

Introduction

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Metaphors are very common in musicological discourses. Rather, in a sense, it might be said that metaphor is a crucial tool needed to think and talk about music making. After all, metaphor is not a simply stylistic expedient of speech, nor is it a mere device of ornamental language use, but it is rather an experiential and conceptual process, a basic mechanism that allows us to think (Lakoff and Johnson 2005), a mechanism that can also resort to unusual and unpredictable mental associations which can stimulate original interpretative perspectives.

It is the case that the articles in this volume are rooted on the image of transhumance, a form of pastoralism once widespread in the Mediterranean and the Alps in which takes place the seasonal droving of livestock along migratory routes, for dealing with special aspects of the general issue of music travelling. The articles were selected from among the papers presented at the XXXII ESEM Seminar, held in Cagliari/Santu Lussurgiu, Sardinia, from 20–25 September 2016. The Seminar, in fact, was entitled *Musics/Music Makers/Musicologists' Transhumance*.

The choice of the transhumance metaphor, obviously, has much to do with the cultural heritage of the region that hosted our meeting and its contemporary self-representation. For the lives of many Sardinians, transhumance had a crucial relevance, just as it did for many people in other regions characterised by pastoral economy – and it is no coincidence that in 2019 Transhumance was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.²

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² *Transhumance, the seasonal droving of livestock along migratory routes in the Mediterranean and the Alps*, UNESCO, last access 1 May 2020, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/transhumance-the-seasonal-droving-of-livestock-along-migratory-routes-in-the-mediterranean-and-in-the-alps-01470>

Every year, following the course of the seasons, men and flocks tread long established paths, from the mountains to the plains, and then back again from the plains to the mountains. Thus, transhumance implied the going and returning of people, their skills, experience and cultures, their collective and individual identities. Through such a kind of travelling, localised knowledge met other knowledge, in mutual enrichment, through dialogue and interaction that go beyond every barrier or wall, through the traffic of consciousness and ideas, through exchanging, lending and returning.

Today, transhumance is an experience that belongs to the past, superseded by modern zootechnics. But the idea, the image of transhumance still has a strong symbolic significance in Sardinia, where animal husbandry determines (or in the past determined) a substantial economic resource.

Essentially, transhumance encompasses both the idea of *leaving and returning*. It cyclically entailed social life for both travelling shepherds and for the communities of departure and arrival. It involved meeting with other people which determined mutual enrichments, through dialogue and interaction, through the circulation of knowledge, experiences, thoughts, and awareness, through taking over and drawing back, borrowing and ownership, etc.

This was an extremely complex practice, lived in first person by the transhumant-shepherds, which not only regarded travelling peoples, but also involved entire communities from which the transhumant travellers departed, their places of arrival and the communities they met along the way. A travelling of men and knowledge which, although they moved along the same routes, were always different in the encounters and in what they gave rise to in terms of commingling, transformations, changes in men and their cultures. This special idea of a periodic people's *leaving and returning* along known paths may be inspiring for our thinking about the properties of music circulation.

Musics have always travelled (and still travel) along unpredictable paths, in unforeseeable ways. Travelling is certainly inherent in the nature of music, at least because music is something that is *in* the bodies and minds of the women and men who give it life – both by producing or listening to sounds. Music is not something that 'has been made'; rather it is a collective process in which different actors take part each with their own role. Thus, music travels by means of people – through all individuals, not just musicians!

If it is impossible to give a general outline of the forms and ways of this travelling of both people and musics, we can also think that, today as yesterday, many departures were followed by just as many returns.

The diffusion elsewhere of acquaintances through the traveller's own cultural and music knowledge was followed by importation phenomena of acquisitions, with original musical results, whenever the frequency of the people's departures and returns were all the more intense. An

unreachable variety of situations and experiences of moving in space and time, in which the relational dimension inevitably shaped the sound outcome.

This general process extends to any musical expressions, also beyond what we usually call 'traditional music.' The common idea nowadays is that there are musics 'inclined to travel' because a sort of paradox is connected with itinerant, nomad, migrant, diasporic peoples. It lets us imagine that there could be non-travelling, unmovable musics: in actual fact, this idea of static musics, perpetually settled in one place is only a theoretical construct and easily refuted. As far as we know, traces of journeys, encounters and contacts with other musics can be found in all the musics of the world. Traces that put into question the idea of 'belonging barriers' (geographical, cultural, social, generational boundaries and so on) which are usually immediately connected with the representation of a music practice.

Of course, the invention of the phonograph has determined the technological conditions for new ways of circulating music, which is in constant development and diversification. Immaterial musics (i.e. music circulation without the corresponding circulation of the musicians), has determined faster and faster sound travelling around the world via the media, often including incredibly quick outward/return trips, losing many aspects of the traditional ways, developing new circulations of knowledge within new forms of human relationships.

