Civilizing the Scaffold:

A History of Punishment, Control, and Spectacle

"We all died painfully
swallowing our last word
kicking at the wind."
Fabrizio De André (1968)[1]

Pisanello's 15th-century *Saint George and the Princess,* in the church of Sant'Anastasia in Verona, depicts the story of Saint George, a tale much like that of Perseus and Andromeda. Saint George travels to a faraway town that regularly sacrifices farm animals to a local dragon; sometimes the town has even sacrificed its children to appease the monster. When Saint George arrives, it is the princess of Trebizond who has been selected for sacrifice and she is tied up at the shore awaiting her destiny. Saint George injures the dragon, tames him, brings him into town, and tells the townspeople he will slay the dragon before their very eyes if they all convert to Christianity. Today, the part of the fresco with the dragon has worn away, and viewers are left with a slightly more modern mural, for with the mythical creature gone, minor figures, like the men being hanged above the crowd in the near background, gain greater centrality.

Indeed, to look at Pisanello's fresco today, it is striking how it seems to have changed with, or been changed by, the centuries. It is as if medieval mysticism has been worn away by the development of ages and replaced by an early-modern tale of a merchant's daughter saved from lowly scoundrels who are publicly hanged for their crimes. In this version of the tale, one

can understand those hanged men literally and symbolically to be, like the dragon before them, sacrificed for the common good, in the name of morality. In Saint George's tale, this morality is strictly Christian, the dragon dies so the townspeople can be converted. However, without the dragon, the tale loses some of its original specificity and opens itself up to new interpretations. For example, without the dragon, Saint George becomes an ambiguous figure, even a sort of heroic everyman. He is dressed in armor and stands with his horse, but he is also positioned at the seashore, near a sailboat, and so can be read as any one of myriad medieval or early-modern knights or sailors setting off for adventure.

At the same time that Saint George's heroism fades or becomes less specific, the sacrificed men hanging from the scaffold in the background grow more relevant. They are nameless and their stories untold but their sins were most likely the sins of the nascent merchant city-state: violence, thievery, treason, or counterfeiting. In this new reading, without the threat of the dragon and with the hanged men suddenly looming larger on the scene, the princess, or merchant's daughter, appears to have been saved in a more lateral sense. That is, she was once saved directly from the threat of the dragon, but now she has been saved indirectly from the latent threat (a threat to her class and to the state) of the hanged men and their nefarious existence at the corners of the fresco, and of the city. She has been saved, in this sense, not by Saint George, but by the unseen powers of the city-state, which calls into further question the knight's role in the scene. As opposed to the 10th century of Saint George's tale, the 15th century of Pisanello's fresco was, in fact, a time when the figure of the knight was diminishing, along with the mysticism that allowed for morality tales of dragons in far off lands. The feudal knight's power in western Europe was being gradually transferred to the centralized state and the Christian mysticism that in many ways defined the Middle Ages was being chipped away at by

philosophical thought based on ancient Greek and Roman philosophers and which would pave the way for the Age of Reason. As we will see, in this transitional time, as in the deteriorated fresco, it became increasingly more important for the state to demonstrate its power and control by publicly executing thieves and other criminals than it was for saints in church frescoes to demonstrate the power of their religious beliefs by publicly slaying a dragon.

Yet, while the figure of the hanged, or publicly executed man, gained ground around Pisanello's time, the specific reasons for which the artist depicted these men is unclear. It has been suggested that he was setting the fresco doubly in the faraway byzantine town of Saint George's tale and in contemporary Florence where Piazza Piave, once called Gallows Square (Piazza delle Forche), was known—until 1786 when it became the first European state to abolish public execution—for its daily public hangings. However, whatever Pisanello's intentions, what is clear is that the fresco works in at least two ways to elucidate the process of civilization as it relates to punishment, which is the central matter in this chapter. Firstly, the fresco is dated to the 1430s or 1440s, which were years of great change for the Western world. In Verona, where the fresco was painted, the Middle Ages were drawing to a close while in Florence, which the fresco is thought to depict, Cosimo de Medici's rule was underway, and a local Renaissance had begun. In France, the Hundred Years' War was near its end and within a couple of decades the feudal system in France would largely give way to a centralized State, as will be discussed in more detail later on in regard to the French poet, François Villon. Related to this increased centralization of power, knights in feudal systems had already lost much autonomy and they were increasingly forced to lay down their swords and enter noble courts where they would learn that social success must be vied for with words rather than brute force. This transition marks the beginning of the rise of 'civilization' as we think of it today and the beginning of the end of the

knight's form of vigilante justice as the status quo; though half a millennium later modern man still remembers this autonomy romantically in myth—in tales of errant-knights, superheroes, and cowboys, for example, the latter of which are central to the following chapter of this book.

In this sense, Pisanello's 15th-century fresco now appears contemporary to his own time: the hanged men become the only force opposing the representation of goodness and morality in the foreground but they are distanced from the central medieval hero. Instead, they are dealt with at the periphery, as they belong to the backdrop of the city-state, to the city-state's mechanism of control and punishment. The symbolic power of public executions will eventually become problematic for the State and, in time, the figure of the hanged man, like knights before him, will lose the prominence he once had in the city. However, before he disappears, he will come to complexly and variously represent much of the loss, achievement, and myth of the civilizing process.

This, finally, brings us to the second point, for Pisanello lucidly depicts many of the difficulties of public execution: its literal and metaphorical position at the edges of society, its population by the lower classes (as seen by the hanged men's dress), its aspects of spectacle (specifically its position above the rest of the crowd, to be witnessed by all), its association with a sense of sacrifice, martyrdom, atonement (for neither Saint George nor the princess died as sacrifice or martyr that day, but two died in their places). With the dragon gone, the mural becomes a historical, rather than mystical document. It becomes a document that remembers the many who were executed and forgotten, rather than the few who were executed and redeemed in communal memory, like the man commemorated a few meters away from the fresco, above the altar. Thus, it seems to unwittingly celebrate those condemned to the gallows, perhaps not all martyrs, but certainly some unjustly executed. Particularly because the fresco is installed in a

church, the hanged men come to possess the possibility of redemption. They represent the double witnessing that creates a martyr. The sacred object, the martyr, must witness God, and in a second recognition, the martyr must be identified and redeemed by the crowd who watches his death. In this case, ordinary hanged men are given a second opportunity to be witnessed by centuries of churchgoers in Verona.

Perhaps Pisanello desired exactly this, to artfully commemorate, specifically or generally, condemned men who had not deserved to die. If so, he would be neither the first nor the last to use the gallows as a symbol of injustice. The theme of injustice and redemption was never far from the hearts and tongues of those who frequented public executions in continental Europe and Great Britain, and it is a theme picked up and remembered in British folk ballads that date as far back as the 15th century and that were revived by 20th-century musicians. These folk ballads were revived in traditional and near-traditional versions, while the gallows setting re-entered the popular imagination in new and creative ways as well. Pisanello's scene is reminiscent, for one, of the carnivalesque setting of Bob Dylan's 1965 "Desolation Row" which begins: "They're selling postcards of the hanging / They're painting the passports brown," and goes on to describe the setting: "The beauty parlor is filled with sailors / The circus is in town."[2] In context—though hardly clear due to the extremely hermetic nature of the song—Dylan's song refers to a 1920 lynching of innocent black circus workers in Duluth, Minnesota. In context, Pisanello paints the scene of a saint's heroism. Yet, visually, both illustrate a confused city center, full of animals, ships at port and men to sail them, townspeople in all sorts of dress, mythical and epic figures, and the reproduction of a hanging, one in 1920 on Desolation Row (translated by Fabrizio De André and Francesco De Gregori in 1974 as "Via della povertà") and the other c1438 at the end of Malcontents' Row (Via dei Malcontenti), in the Gallows Square. Beyond Dylan's one-liner

homage, the larger generation of Anglophone musicians in the 1960s and 1970s continually returned to the image of the public hanging, which seems to have been used to call into question current systems of law and justice.

Beyond Child Ballads

The 'Child Ballads' is the colloquial name given to a collection of 305 ballad lyrics collected in the 19th century by Francis James Child and originally published between 1882 and 1898 under the title *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*.[3] Bertrand Harris Bronson gathered and published the tunes to these ballads in the 1960s, making the ballads particularly ripe for reinterpretation at that time and, in fact, one sees in British and American folk music of the 1960s an increased popularity of the Child Ballads. Though not the only one to return to vogue,[4] a particularly popular folk-revival song was a gallows ballad commonly known as "Maid Freed from the Gallows Pole", in the British tradition, and as "Feher Anna", in Hungarian. It was recorded by, amongst others, the American folk singer, Huddie Lead Belly Ledbetter, by Bob Dylan as "Seven Curses" in 1963,[5] by Judy Collins as "Anathea" on her 1964 *Judy Collins 3* album, and by Led Zeppelin as "Gallows Pole" on their 1970 *Led Zeppelin III.* While the details differ, all versions remember the tale of a man who awaits the arrival of a loved one who would bribe the judge/hangman and save his life before he is executed for theft. Inevitably, in these tellings, the judge accepts or refuses the bribe and asks for more, namely, he asks for the body of the daughter or sister who brings the silver and gold. She concedes to give him her body and sees in the morning light that her loved one has been executed anyway. This particular gallows ballad was popular, perhaps, because it calls into question the law itself, the right of a judge to condemn a man to death and the intrinsic validity of laws to rule the land unevenly, protecting those in

power and punishing the powerless. It calls into question, as well, the objectivity of the morality that belongs to those who create and uphold law.

The song, in this sense, is a subversion of class hierarchies and hegemonic morality that unscrupulously and irregularly applies itself across society. Similar scenes are evoked in this period in other British and American folk songs, as well as in Italy, as we shall see, by Fabrizio De André, and in France, by the French *chansonnier*, Georges Brassens, among others.[6] Around the same years that the gallows were reawakened in national mythoi by folk-musician recordings, national opinion in England and France—and even, to a certain extent, in the United States—brought about the countries' last executions. Except for years during Fascism when it was reinstituted, it has been banned in Italy since 1889. However, the last executions in the other countries dealt with here were much later: in the United Kingdom was by hanging in 1964, while in France it was by guillotine in 1977. The United States is one of the only modern Western states that upholds the death penalty (legal as of 2022 in 27 states), but the 1970s saw its only federal moratorium, which lasted from 1972 to 1976. Public executions were abolished earlier in all cases: in the United Kingdom in 1868, in France in 1939, and in the United States in 1936.

The gallows appear to be somewhat romanticized in these songs, yet, they were produced in a historical moment that saw, to a great degree, the end of both public and non-public executions in the West, as stated above, and they were produced by young musicians who were politically aligned with those changes. Thus, it would seem more likely that, as opposed to a romanticizing of the act of state execution, there is a nostalgia for the loss of something else related to or represented by the gallows. These musicians, perhaps, intuit some of what Michel Foucault would later argue in his 1975 *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,*[7] namely, that the death penalty was not abolished so as to render the penal system more humane, but,

rather, in order to render the judicial process a more proficient and effective system of control. The musicians perhaps intuit that the inhumanity of punishment has not disappeared in the modern landscape, but it has only become harder to sing about, to communicate about, for it has been hidden. So, they revert to singing of the gallows, so obvious and stark. However, in the occasional reference to public hangings—in retold folk ballads or in original pieces like the Styx "Renegade" from their 1978 *Pieces of Eight* album—there is not a comprehensive enough treatment by any one artist to argue that they had a clear sense of why the gallows and scaffold felt like a significant cultural symbol. Rather, the songs most likely represent an unscrutinized zeitgeist, an intuition of certain societal losses, or mere mutations, between the late Middle Ages and present day.

On the other hand, in Fabrizio De André's enduring return to the figure of the condemned man in his oeuvre, one ascertains a clear sense of that figure's manifold power and De André's own systemic drive towards unveiling—through hanged-men and other representations of sacred power and communal sacrifice that substitute the hanged-man—contemporary illusions of humaneness in spectacle and punishment.[8] Before Foucault's landmark *Discipline and Punish*, De André questions the commonly understood conception of post-Enlightenment 'Western Civilization' as existing on an evolutionary trajectory of righteous progress towards an ever-gentler humankind. Significantly, the Genoese *cantautore* begins his investigation by returning to the moment depicted by Pisanello: the end of the Middle Ages and the birth of early-modern centralized states. Like the musicians who revisit traditional folk ballads in the songs detailed above, De André's first gallows song is a rendition of the c16th-century British broadside ballad, "Geordie", also known as Child Ballad 209. Yet, his interest proves hardly a one-off production that belongs to the larger folk zeitgeist.

To give a sense of the importance throughout De André's career of the themes of crime, judgment, and punishment, listed below are songs relevant to those themes, which represent 14% of his corpus of songs with lyrics. It is worth noting as well that, as we shall see, even more of his songs deal with offense and judgment as they relate, not to the penal system, specifically, but rather to cultural norms and societal judgment and exclusion.

Public hangings:

- "A Crime of the Countryside" ("Delitto di paese" 1965, after Brassens' "L'assassinat")
- "Geordie" (1966)
- "The Ballad of the Hanged Men" ("La ballata degli impiccati" 1968, after François Villon's "La ballade des pendus")
- "Recitative" ("Recitativo" 1968)
- "Poverty Street" ("Via della povertà" 1974, after Bob Dylan's "Desolation Row")

Allusion to public hangings, while strictly mentioning public torture:

- "Death" ("La morte", 1967) takes it tune from Brassens' "The Orchard of King Louis", which, in turn, takes its lyrics from Théodore de Banville's "Ballad of the Hanged Men" ("La ballade des pendus" from his 1866 play *Gringoire*), which tells of royal lands reserved for hangings

Other forms of public execution:

- "Via dolorosa" ("Via della croce", 1970)
- "Titus's Testament" ("Il Testamento di Tito", 1970)
- "Joan of Arc" ("Giovanna d'Arco" 1974, after Leonard Cohen's "Joan of Arc")

Legal judges, in direct relation to the accused:

- "The Gorilla" ("Il gorilla" 1968, after Brassens' "Le gorille")

- "A Judge" ("Un giudice" 1971, after Edgar Lee Master's "Judge Selah Lively")
- "Dream Number Two" ("Sogno numero due", 1973)
- "Father's Song" ("Canzone del padre", 1973)

Incarcerated men:

- "Miché's Ballad" ("La ballata del Miché", on his second single release in 1961)
- "A Blasphemer" ("Un blasfemo" 1971, after Edgar Lee Master's "Wendell P. Bloyd")
- "A Madman (Behind Every Idiot There's a Village)" ("Un matto (Dietro ogni scemo c'è un villaggio)" 1971, after Edgar Lee Master's "Frank Drummer")
- "A Doctor" ("Un medico" 1971, after Edgar Lee Master's "Doctor Siegfried Iseman")
- "My Hour of Freedom" ("La mia ora di libertà", 1973)
- "Don Raffae'" (1990)

The themes of corrupt justice and punishment of the powerless are, in a general way, central to De André and they permeate his work for decades. This chapter examines how his music utilizes the figure of the hanged man, specifically, to negotiate these themes, as well as the themes of discipline, normalization, and spectacle. Though the songs listed above span the length of 30 years, the majority of the songs with which this chapter deals come from Fabrizio De André's first four concept albums, published during five years near the beginning of his career: *We All Died Agonizingly* (*Tutti morimmo a stento,* 1968), *The Good News* (*La buona novella,* 1970), *Not of Money not of Love nor of Heaven* (*Non al denaro non all'amore né al cielo,* 1971), and *Story of an Office Worker* (*Storia di un impiegato,* 1973). In these albums, De André follows a narrative of the cultural evolution of punishment that is seated, almost ironically, in the public execution that razed time in the West to year 0 and which inaugurated the current historical cycle of Western Civilization.

