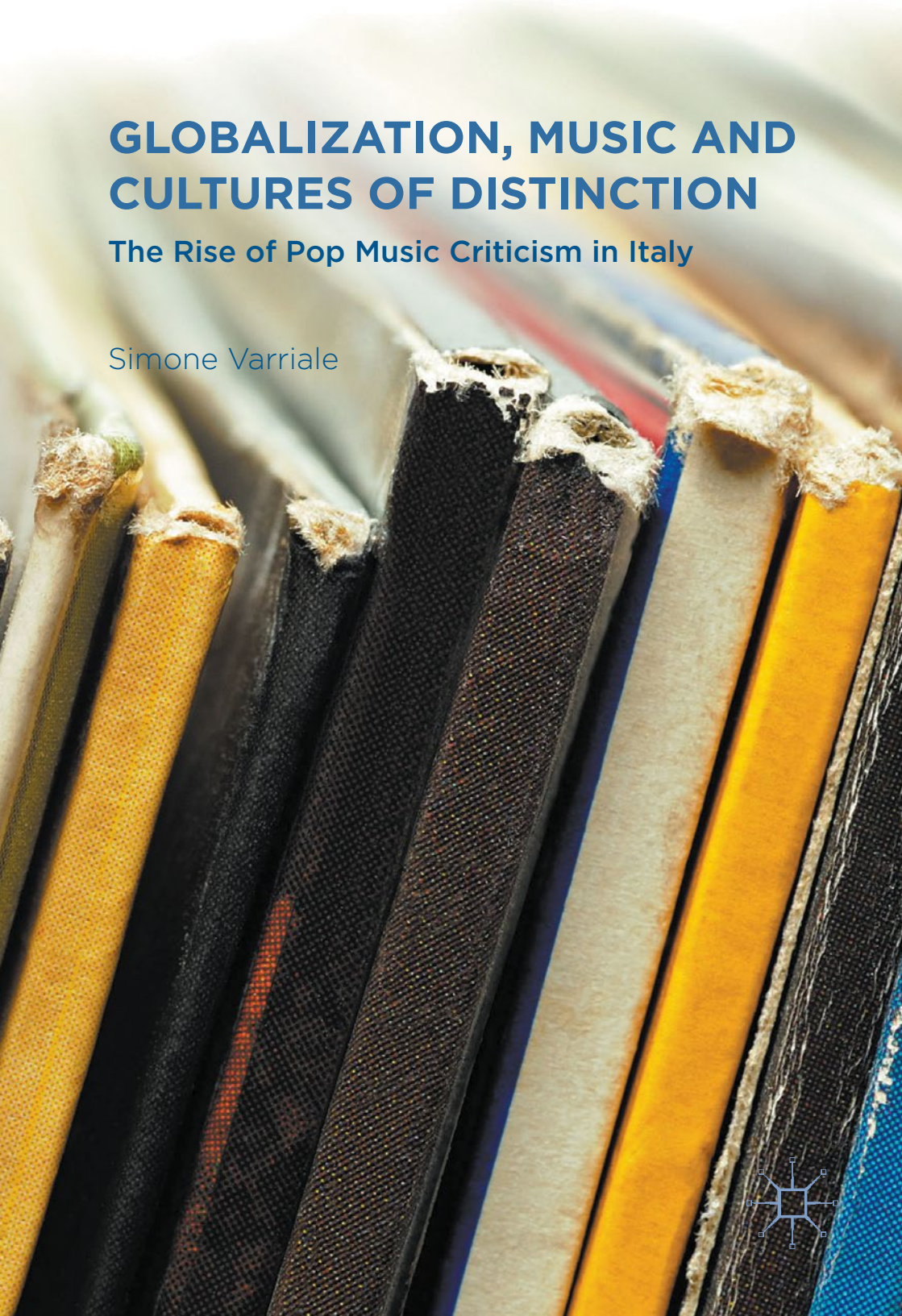
# GLOBALIZATION, MUSIC AND CULTURES OF DISTINCTION

## The Rise of Pop Music Criticism in Italy

Simone Varriale



# Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction

Simone Varriale

# Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction

## The Rise of Pop Music Criticism in Italy

palgrave
macmillan

Simone Varriale
University of Warwick
Coventry, United Kingdom

ISBN 978-1-137-56449-8 ISBN 978-1-137-56450-4 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016945388



Cover illustration: © Simon Belcher / Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Macmillan Publishers Ltd. London

# Acknowledgments

The research for this book started at the end of 2010, but the pop music press has been with me for much longer. My work about the early days of this cultural institution is first and foremost indebted to all the critics I've been reading during the last twenty years, including those I write about in this book and those I worked and argued with during the late 2000s, when I used to write for Italian music web-zines. Other people deserve gratitude for helping me turn this part of my everyday life into an object of sociological investigation. Deborah Lynn Steinberg has provided invaluable support during my Ph.D. and early steps as a post-doctoral researcher; Claudio Bisoni was the first to suggest, back in 2009, that Italian music magazines could become the subject of a Ph.D. proposal (although perhaps not in Italy). Finally, Bob Carter helped me settle into sociology and social theory during my early days as a Ph.D. student at Warwick, when these were pretty much new languages for me (along with English).

Several friends have listened to my ramblings about music magazines for way too long. I'm indebted to Albi, Giorgio Busi-Rizzi, Chiara Checcaglini, Giacomo Di Foggia, Marco Persico and Lucia Tralli for much more than scholarly chats. On top of these, there is a long list of friends and colleagues I've met at Warwick. For their support at different stages of this journey, I wish to thank particularly Valentina Abbatelli,

Elio Baldi, Eleonora Belfiore, Maria do Mar Pereira, Mortezā Hāshemī, Linde Luijnenburg, Jeannette Silva-Flores and Lorenzo Vianelli.

During the last five years, various colleagues have provided valuable feedback on earlier ideas and drafts. For their constructive insights, I am grateful to Daniel Allington, Les Back, Mark Banks, Shyon Baumann, Pauwke Berkers, Anna Boschetti, Nick Crossley, Tymothy Dowd, Martin G. Fuller, Leo Goretti, David Inglis, Monika Krause, Paolo Magaudda, Lynne Pettinger, Motti Regev, Marco Santoro, Vaughn Schmutz, Jason Toynbee and David Wright. Any mistakes or oversights are solely mine, however.

This book is dedicated to Cecilia, for each day of her company, wit and humor.

An earlier version of the section 'The morality of markets' (Chap. 5) has been published, along with Table 5.1, in the article 'Cultural production and the morality of markets: popular music critics and the conversion of economic power into symbolic capital', *Poetics* Vol. 51: 1–16 (2015).

# Contents

# List of Tables

# 1

# Introduction: How Things Come into Being

In July of 2012, *The Guardian* published three articles about Italian pop music as part of its 'Sounds of Europe' series. These pieces have a slightly revelatory tone: forget about 'overbearing mamas and sinister mafiosi', Italian pop has nothing to do with these 'lazy cliches' (Khan 2012). The articles describe a familiar constellation of 'global' music styles like rock, rap and electronic music, and suggest that they have nothing to envy in their Anglo-American models (Bordone 2012). Italian pop, or at least some of it, has artistic value.

Perhaps these articles state the obvious for some Italian readers, but nonetheless they introduced most Britons, or at least the upper-middle segment represented by *The Guardian*, to a complex musical landscape. Indeed rock, rap and electronic music have been around for several decades in Italy, in all the versions one can imagine. What sociologist Motti Regev (2013) has called the pop-rock field has become highly diverse and hierarchical. Familiar distinctions between underground and mainstream, alternative and pop, apply to the Italian as well as other national contexts. Moreover, different scenes have their own cultural distinctions between avant-garde and commercially-oriented acts and between different sub-genres. Specialization is sufficiently advanced to



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_1

require a variety of media. While quality newspapers provide coverage of the most successful pop-rock acts, music magazines, web-zines and blogs focus either on specific scenes or what constitutes 'good' popular music across most of them. An exhaustive list of these specialized media would cover more than 40 years of Italian cultural history.

How this story started is this book's object of investigation. It explores the introduction of American and British pop-rock in Italy and their *artistic legitimation*: how they started being considered as art. Indeed, to understand the hierarchies of contemporary Italian pop, one needs to reconstruct their socio-historical genesis: How have distinctions between different popular music styles, and between artistically valuable and unworthy popular music, been established? By what social groups and for whom?

To answer these questions, this book focuses on the rise of a new cultural institution, one that significantly contributed to this process: pop music criticism. As I discuss in Chap. 2, critics have played an important historical role in establishing boundaries between the arts (high culture) and popular culture. More recently, though, they have become invested in the artistic legitimation of 'low' cultural forms like film, television and popular music, especially jazz and rock. This cultural transformation has taken place at different paces in various Western countries, and Italy is no exception. Indeed, some of the distinctions that Italian critics have established since the early 1970s remain powerful in the contemporary context. As electronic music producer Alessio Natalizia explained to *The Guardian*, Italian pop music has 'always been split' (Richards 2012). However, it is only from the 1970s onward that a distinction between good and bad popular music, and in a sense between different Italies, was fully consolidated.[1]

Looking at this decade, especially the years between 1969 and 1977, this book contributes to a growing literature on the artistic legitima-

[1] As I clarify in Chap. 4, this process starts around the mid-1960s, when a new generation of cultural producers – singer-songwriters and pop-rock bands – started making distinctions between artistically valuable and 'light' popular music (*musica leggera*). In this respect the book extends the account of Santoro (2010), who has focused on the legitimation of the Italian singer-songwriter song between the mid-1960s and late 1970s. I focus on the years when new organizations devoted to popular music's artistic legitimation – specialist music magazines – emerged and consolidated into an autonomous 'cultural field' (Bourdieu 1996).

tion of popular music and culture. Furthermore, it expands this body of work, considering the impact of globalization upon changing cultural hierarchies. In cultural sociology and popular music studies, cultural globalization is receiving growing attention. However, the circulation of cultural products across national borders, and the power dynamics underpinning this process, remain marginal to theories of artistic legitimation. This book draws on some recent exceptions (Chap. 3) to propose a revised theory of artistic legitimation, one that considers how non-national cultural forms become legitimate art. Furthermore, the book pays attention to the contested nature of artistic legitimation, namely how different groups of experts define competing cultural canons, drawing the boundaries between valuable and undeserving popular culture in different ways. Italy provides a valuable case study to reflect on these dynamics, particularly in the years when the pop music press boomed into a diverse cultural sector, and when American and British rock, jazz and soul became available to a growing youth consumer culture.

A further contribution of this book is to ground cultural globalization and artistic legitimation in social inequalities and asymmetries of resources. While pop music criticism emerged in the context of a more urban, literate and socially mobile Italy, enduring divisions of class, gender and geographical location shaped the production and consumption of music magazines (Chap. 4). Here the book reveals one of its major intellectual influences: the work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. In recent years, an impressive amount of empirical research has drawn on Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984) and its central assumption, namely that cultural practices – especially cultural taste – may unconsciously reproduce class divisions. Some of these studies reveal that a taste for avant-garde or 'edgy' popular culture has become, in various societies of the Global North, a new means of social distinction, particularly among the younger members of the upper and middle classes (Chap. 2). Moreover, some studies show that consumption of foreign cultural products – a global or cosmopolitan cultural taste – is particularly important to this process. The book contributes to this body of work in two ways. Focusing on critics, it reconstructs the genesis of the cultural institution which makes appreciation for global popular culture, or at least some of it, both possible and legitimate. On the other hand, it reveals that global taste is

a source of tensions, a 'field of struggles' between experts and audiences possessing unequal cultural and economic resources.

Finally, the book contributes to a growing literature on Italian popular music cultures, one that has adopted a sociological lens only occasionally. Italian popular music has certainly been neglected if compared to the impressive amount of work that exists on the British and American contexts. However, it would be unfair to say that it has been completely neglected, since musicologists, historians and cultural studies scholars have provided important contributions on the subject (Fabbri and Plastino 2015; Prato 2010). When it comes to sociology, nonetheless, only a handful of studies exist. These have addressed specific genres and scenes, like the singer-songwriter song (Santoro 2010), independent rock (Magaudda 2009) and hip hop (Santoro and Solaroli 2007). This book contributes to this hopefully expanding literature with a historical and sociological reconstruction of how the very distinction between good and debased pop music, or pop music (*musica pop*) and light music (*musica leggera*), came into being, a reconstruction that considers which cultural organizations and social groups contributed to this transformation. Moreover, existing studies have rarely focused on questions of cultural globalization, treating the Italian context as a self-contained centre, rather than as a periphery of what, in the 1970s, was already a transnationally connected pop-rock scene, one with significant power imbalances between centres (the US and UK) and peripheries (Regev 2013).

## Organization of the Book

The book is organized in three parts, with the first situating the Italian case within a wider scholarly and transnational context. Chapter 2 discusses the book's contribution to cultural sociology and popular music studies, and charts the rise of cultural criticism in various popular and consumer cultures, including popular music. Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical approach used in the book's subsequent chapters. It revises Pierre Bourdieu's field theory towards a consideration of global forces and their influence on processes of artistic legitimation. The chapter highlights

three inter-linked dimensions of transnational cultural legitimation: the discovery and appropriation of new aesthetic materials ('aesthetic socialization'); the ways in which these cultural resources are mobilized by competing groups of experts ('legitimation struggles'); and the reception of their aesthetic distinctions among publics with unequal cultural and economic resources ('homologies and asymmetries').

The book's second part investigates this process in relation to the rise of Italian pop music criticism. Chapter 4 reconstructs the socio-cultural transformations that made possible the appearance of specialized music magazines in Italy, and explores how critics drew new distinctions between Anglo-American and Italian, valuable and debased, popular music. This chapter reveals that the aesthetic and generational character of critics' distinctions obscured the inequalities of education, class, gender and geographical location which marked the emergence of the music press (and the Italian 'economic miracle' at large). Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the ways in which music magazines developed competing projects of artistic legitimation. The former focuses on the most successful music magazine of the 1970s – the weekly *Ciao 2001* – and examines how this publication promoted a distinctive 'economic cosmopolitanism'. This ideological project implied a view of cultural globalization as economic modernization and a subjectivist understanding of cultural hierarchies, which I describe as 'loose' aesthetic boundaries. This strategy of legitimation gave space to a wide variety of international pop music, helping the magazine maintain its position of commercial leadership in a changing musical landscape. Further, the chapter considers the possibility, unexplored in Bourdieu's work, that commercial success may be transformed into a form of prestige or symbolic capital. Chapter 6 looks at magazines with less commercial success but greater symbolic recognition, especially for their aesthetic and political innovations: the monthlies *Muzak* and *Gong*. This chapter investigates these magazines' 'political cosmopolitanism', which questioned the commercial and aesthetic domination of Anglo-American pop-rock and promoted normative aesthetic boundaries, which presupposed the belief that only some acts and music styles have objective aesthetic value (and hence deserve discussion). More generally, this chapter reconstructs the forms of political activism which, during the 1970s, animated vari-

ous sectors of Italian society, and which made political engagement an important line of division among music critics.

The book's third part considers how critics' affiliation with different cosmopolitan projects shaped their legitimizing discourses, and how such discourses were received by the magazines' readers. Chapter 7 considers how critics evaluated rock, jazz and soul and how they drew distinctions between and within these genres. It conceptualizes critics' evaluative work as an 'aesthetic encounter' between their dispositions, or *habitus* (Bourdieu 1984), and musics endowed with specific sounds, images and narratives. I show that critics' socialization in 1950s and 1960s pop-rock significantly shaped their evaluation of later musical trends, but that this 'rock habitus' had to be sensitized to the properties of different musics, and that it was significantly affected by musicians' gender and race. Chapter 8 draws on the readers' letters published by *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong* to explore the reception of their projects of legitimation. Readers' narratives reveal that differences in cultural knowledge, gender, age, class and geographical location influenced their relationship with music magazines. As a result, the chapter argues that asymmetries of resources were likely to shape the reception of critics' work, and that Bourdieu's assumption about the social similarity or 'homology' between cultural producers and their audience needs to be probed vis-à-vis different socio-historical contexts. More generally, the chapter highlights the role of music magazines as 'public spheres' ripe with conflict and power asymmetries (Fraser 1990), but which nonetheless enhanced reflection about the inequalities affecting Italian youth.

Chapter 9 will discuss the research's main findings and how they enrich our understanding of cultural legitimation and its relationship with globalization processes. This book is based on historical research and archival work: it combines analysis of magazine articles – music features (297), editorials (192) and readers' letters (487) – with analysis of critics' public biographies (34) and various secondary sources, both qualitative and quantitative. The ways in which the research has been designed and conducted, and the potentials and limits of the gathered data, are discussed in the book's Appendixes, which also provide supplementary data that I could not discuss in the main chapters.

## Bibliography

Bordone, M. (2012). Italian music now: From Turin to Sicily. *Guardian*, Tuesday 10 July. http://www.theguardian.com/music/2012/jul/10/italian-music-sounds-europe

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The rules of art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Fabbri, F., & Plastino, G. (Eds.). (2015). *Made in Italy: Studies in popular music*. New York/Oxon: Routledge.

Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social Text, 25*(26), 56–80.

Khan, A. (2012). Sounds of Italy – Day one: A history of Italian pop in 10 songs. *Guardian*, Monday 9 July. http://www.theguardian.com/music/2012/jul/09/history-italian-pop-10-songs. Accessed 12 Feb 2016.

Magaudda, P. (2009). Processes of institutionalisation and "symbolic struggles" in the "independent music" field in Italy. *Modern Italy, 14*(3), 295–310.

Prato, P. (2010). *La musica italiana. Una storia sociale dall'Unità a oggi*. Roma: Donzelli.

Regev, M. (2013). *Pop-rock: Aesthetic cosmopolitanism in late modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Richards, S. (2012). Alessio Natalizia of Walls: "What does Italian music sound like anyway?". *Guardian*, Wednesday 11 July. http://www.theguardian.com/music/2012/jul/11/alessio-natalizia-walls-italian-music

Santoro, M. (2010). *Effetto Tenco: genealogia della canzone d'autore*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Santoro, M., & Solaroli, M. (2007). Authors and rappers: Italian hip hop and the shifting boundaries of *canzone d'autore. Popular Music, 26*(3), 463–488.

# Part I

## Situating the Study

# 2

# New Forms of Distinction, New Cultural Institutions

There is little controversy in saying that the distinction between high and popular culture is considered outdated nowadays in both cultural sociology and cultural studies. These fields have spent considerable energy studying the artistic legitimation of popular cultural forms like film, television and popular music. Furthermore, during the 2000s, various research teams applied the methodology of Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984) to different European countries, finding that the contemporary upper and middle classes,[1] particularly their younger members, are the biggest consumers of popular culture. High cultural forms like classical music and theater remain important high-status marks, but considerably less so than in Bourdieu's study of 1960s France.

This chapter's task is to reconstruct this story or, more specifically, two entwined stories: on the one hand, the emergence of new distinctions

[1] The literature discussed in the first section operationalizes 'class' in different ways, but it usually relies on a combination of educational attainments, occupation and/or family background (that is, father and mother's education and occupation). For the sake of clarity, in this chapter I use upper, middle and working class – and alternative locutions like 'privileged social groups' – in a loosely descriptive way. I will discuss my own use of class categories in Chap. 4, where I analyze Italian critics' social trajectory.



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_2

between valuable and debased popular culture in cultural consumption practices; on the other, the rise of new institutions devoted to the artistic legitimation of popular culture, particularly in the form of specialist publications and criticism in quality newspapers. The first story has been written mostly by sociologists of cultural taste, whereas research on new forms of criticism draws on a more interdisciplinary mix of cultural sociology and popular music studies. Nonetheless, both stories criticize a postmodern view of aesthetic hierarchies, one that postulates their decline and the autonomy of cultural appreciation from social differences (Featherstone 2007).

I will draw extensively on these literatures to make sense of the emergence of Anglo-American musical tastes in 1970s Italy. However, this chapter points to some under-researched issues and conceptual difficulties. The first section argues that studies of taste, including more recent work on global taste, have mostly ignored how new cultural distinctions came into being, that is, how changes in the production, circulation and evaluation of culture have made it possible and legitimate to distinguish between good and bad popular culture. The second section argues that research on cultural criticism sheds important insights into these contextual issues. This strand is concerned with analyzing critics' evaluative criteria and with issues of causation, namely what organizational and historical factors influence processes of artistic legitimation. However, it has constructed criticism as an overly homogeneous cultural institution, under-appreciating the dynamics of competition between different groups of experts, their cultural politics and how critics make distinctions between and within different kinds of popular culture. In the third section, I argue that popular music scholarship deals with the first two problems in a more convincing way, but has focused mostly on rock criticism and the Anglo-American context. Furthermore, this field has rarely engaged with broader debates about artistic legitimation and cultural stratification. Overall, the chapter advocates a Bourdieusian 'field perspective' on the emergence of new cultural distinctions, one that may usefully complement the study of changing cultural hierarchies.

# New Forms of Cultural Distinction

## From Snob to Omnivore

Since the translation of Bourdieu's *Distinction* into English (1984), the arts and popular culture have become a key concern for sociologists studying stratification and inequality. To briefly rehearse that book's empirical and theoretical contribution, *Distinction* found that cultural taste acts as a strong (albeit unconscious) mark of class distinction. A preference for high culture in 1960s France revealed socialization into a privileged background and high educational attainment. The upper and middle classes studied by Bourdieu displayed a Kantian disposition towards culture: a style of appreciation informed by knowledge of art history and focused on the formal qualities, rather than the content, of aesthetic objects. By contrast, working class respondents displayed a 'taste of necessity' or 'popular disposition': they had no knowledge of art history, appreciated content rather than form, and sought immediate pleasure and gratification from their cultural engagements (Bourdieu 1984: 32–44). Moreover, they were interested mostly in popular cultural forms. Since the upper-middle class's disposition was formally recognized (and reproduced) by the education system, it could act as a 'cultural capital' securing social privilege, like membership into high-status groups and occupations (Bourdieu 1984: 141–168), and an illusion of intrinsic superiority: what Bourdieu calls a 'symbolic domination' of working class taste (Bourdieu 1984: 386–396). Although there could be individual exceptions to these statistical trends (Bourdieu 1984: 110, 456), Bourdieu's central argument was that the 'social trajectory' of individuals, particularly their early socialization into different class backgrounds, is likely to shape their dispositions, or *habitus*, towards culture and other social practices, including political preferences (Bourdieu 1984: 397–465).

Since Bourdieu's findings were historically and nationally specific, a great deal of subsequent research has been concerned with testing his cultural capital theory (Holt 1997) in different national contexts and vis-à-vis the postmodern waning of aesthetic hierarchies. It is on this ground that the figure of the omnivore gained momentum. Coined by American

sociologist Richard A. Peterson and his associates, this concept indicates the decline of snobbishness among the upper and middle classes and the rise of openness towards the culture of other social and ethnic groups (Peterson and Kern 1996; Peterson 2005). Working with nationally representative US surveys, and looking at music, Peterson and his associates found, *contra* Bourdieu, that respondents with a preference for classical music and opera (highbrow taste) were also the strongest consumers of middlebrow and lowbrow musical forms like rock, blues, big-band music and Broadway musicals. A historical shift from snobs to omnivores, the authors argued, was taking place in the USA (Peterson and Kern 1996: 900).

The omnivore thesis fostered an impressive amount of survey-based quantitative research, which delved further into the USA (Bryson 1996) and addressed a variety of national contexts, including, among others, Australia (Bennett et al. 1999), Denmark (Prieur et al. 2008), the UK (Bennett et al. 2009) and Serbia (Cvetičanin and Popescu 2011). Notwithstanding some differences in how omnivorousness is measured (Peterson 2005; Savage and Gayo 2011: 239–241), these studies provide similar pictures: highly educated respondents, with an upper- or middle-class background, are likely to display preference for a wide array of cultural products and genres. By contrast, people lacking both economic and cultural resources are more likely to be univores: they are uninterested in highbrow cultural practices, engage only with a few forms of popular culture – like television and pop music – and participate mostly in informal and in-house leisure activities (Ollivier 2008; Bennett et al. 2009; Cvetičanin and Popescu 2011).[2] Furthermore, this research strand unravels generational differences within privileged social groups: while the older members of these groups maintain a degree of hostility towards popular culture, younger generations are significantly invested in various

[2] However, as argued by Bennett et al. (2009: 71), it would be incorrect to interpret these findings in terms of 'social exclusion'. Survey studies contain only a limited set of choices; they usually include high cultural forms and some popular media, like film, music and television. As a result, the univore is partly an artifact of research instruments that are badly equipped to detect more informal leisure activities, which are not necessarily mediated by the state or the cultural industries.

popular cultural forms (Lizardo and Skiles 2012: 276–277; Wright et al. 2013; Roose 2014).

## Tolerance or Distinction?

The findings of this literature have been initially interpreted in terms of a greater tolerance towards popular culture, one that has allegedly replaced snobbishness as an elite status mark. Peterson particularly argued that: '[o]mnivorous inclusion seems better adapted to an increasingly global world culture managed by those who make their way, in part, by showing respect for the cultural expressions of others' (Peterson 2005: 273). In a post-war context reshaped by social and geographical mobility, and the crisis of established artistic canons, snobbishness seems unlikely to gain the social advantages and symbolic recognition assumed by Bourdieu. While this assessment was limited to the USA (see also Lamont 1992), similar conclusions have been reached for the UK (Bennett et al. 2009) and in other national contexts (see Ollivier 2008: 122).

However, this position has come increasingly under attack. It has been argued that surveys of cultural preferences provide poor empirical evidence of tolerance or openness (Atkinson 2011). Since they measure what objects, genres or 'brows' respondents prefer, they do not explore how these preferences are discursively justified and how social actors draw 'symbolic boundaries' (Lamont and Molnàr 2002) between different objects, genres[3] and audiences (Savage and Gayo 2011). Indeed, it has been stressed that omnivores cross the boundaries between high and popular culture in selective ways. They may exclude cultural forms deemed too low for recuperation, like heavy metal (Bryson 1996), country, folk and bluegrass (Lizardo and Skiles 2015), and distinguish their taste from the preferences of other social groups. Indeed some studies exploring the discursive justifications of omnivorism show that valori-

[3] The sociology of cultural taste has recognized only recently the slippery boundaries of genre labels, and hence the problems of using such labels in surveys of cultural preferences (Savage and Gayo 2011; Friedman 2014). However, most studies have ignored these problems, as well as the existing sociological literature on genres (DiMaggio 1987; Frith 1998; Santoro 2002). See Appendix 1 for a discussion of how the literature on genres has informed my own methodological choices.

zation of 'authentic' forms of popular culture goes hand-in-hand with a critique of mass culture (Ollivier 2008; Johnston and Baumann 2007) and stigmatization of working-class tastes (Friedman 2014). More importantly, qualitative data reveal that omnivorous consumers bring a Kantian disposition to popular culture, one that they have developed through education or familiarization with high culture during childhood (Holt 1997; Atkinson 2011). On the one hand, this enhances preference for sophisticated forms of pop culture like highbrow television shows (Kuipers 2006) and alternative rock music (Bennett et al. 2009). On the other hand, it fosters a style of appreciation which is historically informed and valorizes form over content, in line with Bourdieu's original thesis (1984). From this standpoint, the decline of snobbishness appears at the very least a partial interpretation, whose salience needs to be tested vis-à-vis different consumption practices and cultural genres.

Overall, there is growing attention to the *dispositions* that omnivorous respondents bring to popular culture (Lizardo and Skiles 2012; Jarness 2015), rather than the objects they prefer via survey questionnaires. As I show in the forthcoming chapters, these findings are particularly important for understanding Italian critics' selective appropriation of American and British popular music, and the subtle distinctions they drew between valuable and trivial forms of rock, jazz and soul. However, the omnivore literature, including its recent critiques, rarely situates new cultural tastes vis-à-vis broader transformations in the production, circulation and evaluation of popular culture: what Bourdieu calls the cultural field (1993, 1996). Indeed only a few authors have looked at the role of cultural institutions, such as newspapers and specialist publications, in redefining what counts as legitimate culture and its modes of appreciation (Johnston and Baumann 2007; Friedman 2014). Similarly, new cultural tastes have rarely been linked to the emergence of new forms of authorship and artistry in the production of popular culture (Santoro 2002). More recent studies exploring the expression of global tastes among the upper and middle classes similarly lack an attention to such issues.

## The Rise of Cosmopolitan Taste

The scholarship discussed so far has occasionally suggested that omnivores are both tolerant and cosmopolitan,[4] namely that they are knowledgeable about nationally and ethnically diverse cultural forms (Peterson and Kern 1996; Bryson 1996). Holt (1998) provided initial empirical evidence of this trend. Studying the residents of a small city in central Pennsylvania, he found that respondents with high educational attainment (that is, high cultural capital) appreciated Chinese and French food, urban hip hop and national newspapers, as opposed to local ones. For Holt these were: 'the tastes of a person whose social world is not only geographically but also racially and economically inclusive' (Holt 1998: 13). Systematic research on cosmopolitan tastes is, however, a more recent trend. Some survey-based studies have introduced measures of nationality, place and language to detect the presence of foreign cultural forms among respondents' preferences, finding globally oriented tastes in countries like the UK (Savage et al. 2010), the Netherlands (Meuleman and Savage 2013), Serbia (Cvetičanin and Popescu 2011), Switzerland (Rössel and Schroedter 2015) and Finland (Wright et al. 2013). These studies show that there is significant correlation between appreciation of non-national cultural forms and possession of economic and cultural capital. For instance, Cvetičanin and Popescu (2011) show that, in Serbia, a taste for global commercial culture like jazz, rock, hip-hop and techno is more widespread among members of the upper and middle classes, with the former being also more likely to engage with European high culture. In line with the omnivore literature, other studies reveal important generational differences. In the UK and Finland (Savage et al. 2010; Wright et al. 2013), younger members of the upper-middle classes consume significant amounts of American popular culture, particularly film and TV,

[4] Research on cosmopolitan tastes partly draws on a broader debate about 'ordinary' forms of cosmopolitanism (Lamont and Aksartova 2002; Beck and Sznaider 2006). This debate concerns people's everyday encounters with other national and ethnic cultures, as well as issues of cross-cultural solidarity (Ong 2009; Inglis and Robertson 2011). However, research on cosmopolitan tastes rarely steps into these questions. In Chaps. 5 and 6 I address the moral and political underpinnings of Italian critics' cosmopolitanism, and in Chap. 8 I explore their relationship with African-American musicians. However, for reasons of space, I do not discuss in detail the literature on ordinary cosmopolitanism, but limit my contribution to questions of cultural evaluation and taste.

whereas older elite respondents still equate the USA with 'mass culture', or see European cultural forms, like French cinema, as superior. It has been suggested that expertise with different ethno-national cultures may act as a new form of global (Cvetičanin and Popescu 2011), multicultural (Bryson 1996) or cosmopolitan cultural capital (Prieur and Savage 2013). A command over foreign, exotic cultural practices might thus secure new forms of social privilege. However, existing research has provided scant evidence of this process (Prieur and Savage 2013). What remains unclear is which forms of non-national culture are valued and which are not, and in what contexts and networks these symbolic resources generate capital in the Bourdieusian sense, that is, economic benefit or esteem and symbolic recognition (Chap. 3).

This literature provides important insights into the mediating effects of class, age and generation on the adoption of globally spread cultural forms, as they reveal that cosmopolitan tastes depend on possession of economic and cultural resources and on other classed biographical traits, like frequent travel and experiences of living and working abroad. Moreover, it unravels significant asymmetries in the supply of global culture. Indeed, preferences for foreign cultural forms are skewed towards countries which either possess strong commercial infrastructures, like the USA, or have acquired transnational prestige for the production of specific cultural products, like France for literature and art-house cinema (see also Chap. 3). However, this literature provides a too-homogeneous view of cosmopolitan taste. Using broad indicators, such as preferences for American, European or other national cultural products, survey questionnaires construct globally oriented tastes as relatively stable over time and consistent within certain social groups, like young middle-class respondents (Meuleman and Savage 2013; Savage et al. 2010; Rössel and Schroedter 2015). Struggles over what counts as 'good' cosmopolitan taste have received less attention (Cappeliez and Johnston 2013), especially among young people with different kinds and amounts of resources (Chap. 8). More generally, the network of institutions and intermediaries which makes possible (and legitimate) a selective appreciation of global culture has been mostly ignored (Hedegard 2015). Cosmopolitan tastes have not been linked to broader transformations in national cultural fields (Bourdieu 1996). As a result, it remains unclear how they came into

being, and what cultural institutions contributed to their emergence. The next section discusses studies which have investigated the rise of criticism in the fields of popular culture. Focusing on critics rather than consumers, this literature sheds valuable insights into the historical and organizational changes which allowed the emergence of new cultural distinctions.

## New Cultural Institutions: Critics in Popular and Consumer Cultures

The role of critics in both the art worlds and media industries has been a longstanding concern for theorists of cultural production. For Hirsch (1972), critics act as 'gatekeepers' who select, filter and reduce the output of cultural producers, thus shaping what catches the attention of media audiences. From a different standpoint, Becker highlights the importance of critics' symbolic labour. By applying shared evaluative standards, they define the moral boundaries between the realm of art and what is excluded from it (Becker 1982: 136). As I discuss further in the next chapter, Bourdieu slightly complicates this picture, defining critics as actors in competition with each other: they struggle to legitimate both different cultural objects and principles of legitimation (Bourdieu 1993: 36). Nonetheless, both theorists recognize critics as key actors in the social conflicts over what constitutes legitimate (and, by corollary, illegitimate) culture.

Notwithstanding these early contributions, studies of critics' roles in popular culture are a recent phenomenon. This partly coincides with a broader historical shift. As early as the 1960s, Bourdieu identified the rise of new 'cultural intermediaries', that is, members of a new *petite bourgeoisie* devoted to the appraisal of less legitimated cultural forms like film and jazz (1984: 319–329).[5] However, professional experts and specialist media nowadays populate a variety of consumer cultures. Apart

[5] For Bourdieu, cultural intermediaries are professionals involved in the 'presentation and representation of symbolic goods and services' (Bourdieu 1984: 359). More recent studies have explored similar roles beyond the cultural industries, looking at various economic sectors and adopting a much looser definition of cultural intermediaries (Hesmondhalgh 2006). For an overview of this literature, see Smith Maguire and Matthew (2013).

from film (Baumann 2007) and popular music (Regev 1994), they have emerged in fields as diverse as television (Bielby et al. 2005), computer software (Blank 2007), contemporary cuisine (Blank 2007; Johnston and Baumann 2007) and comedy (Friedman 2014: 125–142). These new cultural intermediaries have been the subject of growing empirical research during the last 20 years, which tells us a different but equally important side of the new-distinctions story.

## The Semi-legitimation of Popular Culture

Various scholars have argued that the artistic recognition of popular cultural genres in quality papers, such as the *New York Times* (USA) or *The Guardian* (UK), is a sign of their higher social legitimacy. The notion of semi-legitimation (Regev 1994) indicates the partial nature of this process: in contrast to high culture, film, television and popular music rarely receive public funding and are not fully integrated into academic curricula. Nonetheless, critics' artistic appreciation of popular culture, and their contribution to historical canons based on aesthetic discrimination, are signs of stronger recognition among the upper and middle classes.

These findings are largely in line with the literature on new practices of distinction discussed above. However, this sociology of cultural evaluation (hereafter SCE) has been more interested in the long-term historical change of established cultural hierarchies. For instance, Baumann (2007) has analyzed the reviews American film critics published between 1925 and 1985, showing that critics, particularly in the 1960s, discussed movies according to highbrow categories like originality, authorship and innovation. Studies on television (Bielby et al. 2005) and popular music unravel a similar pattern. Between 1955 and 2005, popular music genres have been progressively included in the coverage of elite newspapers in the USA, France, Germany and the Netherlands (Schmutz et al. 2010). This inclusion has been selective, with rock and jazz receiving more attention than rap, heavy metal and country. Moreover, as with Hollywood films, this has been mediated by a highbrow repertoire emphasizing the originality, complexity and seriousness of popular music (van Venrooij and Schmutz 2010), although critics have occasionally evaluated music

via a popular aesthetics, praising pleasure and entertainment values (Bourdieu 1984).

In line with recent critiques of the omnivore thesis, these studies show that a Kantian disposition (Bourdieu 1984) remains an important means of distinction for the upper and middle classes. Moreover, they reveal that the semi-legitimation of popular culture has supported new forms of social exclusion. For instance, women have been mostly excluded from the aesthetic canon of US rock music (Schmutz 2009) and, when included, they have been framed as dependent on other creative sources, like partners and other musicians, or as overly emotional (Schmutz and Faupel 2010; see also Chap. 7). Music critics also tend to compare musicians within rather than across racial categories. As shown by van Venrooij (2011), critics evaluate white musicians in relation to both white and black acts, whereas this happens more rarely for black musicians. These evaluative practices, as a result, reinforce the association between genre labels, like rock and jazz, and race categories (e.g. white and black).

## Measuring Discourses

Using various forms of quantitative content analysis, these studies have measured historical shifts in critics' evaluative standards and have provided an important methodological contribution to the study of changing aesthetic hierarchies. However, they have left other dimensions of criticism as a social practice, and hence other aspects of their role in processes of artistic legitimation, unexplored. First of all, criticism has been constructed as a too-homogeneous institution. Focusing on national quality newspapers, the SCE has tended to obscure differences between newspapers and specialist publications, as well as within these editorial genres. As a result, it has underestimated the legitimation strategies of different organizations and groups of critics. Moreover, being concerned with measuring evaluative criteria, such as the highbrow and popular repertoires, the SCE has rarely examined the ideological projects or cultural politics of different publications. These differences, however, may influence critics' choices of coverage. They may explain why different publications promote different genres and aesthetic canons (Chaps. 5 and 6),

and why they evaluate the same cultural genres in different ways (Chap. 7).

On a similar note, this literature has rarely looked into how critics understand the relations between culture and other social institutions. As I will discuss in the following chapters, critics' legitimation strategies are tied to broader arguments about the role of culture in society (Frith 1998). They evaluate both cultural products and the institutions responsible for their production, circulation and consumption, such as other media, advertisers, the state and its cultural apparatus. Put otherwise, critics construct their cultural politics in a relational way, evaluating the politics of other national and non-national institutions. Their legitimation strategies emerge in a historically specific 'space of possibles' (Chap. 3), one that includes cultural, economic and political institutions. However, despite addressing various national contexts (van Venrooij and Schmutz 2010; Kersten 2014), SCE studies have not investigated how critics define their cultural politics vis-à-vis other institutions, competitors and audiences. This is, again, an artifact of methodological choices. The SCE has relied on content analysis and, with a few exceptions (Johnston and Baumann 2007), has concentrated on categories to be measured, like discursive repertoires (van Venrooij and Schmutz 2010; Kersten 2014), genre and ethno-racial classifications (van Venrooij 2011; Berkers et al. 2011). Critics have been constructed as *reviewers*, rather than as cultural intermediaries supporting historically and contextually specific projects of legitimation.

This approach also affects studies which deal with dynamics of cultural globalization. On this subject, Janssen et al. (2008) show that quality newspapers in France, Germany and the Netherlands have paid growing attention to Anglo-American pop culture between the mid-1950s and mid-2000s. They reveal significant power asymmetries in transnationally connected cultural sectors and critics' roles in legitimizing skewed patterns of attention to different ethno-national cultures (Berkers et al. 2011). However, a focus on the content analysis of reviews obscures the history and politics of these organizations and their role in the national context, especially vis-à-vis other national institutions and forms of criticism.

## Causal Analysis

As discussed so far, the SCE literature reveals important changes in the fields of popular culture, particularly the emergence of new institutions devoted to a selective aestheticization of music, film and television. In line with a 'production of culture' perspective (Peterson and Anand 2004), some studies have also considered what historical and institutional transformations enhanced the semi-legitimation of popular culture, and what organizational constraints influence the work of critics. For instance, Schmutz (2005) has analyzed via logistic regressions how different variables influenced the inclusion of pop-rock albums into *The Rolling Stone's 500 Greatest Albums* list. *Rolling Stone* magazine is here characterized as an institution of 'retrospective cultural consecration', one that is influenced by contextual factors (like an album's age and commercial success) and the work of other cultural institutions, like the Grammy Awards and critics writing for other publications. An interest in issues of causation also figures in studies which adopt a historical or qualitative methodology. Through ethnography and interviews, Blank (2007) links textual differences between restaurant and software reviews to different ways of organizing their editorial production. Since the evaluation of software is based on statistical tests, reviews show a positivist epistemology combining plain description and quantitative data. By contrast, the evaluation of dining experiences is based on the opinions of connoisseurs, who display their personality and taste in reviews. Baumann's work (2007) similarly links the artistic legitimation of Hollywood films to several causal processes. These include the reorganization of film production in the 1960s (the decline of the Hollywood studio-system and the rise of film festivals) and changes in North America's social structure, such as higher rates of literacy and social mobility. While critics' discourse has contributed to the intellectualization of American cinema, their intervention was made possible by this new 'space of opportunity' and the institutionalization of an art world (Becker 1982) for American films.

Both in its statistical and historical variety, this literature situates the emergence of new cultural distinctions vis-à-vis wider historical and institutional transformations, thus adding an important contextual

dimension to the studies that measure critics' discourses. However, like those studies, this strand tends to characterize criticism as a homogeneous institution and to underestimate competition between different groups. As a complement to these approaches, I will argue that a field perspective (Chap. 3) allows for a better exploration of the dynamics of diversification and competition, one that does not underestimate causal processes (Chap. 4). Indeed, field theory can account for asymmetry of resources (like commercial success and symbolic recognition) between different cultural intermediaries, and for how they struggle over competing aesthetic canons and ideological projects. Moreover, it allows a more holistic integration of historical, social and cultural analysis. Indeed, the SCE has somehow reduced cultural analysis to the measurement of evaluative criteria, and has rarely addressed how critics evaluate different cultural genres and their aesthetic properties. The very meaning that critics ascribe to different forms of film, television and popular music has thus been underappreciated.

## Aesthetic Diversity and Aesthetic Socialization

In the next chapter, I will discuss in more detail the role of aesthetic materials in processes of artistic legitimation. In this section, however, I focus on how aesthetic differences can be concealed by an emphasis on measurement and causal analysis. For all its merits, the SCE has frequently downplayed the aesthetic diversity of cultural forms and the extent to which they elicit distinctive meanings. In this respect, music sociologists have recently argued that aesthetic materials, such as music's sonic structures and texture, may influence how social actors construct their meanings. From this standpoint, meaning is conceptualized as a 'co-production' involving both actors and the properties of cultural objects (DeNora 2000; Hennion 2007). Measuring discourses may thus conceal evaluative repertoires which are specific to certain cultural forms, and how critics make sense of aesthetic differences between and within genres (Chap. 7). Furthermore, the rise of new forms of criticism is itself tied to specific processes of aesthetic socialization. Indeed early familiarization with certain forms of popular culture, such as 1950s and 1960s rock,

allows critics to question established cultural hierarchies and develop alternative aesthetic canons. As I will argue in Chap. 3, aesthetic socialization creates new cultural resources: a subcultural capital (Thornton 1995) that can be mobilized by new intermediaries to struggle over aesthetic hierarchies. Focusing on critics' mastery of highbrow categories, the SCE has mostly ignored these subcultural and field-specific resources.

So far, I have discussed how the SCE enriches and complements the findings of the sociology of cultural taste. This literature shows that the rise of new distinctions is tied to the emergence of new cultural institutions, which have increasingly defined popular culture, or at least some of it, as art. However, I have argued that this body of work underestimates some important dimensions of cultural criticism, such as the dynamics of competition between different organizations, critics' cultural politics and its relationship with other national institutions, and how aesthetic differences can shape critics' evaluative work. Below, I discuss how popular music scholarship addresses some of these problems and, more generally, its contribution to the study of artistic legitimation.

## Music Criticism and Anglo-American Rock

Popular music studies have addressed a different empirical object than the SCE. They have mostly ignored elite newspapers and have concentrated on specialist publications and fanzines. Moreover, rather than approaching criticism as a homogeneous institution, they have provided nuanced descriptions of the cultural politics of different organizations, opting for various forms of discourse and historical analysis (Brennan 2006; Atton 2009; Elafros 2010). The history and politics of Anglo-American rock criticism – namely magazines like *Rolling Stone*, *Creem* and *Crawdaddy*! (USA), *Melody Maker* and *New Musical Express* (UK) – have been the main source of interest in this field, which has also explored the poetics of consecrated Anglo-American critics like Robert Christgau, Greil Marcus, Nick Kent and Paul Morley (Lindberg et al. 2005).

In line with the SCE, the findings of this literature give further support to the new-distinctions thesis. Since the late 1960s, American and British rock critics have contributed to a selective consecration of popular

musicians and acts. They have constructed a shared canon of founding fathers, like Bob Dylan, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones (Von Appen and Doehring 2006), and a historical narrative which sets 1950s rock 'n' roll as the origin of a later cultural revolution, one that fully blooms between the late 1960s and early 1970s. It is during these years that critics, along with musicians, appropriated romantic notions of authorship and artistry, thus defining the rock counter-culture as an authentic expression of the baby-boomer generation (Frith 1983). During these same years, critics developed a new language mixing highbrow categories – what Frith calls the art discourse (1998) – and references to the pleasures, excitement and fun of pop-rock. This 'intermediary aesthetic' (Lindberg et al. 2005) is arguably not too far from the main findings of the SCE. Like newspaper critics, rock critics mobilize a highbrow disposition to discriminate between valuable and trivial instances of popular music, but without shying away from music's pleasures and entertainment value (van Venrooij and Schmutz 2010). Similarly, they have contributed to the reproduction of social divisions, particularly along the lines of race and gender. Women musicians, for example, have frequently been evaluated as women and sexual objects rather than musicians (Davies 2001; Johnson-Grau 2002; Kruse 2002; Leonard 2007; see also Chap. 7). Moreover, the very notion of rock authenticity cherished by critics has privileged male performative and sonic qualities, like anger, aggressiveness and rawness (McLeod 2001).

