Musical Introductions to Cavalleria Rusticana: Giuseppe Perrotta's "Bozzetto Sinfonico" and Pietro Mascagni's "Preludio"

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MUSICAL INTRODUCTIONS TO CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: GIUSEPPE PERROTTA’S “BOZZETTO SINFONICO” AND PIETRO MASCAGNI’S “PRELUDIO”

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in

The School of Music

by

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ABSTRACT

Giovanni Verga’s *Cavalleria rusticana* has inspired a variety of musical works, among them Giuseppe Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico” (an overture to Verga’s play), and Pietro Mascagni’s *Cavalleria rusticana* (a one-act opera based on a libretto by Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti and Guido Menasci). Each composition represents a genre on which scholarship is scarce: late nineteenth-century incidental music and the late nineteenth-century operatic prelude. Considering both Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico” and Mascagni’s “Preludio” as musical introductions to stage works, this study undertakes a complete hermeneutic analysis of both works (chapters 2 and 3). The analysis of Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico” is guided by a letter in which Verga commissions the overture and outlines the desired program, the analysis of Mascagni’s “Preludio” by the text underlying the thematic recurrences in the opera proper. By way of a conclusion, a comparison of the two works and an assessment of their historical and generic context will round out the monograph (chapter 4).

The analyses show that both works consist of two parts and anticipate the drama of the subsequent play and opera, respectively. The “Bozzetto sinfonico” is programmatic throughout, with the first part depicting events predating the play and the second part the events during the play, in both parts through constant development of a few themes. The “Preludio,” less symphonically conceived, is programmatic only in the first half, depicting the events of the play more loosely than does the “Bozzetto sinfonico”; in the second part, it serves a largely musical function, providing the conclusion to an original formal conception.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

After living in Cerignola, Italy, for over a year, Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945) knew “that for [his] artistic aspirations … a little provincial spot … was the kiss of death.”¹ Little did he know, however, that Edoardo Sonzogno’s second competition for a one-act opera would forever change his life. Mascagni ended up winning the first prize, and on 17 May 1890, at the Teatro Constanzi in Rome, presented his Cavalleria rusticana to an international audience. The libretto, by Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti and Guido Menasci, is based on the eponymous play (1884) by the Sicilian writer Giovanni Verga (1840–1922), which in turn is adapted from a short story first published in the collection Vita dei campi (1880). How exactly the composer came to settle on the subject is not clear, but the correspondence implies that it was Targioni-Tozzetti, who suggested it.²

It was not until reading the doctoral dissertation by Matteo Sansone that I gained knowledge of another composition, one far less well-known than Mascagni’s opera but also related to Verga’s play: an overture to the play by Verga’s Catanese friend Giuseppe Perrotta. Sansone quotes part of a letter in which Verga asks Perrotta for an overture to be performed before the rising of the curtain. A fuller version of the letter is included in two Italian publications, the first biography of Perrotta and the first study of his “Bozzetto sinfonico”:³

¹ Salvatore De Carlo, Mascagni Parla: Appunti per le memorie di un grande musicista (Milan: De Carlo Editore, 1945); quoted in Alan Mallach, Pietro Mascagni and His Operas (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 43.
³ Matteo Sansone, “Verismo: From Literature to Opera” (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1987), 45. Verga’s play was premiered at the Teatro Carignano in Turin on 14 January 1884 by the company of Cesare Rossi, including Eleonora Duse, Flavio Andò, and Teobaldo “Checci” Marchetti. The fuller version of the letter, dated Catania, 22 March 1884, is transcribed in Francesco Guardione, Giuseppe Perrotta: Maestro di Musica (Catania: Tipografia La Siciliana Fratelli Perrotta, 1911), 32 and, with some revisions of spelling and wording, in Francesco Branciforti and Elisa Ferrata, Una Ouverture per Cavalleria rusticana (Catania: Biblioteca della Fondazione Verga,
Dear Peppino:

Since my Cavalleria rusticana has had so much luck, above its merits for sure, make me a piece for small orchestra as an introduction to the play, a sort of small symphony to the play and musical summary of it, to be performed before the rising of the curtain, that is simple above all, clear and effective, matching the subject, without abstruseness or difficulty, something that has the effectiveness of simplicity as [does] the play; [something] that has color and breathes truly Sicilian and rural air…

A love song that sighs into the night, almost the passionate yearning of Turiddu, who is about to complain under Lola’s window and the lament of Santuzza, who is waiting [for him] in vain. Then the life in the village that is about to awake, the sound of the festival bells, the note of jealousy and love that returns and persists in the form of a pedal [point], and finally the outburst of furious anger of jealousy, the shouts for help, from the mother and the lover.

Yours
Giovanni

I will analyze Perrotta’s overture, or, as the composer himself called it, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” and Mascagni’s “Preludio” to Cavalleria rusticana, paying special attention to the programmatic interpretation of those works with regard to Verga’s request. While investigating the relationship between Verga’s play, Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico,” and Mascagni’s “Preludio,” I intend to show that the “Bozzetto” serves a similar function vis-à-vis the play as the

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5 Branciforti and Ferrata transcribed “Turiddu,” Guardione “Turiddu”; it is possible that Perrotta made a mistake in his transcription of Verga’s original and that Guardione silently corrected the mistake. In any case, the character’s name in Verga’s play is “Turiddu.”
“Preludio” serves vis-à-vis the opera. The analysis will be based on a hermeneutical approach to both pieces.

Ian Bent defines hermeneutics (theory of interpretation) in the nineteenth century music as “a type of writing concerned primarily not with the ‘how’ of music ... but with the ‘what,’ not with the mechanism but with meaning, not with technique but with content.” Elaborating on this concept, Edward Cone differentiates between two different types of meaning, one that “depends on purely musical relationships” (congeneric) and one that refers to “the supposed reference of a musical work to non-musical objects, events, moods, emotions, ideas, and so on” (extrageneric). More important, Cone states that understanding the musical syntax, structure, and style of a piece, its congeneric meaning, is fundamental to the understanding of a composition’s relationship to events, moods, emotions, its extrageneric meaning. Wilson Coker similarly emphasizes the importance of the musical syntax to a work’s congeneric meaning “for it is largely because we respond to the stimuli of a work’s structural characters that a work has significance for us.” In other words, congeneric meaning derives from the interrelationship of a work’s structural aspects including the “difference in qualities or relations of successive sounds and silences … contrasts and changes in … the dimensions of pitch, timbre, loudness, and duration.”

Both Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico” and Mascagni’s “Preludio” remain understudied. Francesco Branciforti and Elisa Ferrata present a short commentary on the manuscript of

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8 Ibid.
Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico,” both in its version for piano four-hands and its final version for orchestra. The comments refer to the length, keys and modulations, as well as a few surface aspects, without addressing either the congeneric or extrageneric meaning.\textsuperscript{10} With regard to Mascagni’s “Preludio,” Henry E. Krehbiel identifies most of its thematic material, especially Santuzza’s main themes. He covers to some extent the “orchestral proclamation of the moving passions of the play” and attributes meaning to the respective instrumental passages.\textsuperscript{11} He does not, however, go beyond the themes’ identification or their consideration with regard to the opera as a whole. Even the most thorough analysis of \textit{Cavalleria rusticana}, Hans-Joachim Wagner’s \textit{Fremde Welten}, dedicates no more than a single page to the “Preludio.” Wagner does acknowledge the “Preludio’s” function as an “agent of the plot” and recognizes the realism of the inserted “Siciliana” but dismisses the “Preludio” proper as a “potpourri overture” that does not expand on the tradition of overtures.\textsuperscript{12}

This monograph will offer the first thorough hermeneutic analysis of Perrotta’s and Mascagni’s overtures. It will furthermore compare these two works in the hope of contributing to the scant corpus of scholarly studies of nineteenth-century operatic overtures and incidental music (\textit{musica di scena}). Finally, as many of the sources are not available in English, this monograph will make the topic of this study available to readers not fluent in Italian.

