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*Luciano Chailly's "De profundis di Cefalonia"
between civil-ethical commitment, theatricality
and graphic experimentalism¹*

The only reference to the *De profundis di Cefalonia* (1980-81)² by Luciano Chailly³ (1920-2002) is found in his last book, an autobiography he wrote and published as he approached his seventieth year of age:

¹ This contribution originated as part of my doctoral studies and, in general, of the three-year 2020-22 celebrations marking respectively the centennial of Luciano Chailly's birth and the twentieth anniversary of his death. I sincerely thank the composer's heirs for their support of this study of a yet unpublished composition, to which Chailly was clearly attached for its deeply religious, as well as for civil-ethical implications. I also would like to thank the staff of the Provincial Archive of Trento where the Chailly Fund is kept and promoted, in particular the director Armando Tomasi and Isabella Bolognesi. In the present article, the acronym "APTN, LC" indicates the "Archivio provinciale di Trento, Fondo Luciano Chailly", followed by the number(s) of the archival unit(s) as indicated in *Luciano Chailly. Inventario dell'archivio (1920-2002)*, edited by Mirella Duci and Novella Forner, Trento, Soprintendenza per i Beni culturali-Ufficio beni librari archivistici e Archivio provinciale, 2020.

² The unpublished, handwritten score can be found in APTN, LC, nos. 27 (autograph and photocopy), 194 (facsimile reproduction), 339 (pencil manuscript and notes). According to a note pencilled in on the last page of the autograph copy, the *De profundis di Cefalonia* was composed in Milan and in Pieve di Ledro (in the province of Trento, where the Chailly family has owned a chalet since the 1960s) between 22 November 1980 and 17 January 1981.

³ In recent years, the figure of the composer has attracted some interest from historians and musicologists. An initial biographical and aesthetic profile may be drawn from the five monographs penned by the author himself: LUCIANO CHAILLY, *I personaggi*, Bologna, L'Autore Libri, 1972; ID., *Cronache di vita musicale*, Rome, De Santis, 1973; ID., *Taccuino segreto di un musicista*, Bologna, Barghigiani, 1974; ID., *Buzzati in musica. L'opera italiana nel dopoguerra*, Turin, Eda, 1987; ID., *Le variazioni della fortuna. Storie di un musicista*, Milan, Camunia, 1989. The most recent musicological contributions on Chailly include: *Il suono conquistato e organizzato. La musica secondo Luciano Chailly*, edited by Alberto Delama and Marco Uvietta, Lucca, Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2022; *Luciano Chailly. Oltre il tritematico*, edited by Maria Maddalena Novati, Marina Vaccarini and Carlotta Ghiretti, Milan, Die Schachtel-NoMus, 2020; *Severe di lamentazioni e di echi teneri e segreti. Omaggio a Luciano Chailly (1920-2002)*, edited by Nicola Badolato, Rome, Aracne, 2012. For a reference list and more information on the conferences organized on the composer, see CARMELA BONGIOVANNI, *Luciano Chailly: bibliografia ragionata*, in *Il suono conquistato e organizzato* cit., pp. 263-298.

My most recent sacred work is *De Profundis di Cefalonia*, which is part of my anti-Nazi production, since it is dedicated to 'the 5,000 Italian soldiers of the Acqui Division massacred by German troops in Cefalonia as a reprisal'.

I conceived this work for three choirs: one in Italian, set to verses by my uncle Giuseppe Ravegnani, one in German, on texts by Eisner and Petzold, and an a cappella choir in Latin that sings the liturgical psalm 'from within' (i.e., in a different space), interspersed with dramatic interventions by the previous choirs. Instead of the orchestra, the instrumental support consists of three electric organs accompanying the Italian choir and 16 timpani accompanying the German choir.

The 'speravit anima mea' of the *De Profundis* brings to my mind the thought of the end.⁴

With his usually precise and direct language, Chailly outlines the main elements of his work, composed almost a decade earlier: a dense, expansive work, ripe with multi-layered meanings and civically engaged, which the composer regarded as truly representative of his sacred production.⁵ In the wake of a strong and genuine commitment to a civil and anti-fascist cause, Chailly was clearly inspired to create a unique composition, devoted to the memory of a shocking event for Italian and European consciousness. In many respects, this work stands out in his production, sacred or otherwise. Although at first glance it seems to be permeated by a secular, rather than religious kind of theatricality – in the pages below I will seek to demonstrate that in it Chailly managed to bring together two of the driving themes that guided him throughout his musical career: a calling for the theatre, and a sensitivity to religious themes.

The two levels of the sacred and of the theatre, then (the latter with its familiar spatial and gestural implications), intersect in this imposing piece, which to this day remains both unpublished and, as far as we know, unperformed, due to the unusual size of its instrumental and choral ensembles. Thus, those two levels are also key to correctly approaching, contextualizing and appreciating Chailly's *De profundis*. My study begins with a brief analysis of the work's literary sources; it will then address the various dramatic elements that animate it.

Literary sources

As the author himself declared, there are three literary sources for the 'secular' component of *De profundis*: two in German and one in Italian. The Ger-

⁴ CHAILLY, *Le variazioni della fortuna* cit., p. 204 ff.

⁵ For a broad overview of the composer's sacred production see SALVATORE DE SALVO FATTOR, *Luciano Chailly e la musica sacra*, in *Il suono conquistato e organizzato* cit., pp. 173-199.

man poems are *Letzter Marsch* [Last March] by Kurt Eisner (1867-1919)⁶ and *Die Erde und der Krieg* [The Earth and the War] by Alfons Petzold (1882-1923),⁷ while the Italian poem is *Lamento* by Giuseppe Ravagnani,⁸ Chailly's uncle. The latter text had already been used for another important work by the composer: the *Lamento dei Morti e dei vivi per soli, due cori e due orchestre* op. 180, begun in November 1949 and finished on 24 January 1950.⁹ Already in this early work the composer had the opportunity to show his solid theatrical thinking:

I decided to make the living sing and the dead speak, differentiating the orchestra of the living (strings and timpani) from that of the dead (flute – oboe – trumpet – horn – piano – bass drum – tam tam – suspended cymbal), and preparing to characterise each dead person with the accompaniment of a given instrumental group (*The child*: tam tam – flute and oboe on a twelve-tone texture; *The girl*: piano – horn – bass drum – cymbal, on an *ostinato*, etc.) [...].¹⁰

⁶ See ANTON RITTHALER, *Eisner, Kurt*, in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, IV, Berlin, Duncker & Humblot, 1959, p. 422 ff. (online: <<https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz12945.html>> [Last accessed 2 September 2021]).

