

Three ‘Meditazioni’ by Giovanni Salviucci¹

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While he was studying organ and composition with Ernesto Boezi² and devoting himself to the rising concert life of Rome, in 1927 the young Giovanni Salviucci³ gave himself the challenge of composing for a large symphony orchestra in the manner of Ottorino Respighi. Up until 1930 he had written three ‘symphonic poems’: *Saul*, *Samarith*, and *Serena* (lost). Giovanni Arledler identifies and effectively summarizes the features of the works that Salviucci composed during these years:

- a) clear structural concept;
- b) thematic prevalence of counterpoint over harmony;
- c) diatonic harmonies;
- d) importance of rhythm;
- e) indecisive melodic cues;
- f) uncertainties in instrumentation;
- g) overlapping of several voices (as many as five) in the orchestral works.⁴

Between 1930 and 1931 Salviucci confronted the composition of three other important works, which, in a less pretentious way than his earlier works, he

called ‘symphonic sketches’ or ‘suites’: *Villavecchia*, *Campagna Romana* and *La tentazione e la preghiera*. Once Salviucci had overcome the naivety of his initial, negligible experimentations in works for orchestra, the music he composed within this short time became the latest product of ‘past enthusiasms and burning loves’:⁵ the love and enthusiasm for the language and form of the symphonic poem, and his adolescent fascination for Respighi, with whom he aspired to study. By overcoming the crisis of this ‘love’ and moving beyond Respighi’s model, a new, original personality of Salviucci was able to emerge, and he began to receive public appreciation starting in 1932. Referring to the three main compositions that date back to those years (*Villavecchia*, *Campagna Romana* and *La tentazione e la preghiera*), Ferdinando Ballo writes: ‘it is evident that Salviucci’s cultural experience has come to a decisive crisis. The descriptive naturalism of the “symphonic poem” runs out [...], the stylistic elements shatter’.⁶

It becomes clear that the unpublished music that Salviucci wrote during the period between 1929 and 1931 was of crucial importance for his growth.⁷ These years represent the moment of the real development of his artistic personality, his transition from youth to maturity. Therefore, an analysis of the works by the composer in this pivotal period of transition can help us to consider his position within the musical world in Italy, and in particular Rome, at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s; to understand the importance of the composers that Salviucci considered to be his role models during his formative years; to understand the dynamics of the ‘crisis’ (and especially those of the consequent ‘resolution’); but also to shed new light on Salviucci’s growth and on his compositions that followed.

For the reasons stated above, it is particularly useful to examine a composition which, in three different versions, spans the time period under consideration in its entirety. Indeed, in some respects it might seem more accurate to speak of three independent works, rather than three different versions of the same piece, given the fact that the author recognized the aesthetic autonomy of each individual work: *Meditazione* for organ, *Meditazione. Adagio per orchestra* and *Il richiamo alla terra (Notturmo)*, first movement of the Suite in due tempi *Campagna Romana*. Both *Meditazione* for orchestra and *Il richiamo alla terra (Notturmo)* represent two new versions of the original *Meditazione* for organ: the creative process therefore leads from *Meditazione* for organ to *Campagna Romana*, passing through *Meditazione* for orchestra and the ‘symphonic sketches’ entitled *Villavecchia*, as we will see.

It was possible to reconstruct the genesis of these compositions, which appeared to be interesting in theory,⁸ through a careful analysis of the manuscript scores of *Meditazione* for organ, *Meditazione* for orchestra and the Suite *Campagna Romana*, all preserved at the Istituto per la Musica of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, which acquired Salviucci’s personal archive from the composer’s

heirs in 2013. The archival collection includes letters, compositions (manuscripts, printed editions), writings, press clippings and a number of documents relating to Salviucci's musical activity. In the next few pages we will proceed to analyse some of the technical aspects of Salviucci's musical language, providing archival and philological data in parallel which will shed light on the compositional process and help us to understand that language more deeply.

MEDITAZIONE FOR ORGAN

As mentioned previously, *Preludio per organo*, whose title was changed to *Meditazione*, represents the first composition of the 'Meditazioni' group. The piece was published in 1929 by Carrara in Bergamo.⁹ In spite of its short length (45 bars), the piece offers examples that can clarify some aspects of Salviucci's compositional techniques, in terms of managing the musical material, counterpoint, harmony and formal structuring.

The piece has an ABAB' structure where the sections are divided into smaller blocks of 2–4 bars each. This structure is explicit, because each block of bars is characterized by a clear-cut melodic or contrapuntal phrase which may or may not be repeated within different blocks. It therefore emerges that the piece is built on seven phrases:

FIGURE 1. Phrase 1 (bars 1–2).



FIGURE 2. Phrase 2 (bars 2–4).



FIGURE 3. Phrase 3 (bars 5–7).



FIGURE 4. Phrase 4 (bars 8–9).



FIGURE 5. Phrase 5 (bars 11–13).



FIGURE 6. Phrase 6 (bars 15–16).



FIGURE 7. Phrase 7 (bars 17–19).



