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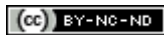
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Carola Nielinger-Vakil, *Between Memorial and Political Manifesto: Nono's Anti-fascist Works, 1951-1966*

A remarkably bold short story, *Impiccagione di un giudice* by Italo Calvino, was first published in *Rinascita* in February 1948 on the condition that its title be changed to *Il sogno di un giudice*.¹ The story describes the trial of a fascist, accused of having participated in one of the brutal reprisal actions that shook Northern Italy throughout the partisan war. The crime is merely mentioned in passing, however, as the story is told from the perspective of the judge, Onofrio Clerici, whose sympathy for the former fascist regime is made clear from the outset. Within the realms of the judicial system the judge feels completely at ease, confident in the knowledge that the law was written by people like him and, moreover, may be turned in any desired direction. Throughout the proceedings, however, gallows are being constructed in the courtyard, and the judge's confidence is undermined further by three characters hitherto unknown to the court: a clerk and two guards. The mob at the back of the court room, too, is unusually silent on this day. '*Stupidi e ignoranti, - pensò il giudice Onofrio, - credono che l'imputato sia condannato a morte, perciò han costruito una forza.*'² And, to teach them a lesson, he proposes that the accused be absolved, a sentence which is unanimously approved by the magistrates of the court. But as the judge signs the acquittal, he inadvertently also signs another document, slipped in by the new clerk. It is his own death sentence, condemning him to die '*come un cane*'.³ Without protest the judge succumbs to this sentence and, following the orders of the two guards, hangs himself on the gallows in the now deserted courtyard.

Calvino's references to Kafka are obvious: the gallows, an 'apparatus' of equally intimidating dimensions as that in Kafka's *In der Strafkolonie*, the use of such Kafkaesque characters as the anonymous clerk and the two 'door keepers', and the specific reference to *Der Proceß* in which Josef K, too, is condemned to die like a dog. Recourse to Kafka's modernist world of abstraction and its recurring theme of inescapable dependence on a higher law, serves to transcend the essentially neo-realist setting of this story, but also emphasises Calvino's biting social critique, the complete loss of faith in the judicial system in the given historical

¹ Italo Calvino, 'Il sogno di un giudice', *Rinascita* (February 1948), later included under the original title in the collection of stories *Ultime viene il corvo* (Turin: Einaudi, 1949).

² Calvino, 'Impiccagione di un giudice', in *Ultime viene il corvo* (Milan: Garzanti, 1988), 224-33 (p. 231).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

context. Without doubt Bruno Maderna resorted to Kafka's *Der Proceß* for his *Studi per 'Il processo' di Kafka* (1950) for similar reasons.

Both works essentially have to be understood in the context of the amnesty laws passed in Italy soon after the war. The first was passed in 1946 by none other than Palmiro Togliatti, then minister of justice of the newly founded Republic. At the time, the PCI was still hoping to take on a governing role in the post-war reconstruction of Italy and, to this end, depended on broad support also from the middle classes. The party had thus performed a U-turn on its previous demands of a radical *epurazione*. The amnesty of 1946, approved by the ministerial board in the name of 'national pacification', was aimed primarily at the large number of citizens who had served the fascist regime in administration and public services. Excluded were those who had taken on positions of higher command or had personally been involved in war crimes. However, the amnesty was applied with greatest leniency, especially by the appeal courts which, according to Hans Woller, had generally not been affected by the half-hearted purges of the *epurazione* under Badoglio.⁴ Hence doors were opened for fascist ministers, state officials, chief editors, and judges alike. According to the figures provided by Focardi, of the 12.000 fascists under arrest in 1946, only two thousand were still under arrest the following year. And this figure dropped to just 266 by 1952. A further amnesty law in 1953 then extended the benefits also to those fascists who had been forced to leave the country and by the mid fifties virtually everybody had been absolved.⁵

A wave of releases of high ranking fascists occurred almost immediately after the Communists and Socialists had been ousted from government by De Gasperi in 1948. Prince Junio Valerio Borghese, for example, ex-commander of a naval unit accused of ferocious attacks during the partisan war and personally responsible for 43 homicides, was initially sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment in February 1949. The prince was absolved and immediately released. Filippo Anfuso, the former ambassador for Germany, as also Renato Ricci, the head of the fascist National Guard, were treated in similar fashion. Another trial of extremely high profile was that of Field-Marshal Graziani (1882-1955), commander-in-chief of the armed forces of Mussolini's Republic of Salò. Graziani, who had initially been named by the British to be tried by the Allies after the war, stood trial in Rome from

⁴ Hans Woller, "'Ausgebliebene Säuberung'?" Die Abrechnung mit dem Faschismus in Italien', in Klaus Dietmar Henke, Hans Woller (eds.), *Politische Säuberung in Europa: Die Abrechnung mit Faschismus und Kollaboration nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich: DTV, 1991), 148-91; also see Hans Woller, *I conti con il fascismo. L'epurazione in Italia 1943-1948* (Bologna: Mulino, 1997).

⁵ Filippo Focardi, *La guerra della memoria: La Resistenza nel dibattito politico italiano dal 1945 a oggi* (Bari: Laterza, 2005), p. 29.

1948 to 1950.⁶ He was sentenced to 19 years of imprisonment but remained in prison for only a few months. After his release he was made honorary president of the neo-fascist *Movimento sociale italiano* and his autobiographical *Ho difeso la Patria* (1948) sold in large numbers - a bestseller of the time, according to Focardi.⁷ Meanwhile, Primo Levi was struggling to find a publisher for his now famous Auschwitz account *Se questo è un uomo* which first appeared with a print run of just 2500 also in 1948.⁸

At exactly the same time as Graziani's trial another important case was being heard at the courts in Rome: the trial of the partisans responsible for the attack on the Via Rasella in March 1944. The attack killed 33 Germans and led to the brutal reprisal shooting of 335 Italians at the Fosse Ardeatine outside Rome. Although acquitted, the fact that partisans – the liberators of the country - were being tried and held responsible for such reprisal actions left an indelible stain on the Resistenza. Moreover, this case set the precedent for many to follow. As Focardi put it: '*La Resistenza fu messa in stato di accusa e criminalizzata*'.⁹ Almost a decade later, Nono would still write to Alfred Andersch: 'Attempt by the Christian Democratic Party to form a government of our republic together with Nazis and Monarchists????? ...restoration is everywhere!!!! today the Resistenza is increasingly portrayed as a criminal deed! by permission of the government and not too much reaction from the public!'¹⁰

These, of course, were the years of the Cold War, and in Italy the legacy of the Resistenza with its undeniable roots in the predominantly communist anti-fascist movement was centre stage to the growing rift between right and left. Naturally, the Christian Democrats tried to play down the significance of the Resistenza and even attempted to invest it with a stigma of criminalisation. The political left, on the other hand, mobilised the memory of the Resistenza, its immense sacrifices and loss of life in support of the liberation in legitimisation for their demands for radical change. Their political ideal was that of a progressive

⁶ 'The first full list of major war criminals drawn up by the British Foreign Office in June 1944 included thirty-three Germans and eight Italians.' This list included Hitler, Goering, Himmler, Ribbentrop, and Bormann. Among the Italians listed were Mussolini and Graziani. Richard Overy, *Interrogations: The Nazi Elite in Allied Hands, 1945* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2002), p. 29.

⁷ Rodolfo Graziani, *Ho difeso la Patria* (Milan: Garzanti, 1948). See Focardi, *La guerra della memoria*, pp. 20-21.

⁸ Primo Levi, *Se questo è un uomo* (Milan: De Silva, 1948). The independent publisher De Silva went out of business soon after the publication of Levi's book.

⁹ Focardi, *La Guerra della memoria*, p. 28.

¹⁰ Nono, letter to Alfred Andersch, 11 June 1957 (ALN): 'Versuch von demo-christliche Partei hier zusammen mit Nazi und Monarchisten eine Regierung von unsere Republik zu bilden????????? ... es ist überall Restaurationszeit!!!!!!! heute und immer mehr wird hier die Resistenza als Banditentat gezeigt! mit Erlaubnis von Regierung (???) und nicht so starke Reaktion von Opinion!'

kind of socialism modelled on the ideas of Antonio Gramsci, whose prison notebooks and letters took Italy by storm at this time. To the political left Resistenza thus not only meant the heroic anti-fascist Partisan movement, but the ongoing struggle for a democratic and just socialist society. This understanding of Resistenza as continued struggle was the one later also taken by Nono in his text '*Musica e Resistenza*' (1963).¹¹ The socialist dream, however, suffered a hard blow with the election defeat of the Communist and Socialist alliance in 1948, and by 1949 Resistenza had come to be regarded as 'rivoluzione interrotta' by the communists themselves.¹² That year the parliamentary decision was taken to join NATO and the papal *avviso sacro* decreed that communists and all members of communist organisations such as trade unions or youth clubs be excommunicated from the Catholic Church. A further attempt to incapacitate the political left was the introduction of a new electoral law, according to which any alliance of parties that gained more than 50% of the votes would receive two thirds of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Communists and Socialists immediately dubbed this law of 1952 '*la legge truffa*' and saw in it a dangerous parallel to Mussolini's 'Acerbo law' which had consolidated the fascists in power in 1923. As it happened, the centre coalition missed the 50% mark by a fraction in the 1953 elections (49.85%) and the law was annulled a year later.

It was precisely during these 'hard years' of Cold War persecution that Nono and Maderna joined the PCI, in 1952. The same year Einaudi published the volume *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza italiana*, followed, two years later, by *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza europea*.¹³ In the tense Italian political climate this publication was an important attempt to redeem the image of the Resistenza, and one that also left its mark in the music of the younger generation.¹⁴ Vittorio Fellegara (b. 1927), who also briefly attended the Darmstadt courses in the mid-fifties and adopted serial practices in the late fifties, composed a cantata of the same title, *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza italiana* (1954) for speaker, chorus and orchestra. Bruno Maderna also chose one of the

¹¹ Luigi Nono, 'Musica e Resistenza' (*Rinascita*, 1963), in Nono, *Scritti e colloqui*, ed. Angela Ida De Benedictis, Veniero Rizzardi, Le sfere, 2 vols (Lucca: Ricordi, LIM, 2001), 144-47 (p. 144).

¹² Riccardo Lombardi, '25 Aprile', *Avanti!* (24 April 1949), in Focardi, *La guerra della memoria*, 141-44 (p. 144).

¹³ Piero Malvezzi, Giovanni Pirelli (eds), *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza italiana (8 settembre 1943 – 25 aprile 1945)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1952); *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza europea*, with a preface by Thomas Mann (Turin: Einaudi, 1954).

¹⁴ Pietro Ingrao stresses the importance of the publication of *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza italiana* in his memoirs and, interestingly, credits Nono with the use of text from this first volume for *Il canto sospeso*. This is wrong, of course. Nono only chose text from the second volume, the letters from the European Resistance. Pietro Ingrao, *Volevo la luna* (Turin: Einaudi, 2006), p. 264.

letters from this source for his *Quattro lettere* of 1953. Maderna who had joined the partisans in the last months of the war and had been one of the first to write music for a radio programme on poetry of the Resistenza in 1946 was gradually becoming more cautious with politically charged themes.¹⁵ Early in 1953 he wrote to Nono: '*Le lettere sulla Resistenza sono bellissime ma non vorrei farne una speculazione*'.¹⁶ The primary reason for his more cautious approach may have been the political situation in West Germany where the piece would receive its first performance. Apart from Kafka's love letter to Milena, however, the other letters chosen for this work - a business letter and one of Gramsci's prison letters - are hardly less political. In addition, the work's pitch material derives from one of the most famous songs of the Resistenza, *Fischia il vento*. This, however, is well disguised - pitch permutation techniques ensure that the song essentially remains unrecognisable. By means of text montage and clever disguise, it seems, Maderna intended to soften the impact of his politically charged subject matter. As in Calvino's story *Impiccagione di un giudice* neo-realist elements provide the ideological basis for the work but do not predominate. Combined with an uncompromisingly avant-garde idiom, the underlying ideological content is raised to an extremely high, modernist level of abstraction.

Maderna's *Quattro lettere* was later named by Nono as a leading example of a work that combines ideological engagement with total commitment to the avant-garde. '*All'urgenza di una tematica ideale nuova, provocata dalla Resistenza, si unisce una ricerca di mezzi tecnici adeguati. L'impegno ideologico s'accompagna all'impegno del linguaggio... In questa composizione v'è un'interazione reciproca tra tematica ideale nuova e complessa e concezione e invenzione musicale in nuova proiezione*'.¹⁷ From the same compositional ethos emerged Nono's own masterpiece of the period: *Il canto sospeso* (1955-56). By 1955, Nono had advanced to a rigorously serial technique, making use of one of the most objective of series: the 'basic chromatic form' of the all-interval series according to Eimert's *Lehrbuch der Zwölftontechnik* of 1950.¹⁸ Gone, for the moment, was the 'socialist-realist' dimension of revolutionary song: that

¹⁵ Maderna wrote music for the radio programme 'Poesia della Resistenza' (broadcast 17 November 1946), records of which no longer exist. The programme is mentioned in Angela Ida De Benedictis, *Radiodramma e arte radiofonica. Storia e funzioni della musica per radio in Italia* (Turin: EDT, 2004), p. 15, and Maurizio Romito, 'I commenti musicali di Bruno Maderna: radio, televisione, teatro. II', *Nuova Rivista Musicale Italiana*, 36:1 (2002), pp. 79-98 (p. 79).

¹⁶ Bruno Maderna, letter to Nono (Feb/March 1953), ALN.

¹⁷ Luigi Nono, 'Musica e Resistenza' (1963) in *Scritti*, p. 145.

¹⁸ Herbert Eimert, *Lehrbuch der Zwölftontechnik* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1950). Nono owned (and annotated) the Italian translation, H. Eimert, *Manuale di tecnica dodecafonica*, trans. Mariangela Dona, ed. Luigi Rognoni (Milan: Carish, 1954), ALN.

ideologically charged source material which Nono, like other Italian composers, had exploited in earlier pieces such as the Lorca *Epitaffi* and *La Victoire de Guernica*. *Il canto sospeso*'s only ideological basis, therefore, lies in its text. At first sight this text is predominantly commemorative – a moving memorial to those who gave their lives for the worthy cause of the European anti-fascist resistance. In this sense the work is indeed timeless and transcends its historical moment. By means of allusion, however, Nono created a web of layered meanings which also invested the work with a highly charged political actuality. First, there is the work's title, *Il canto sospeso*, which, as Angela Ida De Benedictis has recently rediscovered, was taken from the Italian translation of the poem *If We Die* by Ethel Rosenberg. Nono will have chosen this poetic fragment for its fitting ambiguity, the double meaning of the word 'sospeso' - suspended in the sense of 'floating' and 'interrupted'. However, the hidden allusion to the Rosenberg affair was surely also deliberate. The Jewish couple Julius and Ethel Rosenberg stood trial in 1951, charged with conspiracy for passing secret information on nuclear weapons research to the Soviet Union. The alleged dealings took place in 1944 and 1945, at a time when Russia and the USA were still allies. In the surge of American anti-communist hysteria the Rosenbergs were sentenced to death. This sentence caused an outcry within the European political left, especially in France. Many intellectuals, including Sartre and Aragon, and religious leaders of all denominations appealed for clemency, to no avail. After two years of 'torture by hope' the Rosenbergs were electrocuted on 19 June 1953.

