

EZRA POUND, ALFREDO CASELLA,
AND THE FASCIST CULTURAL NATIONALISM
OF THE VIVALDI REVIVAL

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In the music of Antonio Vivaldi, Ezra Pound found an opportunity to be a cultural administrator for Mussolini's fascist regime, reviving modern Italian culture through its rich cultural heritage. As hard as it is to imagine the world of classical music without Antonio Vivaldi, his work was largely unknown until the 1930s. Now we know of over 770 works by him, but when Olga Rudge and Ezra Pound began looking for music to perform in Rapallo, only about 100 pieces were known. Thanks in part to the work of Stephen J. Adams, Anne Conover Carson, Giulio de Angelis, Archie Henderson, and R. Murray Schafer, we know a great deal about Rudge's and Pound's efforts toward reviving Vivaldi's work. Here I examine their efforts together with new archival material, a sense of composer Alfredo Casella's work with Vivaldi, and the wider context of fascist cultural nationalism, to demonstrate that for Pound, this work was the culmination of a decade's desire to act as a fascist cultural administrator.

Within a few decades of his death in 1741, Vivaldi had all but fallen into oblivion. The entry in *Grove* (1928), which Rudge's entry would replace in 1940, made a common asser-

tion: “Vivaldi in fact mistook the facility of an expert performer (and as such he had few rivals among contemporaries) for the creative faculty, which he possessed but in a limited degree” (Poole 556). But between the wars, Italians were eager to rediscover their cultural past. The article “Una nuova antica gloria musicale italiana: Antonio Vivaldi” (1919) by Alceo Toni, mediocre composer and music critic for *Il Popolo d’Italia*, is considered by Michael Talbot to mark the beginning of the Italian Vivaldi revival; it gestures to the widespread impulse to celebrate a rich heritage to fortify the young nation’s identity (Talbot xviii, 44). Vivaldi fared well in concerts given by the Accademia di Santa Cecilia during this period, but the renditions of Vivaldi’s music being performed in Rome were hardly philologically “accurate.” As Cesare Fertonani has shown, Bernardino Molinari’s sumptuous orchestrations (e.g., sixteen first violins) had many personal and modern twists to them, such as his rendition of the continuo by the combination of a harpsichord and an organ, or his rewriting of entire movements.¹

In 1926 the realm of known Vivaldi compositions expanded dramatically, when the National Library in Turin, with funding from Roberto Foà, acquired a large collection of Vivaldi manuscripts. Alberto Gentili, a composer, director and musicologist lecturing at Turin University, had quickly identified them as half of Vivaldi’s personal collection of his own music, and in 1930, with funding from Filippo Giordano, the library acquired the other half (Talbot 5-7). This is the collection of manuscripts that Olga Rudge explored from 1935, searching for music to perform in Rapallo, later for the purpose of cataloguing the manuscripts themselves.

Rudge also contributed to the Vivaldi Week, held at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in September 1939 under the musical direction of the composer Alfredo Casella. She was working as secretary for the Accademia, and Adams has shown that she deserves some credit for the structure of the

Siena concerts – their use of comparative material and their focus on many pieces by a single composer (117). Additionally, on the occasion of this festival, she published the first thematic catalogue of Vivaldi's works in Turin (*Antonio Vivaldi* 47-59). While Vivaldi had previously been known only as a composer of instrumental music, the Week included sacred choral music and the first posthumous performances of Vivaldi's opera *L'Olimpiade* (1734), as well as two keyboard transcriptions by Bach of Vivaldi's concerti. Casella insisted on presenting Vivaldi's music as faithfully as possible, to get a real sense of eighteenth-century musical norms and tastes.

