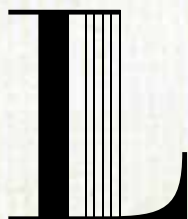




Reflecting on Hornbostel-Sachs's *Versuch* a century later

Proceedings of the international meeting
Venice, 3-4 July 2015



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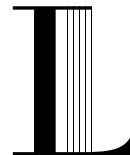
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edited by Cristina Ghirardini



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who has also helped with the linguistic revision
of the texts.*

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a Febo Guizzi

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Davide Croff

Foreword

We are honoured to present here the *Atti*, the records of an intense and productive exchange on the theme of the classification and the description of musical instruments.

Our first thoughts go to Febo Guizzi, to whom we will be forever grateful for proposing this initiative for the one hundred year anniversary of the publication of the classification system created by Erich Moritz von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs in 1914. Guizzi worked intensively on this subject, and we believe that his contribution – in continuity with the research carried out by and with Roberto Leydi – is extremely important.

In 1985, on the occasion of the international year of music, the Fondazione Levi, too, along with numerous other associations, participated in the proceedings by holding an important conference on the restoration of musical instruments. Evidence of this fact can be found in the *Atti*, which were edited by Elena Ferrari Barassi and Marinella Laini. Febo Guizzi took part in the conference and published an articulate intervention on *La classificazione degli strumenti musicali popolari: appunti per una riflessione critica* (The classification of folk music instruments: notes for a critical reflection). In the title itself, as in his methodical elaboration, we find the man Guizzi, his ability to work in the field and to collect objects and information on how those objects are used, that is, objective data that he would later reflect upon critically, in depth, and with dedication. The transcription of the debate which took place at the end of the conference and is found in the *Atti* also holds one of his lectures on the theme, a lecture in which he speaks of the research carried out together with Roberto Leydi in various regions of southern, central and northern Italy in order to collect documentation on musical instruments, on the use of those instruments, and on the history, both ancient and modern, of their evolution using iconography – reconstructing the evolution processes of instruments and how they were played. This presented the chance to make hypotheses on the reconstruction of sound in the distant past.

The defence of the Hornbostel and Sachs classification system – which is

moving towards a revision, as we can see from the *Atti* of this conference – remains a strong instrument for historical-critical understanding, which makes organology one of the elements of a complex system of references that mirror each other, dialogue with each other, and come together, returning constantly to the relationship between the diachronic plane and synchronous plane where they enlighten one another. In the meantime, the revision of the classification system is a formidable work carried out by Guizzi, and it is presented here in Italian and in English.

In 2014, Luisa Zanoncelli, the then President of the Scientific Committee of the Fondazione Ugo e Olga Levi, took up the suggestion, which was celebrative only in appearance, and created the aforementioned conference of which this publication is the result. The Fondazione Levi is extremely grateful to her for the realization of this work, which has finally come to light.

We now extend our thanks to Cristina Ghirardini, who oversaw this collection of works, first with the collaboration of Luisa Zanoncelli, and later autonomously. She is a worthy pupil of the school of Italian ethnomusicology to which this work on the systematics is ascribed. Her preparation, her method of uniting fieldwork and historical and iconographic sources, her method of critically analysing every sort of document, together with her *pietas*, that of a pupil who is forever grateful to her *maestro*, have made her the person who was most qualified and suited to carry out the long and meticulous work needed to complete this work.

As always, the Fondazione Ugo e Olga Levi now leaves to the specialists of the world the task of assessing this attentive work: this can be done *on line* by accessing the *LEVIdata* database, a link also to their institutional site, and a limited print edition.

[Translated from Italian by Matilda Colarossi]

Reflecting on
Hornbostel-Sachs's *Versuch*
a century later

Cristina Ghirardini

Introduction

Ma che cos'è l'idea, che costituisce l'omonimia dei molteplici sinonimi, e che, insistendo in ogni classe, ne riprende i membri dalla loro appartenenza predicativa, per farne dei semplici omonimi, per esibire la loro pura dimora nel linguaggio? Ciò, rispetto a cui il sinonimo è omonimo, non è né un oggetto né un concetto, ma è il suo stesso aver-nome, la sua stessa appartenenza, o il suo essere-nel-linguaggio.

