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Dallapiccola and the Politics of Commitment: Re-reading *Il prigioniero*

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Introduction: Dallapiccola, Sartre and the Dialectic

Well over half a century since its premiere, Luigi Dallapiccola's 'prologo e un atto' *Il prigioniero* (1944-48) remains the only Italian opera since Puccini's *Turandot* (1926) to have come anywhere close to a footing in the international repertory. New productions have been announced for 2008 in the most prestigious of houses (La Scala, Milan, and the Paris Opéra), which will bring the total of new productions mounted since 2000 to thirteen. Even allowing for the fact that three of these were associated with the composer's centenary in 2004 (when one would have expected a greater than usual interest), this is an impressive record for a twentieth-century opera, let alone a twelve-note one.[1] After a downturn in fortunes during the 1980s and 90s, when it more or less disappeared from the world's stages, Dallapiccola's best-known work has evidently recovered something of the success of its early 1960s heyday – when, as his compositional colleague Riccardo Malipiero (1914-2003) put it, the word was that, 'in the future, *Il prigioniero* will be the *Cavalleria Rusticana* of our time'.[2] The notion of a popularity of this kind may seem absurd. But the statistics of forty-five years ago can be startling: 'The publisher records that in the first dozen years after its première, there were no fewer than 186 performances of this modern opera on radio, concert platforms and stage'.[3] One wonders why the latter decades of the century should have proved the prediction reported by Malipiero so wrong. And also: what has happened such that the work should once again have come into favour? 1

Some suggestions will be put forward in due course. In an initial approach to *Il prigioniero*, we should ask how the success came about in the first place. Though immediate – the artists received seven curtain calls, the composer four[4] – it was hardly self-evident. As critics have complained ever since the stage premiere – at the Teatro Comunale, Florence, on 20 May 1950, as part of the 13th Maggio Musicale (*Il prigioniero* had previously been heard in a RAI concert broadcast from Turin, on 1 December 1949) – the opera is theatrically problematic. Hans Keller was characteristically outspoken. 'The greatest part of the work', he wrote, 'is immensely expressive and impressive as long as you don't look at the stage. For if you look you don't see what you hear: the "action" chiefly consists of the drama of the prisoner's inner life. I have not met a musician who did not object to the untheatrical character of the piece.' For the Torinese critic and musicologist Massimo Mila (1910-88), it was as if Dallapiccola 'had in mind a form of oratorio- 2

like theatre [*teatro oratoriale*], where the physical presence of the actors and stage ends up as a cumbersome surplus, and all the dramatic substance of the action is transmitted through the music'.[5] *Il prigioniero* was carried in the opera house by its vivid neo-expressionist score. For Mila, the work brought to light 'a sense for the dramatic and theatrical use of music […] no less powerful than what we are accustomed to appreciate in a *Tosca*'.[6] The premiere was an instant music-historical event: Dallapiccola had written the first important twelve-note opera in Italian. '[E]ven at the time', writes David Osmond-Smith, it 'was seen as marking a crucial step forward […] after the war years'.[7] But the rapid progress of the work through the opera houses of all the major cities of Western Europe (and beyond) cannot be explained solely by reference to its music's aesthetic charge or technical novelty. As Malipiero put it, 'the springboard, the first gear that put in motion the mechanism of the interest of the whole world', was 'the subject matter'.[8] *Il prigioniero* is an opera of ideas, and has always been received as such. It is 'one of the great political operas', declares Anthony Arblaster: 'a direct and manifestly deeply felt response to the experience of fascism'.[9]

Like many commentators, Arblaster follows the composer, who considered his work an autobiographically informed instance of 'protest music', 'a protest against tyranny and oppression'.[10] Nor is this the only well-established reading that treats the opera as, before all else, 'political'. Another critical commonplace – a more complex and interesting guide, it is suggested, to the significance of *Il prigioniero* – is the characterisation of Dallapiccola's work of the late 1930s and 1940s as 'musica impegnata': 'committed music'.[11] The composer, Camillo Togni (1922-93), in an encyclopedia entry first published in 1964, tries harder than most to explain what this means. Appropriately, given the provenance of 'commitment', he quotes Sartre. 'By taking part in the singularity of our era, we ultimately make contact with the eternal, and it is our task […] to allow the eternal values implicit in our debates to be perceived'.[12] These words are carefully chosen for their ambiguity vis-à-vis the philosopher's atheism: Togni refers to Dallapiccola's 'religious humanism'. But as we shall see, in the case of *Il prigioniero* such care is unnecessary. Religion brings little comfort here. Dallapiccola is indeed close to Sartre, for whom man is 'absolute' only 'in his time, in his surroundings, on his parcel of earth'.[13] To put it another way, emphasising the philosophical heritage of Sartre's position: in so far as Dallapiccola's work is 'committed', it aspires to the quality of the dialectic. 3

Unmistakeably Hegelian in its metaphysical ambition, Sartre's argument is also Hegelian in structure. The conditions he presents as interdependent – 'the eternal' and 'the singularity of our era'; man as 'absolute' and man 'on his parcel of earth' – are, at the same time, dialectically opposed. Unlike 'analytic' or 'static' binaries, in which, as Fredric Jameson has explained, 'both poles […] are positive, both are existants, equally present to the naked eye', such dialectical oppositions involve 'differential perception'. They are a 'dynamic' combination of positive and negative terms.[14] How could man's activities be simultaneously unconditioned ('absolute') and conditioned (grounded 'in his time, in his surroundings')? To common sense, the poles simply cancel each other out. Nor is the above a digression of purely philosophical – that is, logical – interest. Sartre's words here are taken from a discussion of literature. Following Hegel, his aesthetics too are thoroughly dialectical. The 'committed' work of art is a mode – the result of a dialectical process – of knowledge. *Il prigioniero*, on this view, is seen as negating its 4

autonomy, as going out into its socio-political other ('taking part in the singularity of [its] era'). It experiences the latter, moreover, not from any pre-ordained perspective, but such that it loses itself in the historical condition of spirit, grasps it from the inside. Returning to itself, the work displays its other as the content of its musical-dramatic form, striving by artistic means to make the truth of the age – what there is in it of 'eternal value' – transparent to all. It is a report on the state of human freedom, the manifestation of a desire (this is the specifically Sartrean political element) 'to change simultaneously the social condition of man and the concept he has of himself' in line with the 'distant goal' of '*liberation*'.[15] In simpler terms: the opera confronts audiences with an image of the world as they have made it. By this unpalatable reminder, it urges them to positive action.

The dialectical impulse in *Il prigioniero* is not hard to locate. It emerges, for example, from a consideration of the striking contrast – often noted – between Dallapiccola's libretto (which, like those of all his operas, he put together himself) and its principal source. Prompted by his wife, Laura, as the composer later recalled in a celebrated essay (henceforth the 'Genesis' essay), he decided to fashion a text from a short story, 'La torture par l'espérence' ('Torture Through Hope'), by the early symbolist writer, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam (1838-89). Many of the details of this sinister narrative of imaginary events during the Spanish Inquisition found their way into the opera. And yet Dallapiccola deleted the identity of the protagonist, named in the story as the Rabbi Aser Abarbanel. In the opera, he is simply 'The Prisoner'.[16] 5

We should doubtless be relieved that the work is not so 'topical' that – as Adorno felt with respect to Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*, op. 46 (1947) – it runs the risk of aestheticising real suffering, of making 'the unthinkable appear to have some meaning'.[17] Nevertheless, given Dallapiccola's intention to write 'an opera that could be at once moving and contemporary despite its historical setting',[18] the removal of the Jewish name seems an odd decision. But this is precisely to miss the dialectical point. Villiers presents a fictional episode of the sixteenth century, comprehensible only in terms of a particular set of religious or political circumstances. His story resonates with particular events of the mid-twentieth century. And yet Dallapiccola removes the link that most encourages the resonance. The period of his opera's composition saw many forms of persecution, and *Il prigioniero* is intended to protest on behalf of those who suffered under all of them. It will not merely link two particular instances of persecution but speak, dialectically, of the particular and the general at once. To keep the name, the composer explains, would have placed limits on the opera's scope. '[T]he tragedy of our time', he writes, is 'the tragedy of the persecution felt and suffered by the millions and tens of millions'. The 'problem' is 'now universal'.[19] Similarly, in an earlier version of the 'Genesis' essay, apropos the setting of a prayer by Mary Queen of Scots in his first work of 'protest music', *Canti di prigionia* for chorus and instrumental ensemble (1938-41), Dallapiccola declares his 'intention […] to transform the prayer of the queen as an individual into a song for all mankind'. 'I wanted to dwell at length upon the word "libera" in the music', he continues, 'to have this divine word shouted by everyone'.[20] 6

The aim is lofty. And signs of trouble were quick to appear. In the same essay, Dallapiccola is annoyed that it is apparently no longer the name Hitler that 7

audiences associate with the figure of Philip II of Spain (present in *Il prigioniero* as an unseen source of malevolence), but 'some other character'.[21] In a short piece published in London in 1960, he was less guarded. At the premiere of his opera, he writes, the Italian Communist Party, 'whose attentions had been lavished on me in the past […] pretended to believe my barbs were aimed at the Soviet dictator of 1950'.[22] The accusation of bad faith echoes an accusation made in the earlier version of the 'Genesis' essay: that 'many people *refused* to understand the libretto'.[23] But if Dallapiccola had wanted to restrict the work to an allegory of Nazi barbarism – to ensure that its audiences saw only the malign influence of Hitler behind his opera's cruel outcome – then the name of the protagonist should not have been deleted. If the work was to have universal contemporary significance, then it is difficult to see why its 'protest against tyranny and oppression', even if not aimed specifically at the Soviet Union, should not have the Show Trials and the Gulag in its sights just as much as it might have the Gestapo and Auschwitz. Indeed, this is just the connection one would expect a Cold War audience to make. Dallapiccola's insistence that in 1942-43, when he wrote the libretto, he 'was combating only one kind of dictator',[24] may perhaps be enough to clear him of anti-Stalinism (at least at this stage of his career), but the meaning of the text that emerged at the end of the decade could not be circumscribed according to his wishes.

8 From the vehemence with which the composer Mario Zafred (1922-87) denounced *Il prigioniero*, in his capacity as music critic on the Rome edition of the Communist daily, *L'Unità*, it is clear that something more than aesthetic judgment was at stake. In a review entitled 'Altoparlanti e confusione nell'opera di Dallapiccola' ('Loudspeakers and Confusion in Opera by Dallapiccola') – the echo of the notorious 1936 *Pravda* denunciation of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (1930-32), 'Chaos instead of Music', may not have been unintentional – the work was defined as 'sonorous filth' ('melma sonora'): a 'muddle of sounds which not even the most educated and refined ear would succeed in disentangling'.[25] Dallapiccola continued until his death to refer to Communist hostility towards the opera, in a manner that suggests he was deeply wounded by this attack.[26] But it cannot have been entirely surprising. The failure of audiences correctly to identify the referent of *Il prigioniero* – if indeed the work is supposed to have a single contemporary referent – is only half the story. As Dallapiccola explained in 1960, opposition to the opera sprang not so much from the work as from an article he had published in January 1950 under the title 'Musica pianificata' ('Planned Music').[27]

9 This is an extraordinary piece of writing, worth dwelling on at length. An account of Dallapiccola's aesthetic stance, as revealed in this and other essays published at the same period, will place under considerable pressure the 'dialectical', 'truth-telling' image of the composer's work sketched above. To then situate *Il prigioniero* in the context of its original reception, at the height of the 'cultural Cold War' – a climate, as commentators have recently been so keen to emphasise, marked by widespread instrumentalisation of artists and their work – will be to view the success of this 'political' opera in a new and equivocal light. The confidence of a Hans Werner Henze, that '[a]s a good Italian intellectual, [Dallapiccola] belonged of course to the Italian left', is difficult to sustain.[28] But the ultimate aim of the present essay is not to produce a critique of *Il prigioniero* or its composer. Instead,

the latter stages will endeavour to rise to what Adorno, in a commentary on his own book on Wagner, calls a 'Rettung',[29] a 'rescue' or 'salvation' of the opera: even (or especially) at the expense of Dallapiccola's own thoughts on contemporary music and its relation to history and society. To that end, Adorno's theorisation of these issues will be a crucial resource. But Adorno will prove useful only up to a point. In a concluding attempt to go beyond critique (to the 'Rettung', in other words), this essay will turn to recent developments in dialectical psychoanalysis. The politically charged Lacanianism of Slavoj Žižek, it is suggested, will permit us to recover a sense of *Il prigioniero* as a 'committed' work: one that continues to have resonance for our own time.

The Aesthetics of Angst

'Musica pianificata' is a review, hostile and sarcastic in tone, of a classic document 10
of the period, an 'Outline for a Five-Year Plan for the Composers and Musicians of Czechoslovakia', issued in April 1949. In the face of proposals for musical collectivisation, Dallapiccola insists on the indissolubly personal, necessarily solitary, nature of artistic creation. He reads condemnation of the artist who would remain sitting at his desk, instead of throwing himself into the life of the people and their struggle for liberation, as a product of fear:

> The solitary man, enclosed within four walls, can become a dangerous person. The solitary man, enclosed within himself, thinks. The saints had their greatest revelations alone. And the man who thinks is an individual, no longer a number in a collectivity: an individual with his joy and his sorrow. Care [*Sorge*] can slip through the keyhole and 'critique' too can be born in solitude.[30]

This is a characteristically allusive passage. The nod to Goethe is clear.[31] To place Dallapiccola adequately amid his contemporaries and predecessors in aesthetics is no easy task, however. The association of 'solitude' and 'critique' is one hint. Dallapiccola would have had to be quick, but he would not have had to read far in the Schoenberg essay of Adorno's *Philosophie der neuen Musik* to come across the section entitled 'Dialektik der Einsamkeit' ('Dialectic of Loneliness'), which seems to describe precisely the relationship between artist and world he has in mind.[32]

Isolation is no bar to dialectics. As Adorno puts it, '"Lonely discourse" expresses 11
more about the tendency of society than does communicative discourse' (48). The expressionist compositions of Schoenberg and Webern, which strip music of conventions, destroy the self-sufficient character of the work of art. If dramatic music from Monteverdi to Verdi presented images of emotions, the unmediated subjectivity of expressionism registers 'undisguised stirrings of the unconscious itself, shocks, traumas'. This radical music tends towards knowledge. Powerless to maintain any distance between itself and reality, it 'perceives […] the untransfigured suffering of mankind' (42-47). For Dallapiccola, too, 'lonely discourse' stands in relation to truth. As he put it in 1949, 'solitude […] does not by any means imply lack of contact with the *souls* of men'.[33] And yet one should not rush to identify his thought with that of Adorno. In *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, music's preservation of 'social truth' causes it to 'wither away'. If art is to retain its

authenticity in an inhuman ‘organized society’, it must withhold its ability ‘to speak to people’ (28). Dallapiccola thinks the reverse. As he declares in what would remain his major post-war aesthetic statement, the imposing ‘Die moderne Musik und ihre Beziehung zu den übrigen Künsten’ (‘Modern Music and its Relation to the Other Arts’), delivered in 1951, great art is recognised as such because it ‘fully realizes the expression of an inner truth, of a universal truth, which grips the whole of humanity’.[34]

> It would be a mistake to suppose that the dialectical grandeur of Dallapiccola’s ideas necessarily involves a direct appeal to the German philosophical tradition. The pre-eminent Italian aesthetician of the period, Benedetto Croce (1866-1952), was another Hegelian: by no means an orthodox one, but far less radical than Adorno. For Croce, in his 1917 article, ‘Il carattere di totalità dell’espressione artistica’,

Every genuine artistic representation is itself and is the universe, the universe in *that* individual form and *that* individual form as the universe. In every utterance, every fanciful creation, of the poet, there lies the whole of human destiny, all human hopes, illusions, griefs, joys, human grandeurs and miseries, the whole drama of reality perpetually evolving and growing out of itself in suffering and joy.[35]

