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## **The interactive and spatial life of music: Towards a composite ethnomusicological approach for the analysis of musical performance**

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One striking aspect of the study of performance is made clear by Richard Schechner at the beginning of his seminal volume *Performance Theory*. Writes Schechner: ‘Performance is an inclusive term’ (Schechner 1988: xiii). And later on: ‘... performance theory – which for me is rooted in practice and is fundamentally interdisciplinary and intercultural’ (Schechner 1988: xv). These two brief and rather general sentences help me to clarify my personal interest for an issue that is particularly elusive in the field of ethnomusicology and yet, full of crucial questions to be asked and right at the core of what ethnomusicologists do, that is study ‘living’ music.

The difficulty of such an approach to music performance, as Schechner clearly states, lies in the fact that it implies considering a network of concepts, practices and disciplines, which are not easy to master at one and the same time. So much has been written on this topic that it is really impossible to grasp all its aspects. A chapter of this volume presents an overview of the main writings, and the main trends of this multifaceted field of study.<sup>1</sup> The perspective I adopt, however, mainly derives from ethnomusicological research with the aim of discussing some general issues stemming from a specific case-study. I will also relate a personal path in research covering over forty years, with a gradual ‘discovery’ of the need to study performing practice in order to understand how a given music is continuously recreated, and unfolds in time and space.

However, before entering into the specific aspects of this chapter, it is important to stress how this field is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary within the different fields of musicology. It has become a genuine laboratory

for cross-disciplinary approaches that consider music as a whole unitary field in which the ethnographic and historical methods blend and feed each other continuously, in a constant dialogue with related fields, and with the specific field of performance studies that has emerged in the last decades. The issues addressed apply to music-making processes, crossing boundaries as they focus on the moment in which music is spelled out, and becomes sound. Let me propose just a few examples of this cross-disciplinary attitude. When Nicholas Cook writes extensively about performance stating that: ‘To understand music as performance then, means to see it in an irreducibly social phenomenon’ (Cook 2003, 206) he is referring to this social character of music without specific delimitations of historical period or geographical and cultural distinctions. And, in what may seem an intersection with the anthropology of music, the subtitle of his recent book (Cook 2013), ‘Music as performance’ significantly echoes the path that Alan Merriam undertook by first giving the definition of ethnomusicology as ‘music in culture’ and later changing it to ‘music as culture’ (Merriam 1977).

Philip Auslander looks at things from a different perspective when he writes that: ‘There is perhaps no element more basic to performance of all kinds – and more difficult to theorize – than the human body’ (Auslander 2003: 3), encompassing the concept of embodiment in its widest sense in this field. Or when Martin Clayton mentions the importance of cognitive processes, such as entrainment, and concepts such as ‘motivation’, ‘intention’ in dynamic and complex cognitive systems (Clayton 2013), we can once again see how the study of performance is placed at the crossing of several different and important approaches to the contemporary study of music. A recent definition of this field clearly outlines the multifaceted, interactive, and complex series of factors involved in the study of musical performance:

Performance defines music as the moment of production – of sound, meaning, or consequential action – rather than as a model, ideal or product. It directs our attention to people producing, experiencing and making meaning from organized sound: people with bodies as well as minds, with a concrete existence in time and space, whose musical behavior is shaped by innate tendencies (such as that towards rhythmic coordination, or entrainment), as well as by individual, environmental and social factors.  
(Clayton, Dueck and Leante 2013: 1)

When one turns to ethnomusicology and reviews the literature on this topic, one is immediately struck by the rather limited number of publications specifically devoted to the issue of performance. The reason might lie in the fact that performance is considered to be so embedded in our object of study that scholars do not feel the need to devote specific studies to it. To use Marcia Herndon and Norma McLeod’s words: ‘all that exists for an ethnomusicologist is the performance. The more one knows about performance, the better one will understand music’ (Herndon and McLeod 1979: 51). This rather blunt statement may explain why one finds a lower-than-expected number of ethnomusicological studies that directly address the issue of performance.

A first study that was meaningful for my research is that of Regula Burckhardt Qureshi in which she uses her own studies on Pakistan *qawwali* to draw a model to connect musical analysis to the social and cultural context. She writes:

In summary, two kinds of tools have been found useful for the analysis which I propose. First, there are tools for understanding the rule system of the musical sound system, using systematic eliciting from musicians on the basis of indigenous musicological concepts ... Second, there are tools for analyzing the context of performance, in terms of both concepts and behavior, structure and process, using anthropological theory and methods of eliciting and observation. In order to use these tools together, a single analytical scheme is required, so that both music and context can be analyzed in a mutually compatible way. Such an analytic framework can be generated from anthropological theory, but it needs to be extended, and endowed with a concrete methodology that is compatible with the special needs of music analysis.