Giorgio Agamben, *La comunità che viene*, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri, 2001, p. 61.

The conference *Reflecting on Hornbostel-Sachs's Versuch a century later* was the last international conference organized by Febo Guizzi before his untimely death. When he asked Luisa Zanoncelli, at that time the President of the Scientific Committee of the Fondazione Ugo e Olga Levi in Venezia, if the Foundation would be willing to organize an international meeting to celebrate the hundred-year anniversary of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, Febo Guizzi was working on his lengthy revision of the systematics. Thanks to the generous hospitality of the Fondazione Levi, the conference took place in Venezia on 3-4 July 2015, and just a few days before it began, the final version of Febo Guizzi's Italian translation, along with the results of his emendations, were shared with the participants of the conference. As he was known to do, Guizzi worked until the very last minute; and this version, published at the end of these proceedings, is now available. His indefatigable and somewhat rushed endeavour was edited and translated into English thanks to the collaboration of Matilda Colarossi.

Febo Guizzi worked on the Hornbostel-Sachs classification for more than thirty years. His first important emendations date back to the early 1980s. At that time, he was collaborating with Roberto Leydi in field research throughout Italy (paying special attention, for the very first time, to musical instruments). This research brought to light the exceptional and astonishing musical diversity still alive in Italian traditional culture. The most important result of the research, for its impact on a general audience, was the exhibition *Gli strumenti della musica popolare in Italia* (The instruments of folk music in Italy), which was held in Venezia (Teatro La Fenice), Angera (Rocca Borromea), Bologna (Teatro

Comunale), Milano (Teatro alla Scala), Castelfidardo and Roma (Museo Nazionale delle Arti e Tradizioni Popolari) between 1983 and 1984. The catalogue of the exhibition was published in a special issue in the journal «Culture musicali», and later in a volume [Leydi and Guizzi 1985]. It is in the catalogue of this exhibition that Febo Guizzi describes the voice disguiser made of two halves of a gourd called *ravi* or *cusa* in Piedmont. The two symmetric parts vibrate when placed near one's mouth while singing, thus changing the timbre of the voice. For this instrument he proposed to add the *taxon* 15 «Singing idiophones (idiophonic mirlitons): idiophones solicited by the pressure of sounding waves» to the existing Hornbostel-Sachs classification [Guizzi 1985, 302].

A few years later, Febo Guizzi was invited by Giuliana Zanetti to take part in the scientific committee of the exposition of pre-Columbian art entitled *Prima dell'America* (Before America), which took place in the Museo Archeologico in Bologna from 30 March to 30 June 1992. In the catalogue of the exhibition, Guizzi [1992] published, for the first time ever, a partial translation from German into Italian of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification. Only the musical instruments and sound devices displayed in the exhibition were taken into account, however; in addition to the Italian translation, he also proposed a series of improvements concerning the pre-Columbian flutes. It was in the 1990s that Febo Guizzi realized his Italian translation of the whole Hornbostel-Sachs classification, which was largely discussed with other researchers, and his students at the Facoltà di Conservazione dei Beni Culturali (Faculty of Preservation of Cultural Heritage) of the University of Bologna, located in Ravenna, where he was a lecturer in Organology, and from 1999 at the University of Torino, where he became Professor in Ethnomusicology. At the same time, while Febo Guizzi was involved in various projects of cataloguing musical instruments in private and public collections, other researchers (many of them trained in Roberto Leydi's courses on Ethnomusicology at the University of Bologna) were doing extended fieldwork on the instruments of Italian folk music, and on the various sound devices documented during their research. Both Febo Guizzi's own experience as an organologist in various museums, and his passionate discussions with researchers and students were a determining factor in the realization of his translation, his revisions, and his additions to the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, which were published in 2002 [Guizzi 2002, 409-482]. In 2004 Guizzi met Domenico Torta, the musician, composer, and researcher from Riva presso Chieri (Torino). Torta possessed a huge collection of musical instruments, clay whistles, hunting calls, toy instruments, flutes, reedpipes, horns made of bark, and noise makers used in the countryside not far from Torino, and Guizzi greatly regretted having made this acquaintance only after the publication of his 2002 book. However, Domenico Torta soon became his and our – Febo Guizzi's students in Torino – close friend; and we immediately

found ourselves participating in the creation of the Museo del paesaggio sonoro (Soundscape Museum) in Riva presso Chieri, which was greatly improved in 2011 in accord with the plan laid out by Domenico Torta and Guido Raschieri [Raschieri 2011].