Without losing sight of the ideological power of the highbrow repertoire, popular music studies have paid more attention to both organizational and individual differences in music criticism. Not surprisingly, Bourdieu has played an important role in this debate. In a now classic contribution, Regev (1994) situated the artistic evaluation of rock within a broader field of transformations: along with museums, quality newspapers and some fractions of academia, critics contributed to a partial legitimation of rock music and culture, at least in the USA and UK. About a decade later, Lindberg et al. (2005) used Bourdieu's concept of field to make sense of the individual and editorial differences which shaped the history of rock criticism since 1964. This adds a productive synchronic dimension to their narrative, and helps trace the connections between critics' individual writing styles and the wider space of post-war

cultural influences, like jazz and film criticism, American new journalism, folk ideology and the Frankfurt School. Similarly, Toynbee (1993) explains the influence of 1970s rock journalism over British music critics through Bourdieu's notion of habitus: having become an established editorial genre, rock journalism shaped the dispositions of later generations of critics who entered the field in the 1980s.

These studies help situate the rise of rock criticism within a wider network of influences and historical transformations, and convincingly examine its institutional diversity (Atton 2009). There are however some limits to this exploration, especially in relation to less prestigious and non-anglophone forms of music criticism. Indeed, popular music scholarship has addressed mostly American and British rock criticism. This has historically developed as a form of serious cultural criticism, with critics being perceived (and perceiving themselves) as public intellectuals (Powers 2010). The scholarly focus on a journalistic genre endowed with high symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1996) has been coupled with an underestimation of journalistic discourses about other music genres like jazz, rhythm 'n' blues, folk, hip hop and so on. On the other hand, it has led to a limited consideration of more commercially oriented and teen publications (Railton 2001; Tomatis 2014). The most extensive account of Anglo-American rock criticism explicitly excludes magazines defined as 'teen glossies' from its scope (Lindberg et al. 2005: 7). Similarly, in her analysis of the gendered dimension of music criticism, Leonard (2007: 67) excludes 'some pop titles' with a predominantly female audience, and looks at more serious magazines targeting a male audience. An emphasis on rock criticism has thus prevented the comparative study of different forms of music journalism and, by extension, the study of its institutional diversity. We know a great deal about the diversity of rock criticism itself, but relatively little about the other styles of music writing from which it has been carefully distinguished by both scholars and critics themselves. A field perspective, however, can helpfully remedy these shortcomings, as it can further explore how critics draw distinctions between different forms of criticism (Chaps. 5 and 6), as well as between and within different music traditions like rock, jazz and soul (Chap. 7).

Furthermore, attention to rock criticism has gone hand-in-hand with a focus on the USA and UK. To be sure, Lindberg and colleagues have

defined Anglo-American rock criticism as an influential 'transnational field' (2005: 198), and in a later study (Lindberg et al. 2006) have substantiated their claims, showing that British and American rock criticism has influenced local forms of music journalism in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Iceland. However, with a few exceptions (Pires 2003; Nunes 2010), their invitation to further investigate rock criticism's transnational dimension has remained unaddressed. As I discuss in Chap. 3, a revised version of field theory may prove particularly useful in this task. Indeed, notwithstanding the exceptions discussed above, popular music scholarship rarely situates critics' writings within a broader sociological analysis, one that considers 'how systems of discourse are linked to more concrete economic and social institutions' (McLeod 2001: 59). Many studies provide nuanced analyses of critics' notions of authenticity (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010), but these are rarely situated within a broader field of influences and social relations. In this respect, Marshall (2011) has recently criticized popular music studies for having rarely engaged with other areas of debate, particularly sociological research and social theory. According to Marshall, this tendency has prevented the development of a solid line of (sociological) empirical research about popular music cultures (2011: 161–162). While Marshall's generalization may go a bit too far, his argument appears correct if applied to several studies of music criticism. It is true, for example, that they rarely engage with broader debates about artistic legitimation, cultural stratification and globalization. Furthermore, except for a few studies (Lindberg et al. 2005; Elafros 2010), methodological choices are rarely made explicit. There are significant differences between the work of Leonard on the gendered image of musicians (2007), Atton's study of critics and fans' narratives (2009) and Brennan's investigation of the cultural politics of different magazines (2006), but the lack of methodological discussion conceals important distinctions between different editorial practices, organizations and legitimation strategies.

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed some key shifts in the study of cultural taste and artistic legitimation. It has charted the emergence of new distinctions in cultural consumption practices and the rise of new cultural

institutions devoted to the selective aestheticization of popular culture. The chapter has highlighted overlaps and complementary findings across three areas of debate: the sociology of cultural taste, the sociology of cultural evaluation and popular music studies. Overall, I have argued that a 'field perspective' may usefully complement the ways in which these deal with the question of changing cultural hierarchies. The sociology of taste has rarely explored how new cultural distinctions came into being, and how changes in national cultural fields have made it possible (and legitimate) to draw distinctions between valuable and unworthy, national and global popular culture. Research on cultural criticism sheds important insights into these transformations, but its main methodological trends may obscure some important dimensions of artistic legitimation, such as its contested nature, its ideological dimension and its link with specific forms of aesthetic socialization and evaluation. Finally, popular music studies provide a more nuanced account of critics' cultural politics, but they have rarely problematized the centrality of rock criticism and the Anglo-American context. Moreover, they have only occasionally engaged with broader debates about artistic legitimation and globalization.

The next chapter situates the question of artistic legitimation vis-à-vis the transnational circulation of cultural products: what several commentators have called cultural globalization.

## Bibliography

Atkinson, W. (2011). The context and genesis of musical tastes: Omnivorousness debunked, Bourdieu buttressed. *Poetics, 39*(3), 169–186.

Atton, C. (2009). Writing about listening: Alternative discourses in rock journalism. *Popular Music, 28*(1), 53–67.

Baumann, S. (2007). *Hollywood highbrow: From entertainment to art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Beck, U., & Sznaider, N. (2006). Unpacking cosmopolitanism for the social sciences: A research agenda. *British Journal of Sociology, 57*(1), 1–23.

Becker, H. S. (1982). *Art worlds*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Bennett, T., Emmison, M., & Frow, J. (1999). *Accounting for tastes: Australian everyday cultures*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Bennett, T., Savage, M., Silva, E., Warde, A., Gayo-Cal, M., & Wright, D. (2009). *Culture, class, distinction*. London: Routledge.

Berkers, P., Janssen, S., & Verboord, M. (2011). Globalization and ethnic diversity in Western newspaper coverage of literary authors: Comparing developments in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States, 1955 to 2005. *American Behavioral Scientist, 55*(5), 624–641.

Bielby, D. D., Moloney, M., & Ngo, B. Q. (2005). Aesthetics of television criticism: Mapping critics' reviews in an era of industry transformation. *Research in the Sociology of Organizations, 23*, 1–43.

Blank, G. (2007). *Critics, ratings and society: The sociology of reviews*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The field of cultural production: Essays on art and literature*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The rules of art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Brennan, M. (2006). Down beats and rolling stones: The American jazz press decides to cover rock in 1967. *Popular Music History, 11*(3), 263–283.

Bryson, B. (1996). "Anything but heavy metal": Symbolic exclusion and musical dislikes. *American Sociological Review, 61*(5), 884–899.

Cappeliez, S., & Johnston, J. (2013). From meat and potatoes to "real-deal" rotis: Exploring everyday culinary cosmopolitanism. *Poetics, 41*, 433–455.

Cvetičanin, P., & Popescu, M. (2011). The art of making classes in Serbia: Another particular case of the possible. *Poetics, 39*(6), 444–468.

Davies, H. (2001). All rock and roll is homosocial: The representation of women in the British rock music press. *Popular Music, 20*(3), 301–319.

DeNora, T. (2000). *Music in everyday life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DiMaggio, P. (1987). Classification in art. *American Sociological Review, 52*(4), 440–455.

Elafros, A. (2010). "No beauty tips or guilt trips": Rockrgrl, rock, and representation. *Popular Music and Society, 33*(4), 487–499.

Featherstone, M. (2007). *Consumer culture and postmodernism* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Friedman, S. (2014). *Comedy and distinction: The cultural currency of a 'good' sense of humor*. New York/Oxon: Routledge.

Frith, S. (1983). *Sound effects: Youth, leisure and the politics of rock*. London: Constable.

Frith, S. (1998). *Performing rites: Evaluating popular music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hedegard, D. (2015). Transnational connections: The meaning of global culture in the tastes of Brazilian elites. *Poetics, 53*, 52–64.

Hennion, A. (2007). Those things that hold us together: Taste and sociology. *Cultural Sociology, 1*(1), 97–114.

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2006). Bourdieu, the media, and cultural production. *Media, Culture & Society, 28*(2), 211–231.

Hirsch, P. M. (1972). Processing fads and fashions: An organization-set analysis of cultural industry systems. *American Journal of Sociology, 77*(4), 639–659.

Holt, D. B. (1997). Distinction in America? Recovering Bourdieu's theory of tastes from its critics. *Poetics, 25*(2–3), 93–120.

Holt, D. B. (1998). Does cultural capital structure American consumption? *Journal of Consumer Research, 25*(1), 1–25.

Inglis, D., & Robertson, R. (2011). From cosmos to globe: Relating cosmopolitanism, globalization and globality. In M. Rovisco & M. Nowicka (Eds.), *The Ashgate research companion to cosmopolitanism*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Janssen, S., Kuipers, G., & Verboord, M. (2008). Cultural globalization and arts journalism: The international orientation of arts and culture coverage in Dutch, French, German, and U.S. Newspapers, 1955 to 2005. *American Sociological Review, 73*(5), 719–740.

Jarness, V. (2015). Modes of consumption: From "what" to "how" in cultural stratification research. *Poetics, 53*, 65–79.

Johnson-Grau, B. (2002). Sweet nothings: Presentation of women musicians in pop journalism. In S. Jones (Ed.), *Pop music and the press* (pp. 202–219). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Johnston, J., & Baumann, S. (2007). Democracy versus distinction: A study of omnivorousness in gourmet food writing. *American Journal of Sociology, 113*(1), 165–204.

Kersten, A. (2014). National cultural repertoires of evaluation in a global age: Film discourse in France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. *European Sociological Review, 30*(6), 717–727.

Kruse, H. (2002). Abandoning the absolute: Transcendence and gender in popular music discourse. In S. Jones (Ed.), *Pop music and the press* (pp. 134–155). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Kuipers, G. (2006). Television and taste hierarchy: The case of Dutch television comedy. *Media, Culture & Society, 28*(3), 359–378.

Lamont, M. (1992). *Money, morals, and manners. The culture of the French and American upper-middle class*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lamont, M., & Aksartova, S. (2002). Ordinary cosmopolitanisms: Strategies for bridging racial boundaries among working-class men. *Theory, Culture & Society, 19*(4), 1–25.

Lamont, M., & Molnàr, V. (2002). The study of boundaries in the social sciences. *Annual Review of Sociology, 28*, 167–195.

Leonard, M. (2007). *Gender in the music industry: Rock, discourse, and girl power*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Lindberg, U., Gudmundsson, G., Michelsen, M., & Weisethaunet, H. (2005). *Rock criticism from the beginning: Amusers, bruisers & cool-headed cruisers*. New York: Peter Lang.

Lindberg, U., Gudmundsson, G., Michelsen, M., & Weisethaunet, H. (2006). Critical negotiations: Rock criticism in the Nordic countries. *Popular Music History, 1*(3), 241–262.

Lizardo, O., & Skiles, S. (2012). Reconceptualizing and theorizing "omnivorousness": Genetic and relational mechanisms. *Sociological Theory, 30*(4), 263–282.

Lizardo, O., & Skiles, S. (2015). Musical taste and patterns of symbolic exclusion in the United States, 1993–2012: Generational dynamics of differentiation and continuity. *Poetics, 53*, 9–21.

Marshall, L. (2011). The sociology of popular music, interdisciplinarity and aesthetic autonomy. *The British Journal of Sociology, 62*(1), 154–174.

McLeod, K. (2001). *1/2' a critique of rock criticism in North America. *Popular Music, 20*(1), 47–60.

Meuleman, R., & Savage, M. (2013). A field analysis of cosmopolitan taste: Lessons from the Netherlands. *Cultural Sociology, 7*(2), 230–256.

Nunes, P. (2010). Good Samaritans and oblivious cheerleaders: Ideologies of Portuguese music journalists towards Portuguese music. *Popular Music, 29*(1), 41–59.

Ollivier, M. (2008). Modes of openness to cultural diversity: Humanist, populist, practical, and indifferent. *Poetics, 36*(2–3), 120–147.

Ong, J. C. (2009). The cosmopolitan continuum: Locating cosmopolitanism in media and cultural studies. *Media, Culture & Society, 31*(3), 449–466.

Peterson, R. A. (2005). Problems in comparative research: The example of omnivorousness. *Poetics, 33*(5–6), 257–282.

Peterson, R. A., & Anand, N. (2004). The production of culture perspective. *Annual Review of Sociology, 30*, 311–334.

Peterson, R. A., & Kern, R. M. (1996). Changing highbrow taste: From snob to omnivore. *American Sociological Review, 61*(5), 900–907.

Pires, M. (2003). The popular music press. In H. Dauncey & S. Cannon (Eds.), *Popular music in France from Chanson to Techno: Culture, identity and society* (pp. 77–96). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Powers, D. (2010). Rock criticism's public intellectuals. *Popular Music & Society, 33*(4), 533–548.

Prieur, A., & Savage, M. (2013). Emerging forms of cultural capital. *European Societies, 15*(2), 246–267.

Prieur, A., Rosenlund, L., & Skjott-Larsen, J. (2008). Cultural capital today: A case study from Denmark. *Poetics, 36*(1), 45–71.

Railton, D. (2001). The gendered carnival of pop. *Popular Music, 20*(3), 321–331.

Regev, M. (1994). Producing artistic value: The case of rock music. *The Sociological Quarterly, 35*(1), 85–102.

Roose, H. (2014). Signs of "emerging" cultural capital? Analysing symbolic struggles using class specific analysis. *Sociology, 49*(3), 556–573.

Rössel, J., & Schroedter, J. H. (2015). Cosmopolitan cultural consumption: Preferences and practices in a heterogenous, urban population in Switzerland. *Poetics, 50*, 80–95.

Santoro, M. (2002). What is a "cantautore"? Distinction and authorship in Italian (popular) music. *Poetics, 30*(1–2), 111–132.

Savage, M., & Gayo, M. (2011). Unravelling the omnivore: A field analysis of contemporary musical taste in the United Kingdom. *Poetics, 39*(5), 337–357.

Savage, M., Wright, D., & Gayo-Cal, M. (2010). Cosmopolitan nationalism and the cultural reach of the white British. *Nations and Nationalism, 16*(4), 598–615.

Schmutz, V. (2005). Retrospective cultural consecration in popular music: *Rolling Stone*'s greatest albums of all time. *American Behavioral Scientist, 48*(11), 1510–1523.

Schmutz, V. (2009). Social and symbolic boundaries in newspaper coverage of music, 1955–2005: Gender and genre in the US, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. *Poetics, 37*, 298–314.

Schmutz, V., & Faupel, A. (2010). Gender and cultural consecration in popular music. *Social Forces, 89*(2), 685–707.

Schmutz, V., van Venrooij, A., Janssen, S., & Verboord, M. (2010). Change and continuity in newspaper coverage of popular music since 1955: Evidence from the United States, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. *Popular Music and Society, 33*(4), 501–515.

Smith Maguire, J., & Matthews, J. (Eds.). (2013). *The cultural intermediaries reader*. London: Sage.

Thornton, S. (1995). *Club cultures: Music, media and subcultural capital*. Cambridge: Polity.

Tomatis, J. (2014). "This is our music": Italian teen pop press and genres in the 1960s. *IASPM@Journal, 4*(2), 24–42.

Toynbee, J. (1993). Policing bohemia, pinning up the grunge: The music press and generic change in British pop and rock. *Popular Music, 12*(3), 289–300.

van Venrooij, A. (2011). Classifying popular music in the United States and the Netherlands. *American Behavioral Scientist, 55*(5), 609–623.

van Venrooij, A., & Schmutz, V. (2010). The evaluation of popular music in the United States, Germany and the Netherlands: A comparison of the use of high art and popular aesthetic criteria. *Cultural Sociology, 4*(3), 395–421.

Von Appen, R., & Doehring, A. (2006). Nevermind the Beatles, here's Exile 61 and Nico: "The top 100 records of all time" – A canon of pop and rock albums from a sociological and an aesthetic perspective. *Popular Music, 25*(1), 21–39.

Weisethaunet, H., & Lindberg, U. (2010). Authenticity revisited: The rock critic and the changing real. *Popular Music and Society, 33*(4), 465–485.

Wright, D., Purhonen, S., & Heikkilä, R. (2013). 'Comparing "cosmopolitanism": Taste, nation and global culture in Finland and the UK. *Comparative Sociology, 12*(3), 330–360.

# 3

# Globalization and Artistic Legitimation: Reconceptualizing Bourdieu

This chapter expands Bourdieu's field theory towards a consideration of global forces and their influence on processes of cultural legitimation. It will first introduce the theory's main tenets, especially as they emerge from Bourdieu's study of the French literary field (1996); it will then discuss an emerging literature on transnational cultural fields, systematizing its empirical contributions and fleshing out its theoretical implications for the study of artistic legitimation. I will argue that this body of work provides important evidence about the transnational symbolic power of Anglo-American popular culture, especially its more artistically legitimate forms, like pop-rock music and quality television. However, like the literatures discussed in Chap. 2, it does not address cultural legitimation as a contested social process, nor does it focus on how global taste and its institutions came into being. To account for these questions, the chapter's last sections return to Bourdieu. I expand his concept of 'encounter' to highlight three interlinked dimensions of transnational cultural legitimation:

(a) the discovery and appropriation of new aesthetic materials, which may be generative of new dispositions and forms of knowledge (aesthetic socialization);



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_3

(b) the ways in which these new cultural resources are mobilized by cultural intermediaries to establish competing projects of legitimation (legitimation struggles);
(c) the reception of these projects among publics with unequal resources and different social biographies (homologies and asymmetries).

In the book's remaining chapters, I explore how these dimensions of cultural legitimation manifested in the Italian musical field, but here I concentrate on how Bourdieu's work can be fruitfully adapted to the study of such dynamics.

## Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Fields

Pierre Bourdieu defined his theory of cultural fields through a series of theoretical essays (Bourdieu 1993) and a major socio-historical study of the literary field in nineteenth- and twentieth-century France (Bourdieu 1996). These works differ significantly from *Distinction* and its concern with the relations between taste, education and class background. In *The Rules of Art*, Bourdieu is concerned with the institutional space, or cultural field, which makes aesthetic distinctions both meaningful and historically possible. He postulates that cultural hierarchies are a socio-historical product sustained by the workings of different actors, like artists, critics, publishers, museums and educational institutions. Like the 'art worlds' theorized by Howard Becker (1982), cultural fields depend on shared beliefs and presuppositions: the field's *doxa*. The difference with Becker, however, lies in Bourdieu's emphasis on dynamics of diversification, competition and unequal distribution of resources. Indeed, cultural fields are 'fields of struggle' because their participants have different histories, or social trajectories, and possess different resources. They occupy different 'positions' in the field.

### Positions, Resources, Capitals

The making of positions requires resources in the form of economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital. For Bourdieu, capital is not sim-

ply a material resource (economic capital), but also derives from social connections, cultural knowledge and status, with the last two being crucial for participation in cultural fields as producers or intermediaries. Cultural capital indicates forms of knowledge and modes of perception that are reproduced through national educational curricula, which, as such, are widely recognized across different social institutions (Lamont and Lareau 1988). An example of cultural capital in most Western societies is the Kantian disposition discussed in Chap. 2: a familiarity with the evaluative standards of high culture which is inherited via class background or developed through education, and which is made manifest in the manners and discourses of cultural appreciation. This is what Bourdieu defines as 'embodied' cultural capital. However, the value of high culture is also 'institutionalized' via the workings of the education system, and 'objectified' through the definition of a canon of valuable works, authors and movements. Cultural capital can thus assume different forms (Bourdieu 1986). On the other hand, field-specific or subcultural capital (Thornton 1995) indicates knowledge and modes of perception which are highly valued in specific social fields, but are not necessarily recognized as valuable in other contexts (Bourdieu 1993: 74–76). Finally, Bourdieu defines as symbolic capital the recognition and prestige that cultural producers may derive from their peers, critics and other cultural institutions. This form of esteem is grounded in the high value that field actors ascribe to artistic innovation, although I will argue that commercial success (that is, economic capital) can also be subject to distinctive forms of symbolic valorization (Chap. 5).

Cultural fields are thus internally diversified and hierarchical social spaces. The very existence of different producers, intermediaries and audiences represents a field's 'space of possibles' (Bourdieu 1996: 193–205). A group or organization willing to create a new position cannot help but take into account this pre-existing social structure and its history, which includes past artistic trends and canons of consecrated movements and works (field-specific capital). Artistic innovations, and hence social change, are possible only in relation to the field's structure and history.

## Large- Versus Small-Scale Cultural Production

Bourdieu's focus on different resources helps in analyzing how cultural producers and intermediaries make a position in a cultural field, and how they struggle over the definition of artistic canons and notions of value. However, Bourdieu also provides a more formalized typology of how cultural fields are structured. According to this schematization (Table 3.1), 'large-scale production' is the space occupied by organizations with high commercial success and low cultural and symbolic capital. On the contrary, 'small-scale production' is the region of the field where cultural producers are equipped mostly with cultural and symbolic capital. This space constitutes an 'inverted economic world' (Bourdieu 1996: 83), a social space in which artistic innovation and autonomy from the market are the values most praised by cultural producers. This is itself a structured social space, one in which avant-garde movements are differentiated in terms of symbolic capital (more consecrated avant-gardes versus newer artistic movements). In Bourdieu's socio-historical study of the French literary field, this position is occupied by writers struggling to define the autonomy of literature from political and economic demands, like Gustave Flaubert, who praised an aesthetics of 'art for the art's sake' (Bourdieu 1996: 75).

This schematization shows that, while Bourdieu conceptualizes cultural fields as the result of ongoing struggle and historical change, he also defines an *ideal type* of the ways in which the arts are produced. This ideal type is based on what Bourdieu considers a common feature of different

**Table 3.1** The field of cultural production (Adapted from Bourdieu 1996)

| **Social space (+CC, +EC)** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Cultural field** | | |
| **Small-scale cultural production**<br>+CC, +SC<br>–EC | | **Large-scale cultural production**<br>–CC, –SC<br>+EC |
| **Consecrated avant-gardes**<br>+CC, +SC | **New artistic movements**<br>–CC, –SC | |
| **Social space (–CC, –EC)** | | |

**Legend:** *CC* cultural capital, *SC* symbolic capital, *EC* economic capital

cultural fields: the opposition between commercial and non-commercial art (Bourdieu 1996: 161), or between economic and cultural capital as irreconcilable principles of legitimation.

## Homologies Between Production and Consumption

The opposition between large- and small-scale cultural production is tied to a similarly structuralist view of the relationship between producers and consumers. This is theorized as a 'pre-established harmony' or homology (Bourdieu 1996: 161) between members of the same social group. Since cultural producers occupy specific positions in the cultural field, their audiences will occupy similar positions in the social space, that is, they will possess similar kinds and amounts of capital.[1] Indeed, as showed by Table 3.1, for Bourdieu the opposition between cultural and economic resources structures both specific fields and society at large. Since cultural production requires both material and cultural resources, social groups possessing neither cultural nor economic capital – the working classes – are largely excluded from it. By contrast, cultural producers and their audience represent the 'dominated' fraction of the dominant class. They are those members of the middle and upper-middle classes endowed with high cultural capital, but with relatively low economic capital when compared to other professional groups (Bourdieu 1996: 251).

## Too Much Determinism? Reflexive Sociology

As anticipated in the previous chapter, Bourdieu's understanding of cultural practices presupposes a distinctive theory of social action (Bourdieu 1990). From this standpoint, individuals are a product of their social history, one in which family background and education (early socialization) play a crucial role in shaping later views and behaviors. These embodied dispositions are organized into a relatively enduring habitus, one that

[1] Bourdieu also uses the concept of homology to indicate the structural correspondence between consumption practices and social position, or people's position in the 'space of lifestyles' and their position in the social space (Bourdieu 1984). In this book I am concerned mostly with the homology between cultural producers and their publics.

will inform people's interactions with (and within) different social fields, including cultural institutions. However, social practices are never fully determined by the habitus, but emerge from the encounter between this 'structuring structure' and the social fields people engage with: they arise from the 'meeting between two histories' (Bourdieu 1996: 256–258). The extent to which this is a satisfactory and not-too-determinist theory of practice is a matter of ongoing debate (Crossley 2011; Lizardo 2011), and the concept of cultural field has been similarly criticized for its high degree of abstraction and objectivism. Born (2010) has argued that Bourdieu's emphasis on positions simplifies the practices of concrete organizations, which may be internally diversified and affected by conflicts (see Chap. 6). On a similar note, Bottero and Crossley (2011) have contended that the concept of position risks obscuring concrete interactions and networks, as it conceptualizes social relationships simply as 'objective' differences in capital distribution. Media scholars have advanced similar critiques of the opposition between large- and small-scale cultural production, arguing that it is too rigid to tackle the complexity of contemporary media production. Indeed, some cultural organizations may possess both cultural and economic resources (Benson and Neveu 2005; Hesmondhalgh 2006), and even producers concerned with autonomy and artistic innovation – the avant-gardes of media production – may be reluctant to reject market demands *in toto* (Banks 2007; Chap. 5).

These critiques point to important limitations in Bourdieu's social theorizing. However, they focus on Bourdieu's (admittedly rigid) ideal types rather than his reflexive research practice. According to the latter, theoretical ideal types should not be crudely applied to different social contexts, but should be 'sensitized' to their distinctive properties through fieldwork. Theoretical abstractions need to be grounded in the actors' histories, practices and modes of perception; but, more importantly, they need to be 'moved by' data and open to revision (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 228). I follow this approach in constructing the pop music press and the Italian musical field as objects of study. As I will argue below, a more reflexive engagement with Bourdieu's work, and dialogue with other theoretical traditions, make it possible to sensitize field theory to the forms of aesthetic socialization enhanced by cultural globalization. This allows a redefinition of other ideal types, such as the opposition

between large- and small-scale cultural organizations and the concept of homology. Before turning to such questions, I discuss the growing literature on transnational cultural fields, systematizing its empirical contributions and fleshing out its theoretical implications. This is an important preliminary step for sensitizing field theory to global processes that remain underappreciated in Bourdieu's work, but which are crucial to understand how globalization restructures national cultural fields.

## Exploring and Theorizing Transnational Cultural Fields

Despite his emphasis on reflexive and empirically grounded social theory, Bourdieu's engagement with 'transnational relationships of power' leaves much to be desired. In an article published in *Theory, Culture & Society*, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1999) reflected on the growing power of American academic publishing in European and Latin American universities. The authors attacked the transnational spread of cultural studies, arguing that concepts which had developed for studying North American societies were being superimposed on different socio-historical contexts, obscuring the distinctive character of their stratification systems and cultural practices. A new form of 'cultural imperialism', the authors argued, was emerging, one that was facilitated by the uncritical adoption of an anglophone, semi-academic *lingua franca* by complicit scholars and journalists.

This polemical piece has been rightly criticized for its Eurocentric undertones: for assuming the 'symbolic domination' of non-anglophone scholars and for simplifying their engagement with American and British scholarship (French 2000). Nonetheless, Bourdieu and Wacquant's focus on transnational relationships of power has much to offer to the study of legitimation processes, and is becoming increasingly important for understanding globalization's effects on national cultural fields. Some scholars have adopted the concept of field, albeit in a loose sense,[2] to

[2] Scholars working on transnational cultural fields are generally interested in meso-level organizational dynamics. Although they adopt a 'field language', their understanding of cultural fields is not

understand different sides of cultural globalization, such as the asymmetries of power between centres and peripheries of cultural production (Sapiro 2010, 2015), the emergence of organizations and intermediaries operating on a transnational scale (Kuipers 2011, 2012), and the adoption of foreign cultural forms by national and local cultural producers (Regev 2013).

## Centers and Peripheries

This literature shows that, despite different historical trajectories, cultural sectors like literature, television and pop-rock music have become both transnationally connected and influenced by power relations between centres and peripheries. These asymmetries shape the workings of cultural fields at different levels. Some countries, like the USA, have acquired a position of economic and symbolic power across several fields of high and popular culture, particularly during the second half of the twentieth century (Janssen et al. 2008). Other countries, like France, have accumulated transnational prestige in specific cultural arenas, like literature, but possess smaller commercial infrastructures and less economic power than the US publishing industry (Sapiro 2015). A key contribution of this literature is to situate specific cultural fields in a transnational space of influences and to address questions of both economic and symbolic power. Cultural centres are indeed not necessarily 'dominant' from a commercial point of view, but have been able to establish new standards of aesthetic quality (Kuipers 2012). In other words, some of their cultural products have become examples of artistic modernity on a transnational scale (Regev 2013). This is a significant break with the so-called cultural imperialism thesis, which understood the economic power of the USA as an explanation of its cultural influence across the globe (Tomlinson 1991). By contrast, a focus on symbolic power explains the transnational

always in line with Bourdieu. For instance, Kuipers also draws on the 'production of culture' perspective, and sees Bourdieu's focus on dynamics of competition as too normative (Kuipers 2015). By contrast, Sapiro (2010) and Regev (2013) pay significant attention to struggles for capital and recognition. Following the reflexive approach outlined above, I take questions of competition and/or collaboration as empirical rather than normative, as they are likely to vary across fields and historical contexts.

appeal of both US popular culture – especially its more artistically legitimate forms – and European high culture, whose enduring recognition would be difficult to explain in terms of commercial success and economic power. Bourdieu's opposition between economic and symbolic capital thus informs a transnational understanding of cultural production, one in which national cultural fields occupy different positions in the global cultural economy.

## National and Cosmopolitan Institutions

A further issue explored by this literature is the emergence of new divisions in national cultural fields, particularly the rise of organizations and movements which promote some forms of global popular culture. The studies which address these globally oriented producers corroborate the literature on cosmopolitan tastes discussed in Chap. 2, but focus on the institutional infrastructure which makes such cultural preferences possible. Post-1950s popular music provides a vivid example of this transformation. As shown by Regev (2013), pop-rock genres have become a new symbolic resource for musicians working in various European, Asian and Latin American countries. These new (and usually younger) cultural producers combine this influence with their ethno-national cultural traditions, crafting new sonic idioms and forms of 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism'. This has enhanced the emergence of pop-rock fields, and distinctions between nationally and globally oriented musical production, in several national societies, as also shown by other studies of musical globalization (Elafros 2013).[3] Kuipers (2011, 2012) has documented a similar institutional transformation in the field of television, namely the emergence of a globally oriented group of television buyers in Poland, Italy, France and the Netherlands. Television buyers purchase international TV formats for their domestic markets, and their evaluative criteria are

[3] There is a well-established research tradition on musical globalization in popular music studies, which has focused on questions of aesthetic hybridity and cultural identity (Stokes 2004, 2007; Biddle and Knights 2007; Toynbee and Dueck 2011). However, this literature has rarely engaged with sociological debates about artistic legitimation and cultural stratification, and has mostly ignored institutional and organizational dynamics (that is, a meso-level analysis of musical globalization).

tailored to the aesthetic standards of the industry's centres, particularly North American quality television. Other studies reveal that, depending on their resources, national cultural organizations may devise different strategies vis-à-vis globalizing forces. For instance, in the French and Dutch literary fields, small publishers have invested in the translation of exotic or 'world' literature to differentiate themselves from large-scale publishers, which have invested more on translations of Anglo-American literature (Sapiro 2010; Frassen and Kuipers 2013).

Overall, these studies suggest that globalizing forces restructure national cultural fields in significant ways. They create new divisions between and within national contexts, while enduring differences in economic and symbolic capital shape how cultural organizations respond to transnational dynamics. In this context, knowledge of non-national aesthetic cultures emerges as an important symbolic resource, a 'cosmopolitan cultural capital' (Kuipers 2012) that allows competition both on a national and transnational scale. However, this body of work examines only to a limited extent the rise of new institutions devoted to the legitimation of global culture, and hence to the production of new forms of cultural capital (DiMaggio 1992). Indeed, critics figure very little in these contributions, although their importance is recognized by Regev (2013). Furthermore, while showing that some global popular culture has gained the attention of national elites (Janssen et al. 2008), these studies do not investigate how such cultural products acquire symbolic prestige, that is, their role in the socialization of the new upper and middle classes.[4] The missing question is how cosmopolitan taste and its institutions came into being, and how appreciation for foreign cultural products has become a form of capital in structurally peripheral national contexts. In the remainder of this chapter, I address these questions, outlining a more general theory of transnational artistic legitimation. I focus on how globalization enhances new forms of aesthetic socialization, and how the cultural

[4] In this respect, the literature on transnational cultural fields has not much to say about questions of 'cultural hybridity'. In contrast to cultural imperialism, cultural hybridity emphasizes the active appropriation of non-national popular culture and the agency of cultural consumers (Hannerz 1991). Below, I argue that the appropriation of new cultural forms depends on pre-existing dispositions and resources, as well as on socialization into new aesthetic cultures. This is a different position than cultural hybridity, which tends to underestimate social divisions, especially class, and their effects on cultural consumption.

resources produced by this process are employed by competing groups of intermediaries. Finally, I consider the exclusionary power of their distinctions, namely how they may be received by publics with unequal cultural and economic resources.

## Aesthetic Socialization: New Dispositions, New Resources

The notion of cosmopolitan taste presupposes a process of familiarization with (and socialization into) new aesthetic materials. However, existing research has rarely reflected on the mechanisms which generate a taste for non-national cultural forms. Moreover, a too-broad definition of cosmopolitan taste (Chap. 2) makes it difficult to examine how social actors develop attachment to specific aesthetic objects, such as certain music styles and acts. As anticipated in Chap. 2, recent contributions from music sociology may prove helpful in better understanding these questions.

Music sociologists have increasingly stressed the relational nature of music listening, arguing that music's meaning and affect are the result of a co-production involving both listeners and the properties of musical pieces. In this respect, DeNora (2000: 40–44) has proposed the notion of 'affordances' to identify the possibilities for semiotic and emotional work that musical pieces provide to listeners. Music's lyrics and sonic structures, like rhythm, melody and harmony, can be used to cope with emotions and memories, or to structure mundane rituals like waking up and going to work (DeNora 2000). DeNora follows other scholars, like Hennion (2007) and Born (2005), in questioning a constructionist understanding of music's meaning, as they conceive of culture's materiality as 'real', sensuous and relatively autonomous from the interpretations of social actors. However, in order to reveal the importance of aesthetic materials in everyday cultural practices, these approaches have bracketed off the differentiation of cultural publics. For instance, DeNora's work does not take into account the social differences and fields of relationships (Bourdieu 1990) which shape listeners' biographies. Similarly, Hennion

has been keen on stressing that aesthetic materials need reflexive actors to be 'activated', but the history of such actors, their dispositions and their resources, are black-boxed in his approach (Hennion 2007).

Notwithstanding such limitations, these contributions situate culture's materiality in a relational epistemology, one that is potentially compatible with a Bourdieusian approach. Since they theorize music's meaning as a co-production requiring the intervention of social actors, we may start considering such actors as endowed with diverse social biographies and positioned in different fields. Bourdieu himself clarifies that cultural practices arise from the meeting or encounter between two autonomous histories: the history of actors (their trajectories, dispositions and resources) and the history of the social fields they interact with. I propose to conceptualize the discovery of new cultural forms as an encounter with new aesthetic materials, such as sounds, images and narratives. This relational perspective can account for socialization into specific 'aesthetic cultures' (Regev 2013), like 1950s and 1960s Anglo-American rock music (Chap. 4), and hence for the production of new dispositions and cultural resources. At the same time, it allows examining what pre-existing resources and dispositions social actors bring to their aesthetic encounters, which will depend on their social trajectory and position in different fields (Table 3.2).

This theoretical synthesis (see also Varriale 2016) complements recent research on cultural consumption, which grounds omnivorism in a more historically and culturally sensitive framework. For instance, Rimmer

**Table 3.2** Aesthetic encounters

| **Social actor →** | **Encounter** | **← Cultural object** |
|---|---|---|
| Properties | Properties | Properties |
| Dispositions, resources | Meanings, attachments | Aesthetic materials (Sonic, visual, narrative) |
| | ↓ | |
| ↑ | New cultural resources, new dispositions | ↑ |
| **Position in social/cultural fields** | | **Technological mediation** |
| (Class background, education, age, gender, nationality, occupation, consumption) | | (E.g. vinyl, live performance, CD, Internet) |
| ↑ | | ↑ |
| **Social trajectory** | | **Spatial/temporal trajectory** |

(2012) has argued that early familiarization with specific music genres and technologies can create an enduring 'musical habitus', that is, attachment for (and expertise about) specific musical domains. Other studies show that socialization into high culture, via family or education, shapes later engagements with popular culture, which is appropriated via a Kantian disposition (Chap. 2). My own empirical research supports this line of work: Italian critics appropriated recently imported forms of pop-rock music via their embodied cultural capital. However, their encounter with 1950s and 1960s rock also created an enduring attachment for specific acts and styles. In the early 1970s, these were already perceived as a cultural tradition by Italian critics, and knowledge of this emerging canon shaped their evaluation of later, 1970s music trends, like hard rock and disco music. Their evaluations were not simply driven by a highbrow disposition, but were shaped by their 'rock habitus' (Chap. 7), namely earlier socialization into the sounds, images and narratives of pop-rock. Aesthetic socialization created new cultural resources: a subcultural capital (Thornton 1995) which allowed membership in the field of pop-rock and the establishment of different projects of legitimation.

## Mobilizing Resources: Competing Cosmopolitan Projects

Aesthetic socialization is thus a key pre-condition for the genesis of specific cosmopolitan tastes. However, it is also necessary for establishing new institutions devoted to the legitimation of foreign cultural forms. Indeed, early adopters of these aesthetic cultures are also those equipped with the subcultural capital to attempt their legitimation. As I show in Chap. 4, it is also likely that they possess sufficient cultural and economic capital to establish new organizations and invest in a scarcely legitimate cultural arena. However, this does not necessarily lead to the emergence of a homogeneous group of globally oriented cultural intermediaries. To account for the influence of global forces, theories of artistic legitimation need to examine both new forms of aesthetic socialization, and how the resources they generate are 'put into practice' (Bourdieu 1990). In other

words, new forms of subcultural capital may be used to establish different legitimation strategies; new cultural intermediaries may implement competing editorial projects, which promote different aesthetic canons and conceptions of cultural globalization.

## Cultural Politics

As discussed in Chap. 2, the sociology of cultural evaluation has rarely focused on critics' cultural politics, namely the political and moral underpinnings of their projects of legitimation. These ideological orientations, however, are an important aspect of the legitimation struggles engendered by cultural globalization. As I explore in the following chapters, Italian critics used to take positions, via editorials and non-musical features, about the politics of other national institutions. Their aesthetic claims were tied to a broader critique of Italian society, one addressing cultural, political and economic organizations. Italian music magazines developed competing 'cosmopolitan projects', which implied different views of globalization's social and political consequences. It was critics' cultural and subcultural capital which allowed this symbolic rupture with national institutions. However, their shared resources were used to implement competing ideological projects, which I call economic cosmopolitanism (Chap. 5) and political cosmopolitanism (Chap. 6). These differences in cultural politics were tied to differences in commercial success (economic capital) and symbolic recognition, as well as to differences in critics' networks with other organizations and fields, particularly the political field (Chap. 6). However, they are not reducible to differences between 'large-scale' and 'small-scale' cultural organizations, and hence to objective differences in capital distribution (Bottero and Crossley 2011). To avoid reproducing Bourdieu's ideal type across different national and historical contexts, it is necessary to explore how objective differences translate into culturally and historically meaningful differences, that is, into different histories and political projects. Such differences can be empirically investigated through Bourdieu's notion of position-taking, which indicates the 'political acts or pronouncements, manifestos or polemics' of field actors (Bourdieu 1993: 30). The very idea of taking a

position in the public sphere is tied to a European understanding of intellectual practice, one that had a pivotal role in defining the literary field as a space of autonomy from political and economic influences (Bourdieu 1996; Sapiro 2003). This understanding of cultural labour remains central to the emergence of American and British rock criticism (Powers 2010), and similarly informed the rise of pop music criticism in Italy. We can thus look at how critics take positions in relation to the national space of possibles. Although Bourdieu defines the space of possibles as the structure of a cultural field (1996), the concept can be fruitfully used to consider how national structures and institutions shape the work of cultural organizations. In this way, it becomes possible to account for how different projects of legitimation emerge in concrete socio-historical contexts, and how such contexts give shape to actors' motivations, meanings and politics.

## Boundary-Drawing and Aesthetic Evaluation

Differences in how critics use their resources and establish competing cultural politics are also important in understanding how they carry out cultural evaluation. Indeed, such differences may sustain different boundary-drawing strategies (Lamont and Molnàr 2002): different ways of making distinctions between valuable and unworthy popular culture. In Chaps. 5 and 6, I will make a distinction between 'loose' and 'normative' boundaries to account for how Italian critics constructed competing aesthetic canons. These boundary-drawing strategies rely on the same cultural and subcultural resources, but used in different ways. Loose aesthetic boundaries imply a relativist understanding of cultural hierarchies. Critics use their cultural resources to discuss 'in artistic terms' a broad variety of acts and styles, without pretending to define objective musical canons. This strategy was pursued by the magazine with the highest commercial success among Italian specialist publications: the weekly *Ciao 2001* . It led to a significantly inclusive music coverage, which gave space to artistically dubious genres like hard rock and disco music (Chap. 7). By contrast, normative aesthetic boundaries are predicated on the assumption that some music is objectively superior from an aesthetic and

even political point of view. This strategy, which was implemented by the monthlies *Muzak* and *Gong*, led to a highly selective strategy of coverage and an increasingly negative view of contemporary (1970s) pop-rock trends. Differences in boundary-drawing strategies are thus differences in the contents and logics of symbolic boundaries: what acts are included among valuable popular culture, and how their inclusion is justified ideologically. Moreover, the aims of these strategies were very different: to keep up with changing market trends and maximize revenues (*Ciao 2001* ), and to establish a political and aesthetic alternative to the existing musical market (*Muzak* and *Gong*).

While differences in cultural politics may translate into different boundary-drawing strategies, cultural evaluation is also significantly affected by the properties of different musics. In this respect, aesthetic socialization is likely to inform how critics receive later cultural trends: how their dispositions interact with and are affected by new aesthetic materials. As discussed in Chap. 2, we know relatively little about how critics make sense of aesthetic differences between and within genres, and hence how they evaluate different aesthetic properties. Following the theoretical synthesis outlined above, I argue that critics' embodied dispositions need to be sensitized to new cultural materials, such as the 'computerized' sounds of disco music or 'rough' guitar riffs of hard rock (Chap. 7). Critics' cultural capital and subcultural capital are thus pragmatic resources, which are used to evaluate new aesthetic materials. Their pre-existing dispositions do not determine cultural evaluation (and hence music's meaning), but are 'tuned' into the properties of different acts and styles. As showed in Table 3.2, I adopt a loose definition of aesthetic materials, which includes narrative properties, like lyrics, and any visual property associated with the distribution and circulation of music, including musicians' public images. Indeed, post-1950s popular music is characterized by a high degree of technological mediation (Shuker 1994), and has been able to circulate across national borders through different audio-visual technologies, like album and singles covers, film and television, live performances and newspaper narratives. Along with sounds, these materials may influence critics' evaluations (Chap. 7). A loose definition of aesthetic materials can thus better reveal how aesthetic differences shape legitimation struggles.

## The Impact of New Distinctions: Homology and Asymmetries

So far, I have argued that to understand the genesis of globally oriented tastes, one has to make room for specific forms of aesthetic socialization, that is, for the encounter with new aesthetic cultures and familiarization with their properties. This is a preliminary condition for the emergence of new cultural institutions and legitimation struggles. Moreover, such struggles depend on how critics mobilize their subcultural knowledge (the product of aesthetic socialization) and other resources, like cultural and economic capital, via-à-vis a historically specific space of possibles. The third step towards a revised theory of artistic legitimation requires considering how legitimation struggles are received by different social groups, and hence the exclusionary power of cosmopolitan cultural capital. The sociology of cultural evaluation has rarely investigated the reception of criticism empirically; nonetheless, it has addressed the issue via Bourdieu's concept of homology. As discussed above, for Bourdieu there exists a structural similarity between cultural producers and their audiences: a pre-established harmony between actors possessing similar kinds and amounts of capital, who hence occupy similar positions in the social space. Following the same logic, SCE studies have argued that the cultural criticism of quality newspapers is worth studying because '… they establish widely shared understandings of which cultural objects, styles, and dispositions are valuable' (Hedegard 2015: 56). Criticism has thus been used to investigate meanings which are assumed to be shared by critics' upper- and middle-class readership (see also Janssen et al. 2008; Johnston and Baumann 2007). However, like the opposition between large-scale and small-scale cultural production, homology is an ideal type which needs to be sensitized to different socio-historical contexts. On the one hand, similarity of social position between producers and consumers, or between different audience members, does not rule out differences in the amounts of subcultural, cultural and economic capital they may possess. On the other hand, assuming the centrality of cultural and economic resources, the notion of homology risks downplaying the effects of other social divisions on cultural participation, such as gender, age,

ethnicity and geographical location. My empirical research suggests that the homology of resources, dispositions and tastes between critics and their readers was only partial. There were also asymmetries of cultural, subcultural and economic capital, which tended to be exacerbated by gender and age differences. This was partly due to a historical contingency: Italian music magazines attracted a significantly diverse audience of young people (Chap. 4). However, such differences may be important in other national and historical contexts. As a result, they are worth considering for a fuller account of legitimation processes, and to investigate how cosmopolitan tastes may contribute to processes of symbolic stigma and social exclusion (Chap. 8).