TABLE 1 summarizes the form of the piece by linking the syntactic units (groups of bars) with the phrases. The table confirms the principle of ‘formal clarity’ underlined by Giovanni Arledler and mentioned earlier, yet what is most interesting is how Salviucci manages the musical material. Indeed, there is a very strong connection between the six phrases. The most obvious link is between phrases 3 and 5: phrase 5 is a rhythmic transformation of phrase 3, transposed by an octave (FIGURE 8). It should also be noted that phrase 3, and therefore also

phrase 5, consists of a motif displayed in two different forms. Phrase 4 is built on the retrograde of phrase 3.

TABLE 1. Formal structure of *Meditazione* for organ.

Section	Bars	Phrase
A	1-4	1, 2
	5-7	3
	8-10	4
	11-13	5
	14-15	4
	15-16	6
B	17-19	7
	19-21	7
A	22-24	1, 2
	25-27	3
	28-30	4
	31-33	5
	34-35	4 (modified)
	36	6
B'	37-38	2
	38-40	7
	40-42	7
	43-45	3

Phrases 1 and 7, though apparently different from each other, share many intervals and use the same degrees of the scale (FIGURE 9). Phrase 6 shares material with phrases 3 and 5 (FIGURE 10). Phrase 2 is structured into two parts (as if they were the antecedent and consequent), and the second part is a transformation of the first part (FIGURE 11).

FIGURE 8. Phrase 4 (bars 8–9), 3 (bars 5–7) and 5 (bars 11–13).



FIGURE 9. Phrases 1 (bars 1–2) and 7 (bars 17–19).



FIGURE 10. Phrases 3 (bars 5–7), 5 (bars 11–13) and 6 (bars 15–16).



FIGURE 11. Phrases 2 (bars 2–4).



After considering this singular *modus operandi* we can approach Salviucci's thoughts on the form, which without this prior analysis would be abstract or at least difficult to understand. The following article was published in 1933 in *La Rassegna Nazionale*, where Salviucci worked as a critic from 1931 to 1933:

Usually form means “the harmony of the constructive parts” and in this sense it is used to indicate the musical forms, precisely meaning those constructive schemes conveyed to us such as: the ancient dances, the fugue, the sonata etc... But beyond this visible and almost palpable form seems to me to be a more intimate and elusive one that I would define: “the sense of constructive coherence”.

[...] This substantial-form, so to speak, is not the result of the management of the thematic material of the composition but is in the very nature of this material and therefore of the whole composition; it is precisely the sense of constructive coherence, something that sustains, vivifies, deeply dynamic.

[...] For this reason when I say “perfect form” I am not only referring to the perfection of the form-scheme, but to a perfection of construction which necessarily must include a perfect substantial-form; that is, that all the music of the piece, in its various elements, is as if cemented in a single block by this profound, unitary constructive sense.¹⁰

The attention placed on the ‘substantial form’, or rather on the intrinsic characteristics of the thematic material used, should advise us against the commonplace critics who sought to describe Salviucci's conceptions as substantially contrapuntal, overshadowing his more strictly thematic and motivic work. An analysis shows that the musical construction is built on limited musical material: the motif that underlies phrases 3 and 5; the pitch contour shared by phrases 4, 3 and 5; the intervals shared by phrases 1 and 7; and the material that links the melodic lines of phrase 6 with those of phrases 3 and 5. Indeed, it is not possible to identify one single motif which generates the entire musical structure of the piece, as one might expect upon reading the author in the above quoted paragraph; but we should keep in mind that *Meditazione* for organ was composed four years before the article was published in *La Rassegna Nazionale*, a substantial amount

of time for a growing young composer. It seems plausible to consider what we find in *Meditazione* for organ to be the germ of a compositional language in its embryonic shape that will fully develop over the following years. The examples confirm what Guido Salvetti wrote: ‘this statement [the contrapuntal substance of Salviucci’s thought] prevents us from seeing how the musical construction is based on the juxtaposition (sometimes the superimposition) of different writings: the counterpoint-imitative one, certainly, but also the homophonic-chordal one and the melodic-accompanied one’.¹¹

We can formulate some observations on the musical language Salviucci used, not so much in relation to the rhythm, as on the horizontal and vertical pitch management. The phrases often move by step or small interval, within a quite restricted area (mainly, a sixth). They insistently use some particular altered degrees of the scale, such as the lowered sixth and seventh (thereby avoiding the leading tone). Parallel chords or empty fifths and octaves are frequently found.

All this determines some relevant consequences. For example, harmonically there is a loosening of tension: even if the piece is distinctly in the key of E flat minor, the loosening of the harmonic tensions in the central section leads to a temporary polarization of the B flat minor harmony, a minor variant of the dominant. The harmony, already very rich in itself (secondary seventh chords, ninth chords, altered chords), is further enriched by many harsh dissonances created by the movement of the voices. Dissonances are handled as if they were grace-notes, anticipation or retardation. This attitude towards the construction of vertical sound clusters that do not justify themselves harmonically reveals Salviucci’s mentality, which is contrapuntal rather than harmonic.

Melodically, Salviucci’s language takes a decidedly modal character. This is evident, for example, in phrases 2 and 3, which highlight the D flat, the lowered seventh degree of the E flat minor scale. The archaic flavor of the piece is also given by passages of parallel fifths and by drones of empty fifths (FIGURES 12, 13).