⁷ The two poems are published in the original language and translated in *Poesia operaia tedesca del '900. Studio antologico di Maria Teresa Mandalari*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1974, pp. 112-115; 132 ff. I have learned from RAINER NOLTENIUS, *Petzold, Alfons*, in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, XX, Berlin, Duncker & Humblot, 2001, p. 275 ff. (online: <<https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz95082.html>> [Last accessed 2 September 2021]) that the pseudonym of the *Arbeiterschriststeller* was «De Profundis»; this is a coincidence probably unknown to Chailly, since he would not have failed to point it out had he been aware of it (on the other hand, Mandalari's edition features short biographies of the poets, and no pseudonym is mentioned in the entry devoted to Petzold (*Poesia operaia tedesca* cit., p. 232 ff.)).

⁸ The poem is published in GIUSEPPE RAVEGNANI, *Quasi una fiaba*, Sarzana, Carpena, 1963, pp. 103-114. With this collection, Ravagnani won the “Sebeto” National Poetry Prize in Naples in 1964; in APTN, LC, n. 1059 we find a personal copy of the composer with a dedication by his uncle dated «April 1964». On the pages containing the sixth part of the poetic collection, titled *Lamento. Coro a più voci*, Chailly underlined the portion of the text to be used in the *De Profundis*, and noted that the text had been set to music in 1950 for the *Lamento dei Morti e dei vivi*. For a brief biographical outline and information on the scholar's bibliography see NICOLA BADOLATO, *Luciano Chailly critico e divulgatore di musica in Il suono conquistato e organizzato* cit., pp. 153-169: 153, fn 1.

⁹ The unpublished score can be found in APTN, LC, nos. 9, 42-43, 239.

¹⁰ LUCIANO CHAILLY, *Storia della mia musica*, I, p. 55; APTN, LC, nos. 682, 687-688 (three copies of the same document). This is an unpublished typescript that contains precious information on his life and on the genesis of the author's compositions from his youth until 1967 (the following year he was appointed artistic director of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan

Thirty years later, the same literary source would turn out to be useful for a new, broad-ranging work dealing with the sensitive issue of death. In both cases Chailly 'pruned'¹¹ the poem to extract a more agile musical version, retaining only the lines best suited for the dramatic demands of the composition. In the case of the *De profundis di Cefalonia*, the process was even more radical, since the 'dramatic' setting of Ravegnani's original is missing: the living and dead characters (both soloists and choral) are not part of the new composition, since Chailly extrapolated only the lines that he considered particularly effective for his expressive purposes.

Chailly did not set the poems by Eisner and Petzold in their entirety either, but rather picked individual lines from them. The only major change concerns the sixth line of the third stanza in *Letzter Marsch*, where Chailly changed the verb's tense: «Liegt nichts dran: | Du warst ein Mann! [It does not matter: | you were a man!]12 becomes «Liegt nichts dran: | Du bist ein Mann! [It does not matter: | you are a man!]

Why was Chailly inspired by two *Arbeiterdichtungen* [workers' poems] for the German choral part? The author's notes do not answer this question, but the composer may have been fascinated by the strong expressiveness of the two poems. Moreover, Maria Teresa Mandalari's introductory study provides important insights into the history and aesthetics of the poems she collected in her 1974 edition. Referring to Alfons Petzold's *Die Erde und der Krieg* she writes: «it has its own heartfelt inspiration, an aspiration to redemption beyond hatred, beyond the darkness of the moment».¹³ Luciano Chailly could only have referred to this edition, and indeed he writes so in the typed introduction to the score: thus, it may be that, having read Mandalari's text among other things, he was fascinated by the collected poems (perhaps in particular by *Die Erde und der Krieg*) and decided to set them to music. Mandalari's words thus provide one additional clue to the interpretation of the *De profundis*:

and ceased working on this writing). I would like to thank Maestro Chailly's heirs of for granting me permission to consult and study this important work.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² I am adhering to Maria Teresa Mandalari's translation, even its free renderings of the original, since Chailly himself referred to it.

¹³ *Poesia operaia tedesca del '900* cit., p. 38.

a composition that aims at redemption beyond hatred, reconciling the then opposing sides to overcome the darkness and horrors of war. It is as if Chailly wanted to draw a parallel between, on the one hand, the working class – i.e., the author of the poems – and the Italian and German soldiers on the other: both groups, with their shared *de profundis*, cry out a desperate, common lament addressed to a divine being; in the case of the Italian and German troops, as they are finally united after the tragic struggle on the battlefield.

The two German poems are radically different. In particular, Kurt Eisner's *Letzter Marsch* has short, poignant lines that condense an immediate, violent drama in a few words. In contrast, Alfons Petzold's poem is more poised, lyrical and solemn, the lines are longer, and the religious feeling clearly shines through.

Between theatre and the sacred

De profundis di Cefalonia belongs to Luciano Chailly's late production; at the beginning of the 1980s the composer had an impressive number of instrumental and vocal compositions to his credit (including twelve works for the musical theatre) and above all he had considerable experience as an artistic director of prestigious Italian musical institutions: the Teatro alla Scala in Milan for two terms (1968-1971, 1977-1979), the Teatro Regio in Turin (as a consultant, 1972-1973), the Angelicum in Milan (1973-1975), and the Arena in Verona (1975-1976),¹⁴ not to mention his sixteen years at Rai early in his career (1951-1967, first in Milan and then in Rome),¹⁵ which enabled him to become acquainted and collaborate with internationally renowned performers, and to access a vast repertoire of chamber music, symphonic music and opera, both traditional and contemporary.

We do not know the reasons that led Chailly to dedicate a composition to the memory of the Cefalonia massacre, but it is a fact that at the turn of the 1970s and 80s he published several works that can be fully included in

¹⁴ This biographical information can be found in CHAILLY, *Le variazioni della fortuna* cit. and – in a condensed version – at the website dedicated to the composer <<https://www.cultura.trentino.it/Luciano-Chailly/Direttore-artistico>> [Last accessed 2 September 2021].

¹⁵ For further details on various aspects of Chailly's years at Rai see: MARIA MADDALENA NOVATI, *Luciano Chailly e la Rai*, in *Il suono conquistato e organizzato* cit., pp. 135-152; *Luciano Chailly e la produzione Rai*, in *Luciano Chailly. Oltre il tritematico* cit., pp. 39-43; MARIA MADDALENA NOVATI – LORENZO PISANELLO, *L'opera di Chailly in Rai e nello Studio di Fonologia: come conservare un'eredità culturale*, in *Severe di lamentazioni e di echi teneri e segreti* cit., pp. 91-106.

the «anti-Nazi production» mentioned at the beginning of this contribution. These include the imposing *Kinder-Requiem* (1977),¹⁶ inspired by a massacre of children in front of their parents carried out by Nazi soldiers, the four-part ballet *Anna Frank* (1978),¹⁷ composed with the blessing of Anne's father Otto Frank (who died shortly before the premiere) and, in a more subtle way, the *Serenata a Mauthausen* (1980),¹⁸ a poignant and distraught song in honour of the victims of the concentration camp. Another work that can be partially placed side by side with the compositions mentioned above (due to its chronological proximity and reference to an event of the Second World War) is the poem *Li hanno portati a spalla* (1976), which closes with the epigraph: «in memoria dei morti di Hiroshima [to the memory of the dead of Hiroshima]».¹⁹ We may conclude, then, that between the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s Chailly developed an anti-Nazi conscience that urged him to write compositions for both intimate (i.e., chamber-like) and large-scale ensembles, with colossal choirs and orchestras.

