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Female Musical Patronage in the first half of the 20th century Venice

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INTRODUCTION

The object of this research is the phenomenon of female patronage in Venice during the first half of the Twentieth Century. In particular, the analysis revolves around patronage in the musical field, focusing thus on the modalities employed by women in the progress and fortune of this art.

The first half of the first chapter tackles the matter on the historical and geopolitical level. This study allows to further understand not only how deeply embedded this practice and the female involvement in it are embedded in the social fabric of the western world, but also how they developed, transformed and adapted through the centuries to both the changing realm of music and the shifting role of women. Although there was no shortage of male benefactors, it is, indeed, noblewomen who drew around themselves the bulk of the musicians. Due to their rank, they could not pursue any kind of professional career, but at the same time their education had provided them with enough skills and knowledge to match their opposite-gender peers. This put them in the position of devoting their free time and efforts to the fostering of artists. Yet, their generosity towards the music field, as well as the arts one, was not a completely disinterested one. It was, first of all, a demonstration and an enhancement of their power, especially in the case of politically engaged women, such as that of archduchess Maria Magdalena in the Seventeenth century. Their contribution to the arts was a way of asserting their role and their authority, vehiculating messages according to their specific political agenda. Aristocrats too, even without political aims, to a degree established and strengthened their influence through patronage. Their protégés careers, indeed, depended on their involvement and support.

Yet, patronage cannot be reduced exclusively to a display of power. To women it was also and foremost a means of participation in the contemporary culture and of forming relations and friendships with both musicians and their peers.

To better grasp the elaborate framework which female patrons operated in, it has been imperative to establish a few methodological strategies, to which the second part of the chapter is dedicated to. The circumstances of female patronage have been, in fact, enquired through two main perspectives: the historical-musicological one and the sociological one. The first one allowed to shed a light on the critical issues surrounding both the perception of female involvement in the musical field by contemporaries and the actual space reserved to women's personalities and efforts in the researches over the contributions in the field of music making. The second one, through the employment of the thoughts of different sociologists, in particular Bourdieu, Peist, Adorno and Mukerji, allows to investigate the relevance of role and class of female patrons, the contributions that female patrons brought to the exchange of ideas and the building of profitable relationships among musicians, the modalities through which they exerted influence and swayed musicians works, the development of music making and its consequences on the evolution and adaptation of the role and functions of the patron and lastly the significance of the spaces in which female patronage took place.

Particular attention was thus devolved to the in-depth analysis of gender issues related to patronage. Furthermore, an excursus is devoted to "The Jewish Question" too, since - being the object of the case study a woman of that confession – it is impossible to ignore the impact and relevance that this had in that specific historical period and geographical context. Since Twentieth Century venetian culture enjoyed the contributions of affluent Jewish patrons and the case study of this research is part of that demographics, a significant part of the study has been centered also around Jewish people's participation in Venice musical life.

The second chapter deals with the phenomenon of the salons, in particular the musical ones. After this, a particular focus is dedicated to the practice of the Musical Salon, its importance as a place of cultural nurturement of not only the artists, but also of the patrons themselves. The enquiry proceeds then with the key issues regarding this custom, considering how it came to establish itself in the musical field, its impact on it and how, in some cases, due to the social restrictions hindering their affirmation as musicians, it became an outlet for women to express their artistic inclinations. Thanks to Chimènes' investigation it is possible to operate a distinction within the very practice of the salon and set apart the "pure" one from those of amateurs and music lovers.

Once again, this tradition is framed also through the sociological lens: the gender issues, the mediations, the creation of social networks, the social performance and the influence this had on the relationship between the private and public sphere. On this last note, an additional layer of distinction has to be factored in: the one between the public and the private space, between an open and a closed environment. As the salon is a combination of both – being thus defined a semi-public space – it is necessary to fully understand the complexity of the relations and of the etiquette pertaining it.

Through Peist's theories, this investigation uncovers and highlights the scale of women's work in the musical field and the heights that it enabled artists to reach and culture to achieve as well as the subtlety of their efforts, which often prevents the general public from realizing how musical development is indebted to them.

The issue of mediation and of networks is, therefore, reprised and further studied along with those of collecting and the circulation of culture. Still, the issue of mediation as intended by Peist is not the only one emerging from this frame. Heinich's thought consents to reflect upon the broadness of the scale of mediators' influence and to the effects that it can have on multiple degrees and on both the spatial and the temporal levels. It is in this context that the theme of recognition and of posterity of musicians and their works assume particular significance. The patron is, thereby, not only a supportive individual that facilitates an artist's career to break out and to keep thriving nor is her just a person who provides them the economical means required for the production of music, but a figure that absolves to multiple functions without necessarily incarnating just a single one of them.

Lastly, in the third chapter the interview with Sonia Finzi Guetta – a lady hailing from a family of patrons and modern patron herself – sheds a light on what the venetian panorama of the time consisted of. Through her childhood memories and anecdotes from her mother and grandmother it was possible to retrace Venice's cultural landscape and its development. Once more, her record allows to explore first-hand the reality of Jewish contribution to the cultural and, especially, musical field in Venice. Her memories allowed this analysis to reconstruct a long-standing tradition of wealthy Jewish families being involved in the cultural side of the city. Furthermore, her recollections vividly depict how was really life in a salon, its liveliness and the broad scope of people that intervened in it. Her account stresses also how salon culture changed and developed with the time, up until its very disappearance. Hence, the necessity to shift accordingly the modalities of performing acts of patronage, as attested by Sonia Finzi and her comparison with her mother and grandmother.

Finally, the last part of the research is devoted to the figure of Olga Levi - the daughter of a wealthy and renowned bourgeoise family - who was not only the patron of a local venetian choir company, but, along with her husband, Ugo Levi, welcomed and hosted in their house numerous musicians. The paucity of information regarding Olga Levi does not allow to have a rich and detailed account of her relations with the musicians who frequented her house. The lack of documentation on the specific salon soirées – which was typical of the time – prevents to retrace thoroughly each one of her interactions and intentions towards her guests. Still, through the reconstruction of her biography, the research purports to identify which were the factors in her education that encouraged her musical inclinations and that would later push her to establish a salon of her own, to be actively involved in the city's venues, and to support and promote the production of music.

The legacy left by this noblewoman is investigated too: since as per hers and her husband's will their own homonymous Foundation was instituted, the relevance of their action aimed to assure a future beyond their deaths assumes a novel meaning. In light of Heinich's theories, the modalities though which the Levi spouses furthered even after their death the research in and the promotion of the musical field are investigated.

As a result, the purpose of this research is to shed light to a practice close to "concealed" work and whose endeavors often remain unknown in the eyes of the general public, which often sees only the tip of the iceberg, the cultural outcomes. As a means to underline the prominent role that women had in this area, the as much as accurate as possible analysis of one of the most prominent figures in Venice's panorama proposes to contribute to the already underway efforts towards a vision of the history that takes into consideration women's contributions, thus gaining a further understanding of the magnitude and scope that their participation in and endorsement of cultural circles had.

CHAPTER I

1.1 FEMALE PATRONAGE

«Admittedly, the concert world has for centuries been highly formalized and hierarchical. Because of this formality manifested in the highly standardized codes of dress, the emphasis on a ritualistic silence conducive to solitary contemplation, and the regularly replicated sequence of tuning up, taking bows, and so on - the concert lends itself not only to satire but also to explanations that are primarily sociological or social-historical»[1]. As per Locke's admission, the impenetrability of the music lovers' and patrons' world makes it difficult to laypeople to discern its real complexity and to therefore understand who these people were and their motives, thus often leading to a stereotyped and only partial perspective of them.

Although Locke focuses the scope of his research on the American context, the implications of his enquiry are applicable to European side of the issue too. One could in fact easily argue that some aspects typical of the American patron are derived from the European one, since some of them were transposed to and readapted into North America[2].

It is thus possible to draw from this analysis elements useful in outlining the figure of the musical patron in general and the female one in particular, her motivations and her perception not only in the eyes of the general public, but also those of the very musicians and composers they were aiding.

To best appreciate and encompass what patronage and, more specifically, female patronage consist of it is imperative that we go beyond its mere definition. «Money and support that is given to an artist, organization etc…»[3] is too a reductive and narrow explanation for a phenomena that comprises a number of different practices and involves complex figures, who can perform several roles. As Locke points out the forms that patronage takes on are various and it is not only challenging to define them, but also near impossible to encapsulate them in a single, univocal structure. It is in fact hard to establish if it is to be considered a patron just who financially or through voluntary work contributes to the support of the arts and the music or if its meaning can be extended also to individuals who in their private lives were supportive of an artist[4]. Although Locke accepts the first above-mentioned definition of patronage, his investigation sheds light on not only what is the focus of many gender issues studies, but also and foremost on the more "private" practices related to patronage, the Salons.

[1] Locke 1993, p. 149
[2] Ivi, p. 151
[3] S.v. Britannica Dictionary
[4] Locke 1994b, p. 86

Salons, as it will be explained more in depth in the dedicated chapter, were real parlours, places in which a noble person or a bourgeois – be it a man or a woman – gathered and met with intellectuals[5]. This practice was also declined in the musical field with musicians being welcomed and encouraged to play or discuss their compositions – similarly to what happened in literary salons with scholars, poets and men of letters – and sometimes even the host exhibiting herself their musical talents as Olga Levi did in her time[6].

Notwithstanding that this custom does not identify with a monetary contribution nor with a public advocacy of the arts, it falls under the category of patronage in the fact that it incentivised the support of the musicians, created a network among them and with their patrons and granted them a space where they were able to nurture their talent and inclinations. These were environments of cultural growth, where musicians, academics and intellectuals could not only exchange ideas, but also - especially in the case of young and emerging artists - make an impression on these social circles and try to stand out. This finds confirmation, for example, in the article announcing Olga Levi's death. It is quoted, in fact, that in her salon the Venetian singer Antonietta Meneghel, also known as Toti dal Monte, had «mietuto i primi allori» («reaped the first honours»)[7]. However salons cannot shrunk down to a stepping stone. They were also a means for musicians to forge a selected public and to break in their concert programs and for composers to try out beforehand and later spread their compositions[8]. The salon of viscountess Marie-Laure and viscount Charles de Noailles hosted the yet unreleased performances of the works commissioned by them; only after this "baptism" they were played in public at the Sérénade Concerts, which too were sponsored by them[9]. Thus, they were both propaedeutic to the artistic ascent and a valuable sounding board for the enhancement of an artist's reputation and demand.

This declination of the phenomenon of patronage casts a light on another implication. As afore-mentioned, this tradition allowed the establishment of networks that proved to be beneficial to the artists. As a matter of fact it developed a community with all that it entails: the mingling of ideas, the intermediations and also assistance in the more practical day to day life. As a case in point, the intercession of Winnaretta Singer - who had been a *salonnière* and patroness for many musicians, among which can be accounted Erik Satie - not only facilitated the resolution of Satie's libel case, but also allowed the musician to pay the fees resulting from the lawsuit[10]. Concerning strictly the

[5] Mori 2004, p. 3
[6] Vivian 2005, p. 39
[7] Anonymous, È morta Olga Levi, in *Il Gazzettino*, 8 August 1961
[8] Chimènes 2021, p. 128
[9] Ivi, p. 132
[10] Kahan 2003, p. 207-208

environment of the salons they were a strategic way for the performer not only, as already said, to lay the foundations for the future public, but also to accumulate social capital[11]. This is the example of Ricardo Viñes y Roda (1875-1943), who for ten years from age twelve performed in Parisian salons. Being there an artist fee, he was able to support himself and his family, while at the same time making himself known in both bourgeoise and aristocratic circles[12]. This paid off, since seven hundred spectators attended his first recital at the Salon Pleyel in 1895[13]. Salons were therefore strategically functional, in that they allowed artists both to generate a revenue and to establish fruitful relationships, while their careers bode their time. As it can be seen social capital was never aimlessly amassed: the fruits it could bore ranged from the benefits that could be reaped from the patron herself to those that quantified in terms of audience to those oriented to word of mouth benefits when coming down to being hired.

Locke and Barr cannot exempt themselves from emphasizing that in the years previous to their research there had been trouble in both determining what exactly the tasks of these middle and upper-class ladies consisted of and in detecting and retracing the actual fruits of their labour as well as the specifics entailed by their work[14].

Most of the endeavours carried out by patronesses fall under the domain of either voluntary work or activism. It is therefore a gruelling challenge detecting it. As it is, if it was to be considered "unpaid work" as Kaminer suggests[15], evidence of its presence are harder to trace, because there are rarely official records pertaining it referring to the late Nineteenth and the early Twentieth century. It is a "concealed" labour, one that, although leaving proof of its existence, is hardly documented. To reconstruct its protagonists, the tendrils of their relationships and the range of the resulting impact, private correspondence, occasional mentions and common oral knowledge and hearsay have to be found and researched. From the epistolary exchange between Olga Levi and the poet Gabriele D'Annunzio – who often frequented her home and the soirées held in her salon – the love the two shared for the music emerged and the poet himself in some letters hints at his penchant for listening Olga Levi either sing or play the piano[16]. From the obituary article published at Levi's death, information can be retrieved about her fondness for the musical field, enthusiasm that was concretized

[11] Chimènes 2021, p. 130
[12] Ibidem.
[13] Ibidem.
[14] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 8-9
[15] Kaminer 1984, p. 2
[16] Vivian 2005, p. 39

not only with her activity as a *salonnière*, but also as the patron of a coral society that gathered at the conservatory "Benedetto Marcello" in Venice[17].

It can be nevertheless also argued that the knowledge of some of these ventures, in particular her efforts towards an institution such as that of the conservatory, and her legacy are to be partly attributed to her husband, Ugo Levi. He too was a man of letters and above all a musicologist. To him is ascribed the establishment of a rich library of musical manuscripts and printed materials[18] and his involvement first in the "Consiglio di vigilanza" and then in the executive board of the conservatory of Venice is common knowledge[19]. As it often happens with many women, her figure is known also because of her marriage and her extramarital relationship with D'Annunzio. The traces of her passage in the musical world are frequently seen through the filtered lens of her relationships with the men who dotted her life. Her life has been studied first and foremost because of her relations with men renown in the cultural field and only recently because of the footprint she herself had left in it.

Hailing from the upper class, the spouses' endeavours were known not only to the people belonging to their same social circles, but also to the community at large. It was no secret that they attended concerts at the theatres La Fenice and Rossini - where a box was permanently theirs - and at the conservatory[20]. From the correspondence between Olga and D'Annunzio it can be inferred that she invited over and in turn paid visit to ladies of the venetian élite[21]. Both of them were involved in the cultural life of Venice.

This involvement, though, as already mentioned, was unsalaried. As Kaminer would put it «The ideal nineteenth-century woman did not work for money; many had to, and many did […] but working women were not "ladies." "Ladies" were active in voluntary associations dedicated to charity and service work and the moral elevation of society, which first emerged in the 1830's. Through their associations, "ladies" learned to organize and became involved in public affairs and, eventually, progressive movements for social reform—settlement work, consumerism, and even trade unionism. They forged new roles for themselves and new goals for society by working for free. The rank and file of the nineteenth-century suffrage movement was comprised of traditional volunteers»[22].

Albeit this statement refers to the American society of that time, it is safe to claim that to a certain extent the status quo applied to European and more specifically Italian upper-class women too.

[17] Anonymous, È morta Olga Levi, in *Il Gazzettino*, 8 August 1961
[18] https://www.fondazionelevi.it/la-fondazione/storia/ugo-levi-1878-1971/
[19] Vivian 2005, p. 37
[20] Ivi, pp. 38-39
[21] Ivi, p.39
[22] Kaminer 1984, pp. 4-5

Although representative of only the "limited" reality of Milan and being aware that at that time – despite being recently unified – North and South Italy were split by a deep social, economic and cultural gap, Licini's survey over wealthy women suggests a picture in which well-off ladies could employ their time and finances in patronage-related activities. Licini's study deliberately picks Milanese women as the target demographic of her investigation first because in Post-Unification Italy Milan was one of the most economically developed cities and secondly because it's one of the few Italian cities whose archives make available the Acts of Succession, i.e. the estate tax return records[23]. Her assessment is focused mostly on the distribution of wealth among women and it takes into consideration both the affluent, unemployed women and the commoners holding a propriety or a certain amount of riches. However, it draws a framework in which one woman out of three worked, while «the others declared themselves 'possidenti' (landowners), 'benestanti' (well off) and 'agiati/e' (annuitants)», thus hinting at the fact that – even though some of these latter ones might have played up their social standing – it is possible that a few of them managed to earn a living without a salaried job or without having to directly running an activity[24]. Although not yet proven, from this it can be assumed that some of these well-to-do ladies might have spent their time in volunteer activities such as patronage.

Licini affirms also that in the decade 1871-1881 women leant money for six billion lire and that this represented one third of the financial means that circulated in the economic and productive system and that they granted credits to both family members and third parties, although more than one fourth of these allowances comprised the marital dowry, therefore showing that reports of that period included among these concessions also the passage of money from bride to groom pursuant to the marriage[25]. These considerations pertain the chiefly industrial context of just one city and there are no further information about the final destination of these loans, hence one cannot guess how much of these funds – if any at all – was devoted to patronage activities or to artists as well as it is impossible to determine how many of these ladies was actually engaged in these specific practices. Nevertheless, they reveal that women in possession of enough means and time to take part in such occupations existed. They moreover make it plausible to imagine that – still keeping in mind the huge rifts between different regions in Italy – some of these figures might have devolved their resources to cultural activities.

Aristocratic women not only worked for free as Kaminer states, but in some cases were not even allowed to work, lest they lost their reputation. This is made explicit in the letter that the princess Bibesco (1855-1902), née Elena Costache Epureanu, wrote to Saint-Saëns in 1898 and which

[23] Licini 2006, pp. 13-14
[24] Ivi, p. 15
[25] Ivi, p. 18

Chimènes[26] draws attention to as a noteworthy piece of evidence of the status of the upper-class lady of the time: «Quand je joue pour les pauvres je suis censée travailler pour la gloire de Dieu […]. Jouer avec vous au *Figaro* ce serait travailler pour *ma propre gloire*, et cela c'est un droit que ma belle-famille me conteste et me refuse, trouvant que je prendrai à mon bénéfice l'admirable publicité du *Figaro* sans qu'il y ait de ma part le sacrifice que je suis censée faire pour les pauvres. Jouez au Figaro pour les blessés de la guerre ou pour n'importe quelle autre œuvre charitable, et croyez bien que je ne refuserai pas l'immense honneur que vous me faites en voulant bien m'associer à votre exécution artistique» ("When I play for the poor I'm supposed to toil for God's glory. To play at the *Figaro* would be to work for *my own glory*, and this is a right that my in-laws contest and refuse me, finding that I will take to my profit the admirable publicity of the *Figaro*, without there being a sacrifice on my part, sacrifice that I am meant to do for the poor. Play for the war-wounded or for whichever other charity endeavour, and be sure that I will not decline the huge honour you do to me by wanting me to join your artistic performance")[27]. This is even more significant in the context of Third Republic France up until 1938, in which State patronage tended to direct most of its resources mainly towards opera and education, neglecting other musical fields and institutions[28]. As a matter of fact the most financed bodies were the Paris Opera and the Conservatory of Paris[29]. On one hand these centralized investments must have given to rows of patrons ground to work on: the vacuum around the other areas of musical interest must have generated requests for private subsidies, spotlight and support, which benefactors were able to supply to some extent. «As a component of sociability, music fit appropriately in a society in which society events were pivotal»[30]. The concerts of the Société Nationale de Musique, of the group Jeune France, the Concerts Wiéner and the Ballets Russes received most of the grants, while the symphony concerts were still disregarded overall[31]. On the other hand this might have pushed women to operate in more private scenarios and might have strengthened these circumstances instead of generate more opportunities for them to come out in the public sphere. These conditions made for an halo of exclusivity not only around the access and participation in these circles, but also around the connoisseurship of the music of certain musicians. Snobbism strengthened the role of the patrons-amateurs and of the patrons-mélomanes as well as the prestige that artists could gain from their association with them and the admiration they received from them[32]. Only some exceptions were allowed to the participation of women in the public sphere of music and the

[26] Chimènes 2004, p. 49
[27] Letter from the princess Bibesco to Saint-Saëns, 7th May 1898
[28] Chimènes 2021, p. 126
[29] Ibidem.
[30] Ibidem.
[31] Ibidem.
[32] Ivi, pp. 127-128

philanthropic context was one of these. It was, as seen, a setting in which the figure of the woman musician acquired a redeeming quality. She was allowed in only this nuanced scenario to step out from her role as a hostess and "mere" patron in the more domestic sphere of the salon and of all the inner workings taking place in the private domain and into the more public territory of charity events. They were pulled out from a framework in which they had a certain amount of power and agency in not only realizing themselves, but also in the more subtle and to a certain degree unconscious skill of swaying and influencing the taste and in determining the exchange – in bourdeusian terms – of cultural, social and economic capital[33]. But again, as Locke argues, even the seemingly "inconsequential" musical contribution of women in the realm of philanthropy must not be underestimated in terms of cultivating taste, exchanging capital or forging links between music lovers. The participation and oftentimes driving force of women, even the least affluent ones, in the scholastic realm or, in the American case, in the institution of activities directed at the musical training of immigrants in the settlement houses or in the ethnic neighborhoods although scarcely documented, must have left an indent on the musical field[34]. Chimènes insists on this point: amateurism and the nurturing of both the private sphere and the philanthropic one, especially on women's part, allowed the aristocracy, whose political force had been curbed, to both reaffirm its standing and to «cultivate differences»[35]. When talking about patronage it often happens to overlook the less institutionalized, "lowbrow" forms of music and therefore patronage. Scholars of both the musicological and sociological field – because of ingrained mental structures granting aesthetic value to "highbrow" forms of art – tend to focus the scope of their research on the more "official", higher forms of art, often foregoing the analysis of the other dimensions. This is not to say that these less known, "bottom-up" efforts exert the same power or that they apply the same pressure in shaping the taste of the public at large as the predominant ones do, nevertheless they bear the same dignity and carry out a fundamental role in educating future musicians and people in general, in spreading musical knowledge, in developing networks of people and musical cultures different from the prevailing ones. The aforementioned ventures show also the entrepreneurial and organizational nuance that the role of a patron had. In order to manage such programs women had to have a certain range of action and initiative. They, for one, if not able to provide themselves subsidies for these venues, took upon themselves the responsibility of raising funds. Again the names of these women remain unknown, lost in the string of inner workings of institutions, festivals and "minor" events[36].

[33] Cfr. Bordieu 1986
[34] Locke 1994b, pp. 90-91
[35] Chimènes 2021, p. 127
[36] Locke, Barr 1997, pp. 31-32

Another analysis, although centred on Northern France bourgeoisie, comes into play in the definition of the character of the woman patron. Although wealthy women were tied to the domestic sphere and their familial relations featured majorly in their social circle, the ramifications of the Industrial Revolution bore fruits also in women's social life[37]. As the businessmen broadened their contacts both within Northern France and outside it, even outside the country and overseas, in order to back up the increasing specialization of their enterprises and the heterogeneity of their holdings, similarly this growth reverberated on the social realm. In fact, «such developments had their social parallel in the proliferation of clubs for men and in a more elaborate social life for all members of the bourgeoisie. Dinner parties, evening gatherings, public balls produced a measure of visible solidarity that also served to mask the fact that businessmen were in direct competition with one another, and that bankruptcies and business failures occurred at an alarming rate»[38].

This lead to a transition in the social life as well as in the role of the *bourgeoises*. Where once she met a circle of close relatives and tended to the economy of the house – and thus her interests were more family-oriented – she then arose to the position on "hostess"[39]. According to Smith these events, although aimed at fostering encounters and relations among entrepreneurs and even deputies and politicians, provided for «elaborate soirées complete with musical or dramatic programs»[40]. Many of the patronesses hosting these parties prided themselves on the fact that during these meetups business affairs were never touched upon[41]. Women gained a central role in this environment, condensing in their own persona not only the power of devising these social functions, but also that of directing them with all the consequent social obligations and benefits. They were furthermore able to orient, to a degree, the tastes that simultaneously were performed in these salons and projected outside of them and appreciated in opera houses and theatre. Still, it is important to remember that despite a *Verbürgerlichung*, a *embourgeoisement*, of both the patrons and the spaces of music making had taken place, aristocracy featured a pretty important role in the music field[42]. Although Mikahail Glinka was already present and partly known in Italy – thanks to his friendship to Giuditta Pasta, Vincenzo Bellini and Giovan Battista Rubini he was able to take part in the musical life in Italy – his works had yet to be presented officially and at large[43]. As a matter of fact, the first reception of the Russian opera in Italy was facilitated by the singer of noble origins Aleksandra Gorčakova, who financed and organised the staging of Mikhail Glinka's *A Life for the Tsar* – which had been first staged in St.

[37] Smith 1981, pp. 126-127
[38] Ivi, p. 127
[39] Ivi, pp. 127-128
[40] Ivi, pp. 128
[41] Ibidem.
[42] Cfr. Gerhard
[43] Gerhard 2013, pp. 254-255; Ottomano 2011, p. 145

Petersburg in 1839 - on the 20th May 1874 at the Theatre dal Verme in Milan, in the occasion of the composer's birthday[44]. Albeit the not so warm and even sceptical reception by the Italian public and even though there were other supporters of Glinka's repertoire - such as orchestra director Hans of Bülow, who refused to attend Verdi's *Requiem* premiere as an act of protest – it is primarily due to Gorčakova if his work reached Italy and paved the way for other Russian compositions to gain an interest among the Italian audiences[45]. Her intervention might as well be considered almost pioneering, since *A Life for the Tsar* had went unnoticed for thirty-five years and might have probably kept on being so for quite some time. The almost cold reception of part of the public is a sign of the reluctance to accept more "exotic" works. As Ottomano points out this tardive reception is also due to the lack, at the time, of elements of aesthetic, political and of cultural identification nature between Italy and Russia. On the contrary, France was one of the first countries to welcome and support Russian composers and saw in them a pleasant alternative to more traditional composers such as Wagner[46]. Germany too, due to Bismarck's Russia-oriented politic, was highly receptive towards this music and, as it was done France, greeted positively and adopted through the aforementioned process of cultural identification the nationalistic model set forward by Russian music[47]. This model was preserved and translated into the Italian rendition of the libretto by Gorčakova - who dealt with the literary translation - and Carlotta Ferrari, who, being a poetess and composer, converted it in a poetic version that well adjusted to the pre-existent score[48]. This shows how not only women's efforts were incisive in the circulation of music, but also that, notwithstanding the raise of the bourgeoisie and the inputs of people hailing from social classes different from the aristocracy, nobility still played a relevant role. This, though, was not the only instance of aristocrats fostering and promoting musicians. Another case taking place in Italy and concerning an Italian composer is that of Verdi. Gerhard calls attention to the fact that, although Verdi polished the history of his career and climb to success in order to look almost like a "self-made man", it is indeed possible to spot instances of noble assistance[49]. The at the time president of the theatre La Fenice, the nobleman Alvise Mocenigo, suggested to him the risqué theme for the *Hernani* and in retrospect it is also possible to glimpse in other compositions of his, such as *Nabucodonosor*, *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*, elements ascribable to an aristocratic clients and suggestive of a social reality of the time: the *mésaillances* among noblemen and singers and composers[50]. Despite not going into the details of the nature – financial or otherwise - of the patronage that Verdi enjoyed

[44] Ottomano 2011, p. 144-145
[45] Ivi, p. 146
[46] Ivi, p. 147
[47] Ibidem.
[48] Ivi, pp. 147-148
[49] Gerhard 2013, p. 249
[50] Ivi, pp. 249-254

at the debut of his career, Gerhard, through Pietro Lichtenthal's review of Oberto sent to the Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung of Leipzig, infers that among the numerous nameless friends, who «mächtig zur guten Aufnahme dieser Oper beigetragen haben» («have mightily contributed to the good reception of this opera»)[51], might have been counted also some aristocrats[52]. One of the only outright identified and documented relations with a noble is that with count Renato Borromeo, who at the time was the president first of the Accademia dei Filo-drammatici and then of the Conservatory of Milan[53]. In the event of a wedding he asked Verdi to compose some music, although for free[54]. Verdi had also covered the role of "maestro al cembalo" during the 1834 and 1835 renditions of Haydn's *The Creation* and in nine performances of Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, all of them within the Accademia dei Filo-drammatici, presided at the time by Borromeo himself, and for the Casino dei Nobili, a gathering of aristocrats[55]. Gerhard finally proposes another transalpine case: the reception of Händel's oratorios in France. Although the more available documentation may lead to believe that Händel's works apparently had been performed consistently only as from the second half of the Nineteenth century, an analysis of other sources uncovers a different reality. Many nobles and enriched individuals enjoyed his music either in their private residences or in not publicized nor open to the wider public concerts, thus going unnoticed by the press[56].

Under also this light, finally ladies were able to make the most of their education and to have some way of expressing, in step with their male counterparts, their academic and, more specifically, musical talents. «In their early years most women had cultivated skills that would allow them to hold center stage of the social world, and piano playing was primary among them»[57]. This was especially true also in fin de siècle France. «L'un des buts visés est incontestablement de pouvoir se produire dans les salons» ("One of the expected objectives is, without doubt, that of performing in the salons")[58]. As Chimènes attests music occupied a great part of these ladies' life, so much so that Marie-Louise Pouyollon (1872-1965), also known as the countess of Gencé, in her guide "Savoir-vivre et usages mondains" described how a lady should behave when asked to play the piano during the musical soirées, even going into details about how one should sit and face the public in order to follow the music score without having their countenance concealed[59].

[51] P. Lichtenthal, Herbststagione (1839) in Italien u. s. w. Lombardisch-Venezianisches Königreich, «Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung», 42/6, 5 febbraio 1840, coli. 101-110: 104; Gerhard 2012, p. 38
[52] Gerhard 2012, p. 38
[53] Ivi, p. 38-39
[54] Verdi 1881, p. 41; Gerhard 2012, p. 39
[55] Gerhard 2012, p. 44
[56] Gerhard 2013, pp. 245-248
[57] Smith 1981, pp. 126-127.
[58] Chimènes 2004, p. 43
[59] Ivi, p. 43

Established that these ladies were performing un unpaid activity that can be considered close to volunteer work, it is essential to determine who fell under the category of patron. These women have been called different names: patrons, *salonnières*, volunteer workers. But each of them singularly is not able to fully describe and enclose the vastness of the meaning of their role. Gerber, studying the complex roles of Henriette Voigt (1808-1839) and of Elizabeth von Herzogenberg (1847-1892) comes to the same conclusion. In regards to Henriette Voigt, she first recalls the effort made by Friedrich Schmidt and Rudolf Weinmaster in the early Twentieth century to frame the role she played and the kind of environment she acted in[60]. They tied her figure to the "Gesellschaftsform" ("form of company", "form of society") of the "musical salon"[61]. Nevertheless, in Nineteenth century Germany the concept of salon itself was of difficult definition, so much that in the eyes of someone, at the beginning of the century, it even assumed a negative connotation[62]. For one the salon was a model imported from France and at the time, there was still some residual animosity left from the Napoleonic wars (1803-1815). But this was not the only motivation. In fact, some regarded it with some level of distrust, because it was deemed something too much aristocratic[63]. Aside from these issues, Gerber highlights how problematic it was to define the phenomenon of the musical salon itself, also because it didn't gain attention until very recent years. Only in the 80s and the 90s of the last century it was given academic interest mostly thanks to Petra Wilhelmy, who in her study "Der Berliner Salon im 19. Jahrhundert (1780– 1914)" listed seven characteristics of the salon, although these had been already customary at the beginning of the Nineteenth century[64]. As noted by Gerber, she had been the forerunner for the other definitions of the salon and the role that women occupied in it, which tried to delimitate and encapsulate it in a definite sphere, sometimes generalizing the position of power wielded by women in this context, while other times trying to make a discrimination between and a subsequent analysis of the salons run by women and those run by men[65]. «Daher sollten die vorgefundenen Aktivitäten nicht vorschnell unter dem Begriff Salon vereinheitlicht werden. Der Begriff Mäzen wird ebenfalls den zahlreichen vorgefundenen Tätigkeiten nicht gerecht, da er typischerweise Unterstützungsleistungen monetärer Art zusammenfast» ("Therefore, the activities encountered before should not be categorized hastily in the standardizing concept of the salon. Likewise the concept of patron does not do justice to the numerous practices, since it conflates typically monetary support efforts")[66].