\textsuperscript{10} Branciforti and Ferrata, \textit{Una Ouverture}, 41–49.
\textsuperscript{12} Hans-Joachim Wagner, \textit{Fremde Welten: Die Oper des italienischen Verismo} (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999), 84–85.
CHAPTER 2. GIUSEPPE PERROTTA’S “BOZZETTO SINFONICO”

Giuseppe Perrotta Musumeci (1843–1910) was the son of Emanuele and Giuseppa Musumeci. He graduated with a degree in law but decided to pursue a career as a composer. Although relatively little is known about him today, contemporary reviews suggest that he was reasonably well known at the time. Francesco D’Arcais (1830–1890), an Italian critic and composer, “called Perrotta an expert on the artifice of harmony, wishing [however] that the melody was more independent from the accompaniment, and not subject to it.”\(^\text{13}\) Another Italian music critic, Filippo Filippi (1830–1887), wrote that Perrotta was a “composer who stood out from the commonplace … who set to music some very lovely poems by Luigi Capuana. The music of Perrotta … is of an elevated style.” Filippi concluded, however, that “Perrotta must be young because he has an obsession with harmonic refinement.”\(^\text{14}\) Perrotta’s biographer Francesco Guardione (1847–1940) stated that Filippi’s criticism was precipitate because it had not taken into consideration what “in Perrotta presented novelty in form and style, a learned harmonic language, abrupt changes, which had on us effects easy to appreciate, but, as they were not common, caused those who were inexperienced in such a fertile art to believe that this new manner covered up a melodic deficiency with empty harmonic sonority.”\(^\text{15}\) Giovanni Verga and Luigi Capuana (1839–1915) regarded Perrotta’s talent highly. As an attempt to liberate him from rural isolation, they encouraged him to move to Milan in 1879.\(^\text{16}\) Capuana eventually even

\(^{13}\) “[D’Arcais] lo chiamò peritissimo negli artifizii dell’armonia, desiderando che la melodia fosse più indipendente dagli accompagnamenti, e non soggetta a questi.” Guardione, Giuseppe Perrotta, 16.

\(^{14}\) “Un compositore che si stacca dal comune, … il quale ha musicato alcune poesie molto leggiadre di Luigi Capuana. La musica del Perrotta… è d’uno stile elevato.” Guardione, Giuseppe Perrotta, 17.

\(^{15}\) “nel Perrotta ciò che si presentava nuovo nella forma e nello stile, una sapiente orditura armonica, una mutazione brusca, cui il non essere abituati, nè producendo su’ nostri sensi gli effetti facili ad apprezzarsi, fecero giudicare agli’inesperti d’un’arte feconda che la nuova maniera copriva la deficienza melodica con la vuota sonorità dell’armonia.” Guardione, Giuseppe Perrotta, 19.

\(^{16}\) Guardione, Giuseppe Perrotta, 29.
dedicated to the composer his theatrical fairy tale *Rospus* (1887), and Verga asked him for the overture that has led to this study.

Perrotta was a close friend of Verga’s, as not only the commission of the overture but also their correspondence makes clear.\(^{17}\) According to Branciforti and Ferrata, Perrotta did not hesitate to accept the commission and quickly set to work. He first composed a preparatory version for piano, then a version for small orchestra, of which the manuscript appears to be lost.\(^{18}\) An even later version, for full orchestra, has attached to it Perrotta’s transcription of the Verga letter cited earlier (footnote 3). Perrotta introduced his transcription with the following words: “this musical sketch, of which I have made today a composition for full orchestra,\(^ {19}\) was requested from me by Giovanni Verga.”\(^ {20}\) Following the letter, Perrotta added that he had completed the overture in ten days; that he sent it scored for small orchestra to Milan, where it “was not considered of easy execution” and therefore was not understood by the audience; and that, even scored for large orchestra, it was not deemed suitable for its intended purpose. Two years later, on 29 July 1886, the overture was revived in Catania under the baton of Giuseppe Pomè and apparently received with enthusiasm.\(^ {21}\)

Based on the structure Verga outlined in his letter, Perrotta drafted the following “Indicazioni [Instructions]” on a page attached to the score: “Instructions || Part I || Night – Voice

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\(^{17}\) See Branciforti and Ferrata, *Una Ouverture*, 26. Verga even calls Perrotta by his nickname, Peppino, demonstrating a level of intimacy that contrasts with the formal relationship Verga had with Mascagni.

\(^{18}\) Branciforti and Ferrata, *Una Ouverture*, 27. The piano score is located at the Biblioteca Universitaria Regionale in Catania, and the full orchestra score at the Biblioteca del Conservatorio di musica Giuseppe Verdi in Milan.

\(^{19}\) Orchestration: piccolo, flutes, oboes. English horn, clarinets in B flat, bass clarinet in B flat, bassoons, French horns in F, trumpets in B flat, trombones, bass trombone, timpani A flat and E flat, cymbals played with a bass drum mallet, bass drum, harp, violins, violas, cellos, basses, and an optional Tam Tam. Since I could not find the specific number of the instruments listed in the plural, I would assume that besides the French horns (probably four – two on each staff), all the other wind parts should be played by two performers each.


\(^{21}\) Guardione, *Giuseppe Perrotta*, 32 and Perrotta’s letter to Pomè, quoted in *ibid.*, 83. The version performed on that occasion was probably the one for full orchestra.
of love – Suffering of Santuzza || Part II || EASTER day || JEALOUSY || CATASTROPHE || CATANIA APRIL 1884.”  

These keywords serve as the point of departure for my analysis, in which I will interpret each of these sections through one or more musical themes and their transformations (the themes in quotation marks correspond to keywords in Perrotta’s “Instructions”): “Night” (A), “Voice of Love” (B), “Santuzza’s Suffering” (C), Bells (D), “Jealousy” (E), and Lola (F).

A synopsis of the play shall provide context for these keywords and themes. Before the play begins, Turiddu Macca returned from his military service and found his former lover (Lola) married to a carter (Alfio) and thus took a new lover (Santuzza). When the play begins, it is Easter morning. Santuzza stops by Mother Nunzia’s tavern and asks where she can find Turiddu, Nunzia’s son. Nunzia is under the impression that Turiddu left town to buy wine, but Santuzza responds that he was seen in town at two in the morning. Alfio enters and tells Nunzia that he, too, saw Turiddu in town, near his, Alfio’s, place. Alfio leaves, and Santuzza explains to Nunzia that every time Turiddu passes by her door, Lola would flirt with him. With Nunzia gone off to church, Santuzza waits for Turiddu and confronts him about his continued interest in Lola. They are briefly interrupted by Lola, but with Lola gone off to church, the argument intensifies and ends with Santuzza’s and Turiddu’s cursing each other. Alfio comes by on his way to church, and Santuzza tells him about Lola’s unfaithfulness. Back at Nunzia’s tavern, Turiddu is sharing a drink with Lola and some of the townspeople, when Alfio arrives. Turiddu offers him wine, but Alfio rejects it. The two men embrace, and Turiddu lightly bites Alfio’s ear as a sign of an unnamed agreement. Turiddu vows to kill Alfio and then asks his mother for a kiss, suggesting

he might never return. The play ends with Pipuzza’s repeated shout of “They’ve killed Neighbor Turiddu!”

