

Signifying Chaos: A Semiotic Analysis of Sylvano Bussotti's *Siciliano*

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0.00- α

In contrast to the traditional narrative structure of academic studies, and in direct opposition to the apparent incoherence of the work being analyzed, this paper follows a strict but unusual methodology.¹ Paragraph numberings identify linear relations between their subjects in the normal matrix of a treatise. In addition, each paragraph has an identity on another scale, one running from objectivity to interpretation. Four levels are employed herein: an *alpha* (α) level of 'objective,' received or

1. The original of this paper was written in December 1987; a version was read at the first West Coast Conference of Music Theory and Analysis at the University of California, Santa Barbara, in April 1992. I am indebted to Edward Tuttle, Giuseppina Colicci, and Kevin Ames for their help in translating the Italian and Sicilian texts; the final versions are my own. Thanks are also due to Susan McClary for her comments.

commonly agreed facts; a *beta* (β) level of the analysis of facts, employing relatively straightforward methods; a *gamma* (γ) level of the interpretation of analyses or facts; and a *delta* (δ) level of freer interpretation and reaction. Paragraph indentations are employed to enable the reader to follow this structure. Thus, the heading '2.12- β ' implies that the ensuing singly-indented paragraph is the second major section, first subsection, second subsection of that subsection; and that it is essentially objective yet analytical.

0.01- β

The intent of this methodology is to allow for the analysis of those parts of the work under consideration which seem purely sensual or even nonsensical, without falsifying them by subjecting them to standard objective techniques. This is in line with some common methodological concerns of the post-structuralist project.

0.02- δ

The result can be metaphorically described as a linear analysis of a non-linear work of art, or as a two-dimensional line which includes all of the elements of a three-dimensional space. This is, of course, impossible.

1.00- γ

Sylvano Bussotti's *Siciliano*² might be said to exist in a space of semiotic abstraction. It does

2. Sylvano Bussotti, *Memoria* (Milan, 1962), pp. 23-25.

not express any narrative or argument, but presents fragments of signs in a context that is only intermittently comprehensible. It is the task of this paper to make an attack on the explication and dismantling of this inexplicable, already deconstructed work.

1.10- γ

The seemingly unmanageable density of the *Siciliano* seems to resist analysis, as many of its elements appear to be purely sensual or even nonsensical rather than meaningful in some consistent sense. If the usual need for consistency in method is set aside, it is possible to use various tools of semiotics without appealing to a dominant theory. On the other hand, I would prefer not to use that aspect of musical semantics defined by Nattiez,³ which is chiefly denotative and grammatical. In relation to syntax, Nattiez's "sémantiques musicales" relates to meaning; yet, in relation to our usual concept of meaning, his generalized semiotic project focuses on what is essentially an aspect of grammar. In addition, his "sémantiques musicales" has virtually no place in the analysis of a work that has no apparent syntactical structure that it holds in common with other works.

3. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, "Situation de la sémiologie musicale," *Musique en jeu* 5 (November 1971), 8-II.

1.11- α

In her discussion of meaning, Micznik⁴ defines a musical sign as: "any musical entity...that can be perceived and interpreted on the grounds of previously established conventions as conveying some meaning beyond its purely physical...appearance." This usage is crucial to the ensuing observations. Micznik also mentions the commonly understood distinction between denotative and connotative meaning; in contrast to her methodological choices, I will need to use both of these in this study, as denotation cannot be taken for granted in this particular work.

1.20- α

The Italian avant-garde composer Sylvano Bussotti wrote his five-movement cantata *Memoria* in 1962. It was his first work designed for the stage; highly varied ensembles and notational conventions appear throughout the work. For example, the first movement is a relatively traditionally notated work for narrator, mixed voices and orchestra; the second is a text accompanied by freehand graphic improvisations intended for any performers, susceptible to any interpretation.

1.30- α

The third movement, certainly the shortest and best known, has its own title: *Siciliano, per dodici voci maschili* ('for twelve male voices'). Its ensemble, and the partially fragmented notational style of the two pages that constitute the entire movement, do not resemble any other sections or pages of *Memoria*.⁵

4. Vera Micznik, "Gesture as sign: a semiotic interpretation of Berg's opus 6, no. 1," *In Theory Only* 9/4 (September 1986), 20-21. Micznik's definition is developed from the definition of a general sign in Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington, 1976), p. 16.