The book's final chapter investigates this question using readers' letters as sources of data, and looking at how these were selected and discursively mediated by different music magazines. I will analyze, via thematic and discourse analysis, a sample of readers' letters (487) and critics' replies published by the magazines *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong*. To be sure, letters are a highly mediated response to criticism, as they are selected by editorial boards according to different organizational logics. They cannot be taken as transparent representations of how readers received critics' aesthetic claims. Moreover, writing a letter is a quite specific form of engagement, one that is likely to be chosen by a minority of readers. Nonetheless, letters are a source of rich narratives about the significance of music magazines from their readers' perspective. They are a valuable, unobtrusive source to explore how differences in cultural knowledge, age, gender, class and geographical location affected the reception of critics' legitimizing discourses. These narratives are no substitute for individual-level data about readers' social trajectories and resources, but, nonetheless, they shed some light into a question that remains unaddressed in the sociology of cultural evaluation.

Furthermore, discussions with readers had an important ideological function for Italian critics: they made it possible to present the pop music press as a 'democratic' site of discussion for the 'youth culture'. This space of debate was carefully distinguished from both lower cultural products, like teen magazines, and more highbrow forms of criticism. Moreover, it was devoted to several issues of debate, spanning from critics' aesthetic choices to questions of politics and inequality. Drawing on Fraser (1990),

I will approach music magazines as 'alternative public spheres', that is, as media which enhanced the construction of a specific community of interests. Despite being presented as democratic and inclusive, this community was ripe with conflict and asymmetries of resources. In line with Bourdieu, Fraser's work highlights the influence of social divisions upon public deliberation and interventions.[5] Furthermore, it reveals a different side of cultural criticism, namely its role in enhancing forms of mediated reflexivity. In this respect, readers and critics used to openly discuss the impact of social divisions upon Italian youth and the musical field, and critics' privilege in both contexts had to be actively justified. However, these forms of reflexivity had limitations. If the relationship between cultural taste and social privilege was clearly recognized (and partly criticized), the primacy of a Kantian disposition towards popular music was rarely questioned. There could be disagreement about which musicians and bands were artistically valuable, but a 'knowing approach' (Prieur and Savage 2013) to music consumption remained largely unchallenged, especially by critics. Embodied cultural capital and subcultural knowledge were key resources for participating in this space of debate. From this standpoint, the mediation of readers' letters reveals a different side of legitimation processes. It shows that legitimation of a Kantian disposition towards popular music was a *pre-condition* for legitimation struggles over different works, authors and movements. However, not all readers had the resources, and hence the confidence, to participate to this struggle, or, in the words of critics, this democratic debate.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I have expanded field theory towards a consideration of global forces and their impact over processes of cultural legitimation. I have introduced the theory's main tenets and sensitized Bourdieu's work

[5] Fraser's work differs from Habermas's original definition of the public sphere in two ways. First, she focuses on non-bourgeois public spaces and media, such as working class papers and women's publications, which had been ignored in Habermas's work. Secondly, she takes social divisions as constitutive of public deliberation and democratic debate. Interestingly, Bourdieu is an explicit influence on her work (Fraser 1990: 60).

vis-à-vis growing research on transnational cultural production, one that complements his insufficient attention to transnational relationships of power. Furthermore, I have highlighted social processes which remain underestimated in this literature, but which are important in understanding how globally oriented tastes emerge and how they sustain new projects of cultural legitimation. I have proposed a more general theory of transnational artistic legitimation, one that focuses on: (a) aesthetic socialization into specific cultural forms and its link with the genesis of new resources; (b) the ways in which this subcultural capital is mobilized by competing cultural intermediaries; and (c) how their legitimation strategies are received by publics with unequal cultural, subcultural and economic capital.

Overall, I have argued that globalization may foster the emergence of competing cosmopolitan projects, thus redefining legitimation struggles in national cultural fields. These projects may support competing understandings of cultural globalization, its opportunities and perils, and different strategies of boundary-drawing between national and global, valuable and undeserving popular culture. Furthermore, the reception of these projects may reveal both homologies and asymmetries between critics and their audiences, and hence the exclusionary power of cosmopolitan cultural capital. The next chapter begins exploring these dimensions of artistic legitimation vis-à-vis the Italian case. It introduces the context of post-war Italy, the internationalization of the Italian recording industry and the rise of pop music criticism as a new cultural institution.

## Bibliography

Banks, M. (2007). *The politics of cultural work*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Becker, H. S. (1982). *Art worlds*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Benson, R., & Neveu, E. (2005). Introduction: Field theory as a work in progress. In R. Benson & E. Neveu (Eds.), *Bourdieu and the journalistic field*. Cambridge: Polity.

Biddle, I., & Knights, V. (Eds.). (2007). *Music, national identity and the politics of location: Between the local and the global*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Born, G. (2005). On musical mediation: Ontology, technology and creativity. *Twentieth-Century Music, 2*(1), 7–36.

Born, G. (2010). The social and the aesthetic: For a post-Bourdieuian theory of cultural production. *Cultural Sociology, 4*(2), 171–208.

Bottero, W., & Crossley, N. (2011). Worlds, fields and networks: Becker, Bourdieu and the structures of social relations. *Cultural Sociology, 5*(1), 99–119.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). New York: Greenwood.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The field of cultural production: Essays on art and literature*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The rules of art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (1999). On the cunning of imperialist reason. *Theory, Culture & Society, 16*(1), 41–58.

Crossley, N. (2011). *Towards relational sociology*. London: Routledge.

DeNora, T. (2000). *Music in everyday life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DiMaggio, P. (1992). Cultural boundaries and structural change: The extension of the high culture model to theater, opera, and the dance, 1900–1940. In M. Lamont & M. Fournier (Eds.), *Cultivating differences: Symbolic boundaries and the making of inequality*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Elafros, A. (2013). Greek hip hop: Local and translocal authentication in the restricted field of production. *Poetics, 41*, 75–95.

Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social Text, 25*(26), 56–80.

Frassen, T., & Kuipers, G. (2013). Coping with uncertainty, abundance and strife: Decision-making processes of Dutch acquisition editors in the global market for translations. *Poetics, 41*, 48–74.

French, J. D. (2000). The missteps of anti-imperialist reason: Bourdieu, Wacquant and Hanchard's *Orpheus and Power. Theory, Culture & Society, 17*(1), 107–128.

Hannerz, U. (1991). *Cultural complexity*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Hedegard, D. (2015). Transnational connections: The meaning of global culture in the tastes of Brazilian elites. *Poetics, 53*, 52–64.

Hennion, A. (2007). Those things that hold us together: Taste and sociology. *Cultural Sociology, 1*(1), 97–114.

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2006). Bourdieu, the media, and cultural production. *Media, Culture & Society, 28*(2), 211–231.

Janssen, S., Kuipers, G., & Verboord, M. (2008). Cultural globalization and arts journalism: The international orientation of arts and culture coverage in Dutch, French, German, and U.S. Newspapers, 1955 to 2005. *American Sociological Review, 73*(5), 719–740.

Johnston, J., & Baumann, S. (2007). Democracy versus distinction: A study of omnivorousness in gourmet food writing. *American Journal of Sociology, 113*(1), 165–204.

Kuipers, G. (2011). Cultural globalization as the emergence of a transnational cultural field. *American Behavioral Scientist, 55*(5), 541–557.

Kuipers, G. (2012). The cosmopolitan tribe of television buyers: Professional ethos, personal taste and cosmopolitan capital in transnational cultural mediation. *European Journal of Cultural Studies, 15*(5), 581–603.

Kuipers, G. (2015). How national institutions mediate the global: Screen translation, institutional interdependencies, and the production of national difference in four European countries. *American Sociological Review, 80*(5), 985–1013.

Lamont, M., & Lareau, A. (1988). Cultural capital: Allusions, gaps and glissandos in recent theoretical developments. *Sociological Theory, 6*(2), 153–168.

Lamont, M., & Molnàr, V. (2002). The study of boundaries in the social sciences. *Annual Review of Sociology, 28*, 167–195.

Lizardo, O. (2011). Pierre Bourdieu as a post-cultural theorist. *Cultural Sociology, 5*(1), 25–44.

Powers, D. (2010). Rock criticism's public intellectuals. *Popular Music & Society, 33*(4), 533–548.

Prieur, A., & Savage, M. (2013). Emerging forms of cultural capital. *European Societies, 15*(2), 246–267.

Regev, M. (2013). *Pop-rock: Aesthetic cosmopolitanism in late modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Rimmer, M. (2012). Beyond omnivores and univores: The promise of a concept of musical habitus. *Cultural Sociology, 6*(3), 299–318.

Sapiro, G. (2003). Forms of politicization in the French literary field. *Theory and Society, 32*(6), 633–652.

Sapiro, G. (2010). Globalization and cultural diversity in the book market: The case of literary translations in the US and in France. *Poetics, 38*, 419–439.
Sapiro, G. (2015). Translation and symbolic capital in the era of globalization: French literature in the United States. *Cultural Sociology, 9*(3), 320–346.
Shuker, K. (1994). *Understanding popular music*. London: Routledge.
Stokes, M. (2004). Music and the global order. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 33*, 47–72.
Stokes, M. (2007). On musical cosmopolitanism. URL: http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/intlrdtable/3/. *The Macalester International Roundtable*. Paper 3.
Thornton, S. (1995). *Club cultures: Music, media and subcultural capital*. Cambridge: Polity.
Tomlinson, J. (1991). *Cultural imperialism: A critical introduction*. London: Continuum.
Toynbee, J., & Dueck, B. (Eds.). (2011). *Migrating music*. London: Routledge.
Varriale, S. (2016). Beyond distinction: Theorising cultural evaluation as a social encounter. *Cultural Sociology*, OnlineFirst. doi: 10.1177/1749975515596447.

# Part II

## Pop Music Criticism in Italy (1969–1977)

# 4

# Young, Educated and Cosmopolitan: A New Cultural Institution

This chapter reconstructs the rise of pop music criticism vis-à-vis the economic, social and cultural changes of post-war Italy, particularly between the early 1950s and late 1960s. The first section focuses on these changes as well as structural transformations in the cultural and musical field. The second section, drawing on critics' public biographies and magazines' audience surveys, reconstructs how inequalities of education, class, gender and geographical location marked the emergence of the music press. The chapter's last section examines critics' shared values and presuppositions, namely the *doxa* of pop music criticism as a new and autonomous sub-field.[1] I explore how critics drew new cultural distinctions between Italian and Anglo-American pop, different forms of Italian popular music and, more generally, between different Italies.

Overall, the chapter argues that the aesthetic and generational character of critics' distinctions obscured the social divisions which marked

[1] The concept of sub-field indicates institutional spaces that are part of broader cultural fields, but which nonetheless develop an autonomous organizational structure and set of values. Later in this chapter, I discuss the position of pop music criticism vis-à-vis Italian cultural and musical production in more detail.



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_4

the genesis of the field (and the Italian 'economic miracle' at large). Moreover, Italian music critics had to face a partly different space of possibles (Bourdieu 1996) than their Anglo-American counterparts. This space was characterized by Italy's position as importer in an increasingly global recording industry, and by the state's monopoly over the main promotional vehicles for popular music: radio and television. In this context, critics' knowledge of 1950s and 1960s Anglo-American rock and highbrow disposition – their subcultural and embodied cultural capital – were key resources for setting up new organizations and advocating new cultural distinctions.

## A New Space of Possibles: Social and Cultural Change in Post-War Italy

The rise of pop music criticism was made possible by economic, social and cultural transformations which date back to the early 1950s. This is when Italy, a rural society with high rates of illiteracy, started becoming an urban society reshaped by patterns of economic growth, social and geographical mobility (Ginsborg 1990; Lanaro 1992). Indeed, a key condition for the emergence of a specialized music press (*stampa specializzata*) was a sufficiently autonomous and differentiated consumer society, which is what post-war Italy became in the years of its 'economic boom' (1958–1963). These changes strongly reshaped the national media system as well as music production and consumption. The Italian musical field in the 1970s showed marked differences vis-à-vis the ways in which popular music had been produced, consumed and mediated in the previous two decades. Some of these changes also took place in other countries, albeit at different paces. Indeed, it has been argued that a stronger demand for education, the emergence of a distinctive youth identity and consumer culture, and the expansion of the recording industry are among the social transformations that enabled the rise of rock criticism in the USA and UK (Regev 1994; Lindberg et al. 2005). However, the organization of the media and cultural production in post-war Italy also featured significant continuities with the institutional arrangements of the Fascist

regime (1922–1943), especially a strong presence of the state in some sectors of cultural production (Colombo 1998). As a result, while British and American rock criticism were defined as spaces of relative autonomy from the market, Italian music criticism was also defined as autonomous from the state and its cultural apparatus: the light music (*musica leggera*) and mass culture (*cultura di massa*) promoted by Italian radio and television (see also Chap. 5).

## Education and Youth

A key transformation that occurred in the post-war years was the growth in young people's access to secondary and higher education, a process that drastically changed the contours of Italian society and, more specifically, the conditions of youth from the late 1950s onwards. This process was fostered by a national law (1962) making education compulsory until the age of fourteen. The law had a significant impact on younger generations. In 1961–1962, only 21.3 % of young people aged between 14 and 18 years attended high secondary school (*scuola secondaria superiore*). However, this figure steadily increased throughout the 1960s and 1970s, becoming 53 % in 1976–1977. Overall, between 1951 and 1977, the number of young people attending high secondary school grew from 416,348 to 2,197,750. This affected the demand for higher education as well, with the number of people attending university rising from 231,000 (1950–1951) to 936,000 (1975–1976). As argued by Cavalli and Leccardi (1997: 717), it is through this process that the condition of youth started being associated with the 'student condition', especially for people aged between 14 and 18 years. As I discuss further below, high educational attainment marked the experience of both critics and their readers. On the one hand, the cultural capital that critics acquired through their education became a key resource in defining the *doxa* of pop music criticism, as well as its distance from the social world of Italian light music. On the other hand, the growth of mass education provided the pop music press with an audience of young consumers capable of making and appreciating finer distinctions within the realm of popular music.

## Cultural Consumption and Social Distinction

The years of the economic boom also led to a general increase in cultural expenditure (Forgacs 1990: 132). In this respect, the 1960s saw a significant expansion in the consumption of tabloids (Sorcinelli 2005: 9–24), television (Monteleone 2003) and, as I discuss below, popular music. Furthermore, cultural consumption underwent a process of diversification that took place along generational lines. Early in the 1950s, adults and young people used to prefer the same kinds of music, tabloids and books (Cavalli and Leccardi 1997: 726–728). However, this changed as early as the second half of the 1950s, particularly in relation to music and fashion. Rock 'n' roll became the first visible sign of a youth identity, which was still tentatively articulated, rather than self-consciously defined in opposition to a parental culture (Piccone Stella 1993). Further, it was during the 1960s that the youth culture was defined as autonomous from both the culture of older generations and young people's socio-economic backgrounds, although I will argue that differences in education, class, gender and geographical location had a significant impact on the rise of pop music criticism and, as I discuss in Chap. 8, on the experience of its readers.

A growing consumer culture aimed at teenagers also provided the ground for the emergence of the first teen magazines entirely devoted to the tastes of young people (Grispigni 1998). The first Italian teen magazine (*Ciao Amici*) was launched in 1963, and was soon followed by similar initiatives, such as *Big* (1965) and *Ragazza Pop* (1966), the latter explicitly targeting girls. As argued by Tomatis (2014), Italian teen magazines played a pivotal role in establishing a symbolic distinction between 'us' (the youth) and 'them' (parents and relatives), and in the 1970s, specialized music magazines inherited this cultural schema. As I show below, the 'youth culture' became a strong symbolic weapon for music critics, as they defined the boundaries of pop music criticism along both aesthetic lines (valuable versus debased popular music) and generational lines (youth music versus adult light music). Moreover, this generational distinction became the ground for a symbolic struggle between different editorial projects, as different magazines would claim to be the 'true' representatives of Italian youth (Chap. 6).

It is important to stress that these processes of diversification went hand-in-hand with the commercial growth of Italian popular culture at large. Indeed, while young people were turning to distinctive cultural choices, tabloid magazines and television were the media chosen by a broader and undifferentiated audience. The position of radio and television in this landscape was rather peculiar. The state-controlled company RAI held a monopoly on broadcasting frequencies, both for radio (since 1944) and television (since its introduction in 1954). Subscriptions to RAI were compulsory by law for any family owning either radio or television equipment, an arrangement which remained in place after RAI lost its monopoly on broadcasting frequencies in 1976. During the post-war years, then, television became the major form of popular entertainment in Italy, with the growth of subscriptions rising hand-in-glove with the ownership of television equipment among Italian families. By 1974, RAI was able to reach 92 % of Italian families (Monteleone 2003: 372). This situation made radio and television key promotional vehicles for the Italian recording industry. They were indeed pivotal for the development of a musical-star system involving singers, whose image was constructed through such media (De Luigi 1982: 17–22). As I show in the next chapter, RAI's prominent role in the musical field was both recognized and challenged by music critics, who aimed to promote a different kind of popular music and culture.

## Music Production and Consumption

Both the production and consumption of music underwent significant changes during these years, which are partly related to the urbanization of Italy described so far. As reported by De Luigi (1982: 5–6), between the late 1940s and early 1980s, the sales figures of the recording industry grew from one million (1948) to 60 million copies (1980). The post-war years witnessed the transition from a publishing-based to a recording-based music business: 45 singles, and later LPs, became the standard for the commercial circulation of music, and popular music gained the lion's share of the industry's revenues as early as 1958 (De Luigi 1982: 17–22). However, the recording industry also contributed to the spread of musi-

cal styles which were different from the ones favoured in the early 1950s (national light songs, opera songs and early imitations of American jazz; De Luigi 1982: 11). A more competitive music business fostered the acquisition of foreign catalogues, leading to the introduction of styles like rock 'n' roll and, during the 1960s, beat, folk-rock, rhythm 'n' blues and British progressive rock[2] (the latter from the late 1960s). During the same years, multinational record companies, starting with RCA in 1949, opened sub-divisions in Italy, a process which reached its peak in 1972, with the opening of the Italian divisions of WEA and CBS (De Luigi 1982: 30–36). By this time, other 'majors' such as Decca, EMI, Phonogram and RCA had already opened sub-divisions in Italy. Overall, the Italian recording industry went through a process of increasing globalization, with Italy becoming one of the peripheries of a transnational musical field centred around American and British exports. As I discuss further in this chapter's last section, non-national musical styles also became a key symbolic resource for the development of pop music criticism. Indeed, it was through engagement with 1950s and 1960s pop-rock – a process of aesthetic socialization – that critics developed a shared rock habitus and cosmopolitan disposition towards Italian cultural trends.

There are further transformations which informed the Italian musical field, and hence the space of possibles in which critics operated. On the one hand, during the 1970s the sales figures of LPs grew from four to 20 million copies (De Luigi 1982: 53), fostering the creation of an album chart as early as 1971. On the other hand, American and British rock musicians contributed to a key cultural transformation, namely the invention of the album conceived as the coherent and original creation of an artist or creative collective. New forms of Italian popular music contributed to this process too, namely the singer-songwriter song (Santoro 2010) and Italian rock, with local bands developing autonomous artistic projects beginning in the late 1960s (Facchinotti 2001). These younger cultural producers were informed by a range of American, British and

[2] The articles I analyzed frequently refer to both American and British rock as *musica progressiva* (progressive music). Progressive rock was thus not strictly associated with a specific strand of British rock (such as the Canterbury scene), but with Anglo-American avant-garde pop in general. Alternatively, critics spoke of *musica pop* (pop music) or rock. In contrast to the Anglo-American context, pop and rock were used as synonyms, rather than in opposition to each other (Regev 1994). As I show in this chapter, it was the opposition between pop (or rock) and *musica leggera* (light music) which structured critics' discourses and the field's *doxa*.

French influences, and explicitly defined their music as original artistic creations. By the early 1970s, a local pop-rock field (Regev 2013) was fully in place. It is in relation to this redefined musical field that newly launched music magazines acted as competing institutions of legitimation for both new forms of Italian popular music and the international music trends introduced in Italy during the 1970s.

So far, I have described the social and cultural changes which made the emergence of pop music criticism in Italy possible. I have focused on transformations which affected the youngest generations born after the Second World War, and which took place in the musical and cultural field. The next section examines more specifically the music press and its actors, showing how their social trajectories (Bourdieu 1984) were shaped by the changes described above. I will show that a relatively young age and high educational attainment were key features of critics' and their readers' social profiles. However, I will also argue that the field was marked by the inequalities which had affected the Italian economic miracle during the post-war years (Ginsborg 1990; Lanaro 1992). These inequalities involve education, class, gender and geographical location, particularly the difference between North-Centre and Southern Italian regions (whose growth in the sectors of education, cultural production and consumption remained modest; Forgacs 1996). In this respect, the next section shows that the aesthetic and generational distinctions which defined the field were sustained by people coming from the urban North-Centre, based in Italian cultural and economic centers (particularly Rome), and with at least a middle-class background. Moreover, gender inequalities made pop music criticism a predominantly male profession, and music magazines a media read by a majority of male readers.

## Introducing the Field: Social Trajectories of Critics and Readers

While teen magazines had been created during the 1960s, new magazines focusing on the critical evaluation of popular music can be considered a 1970s invention. To be sure, popular music had been an object of journalistic interest at least since the inception of *Sorrisi e Canzoni* (1952),

a highly popular tabloid which addressed the lives of radio, music and (beginning in the 1960s) television celebrities.[3] Moreover, a magazine specializing in jazz music (*Musica Jazz*) had existed from 1945 onwards. However, jazz used to represent a small niche of listeners in Italy (RAI 1968: 104–116),[4] and some publications devoted to classical music and jazz did not attain national circulation (Tomatis 2005–2006: 12–14). It is only from the late 1960s that popular music criticism assumed the contours of a national and internally diversified cultural field; a development made possible by the existence of a broader audience of young music listeners. Indeed, a great number of publications were launched throughout the 1970s (Table 4.1). While some of them still followed the format of the teen magazine (*Qui Giovani*), others specialized in the coverage of Anglo-American and Italian pop-rock acts (*Super Sound*, *Nuovo Sound*). Among these, the weekly *Ciao 2001* became the most successful and long-lasting publication, with sales figures ranging between 60,000 and 80,000 copies per week (Rusconi 1976) and a position of market leadership maintained until the early 1980s (Gaspari 1981: 88–89).

*Ciao 2001* was established in 1969 as a new teen magazine (from the *merger* of *Ciao Amici* and *Big*), but it progressively abandoned the teen magazine format, and in the early 1970s started focusing increasingly on pop-rock music (Casiraghi 2005: 225). Later on, the monthlies *Muzak* and *Gong* were established as more serious alternatives to *Ciao 2001* (in 1973 and 1974 respectively), thus contributing to the diversification of the field. These magazines were set up by the same network of people, with *Gong* resulting from a split within *Muzak*'s editorial board (Chap. 6). *Muzak* and *Gong* came to represent smaller niches of readers, selling,

[3] *TV Sorrisi e Canzoni* was the principal tabloid addressing music celebrities during the 1960s and 1970s. Between 1971 and 1980, its sales figures grew up to 1.5 million copies per week (Sfardini 2001). This publication was rarely 'named' by pop music critics, but they frequently referred to tabloids as the lowest expression of Italian mass culture (see below in this chapter and Chap. 5).

[4] According to a RAI survey conducted in 1964 (RAI 1968: 104–116), about 16 % of the Italian population had a positive attitude towards jazz. However, almost 70 % of this group could not express preferences for a specific jazz style, and 49 % were unable to name a favourite musician or band. Those who did mostly favoured popular band leaders like Louis Armstrong (33 %) and Benny Goodman (9 %). The report concluded that knowledgeable jazz amateurs were only a small niche in Italy.

**Table 4.1** Pop music magazines launched during the 1970s

| 1960s | 1970s |
|---|---|
| Teen magazines | Specialist music magazines |
| *Big* (1965–1967, Rome) | *Ciao 2001* (1969–1994, 1999–2000 Rome) |
| *Ciao Amici* (1963–1967, Milan) | *Gong* (1974–1978, Milan) |
| *Ciao Big* (1967–1969, Rome) | *Mucchio Selvaggio* (1977 onwards, Rome) |
| *Ragazza Pop* (1966-unknown, Rome) | *Muzak* (1973–1976, Rome) |
| | *Nuovo Sound* (1975–1981, Rome) |
| | *Popster* (1978–1980, Rome) |
| | *Qui Giovani* (1970–1974, Milan) |
| | *Rockerilla* (1978 onwards, Savona) |
| | *Super Sound* (1972–1974, Rome) |
| | *Sound Flash* (1972–1973, Rome) |

respectively, up to 35,000 copies, and between 20,000 and 15,000 copies per month (Rusconi 1976; Bolelli 1979).[5]

Specialized music magazines explicitly situated themselves within the youth culture (see below). Indeed, according to data collected by *Ciao 2001*, *Gong* and *Muzak* via mail questionnaires between 1974 and 1976, young people were their main audience: a young, relatively educated and significantly male audience (Table 4.2).[6]

Readers were aged between 13 and 25 years, with the majority of them being in their late teens or early twenties.[7] About 70 % defined

[5] The rationale for choosing these three magazines as case studies is discussed in Appendix 1. See Casiraghi (2005) for a general discussion of other music magazines active in the same years.

[6] Table 4.2 summarizes data which were published by *Ciao 2001* (n. 22, 6 June 1976), *Muzak* (n. 12, October 1974; n. 12, April 1976) and *Gong* (n. 6, June 1975; booklet enclosed with the issue). These data were collected at different times and with different methodologies, and as a result must be viewed with caution. They should be considered as different 'snapshots' of the audience which show some major common trends. The data reported by *Ciao 2001* and *Gong* are based on random samples of 1000 and 586 questionnaires respectively; *Muzak*'s data are based on the total number of questionnaires received by the magazine (13,678). *Muzak* launched a second survey in 1976, publishing findings which are similar to those published in 1974. For the second survey, though, the methodology was not published.

[7] The magazines grouped their data according to different age categories, which are reproduced in Table 4.2. The only exception is *Ciao 2001*, as it reported the proportion of readers for each year (from 13 to 32 years old). To increase comparability, I recoded the data of *Ciao 2001* according to the age categories of *Muzak.* This makes the data easier to display and compare across magazines. Recoding the data of *Ciao 2001* according to the categories of *Gong* would not change the substance of my claim: that is, the majority of magazines' readers were likely to be in their late teens or early twenties.

**Table 4.2** Magazines' readership

| | Ciao *2001* | Muzak | Gong |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | Younger than 17 (33.8 %) | Younger than 17 (18.6 %) | Younger than 15 (6.5 %) |
| | 17–20 (48.9 %) | 17–20 (48.3 %) | 16–18 (33.4 %) |
| | – | – | 19–21 (35.2 %) |
| | 21–25 (14.4 %) | 21–25 (26 %) | 22–24 (14.1 %) |
| | Older than 25 (1.9 %) | Older than 25 (7 %) | Older than 24 (10.8 %) |
| | Unanswered (1.0 %) | – | – |
| Education | Students (68.6 %) | Students (62.7 %) | Students (57.1 %) |
| | – | Working students (13.2 %) | Working students (14.2 %) |
| | Workers (25.6 %) | Workers (20.3 %) | Workers (24.9 %) |
| | Unemployed (2.1 %) | – | – |
| | Unanswered (3.7 %) | Military service (4.8 %) | Unanswered (3.8 %) |
| Sex | Unreported | Men (73.2 %) | Men (73.4 %) |
| | Unreported | Women (26.8 %) | Women (26.6 %) |
| Socio-economic background | Unreported | Readers framed as coming from middle class (*piccola borghesia*) and working class (*proletariato*) in equal measure | Readers classified as 'middle-class' (60.4 %), 'upper and upper-middle' (18.7 %), 'lower-middle' (18.8 %) and 'lower' (2.1 %) classes |
| Geographical distribution | Unreported | Readers framed as coming mostly from the North-Centre (*settentrionali*) | North-West (33.3 %)<br>North-East (24.6 %)<br>Centre (20.3 %)<br>South and islands (21.8 %) |

themselves as students (that is, secondary school or university students) or working students (*studenti lavoratori*), whereas workers represented a smaller group of readers. The presence of workers, along with the monthlies' data about class, suggest some variety in readers' socio-economic backgrounds. However, the fuzziness of these indicators and the way the

data are reported (e.g., discursively for *Muzak*) require caution. A better indicator of some degree of diversity is the presence of working students, who were more likely to come from less privileged backgrounds (Ginsborg 1990). Similarly, regional and age differences were likely to increase the readership's diversity, the latter being also an indicator of differences in educational qualifications (namely 'institutionalized' cultural capital; Bourdieu 1986). As I discuss in Chap. 8, these differences emerge also in readers' letters, as they frequently described the Italian youth as a space of intensely felt inequalities.

The trajectory of music critics was similarly marked by the expansion of secondary and university education, although they were slightly older than their readers. Also, like their readers, critics were mostly male. This is what emerges from an analysis of 34 biographical profiles of critics working for *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong* (Table 4.3).[8] Most music critics were in their twenties during the years 1973–1977, being born between 1949 and 1957. They also had significantly high educational attainment: those mentioning their education were graduates, university students, or had at least a high secondary school *diploma.* Crucially, those mentioning secondary education went through the *liceo*. This was (and still is) the most prestigious form of secondary education in Italy, and its *diploma* was the only title granting access to university courses until 1969 (albeit a partial liberalization of university access had already started in 1961, see Barbagli 1974: 386).

The *liceo* was the educational path usually taken by the upper and middle classes,[9] and despite a broadened demand for education, it remained devoted to this task. Indeed, during the 1950s and 1960s the social

[8] This is a sample of convenience, as it represents all critics on which I was able to find biographical information. Biographical profiles range from very detailed accounts to basic information about place and date of birth, education and professional trajectory. The sample represents the founders and main writers of the three magazines for the years under study; it lacks information mostly about occasional collaborators. A list of names and sources is available on request.

[9] I use upper and middle class following Barbagli's historical study of the Italian education system (1974). Given their successful transition through *licei* and university, critics were less likely to be children of 'dependent workers' (factory and rural workers) and more likely to be children of 'autonomous workers' (professionals and entrepreneurs). While this distinction does not take into account dependent workers with high cultural capital (like teachers and civil servants), it is sufficiently robust to reveal the structural exclusion of working-class children from the *licei*'s elitist culture (Cavalli and Leccardi 1997).

**Table 4.3** Critics writing for *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong* (1973–1977)

| | |
|---|---|
| Date of birth | 1950–1957: 16 |
| | 1945–1949: 6 |
| | 1942–1944: 3 |
| | 1938: 1 |
| | 1933: 1 |
| | No mention to date of birth: 7 |
| Education | High secondary school: 17[a] |
| | *Liceo*: 15 |
| | non-specified or other: 2 |
| | Degree: 12 |
| | 7 mention *liceo* as secondary school |
| | No mention to education: 5 |
| Place of birth | North Italy: *Milan* (3), *La Spezia* (2), *Turin* (1), *Novara* (1), *Parma* (1), *Ravenna* (1) |
| | Centre: *Rome* (13) |
| | South and islands: *Naples* (3), *Benevento* (1), *Pescara* (1), *Sassari* (1) |
| | Other: *Lubecca* – Germany (1) |
| | No mention to place of birth (5) |
| Gender | Men: 26 |
| | Women: 8[b] |

[a]Figure includes university drop-outs (1) and people who did not specify if university attendance led to a degree (4)
[b]Only three wrote regularly about music

composition of *liceali* (students graduating from *licei*) remained relatively stable: graduates with a working class background were 7.57 % in 1952–1953; they were still only 11.03 % in 1969–1970 (Barbagli 1974: 373–381). Indeed, *licei* indirectly penalized people from a working-class background, who usually enrolled into technical or professional institutes (Cavalli and Leccardi: 716–717). While many critics mention *liceo* as an educational attainment, those who graduated were likely to have gone through such a path in order to access higher education (see Table 4.3). This suggests, at the very least, that Italian music critics usually came from a middle or upper-middle class background, a profile which is confirmed by the more detailed biographies of some founders and directors of the magazines.[10] More generally, critics' educational qualifications

[10] While there are some important differences among individual trajectories, an upper or middle-class background (as defined in note n. 9) is what emerges from the biographies of Giaime Pintor (director of *Muzak*), Saverio Rotondi (director and co-owner of *Ciao 2001*), Marco Fumagalli

were still a rare currency among Italian youth, and even more among the Italian population.[11] *Liceali* represented 28.5 % of high school attendees in 1976–1977, and high school graduates for all curricula were only 49.2 % among those 19 years old. University attendees were 18.2 % among those 19–25 years old, and high drop-out rates kept the number of graduates much lower (ISTAT 2012: 367–368, 377, 379).

Gender inequality similarly affected the rise of pop music criticism. It did not only shape the composition of editorial boards, but music magazines' division of labour. The sample of female journalists reported in Table 4.3 includes only three women who wrote about music with some regularity: Maria Laura Giulietti (*Ciao 2001* ), Fiorella Gentile (*Ciao 2001*) and Gloria Mattioni (*Gong*). Other women in the sample either published about social and political issues or were not involved with writing.[12] This was a significantly contradictory arrangement. As I show in Chaps. 7 and 8, Italian critics had significant awareness of gender inequalities and their impact on music production, consumption and society at large. Nonetheless, such awareness did not translate into a public reflection about gender inequalities within the music press. Moreover, *Muzak* and *Gong* gave regular space to feminism, sexuality and gender as topics of discussion on their pages (especially from 1975 onwards). They also hosted feminist activists writing about such topics,[13] and *Muzak* had a woman as its co-editor beginning in July 1975 (Lidia Ravera). Nonetheless, they never wrote about music, and while some women wrote regularly about music on *Ciao 2001* , they remained a minority in a predominantly male editorial board.[14]

(founding member of *Gong*), Marco Lombardo Radice (*Muzak*), Lidia Ravera (co-director of *Muzak*), Luigi Manconi (*Muzak*) and Alessandro Portelli (*Muzak*).

[11] Among the Italian population, upper-secondary school graduates (not just *liceali*) were about 6.9 % in 1971 and 11.5 % in 1981. Graduates were a scant 1.8 % in 1971 and 2.8 % in 1981 (ISTAT 2012: 352).

[12] These were Francesca Grazzini (*Gong*), Emina Cevro-Vukotic (*Gong*), Lidia Ravera (*Muzak*), Mariù Safier (*Ciao 2001*) and photographer Silvia Lelli Masotti (*Gong*).

[13] Lidia Ravera and Agnese De Donato wrote about such topics in *Muzak*. In *Gong*, they were frequently addressed by Gloria Mattioni and Emina Cevro-Vukotic. A number of other women wrote about gender and sexuality in the monthlies, but on a more occasional basis.

[14] While Maria Laura Giulietti was among the main critics of *Ciao 2001*, other women writing regularly about music (but to a lesser extent) were Fiorella Gentile, Mimi J. Silva and Barbara Woods.

Along with education, class and gender, critics' biographies also reveal the significance of geographical inequalities. The majority of critics came from North-Centre urban centers, with 13 people out of 34 being born in Rome, Italy's capital and most populated city. While others were originally from Northern cities (like Milan, Turin, Parma), only six people came from the South, with three out of six being born in Naples, Italy's third biggest city and the closest to Rome among Italy's urban centers.[15] By and large, these data suggest that people coming from Southern peripheries, and without a sufficient amount of economic and cultural capital, were very unlikely to become involved with the music press as writers during the 1970s. Moreover, the production of music magazines was strongly centralized in Rome and Milan. These were the cities where both 1960s teen magazines and 1970s music magazines were produced, and where their editorial boards were based (see Table 4.1). According to the magazines' editorial pages, it was here that the larger apparatus sustaining the circulation of magazines was situated, that is, the company distributing the magazines nationally (Parrini and Co.) and the companies providing advertising. The offices of record companies were also concentrated in Rome and Milan (De Luigi 1982; Gaspari 1981), thus making these cities pivotal for the emergence of the field.

The popular music press, in essence, was marked by social inequalities which had impacted other sectors of cultural production (Forgacs 1990) and, more generally, Italy's economic miracle (Lanaro 1992; Ginsborg 1990). However, critics defined the field's *doxa* mostly through aesthetic and generational distinctions. It is important to keep in mind, therefore, that the social construction of pop music criticism, while emphasizing a shared and potentially inclusive generational identity, was shaped by a subset of urban, educated and upper- or middle-class young people. Some of their readers, indeed, did not fail to recognize these privileges (Chap. 8). The next section explores how critics mobilized their subcultural knowledge of Anglo-American rock and their Kantian disposition

[15] The other Southern-born critics came from Sardinia (Luigi Manconi, *Muzak*), Campania (Saverio Rotondi, *Ciao 2001*) and Abruzzo (Fiorella Gentile, *Ciao 2001*). However, they moved to Milan, Rome and Bologna, respectively, to attend university.

towards cultural practices (their embodied cultural capital) to draw new distinctions within popular music and culture.

## A Shared Commitment: Breaking with Italian Light Music and Culture

While *Ciao 2001* , *Muzak* and *Gong* developed different positions between 1973 and 1977 (Chaps. 5 and 6), the field of pop music criticism was primarily defined as something other than the world of Italian light music, a style whose contours had been shaped by the *Sanremo Festival*. Since its first television broadcast (1955), this musical competition became one of the most popular media events in Italy.[16] In terms of musical style, the 'Sanremo song' has been described as based on 'the vocal, melodic and orchestral mechanisms of the *bel canto* tradition, with traces of various local urban traditions'. The lyrics used to be 'openly moralizing and rich in rhetoric', while addressing 'the traditional values of country, church and family'. (Agostini 2007: 390). However, pop music critics did not simply reject a musical style, but the social and professional world associated with it, which included *Sanremo* and other musical shows broadcast by RAI. *Ciao 2001* was the first magazine to take a position against these institutions and against Italian singers and performers deemed part of their world. The tenets of this critique were already well defined in 1973, as shown by the following feature about the ninth *Mostra della musica leggera* (Festival of light music). The *mostra* was a Sanremo-style event which, beginning in 1969, awarded a prize to the best-selling Italian 45 single during the previous year. Like *Sanremo*, it was broadcast on national television. *Ciao 2001* framed the 1973 edition as emblematic of a musical, generational and national culture which critics rejected primarily on the basis of its low aesthetic qualities. It is according to this logic that the following excerpt, while evaluating the performance of the

[16] *Sanremo* had an audience between 18 and 25 million viewers during the 1970s, and was frequently one of the most popular ten shows annually broadcast by RAI (Sfardini 2001). However, the songs launched by the festival were not necessarily successful once released as singles (Facchinotti 2001: 43–45).

festival's international guest (Diana Ross), draws symbolic boundaries between Italian and American light music:

> The presence of Diana Ross allows for some comparisons between American light music and ours. There is no need to say that these two worlds are the antithesis of each other. […] The [Italian] music was cheesy [*stucchevole*] and loud. On the contrary, a minimal rhythmic session (piano, guitar and drums) provided a smooth background for Diana Ross's limpid notes. The violins that had accompanied Gigliola Cinquetti's *Il tango delle capinere* had finally stopped! She even offered an unrequested encore with *La spagnola*; it entranced the wrinklies who had sacrificed their pensions to attend the show.[17]

Here, the performance of Diana Ross becomes a resource to depict both different aesthetic cultures and social worlds. On the one hand, Italian light music – represented by the popular singer Gigliola Cinquetti – is framed as cheesy and loud in contrast to the elegance of Ross's music. On the other hand, Cinquetti also represents an audience of elders, who are harshly parodied as willing to invest their pensions to attend the show. As in other music features, the boundaries between Italian and Anglo-American popular music are defined along both aesthetic and generational lines. This difference is reinforced by framing foreign pop music as 'music of the present' (that is, aesthetically modern) and as the product of a more meritocratic professional world:

> She [Diana Ross] represents a different world, where you have to sweat, study for years and go through tough experiences before becoming a big [star]. These comments are not the result of xenophilia, which would be a form of provincialism. They are due to a simple fact: there is a gulf, which perhaps will never be shortened, between our singers and foreign ones (American, English, French). Everything [in Italy] is like it was ten or twenty years ago, and if we can still save face is thanks to some singer-songwriters and pop bands.[18]

[17] Belardi, R. (1973). 'Venezia: dal colera alla spagnola'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 40 (7 October): 26–27.
[18] Belardi, R. (1973): 27.

The singer-songwriters and pop bands mentioned by the article, in line with their American and European counterparts, are the object of critics' cosmopolitan disposition. This disposition praised a different Italian culture and hence new distinctions between avant-garde and lower forms of Italian popular music. This emerges also in the following article from *Ciao 2001*, which comments upon the interest of British music magazines like *Melody Maker* and *NME* in Italian popular music:

> The renewed interest [for Italian musicians] among the English audience comes at the best of times. However, we hoped for a different orientation; that is, Premiata Forneria Marconi, Banco del Mutuo Soccorso, Orme, Osanna or Alan Sorrenti. In other words, *our avant-garde artists*. […] One wonders if people like Celentano and Battisti could really make way for our avant-garde bands, or if they will compromise a long-awaited exportation![19] [my emphasis]

The bands mentioned by the critic belong to the milieu of Italian progressive rock. In contrast to this avant-garde, a popular performer who used to be associated with 1950s rock 'n' roll (Celentano) and one of the most popular singer-songwriters of the 1970s (Battisti) could be associated with an aesthetically and socially older Italy. More generally, the magazines set up in the early 1970s frequently expressed cultural closeness to the avant-gardes of Italian popular music. The newly launched *Muzak* and *Gong*, in this respect, devoted several articles to Italian pop bands (see below). On the contrary, musicians considered representatives of light music rarely received any coverage from these magazines, although the last example shows that the boundaries of light music were themselves subject to historical revision.

The appreciation of music critics for Italian pop-rock acts shows that they were participating in what Regev (2013) calls aesthetic cosmopolitanism. As discussed in Chap. 3, aesthetic cosmopolitanism is a globally oriented musical taste which has emerged in various countries affected by the introduction of Anglo-American pop-rock. This cultural disposition is articulated by music producers who have been exposed to

[19] Caffarelli, E. (1974). 'Avanguardia e mercato. Chi preferiscono gli inglesi?'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 10 (10 March): 30.

this kind of music. However, it does not simply result in a celebration of foreign pop-rock, but enhances new forms of national uniqueness and the production of local forms of pop-rock. This process thus fosters a symbolic struggle between new music producers and the field of national culture. While Italian critics were participating to a similar struggle, they had to define their cultural uniqueness by addressing a complex web of institutions, practices and technologies. Indeed, the break with light music was also a break with certain production and consumption practices, as well as with other cultural, political and economic institutions (Chaps. 5 and 6). As regards production practices, critics supported musicians who were authors rather than just singers or performers, hence rejecting the division of labour between songwriters and singers, an arrangement associated with the world of light music. Moreover, these artists used to release albums rather than singles, with the former being conceived, at least beginning in the late 1960s, as the vehicle of an original artistic discourse (Facchinotti 2001). The article below, published by *Muzak*, exemplifies how critics drew boundaries between a world of singers and songs and a world of authors and albums:

> [45 singles are] the sign of a macroscopic involution. *They are enjoying a crass and triumphalist revival*, thus reminding us of *what a monstrous money-making machine they have been in the past*. […] This revival can be interpreted as the revenge petit bourgeois adults [*adulti piccolo-borghesi*] are taking over the power teenagers have had over music charts for many years, before shifting their attention to other things such as *the more refined and expert listening required by LPs.*
>
> […]
>
> *The charts have never been an example of intelligence and taste*. It is sufficient to give a quick look to the current trends to get a sense of the deep idiocy they have reached […]. A lot of old idols (Mina, Celentano, Albano) still collect successes despite the fact that they should retire once and for all […]. Even the most anonymous Italian-style groups [*complessini all' italiana*] do well (Equipe 84, Pooh, Camaleonti, etc…), despite being old glories *basically indistinguishable between each other*.[20] [my emphasis]

[20] Renzi, R. (1975). 'E' leggera: pesa alcuni miliardi', *Muzak*, n. 5 (September): 8–9.

This excerpt remarks on the distinction between two different ways of producing and consuming popular music, casting a negative light on the realm of sameness and lack of originality of 45 singles. This is the realm of a purely economic logic (45 singles are 'a monstrous money-making machine') and of 'Italian-style groups' (rather than Italian pop bands), whose success depends on adults' 'petty bourgeois' taste.[21] As in other excerpts, critics drew a combination of aesthetic boundaries (art vs. commerce) and generational boundaries (youth vs. adults) to distinguish between the worlds of pop-rock and Italian light music. However, critics also had to define a space of autonomy from the practices of musicians. Indeed their relationship with both Italian and foreign pop-rock was not unconditionally supportive, but was framed as an open question. What critics asked of musicians was to find their own personality and artistic voice. The primacy given to artistic quality shows that critics' cosmopolitan disposition was sustained by their embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986), that is, their familiarity with highbrow categories. It was on the basis of highbrow qualities that music, regardless of its nationality, was evaluated (see also Chap. 7). And it was critics' cultural capital that made it possible to define music criticism as an autonomous sub-field of the local pop-rock scene. The question emerges in the following article from *Ciao 2001*, which assesses the state of the art of Italian pop-rock:

> Our pop music has only five or six names which could compete with the hundreds of good groups coming from abroad. Perhaps they are simply better supported, more personal and [musically] more prepared […]. It is true what we have been saying for a year or so: things are changing, but this does not mean that [Italian pop musicians] must stop working [on their music] or start congratulating themselves. Quite the reverse: they should be more and more committed [to their music]. […] A truly honest artist should always work towards improvement of himself and his work. Only in this way his work will reach the highest qualitative levels.[22]

[21] The word *piccolo borghese* (petty bourgeois) can assume strong moral connotations in the Italian context. It can indicate a conservative mentality and lifestyle, one associated with lower-status professional groups (like shopkeepers or sales people). In the last excerpt, it reinforces the idea of a conservative musical taste.