Analysis and Interpretation of the “Bozetto sinfonico”

The overture has 323 measures and is divided into two main parts (see Perrotta’s “Indications,” above).24 The first part is rooted in G minor (mm. 1–119), the second part in A-flat Major or A-flat minor (mm. 120–323). The second part, however, includes some challenges to the general key of A flat, first by a cadence in B-double-flat (the enharmonic equivalent of A; m. 158) and by a section rooted in E major (mm. 205–20). The tonal center eventually revisits the G minor of the first part (mm. 268–91) and eventually returns to A-flat minor.25

The first part, in a rondo-like form (see Table 1 on p. 23, below), alternates between themes A (“Night”), B (“Voice of Love”), and C (“Santuzza’s Suffering”) but heavily focuses on theme A. Theme A begins with an outline of the G-minor triad in slurred, rising dotted quarter notes (see Example 2.1); these are soon broken up into undulating shorter notes (mm. 3–4) and then transformed into dotted half notes (mm. 16–19) and relatively static tremolos (mm. 20–35). Beginning with m. 6, occasional ornamental flourishes in the woodwinds (with the basic rhythm of quarter–sixteenth triplet–quarter–eighth–dotted quarter; see Example 2.2) begin to ornament the theme. As the examples show, most of the chords in this passage are of a minor quality, befitting nighttime. Harmonically, m. 16 is particularly interesting, because the lone pitch (G


24 This analysis is based on the autograph manuscript for full orchestra (see footnote 19 for orchestration).

25 There is a discrepancy between my measure count (323 measures) and that of Branciforti and Ferrata (316 measures; see Branciforti and Ferrata, Una Ouverture, 44). Furthermore, the key of A-flat Major, according to my analysis, begins at m. 120, whereas according to Branciforti and Ferrata’s, it begins at m. 141.
sharp) in its enharmonic spelling (A-flat) hints at the Neapolitan chord, a chord known for evoking feelings of pain and lamentation. The effect is reinforced by leaps of a diminished fifth (tritones) leading to and from the G sharp. In addition, the G sharp enharmonically anticipates the key of the second part of the overture (see Table 1). What follows is nevertheless firmly rooted in G minor.

Example 2.1: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 1–6, theme A (“Night”)

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The relatively slow tempo (dotted quarter = 48) adds a sense of tranquility to the image of night. This stillness will be disturbed by themes B (Turiddu’s “Voice of Love”; mm. 25–46) and C (“Santuzza’s Suffering”; mm. 74–92), after which A continues in a faster tempo (mm. 53; dotted quarter = 76). The return of A after B (sung to Lola on one of his nightly visits) and C (caused by Turiddu’s actions) and its contrapuntal presence during the two episodes confirm that the latter occur at night, prior to the actual beginning of the story.

The theme B (“Voice of Love”) is introduced in mm. 25–46. It is played by clarinets and bassoons and marked “cantabile,” emphasizing the idea of a voice singing through the night (see Example 2.3). The clarinets and bassoons sound in a relatively low register, probably in representation of Turiddu’s (male) voice. The theme consists of an unusual number of thirds, which characterize Turiddu as somewhat unstable. Nevertheless, like theme A, it is firmly grounded in G minor, as if it were oblivious to its harmonically less stable surroundings. Indeed, Turiddu does not seem to be concerned about visiting a married woman whose husband is away on business.
Theme C ("Santuzza’s Suffering") first sounds immediately after theme B (mm. 46–53) and is played by the flutes, oboes, and first violins; this register is higher than that of theme B (Turiddu’s “Voice of Love”) and thus likely representative of a female voice (see Example 2.4). Compared to Turiddu’s theme, which was marked cantabile, Santuzza’s is more dramatic,
juxtaposing stepwise descents with abrupt upward motions. The descending contour has traditionally been tied to the idea of lamentation, tragedy, or sorrow, not least due to the use of the Phrygian tetrachord, that is, the upper tetrachord of the natural minor scale (here G–F–E-flat–D; see Examples 2.4 and 2.5), whereas dramatic upward leaps have been tied to the invocation of someone’s help. The close proximity of themes B and C (they are intertwined in mm. 76–78 and 89–91) suggests that Santuzza was crying at home over Turiddu’s concurrent philandering.

Example 2.4: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 46–53, theme C (“Santuzza’s Suffering”)

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28 As we know from the play, Santuzza did not actually see Turiddu but learned of his whereabouts through others: “L’hanno detto qui, or ora, che vi hanno visto all’alba sull’uscio della gnà Lola. [They told me, they told me just now they’d seen you at dawn at Mrs. Lola’s door.]” Verga, *Cavalleria rusticana*, 30 (Italian version) and 44 (English translation). Even though the short story tells us that Lola’s house was across the street from Santuzza’s, we cannot presume that the same locations apply to the play.
Example 2.5: Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 74–77 (themes B and C)

Perrotta accomplishes the transition from the first part to the second one via a musical topos known as “sunrise” (mm. 100–119). Helen M. Greenwald refers to a series of musical techniques on which composers have traditionally drawn to portray a sunrise, such as “a gradual crescendo that moves from darkness to light, from piano to forte, and from minor to major.”

With these techniques, Greenwald essentially follows the nineteenth-century theorist Bonifazio Asioli, who “advises that the rising of the sun can be approximated musically through rhythmic acceleration, and increased texture and volume, as in the ‘sorgere del sole’ [sunrise] in Uriel’s recitative from Haydn’s Creation, […] described as ending in a ‘concentrated light that inundates the vastness of the heavens.’” The sunrise in Perrotta’s “Brozzetto sinfonico” includes every

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single one of these techniques. It begins \textit{pp} with the double basses outlining the G-minor triad in slurred, rising dotted quarter notes. These are gradually joined by clarinets, oboes, flutes, and celli and together launch a \textit{crescendo e rinforzando poco a poco} in m. 106. Perrotta continues to build up the intensity by adding violas, violins, and bassoons and introducing in m. 112 the “bright” pitch G-sharp and with it a major triad. The sunrise reaches a preliminary climax with the \textit{ff} dynamic and the tremolo in the upper strings in m. 116. The G-sharp then serves as an enharmonic pivot for the harmonic climax in A-flat major at m. 120. We have reached Easter morning.

The second part of the “Bozzetto sinfonico” begins with the culmination of the sunrise and constitutes the musical summary of the play (as opposed to the summary of the preliminary events). What was once a dark theme (A) in dotted quarter notes has been transformed into static, radiant tremolos (a congenic interpretation), tracing the trajectory from “Night” to “Easter day” (an extrageneric interpretation). Over the next nine measures (mm. 120-28), the radiant A-flat major chords subside via a diminuendo, giving way to theme \textit{D} (Bells, mm. 124-41) and confirming the arrival of Easter.

The formal organization of the second part is looser than that of the first part, possibly due to its more detailed program (an entire play). Although this part starts out in a major key, A-flat, it concludes in A-flat minor, in agreement with the tragic ending of the play. Nevertheless, the return from the first part of the key of G minor (in m. 268) right before the catastrophe and of themes \textit{B} and \textit{C} contribute to the “Bozzetto’s” unified musical conception.

At m. 120, Perrotta annotated both the trombone and the cymbal parts to convey their programmatic function (see Example 2.6). He instructs the trombonist to employ tongue strokes to imitate the touch and undulation of bells, and the percussionist to suspend the cymbal by the
handle with one hand and strike it lightly with a bass drum mallet with the other.\textsuperscript{31} The bells (imitated by trumpet, trombone, bass tuba, and cymbal) begin to sound in m. 124; they will attack their respective pitch exactly twelve times, possibly suggesting that it is noon.