[60] Gerber 2016, p. 204
[61] Ibidem.
[62] Ivi, p. 18
[63] Ivi, p. 18
[64] Ivi, pp. 18-19
[65] Ivi, pp. 20-22
[66] Ivi, p. 204

In support of this she explains how Antje Ruhbaum's effort in defining Elisabeth von Herzogenberg's role by trying to find an equivalent to Locke's and Barr's concept of "musical activist" that could be applied to the German context might lead to misleading or incomplete depictions when transferred to other individuals[67]. Ruhbaum avails herself of the definition of "social support" given by sociologist Martin Diewald, who comprises it of sixteen elements among which figure care, intermediation, affection, support, motivational support, places for the acquisition of competences, information, company, security and so on[68]. Ruhbaum then proceeds to apply Diewald distinction among direct and indirect musical support, thus outlining the features of the support of the musicians, but – according to Gerber - failing to catch the nuances of the involvement and of the wider scope of the contributions to the musical culture[69]. However, it has to be prefaced the fact that Ruhbaum, drawing her analysis from Locke and Barr's research, finds that none of the definitions proposed by Locke and Barr – volunteer, activist, patron – contrive to downright grasp the essence of Elisabeth von Herzogenberg's activity[70]. It is under these premises that Ruhbaum suggests the term « Musikförderin»[71], which can be translated as "promoter", "sponsor", but also as "enthusiast" of the music. Although challenged by Gerber – who purports an even more ubiquitous definition of the role - Ruhbaum's effort collides with the hassle of devising a term or an expression able to subsume all these attributes. It shows that it is indeed hard to come across a description that is simultaneously far-reaching and punctual when applied to each and every individual, thus confronting us with the chance that such an exemplification may never be found and prompting us to painstakingly ponder each case one by one.

This problematic had been already brought up by Locke in his essay "Women in American Musical Life: Facts and Questions about Patronage". The aforementioned inadequacy of the sources is a facet in the under-representation and misrepresentation of the musical life of a city, of the patterns of patronage and of the actual support handed out by women[72]. In some cases, indeed, their agency and therefore their contributions – be them financial or directly to the musical culture – have been clouded by the name of the more illustrious husbands, such as in the case of Ellen Bartell Stoeckel, who lent her money to her spouse, who employed it in the foundation of the Norfolk Festival in Northern Connecticut and in the financing of the music department at Yale University[73]. In some others women's contribution to music culture manifested themselves in fields different from the more institutionalized one. As previously stated, their involvement was extended to more marginal – in terms of research and

[67] Ivi, p. 205
[68] Ivi, p. 204
[69] Ivi, p. 205
[70] Ruhbaum 2009, p. 159
[71] Ibidem.
[72] Cfr. Locke 1994b, pp. 86-91
[73] Perry 1997, p. 125

documentation – areas. This made for some «serious omissions and distortions in the historical record»[74].

On top of all these issues the one of the amateurism is added up. As already noted by Chimènes, many women, having been musically trained from childhood, performed and sang during at the salon or during other similar social gatherings. Not all of them were artists, on the contrary very few of them had been able to make a profession out of their musical talent. «Au sein de la communité des amateurs, les femmes dominent. L'artiste femme est à cette époque souvent assimilé à la cocotte. C'est ce qui explique que la formation la plus aboutie ne peut offrir d'autre débouché que des prestations dans les salons, ersatz de scène publique et seul cadre autorisé à l'expression du talent de celles qu'on appelle les femmes du monde» ("Within the community of amateurs, women prevail. The woman artist at that time is often assimilated to the cocotte. This explains how the most successful education cannot offer other prospect than the performances within the salons, a surrogate of the public scene and the only authorized context for the expression of the talent of those who are called socialites")[75]. This is attested by another case study: Blanche Wetherill Walton (1871-1963). She had a formation as a pianist and, being quite well-off, put her lodgings in New York at the disposal of musician friends: Béla Bartók, Carl Ruggles, Henry Cowell and Ruth Crawford rated among her hosts[76]. She, like Elisabeth von Herzogenberg (1847-1892) before her, decided against pursuing a career as a pianist and opted for a life as a mother first, because such an occupation would have been «unthinkable for a girl hailing from a good family»[77]. One of the exceptions to this rule was Marie-Blanche de Polignac (1897-1958), who - defined by Chimènes as a "woman of the Twentieth century" - was allowed to perform professionally, perhaps for the reason of having no aristocratic roots and even less an education befitting such an upbringing[78]. As it was already discussed, up until the Twentieth century women taking up the profession of musicians were frowned upon as well as those volunteering in the field were confined to the crippling stereotype of «silly geese in flowered hats»[79]. In late Nineteenth Century France women's working rights were restricted and there was a general resistance and dissensus towards their involvement in matters outside the private and familial sphere[80]. Despite this feminist groups increased in number and women's participation in musical production intensified[81]. Their struggles brought them to be admitted in ever more ventures: they performed in fifteen concerts at

[74] Locke 1994a, p. 803
[75] Chimènes 2004, p. 49
[76] Ruhbaum 2009, pp. 156-157
[77] Ivi, p. 157
[78] Chimènes 2004, p. 48
[79] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 40
[80] Pasler 2009, pp. 672-673
[81] Ibidem.

the Concerts Colonne during the three-year period of 1889-1892; Cècile Chaminade, Clémence de Grandval and Augusta Holmès, all three composers and the first one also a pianist, all managed to have their careers thrive[82]. Still when faced with male composers, their works were subjected to a double standard. Although at the time music production was expected to engage patriotism, the virile and strong image that France at the time tried to acquire, women composers' works were expected to conform to more feminine - in the eyes of the society - ideals[83]. That's why, despite the efforts of composers like Holmès, who engaged more masculine ways of making music, numerous women preferred to adapt to society's projections of them rather than risk their careers[84]. Holmès herself, despite having being praised by the critics for her patriotism and the employment of epic themes in her compositions, suffered a drawback when, after the Opera's production of her *La Montagne noire* in 1895, she was criticised for having tried to pass her music as the same of that of men[85]. Critics found her attempts a poor imitation of her male peers[86]. *Les Amazones* by Chaminade, albeit featuring battle music, went ignored by the critic after the first performance. After that she focused on small compositions and on her career as a pianist[87]. This shows that despite the development of the figure of the woman in the plays, her emancipation and her rights still went unrecognized in real life. When touching the topic of female patronage, loans and raising funds the mistake is often made of stereotyping the image of these women as entities with a primarily financial endowment and of reducing their contributions and achievements to the aid of a certain musician or the foundation of an orchestra or to having climbed to the board member position in an institution. As affirmed before, the ladies involved in such projects showed more than a financial capacity and their entrepreneurial skills did not exhaust themselves to the mere organisational issues. Locke and Barr sum this up with a compelling argument: «Do these women have different reasons for being active than the women on "ladies' committees" and in women's music clubs? To what extent are the same women—especially some of the most energetic and devoted—often active in all of these different sorts of organizations? Is board membership the eventual reward for good work on the "ladies' committee," or are board members—female as well as male—chosen primarily for their financial clout and business connections? And are women, once they are allowed a place on mixed-gender institutional boards, granted the kinds of leadership opportunities and responsibilities that have long been part of the challenge of working in women-only groups?»[88]. All these evidence emphasizes the fact that the world

[82] Ivi, p. 673
[83] Ivi, pp. 673-674
[84] Ivi, p. 674
[85] Ibidem.
[86] Ibidem.
[87] Ibidem.
[88] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 40

of patronage is extremely complex and articulated in so many different developments that it should not be encapsulated into a single structure. This lack of knowledge regarding female patronage and the proclivity to compartmentalize and focus on isolated features of the phenomenon contributed too to the misrepresentation and the build-up of some prejudices towards women patrons. Locke identified six «misapprehensions»[89] that, albeit revolving around the American frame of reference, are appropriate and applicable – occasionally with some due variations – to the European context too. These misconceptions are the fruit of a too broad generalization that, although tapping into real data, doesn't take into account the full picture and the memorable exceptions, thus leading to a distorted mirror of reality. The first malentendu is a matter of taste: patronesses favoured European musical works. Although it is accurate to allege that European composers were very much loved by both men and women patrons alike, it is equally true that many patrons sponsored and encouraged clubs, in which the production of American-based music and, in some cases, even the more popular or «vernacular» one was encouraged[90]. This is the case of the Treble Clef Club of Washington, which was a group of African-American women who, down the years, changed the view of the music their club was proposing so much so that their attitude went from a conservative stance characteristic of other clubs to a more conscious and appreciative one towards their very own musical heritage, presenting thus in their program jazz and blues exhibitions[91]. A parallel could be drawn with the European contest, notwithstanding the fact that such clubs were not native to Europe and that, therefore, such problematic did not present itself in the European context with the same virulence. Neighbourhoods, workers' and church circles and similar groups, smaller realities such as those of conservatories probably provided too their own specific programs, which presumably did not mirror the more "mainstream" ones, in that they maybe contained influences or peculiarities hailing from their own local, circumscribed context. Even in the cases in which this stereotype is corroborated – the initial aesthetic choices of the aforementioned Treble Clef Club are a testament to that – it can prove helpful to remember that «aesthetic conflicts between support personnel and the artist also occur»[92]. Considering the prevailing musical repertoires as the result of not only a collective process – as Becker would put it – but also as the interaction of many different actors, signals that female patrons were not the only agents at play in the definition of the musical arena and taste. As a matter of fact patronage was not carried out in a one-sided, top-down direction where the wealthy benefactor commissioned works, founded institutions and granted funds while the beneficiaries were passive recipients. Oftentimes were artists that launched initiatives meant to attract audience and therefore

[89] Locke 1994a, p. 807
[90] Locke 1994a, p. 808 and Locke, Barr 1997, p. 78-79
[91] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 78-79
[92] Becker 1974, p. 769

potential patrons. The National Society of Music was actually born like this. Fauré, César Franck, Jules Massenet, Camille Saint-Saëns were, along with others, the fathers of this association, whose purpose was have their music listened to regardless of its publication[93]. Inaugurated in 1871, it developed so much so that at the turn of the century it had become the chief arena where musical composition were represented[94]. This again demonstrates how these stereotypes are noxious and warp the actual role and influence of women patrons as tastemakers, because they unveil only a partial truth about the impact that women had in the choice and diffusion of the musical repertoire in their societies. The second misconception confronted by Locke is that of the size and range of the female patrons' legacy[95]. He contests, again, the disregard laid upon the more nuanced and subtler expressions of patronage and support, reaffirming thus the need to broaden the scope beyond the outcomes in order to be able to take in also the cogs that kept the process running. The third misconstruction that Locke lists plunges directly into gender issues by arguing that there were, in fact, instances of women patrons supporting women musicians. Once more he urges us to examine the cases individually and to remember the fact that «a woman patron's choice of musicians to patronize can more helpfully be seen in the context of the pressures, both external and internal, working upon her»[96], thus reminding us that women patrons did not operate in a vacuum. They too were subject to their milieu, to their resources and, most of all, to their aspirations and the environment they worked in. It would be incorrect to scrutinize their support cases and choices under the premises of gender equality, because their routes of action were conditioned by the lack of rights that indeed nowadays women do have and therefore by the socio-historical context they grew up and lived in. One could say that their *habitus*, which one could describe as "generative structuralism" both incorporated in the individual and also simultaneously produced by the society, along with the codes that imbue our existence lead women at that time to operate such choices, both in the selection of the repertoire – and therefore in the consumption of certain musical pieces rather than others – and in the choosing of the musicians[97]. DeNora and Witkin would argue further that these decisions not only depend on the habitus, but also on «her or his own emotional, aesthetic, and affective preparation for action (the "inside" of action)»[98]. Their concept of «aesthetic agency»[99] fits into place with DeNora's support of Becker's interactionist view, which broadens the scope of what is considered art in order to take in also the actors that take action in the process and not only the artist herself or himself, thus proving that the art product is the result of many different

[93] Chimènes 2021, p. 131
[94] Ibidem.
[95] Locke 1994a, p. 809
[96] Ivi, p. 810
[97] Cfr. Bordieu 1979
[98] Acord, DeNora 2008, p. 228; Cfr. Witkin, DeNora 1997
[99] Ivi, p. 228

actors and practices, without which it could not be put together and delivered[100]. This again attests to the great significance that all the actors have on music production, patrons included. Furthermore, by mentioning the steps and also the "obstacles" an artist has to go through in order to have her or his work realised, he provides an insight also on the struggles that the actors either supporting or collaborating with her or him have to face. Therefore, regarding both the first and the third misunderstanding discussed by Locke, one has to understand that patrons as much as musicians had to confront themselves with other actors and circumstances at play that might have made difficult an assistance such as the one demanded by Locke's opposers.

«Decker's and others' attempts to characterize artistic activity as a trivial self-indulgence may be yet another symptom of how easily the arts are marginalized and of the false dichotomies that polemically pit one marginalized sector of activity in American society against another, to their mutual detriment»[101]. This is another of the objections that Locke's faces. Locke's argument that to confuting one's entanglement in the arts is not only a way to disparage it, but creates a further harmful precedent to disproving one's endeavours through her or his life can be yet more validated by DeNora's take on McClary's analysis of the impact of Bizet's *Carmen*[102]. DeNora maintains that «the libretto is musically enhanced in a manner that is by no means obvious to the opera's audience but that works, none the less, subliminally upon hearers and their ability to respond, in non-cognitive ways, to musical material»[103]. The plot of the opera and its interpretation are backed up and enhanced by the musical medium: the voices of the two main female characters and the melodies they sing allow, alone, regardless of the libretto, the audience to draw its own conclusion about the qualities of the two women and the even moral judgements and norms to follow in life[104]. According to DeNora, McClary's study managed to manifest how music, and therefore any other forms of art at large, are able «to construct our perception and imagination of non-musical matters – social character and status, pleasure, longing and so forth»[105], therefore introducing the concept of how music is useful in the mapping, interpretation and articulation of issues that are apparently independent from the musical realm, first of all the opera's libretto that is not considered strictly musical material[106].

The culture of the musical salons and soirées too is challenged. As acquiesced by Locke oftentimes they were presented and therefore perceived as parties[107]. But it would be belittling to dismiss their

[100] Becker 1974, pp. 767-770
[101] Locke 1994a, p. 811
[102] Ivi, pp. 811-812
[103] DeNora 2000, p. 25
[104] Ivi, pp. 25-26
[105] Ivi, p. 26
[106] Ivi, p. 27
[107] Locke 1994a, pp. 812-813

contribution to musical culture and it is even more harmful to label them all as mere social get-togethers without telling them apart case by case. As noted before, ladies' musical work was allowed only within certain social structures and, therefore, in order to be able to execute their jobs as patrons or even as music lovers they had to comply with the social norms of their communities. Again as noted by Locke there is a tendency to ignore the relevance of concerts as long as they are held in private households[108]. Nonetheless music lovers were not solely consumers, but active and occasionally interactive players or singers as well[109]. Plausibly they replicated in the domestic sphere and in their local circles what they listened to at the concerts. This made for reinterpretations in their own small way: the chance to re-enact what already heard being performed made the amateur musician shift from his passive role as a listener to a more active one. Interactivity comes into play when the amateur gives his very own rendition of the musical piece[110]: the power to decide how to play it, either in a more emphasized or slower manner, or even in an improvised one makes the concertgoer transition from a passive entity to an actor, that in the relatively larger space of the salon or of the club could even lead to influencing tastes. Moreover, even middle and working-class people often had a piano in their houses[111], making for a wider dissemination of this practice for those who could afford if not by going to the theatre, then by going to the cinema – where in the silent era movies were always accompanied by music – or by listening to the music recording that started to become increasingly available to more strata of the society.

As for other musical ventures, for instance institutions, clubs and orchestras, patrons «were not merely purchasing playthings for (and monuments to) themselves»[112]. The auto celebratory intent was not the sole primary focus and driving force of the people involved in such endeavours. Their main purpose was perpetuating the musical culture, whose aesthetic value they appreciated and believed in, and to achieve this they arranged that not only its products could be enjoyed at their best, but that they could be available to the larger audience possible[113]. Their high regard for the musical culture made them want to spread and share it with as much people as it was likely. This is remarkably true for women volunteering either in the educational field or in the setting up of local, neighbourhood circles. The prospect to reach and involve as many members as they could was something that they had at heart and that spurred them on more than promises of prestige.

[108] Locke 1994b, p. 86
[109] Locke 1993, p. 159
[110] Ibidem.
[111] Sneeringer 2021, p. 237
[112] Locke 1993, p. 154
[113] Ivi, p. 154-155

The last myth debunked concerns patron's social status. This stems from a negative perception of self-promotion that one should unlearn. A double standard is applied to women and men, thus preventing one to consider their achievements fairly. Once more, the stubborn focus singularly on the patron's reputation muddles the wider vision, which is multifaceted. Along with status and prestige come also «identity, personhood, participation in the endeavor of civilization, release from stultifying boredom [which were] harder won by a woman, and often […] through patronage and other voluntary work»[114]. Those bolstering the idea that women benefited status-wise from their collaborations with musicians and that they used them to their advantage forget to look at the other side of the coin: ladies who entangled themselves with patronage often had no other way to participate in the musical culture of their time. Not only that, but as already seen in the cases of French women, they had to tread carefully not to cross specific lines that would cause damage to their name. Furthermore, it would be hypocritical to forget that artists often relied on snobbism, which was one among the numerous driving forces behind patrons' work[115]. Diaghilev turned to affluent sponsors in order to arrange his first full season of operas and ballets[116]. Amidst his patrons were the spouses Greffuhles[117], Isaac de Camondo, Henri de Rothschild, Henri Deutsch de la Meurthe and Otto Hermann Kahn[118]. Thanks to them in 1909 he was able to realise his first season of Ballets Russes[119]. The spouses Noailles financed and promoted avant-garde musicians such as Francis Poulenc and Georges Auric in order to make an impression on other high-society fellows[120]. It is also thanks to people like for pioneering artists to emerge and have success, whereas otherwise their innovative ideas might have been caged by more traditionalist expectations and their careers inhibited. «Snobs, one must admit, were the ones who looked for novelty» admits Suzanne Tézenas, who under the insistence of Pierre Boulez founded the *Domaine Musical* in 1954[121]. Locke's breakdown revolves around American women, nevertheless it sounds valid even for the European setting, where patronage was the most accepted practice when dealing with female involvement in music. Therefore, although women's ventures in patronage had an impact on their social standing, can their advancement of status really be stigmatized?

As observed through this analysis, patronage is a convoluted phenomenon and it becomes even more nuanced in the particular case of female patronage. It takes, indeed, different connotations, so much

[114] Locke 1994a, p. 813
[115] Chimènes 2021, pp. 131-132
[116] Ivi, p. 132
[117] Chimènes 2021, p. 132; Pasler 2008, p. 307
[118] Chimènes 2021, p. 132.
[119] Ibidem.
[120] Ivi, p. 136
[121] Chimènes 2021, p. 138; Interview with Suzanne Tézenas, 1978, in Pierre-Michel Menger, Le paradoxe du musicien: le compositeur, le mélomane et l'État dans la société contemporaine (Paris: Flammarion, 1983), pp. 222– 223; https://jean-paulhan.fr/personnes/suzanne-tezenas

that it results arduous to trace it back to a single practice. Various patterns – also depending on the historical and geographical context – take shape, so much so that it is impossible to outline an unequivocal one that might be universally suitable. Although some elements are in common and transversal in different societies, still it is imperative that the matter be examined under a contextualized lens, least one lapses in generalizations and stereotypes. As a matter of fact, there are still preconceptions surrounding this particular field of musical culture that need to be demystified through research and the study of singular cases: disinformation abounds because of the lack of documentation. Nevertheless, this social custom can be examined and further understood with the aid of a sociological lens. Patronage is tightly bound to the effects it has on society, especially on taste and on the constitution and development of music culture. On this note, it is essential to recognize that patronage is not a mere act of support. It, actually, takes many configurations and cannot be constrained to the financial loan or any other fragmentary trait encountered up until now. The salon is a prime example of it: it was one of the main places were it thrived, but not the only one. Societies too were founded: countess Élisabeth Greffulhe set up and presided the Société des Grandes Auditions Musicales de France, whose purpose was staging the compositions of artists who had been forced to perform them abroad[122]. The work of countess Greffulhe fit into the climate set by the State's political agenda of finding unity and a common ground among the various forces animating it[123]. Hers also represents an exceptional case in the history of female patronage: she did not operate simply as a benefactor, but took her role to the subsequent level by becoming an entrepreneur[124]. In 1890 she proposed to the committee of the Societé Nationale - whose task was that of performing French works – to create a joint venture with the Societé Philantropique in order to dedicate a wider scope to the musical landscape[125]. Under the suggestion of her banker, baron Francis Hottinguer, and of composer Vincent D'Indy she set up two puppet committees, which gave credibility to the Societé, while still leaving the whole power in the hands of the countess, who was its president[126]. She put together an administrative committee too, composed by relatives and close friends, and a women's one, whose function was that of spreading a good word of mouth and attracting more members - who paid memberships - audience alike[127]. She also occupied herself in fundraising activities. According to Pasler she «was involved in every detail and decision concerning the concerts»[128]. She, under careful advice, decided the ticket fees; conductors such as Charles Lamoureux sought her approval for the hiring and

[122] Chimènes 2021, p. 133
[123] Pasler 2008, pp. 285-291
[124] Cfr. Pasler 2008
[125] Ivi, p. 302
[126] Ivi, pp. 302-303
[127] Ivi, p. 303
[128] Ivi, p. 304

salary of the concert soloists; she had decisional power over which works had to be performed[129]. Her work was such that she had to get an office in rue Favart[130]. Institutions too attracted the favour of wealthy philanthropists: Winnaretta Singer subsidized the Schola Cantorum de Paris almost from the start in 1896; the countess of Béarn in 1894 paid for a supplementary concert of the Lamoureux Orchestra dedicated to Wagner[131]. It can thus be claimed that patronage is an umbrella term that encloses a variety of practices that do not restrict themselves to the mere encouragement, provision of an audience and money: they go beyond them and take the shape of a more fluid and interconnected web of practices that make this an extremely elaborated, well-structured system whose finer intricacies need to be scrupulously examined in order to get a thorough portrayal of the real state of affairs.

1.1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF FEMALE PATRONAGE

Before delving into the historical accounts of female patronage, in order to further understand the premises of the phenomenon, an excursus on the etymology of the term "patronage" is due. Its etymology can be traced back to *pater*, the Latin word for father, from which the term *patronus* descends. This latter one was used in Ancient Rome to identify the protector of the *clients*[132]. In the English language, according to Locke and Barr, because of this root it is ill-fitted to represent the category of women performing this activity and they thus purport the term "activist" as a suitable substitute[133]. But in the non-Anglophone languages it draws its origins elsewhere. *Mecenate*, *mécène*, *Mäzen:in*, *mecenas* all stem from the same name, *Maecenas*, who was a well-known patron of poets during Augustus' Roman Empire. Albeit in non-English countries this hesitation in the usage of this nomenclature might be less felt than in the English-speaking ones, because the etymologic weight is not quite as explicit, the previously discussed difficulty in framing the women covering this role under this designation remains. But patronage did not acquire immediately the current meaning. In the Middle Ages it was associated to the Christian practice of introducing a member of the clergy to an ecclesiastical living or benefice; it was only in the Sixteenth century that its connotation became alike to the contemporary one[134]. Another issue brought up by Locke and Barr that may excruciate also the historical interpretation of the term is that the word associated the most with the patrons in music is "volunteer" rather than patron and even in this terminology some controversies arise: women making

[129] Ivi, pp. 304-305
[130] Ivi, p. 303
[131] Chimènes 2021, p. 131
[132] The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, 1996; Etymological Dictionary of Latin and the other Italic Languages, 2008
[133] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 8
[134] Flora 2012, p. 207

financial contributions are often excluded from this classification[135]. Patronage is, indeed, mostly associated with the figurative arts and literary works. Retracing the evolution of the expression along with its usages through the ages may be of assistance and support in better understanding the history of the phenomenon, but also the development of the perception of the role of the patron.

Although referred to manuscripts patronage, Flora's research unveils an eye-opening narrative that challenges Martin Wacker's outdated – but still one of the first – attempts at discerning the different practices that lead to the artistic production in the Middle Ages and after. She confirms the impossibility – at least for now – in the absence of any records, to determine if a manuscript was commissioned by a woman or not, but through circumstantial evidence sheds a light on how the subtle analysis of an artwork may disclose some hints about the agency, the recipients and at times the potential commissioner behind an artwork[136]. Music was a touchier subject in the Middle Ages. Women were allowed an education, but discouraged from performing in public in order not to elicit "improper" situations[137]. Moreover, according to Gentile Sermini's cautionary *novella* "Il maestro di suono e di canto", because of the sensual power then attributed to music practices, it was suggested to have music lessons for women take place strictly in classrooms with other students or at home under the due surveillance[138]. Musical education for women, thus, was not only contemplated, but occurred also in line with some - to a certain degree - regulated practices. Furthermore this is a testament to the relevance that musical life had in society, as the case study of early Fifteenth Century Siena – with its musical activities not only at the Palace and the Cathedral, but also during festivities – shows, so much so that there was quite a plethora of music teachers[139].

Still, although the existence of women composers and musicians as well as patrons in Europe is attested, there is paucity of information. «Developing a portrait of the musical activities of women in western Europe from the first to the fifteenth century is rather like creating a tapestry from a variety of fibers and textures. No single type of resource provides comprehensive information on the range of their participation»[140]. The single resources offer only partial information in regards of music production and patronage and therefore they must be cross-checked in order to obtain a global and exhaustive understanding[141]. On one hand, it is especially an issue when dealing with secular music: it relied on oral tradition, since it was either learned by heart or wasn't subjected to a prolonged interest,

[135] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 8
[136] Flora 2012, pp. 210-216
[137] Haar 2010, p. 18
[138] D'Accone 1997, pp. 635-637
[139] Ivi, pp. 634-635
[140] Michele Edwards 2001, p. 26
[141] Ibidem.

therefore oftentimes it lacked the need of notation[142]. Thus, in the absence of manuscripts tracing the origins and the motivations for such a production becomes even more toilsome. The deficiency of records logging business transactions or the clientele of an artist is a further encumbrance in the reconstruction of such exchanges and characters. One of the most extensive specimen is the *Ricordanze* by Neri di Bicci, a Florentine painter, who listed in this document his business transactions and hence his patrons from 1453 to 1475[143]. This is a particularly important file, in that it attests not only to the presence of women patrons, but also to their status[144] - if they were widowed, married, single or nuns - which as it will later be seen is decisive in the delineation of the female patron profiles. Nevertheless, despite its weight and its merit as an extraordinary finding, it has to be considered with cautiousness, on the grounds that it is an isolated case, which cannot be taken as exclusively representative of a whole category[145]. Its testimony holds significance, but it is inconsequential - it could even generate a distortion in the interpretation of the picture - when related to a wider frame. On the other hand, much more attention was given to the copy and preservation of liturgical music texts; yet, it would be incorrect to draw conclusions on musical production based on religious manuscripts alone[146]. This scantness of information has been exacerbated again in the historiography of music, leading to overgeneralized accounts. Cyrus and Carter Mather's fastidious scrutiny of music history textbooks exposes a trend - in contrast to nowadays reservations in recognizing the role of the female patron - to gather under the category of patron women that undertook endeavours, such as those of dedicatees, trobairitz, performers and composers, that cannot be merely reconducted to that[147]. Their survey - published in 1998 - takes into account books ranging from 1940 to 1994, so it must be considered cautiously when relating it to the present day. Yet it is still actual in that, through time, the curve of accuracy in the correct identification of each role women took on in the Middle Ages and Renaissance became ever more positive. It is safe to assume that this trend, albeit with some difficulties, is still continuing.

Recalling Haar's analysis regarding the education of affluent women and comparing it with Leyser's an articulated framework emerges. Noblewomen were expected to be connoisseurs of the arts, including music, and to practice acts of patronage[148]. Their task was not only that of entertaining the hosts, but also that of promoting the nobility and the power of the family[149]. This finds confirmation in Hall

[142] Ibidem.
[143] Hall McCash 1996, p. 13
[144] Ibidem.
[145] Ibidem.
[146] Michele Edwards 2001, p. 26
[147] Cyrus, Carter Mather 1998, pp. 110-115
[148] Leyser 1995, p. 240
[149] Ivi, p. 242

McCash's breakdown of the driving forces behind women patrons. «Women's reasons for engaging in cultural patronage are as varied as the women themselves; one can, however, discern certain recurring patterns. It was […] a means by which disempowered but determined women could articulate clear and well-defined political agendas»[150]. At the most of its influence it was a remarkable political tool. Emma of Normandy, who governed England from 1002 to 1035, in the wake of a political rivalry with her brother Richard II and the launching of his program of patronage on la large scale, availed herself of this instrument in order to pursue her political goals[151].

The second instance in which patronage appears is the religious sphere. Often it can be traced back to the foundation, support - or even both - of religious institutions. The case of the abbey of Santa María de la Real de Las Huelgas in Spain is exemplary. It was instituted in 1187 by the spouses Eleanor of England, a daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry II of England, and King Alfonso VIII of Castille and hosted Cistercian nuns, order of whom their daughters Berenguela and Blanche would later be a part of[152]. For at least the next two generations of the royal family, the monastery not only welcomed some of its members among its nuns, but also maintained a close relationship with said family, partly because the nunnery was intended from the beginning as its dynastic cemetery[153]. It is known that women of the royal family entered the convent up until 1371 - so much so that authority has been referred to by some historians as "señorío"- although the stay of the last few of them was rather cursory and, in some cases devoid of the same influence, when compared to those of their predecessors[154]. It is interesting to observe that the Las Huelgas Codex – one of the most considerable and relevant repertories of polyphonic music, whose production is dated to the early Fourteenth Century – was plausibly put together and came into possession of the cloister during the permanence of Lady Blanche (1259-1321), daughter of Alfonso III of Portugal and Beatrice of Castile[155]. Without a dedication over the manuscript or official records attesting the commission of the work, it is impossible – and it would be incorrect, even mendacious – to conclude that the patron of such oeuvre was Blanche or even a woman. Nonetheless, speculation over the approval by one of the abbesses, if not Lady Blanche herself, of the acquisition and conservation of the document is reasonable. As already said, the religious community of Las Huelgas was not only run mainly by women, but it also maintained strong connections with female members of the royal family. Pursuant a litigation among Lady Blanche and King Fernando IV concerning the spheres of influence each of them had right to over the nunnery,

[150] Hall McCash 1996, p. 17
[151] Ivi, p. 16
[152] Fassler 2014, p. 254; Shadis 1996, pp.203-204
[153] D'Emilio 2005, pp. 206-216; McKiernan González 2005, pp. 197-236; Shadis 1996, p. 204
[154] Cfr. Reglero de la Fuente 2016
[155] Ivi, p. 7; Fassler 2014, p. 254; Michele Edwards 2001, p. 49

a document was issued that limited the royal prerogatives to the burial ones[156]. «Este documento limitaba la extensión del patronato regio y, al menos formalmente, las atribuciones de la "señora de las Huelgas". En la práctica suponía la delegación de los poderes del rey sobre un monasterio fundando por sus antepasados en una infanta que era simultáneamente miembro de la comunidad monástica. La señora de las Huelgas se convertía en garante de la libertad del monasterio frente al propio rey» («This document limited the extent of the royal patronage and, at least formally, the privileges of the "Lady of Las Huelgas". In practice it entailed the transfer of the king's powers over a cloister founded by his ancestors to an *infanta*, who was concurrently a member of the monastic community. The Lady of Las Huelgas became the guarantor of the freedom of the convent before the King himself»)[157].