[22] Gentile, F. (1973). 'Incontro con i cantautori: "…e voi che ne pensate"?'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 46 (18 November): 45–46.

As in other features on Italian music, what emerges is a relative homology (Bourdieu 1984) between pop music criticism and the milieu of Italian pop-rock. Critics and musicians occupied a similar position in the musical field, since they both supported a different kind of national popular music and different production and consumption practices. Moreover, musicians and critics were likely to share a similar social and generational trajectory. Indeed, the social profile of singer-songwriters (Santoro 2010: 57–58) was very close to that of music critics, as set forth in the previous section. Nevertheless, while participating in the definition of an Italian pop-rock field, critics were willing to define a degree of autonomy from the practices of musicians: a space which implied ongoing evaluation and the possibility of reshaping genre-narratives. This was particularly the case for the monthlies, whose more normative aesthetic boundaries (Chap. 6) resulted in a more critical view of national pop-rock. Indeed, the monthlies were rarely satisfied with Italian musicians' artistic efforts, which were seen as 'partial',[23] 'discontinuous'[24] or as just a 'velleity' of artistic innovation.[25]

## The Genesis of Cosmopolitan Dispositions

In order to understand critics' cosmopolitan disposition, one also has to consider their socialization into the sounds, images and narratives of 1950s and 1960s rock. The significance of this early encounter emerges in critics' narratives of aesthetic discovery, which emphasize a shared musical education based on Anglo-American popular music:

> I remember when several years ago it was considered outrageous to go out with short skirts and long hair […] I also remember thousands of discussions about the emergence of a new music […] they were pronounced with

[23] Editorial board (1974). 'Proposta da un cascinale: Sensations' Fix'. *Gong*, n. 3 (December): 23–24.

[24] Antonucci Ferrara, A. (1975). 'Intervista a Franco Battiato'. *Gong*, n. 9 (September): 65–67.

[25] Dessì, S. (1975). 'Avanti e De André'. *Muzak*, n. 4 (July): 46. For reasons of space, I do not provide a full exploration of the magazines' different stances towards Italian pop-rock and singer-songwriters. However, in Chap. 7 I further explore differences in their strategies of coverage.

> some doubts. Was it culture or otherwise? If [Eugenio] Montale's poems are culture and make us shiver, and if Cesare Pavese's images are striking for their beauty, then John Coltrane's saxophone and Bob Dylan's long spoken-songs deserve the same consideration. It does not matter if the former has gone and the latter is doing different things today. We should keep sustaining the cause […].[26]

This narrative pairs the discovery of a new music with participation into an emerging youth identity (the reference to short skirts and long hair). Moreover, it shows that critics used their cultural capital to appropriate new musical forms: Bob Dylan and John Coltrane were compared (still with 'some doubts') to Eugenio Montale and Cesare Pavese, two key figures of the Italian literary modernism. A highbrow understanding of culture, then, structured critics' encounter with rock and (for some) jazz. Similar narratives of aesthetic socialization were used by the monthlies to present themselves to their potential readership. In October 1973, the newly launched *Muzak* published an article called 'self-portrait of the muzak generation' as its first editorial. The article, which was attributed to the editorial board, contextualizes the magazine's focus on *muzak* (i.e. music without value) through a narrative of foreign musical education:

> Three, four, five or perhaps ten years ago (who remembers Elvis?) anyone could find a momentary satisfaction in music. It could be marijuana, it could be another rum 'n' cola, it could be a partner to love […] or the politics expressed by the simple, [Woody] Guthrie-like sound of Bob Dylan and the early Joan Baez. It could be Pink Floyd's rationality or the craziness of Zappa (always to be praised); or the sonic and vocal evolutions of the unforgettable Jimi [Hendrix]. It could be – why not? – the Beatles, even the disgusting *muzak* of 'Michelle' [the Beatles' song], and the Rolling [Stones], a landmark for so many deaf and sad ears. […] Muzak is ugly music [*musicaccia*]. Well, ugly music is what we're interested in, perhaps to turn it into proper music.[27]

[26] Giulietti, M. L. (1975). 'Allora, esiste la cultura rock?' *Ciao 2001*, n. 45 (16 November): 17.
[27] Editorial board (1973). 'Autoritratto della muzak generation'. *Muzak*, n. 1 (October): 2.

As in the earlier excerpt, Anglo-American pop-rock is part of a generational account of everyday life; it is music which has left a mark on critics' sensibilities, but which still needs to be treated (and hence legitimized) as 'proper music'. Put otherwise, the socialization process evoked by these narratives is the pre-condition for the (later) symbolic break with Italian light music. It was the exposure to Anglo-American popular music that provided critics with a different tradition, a rock habitus that structured their evaluation of Italian popular culture and gave them the expertise, motivation and 'belief' (Bourdieu 1996) to launch new editorial projects. Although the monthlies openly questioned the position of *Ciao 2001* within the pop-rock tradition (Chap. 5), all three magazines promoted a similar cosmopolitan disposition. In this respect, *Gong*, launched in 1974, situated itself within the same aesthetic and generational narrative:

> Once upon a time there was Sanremo… a world of flowers, paillettes and light songs [*canzonette*] that had words rhyming with 'heart'. The press covering this kind of events was all about the lives of celebrities [*spiccioli di cronaca mondana*]. However, the 1960s saw the beat explosion, that strange 'thing' coming from England. […] Suddenly, people in their twenties stopped yawning. During those years, some kids of good will and a few adventurous magazines acted as improvised chroniclers for a youth hungry for new sounds. They provided some information and a lot of cheap myths [*facili miti*]. But the times have changed and the myths have been put back to their right perspective. A new musical culture has emerged and the interests of the youth have become more thoughtful. These are the needs which give birth to *Gong* […].[28]

As I go on to discuss in Chap. 7, the evaluation of new pop-rock acts was performed using this common past as yardstick of evaluation. In other words, critics' encounters with 1950s and 1960s rock created an enduring evaluative disposition, one that structured later musical encounters. In this respect, while critics' high educational attainment gave them the resources to evaluate popular music along the lines of a highbrow

[28] Antonucci Ferrara, A. (1975). 'Perché Gong'. *Gong*, n. 6 (June): no pages (booklet enclosed with the issue).

discourse,[29] their musical socialization provided them with subcultural capital based on knowledge of American and British popular music. These are the main resources that critics employed to construct the pop music press as a new and globally oriented cultural field, as well as to distinguish specialist music magazines from the still popular format of the teen magazine (the 'adventurous magazines' mentioned in the last excerpt, which provided 'some information and a lot of cheap myths', rather than critical expertise).

The last example's nod to a press that is 'all about the lives of celebrities' anticipates an issue which I discuss in the following chapter. Music magazines had to define their position vis-à-vis a pre-existing apparatus of music promotion, which encompassed radio, television and entertainment tabloids, that is, Italy's most popular media. The centrality of the state's cultural apparatus as a promotional vehicle of popular music, and the commercial success of other media (like tabloids) made economic autonomy a serious concern for critics. They saw economic capital and commercial success as a means to define new positions in the musical field, rather than as in contradiction to their projects of cultural legitimation (Bourdieu 1996). In other words, economic autonomy was seen as a viable alternative to the state's control over popular culture.

## Conclusion

This chapter has provided a socio-historical narrative about critics' and their readers' social trajectories, and about the space of possibles that critics had to face in order to establish a new cultural institution. Furthermore, I have provided a qualitative exploration of critics' shared *doxa*, namely the symbolic boundaries that they drew to construct pop music criticism as a young, cosmopolitan sub-field devoted to the artistic legitimation of popular music. I have analyzed the ways in which critics mobilized their embodied cultural capital and subcultural knowledge to define new

[29] Of course, some critics could have 'inherited' this cultural capital via their families (Bourdieu 1984). However, this is difficult to assess because of lacunas in critics' public biographies. In this context, educational trajectories provide a more robust indicator of highbrow socialization.

practices and identities vis-à-vis the Italian musical and cultural field, and have argued that, while the music press was constructed along aesthetic and generational lines, it was marked by social divisions which were rarely addressed by critics, at least until their readers made them visible (Chap. 8). To be young, educated and cosmopolitan, then, meant also being at the centre of Italy's economic development and urbanization, coming from an upper- or middle-class background and being mostly male. I now turn to the field's institutional differentiation, analyzing the strategies through which music magazines defined differences between themselves and different cosmopolitan projects.

## Bibliography

Agostini, R. (2007). The Italian *canzone* and the Sanremo Festival: Change and continuity in Italian mainstream pop of the 1960s. *Popular Music, 26*(3), 389–408.

Barbagli, M. (1974). *Disoccupazione intellettuale e sistema scolastico in Italia: 1859–1973*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Bolelli, F. (1979). Movimento e scrittura nell'area del pop. In P. Alfierj & G. Mazzone (Eds.), *I fiori di Gutenberg: analisi e prospettive dell'editoria alternativa, marginale, pirata in Italia e Europa*. Roma: Arcana.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). New York: Greenwood.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The rules of art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Casiraghi, G. (2005). *Anni Settanta. Generazione rock*. Roma: Editori Riuniti.

Cavalli, A., & Leccardi, C. (1997). Le culture giovanili. In F. Barbagallo (Ed.), *La storia dell'Italia repubblicana* (Vol. 3, pp. 709–800). Torino: Einaudi.

Colombo, F. (1998). *La cultura sottile: Media e industria culturale in Italia dall'Ottocento agli anni Novanta*. Milano: Bompiani.

De Luigi, M. (1982). *L'industria discografica in Italia*. Roma: Lato Side Editori.

Facchinotti, L. (2001). L'industria discografica: produzione e consumo. *Comunicazioni Sociali, 23*(1), 42–50.

Forgacs, D. (1990). *Italian culture in the industrial era 1880–1990: Cultural industries, politics and the public*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Forgacs, D. (1996). Cultural consumption: 1940s to 1990s. In D. Forgacs & R. Lumley (Eds.), *Italian cultural studies: An introduction* (pp. 273–290). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gaspari, M. (1981). *L'industria della canzone*. Roma: Editori Riuniti.

Ginsborg, P. (1990). *A history of contemporary Italy: Society and politics 1943–1988*. London: Penguin.

Grispigni, M. (1998). S'avanza uno strano lettore. La stampa giovanile prima del '68. In M. Grispigni & P. Ghione (Eds.), *Giovani prima della rivolta* (pp. 55–72). Roma: Manifesto Libri.

ISTAT. (2012). *L'Italia in 150 anni. Sommario di statistiche storiche, 1861–2010*. Roma: ISTAT.

Lanaro, S. (1992). *Storia dell'Italia repubblicana: dalla fine della guerra agli anni Novanta*. Venezia: Marsilio.

Lindberg, U., Gudmundsson, G., Michelsen, M., & Weisethaunet, H. (2005). *Rock criticism from the beginning: Amusers, bruisers & cool-headed cruisers*. New York: Peter Lang.

Monteleone, F. (2003). *Storia della radio e della televisione in Italia* (3rd ed.). Venezia: Marsilio.

Piccone Stella, S. (1993). *La prima generazione. Ragazze e ragazzi nel miracolo economico italiano*. Milano: Franco Angeli.

RAI. (1968). *La cultura e i gusti musicali degli italiani*. Torino: RAI.

Regev, M. (1994). Producing artistic value: The case of rock music. *The Sociological Quarterly, 35*(1), 85–102.

Regev, M. (2013). *Pop-rock: Aesthetic cosmopolitanism in late modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Rusconi, M. (1976). La rivista musicale cambia disco. *L'Espresso.* http://stampamusicale.altervista.org/Articolo%20L%27espresso/index.htm. Accessed 12 Feb 2016.

Santoro, M. (2010). *Effetto Tenco: genealogia della canzone d'autore*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Sfardini, A. (2001). Gli anni Settanta: dati di scenario e di consumo. *Comunicazioni Sociali, 23*(1), 75–99.

Sorcinelli, P. (Ed.). (2005). *Gli Anni del Rock (1954–1977)*. Bologna: Bononia University Press.

Tomatis, J. (2005–2006). *Cantautori 1958–1967: ideologia di un genere musicale*. MPhil thesis. University of Turin, Italy.

Tomatis, J. (2014). "This is our music": Italian teen pop press and genres in the 1960s. *IASPM@Journal, 4*(2), 24–42.

# 5

# Economic Cosmopolitanism: The Case of *Ciao 2001*

This chapter considers how market forces and economic capital shaped critics' projects of cultural legitimation. More specifically, it focuses on the magazine which gained market leadership of the pop music press, the weekly *Ciao 2001*, and explores how this publication implemented an ideological project praising competitive market structures and a relativist view of cultural hierarchies.

The chapter's first section investigates the importance of economic autonomy for all field actors, regardless of their material resources and cultural politics. It unpacks how differences between economic autonomy and commercial success shaped the views of music critics. The rest of the chapter focuses on *Ciao 2001*. The second section examines how this publication turned its commercial success into symbolic capital, that is, into a moral argument about the superiority of market-driven cultural production versus state-funded cultural institutions. By corollary, the third section explores how the critics of *Ciao 2001* mobilized their cultural and subcultural capital to 'keep up' with changing market trends, rather than to reject market imperatives as postulated in Bourdieu's field theory (1996). Finally, the last section discusses the weekly's economic cosmopolitanism, namely its view of cultural globalization as economic



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_5

modernization and its appraisal of foreign market structures and commercial innovations.

Looking at how cultural and economic capital can sustain each other, the chapter problematizes Bourdieu's distinction between large-scale (commercial) and small-scale (avant-garde) cultural production. As discussed in Chap. 3, the outdatedness of Bourdieu's distinction has been stressed by several scholars. However, this literature has rarely explored the symbolic valorization of commercial success, or the extent to which cultural and subcultural capital can contribute to market recognition. Similarly, the sociology of cultural evaluation (Chap. 2) has mostly ignored the influence of market forces and commercial success on critics' legitimation strategies. In line with the framework outlined in Chap. 3, I sensitize Bourdieu's opposition between cultural and economic capital to the ways in which these resources were used by different publications, considering the national and transnational space of possibles which made their strategies both possible and meaningful.

## Economic Autonomy Versus Commercial Success

As discussed in the previous chapter, Italian music critics predicated a symbolic break with the world of Italian light music, rejecting this genre's technologies (45 singles) and institutions (the *Sanremo Festival*). However, despite their emphasis on artistic innovation, critics did not reject market pressures *in toto*. Indeed, they were fully conscious that pop music criticism, as a new cultural field, could be sustained only through a sufficient amount of economic autonomy, that is, the economic support of readers and advertisers.

The idea that critical evaluation of popular music should be economically viable was supported by all music magazines. To be sure, the monthlies *Muzak* and *Gong* developed a more radical cultural politics after their inceptions, with their position vis-à-vis market actors like advertisers, record labels and concert organizers becoming more contradictory (Chap. 6). Nonetheless, the early editorials of both magazines show full aware-

ness of market structures and their importance for the very existence of pop music criticism. Indeed, they conceived of economic autonomy as a pre-condition for a serious and ideologically autonomous cultural project. The editorial board of *Muzak* explicitly addressed this question when the magazine decided to accept advertising from companies outside the musical field:

> While reading the current issue, our readers will notice the change from discography-based adverts to a more generic kind of advertising. […] To receive adverts only from record companies was a risk for our freedom. Indeed a record company may withdraw its adverts if we review one of its bands negatively. Also, they could put pressure on us or make 'offers', which could jeopardize our honesty. On the contrary, how could an airline company or a producer of shoes have any influence? […]. [I]t is well known that advertising is the main source for the life of a magazine. It is the only way to either avoid material death or the compromise of articles being 'paid' for by someone else. […] You know that we are not here to sell out our ideas […] we are here to make *Muzak* a free magazine, one which is independent from the maneuvers of the recording industry.[1]

The need for economic autonomy fostered a nuanced, strategic understanding of market forces. Indeed, some market actors could provide the resources to sustain an ideologically independent editorial project, whereas others – especially if directly involved with critics' work – could damage the magazine's credibility and cultural authority, especially for its readers. This was a particularly delicate issue for a publication which had been on the market for less than a year, without the support of a large publishing house.[2] Like *Muzak*, *Gong* clarified the editorial board's position on market structures in its early editorials. For this group of critics, a different way of discussing music could only be pursued within the realm of 'consumer society' and on the ground provided by the 'cultural

[1] Editorial board (1974). 'I soldi di Muzak'. *Muzak*, n. 7 (May): 7.

[2] According to one of its founders (Antonino Antonucci Ferrara, who later launched *Gong*), *Muzak* had been created with the personal resources of the director Giaime Pintor, Ferrara himself and other journalists. The magazine had a national distributor (*Parrini and Co.*) but was largely self-produced for about a year (Mangiarotti 1977: 38). At that point it was bought by *Publisuono*, a publisher specializing in hi-fi publications (Rusconi 1976).

industry'.[3] In a later editorial, they further argued that these structures have to be exploited and used with 'pragmatism':

> This is just the beginning… We are strong and reckless, and we want to realize all the things that so far, for lack of pragmatism or realism, have not been attempted in Italy. The important thing is to work seriously and together. *The important thing is to not get lost in foggy utopias*, *and to recognize that certain structures exist. This is why we have to exploit them without asking permission*.[4] [my emphasis]

More generally, both magazines assumed a commercialized cultural field as the only context in which their projects of artistic legitimation could be carried out, and argued for the necessity of strategic alliances with some market actors. In this respect, Italian critics faced a dilemma which has become increasingly widespread in contemporary media industries. As shown by various empirical studies (Banks 2007; Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011), contemporary cultural producers are likely to understand market pressures as rather unremarkable. These pressures have become the only space of possibles in which cultural production, regardless of its ideological orientations, can be carried out. As a result, cultural producers have developed strategies to maintain a degree of autonomy and cope with the commercial demands of other stakeholders, such as private television channels (Lavie 2014), multimedia companies (de Valck 2014) or, in the case of Italian critics, a growing recording industry. This is why economic autonomy was a prominent issue for Italian critics: it was considered an important means to achieve ideological (and hence symbolic) autonomy. This required pragmatic choices and the rebuttal of a too-rigid opposition to the culture industry.

However, economic autonomy and commercial success were not the same thing, and, in a field structured around aesthetic boundaries, the latter could still be a problematic issue. This was particularly the case for *Ciao 2001*. While the monthlies were newly launched publications, whose position in the field was still 'in the making', the weekly had already

[3] Anonymous (1975). No title. *Gong*, n. 1 (January): 7.

[4] Anonymous (1974). No title. *Gong*, n. 2 (November): 8.

reached significant popularity by 1973 (Chap. 4). This position of economic power was highly problematic for the monthlies, which received it as a form of 'selling out'. Despite its subcultural membership in the pop-rock field and its emphasis on music's aesthetic quality, *Ciao 2001* was seen by *Muzak* and *Gong*'s critics as closer to the world of tabloids, which they considered the lowest expression of Italian popular culture:

> We envy *2001* as much as we envy *Grand Hotel* and *Novella 2000* [Italian tabloids]. We sincerely envy them, as we think it must be pleasing and relaxing to passively follow popular fads without being worried about the counter-educational value [*valore diseducativo*] of one's own writings.[5]

> *Ciao 2001* is unspeakable from a musical point of view, and it keeps pursuing a project of collective cultural degradation [*deculturazione collettiva*] which jumbles together epitaphs to Gramsci, digressions about Jesus and [articles on] Freud and Cossiga [Italian Christian Democratic politician].[6]

*Ciao 2001* was not perceived as economically autonomous, but as lacking any autonomy from economic interests, a publication which 'passively follow[s] popular fads' and lacks ideological coherence. Moreover, the weekly was accused of spreading 'cultural degradation' among the children of the working class and 'second-class' students (that is, students of technical and professional schools):

> While *Lei* and *Doppiovù* [Italian teen magazines] appeal to the children of the upper-middle classes [*borghesia*], *Ciao 2001* leaves its mark especially on young workers, the underclass, the 'second-class' students. So it appeals to the 'weakest ring', bringing them its kitsch musical taste.[7]

These kind of allegations required public justification, as they could compromise the weekly's membership in the field of pop music criticism. In this context, economic capital was seen as a means to accomplish symbolic

[5] Editorial board (1974). Answer to Corrado Vitale. *Muzak*, n. 13 (November): 62.

[6] Troglodytes Niger (1977). 'Stampa "giovanile" in Italia: belli, consumatori, ghettizzati…'. *Gong*, n. 7–8 (July–August): 56–58.

[7] Troglodytes Niger (1977): 58.

autonomy, but not as an end in itself. As a result, *Ciao 2001* had to prove that it was committed to something different than purely commercial interests. The magazine's market success had to be moralized.

## The Morality of Markets: Converting Commercial Success into Symbolic Capital

As I discuss in this section, *Ciao 2001*'s commercial success was converted by its editorial board – particularly by the founder and co-owner Saverio Rotondi – into symbolic capital, that is, into a moral argument about the superiority of market-driven cultural production. If symbolic capital has been traditionally defined as esteem and recognition based on artistic innovation (Chap. 3), the critics of *Ciao 2001* argued that commercial success was itself a source of non-economic, moral values. As a result, the weekly's economic power supported distinctive position-takings and symbolic boundaries between good and bad cultural production (Table 5.1), and a strategy of music coverage marked by inclusivity and loose aesthetic distinctions (Chap. 7).

Critics' arguments about the morality of their commercial success can be understood as a strategy of capital 'conversion'. According to Bourdieu, economic, cultural and social resources are all amenable to conversion. For instance, the consecration of an artist by critics and peers could lead, in the long run, to higher sales figures, and hence to conversion from symbolic to economic capital. Similarly, artists possessing high symbolic capital could use their cultural authority to effectively intervene in the political arena (Bourdieu 1996: 129–131). Economic capital does

**Table 5.1** Economic power as symbolic capital

| | Position-takings | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Ciao 2001* | *Positive values* | *Negative values* | Strategy |
| | Ideological independence<br>Professionalism<br>Social authenticity | Political/economic control<br>Incompetence<br>Elitism | Inclusive coverage<br>Loose aesthetic distinctions |

not escape this logic of conversion. If cultural fields are 'inverted' economic worlds, large-scale cultural organizations may be able to maximize their profits only 'by avoiding the crudest forms of mercantilism and by abstaining from fully revealing their self-interested goals' (Bourdieu 1996: 142). This is why *Ciao 2001* had to respond to allegations of commercialism: because membership in pop music criticism – and the Italian pop-rock field – required commitment to artistic value. This was the field's *doxa* (Chap. 4), and could not be easily challenged.

## Ideological Independence

One way of justifying the weekly's commercial success was via the discourse of economic autonomy examined above. Since the critics of *Ciao 2001* could not claim distance from the market, they framed their economic strength as a proof of full ideological independence. According to this argument, the revenue generated selling copies and space to advertisers was not simply a material resource, but a guarantee of journalistic freedom:

> [Some readers] easily assume that we make huge profits from this magazine […]. Keep in mind that our magazine is not subsidized by anyone. Readers frequently ask why we publish advertisements, and we always reply, with frankness and honesty, that ads give us freedom of expression, one that we wouldn't have without them. Try to imagine a different kind of funding, such as funding from industrial and political groups. You can clearly imagine how limited our freedom of intervention would become.[8]

This line of justification was made possible by a specific historical conjuncture. During the 1970s, the Italian journalistic field was going through a process of strong concentration: several newspapers were being bought by companies operating across the industrial and chemical sectors, such as *Montedison*, and part of the press received 'hidden' financial support

[8] Rotondi, S. (1974). Answer to Emanuele Papa. *Ciao 2001*, n. 15 (14 April): 5–7. This was an ideological argument, of course: a position-taking which did not necessarily represent the 'real' relationship between the magazine and advertising companies.

from political parties (Forgacs 1990: 130–151). Rotondi's negative view of 'industrial and political groups' as sources of economic support depends on the fact that *Ciao 2001* was published by a small firm (*Leti Editore*), which had specialized in publications about popular music like *Ciao 2001* and biographies of popular musicians (Prato 1988). The magazine thus represented a field-specific economic power; it was a large scale or heteronomous actor (Bourdieu 1996) only in comparison to other specialist music magazines, but it was a fairly modest economic enterprise if compared with the petrochemical and political groups that controlled part of the press. Indeed, the critics of *Ciao 2001* conceived of more powerful economic actors as a potential threat to their own position. They could thus draw distinctions between 'pure publishers' and those 'controlled' by economic and political powers:

> Press freedom looks like an increasingly remote possibility in the Italian publishing industry. Indeed, while the pure publisher wouldn't have any interests in concealing or manufacturing a given piece of information, it is clear that Monti, Agnelli or Cefis, who is Montedison's president, have huge economic interests to defend. And they use [their] newspapers precisely to do so.[9]

Rotondi and his collaborators were thus arguing for a peculiar kind of purity, one based on a more 'authentic' way of being within the market, rather than on distance from market imperatives (Bourdieu 1996). This suggests that large-scale cultural production is not a homogeneous ideal-type (Chap. 3), but can be significantly diversified. Commercially-oriented organizations may possess different degrees of economic capital and market success. As a result, they may operate on different scales and pursue competing strategies.

The idea of economic capital as a means to ideological independence was crucial for the magazine's cultural politics, and this was also stressed when its price had to be increased to meet growing production costs. This happened in 1974 and 1975, and in both cases it was presented as a consequence of the impact of the 1973 oil crisis on the price of paper:

[9] Montini, F. (1975). 'La stampa in Italia'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 28 (20 July): 13–14.

> We hope that readers will understand this extremely difficult situation, which is affecting our magazine and other small and mid-sized publishing firms. Today more than ever, it is difficult to make a magazine based on independence of judgment and political autonomy. [Like other publications] we received economic and political offers. They would certainly help the magazine, as we could maintain the current price and limit the number of ads. But we refused such offers for respect to our professional dignity and the readers' trust. Accepting them would be an insult to our readers.[10]

Economic power, which derived from the magazine's ability to attract a growing audience of young music consumers (Chap. 4), was thus used to support a moral distinction between independent and other-directed cultural production.

## Professionalism

Critics also mentioned the market success of *Ciao 2001* as a proof of their own professional capabilities. More generally, Rotondi and his team argued that free-market competition naturally rewards the best products, that is, products embodying high standards of quality and expertise. As with ideological independence, this argument has to be considered within a broader space of possibles. As anticipated in Chap. 4, Italian popular culture was not, by definition, a completely free market. This is why *Ciao 2001* frequently attacked RAI, the public company holding the monopoly on broadcast frequencies. During the 1960s and 1970s, RAI was the most important promotional vehicle for the recording industry (De Luigi 1982; Gaspari 1981). Moreover, it was the major channel of popular entertainment, as by 1975, its radio and TV shows were able to reach 92 % of Italian families (Monteleone 2003: 372). For pop music critics, then, RAI was a symbol of political control over popular culture, and was perceived as lacking subcultural capital, namely expertise in Anglo-American popular music and questions of interest to the youth culture.

[10] Anonymous (1974). 'Il prezzo del giornale, la libertà di stampa…e noi'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 24 (16 June): 5–6.

This view is expressed by Rotondi in the following position-taking, which addresses RAI's then director Giovanni Salvi:

> Salvi has proven with facts (that is, TV shows) that he is not exactly an expert in his sector […]. Dear Salvi […] a magazine needs to be the best possible product in order to 'sell'. It must give the readers something more than its competitors. This is why a magazine does not employ people who are not experts. On the contrary, on television you can keep working on musical shows, even though you could not distinguish the sound of a violin from the noise of a train. After all, the payment of the television tax [*canone*] is compulsory and the audience can only get what you make. It does not matter if they will stop watching *Canzonissima*; you will still be able to keep your position [in RAI].[11]

According to this view, the fall in popularity of musical shows like *Canzonissima* and *Sanremo* (both produced and broadcast by RAI) was a direct result of their poor quality.[12] By corollary, Rotondi argued that quality and popular recognition mutually sustain each other. The poor quality of RAI shows, then, was seen as the result of an organizational culture in which professionals were chosen according to a purely political logic, rather than for their skills. This view is also expressed by the following article about RAI's 1976 reform:

> Once again, a principle of wild allotment [*lottizzazione selvaggia*] prevailed […]. The administrators showed themselves to be more engaged in fighting one another, rather than seriously taking into account the skills of the people they had to hire […]. That quality TV programmes could be possibly produced by the same people who created *Canzonissima*, *Teatri Dieci*, *Sim Salabim* […] is an issue raising doubt.[13]

---

[11] Rotondi, S. (1974). 'Si… SALVI chi può!'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 6 (10 February): 15–16.

[12] It is important to highlight that this view of RAI as 'the worst' of popular culture depends on critics' aesthetic socialization (that is, their habitus) and position in the musical field. As far as we know, RAI could have been perceived differently by other cultural producers. Similarly, some of its TV shows could have been considered middle or even highbrow culture by less-privileged social groups.

[13] Anonymous (1976). 'Rai-tv: è cambiato tutto… anzi niente'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 20 (23 May): 4.

RAI managers were also seen as removed from the latest music trends and, crucially, from the international trends shaping the Italian charts, such as rock and disco. Being an institution which addressed a diverse popular audience (Monteleone 2003) and which gave space to a variety of musical traditions, including classical music and opera (Bolla and Cardini 1998), RAI did not focus specifically on the growing market of LPs, or on more recent tendencies shaping the 45 singles market, such as disco music:

> If RAI managers consider these singers [Massimo Ranieri, Gianni Morandi, Milva, Nicola Di Bari] as 'big' names, it is clear that they don't read the weekly charts published by their own *Radiocorriere* [RAI's entertainment magazine]. Otherwise, they would find out that their 'big' names are simply gone. Like *Canzonissima*, indeed.[14]

As an alternative to the 'defunct' names of Italian light music, the same article indicates a list of successful acts including very different genres, such as disco (Barry White, Gloria Gaynor, Carol Douglas), Italian singer-songwriters (Edoardo Bennato, Antonello Venditti, Riccardo Cocciante) and both Italian and foreign rock acts (Banco del Mutuo Soccorso, Rick Wakeman). I shall discuss the role of these loose aesthetic boundaries below, and when addressing *Ciao 2001* 's coverage of disco music (Chap. 7). Here, Rotondi's argument can be interpreted as a 'cultural-populist' approach to cultural production. This approach does not conceive of creativity and commerce as opposing social forces, but sees the latter as 'the condition that inspires creativity' (Negus and Pickering 2004: 47). For the critics of *Ciao 2001*, RAI embodied the negation of such a principle, being a company sustained by a compulsory tax (the annual *canone*) and controlled by the Italian government (and, after 1975, the parliament). By contrast, the sales figures of *Ciao 2001*, while modest if compared to larger cultural fields like the tabloid industry (Sardine 2001), could be converted into a form of symbolic capital. The magazine's market success could be framed as a direct outcome of professionalism and expertise. As I discuss below, it was also converted into a proof of social authen-

[14] Rotondi, S. (1975). 'Canzonissima: Requiescat in pace'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 25 (29 June): 9.

ticity. Indeed RAI's distance from the charts was also considered as distance from the magazine's audience: young people interested in pop-rock music.

## Social Authenticity

Social authenticity is an important value in popular music cultures. The historical development of genres like rock and jazz has been entwined, at least in the USA, with arguments about the extent to which these musics 'truly reflected' the social life of broader communities, such as youth (Frith 1998) and African-Americans (Lopes 2002). However, the critics of *Ciao 2001* had a peculiarly populist understanding of social authenticity. Being a successful product, the magazine could be promoted as the most authentic voice of the Italian youth culture. Such an equivalence between market success and social authenticity is emphasized by the following article, in which Rotondi stresses the high number of responses which the magazine received for its 1973 survey about readers' opinions:

> The survey shows that *Ciao 2001* doesn't have hundreds of thousands of readers […] but hundreds of thousands of friends. *Ciao 2001* belongs […] to hundreds of thousands of young people who […] identify with this magazine. [In *Ciao 2001*] they find advice and, in some instances, spiritual guidance. They put into this magazine, consciously or otherwise, their desires, hopes, resentment and discontent with the world around them. Given the survey's evidence, it's not an exaggeration to claim that today, in Italy, *Ciao 2001* is a unique magazine, the first one to have such a strong readership.[15]

As in other position-takings, readers were not simply defined as buyers, but as friends who 'feel' about the magazine as if it was their 'family'.[16] It is significant, then, that the editorial board used this discursive rep-

[15] Rotondi, S. (1973). 'Cari lettori e cari amici'. Ciao 2001, n. 48 (2 December): 5.

[16] Rotondi, S. (1973): 5.

ertoire when it had to increase the magazine's price. Indeed a similar decision could be read as dictated by purely economic interests, but this was problematic in a field concerned with questions of artistic value and serious critical evaluation. As a result, increasing the weekly's price had to be framed as a moral question about the magazine's honesty and bond with readers:

> We tried to resist, but the growing price of paper, among other rising costs, didn't leave us a choice. We could have reduced the number of pages to cut costs (as other publications did). But that would have meant giving you a magazine not worthy of what you expect and deserve. […] there is a special relationship between us and the majority of you, one which can't be compared with other magazines and the way they deal with readers. […] You will keep receiving stickers and posters, as well as devotion. That same devotion that you always show to our (and your) magazine.[17]

More generally, the magazine's social authenticity was emphasized to reject accusations of commercialism. As discussed above, these came from other field actors and some readers. But occasionally they also came from other cultural institutions, like newspapers. In the following article, which discusses the negative publicity that *Ciao 2001* received in two Italian newspapers (*Il Manifesto* and *Il Borghese*), social authenticity stands in contrast to elitism. The magazine's high sales figures testify that it is socially alive, whereas other publications are 'read only by those who write them':

> Since no one wastes his time with dead publications. […] the fact of being criticized, and so meticulously, is a proof that we are alive. Given that so many publications are read only by those who write them, this is undoubtedly something. […] [These allegations] betray acrimony, perhaps because this magazine doesn't belong to anyone, and because we are free to say whatever we want. We are able to address the problems of young people moving from their own perspective. And this happens because the magazine is made by people who are young themselves, whereas the authors of

[17] Anonymous (1974). 'Perché abbiamo dovuto aumentare il prezzo'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 1 (6 January): 5–6.

> the 'investigative reports' discussed here are close to their intellectual senility.[18]

As discussed in this section, the critics of *Ciao 2001* used to convert their field-specific economic power into a form of symbolic capital, one that was based on distinctive boundaries and moral values, such as independence, professionalism and social authenticity. Put otherwise, the magazine's economic power had to be 'made authentic' through an ongoing strategy of discursive conversion, which was pursued through the publication of editorial articles and answers to readers' letters. To be sure, the moral claims of *Ciao 2001* were not necessarily taken at face value by other field actors; they were in fact received as false by other magazines and some readers. Nonetheless, the weekly's market leadership throughout the 1970s indicates that its 'strategy of conversion' was largely successful, as the magazine was capable of securing a significant degree of loyalty. Such a conclusion is in line with a relational understanding of symbolic capital. Indeed, while it depends on other actors' recognition and belief, symbolic capital never goes uncontested, but is subject to the evaluation of individuals and organizations endowed with different resources and which occupy different positions in the cultural field. As a result, *Ciao 2001*'s contested position does not rule out the support of other actors (that is, most of its readers) for its cultural populism. The same logic applies to the practices of the monthlies, which I address in the next chapter. Their symbolic capital as serious and politically committed projects was highly contested by some of their readers (Chap. 8) as well as by *Ciao 2001*'s writers, who saw in the monthlies' critique of market institutions a form of elitism and hypocrisy.[19]

---

[18] Rotondi, S. (1975). 'Noi e… gli altri'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 42 (26 October): 4.

[19] For instance, the critic Manuel Insolera (*Ciao 2001*) accused *Gong* of hypocrisy when the monthly published fake news about the 'new album' of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. This fake article was later presented as a playful critique of consumerism by *Gong*'s editorial board. But for Insolera it was simply a cheap trick to attract more readers. Similarly, Saverio Rotondi argued that a magazine like *Muzak*, with its ads about expensive hi-fi equipment, was as commercial and consumerist as *Ciao 2001*. See Insolera, M. (1976). 'Gruppi-Ricostituzione. Le favole esistono ancora'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 6 (15 February): 13–14; and Rotondi, S. (1975). 'Noi e… gli altri'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 42 (26 October): 4.

## The Democracy of Taste: Mobilizing Cultural Capital

So far, I have explored the ways in which market recognition and eco *Ciao 2001*'s writers. In this section, I show that the weekly's cultural politics also depended on cultural capital and a peculiar way of using it. Cultural capital, in the form of appeals to artistic originality and critical distance, was mobilized to maximize commercial success, rather than to resist market forces (Bourdieu 1996). Critics advocated a subjective and relativist understanding of cultural hierarchies, thus favouring eclectic musical tastes and the primacy of readers' preferences over critics'. This favoured the weekly's adaptability to a changing musical market and, as a result, its heteronomous orientation.

### Democracy Versus Distinction

As anticipated in Chap. 4, *Ciao 2001*'s critics considered aesthetic judgment a key function of music criticism. Indeed their appeals to the morality of markets must be placed within the field's *doxa*, which implied strong aesthetic (and generational) boundaries and a break with the world of light popular music. However, *Ciao 2001* framed both aesthetic evaluation and artistic value as subjective matters. From this standpoint, the role of critics was not to define universal (and hence normative) distinctions, but to help readers making such distinctions for themselves. The excerpt below shows how this position was justified vis-à-vis a reader asking why *Ciao 2001* had published both positive and negative reviews of the same band (the British progressive rock band Yes):

> The arts and our music [are] essentially subjective facts. *Ciao 2001* wants to give space to all voices, among readers as well as critics. We stress the value of an open and dynamic form of criticism, one that is based on debate and ongoing discussion. Sure, the reader could get confused by two opposite views, and he is free to question the expertise of one or the other journalist (albeit not their good faith). He has to evaluate the reasons of both journalists and reach his 'own' conclusions about the album. Only in

> this way he will be able to refine his critical skills and autonomy [of judgment] […] which we consider pivotal.[20]

Cultural capital was thus employed via appeals to the relativity of aesthetic judgment and readers' critical autonomy. This allowed critics to position the magazine as a 'democratic' site of debate and promote an ideal of open cultural criticism (see also Chap. 8). Crucially, this was the ideological argument put forward whenever readers complained about coverage choices. Indeed, if artistic value was a subjective matter, the magazine could cover a variety of music genres and host conflicting evaluations. And if critics' evaluations were received by some readers as being too strong, they could always be framed as subjective opinions:

> About the 'deification' of some artists, we think we've never acted like cheerleaders [*bandieruole*]. Consider that *Ciao 2001* hosts very different voices, as there is space for all opinions. If we had to uniform our judgments, the reader could get a better sense of an artist or album's value. But then he'd realize he has been 'manipulated' and might lose his autonomy of judgment, which we consider essential to the relationship between journalists and readers.[21]

The magazine was not advocating a specific aesthetic canon, but the legitimacy of keeping aesthetic distinctions flexible and open to discussion. Moreover, in line with its cultural populism, the editorial board stressed the sovereignty of readers' choices: readers did not have to be 'manipulated' by critics, but had to preserve autonomy of judgment. This was a powerful way to accommodate diverse and potentially conflicting tastes. However, readers still had to be reflexive and critical about their own musical choices. A Kantian disposition towards music (and music criticism) was essential to the weekly's cultural openness, as it rarely encouraged a popular disposition towards music, namely a relationship based on immediate gratification and pleasure (Bourdieu 1984). Indeed,

[20] Anonymous (1974). Answer to Gianfranco Morisco, 'La tribuna dei lettori'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 30 (28 July): 8–9.

[21] Anonymous (1974). Answer to Pietrangelo Guffanti, 'La tribuna dei lettori'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 29 (21 July): 8–9.

a popular disposition was seen as uncritical and occasionally framed as feminine (Chap. 8). Nonetheless, critics' relativistic take on artistic value was instrumental in presenting *Ciao 2001* as inclusive and open to 'the international music scene in its entirety', in other words, as adaptable to changing market trends:

> [*Ciao 2001* is] a magazine that takes into account the international music scene in its entirety. It does not manipulate the decisions of readers and does provide real 'information'. This is what we do, more generally, with the problems of youth, like unemployment, school and the university. And this is the way we will keep following.[22]

## Objectivity and 'A Minimum of Artistic Dignity'

As shown by the last excerpt, eclectic musical choices could also be justified via appeals to journalistic objectivity (providing 'real information'). This discursive repertoire might appear at odds with the magazine's emphasis on subjective music criticism and, more generally, with its identity as a specialized publication. Nonetheless, objectivity was another way of promoting loose aesthetic distinctions. The magazine's aim was to report 'as objectively as possible' about changing music trends and tastes. Crucially, this was the justification put forward when the magazine was accused of being too commercial:

> It's ridiculous to hear that we've sunk too low from people who have not understood that times have changed, and that music and the taste of music fans have changed as well. […] A magazine doesn't rule over music trends, nor could it. A magazine reports, as objectively as possible, on the things happening in the world. This is its sole role. Allegations that we have changed our tastes are really ridiculous.[23]

This editorial strategy could well accommodate a heteronomous position (Bourdieu 1996), one open to the changes in the music market, rather

[22] Rotondi, S. (1977). Answer to Antonio Palmieri. *Ciao 2001*, n. 21 (29 May): 5–6.

[23] Rotondi, S. (1977). Answer to Bartolo Da Fiore. *Ciao 2001*, n. 4 (30 January): 5–6.

than committed to a too-restricted musical canon. Again, cultural capital played a crucial role in these objectivity claims. While artistic value was framed as a subjective matter, objectivity was a way of claiming symbolic autonomy from pure commercialism. It was a way of promoting critical distance while staying flexible vis-à-vis changing market trends:

> Our aim has never been to impose a certain music style, but to report on avant-garde music, [such as] pop, rock, jazz. […] Since there are new music trends today, it is unfair to say that we have changed. And we can't be accused of being commercial either, as this phenomenon [disco music] is everywhere and we are just a magazine, not a music label. I agree that the past is important, and we keep discussing it with the usual passion. But we also have to live in the present, perhaps to criticize or refuse it. We just can't pretend it doesn't exist.[24]

While objectivity could help promote loose aesthetic distinctions, the weekly was still presented as a publication committed to avant-garde music trends, as well as to the fields of pop-rock and jazz (rather than light music). As a result, breadth of coverage had to be balanced against 'a minimum of artistic dignity'; that is, it could not break with the field's *doxa*:

> We always try to address every new phenomenon of the international music scene (but of course it needs to have a minimum of artistic dignity to be considered).[25]

Overall, cultural capital was very important for this heteronomous actor, as it was used in ways that supported its closeness to market imperatives. Appeals to the subjectivity of artistic value and objectivity (or critical distance) of music criticism helped the editorial board justify loose aesthetic distinctions and an inclusive coverage strategy, which I further investigate in Chap. 7. Moreover, in line with its cultural populism, the magazine emphasized the sovereignty of readers' (rather than critics') musical

[24] Rotondi, S. (1977). Answer to Paolo 59. *Ciao 2001*, n. 10 (13 March): 5–6.

[25] Rotondi, S. (1977). Answer to Daniele Baldini. *Ciao 2001*, n. 21 (29 May): 5–6.

tastes. If the former were contradictory and changing, the magazine had to report them nonetheless, objectively and critically.

To understand how this use of cultural capital was possible, we need to look at the broader field of relations (or space of possibles) in which the magazine operated. Indeed, the possibility of such position-takings depended on *Ciao 2001*'s unique position in the Italian cultural field. It was a publication whose success was based on a growing audience of music consumers interested in 'serious' recording artists, the same audience that boosted the LP market during the 1970s (Chap. 4). In this respect, *Ciao 2001* represented an audience that was both a cultural and economic avant-garde in the musical field. Similarly, the magazine was endowed with both economic and cultural capital: the former deriving from its revenues and the latter from critics' knowledge of highbrow categories and the history of Anglo-American popular music (their subcultural capital). On the contrary, *Muzak* and *Gong*, lacking the market recognition of *Ciao 2001*, could not pursue a similar strategy, and came to define a very different position in the music press (Chap. 6).

## Praising the Cosmopolitan Cultural Economy

So far, this chapter has examined how a specific group of critics employed their material and symbolic resources vis-à-vis a new space of possibles, one increasingly open to the products of British and American music labels (Chap. 4). In this section, I discuss how *Ciao 2001*, drawing on such resources, promoted a peculiar cosmopolitan project, which I call economic cosmopolitanism. This ideological project praised both aesthetic originality and 'modern' market and promotional structures. I thus show that aesthetic cosmopolitanism (Regev 2013) is not simply a shared orientation among globally oriented cultural organizations, but a resource that can be realized via competing ideological projects. While Italian critics shared a symbolic investment in Anglo-American popular music, this subcultural capital sustained different editorial projects and competing views of cultural globalization.

*Ciao 2001* promoted a market-friendly view of cultural globalization. Critics praised (and perhaps idealized) a foreign music industry which

they saw as stronger and better organized than the Italian one. As a transnational field including other European countries, but with its centres in the US and UK, this growing recording industry was celebrated for being economically powerful, effective and more modern, that is, supported by avant-garde marketing techniques and organizational practices:

> Abroad, the recording industry is an industry in the true sense of the word. It is an immense source of revenue; it moves millions of dollars and is a business writ large. Providing figures or making comparisons with our country would be difficult, but it is certain that for each album sold in Italy, ten albums are sold in other countries like England, Germany, the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands, not to mention an obvious example like the United States of America. […] It is precisely to sustain this thriving industry (also in its crises) that the price of albums is decided via rational and carefully planned marketing techniques.[26]

The article goes on, magnifying market techniques which make musical commodities, especially albums, more affordable for the consumer. For instance, double albums are '…sold like single ones. They are rarely more expansive and never reach the price of two albums, as happens in our country'.[27] A second-hand market and seasonal promotional campaigns are indicated as further examples of effective, modern commercial practices. By contrast, the Italian music industry was seen as short-sighted, economically ineffective and, in a sense, less honest. In line with its cultural populism, *Ciao 2001* magnified Anglo-American music labels for being 'truly connected' with both musicians and their publics. As shown by the following excerpt about Virgin Records and other British independent labels like Island, this cosmopolitan cultural economy was thriving because it was based on recognition and effective promotion of real talent and 'the right ideas':

> Born with little money and the right ideas, today [independent labels] are able to contend for the most popular artists with Warner Bros or Columbia

[26] Giulietti, M. L. (1976). 'Quando l'estero insegna'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 3 (25 January): 36.
[27] Giulietti, M. L. (1976): 36.