Characteristics of the composer such as his search for formal clarity, his modal language, and his search for a modern language rich in dissonances managed via

FIGURE 12. Giovanni Salviucci, *Meditazione* for organ, bars 15–16.



FIGURE 13. Giovanni Salviucci, *Meditazione* for organ, bars 17–19.

counterpoint – as if it were the ‘durezza e ligature’ of Frescobaldi’s instrumental music or Gesualdo’s vocal music – allow us to place Giovanni Salviucci within the context of the ‘generazione dell’Ottanta’. The composers of the ‘generazione dell’Ottanta’ set themselves the goal of creating a new Italian music, which intended to embody the following characteristics: to be free from the legacy of nineteenth-century opera, which was perceived as extremely cumbersome; to be independent of what was then considered to be instrumental music par excellence, that is, German music, drawing inspiration instead from the Italian instrumental music of the past centuries; and to be aware of the languages of European music but at the same time ‘authentically Italian’.

Moreover, *Meditazione* fits stylistically with the other pieces that make up the collection in which it was published. Giovanni Arledler rightly points out that pieces from the same collection by composers who were already well-known do not overshadow the one by Salviucci.¹² I would agree that it is among the best, containing the seeds of a musical personality that would have attained extraordinary results had he not perished prematurely.

Regarding the documents stored in the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, the autograph manuscript of the *Meditazione* is on an *in-folio* music sheet signed by the author and dated 3 January 1929 (FIGURE 14). It is a fair copy written in ink, with clear writing, rich in accurate agogic indications, and without cancellations or alterations in ink.

The autograph differs from the piece published by Carrara because the voices are divided differently between the three staves at bars 6–9 and bars 25–28. Some corrections made in pencil indicate the divisions that we find in the published version. Salviucci therefore used this manuscript as an antigraph from which he copied the corrected and definitive version that he sent to the Carrara publishing house.¹³

FIGURE 14. *Meditazione* for organ, autograph, p. 1 (bars 1–12). Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Giovanni Salviucci.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for organ. At the top, there is a handwritten note: "più cambramenti al fagotto seguente". Below this, the title "Meditazione" is written in cursive, followed by "Particella per Organo". The tempo marking "Adagio molto" is written above the first staff. The score consists of four systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are several pencil annotations throughout the score, including "Poco", "Pieno", and "Tutti". At the bottom of the page, there is a printer's mark: "Ditta Alberto De Santis - Corso Umberto I, N. 47 - Roma (1909)" and a small number "18 **".

From the manuscript we can observe that in a second stage the author added some instructions about the organ registers in pencil ('Ance', 'Subbasso', 'Bassi 16", etc.). Similarly, he crossed out some bars and inserted some phrases in counterpoint (with indications 'da qui [from here]' and 'segue [follows]'). As they are not executable for the organ, these interpolations could not have been conceived as a modification to the original text: it then becomes evident that Salviucci must have used his autographed copy of *Meditazione* for organ as a *Particella*, or as a 'condensed score' and guide for the drafting of the *Meditazione* for orchestra. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that, in the orchestral version, we find the phrases in counterpoint that had been added in pencil in the organ manuscript.

MEDITAZIONE. ADAGIO PER ORCHESTRA

Apart from the phrases in counterpoint that were inserted (see FIGURE 15), *Meditazione* for orchestra does not differ from the piece for organ of which it represents the orchestration. Salviucci maintains the key of E flat minor which must have had a particular meaning for him. As Giovanni Arledler points out indeed the composer uses this 'late romantic' tonality not only in *Meditazione*, but also in *Salmo di David*, both in the version for voice and piano and in the version for voice and chamber orchestra.¹⁴ *Salmo di David* dates back to 1933 and was one of the successful works that marked Salviucci's career. It is the musical setting of Psalm 60, where a plea is addressed to God to listen to this prayer. The link between the two compositions is underlined by the Latin epigraph 'Ne memineris Domine' that Salviucci inserted in the manuscript of *Meditazione* for organ that he sent to Carrara, and which was reproduced in the printed edition. This Latin epigraph is taken from Psalm 25, and is a plea to the Lord to offer forgiveness for the sins committed in youth. We can therefore hypothesize that Salviucci considered the key of E flat minor particularly suitable for expressing spirituality in his music.

The instrumentation of *Meditazione* includes two flutes, two oboes, an English horn, two clarinets in B flat, two bassoons, a contrabassoon, four horns in F, a trumpet in F, a trumpet in B flat, harp and strings. It is essential to keep in mind the original version for organ to understand the Salviucci's orchestration as a young composition student. Indeed, his aptitude for using the instruments of the orchestra as organ registers emerges from a comparison between the two scores. In the first section of the piece (bars 1–7) he uses the low instruments of the orchestra (cellos, double basses, bassoon) to give the piece a dark color, effectively emphasizing the austere sacredness and the meditative character of the

FIGURE 15. Giovanni Salviucci, *Meditazione* for organ, autograph, detail of the counterpoints added in pencil (bars 14–15). Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Giovanni Salviucci.