The text was a reproduction of a collection already copied by Maria Gonzalez de Aguero[158] and the music contained in it was in some points adapted to suit a choir of Cistercian nuns: the French motets were, in fact, often translated in Latin and includes an excursus meant to let them exercise in solfège syllables and an assortment of other techniques, such as the hocket [159]. This part was explicitly destined to the nuns, as it addressed «you cloistered virgins, gold-plated nuns, suited for these things by birth»[160]. Therefore, the hypothesis that the Codex was not only destined to the fruition by nuns, but that its transcription was also possibly accepted – if not even encouraged – by women is not so far-fetched. Another example of a lady upholding the right of women to sing stems again from the religious context. Hildegard von Bingen (1097-1179) – a Benedictine nun and, for a time, an anchorite – appealed to the male church leaders – who had interdicted, among other things, the musical tradition of her monastery as a retaliation for her having allowed an excommunicated nobleman to be buried in her grounds – in order to regain the permission to keep the musical custom going[161]. Thus she supported her thesis in front of them: «The body is the vestment of the spirit, which has a living voice, and so it is proper for the body, in harmony with the soul, to use its voice to sing praises to God»[162].

The third occurrence in which female patronage took place is following the «desire for knowledge and the need to provide learning materials for their children»[163]. As Groag Bell points out, «the influence of laywomen in promoting cultural change can be assessed by looking at their special relationship to books»[164]. However, these book purchases and collections may only partially shed a light on the

[156] Reglero de la Fuente 2016, p. 8
[157] Ibidem.
[158] Michele Edwards 2001, p. 49
[159] Fassler 2014, p. 254-255
[160] Ivi, p. 255
[161] Signe Morrison 2016, pp. 105-106, p. 108
[162] Baird, Ehrman 1994, p. 79.
[163] Hall McCash 1996, p. 22
[164] Groag Bell 1982, p. 743

musical education of children, since all those listed until now are not properly books intended for such an education. It is likely to imagine that when children were initiated to the music, the parents commissioned music books and instruments as well. Still, one cannot exempt themselves from imagining that, when a musical education for young noblewomen was recommended - such in the case of "Del reggimento e costumi di donna" (1348) by Francesco da Barberino[165] - some mothers were involved. Barberino, indeed, prescribed some norms concerning when and how to sing in the presence of genteel company. To be able to sing in a certain way and to know specific chants one had to be not only trained, but probably had to be supported in her or his education with some textbooks, some also such as that of da Barberino, which instructed them on the behaviour to hold. Books such as these, among those at disposal of children, may be counted too along with the musical repertoires, the instruments and the music teachers as the tools provided by affluent mothers and as the bedrock of the musical education of young minds. Furthermore, the love for the music was - and still is - firstly passed on through lullabies, nursery rhymes and simple songs. In the Middle Ages too mothers sung cradlesongs to their children; this can be inferred from the presence of songs in which the Virgin Mary sings sweet, soothing lullabies to Jesus when he was still a child[166].

Lastly, female patronage configured itself in courtly entertainment. As already seen, entertainment was a «social responsibility» to be supplied[167]. «It was not that such patronage was exclusively a woman's prerogative - far from it - but whereas their menfolk could be excused if they neglected to do their bit, for a woman to show a comparable lack of concern or largesse would have been to demonstrate a shocking lack of decorum and finesse»[168]. They had to bestow liberality, encouragement an attention on the artists of their court, among which figured also singers and musicians. A work similar to Geoffrey of Monmouth's "A History of the Kings of Britain" and Gaimar's "History of the English", which treated a history of the rulers of England, was that penned by a certain David, at the service of Adela of Louvain, King Henry I's wife[169]. This work has been lost had been allegedly put into music by David himself; of this oeuvre Constance FitzGilbert – Gaimar's patron and commissioner of his aforementioned opus – had a copy[170].

According to Leyser, one of the spaces in which court entertainment took place were noblewomen's bedchambers: «a woman's bedchamber functioned both as literary salon and literary topos»[171]. Their room was not restricted to the female presence alone nor it was intended just as the parallel of a

[165] Michele Edwards 2001, p. 36
[166] Signe Morrison 2016, p. 9; Orme 2011, p. 10
[167] Hall McCash 1996, p. 23; Leyser 1995, p. 240
[168] Leyser 1995, p. 240
[169] Ivi, p. 244-245
[170] Ivi, p. 245
[171] Ivi, p. 241

modern mere salon. It served also the function of displaying their fine taste, good education and the results of their very acts of patronage to those having access to it[172]. Some literary narrations exist that can provide us evidence of this: in the "Conte de Floire et Blancheflor" there is a description of a refined and expensive spread from Thessaly adorning the bed; in "The Romance of Horn" the elaborate and exquisite decorations of the ceiling and floor of a princess' chamber are listed in detail[173].

A final issue in defining female patronage is identifying who actually were the patrons. Aside from nuns there are three possible profiles for lay noblewomen: unmarried, married or widowed. Of the first group there is little evidence: once more, Neri di Bicci's "Ricordanze" accounts for only two single women as patrons and theirs was a joint activity with men[174]. This is too little data to establish a definite pattern, not to mention that it is focused on the pictorial field rather than the musical one, placing thus the analysis regarding unwed women at a yet embryonal state. Nonetheless, although Bicci's document has to be considered with due caution and its information therefore cannot be extended, as already discusses, to represent the entire demographics of women patrons in medieval times, it sheds a light on possible systems of patronage that need to be further investigated. With respect to the second category of women patrons, research has shown that – although not infrequent – they were still positively few compared to widows. This is due to the fact that that they were seldom able to manage their financial means, being usually – especially in countries such as France and Germany – dependant on their husbands in the management of their resources[175]. Therefore, records show that they often operated in joint patronage activities with their grooms[176]. As Hall McCash notes, though, the concern behind these concerted efforts was not equally shared between the two parties: wives were often the ones to prompt and propel forward these initiatives[177]. One noteworthy exception is Eleanor of Aquitaine, who, according to Lejeune[178], not only instilled in her children the interest for literature and the arts, but also nurtured it, so much so that they cultivated it and, in the case of her daughters - who in reason of their marriages moved to other courts - in particular Marie de Champagne, shaped the "literary geography" of France[179].

Yet, as Aurell points out, «le veuvage signifie une rupture considérable. Il accorde, en particulier, un grand pouvoir aux dames» («Widowhood means a considerable rupture. In particular, it grants great

[172] Ibidem.
[173] Ibidem.
[174] Hall McCash 1996, p. 13
[175] Ivi, p. 8
[176] Ibidem.
[177] Ibidem.
[178] Cfr. Lejeune 1958
[179] Ivi, p. 332

power to the ladies»)[180]. Even though she was doted of great charisma, had to a certain extent more influence on her spouse than other women and was able to exert her power and finances so much that she was able to grow her children in a refined court, so much so that they themselves became culture lovers and fine patrons, still the moment of «puissance sans précédents» («power without precedents») occurs only after the her husband's death, to the point that her authority goes beyond the domestic domain and into the public one[181]. This brings the analysis to the final tier of patrons: widows. Once «emancipated from the legal tutelage of a male from the first time»[182] they could engage more freely on independent programs of patronage, since they not only could manage more freely their heritage, but were also pressed to do so either in order to heighten the social and political standing of their children or for more spiritual reasons, such as the desire to concretize their devotional outlets into a religious works[183].

More is known in regard to female patronage during the Renaissance. Although there were still consistent reservations on the subject of women performing publicly, education was strongly encouraged, so much so that ladies were expected «to read music, to sing, to dance, and to play at least one instrument»[184]. Therefore, compared with medieval times Early Modern Europe assisted to an improvement of the schooling of noblewomen, so much so that it became almost compulsory in order for them to be able to entertain and engage their guests and, above all, be considered humanistically cultured hosts, since. It can also be observed that a novel pattern emerges: chamber music, either performed by a single musician or by limited ensembles, and the secular, played during official occasions become the field of competence of female patrons[185]. One of such cases is that of Isabella d'Este (1474-15), who, through her patronage, spread the popular secular song called "frottola madrigal"[186]. From researches on her financial accounts, on the entourage of her court and on her correspondence her focused interest on this kind of music has been interpreted in both the light of the genres of music that were reserved to the women at the time and of the musical capabilities of Isabella; it appears, in fact, that she might have wanted that be produced only music that she could sing and accompany with the instruments that she knew how to play[187]. Another contemporary example of this orientation of the female musical interests comes from Lucrezia Borgia (1480-1519). The analysis of her retinue, of the hirings and of the replacements of her musicians shows again that the circle a lady

[180] Aurell 2005, p. 8
[181] Ivi, pp. 8-9
[182] Hadju 1980, p. 130
[183] Hall McCash 1996, pp. 9-10
[184] Pendle 2001, pp. 60-61
[185] Pendle 2001, p. 63
[186] Ibidem.
[187] Prizer 1985, p. 18

was allowed - she was granted a budget by her husband and father-in-law with which she had to make do[188] - to have reflected not only the expectations of propriety called for from a woman, but also her actual needs. «From her pay registers, one can see the kinds of music that she, and perhaps other noblewomen of the Renaissance, patronized. Two facts are immediately apparent. First, with frottolists, singers, string players, and a dance instructor, Lucrezia was well furnished with the requisites for secular vocal music designed for court entertainment. Second, her musical staff was much more limited than her husband's, for she employed neither singers of sacred music nor players of loud instruments: trumpets, shawms, and trombones»[189]. Unlike Isabella d'Este, Lucrezia Borgia - even if at a certain point in time had up to three frottolists at her service[190] - strived for a more heterogeneous court. Still she had to abide by the social norms expected from a lady of her rank.

It is plausible to imagine that during the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation period a change in the works commissioned occurred especially in Northern Europe. It is known, in fact, that Marguerite of Navarre (1492–1549), sister of King Francis I of France, composed the "Chansons spirituelles", in which she discusses her relationship with the death after her brother's passing through a devotional and evangelic approach[191]. Her daughter, Jeanne d'Albret (1528–1572), too wrote and plausibly arranged the music for a religious poem, which is a sung dialogue between a monk and a few Calvinist girls, whom he wishes to convert back to Catholicism[192]. If these noblewomen themselves produced compositions destined to be successively put into music, it is also likely that they commissioned such works and that they, thus, searched for artists well-versed and willing in this practice.

In the Seventeenth century, with the advent of Baroque, music underwent changes in style, composition and even instrument building[193]. Opera rose to success among the musical genres, provoking a spike in the career of singers, especially women[194]. Noblewomen supported, thus, theaters. Such is the case of Queen Christina of Sweden (1626-1689), who sponsored and promoted the Teatro Tordinona for four years after its opening[195]. They also supported and financed other activities, such as festivities: Maria Mancini Colonna (1639-1715), princess of Paliano and duchess of Tagliacozzo, not only endorsed the *mascherata* for the Roman carnival of 1669, but also paraded in it in the role of Clorinda from Torquato Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered"[196]. Her memoirs, "La Vérité dans

[188] Ivi, p. 13
[189] Ivi, p. 12
[190] Ivi, p. 10
[191] Ahmed 1990, p. 37; Pendle 2001, p. 73
[192] Pendle 2001, p. 74
[193] Garvey Jackson 2001, p. 97
[194] Ibidem.
[195] De Lucca 2011, p. 388
[196] Ivi, p. 374-376

son jour", further confirm her active role in the organization and patronage of other spectacles, included the theatrical ones and the very verses she commissioned[197]. To Mancini Colonna as well as to queen Christina and other prominent well-off ladies patronage was also a political tool, a way to «respond to her detractors»[198].

Archduchess Maria Magdalena (1589-1631), who acted as a regent for her son Ferdinando from February 1621 until July 1628 in Tuscany, occupied the "primo luogo" – the principal seat on a raised platform – when attending spectacles at the theater[199]. This symbolic and political position is a testament to her sponsorship and support of the cultural and, at times, musical performances that were first produced and then staged. The prerogative of such space speaks volumes of her patronage: if she so much desired, she could have had control over what exactly was being enacted, she could have commissioned and devised the parameters within which the piece could be directed and even those under which it could have been censored. In fact, it has been noticed that religious themes prevailed in the musical and theatrical, as well as artistic, landscape of her commissions[200]. This is due not only to her upbringing, which heavily featured sacred music and plays at the court and at the university of Graz – which was a Jesuit college – where students performed didactic plays attended by Maria Magdalena and her siblings, but also an act of "self-fashioning"[201]. As it was already prefaced, this was a process according to which «visual images create symbolic responses to historical events and assert the legitimacy of an individual ruler», thus vehiculating precise messages even in operatic performances[202]. Even when direct political interests were not at stake, patrons were still interested in conveying images to attribute to their persona in order for their rank, prestige, reputation or even themselves and their relatives to benefit from it. «The works performed were themselves an integral part of the strategy employed by their patrons, even though they had not necessarily played a role in the commission of the work, but just chosen it for a production. The patron was as much the author of her own self-fashioning plan as those involved in the creative process: composer, poet, singers, actors and anyone else who contributed to the realization of a spectacle, including the audience and its participation. It was this collaboration between patron and artist that generated the final event, whether it was a play or an opera, a private concert or a public serenata»[203]. For instance, Olimpia Aldobrandini Borghese Pamphili (1623-1681), also known as the Princess of Rossano (1623-1681), financed several *commedie*, which were spoken plays, in 1669, with the apparent purpose – at least

[197] Ivi, p. 375, p- 387
[198] Ibidem.
[199] Harness 2006, pp. 14-15
[200] Ivi, p. 21
[201] Ivi, pp. 19-21
[202] Ivi, p. 21, p. 41
[203] De Lucca 2011, p. 385

according to the avvisi di Roma, which were – of arranging a match between her daughter and a certain Don Tommaso[204].

Furthermore, as supplementary evidence of Maria Magdalena's agency and decisional power over the commissioned works, there are documents endorsing this claim. She plied an active role in the selection of not only the performances, but also of the subjects[205]. As Harness observed, eight of the performances presented at her court in occasion of high-ranking company during her regency were meticulously planned by Maria Magdalena herself, insofar as she personally picked the singers and attended the rehearsals[206]. It is striking that in all of these plays female characters are present and almost often are also the protagonists.

This is, as in the case of Eleanor of Aquitaine, an extraordinary case of a woman in charge, who, for obvious reasons, had more freedom of movement in the cultural scene, so much so that its functions outright bordered on political. Before her, though, other women set examples for the patron woman. One of those is Mary of Hungary (1505-1558), who distinguished herself both for her political relevance after her husband's death and for her passion for the arts, especially music. Financial accounts, an inventory filled out at the end of her life and the perception of the contemporaries attest to the fact that music occupied a significant role both in her life and at her court[207]. From childhood she had been introduced to a musical education and she kept cultivating this inclination also in her adult life so much so that during her time as a regent in Brussels she collected up to almost two hundred instruments, many of which were played by musicians invited at her court[208]. There is in fact an account, "Les Comptes", which lists these musicians and their provenance, which oftentimes was from outside the Netherlands, while the singers usually came from inside her domains[209]. This shows a proneness towards a cosmopolitan taste and her abilities as a tastemaker, since musicians of different nationalities could import exogenous traditions and ways of making music. Still, as in Maria Magdalena's case, music, performances and feasts heavily featuring them played an important role also in the secular and religious sphere[210].

Women could perform also a more indirect role when coming to patronage. Isabella Bendidio (1546-1610), a noblewoman who had been a singer and had been a part of the "concerto delle dame" in Ferrara, supported her son's choices in musicians and even made herself available to make them study

[204] Ivi, p. 385-386
[205] Harness 2006, p. 40
[206] Ivi, p. 42
[207] Goss Thompson 1984, p. 409
[208] Cfr. Goss Thompson 1984
[209] Ivi, p. 409-410
[210] Ivi, pp. 411-413

and train them[211]. «Encio hebbi la vostra litera, la qual mi insenava quelo che dovevo far per il studiar della Franzesca […] come a mio giudicio credo che meritarà per i suoi buoni portamenti per questi giorni che la fatico io; […] non voglio che gli manca niente» («Enzo, I received your letter, which instructed me on what to do to make Francesca study […] as for my opinion she deserves, for her good carryings, that I train her; […] I don't want her to be left wanting»)[212].

The common denominator in all these case studies is that up until the salons female musical patronage assumed frequently a political connotation. This bears the questions: did this stick also in the circles of "simple" noblewomen who surrounded themselves of artists and scholars? Is patronage almost always political?

In the Eighteenth century a transition in the patterns of patronage takes place. The spread of public theaters and the establishment of regular opera seasons in other cities besides Venice produced a shift in the – up until then – traditional patronage structure[213]. Increased opportunities of performing in public drew artists, in particular singers, away from courts: their presence was not condensed mainly there anymore, but it indeed started to flow towards emerging institutions that – thanks to their growing number – could offer them quantitatively more opportunities to be recruited. Although nobles and their courts still attracted musicians and held influence over them, they adapted their habits to the transition. As a case in point in Tuscany the Grand Prince Ferdinand both hosted opera seasons in his country villa and involved himself with productions of opera hoses in Florence and Lenghorn, while in Modena a nobleman - who was close to the Duke of said city - run the town theater notwithstanding the activity of the court one[214]. Changes in the requested music and in the production happened: public, secular music rose even more, loosening thus the musical profession from the strictly monastical environment; singing careers became acknowledged; the figure of the chamber musician – a singer who accompanied herself or himself with a harp or a lyre – faded and few of that remained: substantially castratos who played the organ or the harpsicord; leading singers' names featured in the libretto and in the production programme; composers skilled in both singing and teaching it remained only in the Italian tradition down to Rossini and Donnizetti[215]. Families of musicians started to form who «pursued a wide variety of musical activities and formed support systems fostering the education and employment of their talented children. Families like the Caccinis, the Bachs, the Couperins, and the Bendas usually married within the profession»[216]. Italian academies evolved into congregations of

[211] Fabris 1999, pp. 39-40
[212] Letter from Isabella Bendidio, in Ferrara, to Enzo Bentivoglio, in Rome, dated 16 October 1613; Fabris 1999, p. 40
[213] Rosselli 1989, p. 18
[214] Ivi, p. 13
[215] Garvey Jackson 2001, p. 99; Rosselli 1989, p. 13
[216] Garvey Jackson 2001, p. 99

intellectuals who were supported by nobles and debated, along with philosophical and literary topics, musical ones and hosted also musical performances; It was not uncustomary for these latter ones to be experiments or aesthetic manifestos. Albeit the affiliates of these societies were exclusively males, women were allowed to perform[217]. It's not a too strained leap of imagination to assume that at least a few of these circles might have been fostered by some female aristocrats. The Seventeenth century witnessed too the birth of precocious forms of salon, which became fully established from the Eighteenth century onward[218]. A sort of salon ante litteram were the "conversazioni", which were «social gatherings organized by noble men and noblewomen alike in their palaces, were one of the most common *loci* for this kind of interaction, and they usually included the performance of a play, a concert, or an opera»[219]. It is reported that Queen Christina of Sweden frequently held these assemblies, through which build, strengthen and even sway her network of relationships while at the same time entertaining herself and her guests[220]. As De Lucca points out these encounters were viewed with a certain degree of mistrust and wariness because of the element of promiscuity that characterized them: both sexes were, in fact, admitted to them[221]. To avoid untoward situations and scandals strict rules were set: either women could only talk among themselves, their husbands or male relatives or men – apart from the castratos – were allowed to participate to certain events[222]. This was due to the fact that they replicated the French style salons, which were emulated in Italy by Maria Mancini at Palazzo Colonna[223]. An interesting case study is that of the Princess of Rossano, who specifically held *conversazioni* that revolved around the presence of "musici"[224]. The *conversazioni* held by these three women became the current fashion and were very widespread among the noblewomen of the time[225].

As already stated, the old models of sociability and patronage morphed in order to get attuned to the new systems of entertainment and career and their structures. If before the artist present at court was used to perform other tasks - such as that of a notary or a secretary - which were extrinsic from the sole profession of musician, in the Seventeenth century their profession was stabilized and recognized as such. Instead of revolving almost exclusively around the courts, patronage transformed in order to accommodate such change: «Nobles in the 1720s and 1730s went on recommending singers for opera engagements; they went on asking each other to persuade this or that singer to enter into or fulfil a

[217] Ivi, p. 99-100
[218] Ivi, p. 100
[219] De Lucca 2011, p. 382
[220] Ibidem.
[221] Ivi, 382-383
[222] Ivi, p. 384
[223] Ivi, p. 383
[224] Ibidem.
[225] Ibidem.

contract. Rulers did much the same, as they were to go on doing well into the nineteenth century. Singers now and then tried to enlist a ruler's help in their contractual dealings with impresarios, as when the ageing tenor Francesco Guicciardi, a longstanding dependent of the Duke of Modena, wished the Duke's secretary to intervene and tell those who had had the bad taste to prefer another tenor that 'that is not how princes' servants are to be treated'[226]. But so far as patronage was used to direct an opera singer's career it was now almost wholly a matter of influence and persuasion»[227]. Patronage, therefore, took on more subtle, at times indirect, nuances, as it involved an intricate game getting to know influential people, who could then direct and suggest the artist to operatic or theatrical companies, salons and sometimes courts. This is not to deny that such situations did not take place before, on the contrary they strengthened in the era of the salons, because the elements of sociability and of networking became focal.

The more in-depth features and origins of the salons will be later discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation.

1.1.2 FEMALE PATRONAGE IN ITALY

«L'avvento del teatro d'opera impresariale segna un ulteriore passaggio che sposta l'accento sul momento performativo rispetto a quello compositivo, indebolendo in un certo senso gli aspetti personali del mecenatismo umanistico (ed è anche necessario ricordare che l'attività musicale in senso professionale fu sempre considerata sconveniente per un aristocratico). È palese che a partire dal Seicento le due diverse forme di mecenatismo si intreccino e non sia sempre facile distinguerle, ma come «bussola» per interpretare questo fenomeno si può tenere presente […] il carattere paternalistico-clientelare della relazione tra mecenate e musico» («The advent of the operatic theatre marks a further transition that shifts the emphasis from the moment of composition to the performative one, in a sense weakening the personal aspects of the humanistic patronage (it i salso necessary to remember that the professional music career had always been considered unbecoming of an aristocrat). It's clear that from the Sixteenth century these two modes of patronage got intertwined and its not always easy to distinguish one from the other, but the paternalistic-clientelistic aspect of the relationship between patron and musician […] can be used as a "compass" to interpret this phenomenon»)[228].

[226] Guicciardi, 17 May 1729, ASMO Mus b. 1/B.
[227] Rosselli 1989, p. 17
[228] Tedesco 2014, pp. 4-5

According to Tedesco there are three prominent aspects that show the characteristics of the above-mentioned patronage relationship: the dedications, the protection granted to the opera singers and the sponsorship of musical events, especially the *serenate*[229]. The first one consists in a pledge to the either actual or potential - that is the one, whose attention and patronage the artists hopes to attract - employer, who is often a noble or a member of the clergy. In the particular case of the sale of librettos of performances that had already been staged, the inscription had a more "institutional" nuance, as it configured more as an act of submission to the political power – by being directed to the political head or one of his relatives, female ones included – rather than a plea or a recognition for an actual act of patronage[230]. Concerning the tutelage of the artist, again, this was a two-way street. Both the patron and the musician drew benefits from their association. The patron was able to display and boost her prestige and rank: «the most magnificent performance of a musical work reflected the magnificence of the patron just as a poor performance, a bad cast, or the inadequate participation of the audience reflected poorly on the patron who promoted the event»[231]. As already seen, the case of Maria Mancini is emblematic, in that the chronicles of 1676 – the *avvisi di Roma* – through a comparison between the event hosted by her and the one promoted by another fellow patron, exalted her reputation[232].

«A Caetani al Corso si è dal figlio del Bernini con tre altri di compagnia apperto un Theatro di Comedie che dà gran gusto per riuscire molto belle, ma non per questo si possono comparar con quelle del Ecc.mo Contestabile, essendovi la medema differenza nella qualità delle opere, che è tra personaggi che le fanno rappresentare» («At [Palazzo] Caetani on the Corso the son of Bernini with three more of his company have opened a theatre for the comedie which gives great pleasure since the [performances] have been very beautiful; however, they cannot for this reason be compared with those of the Most Excellent Constable [Colonna], as there is the same difference between the quality of the operas as [there is] between the individuals who sponsor the performances»)[233].

The musician, in exchange, received support - at times even financial - was introduced to a network of useful relations by her or his patron and through the patron was able to build her or his reputation. Lastly, the promotion of musical events again benefited the patron's rank and reputation. This also aided the selection and promotion of certain kinds of music: by favoring repeatedly the *serenate*, the patrons performed an assertion of taste.

[229] Ivi, p. 5
[230] Ivi, p. 8
[231] De Lucca 2011, p. 378
[232] Ibidem.
[233] I-Rvat, Barb. Lat. 6415, Awisi di Roma, 8 February 1676, fol. 9; translation of de Lucca 2011, p. 378

It is meaningful to observe that a true, full-fledged transition in the semipublic form of the salon did not take place in all the cases of noblewomen hosting social gatherings. Contini's study of the correspondence network regarding the meetings around aristocratic women in Florence stresses the fact that, although ladies took part in social events of cultural nature, not all of them run fully organized forms of sociability nor all of these gatherings resulted in salons[234]. Her analysis id focused only on the Tuscany area and therefore cannot be held as a representative of all Italy. She herself points out that the models of Florence and Pisa are not to be applied to the whole of Tuscany and that her research through the epistolaries evidences that a study based exclusively on the exchanges of letters cannot be reliable enough to describe the reality of the salons; still, the net correspondence is a clue that useful in shedding light on this custom and in tracing the differences among the contexts set by each city[235]. Her investigation uncovers the already fragmented situation of Italy, in which even in a relatively limited geographical region the models of sociability spread at a different pace and take on different features. Such is the example of Florence, where foreign women – such as Catherine Shorter, also known as lady Walpole, and Louise Stolberg, countess of Albany – imported the model of the European salon, while Italian aristocratic women limited themselves to the participation to social and cultural events without ever really getting into the habit of organizing their own themselves. Salons of the level of the foreigner hosts were usually still held at court: Maria Luisa Borbone arranged in her royal apartments, both at the Pitti and at the Imperiale Palaces musical and social conversations[236]. In Siena a higher level of active involvement of Italian women in the cultural field is picked up from their letters, albeit it is not sufficient to corroborate the birth – prior to Florence – of modes of sociability comparable to that of the French salon[237]. It, indeed, demonstrates a greater receptiveness in other parts of Tuscany, and thus more in general, in Italy of the imported model of the salon.

This shows that, although the model of the *conversazioni*, a precursor of the later salon, was already widespread and practiced in Italy, the transalpine sociability mode of the salon, being something imported, was introduced and then adopted in Italy at different rates and encountered disparate obstacles in its reception. Italy was not so distrustful towards the salon culture as Germany had been, yet the importation of a pattern ruled by its own rules that had been clearly designed to adapt to the norms of another society proved to be difficult, at least to some degree, when transplanted in a different context such as the Italian one.

[234] Contini 2004, pp. 29-32
[235] Ibidem.
[236] Ivi, p. 32
[237] Ivi, pp. 33-34

Almost in concomitance with the diffusion of salons – which took root in other major cities such as Genoa, Bologna, Rome and Naples – the Arcadian circles started to include women, when up until that point they were characterized exclusively by the male presence[238]. The Academy of the Arcadia was also known for its lack of an established and stable seat and meeting point for its members[239]. In 1695 and 1699 were respectively officially admitted Prudenza Gabrielli Capizucchi and Maria Casimira Sobieska[240]. The first one started a literary salon within the arcadia, which was frequented by Giovan Battista Zappi e Vincenzo Leonio, two of the founders of the Academy, and was the forerunner for other arcadian salons attended by women. The second one tried to follow in the footsteps of Queen Christina od Sweden by centralising around her court the gatherings and taking advantage of them in order to build, steer and influence relationships to her benefit and that of her children[241]. Although these two women were not the main founders nor the main actors around whom the arcadian circles revolved, they managed, especially Maria Casimira, to exercise a role of primary importance, so much so that with their presence and cultural capital they probably managed to sustain and maybe influence too the scholars and the artists attending these circles. Albeit they were not outright, formal patrons, they must have helped the circulation of ideas, the promotion of some musicians, the support of some participants, fulfilling thus the roles of a "volunteer" at 360 degrees described by Barr, Locke, Ruhbaum and Gerber.

The Arcadian salons assumed a more patron-wise nuance in Naples, where women became the dedicatees of some works; though this was more than an empty attempt to endear themselves a patron, since more women were given the possibility to present and spread their poetry, which was taken in such consideration that their oeuvres were later published in the anthologies[242]. This turn that the agency and activities of women took in Naples is of particular significance, because it is not only evidence of the divergent realities simultaneously present in Italy, but also shows to what lengths women patronage – in Locke and Barr's sense – could go and which shapes it could take. In Venice, as it will be seen in the next subchapter, the presence of women in the Arcadia was belated and it only happened in 1704, with the admission of the baroness Felicita Tassis, showing thus the backwardness of this city, that presumably because of its customs and the fear of the already discussed element of promiscuity characteristic of an environment that welcomed both sexes held off the introduction of mixed-genres meetings[243].

[238] Graziosi 2004, pp. 67-70
[239] Ivi, p. 67
[240] Ivi, p. 71
[241] Ivi, pp. 70-71
[242] Ivi, p. 72
[243] Ivi, p. 73

Concerning again the salons, one of the cities that stood out the most for its assimilation of the salon customs originating from France is Genoa[244]. According to Farinella's research, even of the foreigners' reports, Genoese women enjoyed more freedom, even of costumes, than others residing in other towns[245]. Mary Wortley Montagu's observation, quoted by Farinella himself, even though referred to the tend of the chaperoning gallants, is emblematic of the more advanced situation of the city: «Le signore affettano modi francesi e hanno più grazia di quelle che imitano. Sono certa che la moda dei cicisbei ha molto migliorato il loro portamento. […] Questa moda è cominciata qui ed è dilagata per tutt'Italia […]. Hanno l'obbligo di accompagnarla dappertutto: a teatro, all'opera e alle riunioni, che qui si chiamano 'conversazioni', dove si mettono dietro la sua seggiola» («Ladies flaunt french manners and have more grace than those whom they imitate. I'm sure that the trend of the gallants has improved significantly their garb. […]This fashion has originated here and has scattered over all Italy […]. They have the duty to escort them everywhere: at the theatre, at the opera and at the gatherings, that here are called "conversazioni", where they stand behind their seat»)[246].

