

Europe's southern peripheries. Through extensive fieldwork in Sicily (mainly) and Rome, Carney convincingly challenges the traditional view of Mediterranean migration as a crisis of the nation state and neoliberal economy, combining meticulous empirical analysis and thoughtful discussions. What renders this book particularly invaluable is that Carney offers a timely epilogue written after the outbreak of coronavirus in Italy and the global movement of Black Lives Matter in 2020, pointing to possible trajectories in future studies. However, the book falls short of an engaged theoretical analysis, even if touching upon a variety of topics and thoughts. For example, one of the frameworks perfectly echoed in Carney's study would be the concept of 'minor transnationalism' coined by Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih. When reading Carney's elegantly written chapters, I eagerly awaited a similar sensibility on political theories. But with its ethnographic narrative and interesting details, this practical ethnographical work leaves the door open for more theoretical discussions on the perspectives Carney introduces. Scholars and students working on migration studies, in any regional or national context, will appreciate reading *Island of Hope* for the refreshing snapshot it provides of philosophies of care and hospitality, Italy's Southern Question, the Mediterranean migration 'crisis' and the concept of the Global South in the context of globalisation.

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Voices of Dissent: Interdisciplinary Approaches to New Italian Popular and Political Music

by Giovanni Pietro Vitali, Oxford and New York, Peter Lang, 2020, xvi + 390 pp., €66.13 (paperback), ISBN 978-1-78874-204-7

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The study of Italian popular music is a somewhat troubled academic area. Two of the most important names in the field, Franco Fabbri and Goffredo Plastino, are extremely influential scholars who do not hold yet professorships in Italy and had to move to the UK to work. Another top scholar in the field, Philip Tagg, has been campaigning against the Italian academic structure and how it operates to impede any formal recognition of popular music studies. In this context, it is no surprise that such an important contribution in the field comes from a young scholar based between Paris, Oxford and Cork. Giovanni Pietro Vitali's *Voices of Dissent* is a very fine read, full of precious information about politically engaged songs and bands active in Italy over a span of more than six decades. The volume has the undeniable merit of putting forward the compelling notion of NPP (New Popular and Political) music, a specific and yet inclusive definition that encompasses Italian singer-songwriters and bands, left-wing and right-wing acts, songs in regional languages and songs in Italian, etc. Importantly, and despite the author's own clarification that he did not intend 'to elaborate a musicological definition' by coining the term NPP (p. 9), I would rather say that this is a very needed definition indeed, and is, in

fact, musicology – a musicology that deals with the socio-political context rather than providing only technical analyses of the specific musical content.

In the first chapter of *Voices of Dissent*, Vitali discusses the genealogies of NPP music, along spatial and temporal axes. Here the wealth of anecdotes, examples and comparisons with national and international songs is remarkable. If I have any criticism, it is that some of the premises of this monumental work might be slightly problematic, and this becomes apparent in this first chapter. For instance, when considering the ‘political and social content’ (p. 4) that acts and songs need to address in order to be regarded as NPP, it gradually becomes clear that the author is looking at a very precise and circumscribed notion of ‘political’. For example, a Sanremo song such as Fiordaliso’s *Non voglio mica la luna* (1984), that addresses feminism and women’s empowerment in a very political way but could be easily dismissed as a frivolous ballad about couple dynamics, would probably not make it into the NPP corpus. In *Voices of Dissent*, the idea of ‘political content’ seems to refer to explicit forms of dissent directed at governing institutions and/or aligned to ‘classical’ ideological factions. At times, this might also result in a lack of critical depth in the construction and analysis of the corpus: to me, this is evident when NPP songs are innocently compared to two outrageous nursery rhymes full of ableism, animal cruelty and racism – *Three Blind Mice* and *Ten Little Indians* (p. 86). In the following pages, the sexist violence of the epithet *gallina* (literally ‘hen’, but also translatable as ‘bimbo’) addressed to a woman in Bandabardò’s nursery rhyme-like song *Sette sono i re* also goes unnoticed, although the author expressly analyses this word and simply concludes that it ‘may hide an allusion to Berlusconi’s behaviour with showgirls and young models’ (p. 87). The author demonstrates a high degree of competence with issues related to Italian regional languages and their affirmative usage in NPP music, but I confess that I felt somewhat disappointed when I noticed that he had chosen to consistently refer to them as ‘dialects’ throughout the volume. However, since this is a general custom in Italy across disciplines, I was not too disturbed – until I reached the passage where the author (appropriately) blames Spain’s dictator Franco for describing languages such as Basque, Catalan and Galician ‘as dialects of Castilian’ (p. 55). Now, if we tremble with indignation when the regional languages of Spain are called ‘dialects’, how can we possibly keep using the very same word when referring to the regional languages of Italy? My critique here is not specifically addressed at Vitali, but rather at a general custom that characterises the national debate in Italy. Despite these and other minor contradictions, the first chapter of *Voices of Dissent* displays solid and much needed scholarship.