But Dallapiccola is no straightforward Crocean either. If the composer declares that the ‘beauty of the work of art is guaranteed by the complete correspondence of truth and representation’, he also insists, moving in an Adornian direction, that truthful representation ‘can only be achieved in artistic terms by means of a new “technique”’. ‘[I]ncluded in any work of art’, he writes, citing Leonardo da Vinci, ‘is *the thought of the new*’.[36] To a Crocean, such emphasis on technical novelty contradicts Dallapiccola’s equally strong conviction that the source of the work of art, if not of all human activity and knowledge, is ‘intuition’ and ‘intense emotion’ (‘Erschütterung’). And indeed, technique does not stand at the centre of his argument. ‘The impulse which compels us to write, paint and so forth’, Dallapiccola writes, ‘is the inner necessity we experience to grant an inner movement of feeling perceptible expression’.[37] He backs himself up with a quotation – not from Croce, but from the lengthy passage of aesthetic reflection, the ‘Adoration perpétuelle’, which stands at the centre of *Le temps retrouvé*, the final volume of *À la recherche du temps perdu*:

> So I had already come to the conclusion that we have no freedom at all in the face of the work of art, that we cannot shape it according to our wishes, but that as it pre-exists us, and both because it is necessary and hidden, and because it is, as it were, a law of nature, we have to discover it.[38]

This is a crucial sentence for Dallapiccola: ‘much quoted’, he writes in another place, ‘yet never quoted enough!’.[39] Its roots lie in Schopenhauer, above all, in the declaration, from the third book of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, that the true artist ‘anticipates the beautiful *prior to experience*’. As the philosopher explains, the artist can do this to the extent that he is ‘the “in-itself” of nature’: part of the will in its self-objectification. The sculptor of genius loses his individuality in the

contemplation of the human form and comes to objective knowledge of its Platonic Idea. He finds himself 'dimly aware *a priori*' of the beautiful shape his sculpture will take: he 'so to speak, *understands nature's half-spoken words*'. In the case of poetry, where the possibility exists to apprehend 'the Idea of mankind', the artist's knowledge is, similarly, 'half *a priori*', for 'it is the nature of his own self that is objectified […] for him' in his work.[40]

13 The argument is reasonably clear – once one has mapped out the philosophical framework. But Proust is far from loyal to his source. As Duncan Large has argued, the novelist's evident familiarity with Schopenhauer formed the basis for a Nietzschean 'overcoming' of the older philosopher's position.[41] It is a point that is important to bear in mind, for the same overcoming can be located in a text that exerted an influence comparable to that of Proust on the formation of Dallapiccola's aesthetic position, Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre*.

14 In Schopenhauer's philosophy of music, the composer is able to bypass the contemplation of Ideas (which are the will's 'most *adequate objectivity*'), in favour of self-sacrifice to instinct. For 'music is as *immediate* an objectification and copy of the whole *will* as the world itself is'.[42] There are many places where Schoenberg is happy to go along with this kind of thinking.[43] But elsewhere, above all in the narrative of the birth of the 'new man', the 'young artist' who has the 'courage' to submit 'wholly to his inclinations', a different note is sounded. In an instance of what the author of *Also sprach Zarathustra* termed *amor fati*, the artist's involuntary tastes ('inclinations') are affirmed as his own.[44] As Large makes clear, such an active contrast with Schopenhauer's passivity is just as typically Proustian. In another of Dallapiccola's favourite passages, the narrator of *À la recherche* speaks of reading his 'inner book of unknown signs'. This is a process for which none but the reader can provide rules: it is 'one of those acts of creation in which nobody can take our place or even collaborate with us'.[45] No longer is the artist subject to a pre-existent 'law of nature'. As Large observes, the explication of involuntary memories – the celebrated starting point of Proust's discussion of aesthetics – is here 'figured as a dynamic process of "reading" a self-text'.[46]

15 It would be wrong to suggest that either Proust or Schoenberg manages a complete overcoming of Schopenhauer. They tend to hesitate between the two poles: loss of individuality in the contemplation of Ideas (or self-sacrifice to instinct) on the one hand, affirmation of individuality on the other. Interestingly, though, there is one place in the *Harmonielehre* where Schoenberg attempts a Hegelian synthesis. If he argues for Nietzschean individualism with respect to composers' styles, he also notes that this is an effect of proximity. With historical distance, individualities are sublated, reappearing as expressive of 'the spirit of mankind'. Thus Schoenberg can speak of 'what is most important about the individual, that most profound introspection into an absorption with his own nature, that which leads him to express: the nature of mankind' (411-412). This notion might have been Dallapiccola's direct model, but he does not cite it. Nor does he pay attention to Schoenberg's warnings about fulfilment: 'Integrity, truthfulness never turns into truth', writes the author of the *Harmonielehre*, 'for it would hardly be bearable if we knew truth' (326). For Dallapiccola, it is precisely truth – the 'deep inner truth of humanity' – that the solitary, self-reading artist may reveal.

This essence does not require historical distance to be grasped. As Dallapiccola sees it, the Idea of humanity is revealed in the art of today just as much as in that of eight hundred years ago: in the work of Cézanne, the Douanier Rousseau and Van Gogh just as much as in that of the thirteenth-century artists Duccio, Cimabue and Margaritone d'Arezzo. 'Faced with artistic success', Dallapiccola declares, 'we always find ourselves *outside time*'.[47] That sounds like Proust at his most Schopenhauerian. But once again Dallapiccola asserts his independence. For the narrator of *À la recherche*, the extra-temporal contemplation of essences gives pleasure: the only pleasure that is 'both real and fertile'.[48] For Dallapiccola, what the artist or spectator learns in the extra-temporal sphere is disturbing: 16

> It is angst, probably, that is the primary emotion that governs humanity today; an angst that springs from a radical alteration of our civilization, an angst that has come about from the way the world seems constantly to be on the eve of its destruction, that arises from our lack of certainty that we will find solutions for our thoroughly complicated problems, an angst, finally, that springs from the search for God, who seems to be keeping himself hidden.[49]

At this point, the argument seems to be spiralling out of control. These are not eternal problems: they belong explicitly to modernity.[50] But this is, in fact, the crux of the issue. In contrast to Proust and Schoenberg, Dallapiccola makes a concerted effort to think particular and universal together, on the grandest scale. Drawing on an essay, *Expressionism*, by the Austrian man of letters, Hermann Bahr (1863-1934), he sketches an all-encompassing philosophy of art history. If, in impressionism (according to Bahr), the de-individualised artist sees 'with his bodily eyes', in expressionism, the passionately individual creator sees with 'the eye of the spirit'. While impressionism – 'the completion, the climax of classic art' – increased 'the outer vision to its highest possibilities', striving to make man 'a complete *passivum* of his senses', expressionism 'seeks to dominate the outer world by the powers inherent in man'. The result is a recovery of 'the oldest Art expression of mankind': that of 'all primitive and all Oriental art'.[51]

Bahr does not grant the spiritual eye 'truth'. But, for Dallapiccola, this is precisely what 'inner hearing' – 'the ear of the spirit' – can reveal. In art that is faithful to the conventions of classical beauty (the 'physical', or 'bodily', variety), truth is covered up. When creators strip aside the veil, they are suddenly our contemporaries. The most notable case is Mozart. Plumbing the truth he carried 'in the depths of his consciousness', in the finale of *Don Giovanni*, Act 2, he found himself impelled to break with the conventions of his age and glimpse the future. Not only do the Commendatore's tenths (at 'Risolvi: Verrai?') anticipate the wide intervals of expressionism; the governing rhythm following his entrance (dotted crotchet, quaver) adumbrates the Bergian *Hauptrhythmus*.[52] 17

Expressionism as Ideology

We have come a long way from Croce, who would never have countenanced this positing of angst as the trans-historical essence of humanity. The necessity Dallapiccola is thereby able to attribute to Mozart would have been anathema to 18

him.[53] And it is not only Croce who would argue that, in his attempt to shore up the 'truth' of expressionism, Dallapiccola has taken a step too far. Adorno is particularly instructive here. In *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, as for Dallapiccola, Schoenberg's music lays bare the tormented soul of mankind. Expressionism's rending of the veil of convention is, furthermore, the revelation of the culminating stage in a despairing narrative of human destiny – the 'dialectic of Enlightenment' – whose roots lie in prehistory.[54] And yet Adorno advances the idea of the universality of expressionism only to criticise it. In its 'critique of illusion and play' (*Philosophie der neuen Musik*, 42-46), Schoenberg's music of the period immediately preceding the First World War is hostile to the autonomous work. At the same time, Adorno suggests, in its characteristic polarisation between frenzy and glacial stillness, the 'seismographic sketching of traumatic shocks' becomes a principle for the creation of the very autonomous compositions – by extension, for the safeguarding of the very bourgeois subjectivity – that expressionism sought to shun (47, 52-53). In Scene 3 of the 'drama with music', *Die glückliche Hand*, op. 18 (1910-13), the 'secret of loneliness' is revealed. Its angst is real, but only as the fear of 'those cut off from material production' that they might have to wake up to reality (48, 49).

19 Dallapiccola may raise the topics of 'solitude' and 'critique', but such Adornian candour with respect to the social meaning of his work stands outside his mode of thought. As the *Don Giovanni* examples show, his conception is precisely what Adorno calls 'loneliness as style' (51-52). The authenticity of autonomous subjectivity remains above suspicion. Not even twelve-note technique can touch it. Dallapiccola does concede that serialism 'has given us laws that expressionism lacked'. It offers composers an alternative to 'being utterly individual'. But in their twelve-note music, Schoenberg, Berg and Webern were all successful in developing 'their own special personality that was unique to their art'. Future generations will recognise that, 'for the most part' all three wrote music 'for *inner listening*'.[55] As he puts it, '[p]ersonally, I have adopted this method because it is the only one, up till now, that has allowed me to express what I feel I have to express'.[56]

20 To return to our starting point, a greater contrast with the ideals of socialist realism would be hard to imagine. In Proust, the Dallapiccola of 'Musica pianificata' evidently thought, the commissars had met their match. Rejecting demands for an art that would take its subject matter directly from current problems, he cites the narrator's insistence that the artist's only duty is to his 'inner book'. He can serve his country only in his capacity as artist, in his concentration on the 'truth that lies before him'. Questions of patriotism, of law, morality and so on, have no place in his work.[57] Such insistence on the autonomy of the aesthetic might well be read as a Crocean commonplace, typical of Italian intellectuals of Dallapiccola's generation. But the composer's modernism drives him, once more, to positions that Croce would have found intolerable. Against the Czech musicians' demand that composers should aim for success with the public, he invokes Cocteau: 'Cultivate what the public holds against you: it's you'.[58]

21 This is an important moment. If the earlier critique of Dallapiccola's aesthetic stance in terms of 'loneliness as style' appeared somewhat abstract, now the ideological presuppositions of his argument unravel before our eyes. Great art, we

recall, is recognised because it 'fully realizes the expression of an inner truth, of a universal truth, which grips the whole of humanity'. But for all expressionism's insight into 'the *souls* of men', Dallapiccola does not suppose that angst-ridden truth will be universally comprehensible. Not everyone can enjoy a work of art. Enjoyment presupposes 'a minimum of preparation', a certain '*habituation* to a given language'.[59]

22 There need be no prima facie objection to these statements. At their core is a matter of fact – albeit one that, within what has been called the 'ideology of natural taste', is typically overlooked or rejected.[60] The problem with Dallapiccola's position, and the root of his incompatibility with both the liberal Croce and the Marxist Adorno, lies in the way this evidence of what the author of *Philosophie der neuen Musik* calls 'the debt of privilege' (28) – the separation of mental and manual labour – is shrugged off. As Dallapiccola put it in 1948, 'I don't think I have ever believed in the fable – I don't know whether it is romantic or demagogical – of "art for everyone". I am, by nature, more disposed to think of an art for the "happy few"'. As for the masses, he suggests, let them have Beethoven Nine.[61]

23 The issue of 'commitment' is once more close to hand. In the first paragraph of 'Musica pianificata', Dallapiccola refers, with evident approval, to an 'exhaustive and […] drastic' review of the so-called 'Prague Manifesto' of 1948 – the forerunner of the Czech five-year plan – by the Polish-born Paris-based composer and writer on music, René Leibowitz (1913-72). Under the title 'Le musicien engagé', this had appeared in early 1949 in Sartre's journal, *Les temps modernes*.[62] Given the equivalent positions then occupied by Dallapiccola and Leibowitz in their respective countries, as leading exponents and apologists for twelve-note technique, one might assume that the composer of *Il prigioniero* was inspired to his diatribe by a sense of dodecaphonic solidarity. The socialist realists had, after all, criticised the way 'so called serious music' was becoming 'ever more individualistic and subjective in terms of its content, more complicated and artificial in terms of its form'.[63] On reading Leibowitz's text, however, one is struck how, following the lead of Sartre, this French disciple of Schoenberg shows sympathy for the egalitarianism of the socialist realist proposals.

24 To be sure, Leibowitz pours scorn on the idea that music could return to the simplicity that socialist realism has in mind. And yet he is primarily concerned to lament the lack of clarity among Communist musicians as to how to put their plans into practice. If he commends dodecaphony, it is because, in a manner apparently influenced by Adorno (with whom, according to Sabine Meine, he had made contact in 1946[64]), he sees musical technique as the locus of the mediation between music and society these intellectuals had failed to define. In contrast to Adorno, Leibowitz puts forward an optimistic vision. Musical innovation is tied to social innovation: 'The committed musician is he who, defying the established order on the musical level, thereby defies the established order on the social level, and thus participates in his way in the establishment of a free society'.[65]

25 One might begin to wonder how the slogan of 'impegno' ever came to be attached to Dallapiccola. In his aristocratic anti-egalitarianism and insistence on the apolitical nature of creative activity, he occupies a position a good way to Leibowitz's right. Indeed, it seems the Italian was taking the opportunity in 'Musica

pianificata' to distance himself not just from socialist realism but – against everything asserted at the start of this essay – from Sartrean existentialism as well.[66] The situation is complex: a careful look at the circumstances surrounding the premiere of *Il prigioniero* will be necessary to untangle it. But it is high time we started to look at the opera 'itself', beginning with the chilling vision of its libretto.