As sound and images, musics can travel, transform, go and come back, regardless of the human experience from which they started, from the actions of the men and women who gave them shape and meaning. In this frame, juxtaposing the terms music and transhumance is a way to immediately focus attention on the human/relational dimension of 'travelling music.' It means emphasising a fundamental interpretative perspective which is often neglected in favour of the mere observation of the intertwining of sounds, of the mere moving of sounds in space.

Therefore, the continuous *going and returning* also involves (ethno)musicologists. We do not simply go out into the field, but rather, we go back to it. Our work includes a continuous leaving and returning, from home to the field and back again, which implies peculiar experiential situations. Moreover, when 'our field' is also not so far away (as in the so-called 'ethnomusicology at home'), our idea of a musical journey embodies a shift to other conceptualisations of music (and of the surrounding world). Inevitably, this coming and going along the 'same known path' involves a mutual enrichment for ourselves and our interlocutors, beyond the results of our music analysis and interpretations.

Another feature of transhumance is seasonality. The passing of the seasons suggests the idea of a 'cyclical time' during which things double back. But – as we know – that is not really how things work, since, ultimately, we are dealing with only apparent repetitions. Of course, this is noticeable about

music performances, which cannot be faithfully repeated. However, seasonal musics or cyclical events that involve music acquire a special significance due to their cadenced flowing in time. This sort of leaving and returning is implicit in the cadenced recurring of seasonal music-making.

At the same time, the coming and going of transhumance obviously had a direct influence on what people brought with them. Music practice, in particular, implied transmigrations of music patterns, repertoires, combinations of text and music, sound objects and music instruments and so on. What someone performed in a context is taken up and used in other settings by other music makers in other settings. Occasionally, any acquisition/transformation, after undergoing further changes, might even return to its original context: a coming back with the slowness of people's movements in the past that could give many substantial suggestions to the upshot of many music repertoires in our contemporary times of migration, globalisation, and fast changing societies.

This publication includes 14 articles that were selected on the basis of their relevance to the proposed theme of the conference. After a thorough review that took into account the debate that took place during the seminar, they have been published together in this volume, which provides a number of different perspectives revolving around the main theme of transhumance.

It must be stressed that all the articles have taken up the theme of transhumance as a metaphor, underscoring the idea of movement, of going and returning, of crossing boundaries by people and their sounds. There is only one article that directly addresses the pastoral culture referring to the idealised figure of the shepherds in a well-known English carol (Ian Russell), a song that also migrates around different areas of England and elsewhere. The issue of music among migrants is, understandably, one of the main themes, developed in several and complementary ways: from a methodological reflection on this issue (Fulvia Caruso), to a multi-sided perspective concerning the Armenian diaspora (Ortensia Giovannini), to the role of the media in connecting diaspora communities of the Sikhs and their homeland (Thea Tiramani), to an example of music as a catalyst of social and ritual life in a cosmopolitan setting such as the Filipinos in Rome (Serena Facci and Grazia Tuzi). These articles, all presented by Italian researchers, well highlight a current interest in Italy for this issue, prompted by the fact that, in recent years, Italy has become a land of destination for migrants coming from every corner of the world.

As people go and return, their music also accompanies them, and another group of articles address similar issues of transhumance of musical genres and structures. One article highlights how a musician can 'go and return' from Sardinian folk singing to Opera, from an international to a local setting (Paolo Bravi and Salvatore Carboni), while other articles analyse how, along with people, tunes also depart and return, as it happens in various areas of the world such as Southern Siberia (Galina

Sychenko); another case of musical migration consists in the passage of tunes from one genre to another within the same culture, with changes in structure and function as happens in Lithuania (Rytis Ambrazevicius) or in Cambodia (Francesca Billeri), or in Southern Italy where musical and social practices migrate geographically within the same area, and also between different festivals and rituals (Claudio Rizzoni). There are also musical structures, such as the pentatonic *buayno*, which migrate on a wide transnational (trans-Andean) basis (Enrique Camara de Landa) just as musical recordings kept in archives can also go and return in a process of restitution (Gerda Lechleitner).

Finally, two articles are included in this volume, even though they are not entirely pertinent to the chosen topic, because of their innovative subject and approach: new research on the organology of the accordion through fieldwork carried out among industrial makers in Central Italy (Raffaele Pinelli) and on the little explored issue of sound and altered states of consciousness in the rituals of the Uyghur Sufis (Mu Quian).

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References

Lakoff George, and Mark Johnson. 2005. *Metafora e vita quotidiana*. Milano: Bompiani (*Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).