A combination of the sacred sphere and theatricality permeates the *De profundis*. Drawing a parallel with the *Kinder-Requiem* mentioned above (another grand, sacred work with evident theatrical features) we may adopt, and try to interpret, the expression «humanisation of religiousness» coined by Renzo Cresti.²⁰ In works so conceived, religious *pietas* is evoked to solemnly recall episodes of sheer human brutality. Spectacle embellishes and highlights them in addition to carrying the author's signature, as it were (Massimo Mila described Chailly as a «prolific opera composer with a sense of theatre».)²¹ In the composition discussed here, the choirs act as charac-

¹⁶ LUCIANO CHAILLY, *Kinder-Requiem* per 4 voci soliste, voce infantile, coro misto, coro di voci bianche e orchestra, Milan, Ricordi, 1978.

¹⁷ ID., *Anna Frank*, Milan, Carisch, 1980.

¹⁸ ID., *Serenata a Mauthausen* for mandolin and piano, Milan, Rugginenti, 1981; for an overview of the piece and, more in general, of Chailly's mandolin repertoire, see ANNA SCHIVAZAPPA, *Le composizioni con mandolino di Luciano Chailly: fra avanguardia e tradizione*, in *Il suono conquistato e organizzata* cit., pp. 247-260.

¹⁹ LUCIANO CHAILLY, *Due liriche spirituali* per mezzo-soprano e piano, Rome, Boccaccini & Spada, 1980. The two poems are "Li hanno portati a spalla" (text by Severino Di Candia) and "Preghiera" (text by Saint Francis of Assisi).

²⁰ RENZO CRESTI, *Linguaggio musicale di Luciano Chailly*, Milan, Miano, 1993, p. 64. To contextualize the concept of «humanisation of religiousness», one could do worse than to cite the comment found shortly thereafter about the *Kinder-Requiem* as a «masterpiece of this religious series, of spiritual ethics, pervaded by deep humanity» (*ibid.*, p. 65).

²¹ MASSIMO MILA, *Breve storia della musica*, Turin, Einaudi, 1977, p. 448.

ters endowed with duality: on the one hand the ‘secular’ role, represented by the Italian- and German-language choirs; on the other, the ‘religious’ role embodied by the Latin choir and surrounded by a sort of liturgical aura. Moreover, the ‘lay’ choirs are supported by the instrumental sections of the orchestra, whereas the Latin choir sings a cappella «‘from within’ (i.e., in a different space)», as the author himself declared. This is both a conceptual and a spatial, or scenic, indication: the choir – the only one of the three featuring four mixed voices – ideally belongs to the heavenly realm, far from the human condition, and according to the «Technical Notes» drawn up by the composer (see Fig. 1),²² its purpose is to sound «as far away as possible», even though «it may be helped by an invisible and imperceptible Harmonium».²³

The general structure of *De profundis* conceals a well-thought-out theatrical idea. Before the Latin psalm is heard, Chailly weaves together a stormy prelude where the German and Italian choirs are the absolute protagonists, amid highly charged atmospheres and great dynamic mobility. The entrance of the Latin choir marks the first change of direction: the dynamic shift from a concise and violent *ff* to *ppp* on a long fermata in Adagio tempo at |17|. ²⁴ The *Requiem eternam* begins in similar manner: after the German choir and the timpani reach a *fff*, and after a long fermata, the prayer for the dead begins *ppp* in Molto lento tempo. From this moment to the end, the composition draws to a close with the parts gradually coming together in song, as if aspiring for transcendence.

In contrast to the Latin choir, the ‘living language’ choirs are supported by musical instruments; being exclusively male, they represent the military sides involved in the war. In turn, they are characterised by a clear duality: the Italian choir sings, while the German choir speaks. Chailly, however, does not want to stage the massacre by the Nazis against the Italian soldiers, as one might perhaps expect, given his premises. On the contrary, both sides sing a desperate lament modelled after the liturgical psalm, in the secularized variant of it offered by the select poetic compositions. The protagonist is, at any rate, the Latin psalm that gives the work its title, while the Italian and German interventions serve as modern tropes to reinforce the religious mood. In short, what is most important is not to stage the event that inspired

²² Reproductions from the score can be found in the Appendix at the end of this article.

²³ APTN, LC, n. 27, p. «C».

²⁴ Here vertical bars are rehearsal numbers; where necessary, I will also indicate the bar numbers before or after rehearsal numbers. In the original score rehearsal numbers are circled, page numbers underlined.

the composition, but to unite the two opposing sides in a moving song that supports the solemn Latin lamentation. The aim is to resolve the conflict in order to reconcile the factions in a common lament addressed to the divine being: for this reason, Chailly regards the composition as truly representative of his own sacred production.

A convincing theatrical atmosphere is found in particular sections dominated by a sense of chaotic suspension. Crystal-clear examples of such moments are the introductory section, the canon at |3| (where Chailly points out «the intonation for this canon may be *imperfect*, as it is an effect of chaotic agitation», see Fig. 2), the triple canon beginning at |19|, where the choirs and organ III are given a tempo of 4/4, organ I 2/4 and organ II – accompanying the vocal part – a free tempo indicated as «1/1», and the section from |23| to |25| included, which reads: «Lento liberamente (senza rigore ritmico) [Slow and freely (with no rhythmic rigour)]» (see Fig. 3). Particularly interesting in the latter section is the writing of the choral part, with sustained notes that articulate the syllables «per-ché» bouncing through the four voices.

The particular choice of instruments to accompany the choral sections reflect a highly spectacular and deliberately emphatic conception, with no less than three organs supporting the Italian text and sixteen timpani assigned to the German. The sound result is truly unique, as the timbral possibilities of the instruments are fully exploited to effectively express the underlying drama.

Dazzling organ writing

Chailly was very familiar with organ writing and knew the sound possibilities of the instrument very well. Examples of his production before 1980 are the spectacular *Improvvisazione n. 6* (1963),²⁵ the *Preludio e doppio canone* (1979)²⁶ and *Recitativo e ostinato* (1973).²⁷ In these compositions the organ, either solo or as part of an *ensemble*, deploys the full spectrum of its sound potential. Those works also showcase the salient elements of Chailly's aesthetics: inventive sound colors, intelligent creativity resulting from his musical craftsmanship, exploration of twelve-tone combinatorial possibilities and references to the forms of the past (as in the case of the impressive double canon).

In Chailly's organ writing, there are elements that undoubtedly reveal

²⁵ LUCIANO CHAILLY, *Improvvisazione n. 6* per organo, Ancona, Bèrben, 1974.