From faceless public executions in late-medieval France, to the most renowned public execution in the Western imagination; from the relationship between the judge, the law, and the prisoner in the early 20th-century United States, to contemporary Italy and the same relationship there; this chapter follows De André as he investigates old systems of punishment, traces their transitions to current systems, and considers the causes and effects of those transitions. It tracks, furthermore, his consideration of the side effects of the civilizing of western man, in songs that depict a corollary relationship between medieval hanged men and modern addiction and suicide. Finally, the chapter looks at the ways in which De André sees the contemporary stage as a space of apparently harmless spectacle that has, in truth, not lost all relics of the violent and sacrificial spectacles of its past.

The Implications of the Hanged Man

When Fabrizio De André appeared on the music scene, he was labeled by the media 'The Minstrel in Microgroove' and 'The 'Medieval' Singer-Songwriter.'[9] The young musician admitted to being smitten with the period and said he preferred the medieval title 'troubadour' to the modern '*cantautore,*'[10] citing Provençal troubadours like Jaufré Rudel and Rambaldo di Vaqueiras as some of his influences. It is well-known that the late-medieval French poet François Villon was an early inspiration in De André's work and that he borrowed from his own translations of Provençal ballads, which he found in music shops in France, for some of his early songs. Yet, De André's fixation with medieval poetry and lyric is not as clearcut as it initially appears. When he cites a poet like Villon as an influence, he cites him together with *poètes maudits* like Charles Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud.[11] Furthermore, at least some of this preference came down to him distilled through the French anarchist singer-songwriter and poet, Georges Brassens, whom he recognized as, if not influential, at least sympathetic to his affinity

for medieval ballads.[12] In fact, Brassens' 1960 reworking (via Symbolist poet Théodore de Banville) of Villon's "La ballade des pendus" perhaps had a hand in De André's own 1968 version, "Ballad of the Hanged Men" (Ballata degli impiccati).

De André's so-called medieval styling, as defined by contemporary journalists and music critics—"ancient songs, as if sung by 13th-century minstrels"[13]—is, like his influences, far from strictly medieval. In 1968, when he sounded to critics like a 13th-century minstrel, he had just released *We All Died Agonizingly: Cantata in Si Minor for Solo, Chorus and Orchestra* (Tutti morimmo a stento: cantata in Si minore per solo, coro e orchestra). The concept album includes a series of movements, rather than discrete songs, and takes the form of the type of compositions for which the Baroque composer Johann Sebastian Bach is famous. Indeed, as scholars have pointed out about his early songs, De André's Middle Ages were quite long, beginning in his lyrics with 7th-century stories of Charles Martel, ending somewhere around the Baroque in arrangement, and colored throughout by his fascination with the 19th-century French poets and Brassens' 20th-century French folk.[14]

If musically, then, De André's influences hardly limit themselves to the medieval, it is perhaps his fondness of medieval society that shined through and earned him a reputation as a troubadour. Indeed, he claims in 1967: "If I could conserve certain social advancements made during the following centuries, I would happily see a modern society set in the Middle Ages."[15] This indistinct statement can be clarified somewhat by other of the singer's preferences and beliefs. De André, for example, did not drive, abhorred flying, and claimed variously to want to live on a private island and on top of a mountain with no telephones.[16] Therefore, it seems he intends a world with less technology, generally, as he desired fewer modes of fast communication and commuting. He was non-religious, so his 'conservation of certain social

advancements' should include the second half of the 20th-century's increasingly secular society, as well as social advancements for minority groups (e.g. women, indigenous people, transgender people), for whom he was an outspoken advocate throughout his career. Yet, if he sought less technology and the preservation of some social advancements, he could have easily chosen nostalgia for the 18th or 19th century. This chapter proposes, rather, that the Middle Ages specifically appealed to the part of Fabrizio De André that, throughout his life, desired a less-centralized society, one less controlled by cultural norms and the State's monopoly on violence. That is, it appealed to his anarchical side.

As a youth, De André moved out of his family home and in with, as he describes it, the "seedy side of Genoa: thieves and prostitutes."[17] He loved a prostitute during this period but says of her: "I was a coward and hypocrite: see, in this I have remained bourgeois. No, I would never have married her."[18] Throughout his career he makes this claim again and again, that he is 'bourgeois' and, having been born into that class, cannot, no matter his intentions, be anything else.[19] He laments his position within society, not as one that is equal to the difficulty of marginalized classes, but as one nonetheless that is controlled by a mechanism within which an individual must do as social norms dictate, rather than as he would choose for himself.[20] One sees in this how De André is self-aware about his inability to shake the effects of the social code on his social conscience. One can see, as well, signs of his awareness that, in contemporary society, well-embedded societal restrictions reenforced from birth become elements of the individual self, creating self-restraint that is, at first, imposed externally but that is eventually experienced as an internal restraint, even when it means a split of one's own desires. That is to say, De André loves a prostitute but cannot marry her, not because anyone forcibly prohibits him, but because his own internalized societal training forbids him from 'acting out' in this way.

"How can we free ourselves of this society?", De André asks in a 1970 interview in *Corriere Mercantile* and, in answer to his own question, states: "To be free, one would need to be individually free. But to be free within oneself, wouldn't it be necessary to first allow individuals that freedom?"[21] This reads as very much in line with the individual anarchical thought of Max Stirner with which De André was known to be aligned. However, there is more than an allusion to individual anarchy in his statement, there is also a pushing back against the underlying social structures that led him to individual anarchy as a philosophical mode. That is to say, there is the recognition that, at least in this day and age, a man who seeks to act or think freely, at the individual level, is stymied by the fact that long before he was mature enough to think for himself, hegemonic social norms backed up by the power of the state had already acted upon him to control and limit his desires and, subsequently, his choices.

De André suggests in the above citation, as well as in his early works, that western societies today are ones that do not allow individuals this sort of freedom, that they are, rather, societies with heightened constraints on citizens' thoughts, bodies, and behavior. This belief flies in the face of that which western societies claim about themselves, as they regularly brandish their commitments to freedom as fundamental to their histories and governments. It flies in the face, furthermore, of claims about western progress and 'civilization' as the most humane, the most enlightened, and the freest trajectory for humanity. Despite these national myths, which are rendered to citizens as natural truths, De André recognizes medieval-feudal and early-merchant societies as freer in many ways than his own in 1967. And he is not alone in this thinking, for, while it generally goes against the grain of commonly held opinions about 'progress' and 'civilization', many historians and scholars agree that the Middle Ages were a time in which the organization of space, particularly in urban areas, was much less clearly defined or thoroughly

controlled. Furthermore, many historians hold that the comprehensive normalization of behavior, which De André vehemently criticizes across his career, was not yet complete in medieval societies, but that it would be perfected in our own. Norbert Elias, for one, in his *The Civilizing Process,* notes that the so-called civilizing of western man has been a process many hundreds of years in the making and that it began first in courtly circles and then spread outside the court to larger swaths of society in following centuries. Furthermore, like De André, he cites as central to the creation of this new civilized citizen, not an externalized exercise of state power but, rather, those very courtly norms that "imposed emotional restraint upon subjects" and prohibited the "the free expression of desires."[22] Elias claims that if a Western man today were to travel back to the medieval-feudal period, he would note "the wilder, more unrestrained and adventurous life of the upper classes in this society," which could be considered alternatively barbaric and coarse as compared to the 20th century.[23]

In the Middle Ages, even the late Middle Ages, the necessary economic, technological, and intellectual developments had not yet taken place that would, across the next few hundred years, work synergistically to create an environment that categorized and classified all types of human behavior, labeling only that which was 'useful', 'diligent,' and above all, 'disciplined', as 'proper' and therefore sanctioned by ruling-class society and the State.[24] As far as State mechanisms are concerned, as the feudal system transitioned to increasingly centralized modern States, the monopoly on violence that was necessary for centralized control required knights to turn the power of their swords over and become, in turn, bureaucratic functionaries of the courts. The modern concept of a monopoly on violence is defined by Jean Bodin's 1576 *Les Six livres de la République* and Thomas Hobbes' 1651 *Leviathan* and, as Max Weber points out in his 1919 "Politics as a Vocation*,"* it requires a State's exclusive and legitimate right to force and

retribution within a social organization.[25] Furthermore, the 18th and 19th centuries would see the powerful new middle class, the bourgeoisie, add to courtly social requirements (*court*esy) by formalizing and heightening its own demands for propriety and decency, in the name of Enlightenment and bourgeois concepts of discipline and achievement. In this period, further powers were turned over to the courts and the State began to play an even greater role in regulating behavior via nuanced institutions like asylums and prisons. Thus, we can begin to imagine that the creation of the 'civilized' person in Europe was by no means a natural or inevitable individual evolution.[26] Rather, it was born in the economic and social requirements of the ruling class and it has been enforced by a monopoly on violence that acts as the central notion of modern public law.

Fabrizio De André investigates this connection between control, discipline, and behavioral normalization and uses the scaffold as a platform to scrutinize the inner working of contemporary structures of societal control and, in turn, to demythify the aggrandizing self-promotion of the West's relentless civilizing. The scaffold and the figure of the hanged man appear to be particularly useful for at least four reasons, which will be examined in that which follows. Firstly, they reveal imbalances of control and punishment that are more effectively hidden by the modern penal system. Secondly, they mirror the hanged man who has not been overcome, whose existence, indeed, is proliferate in the civilized world in the figure of the self-condemning addict and suicide. Thirdly, the scaffold is literally a stage, a traditional space of attention that is raised up to be the object of the multitudinous gaze. The scaffold is a unique kind of stage, in fact, from which the social/political other speaks, even in his silence, sometimes as a symbol of the king's or State's power, and sometimes as a symbol of his own subversive power. Finally, the publicly executed man reminds the listener of the power he has to incite

revolution as a martyr, via the power of *witnessing*, and the comparative impotence of the figure of the incarcerated man today who is effectively hidden away.

From the Scaffold to the Institution

In De André's early career, he transitions from songs that testify to public executions, to songs that scrutinize the judicial process and detention as well as other forms of institutionalization. From the first camp are songs like "Geordie," "A Crime of the Countryside" (Delitto di paese), "The Ballad of the Hanged Men" (Ballata degli impiccati), and "Titus's Testament" (Il testamento di Tito), (1966-1970), while in the second are "A Judge" (Un giudice), "A Madman" (Un matto), "A Blasphemer" (Un blasfemo), "Dream Number Two" (Sogno numero due), and "In My Hour of Freedom" (Nella mia ora di libertà), (1971-1973). In a sort of liminal space is "Recitative" (Recitativo), (1968), which deals in an amorphous landscape between the hanged men of the past and the judges and condemned men of the present. In three phases, the *cantautore* expresses the shift from an execution to an internment-based penal system. Phase one details the stark justice or injustice of pre-modern law, as it is directly, swiftly, and publicly conveyed by the hand of the executioner in the name of the sovereign. Phase two portrays an increased ambiguity of justice in the modern world: the almighty and public will of the king is converted into an apparently objective, rational, and systematic judicial process, but underneath this apparently more humane modern process hides an increased ability to intern citizens for an increasing number of threatening and non-threatening actions. Finally, phase three reflects on the contemporary landscape in which behavioral controls that support the power structure have become so effective that people lose sight of injustice, while surveillance and confinement have become so pervasive that spaces of freedom and internment become indistinct and, at times, reverse.

“Geordie” (1966) and “Titus’s Testament” (1970)

“Geordie,” De André’s first gallows song, was altered by the *cantautore* from a literal translation done by Maureen and Giorgio Rix and was released in 1966.[27] There are a number of differences between the c16th-century folk ballad and De André’s version and the changes throw into sharp relief the *cantautore*’s intentions. In the English version, for example, Geordie is of the “king’s royal breed” and so “will be hanged in a golden chain” because “he stole sixteen of the king’s royal deer / and sold them.” His wife rushes to the London court, she swears her husband has never stolen and says she will give up all three of her children to save him. In response, “the judge looked over his left shoulder / he said fair maid I'm sorry / he said fair maid you must be gone / for I cannot pardon Geordie.” In De André’s version, Geordie will be hanged from a golden cord but, significantly, he is not given the status of a noble birth, De André instead gives an age to Geordie. “He isn’t 20 years old yet,” and when his love comes to save him, she does not offer her children in exchange, but simply insists that he is innocent.[28] In response, she hears that “Neither the hearts of the English, / Nor the scepter of the king” have the power to save Geordie, for, “Even if they all cry with you / The law cannot change.”[29] De André’s changes lend less ambiguity to the song than the original; Geordie is young and poor and sells deer reserved for the king, for money that one can presume he needs to feed his loved ones. The maid who loves him, as well, is ethically unambiguous, no longer offering any bribe in return for his life. Indeed, her pathetic humility, which displays the impotence of the powerless, is emphasized as she, in resigned optimism, remembers his relative luck: “they will hang him on a golden cord / it is a rare privilege.”[30]

The most significant change, however, is in the disappearance of the judge. De André, who will become fixated with the figure of the judge in later songs, erases his presence and

power from this ballad. The judge's "I cannot pardon Geordie," becomes an anonymous "the law cannot change," not even the king and all of England can pardon Geordie. Though historically inaccurate, as condemned men awaited the king's pardon from their jail cells all the way through their walk up to the scaffold, the law takes on an objective universality that will be lost when the judge reappears later in De André's work. In this distant past, in this foreign land, the law pretends, like the Ten Commandments, to supersede the king, to derive from the seat of the king's own terrestrial power, from God himself.

The claim of the old system is thus clear and unambiguous; it is not man who judges man, but God who judges man, and thus the law requires no justification by the powers that wield it. This clarity of pretense, that civil law descends from divine law, only makes the injustice of Geordie's affair clearer to the modern, more secular and democratic listener. The ancient law of retaliation, "an eye for an eye," does not apply in crimes against the monarch, as it has seldom applied across history to crimes against one's social superior or inferior. Certainly, the Christian mandate to turn the other cheek—though the king's law descends from a Christian god—does not apply. The social hierarchy is clear, and the law is unalterable, divine, even in its injustice. Geordie's sweetheart does not question the law, she only pleads for his life. Geordie himself is not heard in the song but, perhaps, if we had heard his last words, they would have been much like Titus's, who, like Geordie, is a common thief and pays with his life.

Titus, from De André's 1970 "Titus's Testament", is the Penitent or Good Thief who, in the Gospel of Luke, asks to be remembered by Jesus in the Kingdom of Heaven. The thief dies namelessly next to Jesus in the New Testament (like Pisanello's hanged men in the church of Sant'Anastasia), but in the non-canonical Arabic First Infancy Gospel, he is given the name of

Titus. De André's Titus underlines the power dynamic that organizes the terrestrial interpretation of the divine 5th commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." He says:

> The fifth says: "You mustn't steal"
>
> And perhaps I respected that one
>
> By silently emptying the brimming pockets
>
> Of those who had stolen.
>
> Yet I, lawless, stole in my own name
>
> Those others stole in the name of God.[31]

A more detailed reading of this, one of the most significant songs of De André's career, can be found in Chapter 3, which deals with *The Good News* album. That which is important here is specifically the form of crime and its punishment. Titus and Geordie steal from the rich and pay with their lives, yet Titus points out that the rich steal from others, and worse yet, they justify and validate it in God's name. Titus does not specify his crime, but De André's thieves, often, are bread thieves. They steal to survive, they steal the most basic metaphor for life itself: the manna of Exodus, the sustenance given, shared, and promised by Jesus throughout his life, remembered in the most fundamental prayers and teachings of the Christian Church, "Give us this day our daily bread," and in the sacrament of the eucharist during which it becomes a consumption of the Lord himself.