5. Reproduced here on pp 91-92.

As are most of the composer's scores, it is entirely hand-drawn in a self-consciously graphic style; the first page of the *Siciliano* is signed with Bussotti's painterly logo and the date, July 22, 1962.

1.31- γ

Bussotti's larger works are often structured with a sublime disregard for practicality. One might recall similar occurrences in the work of Ives; for example, there are those brief bars in the Piano Sonata no. 2 ("Concord") where viola and flute are abruptly required and then dropped.⁶ The usual, and obvious, excuse for Ives is that, after a certain point in his career, he did not expect his works to receive professional public performance. Bussotti's position is, however, quite different. Although one might interpret the staggeringly impractical demands of the extended song cycle *Pièces de chair II*⁷ in terms of sealing its doom as virtually unperformable, Bussotti evidently expects all of his works to be performed, and without logistical compromises; as a director and impresario, he is generally in a position to enforce his requirements.

1.32- δ

In the course of discovering and analyzing different types of evidence in vari-

6. Henry and Sidney Cowell, *Charles Ives and his Music* (London, 1969), p. 199; also Gilbert Kalish, *Charles Ives: Piano Sonata No. 2, "Concord, Mass., 1840-60"* [liner notes] (Nonesuch H 71337, 1977).

7. Sylvano Bussotti, *Pièces de chair II* (Milan, 1970).

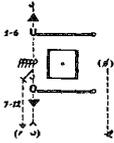
ous works, I am beginning to read a basic intentionality that suffuses most of Bussotti's works. Impracticality is one expression of what is often identified as contemporary decadence: a violent antipathy towards normal, bourgeois organizational patterns of life, an avoidance of any action that might fit into the machinery of the modern administered society. In common with certain other contemporary figures, Bussotti simply will not play nicely with his little friends.

2.00- β

The *Siciliano* is, however, organized in several ways. The first and most evident is the organization of the voices themselves; the parts are carefully numbered from one to twelve, and it is never ambiguous which voice should be performing any given gesture. This is consistent even when phrases are flung across the page in complex graphic forms.

2.10- γ

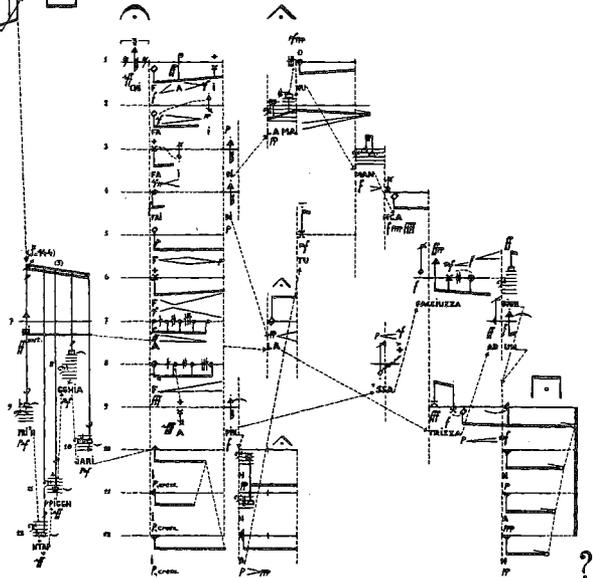
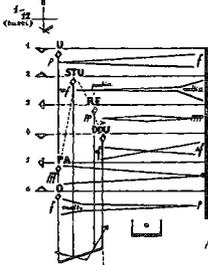
Given the history of ancient number systems, twelve can be considered as the eminently divisible number. Music certainly has its own mathematics, with certain numbers and groupings emphasized. Twelve is a grouping that can include smaller groupings into two, three, four, or six elements. Twelve could thus be regarded as the largest of the small ensembles, if these are defined as ensembles where elements can still



o pastureddu di la Erizza ad unna
 chi fai pinnata di la manu manna
 pri'n fuppiaggiari 'ssa facuzza biunna (?)
 (anonimo canciastoria popolare)

siciliano

per dodici voci maschili



Attinello
 11.7.1962

a francese agnello

fppp

mf

p

f

mp

cal

fiumi caldi

raccolghe

il mare è che lunghi fiumi caldi raccoglie.

paolo emilio carozza p.m.

be separated. Any larger ensemble becomes a mass, intelligible only as a whole. Thus, the choice of twelve elements establishes certain expectations about the range of ways in which voices may be grouped or separated.