Jacques de Campredon, who'd been a French envoy in the Republic of Genoa, describes a social picture in which noblewomen wielded a considerable amount of power, so much so that they were able to sway men in political decisions and even subtly manage their businesses[247]. It is not hard to imagine that women so influential as to dictate on political matters and alliances were also able to manoeuvre the tones and the net of relationships that formed within a salon.

The Nineteenth century witnesses the full establishment of the salon culture in Italy. It becomes the preferred way of encounter for the élites, be they either noble or bourgeoises[248]. On this note, it is interesting to note that the "Verbürgerlichung", the *embourgeoisement*, of the higher social classes fostered the access and the interest of non-aristocratic, but well-off people to the concert life and therefore also to the salon world[249]. Earlier, in fact, there was a polarization of the operatic spectacles either in the court theatres or in the municipal and the small town ones[250]. The market in the theatre field before the Nineteenth century had not developed as in Italy, where indeed it had flourished a century before already[251]. As a case in point, up to the Napoleonic Wars the employment of the musicians and singers still happened on a long-term basis[252]. This spread of the theatrical and operatic

[244] Farinella 2004, pp. 97-99
[245] Ivi, p. 98
[246] Ricci 1996, pp. 46-47
[247] Farinella 2004, pp. 107-108
[248] Mori 2000, p. 27
[249] Gerhard 2013, p. 239
[250] Rosselli 2002, p. 5
[251] Rosselli 1989, pp. 22-23; Rosselli 2002, p. 5
[252] Rosselli 2002, p. 5

interest through bourgeoise classes in this century is especially evident in Germany, thanks to the extended access to the theatres[253]. These latter ones were, indeed, accessible to anyone upon payment to and were no longer administered by just one noble[254]. Albeit the shift in the operatic production, it is «not to say that patrons vanished» as Rosselli put it[255]. In Italy, and later in Germany too, aristocrats were still influent, in that their range of action moved from the court sphere to a more abstract one, gravitating around networks of social relationships and their prestige. Thus, instead of inviting artists to their own entourage – which still happened, but was no more the only favoured destination of a musician – they used their reputation and sway in order to coax impresarios to hire them[256]. Patronage practices, therefore, had shifted once again: as the courts became one of the alternatives among artists' career choices, nobles role remoulded. This might be the instance in which their social capital reached its peak: their intermediation and leverage were valued more than their economic capital. Furthermore, the *embourgeoisement* of the concert field and the establishment of seasonal operatic productions brought developments on two more fronts: the impresario's one and the audience one. Impresarios, being often librettist, did not usually hail from aristocratic families, but rented the theatres from them, who often owned them. Along with them there might be third parties interested in investing in the operatic productions and these too might have been in many cases wealthy, albeit not noble, citizens: such might have been the case of civic officials, lawyers and merchants. Likewise, this presences in the financial aspects of the production reflected a taste and an interest that were not limited to the restricted circles of the aristocracy. This does not mean that these classes were not involved nor engaged by music production before, but that the transition made for a further recognized participation on their part. The audience is closely related to the world of the producers and that of the patrons. While commoners could not yet afford to enjoy a theatre show, the public was not composed exclusively by nobles. Here too, affluent, but not highborn, people were able to attend to the performances. Therefore, it is very plausible that some of same figures who had access to the opera houses as audience members were also investors or patrons. Still, as Gerhard cautions, the *Verbürgerlichung* was not so generalized as one might think. There was still a persistence of aristocratic structures and a yearning for the noble prestige on the bourgeoises' part - especially when considering the musicians - that prevent the belief that the *embourgeoisement* of the concert life was a full-fledged one[257]. This means that bourgeoise patrons and tastemakers might still have retained a disposition towards aristocratic-oriented preferences, thus at times perpetuating the tastes and

[253] Gerhard 2013, p. 241
[254] Ibidem.
[255] Rosselli 1989, p. 17
[256] Ibidem.
[257] Gerhard 2013, pp. 239-242

choices of higher classes instead of always proposing utterly groundbreaking products. This might have been also supported by the fact that many salons were still run by nobles.

One of the most prominent salons of that age was that of Clara Maffei (1814-1886) in Milan. Its relevance is due to the period in which it was established, that of pre-unitary Italy. It no more revolved around cultural issues, but it became a place of political assertions. It in fact distinguished itself for its liberalism[258]. As it is pieced together by Barbiera it coupled the cultural aspects with the political ones, which were especially related to the Risorgimento[259]. Initially established in 1834 around the figure of Clara Maffei's husband, Andrea Maffei, it soon became Clara's, thanks to her prominent role in the management of the salon[260]. Among the other salons, Clara Maffei's was one of the most popular, because it was «non solo come luogo di incontro fra aristocratici e intellettuali, ma come punto di coesione, di informazione e di formazione di una borghesia colta e politicizzata» («not only a place of encounter between aristocrats and intellectuals, but a spot for bonding, information and building of a well-read and politicized bourgeoisie»)[261]. In fact, the gatherings at her house were an opportunity for nobles such as the Borromeo, the Carcano, the Durini, the Gonzaga and the Visconti-Venosta to mingle with intellectuals coming from assorted social backgrounds, chiefly with the contributors of the liberalist newspaper "Il Crepuscolo"[262]. Giuseppe Verdi is remembered among the artists attending her soirées. He was invited to the salons and therefore introduced to Clara and into the society frequenting them soon after his *Nabucco*'s success by Andrea Maffei[263]. This latter one suggested him some arias for his *Macbeth* and provided him the translation for Schiller's *Masnadieri*[264]. Although it was Andrea that supplied Verdi with these contributions, Clara's patronage and mediating role as a *salonnière* is undeniable. Maldini Chiarito describes her as the soul of the salon[265]. This lines up with Mori's portrayal of the lady manning the salon, a woman whose role is so much more than that of a simple entertainer or even a patron in the strict sense of the term[266], but extends to comprehend the multifaceted figures delineated by Barr and Locke[267]. Clara was educated and most able in the art of the conversation[268]. It is highly probable that she interacted with Verdi and, even if she did not outright hand out material as her husband did, she might have proffered him insight and support. As a matter of fact they became so close friends that he was invited to her estate in Clusone, in the Valle Seriana, where she hosted

[258] Mori 2000, p. 63
[259] Maldini Chiarito 2004, p. 294
[260] Ivi, p. 295-296
[261] Ivi, p. 296
[262] Mori 2000, p. 63
[263] Maldini Chiarito 2004, p. 295; Palazzolo 1985, p. 94
[264] Maldini Chiarito 2004, p. 295
[265] Ivi, p. 295-296;
[266] Cfr. Mori 2004
[267] Cfr. Locke, Barr 1997
[268] Maldini Chiarito 20054, p. 296-297

only her most intimate friends[269]. Here he was able to meet again Giulio Carcano, whom he had already encountered five years before at one of her salons[270]. They worked on their respective compositions at her house, thus continuing their friendship, which had blossomed under the tutelage of her salons. This shows how strong could become the connections formed at these gatherings and how impactful could be the mediation of the *salonnière*. Besides, it is curious to notice that her role went beyond that of the lady of the house the moment in which she extended her hospitality, friendship and support outside the salon. She may very well be labelled as a *Musikförderin*.

Her gatherings became so frequented that depending on the time of the day one could incur in two different kinds of salon: in the early hours of the evening it was attended by the closest and oldest of friends, while later it was opened to a wider range of regulars and it was devoted to music, theatre and literature[271]. Her salon, as it probably may have sometimes happened to some of her peers, suffered some setbacks down the years, with some evenings being less crowded than others, so much so that she commented on it to some of her most loyal frequenters and friends. To Carlo Tenca, once, she wrote: «Le mie domeniche sfumano e sia pure, il mio debito alla società l'ho fedelmente pagato, io sto sempre al mio posto e dirò come il povero mio papà, vengono o non vengono mi fanno sempre piacere» («My Sundays wither and let it be, I loyally paid my debt to the society, I' doing my thing and as my poor dad said, be that they come or not, I will always be pleased»)[272].

Another prominent center was Bologna. At the beginning of the century it stood out also for its circles and academies. The most renown were the "Società del Casino" - which welcomed also members of the bourgeoisie and featured mostly leisure activities, such as parties, musical evenings and balls - the "Società delle Signore", "Accademia Polimniaca"(1806-1809) and the "Accademia Filarmonica"[273]. To the academies were especially linked famed musicians: Isabella Colbran and Gioacchino Rossini entered it on the 21 November 1806; even musicians from abroad asked for admission: such is the case of Mozart during his stay in the city[274]. Music and theatre were especially valued. As Musiani points out, count Francesco Rangone took care of highlighting the liveliness of the musical life of Bologna even though it lacked the appropriate means to stage great shows[275]. In his letters he indeed recounts: «La musica e il canto sembrano particolarmente destinate all'utile ed al piacere di questi abitanti, ed esistono varie accademie società dette dè Concordi e dè Filarmonici, che in varie epoche dell'anno offrono dei saggi ed esperimenti del loro studio ed ingegno. In quanto al canto vi sono delle

[269] Palazzolo 1985, p. 94-95
[270] Ibidem.
[271] Ivi, p.299
[272] Carteggio Tenca-Maffei, cit., voi. I, p. 136; Maldini Chiarito 2004, p. 304
[273] Musiani 2003, pp. 55-57
[274] Ivi, p.57
[275] Ivi, p. 58

buone voci, e rispetto all'instrumentale molti sono i suonatori […]» («Music and singing seem especially destined to the profit and to the pleasure of these inhabitants, and academies-societies called of the Concordi and of the Filarmonici do exist, which in various seasons of the year offer recitals and experiments of their study and talent. Concerning the singing there are good voices, and with respect to the instrumental many are musicians»)[276]. It is in this context that the salon of Maria Brizzi Giorgi (1775-1812) flourished at the very beginning of the century. Founder of the Accademia Polimniaca, she hosted its gatherings in her own house. Notable is the exhibition at her house of Rossini, who played *Il pianto di Armonia*, which was accompanied by Maria herself at the piano[277]. She was indeed a composer and a musician, acclaimed for having written marches for the Bolognese militia[278]. Another host of Rossini was Maria Laura Malvezzi Hercolani (1780-1865), who had built in her palace a theatre where she and her guest could attend to the performances of the most known artists of the time. In 1845 he played for her the *Stabat Mater* in 1845 and *Fede, Speranza e Carità*[279]. Very much like Clara Maffei, Maria distinguished herself from the other *salonnières* of Bologna for having introduced politics into her meetings[280].

The fragmentary situation present in Italy during the previous centuries dragged on well into the Nineteenth one. The modalities in which salons took place differed from city to city. Whereas Milan experienced more proactive dynamics, Turin presented a more strict and traditionalist environment, where nobility was still reluctant to open up its salons to those not belonging to their rank, even if they were renown intellectuals. Unlike Milan, Turin was subjected to different circumstances: it was the capital of the kingdom of Vittorio Emanuele II and up until the Nineteenth century was described as a city whose social gatherings were almost listless and severe[281]. It is possible that the closure towards classes extraneous to the nobility and the past lack of liveliness in this world, prevented them from having a recirculation of ideas and from being encouraged towards novelty. Rigorousness characterized them and the distinction between classes determined a difficulty in the accessibility[282]. Only after 1848 there was a turn in the life of the Turinese salons[283]. It is exemplary the case of Olimpia Rossi Savio (1815-1889), whose salon welcomed a varied array of intellectuals and artists[284]. Still, unlike those of Clara Maffei and Maria Hercolani, her salon at its outset was restricted to her closest relations, mostly bestowing upon it an aura of familiarity rather than one of dynamism and openness, thus

[276] BCAB, Manoscritti B, F. Rangone, Lettere a un amico su accademie e ritrovi della città di Bologna, Lettera V
[277] Musiani 2003, p. 61
[278] Ibidem.
[279] Ivi, p. 76-77
[280] Ivi, pp. 78-79
[281] Maldei Chiarito 2004, p. 288
[282] Mori 2000, pp. 70-71
[283] Ivi, p. 71
[284] Ivi, p. 72

bearing testament to Turin salon's struggles to achieve a more versatile aspect[285]. Mori, indeed, reports that Olimpia Savio refrained to associate herself to figures such as that of Laura Oliva Mancini (1821-1869), who coming from a different reality – the Neapolitan one – entertained a more eclectic kind of salon, one which was very open to circles foreign to the nobility[286].

Naples provides a case system polarly opposite to that of Milan. It is the bourgeoisie which promotes the salon culture[287]. As a matter of fact, in this city more than others this class was quantitatively more prominent and was therefore the more involved and active in the social and cultural circles[288]. The testimony of Sidney Morgan is of particular significance, since she attests to the fact that, whereas in other cities she was received almost exclusively by noble figures, in Naples she was easily welcomed in the salon of a lawyer[289]. These gatherings were mostly attended by young students and intellectuals, who found in these assemblies an opportunity to meet up and discuss culture more than in the university environment[290]. Naples was also characterized by a consistent presence of foreigners, who very much like the other citizens of the city, organized their own salons[291]. Similarly to Turin, what emerges is the almost clean-cut division among classes and among citizens and strangers[292]. It is interesting to notice a distinction and an exclusion among the foreigners operated also according to the religion. Thus, it comes as striking that, in a climate of ambiguity and contradiction - were migrants were invited to the Academies if talented, but at the same time segregated from the other classes and citizens - that Jewish bankers such as the Appelt, the Falconnet, the Meuricoffre and the Rothschild, managed not only to be received, because of their social and professional standing into these circles, but also were extremely welcoming towards the others[293].

Female patronage and the reality of the salons continued in Post-Unification Italy and well into the Twentieth century. Women started to involve themselves in environments that fell outside the semi-public sphere of the salon[294]. Many of these initiatives revolved around gender issues such as women's condition. Such are the case of the *Comitato di propaganda pel miglioramento delle condizioni della donna* (the Propaganda committee for the improvement of women's condition) in Bologna and the publication of the periodical "La Donna" by Gualberta Alaide Beccari in Venice in 1868[295]. Women

[285] Maldei Chiarito 2004, p. 288-289
[286] Mori 2000, p. 72
[287] Ivi, p. 76
[288] Ivi, pp. 76-77
[289] Ivi, p. 77
[290] Ivi, pp. 77-78
[291] Cfr. Cagliotti 2004
[292] Ivi, pp. 365-370
[293] Ivi, p. 370
[294] Musiani 2003, p. 141
[295] Ivi, pp. 139-141

moved towards always more emancipated roles and to the salon were associated other forms of societies, such as the charitable institution of the young female workers and the choir society at the Conservatory Benedetto Marcello in which Olga Levi was involved[296]. Salons acquired a more political or philanthropic quality: at the turn of the century, the Dora Melegari's salon in Rome focused on the conquest of political rights and the commitment to society, while that of Gabriella Spalletti Rasponi revolved around women's emancipation[297]. Anna Kuliscioff's massively hosted figures involved in the socialist scene and her work and ideas extended well outside the private sphere of her house[298]. Outside the realm of patronage, Adelaide Ristori distinguished herself for her rise from simple actress to the role of actress-creator and then to that of actress-director of the play, when before and also during her times actors' careers were affected by many taboos and censorship[299]. Her example shows that women were gaining more autonomy also in the professional realm, besides the one of the patronage.

The industrialization, which took off in Italy in the last decades of the Nineteenth century, the modes of leisure shifted[300]. For instance, the *politeama* – a theatre with undifferentiated seating – which had already been in use in the 1850s, came in vogue. At the same time, especially right after the Unification process, most of the theatres came into the possession of the Italian government[301]. This latter one took over all the obligations that before had been shared among monarchs, municipalities and the smaller States in which Italy was fragmented. Albeit in 1867 the Italian State transferred the authority over them back to the town administration, these often lacked or refused the subsidies needed for the sustenance of them[302]. In fact, because of the cuts to the municipal budgets enforced by the government and the redirection of the funds towards the agriculture, who had suffered a crisis during the 1880s and that later developed towards a more industrialised structure, theatres and opera houses faced a serious setback[303]. The tastes and the expectations anticipated from the performances changed too: the artistic level of the productions was held to higher standards, thus requiring higher investments[304]. There was even a sort of competition among genres: as opposed to ballet, opera often struggled to obtain a fair amount of stage time[305]. During the season of 1882-83 the Teatro Apollo in Rome proposed a melange of selected pieces of operas as a prelude to the première of the ballet

[296] Musiani 2003, p. 145; Vivian 2005, p. 39
[297] Musiani 2003, p. 146-147
[298] Cfr. Punzo 2004
[299] Dashwood 2013, pp. 164-170
[300] Nicolodi 1998, p. 188
[301] Ivi, pp. 165-166
[302] Ibidem.
[303] Ibidem.
[304] Ibidem.
[305] Ivi, p. 184

Excelsior by Luigi Manzotti and Romualdo Marenco[306]. It is plausible that in such a scenario a situation comparable to that previously described by Locke and Barr took place: women either financed these ventures under the name of their husbands or convinced them to do so, they involved themselves in the networks supporting artists or in associations promoting and nurturing music production, since music education was not regulated by law until 1923 and its incorporation in schools was left optional[307]. At the turn of the century up until the 1920s leftists forces contested the élite-oriented production and consumption of the music, seeking to enlarge the access to it to the popular fringes of the society and pledging for theatre subsidies[308]. The model of the Nineteenth century salon too changes with the First Worl War: its modalities and its aims are subjected to a transformation accordingly to the necessities of the society. Discontinued during the war in favour of voluntary work activities, in the post-war period it acquires the objective of building and nurturing the ruling class, which takes the participation to these gatherings as a distinctive element of their status[309].

The ascent of Fascism established an overbearing control of the State over theatres, artists and their productions, thus closely intertwining music and politics. In fact, musicians, although free to develop their own personal style, were required to conform to the ideology of the regime and not to express any sort of opposition to it[310]. It is reasonable to presume that under such restrictions the support and the patronage of the artists was hampered. Still some women, albeit conscious of the imposed limitations, managed to carry out their role of promoters and supporters. This is the case of Winnaretta Singer, who in 1932 declined the position of organiser of the French wing of the International Festival of Music announced by the Venice Biennale and took instead that of honorary president. In doing so she was able to exert her decisional power and influence, favouring Manuel de Falla and Francis Poulenc respectively with *Retablo* and the at the time unfinished two-piano concerto[311]. Whereas her influence, her mingling with fascist sympathizers such as Ezra Pound[312] and also possible her not being Jewish might have allowed her some degree of fortune and freedom in the Italian circles, the same cannot be said for Olga Levi, who, along with her husband, had to flee their residence and take refuge in the countryside properties in Meolo and Monastier, thus interrupting their patronage activities in Venice and probably also their salons[313]. A sort of exceptional case is that of Margherita Sarfatti. She structured and nurtured her salon as a means of her own promotion: the artists' one came more as a

[306] Ibidem.
[307] Ivi, p. 167
[308] Ivi, pp. 190-191
[309] Duby, Perrot 1992, p. 46; Palazzolo 1985, p. 61
[310] Ivi, pp. 192-193
[311] Kahan 2003, p. 286
[312] Ivi, p. 286, p. 307, p. 317
[313] Vivian 2005, p. 38

collateral benefit[314]. She invited journalists, poets, theorists of oriental religions and politicians[315]. Her salon went through many phases, included that of incubation room for fascist ideologies[316], although the eclecticism of her and her salon's development make it difficult to retrace not only her figure as a critic and patron, but also her use, involvement and position in politics[317]. With her later detachment from Mussolini – with whom she had a relationship and whom she had hosted in her house – and from the Fascism, her Italian salon declined and finally closed when she emigrated abroad, just a few years before the institution of the racial laws[318].

After the war, with the later economic boom, the increased access of women to the job pool and the introduction of new modalities of production and consumption of music, as it will be seen in the next subchapter with the interview to Sonia Finzi, the salon culture started to decline and novel modes of patronage emerged. Women's involvement started to shift from voluntary or even unpaid work to paid work, albeit the first two, as already mentioned by Kaminer, kept to be practiced preponderantly and probably still are well into the 2000s.

1.1.3 FEMALE PATRONAGE IN VENICE

Unlike in the rest of Italy, in Seventeenth century Venice dedications of the librettos were aimed towards both the members of the aristocracy – who, not unfrequently, were also theatre owners – and foreigners alike[319]. It is, indeed, reported in a diplomatic dispatch that Maria Mancini gifted the poet Nicolò Minato a 60 *doppie* - which corresponds to 270 ducats - worth necklace in exchange for the dedication of the *Pompeo Magno*[320]. Usually, though, the price for a dedication amounted to around 100 ducats; it was the dedicatory's choice to award higher compensations[321]. Women, however, were able to bring on their acts of patronage in cafés and in the *casini*, which were not quite as proper salons, but were still contexts in which *conversazioni* took place and where they could build and spread their networks of relations. According to Plebani, these settings unfolded through the areas of Sant'Angelo, San Beneto, San Cassiano, San Luca and San Samuele[322]. Gatherings took also place in palaces and private homes, especially those of noblewomen belonging to the senatorial segment of the nobility. Such are the cases of the *procuratessa* Elisabetta Corner Foscarini, Faustina Rezzonico,

[314] Urso 2004, p. 479
[315] Ivi, pp. 479-482
[316] Ivi, pp. 482-483
[317] Barisoni 2018, pp. 15-25
[318] Ibidem.
[319] Tedesco 2014, pp. 8-9
[320] Ivi, p. 9
[321] Ibidem.
[322] Plebani 2004, p. 156

Lucrezia Bassadonna Mocenigo, Pisana Mocenigo Pisani and Maria Civran Labia[323]. Unlike in cities such as Naples, noblewomen liked to mingle with foreigners of similar social standing, as attested by Mary Wortley Montagu when writing about her stay in Venice[324]. Lady Montagu reports also the presence of outright salons, such as those of Giustiniana Morosini and Pisana Corner Mocenigo Gradenigo[325]. Being, as defined by Mori, "a city without court", since it's official one – Vienna – was felt as very distant, Venetian courtly élite substantiated and concretized around these salons[326]. Still the most famous venetian salon of the time was held by a foreigner: Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi. Hailing from Corfu, she came to Venice in 1778 after her marriage with Carlo Antonio Marin[327]. From the portraits outlined by her contemporaries, emerge her kaleidoscopic interests and capabilities: great conversationalist, she was also an author, but first and foremost distinguished herself as an art critic. Her charisma, her sociability and her skill to weave nets of relations allowed her salon - which, down the years took place in three different locations: near Ponte de' Barettieri, in Calle delle Ballotte and finally in her second husband's villa in Preganziol, near Treviso[328] - to last for nearly forty years[329].

Still, as fervently and richly cultural city as it was, Venice salons too suffered a decline during the first thirty years of the following century. The lack of interest in the happenings related to Vienna and to politics as well and the closure of the aristocracy towards the outside world, caused salons to dwindle down and become a marginal reality of the cultural landscape by the 1830s[330]. In those years the centre of the cultural and political ferment shifted once again to the cafés, in particular those of St. Mark[331].

Despite this, salons continued to exist. Particularly known are those of Vittoria Aganoor Pompilj (1855-1910) and Maria Pezzè Pascolato (1869-1933), both of whom used to welcome in their houses writer Antonio Fogazzaro among other hosts[332]. In an invitation to this latter one, Maria Pezzè Pascolato mentions her friends Guarnieri and Tedeschi who would have been happy to «sonare per Lei – e, ben inteso, per Lei solo» («perform for you – and, naturally, for you only»)[333].

One intriguing figure of the venetian panorama was Isabella Velo Scroffa. She was not a *salonnière* nor a patron per se, but "by defect" she shows to what lengths women's connoisseurship and participation

[323] Ibidem.
[324] Ibidem.
[325] Ivi, pp. 156-157
[326] Mori 2000, pp. 94-95
[327] Dalton 2014, p. 206; D'Ezio 2014, p. 177
[328] D'Ezio 2014, pp. 179-180
[329] Cfr. Dalton 2014; Cfr. D'Ezio 2014
[330] Ivi, pp. 96-97
[331] Ivi, p. 97
[332] Chemello 2004, p. 269
[333] Ibidem.

in the mundane and cultural scene could go[334]. She moved around the Vicentine and Venetian circles, attending *conversazioni*, going to theatre and giving parties. The evidence of her composite and rich social life is attested by her epistolaries to her mother and her brother, in which she describes in great detail events and people[335]. Although she was not a protagonist of the salons, she is an important figure in that she passes on the memories and the legacy of that cultural world.

Salon culture carried on well into the Twentieth century, although this custom positively wore off around the 1960s-1970s due to the change in the modalities of enjoyment of the arts and of performing patronage. According to Sonia Finzi Guetta[336], the venetian society stood out for being well-read, often cosmopolitan and characterised in particular by strong, cultured Jewish côté. Through her account, it is possible to delineate a history of not only patronage, but also of relations, oftentimes friendly or even familial. Her family tree recounts a tale of cosmopolitanism, where lineages from different areas of Europe met and transmitted her a vey "Mittel Europa legacy". Her family was related to that of Olga Levi and was linked by friendship to patron Bianca Coen, whose household was frequented by musicologist and music critic Mario Messinis – who contributed to the foundation of the "Quartetto Italiano" - and who, along with Leo Guetta - Sonia Finzi's grandfather – supported the studies of composer Bruno Maderna. Another cousin of Sonia Finzi – Max Coen – tried to organize a concert for Maderna too.

Albeit Sonia Finzi experienced the tail end of the salon tradition and the transformation of the ways of performing acts of patronage, through the memories of her mother – Peggy Finzi – she gives a picture of very busy and crowded salons. Evocative is the anecdote in which art merchant Leo Castelli and Françoise Zonbend asked Peggy Finzi for a quiet place to talk in. Because of the crowd and the din in all the other rooms, the only one enough silent left was the bathroom. Her maternal grandmother too, once come back from Romania, held a salon at San Sebastiano, which was frequented Paloma Picasso, Arthur Rubinstein, Mircea Eliade and many others. This was not only a family tradition, but something so rooted in the forma mentis of these élites that had become a habit instead of an extraordinary occurrence. Sonia Finzi too describes it as something so ingrained in their society that it was viewed as normalcy. Salons and patronage for them were part of the day to day life.

More importantly, through her account it emerges that at the base of the salon tradition lies a history of profound love and dedication to the arts, the music and therefore to the culture. As a matter of fact she remembers being constantly immersed and involved in this world: from attending shows at the theatre La Fenice with her parents to be witness to the artistic processes and developments of her

[334] Chemello 2004, p. 264
[335] Ibidem.
[336] Interview is mine.

mother, so much so that she was involved in cultural venues through all her life and to this day still works in this fields by having founded the associations Amici del Conservatorio Benedetto Marcello (Association of the Friends of the Conservatory Benedetto Marcello) in 2010 and Musikàmera in 2016[337], the first with the aim of supporting, promoting and valorising the artistic and didactic development of the Conservatory Benedetto Marcello[338] and the second with that of fostering the knowledge and appreciation of classical music especially among the youth through concerts, seminars and lessons[339]. This shows how the love for music instilled from a young age can impact the life and the habits of an individual.

1.2 MAIN APPROACHES AND KEY ISSUES

Before delving into the topic of the salon and the role of the *salonnières*, some key issues that arose in the introductory chapters need to be further dissected in order to better understand the implications that they had on the ladies that performed this profession and on the perspective of the society that viewed them. Gender issues are the main topic around which this research revolves and are the chief cause for women being circumscribed and therefore becoming, in a sense, specialised in the patronage sector. Within this field forcefully emerges the question related to the salons. Although patronage remains a route almost equally trodden by women and men alike, the same cannot be affirmed for the salon. This practice has been connotated by a predominant female element. Notwithstanding that husbands of *salonnières* participated and in many instances run the salons either alone or along with their wives, this keeps being considered a predominantly female custom and at the time was viewed as one of the few, if not the sole, possibilities a noble woman could undertake.

1.2.1 GENDER ISSUES RELATED TO THE PATRONAGE

As already seen in the previous chapters female patronage is dotted by gender issues, in that it is both a field to which noblewomen fell into and one in which they are severely underrepresented. Female patronage might be considered a practice of its own and allowed noblewomen to participate, oftentimes with a position of authority, in the music production process. Suffice it to know that Winnaretta Singer was the president of the founding committee of the Edmond de Polignac Foundation, whose purpose was to finance a bi-annual competition among French composers or composers residing in France[340]. Nonetheless, they wielded power not only through formal positions, but also by becoming a point of reference for musicians when they needed encouragement or when

[337] http://www.archiviofano.it/trasparenza.html
[338] http://amiciconservatorio.blogspot.com/2010/12/statuto.html?m=0
[339] http://www.musikamera.org/?id=associazione-musikamera
[340] Kahan 2003, p. 140

they where sought by them for financial support. In the salon too, as it will be seen in further detail in the next chapters, they held some influence over their guests, either by replicating the patronage practice in the semi-public sphere of the salon or by acting as the cornerstone of the event and all of what it entailed. Viñes, as seen before, while studying «gagne […] sa vie dans les salons tout en s'exerçant à jouer et en constituant un réseau de relations» («earns a living within the salons while at the same time practicing to play and building a net of relations»)[341]. The power that they drew on and around themselves was enormous. «Ils peuvent, grâce à leur position sociale, jouer de leurs relations pour les [les musiciens] faire bénéficier de précieuses recommandations ou user de leur influences sur les responsables d'institutions, voire sur les hommes politiques, afin de favoriser des nominations ou de permettre l'exécution de leurs œuvres sur des scènes nationales. Ils exercent parfois un pouvoir déterminant sur la presse» («Thanks to their social position, they can take advantage of their connections in order to make them [the musicians] benefit of precious recommendations or to use their influence on the responsibles of institutions, even on politicians, with the aim of facilitating some nominations or to allow the execution of their works on the national scene. At times they exerted a critical power over the press»)[342]. Nevertheless, there was a downside too: noblewomen might have benefited, in terms of personal realization, from these ventures and they also might have performed a primary role in the careers of the musicians they supported, but still that of the patron was a limiting choice for women. They fell into this practice because oftentimes their standing and social expectations of them prevented them from pursuing professional careers. In some cases - like that of princess Bibesco - meant that they could not make profits out of their activities and skills, since only charitable work and running a semi-private and semi-public space like that of the salon were the only viable options consented to them. Therefore, patronage and salon work were a double-edged sword: on one hand they performed an empowering function over women, on the other they once more reiterated the fact - at least in the case of those women who had fallen back on patronage because of the restrictions imposed to ladies of their class - that women could only fulfill a supporting role in the mostly male-oriented and male-conducted process of producing music.

Yet, it is important to remember that not to all women patronage was a second choice nor a constricting role. Many of them were *mélomanes*, sometimes untrained in music playing, who raised to the position of patrons because motivated by their passion. This is the case of Sophie Drinker, an amateur who, along with her equally music loving husband, set up in her house singing parties that strongly favoured the participation of amateurs[343]. In the case of female members of women's music

[341] Chimènes 2004, p. 649
[342] Ivi, p, 647
[343] Cfr. Solie 1997

clubs - in the American context - many of them were middle-aged, married women who either had a past as professional musician or had been musically trained[344].