In the second chapter, Vitali deploys a variety of software for the digital humanities in order to perform different types of automated discourse analysis of a vast corpus of lyrics. Despite the fact that the automated analyses produce a number of charts and graphs that are definitely useful for categorisation purposes, I feel that the best parts of this chapter are still those where the author describes the various corpora qualitatively, that is, before feeding them to the software. However, the software highlights a discursive proximity between left-wing and right-wing bands (p. 148). Among other things, Vitali refers to fascist singer-songwriter Massimo Morsello as displaying ‘musical similarities with left-wing artists’ and as being ‘the most representative artist of Italian right-wing music’ (p. 129). A crucial anecdote in this context, not included in the book, has Morsello managing to deceitfully publish an advert for his 1998 album *La direzione del vento* in the communist newspaper *Il Manifesto* (*Corriere della Sera*, 28 February 1998). The very fact that the unsuspecting leftist newspaper agreed to promote the album as *veramente rivoluzionario* (‘truly revolutionary’) and had later to apologise to its readers already attests to the dramatic proximity between right-wing and left-wing NPP music, a feature that is honestly and correctly underscored in Vitali’s work.

The third chapter attempts to identify genealogies and develop analogies between NPP music and literature. A plethora of Italian and international writers from Fenoglio to Dostoevsky are compared to NPP songs. Here, once again, the richness of references and precious information is impressive, although this chapter seems a bit peripheral in the general context of the volume.

Overall, *Voices of Dissent* is an invaluable volume, which may offer extremely significant insights to a large audience of readers interested in Italian popular music, while also attracting scholars in a variety of related fields.

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Stuart Hood: Twentieth-Century Partisan

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The result of two rich centenary conferences held in Edinburgh and London, the two cities linked to the biography of Stuart Hood (1915–2011), this book explores the cultural action of a veritable *éminence grise* who shaped many interlinked academic and creative fields (media studies, translation, creative writing, documentary film-making) and who was shaped, in turn, by the historical events in which he took an active role. Hood was a genuine polymath and a man of substantial intellectual talents. He volunteered for the Army in 1940 and joined the Italian Resistance in December 1943. He reached the top of the BBC (which he joined in 1946) as Controller, a position he held in 1961–4, despite his obvious communist sympathies. A man of rare intellectual clarity and integrity, he then went on to teach media studies at the Royal College of Arts where he very openly supported student protests. After his resignations in 1978, he joined Goldsmiths' College and then Sussex University. A linguist, a writer, and a prolific translator from Italian (twenty-five titles), German, French, and Russian, Hood honed his language knowledge during the war. Only two decades later he managed to put on paper his traumatic war experience. Published in 1963, the year of Beppe Fenoglio's untimely death and one year earlier than Luigi Meneghello's *I piccoli maestri*, *Pebbles from My Skull* (published as *Carlino* in 1985) recounts Hood's experiences in the partisan bands, and, like Meneghello's 1964 novel and Fenoglio's *Il partigiano Johnny* (which Hood translated in 1995), this book was subjected to revisions that reflected an uneasiness with, and the inherent instability of, the traumatic subject matter. It is fair to say that it is precisely Hood's formative war experience, his translations from Italian (spanning Goffredo Parise, Dacia Maraini, Dario Fo, and Pier Paolo Pasolini), and this memoir that warrant Hood a special place in the network of British cultural operators that consolidated a bridge between postwar British and Italian cultures. In this sense, Hood's trajectory has many points of contact with Raleigh Trevelyan's, who also served in the British Army, published accounts of