The translation of the Rosenberg correspondence to which the poem *If We Die* serves as a moving preamble, was published in Italy in 1953 under the title *Lettere dalla casa della morte*.¹⁹ Given the high degree of public interest in this case, Nono's reference to the poem would not have gone unnoticed. The connection was certainly known to Massimo Mila who still mentions it in his article 'La linea Nono' of 1960. Referring to this case, Nono draws an analogy between the death of the Rosenbergs and that of the resistance fighters whose words he chose to set in *Il canto sospeso* - a clear hint that these words should not merely be regarded as a matter of the past. The score's quotation of Thomas Mann can be read along the same lines: praised is the faith, the hope, and sacrifice of a young European generation 'who wanted more than simply to resist, feeling themselves to be the vanguard of a better human society'. This is as clear an allusion to the class struggle

¹⁹ Ethel & Julius Rosenberg, *Lettere dalla casa della morte*, trans. Renato Nicolai & Giuliana Orlandini, Attualità politica (Rome: 1953).

as was possible in the Cold War climate. Those who knew Mann's preface in its entirety will further have been aware that the passage chosen by Nono is in fact part of a vicious attack on the deadlocked situation of the then divided world: 'a world of evil regression' ruled by superstitious hate and persecution mania, a world where weapons of mass destruction are entrusted to those who are intellectually and morally incompetent, and a world in which 'the sinking level of culture, the atrophy of education, the mindless acceptance of atrocities committed by a politicised judiciary, bigwigs, blind greed for profit, the decay of loyalty and faith' seemed to offer 'poor protection' against the threat of a third World War.²⁰

In this sense Massimo Mila was absolutely right in saying that the second movement of *Il canto sospeso* represents the 'Credo' of this 'messa di libertà'. Its text is by the Bulgarian teacher and journalist Anton Popov, who was arrested for clandestine Communist resistance in 1941, interrogated, tortured, and finally shot in the central prison of Sofia in July 1942 at the age of 26. '*... muoio per un mondo che splenderà con luce tanto forte con tale bellezza che il mio stesso sacrificio non è nulla. Per esso sono morti milioni di uomini sulle barricate e in guerra. Muoio per la giustizia. Le nostre idee vinceranno...*' Of the ten texts set in *Il canto sospeso*, the text by Popov is the only one which alludes to the Communist cause and its importance to the European anti-fascist resistance. It is the very first text of *Il canto sospeso* and the way it is set by Nono leaves no doubt about the importance of its message. Set for a *cappella* chorus, Popov's highly idealistic text is firmly placed in the realm of the collective. The last two phrases, arguably the most important, '*muoio per la giustizia*' and '*Le nostre idee vinceranno*', are set apart from the rest of the text. The underlying compositional idea for this concluding part of the movement is a drawn out prolation canon in four layers. The two phrases are thus juxtaposed and rendered simultaneously. In all four compositional layers the duration factors move from the largest to the smallest number and back, creating the audible effect of contraction and expansion. At the centre of the contraction the two words 'giustizia' and 'vinceranno' fall together, articulated clearly by the chorus, so that there is absolutely no misunderstanding: justice will prevail.

A look at the early sketches shows that this communist dimension of *Il canto sospeso* was at first much more pronounced. Initial plans reveal very interesting parallels to Nono's earlier *Fučik* project which the composer had abandoned, most probably for political reasons, in 1951. With the choice of the book *Scritto sotto la forza*, the 'prison notebook' of the Czech communist Julius

²⁰ Thomas Mann, prefazione a *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza europea*, p. xiv.

Fučik (1903-43), Nono immediately focussed on an example of central European anti-fascist resistance.²¹ Fučík, a journalist by profession and one of the leaders of the Czech Communist Resistance, was arrested by the Gestapo in 1942. His book was written during imprisonment in Prague and is a moving testimony to the Communist struggle in Czechoslovakia, the belief in its final victory, as well as a personal farewell to comrades and family. The script was smuggled out, page by page, by a prison guard who handed it to Fučík's wife Gusta only after the liberation. In August 1943 Fučík was transferred from Prague to Berlin-Plötzensee where he was executed on 8 September.

Fučik's script was first published in Zagreb in 1946.²² The first German translation came out in East Berlin in 1948.²³ The Italian edition - which immediately caught Nono's imagination - followed in 1951. Nono's library also contains the programme of a production of a Czech documentary drama on the life of Fučík which was put on at the *Deutsche Theater* (East Berlin) during the season of 1951/52. Nono may have attended or known of this production through Paul Dessau.²⁴ Slightly later, in 1954, Jean-Paul Sartre also took Fučík as an example of heroic communist resistance. Speaking to an assembly of workers in a factory outside Paris, Sartre addressed a question which had already been of great concern to him in *Morts sans sépulture* (1946), his own dramatic response to the *résistance*: 'And what about us; would we have resisted if we were tortured?'²⁵

The aspect of torture was of lasting interest also to Nono. Precisely in this context the figure of Fučík would resurface in *Intolleranza 1960*, now in connection with the practice of torture in French Algeria. Back in 1951, Nono began his project with Fučík's arrest, torture and subsequent state of agony.²⁶ However, Nono seems to have abandoned the piece before completing the sung vocal line that was to distinguish the figure of Fučík from the aggressive speech of the commanding Nazi. And despite the use of distinct materials, a 'serie melodica' for

²¹ Julius Fučík, *Scritto sotto la forza*, ed. Franco Calamandrei (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1951)

²² Julius Fučík, *Reportáž pasná na oprátce* (Zagreb: 1946)

²³ Julius Fučík, *Reportage von unter dem Strang*, trans. F. Rausch (Berlin: Dietz, 1948).

²⁴ Jurij Burjakowskij, *Julius Fučík*, Drama in 4 Acts (12 Scenes), trans. Kurt Seeger, produced by Wolfgang Langhoff, scenography by the brothers Heartfield Herzfelde, Deutsches Theater (1951/52).

²⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Julius Fucik', *Les lettres françaises* (17-24 June 1954), as cited in *The Writings of Jean-Paul Sartre: A Bibliographical Life*, ed. Michel Contat, Michel Rybalka, trans. Richard C. McCleary (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), p. 301. Nono owned the first Italian edition of *Morts sans sépulture*: Jean-Paul Sartre, *Morti senza tomba/Le mani sporche* (Milan: Mondadori, 1949), ALN.

²⁶ The first episode which contains these three elements is almost complete and can now be performed thanks to the edition by Peter Hirsch. *Fučik* was premiered under Hirsch with Manfred Andrae (Fučík), Jochen Strodthoff (Nazi) and the Münchner Philharmoniker in Munich on 6 May 2006.

Fučik and a 'serie armonica' for the Nazi, plus characteristic rhythmic cells derived from the spoken interrogation, the music is generally not marked by extreme contrast, but amounts to a typically slow moving, reflective, and beautifully orchestrated arch form. This, it seems, is not yet the music of extremes with which Nono would later tackle such situations of conflict and violence: the long floating lines and textures disrupted by dramatic thrusts of sound, orchestral and/or electronic gestures of utmost violence.

So it was perhaps not only for political reasons that the second and third episodes of Nono's *Fučik* were never written. Their content, however, was outlined in a letter to Scherchen. The second episode was to reflect Fučik's account of the class struggle in Czechoslovakia and the third episode was to conclude the work on a note of hope: the certainty that the struggle will continue '*finché gli uomini non saranno completamente uomini*'.²⁷ As a final affirmation of this belief, Nono wanted to end the work with a quotation from Karl Liebknecht's last article *Trotz alledem!* [*Despite Everything*] (1919), published the day Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were murdered: '*chissà se vivremo ancora, quando sarà raggiunto, ma vivrà il nostro programma per tutta l'umanità libera*'.²⁸ All this, as Veniero Rizzardi has shown, was planned on a much larger scale than is evident from the complete first episode. *Fučik* was to include several spoken parts, one or two soloists, chorus and large orchestra.²⁹

That the *Fučik* project later served as a preliminary model for *Il canto sospeso* is evident from one of the first compilations of text from *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza europea* on which Nono also notes initial ideas in regard to form and forces (ALN 14.01.01/06-07). This first draft shows that

²⁷ Nono, letter to Hermann Scherchen, 2 June 1951 (ALN), quoted in Veniero Rizzardi, 'Verso un nuovo stile rappresentativo. Il teatro mancato e la drammaturgia implicata', in G. Borio, G. Morelli, V. Rizzardi (eds.), *La nuova ricerca sull'opera di Luigi Nono* (Florence: Olschki, 1999), 35-51 (p.38); and in German translation in Jürg Stenzl, *Luigi Nono* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1998), p. 23.

²⁸ Nono, letter to Scherchen, 2 June 1951 (ALN). 'Und ob wir dann noch leben werden, wenn es erreicht wird – leben wird unser Programm; es wird die Welt der erlösten Menschheit beherrschen.' Karl Liebknecht, 'Trotz alledem', *Die Rote Fahne*, 15 (15 Jan 1919), in *Gesammelte Reden und Schriften*, ed. Wilhelm Pieck (Berlin: Dietz, 1958), vol. 9, pp. 675-79 (676). Nono owned the following editions: Karl Liebknecht, *Ausgewählte Reden, Briefe und Aufsätze* (Berlin: Dietz, 1952); *Scritti politici*, ed. Enzo Collotti, *Il pensiero socialista* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1971). Nono also knew of Piscator's revolutionary political revue *Trotz alledem!* (1925), although perhaps not yet in 1951. Liebknecht was later reconsidered by Nono in the context of *Al gran sole carico d'amore*.

²⁹ Veniero Rizzardi, 'Verso un nuovo stile rappresentativo', in *La nuova ricerca sull'opera di Luigi Nono* pp. 35-51 (39-42). Rizzardi here also discusses Nono's later idea for a work 'dedicato alla Libertà' which was to set texts by Fučik, Eluard, Rosenberg and 'an Italian' (most probably a text from *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza italiana*). Nono mentioned this project in a letter to Maderna in 1953, *ibid.*, p. 44. Eluard was set in *La Victoire de Guernica* (1954); the character Fučik and Eluard's *La liberté* were later brought together in *Intolleranza 1960*; the Rosenberg poem, however, remained encapsulated in the title 'Il canto sospeso'.

Nono was initially thinking of a work in four parts with text from the Bulgarian and Greek resistance (Part I), Polish Jews (Part II), Italian and French resistance (Part III), and Russian and Austrian resistance (Part IV). Except for the three texts set in no.9, all texts of the finished work are already present in this compilation. Most were written by members of the communist resistance. Very striking in regard to the preliminary musical annotations is the fact that Nono here still considers the use of recited speech. Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw* always served as the great model of anti-fascist music, but in this case the idea of recited speech is also specifically linked to the earlier *Fučik* project. An additional text by the Greek communist Kostas Sirbas is found at the end of Part I. Central to this text is the agony of waiting to be executed. As in *Fučik*, the first part of *Il canto sospeso* was thus to conclude with a state of agony. Next to this text by Sirbas Nono notes: 'CORO/ parlato e cantato/ insieme stesso ritmo!' Both the text and the idea of recited speech were later discarded, but one wonders whether the idea of a state of agony still found its way into the purely instrumental no. 4 which now concludes the first part of *Il canto sospeso*.

Also the quotation of Liebkecht's *Trotz alledem!* with its faith in the victory of the class struggle finds its equivalent in this first draft of *Il canto sospeso*. The final text of the compilation stems from a letter by the Austrian communist Oskar Klekner, written to his brother Rudolf shortly before their decapitation at the *Landesgericht* in Vienna on 2 November 1943. It reads: '*Ora ... tocca a noi. Anche noi ci avviamo al capestro a testa alta e consegnamo la bandiera della libertà a quelli che avranno ancora la fortuna di vivere l'ora della libertà...*' If the song *Bandiera rossa* was no longer considered adequate musical source material by 1955, it is all the more striking that Nono at first toyed with the idea of this final image of passing on the 'flag of liberty' to future generations such as his own. On the draft, Klekner's text is marked FINALE and allocated the forces S/A/T and Coro. On the margin Nono also notes '*Corale 4 parti*' and a later addition then reads '*con coro come inizio*'. Other sketches show that Nono must have adhered to the idea of a Finale on the text by Klekner for quite a while. At a stage when instrumentation and choice of duration factors had already been determined in great detail for all other movements, Nono still marks '*FINALE soli + coro + orchestra*'. On this sketch, however, there is no longer a clear reference to Klekner's text which had previously been indicated by its country of origin, '*Austria*'.

Klekner's letter was eventually replaced by three short extracts from letters by the Russian Irina Maložon, the Italian Eusebio Giambone and the German Ellie Vogt. All three were members of the communist resistance. The Italian, Eusebio

Giambone (1904-44), was a contemporary of Gramsci who had taken part in the socialist experiment of the *Ordine nuovo*, the progressive Soviet workers councils established in factories in Turin (1920-21). Although the communist cause remains unmentioned in this final choice of text, again there is the hope for a better society. *Vado con la fede in una vita migliore per voi* are the last words set in *Il canto sospeso*. This, however, is not yet the end. The choral collective continues, *bocca chiusa*, and renders a prolation canon very similar to that at the end of movement no. 2: the same effect of contraction and expansion with the moment of change over now delicately underlined by three short beats on the timpani. The compositional technique clearly refers back to the second movement where it was used to express Popov's faith in social justice. But perhaps also the image of handing over the *bandiera rossa* to future generations, including the composer's own, reverberates in these last notes of *Il canto sospeso*.

Il canto sospeso was first performed in Cologne on 24 October 1956 - the year the Communist Party (KPD) was banned in West Germany. The concert was conducted by Hermann Scherchen and also included Webern's *Orchesterstücke* opp. 6 and 10 and Schoenberg's *Friede auf Erden* op. 13. Scherchen himself was an ardent socialist who had experienced many of the progressive cultural upheavals of the Weimar Republic at first hand. From 1919 he directed the *Deutscher Arbeiter Sängerbund* and performed with workers' choruses right up to 1933 - allegedly in a red sweater.³⁰ However, in response to the Congress on Twelve-Tone-Music in Milan in 1949, Scherchen also made it blatantly clear that no 'composer of first rank' would ever embrace the unnatural and a-historical confines of 'socialist-realist' music.³¹ It is surely no coincidence that Scherchen programmed *Il canto sospeso* together with Schoenberg's *Friede auf Erden*, another example of extremely complex choral music which, in April 1929, had been performed to great acclaim with a workmen's chorus directed by Anton Webern.³²

³⁰ On Scherchen's commitment to workers' culture see Hermann Scherchen, *Aus meinem Leben/Rußland in jenen Jahren*, ed. Eberhardt Klemm (Berlin: Henschel, 1984).

