

Poetry & Not

Notes on the Political and Social Significance of Poetry Inside Modern Cities

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Abstract

This short essay will treat metric and free verse, with the awareness of the anachronistic quality of these topics. Notwithstanding, this is the purpose of this short essay which dares to start from the astral consideration of the meaning of poetry.

The first paragraph is dedicated to these perceptions, reverberating in the most archaic compositions and consisting in the primeval task of poetry: to bring the light of the stars, to drive the voice of the gods, to lead them to the comprehensibility of the human ear. Here we have the original identity between poetry, magic and priestly function.

The bond with the divine undergoes to a first fracture when it begins the anthropological evolution of the tribal communities: a ritual and institutional function is generated for poetry which is soon absorbed by a clergy understood as a priestly caste. The second paragraph highlights how the disagreement of some men of thought generates another category: the prophets, often opposed to official power but also with blurred and crossed boundary lines, both in the case of opposition and in that of contiguity, melted through by elements of fascination, that are always combined in the magical cup.

The third paragraph shows how the association with the magic component will be for the reactionary forces a tool easy to use, when they want to attack the parties opposed to institutional power and to ban them, or even eliminate them. The most obscure part of the Western Middle Age is imbued with these movements for compliance with the order, with consequent purge of those components that the established power considered to be foreign or hostile.

The progressive emergence of the Age of Enlightenment, of which the fourth paragraph outlines some logical lines, will generate a return to the ideal of emancipation and awareness as inner function of poetry. The disengagement from religious expectations

¹ The M Foundation (FondazioneM.com) is focused on this objective, aiming to generate exchange, relation, contact and link all around the world, creating events, meetings, happenings and publishing books, music and other items able to witness of this commitment, sharing it and spreading everywhere there is an hotbed of consciousness and emancipation.

becomes substantial, although laicization also involves sometimes a fatal trivialization of content, with which modern poetry must struggle. The most authentically progressive members want to see in poetry an instrument of social advancement, of promoting awareness, of emancipation of the masses, crossing ferments that go from the first Socialism² between the lines of early Alchemy³ and Rosy+Cross⁴ *Manifestos*⁵, just up to the elaborations of the anarchist and communist movements, even if soon everything was swallowed up by the arbitrary construction of infiltrations and lies.

The fifth paragraph tries to explain the courageous thesis that the two world wars of the twentieth century were caused, albeit not as a sole cause, by the choice to contain the workers' movement by sending restless youth to the slaughter of the trenches. Under the smoky ruins of Europe in those years, we try to capture the movement of anxiety that comes from the America of the blacks, incubating the musical ferment of blues and jazz, and identifying this root as emanating source for the '68 protest, before even these idealistic hopes were get lost among the pitfalls of the newspeak and the soft dictatorship.

Having reached this frontier of modernity, the sixth paragraph revisits retrospectively the invention of free verse and the successive folds (*calligrammes*, *technopaegnon*⁶, *arbitrary writings of avant-garde*⁷) that slowly, from an authentic expressive necessity, degraded towards unconscious arbitrariness of glamour, with its corollary of individualist atomization.

From this consideration, the concluding paragraphs arrive at the logical necessity of giving back to poetry a notion of form and of logical instruments that can distinguish it from unconscious arbitrary writing, aimed only at the vanity of those who exercise it.

It is only through this process of formal reintegration that the writer can be led back to the obligation to reread what he has written. For the publisher this should sound as a

² Speaking about "first Socialism" means referring to pre-marxist sources, when the idea of emancipation and awareness were embedded with mysticism. The American transcendentalist, like Emerson and Thoreau, are examples of this line.

³ With the term "Alchemy", Western literature uses to refer to a kind of books very difficult in their interpretation, often talking about special procedures of distillation, both on the physical and the symbolic plan.

⁴ Rosy+Cross is the name of a secret brotherhood that maybe never existed, but whose conception had several fruits in the whole world. The philosopher Descartes went around the whole Europe to meet someone of them, but he never found something in which was possible to believe.

