

0 There are certain rules behind complex and organic circumstances.

0 a personal reaction to the 7 questions in the thesis of Ayumi Higuchi answering with my own research relating to a specific field of interest: *Italian Music for Movies*



- 1 **Are rules created by our desires to understand the circumstances?**
or
Can existing rules be discovered through observation of the circumstances ?

In music *rules* are certainly discovered through observation of the circumstances: the common structural elements of music like *pitch* (which governs melody and harmony), *rhythm* (and its associated tempo, meter, and articulation), *dynamics*, and the sonic qualities of *timbre* and *texture* are in deed rules setted in the circumstances.

In *music for movies*, rules are often created in order to reach a general "better understanding " of the content, but i think , more specifcly, that they are created to interpret and render the circumstances. Music in movies, by definition, is the physical "vertical column" on the film that has the function to help the understanding of the filmed images.

Here the "circumstance" become the movie itself and the "rule" the reason of the decision that bring the composer and the director to use a specific theme in specific moments of the movie.

Not so much driven by "desire" but more by a necessity, the composer creates his own particular *rules* in order to connect at best his music with specific scenes in the movie.

A good example is the movie " *investigation on a citizen above suspicion* " by Elio Petri, that tells the story of a cocky police officer which murders his lover and then give the duty to his investigation team to solve the crime. The movie is a political methafore to criticize the abuse of power by those whose detain authority. The protagonist (the police officer) had to be interpreted by the actor following a controversial profile: beeing from one side cruel and ruthless, from the other frail and mocky, but always keeping a grotesque general image;

For the composer Ennio Morricone those adjective where some of the *rules* to follow , decided by the director, that are translated by him into personal *rules* (or restrictions) in the music theme, in order to create sounds that helped to emphasize the role of the central actor through the whole movie.

In my opinion, the result of this study can be noticed since the beginning of the movie, from the opening scene:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GtXOouXjf_o

2 **Does the rule explain all cases?
or
Are there inevitable exceptions?**

3 **How different is an observed
exception,
from an intentionally created
exception?**

Ennio Morricone is maybe the most known Italian music composer for cinema since the late end of 1960. His unique ability to use notes not only to give a sound comment to the sequences in a movie, but to make them become an active part of the action, giving him the possibility to be strongly present through his sounds in more than 500 movies all over the world.

He was able to mould his specific style and make it fit with many different kinds of movie genres, made by very different directors, working from dramatic to erotic, from Italian comedy to horror, from thriller to western etc.

Morricone's compositions are perfectly constructed considering *rules* like metric, time and rhythm;

Although, besides his academic precisions there is an "exception": a voluntary use of asymmetry.

The idea of asymmetry is for me an "observed exception", that means my personal interpretation of his use of specific sounds that "steps out" of the main sound theme, but still are a concrete part of it.

Asymmetry is an "intentional exception" created by Morricone by the use of specific melodies performed by instruments with a singular and unmistakable sound (like oboe and mouth-organ) or by specific voices or chorus, mostly founded in moments without dialogues, that are used in order to help to typify and customize the story.

Keeping the movie "*Investigation on a Citizen Above Suspicion*" as an example, the oboe and the "spring" sound through the whole theme is for me an example of intentionally created asymmetry.

4 Can we apply a rule to something, in order to observe differences evolving?

During the filming of *A clockwork orange*, Stanley Kubrick was fascinated by the theme of "*investigation on a citizen above suspicion*", and asked Morricone to make the soundtrack for his movie, interested to interpret the disquieting, derisory and grotesque tone present in the original story written by Anthony Burgess.

In an interview, Morricone says that Kubrick asked him to literally "imitate himself" referring to what he created for "*investigation on a citizen above suspicion*"; Morricone, even not liking at all to repeat himself, accepted because of his admiration for Kubrick.

In the end the musics for *A clockwork orange* were magnificently chosen and done by Walter Carlos, because of Morricone's previous engagement in "*a fist full of dynamite*" of Sergio Leone, and because of Kubrick's decision to not interfere in the current work of the composer with another director.

In this case I observe a possibility through which things could be curiously evolved in a different way, imagining one of Kubrick's masterpieces with a Morricone's theme.

Viewing scenes of *A clockwork orange* while listening to the theme of "*investigation on a citizen...*", can be an interesting experiment in order to better figure out what kind of differences could take place substituting the main theme.

**5 Can we call one thing "original" and another "copy"?
and
Do they have the same value?**

Calibro 35 is a band formed in Italy in 2008.

The band is formed by several well known professional music artists of the Italian panorama, coming from different music experiences in different bands;

The project of Calibro 35 consists in reproducing specific themes chosen from Italian movie soundtracks, motivated by their interest mainly in Italian police-giallo movies and B-movies from the period that goes from the end of 1960 to the late 1970s. Their kind of approach towards *music for movies* consists in a personal (but faithful) interpretation (and a tribute) of these themes, permitting these sounds to be spread and known again in a different time and context; in an interview they state:

" this project is born by our personal will to not lose a specific Italian music heritage that risks more and more to be ghettoized by fans and collectors of the so called "genre cinema" (...) with Calibro 35 we try to bring this heritage into different contexts, for example this month we will play in a jazz festival, in one indie-rock and in a classic music festival (...)"

Nevertheless, if we look at this new context, the very function of these sounds risks to change, since those themes are a strong part of the movie, the specific medium that helps to understand and experience the content; in my opinion, if they are detached from this content they risk to shift the attention only towards music aesthetics, losing their importance and thereby their peculiarity, and in the worst case they can become some kind of "vintage hits", consequently abused and commercialized.

However Luca Cavina, the bassist of the band, in the same interview says something that kind of makes me think that this last negative comment is hopefully far from actually happening;

" we have tried many different music styles, to give an overview on the soundtracks of that specific period of time (...) we were mainly interested to capture this sound that reminds us a specific way of doing cinema, that goes beyond a specific genre. "

In their first CD they reproduced Morricone's main theme of "*investigation on a citizen above suspicion*", it is interesting to listen to this interpretation, comparing it to the original in the movie sequence, in order to understand more clearly how this interpretation occurs in practice.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkCG8-k4ZbQ>

**6 Does a rule always lead to a single answer?
and
if there are several possible answers,
how do we observe the differences?**

**7 Could there be a single rule
explaining the whole world?
or
Will we never find out?**

My research was based on considering specific examples (a single movie and its theme); within this topic i considered the word *rule* under many interpretations, sometimes objective, sometimes personal; because of that choice these two similar big questions can be answered considering those specific examples;

considering the movie and its political message, this question can be answered with a quote of Franz Kafka
" Whatever impression he can give to us, he is a servant of the law, therefore he belongs to the law and he avoids human judgement "

In this movie the "practical rules" (schemes) used by the director to build the plot with the whole message that the story communicate, together with the rules that Morricone followed (and creates) in order to express better this message, are criticizing a bigger system of rules, the rules that runs society; more in specific, the whole idea of *rule* is questioned, addressing the critic to who detains the power of keeping those rules respected and consequently abuse or bend them on his/their own favour and interest .

considering the theme of Morricone, *rules* are for me the essential "structure", the path, that permits to reach the most effective ways of expression. More generally, *rules* are the actual part that leads to reach communication. Rules are a medium.

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circumstances.**