Like Ezra Pound's, Casella's work to revive Antonio Vivaldi's music was motivated in part by his sense of cultural nationalism. Casella's interest in Vivaldi is no surprise, given his other attempts to revive Italian musical culture to the end of creating an Italian musical modernism. Although Casella was often criticized by fellow composers for being anti-nationalist, his motivations seem to align with those of such cultural nationalists as Margherita Sarfatti, Mario Sironi, and Giuseppe Terragni, who looked simultaneously to Italy's past and to a wider European culture to bring new energy to Italy's cultural scene. Sarfatti, who acted as an art critic, patron, and booster under Mussolini's regime, dreamed of a "second Italian Renaissance that would restore the supremacy of her nation's art and return the center of the art world from France to Italy" (Cannistraro and Sullivan 193). She saw Italian modern art as part of a conversation that included artists from Europe. At the same time, however, in an article supporting the objectives of the Novecento group, she wrote in 1921, "Originality and tradition are not opposite poles, and in returning to the purest traditions of Giotto, Masaccio, Paolo Uccello, one does not renounce the originality of modern times, but only cleans oneself of the rust, and purifies our art of sham alloys."² As Gianfranco Vinay has noted, Casella's vision

of modernism cuts a “third way” between a “conservative, traditionalist and provincial tendency towards melodrama” and “international avant-garde modernism,” as advanced by Schoenberg. That third way conjoined tradition (ancient, or at least pre-romantic) with modernism (Italian, and therefore tempered).³ Pound recognized in Casella a kindred spirit, writing in 1937,

Back before the war Alfredo Casella started educating the Roman, and thence the Italian, public in modern music. At once the most competent of living Italian composers, an unrivaled teacher, an impeccable orchestral conductor and that far rarer thing a creative musician with a wide interest in other men’s work and utter impartiality in judging it, Casella gave, first for a handful of Romans, the best modern compositions. (EPM 409)

Perhaps in part because of the similarity of their ambition, and in part because of their shared field of study, Casella became for Pound and Rudge a leading competitor.

Casella was a Piedmont native, born in 1883 in Torino, and his early cultural allegiances were more to Paris than Rome. He studied in Paris from 1896 to 1914; he distanced himself from nineteenth-century Italian musical culture, as represented by Giuseppe Verdi and characterized by romanticism and melodrama. He was, however, aware of other artists’ attempts to modernize Italian culture. About the publication of F. T. Marinetti’s Futurist Manifesto in 1909, he said, “It seemed the announcement of a new and greater Italy,” adding that it “was the only Italian artistic movement between 1870 and 1914 which received world-wide attention and had universal influence” (*Music* 82). Like the futurists, he had originally wanted to separate modern music from its immediate predecessors: in 1913 he published an article rejecting the romanticism of Verdi. He would later retract that rejection with the statement, “A truce has thus been made with the preceding century” – a statement not unlike Pound’s reconcilia-

tion with Walt Whitman in “A Pact” (1913) (*Music* 115). Casella’s first explicitly nationalist piece, *Italia* (1909), used national folk material as a way of creating national music, but he acknowledged that his setting from 1913 of Giosuè Carducci’s “Notte di maggio” borrowed from Claude Debussy and Igor Stravinsky, rather than Italian tradition (*Music* 116-17).

After World War I, he returned to Italy, living in Rome. There was at that time a significant cultural distance between Piedmont and Lazio, and he “found it more problematical to come to Rome than to stay abroad, considering the differences in character, in customs, and in manners which separated him from the Romans” (*Music* 131). Aiming to revive Italian musical culture, he sought control of the Roman weekly *Musica*, attempting unsuccessfully to make it an agent of Italian musical change (*Music* 133-34). With such other composers as Ottorino Respighi, Ildebrando Pizzetti, and G. Francesco Malipiero, he founded in 1917 the National Music Society, later renamed the Italian Modern Music Society (Società Italiana di Musica Moderna, or SIMM) whose goal was “performing the most interesting music of the young Italians, resurrecting our old forgotten music, printing the most interesting new compositions, publishing a periodical, and organizing a system of exchanging new music with the principal foreign countries.” The group’s opposers called it “a nest of ‘futurists’” (*Music* 139-45).