⁵ The Rosicrucian Manifestos were published in 1616 in Germany. The documents were three: *Fama Fraternitatis*, *Confessio Fraternitatis* and *Chymischen Hochzeit* of Christian Rosenkreutz. It's not possible to state that they were of the same author, and the name of the one who published is controversial. Notwithstanding, the document immediately became famous all around Europe and generated the source of a literary genre: the Manifesto, that will be important in further century, both in the political and in the artistic field.

⁶ Technopaegnon is a way to embed words into a shape, like water into a bottle.

⁷ Avant-garde movements filled the XX century, before, during, in the middle of the world wars and even after. The main contents was a refusal of conventional rules of a world that was clashing in front of the contemporary observers. Therefore they moved a deep criticism over the standard routines, often subverting their meaning. Expressionism, Dadaism, Surrealism are the most famous, and each one adopted its own Manifesto.

moral imperative: not to stop his work to that of a printer. For the general public this should be able to recover the conditions for a social significance of the poem and, in this way, to amend and access the laically sacred function that is its own, which finally is finding non-obvious meanings, thus leading to untried and unheard-of thoughts, the only ones that can contribute to the development of the person and of society.

Through this way, coming back to its inner metric and structure, poetry may compose the partiture of an urban renovation movement, creating conditions for a modern interpretation of urban spaces as common goods, where the ineffable power of the poetical word can introduce a new perception of life into the cities.

*O Luce pura che custodisci la mia anima,
sia ringraziato ciascuno dei tuoi raggi dispersi
nelle tenebre dell'incomprensione che regna tra gli umani!
Fa' che noi uomini di desiderio restiamo immuni dal giudizio
di chi confonde la nostra attitudine a servire con debolezza e inanità.
Fa' che nell'animo di chi ci giudica con severità ed asprezza
si generi la comprensione che quella severità e quell'asprezza
non sono che lo sguardo intimo della coscienza
che traspone in noi le loro inadeguatezze:
e fa' che i nostri Fratelli e le nostre Sorelle
dispersi per il mondo
possano trovare
una sorgente di luce
che permetta loro
di conoscere e di elevarsi
fino alla sfera delle cause profonde.
Di fronte alle Sacre Luci vi giunga il nostro sincero saluto,
e privo di ogni conflittualità possa rivelarsi in ἐγρήγορος nel giorno della Luna Piena.*

Original identity between poetry, magic and priestly function

Aedo, Bardo, Vate: these are the ancient names attributed to the poet. And they all clearly show the connection between poetry, prophecy and magic.

From the beginning there was a poetry of institution, and a free poetry. The second being the one which often gave the warning to power. The *hymns* of the Sumerians, that were played during the celebration of the new year during the age of Babylon in the solemn form of the poem *Enuma Elish*⁸, are examples of a hieratic and institutional poetry. The same can be said of the *Mysteries* of Eleusis and of Delphi. In some ways,

⁸ Sometimes referred as The Seven Tablet of Creation, *Enuma Elish* is a Sumerian poem carved into stone in cuneiform writing. It was translated by Leonard Wolley and published in 1904 by the British Museum.

even the *Psalms* of the tradition of Israel: usually attributed entirely to King David, it is rarely noticed that they are instead composed of several authors - including Asaf, Korach - and that among them some are so remote that the legends even attribute them to Adam.

The tradition of Israel fully realizes the first and unending split between institutional and non-institutional poetry: the prophets expressing the strongest criticism of the constituted power of kings and priests. In this way, lost the hierophany⁹ from the innocent appearances of the ancient world, poetry conquers a political line.

It is evident in the eyes of those who can look between the lines of the history books, that an innocent world has never existed and can't exist ontologically. The phase in which the priest could be called a hierophant is necessarily tribal, and it concerns the unity of the function of the King and the Magician accompanying the anthropological evolution of the ancient tribes: then the problem of power emerges when the clergy take the role of mediation for the succession of Kings.