(Burckhardt Qureshi 1987: 62)

Although this juxtaposition between music analysis and context may today seem out of date, this seminal approach influenced several subsequent studies. Its great merit is that it keeps musical analysis at centre stage, while stressing that ‘la musique c’est toujours beaucoup plus que la musique’, to quote Gilbert Rouget (1996).<sup>2</sup>

Among the significant ethnomusicological publications that have adopted different stances and point of views to deal with performance in the last decades, let me mention a few references that, although they do not bear the label ‘performance’, can be considered seminal in this field, such as, for example, Benjamin Brinner’s work on interaction among Javanese musicians. In fact, the issue of ‘interaction’ lies at the core of a model that intends to study music in the context of its performance, especially – but not exclusively – when it bears a certain degree of extemporaneity or improvisation.

In focusing on interactive musical processes, Brinner writes:

Rather than a sociology of music focusing on social issues, we then have a socially aware ethnomusicology, focusing on music-making and music made, yet cognizant of the web of interpersonal relations in which music-makers are entangled ... Developments in the field of cognitive musicology are crucial to this endeavor. We do not yet have a clear idea of the nature of mental representations of music formed by musicians or the role that these representations play in knowing and making music. Besides mental “soundings” – remembered or imagined internal auditions – there are certainly other important representations such as kinetic and kinesthetic patterns of fingers and voice, visual images of symbolic representations, mnemonics, and associative knowledge of words, movements, and other “extramusical” phenomena.

(Brinner 1995: 320)

Performance, thus, can be seen as the result of a web of interpersonal relations involving music-makers as well as audiences in which mental representations and a wealth of ‘extramusical’ factors also come into play. It is a fascinating cognitive approach that does not forget musical analysis and the actual sonic

result of such processes. Cognition is also at stake in other significant studies, such as that by Martin Clayton with his research on ‘entrainment’ (Clayton, Sager and Will 2005) or that by Charles Keil on ‘groove’ and ‘participatory discrepancies’ (Keil 1979) in which, again, analysis focuses on interaction and on the way performance is continuously negotiated among music-makers, through a wealth of culturally-determined sonic (and individually-specific) details involving rhythm as well as intonation, agogics and timbre.

Generally speaking, recent significant studies on performance have highlighted the fact that music’s life lies at the moment in which musician/s and listener/s (with all due exceptions in which a performance could happen without a musician or a listener) are involved – and embodied – in an interactive aural experience, and, through performance, they construct meaning.

Performance studies, however, must dialogue with other musicological approaches in order to be most fruitful and effective. This is what I discovered in my own research on a path that took several years to unfold. And this is what I would like to address in this chapter, taking into consideration a specific case-study drawn from my research on Italian folk music. The focus of the chapter will be how the analysis of performance can be seen as a linking factor between a detailed formal musical analysis and the larger framework of the context in which a specific music is performed. This implies that a study on performance still requires, in my opinion, a specific analysis of musical utterance (in oral tradition there is no score to rely upon, rather we can use musical transcription or other more sophisticated digital tools as a means of analysis). However, such formal analysis must be considered together with research on a number of other fundamental factors involved in music making, factors that are at stake at the moment in which sound comes to life, embodied in a social context.

In my chapter, I will make an attempt to illustrate how this combined approach can be considered within one single example, which derives from my own research. This has no normative ambition and is only intended as a contribution towards showing the complexity and the richness of a performance-based approach. At the same time, the chapter also tells a personal ‘research path’ of mine that throughout the years has become increasingly aware of the heuristic possibilities of a study of music that is centred on performance.

My case study is the tarantella of Montemarano, a Carnival dance music that is performed by clarinet, accordion and frame drum in a village of Irpinia, a mountainous region not far from Naples. It is a topic that has been with me for over forty years and to which I have returned only recently, considering, in a more systematic way, how a multifaceted approach to performance could stem from fine music analysis by adding elements and parameters that pertain to the context, social and physical interactions, the embodiment of music-making and listening (through dance), the spatial dimension and diachronic factors.

At the same time, the chapter will present my research path and my gradual ‘discovery’ of how performance studies are embedded in research that aims to shift from music analysis, to the study of social interaction, sound and space

and environment, embodiment, even change over time. My hope is that this sort of biographic account can serve the purpose of highlighting some traits in the study of performance that, stemming from ethnography, can also be of some use to other approaches within musicology. In this path I can share the view that Cook presents at the beginning of his recent book: ‘My aim is not to displace traditional musicology but rather to rethink it from the inside. I want to address the issues of culture and meaning that concern most musicologists, but to build performance deeply into their formulation, and make it possible to bring the specifics of individual performances’ (Cook 2013: 1). Adding that, as I am trained in ethnomusicology, I am perhaps more concerned with collective and shared practices, although this does not mean that individual specificities are discarded.

