

History, sociology and politics: The strange triangles of Communication Day

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Chronicle of a fantastic day, in a Rome invaded by an epochal rain, moving from the “masterly” words of Bauman in Roma-Eur to the pearls of wisdom of another great giant of sociology: Franco Ferrarotti.

To discover that sometimes the answers are found in the intersection of unexpected lines.

Standing in front of the Italian House of Parliament, while looking from the corner of my eye the heels of fine shoes, which one would wear only on special occasions, and were still wearable, I felt a sudden pleasure that weakened the weariness of the day, which was everything but normal.

I was concluding in this state of abnormality my Roman “Communication” day.

“Universal Diluvium” was being shot today in front of Sheraton Roma with one hundred and twenty seven millimetres of rain as performer that poured down in only three hours. Had not happened in a life-time. Two miles away, at the “Confindustria Italiana” hall, quite glamorous, designed by Pininfarina, the one of the great Italian Ferrari, who died in vain and young, on a “Vespa”, the two wheel jewel of the Italian modesty, the “wizard” of communication, who was the reason of our gathering, Zigmud Bauman was no longer in the spotlight. God, as the “Director”, trusted rain with the leading role. The players of the largest Summit of Communication in Rome arrived with approximately 2 hours of delay. Roma “Eur”, built in the Mussolini era to celebrate “La Marcia sul Roma” had now transformed now into a Venice because of the rain.

The guests of Franco Pomilio, heir of Pomilio Blumm, the Italian marketing, advertising and communication giant, arrived all soaking wet and were speaking only about the rain. The purpose of the gathering, communication, was no longer in their thoughts. It had won. It was the King of Rome. Rain. Mobile phones and taxicabs were not known in its kingdom. Nothing was known. Blackout. I tried to use the local Roman currency, under the power of the rain and water, the “Metro”. They did not use that too and neither did they exchange it. There, at “Gabartella” station it was outcast, it was not functional. It was exchanged only at “Piramide”, almost six miles away, where the taxicab was still considered outlaw, and after being put out of it without any notice, they finger pointed how to proceed. On foot!

The high heels did not betray me. I was still feeling good in front of that dreamy Bernini building, the Italian Parliament. I never came to know why it was named that way.

“Montecitorio” was there, in front of the curious Egyptian obelisk dating five centuries before Christ, brought to Rome around the year of his birth by Augustus. Roman geniality placed it multi-purposely in the middle of the square, from a sundial to a perpetuum calendar.

Ferrarotti was standing there, on the second floor, somewhere between the “Hall of She-Wolf” and the “Yellow Room” where the golden tapestry of the room, together with the monumental furniture made of precious metal, had not changed in years, but the name did. It had a new one.

He was standing there, as if he was connecting two eras. The past, when Italy of forty six was looking at the bronze “She-Wolf”, which was feeding with its breasts not the mythological twins Romulus and Remus, but the dream of a Republic born that second of July, and the new, the former “Yellow Room”, called Aldo Moro, murdered not too far from there, and baptized now with a new name, far in time, thirty years later, as if it was waiting for the second Italian Republic, just like “John the Baptist”.

Ferrarotti was standing there, on the Bernini stairs, facing the marble statues of those who had truly made Italy a century and a half ago. He was holding “L’Empatia Creatrice”, the book he was presenting there, in the Italian temple of the Republic.

I was meeting Ferrarotti, the greatest Italian sociologist, one of the few famous sociologists in the world.

Rain, like the “Song of Forgiveness” would erase intensely my apology for the delay, which would disperse together with his echoing laughter in that corridor full of windows, which only an Italian fantasy would dare call it “Transatlantic”, precisely for its shape and overhead lighting, and in exchange for my mumbling about the rain, out of his golden wallet came: “The rain?!...no professor, no... Just a few drops. It is the media ... the media, the one that makes things appear more than what they really are. Why on earth, would you believe it?!”

I smiled as I earned a golden Ferrarotti coin. Communication Sociology.

Franco Ferrarotti, this “guru” of the Italian culture still living, still writing. Writing endlessly.

The pen, his life companion will also be his meditation cane.

He will always write, until the end, even when the body will be so obstinate as not to obey to the mind.

He was shivering while mentioning the Nobel Prize winner Andre Gide, who was still writing even in his death bed, and differently from him, like the conflict between the old and the new, the empirical theory and life, the past and the present, just like that small difference that exists between love and feelings, this dualism in perfect relation between his self and non self, where the self hidden in the individual seeks no closure but wants to talk, to get out, communicate, in Ferrarotti's work is really shuddering.