Totalitarian Sadism

Dallapiccola's observation that, up until the premiere, Communist critics had lavished their attention on him, appears especially significant when one starts to look at this text. Any Communist intellectual chancing upon it in the late 1940s would surely have assumed its author was a comrade. Most tendentiously, the libretto can be read as a ferocious condemnation not just of the tyranny of fascism but of the Catholic Church as well. Set, as we have noted, during the Spanish Inquisition, it depicts priests as politically reactionary and inhuman torturers. In what Massimo Venuti calls his 'inexplicable', 'irrational' wickedness, Dallapiccola's Grand Inquisitor exemplifies nothing less than the Kantian 'diabolical Evil', carrying out 'a cruel aesthetic joke' (in Žižek's definition) 'just for the sake of it, not for any external goal like power'.[67] 26

Encouraged by his Jailer, who addresses him as 'fratello' ('brother'), and tells him to 'hope fervently' – 'you must hope to the point of agony' – the Prisoner slips out of his cell (the door has been left open) and, after a terrifying journey along a seemingly endless passage in the *Official* in Zaragoza (the Inquisitorial prison in which he is being kept), emerges into a beautiful starlit spring night. He is allowed only a few moments to rejoice in his freedom. At 'the height of ecstasy', as the Prisoner 'spreads out his arms in a gesture of love for all humanity', he finds his embrace returned by that of the Grand Inquisitor. From his greeting, 'fratello', the Prisoner learns that it was him posing as the Jailer all along. 'On the eve of your salvation', the Grand Inquisitor asks, 'why ever did you want to leave us?'. Taking his victim by the hand, 'with great tenderness', he leads him towards the rear of the stage, where a 'ruddy light' has begun flicker. 'Il rogo!', the Prisoner cries out: 'The stake!'.[68] 27

The temptation to link the action of *Il prigioniero* to concrete events is strong. 'The fundamental argument against the "sincerity" of Nazi belief', writes Žižek, 28

> is their treatment of the Jews before their physical annihilation: in a torturous process of physical and mental humiliation, they first deprived them of their human dignity, reducing them to a subhuman level, and only *then* killed them. In this way, they implicitly acknowledged the humanity of the Jews: while they claimed that the Jews were in fact like rats or vermin, they first had to reduce them brutally to that status.[69]

The Grand Inquisitor is similarly hard to accept at face value. If he is so dismayed by the Prisoner's desire 'to leave us', if he genuinely believes the starlit night of the opera's conclusion to be 'the eve of your salvation' (as he tells his captive in 'a tone of the most sincere compassion'), then why does he find it necessary to reduce him to such a state of abjection? '"Hope…" the final torture… Of all I have suffered, the worst…', the Prisoner cries out, finally recognizing his deception. As

the Prisoner tells his Mother during her visit to his cell in Scene 1, since the Jailer first spoke his 'friendly word', 'fratello', he has begun to pray again. He prays in Scene 1 and twice in Scene 3. His first word on escaping is 'Alleluja!'. The Prisoner's hope is intertwined with his faith: if the one perishes, the other must also. Experienced as crushingly hollow, the Grand Inquisitor's question becomes a version of the inscription, 'Arbeit macht frei!', above the entrance to Auschwitz: confirmation that the Inquisition, like the 'final solution' – in Žižek's words – 'was carried out as a gigantic joke which submitted the victims to a supplementary act of gratuitous, cruel and ironic humiliation'.[70]

29 For Hannah Arendt, whose study, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, appeared the year after *Il prigioniero*, the most shocking aspect of the concentration camps was precisely this 'open anti-utility'.[71] The business of 'transforming the human personality into a mere thing' amounted to 'an unpunishable, unforgivable absolute evil' (438, 459). Arendt's invocation of Kant, for whom 'diabolical evil' is something that cannot even be conceived, is explicit. In the way they 'simply surpass our powers of understanding' (441), the camps are its realisation. The meaningless cruelty of Dallapiccola's Grand Inquisitor, we might say, serves to keep this unfathomable evil before audiences' eyes, as a terrible reminder.

30 But the opera has a subtler message. As *Il prigioniero* helps us to see, the Nazis had a ghastly rationale. Arendt herself points out that the mass destruction of individuality produced a situation where 'millions of human beings allowed themselves to be marched unresistingly into the gas chambers' (445). One notes how, at the close, the Prisoner needs only the gentlest of encouragement to move towards the stake. Moreover, far from testifying to a lack of Kant's 'pathological' – which is to say, all-too-human – motives (Arendt lists 'self-interest, greed, covetousness, resentment, lust for power, and cowardice' [459]), the Grand Inquisitor's inhuman behaviour points to the Nazis' thoroughly 'pathological' intentions. The Prisoner is being put to death, not for the sake of it, but because he is a heretic: a Protestant. That much can be gleaned from the conversation between two priests he interrupts in Scene 3: 'The Communion *sub utraque specie*… They deny the real Presence…'.[72] As far as these priests – and the Grand Inquisitor – are concerned, the Prisoner's execution is in accordance with divine will: just as the extermination of millions of Jews, far from being impossible to deduce from 'humanly comprehensible motives' (as Arendt would have it [ix]), was held to be in accordance with the infallible will of the Führer. 'Sacerdotes tui induantur justitiam', sings the off-stage chorus (of monks in the *Official*, according to the composer) in the first of the opera's two choral intermezzi: 'May thy priests be clothed with justice'.[73]

31 A psychoanalytic approach suggests that there is more, too, to the Grand Inquisitor's employment of 'pointless' torture than a means to a clean kill. In Žižek's account, the totalitarian Leader is a 'sadist pervert'. This is not 'the pre-theoretical, common-sense notion of a "sadist" as a person who fully wills and enjoys the suffering he inflicts upon others'. The Leader 'works for the enjoyment of the Other, not for his own: he becomes a sole instrument of the Other's Will'.[74] Nor is the notion of 'enjoyment' the standard one. It is Lacan's *jouissance*, 'usually identifiable' in Žižek's usage, as Sarah Kay points out, with 'surplus enjoyment': an unconscious pleasure in transgression that, urged on by the superego,

accompanies the desiring subject at all times.[75] In the 'perverse' case of totalitarianism, both desire and enjoyment are aligned with the Law. The Leader is the executant both of this Law – in *Il prigioniero*, the divine will – and its shadowy double. 'Sadism', writes Žižek, 'relies on the splitting of the field of the Law into Law *qua* "Ego-Ideal" – that is, a symbolic order which regulates social life and maintains social peace – and its obscene, superegotistical inverse'.[76]

For Arendt, Nazi power is cynical. It is only 'sympathizers' who believe. 'The party members', she writes, 'never believe public statements and are not supposed to' (383). As for the elite, they have a 'supreme contempt for all facts and all reality': 'freedom from the content of their own ideologies' (385, 387). A reading of *Il prigioniero* along these lines might run as follows: 'The Grand Inquisitor knows very well that the Inquisition is nothing more than a cloak for pointless torture in which he is fully implicated, nevertheless he carries on with its external rituals, to the point of promising salvation to those who will be meaninglessly killed'. The problem is that, as Žižek insists, this situation describes the normal functioning of ideology in a totalitarian state. The case of the elite involves a 'much more radical type of self-distance'. '[N]otwithstanding his awareness of manipulation', Žižek claims, 'Hitler basically believed in its results'. The Nazi inner circle maintained a 'simultaneous coexistence of the ultimate cynicism and the ultimate fanaticism': a 'psychotic split'.[77] 32

Despite what was suggested above, it cannot be taken for granted that the Jailer and the Grand Inquisitor are one and the same. Dallapiccola may insist that the two parts are to be played by a single singer; he thus indicates that they are two parts.[78] Their relationship is ambiguous. Better: the Grand Inquisitor is psychotically split in the way Žižek describes. There is a sense in which his question, 'On the eve of your salvation, why ever did you want to leave us?', is utterly cynical. At the same time, as the composer directs, it is 'most sincere'. But it is not so much the Grand Inquisitor who is 'split' as the Law he embodies. The 'pointless' torture of the Prisoner is the unspeakable truth of divine will, its necessary support. 'Power […] relies on an obscene supplement', which 'is operative only in so far as it remains unacknowledged, hidden from the public eye'.[79] This is why the Grand Inquisitor initiates the Prisoner's 'torture through hope' in disguise: in the form of a character who has only a shadowy existence. 33

For Žižek, 'identification with community is ultimately always based upon some shared guilt or, more precisely, upon the *fetishistic disavowal of this guilt*'.[80] As he explains, 34

> despite the public character of Nazi anti-Semitism, the relationship between the two levels, the text of the public ideology and its 'obscene' superego supplement, remained fully operative: Nazis themselves treated the Holocaust as a kind of collective 'dirty secret'. This fact not only posed no obstacle to the execution of the Holocaust – it precisely served as its libidinal support, since the very awareness that 'we are all together in it', that we participate in a common transgression, served as a cement to the Nazi collective coherence.[81]

The 'pointless' torture perpetrated in the camps follows the same logic. Its very

excess bears witness to the 'surplus-enjoyment provided by executing orders': it too, argues Žižek, was experienced as 'transgressive'. Consider how, in Scene 3 of *Il prigioniero* (according to the stage directions), one of Dallapiccola's priests 'lets his eyes rest for a long time on the spot where the Prisoner is crouching'. It seems clear that the priest sees the Prisoner, and yet nothing happens. The alarm is not raised, the victim is not recaptured and led back to his cell; indeed, he is left in desperate confusion. 'Did they see me, those terrible eyes?', he cries out. Fully aware of the trap into which the Prisoner has fallen, one might suggest (following Žižek), the priest is 'enjoying' the whole transgressive business.[82] As for the chorus, its 'invocation of God's mercy in a place where torture and burning at the stake are part of the daily routine' amounts to a blasphemous perversion, according to one commentator.[83] The behaviour of the Inquisition, as portrayed in this opera, confirms Žižek's general thesis: maintenance of community – all community – requires a 'primordial lie'.[84]

Neither Left Nor Right?

35 Introducing the psychoanalytic dimension allows us to resolve the ambiguity over the opera's contemporaneous referent: as a study in the very mechanism of tyranny, it can indeed be particular and universal all at once. This is a reading to which we shall return. But one can imagine how, in the Italy of the late 1940s, such theoretical finessing might not have been the order of the day. For the notional Communist intellectual summoned up earlier, Dallapiccola's Inquisition would have laid itself open to interpretation not as a universally applicable allegory so much as a specific condemnation of the conduct of the Catholic Church under fascism. Evidence of collaboration with the regime was ready to hand. A reference to the Lateran Pacts of 1929 and to Pius XI's subsequent hailing of Mussolini as the 'Man whom providence has sent us' would have been sufficient; the reluctance of Pius XII to protest against Hitler's policies – in particular, his failure to intervene more forcefully on behalf of Rome's Jewish population during the Nazi occupation of that city – could also have been invoked.

36 The Jailer's celebration of the 'Beggars' revolt' of the late 1560s and early 1570s against Spanish rule in the Netherlands, in the jubilant 'Aria in tre strofe' he sings to the Prisoner in Scene 2, appears to confirm the opera's left-wing credentials. A key element in the Don Carlos story, and thus well known to operatic audiences familiar with the treatment by Verdi, this historical material echoes down the centuries as one of the great monuments to popular liberation (thanks, above all, to the play by Schiller on which Verdi's opera is based). The Prisoner does not only hold the 'wrong' religious views. As Arblaster puts it, he is 'a partisan of the revolt, who rejoices when his jailer tells him of the success of the […] Beggars against the Spanish'.[85] In the late 1940s, the contemporary resonance of such an uprising against a cruel foreign oppressor would have been unmistakable. Dallapiccola himself makes the connection when, in an early version of the 'Genesis' article, immediately following his description of a visit to the estuary of the Scheldt (a major scene of the Flemish revolt), he notes that the first draft of the opera was completed on April 25, 1947: 'two years after the Partisan uprising in northern Italy'.[86] As Dallapiccola was doubtless aware, this insurrection was precipitated by the Communists.[87]

This is not to suggest that Dallapiccola was secretly pro-Soviet. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of his opposition to socialist realism. On the other hand, one cannot help wondering whether, had the Italian general election of spring 1948 not delivered its crushing defeat to the Left, he would have felt the need to take the strident anti-Communist stance displayed in 'Musica pianificata'. The polarisation of Italian politics at this time should not be underestimated. Paul Ginsborg writes of 'two vast opposing fronts: the one having its focal point in the employing classes, the Christian Democrats and the United States; the other centred on the working-class movement, the Communists and Russia'. By the time of the election, the 'conflict of interests and ideologies' was reaching 'dramatic and decisive heights'.[88] 'Musica pianificata' was a provocation, appearing in *Il ponte*, a leading left-wing monthly journal in which Dallapiccola had never previously published and never would again. 37

It would also be wrong, though, to view the composer as a standard bearer for Christian Democracy. The technical innovations of *Il prigioniero* caused just as much controversy on the Right as they did among proponents of socialist realism.[89] Significantly, Dallapiccola's one brief period of regular journalistic activity, in 1945-47, had been in the service of the fortnightly *Il mondo* (later *Mondo europeo*), which combined high cultural internationalism with 'democratic' political non-alignment.[90] In the mid-1940s, there were even gestures towards an alliance between the artistic avant-garde and the Left. Nevertheless, as Andrea Estero has explained, this characteristic post-war Italian formation would not begin to solidify for another fifteen years.[91] 38

Stephen Gundle notes how the 1946 'dispute' over *Il politecnico*, the short-lived left-wing journal edited by the novelist Elio Vittorini (1908-66), 'had revealed that many of the intellectuals who had adhered to the PCI [Partito comunista italiano] remained individualistic and aristocratic in their outlook'. In the clampdown that followed, under the dogmatic Emilio Sereni (1907-77), 'the PCI's alignment with the USSR was more or less total'. '[N]o open criticism whatsoever was brooked of Soviet positions'.[92] Zafred's attack on *Il prigioniero* was part of a concerted 'anti-formalist' offensive aimed at Schoenbergians by the music critics of both *L'Unità* and *Avanti!*: Zafred and Rubens Tedeschi (1914-) on the one; Diego Carpitella (1924-70) and Luigi Pestalozza (1928-) on the other.[93] By putting himself at loggerheads with the Stalinists, Dallapiccola was emphasizing that, for all the endorsement he might have received in the past from Communist intellectuals, and for all that his opera was apparently philo-revolutionary and anti-clerical in the extreme, he was no hard-line Leftist, indeed no Leftist at all. 39

In the circumstances, such political manoeuvring was scarcely to be avoided. In October 1949, in a tortured confessional letter (he asked the recipient to destroy it), Dallapiccola showed his concern at the negative image of the Inquisition that audiences would find – and that the conductor of the premiere, Hermann Scherchen (1891-1966) was already finding – in the work.[94] It seems the Florentine premiere only went ahead as a result of a chance conversation between an acquaintance of Dallapiccola's and 'a ministerial big-shot' ('un grosso personaggio ministeriale'). According to the composer, his acquaintance was asked 'whether it was true that I was a rabid anticlerical' ('un mangiapreti'). '"I don't know him all that well", the acquaintance replied, "but I meet him every Sunday at 40

Mass with his little girl".' Letters arrived at the Ministero dello Spettacolo, protesting against the performance of an opera 'which showed the Spanish Inquisition in a dim light, and, what is more during the Holy Year 1950'.[95] 'Of all the insults hurled at me during the first half of 1950', Dallapiccola later wrote (some seventeen years after the event), the implication that the work was 'essentially an attack on the Catholic Church […] was the only one that deeply wounded me'.[96] But this 'implication' would not go away. In an ironic reversal, Dallapiccola soon found himself defending the work not against, but from, the Church's arch-enemies. If Italian Communists objected to *Il prigioniero*, the authorities in Moscow seem to have appreciated the opera's anti-clerical flavour. Anticipating the possibility of a performance in the Soviet capital, Dallapiccola insisted that the following text was to be inserted into the programme book: 'As a believer I want to emphasize that there is nothing against the Catholic Church in *Il prigioniero*, but only a protest against tyranny and oppression'.[97] The performance did not take place.