In September 1923, Casella and Malipiero joined Gabriele d’Annunzio to form the “New Music Corporation” (Corporazione delle Nuove Musiche, or CDNM), which would perform new music and revive old music, especially the work of Claudio Monteverdi. The organization lasted five years, bringing Béla Bartók and Paul Hindemith to Italy (composers Pound aspired to bring to Rapallo); performing Stravinsky’s *L’Histoire du Soldat* and *Octet for Wind Instruments* for the first time in Italy; presenting a multi-city

tour of Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*; and playing music by Maurice Ravel, Francis Poulenc, Respighi, Malipiero, Ernest Bloch, Ernst Krenek, Zoltán Kodály, and others (*Music* 159-63). Casella connected the CDNМ to other internationalizing strands of Italian cultural nationalism: "Futurism, *La Voce*, *Lacerba*, *Valori plastici*, the New Music Corporation were the major attempts in the last quarter century to deprovincialize our art" (*Music* 232). Pound knew this work of Casella's, comparing it with his own in a press release he sent in November 1933 to Ethel de Courcy Duncan:

This determination [at Tigullio] to have nothing but the best coincides with a manifesto of Alfredo Casella written from the fascist angle and declaring that certain kinds of bad music are no longer tolerable, Casella with usual tact refrains from being very specific and calls the condem[n]ed stuff "music of the small bourgeoisie" which allows even Giordano and co. to suppose he doesn't mean them, but at any rate the demand for a tidying up of the Italian critical sense appears to be growing. (Pound Miscellany)

Pound could emulate figures like Casella, who employed a fascist stance to improve Italian culture, even though other Italian composers criticized Casella for being too reliant on foreign tendencies.⁴ Nevertheless, Casella discussed his musical enterprise in terms like those employed by fascist cultural critics, and he openly declared fascist sympathies by 1926. Like many artists of the period, he did not see a conflict between belonging to the fascist artistic hierarchy and musical avant-garde.

Building on the CDNМ's work to revive the music of Monteverdi, he wrote in 1926 two pieces that bring Italian tradition into modern music. *Scarlattiana* drew on motifs from sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti to create "a divertimento for piano and small orchestra," which he considered "a product of the combination of the personalities of Scarlatti and a

musician of two centuries later” (*Music* 172-73). In one respect, Casella follows the directive of fascist journalist and later Minister of National Education Giuseppe Bottai, who wrote in 1927 that “fascist art” should look to “the great autochthonous traditions of Italian art,” but Casella’s music did not throw off the “incrustations of foreign artistic movements” that Bottai denounced (Schnapp 234). The piece is a “recomposition” in the spirit of Igor Stravinsky’s *Pulcinella* (1922) – a ballet commissioned by Sergei Diaghilev for the Ballets Russes and based on older pieces written by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi and other Italian composers (Straus 58-64).

Written in the same year, his *Roman Concerto* was his “first attempt to achieve a style ... baroque in its monumentality.” For Casella, the baroque – his way of naming the neo-classical – was an explicitly *Roman* form, given the predominance of baroque architecture in that capital city and the style’s derivations from ancient models:

It was natural that the baroque, which constitutes so great a part of the magnificence of Rome, should exercise a profound influence on my art. This served as a complement to the influence of musicians like Bach and Vivaldi, whose disciple I had been for so many years. That sense of relief in the masses, in the mouldings, in the chiaroscuro, which goes back directly to the greatest Roman art; that liberty and fantasy in interpreting the classic forms; the grandeur of this purely Italian art which became international through the enormous influence it exerted over all of Europe.... In this sense, the *Roman Concerto* marked an important development in my style and a strong effort towards the achievement of a truly Roman music. (*Music* 172-73)

As Fiamma Nicolodi has noted, modern compositions that draw on neo-classical or baroque music offered a means of creating a uniquely Italian modernism (*Musica e musicisti* 243). Although Casella called the baroque Roman – linking it to the magnificence of Roman architecture – the style typifies

the architecture of his native Torino as well, allowing him an *italianità* that combines the two. The piece combines features of the monumental baroque with elements borrowed from Stravinsky. Nevertheless, he claimed that the piece had “an indisputably Italian style ... in which is glimpsed, rather than the influence of this or that foreign master, the old ancestral shadows of Frescobaldi, Monteverdi, Vivaldi, Scarlatti, or Rossini” (21+26 41).

The Rome that the piece imagines is a bright mixture of old and new, of ancient heritage and modern innovation. Like the archaeologists commissioned by the fascist government to reveal the classical heritage of modern Rome, Casella aimed in his music to be at once modern and traditional, drawing on Rome’s earlier greatness to enrich modern fascist Italy.⁵ Like the modernism practiced by the painters of the Novecento group, Casella’s music looks both across the Alps and back to the Italian past for source material. And like the Roman empire, and Mussolini’s ambitions, the baroque style that he championed was one that he claimed had originated in Rome and then spread throughout Europe.