The main achievements of Guizzi's revision of the Hornbostel-Sachs system are listed in Guizzi's article which is the presentation he himself made during the conference. Although he was not completely satisfied with the text, he, unfortunately, did not have time to revise it, and we have decided to present the text exactly as is. His main contribution in these proceedings is the last version of his revision of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, in which the numerous examples and the long footnotes document the thinking process that allowed him to achieve his fine revision.

It was Febo Guizzi himself who suggested which participants should attend the conference, and the Fondazione Levi was more than willing to comply. Along with the Italian researchers with whom he was known to have extremely impassioned discussions regarding the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, Guizzi invited international researchers whose noteworthy achievements had been published in recent years, and those who, although they did not work specifically on the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, could help with the historical background that led to the 1914 *Versuch*, and shed light on the relationship between the systematics of Hornbostel-Sachs, Victor Mahillon, and André Schaeffner. At that time we were not aware of Roderic Knight's recent and important revision of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, which was published in the 2016 «Galpin Society Journal» [Knight 2016], and which proposed interesting and different solutions to many of the questions Febo Guizzi, too, had raised. The conference was also an occasion to listen to some critical voices on the usefulness of the taxonomical approach in today's digital era; and, in particular, on questions regarding the hierarchical structure and the problems posed by the class of electrophones, which Hornbostel and Sachs never developed.

In these proceedings, Renato Meucci's article focuses on Curt Sachs and on his works before leaving for the United States, especially on *Geist und Werden der Musikinstrumente*, where the taxonomic approach experimented in the 1914 *Versuch* remains in the background, providing solely the terminology for Sachs's diffusionist theory on the development of musical instruments.

Ignace De Keyser tries to answer «the unanswered question», that is to say, Mahillon's apparent lack of reaction to the Hornbostel-Sachs 1914 *Versuch*: Mahillon had, in fact, laid the foundation for the Hornbostel-Sachs classification in his *Essai de classification*. Then, he goes on to question the very necessity of a taxonomy based on a unique principle in the definition of the classes and its impermeability to the emic perspective; and he puts forth the idea of establishing a permanent discussion group, open to researchers from the natural sciences,

and, more generally, from those life sciences whose disciplines also make use of taxonomies.

Lars Christian Koch explores the relationship between the Hornbostel-Sachs classification and the Indian theory of music as it was disseminated throughout Europe by Raja Sir Sourindo Mohan Tagore in the 1870s. Moreover, he reflects upon the scarce use of the systematics by its authors in their later works, focusing especially on Eric M. von Hornbostel, whose archive and ‘Black Box’, which contains cards with measurements and data resulting from the examination of different musical instruments, are now preserved at the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music in Bloomington.

Gian Nicola Spanu discusses the reasons behind Italy’s general lack of attention to the taxonomies of musical instruments created by Mahillon and by Hornbostel-Sachs between 1880 and the 1930s: in fact, the only relevant exception was Eugenio de’ Guarinoni’s translation of Mahillon’s classification in the catalogue of the musical instruments of the Museum of the Conservatory in Milan, which he published in 1908. He did not, however, properly reference his source and simply thanked his «friend» Mahillon «for his precious advice and precepts».

Florence Gétreau focuses on André Schaeffner’s classification of musical instruments, published first in 1932 and later in 1936 as an appendix to his *Origine des instruments de musique*. After considering its reception in the international organological domain, she examines the interesting contributions that another great French scholar, Geneviève Dournon, published on Schaeffner’s classification and, more generally, on the systematics of musical instruments. As an appendix, Florence Gétreau has transcribed the handout distributed by Geneviève Dournon when teaching Organology at the University of Nanterre, Paris (1991), which contains some of her observations on how to develop the principles of Schaeffner’s classification. In continuity with the French approach to the classification of musical instruments, Marie-Barbara Le Gonidec proposes an English translation of the outstanding classification of flutes, which she published in 1997 in the journal «Pastel». It was conceived in the Musée de l’Homme in Paris, where some years before, Geneviève Dournon had engaged her to reorganize the flute collection. Moreover, she offers a series of considerations on the problem of the classification of bagpipes based on her fieldwork and her experience as a curator of the exhibition *Les cornemuses de George Sand* at the Musée de Montluçon, France (1996).