Titus's death is particularly effective in underlining the fundamental injustice of future Western systems of justice that closely resemble the Roman form. For, Titus dies next to the very man, the divine being, who resets time, whose execution becomes a symbol for a new Christian morality that is founded in a loving and compassionate God. This new morality undergirds the process of Western Civilization, yet the prosecution of bread thieves goes on essentially

unaltered in De André's historical summary. Seen in this light, Titus's execution lends a shadow significance to the primary significance of the symbol of the cross. If Jesus's cross is an exceptional form of the gallows, one that according to Paul the Apostle "disarmed the powers and authorities," and "made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross,"[32] then Titus's cross is the unexceptional gallows, the unremembered, the disregarded, the gallows of the unjust death of a man who is not God, but man alone. If Jesus's cross is change, Titus's is consistency.

In De André's oeuvre, the gallows are a space symbolically reserved for common men, like those who die, namelessly and gruesomely, in his 1968 version of François Villon's "The Ballad of the Hanged Men" (Ballata degli impiccati) on his concept album *We All Died Agonizingly*. In the song, the crimes, like the men who committed them, go unnamed. The condemned reveal only their crimes' brevity: "Before it was over / we reminded those still living," they sing, "that the price was our lives / for the damage done in an hour."[33] Nor does Villon's own version disclose the offenses of the five or six men that we, the reader cum spectator, 'see' hanged.[34] Yet, something can be established from Villon's own life. He was first banished from Paris in 1455 after a skirmish and duel during which Villon wounded a man mortally. That man, Phillippe Chermoye, apparently drew the first blood and forgave Villon on his deathbed, which led eventually to a royal pardon. Later on, however, the poet was again sentenced to death-by-hanging for robbery. The death sentence was commuted to banishment, but it is believed that he wrote his "Ballade des pendus" while awaiting the gallows in prison. Villon wrote much of the rest of his poetry in exile, reversing courtly values and holding up, rather, those who had come to be seen as society's low lives. Interestingly, while Villon defended the thieves who awaited the gallows, Dante Alighieri, another banished medieval poet,

conversely argues, from his own exile about 150 years previously, for a harsher punishment for fraudulent crimes than for violent ones. The Florentine's reasons are at least trifold in his *Divine Comedy*. For one, and most simply, the sin of fraud fits the body analogy of the Inferno, where the *Malebolge* correspond to the stomach and intestines. Truth is nourishment for the soul, while fraud is poison. Secondly, Dante wants to emphasize the distinction between fiction and fraud, as he does with Geryon, the negative image of Dante: one is truth with the face of deception and the other deception with the face of truth. The poet seeks, furthermore, to separate himself from the fraudulent and false prophets and counselors whom he overcomes and, in so doing, to more emphatically claim the ultimate truth of his poem as it recognizes the danger of falsely seeking and claiming unsanctioned knowledge.

Finally, and most important to the discussion here, there is Dante Alighieri's personal experience as it shaped his cosmos. The fraudulent thieves are placed in the 7th *bolgia* of the 8th circle of the Inferno. Fraudulent counterfeiters are found even deeper, in the final *bolgia* before the inner circle of treachery that skirts Lucifer. Dante's placement of the counterfeiters reveals simultaneously the pride and preoccupation he feels for the highly advanced, yet highly unstable, trading capital of Florence whose gold florin was, during Dante's life, the dominant trading currency in Western Europe. Medieval writers saw currency as the blood of the body politic, and Dante, who more than perhaps anything else (save poetic and spiritual immortality) desired the end of civil strife in his hometown of Florence, recognized in currency the potential for stabilizing, or destabilizing, society. Dante saw during his lifetime that when the Sienese banking family, the Bonsignori, collapsed in 1298, a number of rival families sprang up and added to the political friction between the warring Guelf and Ghibelline factions. Therefore, he surmised that in counterfeiting currency, one is not only fraudulent, not only avaricious, one poisons the

lifeblood of the political body and threatens the ruin of the banking economy that supported the strength of the city. Dante shows prescience in his concern for counterfeiting and the power of currency to stabilize the city-state, for it would be Giovanni de' Medici's foundation of his bank in 1397 that would allow his son Cosimo to inaugurate the Italian Renaissance 40 years later while acting as Florence's de facto ruler and patron. During his rule, as is a trait of the increasingly centralized state, war transitioned from internal to external, and citizens within the borders were guaranteed relative peace. Cosimo's stabilized and controlled Florence is the Florence thought to be depicted by Pisanello's hanged men, who are a symbol of State power and a warning that sought to maintain peace by discouraging challenges to power.

Dante Alighieri formed part of the noble ruling class, a White Guelph who was exiled from Florence during one of the many sudden reversals of power in the city; he came to see the only way forward as a stable, centralized, trade-based Empire. François Villon, on the other hand, was of poor birth, and lived to witness the end of the Hundred Years' War, which installed the Kingdom of France and the *Ancien Régime* after a period of political instability much like Florence's. The end of the Hundred Years' War marked the beginning of the transition that would eventually eliminate most traces of medieval feudalism and allow for the creation of the centralized state under an absolute monarch. This transition was accompanied by various changes, such as a shift from a largely barter-based economy to a currency-based economy, a greater differentiation of labor, a rising bourgeois class that began to meld and clash with the noble class, and a march in the direction of what came to be known in the 1700s as 'civilization'. Villon was an early opponent of the stable, centralized state that Dante sought in Florence. Though he was well-educated and thus in a position to join the rising bourgeois ranks, in Villon's 2000 verses of *Le testament* he demonstrates a rancor for the commercial world and the

nascent bourgeoisie that is gaining power to rival noble power. Villon rejects the new structure and chooses, instead, the class of those who were powerless in the feudal system and who remain powerless in the early modern state, some of whom are De André's same disempowered personalities: addicts, prostitutes, and criminals.[35]

Part of the evolution from the 'barbaric' to the 'civilized', from the pre-modern to the modern State, from the medieval-federated to the centralized governing system, as argued by numerous historians and cultural philosophers, has been an increasingly effective power monopoly in the nuancing of the penal system to include elaborate legal judicial processes and non-physical punishment in various forms of internment. The causes and effects of that evolution have been argued across the 20th century. Vic Gatrell in his 1994 *The Hanging Tree* contends that the end of public executions in the Western world marks, in fact, one way of defining modern times. For, he argues, it reveals a great deal about modern man.[36] While the end of public executions was at first seen as increased humaneness on a massive scale, Gattrell argues that it more precisely signals, specifically in England, an increased squeamishness among the Victorian bourgeoisie and thus is an element of, not a humanizing moment, but a civilizing one, a distinction that will be elaborated upon in the pages to come. Furthermore, he argues that it was possible only as far as it was encouraged by increased theft and reduced violent crime (a hallmark of the State's monopoly on violence), and conceivable only because of improvements in the efficiency of the police and the character of legislation which accomplished more effectively what the terror of public executions had accomplished only partially.[37]

Michel Foucault more famously points out in his 1975 *Discipline and Punish* nearly the same for France. He sees in the modern penal system "a tendency towards a more finely tuned justice, towards a closer penal mapping of the social body" led by reformers who "wanted to

regularize the excesses and weaknesses of punishment; they wanted it more regular, more effective, more constant, more detailed in its effect."[38] They sought, not only to better punish the fraudulent whose death sentences were frequently remitted, but they sought, furthermore, to normalize behavior by normalizing punishment and "lowering the threshold of tolerance to penalty."[39] No longer was an act simply established and punished, but the judgment of the person, rather than the act, became customary. "Therefore it is, more than ever before, a subscribing of individuals to various casts outside the normal: the perverse, the psychotic, the impulsive, the ignorant."[40] This, too, is part of the process of civilization as Norbert Elias describes it in his work of historical psychology, 1939's *The Civilizing Process*:

> The circle of precepts and regulations is drawn so tightly about people, the censorship and pressure of social life forming their habits are so strong, that young people have only two alternatives: to submit to the behavior demanded by society, or to be excluded from life in 'decent society'. A child that does not attain the level of control of emotions demanded by society is regarded in varying gradations as 'ill,' 'abnormal', 'criminal' or just 'impossible' from the point of a view of a particular caste or class, and is accordingly excluded from the life of that class.[41]

Thus, as society civilizes, it begins to invest certain behaviors with a morality that does not naturally belong to them. Vagabondage (as public commons disappear) and madness (as self-restraint gains importance) become punishable, for example, and politeness or propriety become increasingly and inextricably knitted with a yarn of virtue. *Policé* and *civilisé* were both terms used by courtiers in France to designate the quality of their behavior; it is perhaps not surprising that 'police' (in both English and French) came to refer to the enforced administration of public order or conduct, while *civilisation* by 1704 had, in its English form, come to mean the "act of

making a criminal process civil" in a usage that is now obsolete.[42] The term 'civilization' as we understand it today was first used in French as a buzzword for a contemporary current of European ideology. Namely, in 1757, Victor de Riqueti marquis de Mirabeau utilized it to refer to "a group of people who were polished, refined, and mannered, as well as virtuous in their social existence."[43] It is worth noting that, in terms of its current definition, since the first, it has been largely understood in English in terms of its binary relationship with colonial terms like 'savagery' and 'barbarity'. That is, to be civilized has often not been spoken of as an inherent or absolute good, rather, it has been couched in terms that support European states' colonizing agendas, as they positioned their own social norms above those of colonized people and thus cast colonization in a moral, as opposed to a strictly economic or political, light.

In this civilizing process, which includes, and indeed is partially defined by, the evolution of the criminal justice system, judges come to personify the justness of the law itself as well as the moral superiority that lends them the authority to act as its arbiter. They represent, as Foucault says, "a justice that is supposed to be 'equal', a legal machinery that is supposed to be 'autonomous,'"[44] and as Elias Canetti argues in *Crowds and Power*, the judge "invariably reckons himself among the good; his chief claim to his office is his unshakeable allegiance to the kingdom of good, as though he had been born a native of it. His decision is binding. The things he judges are quite definite and factual; his vast knowledge of good and bad derives from long practical experience."[45] Yet, the penal system, for all its claims to disinterested objectivity of a judge whose decisions come from practical knowledge and long exercise of his neutrality, is not so much a system that punishes more justly as it is one that punishes more subtly, more convincingly, and more comprehensively. It naturalizes judgment to a point that citizens accept it, at times, far beyond its legal limit, and, as all are constantly judged, all become constant

judges themselves. Thus, the modern penal system and, indeed, society writ large, more effectively hide imbalances in control than the pre-modern system by lowering people's threshold for penalty and by largely broadening the terms that define unacceptable behavior.

In 1968, judicial reform was part of the call for broader socio-political change, as historian, Paul Ginsborg points out.[46] It was perhaps the contemporary issue most pressing to Fabrizio De André and, as the *cantautore* transitions from tales of pre-modern to modern punishment, he, even before Foucault, details a penal system that reveals a larger process of social control and false humaneness. At the end of his 1968 *We All Died Agonizingly* album, in the song "Recitative", which marks the last of his gallows tales,[47] he speaks in the collective voice of the hanged men as they present their case to the judges before them. Their discourse is directed at two groups of men—"bankers, delicatessen owners, notaries" and "elected judges, men of law"[48]—as De André recognizes that there are two classes of men who judge: the ruling class, those who control wealth, and the political class, especially as it relates to the penal system. By bringing them together in this way, and by setting the scene ambiguously in both the Middle Ages and modern day, he underlines how these two groups have created and supported each other for centuries. This ambiguity of setting is made clear in the men who are judged, for just as the businessmen and magistrates sit side by side as judges, so do the modern-day drug addicts sit side by side to be judged with the medieval hanged men. In the first stanza, the antiheroes of the album's first song, "The Addicts' Lament" (Cantico dei drogati), introduce themselves: "We who invoke compassion are the drug addicts," they sing. Then the medieval condemned from "Ballad of the Hanged Men" appear in the fifth stanza: "we are the abandoned human flock / who died with the knot at our throats."[49] In this way, De André brings together the

two classes of antiheroes from the LP Side A and, as the album concludes, he underlines the similarities of their condemnation by and exclusion from society.

The condemned men, as stated, are the album's antiheroes and so the judges are set up as potential villains. These judges, the powerful businessowners and lawmen, are introduced in the first line of the song as "Men without sin, demigods." They are unquestionably society's deities, as they are presented to be above all others, literally, as they live high up "in silver castles" and, figuratively, as they are above human laws; they are those "in glory who touched the apogee", or terrestrial point closest to the heavens.[50] The image of these men as sinless and quasi divine is overturned, however, almost as soon as it is drawn, for, at first glance, they are both gluttonous, "with obese stomachs", and avaricious, with "hearts are in the form of piggybanks,"[51] and in this light their claim to the right to judge becomes flimsy. Indeed, their introduction as "Men without sin" is now understood to be ironic and it is reminiscent of Jesus's lesson in John 8:7: "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone." Similar to the way in which their right to judge is called into question, so too is their objectivity, as ulterior motives are implied towards the end of the song when De André defines them as "Men to whom compassion isn't always convenient."[52] Thus, we can see that in De André's depiction of these powerful men, there is an incisive criticism of their right to control the civil justice system as well as their reasons for wielding that power as they do.