²⁶ ID., *Preludio e doppio canone* per organo, Rome, Boccaccini & Spada, 1980. A recent recording of this piece and the *Improvvisazione n. 6* is included in the CD attached to the volume *Il suono conquistato e organizzato* cit.

²⁷ ID., *Recitativo e ostinato* per trombe, tromboni e organo, Padua, Zanibon, 1976.

the author's creative intention, while also leaving some degree of indeterminacy. The first case concerns the description of the type of organ to be used in performance, namely, an «electric organ» – an ambiguous qualification since, strictly speaking, it indicates the use of pipe organs with electric transmission. The score indication appearing at |3| – «off (only pedal noise without sound)», see Fig. 2 – seems absurd, because it appears just after two bars of rest (for organ III, though after three bars of rest for organs I and II), and therefore certainly not long enough for the motor to turn off completely and cancel the noise caused by its operation, as the score indication requires (in any case, it would have been logical to insert this instruction before the rest bars). Given the difficulty of gathering three pipe organs in a single room, be it a church or a theatre, without even considering the need to equip them with a pedalboard, it cannot be ruled out that Chailly actually intended to use three electronic organs – with electronic sound generation – where no pipes are used for sound emission. However, in this case the indication to turn off the motor seems at least unnecessary, since the electronic organ, which has no electric fan, produces no background noise: the organist only needs to push in the stops previously selected to obtain the required effect.

Another ambiguous detail is the use of the sound interruption symbol (⊕) at 1 and at 2 after |8|, common in harp performance practice, but certainly not in organ performance. Apart from issues of reverberation (arising in any space where concert performances take place, especially organ performances), in order to interrupt the sound emission, the organist only needs to lift his hands from the keyboard: he does not have to dampen the strings in order to stop the vibration, as with the harp. Moreover, in the two cases where Chailly has inserted the symbol, the last note is followed by a rest, so that the instruction is unnecessary even though, as stated above, the intent behind it is crystal clear.

Going back to the use of three organs, one may suggest that Chailly conceived his *De profundis* project to have a life outside church walls – i.e., as a sacred work borne out of quasi-religious impulse to be performed nonetheless in concert halls, which could more easily provide adequate spaces for performance (and the proper amplification for the organs) and facilitate the hiring of the instrumental forces necessary for this colossal piece. Perhaps one may glimpse the author's design in this aspect of his work too, whereby elements of both religious and secular traditions are successfully combined.

A scroll through the score reveals other elements of spectacular writing. First, at |10|, we find the indication «wind effect», to be achieved with trills

in the high register and rapid *volate* in both hands. The effect continues until |12|, while in the same section the Italian choir sings for the second time the lines «È la morte che viene a giudicarci? | Chi nella notte parla senza voce? | Chi parla? Il vento? il mare? la tempesta? [Is it death that comes to judge us? | Who speaks in the night without voice? | Who speaks? The wind? the sea? the storm?]». Thus, Chailly adheres to the literary text while trying to create a sound counterpart of proven impact. From |53| onward the «bell register» is used:²⁸ this is the moment when the three choirs sing together after the Latin one has begun the *Requiem aeternam* at |48|. The finale of the *De profundis* begins with a *pp* tolling, although the stop is removed at 2 after |54| to allow the volume to drop even lower, until the subdued *pppp* at |55| that closes the composition.

Chailly also adapted numerous passages from his *Preludio e doppio canone* per organo (mentioned above), composed the previous year. Here are a few examples. From 1 before |45| to 2 after |47| we have a reworking, distributed over the three organs, of the beginning of the «Prelude», while the two following bars are an adaptation of the penultimate bar of the same movement. Moreover, the sixth and seventh bars of |9| are an adaptation of the last bar of the 'Largo' from the same «Prelude». The practice of partial or complete reuse of musical material is common for Chailly, who had no problem admitting and accounting for it: in *Storia della mia musica* we find several passages explaining the genesis of musical compositions that also include numerous details about the reuse of previously written pieces.

Lastly, other well-tested performing strategies aimed at achieving strong dramatic effects are the two-hand tremolos 1 before |13| and 2 before |17|, as well as the crescendo clusters (*p*, *mp* and *mf*) through the three bars of |14|.

Dazzling timpani writing

The timpani, compared to the organs, embody the most original and 'barbaric' instrumental part. Their use, in support of the German-language choir, betrays a vital theatrical impulse, which becomes particularly evident when, together with the choir, they create chaotic and hallucinated atmospheres. Here, too, Chailly gives full rein to his creativity and makes the most of the technical possibilities of the percussion instruments. Evidence of this

²⁸ This stop was used in the festive 'Hosanna' from another major sacred composition by Chailly: the *Missa Papæ Pauli*, in the original version for 6-voice choir, 18 bells and supporting organ (Rome, Mercurio, 1964).

is the composer's painstaking attention to detail in each section of the score. Consider, for example, the beginning of the piece: the four timpanists play simultaneously, each «on one skin», starting with a truly shocking *ffff*, then gradually diminishing until the sound dies out. The four indications read respectively «scivolato nervoso [sliding, nervously]», «scivolato calmo [sliding, calm]», «scivolato veloce [sliding, fast]» and «scivolato lento [sliding, slow]»: four dynamic nuances to create a chaotic timbral effect of great impact (the term «sliding» refers to the action of the pedals). Or at |6|, where each of the four timpanists is required to use a different type of sticks: wooden, iron, soft felt and hard felt, each with a different rhythm in the low register.

From a technical point of view, Chailly very carefully differentiates his writing for each type of percussion, showing deep knowledge of the timbral possibilities of the instruments and the effects he can obtain from them. An obvious example is the section corresponding to |13|, where the timpanists must perform the passage «rubbing the skin with wet hands». The description of the sound effect reads: «like the threatening trumpeting of elephants», a highly peculiar indication that confirms the theatrical inspiration of the composition (see Fig. 4). But also in other passages the timpanists do not play the usual way: at 3 after |31| they must «place a *cymbal* on the membrane», and from |33| a complex and very detailed part begins: timpanist I starts with a *glissé* «tremolando with hard felt sticks» lasting for seven bars (up to |35|); from 3 after |33|, timpanist II plays free notes but as fast as possible «with the sticks on the finger and the 'head' on the membrane»; from the next measure |34| timpanist III plays a rapid *glissé* «with triangle sticks»; finally, from 2 after |34|, timpanist IV plays without sticks or mallets, but «with the fingertips», «with the knuckles» (third bar) and «with the palm of the hands» (fourth bar). From |35| onwards, the other timpanists must also play the notes with their hands in a rapid exchange between them, beginning again with timpanist IV who starts «with the fingers», then moving on to II «with the fingertips» and to I «with the knuckles» (2 after |35|). Finally, all four play at the same time, on different rhythms, «with the palm of the hands» (third bar).