> […]. Virgin is distinctive among others and represents, at least partially (as always), an alternative in the existing market.[28]

This partial alternative (that is, an alternative that does not disregard market rules) was depicted as close to the weekly's own cultural politics. Hence Virgin could '…avoid compromises and satisfy its audience in the most authentic way'.[29] By contrast, Italian music labels were criticized for being disconnected from both musicians and their audiences. They were practicing a less authentic (and thus less effective) form of economic rationality:

> People still listen to new albums because there is a lot of good music coming from abroad. Should we count on our 'local' production, there would be cobwebs on record players and radios would remain turned off. Why is it that difficult to find good Italian artists? Why do industry executives keep planning albums in their carpeted studios? They should go to the record stores sometimes, where young people buy actual records. I am sure they'd get some helpful insights.[30]

The cosmopolitan cultural economy promoted by the weekly was one in which cultural capital ('good music') and market recognition (young people buying 'actual records') mutually supported each other. The centres of the pop-rock field were thus magnified both for their aesthetic and commercial innovations. By corollary, Italian cultural institutions, and also economic and political ones, were seen as part of a provincial cultural economy. For instance, the unexpected cancellation of a local pop music festival (the *Santa Monica* festival) led to a bitter position-taking against the political institutions and commercial organizations of Forlì, the city where the festival was supposed to take place. These were accused of being both 'racist' towards young people and financially short-sighted:

> […] [A] festival which would have been attended by almost one hundred thousand young people each day. If it has been cancelled because local

[28] Caffarelli, E. (1974). 'Virgin: Un'etichetta diversa'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 1 (6 January): 30.

[29] Caffarelli, E. (1974): 30.

[30] Rotondi, S. (1975). 'Il 76 sarà migliore?'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 51/52 (28 December): 11.

> shopkeepers couldn't figure how to make a profit out of it, or because the audience is not like the tourists who traditionally spend their holidays on the Adriatic Sea, that would be astounding. […] To consider hundreds of thousands of young people who love modern music as 'dirty longhairs' is one of the most squalid, absurd things you can imagine in the 1970s.[31]

The weekly's promotion of a cosmopolitan cultural economy was thus based on the moral repertoire explored earlier, and more generally on a populist view of the relations between culture and economy. From this standpoint, cultural globalization was unproblematically seen as an economic modernization, one that naturally rewards cultural innovations. To be sure, the weekly's opposition between local and cosmopolitan cultural economies was highly ideological, and was probably based on flawed knowledge of how foreign music labels operated. Indeed *Ciao 2001*'s cosmopolitan project must be seen as a product of its history and resources. It largely valorized (and attempted to legitimize) the weekly's position of economic power in the music press and the pop-rock field. By contrast, the monthlies advocated a more normative and politicized form of cosmopolitanism, as these were younger organizations with less market recognition and significant connections with counter-cultural and left-wing movements (Chap. 6).

## Conclusion

This chapter has begun discussing the pop music press as a field of struggles, and hence how music magazines developed competing projects of cultural legitimation. I have focused on the magazine which gained market leadership in the field, *Ciao 2001*, exploring how its critics established a specific cosmopolitan project. On the one hand, I have analyzed how the weekly's commercial success was moralized and turned into a symbolic capital, that is, into a range of moral distinctions between good (market-driven) and bad (state-funded) cultural production. On the other hand, I have stressed the importance of cultural capital and subcultural knowl-

[31] Anonymous (1974). 'Da Santamonica. La stangata'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 31 (4 August): 15–17.

edge for this group of critics, who mobilized these resources to keep up with changing market trends, rather than to challenge or resist market imperatives. Finally, I have explored how the weekly, drawing on these resources, crafted an economic cosmopolitanism that magnified 'modern' promotional and commercial practices, which were seen as natural allies of aesthetic innovation.

Overall, I have argued that *Ciao 2001* supported a market-friendly view of cultural globalization (and its modernizing effects) and a populist understanding of critical expertise. The latter emphasized the sovereignty of readers' choices rather than the normative value of critics' distinctions. From this standpoint, the magazine's music coverage had to be objective: it could not ignore new musical trends which were gaining market relevance. Despite their allegedly low artistic value, such trends could still be addressed 'critically'. In Chap. 7, I will investigate how this heteronomous position informed critics' evaluations of rock, jazz and soul. Methodologically, rather than treating Bourdieu's opposition between cultural and economic capital as an ideal type, I have sensitized it to the practices of a specific organization and the context in which it operated. I have looked at how critics used their resources vis-à-vis a historically specific space of possibles, one that made their strategies both possible and meaningful. I will adopt the same approach in the next chapter, which explores the cultural politics of *Muzak* and *Gong*.

## Bibliography

Banks, M. (2007). *The politics of cultural work*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bolla, L., & Cardini, G. (1998). *Macchina sonora. La musica nella televisione italiana*. Roma: RAI-ERI.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The rules of art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

De Luigi, M. (1982). *L'industria discografica in Italia*. Roma: Lato Side Editori.

de Valck, M. (2014). Supporting art cinema at a time of commercialization: Principles and practices, the case of the International Film Festival Rotterdam. *Poetics, 42*, 40–59.

Forgacs, D. (1990). *Italian culture in the industrial era 1880–1990: Cultural industries, politics and the public*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Frith, S. (1998). *Performing rites: Evaluating popular music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gaspari, M. (1981). *L'industria della canzone*. Roma: Editori Riuniti.

Hesmondhalgh, D., & Baker, S. (2011). *Creative labour: Media work in three cultural industries*. New York: Routledge.

Lavie, N. (2014). Israeli drama: Constructing the Israeli 'quality' television series as an art form. *Media Culture & Society, 37*(1), 19–34.

Mangiarotti, M. (1977). Pop, industria e mass-media. In D. Caroli (Ed.), *L'arcipelago pop. La musica pop e le sue relazioni con la cultura alternativa e la questione giovanile*. Roma: Arcana.

Monteleone, F. (2003). *Storia della radio e della televisione in Italia* (3rd ed.). Venezia: Marsilio.

Negus, K., & Pickering, M. (2004). *Creativity, communication and cultural value*. London: Sage.

Prato, P. (1988). L'editoria della popular music in Italia. *Musica/Realtà, 26*, 75–86.

Regev, M. (2013). *Pop-rock: Aesthetic cosmopolitanism in late modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Rusconi, M. (1976). La rivista musicale cambia disco. *L'Espresso.* http://stampa-musicale.altervista.org/Articolo%20L%27espresso/index.htm. Accessed 12 Feb 2016.

Sfardini, A. (2001). Gli anni Settanta: dati di scenario e di consumo. *Comunicazioni Sociali, 23*(1), 75–99.

# 6

# Political Cosmopolitanism: The Case of *Muzak* and *Gong*

This chapter further explores critics' struggles over cultural expertise, in considering the projects of legitimation of the monthlies *Muzak* and *Gong*. Moreover, it broadens the space of possibles discussed so far, introducing a new group of actors: political, social and counter-cultural movements. I will examine how music magazines devised different strategies of engagement vis-à-vis the forms of political protest which emerged in 1970s Italy. Theoretically, I will argue that a nationally and historically specific space of possibles allowed for the emergence of a distinctive political cosmopolitanism, especially among critics with a former history of political activism. It was this 'meeting between two histories' (Bourdieu 1996) that made it possible, at least for some critics, to re-define pop music criticism as a political practice.

The chapter will first provide a historical overview of the political struggles that arose in 1970s Italian society. It will then explore critics' position-takings vis-à-vis this changing space of possibles, and will show that while they interpreted the historical moment as one of social and political change, they responded to such transformations depending on their resources and position in the music press. In other words, critics defined strategies of engagement on the basis of their cultural capital, subcultural



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_6

knowledge and market recognition. While *Ciao 2001* maintained significant distance from political actors, and defended the autonomy of music production and consumption from political demands, *Muzak* and *Gong* conceived of musical practices as intrinsically political. However, they defined forms of engagement based on the primacy of aesthetic innovations and cultural value, thus defending the autonomy of music (and music criticism) from the logic of political propaganda.

## The Era of Collective Action: Fields, Actors and Events

In this section, I provide a description of what has been called era of collective action (Ginsborg 1990), season of movements (Grispigni 2006) and 'long 1968' (Foot 2010). This period of Italian history witnessed the emergence of forms of collective protest involving different social groups and new political subjects. It covered the years between the student protests of 1967–1968 and the assassination, in 1978, of Italian ex-prime minister Aldo Moro by the terrorist organization *Brigate Rosse* (Red Brigades). There is a constellation of structural and cultural factors which made the 1970s a season of intense political struggle. I discuss those that have been considered pivotal in existing historical research, while the analysis of critics' position-takings will shed further light on the ways in which they responded to such structural and cultural changes.

Between 1967 and 1968, a large movement of students occupied the universities of several Italian North-Centre cities starting in Trent, Milan, Turin and Rome, with disorder spreading quickly to Southern cities and the secondary schools of the main urban areas (Ginsborg 1990: 303). However, rather than remaining a student affair, forms of struggle also arose among blue-collar workers and within other sectors of production, with collective action becoming a means of demanding change in different social institutions. A key factor contributing to this scenario was the lack of structural reform in many areas of Italian society, which had remained untouched despite the country's urbanization and industrialization during the 1960s (Chap. 4). The occupation of universities, for

example, was fostered by a system still unequipped for the expansion of secondary and higher education. Italian universities were characterized by lack of space, professional teachers and grants supporting students in need. Moreover, a system based on oral lectures and oral examinations made attendance particularly difficult for working students, who had part-time jobs to make university affordable. This situation produced a high number of drop-outs and, according to Ginsborg (1990: 300), a 'particularly subtle form of class-based selection: the university was supposedly open to all, but the odds were heavily stacked against poorer students ever getting a degree'.

Subsequent demands in the sectors of production were fostered by similar tensions. For example, while contributing to the growth of Italian industrial production, young manufacturing workers migrating from Southern regions lived in poor conditions in Northern suburban areas and did not have the same rights and benefits of older blue-collar workers. This situation fostered a massive wave of strikes – the so-called 'hot autumn' of 1969 – which saw students joining the protests of blue-collar workers. The unresolved contradictions of the Italian economic miracle fuelled forms of political upheaval in other sectors of production between 1969 and 1973. During these years, chemical and building workers, and also white-collar, technical and public-sector workers, went on strike to demand better working conditions (Ginsborg 1990: 318). Civil society also witnessed the emergence of new practices of engagement aimed at improving standards of living and citizenship rights. For example, a national movement struggled to improve the conditions of housing in Italy's main urban centers between 1968 and 1973, demanding fair rents on a national scale. More generally, members of civil society contributed to the improvement of existing services and spaces of socialization with '..."red" markets, kindergartens, restaurants, surgeries, social clubs, etc., [which] opened (and often shut) one after another' (Ginsborg 1990: 323–325).

A variety of actors contributed to the struggles of the 1970s. Among them there were trade unions, new political groups born between 1968 and 1969 – the so-called Revolutionary or New Left – and new social movements such as the feminist movement, which gained national visibility especially beginning in late 1975. The influence of these groups

varied depending on the field: trade unions were very influential in many sectors of production, while revolutionary groups were strong among students, in the army and in the major factories of the North. Although significant episodes of organized protest arose in the South (Ginsborg 1990: 337–340), it was in the North-Centre that the aforementioned groups, as well as the Italian Communist Party, were stronger and able to mobilize larger groups of people (Gundle 2000: 141).

While structural problems and inequalities have been considered key factors in understanding the Italian 'long 1968', cultural factors also informed the demands of students and young workers. In this respect, some mediatized international events had a profound impact on them. The protests against the Vietnam war in the USA helped shape a critical image of American society, a perception which music critics themselves, as I discuss below, inherited and contributed to reproducing. China's Cultural Revolution also made a great impression on students and political activists. More generally, during these years, left activists came to believe that capitalism was in decline, if not close to its defeat (Gundle 2000: 138–164), a perspective made concrete by the 1973 international oil crisis and the stagflation of the Italian economy, which lasted for the whole decade. As I discuss below, the perception of a changing Italian society also informed the arguments of music critics about the need for political action. It is also worth considering that new interpretations of Marxism had informed the views of the student movement since the late 1960s. Indeed, a high number of journals supporting a heterogeneous Marxist culture emerged throughout the 1970s (Mangano and Lima 1998). By the early 1970s, Theodor Adorno's critique of mass culture had become very influential on Italian intellectuals, as well as on some segments of the music industry (Santoro 2010: 157–158). One of the music monthlies emerging in these years, *Muzak*, even mentioned Adorno as a key inspiration for its project of politically informed music criticism.[1] Although these cultural resources were not accessible to Italian citizens at large, they spread significantly among students and activists. It is therefore not surprising that music critics, being for the most part students

[1] Pintor, G. (1974). 'Per il pop suo malgrado'. *Muzak*, n. 10–11 (August–September): 46.

and graduates close to the centres of the mobilization (Chap. 4), were exposed to these resources and the broader climate of engagement.

## Activism in the Musical and Cultural Field

During these years, a number of political actors defined lines of intervention in cultural production and consumption, thus questioning the very idea of culture as a realm autonomous from political demands. Political parties and movements – most notably the Communist Party and the New Left – were active in the organization of cultural and musical events (Gundle 2000), and groups belonging to the so-called underground considered live concerts a primary arena of political intervention (Echaurren and Salaris 1999). For instance, the group *Stampa Alternativa* (Alternative Press) argued that music had to be freely available and not controlled by tour organizers and record companies. As a result, it offered 'ideological support to groups that attacked concert venues (where security, at the time, was almost non-existent) to get "free music"' (Fabbri 2007: 412). More generally, between 1971 and 1979, concerts became sites of political struggle in Italy. The police had to fight frequently against groups willing to access the venues for free or to protest against musicians who, in their view, lacked political consciousness (Prato 2010: 332–333). Eventually, after some Molotov cocktails had been thrown on the stage of Carlos Santana's 1977 concert in Milan, foreign acts avoided Italy until 1979 (Fabbri 2007).

The politicization of the musical field was thus fostered by political and counter-cultural movements which devised distinctive cultural politics. Meanwhile, the question of the relationships between music and politics became highly debated among pop-rock and jazz musicians (Fabbri 2007; Prato 2010), and some of them, like Stormy Six and Area, developed aesthetic projects with strong political connotations. A particularly important actor contributing to this 'overlap' between the musical and political fields was the counter-cultural magazine *Re Nudo*. With the help of some revolutionary groups, the magazine was able to organize an annual music festival in Milan, *Parco Lambro*, which became a major event for the

Italian youth culture,[2] one that was regularly reviewed by music magazines between 1973 and 1976. As I show in the next sections, actors like *Re Nudo* and *Stampa Alternativa*, along with political parties and groups, were seen by music critics as the carriers of a dubious cultural politics, one that did not take music's aesthetic qualities and autonomy sufficiently into account. Overall, the growing network between political and musical actors introduced political stakes and modes of perception (Bourdieu 1996) within the musical field, which influenced practices as different as music-making, the organization of live concerts and music criticism.

## Pop Music Criticism and the Genesis of Political Engagement

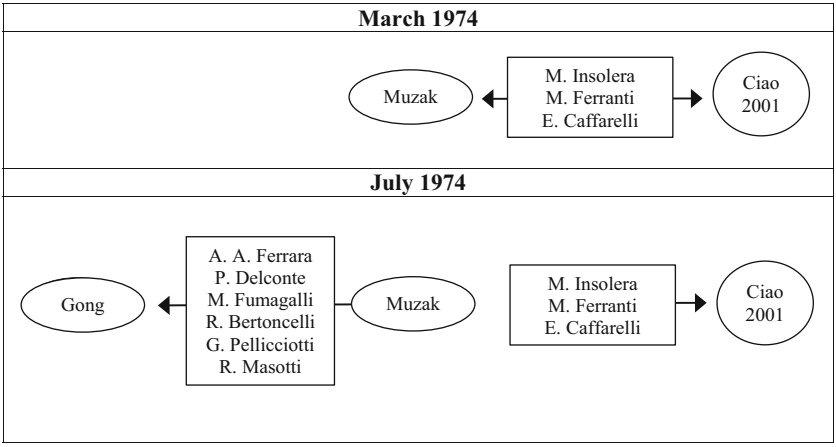
### Organizational Breaks and the Struggle Over Youth

During the first months of its inception, *Muzak*'s purposes were very similar to those of *Ciao 2001*, namely to advocate the aesthetic value of popular music styles mostly consumed by young people. Until March 1974, these magazines also shared some critics. However, the diversification of the field was accompanied by a series of 'organizational breaks' in the magazines' editorial boards. During 1974 *Muzak* severed its connections with *Ciao 2001*, and slightly later, a group of Milan-based critics left *Muzak* to establish a new music monthly, *Gong* (Table 6.1).

These breaks were motivated by disagreements over what constitutes 'good' cultural criticism and over different understandings of Italian youth. As discussed in Chap. 4, the symbolic boundaries of pop music criticism had a strong generational character. The music press was a youth space sustained by a generation of educated Italians aged between their

[2] According to Andrea Valcarenghi (founder of *Re Nudo* and among the festival's organizers), the festival's last edition (1976) had an audience of approximately 120,000 people in four days. See Caroli, D. (1976). 'Parco Lambro. Tirando le somme'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 32–33 (15–22 August): 37–38. The main institutions of the underground were based in Milan (*Re Nudo*) and Rome (*Stampa Alternativa*). However, the Italian counterculture was a relatively widespread phenomenon; it was supported by a variety of initiatives ranging from hand-made zines to groups that remained active for most of the 1970s (Echaurren and Salaris 1999).

**Table 6.1** Main organizational breaks




early twenties and early thirties. Before defining a distinctive political cosmopolitanism, newly launched monthlies claimed to be 'more authentic' representatives of youth culture. The field's *doxa* thus provided the ground for an early process of differentiation. While breaking with the field's main player, *Muzak* accused *Ciao 2001* of manipulating its readership and providing a paternalistic representation of young music fans. By contrast, the monthly invited its readers to participate to a counter-book (*contro-libro*) that would truly reflect their views.

> We know that you are not as stupid as people like Caffarelli [*Ciao 2001*'s writer] make you look like through their 'open-to-the-reader' sections (that is, sections open to those readers who please the editors). […] Since our impression is that you are smart people [*persone sveglie*], what about a counter-book against all ghettos? A counter-book against all the ghettos in which we have been jailed by idiotic little magazines and where music is just escapism [*evasione*], dullness [*stordimento*], idiocy. […] We will show them that being young is not simply about blue-jeans, high heels, long hair, rings and coloured scarves, but is about people living with distinctive problems and realities, and who deserve a better life. […] We will show these paternalist provincials that we are capable of constructing our own life, morality and culture, and that we are able to analyze them.[3]

[3] Editorial board (1974). 'Muzakcontrolibro'. *Muzak*, n. 10–11 (August–September): 2.

Claiming an insider perspective into youth's everyday life, *Muzak* framed *Ciao 2001* as paternalistic and provincial media, one close to the Italian popular culture it claimed to reject. By contrast, *Muzak* was the representative of a 'smarter', less consumerist youth and a less 'escapist' approach to music criticism. It is significant that the weekly was addressed by a critic (Enzo Caffarelli) who had worked for both publications until March 1974. Indeed, the definition of alternative cosmopolitan projects went hand-in-hand with organizational breaks.[4] A few months after *Muzak* had challenged *Ciao 2001*, the newly launched *Gong* also claimed to represent a different and smarter youth culture, with the magazine being defined as a means of accomplishing a more critical and conscious relationship with music.

> This is *Gong's* second year within consumer society. The battle has just begun and perhaps we are impaired […]. We do not need to agree on everything, but we have to remember that music (and culture) is lived day-by-day as an *active and conscious choice*. We do not have to feel obliged by misplaced aspirations, or hungriness, *to eat music as fast as a sandwich*, just between one swindle and another.[5] [my emphasis]

A subsequent editorial explicitly defined this audience as different from the typical readers of *Ciao 2001*, who were parodied for being too involved in their 'consumeristic trip'.[6] As shown by these examples, music magazines struggled over the meaning of youth to define alternative positions in the field. However, claiming to be more authentic representatives of the youth, or more critical media, was only the early stage of a deeper process of diversification, one that was significantly influenced by the changing space of possibles discussed above.

---

[4] To some extent, this symbolic struggle over youth mirrored real generational differences. Being born mostly between the late 1940s and mid-1950s, the founding members of *Muzak* and *Gong* were attacking an older (and hence 'false') representative of the youth: Saverio Rotondi. *Ciao 2001*'s director and co-owner was 40 years old in 1973, and used to stress his age as a sign of experience. As he told to his readers in October 1973: '...it's been three years since I started managing this magazine […] I still do it with the enthusiasm of an age which, luckily enough, makes it possible for me to stay close to the ideas of young generations'. See Rotondi, S. (1973). 'Conosciamoci meglio'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 45 (11 November): 4–5.

[5] Anonymous (1975). No title. *Gong*, n. 1 (January): 7.

[6] Antonucci Ferrara, A. (1975). 'Scherzi da prete e consumismo'. *Gong*, n. 12 (December): 10.

## The Impact of Political Struggles

In July 1974 *Muzak* warned its readers about 'a more direct engagement with the reality beyond our professional realm',[7] a decision which followed the organizational breaks with *Ciao 2001* and with the critics who set up *Gong*. The idea of a deeper engagement with non-musical issues became overtly political throughout 1975 and 1976. In October 1974, the editorial board had already addressed what some readers had perceived as a 'political turn' in the magazine's line, framing such change as 'growing up', namely a further step in the definition of *Muzak* as a cultural project:

> Growing up means facing social and political issues and stopping conceiving of music as a cheerful game. This is the meaning of what someone has called (improperly) our 'political turn'. The point is not to start doing politics, but to represent, within a broad progressive front […] the views and perspectives of youth culture – a culture which is progressive by its own nature.[8]

It was the existence of this 'broad progressive front', and the perception of living a moment of historical change, which made the re-positioning of *Muzak* possible:

> Probably all of you, *during these days of abrupt change*, have had some thoughts about your own role, about your awareness and degree of contribution to changing things. This is what happened to us, as you have probably noticed. Initially we just wanted to deconstruct a false and distorted ideology about music. *But then we found ourselves within a different reality, a different world and a different society.*[9] [my emphasis]

The perception of a different world, which in turn is related to the perception of a different, 'progressive' youth culture, is what the critics founding *Gong* described just a few months after the magazine had

[7] Editorial board (1974). 'Winds of change'. *Muzak*, n. 9 (July): 3.

[8] Editorial board (1974). 'Muzakcompleanno: verso il futuro'. *Muzak*, n. 12 (October): 2.

[9] Editorial board (1974). 'Utilità di Muzak', *Muzak*, n. 13 (November): 2.

been launched. Initially the question of a more serious engagement with musical matters was the priority for *Gong*'s critics, as they clearly established in the monthly's early editorials (see above). Indeed they left *Muzak* because they disagreed with the idea – advocated especially by the director, Giaime Pintor – of a more politicized and less music-centred magazine (Mangiarotti 1977: 38). However things changed as soon as early 1975. As shown by the following excerpt, *Gong* expressed closeness to the emerging movement and framed it as an antidote to the spread of neo-fascist violence at live concerts. From this moment onwards, *Gong* was positioned as part of the growing *movimento*:[10]

> [I]f Fascism now stays away from schools, it is because students are creating new forms of struggle. Similarly, it stays away from factories because workers [*operai*] have a voice over production and their salaries. It stays away from neighbourhoods because people are inventing day-by-day new forms of direct participation (neighbourhood committees, circles, music clubs, theatres, self-managed kindergartens…).[11]

Changes that were external to the field were received by critics as an opportunity to re-think the social role of pop music criticism. Moreover, some events were clearly indicated as turning points. For example, on the 12th and 13th May 1975, a national referendum was held to decide about the abrogation of divorce from Italian civil rights, despite the fact that divorce had been introduced in Italian law only in 1972. The referendum was eventually defeated with almost 60 % of votes rejecting the abrogation. *Muzak* framed this event as proof of the fact that Italian society was changing. The referendum was seen as part of a broader network of events and actors – such as the feminist movement and its campaigns to legalize abortion[12] – which could enhance social change.

---

[10] Another reason behind the break between *Muzak* and *Gong* was musical disagreements. Indeed, while both monthlies gave growing space to avant-garde jazz (Chap. 7) and defined similar projects of legitimation, *Muzak* was slightly more inclusive in musical terms, considering also the folk revival and some singer-songwriters as artistically valuable. *Gong*'s critics openly disagreed with this position (Bolelli 1979).

[11] Antonucci Ferrara, A. (1975). 'Basta con i fascisti'. *Gong*, n. 4 (April): 11.

[12] In Italy, abortion remained illegal until 1978. However, in 1975, the Italian constitutional law introduced a distinction between embryos and human life, and defined the health of mothers as

> The referendum of May 12th has confirmed that the efforts of this movement are not destined to an eternal defeat. Feminism and sexual liberation; abortion and drugs; the youth and its critique to the institutions – *these things are all entwined together and have changed the role of music*. [Music] is no longer the warm and silly shelter for people who neither fight nor live. [Music] has become a further reason to stay together, count each other and live moments – albeit partial – of liberation [*festa*].[13] [my emphasis]

Other events framed as turning-points were the local and national elections of 1975 and 1976, respectively. These signalled a higher degree of institutional power for the Communist Party, which became the second political force after the Christian Democrats (DC). The monthlies perceived these elections as positive moments of change for Italian democracy. For *Gong*, the elections could lead to the defeat of the Democratic-Christian 'regime':

> The Demo-Christian regime is managing its own agony with rage and impotence […] they want to push the electorate towards emotional choices, rather than towards a political choice based on rationality. […] The existing system, whose arrogance and corruption have been paid for by the working class and the youth proletariat [*proletariato giovanile*] is losing. Because the Movement gets stronger and better organized each day.[14]

*Muzak* similarly framed the elections as a decisive historical moment.[15] Although they did not lead to an overturn of the DC, which remained the premier party, events like the elections, the divorce referendum and the broader climate of mobilization acted as emotional and cultural resources for music critics. On the one hand, they informed their perceptions, their choices and (as far as we know) their feelings. On the

---

more important than the life of embryos. That same year, the Movement of Liberation of Italian Women (MDL) and the Radical Party organized a collection of signatures for a referendum to legalize abortion, which gathered 800,000 signatures. According to Ginsborg (1990: 369), women's mobilization about abortion 'was able to transform it from an important civil rights question into a wide-ranging discussion on women's position in Italian society'.

[13] Pintor, G. (1975). 'Contrappunti ai fatti: musica in movimento'. *Muzak*, n. 5 (September): 7.

[14] Anonymous (1976). No title. *Gong*, n. 5 (May): 10.

[15] Pintor, G. (1976). 'Contrappunti ai fatti: All'ombra delle lotte e dentro le urne', *Muzak*, n. 13 (June): 8–9.

other hand, they could be publicly mobilized to justify a changing cultural politics and its groundedness in the national-historical space, that is, its social relevance. Crucially, as shown by the excerpts discussed above, the monthlies claimed that they wanted to represent the youth within a broader movement. Indeed, critics' strategies of engagement did not lead to a break with the music press' *doxa*, but were shaped by their resources and position in the field.

## Cultural Capital as a Political Resource: The Strategies of *Muzak* and *Gong*

As newly established organizations with small audiences, *Muzak* and *Gong* considered political mobilization as an opportunity to further expand their public. Moreover, having several political activists among their staffs, they were positively pre-disposed towards the new space of possibles.[16] As I discuss in this section, the monthlies used their cultural capital and subcultural knowledge as political resources. Their expertise about music and aesthetic hierarchies informed two strategies of engagement. On the one hand, the monthlies elaborated a 'politics of music', namely a Marxist critique of the organization of live concerts and a different understanding of musical events. On the other hand, they defined a 'musical politics' based on normative aesthetic boundaries: they argued that creatively challenging music was political in itself, as it could positively shape people's sensibility and, by extension, society. Both strategies contributed to a political cosmopolitanism which was highly critical of market mediators, the capitalist organization of cultural production and the 'Americanization' of the Italian musical field.

[16] According to their public biographies (Ravera 2004); Dell'Arti 2014), various members of *Muzak* were politically active and close to far-left groups (notably *Lotta Continua* and *Circoli Ottobre*). This was the case of directors Giaime Pintor and Lidia Ravera, and critics Marco Lombardo Radice and Luigi Manconi (who used to write under the pseudonym Simone Dessì). It is less clear if the people who launched *Gong* were similarly involved on a personal level with the New Left, as critics' public biographies remain silent on the issue.

## The Politics of Music

The monthlies defined their politics of music mostly in relation to live events. Along with recorded music, live music was the main channel of music consumption at the time; it is therefore not surprising that critics were concerned with both its organization and contents. Moreover, as discussed earlier, live concerts were a site of struggles between an audience claiming 'free music', private organizers and police forces. It was in relation to these actors, including political groups and regional authorities, that *Muzak* and *Gong* took positions. A key argument of the monthlies was the necessity of excluding private organizers from concert management, so as to create self-managed, independent musical events with the support of other forces of the movement. This position was first elaborated in an article about the *Santa Monica Festival*, a live event which had been cancelled by the local authorities in Forlì to prevent disorder and clashes. As discussed in Chap. 5, *Ciao 2001* attacked Forlì's local authorities for their commercial shortsightedness and for denying the youth culture a long-awaited event. By contrast, *Muzak* focused on the festival's organizers, framing them as people 'who manage [live music] with the only purpose of maximizing their profits'.[17] The idea that private organizers could be effectively excluded from the musical field was supported, again, by the perception of a changing society and youth culture. It is from this standpoint that *Muzak*, along with *Gong*, attacked the biggest private organizers of pop concerts in Italy, Franco Mamone, Francesco Sanavio and David Zard:

> Mamone's dubious role as merchant of culture is being undermined partly by the corruption and competition of the [live] business, and partly by a changed social reality, [that is] by the desires and will of youth who want to count for something. [As a result] this is not a market anymore, or at least it cannot be managed according to common market rules […]. The 'capitalist' organization of culture is seriously in danger.[18]

[17] Pintor, G. (1974). 'Festival Aleatori'. *Muzak*, n. 10–11 (August–September): 15.

[18] Pintor, G. (1974): 15.

*Gong* expressed a similar line in relation to another important gig: Lou Reed's concert in Rome (15 February 1975). As with the *Santa Monica Festival*, the event was eventually cancelled, but this time this happened after the police shot tear-gas directly into the audience. According to *Muzak*, the incident had been orchestrated by the organizers to 'give a lesson' to the protesters, who had been able to break down the venue's gates and turn the concert into a free event.[19] Similarly, *Gong* framed the event as proof of the fact that private organizers could no longer operate in the Italian musical field:

> From 1974 onwards, few foreign names have attempted the world's most difficult stadiums: the Italian ones. We have had few and far-from-exciting gigs (Zappa, Genesis, Soft Machine) and a disaster without precedent (Lou Reed), which has [financially] destroyed poor [David] Zard. […] Those who believed that big American-style events could work here were wrong. These people had bet on the ingenuity and enthusiasm of youth. However, they had to deal with under-developed structures, but also with the growing politicization [of youth] and opposition to both their methods and prices.[20]

Like *Muzak*, *Gong* saw the alternative to private organizers in self-managed events organized with the support of political forces. In contrast to *Ciao 2001* (Chap. 5), this political cosmopolitanism implied a rejection of 'American-style' commercial practices, and was meant to reject the 'alienated' dimension of the stadium imposed by organizers. However, it was also critical of the ideology of free music advocated by underground groups like *Stampa Alternativa*:

> We do not ask for 'free' concerts […] we ask for direct participation in the management of music and for control over the organization in order to rule out private organizers and their logic. […] we want to impose our

[19] Editorial board (1975). 'Lettera aperta al ministro dello spettacolo'. *Muzak*, n. 1 (April): 7.

[20] Delconte, P. and Masotti, R. (1975). 'Inchiesta Gong. I nuovi circuiti alternativi musicali. La lunga marcia'. *Gong*, n. 10 (October): 9–12.

> needs rather than awaiting the organizers' scraps. We want to live in a new culture, not to gain a 'free' place within the theatre of alienation.[21]

Although the movement and its actors were considered natural allies by the monthlies, they were also criticized for lacking specific expertise about musical issues. On the one hand, they were deemed devoid of concrete organizational proposals, and thus incompatible with the organization of an actual network of alternative musical events. On the other hand, the free music movement did not have any coherent position about music's aesthetic qualities (also see below); it thus lacked both subcultural knowledge and cultural capital. In contrast to the ideology of free music, *Gong* proposed fair pay to artists willing to support alternative events, arguing that: 'no one can live off air; professionalism is an uncomfortable but unavoidable reality'.[22] *Muzak* similarly argued that self-managed music concerts needed concrete organizational efforts to be a viable alternative to official concerts:

> Those who call themselves 'alternative people' need to face reality, a reality which cannot be tackled with abstract principles like 'music is ours, let's get it back!'. It is not about showing to official organizers […] that one is able to organize a free festival with few good bands […]. It is about start working seriously to make such concerts real: self-managed but real. Neither concentration camps [*lager*] nor clouds in the sky of pure ideas.[23]

Another event raising the concern of critics was the festival *Parco Lambro* organized by the zine *Re Nudo* in Milan. As mentioned above, *Parco Lambro* was the most successful initiative associated with the counterculture, and the monthlies' position towards the event was ambivalent. It is in relation to *Parco Lambro* that they expressed the second pillar of their politics of music: alternative musical events should promote a different, more socially aware way of being together. In this respect, the 1975 edition of Parco Lambro was framed by *Gong* as a success. In contrast to

[21] Anonymous (1975). 'Allonsanfan – contro cultura. Per uscire dal caos'. *Gong*, n. 2 (February): 56.
[22] Anonymous (1975): 56.
[23] Pintor, G. (1974). 'Festival Aleatori'. *Muzak*, n. 10–11 (August–September): 15.

the American festival Woodstock – an 'old and empty ritual'[24] – Parco Lambro was seen as expressing:

> […] a contradictory but genuine muddle of pressing needs. People wanted to take music back for themselves, but they also wanted to understand something more. They wanted to stay with their peers and gain awareness about the urgent problems of these pre-electoral days […]. [At the festival] people could see different realities and the problems that affect all of us; perhaps they could even become more aware of the ambiguity and contradictions of such problems.[25]

Taking music events back from private organizers was not enough for the monthlies. Such events also had to be moments of critical awareness and discovery of the problems affecting the youth culture and its music. *Muzak* made a similar point in reviewing the same edition of *Parco Lambro*. However, it was more critical about the festival's results: it was seen as affected by a 'consumerist' attitude and as too close to a traditional symbol of Italian popular culture, the *Feste de l' Unità* (Unity Parties) organized by the Communist Party since the mid-1940s:

> We had the poignant feeling that there, among closed fists and red drapes, we were part of something that is already strong. However, progress needs criticism. Walking among the crowd, the feeling of being grown-up was replaced by the less exciting feeling of being big enough to have our own *festival dell' Unità* [sic], albeit with the Ukraine Brèžnev-style overshoes replaced by a good imitation of Jack Kerouac's American sandals. It is the same consumerist mechanism: the symbols change but the soul of commerce remains intact.[26]

For *Muzak*, these events had to raise political awareness and promote more authentic social relationships. In contrast, the article stresses new symbols of consumerism such as the 'Jack Kerouac-style' sandals. The risk was that an old consumerist mentality might turn alternative events

[24] Antonucci Ferrara, A. (1975). 'Musica e candelotti. La festa di Re Nudo'. *Gong*, n. 7–8 (August–September): 31–32.

[25] Antonucci Ferrara, A. (1975): 31–32.

[26] Ravera, L. (1975). 'Juke-box al prosciutto'. *Muzak*, n. 4 (July): 35–36.

into 'just entertainment, musical show, old culture confused with the new one'.[27] To be sure, such attacks on consumerism and market forces never translated into a refusal of the market at large. The monthlies were still very conscious that their own existence depended on a minimum of economic autonomy (Chap. 5). Indeed both *Muzak* and *Gong* remained commercial enterprises based on the economic support of readers and advertisers.[28] Their selective attack on market actors, then, can be seen as a form of negotiation; a way to establish a space of relative autonomy for a different musical culture. As with other instances of contemporary cultural production (Hesmondhalgh 2006; Banks 2007), their autonomy from market forces was based on both compromise and contradictions.

## Musical Politics

The construction of an alternative network of musical events, which could promote political awareness and new social relationships, was the tenet of the monthlies' politics of music. However, as anticipated above, *Muzak* and *Gong* were also concerned with the contents of such initiatives. They developed a second strategy of engagement, which I call musical politics. According to this position, some kinds of music were political in themselves: because of their innovative sonic structures, they could reshape people's feelings and sensibility, contributing to a broader project of social change. The magazines' political cosmopolitanism was thus based on very clear aesthetic hierarchies, and defining such hierarchies was the task through which critics thought they could contribute to the movement. Indeed, they saw counter-cultural and political groups as unqualified to deal with aesthetic issues, and hence as lacking cultural and subcultural capital. *Gong*'s editorial board argued for the importance of aesthetic hierarchies during a debate with other political forces (organized by the magazine itself and published on its pages in 1976). The

[27] Ravera, L. (1975): 35–36.

[28] The monthlies always devoted some pages to adverts, and *Gong* used to defend this choice to those readers who accused the magazine of 'selling out'. Adverts that appeared in the monthlies included record companies' pages on new releases, hi-fi equipment, and a variety of products aimed at young people, like anti-spot creams, discounts on travel and so on.

magazine argued that alternative musical events had to be based on clear forms of 'cultural discrimination':

> All [political] organizations have been involved – some more, some less – with the organization of concerts, and usually with questionable artists to say the least, like Soft Machine, Van Der Graaf Generator, Baker Gurwitz Army [sic]. Artists who are questionable both from a cultural and political point of view. Have such organizations considered making any clear cultural discrimination in future? Not discriminations based on the political affiliation or the revolutionary claims of musicians, but on what musicians are able to accomplish on stage, from a cultural point of view.[29]

The aforementioned pop-rock musicians were 'questionable' because in 1976 they were far from representing the field's avant-garde, especially as understood by *Gong* (see below). Furthermore, the monthlies accused new-left groups and the Communist Party of using music instrumentally, as a means of propaganda to attract young people regardless of the music's aesthetic qualities. This was, for example, how *Gong* assessed the musical events organized by political groups like *Circoli Ottobre* (October Circles) and *Partito Radicale* (Radical Party):

> The interventions of political groups are a mere activity of propaganda based on an old logic of exploitation, and on a wrong and disqualifying interpretation of the Marxist concept of superstructure.[30]

*Muzak* expressed a similar evaluation of the *Feste de l'Unità* organized by the PCI, a popular event that for *Muzak*'s critics emblematized the cultural and organizational power of the party over the musical field:

> The PCI has an enormous network. There have been thousands of festivals [organized by the party] this year alone, in any Italian city and town […] with a degree of participation which is quantitatively incalculable. The party has huge responsibilities towards an audience increasingly hungry for

[29] Villa, M. (1976). 'Dibattito sui circuiti musicali: in cammino per cambiare'. *Gong*, n. 7/8 (August–September): 11–13.

[30] Delconte, P. and Masotti, R. (1975). 'Inchiesta Gong. I nuovi circuiti alternativi musicali. La lunga marcia'. *Gong*, n. 10 (October): 9–12.

> cultural resources, towards musicians (some of whom are managed exclusively by the party) and towards the political situation, now that music has become a means of struggle or, at least, a means of emancipation. However […] the cultural line of the festival is a big melting-pot, with some interesting things emerging from an incoherent line. […] This year we have seen everything and more, from Locomotive Kerutzberg [sic] to Henry Cow, from Archie Shepp to Don Cherry, but also Raffaella Carrà and Gianni Morandi, along with the usual [Lucio] Dalla and [Antonello] Venditti.[31]

The problem underlined by this position-taking is a cultural line that includes too much: from the icons of Italian light music (Raffaella Carrà, Gianni Morandi) and singer-songwriters who played frequently at such events (Antonello Venditti, Lucio Dalla) to British progressive rock (Henry Cow) and free jazz acts (Archie Shepp, Don Cherry). For the monthlies, such loose aesthetic boundaries and disregard of subcultural distinctions undermined the cultural politics of the PCI and revolutionary groups. In contrast, the monthlies argued that politically relevant music was not music with overtly political content, such as politicized lyrics, but music that was challenging from an aesthetic point of view, particularly in terms of sonic structures. According to this position, 'creative' music was able to reshape the sensibility and feelings of people, and as such it could contribute to the broader political project of a different society. This is why both *Muzak* and *Gong* conceived of jazz, particularly free and avant-garde jazz, as the genre that could really contribute to a similar project. By contrast, as I discuss in Chap. 7, they saw rock music as increasingly outdated and unable to make further aesthetic progress. This view was reinforced by the success of Italian jazz festivals between 1973 and 1977 (Prato 2010). Indeed the monthlies took the success of festivals like *Umbria Jazz* and *Bologna Jazz Festival* as further proof of a changing youth culture and Italian society, and argued that jazz was becoming a mass phenomenon:

> Jazz is being rediscovered […] because it demands a more intelligent form of participation. As with everything that demands intellectual effort (rather

[31] Castaldo, G. (1975). 'Feste: Evviva l'Unità… nella diversità'. *Muzak*, n. 7 (November): 10–12.

> than just the gut), it develops understanding of the world and hence real communication.[32]

The reference to the importance of 'intellectual effort' reveals a peculiar disposition (Bourdieu 1984) towards music and popular culture. In this respect, while the monthlies saw music's aesthetic power as intrinsically political, only music with recognizably highbrow features – originality and formal innovation – was seen in such a light. This view emerges also in *Gong*'s support for the 'black avant-garde', namely African-American musicians like Antony Braxton, Cecil Taylor and the Art Ensemble of Chicago:

> The collective and equitable way in which these musicians work […] is alien to any cliché. While working on a common [aesthetic] objective, they are able to expand their creativity. As such […] they represent the most accomplished way of interpreting, living and translating the fundamental tensions of reality as a whole.[33]

This 'creative' music was the product of 'real' political tensions, namely the struggle of African-American musicians against racism and exclusion. As a result, it was an aesthetic force capable of influencing people's consciousness:

> Of course it is not possible to change reality as a whole through music, but if music starts changing itself, it can contribute to new and more fertile levels of consciousness.[34]

As I explore further in the next chapter, this approach to musical evaluation was very different from the 'loose' aesthetic boundaries promoted by *Ciao 2001*, which included genres that the monthlies did not consider as creatively challenging, like soul and disco music. Overall, the monthlies' political cosmopolitanism implied an anti-capitalist approach to cultural globalization (and the way it was transforming the Italian

[32] Pintor, G. (1975). 'E' morto il pop, viva il jazz'. *Muzak*, n. 6 (October): 15–17.
[33] Bolelli, F. (1975). 'Circuiti alternativi: qualche riflessione teorica'. *Gong*, n. 9: 44–45.
[34] Bolelli, F. (1975): 45.

musical field), and a more normative understanding of the boundaries between valuable and worthless popular music. Critics used their cultural and subcultural capital as political resources, that is, to define a cultural politics for the movement.[35] This ideological project was also influenced by a wider post-Marxist culture, one that was very much alive among Italian left-wing students and which emerges in critics' language, particularly their references to concepts like alienation, structure and superstructure. By contrast, while not ignoring the politicization of youth and the changes occurring in Italian society, *Ciao 2001* defined a different relationship with political engagement, one shaped by its field-specific economic power and commercial orientation.

## Economic Power and Political Engagement: The Strategy of *Ciao 2001*

*Ciao 2001* developed a strategy of engagement which was in line with its 'objective' and 'democratic' approach to music criticism (Chap. 5). As Saverio Rotondi pointed out on several occasions, the magazine pursued a 'pluralistic' agenda, one that excluded only 'grim commercialism' and 'artistic inauthenticity', as such values were in contradiction with the field's *doxa*:

> I do not think that music has a [political] colour. It has many colours indeed, and we should not ban any of them, except when grim commercialism or artistic inauthenticity are an issue. I firmly believe in pluralism in this respect.[36]

---

[35] However, the impact of the monthlies' proposals on the movement is unclear. Historical sources suggest that this was rather modest. In late 1976, *Gong*'s critic Franco Bolelli lamented that the magazine was 'not a political force, nor the publication most read by local cultural authorities [*assessori alla cultura*]'; see Bolelli, F. (1976) 'Sulla politica dei raduni estivi. Le polveri bagnate'. *Gong*, n. 10 (October): 10. Similarly, one of the most comprehensive histories of the Italian counter-culture provides only a brief mention of *Gong* and *Muzak* (Echaurren and Salaris 1999: 151). By contrast, their symbolic recognition is greater in histories of Italian popular music and among later generations of critics (see Conclusion).

[36] Rotondi, S. (1977). Answer to Maurizio Iliono (Sezze), 'Ventunenne comunista'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 24 (19 June): 5–6.