These examples expose the complexity of a custom, in which the position covered by women was an extremely nuanced one. Gender inequality weighted on the decision of some ladies of undertaking this road, while on others it might have not played a role at all, since many of them decided to embark in this practice out of other interests and with other goals in mind. It is therefore crucial that this wide range of contingencies is accounted for when scholarly studying such a vast phenomenon.

1.2.2 FEMALE PATRONAGE UNDER THE MUSICOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

One of the most pressing issues in the scholarship of female patronage is that it is a very recent subject in historic and music scholarship. This is also due to the fact that the practice of salons and clubs is a phenomenon that took place in relatively most modern and contemporary times. Furthermore, when focusing on the very last century, it is only natural that the research is only at its early stages, especially when compared to those investigating older times. The most notable and groundbreaking work in this sense for the American landscape is the one done by Locke and Barr in 1997, which allowed them - and the scholars who collaborated to their project - to conduct an extensive research on this phenomenon and on the numerous personalities, whose work had gone unnoticed under the guise of "voluntary" work. Still, before them, although in more limited parenthesis Horowitz, Rubin, Solie, and before her, Oja, and many others had already searched this subject. As a matter of fact, many of them contributed to Locke and Barr's study with those of their own, which were focused on single case studies. Concerning the Italian context, as it has been seen, there have been researches, in particular about the theme of the salon, at least from the 1980s. From after Palazzolo, Locke and Barr the research has ostensibly increased, allowing the scholarly world as well as the general public to know more of this occupation and these personalities. Still, it appears from Solie's enquiry that there has been at least another significant work - although not on an academic level - regarding this topic. It's Sophie Drinker's 1948 book *Music and Women*. Albeit it does not directly speak about patronage, it advocates for women's involvement in music at all levels. As noted by Solie[345] - although the investigation method it's not at all a scholarly one and it is prominently fueled by her outrage towards society's crippling alienation of women from music making processes - it's a feminist work and an act of patronage in itself, as it encourages and supports women's participation in making music[346]. This

[344] Whitesitt 1989, p. 161
[345] Cfr. Solie 1997
[346] Ibidem.

exclusion of women escalated in the Twentieth Century America. The general attitude towards women of the leisure class operating in the field of patronage in 1920s America was that of negative criticism. According to DuPree, «the patronage of women assured the continued weakness of American composition»[347]. It comes not as a surprise that such a mindset delayed the start of research on this practice. For instance, Gertrude Payne Whitney was heavily criticised by Walter Damrosch for having supported the New-York based National Symphony and its founder, Edgar Varèse[348]. When the orchestra resulted unsuccessful and was compelled to close off its venture, Payne Whitney was once again blamed, this time by Paul Rosenfeld, for its failure[349]. This negative attitude towards women spread to women themselves. Orchestra board members were often and in a significant number ladies, who both donated and took care of raising money[350]. Despite this, they too were reluctant in hiring women personnel[351]. One striking example is that of the Boston Symphony during the Second World War: female board members either opposed or hesitated to employ women in order to spare money, even if their original personnel was running low on numbers[352]. All these factors created a climate of negativity and prejudice surrounding women and their work, leading thus to paradoxical situations in which a lack of music production was preferred if it meant avoiding women's involvement in it. Although these two latter cases concern the American socio-historical landscape and they depict much more extreme situations with respect to those taking place in Italy, they show to what lengths bias can go in slowing down and hamper not only the research, but also the very music production process. Notwithstanding this, history is also dotted by plenty of women engaged in it who were regarded positively by society. According to Whitesitt, in the years after the American Civil War up until the first decade of the Twentieth Century the general public saw in a positive light the efforts of women impresarios[353], so much so that they received praises and accolades in numerous contemporary periodicals such as *Musical America*, *The Musical Courier*, *Etude*, *Eaton's Musical U.S.A.* and Gerson's *Music in Philadelphia*[354]. Although these journals make reference to impresarios rather than patrons and notwithstanding the aforementioned shortage of documentation - either of the punctual acts of patronage or salon activities - and the underrepresentation to which has been subjected women's music history, it has to be recognised that, at least as far as it concerns the American soil, women's

[347] DuPree 1983, p. 305; Solie 1993, p. 95
[348] Solie 1993, p. 96
[349] Ibidem.
[350] Dunbar 2011, p. 203
[351] Ibidem.
[352] Ibidem.
[353] Whitesitt 1989, p. 162
[354] Ivi, pp. 161-162

contributions in music making at the turn of the century is supported by evidence, which simultaneously presents a different attitude towards them as compared to twenty years later.

Lastly, as Higgins[355] points out in her critical essay of McClary's book, *Feminine Endings*, it is of paramount importance that the feminist discourse keeps engaging the musicological one and that the works of women composers, musicians, musicologists and critics continue to be recognized and included in the history of music. In light of this dissertation, it would be wise to add patrons too to that list of female contributors to the music production process. It is essential that they keep being engaged and that scholars keep looking into involvement, trying as much as possible to steer away from misleading and misrepresenting analysis that will inevitably lead to partial conclusions.

1.2.3 FEMALE PATRONAGE UNDER THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

«When art is viewed as a commodity, studies of the arts allow scholars to measure the impact of social organization on cultural systems. Here, sociologists examine the tastes/lifestyles of tribes that gather around particular art forms and the complex institutional networks involved in shaping, producing, and disseminating cultural artifacts. These nonexhaustive and non-mutually exclusive approaches demonstrate that the sociology of the arts embraces a broad understanding of art and its engagement in the cultural domain with other human values and variables»[356]. As Acord and DeNora state, there is no univocal and absolute approach through which one should take into consideration cultural objects, practices and actors. Therefore female patronage may be analysed through multiple lenses, each of which may unearth distinct perspectives.

Much as Acord and DeNora did in "Culture and the Arts: From Art Worlds to Arts-in-Action", I will go over the main approaches in order to better understand the impact of female patronage on culture and the position that the woman patron might occupy according to these schools of thought.

Previously, it has been seen how frequently the notions of taste, habitus and distinction come into play when approaching the subject of patrons. The skills and the proclivities of a patron can be well regarded through a bourdieusian point of view and even more so those of a female patron[357]. The lady of the leisure class acts accordingly to a habitus, which is a disposition that an individual has due to their milieu, their upbringing, their family and their cultivated dispositions. Therefore it depends also on the social class. When talking about female patrons, we refer to a specific category of the high society. Despite the attention to gender equality, to this day female upbringing differs from the male

[355] Cfr. Higgins 1993
[356] Acord, DeNora 2008, p. 224
[357] Cfr. Bordieu 1979

one. When considering ladies of high social standing during the first half of the Twentieth Century, one cannot exempt themselves from recognising that within a category of people pertaining to the same class - and who, therefore, should share a similar habitus - there is a distinction between the habitus of the female and the male subgroups. On the issue of a discrepancy between the habitus of women and that of men, Gould[358] provides a compelling argument by investigating the concept of status with respect to the role a woman considers acquiring in music education. First, she considers Rumbelow's[359] distinction into two types of status: an internal one – which is that of a musician among other peers – and the external one, which is that of a musician in a society. She then transfers this distinction to music educators and musicians. Recognising that incumbents of a specific status position are required to possess certain characteristics, retracing Rumbelow' thought, she admits that, although unfair, also factors such as class, gender and race may come into play. Gender can affect the performance expectations asked of a woman and it can instil the perilous thought that a man may be better suited than her for that certain position. It «affect[s] social interaction by limiting the opportunities for performance»[360]. This analysis can also be applied to female patrons. Although oftentimes they were amateur musicians themselves, they struggled, because of the expectations put on them, to be considered as such. Their contemporaries often note their musical skill but abstain from defining them as outright musicians. Furthermore, women patrons, hailing from nobility or bourgeoisie, were expected not to pursue a professional career and it was rather preferred for them to cover the role of the patron or the *salonnière*. Thus, «interaction that is restricted or controlled on the basis of social characteristics such as race, class, or gender is an extremely subtle form of gatekeeping in professions»[361].

It is in this context that the figure of the patron concretises in that of the mediator. As Peist[362] points out – and as it will be further elaborated in the dedicated chapter of this thesis – this specific role is not only that of facilitating connections between the artists, but also that of aiding them in achieving recognition by their peers and especially by the critics. Drawing from Heinich[363] he understands that the activity of a mediator is incisive in the speed at which an artist may assure themselves a position in their field and in the society. Although in his analysis Peist refers to the avant-gardes in contemporary art and therefore to a field in which institutions such as museums were starting to take their first steps just then, his observations are applicable also in the realm of music. This latter one, unlike contemporary art, had its long-time established institutions: conservatories, academies,

[358] Cfr. Gould 1992
[359] Stuart Rumbelow 1969, p. 143
[360] Lorber 1984, p. 4
[361] Gould 1992, p. 12
[362] Cfr. Peist 2012
[363] Cfr. Heinich 2009

theatres and in the Twentieth Century also clubs. Salons too may be considered an institution in a sense, albeit to be more precise, they were an unofficial one and a prelude to the established ones. In Peist's thought, mediators are the mean that emerges when institutions fail to fulfil their role in fostering artists' careers. It can be observed, indeed, that patrons and *salonnières* very much covered this position filling the void left by musical institutions.

The figure of the patron-mediator in the Twentieth Century fits in a delicate contest, as described by Adorno. «Until distribution gets to the masses, it is subject to innumerable processes of social selection and guidance by powers such as industries, concert agencies, festival managements, and various other bodies. […] Ahead of everything comes the control by the giant concerns in which the electrical, recording, and broadcasting industries are overtly or covertly merged in the economically most advanced countries. As the concentration and the power of the distributive agencies increase, freedom in the choice of what to hear tends to decrease; in this respect, integrated music no longer differs from any other consumer commodities»[364]. In the Twentieth Century the introductions of new technologies, brought remarkable changes in the modes of enjoying music and theatre. A commodification of the music and of the musicians took place. On one side this made for a further democratisation of the experience of listening to music: for instance, people who could not afford to go to the opera, could still enjoy it through records. On the other, Adorno warns against the mystification of the massification of the distribution. Although the increased access to music - both on the listener's and the artist's side - burst the bubble that enveloped high society and musicians, at the same time degraded music and musicians, which became a product. Suffice it to know that the recordings of Enrico Caruso singing *Vesti la giubba* from Pagliacci in the first few years of the century, were re-edited thanks to the electrical technologies in the musical field and sold through an ingenious marketing strategy by record company Victor in 1932, ten years after the tenor's death. With the advent of the digital era, the same track was digitally remastered in 1999, thus, once again, immortalising his voice and his myth.

As already seen with Sonia Finzi, progress implied new ways of entertaining and of enjoyment of culture, therefore causing the decline of the salon and the reconfiguration of the role of the female patron. The emancipation of women and the increased access to work of them too brought about the birth of new professions for them. They too had to figure how to shift from the previous possibilities to the new ones. This transition is blatant looking at the very example of Sonia Finzi and her family. Whereas her grandmother operated mostly in the environment of the salon, Sonia Finzi soon after her graduation started to work in the world of cultural institutions and to this day keeps doing so. She too,

[364] Adorno 1962, p. 199

as already mentioned, remarked the shift in the modalities of performing patronage, thus compelling her to adapt to these new circumstances.

Adorno, furthermore, warns against the monopolisation of the production and distribution of the musical product and the consequences that this has on anti conformists and on all that deviates from the monopoly, which get excluded and emarginated from the system[365]. Nevertheless it can be observed that the transition happens from a monopoly to another. Before it was high society which, thanks to its resources, drew to itself the musicians and their performing force, while now are the big industries which hold the productive power.

Lastly, as previously seen, female patronage can have a spatial dimension as a matter of fact happens when focusing on the salons. Down all the history of female patronage, it frequently takes place in closed spaces. During medieval times it was the court and sometimes the bedchamber[366]; in modern times it was again the court or the theatre, where women of power had their own personal seats; in contemporary times the fixed boxes or seats in the theatres remained, whereas the focus of the cultural fervour shifted from the court to more private salons. It is in this precise context that the salon acquires value and meaning. According to Mukerji's studies[367] - which are centred around the study of gardens and the way in which a landscape can manifest social and cultural meanings - power and domination can be expressed also through material objects and environments in the occasions of public interactions. Although her analysis is based on mainly public open spaces, it is possible to draw a parallel with closed, private ones such as the salons. The gardens of Versailles with their itineraries constituted «an important, if obscure, means of doing politics» since what happened during these tours was «meant to inform [the visitors'] assessments of the king and his court»[368]. Albeit salons seldom had such politic goals nor were designed and opened to the guests with in mind such purposes, it is undeniable that they held some meaning for the visitors. The *salonnière* too by running the events acquired a particular status: that of the lady of the house, tasked with organising the encounter, introducing guests, entertaining, listening, mediating and providing support. Women patrons built their reputation and that of the salon through these gatherings, their skill in conversing and in leading the event. Artists went to these soirées not only for the beacon of culture and good company, but also because it allowed them to occupy a position in the society and among their peers. As Maldini Chiarito[369] shows with the accounts of the chroniclers contemporary to Clara Maffei and Olimpia Savio, through salon practice women became renowned because of their skills in conversing, performing and

[365] Ivi, pp. 199-200
[366] Cfr. Leyser 1995
[367] Cfr. Mukerji 1997
[368] Ivi, p. 10
[369] Cfr. Maldini Chiarito 2004

singing and simultaneously to their climb to fame, their salons too earned prominence in the urban cultural and social landscape. Chroniclers often linger on details on how well a salon was received by the people frequenting it and on how numerous were the persons in attendance. Patrons too noticed and suffered when their salons declined in popularity, as it shows the previously mentioned case of Clara Maffei who in her letter to her friend Carlo Tenca lamented this kind of situation.

Although there is a considerable lack of documentation, being places of such significance, it is to be expected that also what happened in those gatherings had a certain meaning. It would be exaggerated to define them outright rituals, but there was probably an etiquette and some protocols to follow in order to be able to perform well in that environment. As Chimènes reports there is an account of the countess of Gencé explaining how one should behave herself in these situations, how to respond when asked to play the piano and even how to sit and what bearing to maintain when performing in order to be a good patroness and make a good impression on the guests[370]. Both Mukerji and Wagner-Pacifici discuss the issue of rituals. The first addresses it from the perspective of public performance. Parties and festivals, for instance, were influential devices used to maintain power[371]. Catherine de' Medici and her son took advantage of them during the period of religious tension their reign was faced with[372]. As already seen the theme of the show, the music employed, the devices used during the performance, the seating positions had all the function of either driving a message or establishing a hierarchy. Much similarly, Wagner-Pacifici[373] conducts a research on the documentation of three military surrenders. The material elements present and interacted with and the physical positioning in these scenes attributed to them a symbolic meaning. His «study demonstrated how aesthetic choreography provides a cultural "anchoring" function in Swidler's[374] sense, drawing participants into a shared situation by aesthetically enacting the issues that might otherwise undermine the event's successful accomplishment»[375]. Therefore, salons too with their rules and traditions on both the patroness' and the guests' parts might have enacted meanings and symbolic messages. Furthermore, the salon might be also seen as a sort of "rite of passage" or a training ground preluding to wider success at greater, more official institutions. As it has already been seen, it was not unusual, indeed, for singers and musicians to have attended the salons first before rise to notoriety and recognition.

Following this analysis it can be thus affirmed that female patronage cannot be considered from only a single perspective, since its constituent elements are various and there are different degrees of

[370] Chimènes 2004 p. 43
[371] Mukerji 1997, pp. 199-200
[372] Ibidem.
[373] Cfr. Wagner-Pacifici
[374] Cfr. Swindler 2001
[375] Acord, DeNora 2008, p. 231

understanding it. As Acord and DeNora have highlighted in their study all these analysis contribute to a deeper level of comprehension of the social, cultural and also symbolic semantics of this phenomenon.

1.2.4 "THE JEWISH QUESTION"

When delving into the core of this research one cannot be exempted from taking into account the Jewish question, in particular when the case study around which it revolves belongs to this creed. Jews, especially in Twentieth Century Venice, were an integral part to the patronage system and of the cultural côté of the society.

The first issue that one encounters, is that of tolerance. Examining the process of assimilation of Jews in postrevolutionary France, Brown observes that the necessity to include them in the French State stemmed from a desire for unity and to close at all costs the small opening that might have engendered discussions over the legitimacy of a Jew nation[376]. Although Clermont-Tonnerre suggested a denationalisation and a decorporatisation of the Jews as Jews in order to make them transition from the subnational Jewish community to the wider, encompassing French society, in 1801 they were formally recognised as citizens without having settled the question regarding their Frenchness[377]. Having their own systems of guilds, corporations and organisations, Jews posed a question of difficult solution when, not only France, but various European States in general engaged the issue of their inclusion[378]. «To be brought into the nation, however, Jews had to be made to fit, and for that they needed to be transformed, cleaned up, and normalized, even as they were still marked as Jews. The triple forces of recognition, remaking, and marking, emancipation, assimilation, and subjection, and/or decorporatization as Jews, incorporation as nation-state citizens, and identification as different characterize the relation of the state to Jews in nineteenth-century Europe and compose the tacit regime of tolerance governing Jewish emancipation»[379]. Germany too emancipated Jews before women, leading thus - along with the industrial development - to their social rise and their integration to the educated bourgeoisie[380]. This resulted in an expansion of the range of possibilities and environments women could operate in[381]. Although they were emancipated only in the Nineteenth Century, their ascent to the higher social class was relatively quick: by mid-century they rose from the lower strata and the petite bourgeoisie to the bourgeoisie and by the second half of the century the

[376] Brown 2004, pp. 17-18
[377] Ivi, p. 18
[378] Ivi, p. 18-19
[379] Ivi, p. 19
[380] Richarz 1994, pp. 62-63
[381] Ibidem.

belonged to the upper classes[382]. While the first social leap allowed women, who still worked in their family business, enough time and opportunities to get interested and involved in culture, the second one caused them to stop working altogether – as, in fact, being engaged in a remunerative enterprise would damage their image – and to thus be able to devolve their time to either cultural or charitable activities[383]. «Die Form ihre Aktivitäten unterschied sich also kaum von der anderer bürgerlicher Frauen – mit einem Unterschied: Sie blieben ganz überwiegend unter sich in einem primär jüdischen Milieu» («Their activities did not differ much from those of other bourgeoise women – with a difference: they stayed among themselves in a primarily Jewish milieu»)[384]. Therefore, although Jewish women through the emancipation of their community had been able to reach a degree of equality similar to that of women of Christian creed, they found themselves not integrated, reiterating thus those patterns of "corporatization" observed by Clermont-Tonerre. It can be affirmed that the effects of their emancipation reverberated mostly inside the Jewish community, making them economically develop and socially rise, but keeping them excluded from the social life conducted by their non-Jewish peers.

The Italian process of emancipation of the Jews was delayed with respect to the French and the German ones: two first attempts happened first with Napoleon, who in 1806 tried to settle the relations among Jews and the State, by convoking the Assembly of Jewish Notables from both the French Empire and the Kingdom of Italy; then two years later again with Napoleon freeing the ghetto of Florence, which nevertheless was restored in 1815[385]. A more widespread process of emancipation begun in 1861 with the Unification of Italy, but did not extend to all the regions and cities[386]. Italy would have to wait up until nine years later to complete the program, when finally emancipation reached also Roman Jews, with the closure of the town ghetto[387].

Despite their tardy assimilation and integration, Jews' participation to the national history of Italy, from before the Risorgimento to the anti-fascist movement during the Second World War are far greater to their actual demographic number[388]. Their social engagement and contribution to the community too are of prime significance notwithstanding the at times unclear position of the State - and in the Italian case also of the Church - in regards to some matters related to their emancipation and their status within the society. This entailed also issues concerning the perception of the identity within the Italian Jewish community and the subsequent efforts to define and establish it. One of the most relevant

[382] Ivi, p. 63
[383] Ivi, pp. 63-65
[384] Ivi, p. 65
[385] https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/timeline-of-jewish-history-in-italy
[386] Ibidem.
[387] Ibidem.
[388] Della Pergola 2010, p. 21

events in this sense is the youth conference of Leghorn in 1924, where four main topics were engaged: the return to an integral Judaism, the recovery of a national Jewish sovereignty, the cultural activism and the consciousness of the link with the Italian Jewish community, and finally the necessity of the transmission of social, ethical and religious Jewish values in the Italian contemporary political context[389].

The "Jewish Question", though, runs parallel and interlaces with the "Woman Question" as pointed out by both Brown and Bonfil, bringing thus the research to the following node: «how did the Woman Question and the Jewish Question take shape within a common rubric of emancipation and at the same time split into respective projects of equality and tolerance?»[390]. Is it possible, as Bonfil[391] asks, to apply to women's history - regarding whom there is scarce documentation - what emerges from Jews' own documentation, being that their presence in literature is equally, albeit in a different manner, meager?

The difficulty in doing this, as Brown notices, is that the axes of subordination and exclusion in the two questions are not always aligned nor go in the same direction[392]. This is due to the different ways in which they were tackled at a political level[393]. Women, being confined to the household and to nurturing the family, were considered «underneath» the nation, whereas Jews, because of their identity as a different people in itself and their thus resulting social organisation, were recognised as «a nation outside the nation»[394]. «As the new formulation of abstract citizenship, and new discourses of race and gender toward eligibility for that citizenship, carry each, difference is not retained but relocated from status and location to ontology»[395]. Their trajectories were parallel, Brown says, but not identical[396]. This is why Bonfil's suggestion must be taken in consideration carefully. It is, of course, a viable and interesting solution to the issue of the lack of representation and documentation in the history of these two groups. Nevertheless this route must be treaded with due caution in order to avoid generalisations and distortions of the reality of the facts. In order to avoid undue attributions of particular discourses to the wrong category, it is imperative that the premises from which each of them start are taken into consideration and that the fork in the road in the history of emancipation of these two groups goes not ignored.

[389] Ivi, p. 41
[390] Brown 2004, p. 25
[391] Bonfil 2005, p. 33
[392] Brown 2004, pp. 25-26
[393] Ibidem.
[394] Ivi, p. 26
[395] Ibidem.
[396] Ibidem.

Women equality was advocated by Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill by supporting, the first, the idea that their moral values and, the second, that their intellectual qualities were no different from men's ones and that therefore these should have been enough to override any physiological and anatomical difference between the two sexes[397]. Their argument is that of a «privatized sexed female body» and «abstracts from women's embodied existence to make claims on behalf of their capacity for public life, a capacity that makes women eligible for education, rights, and, above all, citizenship»[398]. Conversely, although there have been attempts, such as that of Bruno Bauer, to abstract Jews from their Judaism in order to make them eligible for citizenship, the predominant currents of thought were founded on the notion that a Jew had to be decorporationized and denationalized in order be able to subsequently achieve citizenship[399]. In other worlds, Jews were asked to perform a sort of renunciatory act in order to be fully recognized as citizens, while women were not[400]. As Brown remarks the emancipation reached by Jews was more of a sort of tolerance, in that inside their own country they were considered an exogenous element of the political society[401]. As already said before, the difficulty of their true emancipation stemmed from the fact that there was a deeply-rooted belief that they considered themselves and simultaneously were viewed as a nation in and itself, even if it was not officially recognized. While women had the potential to aspire to equality once the sexualization discourse was abandoned, Jews were seen as an enclave inside the state they resided in, posing thus a dilemma on how to approach their emancipation.

Still, despite at the beginning of the Twentieth Century Jews' emancipation was still not as complete as the textbooks my induce one to believe, their role and contribution was of prime relevance. It will be examined, for the purposes of this research, the cultural and political profile of the Jewish community in Venice. As Levis Sullam affirms, Venice of the first half of that century had been «un' esperienza ebraica» («a Jewish experience»)[402]. Jews were a consistent part of the cultural, political and social élite of Venice. As Sonia Finzi affirmed, many families were involved with music, contemporary art and literature. Margherita Sarfatti, hailing from Venice, became an affirmed art critic as well as a salon patron[403]; Sonia Finzi's grandfather was a musician and her grandmother became a salon host; the already mentioned spouses Levi made of their home a private cultural center for music[404]; many of them took part in or even possessed the local Academies: one of them was Giuseppe

[397] Ivi, p. 26-27
[398] Ivi, p. 29
[399] Ivi, p. 30
[400] Ibidem.
[401] Ibidem.
[402] Levis Sullam 2016, p. 498
[403] Ivi, pp. 498-499
[404] Damerini 1988, p. 201

Jona, who became president of the Ateneo Veneto[405]. In this sense, it should be also taken into account the contribution of Jewish women to culture: besides Olga Levi, Adele Franchetti, wife of Giuseppe Musatti, was a poetess; Amelia Fano was the president of the venetian A.D.E.I., a women's institution dedicated to the beneficence and Jewish education[406]. This association had gathered around itself a group of «Signore visitatrici» («Visiting Ladies») coming from other educational and charitable institutes[407]. The city produced also important political personalities, such as Luigi Luzzati, who became Prime Minister of Italy in 1910; Jews sat also in the town council and participated to the national elections in the venetian precinct, like for example the cousins Alberto and Elia Musatti. They were also engaged in the social issues, especially those pertaining to their very own community. The Fraterna di culto e beneficenza degli Israeliti - which nowadays corresponds to the institution Comunità ebraica - not only was in charge of organizing the religious rituals, but took also care of Jews living in destitution[408]. Its president, for a time, was entrepreneur Giuseppe Musatti. Massimo Guetta, the father of Leo Guetta, was an entrepreneur too: he in fact bought the Compagnia Italiana Grandi Alberghi. From this picture it can be, therefore, observed that the Jewish venetian community was significatively composite, with them covering all social strata[409] and their representatives being engaged in various ventures. The increase of the antisemitic sentiments due to the fascist regime disrupted this social conglomeration, causing first, from 1935 an exclusion from public institutions and roles, then in 1938, with the introduction of the racial laws and the persecutions, the exclusion from multiple professions, and eventually, with the arrival of the German troops, the genocidal slaughter[410].

The after war assessment of the conditions of the venetian Jewish community was negative. Although they managed to re-establish their position in the society and to get back their roles, the fabric of their society was indelibly marked and many of them struggled with recovering their positions in it.

[405] Levis Sullam 2016, p. 498
[406] https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/gli-ebrei-a-venezia-nella-prima-meta-del-novecento_%28altro%29/
[407] Ibidem.
[408] Levis Sullam 2016, p. 498
[409] Ibidem.
[410] Ivi, p. 499

CHAPTER II

2.1 MUSICAL SALONS

Although a clear-cut definition of musical salon – therefore a space with a high degree of specificity and whose focal point was music – exists, they often tend to be studied and confused with the ones where music was only one of their features. It can be indeed observed that down the history most of such gatherings tend to have a more fluid configuration, depending on the inclinations of the patron and on the guests that she invited. The most frequent instance is that of either a literary or an artistic salon which includes also musical events. This is not to mean that musical salons did not exist, but that music was often one of the features of these practices and not the sole one which they revolved around. Yet, there can be found several instances of musical salons and of salons in which music was predominantly featured. Such are the cases, for instance, of a Kathleen Rogers (1844-1931), an Englishwoman based in Boston who hosted mainly musical salons, which she called "musicales"[411], of Winnaretta Singer[412]and her niece Marie-Blanche de Polignac[413], and of Élisabeth Greffuhle[414]. Thereby, musical salons were not an isolated instance, but an established institution.

2.1.1 ORIGINS, HISTORY AND THE CONTEXT

Salon culture dates back to the Seventeenth century, although it flourished in the following ones. Even if the salon customs, except for some variations, to the core are similar in every country, their origins are not. In Italy, as it has already been seen, salons can be considered an evolution of the Seventeenth century *conversazioni*. In some other countries, such as Germany and Austria, this tradition was imported from abroad, specifically from France[415]. Italian salons too, albeit derived from the aforementioned tradition of the *conversazioni* were subjected to the influence of the French ones, where the role of communication was paramount[416]. Nevertheless, the first official salon of European history, according to Musiani, was that of marquise Rambouillet, which raised in the Parisian cultural scene in 1610, while the first time the term "salon" was used with the current connotation was in 1807, in madame de Staël *Corinne*[417].

[411] Cfr. Callam
[412] Cfr. Chimènes 2004; Cfr. Kahan 2003
[413] Chimènes 2004, pp. 162-173
[414] Chimènes 2004, pp.114-128
[415] Cfr. Ruhbaum 2009; Van Horn Melton 2004
[416] Mori 2004, p. 5
[417] Musiani 2003, p. 21-22

As already observed, they were born out of the necessity of the nobility, and later of the high bourgeoisie, of employing its time and efforts in activities that fell outside the realms of economy and work, sometimes also with a personal profit in return. High-rankling women were particularly susceptible to the introduction of this practice, since their chances of being professionally involved in professional cultural ventures were extremely limited, lest they suffered significant drawbacks to their standing. On the contrary, as pointed out by Chimènes[418], volunteer and charity work in this field was the only viable path. As it can be inferred by the stories of women involved in these ventures, the engagement in patronage and in salons was even beneficial to their name. In these circumstances, as it has been previously seen, women built their reputation as persons of culture. It is not infrequent to find letters and commentaries in the memoirs of salon regulars of the time that describe the skills and qualities of the *salonnière*. It can be furthermore remarked that, much similarly to Italy, also in France the salons were initially mostly centered around the skill of conversation[419]. To this talent down the time were added the ones of being able to entertain the guests, of knowing how to lead the salon and the conversation and of playing music and singing. A salon was thus an exercise in the knowledge and capabilities of the lady of the house. On them depended the success of the gatherings organized by her and her name around her peers.

Another important aspect of the salons was that they were a manifestation of sociability and of society. They were an expression of the human need of congregating and exchanging ideas and connoisseurship among peers. At the same time they were also a projection of a part of their society. These circles in fact brought together specific segments of their community: the nobility, the intellectuals – who oftentimes were aristocrats themselves – and the artists. It was a limited society, but a society nonetheless, with its structures and protocols.

Moreover, salons served some important functions. For the artists that frequented them they were either a stepping stone for their careers, as the aforementioned case of Viñes demonstrates, or a place were to keep it thriving. This was accomplished thanks to the fact that salons brimmed with peers who could influence and even help the artist. As it will be seen in the next subchapter even *salonnières*, thanks to their formation and knowledge, were oftentimes able to provide the artists and intellectuals with useful insight. Another relevant purpose of the salon was educating the people who frequented them to the mundane life[420]. Notwithstanding the fact that, according to Musiani[421], the etiquette and the ability to conform to it played an essential role, they were not the main aspect nor the sole use of

[418] Cfr. Chimènes 2004
[419] Musiani 2003, p. 22
[420] Ivi, p. 23
[421] Ibidem.

participating in such instances. As claimed by Mori[422], these were places where the young men about to debut officially into society, could form themselves. They were an occasion to grow, to find themselves, and not only to learn how to behave in polite society or to draw attention to themselves[423]. It is in this particular framework that a relationship of mutual dependence between the lady of the house and her guest developed. She surged to the role of patron beyond that of cornerstone of the whole gathering. The guests became the protégés and thus enjoyed the support granted by the *salonnière*, whose guidance allowed them to build their own personality and find their place in the world[424].