This tarantella is peculiar because it is performed on three consecutive days (the last three days of Carnival) to accompany a few groups of masked dancers in a processional dance through the streets of the village. There are usually two large groups, corresponding to what were the two main historic parts of the village: Piazza (The Square) and Via Roma; other smaller groups organised by the small districts scattered around the countryside are also present. The procession starts in the early afternoon and goes on until evening (approximately eight o’clock), sometimes even at night, to start again the following day. The music unfolds almost without interruption, its function being to accompany the processional dance. It must be varied constantly to make the dancers ‘enthusiastic’, as they say, and yet be always recognisable. It must also adapt to the different moments and circumstances of a long feast, and therefore, show some flexibility both in the formal structure and in the performing practices, which accounts for improvisation.<sup>3</sup>

### **Formal analysis and transcription**

A first level of an analysis of the performance goes through the formal detection of the unfolding of this continuous flow of music. My first visit to the Carnival of Montemarano goes back to 1976. I carried out an analysis of the process of improvisation of the melodic part played by the clarinet for my master’s degree, following the methods so neatly outlined in the 1970s by Jean-Jacques Nattiez (1975), together with Nicholas Ruwet (1972) and Simha Arom (1966), based mostly on the paradigmatic method derived from linguistics and structuralism. However, just as happens with every kind of analysis, the results I achieved, which I believe are still valid today (Giuriati 1982), are only one part of the whole story.

Let me provide a brief description of the workings of what I called the kaleidoscopic system of variation of this tarantella, according to my research in the 1980s. I transcribed long sections of the clarinet melody and ordered them according to a paradigmatic model in which I found a high, though constantly ‘microvaried’ rate of repetition (Fig. 1).

The same alignment can also be proposed using cipher notation, just to give a clearer idea of how the system of variants works with a series of constant pitches ('degrées pivot' as Simha Arom would define them) occurring in the same rhythmic position within the melodic segment (Fig. 2).

*Figure 1* Alignment of several variants of a same melodic model transcribed on staff notation.

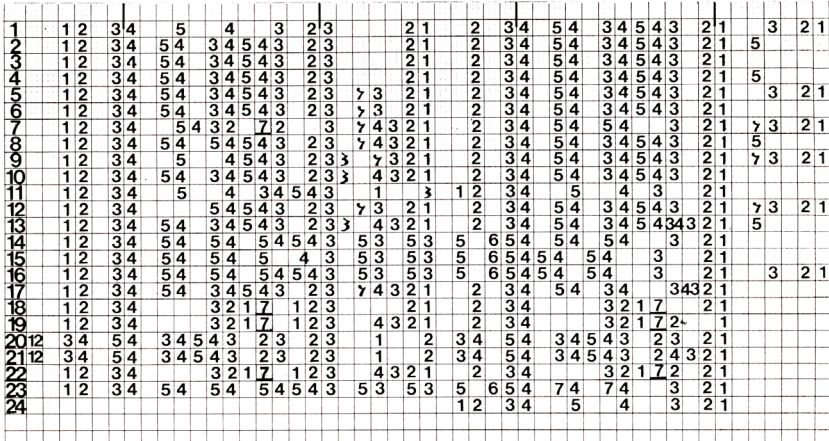


Figure 2 Alignment of several variants of a same melodic model transcribed in cipher notation.

This analysis allowed me to infer the presence of a set of seven melodic models, derived from all my transcriptions, based on those pitches that recurred in all the variants of a same melody.



Figure 3 The seven melodic models of the tarantella.

Having established the basic material for improvisation, I turned my attention to the long sequences of melodies, by trying to determine the criteria chosen by the musicians to enchain them one after the other. I ordered the sequences according to the paradigmatic method proposed by Ruwet and Nattiez and I





they take one ‘road’ or the other, with the hypothesis that such constraints are socially and culturally determined.

In terms of research methods, another aspect that grew as I kept going to this Carnival was the fact that I was allowed the privilege of playing the accordion with them, also during the processional dance. This permitted me to adopt a much more ‘internal’ perspective as regards the performing process which helped me immensely in exploring the performative aspects of this music.