Jeremy Montagu has been working on the classification of musical instruments since the early 1970s, when he published his project for a new classification co-authored with John Burton [Montagu and Burton 1971]. After having proposed a series of revisions [Montagu 2009] that have been adopted by the MIMO version of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, in these proceedings he addresses a series

of major questions concerning the higher levels of the subdivisions, focusing principally on the aerophones.

Roger Blench questions the morphological criterion which is dominant in the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, focusing on instruments which can be played using different techniques, on multiple-feature (*polyorganisch* in the original text by Hornbostel and Sachs) instruments, and on instruments played by more than one player.

Together with Nico Staiti, Vincenzo La Vena had been one of Febo Guizzi’s main collaborators in the revision of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification since early 1990. Vincenzo La Vena’s 1996 volume on the sound devices from Terranova da Sibari [La Vena 1996] has revealed an extremely lively world of sound producers used in everyday life by children and adults in a small village in Calabria, Italy. In his book, he makes use of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, undertaking to give proper Hornbostel-Sachs codes to instruments played in various ways or constructed with different materials. For Febo Guizzi this work was particularly inspiring when he was working on his 2002 and 2015 revisions of the classification. In his proceedings, Vincenzo La Vena goes back to the main questions posed in his 1996 book, enriched by his experience as a teacher who is constantly exposed to the many unconventional and joyful ways children have of playing instruments, and their use of non-orthodox techniques.

Margaret Birley attended the conference on behalf of the MIMO consortium, which adopted a revised version of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification for the MIMO online database of musical instruments collections. Febo Guizzi had some perplexities concerning the consortium’s choices on the classification of musical instruments, and, before the conference, he sent Margaret Birley a series of questions by way of the organizing committee. The article that Margaret Birley wrote together with Arnold Myers and Rupert Shepherd provides a series of thorough answers to the questions posed by Febo Guizzi.

Nico Staiti had been collaborating with Febo Guizzi since the 1980s, especially in fieldwork and in the iconographical research of bagpipes, Italian shawms, and the frame drum. In these proceedings, starting from André Schaeffner’s criticism of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, he deals with reedpipes, especially those with a membrane reed, a subject which had already challenged Vincenzo La Vena and the MIMO consortium and which is also largely addressed by Febo Guizzi in his revision of the classification.

Stéphanie Weisser, in collaboration with Maarten Quanten, is the author of an important essay published in the 2011 «Yearbook for Traditional Music» [Weisser and Quanten 2011]. In these proceedings she questions the opportunity of using the Hornbostel-Sachs classification to study musical instruments in today’s digital era, calling for a non-hierarchical environment instead of an arborescent classification.

My own paper is the text I presented at the conference, and it deals with the punctuation system suggested by Hornbostel and Sachs to construct the proper numerical code for polyorganic instruments: it is often neglected by researchers because of its counterintuitive use; however, it is essential when dealing with instruments that combine different vibrating bodies; and the correct use of punctuation forces us to significantly reconsider the supposed inelasticity that is often attributed to the system.

Maarten Quanten is the author of the classification of electrophones proposed in his 2011 article (co-authored with Stéphanie Weisser and used by MIMO). In these proceedings, he questions the principles on which the Hornbostel-Sachs classification is grounded, beginning with the perspective of the modular and hybrid construction of electric, electronic, and experimental instruments.