The distinctive trait that may have played a fundamental role in this is the fact that salons were a semi-public space. On one hand, being held in private houses, they required an invitation in order to be accessible and thus don't qualify as unrestricted places. On the other – and this is especially evident in the case of the musical salons – some activities that took place within their context were valued almost as if they had been held in public. This is the case of the concerts. According to Chimènes, who quotes the example of Pablo Casals, salon concerts occupied a significant space in musicians' agendas and were regarded almost as if they were performed in outright theatres[425]. Oftentimes the artists playing at these musical soirées were professionally hired with the specific purpose of performing[426]. They therefore received an honorarium that allowed them to sustain themselves or at least to top up the wages they earned from other venues[427]. Salons were, thus, not only a place were artists could earn a living and build simultaneously a retinue and a career, but also one where they could make a living in step with other peers who worked for theatres and opera houses. By referencing Hellegouarc'h, Chimènes[428] highlights the peculiarity of the mixed boundaries of this practice: «Lieux de conversation privilégiés, les salons peuvent aussi devenir des salles de spectacles: des représentations théâtrales et des concerts sont donnés, par des amateurs ou de célèbres professionnels, dans presque toutes les maisons en vue» («As the favourite places of conversation, salons can also become perrformance halls: in al the most prominent estates, theatrical representations and concerts are given either by amateurs or renown professionals»)[429].

This leads to two interesting points: the massive diffusion of the phenomenon and the distinction of the salon accordingly to its organization and the type of performances hosted. Regarding the first one,

[422] Mori 2004, pp. 3-4
[423] Ibidem.
[424] Mori 2004, p. 4-5
[425] Chimènes 2004, p. 26
[426] Ibidem.
[427] Ibidem.
[428] Ibidem.
[429] Hellegouarc'h 2000, p. 17

the number of evidence detected through history and space allows to confirm that the presence of salons was preponderant. The simultaneous and widespread presence of salons not only in numerous countries, but within the boundaries of even the same city, allows to infer that this was not an isolated occurrence, but rather an established practice.

Concerning the second point, the differentiation must be made on two distinguished levels. The first one sets apart the "musical salons" and the ones where one "makes music"[430]. Unlike the others, the musical salons, as Chimènes insists, are characterized by the concept of specialization[431]: they are private spaces specifically conceived and consecrated to musical performances. This implies that in the others music is featured in a more casual manner: it is not the distinguishing mark nor the purpose of the gathering, but only one of the elements animating it.

A further level of distinction operated by Chimènes is that among musicians' salons, amateurs' salons and mélomanes' salons. The first category consists of meetings among musicians, be them either composers or performers. These gatherings distinguish themselves for being comprised exclusively by musicians and at times their artists and sculptor friends[432]. During them, their most recent and unreleased oeuvres are performed in front of an audience composed exclusively by peers[433]. It is thus possible to infer that of the primary functions of these salons is that of testing the reactions of the listeners and to reap their suggestions before presenting the work to the general public. Nevertheless, these gatherings did not take on the function of a mere testing ground. They hosted also musicians that wished to perform for pleasure itself. Still, these salons assume a degree of high specificity, in that they comprehend an extremely specialised segment of the society. They were, in fact, hosted by musicians – such as Pauline Viardot, the countess de Grandval, Albert Cahen, Ernest Chausson, Fernand Halphen, Loius Diémer and Jean de Reszke – in their own homes and, since they welcomed almost only musicians, it can be remarked that they reproduced a micro-cosmos of the society with all its strata[434].

The second sort of salon is that of the amateurs. This one was less limiting in terms of participants and unfolded differently with respect to the previous one. In the first place it was not held by musicians for musicians, but the host was either a music lover or an amateur, usually of high standing. One of the characteristics that set apart this kind of salon from the previous one is that «les musiciens […] ne se produisent pas systématiquement au cours des séances musicales qu'ils organisent» («the musicians […] did not perform systematically during the sessions that they organised»)[435]. The categories of

[430] Chimènes 2004, p. 31
[431] Ibidem.
[432] Ivi, p. 289
[433] Ivi, p. 290
[434] Ibidem.
[435] Ivi, p. 176

musicians that featured preponderantly in these gatherings were the singers – in particular the female singers, who, at least in French salons, sometimes qualified themselves as "cantatrices mondaines" ("mundane singers") – and the pianists[436]. Furthermore, it was not unheard of for the organisers themselves to perform: the princess Bibesco and Marie-Blanche de Polignac were known to have played at their own salons. Still, to these salons partook composers, string players and organists. This sort of salon can be exemplified by that of Winnaretta Singer, Marguerite Saint-Marceaux and Élisabeth von Herzogenberg.

Lastly, the salons of the mélomanes were those held by music lovers who did not actively participate in the musical performances, but limited themselves to organize the event and enjoy the music[437]. This practice had ancient roots, persisted even during the inter-war period and resisted to the rise to popularity of new means of enjoyment of the music[438]. Similarly to the other two types of salons, these two provided both the possibility of either holding outright formal concerts or of following a more spontaneous, if not even improvised, program[439]. Models of events such as these are those of the count of Chambrun in Saint-Germain and of the wealthy family Ménard-Dorian[440].

To this distinction must be added another. Hottmann observed, that at least for German-speaking countries there is a methodological problem regarding the definition of the "klingende Innerräume", i.e. the spaces where melodies where played at the beginning of the modern age[441]. First she discriminates between chamber music, which took place mainly in aristocratic settings, and music-making in the house, which had a more middle-class connotation[442]. This is mainly a social distinction; yet, this differentiation has ramification on the social practice and on the repertoire devised for each of them. A second dividing line is found in the assimilation of public spaces like opera houses and churches under the category of "indoor spaces" where music is performed[443]. This classification assumes circumstantial tones, therefore Hottmann suggests a case-by-case analysis in order to fully understand the social range of each one[444]. Although these considerations regard the precursors of the salon, they shed a light not only on the origins and development of salon culture in Germany, but also urge to pay heed to the social context in which each and every salon takes place. This might be also crucial in determining how *salonnières* and patrons operated and the range of their agency. As

[436] Ibidem.
[437] Ivi, pp. 235-236
[438] Ivi, p. 236
[439] Ibidem.
[440] Ibidem.
[441] Hottmann 2020, pp. 59-60
[442] Ivi, p. 59
[443] Ibidem.
[444] Ivi, p. 60

already observed by Gerhard and exemplified by Ottomano's study on the actors responsible for the earliest reception of Russian opera in Italy, aristocracy kept being preponderantly involved in patronage even in the following centuries[445]. Albeit salon culture is only a limited part of patronage landscape, underestimating the role that social standing played in the shaping of salons might warp the outcomes of the analysis of the phenomenon.

Furthermore, the characterization of the indoor space is of fundamental meaning. The link between indoor and private space must not be taken for granted, for not all indoor spaces can be qualified as private ones[446]. Drawing from Wolfgang Adam, Rode-Breymann, indeed, recognises that starting from the Eighteenth century these two notions overlap each other and that the methodology applied until there for the previous centuries might be posing an issue when studying the subject of salons[447]. Notwithstanding the fact that, when analysing the private space, she mostly makes reference to an intimate one, one accessible to the individual and few others alone, Rode-Breymann makes an interesting point in describing the dichotomy between the two aforementioned concepts. The two poles and their characteristics identified by her, make more understandable the mixed nature of the environment of the salon and therefore its peculiar status as a semi-public setting. «Der öffentliche Raum der Premierenfeier ist nicht, wie eigentlich zu erwarten, ein Ort der Begegnung und des (künstlerischen) Austausches, sondern die eigentliche Begegnung mit der Geistigkeit und Kreativität des Anderen findet im Innenraum, in Abwesenheit des Anderen statt» («The public space of the feast for the première is not, as one would actually expect, a place of the encounter and of the (artistic) exchanges, rather the very meeting with the intellectual element and the creativity of the others takes place in the indoor space, in the absence of the others»)[448]. Albeit Rode-Breymann refers to the feast thrown to celebrate a première, it can be still drawn a comparison – by proceeding at a level of similarities – between the outright concert and the privacy of the house. During a concert in a theatre the exchange is more of a top-down one, with the public absorbing what the performers offer, while in the private space there is a creative act that can be shared with the close ones. Being a semi-public space the salon assimilates the characteristics of both: it is at times an environment of exchange and of creativity and at others a place where there is an unidirectional flux from an actor to the more passive audience.

[445] Cfr. Gerhard 2012; Cfr. Ottomano 2011
[446] Rode-Breymann 2020, pp. 37-38
[447] Ibidem.
[448] Ivi, p. 44

It can be thus concluded that the salon is an extremely articulated environment, which provides within its own category for different variations. It is therefore essential that a distinction is made case-by-case when studying a salon.

2.1.2 THE PROTAGONISTS

Among the salons viewed until now, this research focuses mainly on those of the amateurs. Their protagonist – aside from the non-musician guests frequenting them – are the host, the singers, the performers and the composers. The first category was mostly comprised by women, although there are many instances of men or even couples of spouses organizing these type of events. These ladies belong to wealthy classes, be them aristocracy or high bourgeoisie, and their main motivation is their passion towards music[449]. All of them had the following traits in common: all of them were musically trained and capable of performing, albeit not professionally; they struck up and maintained their relationships with the musicians with whom they surrounded themselves; and they employed their finances as a mean to either compensate a void or to realise themselves[450]. Because of their skills, of the behaviour that they had to adopt with their protégés and of the function of tutelage they assumed towards these latter ones, they acquired an almost maternal role, in that they were perceived as individuals charged with the care of the artists taken under their wing[451]. The qualities either attributed or recognised in them can be, indeed, ultimately ascribed to the maternal sphere[452]. As Mori argues, these characteristics were regarded under the perspective of gender and thus they became an integral part of the ideal model of women proposed by the liberal class[453]. Therefore, women were subjected to the stereotypes related to their gender and to the ideal of *salonnière* and at the same time were able to exert an incredible power over the regulars of their salons. This is because the function of the salon did not run out in the mere gathering itself, but extended outside its walls. Ladies built their reputation and their power on them, they used them as stepping stones towards the public scenes – as countess Greffuhle did – or to become relevant patrons of musicians and institutions and commissioners of oeuvres[454].

The second category of personalities attending the salons were the singers. They could be professional ones, either engaged by the *salonnière* herself as is the case of Winnaretta Singer or invited as

[449] Chimènes 2004, p. 57
[450] Ibidem.
[451] Mori 2004, pp. 6-7
[452] Ibidem.
[453] Ivi, p. 7
[454] Chimènes 2004, p. 57

guests[455], or be the lady of the house herself. This latter one is, for instance, the case of madame Maurice Gallet, who sung at her own salon[456]. There is, in fact, documentation of a soirée of April 1902 in which she performed some fragments of Gluck's *Armida* under the direction of Casella[457]. She is known to have sung in another occasion *Le Voyage d'hiver* and *La Belle Meunière*, for each accompanied by a different pianist[458].

Singers, as already affirmed, were not the only musicians who partook to these gatherings. Another important figure who could not be missing was that of the instrument players. They usually were professionals who took part to these events either, when in their early stages of their careers, to gain experience and an audience or to sound their inedited pieces out or to just enjoy the company of their peers. Yet, there are instances of amateurs, among which are remembered the *salonnières* themselves, who played for the entertainment of their guests.

Lastly, there were the composers. They were inferior in number to the performers, especially in the case of the amateurs[459]. Theirs was a field mainly dominated by men and sometimes they held their very own musical salons in which they executed, in front of a private audience, their works before they were officially played in public concerts[460].

It can be therefore observed that, much like in salons of other kind, such as the literary or the artistic ones, the participants were mostly a highly specialised segment of the musical realm. Although the presence of amateurs was heavily featured, the extent of the musical training and knowledge of both the regulars and the host were positively superior to those of the general public.

2.2 WOMEN AS MEDIATORS

Peist's analysis of the significance of the role of the mediators in the development of artist's career's proves to be compelling when applied to the realm of patrons in music. Nevertheless, some clarifications and adjustments are compulsory when adapting his theories to musician's mediators. First, his assessment revolves around a specific segment of artists, id est those belonging to the, at the time, emerging avant-garde movement. Peist's considerations hinge on the specific historic circumstances influencing the artists' paths in the first decades of the Twentieth Century. Those plunging into the first avant-garde knew that they would find themselves in a transitional vacuum, due

[455] Cfr. Kahan 2003
[456] Chimènes 2004, p. 184
[457] Ibidem.
[458] Ibidem.
[459] Ivi, p. 228
[460] Ibidem.

to the lack of either institutions or academies purposefully specialised in this field[461]. Avant-garde artists not only suffered a lack of support from an external institution, but also the absence of a clear definition of the movement they operated in[462]. This struggle was likewise felt by the critics, the dealers and the art collectors, who being among the ranks of the mediators, needed to outline both their understanding of modernity and their position in this recent area of expertise[463]. A similar occurrence happened with the second avant-garde in the 1940s. Although museums and galleries taking an interest in and hosting art from the first avant-garde were by those years already in place, artists from this second movement experienced some difficulties – albeit to a lesser degree than their peers from the first avant-garde – in reaching recognition and then consecration[464]. In order to grasp the value and the extent of the role of the mediators in music, it is mandatory to determine beforehand the historical context in which they operate. Avant-garde musicians too must have suffered to a degree the stress of being the precursors of modernist music. Yet, there is a crucial difference in their paths: they did not have to deal with the absence of their own designated institutions. That being said, the rest of Peist's reflection holds true to the music field. In order to highlight the role of mediators in an artist's career, he identifies two distinct and opposite poles, incarnated by Duchamp and Pollock. The first one, hailing from a wealthy family and thus disposing of a high economic capital, was able to delay his consecration[465]. The second one, instead, having more modest means, did not have the luxury of taking his time in his climb to success[466]. Both of their families provided them enough cultural capital to be able to develop a profound interest in art and pursue a career in this direction[467]. They, therefore, undertook this profession in accordance to what Heinich would call a vocational regime[468]. This means that the driving force behind their choice is connotated by artistic genius and talent, rather than an academic upbringing or family tradition[469]. According to Heinich «remuneration serves to carry out the activity rather than the activity serving to produce remuneration, as is the case in ordinary economy»[470]. Nevertheless, their economic possibilities and their starting social capital determined their strategies towards the cultivation of this last one and their relationship with the mediators. While Duchamp distanced himself as much as he could from the art world, Pollock accelerated as much as possible his access to it and recognition. As a consequence, their different approaches dictated opposite relationships with their mediators. Duchamp – by personalizing his artistic value and knowing

[461] Peist 2012, p. 235
[462] Ibidem.
[463] Ibidem.
[464] Ivi, p. 243
[465] Ivi, 238-240
[466] Ivi, p. 240-242
[467] Cfr. Peist 2012
[468] Heinich 2005, pp. 87-89
[469] Heinich 2005, pp. 87-89; Peist 2012, pp. 234-236
[470] Heinich 2005, p. 87

the "rules of the game"[471] – managed to profit of his social capital without requiring the assistance of mediators, thus assimilating and internalising their function[472]. Drawing from Bowness[473] Heinich reprises and applies to the vocational regime artists' case his distinction in four circles of recognition. According to his breakdown the first circle consists of peers, whose ideas can influence and aid the artist towards innovative trajectories[474]. Then there is the circle composed by those operating in the market, for example merchants, collectors and dealers. The subsequent circle is that of the specialists, therefore experts, curators and critics. Lastly, there is the general public.

As Heinich points out this analysis operates on two levels: a spatial and a temporal one[475]. These two reflect the degree of proximity between the artist and the other agents and the time employed to get recognition and success, even after death[476]. Combining it with Lang and Lang's study[477] on the tiers of reputation – which are: the "recognition", which is attributed by the specialists, the "renown", which comes from the general public and the media, and the "posterity", which is acquired after the death – Heinich manages to make emerge the correlation between the different kinds of mediation and both the temporal and the spatial dimensions[478]. Therefore, the capitals possessed in bourdieusian terms are not suspended in a vacuum, but play an important role in determining the type and the degree of mediation that an artist will strive to engage. As it has been observed the choices related to the mediation determine the career path of an artist. For instance, Pollock had to lean on fellow artist and wife Lee Krasner and the critic Clement Greenberg in order to obtain the recognition of his peers and subsequently those of the specialists and of the public, while, as it has been already said, Duchamp had the possibility to alienate himself from the other mediators and centralise on himself the very same role[479]. In the case of Pollock, Lee Krasner provided him the necessary contacts in order to enhance the network of intermediaries that would aid him in achieving his success[480]. She, furthermore, acted as a mediator even after his death by working to maintain and even increase his reputation, thus operating in his favour on the aforementioned level of "posterity". Nonetheless the mediation did not only come in the form of the provision of connections and the ability to arrange them in a functioning system, but also in the form of support. This role was absolved by Betty Parsons and Peggy Guggenheim, who, being prominent gallery owners, were able to strengthen Pollock's

[471] Heinich 2005, pp. 89-90; Peist 2012, p. 238
[472] Peist 2012, p. 238
[473] Cfr. Bowness 1989
[474] Heinich 2005, p. 91
[475] Ibidem.
[476] Ibidem.
[477] Cfr. Engel Lang, Lang 1988
[478] Heinich 2005, pp. 90-91
[479] Peist 2012, pp. 237-238
[480] Ivi, p. 241

reputation whilst simultaneously guaranteeing that his works were acknowledged by experts and general public alike[481]. Lastly, there was Clement Greenberg, who being an art critic was able to have an impact on Pollock's ideas, to the degree of even influencing their realisation on a technical level[482]. It can be thus affirmed that mediation comes in numerous declinations.

In the music field too there is a mirror-like image of the figure of the mediator. In this case too this personality can perform different tasks. As it has already emerged from both Gerber and Ruhbaum, patrons carried out numerous roles that is challenging, if not reductive, to frame them in a single one. It is in light of the case studies analysed by them that it is possible to affirm that patrons and *salonnières* covered also that of mediators. Pianist Henriette Voigt did not only gather around herself and in her house a substantial circle of musicians, such as Robert Schumann, Johann Benjamin Groß and Ludwig Schunke, and intellectuals, such as writer Friedrich Rochlitz, but also numerous music lovers[483], allowing thus exchanges of ideas and of contacts. It is reported that she had a close-knit friendship with Schumann so much so that he shared with her his emotions and involved her in his creative process, going as far as to ask her opinion on musical matters[484]. Through her he also met and later entertained a relationship with pianist Ernstine von Fricken[485]. Notwithstanding the fact that a certain rivalry was felt between her and Friedrich Wieck[486], under Robert Schumann's suggestion, he entrusted his daughter to her in order for her to receive further piano training[487]. It is not known, admits Gerber, if Clara Schumann learnt new or not yet known to her pieces or even if her repertoire was influenced by Henriette Voigt's guidance. Yet, the period she spent under Voigt's mentoring must have allowed her repertoire to develop, because, after her lessons with Voigt, she started to replace the more virtuoso and popular pieces with ones that required a more serious tone during the performance[488]. This demonstrates that by means of the specific role she occupied in each and every relationship she entertained, she carried out her role of mediator differently. It can be therefore observed that the role of the mediator, similarly to that of the patron, has no precise definition, since it can assume numerous declinations.

Another example of a patron absolving the role of mediator is that of Elisabeth von Herzogenberg, who provided advise to Brahams regarding his music[489]. According to Ruhbaum's research on their

[481] Ibidem.
[482] Ibidem.
[483] Gerber 2016, p. 60
[484] Ivi, p. 66
[485] Ivi, p. 67
[486] Cfr. Gerber 2016
[487] Ivi, p. 55
[488] Ivi, p. 56
[489] Ruhbaum 2009, pp. 194-195

epistolary exchange, he often sent to Herzogenberg his manuscripts and she sent him back her reviews[490]. She also speculates that it is highly probable that they often talked about his works in person, since some oeuvres exist, such as the two concerts for piano and one for violin, that do not have the corresponding written review by her[491]. Her knowledge and his esteem for her were such, that her recommendations ranged from those regarding the text and the form to those about the singable quality of the piece, from those concerning its clearness to those on its musical expression[492]. «Mit ihren Ratschlägen wollte sie Brahms anspornen, Musik zu schreiben, die „dauerhaft" sei durch die Verkörperung von Schönheit und vollkommener kompositorischer Durchdringung, vor allem aber dadurch, dass sie Hörerinnen und Hörer emotional ergreift und mitreißt» («With her advice, she meant to spur Brahms to write music, which was "long-lasting" through the embodiment of beauty and the perfectly compositional pervasion, but she wanted foremost that it moved and aroused enthusiasm among the listeners»)[493]. It can be thereby affirmed that her recommendations did not stop to the mere technicalities nor that their relationship revolved only around the support she provided him. One might, indeed, assert that her interest in the durability of Brahams' works fits into the category of mediation, in that her interest in the permanence of his music results in it, and therefore Brahams himself, gaining posterity.

Concerning the last century, a very powerful mediator is incarnated by Winnaretta Singer. Both Clara Haskil and Renata Borgatti benefited from their relationship with her, because it was through her that they were offered positions as piano players outside the realm of the salon[494]. They used to perform at Singer's "Piano Fridays", which were comprised mostly of sight-reading sessions of original four-hand and two-piano works[495]. They had incidentally met each other there and they had often played the piano four-hand[496]. But Singer's act of mediation did not exhaust itself there: at least in Haskil's regards, her efforts went beyond procuring her a job. She met her in 1921, when Haskil was still worn out from the complications of her scoliosis and striving to set her career back on track after the hiatus due to her illness[497]. Through Singer, Haskil from 1927 for the subsequent twelve years received economic support, was able to meet other peers and put herself in the limelight[498]. In fact, she managed to strike significant friendships with Poulenc, Rubinstein, Sauguet and Stravinsky and by

[490] Ivi, p. 195
[491] Ibidem.
[492] Ivi, pp. 198-206
[493] Ivi, p. 207
[494] Kahan 2003, pp. 276-277
[495] Ivi, p. 266
[496] Ivi, p. 276-277
[497] Ivi, p. 266
[498] Ivi, pp. 266-267

performing not only during the "piano Fridays", but also as a solo recitalist during formal soirées[499]. Therefore, it can once again be observed that mediation even when focused on a single individual could take different shapes. Hence, it not to be reduced to the mere promotion of one's social capital or to the act of procuring a playing engagement to someone. In order to be appreciated in its fullness, mediation cannot be anchored to a single action, but it has indeed to be linked to a more elaborate web of behaviours and activities. This might be further proven by the fact that mediation is not always directed towards the single individual, but can be also aimed at institutions. Such is the case of the Orchestre Symphonique de Paris, which, in exchange for financial aid, agreed to perform at the events that Singer organised[500]. Singer's intervention not only allowed it to sustain itself, but also to receive requests for projects, especially those related to Stravinsky[501]. Thus, by supporting this organisation Winnaretta gave it employment through her commissions and visibility, so much so that the orchestra was able to generate revenues and survive as an institution at least up until 1938, date in which it was disbanded[502]. Yet, as Haskil's case reveals, in many cases the other side of the coin must be taken into account. Patrons are mostly viewed as benefactors and it is not analysed what they gain back in exchange of their benefits and what may be the toll of their mediation on the artist. As Kahan points out, in the case of the patronage relationship between Singer and Haskil, the pianist was required to indulge to many of Singer's requests, even when those made her uncomfortable[503].

Lastly, one interesting feature of the mediators is their capability of putting pression in order to make their protégés gain a benefit. It is significant the case of composer Gabriel Fauré, who obtained the position of *maître de chapelle* at the parish of Madeline also thanks to the intervention of Monsabré[504]. Different actors contributed to his nomination – among which are remembered Saint-Saëns and Gounod, who supported his candidacy – but still Monsabré's mediation – requested by Camille Clerc – was crucial in the achievement of such coveted spot[505]. As Chimènes remarks, the job in that particular parish warranted the involvement of someone able of swaying the choice in favour of Fauré. Madeline was indeed a wealthy congregation that benefited of the support of the aristocracy and of the affluent people inhabiting the suburb of Saint-Germain, making the role of *maître de chapelle* in there pivotal for the career of an artist such as Fauré[506].

[499] Ibidem.
[500] Ivi, pp. 275-276
[501] Ibidem.
[502] Chimènes 2004, p. 540
[503] Kahan 2003, p. 267
[504] Chimènes 2004, p. 668
[505] Ibidem.
[506] Ivi, pp. 667-668

As it has been observed, mediators operate at many different levels. Patrons are only one of the categories that fall under the label of mediators: supporters of different kinds, critics, politicians and even peers are able to act as mediators. Yet, due to their organisational abilities and their leverage, patrons seem to be one of the most prominent segments. Women in particular, thanks to nature of the role assigned to them, oftentimes seem to be more free to move among circles of people and to weave together relationships, influence those who have decisional power, encourage their protégés and friends, provide both financial and intellectual support, paving thus the way to success for many musicians and composers.

2.3 COLLECTING, TRANSMISSION AND CIRCULATION

Much similarly to the previously analysed case of the salonnières as mediators, it can be claimed that patrons and therefore *salonnières* too did not end their function with just the mediation. They indeed partook in several other initiatives that they cannot be framed as just "mediation", albeit one of their aspects is exactly that.

In the first place there is their support of institutions and foundations. In a time in which governmental subsidies were not always handed out and in countries that have a long tradition of private funding, such as America, patronage assumes a role of paramount relevance. The beneficiaries of these sponsorships were not only the organisations themselves, but the community at large, who could profit from their survival in cultural and educational terms. Although it welcomed a public of amateurs and music lovers who paid fees in order to attend to the performances and be able to socialise with the musicians, the Société nationale de musique (the music national Society) in France relied also on private contributions, such as that of the Maison Pleyel, a prestigious and renown piano manufacturing firm[507]. By virtue of a letter of thanks, it is known that in 1911 Gustave Lyon, the director of said firm, donated to the Société one thousand francs[508]. Pièrre de Bréville, the president at the time, in expressing the gratitude of the Société towards Gustave Lyon and his firm, highlights the weight of the very act of patronage. «Vous savez que, sans votre aide, sans l'aide de la Maison Pleyel qui l'a soutenue depuis sa fondation, elle ne pourrait accomplir son oeuvre» («You know that, without your aid, without the aid of the Maison Pleyel that has supported it since its foundation, it could not accomplish its purpose»)[509]. Since the Maison Pleyel not only funded the association, but also provided it a hall in which its members could gather and perform, thirty years later he went on saying that: «L'histoire de

[507] Chimènes 2004, p. 518
[508] Ivi, pp. 518-519
[509] Letter of Pièrre de Bréville to Gustave Lyon, 12 July 1911 (private collection); Chimènes 2004, p. 519

la Société nationale est intimement liée à celle de la salle Pleyel où elle n'a cessé d'être généreusement accueillie» («The history of the Société nationale it's intimately connected to the one of the Pleyel hall, where it never ceased to be welcomed»)[510]. This is significative of the power that patronage could have on the stability and longevity of an institution. Patrons' constant contributions not only allowed these organisations to flourish and to keep pursuing their vision, but also provided a margin of equilibrium and allowed them to have continuity in the time.

One sore spot of these institutions is that the revenue they generate by the ticket sales and subscription is seldomly sufficient to guarantee their sustainability. One such example is that of the Société Musicale Indépendante (The Independent Musical Society), which, unlike the Société nationale, welcomed among its corporate members strictly musicians and people invited by them[511]. Its public, for the most part and aside from the ticket fees, did not financially aid the organisation. The economical support came, indeed, mainly from the composers that were members of the Société[512]. One of their major patrons was Léo Sachs, an affluent composer, who until his death covered most of the shortfalls of the association[513]. One of the members of the founding committee, Charles Koechlin, indeed admits in fact that his aid guaranteed the balance of their budget, which had become instable due to the fluctuating number of subscriptions[514].

A second patronage activity is that of the bequest and therefore the transmission of not only one's legacy, but also the values, the ideas and at times the musical materials one owned. This is a mean to perpetuate one's passion and to transmit them to future generations. This is a farsighted approach that avoids the dispersion of the knowledge and of the patronage efforts after the patron's death. The main way to achieve such an objective is through the institution of the foundations. This is a practice that originated in the Twentieth century, since the fortunes produced and accumulated during the previous century through the industrial revolution allowed both nobles and especially bourgeoises – especially in America – to have a capital that exceeded what their expenses, even those related to their philanthropic and patronage acts[515]. This meant that many mélomanes decided to channel their assets towards the constitution of bodies that could be beneficial in the support of the musical field. In America this was furthermore facilitated in the Twentieth century by the introduction of income tax, inheritance tax and the tax-exempt status[516].

[510] Letter of Pièrre de Bréville to Gustave Lyon, 21 March 1931 (private collection); Chimènes 2004, p. 518
[511] Chimènes 2004, p. 523
[512] Ivi, p. 524
[513] Ibidem.
[514] Ibidem.
[515] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 30
[516] Ivi, p. 31

Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge is a prime example of the philosophy of passing along one own's legacy to younger generations and of giving solid foundations to one's patronage activities. She understood that, in order to guarantee durability and longevity to a venture, it needed to set up into an institutional and impersonal body, which had to avoid as much as possible to rely on the good will of a single individual[517]. She founded, thus, her homonymous foundation, through which she was able to establish a program meant to bring «the finest of music and musicians into colleges, universities, and libraries from coast to coast, and always free of charge»[518]. Although this resembles more to a trust fund than an actual, material foundation, the values on which it was instituted and its activities are very similar.

Another celebre foundation is the Singer-Polignac one. It was created as a charitable institution, whose purpose was that of supporting not only the arts, but also the sciences[519]. Winnaretta Singer too understood the role of institutions founded by privates as bodies appointed to provide for culture in the case the government did not manage to do it[520]. Although she planned for it to support archaeology and the science disciplines, she dedicated a non indifferent part of it to music activities[521]. She, in fact, donated an additional amount of 1.5 million francs in order for the foundation to bear her name and to remunerate Nadia Boulanger, who took care of the direction of the musical activities of the foundation[522]. To this day, the Foundation is still active and its main object of attention keeps being music. It in fact organises musical events, soirées and gatherings, but it is especially focused on the setting up of an artistic residence that welcomes composers, soloists and groups and allows them to realise and present their projects[523].

Therefore, the relevance of patronage acts, such as the foundation acts of institutions like these, is undeniable, in that the ramifications of the will that created them have effects on the musical field to this day still.

Lastly, one other venture through which patrons managed the circulation of culture was through education. There are two case studies that allow to analyse this phenomenon through different perspectives in terms of dynamics and range. The first one is that of Jeannette Meyer Thurber (1850–1946), while the second one is that of Henriette Voigt. Jeannette Meyer Thurber's approach to this purpose was one framed within an institutional perspective. She in fact established the National Conservatory of Music of America in New York City in 1885[524]. What made her project really innovative

[517] Barr 1997, p. 191
[518] Ivi, p. 193
[519] Kahan 2003, p. 258
[520] Ivi, p. 267
[521] Ivi, p. 267, p. 269, p. 327, p. 347
[522] Ivi, pp. 367-368
[523] https://www.singer-polignac.org/fr/la-fondation
[524] Rubin 1997, p. 147

and revolutionary for the time was the inclusion of female students and minorities[525]. The disregard for gender and race in favour of the acknowledgement and cultivation of students' talent makes of this institution a prime example of the boundless possibilities that she offered to musicians in training through her mindset. Composers Maurice Arnold, Edward Bolin and Will Marion Cook are just a part of most renown African-American musicians who graduated from her conservatory[526]. As already said, women were welcomed too in this institution: this is the case of black soprano Sissieretta Jones, who performed with the chorus and the orchestra of the same institute[527]. Nonetheless, her merit does not end with this. Her recognition is also due to the illuminated idea of a special mission intended to seek out and motivate talented students, regardless of their background, and to subsidise them through private contributions[528]. Hence, the National Conservatory became the first institution in the United States to target and support students – such as minorities, women and disabled people – that were usually either rejected or neglected by the other organisations. This initiative was directly inspired from the French system, whose government provided for the expenses of musical schooling[529].