Cold War Connections

In June 1950, in the thick of the controversy, Dallapiccola published the very first version of his 'Genesis' essay. He admitted that, without the political experiences of the previous dozen years (first the 'legalized persecution' of Mussolini's anti-Semitic campaign, then the Nazi occupation), he would have written neither the *Canti di prigionia* nor *Il prigioniero*. But his main concern was to show how his obsession with the themes of freedom and imprisonment had its origins in experiences of his childhood and adolescence. As far as *Il prigioniero* was concerned, he wanted to stress 'how, in the opera, there is no reference that might be interpreted as directed towards this or that current political tendency'.[98] By tracing the source of his work, in self-consciously Proustian style, to distant events conjured up in memory – his 'inner book' – Dallapiccola was upholding his central aesthetic claim. The way to truth lies in solitary meditation, not in preoccupation with current events. As Mila explained, if Dallapiccola's work is '*engagé*', it is '*engagé malgré lui*'.[99] 41

But what of the composer's audience? No aesthetic stance, not even one so declaredly self-sufficient as Dallapiccola's inward-turning modernist aristocratism, can subsist in a vacuum. His opera has to have listeners, must receive some form of ideological – not to say financial – backing, if it is not to collapse into solipsism: if its 'dialectical' aspiration to universal recognition is not to prove absurd. Let us look at 'Musica pianificata' one more time. The starting point of this attack on socialist realism is a direct identification of the Czech five-year plan with the cultural policies of Italian fascism. The 'Prague Manifesto' is immediately compared to the neo-romantic 'Manifesto musicale' of December 1932, framed by the critic of the fascist daily *Il popolo d'Italia*, Alceo Toni (1884-1969). Dallapiccola proceeds twice more to relate the proposals for the five-year plan to his memories of the fascist *ventennio*.[100] In other words, he is employing what would become a typical Cold War ploy: perhaps the quintessential ideological weapon as far as the West was concerned. It is the notion of 'totalitarianism', Arendt's notion (most famously), according to which 'the Nazi and the Bolshevik systems' are 'variations on the same model'.[101] 42

43 In other words, for all that fascist Italy coined the term, Arendt does not consider Mussolini's regime to have been 'totalitarian'.[102] The very example Dallapiccola draws on, in sarcastic reference to having 'enjoyed totalitarianism for twenty years', backfires. He wants to demonstrate the obtuseness of those – Stalinist commissars and fascist gerarchs alike – who imagine that 'works of art can be written to order'.[103] Instead he pays unintentional tribute to a regime that, despite its slogans about 'going towards the people' (and the fuss caused by the 'Manifesto musicale'), looked after its modernists with generosity. The season of contemporary opera and ballet staged in Rome and Milan in 1942, including the Italian premieres of Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin* (1918-19) and Berg's *Wozzeck* (1914-22), as well as the second production of Dallapiccola's first opera *Volo di notte* (1937-39), involved state sponsorship of the avant garde of a kind unthinkable under Stalin.

44 Dallapiccola's notion of an 'apolitical' art is difficult to defend under any circumstances. To abstain from politics, as Sartre insists, is also to take up a position.[104] And this is particularly evident in the case of the twelve-note composer. As Sartre points out in his response to the article by Leibowitz cited earlier, dodecaphonic music does not merely require an elite audience for its appreciation. By its very difficulty it tends to exclude the majority of listeners, actively shoring up the elite's distinctive status.[105] To assert that such music may be truth-telling and yet 'apolitical', that the path to universal humanity must bypass what Sartre would call the contemporary 'situation', is to ignore the social inequality of which the music is both product and support. But there is a specific historical reason to be suspicious of the label 'apolitical' in the present case. For these were the years of the early Cold War, when promotion of the individual creative freedom Dallapiccola defended so fiercely became a CIA priority. That the composer – like so many others – was surely unaware of his work's potential for politicised exploitation was no bar to its ideological entanglement. As Anne C. Shreffler has argued, 'The aesthetic modernism of post-war Europe and the U.S. cannot be viewed as apolitical because its main concepts developed in the context of, and specifically in opposition to, the diametrically different notion of freedom advocated by Communist governments. The oft-proclaimed aesthetic autonomy grew out of an intentionally oppositional stance, even in cases where the art was unrelated to the CCF [the CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom] or any specific program'.[106] This is painting with a broad brush, of course. But the political character of Dallapiccola's apoliticism is plain to see. And it is not only in his prose that the composer found himself lending support to the US cause. Consider the fact that, despite the hostility of its organiser, the Russian-American composer Nicolas Nabokov (1903-78), towards twelve-note technique, the *Canti di prigionia* found their way onto the programme for what Mark Carroll describes as the 'blatant anti-communist posturing' of the Congress for Cultural Freedom's 1952 Paris Festival, *L'Œuvre du XXe siècle*.[107] But it is the frequency of performances of *Il prigioniero* in the opera houses of the German Federal Republic – the very front line in the 'cultural Cold War' – that is most impressive.[108]

45 Attempts to explain the opera's success in terms of the composer's aesthetic can tell only a partial story. One would argue that the deletion of the Prisoner's Jewish identity and the location of the opera's action in the remote past, in their twin universalizing functions, help to grant the work its 'truth', a quality that further

manifests itself in the work's technical progressiveness, or rather, does so 'necessarily'; the whole account sealed, no doubt, by an invocation of the 'inner book'. In an article published in 1960, Dallapiccola placed *Il prigioniero* alongside Schoenberg's *Erwartung* (1909) and *Moses und Aron* (1930-32), Berg's *Wozzeck*, Busoni's *Doktor Faust* (1916-24) and Gian Francesco Malipiero's (1882-1973) *Torneo notturno* (1929) in a modernist pantheon. 'There is no more certainty', he declares: '*Doubt* has entered the opera house'. Once again, he is gesturing at the universal. 'Doubt' is bound up with 'solitude': 'this contemporary condition', as the composer puts it. The echoes of 'Die moderne Musik' are unmistakable. 'Man without love has become terribly alone', Dallapiccola writes – noting the disappearance of the 'traditional "love duet"' in twentieth-century opera – 'and when man is alone Care easily invades his heart'.[109] It was not just that, as Dallapiccola (and Mila) had previously suggested, the opera spoke to universal wartime experience.[110] On this reading, *Il prigioniero* was a success because it communicated the angst of what it meant to be alive in the middle years of the twentieth century, if not the angst of the 'human condition', *tout court*.

Engaged, by the time of the 1960 article, on his operatic *summa*, *Ulisse* (1960-68), Dallapiccola goes on to announce the impulse towards religious consolation that culminates in that work's final moments. 'I should like some day, after all the question marks – mine and others', to succeed in expressing a "certainty"', he writes.[111] At the period of *Il prigioniero*, the artist's inner quest led to the recognition of universal Care. At the conclusion of *Ulisse*, it leads to the acknowledgement of divine presence. But the difference between the two positions should not be overemphasised. The movement of thought in both is the same: solitary meditation leads to truth. And here one can start to seek out another explanation for the success of *Il prigioniero*. In its 'protest against tyranny and oppression', the opera places on stage the confrontation of the truth-telling individual and the lying collective. As such, it plays into one of the great political myths of the period. 46

Dallapiccola's opera is one of this myth's most prominent musical realisations; it is not alone. Take the Piano Concerto (1963-65) by Elliott Carter (1908-), and even more significantly, the discourse that has tended to surround it. Commissioned by the Ford Foundation ('an integral component of America's Cold War machinery', according to Frances Stonor Saunders: an organisation with the closest of links to the Congress for Cultural Freedom), much of it composed in West Berlin at the invitation of the Berlin Senate (for whom Carter's friend, the thoroughly compromised Nicolas Nabokov, had been employed as 'Adviser on International Cultural Affairs' in 1962), the work is described by David Schiff as featuring a 'fundamental opposition between the soloist's freedom and the orchestra's tyranny'.[112] The polarisation of protagonist and mass, Schiff declares (following Michael Steinberg), breaks 'completely' with Romantic precedents. While the orchestra is 'a machine, insistent and brutal', which represses '[i]ndividual instrumental colours […] in favour of dark, mysterious, heterophonic mixtures', the solo piano, along with its accompanying concertino, 'redefine[s] virtuosity as freedom, vision and imagination'. The two forces 'inevitably become locked in battle', with the orchestra increasingly taking on the character of 'a suffocating blanket of sound'. But against all the odds, the piano wins out. 'It is victorious', Carter wrote at the time of the premiere, 'by being an individual'.[113] 47

Eloquent philosophical justification for this ethic of heroic solo resistance could be found in the anti-Communist diatribe, *L'homme révolté* (1951), by Albert Camus (1913-60). 'For the first time in history', Camus declares, 'a doctrine and a movement supported by an empire in arms has, as its purpose, definitive revolution and the unification of the world'. In their nihilism and murderous power-hungry cynicism, the Soviets have deprived man of 'the power of passion, doubt, happiness, and imaginative invention – in a word, of his greatness'.[114] Also worth mentioning is Arthur Koestler's (1905-83) novel *Darkness at Noon* (1938-40), not so much for its exposé of the show trials, as for the way it depicts the old Bolshevik, Rubashov, discovering what, as a good Party man, he christens the 'grammatical fiction' of his individual subjectivity: his 'I', the unlocalisable yet tangible interior voice that, unbidden, speaks a visceral truth that is non-logical and humane.[115] But the key text is, of course, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: Winston Smith's struggle to maintain what 'Newspeak' calls '*ownlife*'.[116] The relationship between Orwell's 'Last Man' and his nemesis, the Inner Party member O'Brien, can be mapped onto that between the Prisoner and the Jailer/Grand Inquisitor with a neatness that is almost uncanny. In both opera and novel (both completed in 1948) the prospect of proletarian revolt against totalitarian oppression gives the victim cause to hope; in both cases the victim is permitted a brief moment (or moments) of delusory freedom before capture. In a *coup de théâtre*, parallel to that in the opera, the supposed ally then reveals himself as having been duplicitous all along. Just like the Grand Inquisitor, O'Brien finds it necessary to reduce his victim to abjection before killing him. *Il prigioniero* even has its 'Big Brother' moment: 'There's someone watching over you', the Jailer tells the Prisoner as he leaves. 48

Looking at *Il prigioniero* in terms of its libretto alone, one cannot help wondering whether the opera's success was not merely the product of a particular set of historical and geopolitical circumstances. Nor is Dallapiccola's music immune from these kinds of considerations. It cannot have hurt the work's growing international reputation that, as Carroll puts it, the Congress for Cultural Freedom's 1954 Rome Festival, *La musica nel XX secolo* (for which Dallapiccola sat on the 'Music Advisory Board'), marked the moment when the liberal establishment achieved 'reconciliation' with the ideology of the avant-garde. The Festival played a major role in helping to carry out for twelve-note composers that process of assimilation which, a few years earlier, had addressed itself to Abstract Expressionism: the case of New York's celebrated 'theft' of 'The Idea of Modern Art'.[117] De-radicalised, twelve-note music moved into the mainstream of cultural products acceptable to what Carroll, following Alexander Ringer, calls the 'power elite'.[118] In the face of the 'the yea-saying bromides of socialist realism' (Richard Taruskin), dodecaphony's capacity for 'authentic' expressions of anguished humanity fitted the propaganda needs of the West to perfection. The point, Carroll suggests, was that serial music could 'typify a creative individualism and risk-taking that only the West could sanction'.[119] 49

For leading West German critics of the period, such as the Schoenbergians Josef Rufer (1893-1985) and Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt (1901-88), Dallapiccola's opera entirely fulfilled its composer's universalizing ambitions. *Il prigioniero*, according to Stuckenschmidt, is not only 'the most impassioned and authentic [*gültigste*] musical reaction to the European torment of Fascism and National 50

Socialism'. It is the work of a composer who can only be described as 'heimatlos' – stateless, without nation – so deeply does he register the suffering cry of humanity 'from all corners of the globe [*auf allen Breitengraden*]'.[120] Rufer writes of a 'portent' that 'ought to hang over humanity for all time'. As a searing 'reminder' to audiences of the 'nature and value of freedom', the 'epitome of human dignity', *Il prigioniero* addresses 'a matter of eternally relevant concern for the whole of humanity'.[121]

This kind of interpretation is by no means confined to commentators of the 1950s.[122] But it cannot be taken at face value. To the extent that the threat posed to individual freedom by the 'brutal inhumanity' of power (Rufer, 63) is construed as posing the essential contemporary – or indeed eternal – problem of humanity, the work is inscribed within the key trope of anti-Communist Cold War propaganda which we have observed above at work in musicological, philosophical and literary discourse. As a counter-balance to Rufer's or Stuckenschmidt's *Il prigioniero*, it is worth imagining an opera that, rather than – as Bayan Northcott puts it – 'asserting individual worth against the forces of oppression',[123] would condemn the subjective freedom fostered by modernity for the damage it inflicts on traditional collectives – on working-class solidarity, for example. One cannot begin to envisage Dallapiccola composing such a work. And yet the idea is not inherently ridiculous, especially not in the context of the Italian cinematic neorealism of the immediate post-war period. It is not that an anti-individualistic opera would be any less political than the Cold War *Il prigioniero*. But one would not want to dismiss the basis of such a work in the proletarian experience of the 1940s any more than the autobiographical connection Dallapiccola felt towards his own creation (however tangential this may prove to its interpretation). Claims for the universality of *Il prigioniero* can all too easily slip into ideology, whose ground is not so much geopolitics as the prejudices of social class. **51**

To return to the main topic: the argument is by no means that Dallapiccola's opera was fully instrumentalised as a 'weapon' in the 'cultural Cold War'. Without a detailed study of the political economy of programming practice in West German opera houses, concert halls and radio stations during the 1950s and 60s (a book in itself), the issue of instrumentalisation must remain moot. But two further observations may lend weight to the idea that the success of *Il prigioniero* owed at least something to its capacity to resonate with propaganda imperatives of the period. First is the fact that, during the opera's first dozen years, when it was being taken up all over the West, in Italy – after the initial hullabaloo – it disappeared almost without trace. Following the Florentine premiere, the work was not seen again until the La Scala production in 1962: a solitary concert performance was given in Milan in 1953.[124] In 1950, as we saw, the opera was unacceptable to both Left and Right. That, following the lead of La Scala, stagings of *Il prigioniero* became yearly events in Italian houses,[125] may be taken as confirmation that, particularly for the liberal Left (increasingly influential by the mid-1960s), musical modernism was no longer to be dismissed as cacophony (or bourgeois decadence). In retrospect we can see that the theoretical links established at this period between artistic and political 'progressives' merely brought Italy into line with the rest of Western Europe, where modernistically inclined non-Communist Left intellectuals had, for a decade, been the targets of clandestine US generosity. Newly de-Stalinised but still resolutely anti-capitalist (or anti-consumerist) Italian **52**

theorists began unknowingly (at least, surely for the most part) to do the CIA's bidding.

53 The second observation is the one with which this essay began: that of the absence of *Il prigioniero* from the world's operatic stages in the 1980s and 90s. Northcott's plaintive incomprehension, faced in the centenary year with the virtual disappearance of Dallapiccola's entire work since the mid-1970s – 'So what happened?' – appears naive, particularly given the way his account leaves aside any engagement with recent political history.[126] The rapid decline in the frequency of performances of *Il prigioniero* in the late 1970s must be partly a result of the composer's death in 1975: the fact that the great man was no longer available to be fêted. But the thawing of the Cold War was surely a factor too.

54 If this answer appears too easy, one can point to works that have shared *Il prigioniero*'s fate. Two other markedly anti-totalitarian (or anti-tyrannical) operas, Gottfried von Einem's (1918-96) *Dantons Tod* and Gian Carlo Menotti's (1911-2007) *The Consul*, both dating from the immediate post-war period (first produced in 1947 and 1950, respectively), and both internationally successful throughout the 1950s and 60s in a manner that clearly distinguishes them from the 'flash in the pan' so characteristic of twentieth-century operatic history, have similarly come to grief in more recent decades. To put the point the other way round: it is not clear, on purely aesthetic grounds, why the contemporary operas of Benjamin Britten (1913-76), *Peter Grimes* in particular (premiered in 1945), should have survived so much better. Dallapiccola would have been appalled to think that, at the end of the century, while his work languished on the sidelines, *Grimes* was a staple of the international repertory: an opera he judged 'cynical, horrid, disjointed, bloody stupid [*fregno*], and badly made'.[127] *Il prigioniero* is hampered by its length (it is not the only major twentieth-century one-acter that has been under-performed); Britten's musical language is also a good deal more 'accessible'. But perhaps most significantly, while *Grimes* is far from apolitical, it is famously open to reinterpretation, and certainly not available to be reduced (or not easily) to a particular situation (e.g. 'protest against totalitarianism'), in the way *Il prigioniero* so often has been. And this is indicative of one of the great ironies of Dallapiccola's career. For all that he insisted (following Schoenberg following Schopenhauer) that, in their dedication to 'inner truth' rather than success, great artists necessarily write for the future and are bound to be misunderstood by their contemporaries,[128] it would seem that he and his work are bound to their time: that they transcend it only with difficulty.

La libertà?