³¹ Hermann Scherchen, 'Die gegenwärtige Situation in der modernen Musik', *Melos*, 16 (Oct 1949), 257-59.

³² Gesangverein Freie Typographia, 'Chorkonzert', cond. Anton Webern, Vienna, 7/14 April 1929. The concert also included Mahler's 2nd Symphony. One review commented: 'If workmen are successful in giving an exemplary rendition of so difficult a choral work as Arnold Schoenberg's *Friede auf Erden*, which was considered unperformable for decades, then truly the art by the people can take hold.' And Webern himself wrote to Schoenberg 'Finally it has come true, after all: I have performed *Friede auf Erden* twice. I believe that we succeeded beautifully. The chorus sang with great enthusiasm. It seems to me that I have really been able to bring the singers to the point of perceiving your work as I do myself.' as quoted in Hans Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of his Life and Work* (London: Gollancz, 1978), p. 331. Nono himself toyed with the idea

Despite the many politically charged contexts, the premiere of *Il canto sospeso* did not cause a storm. On the contrary, as Nono wrote to Paul Dessau after the premiere: 'Never before did I experience such tension in the audience with my work! tension as total *silenzio*, no noise throughout the performance, nothing.'³³ The German audience, it seems, was dumbfounded by the audacity of the work's theme and Nono's courage to address it with the most advanced musical means. *Il canto sospeso* was then immediately sucked into the 'Poetry after Auschwitz' debate provoked by Adorno's statements in 'Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft' ['Cultural Criticism and Society'], which had just been republished in *Prismen*.³⁴ As is well known, this debate focussed on the question of adequacy: are there adequate artistic means to express such content and if yes, is the serial idiom a valid one? In the context of this debate, *Il canto sospeso*'s political commitment to communist ideology was largely overlooked in West Germany.³⁵ To Nono himself, however, *Il canto sospeso* was never a work related to the holocaust. Nono's preoccupation with the holocaust, as generally in Italy, only really began after the completion of *Il canto sospeso*.³⁶ To Nono, the necessity of addressing the holocaust, that appears to have emerged in the late 1950s, was very much part of the continuation of the spirit of Resistenza, the struggle for social justice, and, in this sense, just as political. It came at a time when Nazi atrocities already seemed to repeat themselves in Algeria: widespread practice of torture, executions without trial, rape, the destruction of whole villages and thousands of deaths in detention camps.³⁷ Worse, these atrocities were now being committed by the French, a people who

of founding a workers' chorus in Venice and wrote to Scherchen about this plan in the spring of 1952. Scherchen congratulated him on the idea but the plan was never realised.

³³ Nono, letter to Paul Dessau (1956): 'in meinem Werk nie von Publikum eine solche Spannung gehört! Spannung als totale *silenzio*, während der Aufführung kein Lärm, nichts.'

³⁴ Theodor W. Adorno, 'Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft', in *Prismen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1955), pp. 7-31.

³⁵ The German context is discussed in detail in my article, "'The Song Unsung': Luigi Nono's *Il canto sospeso*", *JRMA*, 131:1 (2006), pp. 83-150.

³⁶ First Italian publications on the holocaust included Anne Frank's *Diary* and *The Human Race* by Robert Antelème, both published in Italy in 1954. Also published in 1954 was the Italian translation of *The Scourge of the Swastika* by Lord Russell of Liverpool, 'A Short History of Nazi War Crimes' based on evidence from the Nuremberg trials; Nono owned the second edition, Lord Russell, *Il flagello della svastika: breve storia dei delitti di guerra nazisti* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1960). Of great impact, too, was Alain Resnais's groundbreaking documentary film on Auschwitz, *Nuit et Brouillard* (1955) with music by Hanns Eisler. Primo Levi's *Se questo è un uomo* then finally made its breakthrough in a new edition published by Einaudi in 1958 (Nono owned this Einaudi edition, not the first of 1948). Another widely read publication (also contained in Nono's library) was the memoir of Auschwitz Commandant Höss; Rudolf Höss, *Comandante ad Auschwitz: memoriale autobiografico di Rudolf Höss*, preface by Lord Russell (Turin: Einaudi, 1960).

³⁷ According to Simone de Beauvoir, the massacre and burning of Rivet on 8 May 1956, for example, was widely compared to Oradour, the French town burned and its population massacred by the Germans on 10 June 1944. Simone de Beauvoir, *Force of Circumstance*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Deutsch, 1965), p. 338.

had only recently celebrated its own liberation from Nazi-occupation. As Nono later stated in conversation with Pauli (1969): '*Molti di noi riconobbero in Algeria la situazione della Resistenza trasposta al presente, in condizioni geografiche e storiche differenti; per quanto mi riguarda, io vedevo una cosa, che la lotta contro il fascismo e la repressione non era solo un ricordo, ma che proseguiva, doveva proseguire nel terzo mondo, e che ora con L'Algeria si era posta al centro dell'attenzione. Questa convinzione si ripercosse poi nella mia opera.*'³⁸

Two music theatre projects leading up to *Intolleranza 1960* are of interest in this particular context: the project on Anne Frank which Nono discussed with Giuseppe Ungaretti in 1957-58 and the preliminary 'Torture' project with the texts by Henri Alleg and other members of the Algerian resistance, some of which were later used for *Intolleranza*.³⁹ The Anne Frank project was first mentioned by Nono in a letter to Steinecke in July 1957, in which he says: 'I am now thinking about the Anne Frank Diary. One should transcribe the whole thing, not in the way it is now being put on stage; almost everything as choral commentary - chorus as a symbol of Anne Frank; on stage only the essential. The chorus would be written entirely new. Again I spoke to Ungaretti in Rome: he said the piece could be as clear cut as a [drama by] Aeschylus, as strong, as complex, as classical. One will have to see.'⁴⁰ While the Anne Frank project was in the planning stages with Ungaretti, Nono also wrote to Alfred Andersch, asking him to collaborate on a music theatre project for 1958. 'My idea: Intolerance. Possibly 3 or 4 episodes, in which intolerance is exposed,' or '3 episodes of intolerance' juxtaposed with 3 of 'love'

³⁸ Nono, 'Intervista di H. Pauli' (1969), in *Scritti*, II, 23-33 (25).

³⁹ Nono used the following source texts: Henri Alleg, *La tortura*, with a preface by J. P. Sartre (Turin: Einaudi, 1958), and *La cancrena*, trans. R. Panzieri (Turin: Einaudi, 1959).

⁴⁰ Nono, letter to Wolfgang Steinecke, 6 July 1957 (ALN), 'jetzt ueberlege ich das Anne Frank-tagebuch: man sollte das ganze bearbeiten, nicht wie auf Buehne jetzt geht; fast alles mit Choere-Commentar-und Choere als Simbol von der Anne Frank; auf Buehne nur das Essentail; die Choere sollten ganz neu geschrieben werden. war wieder in Rom mit Ungaretti gesprochen: er sagt: es koennte ein Stuck klar wie ein eschilos werden, so stark, so komplex, so classik.' More information is found in a letter by Ungaretti from which it becomes clear that the poet Mario D'Amico was also involved in the project: 'Ho incaricato un mio giovane scolaro, D'Amico, di fare una prima traccia, ed ora sta anche aspettando la riduzione americana per le scene, che non servirà a nulla. Le cose sono a questo punto: tutto avverrà nelle ultime 24 ore del diario. De' fatti avvenuti prima, con commento di stati d'animo di Anna e di stati d'animo del momento storico, sara compito dei cori darne notizia. Mercoledì D'Amico viene a casa, e vedremo come andare avanti. Abbiamo pensato che se l'intera esecuzione non dovrà avere una durata di piu di 45 minuti, noi non dovremmo superare i 200 versi per le parole. Ho pensato ad un'essenzialità e linearità da tragedia greca, nello spirito, s'intende, e nella complessità e intensità drammatica d'oggi.' Ungaretti, letter to Nono, 11 March 1958 (ALN). The American stage version both Nono and Ungaretti refer to is that by Goodrich and Hackett. Nono owned the German translation of this dramatisation, *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank: Ein Schauspiel* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1958), the German edition of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1955) and the biography by Ernst Schnabel, *Anne Frank: Spur eines Kindes* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1958).

and 'understanding', rendered simultaneously. As a source for these ideas Nono mentions the silent film 'Intolerance' (1916) by D. W. Griffith.⁴¹ Collaboration between Nono and Andersch did not go beyond a series of meetings and discussions. However, preliminary ideas for *Intolleranza* were jotted down by Nono in a notebook entitled 'Per il teatro'. One page of this notebook is divided into four sections, only two of which are filled in. Nono here writes: 'Contro il razzismo – /Anne Frank –/ si ascolta/ si vede non la storia' and in the second section 'Tortura - / Alleg-', and then crossed out, 'Fučik'. By this time (presumably early in 1958) Nono had obviously moved away from the idea of an independent work on Anne Frank and was contemplating the use of this topic in connection with that of the practice of torture in Algeria. In a further letter to Andersch, Nono wrote: 'what I now fear the most, and exactly this is happening, is the restoration! and always this poor emotion-feeling-disease!'⁴² Nono here clearly alludes to the danger of sentimentality that comes with a topic such as Anne Frank. A related point is made by Simone de Beauvoir in her memoirs: 'Every evening, a sentimental audience wept over the past misfortunes of little Anne Frank; but all the children in agony, dying, going mad at that moment in a supposedly French country was something they preferred to ignore. If you had attempted to stir up pity for them, you would have been accused of lowering the nation's morale.'⁴³

Like Sartre in his preface to Alleg's *La question*, Nono later did draw the parallel between the contemporary situation in Algeria and the Nazi-regime. He does so, however, not by alluding to the holocaust, but by going back to his heroes of the anti-fascist resistance. In the concentration camp scene, Nono's chorus of prisoners chants not *Kol nidre*, but Eluard's famous resistance poem *Liberté* (1942), while the voice of the tortured man, the protagonist of this scene, is that of Julius Fučik. And Nono's instrumental transition between the interrogation and torture scenes is the entire fourth movement of *Il canto sospeso* – again a hidden reference to a state of agony?

The holocaust – Auschwitz - was first addressed by Nono in yet another political context: that of post-Stalinist Poland. If the brutally suppressed insurrection in Hungary in 1956 had caused major disillusionment within the PCI and many

⁴¹ Nono, letter to Alfred Andersch, 25 Sept. 1957 (ALN), 'Meine Idee: die Intolleranz/ moeglich mit 3 oder 4 Episoden, wo die Intolleranz am meisten gezeigt wird. auch 3 Episoden von Intolleranz/ 3 von "Liebe-Verständnis" simultaneität – zusammen (einmal ein film von Griffith gesehen, genau "intolerance" mit 4 Episoden von alter Zeit bis 1700)'.
⁴² Nono, letter to Andersch, 19 Nov 1957, (ALN): 'was am meisten ich fürchte jetzt, und genau jetzt passiert, ist die Restauration! und immer die arme Emotion-Gefuehl-Krankheit!'

⁴³ Simone de Beauvoir, *Forces of Circumstance*, p. 384.

intellectuals like Maderna and Calvino to leave the party, the political situation in Poland was much more promising. Contrary to Hungary, Poland had succeeded in making a stand against Stalinism and was slowly opening up to the West, including musically. In this climate Nono's first journey to Poland in 1958 turned into an exhilarating experience. Being able to attend the 1958 Warsaw Autumn, Nono wrote to several of his friends with socialist inclinations, had been his 'best' and 'most important experience as human-being/musician' to date.⁴⁴ To Karl Amadeus Hartmann, Nono enthused about 'the great feeling of hope!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!', a musical situation based on human understanding - 'no circle, no snobbism' - and also the exhilarating reception of works by Schoenberg and Webern: 'An audience of 2000 people enthusiastic about Schoenberg and Webern: *A Survivor from Warsaw* repeated and requested for a third time, the same for the *Psalm* as well as the *Five Movements for String Quartet* and *Five Pieces for Orchestra* by Webern.'⁴⁵

Nono also took the opportunity to visit the Warsaw Ghetto and Oświęcim (Auschwitz). He did so with a firm focus on the Polish resistance. Heavily marked and annotated by Nono is a book by the Polish Jew Albert Nirenstein, which was published by Einaudi in 1958 and possibly accompanied Nono on this journey. Its title, *Ricorda cosa ti ha fatto Amalek*, presumably influenced Nono's later choice of title *Ricorda cosa ti hanno fatto in Auschwitz* (1966). A large part of Nirenstein's book is dedicated to the resistance movement in the Warsaw Ghetto. The final two chapters contain accounts of resistance in other urban centres in Poland as also the concentration camps, including the revolt of the *Sonderkommando* at Auschwitz. Highlighted by Nono is a passage from a manifesto of The Jewish Combatant Organisation, for example. This manifesto of 23 April 1943 addresses the Polish population of Warsaw: '*Polacchi! Cittadini! Soldati della libertà! ... Voi vedete con i vostri occhi come il ghetto si sia completamente trasformato in una fortezza, e così rimarrà. Noi moriremo tutti in questa lotta, ma non ci arranderemo... È una lotta per la nostra e la vostra libertà! Per la vostra e la nostra dignità umana!*'⁴⁶ But Nono also marks other passages such as a meticulous description of the method of killing by means of gas – the so-called 'bath' in the

⁴⁴ Nono, letters to Karl Amadeus Hartmann (21 Oct 1958) and Paul Dessau (24 Oct 1958), ALN.

⁴⁵ Nono, letter to Hartmann (21 Oct 1958): 'kaum zurueck von Polen!/ meine schoenste Erfahrung bis heute, als Mensch-Musiker./ dort sehr wichtig: die grosse Hoffnung!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!/ musikalische Situation: sehhrrrrrrrrr schoen... Publikum, 2000 Personen, begeistert von Schoenberg und Webern: Ueberlebender von Warschau wiederholt und man wollte dreimal hoeren, genau dasselbe mit Psalm/so mit Saetze fuer streichquart und Orchstuecke von Webern...', Luigi Nono, "'Was im Grund uns alle bindet: Musik – Leben" Briefe 1953-59', in Wagner (ed.), *Karl Amadeus Hartmann und die Musica Viva* (Mainz, 1980), pp. 204-13 (211).