2.11- β

The progression of voice groupings in the *Siciliano* runs in the following manner: all together, then in two groups of six, then all twelve voices simultaneously, but in free combinations of two and three with ancillary 'soli.' At that point, the breakdown into entirely separate voices begins; this breakdown halts momentarily in a 'half-cadence' grouping of four voices, and finally reaches apocalyptic proportions on the second page.

2.12- δ

The grouping of voices is perhaps the most clearly articulated sign of the actual intent of the work; the progression from unity to total disparity of voices is a progression from predictability to chaos, or perhaps: the coagulation of hesitant fragments into an impassioned synesthesia. The definition and signification of chaos as a positive, sensual value can be gradually developed as the central point that is made in the *Siciliano*, as it is in most of Bussotti's work.

2.13- γ

The careful identification of the voices might be said to be the only thing that saves the work from virtual unperformability: each vocalist has a specific, local problem to solve, although each such problem is both highly complex and admits no single definite answer.

2.20- β

The second organizational aspect is a code which is 'absent' from the score, that is: the collection of signs subsumed under the notational and auditory style of avant-garde music. The explanation of notation which appears at the beginning of the score of *Memoria*, though typical of avant-garde scores, is sketchy at best; many signs are taken for granted, or are employed in ways that emphasize both their precision and their vagueness. It is possible to separate the signs occurring in the *Siciliano* into those which operate in a context of virtually 'standard' avant-garde notation⁸ as opposed to those which are newly created for this work. The first type is detailed in the ensuing paragraphs; the second type is detailed in the paragraphs on sectional analyses of the work, numbered from 3.00.

2.21- γ

Variations in avant-garde notation derive from the natural confusion resulting from the simultaneous inventions of systems of signifiers for

8. As systematically detailed in Erhard Karkoschka, *Notation in New Music* (New York, 1972).

many of the same aural and conceptual signifieds. Thus, Kagel, Cerha, and many other composers employ identical signs for different purposes—at times totally unrelated ones.⁹

2.22- α

Aspects of traditional notation that are used as a preexisting idiom in the *Siciliano* include: reading from left to right across horizontal lines; occasional staves to indicate pitch locations; the 'hairpin' notation of crescendi and decrescendi, here used rather flexibly; letters as dynamic indications; and, at points, normally notated notes and rests.

2.23- α

Aspects of avant-garde notation that can be considered as a preexisting idiom include: the vertical mobility of sections of score, frequently employed for the convenience of the conductor in visualizing groupings; the use of single lines for pitch locations, which indicates approximate pitch by the metaphor of height; triangular note heads for highest, lowest, and middle pitches; altered accidentals to denote quarter-tone pitch alterations; arrows placed over beamed sets of notes, indicating tempo changes; altered fermata symbols, representing different lengths of pauses; beamed groups of notes in 'ornament' notation, indicating rapid performance out of tempo; the separation of flags on beamed groups of notes (although this is usually a graphic rather than a meaningful sign); and diamond-shaped note heads for 'toneless' timbres. There are also a number of specific vocal signs (shrieked, whispered, breathed, spoken, etc.) that are not atypical of normal avant-garde practice, although the signs are not used in exactly the same way by other composers.

9. Karkoschka, *Notation in New Music*.

2.30- β

Organized pitch structures are a common feature of European avant-garde music at the time of this work's composition. There appears to be no precompositional organization to the pitches, but certain interval classes stand out: major and minor sevenths, minor ninths, minor seconds, and tritones most of all.

2.31- γ

These interval classes are, of course, those most common in postwar atonal music, and can be broken into two types. Seconds, sevenths and ninths are related under Pousseur's¹⁰ concept of the "indistinct octave," wherein the octave is generally avoided and replaced by near-octaves which tend to destroy the aural identity of pitch classes. Essentially, the "indistinct octave" results in the classic modernist aural effect of an apparently unlimited number of available pitches, all linked by intervals that imply no functional relationship and strong dissonance. The remaining interval class, that of the tritone, is of course the strongest anti-tonal interval. Thus, the *Siciliano* employs its possibly unorganized interval classes in a way which is nevertheless typical of atonal and serial music, a way which creates a seemingly infinite field of unrelated elements in extreme tension.