Casella continued his work toward reviving the music of the Italian baroque, researching in summer 1934 at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, manuscripts of music by Luigi Boccherini, Muzio Clementi, Vivaldi, Giovanni Battista Sammartini, and Felice Giardini, reproductions of which he brought back to Italy.⁶ Elsewhere, he celebrated Mussolini’s imperial efforts in Ethiopia and the regime’s backing of musical renewal, “through various ministerial portfolios, union enterprises, and subsidies and prizes of every type; through assistance to the operatic and symphonic arts; and through the rigorous control over musical ‘exports.’” Casella praised Mussolini himself for “having understood how to make each of us feel the worker’s sense of proud noble awareness that each of us [is] adding his stone to the majestic edifice of the new fascist order.”⁷ Like

Pound, he saw fascism as a structure to which all must add their own bricks.

And as Pound did, Casella contributed to that Italian cultural edifice by serving as the artistic director for the Vivaldi Week sponsored by the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena. Casella prepared much of the music for the concerts. Cesare Fertonani calls Casella's transcriptions of Vivaldi's music some of the most ambiguous of the period, with conflicting desires to respect the original text while reviving them according to the best understanding of the time. The result is that Casella's transcriptions sometimes "restore" the music by adding elements he believed should be present, but at other times they insist on the music found in manuscript (Fertonani 256-61). Casella was a pioneer in bringing to light unpublished and unknown pieces – such as the *Gloria* (RV589), now a centerpiece of the choral repertoire.⁸

By the time the Vivaldi Week came together in Siena, Ezra Pound and his friends Gerhart Münch and Olga Rudge had been working for some time on the Venetian composer. The Vivaldi work grew out of their performances in 1933 of Mozart's violin sonatas, and in 1934 of Münch's transcriptions of ancient music from the manuscript collection of musicologist Oscar Chilesotti.⁹ Pound wrote that this work, "has produced ... a real addition to the whole body of existing music. In fact, we have a new sonata, obtained via Chilesotti's collection, which would have remained sterile but for Münch's discrimination and enterprise" (EPM 352). With this claim, Pound connects the Tigullians' work with that of cultural figures like Casella, who used older Italian cultural heritage to create new art for a modern fascist state. Whether we think of painters of the Novecento school emulating Giotto and Piero della Francesca, or architects imitating ancient Roman buildings discovered in excavations at Ostia, this period made new art from Italy's age-old cultural heritage.¹⁰ "We must not remain solely contemplatives," Mussolini had said to the stu-

dents of the Academy of Fine Arts in Perugia in early October 1926. “We must not simply exploit our cultural heritage. We must create a new heritage to place alongside that of antiquity. We must create a new art, an art of our times: a Fascist art” (Schnapp and Spackman 235). Through Münch’s transcription, new music grew from material in the Chilesotti collection. Pound was not the only person to see the Tigullians’ work this way. Writing in the *Musical Times* in 1934, Basil Bunting comments:

... musicians have as much to learn from such writers as Janneqin and Francesco da Milano as painters from Giotto and Duccio. However, this piece has ceased altogether to be a museum antique, and is as accessible, as fresh and “modern” (not only in its discords) as any violin sonata or “poème” available. (750)

In the context of the futurists’ condemnation of museums, this is high praise indeed. Pound echoed this distinction, saying that Münch could “recognize when a piece is of great *archaeological* value but unsuitable for a concert performance.”¹¹ Indirectly, Pound situated their work in a fascist context. The last paragraph of his first “Tigullian Studies” article in *Il Mare* directs: “For further details and information write to: E. Pound, Albergo Rapallo. For identification, the card of the Fascist Institute of Culture” (EPM 387).