Example 2.6: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 120–29, theme $D$ (Bells)

The dark color introduced by the bells is soon darkened even further by a new theme, $E$ (Example 2.7). Like the Bell theme, it is marked “ondulante” but unlike the Bell theme emerges softly and introduces the interval of the tritone (B-double-flat–E-flat). It is unlikely that Perrotta was thinking here of a second bell theme. Rather, the tritone, the obsessive repetition, and its

snake-like contour suggest that the theme depicts Santuzza’s jealousy. It will not remain recognizable for long; instead, it will gradually infuse theme C ("Santuzza’s Suffering") with chromaticism and mutate to alternating sixteenth notes a half step apart, that is, essentially repeat theme E’s first two notes in transposition (see later in this chapter).

Example 2.7: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 130–37, theme E ("Jealousy")

Only a few measures later, we learn the reason of Santuzza’s jealousy: Lola. Her theme (F) sounds for the first time in mm. 141–55 (see Example 2.8). It begins with flutes, oboes, English horn, and clarinets and is later joined by violins, bassoon I, and piccolo. The bright color and the sixteenth triplets on strong beats lend this theme a playful character; the alternation of fourths on the one hand and thirds and sixths on the other over the “pedal point” of the bells are reminiscent of horn calls and lend the theme a rustic character. In his preliminary version of the “Bozzetto sinfonico,” for piano solo, Perrotta added the performing instruction “Elegante,” in the version for full orchestra the instruction “Semplice”; the former in particular confirms the
theme’s association with Lola and will later also appear in the full score (see below). A comparison with the version for piano furthermore reveals that Perrotta considerably expanded the passage following m. 155 by developing Lola’s theme ($F$). As part of this development, he cadences in B-double-flat (m. 157–58; Example 2.9) and then infuses the theme itself with the tritone (m. 166–67; see Example 2.10). These observations suggest that the passage of mm. 120–70 corresponds to the scene in Verga’s play in which Santuzza questions Nunzia about Turiddu whereabouts and laments Turiddu’s involvement with Lola.

Example 2.8: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 141–48 (theme $F$)
Example 2.9: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 157–58
(theme F, cadence in B-double-flat)

Example 2.10: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 165–66
(theme F, with tritone)

The change of meter and tempo at m. 171 brings back theme B (“Voice of Love”) and two measures later theme C (“Santuzza’s Suffering”), the former “calmo [calm]” and p, the latter “animando molto” and ff. The clear distinction of the two themes soon gives way to variants that comprise elements of both themes and are tinged in chromaticism. Perrotta’s development of these themes perfectly fits the argument between Turiddu and Santuzza. He is coming on stage without suspecting trouble, the “Voice of Love” in his head, she is waiting for him full of agitation and immediately confronts him about his whereabouts the night before. An argument ensues in which the chromaticism of the “Jealousy” theme gains the upper hand (E; see Example 2.11).
In m. 193, theme A (“Night”) returns, now further transformed from its “Easter day” version in m. 120 into a fully diminished seventh chord. In m. 197 follows theme D (Bells) and in m. 202 theme B (“Voice of Love”); the latter ends after only three measures. A new section introduces a new mood: the key changes from A-flat minor to E major, the tempo from “Agitato” to “Elegante,” theme B (“Voice of Love”) to theme F (Lola). This change must be the musical equivalent of Lola’s interruption of Santuzza and Turiddu’s argument. As in the play, Turiddu has the last word before Lola unexpectedly appears. Her theme, albeit marked “Elegante,” is first juxtaposed by a chromatic counterpoint in the second violins (Example 2.12) and from the second half of m. 206 onward infused by the chromaticism of theme E (“Jealousy”); it is as if Santuzza’s jealousy did not leave Lola as unaffected as the play suggests.

Example 2.11: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 183–92
(theme comprising elements of B and C)

Example 2.12: Perrotta, “Bozzetto sinfonico,” mm. 205–6
(theme F with chromatic counterpoint)
At m. 221, after the brief foray into the sharp keys, the key signature returns to four flats. The development set in motion in the previous section continues, however. Themes C (“Santuzza’s Suffering”) and F (Lola) merge, and although the resulting material is anchored in an E-flat pedal point, it becomes even more chromatic and eventually includes the B-double-flat of theme E (“Jealousy”). This latter theme may no longer be present in its original form, but it has by now infused other themes with its chromaticism (Example 2.13).


The B-double-flat continues to have a strong presence, not least in the upbeat to the climax at m. 242, a ff statement of the transformed theme C.

The passage just analyzed seems to correspond to the remainder of the scene with Santuzza and Turiddu. Although Lola is no longer on stage by this point, she is at the center of the argument; Santuzza keeps bringing her up, driving Turiddu to despair. The scene ends with a dual curse, Turiddu’s “mannaggia! [Damnation!]” and Santuzza’s “Ah! mala Pasqua a te! [Bad luck to you, this Easter day!]”; Perrotta’s climax seems to encapsulate them both.

Three measures after the “curse,” the dynamic level abruptly drops to pp, from where it builds up again, in a crescendo predominantly on theme F (Lola), to a new section beginning with m. 254. Marked “Selvaggio [Savagely]” and f, this tutti section is dominated by theme F (Lola), sounding over an accented ostinato of open fifths (A-flat + E-flat). Falling on beats 1, 3,
4, and 6 of the 6/8 meter, these accompanying fifths recall the “pastoral” topos and are responsible for the rustic atmosphere.\textsuperscript{32} Perrotta must have had in mind the scene at Nunzia’s tavern, where Turiddu is drinking with some of the townspeople.

The celebration is of only a brief duration. In m. 273, the dynamic level changes to a sudden \textit{ppp} on theme \textit{E} (“Jealousy”), which here is transformed into alternating sixteenth notes a half step apart, the isolation and repetition of the theme’s first two notes (mentioned earlier). Theme \textit{E} ends with the beginning of m. 283 but subsequently affects theme \textit{F} (Lola) by way of chromaticism. With Lola as the topic of conversation at Nunzia’s tavern and jealousy as the underlying reason, this passage seems to depict the scene in which Turiddu lightly bites Alfio’s ear, thus challenging him to a fight.

Beginning with m. 292, the music inexorably intensifies. The undulating sixteenth notes (of no obvious thematic derivation) first become the basis for an overwhelming surge: Perrotta increases the dynamic level of the undulating sixteenth notes (m. 294), adds low brass (m. 296), infuses the undulating sixteenth notes with chromaticism, and adds a global crescendo (m. 298). The surge culminates in m. 302 with a restatement of a chromatically transformed version of theme \textit{C} (“Santuzza’s Suffering”) and is followed by a homophonic statement, marked “Precipitato,” of simultaneously ascending and descending chromatic versions of \textit{C}. The “Bozzetto sinfonico” concludes with sustained chords, and a final downbeat so heavily accented that Perrotta suggests the addition of a Tam Tam, if available.\textsuperscript{33}

The programmatic meaning of this culmination is fairly obvious. Turiddu is rushing off, first to ask his mother for an embrace, then to fight with Alfio. The climactic statement of theme


\textsuperscript{33} See Branciforti and Ferrata, 137. “Se in orchestra si trova il Tamtam sarebbe da preferirsi al colpo dei piatti e cassa o meglio unito a questi strumenti.”
C, infused with chromaticism, reflects the peak of Santuzza’s jealousy and suffering, whereas the subsequent thematic contrary motion of the chromatically transformed theme C shows Santuzza’s being torn apart. Even though Santuzza is not on stage in Verga’s play, she is the protagonist who has lost the most, as Turiddu was not only her lover but the one person who might have looked after her. If Perrotta took Verga’s guidelines literally, the contrapuntal statement of theme C might refer to the “shouts for help, from the mother [Nunzia] and the lover [Santuzza].”