piece and evoking the fundamental characteristics of the work for organ. The high strings and the horn are also asked to play in their lowest register. Salviucci builds the crescendo of the following bars with the subsequent addition of the other instruments (first violins, wind section, harp). In a rather unusual way, in bars 11–13, where all the instruments of the orchestra play except contrabassoon and harp, Salviucci forces all the performers into the medium-high register, filling the entire sound space, from low to high, with the entire orchestra present at the climax of the piece (bars 14–16). Technically, the work is done well, except for some weak moments that can be observed, such as the arpeggio of double basses, cellos, harp and bassoons at bar 10, which is not very effective in rendering the expressive crescendo desired by the author. The opposite can be said about the B section of the piece (bars 17–21). The sudden *p* (bar 17) in phrase 6 is played by a solo violin on a background of empty fifths of the strings, and then repeated by the first oboe, accompanied by a descending chromatic scale proposed by the first clarinet, and supported by an octave drone of violas and harp. The passage is very impressive and the orchestration particularly effective. In view of what has been said about the form of the piece, it is important to note how Salviucci uses orchestration as a tool to give the listener a sense of structural clarity of the composition. The change of timbre is indeed used to emphasize the initial and final moment of each phrase and of each section.

In light of this, we can better understand the remarks of some critics of the time, such as Fedele d'Amico, who reviewed the performance of Salviucci's *Overture* in an article dated 2 April 1933, printed in *L'Italia letteraria*. D'Amico describes his style as 'an organistic way of composing, modeled on that of our Seventeenth century'.¹⁵ The fact that in the case of *Meditazione* the orchestral piece is derived from a piece for organ risks making this a tautological statement; but following the comments made, we can rightly believe that Salviucci's organistic conception of music, derived from his musical education, also influenced him when composing for orchestra.

The counterpoints added in pencil to the organ manuscript (FIGURE 15), assume a particular importance in the analysis of the composer's style. In this early piece, we can observe Salviucci's tendency to fill the sound space through counterpoint, creating a continuous flourishing of new phrases. Respighi had reproached this tendency when Salviucci was admitted to the specialization course in composition at the Conservatorio "Santa Cecilia".¹⁶ However, it would be constantly observed by critics as a characteristic of the composer's style in his most successful pieces (such as the *Introduzione, Passacaglia e Finale*), and would become particularly relevant even in his extreme works, *Alceste* and the *Serenata per nove strumenti*,¹⁷ both from 1937, the year of the composer's death.

THREE 'MEDITAZIONI' BY GIOVANNI SALVIUCCI

Returning to the documents stored in the Salviucci archive, the autograph manuscript of *Meditazione. Adagio for orchestra* is on unbound music sheets and the music is written in ink (FIGURE 16). Even if it does not contain relevant cancellations or alterations, it is evidently written in a cursory way by the author and lacks all the scrupulous dynamics and agogic indications that, on the contrary, can be found in the original version for organ.

FIGURE 16. Giovanni Salviucci, *Meditazione for orchestra*, autograph (bb. 1–3). Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Giovanni Salviucci.

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper, titled "Adagio" in the upper right. The score is for an orchestra and is divided into two systems. The first system includes staves for Flauto (Flute), Oboi (Oboes), Cori Anglosassoni (English Horns), Clarinetto (Clarinets), Fagotti (Bassoons), and Contrabbasso (Double Basses). The second system includes staves for Trombe (Trumpets), Tromboni (Trombones), Arpa (Harp), Violini (Violins), Viola (Viola), Cello (Cello), and Basso (Bass). The notation is in ink and appears to be a first draft, with some corrections and markings. The paper has a small number "1" in the top right corner and a publisher's mark at the bottom: "Ditta Alberto De Santis - Corso Umberto I, N. 45 - Roma (195)" and "18 **".

These omissions and the evident haste of the writing suggest that, even before producing a fair copy, Salviucci decided to set aside this first orchestrated version of *Meditazione*. Probably the author chose to immediately orchestrate the composition again for a larger ensemble in order to make it one of the '4 Bozzetti Sinfonici' entitled *Villavecchia* – something that, as we will see, after a series of hesitations and changes of mind, did not happen. From the annotations on the papers containing the sketches of *Villavecchia* it would seem that, according to the initial compositional project, the piece should have been the second of the four symphonic sketches entitled *Notturmo (Meditazione)*.¹⁸ From the title page of the first fair copy version of the *Villavecchia Suite*¹⁹ we learn instead that the piece is no longer meant for the second, but the third place in the suite, with the title *Il richiamo alla terra (Notturmo)*; however, the manuscript contains only two movements, namely *Luce nella preghiera (Vespro)* and *Meriggio di gioia*. Finally, in the second version of *Villavecchia*, the definitive one, the composition does not appear at all. The Suite actually consists of not four, but just two movements: *I. Adagio non troppo* and *II. Lento, Allegro molto vivace*,²⁰ corresponding to the previous *Luce nella preghiera (Vespro)* and *Meriggio di gioia*.