Conversely, the case of Henriette Voigt shows another modality of education and transmission of knowledge. From the account of her husband it is known that she started to give piano lessons as a way to have an additional income and thus sustain their family in a period in which Carl Voigt's business was still in uncertain waters[530]. When Voigt's business finances stabilized and he did not fear anymore the peril of shortfalls, he had asked his wife to interrupt her activity as a piano teacher. Yet, she counteroffered to keep doing it, but for free, especially for less affluent girls[531]. This raises the two following considerations. Her lessons were very popular among young girls who needed musical schooling, so much so that the sessions with her became a stepping stone for some well-known musicians, such as Clara Schumann, Therese Spohr and Emilie Werner[532]. At the same time, in order to preserve her reputation and keep this activity going, she had to do it without compensation, so much so that when referring to it her husband insisted on the gratuitousness of the lessons and of the lack of economic possibilities of her students[533]. It is undeniable that she enjoyed so much her work as a teacher that she was willing to charge no fees as long as she was allowed to keep having students. Yet again, the conditions under which she pursued this act of patronage might rise questions about its authenticity. How much can it be considered patronage when it was somewhat of a forced decision?

[525] Ivi, p. 148
[526] Ibidem.
[527] Ibidem.
[528] Ibidem.
[529] Ibidem.
[530] C. Voigt, Biography, S. 24f., D-LEsm: MT/2011/77; Gerber 2016, p. 52
[531] Ibidem.
[532] Gerber 2016, p. 53
[533] Ivi, p. 52

The multiplicity of her activities as *Musikförderin* might prove the fact that education was one, among many, of the ventures she undertook as a patron and thus shows the broad range of initiatives through which patrons could operate. Education too was thus a mean not only to support young musicians, but also to spread ideas and knowledge.

It can be thereby affirmed that patronage, as already argued by Ruhbaum and later Gerber, encompasses a series of actions and activities that go well beyond the "mere" economical assistance of either novice or established musicians, but involved also the support of institutions and of future generations, the attention towards the tutelage of the legacies left, and the education, which allowed to hand down knowledge and cultivate minds.

2.4 THE EVOLUTION OF PATRONAGE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

One of the critical issues in the history of patronage is its evolution, especially in the Twentieth century. Two main points, which are linked by a cause-effect relationship, have been observed: the introduction of new ways of enjoying music and sociability and the evolution of patronage practices.

The first is directly linked to the technological developments in the field of music: in the last decades of the Nineteenth century the first attempts at music recording were attempted. The first one, done by Léon Scott de Martinville in 1857, was the phonautograph and allowed only to record and transcribe sounds without being able to play them back. It was only twenty years later with Edison's phonograph that it was possible to accomplish the reverse process. Two decades later, Emil Berliner made further progress in this field by broadening the scope of these first inventions: he produced the first blank tapes in the shape of a disk. These disks would later become suitable and increasingly employed in home reproduction. This progressively democratised the access to music enjoyment, thus popularising it. People who could not afford to frequently attend concerts or who simply wanted to be able to listen to their favourite music in the comfort of their own houses had become able to do it. It is important to remember that unlike today, though, the first records could contain only one track and that albeit they contributed to the increased diffusion of classical music, they were not always an easily accessible tool to everyone. The lower strata of the population not always could afford it and in the event that they did, not always had gramophones. Yet, the introduction of the home radio in 1925 may have rendered the democratisation of the enjoyment of classical music and opera more attainable to them[534]. Still, as Locke[535] already pointed out, classical music and opera were genres subjected to a "sacralisation".

[534] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 28
[535] Cfr. Locke 1993

Since attending concerts and opera events was affordable mostly only to people belonging to higher or at least wealthier classes, it is reasonable to imagine that in some cases those who could not afford to go to these type of events might not have been interested in acquiring a disk of music they were not familiar with or that they felt pertained to a world from which they were excluded. Still, as it is emphasised by Locke and Barr, the changes in demographic and socio-cultural patterns and the industrialisation effects in America – although this reasoning can be applied to an extent to Europe too – along with the "modernisation" of the musical life of the time, made for an extension of the possibilities for classes other than the wealthiest ones to access and participate to theatrical events[536].

The new practices of enjoyment of music can also be viewed under the lens of the production process. As defined by Zagorski-Thomas[537] «audio recording uses a mechanical process to translate the vibration of air molecules at a particular place […] into a representational system that allows other transducers […] to recreate similar vibrations of air molecules in a different place and time». Recording technologies have always been striving in order to achieve the highest fidelity, a sound reproduction that, to the human ear, would have been as close as possible to reality[538]. He agues that, although, nowadays record production has achieved this outcome, the aforementioned definition does not take into consideration other aspects of the process of hearing[539]. He affirms, indeed, that «the 'realism' of recorded music is very limited. Indeed, many forms of musical recording are about creating something that is clearer and more impactful than the original moment – or they are about creating something that is an idealized version of a musical idea»[540]. It is, in fact, true that even in the beginning, musicians and producers experimented largely with this new mean of music production. It does not only offer possibilities oriented towards a "realism", a "perfection" of both the sound and the performance, but also chances to try out new ways of making music. The process of making music was not only "live" anymore: performers could decide to record themselves in a studio and this implied that there would occur a change not only in the modes of listening to music, but also in those of performativity. Since this kind of music production entailed two steps before the release of their performance – the recording and the production process – certain musicians started thus to manipulate and test new ways of producing music. The creative process too changed. An example of this branching out from the traditional way of making music is offered by French composer Edgard Varèse. Thanks to the new developments in the music industry he was able to make some experiments, such as playing backwards gramophone records. Paul Hindemith too made experiments in this sense: he was the father of a

[536] Locke, Barr 1997, pp. 28-29
[537] Zagorski-Thomas 2020, p. 8
[538] Ibidem.
[539] Ibidem.
[540] Ibidem.

precocious attempt at overdubbing. In 1930, his *Trickaufnahme* was the outcome of the recording of two turntables playing two different disks at the same time. Overdubbing came in handy to Lennie Tristano too, as twenty-five years later he would use this technique to overdub four piano rhythms for his composition *Turkish Mambo*. This operation has been possible only through overdubbing, as it would not have been possible for him alone to play those four rhythms simultaneously. Pierre Schaffer, on the other hand, not only was the pioneering inventor of loop, but also took advantage of the means of radio to show to the public his *Étude aux chemins de fer*, which was a piece composed by only railroad and train station noises.

Hence, it can be affirmed that the introduction of music recording innovated the process of making music. Furthermore, not only did it offer the chance to experiment and to benefit from the technology, but also made for new pioneering movements in music that branched out from the traditional ones. Notwithstanding that, as pointed out by Locke and Barr, on one hand «the rise of technology in the service of the consumption principle just mentioned has resulted in a shift away from "live" and participatory music making and toward listening to recordings»[541]. Albeit this holds still true, it can be argued that the shift that took place was not from one participatory model to a more passive one, but from a participatory model to another. Indeed, the production process was not the only one affected by these novel developments. In fact, they engendered the birth of new professional figures that collaborated with the artists, such as those of the sound and the record engineer. The creative and productive processes were, thus, not the effort of a single individual, but a concerted one involving multiple figures, who had different and specialised formations. As for the participatory act of the audience, Locke and Barr's statement is irrefutable: attending a performance in presence cannot be compared to the one of listening a recorded reproduction, in that this latter one denies a fully immersive experience. The removal from the traditional environments of the operatic and musical experience might deprive the listener of the typical features that characterise these events and their consumption. Abercrombie and Longhurst argue further, adding that media and audience activities play a significant role of the new media and of the audience activities in the social processes and interactions[542]. Although their study is revolves around more recent musical activities and media, it sheds a light on the evolution of consumption and thus on the possibilities offered in the analysis of audience engagement. They, indeed, identify three types of audience: simple, diffused and mass audience. Each of them performs different paradigms of consumption and therefore require different approaches to their investigation[543]. This is another consequence of the development of the means of

[541] Locke, Barr 1997, p. 28
[542] Abercrombie, Longhurst 1998, p. 174
[543] Cfr. Abercrombie, Longhurst 1998

music making and distribution, in that they engender the birth of a novel audience category and market and, thus, ground-breaking ways of audience engagement.

The personality of the patron changed and shifted too. It had to adapt to both the evolution of the role of the woman and to the change in the consumption patterns. The emancipation of women, their increasing access to the studies and to job positions and the emergence of new models to which they could refer – although at various times subjected to either setbacks or impasses – to made for a growth of the personality of the female patron throughout the Twentieth century. As it emerged from the interview with Sonia Finzi, this called, especially during the last decades of the last century – for a modernisation in the patronage patterns. Patronage, albeit oftentimes and frequently performed as a private act still to this day, started to concretise their support into institutions. The salon – which might be considered an institution in and of itself – faded away and gave way to other paradigms.

Thereby, in the Twentieth century the music field, much as the art one, is subjected to changes at several levels. The democratisation to the enjoyment of music and the diffusion and consumption, even among more "refined", traditionally high classes of innovative ways of making music, which distance themselves from the established ones, gives rise to the "omnivorousness"[544] in the cultural consumption of the various classes and thus produces a «transition in the cultural stratification system of the Euro-American West»[545]. He maintains that, although Bourdieu's model of distinction survives as one of the fundamental definers of cultural products, the same cannot be affirmed in regards of cultural stratification – which begins to disappear – based on social status. Furthermore, the institutionalisation of culture and its diffusion by means of institutions, which are always either influenced by or connected to the market, aids these widespread democratisation and omnivorousness of the cultural product even in the musical field[546].

It can thus be claimed that the alteration in the relationship with both the enjoyment and the production of music shifted the paradigms of patronage, so much so that it had to readapt to the new directions in which the music field was evolving. It is therefore undeniable that the changes occurred involved the music as much as the social domains, in that the developments brought forward by the latest innovations pushed, along with other factors of historic and economic nature, the society and its approach to music towards a novel narrative.

[544] Cultural Omnivorousness lemma (Oxford Bibliographies)
[545] Lizardo 2008, p. 5
[546] Ibidem.

CHAPTER III

3.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDY: INTERVIEW TO SONIA GUETTA FINZI

Come ha vissuto questa passione per la musica in famiglia?

Ci sono due famiglie che importanti nella Venezia ebraica dell'inizio del secolo che si incontrano. Massimo Guetta, che è il capostipite della famiglia della mia mamma, e Vittorio Friedenberg, che è il capostipite della famiglia di mio padre. Entrambi vengono da due realtà proiettate verso l'internazionalità. Soprattutto il nonno Vittorio, che non viene da una realtà italiana, bensì dall'impero austro dall'impero austro ungarico in una delle cittadine che adesso fa parte credo dell'ex Cecoslovacchia. Il nonno Guetta, di cui abbiamo notizia solo fino a suo padre, Benedetto, probabilmente, ma non ve n'è certezza, viene da "ghetto". Le due famiglie si distinguono nell'ebraismo l'una – Guetta – per essere sefardita, ossia proveniva dalla Spagna, cacciati da Isabella la Cattolica, finiti nel Nordafrica e dal Nordafrica arrivati a Venezia; l'altra - Friedenberg - era aschenazita, cioè di origine germanica, perché appunto aveva origini nell'Impero Austroungarico. In particolare, il nonno Vittorio è arrivato a Venezia e si è iscritto come uditore all'università di Ca' Foscari perché non aveva neanche un denaro per pagarsi l'università. Questi sono i due capostipiti che, dotati di grande ingegno, hanno poi reso le loro famiglie due potenze economiche.

La mia fortuna è stata, appunto, di nascere in queste famiglie che erano molto internazionali: era proprio la Mittel Europa. Io ho vissuto attraverso la mia nonna e poi la mia mamma la vera Mittel Europa. Tutte le conoscenze che ho avuto io alla fine erano legate a questo retaggio. Infatti, anche la mia nonna materna nasce a Bucarest da un padre avvocato molto noto, Adolph Stern, che muore prima delle leggi razziali ed è un grande uomo perché fece molto sia nella sua vita privata sia per la comunità ebraica. L'avvocato Stern - lo si trova anche nell'*Enciclopedia Giudaica* - si era laureato in giurisprudenza a Berlino, apre dunque uno studio legale, fonda poi la grande sinagoga di Bucarest ed è il primo ebreo nella Duma in Romania. È però noto per aver messo in luce la comunità ebraica romena, che fino ad allora non era ben vista, dandole una struttura. Fece ciò attraverso uno scambio epistolare molto importante, che io ho recuperato all'Istituto Veneto da poco, con il ministro Luzzatti, il quale era ebreo a sua volta, italiano e ministro del Regno. Essi si sono scambiati delle lettere sulla situazione ebraica, diciamo, mondiale. Lui aveva anche rapporti con Clemenceau, uomo di Stato francese molto importante che ha sempre difeso la situazione degli ebrei francesi. Per cui il bisnonno Stern, sionista convinto, era una personalità rilevante: era il presidente della comunità ebraica di

Bucarest. Portò avanti la sua attività non solo attraverso il suo studio legale, ma anche con i suoi figli. Una di essi era mia nonna Marietta, la quale, appassionata di musica, viene a studiare pianoforte con Casella. Il nonno Leo Guetta si innamora della nonna a Roma: entrambi appassionati di musica; come già detto la nonna prendeva lezioni da Casella, mentre il nonno ne era amico a tal punto che fecero addirittura un duo. Il nonno Leo, essendo già partito da questa famiglia molto in vista e anche molto danarosa, aveva ricevuto in dono da suo padre uno stradivari che era "Caterina" - di cui ho tutta la documentazione - e lo usa fino alla morte a Ginevra. La storia di questo violino è molto affascinante: Caterina di Russia aveva ordinato a Stradivari questo strumento per donarlo al suo amante. Il nonno aveva anche altri strumenti, tuttavia la documentazione scritta al riguardo è davvero scarsissima. Una delle poche testimonianze scritte che si hanno sulla mia famiglia riguarda Adolph Stern: ha tradotto Shakespeare in romeno.

Per quanto riguarda la vita nei salotti, cosa mi potrebbe raccontare?

La vita nei salotti, che già documentata da una famosa scrittrice - Maria Damerini ne "Gli ultimi anni del Leone" - la quale afferma che si faceva magnifica musica nel salotto di casa Guetta presso palazzo Gambara. Inoltre, noi eravamo anche parenti di Ugo Levi: nonno Finzi era suo cugino. Quest'ultimo suonava il pianoforte e anche lui faceva musica a casa: era tutto un po' in famiglia. Mentre i nonni Guetta ad un certo punto delle loro vite erano concertisti, mia nonna materna ha svolto il ruolo di presidente di Amici della Musica. Sono quindi vissuta proprio questo ambiente. Mi ricordo di un giovane Mario Messinis a casa di questa Bianca Coen, nostra cugina e a sua volta mecenate. Lei ha aiutato diversi musicisti, tra cui il Quartetto Italiano, di cui noi conoscevamo Franco Rossi. Dunque io ricordo musica in casa di Bianca: c'erano Messinis, Lorenzi e diversi altri. Il côté musicale veneziano si riuniva anche lì. Parlando di salotti io sono andata in epoche un po' più vicine a me, tuttavia se vogliamo rievocare delle storie familiari, mia madre mi raccontava che il nonno col suo violino andava a Palazzo da Mula, chiamato dalla contessa Morosini, uno dei grandi personaggi veneziani che raccoglieva intorno a sé il bello della città: pittori, artisti, musicisti.

Tornando a epoche più recenti, Bianca Coen e mio nonno hanno sostenuto agli studi Bruno Maderna. A un convegno riguardo Maderna di Maria Ida de Benedictis - probabilmente la maggior conoscitrice dello stesso - presso il conservatorio, ho identificato una lettera firmata Max Coen, fino ad allora sconosciuto, in quanto lui è mio cugino. Egli durante la guerra era scappato a Londra e da lì cercava di organizzare un concerto per Maderna. Di nuovo c'è una sorta di aggancio con la città, in quanto Bruno Maderna era veneziano e in quanto il gruppo che lo ha sostenuto era composto per la maggior parte da ebrei. C'era dunque un côté di ebraismo colto molto, molto forte e altrettanto noto in città: i Sarfatti, i Levi, i Guetta, i Friedenberg, i Pardo sono solo alcuni dei cognomi che costituivano questo

gruppo. Tutti questi cognomi dimostrano che la comunità ebraica veneziana era una società molto colta. Per quanto riguarda la mia famiglia, il nonno Vittorio è stato uno dei palchettisti della Fenice: è presente, infatti, il suo nome all'ingresso del teatro. Questo è l'ambiente in cui mia sorella e io siamo cresciute e io però con la piena convinzione che tutto quello che è cultura va aiutato. Va aiutato perché in fondo vediamo che tuttora Venezia avrebbe molto più bisogno di sostegno. Ad esempio, nonostante il lavoro dei comitati, ciò che riceve la città sono tutte piccole gocce rispetto alle sue necessità reali. L'aiuto che viene dal privato deve cercare di raggiungere il suo obiettivo al più presto possibile. Io, ormai, avendo vissuto sempre in queste istituzioni statali e comunali, vedo quanto è complicato fare delle donazioni, per cui effettivamente bisognerebbe inventare qualche stratagemma per cui il privato possa donare realizzando al più presto l'obiettivo della sua donazione. Ad esempio, a noi è andata bene quando uno dei Guetta, un cugino di mia madre, di cui io e mia sorella siamo eredi, ha lasciato una collezione di arte orientale che noi abbiamo donato al Museo d'Arte Orientale che ora è in mostra. Questo è stato possibile grazie a dei funzionari meravigliosi che hanno agito immediatamente. Ecco, questa è stata una delle nostre azioni di mecenatismo, se vogliamo tornare all'idea di mecenatismo, a quello che io penso debba essere, potendo fare dei doni o dei doni in denaro. Faccio anche parte del Seroptimis Club, che è un club femminile, con cui abbiamo effettuato dei restauri e ho potuto donare degli oggetti alla Fondazione Querini. La mia forma mentis è la seguente: aiutare la cultura il più possibile. Ciò mi è stato proprio, come dire, iniettato dalla famiglia. L'idea di avere le possibilità e di metterle a disposizione della cultura è nata in seno alla mia famiglia.

Come ha detto Lei appunto non si tratta semplicemente di concentrarsi sulla specifica collezione di arte o su sul restauro, ma l'avere una visione più globale, come ad esempio permettere l'accessibilità alle istituzioni culturali e la fruizione della cultura stessa al più ampio pubblico possibile, rivolgendo uno sguardo attento anche alle barriere architettoniche e alle problematiche sociali.

Esatto. Avendo ricoperto il ruolo di direttore di biblioteca prima e di museo poi, la mia ottica è chiaramente rivolta al pubblico e non, come si suol dire, al mio ombelico. Perciò ritengo importante fare tutto il possibile per agevolare il rapporto con il pubblico, che tuttavia è sempre una questione molto delicata e critica. Ampliare e favorire il più possibile l'accessibilità del pubblico è uno dei primi obiettivi su cui è necessario focalizzarsi. Cerco sempre nuove soluzioni in questo senso. È anche parte del mio carattere ed è qualcosa che va ben oltre il mio amore per la musica. Assieme a Vitale Fano – il cui nonno era un compositore – sette anni fa abbiamo fondato Musikàmera. Anche in ciò ho ritrovato il modo di vivere la musica e la cultura tipico della mia famiglia.

Lei mi ha detto che per voi era normale vivere la realtà dei salotti e dell'incontro. Come si ricorda il momento di cesura in cui è sparita questa pratica?

Io ho vissuto molto gli anni Sessanta e Settanta, che sono state le ultime decadi in cui questa tradizione ha continuato a essere portata avanti fino a cadere poi in disuso. Tuttavia, per capire la cesura fra ciò che è stato il momento di auge dei salotti novecenteschi e il loro declino, è necessario ripercorrere le memorie di mia nonna e di mia madre. Mia nonna ha avuto una vita particolarmente ricca di avvenimenti. È nata a Bucarest, dopo il breve matrimonio con mio nonno, lei ha continuato la sua attività di pianista ed è rientrata in Romania. Una volta rientrata a Venezia ha aperto il suo salotto presso San Sebastiano. Ricordo Paloma Picasso, Françoise Gilot, Mircea Eliade, Arthur Rubinstein, il quale spesso andava a trovare il mio bisnonno. Ho vissuto molto questo momento di vivacità artistica quando la nonna è tornata a Venezia, in particolare perché lei ha lavorato parecchio per il padiglione americano. Grazie a lei ho avuto la possibilità di conoscere diversi pittori della Pop Art, come Georgia O'Keeffe. Questo avvenne negli anni Sessanta e Settanta, che a mio parere sono stati il momento clou.

La sala in cui siamo sedute noi ora è la stessa in cui mia mamma ha dato ricevimenti nei tempi della Pop Art a cui i grandi del movimento come Leo Castelli e Françoise Zonabend hanno partecipato. Un aneddoto divertente è che proprio loro due, durante una di queste serate, chiesero a mia madre un luogo tranquillo, in quanto il resto della casa era talmente affollato che i due non riuscivano a parlarsi. Dove hanno trovato il luogo tranquillo? Nella stanza da bagno! Non c'era altro posto libero per via del gran numero di invitati.

Penso che il declino sia in parte dovuto al cambiamento del modo di vivere e di incontrarsi, perché forse gli artisti adesso si incontrano in altri modi, con altre persone. Invece, quella volta noi conoscevamo i nostri pittori dell'Accademia di Belle Arti: allora c'erano Emilio Vedova, Alberto Viani, Giuseppe Santomaso, che era amico sia di mia nonna sia di Penny Guggenheim. C'era tutta la liaison con Peggy Guggenheim stessa; lei e mia madre si conoscevano. Non c'era l'abitudine di far fare una firma o di documentare questi incontri. Resta solo un ricordo nelle nostre menti.

Immagino che fosse una realtà così abituale e naturale che non si sentiva la necessità di documentarla come momento storico.

Infatti. Fortunatamente io ho ancora qualche testimonianza scritta e qualche foto. Tuttavia essendo la nostra normalità probabilmente non si avvertiva la necessità di registrare questi avvenimenti. Come dicevo prima ormai resta solamente la memoria. Ogni anno come presidente di Musikàmera mi chiedono di scrivere un mio parere sull'opera sul Gazzettino. Quest'anno l'opera era *Falstaff*. Ho scritto che proprio in questa sala, ben nascosto da quel mobile cinquecentesco, c'era un apparecchio Grundig e lì io, quando ero piccola, ascoltavo coi miei seduti qua i dischi diretti da Toscanini che ci arrivavano dall'America dal mio zio - che era appunto scappato in America a causa delle leggi razziali - che ci mandava i vecchi dischi della casa discografica con cui Toscanini registrava. Io conosco il Falstaff a

memoria. Questa è stata la mia infanzia. Ero iscritta agli Amici della Musica, assistevo ai concerti del nonno, ho suonato in maniera dilettantistica il pianoforte, mi sono laureata in storia dell'arte. Ho vissuto così il mio grande amore per la musica. Questa è la mia vita e continuo a occuparmene.

How did you live dis love for music in your family?

There are two important families in Jewish Venice of the beginning of the century that meet. Massimo Guetta, who is the ancestor of my mother's family, and Vittorio Friedenberg, who is the forefather of my father's family. Both come from realities projected towards internationality. Especially grandfather Vittorio, who doesn't come from an Italian reality, but from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, from one of the towns that now is part of the previous Czechoslovakia. The surname of grandfather Guetta, whose family tree can be traced back only to his father, Benedetto, probably but not for certain, derives from the word "ghetto". The two families distinguish themselves in Judaism one – Guetta – for being Sephardic, namely fleeing from Spain after being banished by Isabel the Catholic, having gone to North Africa and then to Venice; the other – Friedenberg – was Ashkenazi, that is of Germanic origins, because it had its roots in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Notably, grandfather Vittorio arrived in Venice and enrolled at Ca' Foscari university as an auditor, because he had no money to pay university fees. These two are the ancestor, who with great talent, made their families two economic giants.

My luck was, indeed, to be born to these families, which were very international: this was precisely the Mittel Europa. Thanks to my grandmother and then my mother I lived the Mittel Europa spirit. All the knowledge that I have is due to this legacy.

My maternal grandmother was born in Bucharest to a famous lawyer, Adolph Stern, who dies before the racial laws and who was a great man, because he accomplished much in his private life and for the Jewish community. Lawyer Stern – who can be found also in the *Enciclopedia Giudaica* – graduated in law in Berlin, set up a legal practice, founded then the great synagogue of Bucharest and was the first Jew in the Duma of Romania. Most of all, though, he is known for having shed a light on the Romanian Jewish community, which at the time was disliked, and gave it a structure. He did so through an epistolary exchange with Luzzati, who was likewise Jew, Italian and a minister of the Kingdom of Italy. They wrote to each other regarding the Jewish question at a, let's say, global level. He had also relations with Clemenceau, a very important French statesman who had always defended the French Jewish cause. Therefore, great-grandfather Stern, a committed Zionist, was a relevant figure: he was the president of the Jewish community of Bucharest. He carried on his activity not only with his legal firm, but also with his children. One of them was my grandmother Marietta, who, being a music enthusiast, went to learn to play the piano with Casella. My grandfather Leo Guetta fell in love with her in Rome: both loved music; as I already said, my grandmother took lessons from Casella, while my grandfather

was a friend of his so much so that they formed a duo. Grandfather Leo, coming from this well-known and wealthy family, had received as a gift from his father a Stradivari called “Caterina” – of which I have the documentation – and he played it until his death in Geneva. The history of this instrument is really fascinating: Catherine the Great had commissioned this violin to Stradivari so that she could gift it to her lover. My grandfather had also other instruments, although the written documentation is very scarce. One of the few written evidences I have on my family concerns Adolph Stern: he translated Shakespeare into Romanian.

What could you tell me about the salons?

Life in the salons was already documented by famous writer Maria Damerini in “Gli ultimi anni del Leone” who affirms that magnific music was played in the salon of house Guetta in Palazzo Gambara. Moreover, we were also relatives of Ugo Levi: grandfather Finzi was his cousin. This latter one played the piano and he too performed music at home: it happened all in the family. Whereas the grandparents Guetta at a point in their lives had become concertists, my maternal grandmother covered the role of president of Amici della Musica. Thus, I lived precisely in this cultural environment. I remember a young Mario Messinis at Bianca Coen’s house – she was our cousin and a patron. She helped many musicians, among whom the Quartetto Italiano, of which we know Franco Rossi. I remember that music was performed at Bianca’s place: there were Messinis, Lorenzi and many others. The venetian musical circle gathered also there. Concerning salons I have talked about times near my own, but if we wish to recall family stories, my mother told me that my grandfather, called by countess Morosini, went with his violin at Palazzo da Mula, one of the great venetian personalities who gathered around her the best of the city: painters, artists, musicians.

Going back to more recent times, Bianca Coen and my grandfather supported the studies of Bruno Maderna. At a conference on him by Maria Ida de Benedictis – probably one of the major connoisseurs of him – at the conservatory, I identified a letter signed Max Coen - unknown up until then - thanks to the fact that he’s my cousin. During the war he fled to London and from there tried to organise a concert for Maderna. Again there is a sort of link with the city of Venice, in that Maderna was venetian and the group which supported him was composed mainly by Jews. Hence, there was a cultural side of cultured Jews very strong and very known in Venice: Sarfatti, Levi, Guetta, Friedenberg, Pardo are just a few surnames composing this group. All these surnames show that the Jewish venetian community was a very well-read one. As for my family, grandfather Vittorio was one of the box-holders of La Fenice: his name is indeed present at the entrance of the theatre. This is the environment in which my sister and I grew up; I had the absolute belief that all that is culture needs to be supported. It needs to be helped, because, as we see, still today Venice requires this assistance. For example,

notwithstanding the contribution of the committees, what the city gets are only little things with respect to its needs. Private support has to try and reach its objective as soon as possible. Having always worked within statal and town institutions I see how complicated making donations can be, therefore one should find some stratagems in order for the private donors to make donations and reach their aims as quickly as possible. For example, it went good for us when one the Guetta, a cousin of my mother, bequeathed my sister and me a collection of oriental art which we donated to the Museum of Oriental Art and now it is exhibited there. This was made possible thanks to brilliant officials who acted immediately. This was in a sense an act of patronage on our part if we want to circle back to the patronage idea, at what I think it should be, when one had the possibility to make some gifts or give money. I also am part of the Seroptimis Club, a women's club, with which we made some restaurations and I was able to donate some objects to the Querini Foundation. My forma mentis is as follows: support the culture as much as possible. This was instilled into me by my family. The idea of having the means and put them at the disposal of culture was born within my family.

How you already said, it is not simply a matter of focusing on the single art collection or on restauration activities, but to have a global vision, like for example to make the accessibility to the cultural institutions and the enjoyment of culture available to the widest public possible, taking also in consideration mobility barriers and social problematics.

Correct. Having covered the role of library director before and of museum director later, my perspective is addressed to the public and not, let's say, to my navel. Therefore I believe it's important to do everything that' possible in order to facilitate the relationship with the public, which is also a very delicate and critic matter. To widen and foster public accessibility is one of the primary objectives to focus on. I always seek solutions in this direction. It's also part of my personality and it's something that goes well beyond my love for music. Seve years ago together with Vitale Fano – whose grandfather was a composer – we founded Musikàmera. It's also in this that I found once more the way - characteristic of my family - to enjoy music and culture.

You told me that the reality of the salons and of the meeting was normalcy. How do you remember the breaking moment in which this practice faded away?

I lived mainly the Sixties and Seventies, which are the last decades in which this practice kept being carried on until it fell into disuse. Nevertheless, in order to understand the breaking point between the acme of Nineteenth Century salons and their decline, it is necessary to retrace the my grandmother's and my mother's memories. My grandmother had a life rich of events. She was born in Bucharest, after her short marriage with my grandfather she continued her activity as a pianist and went back to Romania. Once she came back to Venice she opened her salon in San Sebastiano. I remember Paloma

Picasso, Françoise Gilot, Mircea Eliade, Arthur Rubinstein, who often visited my great-grandfather. I lived this moment of artistic fervour when my grandmother came back to Venice, especially because she worked consistently at the American Pavilion. Thanks to her I had the chance to meet numerous Pop Art painters, like Georgia O'Keeffe. This happened in the Sixties and Seventies, that, in my opinion, were the apex of this season.

The room in which we are seated it's the same in which my mother used to hold parties during the Pop Art period, which were attended by the great names of the movement like Leo Castelli and Françoise Zonabend. A funny anecdote is that these two, during one of these evenings, asked my mother for a quiet place, because the rest of the house was so crowded that it was impossible for the two of them to speak. Which quiet place did they find? The bathroom! Because of the great number of guests there was no other place.

I think that the decline was due to the change in the manner of living and of meeting, because perhaps now the artists meet each other in other ways, with other people. But, at that time we knew personally the artists from the Accademia delle Belle Arti: there were Emilio Vedova, Alberto Viani, Giuseppe Santomaso, who was friends with both my mother and Peggy Guggenheim. There was a sort of connection with Peggy Guggenheim herself: my mother and she knew each other. There was not the habit to make sign a document or to leave trace of these encounters. The memory in our minds is the only thing left.