In this chapter, we have followed a two-pronged analytical approach of first examining the music on its own and thus determining its congeneric meaning, and second of interpreting the findings in light of Verga’s “Indicazioni” and the play itself and thus determining its extrageneric meaning. The two approaches have produced remarkably compatible results, suggesting that Perrotta composed an overture that fully complied with Verga’s request. The compliance resulted in two halves based on distinct organizational principles. In the first half, where the program is less restrictive (because the play has not yet begun), theme A recurs periodically, creating a musical structure reminiscent of the classical rondo, even if the episodes are not distinguished by a contrasting key. In the second part, Verga’s plot does not seem to have allowed Perrotta to draw on a traditional musical form. Instead, Perrotta relied heavily on thematic development, so heavily that themes B, C, and E essentially lose their identity. It is perhaps for this reason that the “Bozzetto sinfonico” has had little popular appeal and failed to become an integral part of Verga’s play.
Table 1: Structure of Giuseppe Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicazione</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Night</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1–15</td>
<td>g\textsuperscript{34}</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Largo; dotted quarter = 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>16–45</td>
<td></td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Poco più mosso; quarter = 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>25–46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>46–53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of Love</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>53–68</td>
<td></td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Stringendo un po’ il tempo; dotted quarter = 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santuzza’s Suffering</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>69–99</td>
<td></td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>quarter = 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>74–92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>76–78, 89–91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Sunrise]</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>100–119</td>
<td></td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>doted quarter = 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter day</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>120–28</td>
<td>A-flat</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Liberamente quasi largo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Bells]</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>124–41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanousy</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>130–37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Lola]</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>141–55</td>
<td></td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Semplice; dotted quarter = 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>144–45, 148–51, 154–55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>148–49, 154</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>156–64</td>
<td>B-double-flat (at 158) (enharmonic spelling of A)</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Meno il tempo; dotted quarter = 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>A-flat</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>dotted quarter = 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>171–74, 179–82</td>
<td>a-flat</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>quarter = 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>177–78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>182–92</td>
<td></td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Agitato; quarter = 116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>193–200</td>
<td>a-flat</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>197–202</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>202–4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>205–20</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td>Elegante; dotted quarter = 66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table cont’d)

\textsuperscript{34} The key areas in this column are listed in uppercase or lowercase letters for major or minor quality, respectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicazione</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C/F</td>
<td>221–53</td>
<td>A-flat</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>dotted quarter = 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>254–67</td>
<td></td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Selvaggio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>268–72, 276–81</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Pesante massa molto; dotted quarter = 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>273–82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>281–83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>284–91</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Primo Tempo; dotted quarter = 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>298–301</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catastrophe</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>302–10</td>
<td>A-flat</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Con tutta forza e ben marcato</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 3. PIETRO MASCAGNI’S “PRELUDIO”

Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945) was the son of Domenico and Emilia Mascagni. He received his musical education at the Istituto Musicale Livornese, which was renamed Istituto Luigi Cherubini in 1879. The institute had been founded in 1875 and was directed by Alfredo Soffredini, a recent graduate from the Milan conservatory. Soffredini taught Mascagni piano, quickly recognized his talent, and added harmony and counterpoint lessons to Mascagni’s schedule. 

Mascagni’s father wanted Pietro to be a lawyer, however, and forbade him to continue with his lessons. It was only with his uncle Stefano’s help (who brought Pietro to live in his house) that Mascagni was able to continue. 

In 1886, Mascagni found employment in Luigi Maresca’s traveling operetta company and in December moved on to Cerignola. 

Cerignola was an unpretentious, dusty market town of straight streets lined with rows of modest two- and three-story buildings, its stores spread along a straggling main street that rumbled with the coming and going of peasants’ oxcarts. It boasted an attractive neoclassical theater of substantial proportions, … which had opened in November 1868…. It was a white elephant, however, hopelessly extravagant for a backward region populated largely by illiterate and impoverished peasants and workingmen.

Like every town in southern Italy, Cerignola “had its educated circles, which included landed proprietors, bored aristocrats, professionals, and officials.” Mascagni was welcomed into one of those circles due to “his charm, musical talent, and Milanese veneer.” Cerignola’s mayor, Giuseppe Cannone, “was particularly encouraging. He hired Mascagni to give piano lessons to his daughters and proposed to reinstitute the town’s music school and orchestra.”

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37 Mallach, Pietro Mascagni, 36.  
38 Mallach, Pietro Mascagni, 39.  
breaking free from Maresca’s company, mayor Cannone followed up on his proposition, and Mascagni decided to stay.\textsuperscript{40}

As Cerignola’s economy declined, a new opportunity emerged. Edoardo Sonzogno, the director of the publishing firm Casa Sonzogno, was trying to compete with the two leading Italian publishers—Tito and Giulio Ricordi on the one hand and Francesco Lucca on the other—by attracting new composers via a competition for a one-act opera. After a less-than-successful first competition in 1883, Sonzogno announced a second one in July 1888.\textsuperscript{41} Mascagni decided to apply and with his \textit{Cavalleria rusticana}, based on a libretto by Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti and Guido Menasci, won the first prize. The Italians had for some time been wondering who might emerge as Giuseppe Verdi’s successor and continue their venerable operatic tradition. Nobody at the time would have thought that Verdi might write another opera (\textit{Falstaff}, 1893), and Puccini had not yet scored an unqualified success. But after the premiere of \textit{Cavalleria rusticana} on 17 May 1890, the Italians felt they had found the successor, celebrating the composer in the streets by shouting “Abbiamo un maestro!”\textsuperscript{42} Mallach puts it as follows: “Overnight, Mascagni was transformed from an unknown provincial musician to a celebrity whose fame quickly traveled across the world; more than a celebrity, he became the composer on whom the Italian musical world rested its hopes for the future of opera.”\textsuperscript{43}

The plot of the opera is virtually identical to that of Verga’s play. The most significant difference vis-à-vis the play consists of the inclusion in the opera of the “Siciliana,” sung by Turiddu backstage while the curtain is still down. The “Siciliana” was not part of the “Preludio”

\textsuperscript{40} Mallach, \textit{Pietro Mascagni}, 41.
\textsuperscript{41} Mallach, \textit{Pietro Mascagni}, 43–44.
\textsuperscript{42} Mallach, \textit{Pietro Mascagni}, 61.
\textsuperscript{43} Mallach, \textit{Pietro Mascagni}, 59.
when Mascagni submitted his scores (full and vocal) to the competition, but he presented it “to the jury in Rome [only] the following February [1890], after he had already been chosen as a finalist in the competition.”

Up to that point, only Rossini (in *Ermione*) and Meyerbeer (in *Dinorah*, originally titled *Le Pardon de Plörmel*) had included voices in their overtures. The purpose of the following analysis is to show that Mascagni created a “Preludio” of a highly original form based on a limited number of themes drawn from the opera proper. This selection of themes anticipates the opera’s emotional quality but is too limited to convey a strong sense of the plot.

**Analysis and Interpretation of the “Preludio”**

The “Preludio,” of 173 measures, is mostly in the key of F Major and consists of themes drawn from the opera proper. The only exception is the interpolated “Siciliana”; it is in the parallel minor key, and its theme does not recur. Although the autograph manuscript suggests that Mascagni intended to include the “Siciliana” from the start, he did not submit it to the competition for fear of spoiling his chances with an overly experimental design.