His criticism blossoms until it ends in an indictment, indeed, the song's full title is "Recitative (Two Invocations and an Accusation)." "How many innocent men have you sent to horrific agony / deciding for them their fates?", De André asks, and he goes on, "And how just do you think that is? / A sentence that decrees death." [53] The precise ways in which the judges have sentenced the drug addicts to death is not clear in the song and that ambiguity, itself, is part

of the point.[54] As Foucault says, the implementation of a more finely tuned justice system means, not only making punishment more constant and detailed, but also expanding the idea of punishment to go beyond the criminal and the prison, to comprise the identification of abnormal citizens and to subsequently exclude them from participation in society.[55] Thus, we can understand that the relationship between society's and the court's judgment and the addicts' 'sentence' is more nuanced and complex than that of the hanged men's. The drug addicts may, indeed, be facing criminal judgment for possessing or selling illegal substances, as they stand before the court judges, but they also stand before society's judges. As the eyes of the businessmen stare at and judge the addicts, we get the sense that the drug use is, itself, a sentence or, rather, that the drug use is the addicts' attempt to alleviate the shame of their life sentences in a community that despises them. We learn, in fact, in the song "The Addicts' Lament" that it is, in part, the addict's fear and shame, as well as his desire to search for meaning outside of societal norms, which leads him to drug use. The relationship between the requirements of contemporary civilized society and an increased number of drug addicts and suicides will be investigated in the following section, yet, it is worth noting here how De André groups traditional criminals and drug addicts in 1968's *We All Die Agonizingly,* just as he will group traditional criminals and the mentally ill a couple of years later in his 1971 *Not of Money* album. Notably, both the addicts in 1968 and the madman in 1971, cite a sense of incommunicability and alienation, from society as well as from any sort of spiritual life, as leading them, in their shame, to punish themselves. The addicts' self-inflicted punishment is their drug use and the madman's is his committing himself to a mental institution.[56]

Not of Money not of Love nor of Heaven (1971)

In 1971's *Not of Money not of Love nor of Heaven* (Non al denaro non all'amore né al cielo), De

André, as mentioned, tells of a mentally ill person, as well as of various forms of criminals and condemned people, and, more than ever before, he speaks explicitly of the figure of the judge. The setting of the *Not of Money* concept album, furthermore, is important and marks a transition from songs and albums set in the far past, to ones set in a nearer past or in the present. In terms of the judge character in *Not of Money,* he is, for the first time, clearly the modern sort who has arrived at his position through study and election and, therefore, as compared to medieval judges and executioners, he would claim greater objectivity within a larger criminal justice system that aims to raise public confidence in its fairness. The condemned men who surround him in the album are neither violent criminals nor thieves; they demonstrate, rather, the lasting ambiguity and new extension of modern law: one is mad, one is falsely accused, one is a hard-up idealist-turned-swindler. After the introductory song on the album, which sets the scene in a midwestern U.S. town cemetery around the turn of the 20th century*,* four songs follow that will be considered here: "A Madman," "A Judge," "A Blasphemer," and "A Doctor." In these songs we see De André's sense that the judicial system is no more just than the premodern, pre-civilized system, but that it punishes more, it punishes more obscurely, and it is not 'civilized', (enlightened, humanized, rational, objective) when it is not convenient.

The first of the songs in question is that of the madman, the second song on the album. The quality of his condition is cast into doubt from the outset, from the title of the song itself: "A Madman (Behind Every Idiot There's a Village)" (Un matto (Dietro ogni scemo c'è un villaggio)), which implies the subjectivity of the idea of 'madness' and 'sanity' as, in some cases, more related to appropriate and inappropriate behavior than to moral and immoral behavior. As the song begins, the listener wonders what precisely is mad, defective, abnormal, or unacceptable about this man who declares in his first words: "You [listener] try to have a world in your heart /

that you can't manage to describe in words"?[57] The 'madness' that the man suffers from is, to put it simply, an inability to communicate, and in this way we might imagine him to suffer from a form of autism, which is thought to affect about 1 in 44 children and young people and which presents itself as a difficulty of verbal and non-verbal communication as well as a difficulty in social interactions.[58] The Madman, in an attempt to find the correct words to express the stifled world in his heart, begins memorizing the encyclopedia, but, upon arriving at *matto,* 'crazy', and reading society's assessment of him, he gives up his quest and commits himself to a mental hospital. De André does not give us a definition of madness, but he precedes it with other entries in the encyclopedia "after pig, Mayakovsky, deformed" (dopo maiale, Majakowsky, malfatto). This gives the sense of one who is uncivilized, who refuses, hygienically, politically or creatively, to conform, and who, therefore, is considered somehow wrong, maladjusted, unfit.

De André's meditation on mental health in 1971 is consonant with a lively topic of debate in the 1960s and 1970s in Italy as, beginning in 1961, a group of doctors led by Franco Basaglia began a program that sought to replace psychiatric institutions with alternative forms of community care. Basaglia's efforts at deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill would eventually pass into law (no. 180) in 1978. While its final effects have been seen as mixed, due to a lack of alterative support structures to replace the closed institutions, it is remembered as an attempt to restore dignity to the mentally ill and to reintegrate them into their communities.[59] The song is also consonant with Foucault's point a few years after De André's, that, while the village idiot has seldom been historically included in society, it was not until the 17th century and the Age of Reason, in what Foucault calls "the Great Confinement," that so-called idiots (along with prostitutes, vagrants, and blasphemers) were excluded from society across Europe and confined in new types of institutions.[60] Furthermore, that which is considered 'madness' or cause for

institutionalization[61] has greatly increased as the civilizing process in society has further constricted an individual's right to express emotion or act on natural impulses. Indeed, Foucault claims that a full 10% of Parisians were confined in the 17th century.[62]

Finally, while the song would seem to position De André in favor of the deinstitutionalization debate that was underway in Italy, his madman's voluntary commitment to the mental institution underlines the modern world's capacity for internalized as well as externalized systems of control and exclusion. For, as Norbert Elias argues, the controlling agencies of society are reproduced within the individual and, thus, while society may decide not to confine an individual, that individual may still very well receive the message that he is somehow 'abnormal' or 'unacceptable' and exclude himself on his own. Furthermore, societies' controlling agents, when reproduced within the individual, not only repress natural emotions and impulses, but create further complications in certain individuals who struggle to repress those drives. Thus, the very act of attempting to control one's compulsions may exacerbate compulsive behaviors and desires. As Elias says: "Compulsive actions and other symptoms of disturbance […] uncontrollable and eccentric attachments and repulsions […] apparently groundless inner unrest shows how many drive energies are dammed up in a form that permits no real satisfaction."[63] In this sense, we may understand the madman to be somewhere along the autism spectrum, or, as De André's own definition suggests, he may simply be someone who refuses or is unable to conform hygienically, politically, or creatively. If his malady is of the latter sort, then, as Elias describes it, his mental unrest may come from the very world around him, which has sought since his childhood to repress certain behaviors. In this sense, like the addict's drug use, the madman's mental illness is both an effect of his inability to conform and thrive in society and the very cause of his eventual total exclusion from that society.

While the madman is condemned for his unacceptable impulses or desires, they are, in reality, no less unacceptable than the judge's impulses in the following song. Indeed, the madman, as far as we can tell, is harmless, while the judge has power over others and uses it to hurt them. However, just as the drug addicts and lawmen are apparently divided by society and the State automatically along the lines of bad and good in "Recitative", so too are "A Madman" and "A Judge." De André's judge, like the madman before him, is a member of society who is seen as deformed, though this time the abnormality is physical rather than mental, as he is described as a little person. His stature is seen by town gossips as a sign of an inner corruption of virtue and decency, as they decry: "that a dwarf / is a lowlife for sure / because his heart is too / much too close to his ass."[64] So, sustained for years on hatred, he reveals a plan to become a lawyer and then a magistrate in order to achieve a position above others and, consequently, to be in a place to judge his community rather than be judged by it.

In the song, De André plays with his sense of the collusion between one's social standing and assumed morality in the modern world, as well as the conflation of the idea of divine judgment and civil court judgment. The judge describes how he must first become a lawyer and a churchgoer so as to be seen as a well-regarded community member, for, indeed, the position of a judge is an elected one and decided by the whims and opinions of ruling class voters. "I became a lawyer," he says, "to access the way / that from the pews of the church [*cattedrale*] / carry one to the sacristy." His goal, as he states, is to transition from the pews, as a passive community member, to the sacristy, where the priest prepares the mass and where the sacred vestments of worship are kept. However, when he makes this transition, the church has become a courtroom and the *cattedrale* becomes a *cattedra*, as in the following lines he says that from the lawyer's

exam and church pews, he eventually passed "to the judge's bench [*cattedra*] of the courtroom" and his ultimate goal to become "finally a judge / arbiter on earth of good and bad."[65]

The judge takes every step that modern society requires of him to succeed, he attends church, he gets a prestigious title and job, and, in this way, he is able to achieve his goals. However, we learn in the end that he didn't just want to prove his community wrong in their assessment of him, he wanted to punish them for mistreating him. He wanted to act as a God, with the power to give life or death. He says, eventually, that it is a joy to sentence people to death (affidarli al boia) and he conflates, once again, divine and civil justice as, at the end of the song, he genuflects at the moment of "farewell" and muses about how his pronouncements are joys "all his own." For, he admits—in a final play on words that evokes the previous conflation of his low stature with base morality—that he has no idea of how God's own pronouncements would compare, as he no idea at all of "God's stature."[66] Thus, in the song, as De André tells it, from that position on high, the judge does not protect society by enacting its laws in a uniform and objective manner. Rather, he takes revenge on his community and demonstrates God's inscrutable mind by acting himself as a god. He is, indeed, inexplicable in his own judgments, as he condemns, with great piety and pleasure, all those who pass before his bench and who say to him "Your Honor."[67] The judge is clearly more mentally ill than the madman before him and more harmful to society, too, but he is immune from its judgment; he has achieved the position on high of a demigod like the judges in "Recitative".

This judge who wielded the penal system as a weapon of personal revenge is similar to the lawmen in the following song, "A Blasphemer," who finesse the law to fit their own personal morality. For, as the blasphemer testifies, "They arrested me one day for women and wine, / Not having any laws to punish a blasphemer," and before he could stand before a judge, he claims,

"death didn't kill me but two bigoted guards."[68] In this testimony, it is clear that some modern changes to law have included a greater tolerance; the man who is accused of blasphemy should, in the 20th century United States where the tale is set, be able to accuse his accuser of bigotry in return. Neither the one nor the other should be actionable attitudes in civil court, yet, the men in positions of power can take action of their own to execute their own judgement and protect themselves from the laws of the state. Their actions are protected, for they are obscured from the view of the masses. The system hides that which may be violent in modern punishment and that which is, indeed, arbitrary in much disciplinary action. Thus, as Foucault argues, the judicial and internment branches work together at "attenuating the effects of revolt that they may both arouse."[69] There is no revolt against the death of the blasphemer. There is no revolt against the incarceration of the doctor who, in "A Doctor", the first song on the album Side B, after years of treating the poor, is starved into submission by an unfair economic system and decides to sell a fake youth elixir to make ends meet and feed his family. In a line reminiscent of Dante's Geryon figure in the Inferno, whose "face was that of a just man," but whose "torso was that of a / serpent,"[70] the doctor is sentenced to prison by "a judge, a judge with the face of a man."[71] Before the song ends, the doctor, the character in this album who is most similar to De André's traditional bread thief, is stamped forever by society a swindler and a crook and is left to die in his cell.[72]

Story of an Office Worker (1973)

There are no revolts for the unjustly accused, institutionalized, and imprisoned in *Not of Money,* but there is a revolt remembered on an album two years later, 1973's *Story of an Office Worker* (*Storia di un impiegato*), as "our May" and "Spring," in reference to the student revolts in France in May 1968 and the so-called Prague Spring of the same year. In the introductory song of the

album, “May Song” (Canzone del Maggio), De André remembers laborers striking and students arrested by forces of social control that set up cordons to curb demonstrations and that injured and massacred protesters on the sidewalks.[73] The *cantautore* sees it as a revolt, not just against the government and police, but against individuals and near-entire social classes that do not take part in or support the social unrest; those in the song who “believe television’s truths” and who think nothing will change because they “have voted for security and discipline.”[74] The revolution, as seen through De André’s lens, reminds all those listening that individuals are only secure so long as they follow the intricate rules of society that guarantee social order at the individual level and small scale, but that also, ultimately, work to guarantee it at the large scale, as they maintain the status quo in terms of distributions of power and wealth.

That is, as long as individuals are docile, remain in their allotted space, behave as they are told, the social order is maintained nonviolently. However, when students or workers demand answers, fairness, or reform, the violence of the system, the old violence of the scaffold, now so effectively hidden, reveals itself. After the initial scene of protest in the concept album’s first song, it goes on to follow an average Italian worker who is inspired by the protests to become an anarchist bomber and ends up in prison for his actions. As the song “My Hour of Freedom” puts it at the end of the album, in reference to the protagonist’s and, perhaps, the listeners’ progress across the album: “Certainly you have to come a long way / moving down the road by an obedient gymnastics / before a much more human gesture / gives you a sense of the violence.”[75] The ‘obedient gymnastics’ here refers to the intricate rules of society, while the ‘human gesture’ is the act of protest, which is, indeed, a supremely human gesture as it involves personal risk with the goal of helping the greater good. The ‘violence’ is the police force that quickly and readily escalated the use of brute force in response to the protests.

In the dream trial sequence of the album's song "Dream Number Two," the anarchist antihero of the album is reminded that only the powerful can overturn power:

Listen,

Once a judge like me

Judged he who had written the law:

First they changed the judge

And right after

The law.[76]

The judge then tells the anarchist that his violent act will only strengthen extant powers as it will create fear in the privileged social classes and allow those who control the monopoly on violence to increase control in the name of social order and wellbeing:

When you killed

Favoring power

The lifetime associates of power

Gathered downhill

In defense

Of their own celebration.[77]

Giorgio Agamben calls this a "state of exception", which he defines as giving government or ruling officials authority beyond the law during moments of crisis and as often continuing beyond the crisis moment to become a regularized extension of oppressive control. During these moments, the production/dissemination of knowledge is controlled as well, and limited voices have the *auctoritas* of truth as media outlets are censored beyond usual measure and opposing voices undermined or silenced.

In this scenario, the power to facilitate change through grassroots movements, such as, but not limited to, sustained protest, is greatly debilitated. As Antonio Gramsci puts it in his "Voluntarism and Social Masses," the Jacobin force that may enact the coercion necessary to move great masses to action and force the national-popular collective will to emerge, is cut down at the knees by what some theorists now call the post-hegemonic State.[78] A post-hegemonic State refers to a society in which enforced constriction of social behavior and confinement of social activity to disciplinary institutions (be they schools, universities, prisons, asylums) produces, as Foucault says, "subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile' bodies,"[79] which aid the State in controlling the flow of information and the congregation of uncontrollable bodies. Importantly lacking in the State thus defined is the ability to produce the crisis of authority that Gramsci saw as crucial to the emergence of the national-popular collective that becomes culturally hegemonic.

The concept of posthegemony, as it aligns with post-Foucauldian theorists like Agamben, is most obvious in these states of exception, which, as Nicholas Thoburn points out, recast "the relationship between law and politico-military and economic crises and interventions."[80] The organization of society in these States is such that censored information, or unsanctioned knowledge, passes only through the disciplinary institutions that represent, themselves, that which is unsanctioned. Indeed, De André's anarchist antihero realizes only in the disciplinary institution of prison that "they have taught us to marvel / at those who steal bread" but that bread is a human right, and it sometimes must be taken. He realizes in prison that one must protest a law that reveals itself so unjust. "Now," he says, "we know that it is a crime / not to steal when one is hungry."[81] The anarchist reminds us that his bomb revealed his desire for power over others and thus was an unjust act, but he reminds us, as well, that those in seats of power perform similar actions and worse but without being seen. People in seats of power may hide their

actions, for, they are not like regular citizens, whom, as the De André's judge says to the anarchist, are surveilled from their "first heartbeat".[82]

Indeed, we see once again that those in positions of power in De André's tales are above the eyes of the law. They are literally in the position to see without being seen, to judge without being judged. Power, in De André's oeuvre, looks down from various panopticons: in the "Recitative" it is in the "apogee" of silver castles; in "Dream Number Two" the power is above the judge, who says "above me, / for that which you have done / […] / the powers are grateful," and who is, in turn, above the defendant "at the tribunal pulpit."[83] Later, in the 1996 song, "Khorakhané", the powers who judge bread thieves do so from "the point of view of God."[84] Power surveils but is, itself, hidden from the community, as is the modern condemned man, for the State fears his last words and the potential *auctoritas* his voice has gained through his actions and his sacrifice. De André calls to the public, as the anarchist's tale ends in *Story of an Office Worker*. He redirects the center of the community to the prison's walls, as the scaffold was once positioned in the city square: "Now come to the prison," he says, "listen at the doors / to our final song."[85] At the same time, he literally calls to the audience at the concert, at the stage that replaces the scaffold. He calls them back to the scaffold and its historical role as a space for subversive flows of information. With the power of the scaffold's last words behind his voice, a power that will be discussed later on in this chapter, De André not only remembers those who were unjustly hanged, but he reminds the audience that hangings have not been truly abolished by so-called civilization, but, rather, that they have only been hidden, and in more ways than one.