10. Henri Pousseur, "Anton Webern's Organic Chromaticism," *Die Reihe* (English translation) 2 (1975), 54-60.

2.32- γ

One aspect of pitch in this work, incidental to analysis but crucial to the performer and listener, is the total lack of pitch cues for the vocalists, resulting in an extremely low probability that many of the specified pitches will be accurate. The density of lines, intervallic tension, and frequent use of vocalizations with unspecified pitches makes it remarkably difficult to retain any consistent network of intervallic relationships. Extensive rehearsal by a group of twelve singers with perfect pitch might solve these problems, but most performances of the work will, at best, allude to the pitches and intervals that are notated.

3.00- β

In deciding how to segment the *Siciliano*, the visual grouping of gestures seems to be the pertinent indicator. Page one and page two are clearly differentiated, but page one can be broken down further. Thus, the first section consists of the introductory 'chord;' the second consists of two 'pointillist' phrases; and the third involves several related gestures, from the cry of *chi* in voice one up to the end of the first page. The second page is, of course, a separate fourth and climactic section.

3.10- α

Although page one is, on first sight, complex to the point of unreadability, all of the signs on this page can be logically decoded. A reading of this page is thus possible which is relatively

clear and consistent, and which should retain a certain identity among different performances. The score is read in the normal manner, following straight horizontal lines from left to right across the page, although following those lines often involves making rapid shifts down the page. The visual progression of grouped elements is downward.

3.11- α

In addition to the title and the composer's signature, page one includes the text that is set on that page, which is completely distinct in style and source from the text set on page two. It is labeled an 'anonymous popular song' with the following text:

*o pastureddu di la trizza ad unna
chi fai pinnatu di la manu manca
pri'n tappigghiari 'ssa facciuzza biunna(?)*

which can be freely translated as: "O wavy-haired little shepherd, who makes a comb out of his left hand to untangle his little blond head (?)."

3.12- γ

This text has interesting implications. It can be read as a portrayal of the experiential vividness of the natural and disorganized, suggesting that such vividness is lost with organization and control; it asserts an attractive chaos to be read into a homoerotic object of fetishized beauty.

3.13- γ

Bussotti's brief text on the *Siciliano*, which is allusive rather than explanatory, ends with a

metaphor which is a common idiomatic expression: *la pietra che nasconde il verminario*, or “the stone which hides the place of the vermin.”¹¹ This can be read as a negative version of the same concept, a visual chaos which may result in fear and disgust.

3.20- β

Section one, page one is an ‘introductory sound,’ where all twelve voices hold their highest or lowest pitches pianissimo (actually *ppppp*, which should perhaps be spelled pianississississimo) until the breath runs out. Micznik¹² points out that, since Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, there has been a tradition of the musical introduction constructed as an “ambiguous, indefinite, nebulous continuum growing from lack of specificity toward more and more articulation.” It is possible to see this ‘sound’ as a brief, abrupt sign for such an introduction, dispensing with extraneous complexities such as development or relatedness of material or gesture. As a stripped-down signifier for introductions, the ‘sound’ includes the phonemes of the first vowel of the text (*o*) and of the most emphasized vowel in the rest of the text (*u*).

3.30- α

Section two begins with a sudden indrawn breath in all twelve voices, which is the first strong or loud gesture of the work. There are then two rapid, brief pointillist phrases setting the words *o pastureddu* and *di / pri'n tappigghiari* respectively.

11. Translated here as Appendix I.

12. Micznik, “Gesture as Sign,” 26-27.

Rhythmic and articulatory details of the two phrases are contrasted; one is held with varying dynamic values until the end of section two, while the other breaks off after each note.

3.31- γ

Both phrases of section two are dependent on the ability of the performers to present the complex envelope of a changing sound with only a fragment of a word; if the ensemble is perfectly together, it may be possible to discern the text. The complexity and consistency of these two phrases are quite unlike the entire rest of the piece. They may be read as working drafts, or references to existing avant-garde methods of writing for vocal ensemble; perhaps the composer is pointing out that he could have written the entire piece as a consistent whole in either of these styles, one which would have looked like a 'normal' postwar choral work.