Another example of a strong dramatic effect can be found from |43| onwards. The sign reads «a tempo di marcia funebre» (i.e., «in the tempo of a funeral march») and for eight bars timpanist IV stubbornly repeats a four-tone accompaniment (G^1 , $F\sharp^2$, $B\flat^1$, E^2) in *ppp*. After these eight bars, at |44| timpanist III joins in with another four quavers repeated for six bars ($D\flat^2$, C^2 , A^1 , $D\sharp^2$), with a gradual crescendo starting from *pp*. Timpanist II enters at |45|, not with ostinato quavers, however, but rather with syncopated rhythms

of semiquavers and quavers in the first half of the bar, to which timpanist I responds in the second half of the bar starting from |46| (i.e., six bars later). This section too projects an underlying sense of drama aimed at progressively creating a dense and solemn theatrical atmosphere. From |47| onwards we arrive at a *mf*, with timpanists I and II alternating more and more quickly to create an effect of chaotic accelerando that extends for twelve bars, until they reach the *fff* of the last bar.

In the last section of the work, the episodes fades out to the soft accompaniment of the timpani, first with the mute in *ppp* |53|, then without mute but in an extremely soft *ppppp*.

Notational features

De profundis di Cefalonia stands out in the instrumental and vocal production of Chailly for its use of experimental musical notations, particularly as they concern the timpani part. The kinship with one of the immediately preceding compositions, *Psicosi* for percussion instruments («Milan, 20 October – 6 November 1980»), seems clear.²⁹ In this surprising work for three large percussion groups, Chailly had the opportunity to give full rein to his creativity, thoroughly exploiting the suggestions of that «terza maniera ... di "allucinazione sonora" [«third manner ... of "sonic hallucination"»]³⁰ he was experiencing in that artistic period. This was nothing more than a summary of previous experiences enhanced by a new element – namely, altered states of consciousness.

The result was a musically shocking score, with a programmatic, markedly experimental approach to notation and timbre, which he had never explored before in his musical production. It is possible to trace influences by avant-garde movements, even though to speak of a musical avant-garde in the 1980s may seem a stretch. Yet these influences are evidence of the composer's ability to 'shed his skin' and make musical choices that were remarkably open-minded and unexpected, given his ostensible rejection of

²⁹ LUCIANO CHAILLY, *Psicosi* per strumenti a percussione, Padua, Zanibon, 1980.

³⁰ ID., *Le variazioni della fortuna* cit., p. 139. This so-called 'third manner' began in the early 1970s, after Chailly's first term as artistic director of La Scala in Milan (1968-1971). In subsequent years Chailly did not go on to identify possible new stylistic 'manners', and only outlined the first three: «neoclassical, post-Hindemithesque»; «dodecaphonic»; and «characterized by 'sonic hallucination' and, from a technical point of view, diluting serialism into structures that are, if not always deformed, deformed». *Ibid.*

this kind of artistic orientations.³¹ Chailly's brief remarks on *Psicosi* are eloquent in this regard: «I would not have been foreign to certain strands of the avant-garde later on, [...] provided, however, that the *object* justified it, that's for sure».³² Here, then, the object of the music can justify the use of expressive means that would otherwise be alien to one's poetics: the purpose of articulating three psychotic phases into music in and of itself justifies the use of unconventional and surprising notational strategies, performing practices and timbral solutions.

The parts assigned to the sixteen timpani in *De profundis* are deeply influenced by the experience of *Psicosi*. The passage where this kinship is most evident is at [7], where the notation, on one page opening, has a clear experimental intent, with very effective graphics that pertain also to the vocal part (see Figs. 5 and 6).

Even the vocal writing is not exempt from notational and timbral experiments, though mostly limited to the German-speaking choir. For this part Chailly uses five modes of sound emission, accurately illustrated in the «Technical Notes» at the beginning of the score (see Fig. 1). The peculiarities concern rhythm and sound emission. As for the rhythm, it can be either completely free, or marked in detail, while the sound emission is more meticulously prescribed: we find generic indications of pitches and two possibilities for intonation: «notes vaguely in tune, but colorless» and an emission almost sung, «but with an approximate and often throaty intonation».

In addition to these possibilities for the spoken part, Chailly employed other choral techniques, first and foremost the shifting of syllables between voices. The composer had used this technical device since the opera *Il mantello* (1959), and later made the following statement on it: «[the chorus] was constructed in such a way that the phrases, then the words and finally the syllables shifted, as if by osmosis, from one voice to another. I actually did not invent this system. Composers of the avant-garde movements had already used it, first and foremost Luigi Nono».³³ Indeed, Luigi Nono had used this technique in *Il canto sospeso* (in the last number, to be precise),³⁴ and it is also

³¹ For an in-depth examination of the fascinating relationship with the post-World War II avant-garde, see ALBERTO DELAMA, *Luciano Chailly e l'avanguardia. Un'indagine attraverso gli scritti*, in *Il suono conquistato e organizzato* cit., pp. 89-117.

³² CHAILLY, *I personaggi* cit., p. 27.

³³ ID., *Buzzati in musica* cit., p. 109.

³⁴ LUIGI NONO, *Il canto sospeso*, London, Eulenburg, 1995, pp. 84-88.

deployed on the very first page of his *Intolleranza 1960*³⁵ – to mention two scores that Chailly held in high regard, for different reasons.³⁶ This technique, which distributes syllables over several voices by breaking up the vocal line, can be found in select passages of *De profundis* encoded in a fascinating graphic surface (see Fig. 7). Considering instead the peculiar sound effects required of the vocal parts, in one passage choir III is instructed to make noises, as in 2 after |13|, where it accompanies the verses «Schreitet schwer | Ein düstres Heer» [heavy is the step | of a gloomy army] by beating their hands on their thighs, and shortly afterwards by «stomping their feet too».

We encounter a final example of 'avant-garde aura' in the controlled alea sections where either or the instrumental or vocal parts are asked to make free variations on given notes. This is the case of the section between |16| and |17|, where all the organs, in succession, either make variations on given notes, or play random notes on the pedalboard (a similar pedal practice is also found in the sections between |2| and |3| and between |11| and |13|). At |33|, on the other hand, it is the altos and tenors of choir I who vocalise freely on groups of fast notes. However, one may glimpse a kind of aleatory writing also in the rhythmically free sections, where the performers must find their way through the graphic spaciousness of the score suggesting either entrances or durations, as was already explained *a propos* of the examples in Figs. 5-6, and especially 3. In these cases, too, it helps to recall Chailly's words: when «justified by the *object*», all technical expedients are legitimate, even those apparently far removed from one's own aesthetic vision. Or again, when referring to the choral technique derived from Luigi Nono: «until then it had not interested me. There, however, it *worked for me*, and had its own *raison d'être*».³⁷ Thus, the *De profundis* is yet another instance where we come across highly experimental features that may be surprising in the context of Chailly's musical production, but since they are mainly used to create a chaotic, suspended, tense, dramatically vibrant and timbrally hallucinating atmosphere, it is not so surprising that the composer resorted to them. And, in all likelihood, they work for the listener as well.