This theme will be dramatic in Israel, where the splits will be numerous and painful, and very often remain as current as they are misunderstood. I refer to the study that I have carried out on the priestly function of the word *Kohen*¹⁰, the reliefs that are more specific to those themes: here we will deal with that aspect of the priestly dimension that takes the forms of poetic narration.

The thesis that here points out is that the priestly function and the poetic language are necessarily anthropologically connected in origin. It is when we determine a gap between the priestly function of the regime and the priestly function of the prophets that the lines take on a divergent dimension.

Schism between Priests and Prophets

The emergence of religion as a socially conditioning power will lead to the sharpening of this divergence, until the laceration and the irreducibility of unity among the clergy as a function of constituted power and prophets.

In Israel this dichotomy was always felt, especially since the division of the Kingdom, especially with Isaiah's prophecies. This fracture will become extremely significant

⁹ Hierophany is the ancient term to indicate the role of the manifestation or the spirit in the world.

¹⁰ Kohen is the Hebrew term for the Greek "Hierophant", being the person charged to creating conditions for the manifestation of the spirit. This would have been later become the Priest.

with the split of Menahem (later to be called *Essene*¹¹), which occurred during the third-second century BC, because it would give rise to a cabalistic flowering (successor of Menahem was Nehunya, who is considered the author of the *Sepher Bahir*¹²) and to the tradition that would have given body to Yahya called "The Baptist" and to Jesus himself.

The prophetic, and therefore poetic, power of these schismatic components will be reabsorbed by the dominant powers with the dual mantle and the two spades of kingdom and religion: this can be referred both to Judaism and later to Catholicism, when it became established as a religion of the Roman Empire.

It is not by chance that a final jolt of the prophetic and poetic function will take place with the ascendant phase of Islam when - also through the *oud*, instrument from which the lute and the guitar will derive - it began, through Spain and Provence, that poetic movement of the *troubadours*¹³, from which would have generated the Romance languages.

It is above all from this historical phase that poetry takes consistency in a way independent from the religious dimension, distancing itself even from the prophetic line. After all, there had always been a non spiritual component of poetry, often attracted by the voluptuousness of the senses. However, the classical world overcame this antinomy with a single leap, because the awareness of the magical dimension allows to give even to the most material expressions the shining aura of something that can't be relegated to the objectivity of things.

The poem will therefore remain a long magic, assuming distinct characters and surviving in the ravines, because the transformation of the religious phenomenon will lead to intolerant fanaticism.

Poetry and Magic

No longer absorbed by the hierophant's function as shaped in archaic times and not reducible to the further prophetic imagery, unresolvable in the spiritual function, so poetry will be one thing with magic for a long time, both when it survives in the aristocratic courts and when it shines on the streets through the troubadour's songs.

¹¹ Essenes were the people of the community retired from the city of Jerusalem in the time of Herod and the hegemony of Sadducees and Pharisees. They take refuge in the wilderness near the Dead Sea. When the library of the desert was discovered in the neighbors of the Qumran small river, it has been recognized that they were a community very important in their time and the main part of the studies confirms it's here that Jesus Christ began his human parable. Essene is sometime said in Greek sources "therapeutics", make evidence of their knowledge of medicine. The Hebrew word from which Essenes came seems to be Chesed, the sphere of the Tree of Knowledge symbolizing the quality of "Mercy".

¹² Sepher Bahir is an important book of the Hebrew mystic tradition of the Holy Qabbalah.

¹³ It must be noted and underlined the connection of the influences between the translation school of the Alhambra and Toledo and the beginning of the modern poetry spoken by troubadours, as the early source of contemporary languages.

The forms that had been of classical antiquity - dithyrambs, hexameters, Alexandrian verses - will be joined by new metric structures, more suited to the spirit of the times, such as madrigals, songs, sonnets.

During the Middle Age and until the Renaissance, power is represented by the two eagles: the power of the Emperor and the power of the Church. There is no more escape for the poets: and the effects is given by the fight against witches, and the burning of heretics. Already with the making of religion of the Empire, Christianity had led to the destruction of the Library of Alexandria¹⁴ and the suppression of the Olympic Games. All the books dealing with astronomy were the special target of the flaming intolerance of the unique power of the two swords.