The Ancient and the Modern Hanged Man, From Execution to Suicide and Addiction

As we have already briefly seen, Fabrizio De André, from early in his career, conflates the role of the publicly executed man of the past with that of the drug-addicted and suicidal man of the present. As he says of his *We All Died Agonizingly* album: "It's about death, not just actual death, but the psychological, moral, and mental death that an average man may encounter during his life."[86] In this intentional conflation, he reveals an understanding of the ways in which the increasingly civilized world puts constraints on the emotional and moral liberty of the modern individual, and how that can have various effects on adult individuals who come to be considered maladjusted to the demands of modern civil society. As Norbert Elias argues, "the circle of precepts and regulations is drawn so tightly about people, the censorship and pressure of social life forming their habits are so strong, that young people have only two alternatives: to submit to the behavior demanded by society, or to be excluded." He goes on to say that, due to these constrictions, civilized man "becomes less dangerous, but also less emotional or pleasurable, at least as far as the direct release of pleasure is concerned."[87] We see, for example, in De André's 1961 "Miché's Ballad" (La ballata del Miché), a man who is maladjusted to the State's monopoly on violence and who cannot bridle his feelings of hatred or love. Then, in 1967's *Vol. 1°* and 1968's *We All Died Agonizingly,* the suicides and drug addicts of "Prayer in January" (Preghiera in gennaio) and "The Addicts' Lament" (Cantico dei drogati), and the criminal pilloried and hanged men of "Death" (La morte) and "The Ballad of the Hanged Men", share the role of antiheroes shamed and punished by society. A few years later, in 1976's "Wolf Tail" (Coda di lupo), an entire generation of young people first revolt and then escape into heroin,

demonstrating a desire to fight normative society and, when that fight is ultimately refused, an attempt to escape normative society, psychologically and emotionally, by entering into drug use. Sometimes they escape entirely by taking their own lives. Finally, in "Prayer in January", his song dedicated to Luigi Tenco, a fellow *cantautore* who committed suicide at the Sanremo Festival in 1967, we see that De André connects the civilizing process, not only to an increased number of suicides and increased drug use, but that he connects it to the ferocity of competition and the public's revelry in spectacle itself, which becomes a substitutional site for the loss of violence in the individual's life, as well as for the loss of the sacred communal sacrifice.

In "Miché's Ballad," Miché is sentenced to 20 years in prison because he killed a man who wanted to steal his love, Marí. Rather than passing those years without Marí, Miché hangs himself and is buried without ceremony or tombstone in a potter's field, until an unknown person comes to place a cross with his name and the date above the mass grave. The song reveals some of the most basic side effects of the constriction of modern individuals, whether those constrictions are performed emotionally or bodily, and it deals, specifically, in some of the earliest constrictions placed on the civilizing body. Miché's tale is ambiguous in its historical setting;[88] there are no technological clues, the only weapons are a rope and a nail, while the motive is as old as time itself: Miché's was a crime of passion. Indeed, his final resting place, the potter's field, harkens all the way back to the beginning of the common era, as it is reminiscent of the original potter's field and the original suicide, that which was bought with the silver returned to the Jewish priests by Judas before he hanged himself.[89] Miché's story could, alternatively, very well be that of a late-medieval knight who is forced, during the early period of post-feudal centralization, to give up his long-held judicial autonomy and turn his sword over to the king. For, by around 1475, as Norbert Elias points out, "the leading nobles have to forgo

more and more frequently the relatively unbridled life at their ancestral seats and are bound increasingly tightly to the semi-urban court and to dependence on kings or princes."[90] At the same time, it could be the tale of a passionate youth from 20th-century Italy. The listener's only clue that the story is relatively contemporary, is that Miché receives 20 years for his crime, rather than a death sentence.

Miché's story takes on further ambiguity by his own simplicity of character and action. Another man threatens to take Miché's Marí, and Miché is unable or unwilling to contain his emotional response and takes justice into his own hands. When he is punished, in turn, for his violence, he once again cannot support his bodily containment, which implies another sort of emotional containment, that of his love for Marí. So, he turns to violence again as the only way, in the face of a centralized judicial monopoly, to determine his own destiny and gain liberty:

I know that Miché

Wanted to die because

He still remembered

the profound love

That he had for you.

<break/>

Twenty years they had given him

The court decided it was so

Because one day he murdered

The man who wanted to steal Marì from him

They had therefore condemned him

To twenty years in prison to rot,

But now that he has hanged himself

They have to open the doors to him.

<break/>

Even if Miché

Didn't write you to explain why

He left this world

You know that he did it

Only for you.[91]

Miché demonstrates so simply his incapacity to accept the terms of civilized society. He is prohibited by society from expressing the fullness of his emotion, in this case clearly because it is violent against another individual. He is punished in an effort to curb and cure his inability to behave as society demands, and in a supposed effort to rehabilitate him. However, as a consequence of his punishment, even more personal autonomy in the form of his physical liberty is taken, and his autonomy to act remains, literally, only upon his own body. Miché is unable to manage his imprisonment and he is similarly unable to manage the shame of his violent action, as the song tells Marí: "he left knowing that he could / never tell you / that he had killed / because he loved you."[92] Thus, he found death to be the only liberty left to him. His murder and suicide are the simplest example in De André's work of the individual who cannot learn to repress certain impulses that arise in, and are disciplined since, childhood. Miché is an example of an inability to repress emotion, to curb either anger or love. Furthermore, Miché's inability to manage the shame related to his violent action is an early example of a psychological motivation that will continue to color the emotions and actions of the characters discussed in this section.

Miché's song is, in fact, just one example of a recognition, or at least an intuition, in De André's earliest work of the relationship between antiquated modes of public shaming (such as the pillory) and public execution and modern modes of shame and self-punishment. De André's first album, in fact, *Vol. 1º*, introduces these themes in 1967, a year before he would elaborate similar ideas more fully on *We All Died Agonizingly* in 1968. *Vol. 1º* is not a concept album and so the songs are, by definition, less thematically tied than those of *We All Died Agonizingly*. Yet, when seen in relationship to the album of the following year, *Vol. 1º* reveals a similarity in theme, at least as far as the songs "Prayer in January" (Preghiera in gennaio) and "Death" (La morte) are concerned. As we have seen already in this chapter, *We All Died Agonizingly* begins with a song dedicated to contemporary heroin addicts in "The Addicts' Lament." *Vol. 1º* begins with "Prayer in January", a song dedicated to contemporary suicides that was inspired by the suicide of De André's friend and fellow *cantautore*, Luigi Tenco. It will be discussed in more detail further on in this chapter, however, it is worth noting here that "Prayer in January" acts as the modern counterexample to the plights of a more medieval hue in the album's penultimate song "Death", very much as "The Addicts' Lament" does for "Ballad of the Hanged Men" on De André's concept album a year later in 1968.

"Death" was inspired by François Villon's "Ballade des Pendus," if in a less direct way than his 1968 version. "Death" takes its tune from George Brassens' 1960 song "King Louis's Orchard" (Le Verger du roi Louis), which took its lyrics from Théodore de Banville's poem "Ballade des Pendus", which was a tribute to Villon inserted in his 1866 comedy *Gringoire.* Banville's poem and Brassens' song are a critique of the hangings ordered by King Louis XI of France, who became king in 1461 just after the end of the Hundred Years' War, and under whose reign France began to strengthen centralized state control by crushing feudal lords and extending

the king's authority into all areas of public life. Banville's and Brassens' lyrics remember the orchard of King Louis as overflowing with executed bodies: a forest that "has rosaries of hanged men" that are like "incredible bunches of fruit."[93] De André's song keeps the tune but changes its lyrics so that it is no longer a direct reference to King Louis or his late medieval hangings. De André, however, does specifically reference antiquated forms of public humiliation in the line: "Ragged beggars who without shame / stood in hair shirts and the pillory."[94] When he returns to a similar setting a year later in his "Ballad of the Hanged Men", the men's punishment is also referenced in terms of shame, this time as "the extreme shame of the way" in which they died.

While the men in the pillory and the hanged men experience shame differently, both medieval settings present the experience of shame as an externalized one. That is, shame was something that was forced on the individual by a public punishment. In "Death", while it apparently doesn't accomplish its goal, the pillory is meant explicitly to shame men as punishment. In "Ballad of the Hanged Men", it is death that is their punishment, while shame is experienced as an additional consequence in relation to the members of the crowd who deride the condemned men. The placement of shame in these settings is different from the shame that is implied in De André's modern songs about suicide and addiction in which, as we will see, it has been internalized. Furthermore, shame is positioned differently on the spectrum of cause and effect. In the medieval setting, it is criminal activity that leads to punishment and subsequently to shame, while in the modern setting, it is internalized shame, itself, that leads to punishment.

De André is not alone in noting the correlation between the increased constraints on the civilized body and the increased internalized experience of shame in the modern world. Historians like Norbert Elias have made similar arguments and they have noted, furthermore, the correlation between increased shame in the modern world and a decreased threshold for

repugnance, which is argued to have been a leading motive for the demise of public humiliations and public executions. John Stuart Mill spoke of this relationship in his 1836 essay, "Civilization", when he said that "the spectacle and even the very idea of pain is kept more and more out of sight of those classes who enjoy to their fulness the benefits of civilization." This, he argues, is due to the:

> perfection of mechanical arrangements impracticable in any but a high state of civilization… All those necessary portions of the business of society which oblige any person to be the immediate agent or ocular witness of the infliction of pain, are delegated by common consent to peculiar and narrow classes: to the judge, the soldier, the surgeon, the butcher, and the executioner.[95]

His view is particularly relevant in the examination here as Mill spent much of his career investigating the limits of authority and liberty, arguing for greatly limiting State authority over the individual but basing that limitation in the promise of civilization itself. That is, he believed that man, once civilized, would control himself and that said control would benefit the individual as well as society absolutely. Mill's conception of the civilizing of man, thus, was elaborated as an objective and absolute good, which, is a problematic framing in at least two ways. Firstly, it is problematic when Mill proposes it in reference to British imperialism in India and China, as a sort of benevolent despotism that would put 'savages' in those countries on the road to useful progress. Secondly, it is problematic in that, while he proposes the civilized citizen as a natural development of technology and progress, the civilized citizen is actually, in many ways, a result of State authority that is couched in non-penal but highly controlling and disciplinary state institutions. Mill, indeed, was a proponent of Jeremy Bentham's (architect of the panopticon) utilitarian theory of normative ethics. Thus, while Mill proposed a state authority with limited

power, he intended, as well, a societal authority with great power to discipline and create useful and, in turn, moral citizens. It is this second sense that is more acutely relevant here, as De André traces the ways in which the very civilizing of the citizen, through increased emotional and bodily restraints, (a) is far from natural or inevitable and (b) may very well have devastating emotional side effects.

The nuanced relationship between repugnance, shame, and the transition from externalized to internalized forms of punishment in the modern world is elaborated by Norbert Elias, who argues that the repugnance experienced increasingly by Mill's refined class is accompanied by increased shame, which is used as a tool to, in part, assure that repugnance. From the medieval books on etiquette written to deter young men from wiping their noses on their collars, books that display an *external* force on the constriction of behavior, the civilized world increasingly encourages *internalized* constrictions, Elias argues. As the centuries progress, the constrictions become greater, the self-restraint demands increase, and no longer is shame associated only with improper etiquette but, rather, with the prohibition of any number of impulses. By the time Mill was writing in the 19th century, the civilizing process had, on the one hand, seen the birth of the individual and his nascent liberation from the monarchy and noble class, but, at the same time, it had created an individual who was more constrained than ever, as is apparent in the elaborate rules of social manners, etiquette, and hygiene of the Victorian era.

Mill explicitly argued for State authority only over violence against another (civilized) individual. Yet, in reality, State institutions, in concert with the bourgeois class's sense of properness, and in the name of progress, created an authoritative society that comprehensively judges and prosecutes/persecutes much behavior, beginning in schools, where children learn to be good citizens by being, at first, obedient, clean, and subdued, and by learning later on to be

hard-working, high-achieving, and productive. Elias's historical psychological evaluation of the effects of civilization on the modern individual suggests that, as he says, "an advance of the threshold of shame and repugnance that becomes more and more perceptible in the make-up of Western men" reveals a "conflict expressed in shame-fear [that] is not merely a conflict of the individual with prevalent social opinion," rather, "the individual's behavior has brought him into conflict with the part of himself that represents this social opinion."[96] This internal conflict is reminiscent of De André's statement about his unwillingness to marry a prostitute whom he loved and how his own love/shame demonstrates one way in which modern man comes into conflict, first and foremost, with himself when he comes into conflict with societal norms.

Indeed, the Genoese *cantautore* cites shame and fear across his career as motivating emotions, as much, it seems, as the more traditional themes of hatred and love. His sense that shame is a social construct, and one that in the West is tied to the socioeconomic structure, is underlined by notes he took while reading Henry David Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience." In the essay, Thoreau writes "Confucius said: 'If a state is governed by the principles of reason, poverty and misery are subjects of shame; if a state is not governed by the principles of reason, riches and honors are the subjects of shame.'"[97] In his personal copy of the book, in Italian translation, held at the archive of the *Centro Studi Fabrizio De André* at Siena University, De André has underlined this citation.[98] The line must have resonated with his own ideas, as it is evocative of the final mention of 'shame' in *We All Died Agonizingly.* In the song, "Recitative", the condemned men tell those in the crowd before them: "May compassion not be shameful to you," and then, specifically to the bourgeois business class: "May compassion not remain in your pocket." That is, De André's condemned men ask the ruling class to reorganize their use of shame and compassion as social tools. They ask, specifically, that the men in power not let

shame control them and keep them from compassion. Furthermore, they ask these rich men to spend their compassion, be generous with it, as it were, rather than keeping it in their pockets. As De André's condemned men are so often the poor and his judges are so often the rich, there is a latent secondary critique in De André's "may compassion not remain in your pocket," as the redistribution of wealth would, indeed, be the most compassionate of actions. However, this secondary reading is more relevant to the hanged men than to the addicts, as the hanged men have found themselves on the scaffold as a direct result of decisions they took due to poverty and/or lack of opportunity. The drug addicts, on the other hand, represent the sort of maladjusted modern person who may come from any socioeconomic class. For that person, the compassion and human connection he seeks, if it had come sooner, may very well have kept him from an untimely death.