Febo Guizzi's 2015 revision of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification was tested during the project *Sound Archives and Musical Instruments Collections* (SAMIC) directed by Ilario Meandri at the University of Torino.¹ This aimed to create a digital catalogue of the musical instruments of the Museo del paesaggio sonoro by making use of the Linked Open Data technology, and adapting the standard for cataloguing musical instruments put forth by Febo Guizzi [Meandri and Ghirardini 2019]. For Guizzi, too, the Museum's outstanding collection was a remarkable field in which to test the coherence of the system. Guizzi's important emendation of the subdivision of aerophones (especially reeds and flutes) is not only due to his previous efforts on pre-Columbian instruments, but also to his countless discussions with Nico Staiti, Vincenzo La Vena, Domenico Torta, and with his students in Torino, especially those involved in the activities of the Museo del paesaggio sonoro. One of his major efforts was aimed at including whistles with two concentric holes, which Laurence Picken classed 420.1 and called «edge instruments that are not flutes» [Picken 1975, 376-380], and which are known as both toy instruments or hunting calls. It is here that it is possible to find a particularly interesting discrepancy in Guizzi's emendation, which we did not notice while he was working on his revision in 2015.

If Guizzi had not passed away, I would not have had to write this *Introduction*. This sad and unforeseen circumstance, however, requires me to take his place, and I would, therefore, like to pay homage to my mentor. In doing so, I would like to explain why Guizzi's massive revision of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification is extremely valuable by discussing this small discrepancy of which I became aware while cataloguing the musical instruments in his most beloved museum along with other pupils in the SAMIC project.

Febo Guizzi did not address the macro inconsistencies which are found in

the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, and which Jeremy Montagu has often underlined [in 2009 and in his contribution in this volume]. It is, therefore, to be expected that there is a resistance on the part of other researchers to adopt Guizzi's revisions. Personally, I agree with Guizzi's respect for the general structure of Hornbostel and Sachs, provided that, as its authors explicitly state, we don't use it as an unalterable set of labels, but rather as a flexible system, one which can grow in specific directions, and not in others, depending on the interests and the needs of the researchers. I believe that we have to give up the idea of a 'universal' classification system, benefiting instead from the possibility of allowing the tree to germinate in various and different directions. Contrary to what Jeremy Montagu writes in this volume, I do not think that the Hornbostel-Sachs classification is «culture- and language-bias free»; instead, I believe that it allows us to think about the linguistic nature of the instruments used by humans to produce sound and to make music. Moreover, it allows us to find a way into the labyrinth of synonyms and homonyms which, as Curt Sachs knew very well, is so peculiar in the world of musical instruments. In short, especially when dealing with the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, my opinion is that ontology is a matter of language [Cimatti 2018a; 2018b, 145-174]. When describing the «edge-tone instruments that are not flutes», Picken [1975, 376] writes:

The distinctive acoustic mechanism of whistles of this type has not hitherto been recognized. If the term 'edge-tone' is reserved for sounds generated by an edge, set at an appropriate distance from, and in the plane of, a slit from which an efflux of air at suitable velocity occurs, these whistles are not, strictly speaking, edge-tone instruments, since here the plane of an annular edge is at right angle to the air-stream. Nevertheless, the edge of an orifice is the discontinuity at which the exciting tone is generated. For the present it is convenient to regard them as relatives of edge-tone instruments.

The other peculiar characteristic of these whistles is the presence of a very small resonator, which can be closed or open, with two concentric holes [*ibidem*]:

In the simpler type (a), because of the structural symmetry of the system, with two opposed circular holes opening into a small, closed chamber the maximal diameter of which lies in a plane parallel to the planes of the two holes, the whistle operates on sucking as well as on blowing. It seems likely that each annular vortex generated at the internal face of the exit aperture excites the chamber-resonance, and this then acts on the incoming air-stream, so as to cause another vortex to be formed. The formation of vortices therefore occurs in a periodic fashion and at a frequency determined by the cavity. The exit aperture and the small, enclosed resonating space, together form a coupled system of generator and resonator. Because the cavity is strongly coupled to the air-stream, small variations in the velocity of the airflow produce large variations in the frequency excited, and the resulting tone is with difficulty held at even an approximately constant pitch.

1. <http://museopaesaggiosonoro.org/sound-archives-musical-instruments-collection-samic/>. The catalogue of the Museo del paesaggio sonoro is now available here: <https://dati.museopaesaggiosonoro.org/>.

Within the second type (b), in which the chamber is open, a strong tone is obtainable by coupling a second air-cavity, defined by the rolled tongue, with the resonating system of the whistle. The capacity of this latter cavity determines the pitch of the whistle for a given air-velocity.