The "Honus" - Ferrarotti converses, communicates. He cannot help himself, alone he cannot save himself and his cry reveals the uncovered and naked sole of the global society.

After all, communication in Rome had become today the keyword of the day.

Ferrarotti and Bauman. From Bauman to Ferrarotti.

Maybe, in my thoughts I was thinking about these two people the other way around.

Combination provocation?! I spent a long time thinking about it!

My mind was no longer on the high heels, while I was crossing on foot that Roman Bermudian triangle, right there beside the "Siara" publishing house, where "Ferrarotti's Critics" was hosted, and where strangely enough I was imagining as a cross the crossroad in Caetani street, where thirty years ago (the age of Christ) Aldo Moro was found murdered. But this time, not by chance, the "Yellow Room" was bearing his name where I was standing few hours ago, in front of the Italian Parliament.

What a bizarre Biblical cross, that virtual one between "Gesu" square, the historical seat of Italian Demo-Christians, "Boteghe Oscure" street of the communists, "Montecitorio", and that not random Aldo Moro's "Caetani" street, president of the Demo-Christians murdered by the "Red Brigades"?!

The cross, Gesu square, the age of Christ, everything originating from sacred Jerusalem. Surprisingly, everything the morning of that day was invaded not only by the rain but also from that Polish Jew, Zygmunt Bauman, him as well originating from Jerusalem.

If this wasn't enough, although the sound of the high heels on the ancient Roman cobblestone was fading, not from tiredness, but from a mixture of thoughts, my feet were in command now, driven by a hidden director inside of me, towards "Boteghe Oscure", the street where the "Hammer and Sickle" were no longer there, but strangely today, in my communication "Mundus Day" took me away, far away, at the embryo of that strange triangle there in Warsaw, almost half a century ago, where Bauman and Ferrarotti were boiling in that volcano of sociology at the cathedra of a Marxist, Adam Schaff.

The triangle would close up again, and this time differently from the previous one, that of Demo-Christians; it belonged to the communists, vertex down.

I was not feeling my feet anymore. I was no longer thinking about the high heels.

The two triangles would connect with each other, giving “David’s Star” and I recalled that infinity of thoughts, following Ferrarotti’s style, where the man and non-man, just like Semitism and Anti Semitism, differently from Christ and the Anti Christ, would intertwine, and after a clash of titans, they would connect under a silent pact whose roots were never uncovered.

An infinity of thoughts, as if it wanted to feed me continuously the idea that it was not by chance that “Siara” publisher was hosted there, at Maria Immacolata, at her house, not in far Jerusalem this time, but right there, in the centre of Rome, in that solid epochal triangle of parties, at the house of another Immacolata, Immacolata Maciotti, the brilliant sociologist of “La Sapienza”, where the journal “Ferrarotti’s Critics” was hosted, and not by change it was too called “Sociologic”.

Was the combination a provocation? I did not thought over it as much as before!

The sweet smile of Maria Immacolata, resembling that of the other Italian “Gioconda”, erased just like the apocalyptic rain of Rome in that extraordinary communication day, my feeling of non-guilt, showing that her class, expressed “alla Romana” was not water.

My tired feet were not obeying me any longer and I could not leave this triangle of history beyond the Adriatic. I could not leave the person that wrote the sociologic epoch in the strangest way possible, only with the pen, when the word was carved painfully on paper.

I was leaving a world, and surprisingly I was approaching another, always on foot, away and inside it, two steps away, very close, as if it were an amoebae extension of the previous, right there at “Plebiscito” street, at the Berlusconian palace “Grazioli”.

Another triangle?!

I kept walking, tired. My mind was not feeling the fatigue yet. High heels?! No way one would think of them.

During the evening, just a few hours ago, while leaving the “Yellow Room”, which for me differently from Gianfranco Fini who called it “Moro Room”, would coincide with Ferrarotti, Paolo Mielli, the director of the famous “Corriere della Sera” and “Stampa”, would address the master of sociology: “It is a pleasure to listen to you, my friend Ferrarotti, the giant of two eras”.

Paolo Mielli himself, the one targeted by Berlusconi, for the irony, there in my Albania, far away, years ago when he was asking him to change his profession, was trying to remind his anti Berlusconi trench companion that the strange dual triangle of his first era was changing its shape, was growing, and its never ending time would yet have to carve with a pen in the next era as well. In this other era.

I was not surprised. It was communication sociology.

I was in Rome. I was with Bauman and Ferrarotti.

I was with Ferrarotti.

That combination of meetings was no provocation. I went to Rome to ask the first one. After that, I learned what I really did not know, but not because of the answer.