⁴⁶ Alberto Nirenstajn, *Ricorda cosa ti ha fatto Amalek* (Turin: Einaudi, 1958), p. 168.

extermination camp Sobibor. The passage ends: '*Tutti era organizzato in modo perfetto, secondo gli ultimi ritrovati della tecnica tedesca.*'⁴⁷ In this account by the Russian Jew Alexandr Peczorskij, the leader of the revolt in Sobibor, one repeatedly encounters the image of the German oppressor with a whip in hand. The crack of four whips is later among the most violent sounds of Nono's *Composizione per orchestra n. 2: Diario polacco '58* (1959).

Ultimately, however, no book can prepare for or capture the reality of places like the Warsaw Ghetto or Auschwitz. Together with a delegation from the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial – defence, prosecution and the accused – Peter Weiss later also made the journey to Auschwitz. Having followed the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial and in the process of writing *Die Ermittlung*, Weiss arrived at Auschwitz extremely well informed. And yet, Weiss recollects in his powerful report *Meine Ortschaft* ('My Hometown'), all knowledge seemed to crumble when confronted with the reality of the now barren and deserted surroundings:

Here the kitchen buildings next to the main square, and in front of them a small wooden house with a steep roof and a weather vane, painted in cheerful colours, as if out of a castle construction kit. It is the house of the *Rapportführer* from which the roll call was watched. I once knew of these roll calls, of this having to stand for hours in the rain and snow. Now I only know this muddy square at the centre of which three beams carry an iron rod. I also knew how they stood under this rod on stools. The stools were then pushed off and men in skull hoods would hang onto their legs in order to break their necks. I had seen it in front of me when I heard and read of it. Now I don't see it any more.⁴⁸

The desolation and frustration felt on visiting Auschwitz, Weiss concludes, is essentially due to the realisation that it is impossible to experience and thus to fully understand what happened here:

A living person came, but what happened here is denied to him. The living soul who came here from another world possesses nothing but his knowledge of statistics, of written accounts, and of witness statements. These are part of his life, he carries them with him, for his entire life, but he will only understand what he himself experiences... Now he merely stands in a lost world where nothing more is to be done. For some time there is utmost silence. Then he knew that it is not over yet.⁴⁹

'*Violenza nazista – e la vita naturale che continua, malgrado*', Nono wrote in the early sketches for *Diario polacco '58* and also: '*ricorda viaggio verso Oświęcim –/ poi Oświęcim improvviso/ Birkenau*'. Like Weiss, it seems, Nono was particularly

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 368.

⁴⁸ Peter Weiss, 'Meine Ortschaft', first broadcast under the title 'Auschwitz – 20 Jahre später', WDR, 17 Jan 1965, published in *Der Monat*, 200 (May 1965), reprinted in Christoph Weiß, *Auschwitz in der geteilten Welt: Peter Weiss und die 'Ermittlung' im Kalten Krieg*, 2 vols. (St. Ingberg: Röhrig, 2000), II, 5-12 (p. 7).

⁴⁹ Peter Weiss, 'Auschwitz – 20 Jahre später', in Weiß, *Auschwitz in der geteilten Welt*, p. 11.

struck by the discrepancy between the 'lost world' - Auschwitz - and life that continues – *Trotz alledem!* Nono's journey on the whole was marked by the constant clash of experiences at opposite ends of the emotional scale: the exhilarating music festival and the Ghetto in Warsaw, the beauty of Krakow and the Tatra Mountains and the pilgrimage to Auschwitz. In his programme note for *Diario polacco '58*, Nono would later write: '*Una caratteristica di questo mio incontro ... fu la rapidità nella successione, spesso simultaneità, di situazioni differenti umane e naturali che in quei giorni mi si fissarono nell'animo.* And he then adds: '*e questa caratteristica fondamentale ... è anche nella scrittura di questa mia musica.*'⁵⁰

Much has been said by both Erika Schaller and Matteo Nanni on the long and complex genesis of *Diario polacco '58*,⁵¹ and the way the piece essentially derives from the three key experiences Nono names in the cited text: *sgomento* (consternation and dismay) on visiting the Warsaw Ghetto and Auschwitz, *ammirato stupore* (admiration and amazement) for the beauty of some of the places visited, and *entusiasmo* (enthusiasm) – '*entusiasmo suscitato dalla decisa volontà di vita del popolo polacco per la necessità di libera esistenza umana – violenta resistenza al nazismo, insurrezione gloriosa di Varsavia nel '44 e, dopo il ciclone della barbarie nazista, la costruzione materiale economica sociale e culturale della nuova Polonia su nuove strutture di base.*'⁵² To these three states of mind, *sgomento* - *ammirato stupore* – *entusiasmo*, Nono himself explains, correspond '*tre diversi modi di essere del suono e la loro differente composizione-uso.*'⁵³ In Nono's sketches these three categories of sound are marked A, B and C and are indeed differentiated in terms of the serial generation of sound. However, what in theory sounds very simple – three states of mind translated into three types of sound – is hugely more complex in practice, so much so that it is impossible to tell for sure which experience is represented by which type of sound. The overriding idea, it seems, is to create a sense of the fast succession, near simultaneity of the fluctuating experiences, going from one extreme to the other, clashing but also merging into a single impression. As Nono's states in his text: '*alla rapidità di successione, spesso simultaneità, di differenti situazioni che mi hanno colpito, corrisponde una rapidità nel succedersi dei differenti cenni*

⁵⁰ Nono, 'Composizione per orchestra n. 2 – Diario polacco '58' (1959), in *Scritti*, I, 433-36 (p. 433).

⁵¹ Erika Schaller, *Klang und Zahl. Luigi Nono: serielles Komponieren zwischen 1955 und 1959* (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 1997); Matteo Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono. Philosophische und musikanalytische Untersuchungen* (Freiburg: Rombach, 2004).

⁵² Nono, 'Composizione per orchestra n. 2 – Diario polacco '58', in *Scritti*, p. 433. The first German version of this text in the journal 'Blätter und Bilder' (1960) and its reprint in Stenzl, *Texte*, omits the allusion to socialism and does not translate 'su strutture nuove di base'.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 435.

'diaristici': *rapidi improvviso mutamenti dove sempre l'inaspettato arriva e sorprende nella sua varietà.*⁵⁴

Diario polacco '58 is a difficult, perhaps even a not entirely successful work, precisely for this reason. It is very fragmented, marked by constant fluidity and change, also within the added spatial dimension (the four identical orchestral groups), and offers few recognisable structural markers to its listeners. At times the succession of events is so fast that they can hardly be grasped (fragments of one or two bars), one reason perhaps, why Nono resorted to slower speeds and inserted general pauses of various length in the revised version with tape of 1965. The piece is extremely interesting in regard to later music by Nono, however, especially in terms of its overall form and the way the memory of Auschwitz is highlighted and distinguished from the layer of 'ordinary' human experiences through musical means that deliberately defy the underlying serial system.

The fundamental compositional idea for *Diario polacco '58*, it seems to me, goes back to movement 8 of *Il canto sospeso*. The most violent orchestral sonorities in *Il canto sospeso* are generally rendered by wind, brass and timpani, most effectively so when coupled with fluttertonguing or tone repetition. I am here thinking of movement 6a in particular, but also the final gesture in movement 3 and the tone repetition in brass and timpani at the end of movement 8. With similar instrumental techniques and a much extended brass and percussion section Nono would attain far higher degrees of orchestral violence in *Diario polacco*. Yet even in 1965 the eighth movement of *Il canto sospeso* continued to serve as a point of reference for *Die Ermittlung* in this sense.⁵⁵ Moreover, movement 8 of *Il canto sospeso* is also one of the first examples of the structural use of density in Nono's oeuvre (this, perhaps, is one of the most important lessons learned from Varèse, mentioned by Nono as an important influence on this particular movement). As shown in figure 1.1, Nono here works with four distinct instrumental groups. In correspondence with the number of instrumental groups, he also uses four different duration values: quaver divided by 3, 4, 5 and 7. These duration values are not linked to a specific instrumental group, however. Their allocation changes from section to section. Durations also do not evolve in continuous layers. Instead, Nono works with a system that regulates the maximum density of each level of duration.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 435.

⁵⁵ Like *Diario polacco*, movement n.8 of *Il canto sospeso* is listed as source material in sketches for *Die Ermittlung*. Sketch 28.1/05v contains the annotation: 'CANTO SOSPEO No. 8 ottoni'. Due to the electronic transformation of sound, it is difficult to ascertain whether material from this movement was actually used for the music to *Die Ermittlung*. The material from *Diario polacco '58* is more easily recognized.

The number of compositional layers per instrumental group and also the movement's large scale structure are derived from the simple numeric sums shown in figure 1.2. The columns of equal numbers indicate the number of compositional layers for each group. Their sum total determines the number of bars for each of the movement's twelve sections. The columns are then reorganised into a varied three-part structure and each allocated a different combination of instrumental groups, duration levels and dynamics. The resulting preliminary structure, which is adhered to in the final movement with astonishing accuracy, is shown in figure 1.4. Continuous change of parameter combination, the selective use of tone repetition and additional blurring of sound by means of displaced entries conveys an urgent sense of disquiet in this movement while the overall shape is articulated by interlocking waves of mutating densities and dynamic contrasts.

A similar, but infinitely more complex structure is found in *Diario polacco* '58. Again Nono works with a number of sub-groups and again the number twelve is essentially divided by 3 and 4. The basic subdivisions of the material used are shown in figure 2.1. In serial terms, *Diario polacco* '58 is a group composition and the three types of sound (A, B, and C) are distinguished by the serial generation of different types of compositional 'groups' (within which the order of the pitches is free). Type A is made up of pitch groups which combine chords and linear pitch progressions. Type B is the only type of sound in which a single pitch may be split and rendered by two or more instruments, creating the sense of an inner mobility of a single pitch, a phenomenon for which Nono uses the term 'vibrazioni'. Type C allows linear groups of pitches only, although they, too, may be layered of course. A fourth type of sound (D) results from the combination of types A and B and is only used in Parts II-IV of the work. All types of sound occur in 4 densities (density now indicating the maximum overlap of pitch groups). Duration factors, too, are divided into 3 groups of 4: predominantly short values (*breve*), predominantly long values (*lungo*) and the remaining medium values (*medio*). The three groups of duration factors are consistently applied to four duration values: crotchet divided by 4, 5, 6, and 7 (i.e. semiquavers, quintuplets, sextuplets and septuplets). In compositional terms, the orchestra is essentially subdivided into three instrumental sections (brass, wind and strings) and three percussion sections (metal, wood and felt). In spatial terms, however, Nono works with four identical orchestral groups spread out in a semi circle facing the audience. For this orchestral layout, Nono devises four different types of sound projection: coordinated pitches (in rhythmic unison) from all four orchestral groups, coordinated pitches coming from two groups on each side, coordinated pitches from the two inner groups with

uncoordinated pitches coming from each of the outer groups, and uncoordinated pitches from all four orchestral groups. The method of sound projection changes with every single note and hardly adds to the clarity of the sound. Instead it supports the impression of constant fluctuation, inner mobility, flexibility and fluidity.

All the presented materials and parameters are essentially treated as variables, with no fixed conjunctions. A good example is the grouping of duration factors. The length of pitches has a great deal of effect on the nature of a sound or texture, and duration factors could well have been used to distinguish the different types of sound. Instead, the allocation of the duration factors to the types of sound rotates with every new part of the piece, so that every type of sound is heard with each set of duration factors at least once. And if indeed there is some sound symbolism at work in this piece (like the recurring desolate sound of the four flutes, the extremely expressive long floating lines soaring up to the highest registers in the violins, flutes and clarinets, or the increasingly violent percussion and brass interventions),⁵⁶ Nono's primary idea was to play through as many instrumental combinations as possible. In keeping with serial aesthetics, the ideal was one of constant change and transformation.

The large scale form of the work, summarised in figure 2.3, essentially also reflects this ideal. Here, for the first time in Nono's works since 1955, the transposition of the all-interval series comes into play. *Diario polacco '58* is based on the all-interval series on F# (the retrograde of that on C). The series remains untransposed throughout the whole of Part I, that is until the long section AIV, which in the sketches alone, is entitled 'Oświęcim'. Thereafter, the series is transposed with each new section, ascending chromatically from F# (G, Ab, A, Bb, C, C# in Part II, D, Eb, E in Part III). In the fourth and last part of the work the process of transposition accelerates even more and the transposition of the series changes with each row of the underlying magic square from which the compositional groups are generated by means of section specific substitution charts. With this accelerating process of transposition, Nono gradually abandons his preferred means of unification: the relentlessly recurring series. The process of transposition is matched with one of increasing formal fragmentation: larger sections are split apart, divided into two or more subsections and intertwined with similar fragments of other sections. In addition, sound types A and B are now combined to form type D. The result is an even greater fluctuation of density and

⁵⁶ On sound symbolism in *Diario polacco '58* see Jürg Stenzl, 'Luigi Nono und Cesare Pavese', in Stenzl (ed.), *Luigi Nono: Texte, Studien zu seiner Musik* (Zurich: Atlantis, 1975), pp. 409-33 (427-28); and Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, pp. 212-22.

sound generation. Going back to the level of content, it could be said that the memories of Poland '58 gradually begin to overlap, merge and become harder to distinguish as they begin to peter out and dissolve. With the introduction of durations of double length in Part III, sounds and textures become more sustained and drawn out, and so do the silences. One memory, however, although increasingly more spaced out as the piece progresses, manifests itself with ever growing orchestral force: that of Auschwitz. From a process of constant change and fluidity, Nono manages to highlight and carve out the one memory that is of much greater importance to mankind than any of the other personal reminiscences of this journey, which is one of the most fascinating aspects of the work.

In order to do so, Nono singles out the instrumental forces capable of the most violent sonorities: brass and percussion. Not that these instruments only function to represent violence - brass and percussion are also used in exceedingly quiet contexts and in all kinds of other instrumental combinations. Whenever violence is required, however, loud brass and percussion sonorities take precedence. And again Nono effectively works with tone repetition, tremolo, trills and fluttertonguing. The special status of the brass is clear from the outset. The only type of sound which is presented in all clarity, in the form of a distinct compositional phrase, is the beginning BI, rendered by the brass alone and cut off by a single strike on a steel plate.⁵⁷ How this type of sound is generated from the first row of the magic square by means of a section specific substitution chart is summarised in schematic form in figure 2.4. AI and CI, the other two basic types of sound exposed in Part I (and generated in a similar fashion), are already much less distinct than BI in that they emerge from or lead into denser textures and are thus perceived as part of the general flow. CI for high strings (violin and viola) organically emerges from CIV, a much denser texture of mixed instrumentation. And section A1 for four flutes in low register seamlessly leads into section CIII for flutes, clarinets, trumpets, trombones and low strings (cello/ double bass). Brass and strings are joined by loud percussion sonorities in the intersecting section BIII. This section is driven by violent thrusts of untuned percussion sounds (wood and felt) which, as Nanni has shown, were later to be reused for the music to *Die Ermittlung*.⁵⁸ As previously in BI, all sound is bundled into the middle register and tone repetition is introduced to great effect in percussion and strings. New levels of orchestral force and intensity are then attained in the final section of Part I: section

⁵⁷ In the revised version of 1965 the distinction of this first musical statement is enhanced by the insertion of a general pause.