55 What then of the recent upturn in the opera's fortunes? To the extent that this revival has continued beyond the centenary celebrations, does it not demonstrate that the work possesses something of the 'truth' for which Dallapiccola was striving? Here too, we must question whether *Il prigioniero*'s success can be devoid of reference 'towards this or that current political tendency'. In the present climate, the return to prominence of an opera that thematises the struggle for liberty against religious fundamentalism, state oppression and torture is not, perhaps, altogether surprising. Nor should this return unequivocally be welcomed; any more than the opera's success of the 1950s and 60s should be recalled with

nostalgia. It is clear by now that the slogan on which the fortunes of *Il prigioniero* turn – its 'protest against tyranny and oppression' – is far from 'apolitical'. As Žižek sees it, the opposition, freedom versus totalitarianism, 'actively *prevents* us from thinking'. 'Throughout its entire career', he declares (implicitly criticizing his own earlier work), '"totalitarianism" was an ideological notion that sustained the complex operation […] of guaranteeing the liberal-democratic hegemony, dismissing the Leftist critique of liberal democracy as the obverse, the "twin", of the Rightist Fascist dictatorship'.[129]

56 It is telling that this should be precisely the rhetorical move employed by Dallapiccola in his attack on socialist realism. Returning to the 'Cold War' *Il prigioniero*, we can see that its critique of 'tyranny and oppression' is similarly problematic. More specifically, it is undialectical: it presents the enemy as entirely Other, his actions stemming from a set of beliefs for which the Prisoner can in no way be held responsible. Whether the Jailer/Grand Inquisitor stands for an officer in Mussolini's OVRA, in the SS, in the KGB, or – to bring matters up to date – an 'Islamo-fascist' terrorist, or indeed, a guard at Abu Ghraib, Baghram or Guantánamo, the opera leaves liberal consciences shocked but confirmed in their own blamelessness. As Jacques Wildberger puts it, 'Dallapiccola has no intention whatsoever of tracking down socio-political or even economic mechanisms as the real causes of terror'.[130] In what appears to be its plea on behalf of individual freedom conceived as an absolute good, *Il prigioniero* stands, for all its 'tragic' finale, as an example of what Herbert Marcuse called 'affirmative culture': a work that does not, as it were, see beyond the bourgeois milieu within which it was produced, and thus fails to take account of the fact that the very freedom on behalf of which it proselytises, far from being universalisable, is itself contingent – under present socio-economic conditions, just as under those of 1950 – on domination, exploitation, slavery.[131]

57 Such a judgment condemns *Il prigioniero* as mere bourgeois ideology. But is that fair? If the work is to be 'rescued', one must hope not. And indeed, closer scrutiny of some 'affirmative' readings of the opera will suggest that they are scarcely adequate to Dallapiccola's text. Mila in 1950 is particularly striking. The Jailer, he writes, is 'the hero-saint who sacrifices himself, *making others suffer* for the salvation of the world'. He is 'a martyr who […] forgets and sacrifices himself, qua individual, on the altar of the good of humanity'. Jailer and Prisoner are equally unfree. And yet 'the central theme of Dallapiccola's inspiration' is 'the inextricable mystery whereby it so often happens that liberty celebrates its triumphs in the depths of a dungeon, and affirms itself and gains vitality precisely through the loss of the material liberty of the individual'. Freedom, Mila declares, is inviolable: it is man's 'sacred and intangible essence'.[132]

58 One should doubtless view these words in the context of Dallapiccola's concern over the Catholic reception of the opera. In the confessional letter of October 1949 referred to earlier, he specifically asked Mila to 'pass over' the apparently anticlerical elements in the work.[133] But Mila is not the only critic to attempt a reconciliation between *Il prigioniero* and the Church. The Earl of Harewood's account has the virtue of pointing to the opera's final words. As the Grand Inquisitor leads his victim towards the stake, the Prisoner stops, whispers 'La libertà…' ('Freedom…'), and 'gazes upwards'. The striking image brings to the fore

the political and philosophical concerns at the heart of *Il prigioniero*. But what do the words mean? The Prisoner has no idea: he speaks 'con incoscienza'. For Harewood, though, the sense is unproblematic: 'the Prisoner comes to see that his ultimate fate is to gain salvation at the stake, just as certainly as he knows that the ultimate torture was hope'.[134] As a result of his sadistic treatment at the hands of the Inquisition, we are to understand, the victim has come to repent his heresy. Purification by fire, Mila suggests (in a revised version of his article from 1962), 'is the only hope that remains'.[135]

The sense here is 'desperately perverse', as Mila himself admits.[136] It is worth noting how, in 1947, in a letter to another critic who had insisted on the religious foundation of his work, Dallapiccola 'asked whether this assertion ought not to be modified in the light of the "despairing" opera which he was just completing'.[137] In 1946 Mila had written of Dallapiccola's 'deeply-felt pessimism which closes off all hope of victory', his expressionistic lack of 'idealism's consoling faith in historical providence'.[138] To turn his interpretation around by 180 degrees as he did four years later was not only to try to bring the work within the bounds of Catholic acceptability but also to make it amenable to the dominant liberal philosophy of the period. For an educated Italian audience of 1950, Mila's hymn to man's 'sacred and intangible essence' would surely have been grasped as a reference to Croce's 'religion of liberty': the confidence that history – to quote the English title of one of the philosopher's most important later texts – is 'the story of liberty'.[139] History is not chaotic, but a coherent, cumulative process of human interaction that is rational and positive. No event can be entirely evil. Even the Grand Inquisitor can be comprehended. His aim – 'the good of humanity' – is the right one, even if his means are 'perverse'. In a universe revealed as lacking transcendence (can one really imagine the Prisoner coming to any other conclusion?), the opera's final words continue to affirm a goal of timeless value.[140] **59**

And yet a suspicion remains that Mila's 1946 reading was closer to the truth. Consider Arblaster's attempt to present the conclusion of *Il prigioniero* as not 'as pessimistic as some commentators have suggested'. As he puts it, '[t]he revolt in the Netherlands was, after all, successful, just as Italian fascism was also defeated in the end. Individuals may be crushed by oppression, but oppression does not always triumph'.[141] Arblaster has at least some of Croce's faith in history; but does the Prisoner share it? For all he knows, the one example of 'history as the story of liberty' with which he has been presented, the rebellion in Flanders, may have been a lie: just another element in the elaborate torture prepared for him. Perhaps his final words do keep the quest alive. But perhaps they are ironic: an expression of disillusion. **60**

Commentators wishing to draw a positive moral from *Il prigioniero* might have done better to direct themselves towards existentialism rather than Catholicism or liberalism. Dallapiccola's talk of the lonely angst of humanity in a world where God 'seems to be keeping himself hidden' is a good clue, as is his taste for the agonised theology of the Spanish philosopher and novelist, Miguel de Unamuno (1865-1936). As the composer observes more than once (including in both 'Musica pianificata' and 'Die moderne Musik'), for Unamuno, 'the man of flesh and blood' cannot but yearn for immortality. The 'essence […] of every man who is a man', writes 'the great Spaniard' (as Dallapiccola calls him), 'is nothing but the **61**

endeavour, the effort which he makes to continue to be a man, not to die'.[142] Dallapiccola's Prisoner has no worldly hope of salvation. It seems he has no other-worldly hope either. And yet he lifts up his head and speaks his final words. The 'great Spaniard' would have understood. Out of the dialectic of despair and scepticism, he writes, comes 'holy, sweet, saving uncertainty, our supreme consolation'. To believe in God is not to accept dogma: it is to create God, an act that requires anguish. Christianity is desperation; hope is torture. And yet, contra-rationally, it must return. Faith, whose form is hope, is nothing less than 'the creative power in man'. It alone looks to the future, 'the sole domain of liberty, where the imagination, the creative and liberating power, the flesh of faith, roams at will'.[143]

A similar reading, albeit shorn of religious connotations, is suggested by the Camus of *Le mythe de Sisyphe* (1942) – rather than the later anti-Communist.[144] All longing for transcendence is 'nostalgia for unity'. 'The world itself […] is but a vast irrational'. Freedom lies in giving up hope, in not looking to the future: in 'the divine availability of the condemned man before whom the prison doors open in a certain early dawn, that unbelievable disinterestedness with regard to everything except the pure flame of life'.[145] The model for the Prisoner's whispered 'la libertà' might be Sisyphus himself. As in the opera, the ultimate moment of torture is the moment of consciousness, when hope is destroyed. But this moment of 'lucidity', where Sisyphus 'knows the whole extent of his wretched condition […] at the same time crowns his victory'.[146] In full consciousness of futility, the Prisoner, like Sisyphus, affirms an 'absurd' freedom simply by clinging to it. 62

Finally, there is Sartre. If, for Croce, evil cannot be absolute, the experience of occupation has taught the philosopher of 'commitment' the contrary. 'Evil', he writes, 'can in no way be diverted, brought back, reduced, and incorporated into idealistic humanism'. In the 'Mass in which two freedoms have communed in the destruction of the human', evil 'blazes forth' with 'irreducible purity'. At the moment when the victim succumbs to torture and speaks, he 'applies his will as a man to denying that he is a man, makes himself the accomplice of his executioners'. Refusing to speak, resistance members decided 'in sovereign fashion' that the world 'would be […] more than the reign of the animal'. Their heroism took place 'without witness, without help, without hope, often even without faith'. They invented man 'on the basis of nothing, for nothing, in absolute gratuitousness'.[147] For the Prisoner, it is speech that signals refusal. He keeps his freedom alive by clinging to his goal in a situation beyond hope. It is proof of his humanity that he is able to. 63

Melodrama and Fate

In Unamuno, Camus or Sartre, then, we have the philosophical basis for a reading of *Il prigioniero* that is indeed 'affirmative'. But the very last moments of the opera put paid to such confidence. The Prisoner utters his final words not once, but twice: the second time as the curtain falls, and as a question. The conclusion is clearly meant to be 'undecidable'. '*Doubt* has entered the opera house', as the composer observes.[148] But interpretation cannot end there. On its own, the Prisoner's question merely suspends the 'affirmative' readings; it does not negate them. Besides, we have yet to take into account one rather important element: 64

Dallapiccola's music. Example 1 shows the Prisoner's 'moment of consciousness', continuing to the first 'La libertà'.

Example 1: Luigi Dallapiccola, *Il prigioniero*, Scene 4, bars 905-925

It is a passage that clearly reveals the debt of the composer's 'neo-expressionism' to Berg. Bars 905-912 combine as many as five details traceable to *Wozzeck*, Act 3.[149] The model at the start is the celebrated pair of unison crescendos at the end of Act 3, Scene 2; to this Dallapiccola adds an allusion to the repeated timpani strokes that accompany Marie's murder, a few bars earlier. The written-out accelerando is a typical Bergian trait. An instance can be seen at bars 236-237 in Example 2, from near the beginning of Act 3, Scene 4. 65

Example 2: Alban Berg, Act 3, Scene 4, bars 230-238

The latter scene is the famous 'invention on a chord'; the hexachord at bar 905 of *Il prigioniero* is a close relative.[150] Finally, the dotted rhythm of the orchestral sforzandos punctuating the Prisoner's vocal line at bars 909-912 might be compared to the rhythmic motive introduced by Wozzeck at 'Mörder! Mörder!' (Example 2, bars 233-234), and echoed around the orchestra thereafter.

But Dallapiccola's music has its own integrity. The sustained chords at bars 905-913 (right hand) state one of the work's principal twelve-note sets (the composer called it the 'freedom' row).[151] Meanwhile, the bass assembles one of Dallapiccola's '"combinaisons" dodécaphoniques variés': a derived set based on a (015) trichord, which is mirrored in the high treble.[152] The vocal line is also dodecaphonic. At bars 908-916 and 917-919, the Prisoner has two twelve-note sets, both of which open with statements of the three-note motive associated with the Jailer's 'friendly word', 'fratello'. In dramatic terms, bars 905-914 function as an ironic *Leitsektion*:[153] the orchestral music recapitulates bars 473-477, where the Prisoner cries out his thanks to the Jailer for 'making him hope'. More directly, as Adorno suggests of *Erwartung*, the instruments present a 'seismographic record of traumatic shocks', a series of 'bodily convulsions', which suddenly collapse, at bar 915, into 'the glassy immobility of someone paralyzed by fear'.[154] Note the grotesquely scored recollection – g-d-e in stunned repetition – of the pentatonic material introduced at the first mention of Roelandt, the great bell of Ghent (bar 323). 66

To cite *Philosophie der neuen Musik* here is disingenuous, however. Adorno's harsh verdict on *Il prigioniero*, which he heard at its German premiere in 1951, reveals that he did not hear the score as expressionistic, but as 'traditional-passionate operatic music' of 'drastic simplicity', couched in a 'traditional musico-dramatic, very Italian-sounding language'.[155] Dallapiccola's recourse to a 'more or less watered-down' twelve-note technique is 'external, a concession to so-called modernity'. The composer is too much concerned with his audience – a charge he would, of course, furiously have rejected – and the resulting 'musical substance' is 67

> so simplistic and easy to grasp that it does not need twelve-note technique at all for its organization. The latter is only justified where it is a question of subjecting very complex, polyphonically conceived musical layers to a

> compositional economy of means. But here twelve-note technique is superfluous, and at the same time, made so crude – under the constraints, partly of the stage, partly of the underlying musical material – that it loses its own meaning.[156]

'The difference between the sound of such constructions and the means employed is impossible to miss', Adorno concludes,[157] and a comparison of Examples 1 and 2 shows what he means. On the one hand, we have a climactic episode so straightforward in design that its insistence on chromatic completion appears almost as a fetish (particularly given the number of different sets involved); on the other, textures so thoroughgoing in their horizontal/vertical unification that, while they are not, in fact, twelve-note, they seem to cry out to become so.

68 The broader point, picked up by Wildberger, is the conventionality of Dallapiccola's achieved compositional goal: the 'opus perfectum' of aesthetic autonomy.[158] In Adorno's terms, gestures of anxiety that, in the 'masterwork […] of traditional art', *Wozzeck*, were already domesticated with respect to their Schoenbergian models, are returned to the untruth of illusion. *Il prigioniero* is very much 'expressionism as style'. The opera's well-made construction transforms its content into a mere object of contemplation. Dallapiccola's music, one might conclude, is just as 'affirmative' as his libretto. But, once again, the situation is not so clear-cut. Attention should be drawn, in particular, to what is most 'conventional' in this opera: its echoes of the Italian tradition. Adorno is scarcely alone in spotting these. As we saw earlier, Mila mentions *Tosca*; he also draws parallels with *Il trovatore* and *Aïda*. Such observations in fact constitute a topos in the literature.[159] And yet the Verdi connection could be probed a little harder.

69 *Don Carlos* not only anticipates the historical theme of the persecution of the revolt in Flanders by the Spanish, but places on stage the figures of Philip II and, of course, the Grand Inquisitor. The crucial point of contact, though, is the *coup de théâtre* at the close: where, just as Carlos is to be handed over by Philip to the Inquisition, the deceased Emperor, Charles V, suddenly reappears and drags his grandson away. One should make no bones about identifying the climax of *Il prigioniero* as similarly melodramatic. It is not that 'neo-expressionism' is inappropriate as a label: the musical debt to *Wozzeck* is clear. Dallapiccola's stage directions have expressionistic features, too. (In the 'Prologo', the Mother is directed to appear in black against a black curtain, such that the audience is able to make out 'only her very white face, pitilessly illuminated'. She represents the expressionistic *Urschrei*: an operatic version of one of Schoenberg's *Blicke*.) But the primary background to the libretto, as in many of Verdi's best known operas, is the popular stage of early nineteenth-century Paris.