In the dark ages, the uncertain light has been coming through the Umayyads¹⁵, penetrating into Spain, to bring back that conscience that since the unification of religion and empire, it was been removed in Europe: even considered lost, the books of astronomy survived in Arabic translations. So the Alhambra became a center of full ferment for translations and the spread of knowledge.

The troubadours were the popular effect of this bubbling, which was soon stemmed by harsh measures: the expulsion of Jews and Arabs from Spain, the persecution of Cathars, Waldensians and Albigensians¹⁶ in the whole Europe. All power was against the wishful thought of poetry. And the most appropriate word for refusing it was to accuse it of magic.

In the dark, if the flame can't be seen, you can be sure that it hatches in the embers: because poetry is an inextinguishable force.

The legacy was collected and transmitted through the hermetic compositions of the alchemists, often in search of early Christianity as opposed to the power of Rome, and from which the historical expressions of the Reformation and the Enlightenment will derive.

¹⁴ There's no a common agreement among historicists about when the Alexandria's library was destroyed. This seems to have been happened several times, from the burning by Julius Caesar in 48 B.C. since the destruction by Caliph Omar in 642. Notwithstanding, a central phases of the decline seems to have been the insurgence of Catholicism as religion of the Roman empire. In those years take place the legend of Hypathia, the woman that was the daughter of the mathematician Theon, who inherited the direction of the library by her father. She was killed by the intolerant Church in 392. Four years later, Olympic games were suppressed.

¹⁵ After the death of Muhammad, the Umayyads continued the Muslim conquests, incorporating the Maghreb and the Iberian Peninsula, that they called Al-Andalus.

¹⁶ Cathars, Waldesians and Albigensians are Christian communities which have the common root into the search for a Christianity of the origins. With this ideal, they don't agree with the representation of God in human shape, therefore their Churches are aniconic (without images).

Anarchy, Reason and Deception

The English (1688) and French (1789) revolutions illusions the idealists that finally a new Age of Reason would begin, in which humanity would finally emerge from the minority phase, to enter in full consciousness.

This wonderful idea produced heroic enthusiasm, reverberating in the exploits of poets like Lord Byron, Ugo Foscolo and all those who believed in the next liberation from every form of oppression.

Poetry, especially poetry, it was a vehicle for the diffusion of these ideas that ignited the hearts of the young generations of that era. The *Sun of the Future* appeared; a system of gestures and signs was conceived to unite workers all over the world.

At that time, anarchy was a mystical doctrine, whose functioning was explained only at the height of an initiation path of improvement. It was explained to the person responsible for the slow and constant acquisition of the necessary degrees that the anarchist is the perfect man, who does not need anyone to tell him what his duty is. It was also explained that no man can be so perfect as to be an anarchist, and that this function must be moved to the superindividual composition of the State: not of the Monarchy, still too tied to the subjectivity of the King; but of the Republic.

In the Universal System of the Republics conceived by these idealists, the superindividual dimension of each Republic is *superiorem non recognoscens*¹⁷, devoid of any possible superior authority. What can not happen for the individual man, that is the full understanding of his duty, could have happened for the aggregated communities, so that the International Community of the Republics could have been authentically anarchic, that is, *an-archos*, without a chief, because it is based on rules of free agreement between peers and for the common good.

The Industrial revolution, with the increasing mechanization of heavy labor, seemed to be able to support this change. In the cinema, the great fresco depicted by Fritz Lang with *Metropolis* (1925) tells these hopes effectively, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

The great landowners, the industrialists feared that the First International¹⁸, which at that time was only one thing with the anarchist movement, could reach the

¹⁷ *Superiorem non recognoscens*, which doesn't recognize a hierarchically superior entity. This idea has to be referred to national bodies. It was conceived as the perfect fruit of the Enlightenment, the direction towards a world government where each national body would have been *inter pares*, without superiors.