3.40- β

Section three can be subdivided into other sections. It moves rapidly through various possible ways of grouping and relating the voices, tending gradually towards increased freedom and independence of the expressive gesture. The first subsection of section three is the setting of *chi fai*, the *chi* appearing as a violent punctuation in one voice and the *fai* as a brief but highly structured burst of heterophony. None of the singers has determinate pitches on *fai*, but each simultaneously performs a different but related vocal gesture on that word.

3.41- β

The first appearance of real independence among the voices occurs in the second subsection of section three, the variegated setting of *la trizza ad unna / pinnatu di la manu manca / 'ssa facciuzza biunna*. The text does not occur in linear order, but instead comes out something like "di/pin-na-la-ma-nu/tu-ssa-nca-facciuzza/trizza ad biun/un-na." Thus, the lines interpenetrate each other, partially through the phoneme identities familiar from other works by avant-garde composers who worked at the Milan electronic studio, and partially through an increase in sheer entropy. Unlike the heterophonies of section two and the first subsection of section three, these phrases can be heard independently of each other.

3.42- β

Section three, and page one, both end with a third 'subsection,' in which the four lowest voices fade into silence as a gesture of partial closure before the expressive explosion of page two.

3.50- δ

The first page can be seen as a series of abortive attempts at setting the text, each scarcely appearing on the page (or in the ear) before being dropped. The background context for each of these attempts is the static murk of a held 'chord' of indeterminate pitches; the quality of this 'chord' is one of hesitation, uncertainty, even avoidance. The

impossibility of adequately communicating the beauty of the dirty young shepherd is paradigmatic to the impossibility of setting the text adequately; these sketchy, incomplete attempts are all the more pathetic in contrast to the violent presentness of the second page.

3.60- α

Page two, which can be classed as section four, is based on a single line of text by Paolo Emilio Carapezza: *il mare è che lunghi fiumi caldi raccoglie*, which can be rendered as 'the sea is [or might be] the collection of long hot rivers.' There is also a dedication to Francesco Agnello, now director of the Comitato Nazionale Italiano Musica (CIDIM) in Rome. Both men are Sicilian, and were friends of Bussotti's at the time of the *Siciliano's* composition.¹³

3.61- γ

The text is metaphorically reflected in the appearance of the page, where a partially fused, indivisible object is created out of the twelve vocal lines. A similarity to the first text also exists, as both texts are about experiences that cannot be broken down or reconstructed.

3.62- β

The structure of the startling second page is based on clear principles; according to Karkoschka, "The slanting staves indicate an acceleration or deceleration of

13. I am grateful to Lalla Brau, Bussotti's representative at Ricordi, for this information.

tempo, the intermingling of the staves unrestrained emotion. Where notes appear on a single line, they may be intoned freely."¹⁴ Timing is approximately organized by eight 'beats' given by the conductor (notated as dotted lines). Additional information is given by the complex linear structure of placement over the line of text, although this does not affect the performance; it indicates the location of the words of the text, some of which are phonemically dismantled and reconstructed (consider particularly *m/atr/le* in voice nine, beat seven).

3.63- γ

Even if their 'intermingling' can be disregarded for a moment, the slanting of staves raises severe temporal problems. If voice one is considered—the longest line, stretching across the page at approximately a 35° slant—it becomes clear that the rate of change in tempo and actual rhythmic relations between notes remains unknown and probably unknowable. The performer must make most of the temporal decisions himself, and even then will work in vain towards any consistency or accuracy. This bizarre, 'impossible' dialectic between the highly

14. Karkoschka, *Notation in New Music*, p. 94. Karkoschka also argues for the viability of the score, not only as a visual work of art, but also as a score appropriate for musical performance: "As is so often the case with Bussotti, close study of this example reveals that—in spite of the strong graphic effect—both details and overall form are relatively precisely determined. It is only at a middle level, within the sections, that the voices are free, but the expressive tendency of the voices is to some extent suggestively influenced by the slanting staves, the proportions, the dynamics and in fact by the very picture itself. There is no doubt that the visual effect of the picture is of great significance for the work's expressive force."

specified and the totally improvisatory is typical of many of Bussotti's works; it demands a great deal of attention and a great deal of imagination, and a willingness to temper each with the other.