The structure of the “Preludio” does not follow any traditional form. It does not even present any of the main themes in a key that would create harmonic tension. Instead, Mascagni presents all the main themes in F major, creating harmonic tension only through modulatory passages between the themes. These modulatory passages do not have the purpose of introducing a new key (since all themes are in F Major) but to create temporary harmonic instability and thus

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46 The analysis is based on Pietro Mascagni, *Cavalleria rusticana* [original vocal score] (Milan: Sonzogno, 1890) and the autograph full score held at Memorial Library of Music at Stanford University, MLM 651.
a sense of unrest. This tension is eventually resolved by omitting modulatory passages between the final three themes of the “Preludio.” Figure 1 summarizes the structure, using the abbreviations of “S” for “Santuzza” and “RC” for “Regina coeli”; for an overview of the analysis, please refer to Table 2 on p. 42.

*Repeated measures 40–42 after the Siciliana

Figure 1: Formal Structure of the “Preludio”

The “Preludio” begins on a B-flat-major chord, the subdominant of F major, and gradually develops melodic material that will emerge as a main theme in m. 8. The initial measures, 1–7, mostly affirm the dominant chord C major (mm. 3, 5, and 7) in preparation for the first cadence in mm. 7–8 (see Example 3.1). These measures introduce several of the main characteristics of the actual theme, such as the descending, dotted figure in m. 3 and the ascending eighth-note figure launching a simple melodic arch from a tied half note in mm. 4–5.

The dynamic level is pianissimo, Mascagni’s instruction in the autograph “dolce e religioso
[sweet and religious].” The string instrumentation, the simple gestures, and the performing instructions make clear Mascagni’s intention of conjuring an atmosphere of religious contemplation.47 This material will return later in the “Romanza e Scena” (No. 5), after Santuzza tells Lucia that she cannot go to church because she is condemned (“Io son dannata”): it introduces and then accompanies Santuzza’s request that Lucia go and pray for her (“Andate, o mamma, ad implorare Iddio, e pregate per me [Go, o mother, to implore God; and pray for me]”).48

![Mascagni, “Preludio,” mm. 1–7](image)

Example 3.1: Mascagni, “Preludio,” mm. 1–7

The first main theme (RC) appears in mm. 8–13. It preserves the characteristic of the preceding measures but is strongly rooted in F major and stretches the stepwise ascending figure of m. 4 into an ascending triad in m. 8 (see Example 3.2). This new variant strongly resembles


the “Regina coeli,” sung by the choir beginning with m. 33 of the “Scena e Preghiera” (No. 3).

Although not exactly the same, both themes feature an ascending triad followed by a stepwise descending dotted figure (see Examples 3.2 and 3.3). This thematic resemblance further confirms our characterization of the opening material of the “Preludio” as religious contemplation.

Example 3.2: Mascagni, “Preludio,” mm. 8–13 (RC)

Example 3.3: Mascagni, “Scena e Preghiera,” mm. 33–39 (RC)
Measures 14–19 present the first modulatory passage (MP1), which is based on the first two eighth-notes of m. 12. This passage does not lead to a new key but returns to F major for the presentation of the “Santuzza 1” (S1).

Although S1 starts on a D-minor chord (m. 20), the presence of the pitch C-natural (as opposed to C-sharp) makes it clear that we are not in D minor but still in F major. The theme consists of a four-measure core, which is repeated and then developed. It begins *pp* and “dolcissimo [very soft]” (a strong contrast to the *ff* in m. 19) and in its first two measures descends in a lightly embellished stepwise motion (F–E–D–A; see Example 3.4). The subsequent two measure complete the core in a contrasting ascending gesture (reminiscent of mm. 5–6) consisting of a stepwise triplet and a dotted figure that returns to the pitch with which the theme began (*f”). The first statement of S1 is orchestrated with flute and French horn over an accompanying harp. The restatement is more intense: the dynamic level is *f*, the orchestration consists of upper strings over accompanying harp and clarinet, and the performing instruction is “largamente [broad].”

The descending gesture of S1’s first two measures, combined with the *pp* dynamic marking suggests a lament,49 whereas the thematic similarity with mm. 5–6 adds a religious component. Mascagni will use this theme in the second half of the duet between Santuzza and Turiddu (No. 5c), to Santuzza’s lamenting text “La tua Santuzza – piange e t’implora; / come cacciarla – così tu puoi? [I, your Santuzza, weeping, implore you; / how can you thus drive her away].” The religious component may pertain to the context, either local (Santuzza and Turiddu

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are outside the church) or emotional (Santuzza is excommunicated, presumably due to her affair with Turiddu).

Example 3.4: Mascagni, “Prelude,” mm. 19–23 (S1)

Measures 36–42 constitute the second modulatory passage (MP2). A motif consisting of a quarter note tied to subsequent triplets alternates between woodwinds and strings as it descends by whole step over a chromatically descending bass line (see Example 3.5). This motif, slightly varied, eventually settles on \( f'/f'' \) as the direction of the bass reverses and the music intensifies with regard to volume and tempo. The overlapping alternation between the woodwinds and strings suggests a dialogue, first a relatively neutral one as the motif’s iterations descend, then a more heated one as the motive’s iterations persist on \( f'/f'' \) and the intensity increases. The intensity increases further through the addition of three blasts in the trumpets and trombones. At precisely the moment where the listener feels the climax would be reached, Mascagni makes a
clean cut and abruptly begins the “Siciliana,” a piece introducing a new meter, a lower dynamic level, and a completely unrelated pattern played by harp alone.

Like the earlier themes of the “Preludio,” the motif of this modulatory passage and its emotional quality anticipate a dramatic situation in the opera proper, namely one of the climaxes of the Santuzza-Turiddu duet (No. 5c; beginning 4 mm. before rehearsal 40). Here, Santuzza and Turiddu are arguing, Santuzza asking Turiddu to stay, Turiddu telling Santuzza not to bore him and sending her away. The three blasts in trumpet and trombone turn out to signify Turiddu’s shouts of “Va [Go].”

Example 3.5: Mascagni, “Preludio,” mm. 36–42 (MP2)
As we have suggested earlier, the interruption by the “Siciliana” is a frequently highlighted aspect of the “Preludio.” The “Siciliana” itself is a fairly conservative piece, sung by Turiddu “dentro alle scene [backstage]” and accompanied by only the harp. The key is F minor, the parallel minor key of the “Preludio” proper, which provides a contrast in color rather than in harmonic function. It is possible that the minor key was intended to suggest the time of night before Easter, even though the stage direction in the libretto (which precedes the text of the “Siciliana”) specifies “È il giorno di Pasqua [It is Easter day].” The form, too, is conservative: it follows the traditional song form (A8A8B4B4′A8′ + coda), modifying it only by occasionally lengthening or shortening a phrase by a measure (see Example 3.6). Nevertheless, with its function as an interruption, the “Siciliana” anticipates a parallel interruption in the opera, where Lola’s “Stornello” (No. 5b), also a popular song, interrupts the argument between Santuzza and Turriddu (Nos. 5a and 5c).51

Mascagni let posterity know that he did not initially include the “Siciliana” because he feared that, with its inclusion, the “Preludio” would be too risky. But in one account, he states that he had originally submitted “un po’ di preludio [a bit of Preludio]” and that the jury accepted the new “Preludio” only because its themes also appeared in the opera, and that by accepting the new “Preludio,” they did not really accept new music.52 In another account, however, he states that the jury liked but did not accept the “Preludio,” thus leaving the opera exactly as he had

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50 In addition to Wagner, Mallach, and Ricci, all cited earlier, see, for instance, Paloscia, “Tra modernità e tradizione,” 33.
51 As Ricci (34 Anni con Pietro Mascagni, 26) points out, the text of this “Siciliana” is based on a poem by Giacomo de Zerbi, a friend of Mascagni’s in Cerignola. Mascagni intended to use the text for a song to be performed by Lola for Turriddu but then changed his mind. The text underwent numerous transformations, not least to capture a more authentic Sicilian dialect. See Sansone, “Verismo,” 45–47; and Ricci, 34 Anni con Pietro Mascagni, 25.
Example 3.6: “Preludio,” mm. 47–62 (beginning of the “Siciliana”)
submitted it, “senza Preludio [without Preludio].” The digital images of the autograph manuscript, available on Stanford University’s Website, cannot solve this issue. They suggest (but do not definitively prove) that the “Siciliana” was inserted at a later time, that the inserted folios include not only the “Siciliana” but also the remainder of the “Preludio,” and that the inserted section replaces the “Preludio’s” original conclusion. In their final form, the measures immediately following the “Siciliana” repeat the three measures that led up to the “Siciliana” (mm. 40–42) and with the instruction “Stringendo e rinforzando sempre [always increasing tempo and dynamics]” lead to a culminating new theme, “Santuzza 2” (S2).