### **Some elements for performance and analysis**

In fact, as my career as an ethnomusicologist progressed, I came to learn more and more, through my readings and experience, that performance is a social act, something that nowadays has become almost common sense. In quoting again Cook when he writes that ‘To understand music as performance then, means to see it in an irreducibly social phenomenon’ (Cook 2003: 206), what was intriguing to me was to try to understand how this quotation could apply to the specific case at hand, and to an ethnographic method of research. In trying to go deeper into the understanding of this social musical process, as is often the case, one might turn to John Blacking. He writes:

Let me make clear at the start that an ethnography of musical performance is not designed to reduce music to a purely sociological phenomenon. What is sociologically and anthropologically problematic is the special character of musical activities, rather than what they have in common with other social activities. Thus, the prime concern of an ethnography of musical performance is with the structure of music and its meaning to performers and audiences. Because music is a social fact and the organization of tones is the result of decision-making by individuals in society, it is necessary to find out something about: 1. The rules of the musical system in relation to the rules of other parts of the social system that affects the music-makers, and 2. The way the music system is used, and the rules bent or adapted, in the course of social interaction. (Blacking 1981: 383–4)<sup>4</sup>

And, in referring to the validity of ethnographic method in relation to music analysis, he goes on:

Ethnography is a scientific description, and what appears to be its major weakness, namely its inclusion of variously perceived data that may seem too vague and fuzzy to a musicologist, is in fact its greatest strength and its prior claim to scientific validity. The scientific potential of ethnography is not always appreciated, and it can seem particularly confusing and irrelevant when set beside apparently rigorous analyses, in which the logic of musical structures is exposed for all to see, like the structure of a crystal or a protein. The scientific rigour of many musical analyses is, in fact, illusory. The chief difference between a musicological analysis and a chemical analysis is that, like any other analysis in the human sciences, it may be there for all to see, but it is not necessary there for all to feel: and if the analytical “experiment” cannot be replicated, it cannot be regarded as scientific. Until a musical analysis can be validated by the

corroborative experience of performers and listeners, it remains as it began: an ethnic view of a musical structure which does not necessarily have any more validity than other ethnic views.

(Blacking 1981: 384)

In continuing to follow the Carnival and the tarantella in Montemarano over the years, I somehow shifted the interest and focus of my research by enhancing the ethnographic method, and started to notice a wealth of dynamic processes that seem to be relevant for the analysis of the music. Thus, I tried to establish a link between formal analysis and an approach that takes into account a number of contextual variables that all occur during performance, especially those mentioned by Blacking in his point 2, that is, the way the music system is used and adapted in the course of social interaction. After completing my master's thesis in 1981 I continued to follow the Carnival in the early 1980s. Following a 17-year break due to my Ph.D. in the United States and my research on Khmer traditional music, thanks to a student of mine, Giuseppe Tulli,<sup>5</sup> I returned to Montemarano in the late 1990s, and ever since I have continued to participate in the Carnival, looking at the music from a different perspective that includes the fundamental aspect of performance. And I have found out that, far from contradicting what I wrote and discovered in the 1980s, this kind of analysis allows me to incorporate the dynamic context of the feast into the music.

In this chapter, far from proposing a new 'model' for the performance analysis of music of oral tradition, I would like to outline a series of elements, a sort of check list drawn from my experience in Montemarano, which could be taken into account when approaching a living music. All these elements can be observed and detected only within the act of performance. Far from being exhaustive, this list is a mere draft and derived from my own fieldwork experience. Each of these aspects would need a specific analysis in its own terms. However, I will limit myself to drawing attention to them in this chapter, in an attempt to provide a framework for further analysis.

#### *Social interaction (among musicians)*

A first aspect to be considered is the interaction that occurs among musicians, between musicians and dancers, between musicians and those who are listening to the music, and not dancing. In fact, something that is very important in the unfolding of the Carnival, which I clearly witnessed while performing during the masquerade, is the constant interaction among the musicians, which accounts for the musical result. Here I can refer to a wealth of elements that Mantle Hood used to call 'untalkables' (Hood 1993) but also plenty of talkable facts. For example, it is difficult to describe in words the network of relationships that emerges during the three days of the Carnival which includes friendship as well as rivalry, and in which the very choice of playing with someone else is a statement that affects the musical performance.<sup>6</sup> Bonding

between musicians is very important. Just to mention one significant example, an accordion player, Nicola del Percio (“Nicolino”) returns every year from South Africa, where he emigrated years ago, to play with his musical partner Carmine Ziviello (“Pasqualino”) in what has become an inseparable duo. More in general, the social relationships among performers are shaped through the years, and during the months between one Carnival and the next, and they affect the musical outcome during the three days. And this is socially important because the ‘best music’ often accounts for the best group of the parade, because masks, in their choice of the masquerade, are often attracted by the music.