⁵⁸ Quotations from *Diario polacco '58* are identified by Nanni in his audio score of *Ricorda cosa ti hanno fatto in Auschwitz* (1966), in *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, pp. 318-29.

AIV for full orchestra – the section which, in the sketches, carries the title 'Oświęcim'. AIV is by far the longest and most coherent section of the entire piece (54 bars). The section evolves in two parts. The first (bars 53-74) is a wave of sound that picks up on elements already exposed. From exceedingly quiet percussion sounds (metal/ wood) grows a dense texture for full orchestra. At the height of its intensity the sound is dominated by loud tremolo and tone repetition in strings and percussion, and - particularly effective - loud fluttertonguing and tone repetition in brass and wind. The segment's arch form recalls movement 4 of *// canto sospeso* and Nono may well have thought of a further 'state of agony'.

Much more terrifying, however, is the part that follows (bars 74-107). It is here that Nono first makes use of a compositional device with which he deliberately defies his all-embracing underlying serial system. With added notes he creates dense and narrow blocks of sound. These blocks consist of three to six pitches. Chromatic relationships prevail. Many are straight chromatic clusters and all pitch constellations have the tightest possible ambitus. The narrow interlocking blocks are all crammed into the middle register. They are also marked by a much more unified sound projection, addressing the audience in a much more direct way than the serially generated textures. The overall effect of these block sonorities is one of impermeable confinement leaving almost no space to breathe. In three consecutive phases, always beginning with untuned percussion sounds, this block composition gradually moves from *ppp* to *fff*, ending with a violent gesture of tone repetition in brass and strings and a last roar of trilling woodwind. Orchestral violence is far less explicit here than in the violent outbursts that follow towards the end of the piece, the almost simultaneous cracking of the four whips in bars 268, for example. The effect, however, is all the more arresting. The impermeable density of the instrumental texture, its narrow range, the unified sound production and projection, the directed and extremely clear cut musical shape all work to create a sensation of growing anguish and trepidation. The built-up tension is resolved with an exceedingly quiet afterthought in the horns, and after another, fainter bolt of violence, the flutes. Accompanied by the other worldly sound of metal percussion the flutes finally ascend to a higher register, a tentative attempt at escape from the strict boundaries of the preceding passage.

The sensation which Nono creates with this central section of *Diario polacco '58* is comparable, perhaps, to that of entering the 'Holocaust Tower' in the Jewish Museum Berlin. Influenced in part by Benjamin's *One Way Street*, Daniel Liebeskind's museum design is structured around 'two lines of thinking, organization and relationship. One is a straight line, but broken into many

fragments, the other is a tortuous line, but continuing indefinitely.⁵⁹ The Holocaust Tower is part of the underground system of intersecting straight lines, positioned at the end of the Axis of the Holocaust. Visitors enters through a large, heavy iron door and finds themselves in a bare, narrow space in the shape of an irregular tetrahedron, cornered in by four towering raw concrete walls rising to the full height of the three storey building. In the most elongated corner light falls in through a single slit high above the ground. The narrow angle of this corner functions as a kind of focal point from which the view is directed to the only source of light above. The architectural void, the damp cold air, the symbolically charged ray of light and subdued city noise compel to silent reflection. Nobody dares speak in this environment in which 'abandonment, doubt, fate, and helplessness all manifest themselves architecturally.'⁶⁰

'For some time there was utmost silence. Then he knew it was not over yet.' was Weiss's response to visiting Auschwitz. The most powerful holocaust memorials, it seems, are those that manage to compel us to silent reflection of this kind - reflection informed by and channelled into historical awareness. Nono's piece, it becomes exceedingly clear, is not primarily about individual experience, but an essay on remembrance. And like Liebeskind's Holocaust museum, Nono's orchestral work is essentially structured around two lines of thought, one straight but fragmented, the other tortuous but continuous. Nazi violence, that which defies human experience, is represented by the straight line of thought - bolts of orchestral violence, increasingly spaced out, but progressively gaining in force. This line of thought encompasses the extra serial device of the sound blocks which stand out in their much more direct and unified sound projection. The second, tortuous line of thought is that of continuous transformation and development and it too contains an extra serial device: very calm and still echo formations. Such echo formations only occur in Part II and only in structures of the sound type C. Also here the method of projection is distinct. An entire serial texture is rendered by a single orchestral group while selected pitches of this texture are echoed in another. These echo formations are placed either in the two outer or the two inner orchestral groups. Nono thereby creates two distinct spatial effects: a channelled projection of sound from the centre of the stage or a void in the centre and sound from the outer groups. '*destra eco sinistra/ centro vuoto*' Nono writes in one of his sketches, and '*Eco! – con strumenti/ - con percussione (metallica)/ dove non eco*

⁵⁹ As cited in Helmuth F. Braun, 'The Architectural Language of Daniel Liebeskind', in Michael Blumenthal & Ken Gorbey (eds.), *Stories of an Exhibition: Two Millennia of German Jewish History*, trans. Darrell Wilkins (Berlin: Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, 2001), 176-81 (p. 178).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

attenta mutare timbro (archi – legni – ott – perc)' The extreme calm and stillness of these musical echoes and their own distinct spatial effect emphasise the reflective function of this tortuous line of thought - the layer of human experience - which becomes more and more complex but also progressively more drawn out towards the end of the piece.

'*Violenta orchestra a scatti! VIOLENTISSIMO! drammatico/ e "canto sospeso"*' one reads in an early sketch when Nono was still planning to write a work in four distinct programmatic episodes. The fundamental split implied in this sketch for the Auschwitz episode was to have impressive and utterly convincing structural consequences for the entire work: a spiral form from which the violent elements associated with the memory of Auschwitz and the Warsaw Ghetto emerge with increasing force while the layer of individual experience becomes ever more tortuous and eventually begins to dissolve. There could indeed be no other conclusion to this work than a final dramatic bolt of violence, a forceful reminder not to forget.

With memory and remembrance at the heart of its discourse, *Diario polacco '58* truly is a memorial piece, more conclusively so than *Il canto sospeso*. This does not mean, however, that it is any less committed. After all, for Nono the model example of Sartrean commitment in music was Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*. In 'Testo-musica-canto' (1960), Nono not only brings this '*manifesto estetico-musicale della nostra epoca*' together with Sartre's *Che cos'è la letteratura*, but ends his reflection with words that are just as relevant and applicable to his own anti-fascist music, the *Diario polacco '58* in particular: '*E se qualcuno si rifiuta al docere e muovere di Schoenberg, e in particolare al Sopravvissuto di Varsavia anche a lui si rivolge lo studente diciannovenne Giacomo Ulivi nella sua ultima lettera scritta prima di essere fucilato dai fascisti a Modena nel 1944: "Non dite di non volerne più sapere. Pensate che tutto è successo perché non avete voluto saperne"*'.⁶¹

Schoenberg had long been declared dead by Boulez, and if Nono chose to speak about this particular work in these terms at the courses in Darmstadt in 1960, he did so deliberately with the intention of leaving with a stark warning. A year previously, one day before the premiere of *Diario polacco*, Nono had inadvertently caused a storm with his controversial lecture '*Geschichte und Gegenwart in der Musik heute*'. The friendship with Stockhausen broke for good

⁶¹ Nono, 'Testo-musica-canto', in *Scritti*, I, p. 65. Ulivi's letter stems from *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza europea* (1954), p. 539.

when Nono allegedly accused Stockhausen of writing 'fascist mass-structures'.⁶² At the same time Schott was trying to dissuade Nono from using text by Bertolt Brecht. It was at this point in his career that Nono was obviously no longer prepared to tolerate the West German climate of restoration and would next return to the West German platform with a new work only on occasion of a political bombshell: *Die Ermittlung* (1965) by Peter Weiss, based on the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial.

The Frankfurt Auschwitz trial (1963-65) was the first major trial of Nazi war criminals in West Germany since the Nuremberg trials in 1945-46 and much had changed since then. Until 1948 the Allies had pursued a far more thorough policy of purge in Germany than was ever the case in Italy. By the end of 1945 more than 200.000 party officials and SS members had been arrested. Of the 5000 perpetrators tried in the French, British and American zones, 800 were sentenced to death, and approximately a third of the death sentences were executed.⁶³ Another consequence of the Allies' politics of purge was the immediate and unconditional mass dismissal of civil servants. More than a hundred thousand civil servants were dismissed from their posts in the American sector alone.⁶⁴ However, the Allies themselves insisted on the completion of the process of de-nazification by 1948 and with the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany under Konrad Adenauer in 1949, all de-nazification policies were finally abolished. The first amnesty law came into force in December 1949 and ca. 800.000 civil servants were immediately re-integrated into West German society. Well concealed by the Nazi infested judicial system, ca. 10.000 Nazi criminals also profited from the law, including some who participated in the Kristallnacht pogroms of November 1938. Another amnesty law was enacted in 1951 and further relaxation of restrictions followed every federal election between 1953 and 1960. Now even former

⁶² Stockhausen himself claims that this happened after having discussed 'statistical structures' in the last of his composition seminars that year (5 September 1959). See Misch, Imke, Bandur, Markus (eds.), *Karlheinz Stockhausen bei den Internationalen Ferienkursen für Neue Musik in Darmstadt 1951-1996: Dokumente und Briefe* (Kürten: Stockhausen-Stiftung, 2001). However, according to Konrad Boehmer (who attended the courses at Darmstadt for the first time that year), Nono did not attend Stockhausen's seminar and the row erupted after Nono's lecture.

⁶³ These figures and much of the following information are based on Norbert Frei, 'Coping with the Burdens of the Past: German Politics and Society in the 1950s', in Dominik Geppert (ed.), *The Postwar Challenge: Cultural, Social and Political Change in Western Europe, 1945-58* (Oxford: OUP, 2003), pp. 27-40.

⁶⁴ In Italy, by comparison, lengthy and often inconclusive trials determined who would be removed from office. If at all, civil servants were dismissed only after the completion of the legal process. See Woller, 'Ausgebliebene Säuberung', p. 161.

members of the Gestapo were allowed to return to public service and former Waffen SS officers began to demand state jobs and pensions. *Wiedergutmachung* [reconciliation], Norbert Frei has poignantly argued, came to mean *Wiedergutmachung* for the victims of the Allies' politics of purge, rather than those of the Nazi regime.⁶⁵

A shift in public perception was evident in the mid fifties when it became apparent that major Nazi officials had been able to make their way back into positions of high rank, even in government. Theodor Oberländer, for example, Nazi expert on the East, was appointed Minister for Refugees under Adenauer. Another extremely high profile case was that of Hans Globke, head of Adenauer's chancellery, who - it emerged - had written a legal commentary approving the Nuremberg Race Laws of 1935. As late as 1968 the Federal President, Heinrich Lübke, and the Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger, both were former members of the Nazi party. In many cases, such as that of Hans Globke, the Nazi past of high ranking officials was exposed by the GDR. The intention here, of course, was to demonstrate the evils of Western neo-capitalist society. Entire 'brown books' were published in the GDR to this end (including English translations), revealing the Nazi careers of government officials, civil servants, judges and business managers alike.⁶⁶ Also initiated by the GDR was the leaflet campaign 'Hitler's Murderous Judges in Adenauer's Service'. GDR ideology was founded on anti-fascist values and their own record in this respect was indeed a clean slate, compared to that of the West. What remained unmentioned, of course, was the fact that the GDR's strict policy of purge had not only wiped out former Nazis but also the more liberal socialists.⁶⁷

Similar divisions manifested themselves in literature and the arts. The publication of Fučík's prison notebook is but one revealing example: published in East Berlin in 1948, it had to await publication in the West until 1976. Anti-fascist themes defined GDR literature from the outset, not only with writers like Brecht and Anna Seghers, but also those of the younger generation, Franz Fühmann and Heiner Müller, for example. The Nazi past was addressed considerably later in the West. 'Classics' like Andersch's *Sansibar oder der letzte Grund* (1957), Grass's

⁶⁵ Frei, 'Coping with the Burdens of the Past', p. 32.

⁶⁶ See, for example, *Brown Book: War and Nazi Criminals in West Germany, State, Economy, Administration, Army, Justice, Science*, ed. Nationale Front des Demokratischen Deutschlands, Staatliche Archivverwaltung, Dokumentarzentrum (Dresden: Verlag Zeit im Bild, 1965).

⁶⁷ On the anti-fascist purge in the GDR see, for example, Helga A. Welsch "'Antifaschistisch-demokratische Umwälzung" und politische Säuberung in der sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands', in Klaus-Dietmar Henke, Hans Woller (eds.), *Politische Säuberung in Europa*, pp. 84-107.

Blechtrummel (1959) and Böll's *Billiard um halbzehn* (1959) were all published in the late fifties as the politics of restoration began to be recognised more fully. Two important films to engage with the Nazi infested economic and judiciary systems were Kurt Hoffmann's *Wir Wunderkinder* (1958) and Wolfgang Staudte's *Rosen für den Staatsanwalt* (1959).⁶⁸ A marked politicization of Germany's Nazi past was further brought about by the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem (1961). In the aftermath of this highly publicised trial, the first to be broadcast on TV all over the world, a series of West German documentary dramas propelled the debate further into the public domain: Hochhuth's *Der Stellvertreter* ['The Representative'] (1962), for example, with its sensational charge that the Roman Catholic Church and its 'representative' Pope Pius XII had done little to prevent the extermination of the Jews, but also Kipphardt's *Joel Brand* (1965) based on Brand's testimony at the Eichmann trial on the business aspect of the holocaust: the deals between Eichmann and those attempting to save lives of Jews.

With *Die Ermittlung* Peter Weiss also makes use of the court room scenario with its aura of judicial authority, to publicly name and shame the major German industrial plants IG Farben, Krupp, Siemens, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung (producers of the Gas Cyclone B) for having profited from the holocaust.⁶⁹ The drama's fundamental charge against capitalist society lies at the heart of Canto 4 'The Possibility of Survival' in which Weiss is generally thought to have given himself a voice in witness 3:

Wir müssen die erhabene Haltung fallenlassen	<i>We must get rid of our exalted attitude</i>
daß uns diese Lagerwelt unverständlich ist	<i>that this camp world is beyond our comprehension</i>
Wir kannten alle die Gesellschaft	<i>We all knew the society</i>
aus der das Regime hervorgegangen war	<i>which had produced the regime</i>
das solche Lager erzeugen konnte	<i>that could bring about such a camp</i>
Die Ordnung die hier galt	<i>we were familiar with this order</i>

⁶⁸ Both films were produced in the West. Staudte's other classic of anti-fascist cinema, *Die Mörder sind unter uns* (*The Murderers are Among Us*, 1946), was the first ever DEFA production (East Berlin).