S2 begins in m. 98, $fff$ and “sostenutissimo [very sustained],” and is again in F major. It shares qualities with two earlier themes, S1 and MP2. With the former, it shares the stepwise descending line and thus the element of lamentation; with the latter, it shares the triplets and thus the element of the heated argument. The full orchestration, including cymbals and bass drum, and the $fff$ marking (present only in the autograph manuscript) lend the theme an intensity not yet experienced in the “Preludio” (see Example 3.7, mm. 98ff.). The return of S2 in the Santuzza-Turiddu duet (No. 5c) supports our congeneric interpretation. Santuzza’s and Turiddu’s parts merge here, Santuzza’s with lamenting and pleading words (“Ah! … no, Turiddu – rimani ancora” [Ah! … no, Turiddu – stay with me!]), Turiddu’s with threatening ones (“Va, ti ripeto – va non tediarmi, / pentirsi è vano – dopo l’offesa! [Go, I repeat – go, don’t bore me, / regret is useless – after the offense!]”).

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54 See https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/10734734.
After this climax, the dynamic level abruptly drops to *pp* and the tempo increases, launching the third modulatory passage (MP3) with an undulating pattern of eighth notes. Beginning with m. 103, the pattern encompasses two beats and as such is incompatible with the pattern in the low strings (see Example 3.8). As a result of this metric conflict, the music periodically erupts into an outburst of nearly the full orchestra, first on G (m. 109), then C (m. 113), and finally F (m. 117). This material does not recur in the opera proper in this form but anticipates the threefold and increasingly forceful eruption of sound toward the end of the opera, framing a woman’s twofold statement that Turiddu has been killed.
By this point, the “Preludio” has completed its outline of the opera’s dramatic stages, from the religious contemplation of the beginning through the duet and the final catastrophe. The return in m. 125 of RC thus suggests that the remaining thematic statements have a primarily formal rather than narrative function. RC assumes a pivotal role in this transition from the narrative section to a formal one, as it is part of both. It is part of the narrative section in that it overlaps with it; it is phased in while MP3 is still in progress (see Example 3.9). Mascagni even highlights RC’s modulatory aspect by omitting its first two measures (in F major; mm. 8–9 of Example 3.2), beginning with its C major section (m. 125) and then returning to F major (m. 132). In addition, RC is now augmented and then further slowed down by the instructions “poco rallentando” and “rallentando molto,” thus creating a sense of closing. RC is part of the formal section, however, in that it reintroduces the key of F major, is harmonically open-ended, and thus could be seen as the beginning of a concluding section.
In this final section of the “Preludio,” entirely in the key of F major, Mascagni introduces one more theme, “Santuzza 3” (S3). S3 consists of thematic material familiar from earlier themes, especially the combination of quarter notes and triplets present in S1, S2, and MP2. In S3, however, the rhythmic intensity created by the juxtaposition of quarters and triplets is somewhat attenuated by the new meter. Whereas the previous themes sounded in duple or triple meter, S3 sounds in 6/8, a compound meter (see Example 3.10). What previously were quarter notes of which the inherent subdivision (eighth notes) was in conflict with the sounding notes (triplets) are now dotted quarter notes of which the inherent subdivision (eighth notes) is no longer in conflict with the sounding notes. The musical atmosphere, therefore, is somewhat
relaxed, supported in the autograph score by the tempo marking “Andante con un poco di moto [Andante with a little movement].” The instruction for the first violins entering in m. 148, present only in the autograph score, is “dolce [sweet],” the instruction in the melodic instruments in m. 151, present in both the vocal score and autograph score, is “doloroso [mournful].” The subsequent climax, marked “sostenuto e grandioso [sustained and with grandeur] thus assumes the character of a transfiguration of earlier material rather than a culmination of the conflict, a goal already reached in the narrative section of the “Preludio.”

Like S1 and S2, S3 recurs in the second part of the Santuzza-Turiddu duet (No. 5c). The first six measures correspond to Santuzza’s text “No, no, Turiddu – rimani ancora, / abbandonarmi – dunque tu vuoi? [No, no, Turiddu! Stay with me, do you really want to abandon me],” the following measures to Turiddu’s text “Perché seguirmi – perché spiarmi / sul limitare – fin della chiesa? [Why follow me? Why spy on me on the threshold of the church?].” The tension in this section of the duet is lesser than the tension in the section that includes S2 (and in the opera proper follows, rather than precedes the section with S3). The reversal of the order in the “Preludio” has a musical reason (the transfiguration) rather than a programmatic one, and allows for a convincing climax after the programmatic section has concluded. After this climax, Mascagni rounds off the “Preludio” with a return to S1 of which he replaces the transposed middle section with a drawn out and plagally tinged cadence.
Mascagni’s “Preludio” tells two stories, one musical and one extra-musical. The musical one is that of a coherent, if untraditional form: the interlocking repetition of two themes (RC and S1) creates the thematic frame, the modulatory passages the tension that subsides beginning with the recurrence of RC, and the transfiguration of earlier themes (S3) the climax that coincides with the subsiding of the harmonic tension; this non-traditional form may be the result of having inserted the “Siciliana.” The extra-musical story roughly traces the plot: Santuzza’s need for salvation and request of Lucia to pray for her (mm. 1–7), the Easter service with the “Regina
coeli” (mm. 8–19), Santuzza’s lament sung to Turiddu (mm. 20–35), her confrontation with him (mm. 36–101), the interruption by Lola (represented by the “Siciliana”; mm. 43–94), and the final catastrophe (mm. 102–124).

Table 2: Structure of Pietro Mascagni’s “Preludio”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Meter</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Santuzza’s Need for Salvation</td>
<td>Regina Coeli</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>8–13</td>
<td>C (4/4)</td>
<td>Andante sostenuto; quarter = 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MP1</td>
<td>14–19</td>
<td>mod.</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Molto animato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santuzza’s Lament</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>20–27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Molto largo e sostenuto moltissimo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28–35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Primo Tempo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument between Santuzza and Turiddu</td>
<td>MP2</td>
<td>36–42</td>
<td>mod.</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Lo stesso tempo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruption</td>
<td>Siciliana</td>
<td>43 47–94</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Andantino; eighth = 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument contd.</td>
<td>MP2</td>
<td>95–97</td>
<td>mod.</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Primo Tempo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culmination of the Argument</td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>98–101</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catastrophe</td>
<td></td>
<td>102–24</td>
<td>mod.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Allegro; quarter = 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina Coeli</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>125–40</td>
<td>mod. to F</td>
<td></td>
<td>quarter = 152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfiguration</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>141–54</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>Andante con un poco di moto; quarter = 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>155–61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sostenuto e grandioso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santuzza’s Lament</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>162–65</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>Largamente sostenuto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>166–73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sempre sostenuto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSION

Giuseppe Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico” and Pietro Mascagni’s “Preludio” belong to distinct genres: the former to incidental music, that is, music conceived for a play, the latter to opera. And yet, both serve as musical introductions to a dramatic genre and thus lend themselves to comparison with regard to function, form, and meaning. The analyses of chapters 2 and 3 have shown that the “Bozzetto sinfonico” functions vis-à-vis the play as the “Preludio” functions vis-à-vis the opera, that is, as a preparation of the subsequent plot. But there are differences as well, some fundamental, some subtle. The most fundamental difference is the fact that the music of Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico” was not intended to recur in the play itself, whereas all themes of Mascagni’s “Preludio” do recur in the opera. It would not have been uncommon to reuse themes from the overture to a play in the play itself (as the example of Felix Mendelssohn’s incidental music to Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream shows), but subsequent music is not known to survive for Verga’s Cavalleria rusticana. As a consequence, the meaning of the “Bozzetto’s” themes cannot be determined with absolute certainty, despite Verga’s “Indicazione” (the program), whereas the meaning of the “Preludio’s” themes is confirmed in Mascagni’s opera as soon as they recur with text.