3.64- δ

The intermingling of staves is both symbolic, as pointed out in 3.61- γ above, and pseudo-functional, in its establishment of a structure which enforces an extreme version of such an 'impossible' dialectic. The vocalists cannot remain unaware of each other, although the complexity of each part prevents any individual singer from actually following the other parts. The sensation in performance is remarkably dense and experiential: following the eight beats given by the conductor, one moves rapidly through a complex labyrinth of sound, attempting to remain in perfect synchronization with several completely disjunct events simultaneously. This is, of course, impossible.

3.65- β

Another unusual aspect of page two is the double beaming of groups of notes. Essentially, a choice is offered: in voice one, beats one and eight, the choice is rhythmic and sequential, indicating that the same note heads can be interpreted under two different rhythmically significant beamings and in two different orders.

Less clear is the suggestion that the same notes might be interpreted as pitches on a different staff. The other version of this beaming alternative can be seen in voice eight, beat six, where the 'heighted' noteheads can be interpreted from two different directions, resulting in different configurations of high and low.

3.66- γ

Among the complex, dense gestures scattered across page two, several are interesting in themselves. The initial and final gestures of voice one become the 'frame' for all of the other gestures; the initial minor ninth in a very high range, with a sforzando attack (notated as *fff*, but on too brief a note to sustain such a change), is dramatic, wild, and leads into the dense labyrinth of voices. The final minor third, at a piano dynamic and at the top of the chest voice range, is performed as a gentle exit gesture in the Gottwald recording.¹⁵ Voices two and nine have staves that actually change direction in the course of the page, resulting in a changing velocity; thus, voice two starts at a steady tempo (whatever that means in this context) and shifts to a rapid deceleration. Lastly, voice five has an interesting melisma with 'fixed' pitches in beats four and five which recalls the vocal figurations of Boulez's *Improvisation sur Mallarmé I*.

15. Sylvano Bussotti, "Siciliano für zwölf Männerstimmen" [recording], in *Neue Chormusik I* (Wergo 60 026, 1966).

4.00- δ

A reading of the *Siciliano* can now be suggested. Page one is a series of aborted sketches in which the creator is audibly conscious of the silence from which they spring, and into which they fall again. Page two is, instead, a real and completed work, which cannot be extended or excerpted without completely changing its nature.

4.01- γ

In addition, page one is coherent, from both a semiotic and a performing point of view; the complexities of its interpretation are all solvable and can be reached by analysis and consensus. But, on the contrary, page two is not beneath, but beyond coherency. Even if the voices are rehearsed individually with great care, the final product cannot be predicted or controlled—it can only happen. This is metaphorically related to the words of the first text: who could ever untangle this unique event?

4.02- δ

The *Siciliano* can be considered an emotional, aesthetic precursor of deconstructive concepts. Oceans come together from long hot rivers; synesthetic experience comes together from the unplannable combination of elements. The experience cannot be taken

apart and reconstructed, and the sum of the parts is not the whole. These are poetic versions of a critical theory that takes as its first principle the statement that human experience cannot be completely understood or thought through. It is useful—although perhaps obvious—to note that such an understanding of the work can only come through structuralist methodologies, particularly semiotics; formal rules must be applied in order to discover their limitations, in order to find the lacunae that exist in any formal system. Such discoveries are perhaps the most dramatic effect of semiotics on thought, and indicate the way in which structuralism naturally and ongoingly transforms itself into post-structuralism.

4.10- δ

A positive definition of chaos may now be possible. The *Siciliano* signifies a particular kind of chaos: fruitful, uncontrollable, made up of elements that occur in a great profusion of detail. Such a chaos might be contrasted with the aleatoric and stochastic improvisations of other postwar composers, which often try to avoid the interesting, unpredictable details or the complex tension of relations between elements that we experience daily. It takes a great deal of careful work, and a remarkably

open imagination, to come so close to recreating the vivid possibilities of chaos as it occurs in everyday life; and such a recreation is in line with the most important social and aesthetic problems of the late twentieth century and the move away from a formalized modernism. Perhaps the *Siciliano*, along with Bussotti's work in general, deserves to hold a more central position in twentieth-century music and aesthetics than it has thus far.