CAMPAGNA ROMANA: IL RICHIAMO ALLA TERRA (NOTTURNO)

The two 'symphonic sketches' removed from *Villavecchia* retained their titles, *Il richiamo alla terra (Notturmo)* and *Il risveglio nel sole*, becoming the two movements of the *Campagna Romana Suite*. The new *Notturmo* therefore represents the third and final, re-orchestrated and modified version of *Meditazione* for organ.

The *Campagna Romana* score is a bound, fair copy. The first movement of the Suite, *Il richiamo alla terra (Notturmo)*, varies substantially compared to the previous versions called *Meditazione*. The piece consists of 58 bars, 13 more than the previous version, and is orchestrated for a larger ensemble when compared to that of *Meditazione*. *Adagio per orchestra*: the number of trumpets has doubled to four trumpets, two in B flat and two in F, along with the addition of a 'clarone' in B flat (bass clarinet), a tenor trombone, a bass trombone and the timpani. Overall, the score is very meticulous, full of agogic indications and other notes regarding dynamics, expression and, for the strings, indications for the harmonics and use of the damper.

Besides the obvious variations due to the enlargement of the ensemble, the orchestration also shows some modifications in the less articulated sections of the piece, such as the beginning. For example, the *ostinato* at bar number 4 is entrusted to the horns, rather than to the strings, and phrase 3 is played by the

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cellos and by the first bassoon doubled by the harp. Some indiscretions have been eliminated: a few ineffective intersections have been avoided and phrase 4, which in the previous version was very static, has been enlivened.

With regard to the counterpoint, there is an increase in complexity: not simply doubling the voices already present in the *Meditazione*, Salviucci assigns new phrases to the instruments that have been added to the ensemble, confirming his tendency for 'melodic efflorescence' that we have previously observed.

The increase of the number of bars is due to the insertion of a new bar between bars 13 and 14 and the replacement of bars 17–22 with 18 new measures. In this 'new' section we find either transformations of motivic ideas already present in preceding versions of the piece or previously unpublished musical material. Here phrase 6 (bars 17–19 of *Meditazione* for orchestra) and the ascending phrase of the basses (phrase 1, bars 21–22 of *Meditazione* for orchestra) appear

FIGURE 17. Giovanni Salviucci, *Campagna romana*, autograph score (bars 28–33). Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Giovanni Salviucci.

The image displays two pages of a handwritten musical score. The left page is marked with a red 'D' at the top left and a red 'D' at the bottom left. The right page is marked with a red '11' at the top left. The score consists of multiple staves, including woodwinds (flutes, oboes, bassoons), strings (violins, violas, cellos, double basses), and harp. The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols such as clefs, time signatures, notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mf' and 'pp'. The handwriting is in dark ink on aged, yellowish paper.

rhythmically transformed. Phrase 6 is played in an expanded version compared to that of *Meditazione* for orchestra. The augmentation is accompanied by an obsessive rhythmical ostinato of empty fifths played by the strings stemming from the ‘ribattuto’ of the harp that appears in bars 19–21 of *Meditazione* for orchestra. This material builds an expressive climax which leads to the *fortissimo* at bar 31 (FIGURE 17).

The analysis of the bars interpolated into the piece leads us to two relevant conclusions. From a formal perspective, it is clear that Salviucci decided to expand the B section of *Meditazione* for orchestra with the aim of giving greater balance to the overall form of the piece. In the previous version the imbalance between section A, consisting of 16 bars, and section B, consisting of only 5 bars, was conspicuous. The final structure of the *Notturmo* is: A (17 bars), B (15 bars), A (16 bars), B’ (9 bars).

From a stylistic perspective, there are a few possible sources, or compositions that Salviucci may have used as a model, for the section inserted in *Il richiamo alla terra* (*Notturmo*). These are: *Il mattutino di Santa Chiara* (the third of the four symphonic impressions *Vetrata di Chiesa*), and *I pini presso una catacomba* (the second movement of the symphonic poem *I pini di Roma*), both by Ottorino Respighi. The three pieces share the atmosphere of austere sacredness and the archaic aura given by the form that was already found in previous versions of *Meditazione*. Taking into consideration *I pini presso una catacomba*, we find an evident similarity between phrases 3 and 6 by Salviucci and the theme announced by the trombones, who are protagonists of the episode *Ancora più mosso* (bars 28–55) of the symphonic poem,²¹ especially at bars 36–38 where the theme is played by trombones, bassoons, contrabassoon and double basses (FIGURE 18).

FIGURE 18. Ottorino Respighi, *I pini presso una catacomba*, theme played by trombones, bassoons, contrabassoon and double basses (bb. 36–38).