¹⁸ IWA, the International Workingmen's Association, is often simply called the First International. Founded in London, association lived during 1864–1876, gathering trade unions, socialist, communist and anarchist groups. The first congress was held in 1866 in Geneva, and immediately, notwithstanding the presence of other thesis and approaches, including the Mazzini's strategy of gradual education, close to the transcendentalist socialism, the hegemonic position became the materialist doctrine of Marx.

expropriation of the means of production, as the first utopian socialism had already theorized.

The first Russian revolution (1905) showed that this possibility was not so remote, and fear grew in Europe, to the point that the wealthy landowners believe that sending the people to the slaughter of a huge war was the right solution to preserve the balance .

It would be scientifically weak to support the mono-causal of extremely complex phenomena like two world wars, but it would be equally foolish to underestimate these considerations, especially if we consider the historicist orientation that allows the reading of Nazism and Fascism as instruments of infiltration into union movements: and it is in this same phase that anarchy ceases to be an initiatory doctrine to be revealed at the height of a gradual process to become another thing, to be given soon and without veils to all, and that is a terrorist system through which "spoil" the workers' initiatives.

Blues, jazz, post-war dream and the nightmare of lost words

The theme of emancipation, which in the wake of the passage between '800 and' 900 had assumed the magnificent forms of *belle époque*, *liberty*, *jugendstil*, *art nouveau* and all those components artists who wanted to free themselves from the iconography of conventional power and religious power, was severely depressed by two world wars.

Despite this, an invisible thread had continued to travel modernity. The songs of blacks in slavery in the cotton plantations had become the blues, the so-called music of the infamous places. It started from the prohibition of the drum: its witness is the invention of banjo, a drum transformed in a guitar, to avoid the prohibition. Soon, the blacks became excellent guitarists and musicians so that, transplanted in New York and made usable to the bourgeois taste, they turned *blues* into *jazz*. The invention of the phonograph made those words and notes a new international and inspirational deal.

The post-war era was the apotheosis of the electric guitar. Having come to England through the American records, the blues - that in the US was now not too pleasant a memory - flourished again in London and it was rejuvenated coming back to America. The *Free Speech Movement* of the University of Berkeley and May '68 in Paris are ferments inexplicable without making reference to their entwining with electric guitars.

At the beginning it was not the psychedelic revolution yet, but rather the dry power of the acoustic guitar played like as in the blues, with the difference to be no more made with elusive text and hidden meaning but explicitly addressed to political *engagement*, with description of social injustices in the lyrics.

It is hard to say how the spread of drugs has been a spontaneous phenomenon and how much has not been cultivated by the power itself to repress student protests. It is not so much what Timothy Leary said in *The politic of ecstasy* but rather what Aldous Huxley explained in *Brave New World Revisited*. In a controversy with George Orwell, who accused of having copied from his ideas without even understanding them, Huxley argued that a dictatorship in the manner of Hitler or Mussolini (and as Orwell tended to represent in his *1984*) was starting to be useless, because the new model, the soft dictatorship, assumed new instruments of abuse, including “chemically induced happiness” and, above all, “indebtedness”.

The utopia of poetry clashes with the reality of power. And it breaks.

Genealogy of verses

In this contemporary world, where everyone writes and no one reads, let alone poetry, it is perhaps necessary, if not obligatory, to bring back to the conscience that poetry, to be poetry, is not obtained by writing broken phrases and the gesture to going head here and there. It must have its techniques. Otherwise it is not.

The inventor of the free verse began by writing hexameters in Latin. What was justified when Arthur Rimbaud courageously wrote «*Il faut être absolument moderne*» today is nothing but a reversed and inconsistent meaning, which no longer has the legitimacy of modernity or even the avant-garde (Tristan Tzara wrote, in the *Dada Manifesto*, something similar to “take a newspaper, take a sack, take scissors, cut the words of the newspaper, put them in the sack, act well: extract them one by one. This is poetry.”

Stéphane Mallarmé already knew that «*Un coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard*», that an arbitrary shot of dice can’t abolish the case. We will see other tragedies, such as the verse by Giuseppe Ungaretti, the precariousness of life in the trench, compared to the winter leaves and vertically from the words of a broken verse, today all this is not valid: the poor attempt is to take poetry to itself, subject it to individual caprice to bear the title of poet, independently from the fact that at least the structure of a sonnet should be known.