From this standpoint, Rotondi and other critics understood the relationship between the weekly and the political counter-culture as a non-exclusive one. To be sure, they saw the rise of new social movements, and the growing institutional power of the left, as welcome changes in Italian society and as changes partly engendered by youth:

> All the civil and democratic achievements of the last few years, as well as the recent mobilizations and struggles, have been engendered by youth. […] I cannot say if the political earthquake of the regional elections of June 15 is due solely to youth. But I am sure that, at the very least, they have conditioned other sectors of society, thus turning the key problems of our country into a public issue.[37]

However, the magazine also argued that music should not necessarily be linked to politics, and that the musical field should not be solely managed by political and counter-cultural groups:

> We cannot close our eyes and hope for an impossible return to the years before 1967–68, which were not affected by the current problems and struggles. What we have to ask is that music is not killed by politics. There must be viable alternatives for those wishing to listen to music but who do not want to participate in political events […] if there must be freedom of participation in political events […] there must also be the freedom to enjoy the music that one likes.[38]

This position is also revealed by the coverage of events like the *Parco Lambro* festival, which was significantly different from that provided by the monthlies. On the one hand, *Ciao 2001* positively reviewed *Parco Lambro* in 1974, 1975 and 1976. On the other, the magazine's accounts did not position *Ciao 2001* within the movement. The articles on *Parco Lambro* adopted an objectivizing perspective: the critic speaking in these articles is an observer who occasionally expresses sympathy for the event's ideological underpinnings, but who avoids making any proposal of

[37] Ruocco, A. (1976). '1975–76 Scuolaortobiezionedroga'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 1 (11 January): 13–14.

[38] Rotondi, S. (1976). Answer to Claudio Scarpa (Rome), 'Un delitto non parlarne'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 8 (29 February): 5–6.

cultural politics for the movement and on behalf of *Ciao 2001*. Indeed, *Parco Lambro*'s last edition (1976) was framed as a popular event and a positive landmark for the movement, but the position of the magazine, albeit sympathetic, remained external to it:

> This year, the youth proletariat festival […] has offered a lot more than music and the slogans of the various organizing groups; it has been the ground of struggles as well as encounters. It has made concrete both the expectations and the uncertainties of a movement, which involves hundreds of thousands of people. *We will need to address it again in order to provide a cold-minded evaluation*.[39] [my emphasis]

*Ciao 2001* never mirrored *Muzak* and *Gong*'s ambition to set a cultural politics for the movement. It simply addressed such events as part of Italian youth, which the magazine aimed to represent in its entirety. Moreover, as argued in Chap. 5, *Ciao 2001* considered effective market structures and professional organizers as preconditions for a thriving music culture, one that could be in line with the professional standards of Anglo-American pop-rock. According to this economic cosmopolitanism, excessive politicization was a risk both for live concerts and for Italian pop-rock at large:

> Italians have learnt nothing from the experience of Anglo-Saxon countries. What we have is provincialism, laziness and insufficient musical preparation, along with outdated labels and business models. […] There are some people ready to exert violence in order to sustain the idea of 'free music'. It is a beautiful ideal, which is also in line with some of the messages conveyed by youth music. However, it is incompatible with the organization of concerts as it exists in Italy and abroad (with the difference that only here there are people protesting).[40]

This position by no means supported the exclusion of professional organizers from the musical field. While both the monthlies and *Ciao*

[39] Caroli, D. (1976). 'Quattro giorni al Parco Lambro. Musica, violenza, dibattiti, gente'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 30 (1 August): 42–44.

[40] Anonymous (1974). 'Da Santamonica. La stangata'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 31 (4 August 1974): 15–17.

*2001* condemned the violence fuelled by the free music movement, the weekly was for the enforcement of professional structures, and not for the monopoly of political and counter-cultural forces over musical practices. In other words, for *Ciao 2001,* there could be both music and politics, and the latter did not necessarily have to mediate or define the former.

## Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the ways in which music critics interpreted the rise of political activism in the musical sector and other fields of Italian society. More specifically, it has examined how magazines possessing different resources devised markedly different strategies of engagement. I have shown that Italy's season of political struggle acted as an opportunity for the monthlies, as it made it possible to implement a distinctive political cosmopolitanism. This project of cultural legitimation was quite different from *Ciao 2001*'s promotion of market forces and loose aesthetic boundaries. *Muzak* and *Gong* defined pop music criticism as a political practice with objectives of radical social change. They supported the exclusion of market actors from the musical field – albeit with some contradictions – and the creation of an alternative network of political and counter-cultural organizations. More importantly, their strategy of engagement privileged the demands of aesthetic innovation rather than political propaganda. For the monthlies, only creative music could contribute to a broader project of social change, which led them to implement a significantly normative strategy of boundary-drawing (see also Chap. 7).

Overall, the chapter has shown that a changing space of possibles forced critics to rethink their cultural politics. Even *Ciao 2001* could not ignore the movement and its actors, as their actions had significant impact on the musical field and, as a result, on part of the weekly's audience. While Bourdieu's distinction between cultural and economic capital helps explain differences in cultural legitimation strategies, to explain how distinctive strategies emerge – particularly their meaning and politics – it is necessary to look at the opportunities and constraints afforded by different national-historical contexts. More specifically, it is necessary

to look at the 'meeting between two histories' (Bourdieu 1996), namely how cultural intermediaries employ their resources vis-à-vis a given space of possibles. Indeed in a different socio-historical context, the monthlies' political cosmopolitanism would not have been possible. It was the very existence of the movement and its ramifications in the musical field that made engagement a pressing issue for music critics, and which made it an opportunity for those in the structural position – professionally, but also personally – to see it as such.

The next chapter explores in greater detail the boundary-drawing strategies of *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong*. It looks at how affiliation with different cosmopolitan projects shaped critics' evaluation of rock, jazz and soul, and how they made distinctions between and within these genres.

## Bibliography

Banks, M. (2007). *The politics of cultural work*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bolelli, F. (1979). Movimento e scrittura nell'area del pop. In P. Alfierj & G. Mazzone (Eds.), *I fiori di Gutenberg: analisi e prospettive dell'editoria alternativa, marginale, pirata in Italia e Europa*. Roma: Arcana.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The rules of art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Dell'Arti, G. (2014). Luigi Manconi. *Cinquantamila Giorni – Corriere. it.* http://cinquantamila.corriere.it/storyTellerThread.php?threadId=MANCONI+Luigi. Accessed 25 Oct 2013.

Echaurren, P., & Salaris, C. (1999). *Controcultura in Italia: 1966–1977. Viaggio nell'underground*. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri.

Fabbri, F. (2007). Orchestral Manoeuvres in the 1970s: L'Orchestra Co-operative, 1974–1983. *Popular Music, 26*(3), 409–427.

Foot, J. (2010). Looking back on Italy's "Long 68". In I. Cornils & S. Waters (Eds.), *Public, private and divided memories of 1968: International perspectives* (pp. 103–129). Bern: Peter Lang.

Ginsborg, P. (1990). *A history of contemporary Italy: Society and politics 1943–1988*. London: Penguin.

Grispigni, M. (2006). *1977*. Roma: Manifesto Libri.

Gundle, S. (2000). *Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian communists and the challenge of mass culture, 1943–91*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2006). Bourdieu, the media, and cultural production. *Media, Culture & Society, 28*(2), 211–231.

Mangano, A., & Lima, G. (1998). *Le riviste degli anni Settanta: gruppi, movimenti e conflitti sociali*. Pisa: CDP: Centro di Documentazione di Pisa and Massari Editore.

Mangiarotti, M. (1977). Pop, industria e mass-media. In D. Caroli (Ed.), *L'arcipelago pop. La musica pop e le sue relazioni con la cultura alternativa e la questione giovanile*. Roma: Arcana.

Prato, P. (2010). *La musica italiana. Una storia sociale dall'Unità a oggi*. Roma: Donzelli.

Ravera, L. (2004). 'Io e Marco con le ali', L'Unità (21 August): 8.

Santoro, M. (2010). *Effetto Tenco: genealogia della canzone d'autore*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

# Part III

## Evaluating Music and Music Criticism

# 7

# Aesthetic Encounters: Evaluating Rock, Jazz and Soul

So far I have explored critics' struggles over different understandings of expertise and cultural globalization, and have shown that cultural capital and subcultural knowledge allowed them to implement competing projects of legitimation. This chapter investigates how these resources were used to evaluate different musics. It argues that critics did not project their Kantian disposition onto inert objects of evaluation, but engaged with (and were moved by) the qualities of such objects. I will conceptualize critics' evaluative work as arising from the encounter between their embodied dispositions and musics endowed with autonomous properties and trajectories. Whereas cultural sociologists have stressed critics' interpretive power – how they construct music's meaning (Chap. 2) – I show that Italian critics had to adjust their dispositions to music's sonic, visual and narrative properties. This relational approach to cultural evaluation avoids ascribing causal power to either critics' social positions or the cultural artifacts themselves, as it theorizes meaning as emerging from the interaction between historically and socially situated actors and the properties of different musics (Chap. 3).

The chapter opens by mapping critics' evaluative criteria over a purposive sample of 297 music feature articles. This first section, in line



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_7

with the other studies discussed in Chap. 2, reveals the importance of highbrow and popular criteria of evaluation for Italian critics. However, the chapter's succeeding sections show that the meaning of such criteria changed across different genres and sub-genres. The second section explores critics' discussion of pop-rock acts, showing that their early experience of 1960s rock acted as a yardstick for evaluation of later musical trends. Critics' rock habitus needed to be sensitized to the properties of new styles, like hard rock and punk, which also required an evaluation of their emotional force and pleasure. The chapter's third and fourth sections investigate how critics' editorial affiliations shaped their aesthetic encounters. They discuss *Ciao 2001* and the monthlies' different solutions to a perceived crisis of rock, analyzing the former's coverage of soul and disco and the latter's investment in free jazz. These sections, along with a final one on gender, also examine the impact of musicians' bodies and social identities on critics' evaluations. They show that musicians' race and gender became stakes in the struggles between different projects of legitimation, as they were charged with different meanings by different music magazines. I thus consider how the field's whiteness and maleness affected critics' evaluations. Overall, the chapter explores a range of different aesthetic encounters, looking at how critics' dispositions – including their position in the music press – interacted with the sounds, images and narratives of different musics.

## Highbrow and Popular Criteria of Evaluation

As discussed in the previous chapters, music critics were very concerned with drawing distinctions between artistically valuable and lower forms of popular music. Even the most commercially oriented magazine, the weekly *Ciao 2001*, defined clear boundaries between debased music styles, like Italian *musica leggera*, and styles worthy of journalistic coverage (Chap. 5). Similarly, the monthlies' strategies of political intervention were based on the belief that aesthetically challenging music could transform people's sensibilities and, by extension, society. It is not surprising, then, to find that defining aesthetic hierarchies was a key function of

**Table 7.1** Highbrow repertoire

| Magazine | Features analysed | Originality of the musician and/or the musical work | Market constraints |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Ciao 2001* | 186 | 151 (81.1 %) | 65 (34.9 %) |
| *Muzak* | 54 | 49 (92.4 %) | 25 (47.1 %) |
| *Gong* | 57 | 54 (94.7 %) | 34 (59.6 %) |

critics' music features.[1] As summarized in Table 7.1, *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong* discussed music's artistic originality in the majority of features analyzed, both when evaluating a specific piece of music or musicians' careers. To a lesser extent, they discussed musicians' creative autonomy vis-à-vis the mediation of market structures.

In this respect, the mastery of highbrow categories was a key resource for all three magazines, notwithstanding their institutional differences, and the highbrow repertoire was used to assess different acts and genres, such as the folk-rock band Fairport Convention (*Ciao 2001*), the jazz composer Carla Bley (*Muzak*) and the rock songwriter Patti Smith (*Gong*):

> From both a conceptual and technical point of view, [Fairport Convention] are at the cutting-edge of contemporary music. […] Drawing on ancient folk traditions, they make a kind of rock music that expands existing expressive and musical possibilities.[2]
>
> While composing, arranging and conducting, she [Carla Bley] draws on an apparently inexhaustible reserve of ideas. She is involved in a broad diversity of experiments and always stamps her personality on them.[3]
>
> Patti Smith is a product of the latest generation of American pop musicians […] her art, today, is no longer urgent and original poetry (as one of the Founding Fathers). It can only be an intellectual game.[4]

[1] See Appendix 1 for a discussion of sample strategy and coding. The sample focuses on music feature articles, that is, long evaluative pieces which were singled out in the magazines' tables of contents. It thus excludes interviews and short reviews.

[2] Ferranti, M. (1976). 'Celebrazioni e speranze per il folk inglese'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 26 (4 July 1976): 51–52.

[3] Castaldo, G. (1974). 'Carla Bley e la jazz Composer's Orchestra'. *Muzak*, n. 12 (October): 47–50.

[4] Bertoncelli, R. (1976). 'Patty in Excelsis'. *Gong*, n. 7–8 (July–August): 54–56.

**Table 7.2** Popular repertoire

| Magazine | Features analysed | Pleasure and emotions | 'Deserved' success | Music's accessiblity |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Ciao 2001* | 186 | 62 (33.3 %) | 66 (35.5 %) | 37 (19.9 %) |
| *Muzak* | 54 | 26 (48.1 %) | 3 (5.5 %) | 0 |
| *Gong* | 57 | 33 (57.9 %) | 4 (7.0 %) | 1 (1.7 %) |

As exemplified by the argument about Patti Smith's lack of originality, the concept of innovation worked as a standard of evaluation both in positive and negative features. Its importance also emerges when critics consider musicians' autonomy from purely commercial demands. As shown by the following excerpt from *Ciao 2001*, an entire musical trend, like disco, could be considered as lacking the prerequisite of artistic autonomy:

> The technical and industrial nature of disco-music [sic] inevitably empties its main protagonists of any content. What could Roberta Kelly and Donna Summer ever tell us? They are shiny puppets in the hands of their producer, Giorgio Moroder. […] This kind of music industry [disco] remains strongly attached to the concept 'I do what people like to sell more and more'.[5]

These examples resonate with other studies in the sociology of cultural evaluation (Chap. 2), which show that critics' highbrow repertoire has been key to the legitimation of rock and jazz. Furthermore, like van Venrooij and Schmutz (2010) and Lindberg et al. (2005), I found that critics occasionally mobilized a popular repertoire, one emphasizing music's emotional force and accessibility, as well as examples of 'deserved' commercial recognition (Table 7.2).

However, a qualitative analysis of this repertoire reveals that it is rarely autonomous from a highbrow mode of appreciation. For instance, the idea of deserved success – which rarely emerges in the monthlies – links popularity to musicians' originality, like in the following example about Bruce Springsteen from *Ciao 2001*:

> America has found his new Dylan, a new Van Morrison, [with] the anxiety of James Dean and the fragile tenderness of Chaplin. On stage it's like a

[5] Ferranti, M. (1977). 'Ah, questa disco-music'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 16 (24 April): 66–67.

> long parade of feelings, with each song […] having such an impact and strong identity that it seems on the verge of an explosion.
>
> […]
>
> America is now conquered; the thousands of young people at the Bottom Line are concrete proof.[6]

Making an explicit connection between artistic identity and 'feelings', the excerpt also reveals that discussions of musical pleasure were rarely an endorsement of music's entertainment value, that is, pleasure for its own sake. Indeed this kind of frame appears only in a few features of *Ciao 2001*, such as the following article about Kiss's live act:

> All 18 thousand scream "Rock 'n' roll!!!!". The Forum gets beautifully packed and the guitars start tripping […] Ace Frehley plays such a powerful solo that the guitar starts smoking: the tension is too high.[7]

More generally, the higher presence of popular criteria in *Ciao 2001* is in line with the magazine's heteronomous orientation (Chap. 5). Occasionally, the weekly also endorsed music that was accessible and 'not too difficult', but still in articles where music's artistic value was the central concern. In the following section, I start exploring how critics' cultural and subcultural capital were 'tuned' into the properties of different musics, such as different forms of pop-rock.

## Pop-Rock and the Politics of Memory

### Musical Habitus and the Ageing of Rock

As discussed in Chap. 4, critics were mostly teenagers when British beat and American rock arrived in Italy, and their dispositions towards 1970s popular music had been shaped by this earlier moment of musical education. The importance of this formative moment is acknowledged in

[6] Giulietti, M. L. (1975). 'Bruce Springsteen. L'eroe dei grattacieli'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 38 (28 September): 18–20.

[7] Gallo, A. (1976). 'Kiss. Baci al cianuro'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 12 (28 March): 42–43.

the monthlies' early editorials (Chap. 4), and also in several retrospective articles describing the discovery of 1960s pop-rock:

> For us, in an Italy where the football match was the best you could get as mass culture, the arrival of the Beatles was like a thunderbolt. We were just teenagers torn between the oratory, sport, school and repressed sexual desires. […] We were fascinated by this music, but also by the possibility of distinguishing ourselves from the masses. We were fascinated by this community, which, somehow, we dreamed to join.[8]

As highly mediated cultural forms, rock acts like the Beatles introduced critics to new sounds, images and narratives. This is why discovering the Beatles meant discovering a new (imagined) community, one that critics 'dreamed to join'. The importance of music's visual and narrative properties emerges also in the following excerpt, which describes the discovery of Frank Zappa's image through a description of his 'toilet poster':

> An odd gentleman seated on a toilet; with a funny moustache and a laughable name […]. We were in the middle of the 1968, and the seated-on-a-toilet Zappa gave us the subtle emotion of the baby saying 'poo' to the priest-uncle. That vulgarity became a positive value, a way to construct and affirm an identity denied by a patriarchal and liberal-repressive family.[9]

These examples, like those discussed in Chap. 4, reveal the importance of critics' cultural capital in appropriating new musical forms. Indeed, pop-rock was compared to both Italian mass culture and high culture, and allowed for a process of early distinction vis-à-vis Italian social institutions, such as the 'oratory' (the church) and the school. However, while early socialization in pop-rock created an enduring musical habitus, this was challenged by the ageing of rock culture. During the 1970s, critics' discourses about pop-rock became mostly discourses about its crisis, as they started comparing contemporary acts to a canon of 1960s musicians which included, among others, the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan and Pink Floyd. This crisis was understood both in

[8] Ricci, P. M. (1974). 'Beatles'. *Muzak*, n. 12 (October): 26.

[9] Pintor, G. (1975). 'C'è un signore seduto sul cesso coi baffi'. *Muzak*, n. 4 (July): 39–40.

social and aesthetic terms. According to Italian critics, American and British rock had failed to fully develop the alternative culture which they seemed to represent in the late 1960s. This discourse emerges, for instance, while evaluating the careers of Jefferson Airplane and Grateful Dead respectively:

> It is difficult to believe that today someone could fall in love with the Californian sound. Without the society that nourished it, the legendary style is nowadays a pale ghost. It is just a 'genre' among others […] a reassuring musical signature. This would have been unthinkable during the days of White Rabbit [the Jefferson Airplane song] and Grace Slick's scandalous tongue.[10]
>
> The 'cosmic dream' of the old, glorious and beloved Grateful Dead has become a mere aesthetic fact […] the spirit has gone and will never come back. The band has 'grown up'. They have money, their own label, and can have everything they want. And nowadays they just want to have some fun.[11]

For Italian critics, these bands spoke of an entire (albeit recent) cultural past. While their highbrow disposition is clearly at work in these examples, their evaluations are also made possible by socialization in a distinctive aesthetic tradition. This habitus is activated vis-à-vis specific cultural objects and producers, whose trajectory is perceived as declining. More generally, critics' rock habitus and subcultural knowledge had a pragmatic function. They were used to make distinctions between uninspired repetitions of the past and acts which seemed to add something meaningful to the emerging rock canon:

> Ian Hunter [Mott the Hoople's singer] acts like a consummate performer, he looks like a decadent Bob Dylan and maybe has even something to tell, although it doesn't impress us. […] Like many other bands of the last years,

[10] Bertoncelli, R. (1976). 'California 10 anni dopo: ma l'amore mio no…'. *Gong*, n. 7–8 (July–August): 7–9.

[11] Insolera, M. (1974). 'Grateful Dead. Album nuovo, storia vecchia'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 32 (11 August): 66–67.

> Hunter and colleagues try to light up a Beatles-like excitement in the hearts of our little brothers.[12]
>
> [Eddie & Hot Rods] are excellent musicians. Their sonic output is fluid, essential and extremely solid. The band played its own compositions but also some old hits, like Them's Gloria, Jumping Jack Flash [the Rolling Stones song], Route 66. So we got proof that 1970s punk has its roots in the music of the glorious pioneers of fifteen years ago.[13]

New musical acts activated critics' cultural memories, which were sensitized to their sonic output and performative style (that is, their visual properties).

## Hard Rock and the Politics of Pleasure

As anticipated above, a concern for music's pleasure and bodily impact emerges frequently in critics' feature articles. However, it would be misleading to conclude that they practised an 'intermediary aesthetic' merging highbrow and popular criteria of evaluation (Lindberg et al. 2005: 338). Indeed they evaluated pleasure in light of a broader cultural hierarchy, one dependent on the perceived artistic value of works, authors and styles. Critics *qualified* pleasure in light of their Kantian dispositions and knowledge of the pop-rock past. It is thus more productive to see critics' relationship with pleasure as a politics of pleasure, rather than as partial support for popular aesthetics.

This selective, evaluative approach to musical pleasure emerges particularly in articles about hard rock. This genre label was used to describe music characterized by guitar-based riffs, loud and aggressive distortions and other sonic features perceived as 'rough'. Critics identified hard rock with American and English acts like Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin, Uriah Heep, Alice Cooper and Kiss. Sometimes the label was used also in rela-

[12] Moroni, D. (1975). 'Tutti i giovani druidi'. *Muzak*, n. 2 (May): 40–41.

[13] Bagli, A. (1977). 'Londra. Rivoluzione punk & altre storie'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 7 (20 February): 42–44.

tion to English acts like Gary Glitter, Sweet and the Bay City Rollers, which the youngest readers liked (Chap. 8). For example, the following article, from *Ciao 2001*, describes David Bowie and Gary Glitter's music as characterized by '...easy and rhythmic [sounds], which are very close to the emotional simplicity of rock 'n' roll'.[14] However, the emotional power of these sonic structures is evaluated vis-à-vis musicians' artistic and historical significance. This is why a sharp distinction could be made between the feelings elicited by Bowie's and Glitter's music:

> Bowie is the true inheritor of a genuinely rock tradition with a specific cultural background – a music that was born with the Rolling Stones and has further evolved with Bob Dylan and the Velvet Underground […]. Glitter and the likes, on the contrary, have nothing behind their shoulders. […] Their heavy and unoriginal music is a purely epidermic fact, one which is consciously manufactured to please the youngest people. They are consumeristic puppets lacking any real and vital expressive validity.[15]

Critics' rock habitus helped making distinctions between 'purely epidermic' music and a 'genuinely rock tradition'. In the following excerpt, *Muzak*'s director Giaime Pintor makes a similar distinction between 1960s rock-blues acts, like the Yardbirds and Jeff Beck, and 1970s acts like Grand Funk Railroad. As with the former example, musical pleasure is evaluated according to the historical and artistic significance of the bands producing it:

> The first wave of hard rock bands had a subversive quality; it was a musical evolution in comparison to simpler kinds of music *providing just empty pleasures* [*vibrazioni*]. […] [However] [*t*]*he relief inducted by either violent stimulation or sleeping pills is not what we should ask from the arts*. Today hard rock is the whore of music; *it gives us the frustrating emotion of a moment*. This is humiliating for us as well as for music.[16] [my emphasis]

[14] Insolera, M. (1974). 'Gary Glitter. Motorcycle rock'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 9 (3 March): 52–54.

[15] Insolera, M. (1974): 53.

[16] Pintor, G. (1974). 'Hard rock: dall'evasione all'evasione'. *Muzak*, n. 10–11 (August–September): 6–9.

Cultural and subcultural capital were thus tuned into hard rock's sonic conventions, and the way such conventions were mastered by different acts. A too-simple version of hard rock would provide just 'empty pleasures'. As I discuss in the section on gender below, it is not accidental that empty pleasures were also framed as feminine (hard rock as 'the whore of music'). More generally, different sub-genres were seen as providing different kinds of pleasure, as argued in the following example comparing the 'delicate emotions' of Hatfield and the North (an English progressive rock act) with Black Sabbath's 'amphetaminic violence':

> [Hatfield and the North] are fascinatingly different from the conformism of current stylistic canons, such as easy blues revivals or the destructive and hyper-amplified rage of hard rock apostles […]. [Hatfield and the North] provides fragile and delicate emotions, not hyper violence and alcoholic flashes, that is, the means through which Black Sabbath, in England, are collecting millions of pounds.[17]

Emotional and bodily pleasures were not negative properties per se. Critics also identified types of music whose emotional qualities were supported by a sufficient degree of artistic research (that is, 'different' sonic structures). Indeed the following example about Love (a 1960s rock-blues band) frames pleasure as something that disrupts everyday experience, rather than as superficial or violent:

> Let's put in a good word for the hard sound (in spite of the group's name). Love were one of the few bands who understood the rock lesson with an open mind. *They used the guitar to move, explore and let explode the doors of normality*. […] *They had a spectacular energy* and the guitar of Arthur Lee could burn all his competitors (except the uncatchable Jimi Hendrix).[18] [my emphasis]

These examples evaluate musical pleasure in a contextual and historical way. Critics did not support a general aesthetics of the senses (Bourdieu 1984), but enacted a politics of pleasure, one which was shaped by both highbrow values and knowledge of the pop-rock past.

---

[17] Fumagalli, M. (1974). 'L'ultimo racconto di Canterbury: Hatfield and the North'. *Gong*, n. 1 (January): 31–35.

[18] Bertoncelli, R. (1975). 'Love'. *Gong*, n. 12 (December): 18.

So far I have examined critics' evaluation of pop-rock, looking at the encounter between their dispositions and the properties of different acts: their sonic outcomes, visual and performative conventions, and historical trajectory. By and large, I have focused on critics' shared resources – their cultural and subcultural capital – and shared concerns, such as the crisis of rock. However, music magazines developed different institutional solutions to the latter, as they made different choices of coverage and justified them through different ideological arguments. The following sections concentrate on these differences and how they informed critics' encounters with soul, disco and jazz.

## Disco and the Politics of Loose Boundaries

As anticipated in Chap. 5, *Ciao 2001* addressed a broader variety of styles and acts than the monthlies. This has partly emerged above, where I examined the weekly's positive evaluations of Bruce Springsteen, Kiss, David Bowie and Eddie & Hot Rods. However, it is in relation to soul and disco music that *Ciao 2001* fully reveals its loose aesthetic boundaries. Disco[19] gained growing success in the Italian charts beginning in 1975 (Sfardini 2001), and *Ciao 2001* announced an in-depth coverage of this new trend that same year. To avoid breaking with its pop-rock identity (and hence the field's *doxa*) the magazine situated disco within a narrative of historical evolution: it was 'taking the place of rock':

> [Disco music] is not simply about another band to be easily glorified as the new Beatles. Disco music […] is a wider and more interesting phenomenon. According to the most qualified observers, it is taking the place of rock. With a range of feature articles to be published in the coming weeks, we will try to understand disco's revival and its relation with the living conditions of ethnic and artistic minorities. We will also discover who are the new protagonists, artists and disk-jockeys.[20]

[19] Critics saw disco as a trend deriving from soul and rhythm 'n' blues. As a result, soul and disco were frequently used as synonyms in music features.

[20] Caffarelli, E. (1975). 'Disco-Boom: le discoteche sono i nuovi Beatles'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 27 (13 July): 31–33.

**Table 7.3** Coverage of soul and disco music[a]

| *Ciao 2001* | *Muzak* | *Gong* |
|---|---|---|
| ↑<br>Disco Boom[b] (3)<br>Gloria Gaynor (2)<br>Diana Ross (2)<br>Disco Music[b]<br>Labelle<br>James Brown<br>Minnie Riperton<br>Betty Davis<br>Temptations<br>Marvin Gaye<br>Undisputed Truth<br>Ray Charles<br>Roberta Kelly<br>↓ | The Sunset of Soul[b]<br>Labelle | Stevie Wonder |

[a]Table compares all features published by the monthlies with a purposive sample of *Ciao 2001*'s features. *Arrows* indicate that the list is just a sample of the weekly's broader coverage

[b]Features on disco as a trend

Critics writing for *Ciao 2001* could be either positive or negative about disco acts. Negative evaluations pointed to performers' lack of creative autonomy from producers (see p. 142) and to music's 'computerized' and 'mechanical' sounds. The crucial point, however, was not to ignore a trend which was gaining market relevance. The magazine thus hosted different views and explicitly supported the possibility (and legitimacy) of conflicting stances:

> The most striking event of 1976 is the rise of disco, with its stereotypical rhythms, the computerized orchestras and voices, and other consumerist gimmicks. The phenomenon can be either alarming, intriguing or exciting, depending on the point of view.[21]

This strategy resulted in an extensive coverage of soul and disco. By contrast, as shown by Table 7.3, the monthlies almost ignored it, publishing only few features which dismissed the trend for its low cultural status

[21] Caffarelli, E. (1977). '1976'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 3 (23 January): 31–36.

(albeit singling out some exceptions, like Stevie Wonder for *Gong* and Labelle for *Muzak*).

As discussed in Chap. 5, *Ciao 2001*'s critics used their cultural resources in a very different way than the monthlies. While the latter focused on genres which, in their view, were gaining socio-political significance for Italian youth, *Ciao 2001* developed a more inclusive coverage: it employed its cultural capital to remain open to a new musical landscape, one characterized by the decline of 1960s rock. To be sure, critical expertise and autonomy remained crucial values for *Ciao 2001*. The point was not to celebrate any new musical trends, but to evaluate them while retaining symbolic autonomy. Put otherwise, it was still possible to make distinctions within soul and disco, and this was precisely the task of a specialist publication like *Ciao 2001*:

> With the current soul explosion, the recording industry and the press have produced, to make easy money, plenty of unexciting musicians and mechanical albums, all blessed with the sugary voice of Barry Whites [sic]. However, in soul music we also find high-profile artists like Stevie Wonder, Al Gree [sic], Marvin Gaye, Sly and the Family Stone, Dr. John and Labelle.[22]

Other features show that critics' politics of pleasure was very important for distinguishing between good and bad acts. If Barry White was an example of 'sugary' soul, Diana Ross's music communicated 'sensuality and grace', which were sustained by her artistic personality and the work of 'experienced' songwriters:

> [Do You Know Where You're Going] is a surprising orchestral ballad, full of sensuality and grace, with the words of the experienced Gerry Goffin and the music of Mike Masser. The song is explicitly 'light' [*leggera*], but I've found it so enchanting to decide that it was good for *Popoff*, a radio programme known for 'being alternative'. Diana is fantastic, she whispers the lyrics and makes them her own […]. She has something more than those disco-sisters who, behind their masks, have nothing but promotion.[23]

[22] D'Agostino, R. (1975). 'Voulez-vous coucher avec Labelle?'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 31 (10 August): 10–13.

[23] Giulietti, M. L. (1976). 'Diana Ross. Il colore del mogano'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 14 (11 April): 51–52.

Critical distance, then, was not in contradiction with paying attention to a changing market. *Ciao 2001* was indeed presented as a media whose objective was precisely to address 'critically' new market trends. As anticipated in Chap. 5, these aesthetic boundaries can be defined as loose: while the highbrow repertoire remains key to their making, they can be expanded to accommodate a broad variety of acts. Some of these acts could be considered questionable art, but nonetheless they are considered worthy of discussion in artistic terms. In this way, the weekly could include a problematic music trend within its coverage, thus adapting to a changing musical market. To be sure, loose boundaries were not fully inclusive, as they remained predicated on the exclusion of Italian light music.

Some features published by *Ciao 2001* also grounded the value of soul and disco acts in their blackness, and more specifically in the alleged nature of African-American musicians. According to these articles, some soul acts were able to express the 'natural' sexuality of African-American people and their mastery of music's rhythmic elements. This racial framing emerges in the following excerpt about Ike and Tina Turner:

> With Ike and Tina we find the complete affirmation of a quintessentially black reality: a theater of joy, sex and sensuality which has been able to conquer [*fregare*] even the super-technical Western society, whose messy imperialism has to face the resistance of this kind of 'rhythm'. The same rhythm which produced the music of the rebellious white youth [pop-rock], who assimilated and made it their own.[24]

Although the excerpt's reference to 'imperialism' suggests some understanding of racial and geopolitical inequalities, *Ciao 2001*'s features about soul and disco never became a structural critique. Musicians' blackness remained merely a source of aesthetic fascination, and the articles' ethnoracial essentialism was rarely problematized.

Race was also an object of evaluation (and fascination) for the critics of *Muzak* and *Gong*. However, since they mostly ignored soul and disco, this emerges in their articles about jazz. As discussed in Chap. 6, the

[24] Insolera, M. (1974). 'Ike & Tina Turner'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 33 (18 August): 10–12.

monthlies interpreted the success of Italian jazz festivals as the rise of a new youth culture, and argued that jazz could have a political function that rock had lost. The next section addresses this issue. It investigates the monthlies' different solution to the crisis of rock and, more generally, how race shaped critics' aesthetic encounters.

## Jazz and the Politics of Race

During the years under consideration, Italian music magazines covered jazz music in a systematic fashion,[25] but focused on different kinds of jazz and developed different coverage strategies. While *Ciao 2001* considered a variety of American, British and Italian acts, *Muzak* and *Gong* were mostly interested in the 1960s free jazz movement and musicians who were further developing this tradition. Although they also covered European and other American acts, African-American free jazz evoked discussions about music's political meaning and its place within Italian youth cultures. Moreover, critics' different takes on jazz reveal a struggle over the meaning of blackness and its socio-political significance. Put otherwise, race became an object of evaluation, one in relation to which magazines developed competing positions.

*Muzak* and *Gong* saw in free jazz a deeper social struggle; the struggle of musicians developing aesthetically challenging music in an indifferent music industry and racist society. As a result, black musicians were seen as cultural heroes making quintessentially political music. As shown by the following discussion of Miles Davis, African-American jazz, for the monthlies, was political in a sense that transcended musicians' consciousness and beliefs:

> The worldview emerging from Davis's music is deeply African-American […]. Arguments about his bourgeois origins or his current wealth do not contradict this fact. As argued by Leroi Jones [sic], the introverted and nihilistic qualities of Davis's sound reflect an essential tendency of the

[25] Jazz was usually covered by one or two critics at each magazine. The sample of jazz articles has been constructed to reflect this division of labour and to cover the magazines' main jazz writers (see Appendix 1).

> African-American universe, namely the reaction of black men against racist exploitation. This tendency, which was already present in traditional blues, is subliminal and unconscious in Davis. Nevertheless, it is a fundamental and unavoidable tendency.[26]

Social differences among musicians, or their different statuses within the music industry, did not contradict this more fundamental African-American condition. This perspective, connecting musical forms with black people's political unconscious, was based on a specific conception of African-American culture, one which resembles the structure of folk ideology (Middleton 1990). Put otherwise, music was taken to represent, without any mediation, a 'culture' in the anthropological sense: the values and will of an undifferentiated social group. Moreover, black jazz was framed as the culture of a radically different Other (Roy 2002).

This political reading of jazz was still supported by critics' highbrow dispositions, which were also informed by specific intellectual influences, like the work of cultural critic LeRoi Jones, mentioned in the last excerpt. As pointed out in Chap. 6, the monthlies ascribed political value to aesthetically challenging music, rather than to music with explicitly political content (such as political lyrics). Like the last example, the following article about the most 'interesting' jazz musicians in New York (Oliver Lake, the group Air) establishes a connection between their radical aesthetics and their social experience:

> These artists […] are shaped by the socio-economic background of the Midwest, where racism and struggles between blacks and whites are still violent. They proudly draw on the Great Black Music, that is, a music without stylistic or historical limitations which encompasses the African-American tradition in its entirety (from ragtime to free jazz). However, their attachment to the tradition does not lead to an empty revival. […] The most interesting music that you can hear today in the USA is a lucid revision of the musical experience of African-Americans.[27]

---

[26] Castaldo, G. (1976). 'Il Davis del jazz'. *Muzak*, n. 11 (March): 37–38.

[27] Pellicciotti, G. (1976). 'Tra i nuovi profeti della black music: New York is now!'. *Gong*, n. 6 (June): 30–35.

By and large, these readings implied an essentialist view of African-American culture, one that could ignore those details in musicians' biographies which did not fit the critics' mythology about blackness. Moreover, the arguments of music critics were shaped by racial assumptions about black sexuality and bodies. From this perspective, Albert Ayler's *Truth is Marching In* could be read as:

> an explosive and enthralling piece based on the memory of New Orleans fanfares and the orgiastic frenzy of African American pre-jazz music.
>
> […]
>
> As always, African-American people's spirituality is infused with sexuality, ancestral mythologies, visionary capacities, magic. But most importantly, this spirituality is a religion of the real. It is love for men and their destiny. As a result, it becomes will for change.[28]

While this argument about African-American jazz implied a perfect 'alignment' (Roy and Dowd 2010) between social marginality and aesthetic and political radicalism, critics' fascination with black culture was clearly entwined with assumptions about the nature of black people. Critics could thus connect music to their 'blood' and black culture's 'savage' nature:

> When he [Sam Rivers] plays with energetic irrationality, we get back the ghosts of the black rage and sensuality; the blood and not just the colour of an archaic origin.[29]
>
> Jeanne Lee is part of a creative scene which was totally marginalized in the past. She combines female expressivity, black culture and improvised music, that is, things and situations which disrupt and perturb the bourgeois morality […]. *This is a universe of witches*, *savages and drifters*, *which has nothing to do with aesthetic clichés*.[30] [my emphasis]

[28] Castaldo, G. (1975). 'Zio Tom, Zio Sam, Zio Sax'. *Muzak*, n. 3 (June): 34–36.

[29] Delconte, P. (1976). 'Riflessi sul nuovo mito Sam Rivers. L'urlo sommerso'. *Gong*, n. 10 (October): 12–13.

[30] Bolelli, F. (1976). 'Jeanne Lee. Una voce un corpo'. *Gong*, n. 6 (June): 25–27.

However, critics' encounters with jazz were also mediated by their position in the field of pop music criticism. In this respect, *Ciao 2001* developed a very different take on jazz and back musicians' social identity. The main critic responsible for jazz coverage was Dario Salvatori. His articles, like the ones published in the monthlies, could acknowledge the difficulties faced by African-American musicians in the USA. However, they did not praise their marginal position in the music industry. On the contrary, the musicians' willingness to reach a broader audience was commended:

> The last twist in [Albert] Ayler's career was received as the most scandalous. Facing the growing success of soul music, and with the aim of freeing himself, Alyer recorded 'New Grass', a valuable and brave album which made him visible beyond jazz circles. […] This last turn to popular (rather than rock) music was never accepted. Perhaps Ayler was simply tired of being without a job and playing for empty seats.[31]

Ayler's involvement with soul music was thus framed as interesting from an aesthetic point of view, and as justifiable in light of the economic difficulties he faced. This was a case of deserved success, a criterion of evaluation that figures frequently in *Ciao 2001*'s articles (Table 7.2). Similarly, the success of an alternative jazz festival organized, in the early 1970s, by Sam Rivers and other musicians protesting against the Newport Jazz Festival, was not seen as a proof of their marginal status, but as an example of professionalism: a value that *Ciao 2001*'s critics took greatly into consideration (Chap. 5):

> [Sam Rivers's Rivbea Studio] has become a major centre for the festival that the most responsible musicians have polemically organized against [George] Wein's [Newport] […]. However, this kind of initiative should not be interpreted equivocally. The jazz festival organized by black musicians against Newport is even bigger than Newport itself, and this is fine. A lot of alternative initiatives end badly because of excessive sloppiness, but initiatives that are 'against' something do not need to be poorly organized.

[31] Salvatori, D. (1974). 'Il leone nero'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 26 (6 July 1974): 27–28.

> This is a big mistake that American musicians, luckily enough, have never committed.[32]

More generally, *Ciao 2001* did not frame jazz music as political, even if musicians had explicitly political intentions. In fact, explicit politicization was not necessarily framed as a positive thing, especially if it was seen as undermining music's artistic quality. In sharp contrast with *Muzak* and *Gong*, creativity was not seen as a natural ally of political purposes:

> Unfortunately, [Archie] Shepp's performance in Bergamo has proven that a certain kind of music, beyond its political content and African tunics, has not much to offer. The audience did not hiss the performance of course, because they knew the importance of Shepp's figure and his relationship with Black Power, but perhaps he deserved to leave the stage more than anyone else. The musicians on stage appeared completely lost and without inspiration.[33]

Free and avant-garde jazz were also not seen as the most representative tendencies within the genre. As with the coverage of soul and disco, *Ciao 2001* had a more inclusive strategy, and did not connect its institutional identity to the destiny of any particular genre. As a result, it published articles about musicians working at the boundaries between jazz and soul (George Benson, Stanley Turrentine), as well as acts representing a more traditional approach to jazz (Bunny Foy, Dexter Gordon). Moreover, in contrast to *Muzak* and *Gong*, the weekly framed jazz's popularity among Italian youth as a 'superficial phenomenon',[34] rather than as a case of alignment between creative music and the political demands of Italian youth.

This comparison between the jazz coverage of *Ciao 2001* and the monthlies shows the extent to which race became a 'symbolic stake' in the field of music criticism, a category in relation to which critics could take a position. Framing the identity of black musicians as something Other

[32] Salvatori, D. (1976). 'Sam Rivers. Diabolico e sottovalutato'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 12 (28 March): 26.
[33] Salvatori, D. (1974). 'Bergamo. L'Art Ensemble non salva il jazz'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 14 (7 April): 12–15.
[34] Salvatori, D. (1977). 'Jazz-estate: lo ascolteremo ancora?'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 19 (15 May): 31.

and radical, the monthlies defined avant-garde jazz in line with their political cosmopolitanism, while *Ciao 2001*'s attentiveness to changing market trends was largely in contradiction to such a project. As a result, it evaluated jazz primarily as an aesthetic and economic fact, adopting a broader strategy of coverage. More generally, this section has shown that musicians' social identities shaped evaluations of both their music and the aesthetic traditions they were taken to represent. This was made possible by the mediated nature of pop-rock and jazz, as critics' encounters with these musics were also encounters with new images and narratives. They interpreted these aesthetic materials in light of their embodied dispositions and organizational affiliations, with whiteness being a central component of the former. As I discuss below, the field's maleness similarly shaped critics' evaluations of women musicians.

## Music and the Politics of Gender

A substantial literature on gender and popular music criticism has shown that the coverage of both newspapers and specialized magazines has been historically biased towards male musicians, and that it has been characterized by differences in how critics discuss women and men (Chap. 2). Given that the majority of Italian critics during the 1970s were male (Chap. 4), it is unsurprising to find that gender significantly affected their evaluations. On the one hand, all three magazines devoted a limited amount of coverage to women musicians (see Appendix 2). On the other, Italian magazines used to evaluate women's music along with their womanhood and sexuality. However, in contrast to the findings discussed in Chap. 2, after 1975, Italian critics started addressing the gendered dimension of musical labour. They could recognize gender inequalities and criticize their impact on the musical field and society at large. As I show below, this tendency was marked by a significant ambivalence. While acknowledging that women musicians were discriminated against in a number of ways, critics still framed their work through the lens of heteronormative sexuality. Arguments about the quality of their music remained related to considerations of their qualities as women.

A tendency towards sexualizing women surfaces in articles about rock, jazz, soul and folk. Critics' encounters with these aesthetic cultures, and the ways they evaluated their social meaning, could change markedly when such genres were represented by women. For example, the 'politics of memory' examined in relation to rock music could become a discourse about the sexual fantasies embodied by Grace Slick (singer and songwriter of the US band Jefferson Airplane) for a whole generation:

> [The song 'Sketches of China'] represents Grace as a woman and her burning fire, which makes her the prototype of sexuality despite the way she looks. This fire literally explodes in *Manhole*, her second and last LP […]. Grace Slick enlivens (and lives through) a synthesis of love and music, gathering around her the hope of millions of young people.[35]

In a similar fashion, the following example connects Maddy Prior's physical appearance to the social qualities of the genre she represents (British folk-rock):

> Maddy Prior is not beautiful. In fact she is the first one to make jokes about what she calls 'my smiling horse kind of face'. Nevertheless, she emanates a weird charm, one which perhaps is similar to the charm the Gaelic peasant attributed to the angelic heroines of the folk ballads learnt from his father… sweetness, harmony, but most of all a light and impalpable spirituality. These same qualities live through Maddy Prior's body and voice when she is on stage, which make her the focal point of Steeleye Span's shows.[36]

Moreover, musicians challenging traditional representations of femininity could be singled out precisely for lacking such qualities, as in the following description of Patti Smith on stage:

> [When she is on stage] Patti changes personality. Her muscles get stretched; the face, already skinny and pale, becomes a mask and the body gets convulsant. She jumps all around the stage, screaming desperation through the microphone […]. *This woman*, *who has nothing of a woman*, is exhausted

[35] Branco, A. (1974). 'The fire woman'. *Muzak*, n. 12 (October): 56–58.

[36] Ferranti, M. (1976). 'Le Silly Sisters del folk inglese'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 20 (23 May): 33.

> after the show; she is all sweaty and dirty for having crawled on the floor like a rock 'n' roll animal.[37] [my emphasis]

This tendency of evaluating women as women, and not simply as musicians, never disappeared from the coverage in Italian magazines. However, beginning in 1975, music critics started showing a higher awareness of gender inequalities. This was the year when the feminist movement gained national visibility in Italy, and its rise was considered a sign of progressive social change by music critics (Chap. 6). As a result, magazines like *Ciao 2001* and *Gong* published special features about discrimination against women in the music industry,[38] and several features published since 1975 reveal some awareness of gender inequalities, as shown by the following excerpt about the Italian jazz composer Patrizia Sciascitelli:

> If you look at the history of jazz you will see that, with the exception of some singers, there are only a few female figures […]. There are some figures of high creative value […] Carla Bley, Annette Peacock, Barbara Thompson and few others. However they are all experimental musicians, whose background is in jazz but their music looks elsewhere. The only young woman showing a rich jazz feeling, and who is interested in making fresh music, is the Italian Patrizia Scascitelli.[39]

This tendency emerges from *Ciao 2001*, and from *Gong* and *Muzak* as well. However there were significant field differences in the way magazines developed their gender politics. In this respect, *Gong* made a stronger symbolic investment in women's struggles, publishing articles which proposed a proper feminist musical aesthetics. Some critics (particularly Franco Bolelli and Gloria Mattioni) argued that women's social struggles were being reflected by the music of women working between jazz and the avant-garde, such as Jeanne Lee, Meredith Monk and Zusaan Fasteau. As for African-American jazz, the magazine argued that the sonic structures

[37] Giulietti, M. L. (1977). 'Patti Smith: Rock 'n' roll animal'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 9 (7 March): 42–43.