70 Dallapiccola may have spoken of months of historical research, but we are hardly dealing with the Inquisition of history in *Il prigioniero*, rather with what Edward Peters has termed 'the myth of *The Inquisition*'. The image sustaining Dallapiccola's libretto, in its derivation from Villiers (and from his explicit model, Poe's 'The Pit and the Pendulum' [1842]), is that popularised in Gothic novels of the turn of the nineteenth century.[160] Peter Brooks has commented on the close relation of these contemporary genres. Melodrama and the Gothic novel are 'equally preoccupied with nightmare states, with claustration […] with innocence

buried alive'. 'We begin', Brooks writes of the 'thwarted escape' plot (a melodramatic stand-by), 'in a Gothic chamber […] and within a few scenes the path for the virtuous prisoner appears open, only to be discovered by the villain-tyrant, and to lead […] to a more frightful and subterranean dungeon, or even the death sentence'.[161]

Another Verdi opera with links to *Il prigioniero*, as Mila suggests, is *Il trovatore* (1853). In Part 4 of that work, all of Dallapiccola's elements are in place: cruel imprisonment; the mother-son relationship; dreams of escape; the cry, 'Il rogo!'; execution; even an off-stage chorus singing prayers. Example 3 is taken from its closing moments. 71

Example 3: Giuseppe Verdi, *Il trovatore*, from the end of Part IV

Azucena reveals to Carlo that Manrico, whom he has just had executed, was his brother: a *coup de théâtre*, parallel to the Grand Inquisitor's self-revelation, which changes the meaning of the entire action (and brings down the curtain). Note also the musical idiom. If Dallapiccola had learnt from Berg in Example 1, in the sheer dramatic panache of this passage, he had also learnt from Verdi. At bars 908-913 of *Il prigioniero*, the maximally heightened recitative of *Il trovatore*'s final moments is transposed into twelve-note terms. All that is missing is the bass tremolando.

Complaints about the 'côté puccinien' of *Il prigioniero* continue, in modified form, until today.[162] One cannot deny the opera's whiff of Grand Guignol. But to follow Brooks' example, this is all the more reason to pay the work serious attention. Melodrama holds up a mirror to society's continuing need, in 'a post-sacred era […] to locate and make evident, legible, and operative those large choices of ways of being which we hold to be important even though we cannot derive them from any transcendental system of belief'. Its excess points to the existence of 'cosmic ethical forces': to a 'conflict of good and evil as opposites not subject to compromise'.[163] *Il trovatore* and *Il prigioniero* both stage just such a 'manichaeistic' contest. But the final catastrophe of Verdi's opera bears witness to a third, fundamentally amoral, force (the deployment of which marks melodrama's aspiration to the status of classical tragedy): that of destiny or fate. The efficacy of the supernatural is established immediately, in the *stretta* that concludes the opening 'Ballata'. Ferrando and the chorus sing of the ghostly nocturnal appearances of Azucena's mother in the forms of hoopoe, screech owl, crow, and so forth. When Ferrando comes to the words, 'Then just as midnight sounded…', a 'real' bell unexpectedly sounds twelve offstage. As Carolyn Abbate might say, the narrative produces a vertigo-inducing moment of reflexivity.[164] The uncanny coincidence inspires panic. 72

Turning to the 'Prologo' of *Il prigioniero*, we find a similar use of reflexivity to indicate supernatural presence, in the context of another 'Ballata'. The case is unusual, in that the Mother sings alone, with no onstage audience. Moreover, Dallapiccola's 'Ballata' is primarily descriptive, narrative being consigned to the B sections that surround it, within an overall arch form, ABCBA. The Mother recounts a recurring nightmare involving Philip II. In the first B section (bars 43-63), an unknown figure advances: the point at which the Mother recognises him is where the 'Ballata' begins. In the second B section (beginning at bars 103 or 106: the 73

division is ambiguous), the king's appearance begins to change. 'Suddenly it is no longer Philip staring at me', the Mother sings: 'it is Death!'. Operatic tradition alone assures us that the Prisoner is doomed. But the reflexive relationship between this narrative and the larger plot is sealed by the music. At the point where the Mother reaches the word 'Morte!' (bar 117), the orchestra, which has been at *pianissimo* or below for some time, breaks in, *fortissimo*, with the strident three-chord motive of the A section. In Abbate's terminology, 'phenomenal' and 'noumenal' regions collide.[165] The three-chord motive becomes a harbinger of 'fate', returning at crucial points in the opera, most notably as the Prisoner is about to 'escape' (bars 794-801).

74 The Verdian quality of Example 1 underlines the sense in which the Prisoner is a victim of the 'force of destiny'. On the face of it, one could hardly imagine a weaker case against accusations of 'affirmation'. The escapist quality of *Il prigioniero* stands confirmed. If Brooks would urge us to understand the climactic melodrama, on the contrary, as emblematic of an attempt to make sense of the mid twentieth-century situation, one that holds to 'the possibility of acceding to the latent through the signs of the world',[166] we can reply that this is just so much mystification. In so far as the Verdian moment of Dallapiccola's opera suggests a state of affairs in which individuals are reduced to blaming obscure metaphysical forces for the straits in which they find themselves, *Il prigioniero* reflects – and contributes to – social alienation. Or is this, again, too simple? What is most 'escapist' in the opera may turn out to be what is most far-sighted: most dialectical, in other words. From Adorno's perspective, at least, the world of late capitalism, in its thoroughly instrumentalised rationality, its total domination of nature, is marked precisely by a return to the mythic inexorability of 'fate'. Twelve-note technique is the 'destiny' of music.[167]

75 At this point, it is worth returning to the 'affirmative' readings of *Il prigioniero*. Those that might reasonably be entertained, the Crocean and 'existentialist' positions (Sartre's included), have a great deal in common. They share a basis in idealism: a commitment to the essential humanity of the identity of freedom and (self-)consciousness. As we have seen, for Dallapiccola, in his aesthetic pronouncements, this is also taken for granted. And yet his own opera speaks against him. 'On the eve of your salvation', asks the Grand Inquisitor, 'why ever did you want to leave us?'. The depth of the irony here becomes apparent only when it is recognised that the Prisoner's longing for freedom, indeed, his very ability to conceive of escape, is not 'authentically' his at all, but implanted in him from without: by the Jailer's 'friendly word'. The Prisoner's questions in Scene 1 – 'How can we say where hope comes from? How it finds its way into our hearts?' – are left unanswered, as if they pointed inward to a mystery. In fact, they are answered all too easily.

76 (Self-)deception of this kind has the widest resonance. 'Torture through hope' could be adopted as a motto for the deadening circuit of Horkheimer and Adorno's 'culture industry', which 'endlessly cheats its consumers out of what it endlessly promises'. 'Escape', they write, 'is destined from the first to lead back to its starting point'. In Jameson's words, 'the surviving remnant of the ego' in late modernity 'falls victim to the illusion of its own continuing centrality'. '[T]he subject wrongly assumes that there exists some correspondence between its inner monadic

experience and that purely external network of circumstances […] which determines and manipulates it'.[168] Dallapiccola's Prisoner is led to believe that the world is, after all, shaped in such a way that it will answer to his aspirations. He is cruelly deceived. As Jameson explains, 'what remains of the subjective […] is no longer able to distinguish between external suggestion and internal desire […] and therefore finds itself wholly handed over to objective manipulation'. With the Grand Inquisitor's question, we confront a 'historical hour' in which, as Adorno puts it, 'the reconciliation of subject and object has been perverted to a satanic parody, the liquidation of the subject in the objective order'.[169] 'Euch werde Lohn in bessern Welten' ('May you be rewarded in better worlds') sings Florestan in Act 2, Scene 1 of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, responding to the kind gesture of his jailer; for Adorno, an enduring symbol of social hope from the dawn of the bourgeois era. With the despairing equation drawn by Dallapiccola's Prisoner, a century and a half later, historical progress comes to its fatal end. '"La speranza"… l'ultima tortura…' – 'along with the idea of "better worlds"', Adorno concludes, 'that of humanity itself has lost its power over mankind'.[170]

If, at the point of death, the victim reaffirms his quest for liberty, he proclaims not his freedom, but its absence. As Marcuse puts it in his critique of Sartre, 'The anti-fascist who is tortured to death may retain his moral and intellectual freedom to "transcend" this situation: he is still tortured to death'.[171] But the conclusion of *Il prigioniero* paints a still more negative picture. And this anti-affirmative, critical moment arrives 'immanently': by means of Dallapiccola's handling of musical-dramatic form. At a leitmotivic level, as Venuti has pointed out, the emptying-out of subjectivity occurs at the moment of the Grand Inquisitor's question. In his employment of the Prisoner's 'hope' row (bars 903-905), the torturer 'enters into the intimate realm of his victim', taking over 'that minimal autonomous (musical) and personal (conceptual) space that still remained to him'.[172] But the process is not seen (or heard) to be complete until the first 'La libertà'. At bar 921 (Example 1), Dallapiccola introduces a new element: an offstage chamber choir singing music from the 'Preghiera di Maria Stuarda'. The task of interpretation seems to be complicated yet further. Is this the voice of the composer, interceding for the Prisoner on our behalf? One thing is clear, though. These quoted sounds stand apart – spatially as well as musically – from the main body of the work. The Prisoner is alienated from his own opera, a sense that is only heightened at bar 925, when the full-size offstage choir re-enters, with echoes of its 'Secondo intermezzo'. The Prisoner's relationship to these voices is radically altered with respect to the start of the scene. There, as he 'escaped', the choir did too, leaving the 'intermezzo space' for the first time. Individual and mass sang together in praise of God, nature and freedom. But now the Prisoner can no longer sing; scarcely even speak. The role of the orchestra has also changed. So vivid in its portrayal of the Prisoner's 'inner life', particularly in the passage beginning at bar 905, it supports the two choirs from bar 921 onwards, but lends the victim no 'voice' at all. His 'La libertà' brings with it not an affirmation of autonomy, but silence. At the moment when, beyond hope, the subject is existentially 'free', the notion of its lonely, truth-telling interior is revealed as a sham.

77

Sadomasochism and Destiny

A few questions remain. Why does the Prisoner allow himself to be led so meekly

78

to the stake? How does he come to be duped in the first place? Could he not have 'seen through' the Jailer and remained in his cell? From Adorno's standpoint, the fact that the victim hesitates for just a short while before rushing through the door left open for him only heightens the opera's dialectical insight. '[I]t is precisely where the masses act instinctively that they have been preformed by censorship and enjoy the blessing of the powers that be', he writes. It is a mark of 'the "totalitarian" nature of present society that […] people […] reinforce with the energy of their own ego the assimilation society imposes on them'.[173] The authors of *Dialektik der Aufklärung* might also have drawn attention to the Prisoner's 'mad' laughter at bar 919. This is the sound by which the victims of the culture industry 'must take their […] satisfaction': a 'wrong laughter' that is a parody of reconciliation, an echo of 'the inescapability of power'.[174]

79 Central to Adorno's theory of fascist propaganda is the notion that the masses do not 'completely believe in' the leader, but 'merely perform their enthusiasm'. It is not simply that '[t]he rationality operative in individual behaviour is […] far from being lucidly self-aware', that 'it is largely the blind product of heteronomous forces'. '[I]n order to be capable of functioning at all', Adorno writes, 'it has to join forces with the unconscious'.[175] The Prisoner is certainly a victim of psychological manipulation: the Jailer appeals to a narcissistic core of self-interest in much the way Adorno suggests.[176] But Dallapiccola goes further. Standing at the centre of the starlit garden into which the Prisoner 'escapes' is a giant cedar. He moves towards the tree: at the moment when he 'spreads out his arms in a gesture of love for all humanity', he is standing before it. The gesture is that of crucifixion: the moment of fulfilment is simultaneously that of self-sacrifice. It is as if the Grand Inquisitor, who emerges at the same point, is conjured up by his victim. But who is redeemed here? The moment is not Christ-like at all. From the Prisoner's point of view, this 'crucifixion' is not even a sacrifice: he and his cause gain nothing. Nevertheless, the gesture is far from empty. It calls for a final shift in critical perspective, in favour of the 'sado-masochistic energies' that Keller pointed to already in his review of the premiere, or what Mila referred to as the composer's *filippismo*, his 'fascinating and reluctant attraction to the grim majesty of tyrannical figures'.[177]

80 Adorno is less helpful now. 'The thesis that in the totalitarian era the masses act against their own interests', he declares, 'comes true only *ex post facto*'.[178] And yet the 'crucifixion' in *Il prigioniero* asks us to entertain the thought that the appearance of the Grand Inquisitor represents not just the destruction of everything the Prisoner is hoping for but also the consummation of his deepest urges. As Žižek explains (contra Adorno), the 'de-psychologization' of the post-liberal subject does not necessarily entail a fundamental insincerity in its obedience to the Leader. Loyalty is sustained via the obscenity of the superego. The novels of Kafka show the way (their affinity to *Il prigioniero* – the isolated individual's doomed search for deliverance in a barely comprehensible world wherein every move appears to have been plotted in advance by invisible hostile forces – is scarcely to be missed). In *Der Proceß* (*The Trial*) (1912-14), as Žižek notes, pursuit of the Law 'is always accompanied by […] an indeterminate […] feeling of "abstract" guilt, a feeling that, in the eyes of Power, I am a priori terribly guilty of something, although it is not possible for me to know precisely what I am guilty of'.[179] The Prisoner's climactic gesture suggests that, beneath the desire for

liberation, there lurks, parallel to Josef K.'s 'guilt feelings', a persistent, albeit unconscious, fantasy of entrapment. Taking a psychoanalytic look at the opera from the standpoint of the victim rather than that of Power, the relationship of Jailer to Grand Inquisitor – previously understood as 'underbelly' to 'Law' – is reversed. When the Prisoner is 'interpellated' by the Jailer's expressions of brotherhood, liberty and hope, Žižek would argue, this 'ideological recognition' takes place only in relation to a 'fundamental fantasy': a repressed scene of masochistic passivity. It is not that, as citizens of Adorno's 'administered world', our 'very experience of subjective freedom is the form of appearance of subjection to disciplinary mechanisms'. Rather, post-liberal society needs the Adornian fantasy of total manipulation as the 'obscene shadowy double' of its '"official" public ideology (and practice) of individual autonomy'.[180]

81 To read the opera in these terms is not to perform a psychoanalysis of Dallapiccola's protagonist, as if he were somehow flesh and blood. It is, rather, *Il prigioniero* that analyses us. Scene 1 stages a 'failed encounter' between the Prisoner and his Mother, in which he pays no attention to her increasingly desperate enquiries. To follow Žižek, the Prisoner's alienation stands for the 'primordial *dis-attachment*' we experience from our surroundings as infants: the 'gap or void in the order of being which "is" the subject itself'. The Prisoner's account of torture at the hands of the Inquisition is then the 'fundamental fantasy', mobilised as a defence against the abyss. (This is not to question the 'reality' of his suffering. The point is the unacknowledgable libidinal satisfaction he derives from staging the scene of his humiliation, illustrated by the way he dwells on the details, as he will again in Scene 3: 'On my tormented flesh I feel again the bite of those pincers… I feel again the iron… the fire…'). The narrative of pain provides the Prisoner with 'the minimum of being'. As Žižek puts it, 'I suffer, therefore I am'.[181]

82 In the Prisoner's subsequent interpellation, the loop of 'drive' (denoting his actively passive enjoyment of pain) is replaced by the arrow of desire. But the opera does not end there, of course. As Žižek explains, it is constitutive of desire that it does not want to be satisfied, that it 'desires its own unsatisfaction'. Desire maintains itself in this state by means of drive, which gains satisfaction from desire's very efforts to suppress it. The superego urges us forward in terms of the guilt we feel at our pursuit of a 'socially determined symbolic role': our betrayal of the fundamental fantasy.[182] But what happens when desire is satisfied, and we gain a freedom without limits? The appearance of the Grand Inquisitor is beginning to seem inevitable. Desire flips back into drive: the Jailer's exhortation, 'you must hope to the point of agony', is fully realised. As the Prisoner's 'suffocated' gasp of enjoyment at the moment of capture indicates, his masochism is, for a moment, no longer 'foreclosed', but manifested directly. 'Evil's moment of spectacular power', writes Brooks, 'provides a simulacrum of the "primal scene" […] a moment of intense, originary trauma'.[183] To put it another way, the Prisoner's 'fate' catches up with him. '[T]he Freudian "drive"', Žižek explains, '*is* ultimately another name for "Destiny"'.[184] Far from being 'an external Master who can be duped, towards whom one can maintain a minimal distance and private space', the Grand Inquisitor is 'ex-timate': the horrifying 'Thing' that stages the 'phantasmic core' of the Prisoner's being.[185]

The Prisoner cannot remain in his cell: his choice is 'forced'. Self-recognition, in the Jailer's 'fratello', 'La libertà', and 'Spera!', is his only means to gain a symbolic identity, to awaken (the appearance of) self-consciousness. He goes to his death so meekly because, as Žižek has it, the encounter with the Thing 'brings [him] too close to what […] must remain at a distance if [he is] to sustain the consistency of his symbolic universe'. The Prisoner is necessarily reduced to the level of the 'living dead' of the Nazi camps, becoming a 'shell of a person, emptied of the spark of spirit', indifferent to his continued existence.[186] But there remains the ultimate question: 'La libertà?'. 'Freedom', writes Malipiero, 'seems to become a mere empty word'.[187] The critic is horrified by the suggestion. But this is surely the point. The Prisoner may be whispering, but his final utterance is enough to cut short the lure of chorus and orchestra in mid-phrase. At the last, the victim confronts us 'free' individuals of the audience with the very word that sustains our ideological self-image. Unlike us, the Prisoner knows what 'freedom' really means. In what is, paradoxically, the opera's one true moment of liberty, he rejects it.