The upper subdivisions of 421 «Edge instruments» in Febo Guizzi's revision of the Hornbostel-Sachs classification follows the original model, distinguishing 421.1 «Flutes without duct (with no blowing devices)» from 421.2 «Channelled flutes (with blowing device)». In order to find a correct place in the system for these whistles where the «annular edge is at is at right angle to the air-stream», Febo Guizzi has subdivided the *taxon* 421.1 «Flutes without duct» in two groups: 421.11 «Edge-tone instruments that are not flutes, or wind instruments orthogonally blown» and 421.12 «Edge instruments not orthogonally blown». The call for blackbirds in figure 1, corresponding to Picken's type a, belongs to 421.11 and for its closed structure it may be considered 421.111 «With closed and fixed chamber» (421.112 «With open and variable chamber» corresponding to Picken's type b). The subdivision of 421.12 then develops the large category of end-blown flutes, whether tubular or vessel.

In the subdivisions of 421.2 «Channelled flutes (with blowing device)» it is possible to locate other hunting calls both orthogonally and non-orthogonally blown. It is interesting to notice that, contrary to Picken, for Guizzi the fact that the air-stream reaches the edge of the instrument at a right angle is not so relevant for the distinction between flutes and edge instruments which are not flutes. However, it is interesting to observe that under the 421.2, in the classification revised by Guizzi, we only find sound devices with a 'proper' resonator.

In Guizzi's system it is possible to define a series of orthogonally blown flutes with blowing device, both with and without what he calls «external chamber». For example, the call for jays in figure 2 corresponds to 421.211.1 «Channelled flutes with external chamber with a central hole on the wall of a vessel chamber», while the call for capercaillies in figures 3 and 4 corresponds to 421.211.2 «Channelled flutes with external chamber, the hole is obtained by the upper end of a tube». Instead, the call for magpies in figure 5 can be easily defined by adding to Guizzi's system the *taxon* 421.212 «Channelled flutes with orthogonal edge-device without external chamber», while the call for female pheasants in figure 6 is an end-blown flute with external duct which corresponds to the *taxon* 421.222.1 «Vessel flutes with external duct with single duct». The system seems to work very well up until this point; however, problems seem to emerge when considering calls for blackbirds like the one in figure 7, which is made of a circular body with two concentric holes provided with a sort of blowing device. Like the one in figure 1, it can be played both by sucking and blowing, contrary



Figure 1.
Call for blackbirds
Museo del paesaggio sonoro,
Riva presso Chieri (Torino)
(inv. 0397SM)

Figure 2.
Call for jays
(inv. 0303SM)

Figures 3-4.
Call for capercaillies
(inv. 0306SM)

Figure 5.
Call for magpies
(inv. 0304SM)

Figure 6.
Call for female pheasants
(inv. 0396SM)

Figure 7.
Call for blackbirds
(inv. 0066SM)

PHOTOS 1-7 ILARIO MEANDRI

to the instruments which are properly defined as flutes. In fact, their peculiar characteristic is not only the fact that they are orthogonally blown, but also lies in the fact that, as Picken points out, «the exit aperture and the small, enclosed resonating space, together form a coupled system of generator and resonator». In Guizzi's system, however, as observed above, this kind of spurious resonator is not taken into consideration in the subdivision of the flutes with blowing devices 421.2. This is relevant because this morphology undoubtedly questions the nature of the flute. If it is the peculiar «coupled system of generator and resonator» which is considered more hierarchically relevant, it would be necessary to modify the system at the very beginning of the subdivision of edge-tone instruments, making possible the existence, among the flutes without duct, of orthogonally blown instruments provided with a kind of blowing device. A possible solution, for example, would be the removal of the definition «(with no blowing devices)» that Guizzi added to 421.1 «*Flutes without duct*» and the addition to 421.111 «Edge-tone instruments that are not flutes, or wind instruments orthogonally blown with closed and fixed chamber» of the further subdivisions 421.111.1 «Without blowing device» and 421.111.2 «With blowing device». Of course, 'duct' must not be used as the synonym of 'blowing device' because the former describes a structural element which directs the air stream towards the edge according to an exact and fixed angle, while the latter is an embouchure, a capsule that creates a chamber which effects the strength of the air stream rather than the angle of incidence, and the acoustic function of which is still unknown. Moreover it makes it easier to hold the sound device in one's mouth with no hands.