[38] Rivieccio, G. (1976). 'Rock al femminile', *Ciao 2001*, n. 17 (2 May): 37–38; Pellicciotti, G. (1976). 'Sulle tracce del suono femminile: Jazzwomen'. *Gong*, n. 3 (March): 24–27.

[39] Salvatori, D. (1975). 'Patrizia Scascitelli. Jazzfemmina'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 34–35 (7 September): 45–46.

produced by these musicians were intrinsically political, as they reflected their social experience. This position is expressed in the following example, which criticizes the idea that a feminist approach to music should necessarily lead to music with socio-political lyrics:

> There is a basic misunderstanding among women, namely the idea that the specificity of women's condition can be expressed without music (sounds, structures…) and focusing on speech and story-telling as means to describe women's experiences. A typical example is the proliferation of [female] singer-songwriters who express the words of women with the sonic structures of men. […] [We have to] express the female condition through sonic structures, instruments and the voice. Only in this way can an autonomous female expressivity exist, one which is not subaltern and does not have to rely on the structures created by others.[40]

Nevertheless, *Gong* displayed the same ambiguity of the other magazines in the way it addressed gender. While acknowledging women's subordination in musical canons and society at large, critics still conceived of women's music as expressing something fundamentally sexual:

> Jeanne Lee's voice is the direct expression of a freed sexual fantasy […]. Her exploration of the voice's resources is entwined with a re-appropriation of the body. It is against the allure of superstar celebrity and is for a different understanding of sexuality – a black sexuality that is not commodified as happens with rhythm 'n' blues, which displays an apparently uninhibited but ultimately imprisoned and stereotypical sexuality.[41]

In a similar fashion, the music of the soul act Labelle was framed by *Muzak* as expressing a 'freed' sexuality. Moreover, when critics addressed African-American women, their considerations of music's sexual politics were reinforced by unacknowledged assumptions about the nature of black sexuality, as happens with both the previous and following examples:

[40] Mattioni, G. (1977). 'Travestite o liberate dalla subalternità'. *Gong*, n. 9 (September): 38–39.
[41] Bolelli, F. (1976). 'Jeanne Lee. Una voce un corpo'. *Gong*, n. 6 (June): 25–27.

> When Patty and her sisters sing one of their wild tunes, they become a female entity that screams its femininity over the faces of the audience […]. Labelle, *the lady of the jungle*, *engages with the audience with clear and swinging sexual implications*. She is not a sexy stereotype for lonely men; her provocation is for everyone: men, women and homosexuals. And it is not based on the repression of the audience. On the contrary, it is an incentive to freely discover the joy of our own sexuality whatever it might be.[42] [my emphasis]

Finally, the priority given to music considered aesthetically valuable supported stigmatizing comparisons with women making the wrong kinds of popular music. These women could be framed as conformist and unintelligent through pejorative metaphors, such as in the following article comparing the 'good' music of Donatella Bardi (an Italian singer-songwriter) with the majority of Italian women 'singers':

> Donatella Bardi is an Italian singer with a different background than the majority of her colleagues. While male musicians have developed 'different' [artistically superior] musical discourses in recent years, for women, the identification with standard models seems inescapable. Donatella started singing within a certain Milanese pop milieu […] where she could sing in a creative fashion without being forced to sing about 'engagement' like basically every female singer in Italy. […] Keep an eye on her name; she is a musician, not one of those bimbo singers.[43]

These examples show that an awareness of gender inequalities did not change the focus on women as a 'genre' in themselves and as sexual objects. Further, critics' awareness of how gender shaped music production, as well as the lives of their readers (Chap. 8), did not produce significant changes in the way similar imbalances shaped the music press (Chap. 4). Gender, along with race and class, emerges as a resilient social division in shaping critics' encounters with different music styles.

---

[42] Moroni, D. (1975). 'Labelle'. *Muzak*, n. 7 (November): 46.

[43] Dani, M. (1976). 'Donatella Bardi'. *Muzak*, n. 12 (April): 44.

## Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the ways in which critics carried out musical evaluation. In line with the framework developed in Chap. 3, I have argued that critics' legitimizing discourses can be conceptualized in a relational fashion: they are the product of encounters between critics' dispositions and resources, and musics endowed with autonomous sonic, visual and narrative properties. Put otherwise, critics' evaluative work can be theorized as a 'meeting between two histories' (Bourdieu 1990): the social history of Italian music critics (including their editorial affiliations) and the histories of acts and genres which had only recently become part of Italian cultural life.

I have argued that critics' highbrow disposition was not simply projected onto inert objects of evaluation, but was sensitized to their properties. As a result, different musics enabled different evaluations and aesthetic experiences: pop-rock acts problematized a habitus which had been shaped by the reception of 1950s and 1960s rock; hard rock aroused discussions about music's emotional power and the very quality of such emotions; disco music raised concerns about its computerized sounds and sugary voices; and free jazz enabled discussions of social struggle and music's political value. Moreover, in sharp contrast to the invisibility of maleness and whiteness, both black and women musicians elicited evaluative discourses about their social identities and bodies. The chapter, then, shows that Italian critics used their cultural capital and subcultural knowledge to evaluate complex assemblages of sounds, images and narratives, which they could access via an increasingly globalized recording industry (Chap. 4). The next chapter turns to the ways in which the discourses analyzed here were received by the critics' readers, and to the function of music magazines as alternative public spheres.

## Bibliography

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lindberg, U., Gudmundsson, G., Michelsen, M., & Weisethaunet, H. (2005). *Rock criticism from the beginning: Amusers, bruisers & cool-headed cruisers*. New York: Peter Lang.

Middleton, R. (1990). *Studying popular music*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Roy, W. G. (2002). Aesthetic identity, race, and American folk music. *Qualitative Sociology, 25*(3), 459–469.

Roy, W. G., & Dowd, T. J. (2010). What is sociological about music? *Annual Review of Sociology, 36*, 183–203.

Sfardini, A. (2001). Gli anni Settanta: dati di scenario e di consumo. *Comunicazioni Sociali, 23*(1), 75–99.

van Venrooij, A., & Schmutz, V. (2010). The evaluation of popular music in the United States, Germany and the Netherlands: A comparison of the use of high art and popular aesthetic criteria. *Cultural Sociology, 4*(3), 395–421.

# 8

# Music Magazines as Alternative Public Spheres

Drawing on the analysis of readers' letters published by *Ciao 2001*, *Gong* and *Muzak*, this chapter investigates how critics' distinctions were received by their readers and how they evaluated the politics of different magazines. More specifically, I explore the asymmetries of cultural and subcultural capital that emerged from the interactions between readers and critics, and argue that these complicate Bourdieu's assumptions about the homology between cultural producers and their audiences (Chap. 3), at least as this can manifest in the fields of popular culture.

The chapter's first section examines via thematic analysis how music magazines selected readers' letters, producing 'alternative public spheres' (Fraser 1990) with different symbolic boundaries between worthy and unworthy topics of discussion. The second section focuses on how critics and readers discussed disagreements about musical taste. I show that while critics conceived of magazines as democratic sites of debate, they exerted various forms of symbolic violence over their readers, and that asymmetries of cultural capital significantly affected readers' interventions. The chapter's third part explores how gender and age could exacerbate such asymmetries, particularly for girls and younger readers deemed to be lacking appropriate dispositions and resources. Finally, the last sec-



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_8

tion investigates how readers and critics discussed the former's experiences of inequality. I show that while the magazines allowed a strong critique of the inequalities affecting Italian youth, only the monthlies situated the readers' experiences in a sociological and political perspective. However, their emphasis on cultural capital and aesthetic innovation made their project of socio-cultural change potentially exclusionary.

## The Need for Debate: Producing Alternative Public Spheres

As discussed in Chap. 3, letters offer both challenges to and opportunities for the study of cultural legitimation. They allow an unobtrusive analysis of how some readers experienced critics' distinctions, and the motivations through which the latter defended their choices. Moreover, letters allow an exploration of experiences of symbolic violence and 'misfit' within Italian youth, which some readers decided to make public through this medium. In this section, I consider how editorial boards selected letters for publication, so as to take into account the mediated nature of this public sphere.

Critics devoted significant resources to the publication of readers' letters. Indeed, there was remarkable ideological investment in the idea that the pop music press should be a space of debate open to discussions with other actors, such as readers and, to a lesser extent, musicians and other intermediaries involved in the pop-rock field. As shown in Chap. 5, *Ciao 2001* was promoted as an inclusive forum for debate, one that aimed to give voice to Italian youth in its entirety. Indeed, the magazine implemented a range of thematic sections devoted to readers' interventions. The section managed by the editor-in-chief (*Lettere al Direttore*) was used to justify the magazine's editorial line, but was also a space in which a wider range of topics was discussed on a regular basis (see below).[1] Similarly, the monthlies devoted a regular section, between two and four pages, to conversations with readers. Despite being more normative in their aesthetic choices, they understood debating with readers as a prac-

[1] My analysis draws on this section; see Appendix 1.

tice distinguishing pop music criticism from the elitism of high culture and its institutions:

> *Muzak* means also a different way of looking at things, an intelligent and critical one. It also means, and will mean more and more, a new way of conceiving of the dialogue between readers and the magazine […]. This has always been our intention, albeit we have not always been able to meet the challenge. Since we are not among the 'saints' of culture [*santoni della cultura*], and do not want to share anything with them, we feel that there is still a lot to do to become truly progressive and free ourselves from regressive attitudes.[2]
>
> This monthly will never become a ghetto for a few learned intellectuals [*pennaioli*] writing their own memories as a form of masturbation. This is a space where EVERYONE [sic] is welcome to play his own *Gong*.[3]

Like other historically specific public spheres (Fraser 1990), Italian music magazines were presented through the rhetoric of openness and democratic deliberation. However, this discursive repertoire implied distinctive symbolic exclusions. There were significant differences in the way critics conceived of the debate with readers. Both *Muzak* and *Gong* considered the letters published by *Ciao 2001* as the expression of a 'youngish' culture, one based on emotional immaturity and superficial interests, like fashion and sport:

> The relationship with our readers is not based on the 'youngish' sort of participation encouraged by some magazines. We will not let any space become the 'dilettante's spot', filled with readers' pics and silly lyrics [*poesiole*]. Also, we will not accept any suggestions on casual fashion [*moda casual*] or the advice of a psychologist.[4]

As I discuss below, for the monthlies, a proper debate required appropriate cultural resources and implied a distinction between informed, ratio-

[2] Editorial board (1974). 'Referendumuzak'. *Muzak*, n. 5 (March): 3.

[3] Anonymous (1974). No title. *Gong*, n. 2 (November): 8.

[4] Antonucci Ferrara, A. (1977). No title. *Gong*, n. 1 (January): 7.

**Table 8.1** Topics of debate

| | *Ciao 2001* | *Muzak* | *Gong* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cultural politics | 41 | 46 | 24 |
| Difficult language | 2 | 15 | 12 |
| Family | 14 | 1 | 0 |
| Friendship | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Love | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| Music | 49 | 11 | 19 |
| Music and politics | 18 | 22 | 15 |
| Music and gender | 17 | 2 | 1 |
| Music and age | 11 | 4 | 2 |
| Other (sport, animals) | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Politics and society | 37 | 17 | 4 |
| Religion | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Social differences | | | |
| Centre/periphery | 7 | 4 | 5 |
| Class/privilege | 23 | 14 | 5 |
| North/South | 13 | 2 | 2 |
| Sexuality/gender | 11 | 10 | 1 |
| Other | 1 (disability) | 1 (education) | 0 |

nal deliberation and excessive or too emotional styles of intervention. The boundaries of debate were thus a contested issue, one subject to the same field dynamics explored in the previous chapters.

These differences also emerge from a thematic analysis (Table 8.1) comparing all letters published by the monthlies (197) with a purposive sample from *Ciao 2001* (290). The analysis shows that readers used letters to reflect on a wide range of issues.[5] Although music and the magazines' cultural politics were prominent topics of debate, discussions about music frequently became arguments about broader social questions, like politics, inequality and social divisions (Table 8.1). Furthermore, while the magazines published letters addressing similar topics, the way they selected letters for publication was likely to follow different logics. *Ciao 2001* emerges (again) as a more inclusive publication, as it published letters about readers' ordinary everyday experiences which barely appear on *Muzak* and *Gong*, like family relationships, friendship, love and religious beliefs. However, this does not mean that the weekly was less selec-

[5] The number of themes is higher than the number of letters, as a single letter could address more than one theme. See Appendix 1.

tive with specific topics. For instance, several letters about sexuality and gender (Table 8.1) published by *Muzak* and *Gong* reveal the experiences of homosexual and lesbian readers. The replies to such letters fully recognize these readers' struggles with the patriarchal norms of Italian society, and frame such struggles as a collective and political problem. By contrast, in *Ciao 2001,* I could find only one letter about the same topic, which Rotondi addressed as an individual and psychological problem, one requiring 'more reflection' on the reader's part.[6]

More generally, since this analysis compares all letters published by the monthlies with a purposive sample from *Ciao 2001*, the latter's biases become more difficult to detect. Nonetheless, the analysis suggests that music magazines implemented significantly different public spheres, drawing different boundaries between legitimate and unworthy topics of debate. As I examine below, discussions between critics and readers further reveal such differences.

## Cultural Divisions: Between Tolerance and Symbolic Violence

Through the publication of letters, Italian magazines fostered ongoing reflection about different musical tastes. In this section, I show that, despite critics' democratic intent, readers' interventions were affected by asymmetries of cultural and subcultural capital, namely differences in musical knowledge, disposition towards music, and style of debating. Since critics required a 'cultured' engagement with both music and music criticism, they performed different forms of symbolic violence in their replies.

### Cultural Tolerance

The approach of *Ciao 2001* to the choices of readers implied a principle of cultural tolerance. As argued in Chap. 5, the magazine promoted

[6] Rotondi, S. (1977). Answer to Davide (Lombardia). *Ciao 2001*, n. 23 (12 June): 7–9.

respect for preferences that did not necessarily match those of its critics. Some readers, for example, were critical of the magazine's bias towards Italian light music and other kinds of 'commercial music':

> I do not appreciate the disdain and lack of interest that your magazine shows for what you call commercial bands, like the fabulous Pooh, Alunni del Sole and Nomadi [Italian bands]. Are they commercial? Fine, but I like their music![7]

While defending a distinction between commercial and avant-garde music, and while situating *Ciao 2001* as closer to the latter, Rotondi supported readers' freedom of choice as an intrinsic value, and did not completely exclude the possibility of covering some commercial music:

> There is neither disdain nor lack of interest in our attitude toward more commercial bands. We even addressed the best instances of their production. However, *Ciao 2001* looks at the most interesting musical expressions, which usually have nothing to do with the most commercial music. We do not disdain this kind of music, we just prefer not to be its advocates and reporters. However, everyone is free to listen to his favorite music, even the most commercial. One will always find the broadest and most objective information on our magazine.[8]

A relative cultural tolerance was displayed not only in relation to musical genres deemed as commercial, but towards 'emotional' ways of listening. These listening practices can be conceptualized as a popular disposition towards music (Bourdieu 1984). Indeed, the readers displaying such attitudes praised the emotional and bodily experience of music over its detached artistic appreciation:

> An album of Gary [Glitter] […] really gets under my skin, it gives me feelings that I cannot get from the boring music of Pink Floyd, Yes, EL&P, Santana, etc. I find it particularly annoying when Slade and the like are

[7] Forace, G. (1976). 'I complessi commerciali'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 14 (11 April): 5–6.

[8] Rotondi, S. (1976). Answer to Forace. *Ciao 2001*, n. 14 (11 April): 5–6.

> accused of being commercial, as [more serious] bands like Deep Purple and Yes demand millions to play a concert or to appear in a TV show.[9]
>
> I admit that the Osmonds are not among the greatest performers in pop music, but they are not that bad and I am crazy for them. Please answer me, do let me know if you think that the Osmonds are not worthy of your magazine; I will save 250 *lire* [Italian currency at the time] a week.[10]

While ascribing a higher value to music displaying recognizable artistic qualities, the magazine did not discriminate against these readers' passionate relationship with their favourite musicians, and framed it as a respectable disposition:

> The market [*la commercialità*], in our society […] commodifies both the most sublime of intuitions and the most deplorable utilitarianism. However, there is still a difference between the two, at least in terms of intention […] so it is undeniable that there is a difference between Yes and Gary Glitter. However, even your position deserves respect. But you should provide convincing motivation in order to sustain that there is something authentic and innovative in Glitter, Sweet and Slade.[11]
>
> I respect your sympathy for the Osmonds […]. Do you think, dear Elena, that *Ciao 2001* should be bought only if it talks (and positively) about the Osmonds? I hope you will decide to remain one of 'us', even if this time we have different opinions.[12]

As argued in Chap. 5, this cultural tolerance was part of a broader project of legitimation, one emphasizing loose aesthetic distinctions. However, as shown in the last two examples, aesthetically dubious choices (Gary Glitter, Sweet or Slade) had to be justified with 'convincing motivation', that is, the appropriate knowledge and evaluative style. Similarly, buy-

[9] Cimini, M. (1974). 'Ribolle il sangue'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 25 (23 June): 5–7.

[10] Elena (no surname) (1974). 'Io vado pazza per gli Osmonds'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 8 (24 February): 5–7.

[11] Rotondi, S. (1974). Answer to Cimini. *Ciao 2001*, n. 25 (23 June): 5–7.

[12] Rotondi, S. (1974). Answer to Elena. *Ciao 2001*, n. 8 (24 February): 5–7.

ing the magazine only if this praised the reader's favourite bands was deemed uncritical (as clearly implied by the reply to the second excerpt). Embodied cultural capital was thus crucial in shaping readers' participation in this public sphere, as their interventions were evaluated in terms of musical knowledge and proper disposition towards music (and music criticism). Furthermore, some tastes were less tolerable than others. The rejection of Italian light music was key for *Ciao 2001*, as this distinction sustained the magazine's identity as youth media committed to avant-garde popular music. However, while this distinction implied the exclusion of older generations (light music's presumed audience), it was experienced as a form of symbolic violence by some readers:

> Critics define as ignorant and narrow-minded [*gretti*] those young people who enjoy Deep Purple and Sweet, and they are pitiless with those buying Pooh, Camaleonti, Mina or Papetti [Italian light acts]. Well, even if some people enjoy Orietta Berti's music, what would you have to say? The records which sell the most in Italy are those of Papetti, Mina or Domenico Modugno. One must also take this type of music into account rather than stigmatizing it, otherwise you also stigmatize those who like this music […]. We should respect the others. I am in my twenties and I think we should not encourage desires of overthrow and distinction [*distinzione*].[13]

As I discuss further below, several readers assumed a 'symbolic homology' between the wrong kinds of popular music and the wrong kind of youth ('ignorant and narrow-minded' young people). While maintaining a principle of respect for these tastes (and people), Rotondi had to defend the boundaries which sustained both the identity of *Ciao 2001* and the field's *doxa*:

> No one here wants to denigrate a certain kind of culture (?) or music, but we want to discuss and report on what we think authentic music and culture is. […] I do not understand why we should take into account things, which, frankly speaking, are objectively debased. I am thinking of celebrity culture [*divismo*], a certain kind of sugary light songs [*canzonettismo mieloso*], and the regrettable habits that we [Italians] have inherited thanks

[13] Angelozzi, A. (1975). 'Grave lacuna'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 37 (21 September): 5–6.

> to the RAI. Everyone, if willing, is free to follow this way or any other way, but we are as free to try to support culture, or at least what we consider authentic culture.[14]

Respect for the readers' choices could not support overly fleeting aesthetic distinctions. While *Ciao 2001* wanted to give voice to a diverse youth, the boundaries of participation were pretty clear: it required appropriate musical knowledge or, at very least, the resources to defend dubious musical tastes, such as hard rock, teenybopper pop and – the bottom line – Italian light music. As I show below, embodied cultural capital was even more important for participating in the public spheres implemented by the monthlies.

## Symbolic Violence

As discussed in the first section, the monthlies conceived of music magazines as means of democratic discussion. While the idea of criticism as an open, ongoing debate was never abandoned by these magazines, the way in which they addressed their readers' choices reveals a more normative approach both to musical taste and appropriate ways of debating. More specifically, readers criticizing the magazines' line or defending different musical choices could be subject to explicit forms of symbolic violence, as shown by the following discussion about Pink Floyd:

> Bertoncelli and Fumagalli [*Gong* critics] are deaf to the fame and cleverness that the Pink [Floyd] have demonstrated in the last eight years of their career; eight years spent developing something original and different within the international music scene […]. For Bertoncelli and Fumagalli, the Pink [Floyd] are idiots and their fans – hundreds of millions all over the world – remain an inexplicable mystery.[15]

The critic replying to the letter (Riccardo Bertoncelli) questioned both the opinion that Pink Floyd was an artistically valuable band, and the

[14] Rotondi, R. (1975). Answer to Angelozzi. *Ciao 2001*, n. 37 (21 September): 5–6.

[15] Torrisi, M., Libra, N., Mazzullo, C. (1975). No title. *Gong*, n. 12 (December): 3–4.

arguments through which the readers (the letter is attributed to three people) made their point. The readers' critique was framed as culturally poor and not 'critically relevant':

> It is not clear why one should 'respect' such myths, maybe it takes some courage to do the opposite […]. In your letter there was not a single justification about why the last Pink [Floyd] should be considered either good or bad. Be honest, apart from arguments about the 'fame', the 'fans' and the mass cult [for Pink Floyd], we have not read anything critically relevant. Write again if you want, but make critiques worthy of their name.[16]

Symbolic violence was not simply displayed towards readers' musical choices, but towards their style of intervention. Readers' interventions could be stigmatized for the use of unconvincing arguments, for language lacking subtlety or displaying an overly aggressive tone. This is what happens with the following letter, a critique of an article about Soft Machine written by *Muzak*'s editor-in-chief (Giaime Pintor):

> Why did the editorial collective allow the publication of such a piece of shit? Perhaps the editorial collective did not want to disagree with the director? But let's get to the point. The article's long and insignificant introduction is out of place: you put together Riley, Beethoven, Mozart and Stockhausen with a disconcerting ease, as if they were courgettes and cabbages.[17]

As shown by Pintor's reply, a language judged as lacking sophistication or being too aggressive could be easily defined as inappropriate for a specialist music magazine. It could be defined as belonging to a lower kind of popular culture, one made of 'cheap comic strips':

> I think we should try to talk about music in a musical way […] especially in a specialist magazine. I would smile at your critiques, if they were not full of sad stereotypes like 'crazy genius' (Wyatt), 'down-to-earth' (Ratledge), 'egocentric' (Dean), 'astral follies' and other observations reminding me of

[16] Bertoncelli, R. (1975). Answer to Torrisi, Libra, Mazzullo. *Gong*, n. 12 (December): 3–4.

[17] Foresta, G. and Iacono G. (1974). No title. *Muzak*, n. 5 (March): 5–7.

> a cheap comic strip. […] I agree with the rest of the editorial collective about the importance of critiques, but we definitely prefer silence to people who violently attack those who disagree with them. […] It is evident that while I have listened to *Six* [Soft Machine's album], my critics have no idea of who Mussorgsky and Scriabin are. Their hate for classical music suits their uncritical and non-musical celebration of everything that is contemporary.[18]

As the last sentences show, some critics could display their omnivorous cultural capital[19] to deconstruct readers' critiques. Moreover, the monthlies' use of obscure references (Mussorgsky and Scriabin) and their stronger aesthetic choices, which implied rejecting acts that would have been praised by *Ciao 2001* (like Pink Floyd and Soft Machine), could reinforce symbolic boundaries for some readers. In the example below, a *Gong* critic, Carlo Cella, follows the same strategy while answering a reader who had questioned his expertise about pop-rock music (he used to write about classical music).[20] While stressing the breadth of his expertise (including both classical and pop-rock music), Cella framed the reader as someone lacking the proper cultural capital to make informed critiques of his articles:

> Do you think I am so stupid to talk about music that I do not know? I am interested in all types of music. In fact I listen without any prejudice to Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited*, Chopin's Preludes […] Mozart's Jupiter, [Jefferson Airplane's] 'Pretty As You Feel', John Cage's Interludes, Curved Air's *Rainbow*, Liszt's Transcendental Studies […]. The problem is that you are a slave of your memories. Feel free to listen to NSU, Little Wing, More Over and the likes until death. But do that behind the walls of your bed-

[18] Pintor, G. (1974). Answer to Iacono and Foresta. *Muzak*, n. 5 (March): 5–7.

[19] Some critics mention early familiarization with classical music in their biographies, notably Saverio Rotondi (*Ciao 2001*) and Renato Marengo (*Ciao 2001*. Others had significant familiarity with classical music and occasionally wrote about it: Carlo Cella (*Gong*), Riccardo Bertoncelli (*Gong*) and Giaime Pintor (*Muzak*). Lack of information in other biographies makes it difficult to assess how many critics were familiar with classical music.

[20] *Gong* published a regular section about classical music (*Riprendiamoci la classica*) from November 1975 onwards. To keep the analysis manageable, I decided not to include classical music in the sample of musical features.

> room, with full awareness of your limitations and without pretending to give lessons.[21]

While discussions with readers did not systematically end in symbolic violence or display of cultural capital, the monthlies made the boundaries of debate very clear. Both magazines were presented through the democratic rhetoric of the bourgeois public sphere (Habermas 1989). However, when boundaries were breached, critics abandoned this repertoire, making it explicit that the debate had rules. This shows that openness and symbolic violence are not mutually exclusive modalities of cultural distinction, as implied in some of the literature on omnivorism (Chap. 2). Indeed, they may work as alternative ways of mobilizing cultural capital, whose activation depends on specific interactions. Italian critics could be both tolerant and snobbish, depending on the reader and, to a larger extent, their position in the field of music criticism. More generally, while magazines acted as spaces in which critics' musical taste could be questioned, the primacy of a Kantian disposition towards music was rarely challenged, and it was consistently reproduced through critics' replies.

This exploration of how readers and critics discussed musical tastes begins shedding some light on the asymmetries (rather than homology) which shaped readers' engagement with music magazines. Below, I focus on how gender and age could exacerbate such differences in cultural and subcultural capital.

## Musical Taste, Gender and Age

Discussions about musical tastes could sometimes turn into arguments about the 'symbolic homology' between taste and certain social groups, such as girls and the youngest music fans. By symbolic homology, I mean the presumption, regardless of empirical evidence, that some social groups carry homogeneous and predictable cultural tastes. This is an argument about presumed audiences rather than measurable homologies (Bourdieu

[21] Cella, C. (1976). Answer to Alessandro Capelletti. *Gong*, n. 11 (November): 3–4.

1984), one that emerges consistently in how readers classified the musical taste of their peers.

Letters addressing the relation between gender and taste appeared mostly in *Ciao 2001*, although letters from girls recounting experiences of discrimination in other spheres of Italian society were published by all the magazines (i.e. the theme sexuality/gender in Table 8.1). For some readers, girls were a social group lacking both interest in serious pop music, and the proper knowledge to appreciate it. One reader, for example, argued that they were interested only in Italian light music and that his female friends did not understand serious rock bands such as Pink Floyd, Genesis, Uriah Heep or Italian rock bands like Banco del Mutuo Soccorso:

> They told me that this is not music, but sounds made by junkies [*gente drogata*]. Now, I think that those who like the Pooh understand almost nothing [about music] […]. Find me a single girl who is able to start or sustain a serious discussion, or simply a girl who can talk about music. […] [T]he girls here in Milan are interested only in boyfriends, motorcycles […] dancing or going to the movies.[22]

Girls were thus associated with poor taste, lower cultural practices (dancing, going to the movies) and lack of embodied cultural capital (the capacity to 'sustain a serious discussion'). A similar view was expressed by two readers arguing that the girls writing to *Ciao 2001* were interested only in emotional, private topics of discussion, like love and friendship:

> The letters of girls […] are always about the same things: love, friendship and so on […]. We would be happy to contradict those saying that girls understand nothing about music. But unfortunately we have to agree with them. Everyone knows that the majority of girls love Pooh, Battisti and so on. How is it possible that none of them has ever heard the amazing music of King Crimson, Genesis and Pink Floyd?[23]

[22] Ranzini, G. (1974). 'A Milano'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 28 (14 July): 5–6.

[23] Marcello and Dulio (no surnames) (1974). 'La musica delle ragazze'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 10 (10 March): 5–6.

The replies to these letters reproduce the cultural tolerance explored above. Rotondi maintained the idea that music requires serious dedication, but discouraged the symbolic homology between girls and poor musical knowledge, describing the latter as a problem that could affect boys too, especially in a country, like Italy, which was affected by 'musical ignorance':

> It is correct to pretend accuracy and competence when it comes to discussions about music, but it is not correct to impose your opinions on everyone, boys or girls. […] [W]hy does one need to accuse girls of lacking a musical knowledge that could still be developed? Or for tastes that may appear provincial? Taste takes time to evolve, and with some time the ideas that you consider natural will interest almost everyone, including girls. […] In the meantime, let's stop making girls the scapegoat of the musical ignorance of our country. A lot of boys and men really scrape the bottom of the barrel with musical issues.[24]

As shown by this answer, the weekly's cultural tolerance could be coupled with a certain degree of social inclusion (although there was still an assumption that some girls could have 'provincial' tastes). As a result, while supporting a distinction between two dispositions towards music, *Ciao 2001* tended to discourage a symbolic homology between girls and lower cultural capital. Moreover, *Ciao 2001* published letters from girls defending their cultural choices, like the following one claiming that only a minority of girls were interested in 'dolls' or Italian sentimental light music (like the songs of the singer-songwriter Lucio Battisti):

> First, it is not true that we are interested only in dolls! Second, perhaps you know just a few girls, and you did not even try to start a true discussion about music with them, you just asked their preferences. Third, have you ever tried to make them listen to Genesis, Pink Floyd and so on? For 'listening' I mean empathizing with musicians and trying to understand what they express through music. […] girls do not think only of dolls or Lucio Battisti, there are also girls who love music as much as boys.[25]

[24] Rotondi, S. (1974). Answer to Ranzini. *Ciao 2001*, n. 28 (14 July): 5–6.

[25] Vittoria A. (no surname) (1974). 'In difesa delle ragazze'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 18 (5 May): 5–7.

As discussed in the previous section, most readers never questioned the idea that a culturally informed way of listening was superior to an emotional one. As a result, although stereotypes about girls' cultural practices could be partly deconstructed, these forms of reflexivity remained limited. A similar mechanism emerges in discussions about the taste of the youngest music readers. Some readers (as well as critics) presumed a homology between lower musical trends, like hard rock and teenybopper pop, and people aged between 13 and 15. The assumption was that younger music fans lacked subcultural capital, and that critics had to introduce them to the proper kinds of pop-rock. For instance, a reader in his thirties argued that youngest readers needed to be taught about the achievements of 1960s acts:

> I believe it's a crime to not discuss albums like the Kinks' *Schoolboys in Disgrace*. I'm forced to read articles about […] Deep Purple, Bennato, NCCP, Venditti […] Barry White (!!) […]. Shouldn't we remember to these youngsters that bands like Kinks exist […] and that we had also Doors, Gram Parsons, Mamas & Papas, Animals, Beatles, Rolling Stones.[26]

As with discussions of taste and gender, the weekly discouraged too strict homologies between musical taste and social differences. Moreover, it published letters that questioned such assumptions, thus contributing to their deconstruction or, at very least, to a public reflection about their arbitrary character:

> I would ask you why you keep telling that there is 13 year-olds music (Suzi Quatro, Glitter, Sweet, etc.) and 19 year-olds music (Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, etc.). Actually a lot of 13 year-olds like Pink Floyd, and a lot of 18–19 year-olds like dancing to the 'less serious' records of Glitter and the likes. No one denies that many songs of Genesis and Pink Floyd are masterpieces, but acts like Gary Glitter and Suzi Quatro also have some personality, though maybe it's less obvious.[27]

[26] Scarpa, C. (1976). 'Un delitto non parlarne'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 8 (29 February): 5–6.
[27] Franco (no surname) (1975). 'Motivo'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 34/35 (7 September): 5–6.

For readers who questioned such homologies, cultural capital remained an important means of defence: perhaps older readers could listen to Glitter and Quatro, too, but such acts could be recovered only on the basis of their musical 'personality'. To be sure, other readers openly disidentified with this cultured approach, but only in the example about Gary Glitter (pp. 170–171) did I find claims for an alternative aesthetics (one based on emotional engagement). In other letters, disidentification does not lead to an alternative frame of appreciation, and relies on accepting that some popular music is more serious than others:

> After some time [listening to Led Zeppelin, PFM and BMS] I got bored, and moved to Gloria Gaynor, David Bowie… basically less serious music [*musica impegnata*]. I think people of my age [the reader is a 14-year-old girl] are more likely to listen to disco music [*musica da discoteca*] than other music (which I don't know how to define). You are 19 [the letter is a reply to another reader] and maybe growing up I'll also appreciate that kind of music.[28]

By and large, these examples provide further evidence of the exclusionary power of critics' cosmopolitan taste, particularly for readers whose musical passions diverged from more legitimate pop-rock acts. In this respect, girls and younger readers, because of assumptions about their lack of cultural knowledge, could find it particularly difficult to 'join the debate' or defend a different, more passionate relationship with music. The next section provides a final exploration of asymmetries among readers (and between critics and readers). It considers the extent to which the magazines enhanced a critique of the inequalities affecting Italian youth.

## Social Divisions: Youth as a Space of Inequality

### Class and Privilege

Reflections about inequalities were not necessarily engendered by discussions about music, but could simply be raised by readers as a critique of their peers. These critiques depicted youth as a space of divisions based

[28] Ragionierei D. (1977). No title. *Ciao 2001*, n. 4 (30 January): 5–6.

on economic resources, geographical location or what readers defined simply as privilege, that is, a sense of inequality that was not articulated through clear-cut (sociological) categories.

*Ciao 2001* published letters expressing conflicting views on issues of inequality. Several readers expressed feelings of isolation and discrimination, particularly in relation to peers coming from more privileged backgrounds. On the other hand, some letters openly discriminated against young people of less means, particularly those coming from South Italy. The first case is exemplified by readers criticizing the attitudes of peers 'coming from money' (*figli di papà*):

> Those youngsters full of money, they think they can give you the cold shoulder. I would tell them that they are wrong […] they prefer to set themselves apart rather than stay close to the common people. They know only the nice side of life, and do not know anything about the other side. They do not know what it means to make sacrifices.[29]

While some letters pointed to experiences of economic disparity, others showed awareness of the relations between such disparities and cultural practices, like fashion and politics:

> In this city, probably like in any other city, you need to fit into a category. Either you join the 'posh' [*vestiti sempre alla moda*] or those 'politically engaged'. But if you cannot afford to be swanky and do not feel like them […] or if you do not have time for demonstrations and stuff like that, then you are cut off. […] I cannot keep going like this. Work, home, work. I am tired![30]

In addressing these letters, Rotondi generally criticized any social division and form of discrimination that could undermine youth's symbolic unity, but without necessarily framing readers' sentiments as the result of socio-structural problems (as shown by his reply to the first letter):

> The attitude that you describe is one of the most squalid. In a world in which these differences [*barriere*] no longer matter, this squalid provincial-

[29] Schiuma, G. (1974). 'I figli di papà'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 24 (16 June): 6–7.

[30] Chiarello, A. (1976). 'Un mondo fatto di fumo'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 21 (30 May): 5–6.

> ism mixed with snobbery […] is simply obsolete. We, youth, live to connect with other people and to listen to what they have to say. Our dignity has nothing to do with those looking down on others.[31]

Here snobbery is framed as an individual disposition; a form of provincialism that should have nothing to do with the (cosmopolitan) youth culture. By contrast, the answer to the second letter frames the inequalities experienced by the reader as an effect of 'social organization', that is, a feature of modern industrial societies:

> Many young people have the same problems, as young people are the first ones to suffer the alienating effects of social organization. I believe this can be changed only by transforming this society in depth in order to rediscover a different and more human way of living, working and loving. It is not simple. Nevertheless I think that being engaged is the only way to get out of a situation like yours, which unfortunately is not an exception.[32]

Although defining the alienation of the reader as a social problem to be solved through 'engagement', Rotondi did not advocate for a more specific (and collective) project of social change, thus framing the choice of political engagement as dependent on individual will. More generally, Rotondi's arguments were frequently infused with moral values such as love and solidarity. In the example above, social transformation is praised because it can lead to a 'more human way of living, working and loving'. In other cases, replies simply provided emotional support to readers feeling 'inferior' to their peers:

> Some time ago, I used to get upset when I saw all these boys and girls with nice dresses and full of themselves. I felt different and inferior, and could only look at my poor dresses thinking that they could not compete with theirs. I also used to think about [the differences between] my house and theirs. I thought of their powerful fathers comfortably sat behind shiny desks, and my father who was somewhere in the city with a dirty coverall.[33]

---

[31] Rotondi, S. (1974). Answer to Schiuma. *Ciao 2001*, n. 24 (16 June): 6–7.

[32] Rotondi, S. (1976). Answer to Chiarello, *Ciao 2001*, n. 21 (30 May): 5–6.

[33] Silvana (no surname) (1973). 'Una lettera piena di dignità'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 45 (11 November): 7–8.

> Dear Silvana, your letter […] is very indicative of a more widespread feeling. It regards all the young people belonging to [lower] social classes, which are unjustly snubbed by people who think that their wealth is the only thing that matters. […] I do not know you, your father and your family, but may I tell you that I feel like a friend of yours?[34]

However, from 1975 onwards, some replies show a more historically and sociologically sensitive framing. This partial shift is arguably due to transformations within and outside the music press. Beginning in 1974, there were other public spheres in which young people could reach out, like *Muzak* and *Gong*, and they did not shy away from political solutions to young people's problems (see below). A tendency to sociologize inequalities emerges, for instance, in the reply to the following letter, which labels young people with a rural and Southern background as 'bumpkins' (*buzzurri*):

> I think these people are really cut off. They are just bumpkins as it does not take much money to buy a pair of Ray-Bans and it is not fundamental to own a Kawasaki. […] Just stop complaining about how difficult it is to live in North Italy. No one forced you to come here. You could keep breeding cows and making love with them, instead you decided to come here and make yourself known for what you really are: people who live like we used to ten years ago.[35]
>
> It does not take much to understand that everyone has the right to dress however he likes, or that everyone has the right to be interested in politics or otherwise. It also does not take much to understand that we are all a product of this society, and if this society failed you, then its fundamental duty is to find a remedy. The 'Southerners' ['*terroni*'] are what they are because that is what some people wanted, not because they have a different blood.[36]

By and large, notwithstanding its limitations, *Ciao 2001* acted as a means through which the differences (as well as the prejudices) informing Italian

[34] Rotondi, S. (1973). Answer to Silvana, *Ciao 2001*, n. 45 (11 November): 7–8.

[35] Un San Babilino [sic] (1976). 'Solo dei buzzurri'. *Ciao 2001*, n. 27 (11 July): 5–6.

[36] Rotondi, S. (1976). Answer to Un San Babilino. *Ciao 2001*, n. 27 (11 July): 5–6.

youth could find expression and visibility. As a result, some social stereotypes, like those regarding Southern Italians and girls' and teens' cultural practices, could be publicly discussed and, to some extent, deconstructed.

*Muzak* and *Gong* also published letters which addressed issues of inequality and discrimination. In contrast to *Ciao 2001*, the monthlies took a more explicitly political stance about these issues. They saw culture, and the cultural privileges of both critics and readers, as means of class struggle and social change. Readers' reflections about inequality stemmed mostly from discussions about music and the monthlies' cultural politics. A reader of *Gong*, for example, defined the aesthetic debates encouraged by the magazine as a sign of social privilege itself:

> Just take one of these names [Tim Buckley, Popol Vuh, Ash Ra Temple] and make them listen to an Ecuadorian farmer [*campesinos*], a cowman working in the valley of Susa [Italy], or a worker of the Mirafiori factory [Turin, Italy]. They will tell you that this is shit, noise rather than music. […] It is difficult to keep discussing what makes music beautiful or ugly when billions of people cannot do that because they have no education, no food, or because they work and have no time for things like music.[37]

While acknowledging that different forms of privilege marked the cultural experience of critics and readers, *Gong* addressed the question by rejecting the reader's social pessimism and defining a specific form of engagement:

> [You say that] we should throw away our minds and ideas just because we are privileged and have time to work on (so-called) alternative projects, while other people are working in factories and have neither time nor the money to do the same. […] It sounds a bit too much like an imposition, one pleasing that part of society which wants to look Powerful and Immutable [sic]. I hope we will not give them a similar satisfaction. There is already someone working hard to remind the good people that history is always a history of class struggles.[38]

[37] Resegotti, R. (1975). No title. *Gong*, n. 3 (March): 3–7.

[38] Grazzini, F. (1975). Answer to Resegotti. *Gong*, n. 3 (March): 3–7.

Being privileged from a cultural and economic point of view, thus, was considered as a resource to be used in the struggle for social equality and the promotion of a better musical culture. As shown by the example above, this perspective was clearly informed by the perception that other groups and social movements were working towards similar aims (Chap. 6). *Muzak* similarly argued for the mobilization of one's own privileges in effecting cultural and social change, with the magazine being seen as a means to this end. However, as discussed above, both *Muzak* and *Gong* required a significant degree of cultural effort from their readers. The idea of spreading a more informed musical culture was based on the defence of strong aesthetic distinctions: critics did not have to 'lower' such standards, but had to mobilize all their symbolic skills to engage and enrich their audience.

## Criticism and Privilege

Some readers perceived this position as excessively demanding, criticizing the monthlies both for overly specialist articles and too-difficult language. For the following readers, for example, the monthlies' ideal audience was a small avant-garde within the youth, rather than 'the people':

> I always read Gong with attention, but 60 per cent of my attention, which is due to the fact that I cannot understand what has been written and why. […] Feel free to address a restricted number of experts [*addetti ai lavori*] and intellectuals closed in their world. I say it without any irony – just clarify […] that you are not addressing the masses, the people who need to be helped to understand how they might build a culture for themselves on the basis of the right popular traditions.[39]
>
> I have the impression that the articles about feminism, abortion and drugs are intended for those comrades [*compagni*] who are already aware and well-informed. In other words, the articles take for granted that all comrades are familiar with these discourses […]. This is why I think that some articles are intended for an avant-garde of readers, an audience that is

[39] Padovani, M. (1976). No title. *Gong*, n. 7–8 (July–August): 3–4.

> already familiar with a certain political discourse. But sometimes the majority of youth [*massa giovanile*] is not familiar with it.[40]

Other readers saw in critics' skillful language, and in the use of words like 'masses', an elitist attitude and misguided cultural privilege:

> You tend to talk about the masses, but this word suggests detachment, manipulation and contempt. Yes, contempt for people who do not share your cultural level and that you imagine as brainless and without personality, people who cannot help but following fads. […] What you are trying to accomplish is nothing more than a power handover: the bourgeois intellectuals replaced by the enlightened comrades who lead the students' avant-garde.[41]

It is worth remembering that the monthlies' readership included at least some working-class people and some very young people (Chap. 4). In this respect, some disputes between critics and readers allow not just differences in cultural capital, but more overt social tensions, to emerge. In the following letter, for example, a working student (*studente lavoratore*) criticizes some articles about gender inequalities published by *Muzak*. For the reader, arguments about the political importance of gender were in themselves an indication of privilege. In other words, he saw them as understandable only to people who did not have to face economic difficulties:

> Do you really believe that I, with my cock, have more power than my boss's wife? She has money, the possibility of enjoying her life, and influence over the life of others. Sex can be about physical strength, but it is not about power. Power is economic, and this can be understood by all those readers who do not go to school and university just for fashion or because their fathers can afford it. I mean those readers who really want to study and have to work and make sacrifices for that, as do all the people who need to work to earn a decent life.[42]

---

[40] Monica (no surname) (1976). No title. *Muzak*, n. 9 (January): 6–8.

[41] Antonio Piras (1976). 'Giornalisti e popolo'. *Muzak*, n. 10 (February): 6–8.

[42] Franco (no surname) (1976). 'Proletario? Si, col cazzo', *Muzak*, n. 12 (April): 6–7.

The publication of these letters clearly shows that the monthlies were concerned by such critiques, as they undermined the democratic (and perhaps idealistic) premises of their ideological project. Nevertheless, both *Muzak* and *Gong* defended the idea that critics had something to offer to those lacking the same cultural resources:

> Sure, sometimes we are 'elitist', sometimes we idealize the average reader rather than addressing the actual one. However, we do a job (which is original, creative and political) and may commit some mistakes, but we never feel contempt. […] Contempt, for the masses and individuals, is the feeling of those arguing that we need to deny our culture in the name of a fake communication. However, the problem is not to 'de-culturalize' the intellectuals, but to give to the oppressed the means to make a new culture for themselves.[43]

On a similar note, *Gong* reclaimed the importance of the cultural effort of both critics and readers in light of broader ambitions of social change:

> Our language (which is very different from academic vacuity) is probably confused, but it is confused because it tries to construct something new […] [I]t is not possible to express new things through banality and stereotypes. When you are trying to transform the world, you have to transform yourself as well, and this requires effort on the part of writers and their readers as well.[44]

## Conclusion

This chapter has explored the meanings that readers ascribed to critics' aesthetic choices and to the ideological projects embodied by different magazines. More specifically, I have discussed the extent to which magazines acted as alternative public spheres for their audiences, showing that they were means through which cultural practices and social dif-

[43] Giaime Pintor (1976). Answer to Piras, *Muzak*, n. 10 (February): 6–8.