Similarly, the texture of bars 4–7 of *Meditazione* and of *Richiamo alla terra* (*Notturmo*) resembles that of bars 16–19 of *Mattutino di Santa Chiara*: in both cases, a modal melodic fragment is played in antiphon by two solo instruments, accompanied by a rhythmic ostinato of empty octaves. What is more important to note here is that the interpolated bars in *Il richiamo alla terra* also contain elements in common with *Il mattutino*. Indeed Respighi uses a ribattuto rhythmic

ostinato that passes from strings to horns, and then to clarinets and long drones of empty fifths and octaves of the strings. A simple melody with a modal flavor, which moves mainly by conjunct degrees, is played against this background. We find the same musical organization in *Il richiamo alla terra*: the similarity of the texture is particularly evident; the ostinato is played by the same instruments in exactly the same order (strings, horns, clarinets). These observations may not be enough to consider *Il mattutino* definitively as a source for Salviucci in the re-orchestration of his piece, given that a similar musical organization is common to several pieces of the time. However, another clue is provided by the fact that Salviucci decided to change the title from *Meditazione* to *Il richiamo alla terra (Notturmo)*. The term 'notturmo' in the Catholic Church liturgy indeed signifies one part of the 'mattutino' rite, which includes the reading of the Psalms. While in Respighi the reference to the rite and to Gregorian chant is clear, in Salviucci the reference is more subtle but always present: in *Meditazione* as a quotation from the Psalm, as seen before, and in *Il richiamo alla terra (Notturmo)* directly in the title. Furthermore, it is very likely that Salviucci was familiar with Respighi's score, performed at the Teatro Augusteo in Rome in 1928 (Italian *première*, conducted by Victor De Sabata).²² To conclude on Salviucci's compositional style, we should note that the attention he gave to rhythmic drones in his early pieces can also be found in the compositions of his artistic maturity such as *Introduzione, Passacaglia e Finale* and *Serenata per nove strumenti*.

Returning to the manuscript of *Meditazione* for organ, we can find evidence of substantial differences between *Il richiamo alla terra* and the two previous versions of the piece which are concordant. As already mentioned, indeed, the organ manuscript contains erasures of some bars with the indications 'from here' and 'follows' – added later in pencil. These later annotations are incomprehensible if one compares the original version of *Meditazione* with the intermediate draft for orchestra. However, they become meaningful if we contrast the first version with the last version. Indeed, the marks correspond to the points in the score of *Il richiamo alla terra* which exhibit the most relevant variants compared to the previous version of *Meditazione*: the points where a substantial modification of the measures maintained occurs, either the elimination of some bars or the interpolation of new material. Evidently Salviucci must have resorted once again to using the manuscript for organ as a *Particell*, this time using it as a guide for the composition of *Il richiamo alla terra*. This hypothesis is further confirmed by the presence of some annotations in the organ manuscript in pencil that give indications for the instrumentation corresponding to the instruments used in the orchestration of *Notturmo* and not in *Meditazione* for orchestra (see for example the indication 'Corni [Horns]' at bar 4 of FIGURE 14). However, the issue

is even more complex. At the top of the first page of *Meditazione* for organ is the author's handwritten note 'Vedi cambiamenti al foglio separato [See changes to the separate sheet]' (FIGURE 14). On this manuscript, it is clear that after having stratified different musical ideas pertaining to three different creative stages and to three different steps of the history of the text, Salviucci simply needed another paper on which to continue composing the latest version of *Meditazione*, that is *Il richiamo alla terra* (*Notturmo*). This piece was now showing substantial changes,

FIGURE 19. Giovanni Salviucci, *Meditazione* for organ, autograph. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Giovanni Salviucci. Please note the erasing marks of some bars with the indications 'da qui [from here]' and 'segue [follows]', added in pencil.