⁶⁹ Peter Weiss, *Die Ermittlung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1965); *The Investigation: Oratorio in 11 Cantos*, trans. Alexander Gross (London: Calder & Boyars, 1966). Canto 1 'The Loading Ramp' includes witness statements of the former station master at Auschwitz, now promoted to a 'leading position in the direction of the German Railways'. When asked to identify the industries at Auschwitz, he names IG Farben, Krupp and Siemens, *Investigation*, p. 13. Managers of IG Farben were tried by an American tribunal in Nuremberg 1947-48. Of a total of 24, ten were acquitted, the others were charged with prison sentences of 1½ - 8 years. By 1951, all managers of IG Farben had been absolved. Five took on leading positions in Germany's chemical industry. IG Farben was liquidated in 1952 and twelve new companies were founded. Compensation to Jewish victims was agreed in 1957, after which shares for 'IG Farben in Liquidation' rose by 10%. See Steinbacher, *Auschwitz: Geschichte und Nachgeschichte* (Munich: Beck, 2004), pp. 112-13.

war uns in ihrer Anlage vertraut
deshalb konnten wir uns auch noch
zurechtfinden
in ihrer letzten Konsequenz
in der der Ausbeutende
in bisher unbekanntem Grad
seine Herrschaft entwickeln durfte
und der Ausgebeutete
noch sein eigenes Knochenmehl
liefern mußte⁷⁰

*from its very beginnings
and so we could still find our way
even in its final consequences
which allowed the exploiter
to develop his power
to a hitherto unknown degree
and the exploited
had to deliver up his own guts.*

While completing the play, Weiss also publicly announced his commitment to socialism at a writers' congress in the GDR. This, of course sparked a hot political debate. As shown by Christoph Weiß in his two comprehensive volumes on *Die Ermittlung* and its reception in East and West, this debate began well before the play was even produced and was to dominate the reception of the work.⁷¹ Nono, too, was fully aware of this politically charged situation and comments in his programme note: '*Peter Weiss testimonia in modo inequivocabile, soprattutto con Die Ermittlung, la sua scelta nel mondo di oggi. anche questo rende così fondamentale nuovo il suo operare nella letteratura tedesca. poter lavorare con lui è per me non solo ovvio logico e conseguente, ne sono veramente felice.*'⁷²

By 1965 Nono himself was actively engaged with workers in Northern Italy, unions of metallurgy plants primarily. Several statements of workers from the Italsider plant in Genova are set in *La fabbrica illuminata* (1964), including the provocative '*fabbrica come lager*'. This statement is later also singled out in a letter to the workers of the plant in which Nono draws a direct link to capitalism and imperialism: '*il capitalismo e l'imperialismo colpiscono dove e come possono; anche per un'equivoca concezione della coesistenza...Il Vietnam oggi è anche in ogni nostra fabbrica. la lotta eroica dei partigiani e del FLN vietnamita è anche la lotta in ogni fabbrica nostra, dove si contrasta e si contesta il potere del capitale. e come dal Vietnam, così da ogni fabbrica nostra (e dall'Italsider, esempio 'illuminato' di oppressione operaia) si indica e si prepara la vera condizione comunista dell'uomo finalmente libero.*'⁷³

Nono wrote this letter to the workers of Italsider less than a month after the premiere of *Die Ermittlung* on 19 October 1965 and it is against this background that one has to understand Nono's equally passionate programme note to the

⁷⁰ Weiss, *Investigation*, p. 88; *Ermittlung*, pp. 85-86.

⁷¹ Christoph Weiß, *Auschwitz in der geteilten Welt: Peter Weiss und die 'Ermittlung' im Kalten Krieg*, 2 vols (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2000).

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 450.

⁷³ Nono, 'Lettera di Luigi Nono agli operai dell'Italsider di Genova-Cornigliano' (21 Nov 1965), in *Scritti*, I, 186-88 (pp. 186-7)

music for *Die Ermittlung* which begins with two fundamental questions: 'come e perché musica per Die Ermittlung? e soprattutto: perché ancora oggi - 1965 - Auschwitz? Why has it taken 20 years for you to come to terms with Auschwitz, Nono here seems to say to his West German contemporaries, and makes this clear with an attack on the Frankfurt trial itself: 'perché si svolgono processi tali, come a Francoforte, a 20 anni dalla fine della guerra? e perché con sentenze così miti e vergognose?'⁷⁴ In a letter to Piscator, written just after the conclusion of the trial, Nono goes much further: 'imputati e giudici: è lo stesso! il paese che lo permette: povero paese!!!!!!'⁷⁵ Had it been up to Nono, the production of *Die Ermittlung* would have turned into an outright political attack. In the cited letter to Piscator he also writes: 'Piscator: mostri ancora oggi chi è il vero Piscator... "die ermittlung" non può essere che un'esplosione. e non una dimostrazione 'obiettiva'. altrimenti si sarebbe d'accordo con la chiusura di Francoforte!!!!!! e io non ci sto! sicuramente anche Lei! e sicuramente anche Weiss!!!!!! il braunbuch resta importante! ancora di più l'idea delle scritte 'anonime' proiettate durante la musica.'⁷⁶ Piscator reacts to this passionate outburst with great reservation. With Weiss's public announcement of his commitment to socialism, the production was already turning into a 'slinging match' between East and West before it was even seen. In this tense climate Piscator recognised the need for political neutrality and reminds Nono that the main purpose of the drama is to confront the people with the facts about Auschwitz and to try 'to "change" their way of thinking, their attitude, their actions.'⁷⁷ In his own programme note Piscator then attacked the West German press for having accused Weiss of exploiting the theme of Auschwitz for the purposes of anti-Western propaganda. Capitalist oppression and exploitation, Piscator argues, is just one aspect of the drama and a comparatively minor one. The drama as a whole is a distilled 'concentrate' of the findings of the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial and deals exclusively with 'the facts' of Auschwitz. 'It could well be', Piscator concludes, 'that these facts speak against us, against the way we come to terms with them; they certainly speak against the kind of public opinion which at all

⁷⁴ Nono, 'Musica per "Die Ermittlung" di Peter Weiss', in *Scritti*, I, 450-51 (p.450), original German in *Die Ermittlung von Peter Weiss*, ed. Heinrich Goertz (Freie Volksbühne Berlin, 1965), pp. 8-9.

⁷⁵ Nono, letter to Piscator, 20 Aug 1965, original German (ALN), trans. in Angela Ida De Benedictis, Ute Schomerus, 'La lotta "con le armi dell'arte": Erwin Piscator e Luigi Nono. Riflessioni e documenti (II)', *Musica/Realtà*, 61 (March 2000), 151-84 (pp. 181-82).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 181-82.

⁷⁷ Piscator, letter to Nono (24 Aug 1965), Italian trans. in 'La lotta "con le armi dell'arte" (II)', pp. 182-83. This reply is also discussed by De Benedictis and Schomerus, *ibid.*, pp. 165-66.

costs seeks to brand the facts as manipulated propaganda.⁷⁸ For this reason Piscator eventually refrains from projecting extracts of brown books or any other texts and images, a possibility which had obviously been discussed and was usually at the heart of Piscator's political theatre.⁷⁹

All the more important to Piscator's production, therefore, was the music. It had been agreed from the outset that the purpose of this music was to represent the 6 million dead – those who could no longer speak out. As Nono states in his programme note: '*Erwin Piscator ha avuto l'idea giusta e geniale: niente musica di scena. attraverso la musica solo ciò che la parola e la scena non possono rappresentare: i 6 milioni assassinati nei campi di concentramento, in una concezione musicale autonoma.*'⁸⁰ And in 'Musica e teatro' he explains: '*cori, quindi, ... che si alternassero al "canti" del testo, con un proprio tempo di sviluppo rispetto a quello scenico, altra formante dell'arco costruttivo della messinscena dell'Ermittlung.*'⁸¹ It was also decided immediately that this music between the scenes should be extremely brief. '*Musiche con massimo 1' / minimo 5"-10"*' Nono writes in one of the earliest sketches (ALN 28.01/03v). This severe time limit is generally adhered to: the shortest of the 35 fragments for *Die Ermittlung* lasts a mere 8 seconds, the longest 1 min 47 sec, and the average duration is around 30 seconds. Basically Nono was here asked to compose what he had already done in *Diario polacco '58*: a series of interrelated fragments. Measuring the individual sections of this work in real time, one is indeed left with an astonishingly similar picture: 32 sections with durations ranging between ca. 5"-10" and 1'. The average duration, here, is perhaps even slightly shorter, around 20 seconds. The 'Oświęcim' episode, however, stands out from all others with the exceptionally long duration of 2'22". Another very important analogy between *Diario polacco '58* and the music to *Die Ermittlung* is the progressive increase in violence. In Weiss's drama this idea provides the single most important structural guideline. Modelled on the structure of Dante's *Divina commedia*, Weiss progressively moves towards

⁷⁸ Erwin Piscator, 'Anmerkungen zu einem grossen Thema', programme note to *Die Ermittlung* (October 1965), in Erwin Piscator, *Schriften II: Aufsätze, Reden, Gespräche*, ed. Ludwig Hoffmann (Berlin: Henschel, 1968), 321-325 (p. 322).

⁷⁹ On Piscator's initial plans to include projections of documentary images see Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, pp. 306-7. Nono later distanced himself from Piscator's production and expressed his preference for the production by Hanns Anselm Petern in Rostock (East Germany) for which his music was also used. Petern is praised by Nono for his courage to take on the charge against the German industry, but also for his effective use of amplification and collective speech. Nono, 'Musica e teatro', *Scritti*, I, 210-15 (pp. 212-13).

⁸⁰ Nono, 'Musica per "Die Ermittlung" di Peter Weiss', p. 450.

⁸¹ Nono, 'Musica e teatro', p. 213.

the final solution in eleven Cantos (33 scenes, 3 per Canto).⁸² The play begins with the arrival at the camp (Canto I: The Loading Ramp), followed by reports on the inhumane living conditions (Canto II: The Camp), the torture of political prisoners (III: The Swing), medical experiments on women and death by hanging for those who attempted escape (IV: The Possibility of Survival). The central two Cantos then focus on individuals, a direct confrontation of victim and oppressor: Lili Tofler (Canto V), secretary of the Political Department, tortured and shot for having written a letter of support to one of the political prisoners whose identity she is not prepared to reveal, and Unterscharführer Stark (Canto IV), a young and zealous Nazi, responsible for countless brutal shootings and killing by gas, attempting to excuse his actions with the indoctrination he experienced throughout his education and the pressures to obey. Singled out between intervals, these two cantos were at the centre of Piscator's production and also central to Nono's music. The process of increasing violence then continues: shootings at close range, including that of a child (VII: The Black Wall), death by injection including a group of 119 children (VIII: Phenol), death by starvation and the first killing by gas of Soviet prisoners of war (IX: The Bunkerblock), the perfection of this technique (X: Cyclone B) and, finally, a detailed description of mass murder and mass cremation in furnaces working at full capacity (XI: The Fire-Ovens). These 'facts' are laid bare in all their brutality, but the trial ends without a verdict. The last word is given to the accused: 'Today/ now that our nation/ has once again worked its way up/ to a leading position/ we should be concerned with other things/ than with recriminations/ These should long ago/ have been banished from the lawbooks/ by the Statute of Limitations'.⁸³

When Piscator asked Nono for music to this drama he immediately approached him with a concrete musical idea: '*pensavo a un coro, cosicché la musica sia composta di sole voci.*' Without yet having read the text, Nono initially

⁸² *Die Ermittlung* was originally conceived as the final 'Paradiso' part of a trilogy of plays based on Dante's *Divina commedia*. An author profile in *The Times* on occasion of Peter Brook's production of Weiss's *Marat/Sade* in London in August 1964 gives insight into the project as a whole: 'Mr. Weiss is now working on a new play, a modern version of *The Divine Comedy*. Inevitably, there are three parts, ironically conceived: the Inferno, where "sinners live in this world unpunished"; the Purgatorio, "a very modern world of doubt and mixed values"; the Paradiso, a world of "disaster, difficulty, and no reward". The dramatist has been getting material for his Paradiso by attending the current Auschwitz trial, "a drama in itself".' 'Playwright of many Interests', *The Times* (London, 19 Aug. 1964), as quoted in C. Weiß, *Auschwitz in der geteilten Welt*, vol. I, p. 57. The Dante project is examined in great detail by Weiß (*ibid.*, pp. 55-88) who has since edited and published the Inferno part. Peter Weiss, *Inferno. Stück und Materialien*, ed. Christoph Weiß (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2003).

⁸³ Weiss, *Investigation*, p. 203; 'Heute/ da unsere Nation sich wieder/ zu einer führenden Stellung/ emporgearbeitet hat/ sollten wir uns mit anderen Dingen befassen/ als mit Vorwürfen/ die längst als verjährt/ angesehen werden müßten' *Ermittlung*, pp. 198-99.

replies: *'naturalmente ha ragione: solo un coro – solo canto./ potrebbe essere: qualche volta solo coro, qualche volta voce sola. potrebbe essere: coro da vivo e anche registrato sul nastro e trasmesso in sala con più altoparlanti (destra -sinistra – avanti – dietro – sopra ecc.)/ il nastro dà alcune possibilità: con un piccolo coro (bastano circa venti persone) si ha un coro di 200-1000 persone, [possibilità] di canto, dal vivo, trasformato (cosicché anche l'espressione varia) e da molti altoparlanti in sala.'*⁸⁴ Having read the text, however, Nono decided that the music to this drama could not be restricted to vocal sonorities alone. As before, in *Diario polacco '58*, several conflicting compositional layers had to come into play. To this end, Nono again worked with three different types of sound: vocal, instrumental and electronic sound. All three layers would include new material as well as material from previous pieces of which recordings were available for use.⁸⁵

New vocal material was recorded with the children's chorus of the Piccolo Teatro Milan and Nono also decided to make use of hitherto unused material which he recorded with the Polish soprano Stefania Woytowicz in Rome, possibly for *Diario polacco '58*, in 1959.⁸⁶ A common characteristic of these new vocal strata is the almost exclusive use of phonemes. With the children's voices in particular Nono experimented with degrees of colour and brightness on different vowel sounds and their possible mutation.⁸⁷ The children are also asked to articulate the word 'Ma-ma'. This single word stands out as a clearly recognisable building block also in the finished work. Verbal texts are of course also at the heart of the choral material which Nono chose to reuse for this work. With the help of electronic sound transformation, however, Nono guarantees that these excerpts from earlier works are never understood as renditions of text, but perceived as musical texture alone. Nevertheless, the words of the choral passages that can and have been identified are also not completely at odds within their new context. On several occasions, for example, Nono quotes from the verses *'il grido, sola, del mio cuore/ grido d'amore*

⁸⁴ Nono, letter to Piscator, 10 May 1965 (ALN), original German, trans. in De Benedictis, Schomerus, 'La lotta "con le armi dell'arte"', p. 179.