These addicts are introduced in the album's first song, "The Addicts' Lament", which De André's reworks from the Genoese poet, Riccardo Mannerini's, 1958 poem "Heroin" (Eroina). Mannerini was a friend of De André's and helped him write the song. De Andre describes him as a poet and a libertarian who suffered greatly at the hands of the justice system because he was known to provide shelter to people in trouble with the law.[99] The song was a personal one for both men, as De André says of himself, it was cathartic insofar as he considered himself an alcoholic, while Mannerini suffered from depression until his death by suicide in 1980. The addict in the song similarly suffers from depression and must contemplate suicide as he describes his life as nothing more than the process of awaiting death "with tremendous anticipation."[100]

In the poem and the song, a sense of incommunicability and alienation, and a loss of meaning, very much like what "A Madman" felt in *Not of Money,* are key aspects of the addict's escape into drug use. The madman wanted to express a world in his heart but couldn't find the

words to make himself heard, while the addict shares a similar sense of incommunicability, saying: “The words I say / No longer have form or accent. / The sounds transform / into a deaf lament.” And like the madman who felt alienated in a village that laughs while the idiot passes by, so too the addict expects no compassion from the society around, but rather experiences public life with the sense of being a surveilled and mocked individual. He says, I see only “glass imps / who are openly spying on me / and laughing behind my back.”[101] The concrete alienation the madman and addict experience is compounded by the fact that they are spiritually floundering in a modern world that hasn’t provided any sense of ultimate meaning beyond quotidian productivity. When the madman realizes he doesn’t have any support or meaning in his community and, additionally, doesn’t know “whom he owes his life to”,[102] he decides to give it to a mental institution and commits himself. After many stanzas of questions, the addict arrives at a similar query. Near the end of his song, he asks: “And above all who / brought me into the world and why?”[103] and after asking this question, the song transitions. From a series of stanzas focused to questions about human existence and his discontent with the world around him, the remainder of the song dedicates itself to an account of the reasons he uses drugs, and we see that drug use is his answer to these questions and his escape from this world.

The heightened sense of alienation compounds with a sense of fear and internalized shame to become the clear emotional and psychological drivers. Mannerini’s addict in his poem suffers an endless internalized critique, as he says, “They will find me / trembling / while / in my brain / the rollercoaster of criticism / has broken brakes.”[104] While in De André’s song, the speaker’s fear, and the shame related to it, is highlighted in the refrain: “How will I ever be able to tell my mother that I am afraid?”[105] The speaker, in the final lines, sums up the alienation, fear, and shame as he searches for someone who can help him out of his sense of cowardice.

"You who are listening, teach me / an alphabet that's / different," he begins, as he returns to the themes of communicability and a search for community. Then he continues in the song's final lines: teach me an alphabet that's "different from that / of my cowardice."[106] The word 'cowardice', understood to be a lack of bravery, or spinelessness, is a significant expression of a cycle of fear and shame. For, fear leads to cowardly behavior and cowardly behavior leads to shame, which, in turn, leads back to fear if the cycle is not broken.

The drug use, however, is at once a form of cowardice, as it is an escape from the world's difficulties, and it is, at the same time, a sort of bravery gone wrong, a search for something more than what the modern world offers. It is an attempt to overcome spiritual and community alienation and the lack of meaning many feel in the modern world. The addict says that when he dies, he will be "admonished" as one of those men who "thinks it's nice / to play ball / with his own brain." But before his lament ends, he momentarily remembers, aside from the shame and fear that remain, that which caused him to play, or experiment, with his brain. He remembers:

> Trying to launch it [his mind]
> beyond the established boundaries
> that someone traced
> at the edges of infinity.[107]

This desire to search beyond the sanctioned limits, the desire for infinite knowledge, uncensored knowledge, is emphasized in De André's version, as he transforms Mannerini's "beyond the line,"[108] into his own "beyond the established boundaries," stressing, in the latter case, both the man-made nature of, and difficulty with which one may cross these boundaries. Those who risk complete alienation in order to cross them, are in search of another model of reality that is not based on the principles of present society. That is, they search for a reality that is stands in

opposition to their own, for the guiding principles of their reality are meaningless to them and, therefore, all proffered futures hopeless. Not unimportant to an objective consideration of this mode of thinking is a reminder that many societies labeled as 'savage' or 'uncivilized' by the West have constructed much of their shared experience of reality on the transcendence of the empirical world through structured and mentored experimentation with hallucinatory drugs.

The addict of the 1968 song is an alienated everyman, he suffers in the modern world and searches for both meaning and escape in drug use. When De André sings of modern addiction again, in 1978's *Rimini* album, the song's protagonist, Wolf Tail, will take on a much more specific identity: that of the youth generation of the 1970s in Italy who fought for change and some of whom, when that change was ultimately denied them, sought an alternative reality in drug use. Wolf Tail will be discussed in depth in Chapter 2: Italian Cowboy Songs; what is relevant here is how the song ends, as it is very much like the end of "The Addicts' Lament." Wolf Tail is part of the social uprising, protests, and strikes of the 1960s and 1970s. Like the anarchist bomber before him, in *Story of an Office Worker,* Wolf Tail eventually resorts to violence in his attempt to bring about change, and he, like the anarchist bomber, eventually loses his battle. While the anarchist ends up in prison, and sings his song from behind the prison walls, Wolf Tail is silenced in a more complete way, as he ends up a heroin addict, and at the end of his song says that he can no longer remember the story he would tell: "With a glass spoon I dig around in my history / But it's a bit hit and miss as I've lost my memory."[109] Thus, we see that in modern times, unlike the restitution of the sovereign's power through a display of power through execution, the revolutionary against the modern State is dealt with mundanely and furtively.

The scaffold crowd was always a potential space of violent revolt. At any given hanging the condemned man could be turned into a positive hero, seen as a symbol of revolution, or a

martyr, rather than a criminal. In Foucault's assessment of the modern state, on the other hand, the crowd is "a compact mass, a locus of multiple exchanges, individualities merging together, a collective effect is abolished and replaced by a collection of separated individualities."[110] This collection of separate individualities creates the anarchist himself, who, in De André's telling in *Story of an Office Worker,* finds his first community in prison, and who uses the first person plural pronoun "we" rather than the singular "I" for the first time in his final song from prison. The modern State discourages revolt by discouraging emotional congregations, by curbing emotion itself and encouraging discipline from childhood on. In this system, some revolutionaries, or potential revolutionaries, are hidden away as punishment, while others succumb to their own inability to maintain the revolutionary spirit in the face of its overwhelming suppression. This later group describes the fictional Wolf Tail and many actual youth activists who eventually gave up on the revolution and, with no other outlet for their unacceptable emotional rebellion/distress, sought oblivion through drug use.[111] We see that Western civilization has both ended and augmented the hangings of individuals: the public, central, ceremonial, sacrificial, emotionally-charged space of the noose has been traded for an isolated, marginalized, neglected, rejected, alienated space of the addict and suicide. The stage itself has remained, and while it is now populated by entertainers, whose primary and often sole purpose is diversion, the stage has not yet completely shaken certain latent ritualistic and civic-political qualities that once belonged to it as a scaffold.

The Scaffold and the Stage, of Arenas and Altars

In many ways, the public, central, ceremonial, sacrificial, emotionally charged space once held by the scaffold, has been replaced, in civilized society, by the stage. The stage holds many functions—political, civic, theatrical, musical, balletic—but the role of the singer-songwriter on

stage is arguably one that, more than other performances, substitutes the work performed by the scaffold. For, like the man on the scaffold, the singer-songwriter is an often-subversive figure who stands at the center of emotional and intellectual energy, at the focal point of attention, of crowds of hundreds or thousands. One extreme example of this came in 1977 with the "Palalido incident," when a group of extreme left demonstrators interrupted a Francesco De Gregori concert in Milan to contest his claim of solidarity with the left. The agitators called De Gregori back onto stage after the concert and held a mock trial. They played the roles of judge, jury, and executioner, while De Gregori replied to their questions and accusations at the microphone. Amongst other charges, one man, recorded by a journalist who was still in the audience, said, "Music doesn't make a revolution. First you make the revolution, and then you can begin to think of the arts and music. Mayakovsky said that, he was a true revolutionary and committed suicide. You should commit suicide too!"[112] In this moment, the complex public role of the *cantautore* was at its most explicit; De Gregori was at once expected to be an artist, performer, revolutionary, and martyr. When he did not completely fulfill his role, he was charged by the people as a sort of traitor to communism, socialism, and more generally, populism.

Thus, we can see that while the stage claims, in a sense, to be the civilized scaffold, allowing crowds to act out communal rituals without the traditional sacrificial denouement, it does not cleave itself from its premodern bloodthirst completely. Indeed, the musical stage maintains aspects, not only of the scaffold, but of the arena itself, where knights drew crowds to witness them fight to the death. This is particularly true for songs that recreate scaffold ballads, which were produced as responses to noteworthy executions. British public scaffold ballads, or flash ballads as they were called due to their spontaneous nature, were, according to Vic Gatrell, spaces of "remembering and imagining, which wove a collective idea of the scaffold in the space

between print and orality."[113] The tone could be one of ridicule, it could be obscene, or it could be historical, reporting the facts. The tone could also be elegiac or satirical, however, and therefore by the 19th century in England they had been repressed due to their potential for inciting violence and revolt. Modern-day popular singer-songwriters, particularly as they came to embody revolutionary goals in the 1960s and 70s, then, may perhaps have the old medieval scaffold to thank, or blame, for the often highly charged atmosphere at their concerts. The following section will work to demonstrate Fabrizio De André's awareness and critique of the various latent roles played by the musician as performer, in an effort to clarify his own complex relationship with the stage.

In medieval times, the gallows represented the judicial power of the feudal knight, a symbol of his omnipotence on his piece of land. However, as discussed earlier, as power centralizesin the modern State, partially through a monopoly on violence, the knight must transition into other roles. In this transitional period, he is no longer autonomous and omnipotent, no longer able to gain land and wealth through the threat of violence and demonstrations of superior strength and force. The feudal lord becomes a courtly poet, he becomes a mercenary soldier, and in various other roles, secures membership in the court of a more powerful feudal lord and, eventually, the king. His knightly valor and strength are no longer useful to him to gain wealth and land but may still gain him prestige. For, as knights broadly lose their right to violence, they maintain some of it in sporting contests that outlive the medieval society that contrived them. As Norbert Elias states:

> Belligerence and aggression find socially permitted expression in sporting contests. And they are expressed especially throughout 'spectating' […] This living out of affects in spectating […] is a particularly characteristic feature of civilized society. It partly

> determines the development of books and theater, and decisively influences the role of cinema in our world.[114]

Thus, the violence that was once part of everyday life, is allowed a circumscribed space. Only within the confines of the arena may men battle each other and may crowds of spectators return to a primordial and wild state that craves the spilled blood of communal sacrifice.

This violent medieval relic (which was already an ancient tradition in medieval times) is a well-known and often observed characteristic of modern sporting events. U.S. football is a classic example of the slow, violent battle to gain the land of an opposing team (or army). However, the crowd's bloodthirst is far less often recognized in spectators at other sorts of competitions, as, for example, in artistic competitions, and specifically, as considered here, in the annual Sanremo Music Festival held in Sanremo, Italy. Like sporting events, which take measures to hide their violent nature by calling themselves 'games', so too does Sanremo call itself a 'festival' rather than 'competition'. Artistic competitions like Sanremo, however, are less often compared to ancient rituals to determine power and valor, most likely because they are less obviously violent. They *are* competitions, however, and are, arguably, more ruthlessly competitive than even some of the most violent modern sporting event. For, artists do not compete as a team against another team; they compete alone against tens, sometimes, hundreds of other individuals. Therefore, they are not judged as a single part of a larger mechanism, but, instead, they are judged individually, literally put under a spotlight to be scrutinized and either praised or discarded. It is not one group against another, but one individual against many.

Another important difference is the way in which a winner is determined. In sporting events, the winner is simply the person or team that performs better, the person or team whose physical strength, speed, ability outmatches the other. Though unfair arbiters can affect the

outcome of a match, there is certainly far less subjectivity in the outcome of a sporting match than in the outcome of a festival like Sanremo. The judging of Sanremo, and competitions like it, rather, is highly modern and highly civilized in a Foucauldian sense. For Foucault states that, in a disciplinary society, "the judges of normality are present everywhere. […] We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the 'social worker'-judge." He goes on: "it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based."[115] Considered from a Foucauldian viewpoint, then, Sanremo is an opportunity for each citizen to play his favorite role: that of arbiter. Each citizen-judge decides good vs. bad, not basing their judgment on morality, but on taste. This is not inherently problematic, for, theoretically, a competition based on the tastes of individuals would be a highly democratic competition, which would allow a society to choose the artists that gain the national spotlight and, in turn, influence future artists. However, the actual process, as is often the case, hardly resembles the ideal.

Firstly, broadly speaking, modern spectators have already been normalized and conditioned themselves, largely by the media, to prefer, if not a certain individual, at least a certain *type* of individual. Secondly, in the specific case of Sanremo, the false premise of the democracy of the competition reveals itself even more egregiously. As Marco Santoro explains in his book *Effetto Tenco*:

> participants were presented directly by record companies, and then selected based on a complex system of commissions, committees, and votes. Many times over the years the selection process has been altered due to pressure and protests on the part of both music companies and journalists, due to the general management of selections, which was seen as lacking transparency and too often maintaining open ties to interested parties.[116]

Therefore, Sanremo not only represents a space in which individuals are encouraged to act as judges, to normalize culture, as it were; not only does it further the interests of the disciplinary society, but it is both latently and directly controlled by private interests that, when they cannot influence the democratic whole, obscure results and declare a winner that best suits a select few citizens' morality, taste, or pocketbooks.