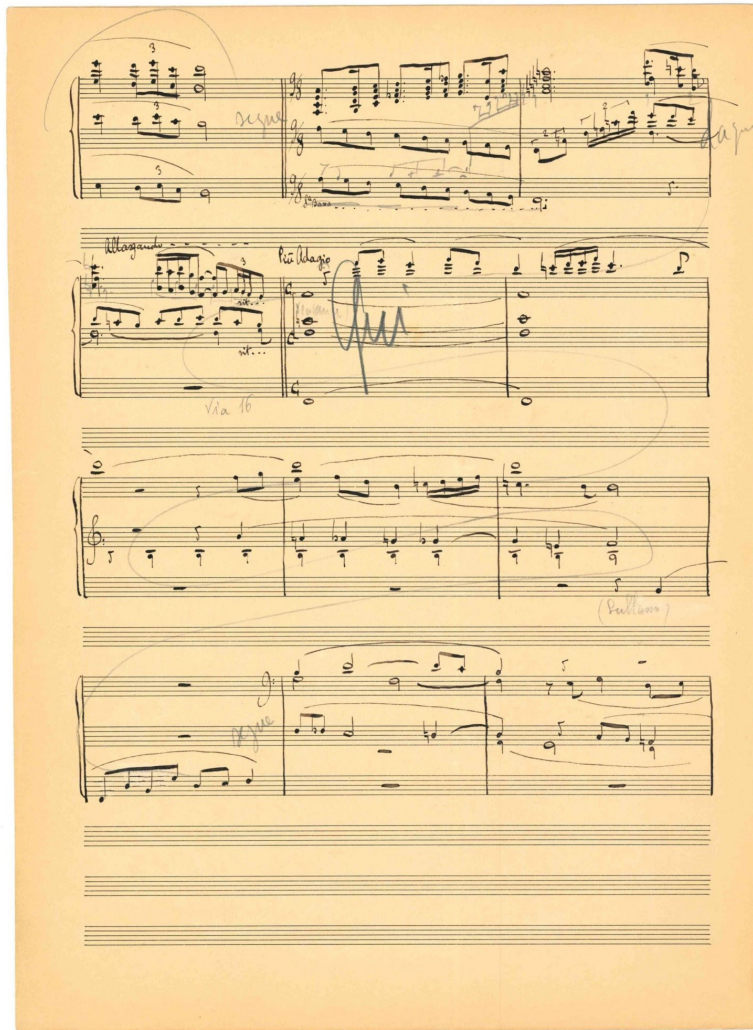
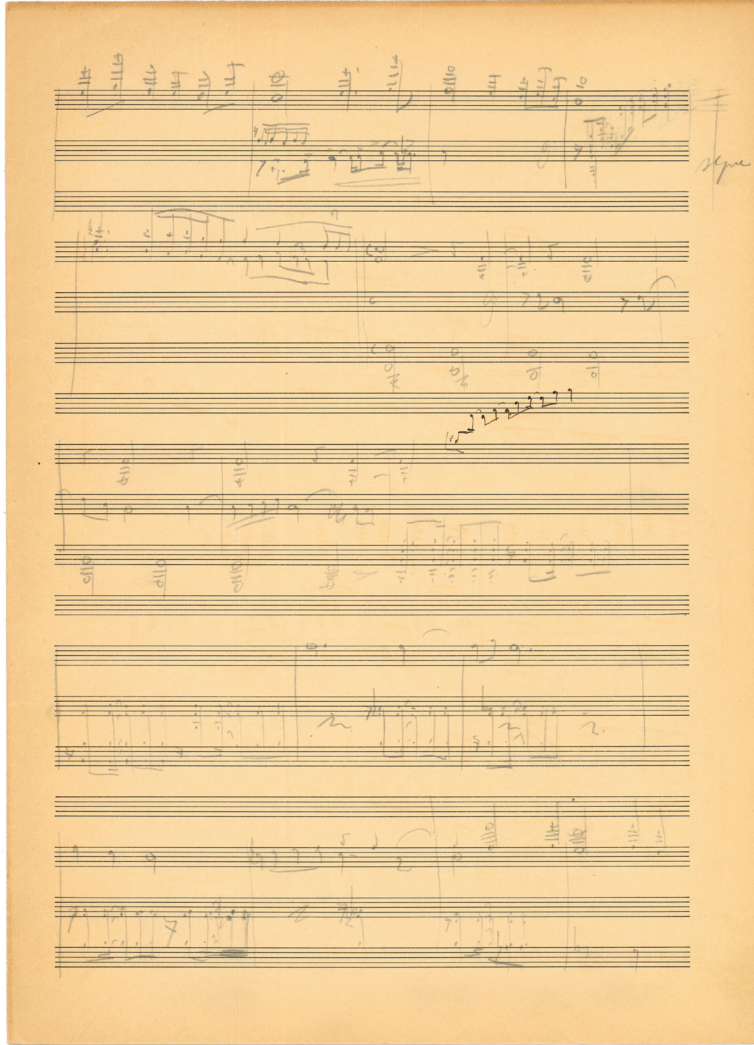


FIGURE 20. The 'separate sheet' that contains the 'changes'. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Giovanni Salviucci.



departing decisively from the original version for organ. The 'separate sheet' mentioned in the note should therefore contain traces of the alterations found in the last version of the text, the one included in *Campagna Romana* (in particular the variants of bar 17 and the following bars), thus it may represent the missing link in the genesis of the text.

After a careful analysis of the uncategorized papers stored in Salviucci's archive, it was possible to identify the 'separate sheet' to which the note in the manuscript of the *Meditazione* for organ refers with certainty. It is an *in-folio* music sheet that

contains music notation only on two sides. There are no indications regarding the title of the piece or the key signature. The sheet shows sketches in the form of a *Particell*, organized in seven staff systems of three staves each. The first system displays a sketch of the bars 11–14 of *Il richiamo alla terra*, the remaining systems contain the sketch of bars 17–35 of the same piece. These sketched-out measures correspond exactly to the points in the manuscript for organ that exhibit erasures of some bars and the indications ‘from here’ and ‘follows’, and they coincide with the passage that shows the most substantial variation compared to the previous versions of *Meditazione*.

CONCLUSION: ATTEMPT, RENUNCIATION, CRISIS, FUTURE

An article entitled ‘L’avenire del Poema Sinfonico [The future of the Symphonic Poem]’, written by Salviucci for one of the periodicals for which the composer worked as a critic from 1931–1933 and preserved among his papers, reads:

It will be observed that descriptivism is implied in the Symphonic Poem and that this having faded, the Symphonic Poem must necessarily have the same fate [...]. Not descriptivism has faded but a manner (impressionism) of this [...]. How can we know if tomorrow will be born a Symphonic Poem whose content is even more distant from Respighi than how Respighi is far from Strauss? We can surely recognize that the historical period of the Symphonic Poem has ended, but not really that as a musical form it is useless.²³

In light of this, we can hypothesize that *Meditazione* for orchestra, and therefore the suite, *Campagna Romana*, which contains *Il richiamo alla terra* (*Notturmo*), together with the other works composed in the same period (*Villavecchia* and *La tentazione e la preghiera*), represent Salviucci’s personal attempt to contribute to the rebirth of the art form of the symphonic poem that was, thus far, free from the legacy of Impressionism.