⁸⁵ The material has been analysed in detail by Matthias Kontarsky, *Trauma Auschwitz*, pp. 52-59, 100-108. Nanni adds valuable details on quotations from previous works, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, pp. 280-89, 319-29. On Nono's working methods in the Studio di Fonologia also see Friedrich Spangemacher, *Dialektischer Kontrapunkt: Die elektronischen Kompositionen Luigi Nonos zwischen 1964 und 1971*, 2nd edition (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2006); Carla Henius, *Carla Carissima. Carla Henius und Luigi Nono: Briefe, Tagebücher, Notizen* (Hamburg: EVA, 1995) and Paulo de Assis, *Luigi Nonos Wende. Zwischen Como una ola de fuerza e luz und ...sofferte onde serene...* (Hofheim: Wolke, 2006). I here also want to take the opportunity to thank Matthias Kontarsky for verifying my own analysis of this music, including the often not conclusive identification of further quotations.

⁸⁶ See Kontarsky, *Trauma Auschwitz*, p. 56.

⁸⁷ A more detailed description of the use of vowel sounds is found in Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, pp. 284-86.

[...]’ from the second movement of *Cori di Didone*, a passage repeatedly referred to as ‘grido’ in the sketches. In its original mythological context this may be a desperate scream of passion, but it is also one of utter despair in the face of imminent death - Didone’s suicide - and, in this sense, totally appropriate also in the context of *Die Ermittlung*.⁸⁸ Another poetic image from *Cori di Didone* made its way into the music for Canto I: The Loading Ramp (fragment 3, CD 2:35, leading into I:3). ‘Aveva speranza per tutti/ non chiara la morte’ Nono comments in the manuscript and the chosen ‘sound image’ from *Cori di Didone* provides such a tentative glimpse of hope: ‘[A bufera s’è aperto, al buio, un porto/ Che dissero sicuro/] Fu golfo constellato/ E pareva immutabile il suo cielo’.⁸⁹ Similarly, a quotation from *Ha venido* in fragment 5 (CD 3:36), an excerpt from the music to the final words ‘madre despertar’ (b. 108-13), is not out of place in a play which repeatedly uses the fate of innocent women and children to underline the merciless brutality of Nazi oppression.⁹⁰ In purely compositional terms the choral material also provides a textural dimension of greater force, depth and density than the much more linear material of the electronically multiplied voice of the solo soprano and the children’s chorus. The chorus also adds a further register: the low range of the ‘uomini’ (tenor/bass). The vocal layer as a whole thus comprises a wide range of registers and densities. Soprano and ‘bambini’ are primarily used in linear polyphony while the material for mixed chorus allows for the expansion to full choral texture and ambitus. With its shorter, louder and more articulated sounds the chorus also provides an element of disruption (male voices in particular). With some electronic modification the high degree of differentiation of this vocal material is explored to the full in the eerie lament, the so-called ‘*Canti dei morti*’, which opens and closes the play.

The proportion between sustained sounds and elements of violent disruption is turned into its opposite in the layer of instrumental material which

⁸⁸ The image of screaming is used extremely sparingly by Weiss, usually in connection with torture. Nono heavily underlined the word ‘geschrien’ (screamed) in Stark’s feeble statement on killing by gas (Weiss, *Ermittlung*, Canto VI:3, p. 119; *Investigation*, p. 121). One prominent quotation which was first identified by Nanni is the bass entry on ‘gri’ (*Cori di Didone*, b. 69) in fragment 32 (CD 19:22) which introduces Canto XI: The Fire Ovens. ‘Tutto (attento a bassi: gri!!)/ gong fine’ Nono notes for this fragment in sketch 28.02/26. Other uses of the ‘grido’ passage from *Cori di Didone*, sung by the female voices, are also placed in the context of physical torture.

⁸⁹ Only the two latter verses are actually quoted in this third fragment (*Cori di Didone*, b. 143-52). Fragment 3 was in second place at first, but later exchanged with fragment 2. Nanni uses this fact to underline the autonomous nature of Nono’s music. Autonomy had its limits, however. This particular quotation from *Cori di Didone* was clearly meant as a commentary to the arrival at the camp and could not have been transferred to any other Canto. The two fragments were probably exchanged to achieve a more organic overall form. Sketches show that Nono first envisaged an a-b-a form for this Canto, but the final a-a’-b format fits much better into the overall formal development.

⁹⁰ Canto II contains the particularly harrowing image of a pregnant woman being drowned.

predominantly consists of loud and disruptive brass and percussion sounds from *Diario polacco '58*, *Cori di Didone*, *Il canto sospeso* n.8, and even earlier works such as the *Epitaffio per Federico García Lorca n.1* (1951-52) and perhaps also the second of the *Due espressioni* (1953). If the vocal layer is guided by 'motivi' such as 'grido' and 'mamma/ madre' and the general idea of a 'canto dei morti', the corresponding motifs of this instrumental layer are 'percussione Stark' and 'educazione cattiva'. In Nono's terminology, the former consistently refers to hard hitting percussion sounds, the latter may refer to a method of electronic sound transformation associated with the violent interventions by brass and percussion, but also the dimension of added electronic sound. Sketches reveal the division of the percussive material into four distinct categories of sound: 'pelle/ legno/ metallo/ con ottoni' (28.01/06r). And again Nono considers the nature of the sound as well as its previous context and meaning. Most percussion sounds stem from *Diario polacco '58*. The recurring motif for Stark (*legno/pelle*), for example, is taken from section BIII (b. 35-36).⁹¹ Also from *Diario polacco* stems the extremely violent sound of the *lastre*. This sound is used to great effect in fragment 22 (CD 14:22) leading into Canto VII: The Black Wall. An equally menacing sound on metal percussion – an intense crescendo on *piatti* – is taken from *Cori di Didone* where it occurs repeatedly in movements IV and V. The origins of the sounds on felt percussion (sustained drum rolls) are harder to distinguish. It may be that Nono here also used the beginning of the second of the *Due espressioni* (1953), a section which he had already reused once before in *Intolleranza* as an instrumental accompaniment to 'projections of racial fanaticism' such as the infamous slogan 'Arbeit macht frei' crowning the gate to Auschwitz.⁹² One remarkable exception, in terms of content, is the quotation from the percussion finale of *La Guerra*, the second movement of Nono's first Lorca Epitaph. Based on the rhythm of 'Bandiera rossa', this percussive intervention is clearly meant to represent the resistance, not the Nazi oppressors. 'B. rossa' duly appears in fragment 9 (CD 5:42), the prelude to Canto IV: The Possibility of Survival which gives voice to the resistance at Auschwitz.⁹³

Divisions between victims and oppressors are thus not as clear cut as one may think. Another dimension which adds to this all-important ambiguity is

⁹¹ This was first identified by Nanni. For *Die Ermittlung* Nono used a recording of the performance of *Diario polacco '58* in Venice (1 October 1959) with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma della Rai conducted by Bruno Maderna.

⁹² The quotation of the second *Espressione* in *Intolleranza 1960*, II:3 (b. 294-313), was first pointed out to me by Angela Ida de Benedictis.

⁹³ 'B. rossa' and 'Lorca' are mentioned at the bottom of sketch 28.01/06r and so is 'Didone', giving vital clues to the origins of the various percussion sounds.

provided by the newly recorded instrumental material: long sustained pitches on clarinet (primarily in the low register with some multiphonics in middle register)⁹⁴ and a single strike on a resonant low gong. Like the slow moving vocal lament with which it is often coupled, the 'breathing' clarinet sound is essentially imbued with a 'human' quality that is absent from the disruptive violence of brass and percussion. Together with the fateful blow on the gong, the sustained clarinet sound clearly belongs to a category of drone-like sounds which also includes an electronic drone. Although essentially non-violent in nature, these instrumental and electronic drones are among the most sinister sounds of the piece and one cannot but feel that they are meant to represent total dehumanisation and death. The drama itself draws the connection between drone and death. In the final Canto the driver of the van transporting the gas Cyclone B is asked to describe what was heard on lifting the hatches of the gas chambers, to which he replies: 'I could hear a drone from below/ as though many people/ were underneath the ground'.⁹⁵ In the manuscript Nono marks this passage with a circle (the sign used to indicate music), and at the end of the Canto the 'gong' is named as one of the elements to be used. And indeed the fragment leading into Canto XI:1 (fragment 32, CD 19:22), one of the densest and most violent fragments of the whole work, breaks off with a final blow on the gong that eerily reverberates into silence. This gestural and highly dramatic use of the 'gong' is certain to create a feeling of great anguish and trepidation with the audience, especially when transmitted in complete darkness and from loudspeakers below the floor, as was possible in Piscator's production.⁹⁶

Equally disconcerting is the use of the highest register: quiet but piercingly high whistling electronic frequencies which allow for the association with the buzzing of insects, especially when used in glissandos. 'We could always tell if Stark had come from a killing', a witness reports at the beginning of Canto VI:2. 'He always had to have things clean in his office and we had to chase away the flies ...

⁹⁴ Nono most probably recorded these sonorities with the clarinetist William O. Smith who also took part in the experimental music theatre piece *A floresta é jovem e cheja de vida* (1966).

⁹⁵ Weiss, *Investigation*, XI:1, p. 185. 'Wenn die Deckel von den Luken/ abgehoben wurden/ hörte ich ein Dröhnen von unten/ als ob sich dort viele Menschen/ unter der Erde befänden' Weiss, *Ermittlung*, p. 181.

⁹⁶ Nono describes the technical possibilities in 'Musica e teatro', p. 213: '*altoparlanti dappertutto ... una vera festa per l'uso di tutto lo spazio acustico del teatro, con ricchissima varietà di movimento dell'elemento sonore. tale movimento viene deciso a) per ragioni puramente musicali b) in rapporto a quanto avviene sulla scena c) in rapporto al pubblico situato così non più di fronte ma al centro di tutto.*' For a reconstruction of the spatial movement of the music and the use of lighting in Piscator's production see Matthias Kontarsky, *Trauma Auschwitz*, pp. 82-95. Kontarsky was not yet able to use Nono's annotated original type script of the play (this was only given to the Archivio Luigi Nono in 2001?). On the whole, however, the manuscript only indicates minor discrepancies with Kontarsky's reconstruction.

All hell broke loose if he happened to discover a fly.⁹⁷ In the preceding scene Stark had just been asked to testify on the 'removal of prisoners' at the small crematorium. '*Morti per gas*' Nono writes in between these two scenes and, next to the powerful image of the unwanted flies, he first makes use of the term *fischi* – a term which was then consistently linked to the '*motivo gas*' in the sketches. This '*motivo gas*' may primarily refer to the actual deed of killing by gas (the hissing sound of gas streaming through open valves), but it is clearly also inspired by the tense anxiety following the execution of such horrendous orders. The buzzing high electronic frequencies with which Nono realises this idea are certainly supposed to create a similar kind of anxiety in those who look on. The disconcerting sonority is perhaps at its most effective when it creeps in on the high vocal lines (soprano and children's chorus) to gradually consume the vocal sound, i.e. to transform the vocal polyphony into purely electronic sound as is immediately the case in fragment 2 (CD 1:40). Another fragment which leaves no doubt about the connection *fischi* – *motivo gas* is the transition between Cantos IX 'The Bunkerblock' and X 'Cyclone B' (fragment 29, CD 17.46). Like the fourth movement of *Il canto sospeso*, this is a simple wave of sound, beginning from silence, gradually growing in sound and then receding back into silence. As the high whistling sound of the *fischi* grows in strength (possibly enforced by a quotation from *La fabbrica illuminata* at 3:40), two other sound elements are briefly blended in: the drone and the children whose voices are almost immediately sucked back into the dominant electronic sonority. 'Now I feel calmer/ Now we have the gas/ and all those blood baths/ will be spared us' the Commandant comments on the first trials of killing by gas just before the audience is confronted with this music.⁹⁸

The choice of a purely electronic sonority for this *motivo gas* is clearly also related to the technological aspect of the holocaust and, with it, the much debated charge against capitalist society. '*Gli ultimi ritrovati della tecnica tedesca*' are perhaps most poignantly alluded to by means of the standard elements of synthesised sound which Nono already used for the first part of *Omaggio a Emilio Vedova*.⁹⁹ In the music to *Die Ermittlung* these are first introduced in conjunction

⁹⁷ Weiss, *Investigation*, VI:2, pp. 113-14. 'Wir kannten genau Starks Verhalten/ wenn er von einer Tötung kam/ Da mußte alles sauber und ordentlich in der Stube sein/ und mit Handtüchern hatten wir die Fliegen zu verjagen/ Wehe/ wenn er jetzt eine Fliege entdeckte/ dann war er außer sich vor Zorn' Weiss, *Ermittlung*, p. 111. A swarm of flies also hovers over mutilated bodies in the yard of Experimental Block Ten, Canto VII:3 The Black Wall, p. 140; *Ermittlung*, p. 138. In the apocalyptic context of Auschwitz the image takes after Sartre's *Les Mouches*.

⁹⁸ Weiss, *Investigation*, IX:3, p. 170; 'Jetzt bin ich doch beruhigt/ Jetzt haben wir das Gas/ und all diese Blutbäder/ bleiben uns erspart', *Ermittlung*, p. 168.

⁹⁹ Although hard to pin down, this material is probably cited from the opening part of *Omaggio a Emilio Vedova* (1960).

with the soprano's drawn out lament in Canto V 'The End of Lili Tofler'. Within this most lyrical part of the work (fragments 14-18, CD 8:52-11:39) synthesised elements from the *Omaggio a Vedova* are present only in fragment 16 (CD 9:50), following the detailed account of IG Farben's exploitation of slave labour from the camp.¹⁰⁰ Nono's most powerful charge against the disgraceful role of Krupps, Siemens, IG Farben, Degesch and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung, however, is the industrial scraping noise and loud bang of an iron gate slammed shut - by far the most violent vocabulary of the piece - which stems from *La fabbrica illuminata*.¹⁰¹

One other key motif of the play is the 'approving laughter of the defendants' with which Weiss occasionally concludes his scenes. The final testimony of Unterscharführer Stark, 'Your Honour/ Our thinking was taken away from us/ Others did it for us', ends with such laughter.¹⁰² So does the testimony of sanitary officer Klehr, accused of killing at least 16,000 prisoners by means of injecting phenol directly into the heart (VIII:1). Klehr's arrogant denial of this charge is typical: 'I'm supposed to have killed 16,000 people/ There were only 16,000 in the entire camp/ No one would have been left/ but the military band'.¹⁰³ 'Approving laughter' dramatically emphasises the defendants' shocking attitude of denial and unwillingness to take on any responsibility for the crimes committed. Annotations to the manuscript show that Nono was very impressed by this dramatic device. Laughter is always heavily marked and was at first considered as a possible element for the music itself. '*Il riso/ un elemento violento della musica*', Nono notes in the manuscript after Canto I:2, the first scene to end with such laughter, and '*fare un risate*' at the beginning of Canto IV. Nono's material is never one-dimensional, however, and this element of laughter was to be complemented with another vocal element: highly stylised gestures of human suffering - sighs, gasps, gagging noises, sobbing, even screaming - which were probably recorded with the

¹⁰⁰ To this scene V:2 Nono had initially jotted down *Fabbrica 3'40''*, indicating a precise passage of *La fabbrica illuminata*. At 3:40 one hears quiet high frequencies not dissimilar to the *fischi* of the *motivo gas*. The passage was later not used for fragment 16 but possibly for the opening sound in the discussed fragment 29, CD 17:46. Merged with the children's voices the synthesised sounds from *Omaggio a Emilio Vedova* resurface once more in Canto IX (fragment 28, CD 17:16).