I presume that this was such an ordinary and natural reality that the necessity of documenting it was not felt.

Indeed. Luckily I still have some written evidence and some pictures. Nevertheless, being this our ordinary life, probably we did not feel the need to record these events. As I said before, there are only the memories left. Every year as the president of Musikàmera I am asked to write a personal review on the opera on the Gazzettino. This year the opera in question was the *Falstaff*. I wrote that precisely in this room, well hidden by a Fifteenth Century piece of furniture, there was a Grundig device and there I, when I was a child, listened with my parents to the disks with music lead by Toscanini, which were delivered to us by my uncle in America. He had fled there to escape the racial laws and from there he sent us the old disks of the record company with which Toscanini worked. I, thus, know the *Falstaff* by heart. This has been my childhood. I was part of Amici della Musica, I attended my grandfather's concerts, as an amateur I plated a bit the piano, I graduated in history of art. I lived like this my love for music and I still keep to take care of it.

3.2 CASE STUDY: OLGA LEVI

In order to have an in-depth insight on the female patronage situation in Venice, it is necessary to provide a case study. One of the struggles is the lack of information and documentation. A part from the information provided by the Levi Foundation, by the interview with Sonia Finzi and by a few articles here and there, little is known of her activity as a patron, whereas more is known of her private life, due to her liaison with poet Gabriele D'Annunzio. It is improbable that new details will be added by my investigation. Thus, the purpose of this research is to gather in an exhaustive dissertation all information known about her and relative to her activities as a patron and to shed light on and further promote her personality, in order to give a face to the group of patrons operating in Venice in the first half of the Twentieth Century.

3.2.1 OVERVIEW OVER HER LIFE

Olga Levi was not native to Venice. She was in fact born in Trieste on the 23rd December 1885 to Isabella Usiglio and Leopoldo Brunner[547]. She too, much like Sonia Finzi Guetta much later, grew up in an environment characteristic of the Mittel Europa. Much like Venice, Trieste too was a very cosmopolitan city: due to its position, it was a melting pot of numerous people. Her family was Jewish. Furthermore, due to her father's pro-Austrian disposition, she grew up in a household which strongly supported and favoured Germanic leanings[548]. Therefore she grew up in an environment where she spoke almost always in German[549]. Still, her knowledge of the languages expanded to English and French, not to mention her mother tongue, Italian[550]. She studied with private teachers and went to the public school only to attend the exams[551]. According to the laws of the Austrian regime concerning women's education, she studied for eight years[552]. After that she learnt to draw, to paint and in particular she studied music[553]. She met and then married on the 8th December 1912, probably through an arranged marriage, venetian Jewish banker Ugo Levi. Although not in love with him, she shared with him - who was a musicologist, a pianist and a harpsichordist[554] - a common love for the music and the arts. Beside his social activity in the salon, he was involved in the Consiglio di Vigilanza first and later in the executive board of the Conservatory Benedetto Marcello and kept collecting through all his life musical documents, scores and manuscripts, so much so that he left to posterity a rich library[555]. Belonging

[547] Vivian 2005, pp. 36-37
[548] Ivi, p. 37
[549] Ibidem.
[550] Ibidem.
[551] Millo 1989, p. 62
[552] Ibidem.
[553] Vivian 2005, p. 37
[554] Busetto 2018a, p. 140
[555] Vivian 2005, p. 37; https://www.canalgrandevenezia.it/index.php/palazzi-canal-grande/lato-destro/171-palazzo-giustinian-lolin

both to Venice high society and to its cultural élite the two spouses had a regular box at the theatres La Fenice and Rossini, attended concerts and theatre events at the conservatory, gave parties and visited friends of equal social and cultural standing[556]. They had often Gabriele D'Annunzio as a guest. He frequented their house not only because of his liaison with Olga Brunner, but also for the pleasure of conversing with the couple - of whom he appreciated the intelligence and the love for music[557] - and for the social and cultural offer their soirées provided him. As a matter of fact, the Levis and D'Annunzio invited each others to meet and attend either concerts at the theatre or soirées at Palazzo Pisani[558]. Oftentimes when D'Annunzio took part at the salons at the Levis' place, there was a pre-decided concert program drafted according to the poet's preferences[559]. In many letters D'Annunzio affirms to have enjoyed many times listening to Olga play the piano and sing[560]. «Più tardi vado a S. Vidal. Venturina mi suona l'*Allegretto* della Settima Sinfonia» («Later I'll go to S. Vidal. Venturina will play the Allegretto of the Seventh Simphony for me») writes D'Annunzio about Olga Levi on the 14th January 1918 in his notebook[561]. And again: «Vorrei rimanere tutto il giorno adagiato e ascoltare il canto di Vidalita e respirare la polvere vivente della melodia, come nel "Pomeriggio d'un Fauno"» («I wish I could spend all day laid down and listen to Vidalita singing and breathe in the living dust of the melody, like in "Pomeriggio d'un Fauno"»)[562]. Although from the epistolary between Olga and D'Annunzio it appears that he was the one writing more about music, while she preferred more romantic subjects[563], it can be inferred from certain excerpts that make reference to her musical performances that, albeit she was not a professional musician, she was so musically trained that she could perform some «pezzo "facile"» («"easy" piece») by Stravinskij[564]. The exchange of cultural capital between the Levis and D'Annunzio was mutual: he was the one who introduced them to the music of Claude Debussy – in honour of whom was performed a concert in the Levis household when he died – and of Alexander Skrjabin[565]. It is safe to presume that such exchanges happened continuously in an environment so culturally rich such as that of the salon. It was not only the artists who benefited of such gatherings and encounters, but also the masters of the house.

[556] Vivian 2005, p. 38-39
[557] Ivi, p. 37-38
[558] Vivian 2015, p. 243
[559] Ibidem.
[560] Vivian 2005, p. 39
[561] D'Annunzio, Taccuini, CXVII, 1918
[562] Lettera del 2 aprile 1918, APV 26540, carta intestata «Io ho quel che ho donato»; Damerini 1993, p. 185; Vivian 2015, pp. 243-244
[563] Uras 2015, p. 71
[564] Lettera a Olga Levi, 18 aprile 1919 (I-GARvi, Archivio Personale, inv. 26788); Uras 2015, p. 72
[565] Vivian 2015, p. 243

The Levis resided in Palazzo Giustinian Lolin - near Canal Grande - and there they held from the 1910s to the 1940s their salon[566]. We know from Zorzi that great soloists of singing, violin and cello, after having spent the evening at the theatre visited the Levis in their home and asked Ugo to accompany them on the piano[567]. Numerous times Olga too performed during these soirées, so much so that, she was defined «apprezzata esecutrice di brani musicali» («much appraised performer of musical pieces»)[568]. Piero Nardi defined her soprano voice[569] as «modesta di volume, ma vellutata e melodiosa» («modest in volume, but velvety and sweet»)[570]. The Levi spouses usually performed a repertoire that ranged from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century[571]. At times they also performed together: they either played the piano four-handed or she sung while he accompanied her[572].

In the autumn of 1943, to escape the effects of the racial laws, they had to flee and sought refuge in the households of the tenant farmers to whom Ugo Levi had rented his properties in the countryside, first in Monastier and then in Meolo[573]. Therefore, they had to close off their salon and interrupt their activities until after they were able to come back. Furthermore, after the war it was difficult for them to regain possession of their palace and goods, hence organising once again visits and salons became a hard feat. According to Maria Damerini[574] after the war both the spouses had lost their liveliness: neither of them sung or performed anymore. Damerini agrees that, although aged, Olga Levi preserved the same grace and finesse that animated her in her youth[575]. This qualities of her character must have been not only among those that intrigued D'Annunzio, but also those who made her a prominent *salonnière*[576].

With no children and aging, they started to search for a way to preserve their library, which consisted of all the musical documents that they – in particular Ugo – collected during their lives[577]. They decided – also perhaps following the example of the birth of the Cini Foundation in 1951 – to create a foundation as well[578]. Pursuant long meetings with the notary Gino Voltolina, the lawyer Enzo Milner and his son Gianni[579] - who would later take care of the development of the Levi Foundation so much

[566] Zorzi 1991, p. 325
[567] Ivi, p. 326
[568] Vivian 2005, p. 39; Cfr. Levi, AGV, LXXXVIII, 4, lettere (s. d.)
[569] Vivian 2015, p. 243
[570] Nardi 1961
[571] Uras 2015, p. 71
[572] Busetto 2018a, p. 141
[573] Busetto 2018a, p. 141; Vivian 2005, p. 38
[574] Damerini 1988, pp. 201-202
[575] Ibidem.
[576] Cfr. Damerini 1992; Cfr. Vivian 2005
[577] Busetto 2018a, p. 142
[578] Ibidem.
[579] Ibidem.

so that he became its president[580] - they redacted each their own will - Ugo's is dated 1957, Olga's 1958 - in which they stated their desire to establish the Foundation in the palace thy inhabited[581]. Olga opposed Ugo's relatives when they tried to dissuade him from this initiative, going as far as declaring the Foundation a «centro di cultura musicale superiore» («centre of superior musical culture»)[582].

Olga Levi died of the consequences of intestinal tumor on the 7th August 1961. Still, Ugo continued their project and officially founded the Foundation on the 14th August 1962.

3.3 OLGA LEVI'S ROLE AS A PATRON

In one of the first talks with Sonia Finzi previous to the interview, she remarked that Olga Levi would not be considered a patron in the strict sense of the term, because, from what is known until now, she did not provide an outright monetary support to the musicians and composers with whom she had contact. Either Bianca Coen, having financially supported Bruno Maderna during his studies, or Winnaretta Singer, with the commissions to her musicians friends and the economical support she provided to them and to other venues, would seem to be better suited candidates to the role of patron as intended in the rigid lexicon sense. However, as it has already been seen with multiple case studies and as Locke and Barr dismantled the limiting definition of patron in 1997, such a notion cannot be considered actual and applicable anymore. Olga Levi's activities cannot be appreciated only singularly nor her effort should be measured just in function of her success in each of them.

Most of the effectiveness of her work probably is due to her role of *salonnière*. It is mainly through that, that she managed to bring together many artists and to contribute to the venetian cultural côté. As it has already been seen, the salon has a centralizing power: it fosters the encounter and the exchange of cultural and social capital, either in a "top-down" manner - with the lady of the house facilitating and mediating the meetings among the participants - or horizontal - with the artists exchanging capitals between each other - or even "bottom-up" - when it was the musician that brought new knowledge and chances of social reciprocation to the patron. This latter instance occurred to Olga Levi herself: it was D'Annunzio who introduced her to the music of Debussy and Skrjabin; he also invited her to listen to Agostini[583]. As for the other two circumstances, it can be presumed that they both happened. The first case is exemplified by venetian singer Antonietta Meneghel, who became known in and thanks to Olga Levi's salon[584]. This, as already seen in the dedicated chapter, is also a

[580] https://www.fondazionelevi.it/la-fondazione/storia/gianni-milner-1926-2005/
[581] Cattin 2008, p. 192
[582] Milner 2008a, p. 232
[583] Uras 2015, p. 72; Vivian 2015, p. 243
[584] Cfr. Anonimo, È morta Olga Levi, in «II Gazzettino», 8 agosto 1961

prime example of her acting out her role of mediator[585]. She further provided a network of support and connections to a young singer who needed to be integrated in the group of his peers and debut quickly. Moreover, enacting her role of mediator, she aided the singer in being recognized not only by her peers, but also by who decided which musicians were valuable in the field[586]. This analysis may be taken even a step further and it might be affirmed that Olga Levi, in a sense, performed a double role: the mediator and that of the individual tasked in recognising the value of Meneghel's music skills. This allowed the singer to gain visibility and to be better positioned in the social strata of the musical field. The second is the case of Italo Montemezzi, who, in order to make arrangements with D'Annunzio for the representation of *La Nave* – one of D'Annunzio's tragedies – at La Scala, upon suggestion of the poet himself, played his proposal for the composition in Olga Levi's salon[587]. This use of her salon, its rituals and what they represented acquired a meaning in its regulars' minds: the idea of a anteroom for success, where the approval of the peers and of the lady of the house may prelude to further accomplishments. Recalling Mukerji[588] it can be affirmed that the specific environment of the salon inscribes a power in the figure of the *salonnière*, to whom the hosts look at as a guardian under whose tutelage they put themselves. The salon, though, as seen in Chimènes[589], had also its rules, which both the host and the guests had to abide to. As already seen, there are even accounts on how the lady of the house had to behave herself. Although very dissimilar from Wagner-Pacifici's study subject[590], it can be drawn a parallel with it, in that the semiotic of the behaviour of the *salonnière* identified her as the lady of the house, the authority in that particular situation. Conversely, also the way of acting of the guests may have contributed to an implicit and tacit "ritual" that consecrated the salon and all its happenings as a determined and powerful space and time.

During the evenings at her house took also place the meeting between pianist Luisa Baccara and D'Annunzio in April 1919[591]. Olga's role, initially unbeknownst to her, went beyond that of the mere patron: she could not have imagined that by inviting and presenting Baccara to D'Annunzio she would inadvertently trigger their attraction for each other and thus facilitate, in a way, their relationship and hamper her own with the poet[592]. In a way this shows the cruel twist of fate to which a patron might have been subjected. The competition with Luisa Baccara made standing up to the challenge harder. Although the motives beside the obvious behind D'Annunzio's infatuation with Baccara will remain

[585] Cfr. Peist 2012
[586] Cfr. Heinich 2009
[587] Damerini 1993, p. 174; Vivian 2015, p. 243
[588] Cfr. Mukerji 1997
[589] Cfr. Chimènes 2004
[590] Cfr. Wagner-Pacifici 2005
[591] Uras 2015, p. 73; Vivian 2005, p. 54
[592] Vivian 2005, p. 54

inscrutable, two elements that put Olga Levi at a disadvantage stand out: compared to Baccara she was not single nor did have a professional career under her belt. Hence, due to the societal norms and expectations of a lady of such standing like her, albeit it is not known if she had ever desired to pursue a professional career, she had not been free to fulfil her passion and realise herself as a musician; furthermore, as a married woman she was tied down and sometimes also "relegated" to her salon and her role of a patron[593]. This is the glaring example of the proverbial other side of the coin. Being a patron and a *salonnière*, despite offering to the women chances to establish themselves, have an outlet for their passions and put their skills and knowledge to use, it was also a limiting role, because it allowed them to achieve only so far in their private lives and ambitions. Regardless of being for all intents and purposes a job, that of the patron and of *salonnière* was never recognised as such at that time.

Yet, her occupation as a patroness was not confined only to that of a salon hostess. Recalling the definitions given by Gerber and Ruhbaum of the functions encompassed by the role of the patron, it can be safely affirmed that Olga Levi held the task of *Musikförderin*. She both supported, encouraged and promoted musicians in her salon and assisted her husband in his collection activity. It is not known which between her and Ugo did have the idea to establish a Foundation, although what is certain is that they stood together in its realisation and that she supported this dream and her husband so much that she opposed his relatives when they tried to discourage him from taking this venture. Moreover, the project of the Foundation was realised thanks to Ugo's as well as Olga's resources and wills; the library and its documents belonged to one as much as the other spouse. She was as much as him an integral and active participant in this enterprise and therefore the act of setting up of their foundation makes her once more a patron.

Lastly, her social engagement through music reaffirms her status as a patron. As it was already mentioned in the first chapter, she was patronnes of a choir society that usually gathered at the Conservatory Benedetto Marcello and of a charitable institution for young female workers. Although the second one is not related to the musical field, her involvement in it shows that to a degree she was interested in gender issues and that she made an effort to be of aid to other women. As Kaminer[594] would point out all this falls under the category of voluntary work, which goes often unrecognised and undocumented. Moreover, as it emerged by Sonia Finzi's statement, for a lady of that standing working for free and not to record her activities was the norm. The need to keep accounts of such ventures - be them salons or the patronage of an institution - was not felt and this lack of documentation was

[593] Ibidem.
[594] Cfr. Kaminer 1984

considered as normal. In fact, besides her will declaring the constitution of the Levi Foundation, very little written evidence of her activities is left.

All this proves that her personality cannot be confined to a single aspect of her work. Even if she may have accomplished quantitatively less acts of patronage as other ladies, such as, for instance, Winnaretta Singer, and even if the information around her and her work is scarce, it is undeniable that she contributed to the cultural development of the city and of the artists that put themselves under her wing.

3.4 SIGNIFICANCE AND CULTURAL LEGACY OF HER WORK IN BOTH THE MUSICOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL FIELD

«The question, then, is not "Is there difference?" or "What's the difference?" but, rather, "How do social life and culture construct the differences that all of us understand and enact in daily life?" For musicologists, as for other scholars of cultural phenomena, this particular line of reasoning may be of great importance: if identities are a matter of social role, we may be able to study the mechanisms including musical ones by which those roles are delineated, communicated, learned, and perhaps challenged»[595]. Contrary to what one might think, musicology and sociology are strictly interconnected. To understand what might be the influence and the weight of Olga Levi's patronage both in the social and musical field, her identity as a patron and her contribution to culture shall be questioned and investigated. Although the most glaringly obvious and tangible contribution she gave to these fields is the Levi Foundation itself, one must not forget that this is only the tip of the iceberg of her dedication to the cause that lasted for more than forty years. Her work in her salon and the involvement with the venetian musical side of the society of the time allowed the realization of many artists, whose names swell the ranks of historiography and whose oeuvres and musical renditions are studied under a musicological perspective. The contributions of these musicians might also be studied - replicating DeNora's work in *Music in everyday life* - under the sociological perspective, offering thus once more an analysis of the effects of their specific music and interpretations of it on the Twentieth Century audience. This might allow scholars in the understanding of what was the role of music as a mediator as intended by Hennion[596]: elements having an agency over the production process of the artistic object. Such a study would be able to present an even more detailed and wider grasp of the processes on which music consumption is built.

[595] Solie 1993, p. 10
[596] Cfr. Hennion 2007

The personality of Olga Levi herself, considered as a subject of study, enriches the fields of both musicology and sociology. Her character, her enthusiasm towards music and her support of culture prompt a broadening of the discourse concerning the actual actors behind the music production process in the first half of the Twentieth Century. It also sheds a light on what really was women's participation in it in the venetian landscape. As it can be observed by this research, the sources on her are exclusively Italian and local ones, some of them are even oral. Personalities - like hers - who did not make an impact on international level, risk to pass into oblivion if the memory of them is not conveniently recorded and transmitted. The scantiness of information and the inadequateness of their circulation poses a serious threat to the accuracy and veracity of the accounts of the Italian cultural panorama. The prevalence of a landscape in which the names that emerge the most are those of better known patrons, such as the already quoted Winnaretta Singer or Pauline von Metternich, or those known in particular at an international level, might engender not only an underrepresentation of the female patronage situation in that particular country, but also a misrepresentation of it. It can be presumed that other less notable patrons might have suffered the same fate of Olga Levi. In fact, it is only thanks to Lucia Vivian's research work that information is known about Olga Levi's formation in her youth and her role as a patron. Nevertheless, there are other scholars who make reference to her in their studies, thereby providing data. Busetto, Cattin, Uras and Maria and Gino Damerini all pass on knowledge about her, some in a more direct way than the others. While Busetto and Cattin focus on her last years and therefore on her role as the founder of her homonymous foundation, the others hand out details about her as they are linked to their main topic: D'Annunzio in Uras and Gino Damerini's case, Venetian cultural bourgeoisie in Maria Damerini's one.

On these grounds it can be therefore stated that Olga Levi's legacy is both a material - in the form of the Foundation - and an intangible one in terms of the benefits that both the artists and the general public drew from her support. Hence, it is of the utmost importance that her personality continues to be studied also outside of the realms of her patronage, in a perspective reminiscent of Locke and Barr's one, in order to, thus, have a more global understanding of not only her contribution as a patron per se, but also of the perception of her work in the eyes of her contemporaries and its long-term ramifications, both in the musical field and in function of a more feminist and women-oriented rewriting of the history of women's participation in music.

3.5 THE LEVI FOUNDATION

The Foundation and its library are the most visible bequest that the Levi spouses left to their community. The library is the fruit of decades of both of them - but in especially Ugo - collecting textual

material and devoting time to it: manuscripts, prints, scores and musical texts, while the Foundation is the destination given to their household and all that it contains so that even after their deaths «potesse loro sopravvivere la vita musicale del palazzo che abitavano e la biblioteca per la quale Ugo dichiarava di avere amore paterno» («the musical life of the palace they inhabited and the library that Ugo affirmed to love as a father could outlive them»)[597]. Yet, its aim did not amount only to a preservation one. In Olga Levi's mind and will it had to represent in the future a «center of higher musical culture»[598] with all of what this function entailed. The superior purpose was that of contributing to the «increase in and diffusion of musical studies»[599]. Nevertheless, the development of the body of the foundation and its growth into the institution that it has become today is not ascribable to the spouses. Their desires - which Busetto attributes mostly to sentimental reasons[600] - and the legal steps they took in order to fulfill them were only the prelude, the embryonic state of the institute they strived to establish. Olga's premature demise due to a bowel cancer and the bureaucratic procedures in which her husband got entangled later until his own death, prevented them from seeing their project come to full realisation. Furthermore, besides their will dispositions, they were not able to conduct the initiatives that they had resolved to do nor they were able to imagine and arrange to its full extent the structure of their organization. At Ugo's death in 1971, the responsibility of carrying on the endeavour fell on Gianni Milner - the son of the Levis' lawyer - who succeeded to his father in the collaboration with the spouses. For a few decades the newly-founded institution struggled in finding its own clear set up as well as accomplishing the due operations of recording, organizing and cataloguing the documents stored in the library[601]. Under the first decade of life of the foundation under the lead of Milner, the institution got in touch with the other venetian organisations which were devoted to the education, preservation and fostering of musical knowledge, such as the Conservatory Benedetto Marcello, the association Amici dell Musica and the Foundation Giorgio Cini[602]. Under his direction the Foundation occupied itself also with numerous initiatives, among which are remembered the efforts to track down, record and safeguard antique musical instruments, the organization of seminars and the publication of studies such as Eleanor Selfridge-Field in the journal *Pallade Veneta*[603]. According to Busetto, though, the turn in the history of this institution has been had when Milner proposed to Cattin to become the head of its scientific division[604]. This collaboration with Cattin allowed the Foundation

[597] Busetto 2018b, pp. 267-268
[598] Ivi, p. 272
[599] Ibidem.
[600] Busetto 2018b, p. 272; Milner 2008b, pp. 237-239
[601] Busetto 2018b, pp. 269-270; Cattin 2008, p. 193
[602] Cattin 2008, p. 194
[603] Ivi, p. 195-196
[604] Busetto 2018b, p. 271-272

to define a methodology in its line of work, to make contact and create an international network of scholars who would gather into a committee and to define a series of enquiries to undertake[605].

Thanks to Milner and Cattin's foresight and vision to this day the Foundation has become one of the main centers in Italy for both musicological and ethnomusicological researches, with a particular attention to the local music contribution, such as the one on medieval polyphony, whose study was profoundly affected by the presence of an oral tradition[606].

The Foundation is therefore the outcome of a concerted effort of numerous forces and missions. Although the mission of the foundation had been developed during the years after Olga Levi's passing, the driving force behind her and her husbands vision is what set into motion the creation of such an institute, whose contributions to musicological research have survived even after the deaths of its founders. It is for this precise reason that the Foundation is so much more than a material legacy: it perpetuates the Levi's spouses patronage and the love for music, making Olga to this day once again an important personality in the field of research.

[605] Ivi, p. 273
[606] Busetto 2018b, pp. 276-277; https://www.fondazionelevi.it/la-fondazione/

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate and pinpoint the complexities of the practice of the female patronage in music. In order to achieve this, it was necessary to adopt a perspective attentive to gender issues, especially in the historical accounts. One of the topics that has indeed emerged is that up until a few decades ago, the narrative was mostly centered around a male viewpoint and, with a few exceptions, tended to take in consideration chiefly male individuals, be them either musicians or benefactors. Another critical matter that arose was the little space dedicated to references to the intricacy of patrons' work when discussing a musician's endeavours. Although it is understandable that a musicological treatise would focus mainly on the artist's oeuvre and accomplishments, it is also equally true that patrons, either by commissioning works or by providing any kind of support, had an impact on musicians' production. By bringing into focus the female contributions and perspective regarding the performance of acts of patronage, the primary objective of this research was, therefore, to retrace and reconstruct a more inclusive vision of the history of patronage. This attempt at retelling history in a more attentive light when coming down to women's involvement is not recent nor original. During the last decades many have been the efforts in this sense; the main one, renown for the attempt at collecting several different realities in the American Twentieth Century landscape is that of Locke and Barr. Through their work – which gathers the researches of different scholars – it is possible to appreciate how much women's engagement could range and thus how many women had been at the very base of vastly known musical institutions. Locke and Barr's research helped to grasp for the first time the breadth of the scope of female patrons' contributions and hence the different ways in which they manifested their support. This work is at the base of later enquiries, such as those of Gerber and Ruhbaum, whose thought derives from Locke and Barr's one and who are two among many scholars promoting a more elaborate and comprehensive view of the phenomenon.

First of all, then, it was crucial to historically frame the roots and development of such practice, in order to better understand the many facets it consists of. It emerged a varied picture, where each European country matured similar patronage traditions, that yet were not the same for everyone. This rings especially true when discussing the phenomenon of the salons, which came into being and established themselves at different times and with different modalities throughout all Europe, so much so that salon typologies were denominated also accordingly to their origin, for example the "French salon" or the "Bolognese salon". This contextualization was thus essential in understanding the social, historical and geographical fabric which salons and especially those from the Twentieth Century were set upon. Though an interview with descendant of patrons and *salonnières* and patron herself, Sonia Finzi Guetta, it was possible to reconstruct the particular conditions in which patronage was performed

in Venice during that time. The memories passed down by her mother and grandmother served to frame the very first half of the Twentieth Century, while her own recollections allowed to understand the final phases of this practice and its transition towards novel and more modern forms of patronage. Furthermore, her account was most of all helpful in grasping what was the social milieu in which young ladies grew up and how this influenced them, not only towards a path of patronage, but especially towards a particular field of arts. In the case in point, she asserted that descending from a family who had a long-standing and established tradition of making music and in general working in that particular field is probably what set her on a path almost exclusively dedicated to this art.

Her account is also enlightening with respect to the contributions of the Jewish community. During this research it has been repeatedly observed that the musical field was not precluded to Jews and that, thanks to this, they were not only able to get involved in it, but also to bring significant contributions to it. It has come to attention that in the specific case of Venice before the Second World War the side of the society bringing more contributions to the culture consisted preponderantly of Jewish individuals and families. Thanks to Venice's cosmopolitan and varied heritage, it is possible to affirm that compared to other contemporary cities, Venice distinguished itself for the substantial presence of Jewish people and, thereby, for their relevant engagement and participation to the venetian cultural, and especially musical, life.

This interview touched also upon the theme of documentation. As argued since the beginning of this research, there is a constant: the lack of records. This is not to mean that there is no written evidence either of the acts of patronage or of the salon gatherings – which abounds – but that since patronage goes well beyond the financial support and salon meetings were hardly documented as an official affair to pass down to posterity, there are seldom official track records of these occurrences. In the first case, mostly only bills might be qualifiable as official and formal proof of a patronage commission or donation, while in the second the musical programs that sometimes were drafted for the event might fit the bill. Nonetheless, as it has already been established, patronage encompasses a series of behaviours that transcend the mere economical assistance. For example, the correspondence between the patron and a musician becomes a source of indirect information as well as a testament of the range of forms that patronage could take on. Chronicles of the time and again letters prove useful in determining the power of a *salonnière* and her salon, the ramifications of her engagement and the distances the tendrils of her work could achieve. Once again, the instance of the documentation shows how the extent of patronage acts cannot be measured just through economical transactions, but that one must take in consideration multiple factors in order to draw a complete picture of the phenomenon and of its protagonists.

In order to get a more punctual understanding of one of the many facets of patronage, especially in relation to women's role in the last century, the research had to be narrowed down to the notion of the salons. As it emerged, although there is no shortage of instances of salons run by men, this was a field dominated by women, since the semi-public quality of this environment allowed them enough freedom to be engaged in a cultural activity without suffering the drawbacks to their reputation by being professionally committed to it. As Kaminer notes, for all intents and purposes they were performing a professional activity, although it was not recognized as such. In order for them to keep it on, it had to be performed and regarded as a charitable or volunteering activity, thus also contributing to the scarcity of formal recognition and documentation of their work.

In order to determine the real extent of women's influence, power and authority within these meetings and, at large, as patrons, Peist's and Heinich's theories are employed. The first one tackles the figure of the patron in light of its role as a mediator. Drawing from Bourdieu's notions on capital, he analyses the degree of mediation required by different artists in order to launch their careers and achieve success according to their backgrounds and initial capitals. Although his observations concern avant-garde artists and although the personality of mediator might be an umbrella term for a wide range of personalities – including but not restricted to patrons – it can be found that this role can be applied also to *salonnières* and benefactors in the musical field. Their modalities of action are, indeed, very similar and it can be observed that, much similarly to artists' mediators, they became indispensable individuals for the accomplishment of their protégés.

The sheer number of different figures meeting the requirements of the mediator and the broad array of activities in which they were involved for the sake of the promotion and nurturement of their musicians is a testament to the multifaceted and never univocal nature of the patron.

On this note, Heinich's thought allows a further insight on the power and influence of the patron. By analysing and identifying the degrees of recognition of an artist and its extent across time and space, she provides a framework in which the artist works and delineates thus the spheres which each mediator belongs to. Thus, she both delineates the fields of influence of each mediator and their ability to guarantee recognition and posterity to the artist in question.

On the matter of posterity, this dissertation purported also to determine in which other ways patrons could assure durability to their work and legacy. To investigate this side of the issue, the cases of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and Winnaretta Singer, who perpetuated their philosophy and activities beyond their death through the institutions they founded shows the will of transmitting and diffusing culture beyond the initiatives that the single individual can undertake in the span of her life.

Lastly, the case study of Olga Levi summarises and exemplifies in the venetian panorama all the themes explored up until now. Her personal history condenses the issues concerning patronage viewed up until now. She was not a patron in the strictly canonical sense of the term, yet through her salon she gave opportunities to several musicians either to make themselves known or to show their skills. She fit the role of a mediator, in that she helped the regulars of her salon to form relationships and exchange ideas. Along with her husband, then, she preoccupied herself with giving a posterity to the collection of musical materials he had accumulated and to the life they had both dedicated to music, by instituting a foundation that might be resourceful for musical studies and researchers in the future.

As it can be observed, patronage can assume many declinations and be enacted through different methods. The common denominator of all the researches regarding patrons, especially female ones, is that up until recently their work was pegged as voluntary work, thus distorting the historical accounts. In the hopes of correcting these misrepresentations and providing more fair and complete versions, it is imperative that the investigation methods be changed. It is not merely an issue of adopting either a feminist or a female narrative, but of training ourselves to investigate and propose a more egalitarian and thorough narrative, one that is purposefully mindful of all the actors in play and of their relevance with respect to all the factors, even the most “unseen” and “concealed” ones.

Therefore, it is important that these accounts are not only spread to the public, but that the education system is rethought in order to provide and promote from the start a critical and comprehensive understanding of all the agents involved in the mechanisms of the musical field, thus striving for a more inclusive and hopefully democratic retelling of the history.

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