³⁵ ID., *Intolleranza 1960*, Mainz, Schott Verlag, 2013.

³⁶ Chailly's appreciation of *Il canto sospeso* is found in CHAILLY, *I personaggi* cit., p. 94 ff. In 1961, referring to the first Venetian performance of *Intolleranza 1960*, the composer wrote: «a most daring work, booed from beginning to end, but of extreme interest», also comparing it to a meteor «in the grey firmament» along with Schönberg's *Moses und Aron*, which was performed for the first time in Italy at La Scala on 19 June of the same year (CHAILLY, *Storia della mia musica* cit., I, p. 226).

³⁷ CHAILLY, *Buzzati in musica* cit., p. 109.

Influence on subsequent compositions

From *De profundis di Cefalonia* Chailly derived several major sacred compositions of the 1980s and 1990s. The first in chronological order was the short and intense *Lux æterna* for mixed choir (1983).³⁸ It is dedicated to the memory of Renato Prinzhofer (1912-1982), the man of letters who, after Dino Buzzati, had most often collaborated with Chailly in writing opera librettos.³⁹ Their artistic partnership resulted in *La riva delle Sirti* (1957), *Markheim* (1965), *Sogno (ma forse no)* (1971-72) and *Il libro dei reclami* (1974).

The second most important adaptation of the *De profundis* is another sacred piece: the *De profundis "delle Vallette"* «for 3 sopranos (one internal), mixed choir and orchestra» (1990).⁴⁰ There are many parallels between the two compositions: the latter is in fact inspired by a tragic news event, as the composer states in the note he placed on the score:

In the spring of 1989, the management of the Vallette Prison in Turin invited RAI to perform a symphony concert with its orchestra (which I organised) at the prison, in the presence of the inmates.

A few days after that moving evening, a gruesome event occurred: a fire broke out at night in the women's ward of the prison, and in the relentless blaze ten women, locked in within those walls, lost their lives atrociously.

Again, Chailly was compelled to dedicate a solemn *De profundis* to a tragic event in civic life. After a hiatus of about ten years, the composer drew heavily from the previous composition, stripping it down and changing the instrumental forces: we no longer find three choral blocks singing in different languages, and the instrumental accompaniment (so unusual in the first composition) is now orchestrated. Nevertheless, there are conceptual parallels: the first of the two episodes – «L'incendio, *Arsit focus*» and «*De profundis* (Psalm 130)» – is an «abridged version of the *De profundis* in Ita-

³⁸ LUCIANO CHAILLY, *Lux æterna* for mixed choir, Rome, Pro Musica Studium, 1989. In the Fondo Chailly there is no manuscript of the autograph of this work. I have determined the date of composition thanks to Chailly's correspondence with the publisher in APTN, LC, n. 784.

³⁹ Finding biographical data on the scholar is not easy. No exhaustive information is available in online resources, and Prinzhofer's year of death was only found in the Luciano Chailly Yearbook, which was compiled in 1982 (APTN, LC, no. 1285).

⁴⁰ APTN, LC, nos. 30-33, 364-365.

lian»⁴¹ based on a dramatic exchange between two inmates who paraphrase the psalm. The theatrical dimension is not lacking either, with the large symphony orchestra permeating the soundscape; here, again, the score proposes truly original semiographic solutions, with avant-garde features worthy of detailed analysis and critical assessment.

The third major work composed in the wake of the *De profundis di Cefalonia* is "Oratio" (*dall'Officium defunctorum*) for mixed a cappella choir (1992).⁴² Though not occasioned by a tragic event in civic life, it is dedicated to a musician who played an important role in the composer's life, as the author explains in the «Technical Note» preceding the score:

The *Oratio pro uno defuncto* (such is the full title in the *Ufficium defunctorum*) was composed in memory of one of the musicians I most admired, and one of the friends I most loved: Piero Guarino.⁴³ This explains the inspirational, expressive emotionality and the sound sweetness I sought on a technical level, particularly in harmony. The work moves across the chromatic continuum but it is not a twelve-tone composition. Quite the opposite, the harmonic determinations derived from the two chords supporting the final *nostrum* of the verse (two traditional 11th and 13th chords) are realised by means of chordal entities that reconcile the tonal, whole-tone, diatonic and chromatic modes. One of the few serial moments is in the closing *Requiem*. Here, beginning with the *dona eis Domine*, the twelve tones are divided into four sections, and each of the four voices is confined, with continuous rhythmic permutations, only within the three sounds assigned to it, thus evoking a sense of a vague, dreamy lullaby, in an emotional contemplating of the mystery of death.

Thanks to this introductory note, we can identify a technical device derived from the original work (the *De profundis di Cefalonia*), namely an in-

⁴¹ Typewritten note containing the texts of the composition, APTN, LC, no. 33.

⁴² APTN, LC, nos. 30, 370-371. The composition was first performed on 13 September 1992 in the basilica of San Gavino in Porto Torres by the Coro Polifonico Turritano conducted by Antonio Sanna.

⁴³ Piero Guarino (1919-1991) was a pianist, conductor, composer, teacher and director of the conservatories of Sassari and Parma. Husband of cellist Donna Magendanz, with whom he had a long concert career, he was close to Chailly and his family from the early 1960s; he also recorded many of Chailly's compositions for piano solo and ensemble. He wrote the entry: "Chailly. Family of Italian musicians", in *Dizionario Enciclopedico Universale della Musica e dei Musicisti. Le biografie*, directed by Alberto Basso, II, Turin, UTET, 1985, p. 187 ff. The tenth anniversary of Guarino's death was marked by the publication of the book *Piero Guarino. La vita e la musica*, edited by Micaela Guarino, Bologna, Albisani, 2012, with a companion CD.

sistent use of three notes – which, distributed over the four voices, cover the chromatic continuum – as a «vague, dreamy lullaby» for part of the composition. As with other compositions of his, Chailly left no written record of the development process and pre-compositional techniques of the work itself, but in the case of this enchanting section we are able to draw some relevant information from a later remake.