That first Vivaldi article notes that the “study-workshops” would examine “the Italian musical heritage of the period before Bach, beginning by reading all Vivaldi’s works for one or two violins and piano” (EPM 384). It is a surprisingly musicological article for a small-town newspaper – evidence that Pound knew they were covering new ground and wanted to leave flags along their route.¹² Pound saw Vivaldi not only as an *Italian* composer *preceding* Bach, but also as a composer whose rediscovery happens in the context of modern experimentation. In his correspondence with Münch, Pound proposed concert programs positioning Vivaldi in con-

versation with Hindemith, Bartók, Scriabin and Stravinsky, thereby arguing for the same kind of modern Italian musical culture that Casella did.¹³ Olga Rudge made similar comparisons in early 1938, likening Vivaldi's music to Stravinsky's and Casella's, and to the surrealist paintings of Mirò ("Venice and Vivaldi" 7). This connection between ancient sources and modern creation is in accord with Mussolini's, Sarfatti's, and Bottai's program for fascist art.

From the Pound-Rudge correspondence, from Rudge's collection of concert reviews, and from a comparison of the Pound-Rudge holdings of musical manuscripts with Peter Ryom's massive thematic catalogue of Vivaldi's instrumental work, I have been able to piece together a sense of the Vivaldi programs in Rapallo. Many of the performances were taken from unpublished works. Performed in February 1938 was the *Concerto in A with echo for two violins, orchestra and continuo* (RV552), one of the first pieces that Pound transcribed from the Dresden microphotographs. Thanks to the work of Gerhart Münch, Pound in 1937 got hold of a trove of microphotographs of manuscripts from the Sächsische Landesbibliothek, which he set about copying into scores that could be performed in Rapallo.¹⁴ Pound wrote to Münch in August 1938: "some of the photos are of complicated pages/hard on the eyes if you haven't a good magnifying glass. I use two sets of glass, wearing one; and using the other for things hard to see" (Pound Papers). Pound was most interested in preparing scores of works that were not already published, either during Vivaldi's lifetime or later, but he told Münch in August 1938 that he was disappointed to find how many had been transcribed already, either by Molinari or Casella (Pound Papers). Pound and Rudge had been frustrated by how slowly Ricordi was publishing the works of Vivaldi, and indeed, the Ricordi edition of the *Concerto in A*, edited by Gian Francesco Malipiero, was not published until 1960 – twenty-two years after the Rapallo performance. For the Tigullians to perform Vivaldi's

vast corpus of instrumental music, they had to make transcriptions themselves.

Pound copied numerous scores from the Dresden microphotographs. He even created his own thematic catalogue, listing twenty distinct works.¹⁵ Not all these scores are complete: one trails off after a page and a half (RV241), and others have only the solo line filled in. But for some scores, such as the *Concerto in A*, multiple drafts demonstrate Pound's working process. First is an initial draft in ink, with corrections in Rudge's hand in pencil. Then Pound prepared a new fair copy, incorporating Rudge's corrections, and from that copy he prepared partitions for performance.

Pound's scores were used in the program for 5 February 1938, for instance. The write-up in *Il Mare* shows that three pieces were performed that evening. First was the *Concerto in A*, "reduced and drawn from manuscript using the microphotographic system ... and adapted in the Tigullian studio to available instruments." Next, a *Concerto in D*, in "free interpretation made by Gerhart Münch, with less liberty than that used by Stravinsky in adapting various passages and movements of music by Pergolesi to make the new work, *Pulcinella*." By comparing Münch's transcription with Stravinsky's *Pulcinella*, the announcement positioned this concert in the wider context of modernist adaptation of older work – including Casella's work with Scarlatti. It also set Münch's transcription as more loyal to tradition than Stravinsky's piece – notable, since Stravinsky was criticized for claiming *Pulcinella* as a new work, given its closeness to the original source material. The performance "set Vivaldi's music in relief" – and completed the circuit of modern and ancient music – by closing with a *Sonata for violin and piano* by Debussy ("Stasera," my translation). Writing a few days after, Desmond Chute said that microphotography could solve a modern problem, where "the greater part of the musical patrimony of the world lies buried in libraries," and provide far more accurate

scores from which musicians could work. The *Il Mare* write-up notes that music of Vivaldi's time assumed a certain amount of improvisation, and that modern performers can "sometimes create better work by taking this license, in the spirit of the twentieth century and of the new and fascist era" ("Stasera"). At play is a distinction between two kinds of modern intervention in ancient music. The Tigullians condemned modern *editions* that blunt the spirit of older music, but they celebrated *performers'* attempts to revive that music's spirit. Such interventions represented the blending of ancient and modern, the desire to make the old scores live in the "new and fascist era."