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[1] During 2004, *Il prigioniero* was staged in Mexico City (Opera Nacional de México), Frankfurt (Oper), and Florence (Teatro Comunale: 67th Maggio Musicale). Stagings in Palermo (Teatro Massimo) and Catania (Teatro Massimo Bellini) used a production previously seen in Turin. There was also a run of concert performances in Milan. Since then, new productions have been seen in Athens (Greek National Opera, 2006) and Hannover (Staatstheater, 2007), while the run-up to the centenary saw new productions in Buenos Aires (Teatro Colón, 2000), London (English National Opera, 2000), Princeton (Opera Festival of New Jersey, 2001), Turin (Teatro Regio, 2002), Nancy (Opéra de Nancy et de Lorraine, 2003) and Vienna (Volksoper, 2003). See the website of Dallapiccola's publisher, Edizioni Suvini Zerboni, Milan (http://www.esz.it) and Elisabetta Soldini, 'L'oeuvre à l'affiche', *Dallapiccola: 'Le Prisonnier'/'Vol de nuit'*, *L'Avant-Scène Opéra* No. 212 (January-February, 2003), 70-75: 74.

[2] Riccardo Malipiero, 'Il prigioniero', in Fiamma Nicolodi (ed.), *Luigi Dallapiccola: Saggi, testimonianze, carteggio, biografia e bibliografia* (Milan: Suvini Zerboni, 1975), 7-21: 9. (Uncredited translations, here and elsewhere, are the author's.)

[3] See George Henry Hubert Lascelles, Earl of Harewood (ed.), *Kobbé's Complete Opera Book*, 9th edn. (London: Putnam, 1976), 1244.

[4] See Massimo Venuti, *Il teatro di Dallapiccola* (Milan: Suvini Zerboni, 1985), 119; Leonardo Pinzauti, *Storia del Maggio. Dalla nascita della 'Stabile Orchestrale Fiorentina' (1928) al festival del 1993* (Lucca: LIM, 1994), 91.

[5] Hans Keller, 'XIII Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. VII Congresso Internazionale di Musica', *Music Review* Vol. 11, No. 3 (August 1950), 210-212: 211; Massimo Mila, '"Il prigioniero" di Luigi Dallapiccola', *La rassegna musicale* Vol. 20, No. 4 (October 1950), 303-311: 311.

[6] Mila, '"Il prigioniero"', 311.

[7] David Osmond-Smith, *Berio* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 6.

[8] Malipiero, 'Il prigioniero', 9. The first dozen years saw two productions in New York (Juilliard Opera Theatre, 1951; City Center, 1960), and one each in Buenos Aires (Teatro Colón, 1954), Berlin (Städtische Oper, 1955), London (Sadler's Wells, 1959; revived 1961), Strasbourg (Opéra, 1961), Stockholm (Royal Swedish Opera, 1962), and Amsterdam (Holland Festival, 1962). In the following decade there were further productions in Paris, Edinburgh, Amsterdam, Rio de Janeiro, Oslo, and Lisbon. See Soldini, 'L'oeuvre', 70-72.

[9] Anthony Arblaster, *Viva la Libertà! Politics in Opera* (London and New York: Verso, 1992), 282, 281.

[10] See Luigi Dallapiccola, 'The Genesis of *Canti di prigionia* and *Il prigioniero*: An Autobiographical Fragment (1950-1953)', in Rudy Shackelford (tr. and ed.), *Dallapiccola on Opera, Selected Writings of Luigi Dallapiccola*, Vol. 1 (London: Toccata, 1987), 35-60; also the composer's letter to his publisher of 4 July 1957, in Nicolodi (ed.), *Luigi Dallapiccola*, 92.

[11] '[T]he notion of "engagement"', observed one critic of the mid-1960s, 'is the constant factor in all writing on the music of Luigi Dallapiccola'. See Claudio Annibaldi, 'Dallapiccola e l'avanguardia

"impegnata"', in *L'opera di Luigi Dallapiccola*, *Quaderni della Rassegna musicale* No. 2 (1965), 79-89: 79.
[12] Camillo Togni, *Carteggio e scritti di Camillo Togni sul novecento italiano* (Florence: Olschki, 2001), 199; citing Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Présentation des *Temps modernes*', in *Situations II* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), 7-30: 15. See Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Introducing *Les temps modernes*', tr. Jeffrey Mehlman, in *'What is Literature?' and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 249-267: 254 (translation slightly modified).
[13] Sartre, 'Introducing', 254.
[14] Fredric Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 119-120.
[15] Sartre, 'Introducing', 255, 261.
[16] Dallapiccola, 'The Genesis', 50, 52. For the text of 'La torture par l'espérence', from the 1888 collection *Nouveaux contes cruels*, see Auguste, comte de Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Alan Raitt and Pierre-Georges Castex, 2 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1986), ii, 361-366.
[17] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Commitment', in *Notes to Literature*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, tr. Shierry Weber Nicolsen, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991-92), ii, 76-94: 88.
[18] Dallapiccola, 'Genesis', 51-52.
[19] *Ibid.* 52. See also Luigi Dallapiccola, 'Notes sur mon opéra', *Polyphonie* No. 1 (1947-48), 139-142: 140.
[20] Luigi Dallapiccola, 'The Genesis of the "Canti di prigionia" and "Il Prigioniero": An Autobiographical Fragment', tr. Jonathan Schiller, *Musical Quarterly* Vol. 39, No. 3 (July 1953), 355-372: 363.
[21] *Ibid.*, 369.
[22] See Luigi Dallapiccola, 'The Birth-Pangs of "Job"', *Musical Events* Vol. 15, No. 5 (May 1960), 26-27: 26, as cited in Shackelford (tr. and ed.), *Dallapiccola on Opera*, 62n4.
[23] Dallapiccola, 'Genesis' (tr. Schiller), 369.
[24] Shackelford (tr. and ed.), *Dallapiccola on Opera*, 62n4.
[25] Pinzauti, *Storia del Maggio*, 90-91.
[26] See Nicolodi (ed.), *Luigi Dallapiccola*, 125.
[27] Luigi Dallapiccola, 'Musica pianificata', *Il ponte* Vol. 6, No. 1 (January 1950), 27-33; more easily accessible in Luigi Dallapiccola, *Parole e musica*, ed. Fiamma Nicolodi (Milan: Il saggiatore, 1980), 147-153 (from where it will be cited).
[28] Elisabeth Lutyens, Hans Werner Henze, and Hugh Wood, 'Tributes to Dallapiccola', *Tempo* No. 108 (March 1974), 15-18: 16.
[29] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Selbstanzeige des Essaybuchs "Versuch über Wagner"', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann in collaboration with Gretel Adorno, Susan Buck-Morss and Klaus Schultz, 20 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970-86), xiii, 504-508: 506.
[30] Dallapiccola, 'Musica pianificata', 149-150.
[31] *Sorge* slips in as an allusion to the 'Mitternacht' scene in Act V of *Faust*, Part II. See J.W. von Goethe, *Faust: Eine Tragödie*, in *Goethes Werke*, ed. Erich Trunz et al., 14 vols. (Hamburg: Wegner, 1948-64), iii, 7-364: 343.
[32] See Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1949), 27-30. This is more easily available in Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften*, xii, 46-51. Further references will be to this edition.
[33] Luigi Dallapiccola, 'L'insegnamento della composizione', in *Parole e musica*, 140-146: 145.
[34] Luigi Dallapiccola, 'Die moderne Musik und ihre Beziehung zu den übrigen Künsten', tr. Gottfried Beutel, in *Die neue Weltschau: Zweite internationale Aussprache über den Anbruch eines neuen aperspektivischen Zeitalters* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1953), 42-80: 44.
[35] Benedetto Croce, 'The Totality of Artistic Expression', in *Philosophy Poetry History*, tr. Cecil Sprigge (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 261-273: 263.
[36] Dallapiccola, 'Die moderne Musik', 46, 47. For an early example of Adorno's commitment to technical novelty as essential to truth-content, see 'The Dialectical Composer', tr. Susan H. Gillespie, in *Essays on Music*, ed. Richard Leppert (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2002), 203-209: 207.
[37] Dallapiccola, 'Die moderne Musik', 43-44.
[38] *Ibid.* 43. See Marcel Proust, *Finding Time Again*, tr. Ian Patterson (London: Penguin, 2002), 189.
[39] Luigi Dallapiccola, 'Notes on the Statue Scene in *Don Giovanni* (1949-1969)', in Shackelford (tr. and ed.), *Dallapiccola on Opera*, 186-211: 192.

[40] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, tr. E.F.J. Payne, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1969), i, 221-223, 245.
[41] Duncan Large, *Nietzsche and Proust: A Comparative Study* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), 12-13, 25, 31.
[42] Schopenhauer, *World as Will*, i, 175, 257.
[43] Perhaps the most striking is Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, tr. Roy E. Carter (London: Faber, 1983), 416, where the composer is 'merely the instrument of a will hidden from him, of instinct, of his unconscious'.
[44] Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 400; Large, *Nietzsche and Proust*, 194-202.
[45] Proust, *Finding Time Again*, 187-188. Dallapiccola cites these words in 'L'insegnamento della composizione', 144-145.
[46] Large, *Nietzsche and Proust*, 203.
[47] Dallapiccola, 'Die moderne Musik', 49.
[48] Proust, *Finding Time Again*, 179-180, 183-184.
[49] Dallapiccola, 'Die moderne Musik', 46.
[50] One can see how Fiamma Nicolodi might be forgiven for calling Dallapiccola's essay 'muddled and abstract'. See her 'Nota', in Dallapiccola, *Parole e musica*, 7-20: 8.
[51] Hermann Bahr, *Expressionism*, tr. R.T. Gribble (London: Henderson, 1925), 56, 19, 69-70, 49, 5.
[52] Dallapiccola, 'Die moderne Musik', 47, 58-59.
[53] Croce rejects causality in art history. His notion of aesthetic universality refers simply to the way in which a state of mind may be recognised across continents and centuries. In any case, he would scarcely have regarded expressionism as art. What he refers to derisively as romanticism's effeminate 'outpouring' ('sfogo') of emotion here finds its apogee. See Benedetto Croce, *The Aesthetic as the Science of Expression and the Linguistic in General*, tr. Colin Lyas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 147-153; Croce, 'Totality', 264, 269-272.
[54] See Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, tr. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 1-62.
[55] Dallapiccola, 'Die moderne Musik', 61, 69-70.
[56] Luigi Dallapiccola, 'On the Twelve-Note Road', tr. Deryck Cooke, *Music Survey* Vol. 4, No. 1 (October 1951), 318-332: 330 (translation modified).
[57] Dallapiccola, 'Musica pianificata', 150; Proust, *Finding Time Again*, 187-190, 196-197.
[58] Dallapiccola, 'Musica pianificata', 153.
[59] *Ibid.* 151.
[60] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, tr. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1986), 68.
[61] Dallapiccola, 'Notes sur mon opéra', 140; 'Musica pianificata', 151. For Croce's condemnation of aesthetic elitism, see his *Aesthetic*, 15-16. It is ironic that a previous use by Dallapiccola of Cocteau's tag, in a lecture of 1936 (where it is attributed to Schoenberg, or rather, to the latter's 'demon'), should lead to a passage where Mussolini's slogan 'Andare verso il popolo' is defended, from the perspective of the avant-garde composer, in terms that take on an unmistakably demagogic character. See Luigi Dallapiccola, 'Di un aspetto della musica contemporanea', in *Parole e musica*, 207-224: 216, 218-219.
[62] René Leibowitz, 'Le musicien engagé', *Les temps modernes* Vol. 4, No. 40 (February 1949), 322-339. This text was swiftly incorporated into Leibowitz's short book, *L'artiste et sa conscience: esquisse d'une dialectique de la conscience artistique* (Paris: L'Arche, 1950), 41-87, but is more readily available in the *Temps modernes* version and will be cited from there.
[63] Leibowitz, 'Le musicien engagé', 327. Dallapiccola's dodecaphonic 'solidarity' is attested to by Mila, '"Il prigioniero"', 307.
[64] See Sabine Meine, 'Leibowitz, René', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn., 29 vols. (London: Grove, 2001), xiv, 501-502: 501.
[65] Leibowitz, 'Le musicien engagé', 339.
[66] With his encyclopedia article complete, Togni read it to Dallapiccola himself, who told his younger colleague that he had nothing against the use of existentialist texts, but added, 'You know that I don't like Sartre'. See Togni, *Carteggi*, 206.
[67] Venuti, *Il teatro*, 45; Slavoj Žižek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism? Five Interventions in the (Mis)use of a Notion* (London and New York: Verso, 2002), 64.
[68] For a scholarly edition of Dallapiccola's text, see Giovanna Gronda and Paolo Fabbri (eds.), *Libretti d'opera italiani dal seicento al novecento* (Milan: Mondadori, 1997), 1729-1746.