On the contrary, if we accept to include the body with two concentric holes as a borderline variant of the morphology of the flutes' resonators, this may be referred to as a further subdivision of 421.21 «Channelled flutes with orthogonal edge-device», maybe as 421.213 «Channelled edge-tone instruments that are not properly flutes». Here again, the nature of the 'channel' can be questioned: I believe there is no doubt that 'duct' (according to the meaning given above) can be considered a blowing device of the call for magpies in figure 5 and of the call for female pheasants in figure 6, however, we can hardly think that the blowing devices of the call for jays in figure 2 and of the call for capercaillies in figures 3 and 4 perfectly determine the right angle for the air-stream to reach the edge, being instead embouchures with an unclear acoustic function, like the one of the call for blackbirds in figure 7.

At the end of the SAMIC project we did not make a decision: only a part of the hunting calls of the Museum have been catalogued; and I believe that a better choice will only be possible when we are able to deal with the entire collection.

What is essential, I believe, is the awareness of the importance of language in defining musical instruments. The extreme mobility of the names of musical

instruments should be studied in relationship with the possibility to establish classes which define them without claiming to make the perfect choice that everybody will accept regardless of their use of language. The Hornbostel-Sachs classification is helpful only as far as it is used to think about the utterance of musical instruments, on the words used to imagine them, and to find relationships between synonyms and homonyms. As Febo Guizzi has taught us, it becomes interesting and challenging when exploring its limits, and probably its main strength is the very fact that it is unachievable.

Febo Guizzi was deceived by the fact that his work on the Hornbostel-Sachs classification from the 1980s to the early 2000s was not internationally acknowledged as it deserved to be. However, I believe that this lack of attention was providential, because it prevented his system from becoming an institutional and fossilized list of statements, and it encouraged him to make the tree grow in different directions.

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Febo Guizzi

Reflecting on Hornbostel-Sachs's *Versuch* a century later

I would like to begin this paper by providing a short autobiographical statement: I started studying the systematics of musical instruments before I was thirty years old. Since then I have continued to cultivate an interest in them, and although my attention has been discontinuous, it has never betrayed my underlying motivations. One of these – perhaps the one that is most dear to me – stems from a critical reflection that was highly in vogue at that time, one that censured what was considered a wrong, unilateral way of viewing the complexity of the system, that is: ‘not seeing the forest for the trees’. For the complexity of the system needs one to take both the ‘trees’ and the ‘forest’ into consideration. The intellectual appeal of the Hornbostel-Sachs systematics largely consisted, for me, in the fact that it allows us to perform this cognitive operation, without the risk of excluding one of the two modalities, the analytical nor the synthetic one. In other words, to see the ‘whole’ and to conceive, in its unrenounceable importance, the aggregative datum of the abstraction, which defines the ‘forest’ as a reality that is not less important than the disaggregated units of which it is composed. Complementarily and simultaneously, this means the ability to see the consistency of the individual elements that make up the generalized abstraction of the whole, that is to say, each of the trees in the specificity and the non-episodic differences that separate it from other objects, which we will refer to, for the sake of simplicity, as ‘tree’. It means devoting adequate attention to all the analytical elements that constitute the particularity and specificity: foliage, leaves, stems, roots, of every variety of tree. And each variety is, in turn, essential and inseparable from the totality, where its contribution to the concurrently abstract and concrete realization of the ‘forest’ outlines itself: therefore, all trees, all ‘the’ trees, on which the reality of a forest depends, starting with, of course, the specific forest we are taking into consideration each time. To make this metaphorical argumentation clearer, we must obviously replace the word ‘tree’ with the term ‘instrument’; but the concept of ‘forest’ is hard to replace because there are no terms commonly used in the various languages to indicate – in a synthetic and unitary way – an organic aggregate of instruments. This fact also helps us clarify a point that is necessary for the comprehension of the *Systematik*: natural entities possess their own network of evolutionary