Interaction is also fundamental for the process of improvisation. While it is possible for all the musicians to play together with someone else, it is apparent that they need to play together for an extended time in order to perform at their best. As the music is made up of constant changes and modulations, they need to be ready to react to the sonic cues that constantly occur during the danced procession, in order to enchain a series of melodies without a predetermined sequence.

The process of interaction also stems from the fundamental role of the personality and individual contribution of single musicians to the unfolding and developing of the tarantella year after year. There are some mythical players who are still remembered, and a number of musicians nowadays who have their performing style which can be detected from afar, and almost immediately.

This has to do with the ‘sound’ of each player, which an expert listener can detect, but it also has to do with the fact that each performer, besides improvising on existing melodic models, creates his own compositions of melodies and song texts. And such compositions become his trademark that goes through a social sanction during performance. It can be ‘accepted’ and appreciated by the dancers and listeners. In this case it will remain in the repertoire of that specific musician, sometimes also eventually becoming part of the shared ‘traditional’ repertoire. If the new tune is not appreciated, it will live for just one Carnival and then be abandoned. The most conspicuous example of a radical innovation can be traced back to the 1940s when Domenico Ambrosini (‘Mbrusino) introduced the clarinet in this music, which till then had been played on the *ciaramella* (shawm), thereby also creating new melodies that are still remembered and played during the Carnival (Giuriati 2016).

Since then, a lineage of musicians can be reconstructed, each with his own melodies, some more innovative than others, with his own specific sound that can immediately be detected by a competent listener. Another aspect consists in the ‘pairing’ of clarinet and accordion in duos that are stable throughout the years and who create a special syntony, some of them becoming almost mythical over the years. The interaction develops through hours of performing together, through the establishment of some sequences of melodies, some of which are shared by all, together with those specific to that group, and in creating an immediate reaction to each other’s cues (sonic, visual, bodily) in

order to make changes with perfect synchrony, in a flow of music that must be never interrupted.

In these scattered observations, one may see how interaction among musicians can be detected both on the level of syntony, affinity and solidarity and at the level of competition and emulation. And this study of social interaction cannot be separated from the level of musical analysis, of embodiment, of emotions.

*Social interaction (between musicians and dancers)*

The relationship between musicians and dancers is also intense and rather complex. In fact, the music's main role is to regulate the unfolding of the dance, as well as that of exciting (or calming down) the dancers during the different moments and situations that occur in the three days of the feast.

A first aspect of this interaction lies in the fact that the dancers often choose which masquerade to join based on their preference for the music. While there are several criteria determining the choice (territoriality, kinship, friendship/rivalry, and so on) the musicians' skill is another criterion often mentioned by the participants in the masquerade, and it is sometimes possible to see that groups of dancers move from one masquerade to another because of the music.

Another evident aspect of this interaction lies in the fact that the dancers often move towards the musicians in order to 'absorb' the sound and get charged for their movements. It is not rare to see dancers moving closer to the sound during the procession in order to acquire a sort of emotional charge.

However, the most significant pattern of interaction is the role musicians play in regulating the emotional flow of the masquerade. One can hear the musicians changing their way of playing according to the different situations. They can intensify rhythm, sound louder, and increase the rate of tonal or modal change to stimulate and encourage the dancers. On the contrary, they can do the opposite if they perceive that the dancers are too excited and risk losing control. Tonal modulations, changes of modes, and melodic models are arranged in such a way as to create a dynamic of 'tension and release' that is strictly connected to the relationship with the dancers. For example, we can see how musicians control the rate of modulation from one tone to the tone a fifth below (following the circle of fifths) which is peculiar to this tarantella. This is obtained by playing a specific melodic formula that all the dancers know well.<sup>7</sup> And, in fact, they react by screaming and becoming excited whenever the musicians play that formula. There is no predetermined moment in which the musicians must modulate. It is up to them to do so, by visual or sonic clues, whenever they feel the moment is right. This option allows the musicians to interact with the masquerade – and they, in turn, are stimulated by the dancers – which sets the emotional tone for the procession.

The chance I had to play for hours with the musicians made me notice how the pace of modulation, but also that of other elements such as variation,

choice of motives, and so on, is determined by a number of factors, which are all related to the dancers and the feast. One particular moment, for example, is when two groups cross paths. In that instance the musicians have to play louder, to choose particular motives belonging to that specific masquerade (and its musicians), and produce changes at a faster pace, in order to excite their dancers in an explicit competition with the other group. One of the most popular motives in these encounters is, for example 'l'ammo fatti ritirà' (we made them withdraw).