Despite the lack of any music during the play, Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico” seems to follow Verga’s program to the letter. The work consists of a first part depicting events predating the play (such as Turiddu’s “Voice of Love,” Santuzza’s Suffering, and the Sunrise leading to Easter day) and a second part depicting the events of the play (such as Easter day, Santuzza’s jealousy, Lola’s flirtatiousness, Turiddu’s and Santuzza’s curse, the drinking at Nunzia’s tavern, and the final catastrophe). As a result of the detailed program, Perrotta did not create any clear
overall formal structure, even though the first half shows traces of the classical rondo form and
the second half recalls, more or less clearly, all the themes of the first half.

Mascagni’s “Preludio” likewise consist of two parts. The first part is narrative in
function, setting the religious context and outlining the plot. Unlike Perrotta, however, Mascagni
was not given a program to follow and thus outlined the plot only loosely, starting with
Santuzza’s need for salvation and progressing via her complaint about Turiddu’s infidelity (in
her scene with Lucia) to Turiddu and Santuzza’s confrontation (their duet) and the final
catastrophe. In the second part, Mascagni returns to earlier material but, unlike Perrotta, presents
it without substantial transformation and thus without programmatic meaning. Indeed, this
second part appears to fulfill purely musical functions: on the one hand, it omits modulatory
transitions common in the first half, virtually resolving all harmonic tension; on the other hand, it
introduces a new theme that combines elements of earlier ones into some sort of transfiguration.

Of particular interest is the way in which the two works deal with Lola’s interruption of
Santuzza and Turiddu’s argument. Perrotta accomplishes it by bringing back Lola’s theme in an
entirely new and distant key (E major, framed by A-flat), whereas Mascagni interrupts a
transitional passage (MP2) and inserts a vocal “Siciliana” without any musical mediation and
without reference to any musical material from the Turiddu/Santuzza duet. Mascagni’s
“Siciliana” also serves a function beyond the interruption: through the use of the Sicilian dialect,
it situates the opera geographically, reinforcing the sense of realism already provided by the
interruption. Finally, it is possible to make a connection between the “Siciliana” and Perrotta’s
“Bozzetto sinfonico” in that the “Siciliana” mirrors the “Bozzetto’s” “Voice of Love” and like
the latter is directed at Lola.\footnote{Another thematic link between Perrotta’s and Mascagni’s works is the theme of the church bells, which in Mascagni’s work sounds for the first time only in the “Introduzione,” that is, \textit{after} the “Preludio.”}
I have pointed out earlier that the Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico” and Mascagni’s “Preludio” belong to distinct genres. Their significance, therefore, calls for a distinct contextualization. The former belongs to the genre of incidental music, any music intended to accompany a play, be it by an introductory overture, *mélodrame* (music underlying spoken text), entr’actes, songs, and dances. In nineteenth-century Italy, such examples seem to be exceedingly rare. Martina Grempler, for instance, refers to our knowledge of incidental music in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Italy as “absolute Terra incognita.” Among the works of the major composers (Domenico Cimarosa, Giovanni Paisiello, Gioachino Rossini, Vincenzo Bellini, Gaetano Donizetti, Giuseppe Verdi, and Giacomo Puccini), she has been able to identify only a single, albeit substantial, example: Rossini’s *Edipo Coloneo* (1814), commissioned by his friend Giambattista Giusti for Giusti’s own translation of Sophocles’ play *Oedipus*. As a probable cause for the scarcity of incidental music in the nineteenth century, Grempler advances Alberto Basso’s argument that Italy was dominated by opera and that opera did not allow for any compromise between the spoken theater and musical theater. The little evidence of incidental music beyond Rossini’s *Edipo coloneo* she has been able to identify, points to Italian tragedies by Vittorio Alfieri and Alessandro Manzoni, tragedies that may have included music (mostly vocal music); however, no such music is known to have survived. In short, Perrotta’s “Bozzetto sinfonico”


58 In Alfieri’s *Abele* (1786, published posthumously in 1804), for instance, the “personaggi fantastici” (that is, allegorical and supernatural characters) were intended to be sung; however, no music is known to exist until the setting by Leandro Passagni (1915). Likewise, *Saul* (1782) includes text relating to biblical scenes and intended to be sung, whereas *Mirra* (1786) includes a section intended for a chorus, which may, if it was not sung, have been introduced by a short “sinfonia.” In the nineteenth century, Manzoni’s *Adelchi* (1822) and *Il conte di Carmagnola* (1819) include sections assigned to a “chorus,” but it is not clear whether they were intended to be sung. Grempler, “Schauspielmusik in Italien um 1800,” 177–79. For the period from the late sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, Robert and Norma Weaver have compiled a list of dramatic works that includes plays we know included music (now lost or written by unknown composers). See Robert Lamar Weaver and Norma Wright Weaver, *A
appears to stand as a rare Italian example of incidental music in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The position of Mascagni’s “Preludio” is unique in the sense that it is a hybrid opening number composed at a time when orchestral introductions were rapidly falling out of fashion.\(^{59}\) In the first half of the nineteenth century, opera overtures came in three types. The first two are cast in some sort of sonata form; they end “with a fast section of some brilliance” and include themes that either do or do not have a connection with the opera proper.\(^{60}\) The third type, the medley overture, is based on a series of themes drawn from the opera proper but not usually cast in sonata form; like the other two types, it commonly concludes with a section in fast tempo.\(^{61}\) A related type of orchestral introduction, the “Prelude,” tends to be “unsymphonic,” in a single tempo, and not in sonata form.\(^{62}\) Mascagni’s “Preludio” is a hybrid of all these types. It borrows the connections to the opera proper from the overture in sonata form and the medley overture, and the string of themes drawn from the opera proper and the concern for some sort of formal structure from the medley overture; and like the prelude, it is light on development and not in sonata form. Most important, however, Mascagni interrupts his “Preludio” with a vocal section, the “Siciliana,” setting a standard for realism appropriate to Verga’s play. As we have seen, the

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\(^{59}\) Neither Verdi’s Otello (1887) nor Falstaff (1893) include an opening orchestral number. Of Puccini’s operas, Le villi (1884) still includes an introductory orchestral number (a “Preludio”), but the subsequent ones do not. Alberto Franchetti’s Asrael (1888) still includes a “Preludio,” Cristoforo Colombo (1892) does not. Ruggero Leoncavallo’s Pagliacci (1992) and Alfredo Catalani’s La Wally (1893) do not include an overture or prelude either.


inclusion of the “Siciliana” was an afterthought, one that not only tied the “Preludio” to the 
drama of the opera proper but replaced an original ending that appears to be lost.
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