It is significant that the composer not only didn’t publish his scores – which he probably considered as studies of composition and orchestration, rather than as works intended for performance – but he also never published his article. During those same years indeed, his aesthetic values as well as his musical language undergo a crisis.²⁴ Contrary to the ‘return to order’ of the musical context that surrounded him, he chose to abandon Respighi’s model and forge a path towards complexity. Thus, Giovanni Salviucci emerged from this crisis with a new artistic personality and, from 1933 until his death in 1937, he experienced a dazzlingly successful career.

Notes

- 1 This paper summarizes my Thesis in Musical composition and Conducting *Giovanni Salviucci: Meditazione. Adagio per orchestra (1929). Indagine filologica, studio genetico, edizione*. L'Aquila, Conservatorio di Musica "Alfredo Casella", December 2019, 63 pp. I would like to express heartfelt thanks to Maestro Marcello Bufalini, supervisor of the Thesis. During the dissertation the *Meditazione* for orchestra was played by the Orchestra Sinfonica Abruzzese conducted by me. It appears to be the piece's *première*. I would like to thank Angela Carone, Ingrid Pustijanac and Ersilia Verlinghieri for their generous help; the Istituto per la Musica of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, in the person of Prof. Gianmario Borio and Francisco Rocca, and Mrs. Giovanna Salviucci Marini.
- 2 Conductor of the Cappella Giulia in S. Pietro, his teachings were based on strict counterpoint and inspired by the great Italian composers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- 3 For an up-to-date bibliography of Giovanni Salviucci, his biography and a complete catalogue of his works see Angela Carone, 'Giovanni Salviucci: l'uomo e il compositore. Nuovi documenti', *Studi Musicali*, VII/2, 2016, pp. 455–479.
- 4 Giovanni Arledler, *Prospettive critiche su Giovanni Salviucci*, Bologna: s.n., 1974, pp. 36–37.
- 5 Mario Rinaldi, *Giovani musicisti romani*, Milano: Zerboni, 1937, p. 8.
- 6 Ferdinando Ballo, 'Musicisti del nostro tempo', *La Rassegna musicale*, X, 1937, p. 10.
- 7 See Mario Rinaldi, 'L'ideale artistico di Giovanni Salviucci', in: *All'ombra dell'Augusteo*, Roma: Vita e lavoro, 1944, pp. 207–214: 208.
- 8 See Carone, 'Giovanni Salviucci', pp. 460–461.
- 9 In the anthological volume *I Maestri dell'Organo* (EC 831); the piece was reissued individually by Carrara in 2006.
- 10 Giovanni Salviucci, 'Classicismo e romanticismo musicale', *La Rassegna nazionale*, LV/1, 1933, pp. 10-18.
- 11 Guido Salvetti, *Analisi musicale of the Serenata per nove strumenti* by Giovanni Salviucci, in: *Musiche del Novecento italiano: decennio 1930–1940*, a cura Maria Grazia Sità e Marina Vaccarini, Milano: Stradivarius, 2010 (CD-ROM).
- 12 Arledler, *Prospettive critiche*, p. 23.
- 13 It was not possible to reference this autograph, stored in the archive of the publishing house. However, information provided by the editor who reissued the piece (2006) confirms what is written.
- 14 Arledler, *Prospettive critiche*, p. 49.
- 15 Fedele d'Amico, 'Ravel, Salviucci e Liuzzi', *L'Italia Letteraria*, 2 aprile 1933, pp. 34-35.
- 16 '[Respighi] suggested Giovanni Salviucci, another musician of great value and formidable contrapuntist, to lose the habit of "seeing eight parts walking"'. Speech by Carlo Alberto Pizzini, Senior Vice President of the Accademia Nazionale di S. Cecilia, at the round table discussion for the centenary of the birth of Ottorino Respighi (Rome, 30 November – 1 December 1979).
- 17 'What matters most [...] is the continuous superimposition, on elements already known, of new figures if not new melodies, in a continuous efflorescence'. Salvetti, *Musiche del Novecento italiano* [my translation].
- 18 See Carone 'Giovanni Salviucci: l'uomo e il compositore', pp. 460–461.
- 19 Salviucci abandoned the wording 'symphonic sketches' for the less *impressionistic* one of 'suite'.

- 20 Here too Salviucci abandoned the descriptive titles for more neutral and less impressionistic tempo markings. This could be a partial proof of a gradual distancing of the composer from the impressionism and Respighi's aesthetics.
- 21 It may also be significant to observe how in the first, dark part of Respighi's piece is focused the key of E flat minor.
- 22 Raoul Meloncelli, 'Sul rinnovamento della vita musicale romana', in: *Musica italiana del primo Novecento. La generazione dell'Ottanta. Atti del Convegno, Firenze 9–10–11 maggio 1980*, a cura di Fiamma Nicolodi, Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1981, pp. 219–259: 242.
- 23 Giovanni Salviucci, *L'avvenire del Poema Sinfonico*, typescript. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Giovanni Salviucci.
- 24 See footnote 5.

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