Also, as one listens to the slow and ordered unfolding of the motives in the early hours of the afternoon, one notices a marked difference with what happens in the evening when the musicians are constantly approached by excited (and sometimes drunk) dancers from their masquerade, asking them to play louder (*sona!* – play!), to produce rapid changes (*cangia!* – change!), and to constantly perform the favourite motives of the year by singing them out loud. Time and time again they negotiate strategies to either please these dancers or to resist them if the situation threatens to get out of hand.

Any formal musical analysis that disregards these elements which are so peculiar to performance analysis would clearly yield results that are partial or of little consequence in explaining the role of music within the context of the feast, as well as the emotional content of the performance.

### *Relationship with space*

Another crucial factor needs to be considered in listening to a performance of the *montemaranese*, the fact that this music, just like a large part of the living music performed in the world, takes place in an open space, rather than in an enclosed concert hall or club. This creates specific conditions that also affect the outcome of a performance. First of all, it must be stressed how the parameter of space is rarely taken into account when discussing musical performance (and music in general). For this reason, I will describe it in a little more detail. Most theories, in fact, consider musical performance in stationary conditions, without considering that the musicians can move, more or less freely, in the performance space. I have dealt with this aspect elsewhere (Giuriati 2010) and a fine analysis of sound in motion was also presented by Glaura Lucas in a special case of a ritual from Brazil (Lucas 2013). It was also the focus, some years ago, of a group of researchers from the CNRS (Rappoport 2010) who devised the term 'polymusiques' to refer to simultaneous performances of music that are not intentionally coordinated and played in a same space.

Montemarano is also an emblematic case, since this music is processional and unfolds along the streets of the village according to a pattern that is, again, free, or kaleidoscopic, in nature. One first implicit condition is that the procession must reach the main landmarks of the social life of the community, in a sort of ritual delimitation of the communal space. Within that symbolically shared space, the masquerades organise their own path in a continuous flow that leads them to dance along the main streets of the village over and over

again during the five-six hours of the procession. However, within those limits, they are free to choose the path that they prefer, and this may vary each time for a number of reasons (presence of an audience, intention to avoid – or try to – cross paths with other masquerades, need for variety, fatigue, etc.). A first musical sonification of the performance consists in associating a specific music to different parts of the historic district of Montemarano, each with its own denomination: Via Roma, Ponte, Parte corta, Piazza. Traditionally, each of these places had its own motive to be played. Therefore, another cue for the dancers, and for the listeners following the masquerade, is a specific tune linked to a given place. For example, when musicians and dancers have to tackle the climb up or down the short but rather steep street in the Parte corta, the motive is shorter and has higher repetitions which, apart from allowing the musicians to catch their breath, also encourages the dancers in a difficult section of the route. This connection is somehow lost nowadays for most of the people, but it lives on in the memory of the musicians and the old dancers.

Another significant sonification of the path of the dancers is given by the specific moments of the encounter between two masquerades. As mentioned above, their paths may cross at any time, according to the directions given to the group by their ‘caporabballo’ (head of the dance) and this may occur by chance or, sometimes by deliberate choice. There is competition between masquerades and their meeting results in a rhythmic and dynamic intensification of the music with the aim of encouraging one’s own dancers and also to make the other group make mistakes. The overlapping of the rhythms, in fact may de-synchronise the musicians, creating moments of confusion in the group that succumbs. Given the skills of the musicians, this rarely happens, unless there is a strong imbalance between the two groups, but the sonic result of the encounter is a peculiar moment of the performance that can be clearly detected and judged by the listeners.

The consideration of the spatial unfolding of this music can also give us clues in a historical dimension. Having participated in this Carnival for over forty years, I am now able to tell the difference between the paths taken by the groups in the period from the 1970s to the present day. One aspect that is clear to me, in observing the difference between today and forty years ago, is the dramatic spatial change, linked to a striking modification in the social distribution of the people in the village space brought about by the earthquake of 1980. After that day, many of the locals moved from the historic part to the new areas of the village, and, accordingly, the procession has also changed path, privileging the new streets, and gradually abandoning the old ones. This is just one example of the strict relationship between social structure and structure of the performance. While in the 1970s the privileged part was the historic part of the village, with stops for collective circle dances in the old village square of Piazza S. Giovanni, nowadays the dancing mostly takes place on the wide Via S. Francesco in the new section of the village, along the old Appian way, thereby marking a shift in the importance of the social areas within Montemarano. While in the past most of the people – and above

all the prominent families – lived in the historic part, nowadays, especially after the earthquake of 1980, it is the new district of Via S. Francesco (Via Appia) that has grown in terms of the number of buildings, and this is where the main shops are now located. As a consequence, during today's Carnival, the masquerades 'venture' once or twice into the historic district, while most of the processional dance, including the final collective dance, takes place in the new part.