The hasty modernity of a language made on TV, overcoming the dialectal barriers and remaining open to the borders of orthography and barbarisms inappropriately, it makes legitimating for everyone to talk about what he does not know. So, we are now full of writers who write things that the same author has already forgotten and doesn’t love to read one more time. One should ask *why*, but one does not even reach the act of conscience that would trigger this question, which remains buried under the desire to appear what one is not.

Praise of the metric in poetry, also in the form of a rose

The effort is at least to ask forgiveness for this arrogance of making us «poets», legitimating not our sayings or writings, but at least giving importance to form and content: that can have minimum merit to resemble poetry.

Already Carducci recalled Foscolo and the poetic tradition that wanted to free himself from the ancient rules: and he spoke about barbarian verse, to emphasize a certain freedom of form with respect to the rules of Greeks, received through Alexandrian mediation.

Creating a new metric, a system of rules more adapted to the times, this is certainly a legitimate aspiration and a creative potential that innovates in the wake of tradition.

Even the composition of words in an evocative form, may be a modality that poetry, in measure indifferent to the conventional meter of the verses, has codified, giving it the name of *Technopaegnum*, from the title of a poem of Decimo Magno Ausonio. This term refers to the figured charms that came into use with the Alexandrian age, imitating the shape of certain objects: famous, in modernity, the compositions of Guillaume Apollinaire collected under the title of *Calligrammes* and, in Italian literature, the Futurist adventures but, above all others, the *Poetry in the form of a Rose* by Pier Paolo Pasolini.

What we mean is that, finding ourselves with at least six thousand years of history behind us, everything has already been done. We can only reinvent: and this is done knowing, and not pursuing a spontaneity that does not lead.

The poetic act, being the creative act *par excellence*, needs to ask for forgiveness: because it demands attention. The only reason why that forgiveness can be considered merited is that the act that calls attention has been brought to completion. We must think before talking. Even more before writing, where thought can be seen in a mirror. Written word should be the mirror of thought. But when we read what we wrote, often we are needed to emend what is fixed in the page, as far as this do not have the meaning we supposed to impress. Through this way, the art of writing take the inner meaning of a work into inner consciousness. This is an idea full of noblesse; but in contemporary time there are too many writers who ask to be read while they themselves have not the patience to read what they wrote.

No one may deny that even writing may be the expression of instinct. The exaltation of spontaneous flux of consciousness has been an important part of some *avant-garde* movement, especially according to the way they were imported and transformed in America, mixing it with music influence of blues and jazz. Notwithstanding, it's not the instinctual side that should be magnified, but the superior instances coming

from the sublimation of spontaneous pulse toward the spiritualized, and abstracted, manifestation, as Kandinskij in painture and Shostakovich in thematized music.

A philosopher like Louis Claude De Saint-Martin should have state that the sublime in poetry is the dignity of the description of a miserable state whose transcendence is proposed: a pure moment of freedom. Kant defined the Art «*Kunst als eine Aktivität des Geistes*», activity of the spirit, pure trace of the spiritual life of the human race.

It is of this kind of poetry that one intends to speak. This, and nothing else. Not the will to represent the ego: but a movement of the spirit that has as its external projection the social act of writing, the sincere expression of the human need to be heard.

The risk of the word is to betray his spirit. To be used against those who pronounced it, and with a meaning that in no way remembers the intention.

The argument of the metric will be easily dismissed by superficial spirits as an orientation contrary to freedom and modernity.

A crocodile for the avant-garde

It has been too many years since the Dadaist provocation to consecrate poetry cropped words, put in a bag and extracted according to chance, or the *cut-up* of Brion Gysin and William Burroughs: it was revolutionary when it appeared. Today it does not mean anything if those who do not even know about these precursors.