Fabrizio De André, for his part, condemned Sanremo, its authority and its effects, throughout his career, saying in 1969:

> Imagine, they want me at Sanremo. They beg me, they insult me to convince me to go. There's nothing they can do. I refuse competition, I don't understand competition, and I don't want life to be a competition. That is, I don't understand why men trouble themselves about nine and eight-tenths seconds in the 100 meter dash, and I don't understand why a sensible singer like Jula de Palma allows himself to be given all zeroes on [the show] *Canzonissima.* At the human level, competition is absurd, crazy and horrible: at this stage we are only animals.[117]

The Festival, however, was highly influential in the world of popular music in Italy from its inception in 1951 until at least 1968-71, which Franco Fabbri and Goffredo Plastino mark as the end of its central role in shaping the Italian pop music scene.[118] In the countercultural 1970s, musicians and fans began to see participation in Sanremo as a sort of betrayal, yet as the following list of successful participants demonstrates, it continued to maintain an influence in the industry; winners and runners-up have included Claudio Villa (1955, 57, 62, 67) Domenico Modugno (1958, 59, 60, 62, 64, 66, 76), Sergio Endrigo (1968, 69, 70), Adriano Celentano (1961, 68, 70), Wess and Dori Ghezzi (1976), Eros Ramazzotti (1986), Gianni Morandi (1987), Cristiano De André (1993), Gino Paoli (2002). Other contestants have included Giorgio Gaber

(1961, 64, 66, 67), Mina (1960, 61), Ivano Fossati (1972), Rino Gaetano (1978), Patty Pravo (Critics Award 1984, 87, 97), Vasco Rossi (1981, 82), Raf (1988, 90, 91), Jovanotti (1989), and Enzo Jannacci (Critics Award 1991). Additionally, Francesco Guccini (1967), Francesco De Gregori (1980), and Gianna Nannini (2007), among many others, have all participated as authors.[119]

De André recognized in the ritual, and in the audience, precisely the remnants of ancient violence that civilized society claimed to have overcome. On February 1, 1968, on the first day of the Sanremo Festival, he wrote a review for the *Corriere Mercantile,* saying:

> In my view, Sanremo's biggest defect consists […] in the traumatically competitive climate of the show, almost as if the Italian spectator cannot enjoy himself unless he is witnessing an agonizing event; demonstrating, as such, that he does not love the music generally or a song particularly, as much as he loves the fight, the tension of participants and their anxiety to survive duels that necessarily result in a winner and a loser; to put it concisely, the battle … singing wars … all of which brings little honor to the Italian public, which in certain occasions proves itself the most deserving heir of the ancient Roman who crunched peanuts at the gladiators' spectacles.[120]

He recognizes the implicit roles artists play when they participate in contests; they are the gladiators, they are the knights, and they battle not just to win, but to survive, if only in the public imagination. He objects to the "competitive climate," amongst the artists, as well as to the role played by the public. For the artists face an audience that, he suspects, hopes to witness something painful rather than something beautiful, spectacular drama born out of actual trauma. His suspicion of the audience is related here to the death of his friend, Luigi Tenco, who had committed suicide a year earlier at the Sanremo Festival. Yet De André's refusal, not only to

participate in festivals, but even to give concerts from the beginning of his solo career in 1961 until 1975, reveals a hesitation that precedes Tenco's untimely death. His assessment of an audience that "wanted a violent emotion," leads him to suspect an audience who, as he writes in *Corriere Mercantile*, after Tenco's suicide in 1967, "will be disappointed if nothing dramatic were to happen" in 1968.[121]

His suspicion of an audience who revels in the pain and trauma of the performers anticipates the results of Sanremo that came two days later, when Sergio Endrigo won the competition. Endrigo was the first Italian singer-songwriter, or *cantautore,* to take the prize. This was significant because, in the competitions leading up to 1968, Sanremo was dominated by pop acts, performers who sang music written by others, songs that treated topics that were sanctioned by the hegemonic powers at be. That is, the winning songs and acts were pre-approved by and reinforced the status quo; they were innocent love songs sung in traditional styles by performers in traditional dress. Luigi Tenco was not a performer, he was a *cantautore,* and, as such, he was a member of a loosely knit group of grass-roots musicians who were as yet unsanctioned by those at the reigns of powers and who were, consequently, held at the margins of public interest. Tenco did not match the physical status quo in looks, attitude, or dress, and his songs were not standard in either tone or topic. He was part of a youth musical trend that was sweeping the West, a trend that chose political or social themes rather than romantic ones, that chose artists rather than performers, and whose aesthetics and ethics were decidedly different from the status quo. While this musical movement was gaining steam in Italy, it gained no traction at the Sanremo Festival. That is, it gained no traction until the year after Luigi Tenco committed suicide in his hotel room during the competition. Marco Santoro, interestingly, argues that Luigi Tenco was the sacrifice the Italian public needed to bring *cantautori* into the mainstream spotlight.

Conclusion

As mentioned, Fabrizio De André not only took no part in live or televised competitions during his career, he did not even perform in front of a live audience for the first decade of his fame. De André defended his reticence by claiming simply: "The public frightens me."[122] The assertion is dual, referring to his own fear of public performance (though he had performed for years in small Genoese venues as a guitarist), as well as to his personal relationship to his journalistic insights in *Corriere Mercantile* regarding the repressed violent desires of the civilized crowd. The ten-plus years that De André did not perform in public are relatively concurrent to the years during which he develops his history of punishment, beginning at the beginning of his career with songs like "Geordie," and ending in 1973, at the end of his *Story of an Office Worker* album, as the incarcerated antihero calls the public to the prison walls to hear his final song. In 1974, he released the album *Songs* (Canzoni) with Francesco De Gregori; it is an album that still features executions, though they are no longer rigorously thematic and sequential as compared to his history of punishment as he developed it up to that point.[123] Executions in some form continued to exist in De André's songs throughout his career but, after 1974, they become increasingly removed from the tales of trial and execution, trial and incarceration, hanged men and martyrs that we see in the first years of his career.

However, by 1975, after a decade of investigating the complex historical and contemporary significance of the stage as a symbol, after a decade of avoiding that space and performing no live concerts, De André finally admits to seeing the stage for what it most overwhelmingly is in his day and age: a space of capitalistic spectacle. It is, indeed, this characteristic of the space that ultimately drives him to overcome his fears and take the stage. For, by 1975 when he performs his first live concert as a singer-songwriter, Fabrizio De André

was broke. He and his family had moved to Sardinia to open a farm in 1975 and, in order to pay for his farm, which was never solvent, he began to perform.[124] De André insisted over and again, when asked why he started to perform live shows, that music is a career and he needed the money. He became then, in a sense, the negative image of Fiddler Jones, the protagonist of his 1971 *Not of Money not of Love nor of Heaven* and one of his most enduring heroes. Jones gives up the farm to become a musician, while De André wants to give up music, as much as he can, to become a farmer. Before 1975, Fabrizio De André's identity was mixed; he was a musician who lived and played in Genoa. In 1975, he allows his life and his art to split so that he can more fully inhabit both realms without fear of one bleeding into another. Only after having disengaged the role of the *cantautore* and the remnants of the scaffold on the stage, can De André successfully separate his private and public self, in order to perform before the public eye without fearing the audience and risking the sacrifice, somehow, of himself. His life in Sardinia, his family, his farm, define him. His music, his performance, his fans, are simply part of his career, and the sacrifices he makes to them are no more than the sacrifices made by any modern working individual.

---

[1] "Tutti morimmo a stento / ingoiando l'ultima voce / tirando calci al vento." Fabrizio De André and Giuseppe Bentivoglio, lyrics, "Ballata degli impiccati", in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni*, ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 64, lines 1-3.

[2] Bob Dylan, "Desolation Row", in *Lyrics, 1962-2001* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) 252-256, lines 1-2, 3-4. Ebook.

[3] Francis James Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1882–98).

[4] For instance, “Barbara Allen,” a 17th-century English folk ballad (and later Child Ballad 84), was performed by Joan Baez and Simon and Garfunkel, and was influential to Bob Dylan. As we shall see, “Geordie” another Child Ballad was also performed and recorded by Baez.

[5] Dylan recorded the song in 1963 during his recording session for *The Times They Are a-Changin’.* It wasn’t released until 1991 on Volume 2 of *The Bootleg Series Volumes 1–3 (Rare & Unreleased) 1961–1991*.

[6] In songs like “Le verger du roi Louis” (The Orchard of King Louis, 1960), “L’assassinat” (The Murder, 1962), and “La messe au pendu" (The Hanged Men's Mass, 1976).

[7] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

[8] It is worth noting that De André, like his contemporaries, does not advocate for a return of the gallows. Nor, I would argue, is his a romanticization of old forms of punishment. Indeed, it would be a particularly difficult position in Italy in the second postwar to attempt to romanticize the death penalty. Capital punishment was abolished in 1889 in the modern Italian state and then reinstated by Mussolini in 1926, who expanded its use in 1930 with the Rocco Code. The death penalty ended with the ratification of the new democratic constitution in 1948 and so in the postwar imagination it was associated with the Fascist regime. Lynching, as compared to hanging, could have been more easily romanticized as the partisans took the monopoly on violence out of the control of the state and Mussolini himself was executed and then hung in a public square. This form of hanging would closely align with the problematic sense given to it in Westerns, however, De André does not deal in lynchings (except and almost certainly unwittingly in his translation of “Desolation Row”), he deals in executions by the State.

[9] "Fabrizio De André, il menestrello in microsolco" and "Il cantautore 'medioevale' Fabrizio è lo sconosciuto più conosciuto d'Italia," from two 1967 headlines. Sassi and Pistarini, eds, *De André talk: Le interviste e gli articoli della stampa d'epoca* (Roma: Coniglio, 2008)*,* 28, 31.

[10] Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 28.

[11] "Mi appassionano e mi affascinano, ad esempio, i poeti e gli scrittori provenzali e francesi come François Villon, come Baudelaire." Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 35.
"Ho avuto molti maestri: anzitutto i poeti francesi dal '200 all'800: fra quelli recenti soprattutto Rimbaud e Baudelaire." Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 111.

[12] "Siamo affezionati alle ballate medioevali." Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 56.

[13] "I critici dicono che le sue sembrano canzoni antiche, cantate di menestrelli del Duecento." "Un cantautore scandalizza i benpensanti," Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 54.

[14] "Sul piano melodico ed armonico questa partita di arcaicità che il cantautore e i *media* indicano come genericamente medievali arriva in realtà al Rinascimento, mentre sul piano del *sound* e dell'arrangiamento sconfina addirittura nel Barocco." Federica Ivaldi, "Il medioevo secondo De André," in *Menestrelli e giullari: Il medioevo di Fabrizio De André e l'immaginario medievale nel Novecento italiano: atti del convegno "Il medioevo di Fabrizio De André"* (Bagno a Ripoli, 16 Ottobre 2010), ed. Gianni Guastella and Paolo Pirillo (Firenze: EdiFir, 2012), 120.

[15] "Potendo conservare alcune conquiste sociali fatte nel corso dei secoli successivi, vedrei volentieri una società moderna ambientata nel Medioevo." Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 33.

[16] Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 33.

[17] In his youth in Genoa, he frequented and eventually moved in with "seedy people of Genoa: thieves and prostitutes" and admits it was his own cowardice that kept him from marrying a prostitute he loved. Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 77, 112.

Of his move to Sardinia, he says: “In Sardegna ho scoperto una cultura non tanto distante dalla mia, a parte le sovrastrutture della cultura borghese.” Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 234.

[18] “Però sono stato vigliacco ed ipocrita: ecco, qui sono rimasto borghese. No, non l’avrei mai sposata” Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 78.

[19] He laments in 1970 in an interview dealing with his album, *We All Die Agonizingly,* that his sense of guilt for “having been part of that social group that possessed the power.” He says: “I would prefer that social classes did not exist. But they do and I cannot not be ‘bourgeois.’” Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 115.

[20] “Non posso dire che anch’io mi sento un diseredato. Anch’io mi sento entrato in un ingranaggio di chi deve dare ciò che vogliono gli altri.” Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 115.

[21] “Ma come liberarsene di questa società? […] Per essere liberi bisognerebbe essere liberi individualmente. Ma per essere liberi individualmente non sarebbe necessario che fosse concesso agli individui di esserlo.” Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 115.

[22] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 17.

[23] Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, xi.

[24] By 1784, Kant would write: “Cultivated to a high degree by art and science, we are civilized to the point where we are overburdened with all sorts of propriety and decency.” A sort of antithesis to ‘culture,’ this application of the idea of morality across society, this “similitude of morality," as Kant called it, is not culture but mere civilizing, he says. Kant refers to the noble class: the artifice (French language in German courts) and elaborate etiquette (control of feeling, disguise of all vulgar attitudes) that was so central to the class’s self-image. Immanuel Kant, “Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View,” in *On History*, trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1963).

[25] Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 77–128.

[26] However, important philosophical attempts are made to devise models that will produce the moral/ethical/civilized individual. Kant, Schiller, and Stirner make arguments for various paths to individuated ethics.

[27] In 1962 he was introduced to Maureen Rix, who was an English teacher at a school in Genoa that Giuseppe De André owned and Fabrizio administrated, and in 1965, while she was in London, he asked her to bring back some British folk songs. One of them was "Geordie". Walter Pistarini, *Fabrizio De André: Canzoni nascoste, storie segrete* (Firenze: Giunti, 2013).

[28] "Impiccheranno Geordie con una corda d'oro, / è un privilegio raro. / […] / Geordie non rubò mai neppure per me / […] / non ha vent'anni ancora." Fabrizio De André and Maureen Rix, lyrics, "Geordie", in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni*, ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 64, lines, 5-6, 13, 18.

[29] "Né il cuore degli inglesi né lo scettro del re / Geordie potran salvare, / anche se piangeranno con te / la legge non può cambiare." De André and Rix, "Geordie", lines 21-24.

[30] "Cosí lo impiccheranno con una corda d'oro, / è un privilegio raro." De André and Rix, "Geordie", lines 25-26.

[31] "Il quinto dice: "Non devi rubare" / e forse io l'ho rispettato / vuotando, in silenzio, le tasche già gonfie / di quelli che avevan rubato. / Ma io, senza legge, rubai in nome mio, / quegli altri nel nome di Dio." Fabrizio De André, lyrics, "Il testamento di Tito," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni*, ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 105, lines, 33-38.

[32] Colossians 2:15

[33] "Prima che fosse finita / ricordammo a chi vive ancora / che il prezzo fu la vita / per il male fatto in un'ora." De André and Bentivoglio, "Ballata degli impiccati," lines 9-12.

[34] "Vous nous voyez ci attachés, cinq, six"

[35] Romano Giuffrida and Bruno Bigoni, eds., *Fabrizio De André: Accordi eretici* (Milano: Rizzoli, 2008), 31.

[36] Vic Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People 1770-1868* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 6.

[37] Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree*, 590.

[38] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 78, 80.

[39] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 301.

[40] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 19.

[41] Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 116.

[42] http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=civilization

[43] Bruce Mazlish, *Civilization and Its Contents* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 7.

[44] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 232.

[45] Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power* (New York: Continuum, 1981), 297.

[46] "Young magistrates and judges, strongly influenced by the intellectual climate of '68, tried to reform the antiquated legal system, to diminish the intolerable delays in the administration of justice, to evolve less class-based forms of justice. […] They [*pretori d'assalto*] intervened in every sort of area: from pollution to food additives, from building speculation to surveillance of the factories. Their administration of justice was aimed not, as had always previously been the case, at beggars and thieves, peddlers and petty debtors, but at major economic interests and at

leading political and administrative figures." Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics, 1943-1988* (London, England: Penguin Books, 1990), 322-323.

[47] He will only mention one more in passing, in his 1974 translation of Dylan's "Desolation Row."

[48] "Uomini senza fallo, semidei […] Banchieri, pizzicagnoli, notai […] Giudici eletti, uomini di legge." Fabrizio De André, lyrics, "Recitativo (due invocazioni e un atto d'accusa)," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni*, ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 70, lines 1, 9, 17.

[49] "noi che invochiam' pietà siamo i drogati"; "siamo l'umano desolato gregge / di chi morí con il nodo alla gola." De André, "Recitativo", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 4, 19-20.

[50] "Uomini senza fallo, semidei / che vivete in castelli inargentati / che di gloria toccaste gli apogei" De André, "Recitativo", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 2-4.

[51] "Banchieri, pizzicagnoli, notai, / coi ventri obesi e le mani sudate / coi cuori a forma di salvadanai" De André, "Recitativo", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 9-11.

[52] "Uomini cui pietà non convien sempre" De André, "Recitativo", *Come un'anomalia*, line 25.

[53] "Uomini senza fallo, semidei / che vivete in castelli inargentati / che di gloria toccaste gli apogei / noi che invochiam pietà siamo i drogati. […] Banchieri, pizzicagnoli, notai, / coi ventri obesi e le mani sudate / coi cuori a forma di salvadanai / noi che invochiam pietà fummo traviate. […] Giudici eletti, uomini di legge / noi che danziam nei vostri sogni ancora / siamo l'umano desolato gregge / di chi morí con il nodo alla gola. / Quanti innocenti all'orrenda agonia / votaste decidendone la sorte / e quanto giusta pensate che sia / una sentenza che decreta morte? / Uomini cui pietà non convien sempre" De André, "Recitativo", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 1-4, 9-12, 17-25.