Figure 5 Map of Montemarano with processional paths.

Therefore, a study of the space of the musical performance can also give us meaningful insight into the patterns of change of a society and of how a community gives meaning to its social space, including a fundamental diachronic perspective.

### *Diachronic dimension*

As was demonstrated in the last point of the previous paragraph, change is apparent in this Carnival and, of course, it also affects performance. Change can be noticed at several levels. It is therefore important to consider not only space, but also the diachronic dimension that involves the performing practice, which includes time spans of decades as well as the analysis of the unfolding of a performance that lasts for just one day of the Carnival.

As regards the first aspects, in which the ethnographic and the historiographic methods are somehow merged, the most significant event that occurred in the Montemaranese tarantella in the course of the twentieth Century, in my opinion, was the introduction of the clarinet. A local musician, Domenico Ambrosini (‘Mbrusino), who used to perform in a marching band, was the first to use a clarinet to accompany the danced procession in the 1940s. Lack of

space prevents further elaboration on this important change here,<sup>8</sup> but I would like to stress how the use of the clarinet instead of the the *ciaramella* (the local shawm) had a significant effect on the performing practice. First of all, the clarinet is a more versatile, agile instrument, and allows the performer to go on longer with less fatigue. Furthermore, the clarinet allows its player to exploit the possibility of tonal modulations, and to also use the minor mode, which is not built into the scale of the *ciaramella* which permits the use of major and the so-called lydian mode (with the augmented fourth) that is widespread in the area of Campania folk music. Thus, the music and the motive have changed ever since. As an example, tonal modulations are used by the musicians to conduct (and control) the emotional intensity of the dance, and have become a fundamental tool in the interaction between musicians and dancers (see above, social interaction). By the way, in my opinion this change (and the musical richness deriving from it) was expedient in fostering the resilience of this feast if compared to other similar ones that take (or took) place in neighbouring areas.

Although we have to rely on oral history (which sometimes turns into a sort of mythical reconstruction) and on the memory of those who were affiliated with, and pupils, of 'Mbrusino to reconstruct this foundational event of the modern Montemarane tarantella, on a shorter time scale there are notable patterns of change that I have been able to witness over the last decades. One of these which is still underway is the turn towards giving more importance to an increase in sound volume. This has prompted the presence of a larger number of musicians in the ensemble, which is still made up of clarinet, accordion, and frame drum. While in the 1970s the ensemble only had three players, one for each instrument (with the occasional addition of one or two extra frame drums), today we often witness the presence in the ensemble of two (or even three) clarinets, several accordions, and even more frame drums (sometimes, up to ten). As far as the musical performing practice is concerned, this change implies a shift from attention to the details of a fine elaboration of the melodies and of the rhythmic formulae in a constant improvisation to lesser finesse in improvisation in favour of the power of the sound, considered the trademark of a successful ensemble during the procession.

In my opinion, two main factors have prompted this change. One of these lies in the fact that nowadays there has been an increase of the number of musicians in Montemarano. This increase is due to the income opportunities that becoming a musician gives to young people today, who can earn money by playing during Carnival but, most of all, throughout the rest of the year at festivals, ceremonies, and on other festive occasions. Therefore, several musicians want to be present and perform during the procession as a sort of self-promotion in order to seek job opportunities for the remainder of the year. But the main factor lies in the fascination that the neo folk-revival has for Italian audiences, including the musicians of Montemarano. Within the general phenomenon of heritagization and festivalization that is taking place throughout Italy, and at a global level, I am mostly referring, in connection to Monte-



marano, to the recent phenomenon of the neo-pizzica and of the “La notte della taranta” festival<sup>9</sup> that takes place during the summer in the Apulian region of Salento. This festival attracts tens of thousands of people and has created a new musical model with a number of very skilled musicians performing on stage, a sort of orchestra of mostly folk instruments in which the frame drum often features. This is something very different from the traditional ensemble of that region, and which nowadays is becoming an aesthetic and musical model of success for other communities. It is within this framework that we must view the shift occurring in Montemarano from small ensembles with high improvisation to the larger ensembles with reduced improvisation. The peak is reached at the end of the masquerade when the two main ensembles gather in the evening in via San Francesco, not far from each other, and start a sort of competition based mostly on the number of followers, but also on the number of musicians involved.

In order to evaluate performance, therefore, one must be aware of the social and cultural conditions that favour and prompt change, since the answers cannot lie only in the music itself which, becomes, rather, an indicator of wider change within the community.

### **Provisional conclusions in the form of an anecdote**

In these concluding remarks, I would like to present a description of a brief sequence in which all the elements analysed above are combined in a short time span of less than five minutes, drawn from a recording of mine made a few years ago.