The art of artists who know nothing: an art that is possible for everyone, arbitrary and without rules. This was the invincible weapon through which the constituted power knew how to defuse any revolutionary value. The difference is blurred into an art with no meaning given to all, with its models of commercial success, while there is an art of the jet-set, consecrated with the unchallengeable power of money.

This is why, paradoxically, reintroducing the metric into poetry becomes a revolutionary and absolutely modern, indispensable, necessary act: because it distinguishes the art of those who make a journey of research and knowledge from the art of those who know nothing and want only to satisfy their own vanity .

By saying metric, we do not invoke a perfect metric, which would be anachronistic, but a modern form of shape, which is conscious in the Author. A *barbaric* variant of the classic meter, as Foscolo already said and as Carducci would have said after him.

Without an awareness of the extent of the verse, without awareness of what a blank verse is, without the presence or at least the presentiment of a metric form, without ever having written a sonnet or an ode, it is difficult to be able to credit oneself, one's own compositions, a legitimate status of poetry. To avoid the rules of a system, you

need to know the rules. Those who do not need schemes are those who know an infinite number of schemes.

Out of this condition, poetry can still exist, but on condition that it accepts the residual category of the naïf. To innovate, history teaches that it is necessary not only to break the rules of the established order, but to create new and more effective ones.

It is no coincidence that the sonnet, one of the most admirable metric forms of European poetry - in which Shakespeare, Rilke, Pessoa wrote, just to give some examples - was born from the Provençal and troubadour poetry, whose purpose was to escape to the dominion of the Latin, now dead language and flourish in the shadow of the illuminated courts of the ducts of Europe, as happened with Jacopo da Lentini, the golden exponent of the *Scola Siciliana* of the thirteenth century from which, as Dante writes in *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, to derive all that the Italian language conceives in poetry. And it is also known how the passage from a dying language to one that is born is an epochal passage that finally allows to welcome what would have been considered heresy (you can test this idea in a troubadour's book like *Marcabru and the sacred sources of lyric romance*).

It is no coincidence that the most unregulated literature *beat* has its ancestry in that vanguard American *vortex* that, stirring all the languages and all the alphabets in search of their origins, right in the troubadour's poetry of Daniel Arnaut, Marcabru or Jaufré Rudel rediscovered his archetypes and its most consonant forms (*coblas*, which we will later call rooms, *stanza*) with the deep legacy of Ezra Pound from America who came to Europe to become a *better smith*, as he would have said TS Eliot in a dedication that everything explains, because it turns to Pound recalling the XXVI Song of Purgatory, where Dante calls Daniel Arnaut *best smith, miglior fabbro*.

Nor should this critical reading be confused with an apology of the empty form: on the contrary. One simply wants to affirm an ethical principle, which is that of not deceiving and not deceiving.

In this light, the outcome is clear: the presence within a poetic composition of metrically accomplished forms is an index of awareness of the instrument used.

The meter as the writer's need to amend and find meaning, and city's inner life

A human truth imposes itself: the writer who does not re-read himself is not a writer but only a vainglorious exhibitionist.

Only those who have experience of reading fatigue can know the craft of writing, which is analysis of conscience, the need to know their mistakes: from simple lapsus, rebus and typos, to the limits of style.

It is a path that transforms the instinctive phrase into a structured verse, the narrow door that leads to the understanding of the aesthetic mystery of the renunciation of the waste of useless articles, prepositions, repetitions of words. And it is precisely here, in the humble act of re-reading and amending itself, that the metric reveals its initiatory operativity.