The evidence suggests that Pound did more than merely copy these pieces, however. For instance, he arranged Vivaldi's *Concerto in D minor*, originally for *Viola d'amore and Lute, orchestra and continuo* (RV540), for violin and keyboard. Doing so required combining the parts originally written for violin, viola d'amore, and lute into one solo line. Pound's letters to Rudge demonstrate a complex engagement with the music itself. On 7 July 1938, he wrote to Rudge, acknowledging that his ambitions might exceed his knowledge:

have YOU any ideas whether ALL the filling in shd/ be uniform arabesque / repeating in the middle voices EVERY possible line that can be repeated/ wich I spekk Johnnie B/ wd/ have// or whether one shd/ try mainly to keep the show MOVINK erlong ... or both. not that advice is likely to make up fer my iggurunce (Rudge Papers)

Thinking about Johann Sebastian Bach's transformations of Vivaldi's concertos into concertos for keyboard, Pound wonders how to condense a piece for solo instrument, orchestra, and basso continuo into an easily (and cheaply) performed violin and piano arrangement. He is making choices about how much of the original score can be retained and where it might appear in the new transcription. But he acknowledges

his ignorance in June 1938, saying that he has “gt/ difficulty rememberin wot key has three flat. AND so forf” (Rudge Papers). In June 1938, he complained to Rudge that the concerto on which he was working did not offer much thoughtful work for him to do:

and he haz just finished page I. of a bdy 3 flats/ conc/ wot is a tooty part and nowt much to do but cawpy the bloomink parts onto the PYanny wich is DULL doing. esp as it all goes GGGG CC etc. However he is chewink along on legible fotos.¹⁶

Reductions for violin and keyboard were common ways to produce Vivaldi’s music during this period, giving a sense of a piece without an orchestra and conductor. In fact, Alceo Toni’s reduction of Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons* for four-hand piano had brought those now famous concerti into bourgeois households, building their popularity (Fertonani 239). And the situation in Rapallo – lack of money and access to a variety of instruments – was the same that motivated other reductions. Archie Henderson has demonstrated that Pound defended the practice of reduction as a means of getting music performed, and often as a way of sifting through the extra silt that might accumulate in over-orchestrated arrangements (124ff.). The existence of so much musical transcription in Pound’s hand indicates that his contribution to the Rapallo revival of Vivaldi goes beyond what we have previously thought. Both Noel Stock (337-38) and Murray Schafer (329) had concluded that Pound was primarily an organizer of events and a supporter of Rudge. We see from these scores, letters, and reviews, however, his involvement in the music itself.

Meanwhile, Pound hoped that Gerhart Münch would conduct similar research in Germany, but it quickly became clear that Münch was not as involved with the Vivaldi project as Pound. In a letter of March 1939, he doubted the value of

Vivaldi's work, noting that the concerto on which he was working "is a bit thin and the 'Virtuoso-parts' are sometimes empty." He said, "I'd like to *cut out* a lot, but I fear that will be considered a capital sin.----- Other proposition; I could get a lot of unknown Old German Stuff: Would that do?" (Pound Papers). Pound responded that Vivaldi "is a GOING train" and that given the "mild Vivaldi boom" going on, it would be a shame to "let the kudos go to Casella..." (Pound Papers). By this time, of course, Pound knew Casella's and the Accademia Musicale's plans of reviving Vivaldi in Siena, and worried that the Vivaldi Week would overshadow the Tigullians' achievements (EPM 449-50). I imagine Pound bristled at Münch's suggestion of switching to a German composer. In his letter, he simply wrote, "Of course IF there is an equally diverse MASS of ONE German composer, that cd/ be boomed" (Pound Papers). Given the competition between Italy and Germany during this period for cultural primacy, and given Pound's interest in Italian "musical autarchy," throwing off a little-known Italian composer in favor of a German composer would hardly suffice. He wrote in November 1939, questioning the moniker "an Italian Bach" often used for Vivaldi: "Vivaldi was a true Italian, who often had the self-assurance to leave his lines blank and unembellished wherever he or a contemporary would have immediately understood which notes needed to be added to his meagre indications" (EPM 450-51). Although Pound would just as soon have seen his Rapallo venture receive all the recognition for reviving Vivaldi, Rudge's involvement with the Accademia Musicale Chigiana meant that he could view their Vivaldi Week as a continuation of his own endeavors.