Appendix I

Sylvano Bussotti's Introduction to *Siciliano* (*Memoria*, p. 23):

The notation of *Siciliano* permits an interpretation completely free from the symbols and their proportions. The vocalists should not interpret the height [pitch] here determined, as written on the staff, according to a *temperate* reading, but should favor the spontaneous, individual impulse in their own register, welcoming sounds and intervals proposed by the score as guidelines or as suggestions. The tempo is totally free, conditioned only by the proportions written in each measure which are to be interpreted visually [i.e., spatial notation], and in certain cases by the fermatas.

Except for the two concluding caesuras, indicated by || and the final bar, all the measures are indicated with dashed barlines to suggest freedom and flexibility even in the coincidence of the twelve soloists.

The oblique interlacing of some voices also suggests the evident mode of acceleration and allows for ambivalence in the structure of intervals and in their rhythmization. The interpreter will choose from the two versions the one he prefers from his point of view [i.e., between ambivalence about the intervals, or about the rhythms].

The first page will have a firm, smooth, dry character which will resolve in a chaotic and unrestrainable second page: "the stone which hides the place of the vermin." [This last phrase is a common Italian metaphor.]

Appendix II

Dieter Schnebel on the *Siciliano*¹⁶

The middle part [of *Memoria*], *Siciliano*, a piece for twelve men's voices, is notated as musical graphics. This must allow a free interpretation, which the spontaneous and individual impulses of the soloists not only make room for, but immediately stimulate. Moreover, the score shows the form of the piece: the first part "has a consistent, smooth and sparse character" which is in the second part "loosened, chaotic and unrestrained—the stone of the worm." The material of the folk song text in the first part is chorally reproduced in fragments—the exclamative *o* of the beginning appears as a tutti (just as at the beginning of the second line: *chi fai*); the syllables of the next word (*pastoreddu*) are sounded in a chord (similar to that in the second line – *pinnatu* – and the close – *biunna*). Other words wander, melodically or pointilistically arranged in a row, through the voices (*la ma-nu man-ca, pri'n tappighiari; la / trizza / ad / unna; 'sa / facciuza biunna*). Toward the beginning of *O pastoreddu*, the lines of text get shoved on top of each other, and then they fall apart into their components. At first, at the end of this phase, undamaged words appear again; at the close is built a fusion of the last words of the first and the third lines (*unna biunna*). The material thus becomes similar to that of *dt 31,6*¹⁷ among the dispersed voices, so that it accumulates itself in clumps or generally falls to pieces. The collective pro-

16. Dieter Schnebel, "Musikalische Kompositionen aus Elementen der Sprache," in *Denkbare Musik: Schriften 1952-1972* (Köln, 1972), p. 411. This is a reprint of his liner notes to *Neue Chormusik I* (Wergo 60 026, 1966), which I am including because it is one of the only published attempts to interpret the *Siciliano*. I have translated Schnebel's quotes of Bussotti's remarks directly from the German, although it changes their meaning somewhat.

17. Dieter Schnebel, *dt 31,6 für zwölf Vokalgruppen* (Mainz, 1973). Schnebel's liner notes discuss several works, including his own *dt 31,6* and the *Siciliano*.

cess corrodes the continuity of the text, which at the close of the first part appears more compactly again. The second part draws from this a consequent, conveyed in the same way by the new text (by Carapezza), except that now the components within the individual voices are accumulated or dispersed. Such temporal processes, themselves already entangled, become—the picture [i.e., the score]—chaotically composed. Through permutations of the word order, the materials in the polyphony of the second part sound from different temporal regions: their radiant strength varies in intensity. As Bussotti's score shows – in which dotted lines leading from each word of the underlying line of the text setting refer to the appearance of that word—the first (*il*) and the last word (*raccoglie*) appear in only two segments each (1 and 2, 7 and 8). The words *mare* and *caldi* cover the widest range (2 through 7). Such a musical interlacing of the text makes clear what it says: *Il mare è che lunghi fiumi caldi raccoglie*.¹⁸

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18. As translated in 3.60- α above: 'The sea is the collection of long hot rivers.'

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