¹⁰¹ *La fabbrica illuminata*, 5:10. A less violent bang on metal is also quoted (*Fabbrica illuminata*, 4:15). Both quotations were first identified by Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, p. 305.

¹⁰² Weiss, *Investigation*, VI:3, p. 122. 'Herr Vorsitzender/ Uns wurde das Denken abgenommen/ Das taten ja andere für uns/ *Zustimmendes Lachen der Angeklagten*' *Ermittlung*, p. 120.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, VIII:1, p. 146. 'Da biegen sich ja die dicksten Eichenbalken/ 16 000 soll ich abgespritzt haben/ wo doch das ganze Lager nur 16 000 Mann zählte/ Da wäre ja nur noch der Musikzug übriggeblieben/ *Die Angeklagten lachen*. This passage is annotated by Nono: '*riso/ senza musica/ subito avanti*'.

actress Elena Vicini.¹⁰⁴ A fragment of music was initially composed with this material for Canto IV, but later deemed inappropriate.¹⁰⁵ Human suffering, Nono wisely decided, would have to be expressed on much more abstract level, with 'composed', even already processed material such as the '*grido*' from *Cori di Didone*. The much admired element of laughter was thus eventually left to speak for itself. The scenes ending in laughter are never followed by music, even before the interval. On Stark's final testimony Nono comments: '*SILENZIO – PAUSE intervallo/ risate – e muti – lasciarli pensare*'.

From a purely compositional point of view, Nono thus establishes three structurally related types of sound, the individual components of which all refer to recurring key concepts of the play. All three types of sound comprise a wide range of register, a number of quiet sustained sounds, various elements of violent disruption, as well as quotations from previous works. Each type in itself allows a high degree of contrast, as also the transition from the individual to the collective. The possibilities of a dialectical compositional approach are of course much enhanced when combining all three categories, but Nono also deliberately exploits the structural similarities between the types of sound, striving to eliminate the boundaries. Often it is exceedingly difficult to distinguish whether one hears a fast tremolo on cymbals or a buzzing electronic sound from *La fabbrica illuminata*, a low electronic drone or an electronically modified clarinet sound, a real or electronically produced 'gong'. Even the vocal material is eerily transformed by, even transformed into electronic sound. The ambiguity achieved with this all-important device of electronic sound transformation is perhaps the single most important characteristic of this piece. While maintaining a high degree of sound symbolism, the distinction victim/oppressor is also powerfully undermined. The music becomes truly disconcerting precisely because the boundaries between the human voice, man made instrumental and electronically produced sound are deliberately blurred. With this uncomfortable and most thought provoking ambiguity of sound, Nono essentially underlines the play's fundamental charge: 'We all knew [and are still part of] the society/ which had produced the regime/ that could bring about such a camp'.

¹⁰⁴ Sketches mention the name Elena.

¹⁰⁵ For a detailed analysis of the discarded passage (Canto IV) see Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, pp. 308-12. Also discarded was the sound of a whistling railway engine - 'the signal that a new shipment was coming in' - which Nono highlights in the first and last Cantos of the manuscript and also mentions in the sketches. Weiss, *Investigation*, Canto I:2, p. 16 and Canto XI:1, p. 185. For Canto XI:1 Nono at first notes the idea '*Locomotiva motivo continuo in sala*' (Sketch 28.01/03).

Inspired by Weiss's drama, Nono was thus able to produce the kind of material he had perhaps been dreaming about already at the time of writing *Diario polacco '58*. It is at this point in time that the history of the two works becomes truly intertwined. Not only does Nono extract material from *Diario polacco '58* for use in the music to *Die Ermittlung*, but he also reuses this material for a new version of *Diario polacco* itself, now (as originally envisaged) with an additional one channel tape.¹⁰⁶ As has been shown in detail by Nanni, Nono primarily uses the tape to transfer passages of the work back onto themselves with minimal delay (a first application of the phasing technique to live orchestral sound in Nono's oeuvre).¹⁰⁷ At the end of the work, however, as the straight line of violent oppression comes to its climactic close, Nono also decides to quote from *Die Ermittlung*. Fragment 21 (CD, 12:29), the densest fragment which combines all sound elements of this music in a single 'tour de force' and thus sums up the entire piece in condensed form, is inserted with the crack of the four whips at bar 268. The interweaving genesis of the two works does not yet end here, however, but was to culminate in the independent electronic piece *Ricorda cosa ti hanno fatto in Auschwitz* (1966).¹⁰⁸ An independent electronic composition based on the materials from *Die Ermittlung* was planned from the outset and was even publicly announced by Nono: 'I will use parts of this music - always on tape - for an autonomous work "Music to *Die Ermittlung* by Peter Weiss"'.¹⁰⁹ For this 'autonomous' electronic piece Nono was of course no longer bound to the structure of the play and was able to select and combine his 'motivi' much more freely. Moreover, the aphoristic snapshots could now be worked into a coherent musical discourse. Even in terms

¹⁰⁶ A detailed analysis of the second version of *Diario polacco '58* and the function of the tape is found in Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, pp. 250-76. Also see Stefano Bassanese, 'Sulla versione 1965 della *Composizione per Orchestra n.2 (Diario polacco '58)*', in Borio, Morelli, Rizzardi (eds.), *La nuova ricerca sull'opera di Luigi Nono* (Florence: Olschi, 1999), pp. 95-103. The second version of *Diario polacco '58* was premiered at the Warsaw Autumn 1965, conducted by Andrzej Markowski.

¹⁰⁷ In a letter to Markowski Nono reveals that the recorded and electronically modified orchestral material on the tape was to provide the live sound with additional 'projections': 'Tonbandmaterial kommt nur von partitur heraus. so dass das klangliche Material viel mehr Projectionene bekommen.' Nono, undated letter to Markowski, cited in Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, p. 250.

¹⁰⁸ The most detailed analysis of *Ricorda cosa ti hanno fatto in Auschwitz* (1966) is found in Nanni, *Auschwitz: Adorno und Nono*, pp. 312-64, including an extremely useful audio score (318-29). Further on *Ricorda* see Kontarsky, *Trauma Auschwitz*, pp. 126-49; Friedrich Spangemacher, *Dialektischer Kontrapunkt*; and Heinz Gramann, *Die Ästhetisierung des Schreckens in der europäischen Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Bonn: Verlag für systematische Musikwissenschaft, 1984). My own comments will focus on the structural similarities with *Diario polacco '58* which have not yet been discussed.

¹⁰⁹ Nono, 'Beitrag' to the programme book, Berliner Volksbühne (October 1965), pp. 8-9 (9): 'von Teilen dieser Musik werde ich – immer auf tonband – ein autonomes werk "musik zu der 'Ermittlung' von Peter Weiss' herstellen.' The Italian translation in *Scritti*, I, pp. 450-51 (451) erroneously renders this sentence in the past tense.

of scale, this discourse is not dissimilar to that of *Diario polacco '58*.¹¹⁰ Another very basic common denominator is the use of three types of sound. These types are now much more distinct in character, however, and Nono primarily works with degrees of presence (fore-/ middle-/ background) rather than simple juxtaposition. Another decisive difference is the strong predominance of the vocal sound. In structural terms, this extremely fluid yet also most unified layer of vocal sound is *Ricorda's* very own tortuous line of thought. Throughout the three parts of the work - Part I: *Canto del lager* (0'00"-5'32"), Part II: *Canto della fine di Lili Tofler* (5'32"-8'40"), and Part III: *Canto della possibilità di sopravvivere* (8'40"-11'15")¹¹¹ - this line of thought constantly mutates in register, ambitus, density and dynamics and is only ever completely wiped out by the motif of death (low drone/ 'gong') which concludes each of the three parts. Again the tortuous line of thought effectively intersects with a straight line of thought, the function of which is to represent the 'macchina repressiva'.¹¹² All elements are exposed in Part I. Nono here works with long and essentially recognisable quotations from the music of *Die Ermittlung*, but immediately devises a different order.¹¹³ As in the music for the play, Nono begins with the *Canti dei morti* (0'00"-0'56"). The first oppressive element to be added is the *motivo gas* (0'56"-2'00"). The vocal texture is then more forcefully enveloped by instrumental interventions (percussion/brass, 2'00"-2'50"). This is followed by another wave of sound in which the vocal line is eventually blocked out by loud 'industrial' white noise. The use of this virtually impermeable electronic block sonority - the ultimate negation of musically defined sound - is strikingly similar in effect to that of the chromatic sound blocks in the 'Auschwitz' episode at the end of the first part of *Diario polacco '58*. Block sonorities of this kind had already been taken a step further in *Canti di vita e d'amore* (1962) where a tightly knit microtonal texture in middle register stands for the ultimate threat of nuclear destruction.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ With a total duration of 11'15" *Ricorda* is only slightly shorter than the first version of *Diario polacco* (12.29 on the premiere recording).

¹¹¹ This three part division agrees with Nanni's audio score and analysis. The titles (from selected *Canti* of Weiss's play) were used by Nono in a programme note for a concert in Rome (28 Feb 1970). Nono, 'Ricorda cosa ti hanno fatto in Auschwitz' (17b), in *Scritti*, I, p. 453.

¹¹² This term was employed by Nono for oppressive forces of any political denomination and occurs in *Al gran sole carico d'amore*, for example.

¹¹³ On use and order of the fragments from *Die Ermittlung* in *Ricorda* see Kontarsky, *Trauma Auschwitz*, 145-46. As can be seen from Kontarsky's analysis, formal units from *Die Ermittlung* are fairly easy to recognise in Part I, but their identification becomes increasingly more difficult with the progressive decomposition of the fragments for *Die Ermittlung*.

¹¹⁴ This texture comprises the full spectrum of pitch (24 quartertones) and is rendered by the full orchestra in a single octave in middle register. Also here this narrow and seemingly impermeable orchestral texture is heard towards the end of the first of three parts. Printed above is a text by Günther Anders written in response to visiting Hiroshima: 'finché non avremo esorcizzato il pericolo, che alla sua prima manifestazione portò via 200.000 uomini, quell'automa sarà su quel

The same texture was later to be re-used in association with the '*macchina repressiva*' in *Al gran sole carico d'amore* (1972-74). Equally impermeable blocks of white noise in *Ricorda* may be seen to represent a similar threat and also take on a similar structural function. The texture of the piece is now dramatically reduced: a lyrical vocal afterthought not unlike that of horns and flutes in the Auschwitz episode of *Diario polacco* resonates over and into the long and desolate low drone which concludes this first *Canto del Lager*. Unadorned solo soprano song then opens the *Canto della fine di Lili Tofler* (Part II). This not only brings to mind the lyrical portrait of the Algerian resistance fighter 'Djamila Boupachà' at the centre of *Canti di vita e d'amore*, but also the extremely still and reflective echo-passages at the beginning of the second part of *Diario polacco '58*. The solo soprano material had of course already been used to very similar effect for Canto V of the play (fragments 14-18, CD 8:52-11:38). In this new *Canto della fine di Lili Tofler*, however, the lyrical soprano is merely a starting point. Conceived as a larger formal unit, the second part of *Ricorda* is much more developmental. The solo soprano begins to weave in and out of a growing collective of voices, ending with chorus and children's chorus. With Part II, the original music to *Die Ermittlung* becomes increasingly fragmented, dissected (beyond recognition) and intertwined in manifold new ways. Although some elements, like the material from fragment 21 (CD 12.29) at the beginning of Part III (8:40), are easily recognised, it is evident that Nono now clearly moves away from the structure of the music as it was conceived for the stage. Effect and unity of the individual fragment had been paramount for the music to *Die Ermittlung* whereby the combination of the various 'motifs' was largely determined by related imagery in the text. The same 'motifs' and the symbolic meanings they acquired in conjunction with Weiss's text are then re-used for *Ricorda*, but with an independent musical discourse in mind – a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. It is as if the composer thus sets out to test the validity of this symbolically charged material. Does this kind of material lend itself to autonomous discourse also without the support of the related text? The experiment, to my mind, was closely modelled on the structure of *Diario polacco '58*. The exposition of basic materials from the original music to *Die Ermittlung* concludes with a seemingly inescapable compression of sound. This sets off a process of increasing fragmentation and dissolution whereby the two contrasting lines of thought are both increasingly drawn out. With pronounced lyricism the

ponte e canterà la sua canzone. sarà su tutti I ponti che conducono al nostro futuro comune come atto di accusa come messaggero' Günther Anders, *Essere o non Essere – Diario di Hiroshima e Nagasaki*, trans. Renato Solmi, as cited in the score.

tortuous vocal line continues to undergo constant change, meandering between solo song, linear polyphony and the full choral collective. Interventions by the 'macchina repressiva' are increasingly spaced out, but again progressively gain in force and electronic 'alienation'. Including the climax of orchestral violence from *Diario polacco* (b. 268-73) as well as material from the dense fragment 21 which Nono decided to insert into the second version of *Diario polacco*, this line of thought is now essentially directed towards a final allusion to capitalist exploitation: the industrial 'gong' from *La fabbrica illuminata* (4'15") after which the piece fades out on a last desolate low drone.

A long, tortuous thread has been spun from Calvino's committed *Impiccagione di un giudice* (1948) to this final 'motiv of death' in *Ricorda cosa ti hanno fatto in Auschwitz* (1966), the last of Nono's strictly anti-fascist works. Compositional technique and intention may have taken many different turns during these two eventful decades, but it is obvious that intense reflection on the European anti-fascist resistance and the holocaust fundamentally shaped Nono's compositional idiom, resulting in structural ideas, material choices, and certain vocables of sound which would continue to be of great relevance in the changing political and musical contexts. One fundamental aesthetic principle of this multi-dimensional music which delights in allusion and deliberate ambiguity of meaning and thus lends itself to reflection was put to us by the composer himself in the programme to *Die Ermittlung*: '*Nessuna musica di ribellione-protesta/ solo coscienza musicale e conoscenza di ieri e di oggi per un altro domani finalmente libero.*'¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Nono, 'Musica per "Die Ermittlung" di Peter Weiss', in *Scritti*, I, pp. 450-51 (451).