Even though that work was completed in Siena, with Casella at the helm, Pound subsumed the Siena concerts into his own. Indeed, his write-up in *Il Mare* of the Vivaldi Week gives a single sentence to that festival, devoting the remain-

der to the Rapallo work, and claiming Siena's successes as an outcome of the Rapallo venture. In this essay, Pound assumes the pose of a true cultural administrator for fascist Italy. His rhetoric borrows heavily from that of fascist writings of the time: "We have mentioned a Vivaldi-Bach axis," he writes, echoing the Rome-Berlin axis (1936), "and we could also, if necessary, proclaim a musical autarchy of our own" (EPM 450). He positions their venture in the midst of Mussolini's dispute with the League of Nations, over Italy's invasion of Ethiopia, noting that their work began "four years ago during the days of the sanctions." He thereby suggests that the interest in Vivaldi's music follows a desire to depend only on Italy's own resources, as Mussolini had urged in his launching of the policy of *autarchia* in March 1936 before the Second National Assembly of Corporations.¹⁷ Despite the success of the Siena week, he argues, the work of reviving Vivaldi is not over: "A week of his music ... has still left three hundred concerti unpublished and a quantity of sacred and operatic music untouched!" (EPM 451). In Rapallo that work will continue, he notes, saying that they are busy "studying several dozen 'repatriated' compositions" – presumably those from Dresden. The article's final paragraph expands "Italian musical autarchy" to include "enough unpublished music by Vivaldi and Boccherini to last for ten years of musical weeks and festivals" (EPM 451). In so expanding his focus, Pound had his eye on other cultural administrators like Alfredo Casella, Margherita Sarfatti, and Giuseppe Bottai, who sought cultural means to make fascist Italy strong. Although Pound's writings from the 1930s suggest that he had long seen himself as a cultural administrator for Mussolini's Italy, his Vivaldi venture was the first concrete product of his ambitions. As we seek to understand his writings from this period, we must add this mask of the cultural administrator to his personae.

Notes

¹ Of the 1290 concerts given between 1914 and 1945, Vivaldi's compositions appeared in 120 – not bad, considering how little of Vivaldi's work was known at the time. For details, see Meloncelli 65-68. On Molinari's transcriptions, see Fertonani 240-50.

² My translation. Sarfatti was hardly unique in making such an assertion. For a smattering of the many examples of artists' and cultural administrators' use of Italian tradition to make modern art, see Braun, Lazzaro and Crum, Schumacher, and Stone.

³ Vinay, v. English translation cannot do justice to the connotations in Casella's phrase (quoted by Vinay), "melodrammismo conservatore, passatista e strapaesano": his use of the word "passatista" echoes similar usage of the term by the Futurists, who condemned all such aspects of Italian culture. Similarly, his use of the word "strapaesano," which literally means something "super-countryside-ish" echoes the name *strapaese*, which denoted an artistic movement championing the power of the traditional associations of the Italian countryside, as opposed to more urban-oriented movements as futurism.

⁴ In December 1932, a number of Italian musicians and composers signed "A Manifesto of Italian Musicians for the Tradition of Nineteenth-Century Romantic Art." The manifesto was written by the composer and music critic Alceo Toni but signed by the composer Giuseppe Mulè, as well as by Respighi, Pizzetti, and many others, and it was published simultaneously in three of the most important Italian newspapers, *Il popolo d'Italia* (Roma), *Il Corriere della Sera* (Milano), and *La Stampa* (Torino). As Harvey Sachs has noted, "[t]he poorly written document set forth the beliefs and apprehensions of the more conservative exponents of contemporary Italian music, and mirrored a way of thinking that is usually termed 'xenophobic' in political matters and 'provincial' in artistic ones." The manifesto criticized the recklessness and "atonal and polytonal honking" of modern music, and suggested that these musical tendencies threaten the musical world and audiences' ability to engage with music. The signers declared, "We are against so-called objective music which, as such, can only represent sound in itself, without the living expression caused by the animating breath that creates it. We are against

this art, which does not wish to have and does not have any human content.” The divisive manifesto was an attack on composers like Casella and Malipiero, and the *Stampa* music critic Andrea della Corte called it a “psychological outlet for its framers, and an example of ‘the pain of doubt that fills the spirits of all contemporary musicians with anxiety’” (Sachs 23-25).