[69] Žižek, *Did Somebody Say?*, 62-63.
[70] *Ibid.* 63.
[71] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, new edn. (San Diego, New York and London: Harcourt, 1994), 445.
[72] These are references to Luther's denunciation of the Catholic practice of withholding the chalice from the laity and to Zwingli's denial of transubstantiation. See Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), 117-130.
[73] Dallapiccola, 'Notes sur mon opéra', 141. The four lines sung by the chorus here (this is the third) are drawn from Catholic liturgy: specifically, the 'Preparation for Mass'. See *The Roman Missal in Latin and English*, 8th edn. (Paris, Tournai and Rome: Desclée, 1948), xliv.
[74] Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies* (London and New York: Verso, 1997), 232; Slavoj Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 234.
[75] See Sarah Kay, *Žižek: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003), 163.
[76] Slavoj Žižek, *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Woman and Causality* (London and New York: Verso, 1994), 55.
[77] Žižek, *For They Know Not*, 243-245.
[78] The Jailer, it should be pointed out, is Dallapiccola's invention. In the short story, the Grand Inquisitor visits the Prisoner undisguised.
[79] Žižek, *Plague*, 73; Žižek, *Metastases*, 55, 71.
[80] Žižek, *Metastases*, 57.
[81] Žižek, *Plague*, 57.
[82] Perhaps, as Mila suggested in an earlier version of his 1950 article (written as an introduction to the 1949 radio premiere of the opera), this priest, like the Jailer, is the Grand Inquisitor in disguise. See Massimo Mila, '*Il prigioniero* di Luigi Dallapiccola', in Luigi Dallapiccola and Massimo Mila, *Tempus aedificandi: Carteggio 1933-1975*, ed. Livio Aragona (San Giuliano Milanese: Ricordi, 2005), 365-371: 369-370.
[83] Jacques Wildberger, 'Luigi Dallapiccolas musikgeschichtliche Sternstunde', *Schweizerische Musikzeitung/Revue musicale suisse* Vol. 115, No. 4 (July-August 1975), 171-179: 178.
[84] Žižek, *Metastases*, 57.
[85] Arblaster, *Viva la Libertà!*, 281. Perhaps he is one of the six Flemish deputies who come to plead with Philip II in the auto-da-fé scene of Verdi's opera. But Dallapiccola does not go back to Verdi (or Schiller) for this section of his libretto. Instead he draws on the nineteenth-century epic by the Belgian nationalist writer, Charles De Coster (1827-79), *La Légende et les aventures héroïques d'Ulenspiegel et de Lamme Goedzak au pays de Flandre et ailleurs* (1867). This is available in English as *The Glorious Adventures of Tyl Ulenspiegl*, tr. Allan Ross Macdougall (New York: Pantheon, 1943). See 438-441, in particular.
[86] Dallapiccola, 'Genesis' (tr. Schiller), 372.
[87] See Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics 1943-1980* (London: Penguin, 1990), 65-68.
[88] *Ibid.* 72.
[89] The hostile review by Franco Abbiati (1898-1981), the critic of the establishment daily *Corriere della sera*, was entitled 'Sussurri e cataclismi nelle dodecafonie del "Prigioniero"'. See Andrea Estero, 'Il dibattito musicale nella pubblicistica', in Guido Salvetti and Bianca Maria Antolini (eds.), *Italia millenovecentocinquanta*, (Milan: Garzanti, 1999), 369-396: 383n59.
[90] See Mila de Santis, 'Dallapiccola per "Il Mondo"', in Daniele Spini (ed.), *Studi e fantasie: Saggi, versi, musica e testimonianze in onore di Leonardo Pinzauti* (Antella: Passigli, 1996), 83-102.
[91] Estero, 'Il dibattito musicale', 378.
[92] Stephen Gundle, *Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian Communists and the Challenge of Mass Culture, 1943-1991* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2000), 48, 52, 50-51.
[93] Estero, 'Il dibattito musicale', 378-379, 385-386. See also Rubens Tedeschi, 'Quattro biglietti di Dallapiccola', in Spini (ed.), *Studi e fantasie*, 337-341: 337.
[94] Dallapiccola and Mila, *Tempus aedificandi*, 141-142.
[95] Nicolodi (ed.), *Luigi Dallapiccola*, 125. See also Dallapiccola's letter to Mila of 20 March 1950 and Mila's response, five days later, in Dallapiccola and Mila, *Tempus aedificandi*, 150-152.
[96] Again, he accused his assailants of 'bad faith'. See Luigi Dallapiccola, '*Job*, a Mystery Play', in Shackelford (tr. and ed.), *Dallapiccola on Opera*, 61-69: 62.
[97] Nicolodi (ed.), *Luigi Dallapiccola*, 91-92.

[98] Luigi Dallapiccola, 'Qualche cenno sulla genesi del "Prigioniero"', *Paragone* Vol. 1, No. 6 (June 1950), 44-54: 54.
[99] Mila, '"Il prigioniero"', 303. See also Mila's polemic, 'Un artista che non evade' ('An Artist who does not Dodge'), in the May-June 1950 issue of the Florentine journal, *Letteratura e arte contemporanea*; reprinted in Dallapiccola and Mila, *Tempus aedificandi*, 371-376.
[100] Dallapiccola 'Musica pianificata', 147, 148, 152.
[101] Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, xxxn5.
[102] *Ibid.* 308-309.
[103] Dallapiccola 'Musica pianificata', 148.
[104] Sartre, 'Introducing', 252.
[105] Jean-Paul Sartre, 'The Artist and His Conscience', in *Situations*, tr. Benita Eisler (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1965), 203-224: 210-211.
[106] Anne C. Shreffler, 'Ideologies of Serialism: Stravinsky's *Threni* and the Congress for Cultural Freedom', in Karol Berger and Anthony Newcomb (eds.), *Music and the Aesthetics of Modernity: Essays* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2005), 217-245: 238.
[107] Mark Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 19, 69.
[108] As Dietrich Kämper puts it (*Gefangenschaft und Freiheit. Leben und Werk des Komponisten Luigi Dallapiccola* [Cologne: Gitarre + Laute, 1984], 78), *Il prigioniero* 'became one of the most frequently performed works of the new music theatre in post-war [West] German musical life'. In this period, it was staged in Essen (1954), Berlin (1955), Frankfurt (1957), Lübeck (1960), Wuppertal (1961), Hamburg (1964), Duisburg (1964), Düsseldorf (1966) and Bonn (1967). Concert performances took place in Frankfurt (1951 and 1956) and Hamburg (1957): no doubt there were others. See Soldini, 'L'oeuvre', 70-71, 75; Dietrich Kämper, 'La musica di Dallapiccola nella Germania del secondo dopoguerra', tr. Eleonora Negri, in Mila De Santis (ed.), *Dallapiccola. Letture e prospettive. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi (Empoli-Firenze, 16–19 febbraio 1995)*, (Milan/Lucca: Ricordi/LIM, 1997), 345-355: 349-350.
[109] Luigi Dallapiccola, 'Comments on Contemporary Opera', in Shackelford (tr. and ed.), *Dallapiccola on Opera*, 99-106: 102-103, 100-101.
[110] Dallapiccola, 'Genesis', 52; Mila, '"Il prigioniero"', 303.
[111] Dallapiccola, 'Comments', 104.
[112] See Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta, 1999), 139-144, 351; David Schiff, *The Music of Elliott Carter* (London: Eulenburg, 1983), 236 (and for Carter's friendship with Nabokov, *ibid.* 22).
[113] Schiff, *The Music of Elliott Carter*, 228-237.
[114] Albert Camus, *The Rebel*, tr. Anthony Bower (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), 155, 207.
[115] See Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*, tr. Daphne Hardy (London: Vintage, 1994), 90-92, 102, 116-117, 121-122, 124-133, 201-207.
[116] George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (London: Penguin, 2000), 85.
[117] Carroll, *Music and Ideology*, 169, 4, in the latter case citing Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War*, tr. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 189.
[118] Carroll, *Music and Ideology*, 140. (His account of the Rome Festival is at 166-176.) See also Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid?*, 221-224.
[119] Richard Taruskin, 'Back to Whom? Neoclassicism as Ideology', *19th Century Music* Vol. 16, No. 3 (Spring 1993), 286-302: 301; Carroll, *Music and Ideology*, 169.
[120] Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, *Schöpfer der neuen Musik: Portraits und Studien* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1958), 240, 228.
[121] Josef Rufer, 'Luigi Dallapiccola "Il prigioniero"', *Oper im XX. Jahrhundert*, *Musik der Zeit: Eine Schriftenreihe zur zeitgenössischen Musik* No. 6 (1954): 56-64: 58, 60.
[122] See, for example, Antonio Trudu, '"Il prigioniero": alla ricerca della libertà', in De Santis (ed.), *Dallapiccola*, 277-300: 298-299.
[123] Bayan Northcott, 'The Forgotten Modernist', *The Independent* (26 January 2004), 52-53: 52.
[124] Soldini, 'L'oeuvre', 70.
[125] In 1962, there was also a staging in Genoa (Teatro Carlo Felice), followed by productions in Turin (Teatro Nuovo, 1963; repeated the same year in Trieste [Teatro Verdi]), Rome (Opera, 1964), Bologna (Teatro Comunale, 1966), Venice (Teatro La Fenice, 1967), and Florence (Teatro Comunale, 1969). In 1972, *Il prigioniero* was staged in Naples (Teatro di San Carlo), Florence (Teatro Comunale) and Treviso (Teatro Comunale), in 1975 in Siena (Teatro dei Rinnovati) and

Palermo (Politeama Garibaldi), and in 1976 in Catania (Teatro Bellini). See Soldini, 'L'oeuvre', 71-72.

[126] Northcott, 'The Forgotten Modernist', 52.

[127] See his letter of 10 December 1946 in Dallapiccola and Mila, *Tempus aedificandi*, 112.

[128] See, for example, Dallapiccola 'Musica pianificata', 152-153; and compare Schopenhauer, *World as Will*, i, 236; Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 325.

[129] Žižek, *Did Somebody Say?*, 3.

[130] Wildberger, 'Sternstunde', 179. See also Fedele d'Amico, 'Luigi Dallapiccola', *Melos* Vol. 20, No. 3 (March 1953), 69-74: 73-74.

[131] Herbert Marcuse, 'The Affirmative Character of Culture', in *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory*, tr. Jeremy J. Shapiro (London: Penguin, 1968), 88-133.

[132] Mila, '"Il prigioniero"', 304-305.

[133] Dallapiccola and Mila, *Tempus aedificandi*, 142.

[134] Harewood (ed.), *Kobbé's Complete*, 1248.

[135] Massimo Mila, 'Il prigioniero di Dallapiccola', in *I costumi della Traviata* (Pordenone: Edizioni Studio Tesi, 1984), 283-299: 291.

[136] Mila, '"Il prigioniero"', 305.

[137] See Roman Vlad, *Luigi Dallapiccola*, tr. Cynthia Jolly (Milan: Suvini Zerboni, 1957), 38; and in similar vein, the composer's letter to Riccardo Malipiero (yet another Catholicizing critic) of November 1974, in Nicolodi (ed.), *Luigi Dallapiccola*, 108.

[138] Massimo Mila, *Breve storia della musica* (Milan: Bianchi-Giovini, 1946), 338.

[139] See Benedetto Croce, *History as the Story of Liberty*, tr. Sylvia Sprigge, rev. Folke Leander and Claes G. Ryn (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000).

[140] For Croce's immensely influential liberal historicism, see the opening and closing chapters of his *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*, tr. Henry Furst (London: Allen & Unwin, 1934).

[141] Arblaster, *Viva la Libertà*, 281-282.

[142] Miguel de Unamuno, *The Tragic Sense of Life in Men and Nations*, tr. Anthony Kerrigan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 9. See Dallapiccola, *Parole e musica*, 153, 300; also 'Die moderne Musik', 44; Shackelford (tr. and ed.), *Dallapiccola on Opera*, 225.

[143] Unamuno, *The Tragic Sense of Life*, 131, 211, 210, 217. See also Venuti, *Il teatro*, 45-46.

[144] The connection is made in Jean-Michel Brèque, 'Des textes du passé à la tragédie du présent', *Dallapiccola: 'Le Prisonnier'*, 40-43: 43.

[145] Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, tr. Justin O'Brien (London: Penguin, 2000), 23, 31, 58.

[146] *Ibid.* 109.

[147] Jean-Paul Sartre, 'What is Literature?', tr. Bernard Frechtman, in Sartre, *'What is Literature?'*, 21-245: 178-179, 180.

[148] Dallapiccola, 'Comments', 102.

[149] Dallapiccola had been familiar with the piano reduction of Berg's opera since at least the mid-1930s. See Fiamma Nicolodi, 'Luigi Dallapiccola e la Scuola di Vienna. Note in margine a una scelta', in *Orizzonti musicali italo-europei 1860-1980* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1990), 231-282: 257; also Dallapiccola's 1936 comments on Act 1, Scene 4 and Act 3, Scene 1, in 'Di un aspetto', 220-221.

[150] Berg's hexachord is (012479), Dallapiccola's (012469). Alter Dallapiccola's A to B♭ and his chord will be identical to Berg's by (transposed) inversion.

[151] Dallapiccola, 'Notes', 142. The row is stated here in prime form: pitch classes G, A, C, E♭, F, A♭, B♭, D♭, E♮, F♯, B♮, D♮.

[152] *Ibid*. The bass trichords ascend: $E♮^1$-$B♭^1$-E♭ (as a succession, bars 909-912), then (as simultaneities, bars 913-914) A-d-g♯, d♭-g♮-c^1 and g♭-$c♭^1$-f^1. The treble trichords descend: f^3-c^3-$f♯^2$ (or $g♭^2$) (heard twice, bars 909-913 and 913-914), $c♯^3$-$g♮^2$-d^2 (bar 913), and $a♭^1$-$e♭^1$-a♮ (bar 914). (The final trichord [pitch classes B♭, E and B] is missing.)

[153] The term is George Perle's. See his *The Operas of Alban Berg: Vol. 1, Wozzeck* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1980), 95.

[154] Adorno, *Philosophie*, 47.

[155] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Fragen des gegenwärtigen Operntheaters', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, xix, 481-493: 487; 'On the Contemporary Relationship of Philosophy and Music', tr. Susan H. Gillespie, in *Essays on Music*, 135-161: 158; 'Neue Musik Heute', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, xviii, 124-133: 130.

[156] Adorno, 'Fragen', 487.

[157] *Ibid*.
[158] Wildberger, 'Sternstunde', 179.
[159] Mila, '"Il prigioniero"', 311, 309-310. See Leonardo Pinzauti, 'L'eredità di Verdi nella condotta vocale del "Prigioniero"', in *L'opera di Luigi Dallapiccola*, 11-21; also Vlad, *Luigi Dallapiccola*, 40; Malipiero, 'Il prigioniero', 16; Arblaster, *Viva la Libertà!*, 280.
[160] Edward Peters, *Inquisition* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 1, 204-217. For Dallapiccola's account of his research, see 'Genesis', 51. 'La torture par l'espérance' has some words from Poe's story as an epigraph.
[161] Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 19-20, 30.
[162] Arnold Whittall, for example, registers 'what now seems a rather over-heated insistence' in *Il prigioniero*, as well as noting Dallapiccola's lack of 'formal sophistication' with respect to his Bergian model. See his 'Berg and the Twentieth Century', in Anthony Pople (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Berg* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 247-258: 254. See also Vlad, *Luigi Dallapiccola*, 40.
[163] Brooks, *Melodramatic Imagination*, viii, 11, 13, 36.
[164] See Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, 1991), 61-118.
[165] *Ibid.* 119-120.
[166] Brooks, *Melodramatic Imagination*, 202.
[167] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic*, 1-34; Adorno, *Philosophie*, 68.
[168] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic*, 113, 111; Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 28.
[169] Jameson, *Marxism and Form*, 36; Adorno, *Philosophie*, 34.
[170] Adorno, *Philosophie*, 27.
[171] Herbert Marcuse, 'Sartre's Existentialism [1948]', in *From Luther to Popper*, tr. Joris de Bres (London: Verso, 1983), 157-190: 183.
[172] Venuti, *Il teatro*, 44.
[173] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Society and Psychology', tr. Irving N. Wohlfarth, *New Left Review* No. 46 (November-December 1967), 67-60: 80; 'Society and Psychology II', tr. Irving N. Wohlfarth, *New Left Review* No. 47 (January-February 1968), 79-97: 86.
[174] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic*, 112.
[175] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda', in *The Culture Industry*, ed. J.M. Bernstein (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 132-157: 152; 'Society and Psychology', 79.
[176] Adorno, 'Society and Psychology II', 88-89.
[177] Keller, 'XIII Maggio', 211; Mila, '"Il prigioniero"', 305. See also Mila's letter to the composer of 19 October 1949, in Dallapiccola and Mila, *Tempus aedificandi*, 145.
[178] Adorno, 'Society and Psychology', 80.
[179] Žižek, *Metastases*, 59-61.
[180] Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real! Five Essays on September 11 and Related Dates* (London and New York: Verso, 2002), 95-96.
[181] Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London and New York: Verso, 1999), 289, 281.
[182] *Ibid.* 290-291, 268.
[183] Brooks, *Melodramatic Imagination*, 34.
[184] Žižek, *Ticklish Subject*, 303.
[185] *Ibid.* 280, 302.
[186] *Ibid.* 302; *Did Somebody Say?*, 73-81.
[187] Malipiero, 'Il prigioniero', 11

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