No fury on the form. Moreover, the moderns do not teach otherwise: the Alexandrian verses of Charles Baudelaire, for example, never close in a regular double septenary but form mixtures of verses where the septenary is accompanied by another verse. Or as in *Le Odi Barbare*, where the classical meter is always imitated but, intentionally, without ever wanting to reach the scheme of the past, kept at a distance as a trend model, an asymptote. Or the 7 compositions where the rhyme replaces the assonance or consonance, where the scheme, as far as known, is elegantly deserted, where the degrees of freedom are always measurable and measure the spectrum, the ghosts, the spirits of art, the words already heard, the letters that are recomposed by spells to form new ones. If form is not the substance of poetry, it is nevertheless its aesthetics. Even when defining it is not the metric but the spatial configuration, as in the *technopaegnon* of Dylan Thomas or the *Poetry in the form of a rose* by Pier Paolo Pasolini, where the words are arranged to form hourglasses, rhombuses or crosses, to rediscover the origins still once hidden in the *Stil Novo*¹⁹ and the novels of the rose, finding in the *Hypnerotomachia*²⁰ the apotheosis of the printed book, the triumph of the Venetian school of Aldo Manuzio on the mechanical hegemony of the Gutenberg epigones.

If we come to the transformational power of poetry and art over the requalification of the city, we should be able to recognize how the meaning we give to words - and even to geographical areas like quarters and streets - this got a inner strength, which holds the key conditions to regenerate the urban context and giving meaning to new issues and strategies.

Then, we should consider the options of social, cultural and anthropological sustainability, which also introduce a critical analysis of the effects of globalization pushed by capitalism on the local territories.

Introducing a comparative dimension through by urban development experiences that have been successful in other European cities, this may provide a new perspective to visualize the border between integrated and degraded areas, identifying that

¹⁹ Dolce Stil Novo, "sweet new style", is the name given to the most important literary movement of the 13th century in Italy, that was influenced by troubadours of the tongues d'Oc and d'Oeil, with impressive impact on the Sicilian School at the court of Frederik Hohenstaufen, in Tuscan poetry and, later, in the Medicean "Accademia Platonica Fiorentina".

²⁰ Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, first published in 1499 in Venice, is a romance said to be by Francesco Colonna. Translated in English as Poliphilo's Strife of Love in a Dream or simply The Dream of Poliphilus, it is the most famous example of an incunable, a work of early printing.

*interzone*²¹ - to express the concept through avant-garde cinema. These areas, if sustained in their internal reintegration dynamic, have the maximum potential to operate the reconstructions of the degraded spaces to the integrated city, moving by imitation and contamination to other areas when the outcome was obtained on an area.

The iconic dimensions hold by each city tends to generate an image in the national and European landscape: the ways in which these icons are shaped by language got the opportunity to become vector able to contribute to a conception of the territory that looks to the parties shared, therefore, to common goods, as the main vehicle for sustainable development in a structural, economic, social and cultural meaning.

In an age like the present, a new *koiné*²² is emerging through the definition of a new *lingua franca*, the overbearing language of the internet and social networks, invisibly similar to the thirteenth century Provençal for syntactic ease and grammatical boldness.

Here the metric - surprise in the scandalous covenant of its most intimate links with the archetypes of the collective unconscious - returns forcefully to define the threshold of difference between what is poetry and what is not, between what remains as *scripta manent*, and what can only be forgotten, because his own Author does not remember.

*O Pure light that guards my soul, be thankful of each of your scattered rays
in the darkness of the incomprehension that reigns among humans!*

*Make us men of desire remain immune from judgment by people
who confuses our attitude to serve with weakness and inanity.*

*Do that in the soul of those who judge us with severity and harshness
the understanding that that severity and harshness is generated*

*from the intimate gaze of conscience
that transposes in us their inadequacies:*

*and let our Brothers and our Sisters do
dispersed throughout the world*

*they can find
a source of light
that allows them
to know and rise*

to the sphere of profound causes.

*In front of the Sacred Lights, our sincere greeting comes to you,
and devoid of any conflict it may be revealed in the ἑπρήγορος on the day of the Full Moon.*

²¹ Interzone is a concept invented by writer William Burroughs, meaning a middle in between of several things, an area of contamination, a melting pot.

²² The Greek term *koiné*, in reason of its inner meaning, demonstrates that the pulse for an universal and inclusive language has always been in the earth of man. Our present contribution, even in the strengthness of internal mistakes, it could be a demonstration of the counterculture that form 1968 passes into the fluid dynamic of XXI centuries, with terabytes of digital documents that are reshaping our way to consider literature, lettres, email and even poetry inside.

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