[44] Editorial Board (1976). Answer to Padovani, *Gong*, n. 7–8 (July–August): 3–4.

ferences – and the relations between them – could be publicly discussed and, to some extent, problematized. Critics explicitly encouraged such use of the magazines, as they saw debating with readers as a practice defining the democratic identity of pop music criticism. However, interactions between readers and critics were affected by significant asymmetries of power and cultural capital. Critics had both the power to select which issues and voices were worthy of discussion, and to define the debate's symbolic boundaries. Moreover, they kept defending a Kantian disposition towards music and a 'knowing approach' (Prieur and Savage 2013) to both music and music criticism, without fully recognizing that this had an exclusionary power for some readers (and that, for the monthlies, it limited their ambitions for socio-political change).

Overall, letters suggest that a homology of resources, dispositions and tastes between critics and their readers was only partial. The extent to which similar asymmetries structure the relationship between intermediaries and consumers in other cultural fields is an empirical question. However, it is one worth considering vis-à-vis the growing evidence of the stratified nature of popular culture consumption, and the role of critics in creating new symbolic and social boundaries in this context (Chap. 2). In this respect, Bourdieu's attention to the homology between cultural producers and their audience may need to be complemented with an attention to the asymmetries that shape participation in the fields of popular culture, and engagement with their institutions. Such asymmetries may pertain to cultural, subcultural and economic capital, but they may also be exacerbated by other social differences, like gender, age, geographical location and race. The emergence of new, cosmopolitan cultural tastes (and their institutions) makes the question even more pressing, as such dynamics are likely to be at work beyond the Italian musical field.

## Bibliography

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social Text, 25*(26), 56–80.

Habermas, J. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Prieur, A., & Savage, M. (2013). Emerging forms of cultural capital. *European Societies, 15*(2), 246–267.

# 9

# Conclusion: The Struggle Goes On

At the beginning of this book, I suggested that, to understand the hierarchies of contemporary Italian pop, one needs to reconstruct their historical genesis. Indeed the very possibility of arguing, today, that '[t]he Italian music industry is not really developed for good music, just shit pop' (Richards 2012) pre-supposes a longer and deeper institutional transformation. The last five chapters have reconstructed its earlier stages. They have focused on the social and cultural changes that fostered the emergence of the 'first wave' of Italian specialist music magazines. Moreover, they have explored their competing projects of cultural legitimation; how they evaluated different music genres; and how the distinctions they advocated were received by a diverse, young audience. This story suggests a number of conclusions about the relationships between globalization, cultural legitimation and social divisions, as well as avenues for future research. But before discussing them, one might wonder what happened to *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong*, and to what extent the invention of pop music criticism as a new cultural institution has endured in the Italian context.



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4_9

## A False Epilogue

The destiny of these magazines was shaped by the very different strategies they developed during the 1970s. *Ciao 2001*'s inclusive approach to new music trends secured its economic leadership until the early 1980s (Gaspari 1981), and the magazine survived with declining fortune until 1994. A new edition was launched in 1999, but survived for only about a year. Nonetheless, it is possible to say that the weekly effectively converted its subcultural knowledge into economic capital (Bourdieu 1996), especially during the 1970s. On the other hand, the monthlies' political cosmopolitanism secured them a higher degree of symbolic recognition in histories of Italian popular music (Carrera 1980: 208; Prato 2010), and their status as innovative editorial projects is well-recognized in the accounts of later generations of critics (Guglielmi 2011, 2012; Catani 2015). Their more normative aesthetic choices, however, made them short-lived enterprises. *Gong*'s editorial board abandoned the project by the end of 1977 because of its increasingly low sales figures (Bolelli 1979). The magazine survived for another year with changing editorial boards, and was eventually abandoned by its publisher by the end of 1978. In 1976, *Muzak* was still benefiting from the existence of a significantly politicized young audience, and its sales figures were around 35,000 copies per month (Rusconi 1976). However, in June, the editorial board was charged with 'moral offense' by the Italian magistrature for publishing a report about teenagers' sexuality (*Muzak* n. 13, 1976). During the following months, the magazine's publisher (*Publisuono*) interrupted its financial support and the editorial board was unable to find new funders (Rusconi 1976).[1] More importantly, the space of possibles which had fostered the monthlies' aesthetico-political choices was changing. Young people's interest in jazz proved a temporary conjuncture, and beginning

[1] In a recent interview, *Muzak*'s critic Gino Castaldo has suggested that the rupture with the magazine's publisher (*Publisuono*) was not due to the 'moral offense' charges, but to the fact that it asked for significant changes in the editorial line. This happened when the editorial board was experiencing the success of *Porci con le ali*, a novel written by *Muzak*'s journalists Lidia Ravera and Marco Lombardo Radice, which quickly became a bestseller. Feeling that they were in a strong position, the editorial board refused to make any changes to *Muzak*, which is why *Publisuono* stopped funding the magazine (Lambiase 2012).

in 1978, the influence of politics on Italian musical life started decreasing. Newly launched music magazines, like *Il Mucchio Selvaggio* (1977) and *Rockerilla* (1978), reclaimed music's autonomy from politics and a stronger rock identity (Prato 1995). The monthlies' break with contemporary (1970s) pop-rock and investment in other forms of avant-garde music had proven premature.

This is how the first wave ended, but in a sense it is a false epilogue. Since then, specialist music magazines have remained a regular feature of Italian cultural life. The invention of a new cultural institution – a sub-field devoted to the artistic legitimation of popular music – had been accomplished. Some individuals and publications, of course, have been more successful than others in terms of historical longevity, symbolic recognition and commercial success. And specialist music magazines, in Italy as elsewhere, are going through a crisis which could lead to the disappearance of the medium. Nonetheless, since the demise of *Muzak* (1976) and *Gong* (1978), Italy has always had a diversified pop music press, and more recently the web has further contributed to the field's diversification. To be sure, critics who established their positions in earlier years, when magazines were the main specialist media, tend to be suspicious of online music criticism. According to the director of the music magazine *Blow Up* (Stefano Isodoro Bianchi) and the former director of *Rolling Stone Italia* (Michele Lupi), webzines and blogs are based on the aggregation of news and superficial commentary (Dalmasso 2014). And yet online music criticism has already developed an autonomous history; people who work in this context have established different cultural politics and aesthetic positions, for example, on what constitutes good indie rock[2] or good rap music.[3] Interestingly, while usually respectful of magazine critics, online music critics have expressed discontent with the music journalism provided by quality newspapers, which has been received as

[2] See Farabegoli, F. (2015). 'La crisi di mezza età dell'indie italiano'. *Prismo*, http://www.prismomag.com/indie-italiano-crisi/, date accessed 1 February 2016. The article shows (from an insider's perspective) that Italian indie is itself a contested field, one that includes different specialist media, such as (to name a few) *Rockit*, *Noisey*, *OndaRock* and the blog *Bastonate*.

[3] Since Italian hip hop has itself become a diversified field, different forms of criticism have started emerging in this context, such as *Four Domino* – a webzine about 'rap & culture' (Four Domino 2016) – and the more news-oriented *RapBurger*. Rock-oriented publications like *Noisey* and *Rockit* have also started taking positions on rap on a regular basis.

superficial and inaccurate.[4] There is clearly evidence of a broader and increasingly complex field beyond quality newspapers, which so far have received most of the attention of cultural sociologists (Chap. 2). With different media and generations of critics now active, one could say that the struggle goes on, and that a field perspective on cultural legitimation may prove useful in unraveling some of its complexity.

## Globalization, Aesthetic Socialization, Legitimation Struggles

A primary contribution of this book is to highlight the advantages of a field perspective on cultural legitimation, one more attuned to specific processes of aesthetic socialization and the politics of different organizations. I have argued that this is a particularly useful approach for studying the relationships between globalization and legitimation processes. Indeed, if the former restructures national cultural fields, as suggested in Chap. 3, it is also likely to foster new legitimation struggles: between nationally and globally oriented actors, but also among the latter, as these may articulate different versions of cultural globalization and understandings of global taste. At the very least, this is how cultural globalization manifested in the field of Italian popular music. The growing internationalization of the recording industry created the conditions for new forms of aesthetic socialization. The young people who established the first specialist music magazines developed knowledge of 1950s and 1960s pop-rock during their adolescence;[5] they possessed a new kind of subcultural capital, but also, given their educational trajectories, institutionally recognized cultural capital. The rest of the story can be best conceptualized as a process

[4] In 2014, the newspaper *La Repubblica* published a live report of the *Sziget Festival* (one of the largest music festivals in Europe) which lamented the absence of similar events in Italy. The article was received by some bloggers and online critics, notably on *Rockit* and *Bastonate*, as an example of superficial music journalism, as it ignored the history and very existence of the Italian festival scene. See Villa, M. (2014). 'Sziget 2014: l'anno dei record'. *Rockit*, http://www.rockit.it/articolo/sziget-festival-2014-report, date accessed 1 February 2016.

[5] Interestingly, older critics like Saverio Rotondi (*Ciao 2001*) and Peppo Delconte (*Gong*) played important organizational and ideological roles, but were less involved with music writing. Music features were written mostly by critics born between the mid-1940s and mid-1950s.

of diversification and competition. From late 1973 onwards, when *Muzak* was launched, Italian pop music criticism became a significantly diverse cultural field. More precisely, it was a sub-field within a redefined musical field, one structured around the opposition between light music (and its institutions, like RAI) and pop music. The latter included Italian acts like singer-songwriters and pop-rock bands (who were influenced by foreign musical trends), and was itself a hierarchical milieu. If *Ciao 2001* and the monthlies developed competing legitimation projects, there were similar oppositions among singer-songwriters and pop-rock bands.[6] To be sure, diversification and competition presupposed commonalities: shared presuppositions and resources. Critics possessed similar degrees of cultural and subcultural capital, and they certainly agreed on a range of aesthetic and generational distinctions. Nonetheless, these resources were mobilized to sustain competing cosmopolitan projects and symbolic boundaries. Leafing through the pages of *Ciao 2001*, a reader would have found discussions of a broad variety of international (though largely British and American)[7] music trends. What mattered here were the exclusion of light music, with its presumed audience of elders and 'ignorant' people, and artistically informed discussion. A Kantian disposition towards popular music was the essential requirement for joining the conversation, but in 1970s Italy this was far from being a widely shared cultural orientation (Chap. 4). For this reason, a reader leafing through *Muzak* and *Gong* would have found it even more difficult to join the debate without the appropriate cultural resources. Here, critics advocated a prescriptive

[6] While I did not discuss this question in detail, distinctions between more avant-garde and more commercially oriented acts emerge very strongly from the articles I analyzed. There were clearly two different poles in the Italian pop-rock field: singer-songwriters like Franco Battiato and Lucio Dalla and bands like Area and Stormy Six were part of an avant-garde which distinguished itself from more successful acts, like Lucio Battisti, Francesco De Gregori, Premiata Forneria Marconi and Le Orme (to name only a few examples).

[7] At least between between 1973 and 1977, all three magazines focused on American, British and Italian acts. Germany and France also received some attention, especially 'Krautrock' (e.g. acts like Kraftwerk and Popol Vuh) and French folk-rock acts (e.g. Alan Stivell and Malicorne). However, the coverage remained focused on the USA and UK, and features on other European and non-European countries were much rarer. Arguably, this skewed attention reflected broader inequalities in the transnational field of pop-rock. For example, it is significant that a musician like Bob Marley received coverage beginning only in 1975, after he had already signed with Island Records.

political aesthetics and a restricted cultural canon, one increasingly hostile towards late pop-rock trends.

## Cosmopolitan Cultural Capital

This book also contributes to the sociology of taste, shedding some light on the cultural institutions that regulate the boundaries of cosmopolitan preferences. In line with a field perspective, I have considered the structural processes that fostered their emergence and how the national space of possibles shaped their politics. My findings provide further evidence of the contested nature of globally oriented taste, particularly along generational lines. Indeed, age emerges as a key division in my case study, and its salience was further exacerbated by the fact that generational differences partly mapped onto educational inequalities (Chap. 4). However, this research also suggests that there were significant differences within youth. Music magazines targeted audiences with different amounts of cultural and subcultural capital. If *Ciao 2001* tried to capture a relatively diverse (but still sufficiently educated) youth, *Muzak* and *Gong* were tailored for an avant-garde with significant symbolic resources, including political capital. Readers' letters further suggest that these differences were salient, and that they were implicated in processes of symbolic exclusion. In this context, appreciation of Gary Glitter or Slade acquired a feminine and youngish connotation, while a taste for light music was more readily dismissed as 'ignorant and narrow-minded' (Chap. 8). These acts did not have the same currency as, say, Pink Floyd. And readers with high subcultural capital would have objected that, well, Pink Floyd were a bit obvious in 1975: not exactly avant-garde. Readers' letters provide only a narrative account of these asymmetries of resources, and the extent to which different popular music tastes map onto divisions of subcultural, cultural and economic capital needs further research. Nonetheless, a preference for the right kind of popular music, and the right disposition, clearly had some exclusionary power in the Italian context. It worked as capital in the sense that it could secure a degree of symbolic recognition for critics and some of their readers (and was indeed implicated in practices of symbolic violence). Furthermore, critics managed to convert

their subcultural expertise into economic (*Ciao 2001*) and symbolic capital (*Muzak* and *Gong*). It is thus possible to say that their knowledge of pop-rock secured a competitive advantage within a changing musical field. However, its effects were relevant only within this specific field of relations. Avant-garde pop did not have any cultural currency beyond young people with an interest in this aesthetic culture, and its recognition beyond the musical field was not obvious. Pop music was still regarded as a form of entertainment by most academics and journalists (Gaspari 1981), or at the very least as youth music (*musica giovanile*). Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to think that subcultural resources cannot be converted into capital. In some fields and networks they clearly can, which is why a field perspective should focus on both widely recognized forms of knowledge (cultural capital) and resources whose power and effects are more localized. Indeed, cultural taste can contribute to the reproduction of inequalities only when activated in concrete fields. Survey studies are invaluable in establishing correlations between socio-economic variables and cultural preferences, but they cannot investigate how and where the latter are put into practice (Bourdieu 1990).

## Limitations and Future Research

This research is not exempt from the limitations that usually apply to case studies, especially their historically and contextually specific nature. Although I hope that this book has shed some light on the relationships between globalization and cultural legitimation, its findings are no substitute for empirical research on other national and historical contexts, which would further elucidate or correct the mechanisms and processes identified in this book. Furthermore, archival work has distinct limitations. A historical case study cannot provide much insight into the functioning of editorial boards and critics' informal working practices, or into their ties and networks with other intermediaries, musicians, concert organizers and so on. Put otherwise, pop music criticism as an art world (Becker 1982) remains beyond this book's scope. Similarly, while readers' letters shed some light on the exclusionary power of cosmopolitan tastes, they are no substitute for detailed consumption research on how

differences in economic, cultural and subcultural capital shape different cosmopolitan dispositions, or for ethnographic research on how these are activated within different fields of relations. Magazine articles and readers' letters also prevent a full exploration of how less privileged young people engaged with Anglo-American pop music. We know very little about those who preferred Gary Glitter or David Bowie to Pink Floyd (or to Anthony Braxton), and even less about young people who remained suspicious of pop-rock and preferred Italian light music. Focusing on critics and the field of cultural production (Bourdieu 1996) provides a useful complement to consumption research, but it makes this book a history of elite tastes, one in which other voices appear only occasionally and via the mediation of critics.

There are other issues that this book could not address but that are important for a future research agenda on cultural globalization, artistic legitimation and social divisions. While knowledge of pop-rock has emerged as subcultural capital in my case study, other studies might examine the contents and legitimacy of other globally oriented tastes. This requires moving away from a too-comprehensive definition of cosmopolitan preferences and considering specific forms of aesthetic socialization. If knowledge of non-national cultural forms can generate economic or symbolic advantages, it is necessary to explore what aesthetic materials and traditions have acquired (or are acquiring) such value, and in what contexts and networks these resources generate capital. A focus on aesthetic socialization may also explain inter- and intra-generational variations in globally oriented tastes, and the extent to which such differences are enduring (and hence dispositional) or transient. Future research might also investigate the conditions under which a taste for the right kind of global culture becomes cultural capital recognized by different social groups and institutions (Lamont and Lareau 1988). Indeed, we know very little about the extent to which foreign cultural forms are consecrated by more established national institutions, like quality newspapers, the education system, and state-funded and non-profit organizations. The Italian case remains illustrative here. In contrast to the 1970s, quality newspapers cover pop-rock acts with a certain regularity nowadays, but what genres they address, to what extent and in what ways these are evaluated, are questions that require further research, in rela-

tion to popular music as well as other cultural genres. It also remains unclear how global tastes correlate with the social differences that constitute the Italian stratification system, such as education, class background, geographical location, race, religion and so on. A proper analysis of cultural stratification in Italy is indeed long past due. How globalization has redefined (or is redefining) legitimation struggles in national cultural fields beyond Italy remains to be investigated.

## Bibliography

Becker, H. S. (1982). *Art worlds*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Bolelli, F. (1979). Movimento e scrittura nell'area del pop. In P. Alfierj & G. Mazzone (Eds.), *I fiori di Gutenberg: analisi e prospettive dell'editoria alternativa, marginale, pirata in Italia e Europa*. Roma: Arcana.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The rules of art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Carrera, A. (1980). *Musica e pubblico giovanile: l'evoluzione dei gusti musicali dagli anni Sessanta ad oggi*. Milano: Feltrinelli.

Catani, G. (2015). C'era una volta la stampa musicale italiana. *Rockit*. http://www.rockit.it/gallery/riviste-musicali-italiane/33350-115122. Accessed 12 Feb 2016.

Dalmasso, F. (2014). In crisi anche le riviste musicali, ma se molte si rifugiano sul web c' è anche quella che dall'online sbarca su carta. *LSDI*. http://www.lsdi.it/2014/in-crisi-anche-le-riviste-musicali-ma-se-molte-si-rifugiano-sul-web-c-e-anche-quella-che-dall-online-sbarca-su-carta/. Accessed 12 Feb 2016.

Gaspari, M. (1981). *L'industria della canzone*. Roma: Editori Riuniti.

Guglielmi, F. (2011). Muzak. *Il Mucchio Extra, 36*, 18–19.

Guglielmi, F. (2012). Gong. *Il Mucchio Extra, 37*, 18–19.

Lambiase, G. (2012). Letter (no title) in 'Il direttore risponde'. *Il Mucchio Extra, 37*, 4–5.

Lamont, M., & Lareau, A. (1988). Cultural capital: Allusions, gaps and glissandos in recent theoretical developments. *Sociological Theory, 6*(2), 153–168.

Prato, P. (1995). Teorie e metodi della critica rock. *Annali dell'Istituto Gramsci Emilia Romagna, 2*, 130–149.

Prato, P. (2010). *La musica italiana. Una storia sociale dall'Unità a oggi*. Roma: Donzelli.

Richards, S. (2012). Alessio Natalizia of Walls: "What does Italian music sound like anyway?". *Guardian*, Wednesday 11 July. http://www.theguardian.com/music/2012/jul/11/alessio-natalizia-walls-italian-music

Rusconi, M. (1976). La rivista musicale cambia disco. *L'Espresso.* http://stampa-musicale.altervista.org/Articolo%20L%27espresso/index.htm. Accessed 12 Feb 2016.

# Appendix 1: Methodology and Fieldwork

This appendix discusses the book's research methodology, especially the use of secondary sources and historical data, the sampling of magazines and articles, and the analysis of different editorial formats via discourse and thematic analysis. The last section considers how the software NVivo was used to handle the collected data, and the translation of article excerpts from Italian to English.

## Archival Research: Accessing and Using Music Magazines

The archival research on which this project is based took place between November 2011 and October 2012 in three Italian public libraries: *Accademia di Brera* (Milan), *Biblioteca Sormani* (Milan) and *Biblioteca Nazionale* (Florence). Their archives provide access to complete collections of the magazines *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong*,[1] which made it pos-

[1] The only exceptions are four issues of the magazine *Gong* published in 1977, three of which have been collected via eBay.



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4

sible to investigate their projects of legitimation in detail. On the other hand, the existence of a broad range of secondary sources allowed for the integration of discourse and thematic analysis with social history, the tenet of Bourdieu's field theory (1996). I could thus examine critics' subjective evaluations and position-takings, and the 'objective' space of possibles in which they operated, including critics' conditions of existence (their social trajectory and resources). Magazines have also been used to collect data about their organizational structure and ownership. They have been approached both as documents delivering public discourse (Atkinson and Coffey 2004) and as sources of information about the organizations that produced them (Prior 2004). Indeed, magazines contain useful information for a social history of the music press, such as: employees' names, positions and gender; the location of editorial boards; professional links with advertising and distribution companies; and so on. I discussed these data mostly in Chap. 4.

## Using Secondary Sources

Secondary sources have been consulted throughout the research process. Such sources include data collected by the Italian Institute of Statistics (ISTAT 2012) and RAI (1968), social and political histories of post-war Italy (Ginsborg 1990; Cavalli and Leccardi 1997) and histories of the cultural and musical sectors (Forgacs 1990; Prato 2010; De Luigi 1982). They also include biographical articles about 34 critics working for the magazines under study[2] and the magazines' audience surveys.

As discussed in Chap. 4, the second and third types of sources have some limitations. Critics' public biographies provide data mostly about education, age, gender and place of birth (and sometimes place of study). In line with Bourdieusian sociology of culture, I used education as a proxy for critics' cultural capital and, given the stratification of the Italian education system, social origins. However, only seven of these biographies contain information about family life and background. This means that I was unable to assess the impact of family on critics' socialization,

[2] A list of names and sources is available on request.

particularly their inherited cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986). For some critics this could have been as significant as the cultural resources acquired through education. Furthermore, lack of information about family origins is likely to obscure cases of upward social mobility. The prevalence of *liceali* among critics suggests that we should not expect a great many instances of this (Chap. 4), but that does not mean they were completely absent from the music press. I could find only one example of a socially mobile trajectory: that of Saverio Rotondi, who was the first graduate in his family and whose father was a builder (*Ciao 2001 Unofficial Website*, 2013). Unfortunately my sources do not allow a proper reconstruction of similar trajectories, or an examination of whether they were concentrated in specific positions of the field (such as the more commercially oriented *Ciao 2001*).[3]

Magazines' audience surveys have similar limitations. As discussed in Chap. 4 (see note 7), they were collected at different times and with different methodologies. They should be considered as 'snapshots' of the audience, which show some major common trends, especially in terms of age, gender and geographical location. Their data about education and class, given their vagueness, require more caution. Indeed I have argued that readers' narratives provide better evidence of the asymmetries of economic and cultural capital which shaped the experience of some readers. Of course they do not allow for measuring such asymmetries, but do offer valuable historical and qualitative evidence. This is significant, given that cultural histories of 1960s and 1970s Italy have a strong generational character, but barely mention social divisions, especially class (e.g. Colombo 2008; Fabbri 2011).

My secondary sources also include several published memories about the pop music press. These come from critics themselves (Casiraghi 2005; Bolelli 1979), and also from organizers and intermediaries (Gaspari 1981; Carrera 1980) involved with the Italian 1970s pop-rock field. As I discuss

[3] Interviews could have been a different way of reconstructing critics' trajectories. A number of reasons made this option unfeasible though. Some key figures in the Italian music press, like the directors of *Ciao 2001* and *Muzak*, passed away several years ago, while for other critics, I was unable to find a public contact. Time and material constraints (along with archival work and living in the UK for part of my Ph.D.) further contributed to making interviews difficult to arrange.

below, these have been used to make preliminary sampling choices and to better reconstruct the space of possibles in which critics worked.

## Sampling Music Magazines

I used secondary sources and published memories to identify suitable case studies. From these narratives, the magazines *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong* emerged as ideologically different projects and as differently positioned in terms of market success. They were also the magazines mentioned most frequently. To be sure, the narratives of secondary sources are not innocent. Some of them provide strong assessments about the historical and intellectual significance of music magazines, thus distributing posthumous recognition and symbolic capital. According to Bourdieu, this is what normally happens with the past of cultural fields: while some positions are consecrated and 'made history', others are ignored or devalued (1996: 70–71). Secondary sources reposition field actors in light of the present. I thus sampled magazines adapting the strategy of Lindberg and colleagues (2005), who used secondary sources to make similar decisions about the study of American and British rock criticism. While they sampled actors that secondary sources framed as culturally relevant, I also considered actors who failed to gain a similar title. In this respect, *Muzak* and *Gong* were defined as 'alternative' (Prato 1988: 77), 'charismatic' (Prato 1995: 135) and, more generally, as culturally more significant than *Ciao 2001* (Guglielmi 2012). By contrast, *Ciao 2001* was framed as a 'generalist' (Sibilla 2003: 222) and 'paternalistic' magazine (Prato 1995: 131), one which passively followed the trends imposed by the recording industry (Carrera 1980: 208; Angelini and Gentile 1977: 16). I thus included *Ciao 2001* in the sample as an ideal type of heteronomous cultural production (Bourdieu 1996). However, the fieldwork revealed a more complex picture of these magazines' positions, showing that it was problematic to hold a too-straightforward distinction between autonomous and heteronomous cultural organizations (Chaps. 5 and 6). Finally, the choice of magazines was related to some practical considerations. As discussed above, for all three magazines, it was possible to work on complete collections that did not present difficulties of access. On the contrary, other magazines active in the same years, like *Nuovo*

*Sound* (1975–1981), were either difficult to access or missing from public archives.

## Sampling Editorial Formats

The choice of focusing on different editorial formats emerged after a first stage of holistic reading, during which I simply familiarized myself with the magazines' contents and narratives. To capture the complexity of the magazines' cosmopolitan projects, I defined a sampling strategy based on three editorial formats: music-related articles, opening editorials and readers' letters. However, this preliminary classification was revised during fieldwork, leading to the choices discussed below.

### Musical Evaluation and Music Coverage

All three magazines evaluated music via features and reviews. The former were long pieces about musicians, bands or music trends, which gained visibility in the magazines' tables of contents. By contrast, reviews were short evaluative pieces published in sections entirely devoted to this format. I chose to concentrate my analysis of musical evaluation on features only, because they indicate stronger choices of coverage: the acts to which critics decided to give the highest visibility. Also, they presented more elaborate evaluative discourses, sometimes about entire music trends. They thus appeared a better choice in reconstructing the magazines' strategies of legitimation. Moreover, the review sections of *Ciao 2001*, *Muzak* and *Gong* were organized in different ways, which made features easier to compare across magazines.[4]

Further sampling choices have been made in order to include different music genres within the sample. Categories of genre are neither immanent qualities of music (Frith 1998: 75–95), nor are they categories universally shared by social actors (Santoro 2002). Genres are cultural classifications whose meanings and boundaries may be differently estab-

[4] The reviews published by *Ciao 2001* up until December 1976 were all written by the same critic (Enzo Caffarelli), while the review sections of *Muzak* and *Gong* were written by more people. For *Ciao 2001*, therefore, reviews would have provided a biased sample.

**Table A.1** Features per magazine and genre

| Features per magazine | | | Features per genre[a] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Ciao 2001* | *Muzak* | *Gong* | Rock | Jazz | Soul | Folk |
| 186 | 54 | 57 | 168 | 67 | 25 | 47 |

[a]Some features (11) address more than one genre, hence the number of references to genres (307) is higher than number of features (297)

lished by audiences, producers and critics (DiMaggio 1987), including critics working for different publications (Bourdieu 1993). As a result, I paid attention to the ways in which critics themselves defined musical categories and struggled over their meaning. During a first stage of holistic reading, it became evident that all the magazines agreed on some broad genre distinctions. Pop (or rock) and jazz were clearly understood as different genres, despite the identification of sub-categories (hard rock, free jazz) and musicians that could problematize such distinctions. Also, they were supported by the magazines' organizational routines: rock and jazz tended to be reviewed by different groups of critics. I thus organized my sampling strategies around these categories. At a later stage, I broadened the sample to include soul music (particularly disco) and the folk revival, two genres which started being covered only in 1975 (soul) and 1974 (folk).[5] Since critics had to justify the inclusion of these trends to their readers, they provided a convenient case in further investigating how the magazines justified their cultural politics, and how critics evaluated different aesthetic cultures.

For each genre I sampled at least one article published every two months in *Muzak* and *Gong*, and one published every four to five weeks in *Ciao 2001*. This procedure generated a sample of 297 features, whose distribution per magazine and genre is reported in Table A.1.

With this approach, I could track the discourse about specific music genres and identify both continuities and changes in the magazines' strategies. The sampling was thus purposive and produced 'redundant' evaluative narratives. While applying this procedure, I also took into account the organization of magazines. For example, while jazz and folk were usually assigned to a few critics specializing in these genres, pop

[5] For reasons of space I have not discussed folk music features in detail. See Varriale (2016) for an analysis of this sample.

music and soul were reviewed by a greater number of people. As a result, for the latter I sampled articles written by at least three critics to avoid overrepresenting the views of a few individuals. Articles about both male and female musicians, and about African-American and white musicians, were also sampled to address gender and ethnicity as potential objects of evaluation. Women writing for all three magazines have also been included in the sample, especially those who wrote regularly about music.

## Position-Taking and Editorials

While all the magazines under study published opening editorials, they defined their cultural politics through various editorial formats, and in relation to a broad range of cultural, social and political institutions. I thus adopted a strategy of theoretical sampling based on Bourdieu's notion of position-taking (Chap. 3). I sampled articles addressing a variety of issues – from the organization of music festivals to Italian elections – to get a better sense of the issues for which critics expressed concern. This revealed that they used to take positions especially on the politics of other actors dealing with the production, mediation and organization of music, such as political groups, regional and local bodies, and the RAI. Using the concept of position-taking to construct the sample, I was able to identify the space of possibles in relation to which critics constructed pop music criticism as a new and autonomous cultural space. Position-taking was indeed a practice through which magazines pragmatically made and 'remade' their cultural politics. Such positions were stepping stones in the construction of broader public narratives, which as such remained open to further qualification. This strategy of theoretical sampling led to 192 articles (93 for *Ciao 2001*, 48 for *Gong* and 51 for *Muzak*), which are distinct from music features.[6] As with musical evaluation, I stopped sampling when I felt I had reached saturation, that is, when coherent and redundant narratives had emerged for each magazine.

[6] Of course, music features, as well as answers to the letters of readers, can present strong position-takings as well. I take these instances into account in my analysis.

## Readers' Letters and Critics' Replies

The analysis of readers' letters and critics' replies required different choices for the monthlies and *Ciao 2001*. The former used to publish between two and four pages of letters in each issue, and, being monthlies, they published fewer letters than *Ciao 2001*. To cover a sufficient variety of topics, I analyzed all letters published between 1973 and 1977 (197), with the exclusion of those addressing technical issues (e.g. readers seeking advice about musical instruments or discographies). The sample thus provides a comprehensive picture of *Muzak* and *Gong* as alternative public spheres (Chap. 8). By contrast, *Ciao 2001* devoted various thematized sections to readers' letters and, being a weekly, published much more material. I decided to analyze *Lettere al Direttore*, a four to five-page section with a generalist focus. This section covered different issues and was attributed to the editor-in-chief, Saverio Rotondi, who also used this space to justify the magazine's politics. These features made the section comparable to those of *Muzak* and *Gong*. To reduce the material to a manageable sample, I applied a purposive sampling strategy. I sampled up to five to seven letters across the four to five issues that the magazine published each month, and only letters that received a reply. In this way, I obtained a relatively large sample (290) based on several topics of discussion.

To make the sampling of editorial formats more effective, I defined more specific boundaries for my chosen historical frame (the years 1969–1977). I started sampling articles from October 1973 for *Ciao 2001* and *Muzak*, since this is when the latter was launched as a competitor of the former. For similar reasons, I started sampling *Gong* from its inception (October 1974). While *Muzak* was dismantled in June 1976, for *Gong* I sampled articles until October 1977. This choice was largely due to the magazine's history. Although *Gong* was published until December 1978, the magazine changed owners between April and July 1977, and its editorial board in October. This led to a strong refashioning of the magazine's identity. The research, covering the issues published until October 1977, addresses only the magazine's earlier incarnation. Furthermore, since *Ciao 2001* was a weekly publication, I defined a temporal hiatus of one year – between August 1974 and July 1975 – to make the sample more manageable. I thus produced a sample representing two distinct

stages: October 1973 to July 1974 and July 1975 to August 1977. Since I found consistent strategies for the first stage, the hiatus was defined in order to make changes in the magazine's orientation more visible. This choice made evident some changes in music coverage, notably the inclusion of soul and disco, and a slightly more politicized way of addressing readers' discussions of inequality (Chap. 8). Other editorial practices did not show significant changes. This sampling strategy focuses on the years of the field's diversification, when competing editorial projects emerged. Unfortunately, it excludes the early years of *Ciao 2001*, when the weekly moved away from its teen magazine format (1969–1972). Because of time and resource constraints, I was unable to include this early stage in the research.

## Discourse and Thematic Analysis

The editorial formats discussed above have been examined through a combination of discourse and thematic analysis. Discourse analysis has been characteristically used to provide rich accounts of people's narratives and motivations, but also to analyze media texts and documents (Alvesson and Karreman 2007). It was thus a suitable method of exploring critics' evaluative work and position-taking, as well as readers' and critics' mediated interactions. I also used thematic analysis[7] to map the recurrence of some discursive themes across different articles, and to better identify continuities and changes in the strategies of music magazines.

My use of discourse analysis is grounded in the Bourdieusian framework discussed in Chap. 3. From this standpoint, discourses are produced by individuals, groups or organizations endowed with specific socio-historical trajectories, dispositions and resources. These resources need to be mobilized vis-à-vis the existing space of possibles; they can

[7] Thematic analysis is a method that qualitative researchers use to identify recurring themes within data sets (Boyatzis 1998), and also to explore how specific themes manifest across different instances (Braun and Clarke 2006). In contrast to content analysis, it pays more attention to the narrative and discursive context from which 'codes' emerge. While this may also be the purpose of 'qualitative' content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2007), I drew on the framework of thematic analysis, since this was easier to combine with discourse analysis.

be put into practice only within given fields of relations and organizational constraints (Bourdieu 1990). This perspective made it possible to examine how critics' affiliation with different magazines shaped their position-takings and evaluations. Furthermore, it allowed exploring the embeddedness of the music press in the national-historical space: how this shaped the field's *doxa* and the magazines' cultural politics.

My analytical strategy was largely inductive. As anticipated above, for the analysis of musical evaluation, I paid attention to how critics themselves defined musical categories. This led to a focus on four broad genre distinctions (pop, jazz, soul and folk), whose internal differences I explored via discourse analysis. Discourse analysis was also used to inductively reconstruct critics' evaluative criteria. This approach produced five frames of evaluation, which can be classified into the broader distinction between highbrow and popular dispositions (Bourdieu 1984). At a later stage, I developed a semi-structured schedule to map, via thematic analysis, the recurrence of these criteria onto all features analyzed. Overall, this combination of thematic and discourse analysis made it possible to reconstruct critics' narratives about different music styles, and how they used their evaluative criteria in relation to different genres and acts. For instance, I found that popular criteria of evaluation were rarely tied to celebrations of music's entertainment value, or pleasure for its own sake. Pleasure and emotions were usually evaluated in light of music's perceived artistic value. Similarly, I found that, while the highbrow discourse was a key resource for Italian critics, it was always sensitized to the properties of different aesthetic cultures.

I adopted a similarly inductive approach for the analysis of position-takings. I focused on the ways in which magazines defined their positions relationally, that is, I looked at the institutions, organizations and groups that music critics called into question, polemically or otherwise, to build their institutional identity (Chaps. 5 and 6). Unlike music coverage and readers' letters, I did not use thematic analysis for position-takings. I simply used discourse analysis to reconstruct the overall narrative emerging from each magazine's position-takings, paying attention to the making (and sometimes remaking) of their public identities.

To analyze readers' letters, I adopted a twofold strategy. I used discourse analysis to explore how readers discussed several topics of debate and how critics framed their concerns. I then assigned a descriptive code to the main

issue raised by each letter. Thematic analysis was thus used to cluster letters under common themes, so that I could compare how different magazines addressed a similar range of issues. Doing discourse analysis, it became evident that most discussions revolved around musical tastes and the magazines' cultural politics, and that the concepts of cultural and subcultural capital, as well as symbolic violence, were appropriate in making sense of such interactions and the asymmetries they revealed. Similarly, since inequalities emerged as a prominent topic of debate, Fraser's concept of alternative public sphere (1990) appeared appropriate in understanding the mediated, asymmetrical forms of reflexivity that music magazines enhanced.

## Handling and Revising Data: NVivo

The data were analyzed during archival research. At a later stage. I used the software NVivo both to organize and revise data. NVivo is data-management software that allows for a number of practices, like electronic coding and the generation of frequencies about collected data (like number of articles about specific genres, or written by given critics, and so on). While the software can be used at different stages of the research process (Welsh 2002), I used it only after having concluded the archival research. In this respect, I used NVivo to control the consistency of the sample, for example, checking if a given critic or genre was underrepresented or otherwise. Moreover, to minimize ambiguities and mistakes, I used NVivo to revise the collected data and the attribution of thematic codes.

## Translation Strategy

As a proper research stage, translation has been problematized only recently in social research (Temple and Young 2004; Jagosh 2009), and researchers have used very different procedures to deal with it. This diversity depends on the variety of issues that may arise in cross-cultural research: researchers might struggle with participants speaking a different language; some languages might require both translation and transliteration; and comparing two linguistically different groups or contexts may pose further problems. My case differs in another respect: my mother

tongue is Italian, which is the language of the primary and most secondary sources. However, the research is disseminated in English, and positioned in a transnational debate. While a discussion of translation in cross-cultural research is beyond scope, I discuss how the methodology outlined above and some practical considerations informed data translation.

Translation occurred at a later stage of the research, as data collection and analysis were conducted in Italian. Some chunks of data have been translated for conference presentations in 2011–2012, but most of the translation occurred during the writing up of my doctoral thesis (October 2012–December 2013). Further excepts have been translated while drafting journal articles and this book (2013–2016). I had to translate mostly two kinds of content: data excerpts and thematic codes. The latter – critics' evaluative criteria and readers' themes – did not raise particular difficulties, as they have semantic equivalents in English. The question is slightly different for the translation of article excerpts. While their semantic content does not present particular challenges, the syntax of Italian critics has peculiarities that at times makes translation more difficult. Indeed many critics used to favour 'hypotaxis', a rhetorical style based on long and complex sentence structures. Since an English translation reproducing these structures could compromise their meaning, I decided to reduce some sentences to simpler 'paratactic' constructions. This choice would not be appropriate for a translation aiming to preserve music criticism's literary qualities. However, it is the most congruent choice for a sociological study of critics' musical tastes and ideological projects. To be sure, the aesthetic and literary qualities of music criticism were explicitly identified by some critics as a value of their work (particularly in *Gong* and *Muzak*). While these features are partly lost in my translations, I could still focus on how critics justified their linguistic choices (Chap. 8). As a result, this dimension of music criticism, while 'lost in translation', is partly preserved through field theory's attention on social actors' modes of perception. Finally, whenever specific words or concepts needed a broader contextualization, I simply provided this in the discussion of data. In this respect, field theory is precisely about reconstructing the social and cultural context which charges certain words and concepts with specific connotations.

# Appendix 2: Music Coverage and Gender

To unravel the magazines' bias against women musicians, I did a content analysis of their tables of contents. The analysis is based on all the issues they published during the years under study, with the exception of a 'gap year' for *Ciao 2001* (see Appendix 1: Methodology and Fieldwork). The division between three time frames in Table B.1 reflects these sampling choices, as well as the magazines' different editorial histories. As with Chap. 7, the analysis is based on feature articles, and as such does not include reviews and other short musical pieces, like live reports. The code 'women' also includes all-female bands (e.g. Labelle) and thematic articles about women musicians (e.g. 'women in rock music'). With the exception of a few bands with some women musicians (like Jefferson Airplane or Steeleye Span), the code 'bands' includes mostly all male acts. The analysis excludes articles about entire music trends and articles about non-musical issues. A full list of coding rules is available on request.

Table B.1 shows that, as anticipated in Chap. 7, the coverage of Italian music magazines was skewed towards male musicians between 1973 and 1977. Being a weekly publication, and covering a broader variety of genres, *Ciao 2001* gave significantly more space to women musicians.



S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4

Nonetheless, all magazines contributed to reproducing a substantial asymmetry between men and women, both applying different interpretive frames (Chap. 7) and giving less visibility to women.

**Table B.1** Music coverage and gender

| | Bands | Men | Women |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Oct. 1973–Aug. 1974** | | | |
| *Ciao 2001* | 182 | 200 | 20 |
| *Muzak* | 33 | 36 | 1 |
| **Sept. 1974–July 1975** | | | |
| *Ciao 2001* (gap year) | – | – | – |
| *Muzak*[a] | 18 | 21 | 4 |
| *Gong* | 31 | 48 | 3 |
| **Aug. 1975–June 1976** | | | |
| *Ciao 2001* | 167 | 239 | 43 |
| *Muzak* | 34 | 41 | 5 |
| *Gong* | 28 | 47 | 4 |
| **July 1976–June 1977** | | | |
| *Ciao 2001* | 159 | 127 | 27 |
| *Muzak*[b] | – | – | – |
| *Gong*[c] | 16 | 39 | 5 |

[a]Due to a change of ownership, *Muzak* published only six issues during these months

[b]*Muzak* ceased publication in June 1976

[c]The sample includes the issues of July/August, September and October, that is, the last issues published by *Gong*'s original editorial board

# Bibliography


Alvesson, M., & Karreman, D. (2007). Varieties of discourse: On the study of organizations through discourse analysis. In A. Bryman (Ed.), *Qualitative research 2* (Vol. 4, pp. 314–337). London: Sage.

Angelini, S., & Gentile, E. (1977). *Note di pop italiano*. Milano: Gammalibri.

Atkinson, P., & Coffey, A. (2004). Analysing documentary realities. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method, and practice* (pp. 77–91). London: Sage.

Bolelli, F. (1979). Movimento e scrittura nell'area del pop. In P. Alfierj & G. Mazzone (Eds.), *I fiori di Gutenberg: analisi e prospettive dell'editoria alternativa, marginale, pirata in Italia e Europa*. Roma: Arcana.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). New York: Greenwood.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The field of cultural production: Essays on art and literature*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The rules of art*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. London: Sage.




S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.

Carrera, A. (1980). *Musica e pubblico giovanile: l'evoluzione dei gusti musicali dagli anni Sessanta ad oggi*. Milano: Feltrinelli.

Casiraghi, G. (2005). *Anni Settanta. Generazione rock*. Roma: Editori Riuniti.

Cavalli, A., & Leccardi, C. (1997). Le culture giovanili. In F. Barbagallo (Ed.), *La storia dell'Italia repubblicana* (Vol. 3, pp. 709–800). Torino: Einaudi.

Ciao 2001 Unofficial Website. (2013). Caro direttore: Una biografia "presentata" di Saverio Rotondi. http://digilander.libero.it/ciao.2001/mat_r_saverio_rotondi.htm. Accessed 25 Oct 2013.

Colombo, F. (2008). *Boom: storia di quelli che non hanno fatto il '68*. Milano: Rizzoli.

De Luigi, M. (1982). *L'industria discografica in Italia*. Roma: Lato Side Editori.

DiMaggio, P. (1987). Classification in art. *American Sociological Review, 52*(4), 440–455.

Fabbri, F. (2011). *Album bianco: diari musicali 1965–2011*. Milano: Il Saggiatore.

Forgacs, D. (1990). *Italian culture in the industrial era 1880–1990: Cultural industries, politics and the public*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social Text, 25*(26), 56–80.

Frith, S. (1998). *Performing rites: Evaluating popular music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gaspari, M. (1981). *L'industria della canzone*. Roma: Editori Riuniti.

Ginsborg, P. (1990). *A history of contemporary Italy: Society and politics 1943–1988*. London: Penguin.

Guglielmi, F. (2012). Gong. *Il Mucchio Extra, 37*, 18–19.

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2007). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. In A. Bryman (Ed.), *Qualitative research 2* (pp. 110–124). London: Sage.

ISTAT. (2012). *L'Italia in 150 anni. Sommario di statistiche storiche, 1861–2010*. Roma: ISTAT.

Jagosh, J. (2009). Lost and found in translation: An ecological approach to bilingual research methodology. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 8*(2), 102–114.

Prato, P. (1988). L'editoria della popular music in Italia. *Musica/Realtà, 26*, 75–86.

Prato, P. (1995). Teorie e metodi della critica rock. *Annali dell'Istituto Gramsci Emilia Romagna, 2*, 130–149.

Prato, P. (2010). *La musica italiana. Una storia sociale dall'Unità a oggi*. Roma: Donzelli.

Prior, L. (2004). Doing things with documents. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method, and practice* (pp. 76–94). London: Sage.

RAI. (1968). *La cultura e i gusti musicali degli italiani*. Torino: RAI.

Santoro, M. (2002). What is a "cantautore"? Distinction and authorship in Italian (popular) music. *Poetics, 30*(1-2), 111–132.

Sibilla, G. (2003). *I Linguaggi della Musica Pop*. Milano: Bompiani.

Temple, B., & Young, A. (2004). Qualitative research and translation dilemmas. *Qualitative Research, 4*(2), 161–178.

Varriale, S. (2016). "Cultura di classe in pillole": Il folk revival e le pratiche del giornalismo musicale italiano (1973–1977). In G. Plastino (Ed.), *La musica folk. Storie, protagonisti e documenti del revival in Italia*. Milano: Il Saggiatore.

Welsh, E. (2002). Dealing with data: Using NVivo in the qualitative data analysis process. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 3*(2). http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/865. Accessed 25 Oct 2013.

# Index



Note: Page number followed by 'n' refers to footnotes.


S. Varriale, *Globalization, Music and Cultures of Distinction*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56450-4

C

G