[54] The same dynamic is emphasized in *La buona novella* two years later, the good magistrate judges a powerless man, a non-citizen, a man literally without legal rights. In the first stanza of "Via della croce" (Via Dolorosa): "For your death on the cross / you can be grateful to the good man Pilate." ("di morire in croce puoi essere grato / a un brav'uomo di nome Pilato.") Fabrizio De André, lyrics, "Via della croce", in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 102, lines 3-4.

[55] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 19, 78, 80.

[56] The addict states his sense of incommunicability near the beginning of the song, as he sings, "le parole che dico / non han più forma né accento" (lines 5-6), and his sense of alienation when he says that the people around him as nothing more than glass goblins "che mi spiano davanti / che mi ridono dietro" (lines 23-25). As he forms question after question in the song, the one he puts above all others is: "E soprattutto chi / e perché mi ha messo al mondo?" (lines 35-36). Similarly, in "A Madman", as is discussed in the main text, the protagonist searches an encyclopedia looking for the words to communicate with the community around him, whom he desribes as "un villaggio che ride e te, lo schemo che passa" (line 4). He, like the addict to drugs, is driven to the mental institution by the combination of understanding that society is laughing at him and a lack of understanding about who made him this way and, implicitly, his purpose in life: "E senza sapere a chi dovessi la vita / In un manicomio io l'ho restituita" (lines 13-14). Fabrizio De André and Riccardo Mannerini, lyrics, "Cantico dei drogati," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 58-59.

[57] "Tu prova ad avere un mondo nel cuore / e non riesci ad esprimerlo con le parole" Fabrizio De André and Giuseppe Bentivoglio, lyrics, "Un matto (dietro ogni scemo c'è un villaggio)" in

Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni, ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 115, lines 1-2.

[58] https://nationalautismassociation.org/resources/autism-fact-sheet/

[59] Ginsborg, *History of Contemporary Italy,* 392.

[60] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988).

[61] Italy in 1971 is just beginning to see what becomes the first European reform of psychiatry that began with Franco Basaglia's appointment as director of psychiatric hospitals in Trieste, the passing of the Basaglia Law in 1978, and the final dismantling of the Italian mental hospital system in 1998. The goal of the reform was to put an end to social exclusion and isolation in institutions, to be replaced by community integration that discouraged social pressure to normalize behavior.

[62] Foucault, *Madness and Civilization,* 38.

[63] Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 454.

[64] "che un nano / è una carogna di sicuro / perché ha il cuore troppo / troppo vicino al buco del culo." Fabrizio De André and Giuseppe Bentivoglio, lyrics, "Un giudice," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 117-118, lines 21-24.

[65] "giudice finalmente, / arbitro in terra del bene e del male." De André and Bentivoglio, "Un giudice", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 33-34.

[66] "E di affidarli al boia / fu un piacere del tutto mio"; "non conoscendo affatto / la statura di Dio." De André and Bentivoglio, "Un giudice", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 39-40, 43-44.

[67] "E allora la mia statura / non dispensò più buonumore / a chi alla sbarra in piedi / mi diceva "Vostro Onore", / e di affidarli al boia / fu un piacere del tutto mio, / prima di genuflettermi /

nell'ora dell'addio / non conoscendo affatto / la statura di Dio." De André and Bentivoglio, "Un giudice", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 39-44.

[68] "Mi arrestarono un giorno per le donne ed il vino, / non avevano leggi per punire un blasfemo / non mi uccise la morte, ma due guardie bigotte" Fabrizio De André and Giuseppe Bentivoglio, lyrics, "Un blasfemo (dietro ogni blasfemo c'è un giardino incantato)," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 119, lines 5-6.

[69] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 303.

[70] "La faccia sua era faccia d'uom giusto, / tanto benigna avea di fuor la pelle, / e d'un serpente tutto l'altro fusto" Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Volume 1: Inferno*, ed. Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez, trans. Robert M. Durling (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), Inferno XVII ll. 10-13.

[71] "E un giudice, un giudice con la faccia da uomo." Fabrizio De André and Giuseppe Bentivoglio, lyrics, "Un medico," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 123, line 27.

[72] "E quando dottore lo fui finalmente / non volli tradire il bambino per l'uomo / […] / E allora capii fui costretto a capire / che fare il dottore è soltanto un mestiere / che la scienza non puoi regalarla alla gente / se non vuoi ammalarti dell'identico male, / se non vuoi che il sistema ti pigli per fame. / […] / perciò chiusi in bottiglia quei fiori di neve, / l'etichetta diceva: elisir di giovinezza. / E un giudice, un giudice con la faccia da uomo / mi spedí a sfogliare i tramonti in prigione / […] / bollato per sempre truffatore imbroglione." De André and Bentivoglio, "Un medico", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 9-10, 18-22, 25-28, 30.

[73] "Le fabbriche riapriranno, / arresteranno qualche studente"; "lasciandoci in buonafede / massacrare sui marciapiede"; "E se nei vostri quartieri / tutto è rimasto come ieri / senza le

barricate / senza feriti" Fabrizio De André and Giuseppe Bentivoglio, lyrics, "Canzone del Maggio", in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 139-140, lines 11-12, 21-22, 25-28.

[74] "se avete preso per buone / le 'verità' della televisione" and "E se credete ora / che tutto sia come prima / perché avete votato ancora / la sicurezza, la disciplina." De André and Bentivoglio, "Canzone del Maggio", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 29-30, 33-36.

[75] "Certo bisogna farne di strada / da una ginnastica d'obbedienza / fino ad un gesto molto più umano / che ti dia il senso della violenza" Fabrizio De André and Giuseppe Bentivoglio, lyrics, "Nella mia ora di libertà," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 154-155, lines 33-36.

[76] "Ascolta / una volta un giudice come me / giudicò chi gli aveva dettato la legge: / prima cambiarono il giudice / e subito dopo / la legge." Fabrizio De André and Giuseppe Bentivoglio, lyrics, "Sogno numero due," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 145-146, lines 33-38.

[77] "quando uccidevi / favorendo il potere / i soci vitalizi del potere / ammucchiati in discesa / a difesa / della loro celebrazione." De André and Bentivoglio, "Sogno numero due", lines 9-14.

[78] Antonio Gramsci, "Voluntarism and Social Masses," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 202–5.

[79] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 138.

[80] Nicholas Thoburn, "Patterns of Production: Cultural Studies after Hegemony," *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 3 (2007): 79-94.

[81] "Ci hanno insegnato la meraviglia / verso la gente che ruba il pane / ora sappiamo che è un delitto / il non rubare quando si ha fame" De André and Bentivoglio, "Nella mia ora di libertà", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 45-48.

[82] "noi ti abbiamo osservato / dal primo battere del cuore" De André and Bentivoglio, "Sogno numero due", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 5-6.

[83] "alla cattedra d'un tribunale / giudice finalmente" De André and Bentivoglio, "Un giudice", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 32-33.

[84] "e se questo vuol dire rubare / questo filo di pane" and it goes on "lo può dire soltanto chi sa di raccogliere in bocca / il punto di vista di Dio." Fabrizio De André and Ivano Fossati, lyrics, "Khorakhané (a forza di essere vento)," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 253-254, lines 33-34, 37-38.

[85] "venite adesso alla prigione / state a sentire sulla porta / la nostra ultima canzone" De André and Bentivoglio, "La mia ora di libertà", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 53-55.

[86] From an interview in 1969: "Parla della morte, non della morte vera, ma della morte psicologica, morale, mentale che un uomo normale può incontrare durante la sua vita." Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 106.

[87] Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 453.

[88] Though we know that De André pulls the story from chronicle of a real event that occurred in Genoa to Michele Aiello, a southern Italian who immigrated to the north.

[89] Matthew 27:3 - 27:8

[90] Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 169.

[91] "Io so che Miché / ha voluto morire perché / gli restasse il ricordo / del bene profondo / che aveva per te. / Vent'anni gli avevano dato / la Corte decise così / perché un giorno aveva

ammazzato / chi voleva rubargli Marí / l'avevan perciò condannato / vent'anni in prigione a marcir, / però adesso che lui s'è impiccato / la porta gli devono aprir. / Se pure Miché / non ti ha scritto spiegando perché / se n'è andato dal mondo / tu sai che l'ha fatto / soltanto per te." Fabrizio De André and Clelia Petracchi, lyrics, "La ballata del Miché", in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 6-7, lines 19-36.

[92] "se n'è andato sapendo che a te / non poteva mai dire / che aveva ammazzato / perché amava te." De André and Petracchi, "La ballata del Miché", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 15-18.

[93] "Sur ses larges bras étendus, / La forêt où s éveille Flore, / A des chapelets des pendus / Que le matin caresse et dore. / Ce boi sombre, où le chène arbore / Des grappes de fruits inouīs." Theodore de Banville and Arthur B. Myrick, "Gringoire," *Poet Lore* 27, no. 2 (Mar 01, 1916): 142. http://search.proquest.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/magazines/gringoire/docview/1296830745/se-2?accountid=11311.

[94] "Straccioni che senza vergogna / portaste il cilicio o la gogna." Fabrizio De André, "La morte," in *Come un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni,* ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 49, lines 17-18.

[95] John Stuart Mill, "Civilization," in *Essays on Politics and Society*, ed. J.M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 130-131.

[96] Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 492.

[97] http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/walden/Essays/civil.html

[98] "Confucio dice: 'Se uno Stato è retto dai principi della ragione, povertà e miseria sono oggetto di vergogna; se uno Stato non è retto dai principi della ragione, ricchezze e onori sono oggetto di vergogna." Henry David Thoreau, *Walden, ovvero la vita nei boschi e il saggio "La disobbedienza civile,"* trans. Piero Sanavio (Milano: Neri Pozzo Editore, 1958), 389-390.

[99] Fabrizio De André, *Come un'anomalia*, 59-60.

[100] "Vivo la mia morte / con un anticipo tremendo?" De André and Mannerini, "Cantico dei drogati", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 37-38.

[101] "Io che non vedo più / che folletti di vetro / che mi spiano davanti / che mi ridono dietro." De André and Mannerini, "Cantico dei drogati", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 22-25.

[102] This line could be read in the sense of not knowing who his parents are. However, in the original epitaph from *Spoon River,* "Un matto" is "Frank Drummer" and Frank Drummer has family members in the village, for example "Hare Drummer", so his being an abandoned child with unknown parentage is unlikely.

[103] "E soprattutto chi / e perché mi ha messo al mondo" De André and Mannerini, "Cantico dei drogati", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 35-36.

[104] "Mi troveranno / a tremare / mentre / nel mio cervello / l'ottovolante della critica / ha rotto i freni." Riccardo Mannerini, "Eroina," 156-158, in *Il sogno e l'avventura: Poesie 1955-1980* (Genova: Liberodiscrivere edizioni, 2009), lines 8-13.

[105] "Come potrò dire a mia madre che ho paura?" De André and Mannerini, "Cantico dei drogati", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 13, 26, 39, 52.

[106] "Tu che m'ascolti insegnami / un alfabeto che sia / differente da quello / della mia vigliaccheria." De André and Mannerini, "Cantico dei drogati", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 53-56.

[107] "Cercando di lanciarlo / oltre il confine stabilito / che qualcuno ha tracciato / ai bordi dell'infinito." De André and Mannerini, "Cantico dei drogati", *Come un'anomalia*, lines 48-51.

[108] "riuscendo a lanciarlo / oltre la riga." Riccardo Mannerini, "Eroina", 158.

[109] "Con un cucchiaio di vetro scavo nella mia storia / Ma colpisco un po' a casaccio / perché non ho più memoria." Fabrizio De André and Massimo Bubola, lyrics, "Coda di Lupo," in *Come*

un'anomalia: Tutte le canzoni, ed. Roberto Cotroneo (Turin: Einaudi, 1999), 186-187, lines 41-43.

[110] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 201.

[111] "E adesso […] che ho imparato a pescare con le bombe a mano / che mi hanno scolpito in lacrime sull'arco di Traiano / con un cucchiaio di vetro scavo nella mia storia / ma colpisco un po' a casaccio perché non ho più memoria." De André and Bubola, "Coda di lupo", lines 36, 39-43.

[112] "La rivoluzione non si fa con la musica. Prima si fa la rivoluzione, poi si potrà pensare alle arti o la musica. Lo diceva anche Majakovskji che era un vero rivoluzionario e si è suicidato. Suicidati anche tu!" Luzzatto Fegiz, Mario. "Concerto interrotto e palco invaso al Palalido." *Corriere della Sera* 3 Apr. 1976. Print.

[113] Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree,* 119.

[114] Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 166.

[115] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 304.

[116] "i partecipanti erano presentati direttamente dalle case editrici e discografiche, e selezionati da un complesso sistema di commissioni, giurie e votazioni, più volte cambiato nel corso degli anni e seguito di pressioni e proteste, da parte sia delle aziende musicali sia dei giornalisti, a cause di una gestione ritenuta spesso poco trasparente e sin troppo apertamente legata a interessi di parte." Marco Santoro, *Effetto Tenco: Genealogia della canzone d'autore* (Bologna: Il mulino, 2010), 63.

[117] "Pensa, mi vogliono a Sanremo. Mi pregano, mi insultano per convincermi di andarci. Niente da fare. Io rifiuto la competizione, non capisco la competizione, non vorrei che la vita fosse competizione. Ecco, io non capisco perché gli uomini s'affannano per fare nove secondi e otto

decimi sui cento metri, non capisco perché una cantante sensibile come Jula de Palma si fa dare degli zero a "Canzonissima." La competizione a livello umano è assurda, pazzesca e orribile: a questo punto siamo soltanto degli animali." Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 76-77.

[118] Franco Fabbri and Goffredo Plastino, eds., *Made in Italy: Studies in Popular Music* (Florence, GB: Routledge, 2013).

[119] Fabrizio De André wrote the song "Faccia di cane" with Roberto Ferri for i New Trolls. The song participated in the 1985 Sanremo but De André asked that his name not be included as a songwriter.

[120] "A mio parere il maggior difetto di Sanremo consiste … nel clima traumaticamente competitivo della manifestazione, quasi che lo spettatore italiano non riesca a divertirsi altrimenti che dinnanzi ad un avvenimento agonistico; dimostrando, in tal modo, di non amare la musica generale o la canzone in particolare, quanto piuttosto la lotta, la tensione dei partecipanti e la loro ansia di superarsi nel duello che deve necessariamente dare un vincitore ed un vinto; in poche parole, la battaglia … guerra canora … non fa neppure onore al pubblico italiano, che in certe occasioni si dimostra il più degno erede dell'antico romano che sgranocchiava le noccioline agli spettacoli dei gladiatori." Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 41.

[121] "Ben, questo pubblico, l'anno scorso, l'emozione violenta che cercava l'ha avuta: un'emozione tanto violenta che se quest'anno—Dio non lo voglia — non dovesse succede proprio nulla di drammatico, forse qualcuno ci rimarrebbe male." Santoro, *Effetto Tenco*, 41.

[122] "Il pubblico mi fa paura." Sassi and Pistarini, *De André talk,* 46.

[123] Track 1, "Via della povertà" is a translation of Dylan's "Desolation Row and begins, like Dylan's with the scene of a hanging; track 5 "Morire per delle idee," is a version of Brassens' "Mourir por des idées," as hinted at by its title, deals with dying for a cause; track 6 "Giovanna

d'Arco" is a translation of Leonard Cohen's "Joan of Arc" and recounts her death as a martyr on the stake.

[124] In fact, when he was kidnapped for ransom, his father had to pay the kidnappers as De André's money was wholly invested in his farm.