⁵ Casella was hardly alone in so doing. For instances of the regime’s employment of Roman history, architecture, and art, see Kostof, Lazzaro and Crum, and Stone.

⁶ Casella, *Music* 202-3. Included in the first concert of the Sieneese Vivaldi Week was Vivaldi’s *Concerto in G minor for violin, strings and continuo* (RV334), one of the works that Casella found at the Library of Congress. Following standard practice in discussions of Vivaldi’s music, I include parenthetically after descriptions of individual pieces the catalogue numbers from Peter Ryom’s catalogue.

⁷ The previous two comments are quoted in Sachs 139. Casella’s “mystery” for the stage, *Il deserto tentato*, composed 1936-37 and first performed in Florence in May 1937, was conceived as a musical tribute to Italy’s “great African adventure” (*Music* 211).

⁸ The extent to which Casella’s edition remains a respected staple of many collections of choral music, despite the recognition of its many “errors” may be seen from the conversation in the *Choral Journal* initiated by Barrow and continuing in the letters to the editor, most notably that by Eric Nisula (21:7 [March 1981]: 41).

⁹ As R. Murray Schafer notes, the Amici del Tigullio performed publicly not *all* but only twelve (of thirty-four) of Mozart’s violin sonatas, although Pound claims they listened to the rest privately (331-33). Schafer gives an excellent sense of the chronology and aims of the Rapallo concerts as well as presenting translated versions of Pound’s essays about them (321-463).

¹⁰ On the use during the 1930s of newly discovered Roman remains as models for modern architecture, see MacDonald.

¹¹ EPM 340. Fiamma Nicolodi notes a similar claim by Alfredo Casella: he justified the insertion of an adagio movement from a separate concerto into his transcription of the *Concerto in C minor* (RV198a) as “obedience to the principle that archaeology is one thing while living and performed music is another thing entirely” (Nicolodi,

“Vivaldi e Casella” 307, translation mine).

¹² In a move atypical of the usual tropes of newspaper writing, he provides a full listing of Vivaldi’s published instrumental works from Altmann’s catalogue (1922) and then reference to the Foà and Giordano collections at Torino.

¹³ See Pound’s correspondence with Gerhart Münch, especially that from 1933-1937 (Pound Papers).

¹⁴ Münch mentions having the materials in Dresden photostated in a postcard to Pound ([25 October 1937], Pound Papers). Pound makes frequent reference to the copying of these scores in his correspondence with Olga Rudge during 1937 and 1938 and her papers contain numerous Vivaldi scores in Pound’s hand (Rudge Papers).

¹⁵ His catalogue includes twenty-one pieces, although one of his listings (#2) is actually a third movement of another item (#10). There are also two other pieces that, for one reason or another, never made it into his catalogue. These pieces are a *Sinfonia in G major for string orchestra* (RV149) and a *Concerto in D minor for solo violin, orchestra and continuo* (RV241). There may well be others among the small unidentifiable fragments extant in Pound’s and Rudge’s papers.

¹⁶ Rudge Papers. In August 1938, Pound makes a similar complaint about a score written with two sharps: “Did three pages, i;e; one quarter of a Viv/ wiff two sharps/ not much fun; as nothing much left to do after one has copied the notes/ in that one” (Pound to Rudge, 19 August [1938], Rudge Papers).

¹⁷ Although Mussolini claimed that the policy of *autarchia* was a response to the League’s sanctions, the policy was also an ideologically driven method of building national consensus and closing ranks. See F. Chiapparino’s entry on “autarchia” in *Dizionario del fascismo* 172-73.

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