Comparing the common passages of the four compositions we notice slight variations in the notation; these are given in the musical examples below:

Adagio ♩ = 50

17 *lunga*
ppp

Sopr. De pro-fun-dis De pro -

Contr. *ppp* De pro-fun-dis De pro - - - fun-

Ten. *ppp* De pro-fun-dis De pro -

Bassi *ppp* De pro-fun-dis De pro - - -

18 (8+2) *p*

S. - - fun - dis - cla - ma - vi ad te

C. dis - cla - ma - vi ad te

T. fun - dis - cla - ma - vi ad te

B. - fun - - - dis - cla - ma - vi ad te

Ex. 1 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, pp. 20-22; APTN, LC, n. 27

(2+3)

S. *mf* > *p* *pp*
Do - mi - ne: Do - mi - ne e - xa - u -

C. *mf* > *p* *pp*
Do - mi - ne: Do - mi - ne e - xa - u - di

T. *mf* > *p* *pp*
Do - mi - ne: Do - mi - ne e -

B. *mf* > *p* *pp*
Do - mi - ne: Do - mi - ne

S. *mf* > *p* *pp*
di vo - cem me - am.

C. *mf* > *p* *pp*
vo - cem me - am.

T. *mf* > *p* *pp*
xa - u - di vo - cem me - am.

B. *mf* > *p* *pp*
vo - - - cem me - am.

Ex. 1 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, pp. 20-22; APTN, LC, n. 27 (continued)

Molto lento (♩ = 40)

pppp *p*

Sopranì
Lux — æ - ter - na lux æ -

Contralti
pppp *p*
Lux — æ - ter - na lux æ - ter -

Tenori
pppp *p*
Lux — æ - ter - na lux æ -

Bassi
pppp *mf* *ppp* *p*
Lux — æ - ter - na lux æ -

4

S. *pp* *f*
- - ter - na — lu - ce - at e - is

C. *pp* *f*
na — lu - ce - at e - is

T. *pp* *f*
- - ter - na — lu - ce - at e - is

B. *pp* *f*
- - ter - - - na — lu - ce - at e - is

(2+3) ♩ = ♩

Ex. 1 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, pp. 20-22; APTN, LC, n. 27 (*end*)

7 *pp* (2+3+3)

S. Do-mi-ne Do - mi - ne Do - mi - ne

C. Do - mi-ne Do - mi-ne Do - mi - ne

T. Do - mi - ne Do - mi - ne Do - mi - ne

B. Do - mi-ne Do - mi - ne

Ex. 2 – Luciano Chailly, *Lux aeterna*, Rome, Pro Musica Studium, 1989, p. 5-6; APTN, LC, n. 210, 490

Molto lento (♩ = 44) (5+3) (2+3)

Sopr. *ppp* De pro - fun - dis cla - ma - vi ad te Do - mi - ne: *mf* > *p*

Contr. *ppp* De pro - fun - dis cla - ma - vi ad te Do - mi - ne: *mf* > *p*

Ten. *ppp* De pro - fun - dis cla - ma - vi ad te Do - mi - ne: *mf* > *p*

Bassi *ppp* De pro - fun - dis cla - ma - vi ad te Do - mi - ne: *mf* > *p*

18 *p* *mf* *pp*

S. Do-mi-ne e - xa - u - di vo - cem me - am.

C. Do - mi-ne e - xa - u - di vo - cem me - am.

T. Do-mi - ne e - xa-u - di vo - cem me - am.

B. Do - mi-ne e - xa-u - di vo-cem me - am.

Ex. 3 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis "delle Vallette"*, p. 25 sg.; APTN, LC, n. 33

Molto lento ($\text{♩} = 44$)

$\text{♩} = \text{♩} (2 \rightarrow 3)$ $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (6 \rightarrow 3)$

Soprani
 In - cli - na Do - mi - ne a - u - rem tu - am

Contralti
 In - cli - na Do - mi - ne a - u - rem tu - am

Tenori
 In - cli - na Do - mi - ne a - u - rem tu - am

Bassi
 In - cli - na Do - mi - ne a - u - rem tu - am

(2 + 3) **A** $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

S.
 ad pre - ces nos - tras qui - bus

C.
 ad pre - ces nos - tras qui - bus

T.
 ad pre - ces nos - tras qui - bus mi -

B.
 ad pre - ces nos - tras qui - bus

Ex. 3 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis "delle Vallette"*, p. 25 sg.; APTN, LC, n. 33 (end)

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano (S.), Contralto (C.), Tenore (T.), and Bass (B.). The score is in 3/4 time and features dynamic markings of *mf*, *pp*, and *fp*. The lyrics are: "mi - se - ri - cor - di - am tu - am sup - pli - ces de - pre -". The score includes a box labeled 'B' above the Soprano part. The lyrics are: "mi - se - ri - cor - di - am tu - am sup - pli - ces de - pre -".

Ex. 4 – Luciano Chailly, "Oratio" (dall'*Officium defunctorum*), p. 1; APTN, LC, no. 371

Below is also the *incipit* of the three versions of *Requiem æternam*, evoking the effect of a «vague, dreamy lullaby» starting with the «dona eis Domine», as mentioned by the author. In this case, as in other compositions, the sound effect is striking: it does not sound serial, but goes straight to the goal, i.e., the author's expressive intent. Chailly's music is supported by a most solid pre-compositional structure, but this does not override the sound result, which engages the listener in a fruitful dialogue. We may also note that, compared to the earlier *De Profundis*, the writing is significantly simplified at the rhythmic level, perhaps to achieve a more linear structure and, apparently, greater ease of performance.

48 **Molto lento** ♩ = 40

ppp

Sopr. Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Contr. *ppp* Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Ten. *ppp* Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Bassi *ppp* Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

p

S. do - na e - is Do - mi - ne.

C. *p* do - na e - is Do - mi - ne.

T. *p* do - na e - is Do - mi - ne.

B. *p* do - na e - is Do - mi - ne.

Ex. 5 – Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, p. 43; APTN, LC, n. 27

31 **Lentissimo** (♩ = 40)
ppp

Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Coro

Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

32

do - na e - is Do - mi - ne

Coro

do - na e - is Do - mi - ne

do - na e - is Do - mi - ne

do - na e - is Do - mi - ne

Ex. 6 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis "delle Vallette"*, p. 37; APTN, LC, n. 33

H Stesso tempo [$\text{♩} = 40$]

ppp

Soprani
 Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Contralti
 Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Tenori
 Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

Bassi
 Re - qui - em re - qui - em æ - ter - nam

I *p* **L**

S.
 do - na e - is Do - mi - ne.

C.
 do - na e - is Do - mi - ne.

T.
 do - na e - is Do - mi - ne.

B.
 do - na e - is Do - mi - ne.

Ex. 7 – Luciano Chailly, “Oratio” (dall’*Officium defunctorum*), p. 5; APTN, LC, no. 371

The following musical example outlines the structure of what the composer describes as «one of the few serial moments [...] starting with the *dona eis Domine*». This is one of the emblematic cases of Chailly’s latitude in his approach to serialism: rather than creating a twelve-tone construction, there is a palpable desire to saturate the sound texture by covering the entire chromatic series. The twelve pitches are divided among the four voices, and each of them continuously repeats the three notes assigned to it, varying only the rhythmic articulation. Consequently, the chromatic series is exhausted horizontally but not vertically, since the notes are repeated without changes in pitch.

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano (S.), Contralto (C.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). Each voice part is on a separate staff. The Soprano part is in treble clef and contains three whole notes: G4, B4, and D5. The Contralto part is in treble clef and contains three whole notes: A3, B3, and D4. The Tenor part is in treble clef and contains three whole notes: A3, B3, and D4. The Bass part is in bass clef and contains three whole notes: G2, F2, and E2. The notes are distributed across the four voices, with the Soprano part having the highest pitch and the Bass part having the lowest pitch.