It is the evening, around eight o'clock, and the two main groups gather in Via S. Francesco for the final part of the performance. The groups are close to each other, and the aim of this moment is to show off as much as possible, in order to obtain the audience's approval as to who has prevailed. Yet, exhaustion starts to steep in as, by then, the musicians have been playing for nearly six hours mastering the cold winter weather of this mountainous village.

First, we can hear the clarinet player, Tiziano, performing the tarantella. He is young and not so expert, showing his tiredness after so much playing. Because of this, as more energy is required, a more rested and experienced player, Gianni, jumps in, adding new vigour and more experience to the music, necessary at this crucial moment of the feast. Significantly, the motives he chooses to play are those that are just right for the moment: first, he plays the melody corresponding to the text *L'ammo fatti ritirà* [We made them withdraw] in defiance of the other group, alternating it with the new melody that his group created for that Carnival, a sort of ‘banner’ of his masquerade, and which only that group plays. At this point, having recovered some energy and confidence, Tiziano (the other clarinet) also joins in, and they play together as a pair. Then, the music goes on insisting on these two motives, while a certain strong background noise made by the crowd and the other

groups located at the different corners of this ample crossroad becomes more noticeable.

I could go on with this description, but it seems to me that this should suffice to recapitulate some of the main points I have tried to convey in my chapter.

This is a clear example of the way in which the theoretical kaleidoscopic model drawn from the formal analysis, while enabling the musicians to choose with some important margin of freedom their musical path, is adapted, through the performance, to the different needs and functions of the music in relation to the feast. Therefore, this analytical model cannot be fully grasped without understanding how it can be applied within the living context of the performance. In order to do this, one must consider the complex network of social interactions, the relations with space, the diachronic dimension, how the music is embodied by both musicians and dancers, and how it is emotionally lived by all the participants in the Carnival. We could also state that it is the performative context that also shapes the kaleidoscopic model of the music. In other terms, the attempt must be to work towards an integrated model for the analysis of performance that can take into account a network of elements in their interrelations, calling on different methods and approaches, including that of the participant-observation of the researcher.

Performance can be seen as everything that is in between the text, from written to implicit oral mode or the 'script', to borrow the term suggested by Cook (2003: 206), and its concrete actualisation. It is right in this 'space' that a number of imponderable elements intervene, elements that are usually overlooked and which, on the contrary become the 'rasa' of music.

In this chapter, I intended to offer my contribution to a wide-open debate, in trying to advance the understanding of such a rich musical process whose complexity actually seems to increase every time I come near it. I also wanted to tell the story of my own 'research path' that took me from a strongly analytical approach for understanding how this music 'works' to an approach that encompasses a number of variants that I believe are crucial – and in this the ethnographic approach plays a fundamental role – for the understanding of the unfolding of music considered in its social cultural and historical (and economic) implications.

## Notes

- 1 See Cecchi and Lutz's chapter in this portal.
- 2 In fact, this quotation is drawn indirectly from a paper published by Bernard Lortat-Jacob in response to a paper by Jean-Jacques Nattiez in which the debate revolved around the limits of a musical analysis that does not take into consideration contextual aspects in the wider meaning of the term (Lortat-Jacob 1996a).
- 3 Improvisation is a topic that was linked to performance in several ethnomusicological studies. See, among others, Lortat-Jacob 1987; Nettl and

- Russel 1989; Solis and Nettl 2009.
- 4 This brief paper contains Blacking's introductory remarks to a session he coordinated at the Twelfth Congress of the International Musicological Society, Berkeley 1977. Participants included Isabel Aretz, John Baily, Ernst L. Heins, Gerhard Kubik, Mwesa Isaiah Mapoma, Norma McLeod, Meki Nzewi and Ricardo D. Trimillos.
  - 5 On the history of clarinet in Montemarano, and on its peculiar sound, see Tulli 1999–2000.
  - 6 An important reference concerning this aspect of the choice of those with whom one does want to play (or sing), is the work of Bernard Lortat-Jacob in his *Canti di Passione* (Lortat-Jacob 1996b).
  - 7 One of the most renowned clarinet players, Giacomo Di Dio ("Giacomino") is proud to say that he was the first to perform the whole cycle of fifths in the tarantella, returning to the starting tonality.
  - 8 I have written more extensively about this issue in another recent paper. See Giuriati 2016.
  - 9 La Notte della Taranta is a festival that began in 1998, and takes place in Salento, the southernmost area of Apulia, in which several tens of thousands of people gather every year in the month of August to dance to the rhythm of the neo-pizzica, a music derived from the traditional healing tarantella (Santoro 2009; Gervasi 2017).

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