Ex. 8 – Distribution of pitches from «dona eis Domine».

Since investigation at the Fondo Chailly is still in progress, the existence of further adaptations of these scores cannot be ruled out. Future research may uncover other compositions indebted to the *De profundis di Cefalonia*, or even other adaptations of it.

Conclusions

In this contribution we have taken a first look at a dense, complex composition ripe with religious, ethical and civil implications. The score effectively merges the sacred and the secular spheres, taking on theatrical connotations but without actually representing a war conflict on stage. The conflicting sides, involved in a heinous massacre on the battlefield, here make peace and join forces for one final goal: to attain transcendence beyond the earthly dimension. In this respect, the words the composer himself published years later seem particularly suggestive: «The 'speravit anima mea' of *De Profundis* brings to my mind the thought of the end». This score is almost an outlier in Chailly's repertoire: it was the occasion that deeply inspired him to produce a work ripe with ideas and exceptional graphic solutions, which until then had been little explored. There is no doubt that at the beginning of the 1980s, in a new period of creative stimuli, Chailly breathed new life into his compositional output, bolstered by his experience and by his ever lively, insightful, advanced and original musical craftsmanship. Although this

is certainly not an easy score to perform due to its spacial arrangements, its unusual instrumental forces, and the high level of playing technique required of the musicians, a performance of the work would certainly do justice to the author's robust and vital musical thought, which only awaits the dedicated study and interpretive acumen of the performers. It is my hope that this study will contribute to generating attention for this and other valuable compositions by Luciano Chailly and to increasing the level of appreciation for them, also through concert performances.

[Più lento $\text{♩} = 42$]

cresc.

S. a - ni - ma me - a in

C. *cresc.* U spe - ra - vit a - ni - ma me - a in

T. *cresc.* U spe - ra - vit a - ni - ma me - a in

B. *cresc.* uniti e - j - us spe - ra - vit a - ni - ma me - a

f

S. Do - - - mi - no.

C. *f* Do - - - mi - no.

T. *f* in - - Do - mi - no.

B. *f* in - - Do - mi - no.

Ex. 9 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, p. 30; APTN, LC, n. 27

- C -

Note tecniche

- 1) Disposizione delle masse = il I Coro sin il più lontano possibile - Il II Coro deve essere vicino agli Organi - Il III Coro vicino ai Timpani
- 2) Il I Coro (a cappella) può essere aiutato da un Harmonium, invisibile e insensibile -
- 3) Per il II Coro = nelle note tenute con parole, ogni cantore canta sillaba ad libitum, mentre nelle successioni libere di note ritate il maestro può fissare una ritmica orientativa.
- 4) Per il III Coro la grafia va interpretata così:
 - a) ϕ gehen Sie zurück | = parlato completamente libero.
 - b) ϕ $\uparrow > \square \uparrow$ = parlato libero ritmico.
 - c) ϕ $\square \downarrow$ oppure: $\uparrow \times \downarrow$ = parlato ritmico, con indicazione generica delle alterezze.
 - d) ϕ $\times \times \times$ = note vagamente intonate, ma non timbrate.
 - e) ϕ $\sim \uparrow \# \downarrow$ = quasi cantato, ma con intonazione approssimativa e spesso gutturale.

Fig. 1 - Luciano Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, p. «C»; APTN, LC, no. 27. Courtesy of the Archivio provinciale di Trento

Piu lento

2/8 = 48, 3/16, 23/16, 34/16, 223/16, 332/8

22

26

Soprano: in vo-com de-pe-ca-ti-o-nis me-ae

Contralto: in vo-com de-pe-ca-ti-o-nis me-ae

Tenore: in vo-com de-pe-ca-ti-o-nis me-ae

Bassi: in vo-com de-pe-ca-ti-o-nis me-ae

II Coro: Ten. solo, Ten. solo

23

Lento liberamente (senza rigore ritmico)

24

I Ten. (crescendo liberamente): per-chie? per-chie? per-chie? per-chie?

II Ten. (crescendo liberamente): per-chie? per-chie? per-chie? per-chie?

Bassi (Av): per-chie? per-chie? per-chie? per-chie?

Bassi (Av): per-chie? per-chie? per-chie? per-chie?

Lento (col solista)

Org. I, II, III

Fig. 3 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, p. 26; APTN, LC, n. 27. Courtesy of the Archivio provinciale di Trento

13

15 *Allegro* (♩ = 58)

(battendo le mani sulle cosce)

p *usc.*

Schreitst du aber ein dies-tes He-er.

(strofinando la pelle con le mani bagnate)

(battendo le mani sulle corde)

p *usc.*

continua

(come bariti immassiosi)

(con forte compassione)

Don-de ren-go-no?

(con forza) chi vo-ra?

(in angoscia) chi par-? chi par-la?

mp *usc.*

(III Org)

(battendo anche i piedi)

mf *usc.*

Schreitst du aber ein dies-tes He-er. Schreitst du aber ein dies-tes He-er

mf *usc.*

(battendo anche i piedi)

dim. poco alla volta

dim. poco alla volta

Fig. 4 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, p. 15; APTN, LC, n. 27. Courtesy of the Archivio provinciale di Trento

9

III Coro

Ten. (div. a 2)

ripetere crescendo e stringendo

Bassi (div. a 2)

ripetere crescendo e stringendo

I Timpa.

Ritmi veloci e incalzando sempre più

cresc.

II Timpa.

Ritmi veloci e incalzando sempre più

cresc.

III Timpa.

Ritmi veloci e incalzando sempre più

cresc.

IV Timpa.

Ritmi veloci e incalzando sempre più

cresc.

Fig. 7 – Luciano Chailly, *De profundis di Cefalonia*, p. 33; APTN, LC, n. 27. Courtesy of the Archivio provinciale di Trento

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Abstract

Luciano Chailly (1920-2002) composed *De profundis di Cefalonia* between 1980 and 1981. The composition, a wide-ranging work employing three choirs, three electronic organs and sixteen timpani, is dedicated to the memory of the Italian soldiers of the Acqui Division who were killed by the Nazis on the Greek island of Cefalonia in September 1943. The choirs sing texts in Italian, German, and Latin; the literary sources are poems by Giuseppe Ravegnani (a scholar and a relative of the composer), Kurt Eisner and Alfons Petzold, and the Latin Psalm 130, *De profundis*.

The composition stands out in Chailly's musical production for its daring experimentalism, surprising in many respects, and for its equally experimental notational solutions, particularly for the voice and percussion parts. The *De profundis di Cefalonia* is one of the composer's few works that reflect his religious inspiration and ethical-civil commitment in virtually equal measure. Its musical gestures display a notable theatricality, typical of Chailly's output.

Keywords

Luciano Chailly, musical experimentalism, 20th-century choral music, music and war, *De profundis*

English translation by Elisabetta Zoni