

Edited by Umberto Mondini

# WOMEN WHO MADE HISTORY



Edizioni Progetto Cultura

*Quaderni di Ricerca*  
Collana diretta da  
**Scaria Thuruthiyil**  
**e Umberto Mondini**



Edizioni Progetto Cultura



# **WOMEN WHO MADE HISTORY**

Edited by Umberto Mondini



## INTRODUCTION

*by Umberto Mondini*

In tribal communities the roles of the sexes are very well defined: men are expected to perform certain duties and women others. Neither of the two sexes are permitted to step outside these roles and doing so is condemned by strict taboos. Both are prohibited by sacred laws from carrying out certain tasks that fall to the opposite sex; it is also against the rules to use certain objects which have specific sexual connotations. Among hunter-gatherers, it is absolutely forbidden for a woman to touch the bow or arrows of the hunter, as it is prohibited for any man to touch or use a basket, a typically female utensil used for harvesting. Since both roles are fundamental to the survival of the community, it may be said that sexual equality is achieved. While the man goes hunting in the forest, a place forbidden to a woman, she will dedicate herself to the care and harvest of the produce from the homestead, an area taken from the forest (nature) by man, a fenced off area transformed into a cultural space, a village. Culture has often been used as a way of marking territory as belonging to humans, to distinguish the human as a being apart from the rest of the animal world and nature in general. A presupposition of this 'fencing' operation by humanity is the thesis of the exclusive coexistence of humanity and culture. Humans are the only inventors, creators or beneficiaries of culture and it is this image which emerges from this thesis, the significance of which is to claim for humanity a unique and singular role, incomparable to any other animal.

This tribal equality is not found, however, in the so-called 'superior' civilizations, neither in the West nor the East. The position of women has generally been under masculine au-

thority and in many cases, she passes from the protection of the father to that of the husband. In Ancient Greece, women were always a level below the men, even though females had a fundamental role within the confines of the home, since men spent most of the day out and about. The principal household activities of women from the higher classes were weaving, organising the slaves and bringing up the children. If they were from a humble background, they would also be responsible for taking care of the home and cooking. Women rarely ventured out, only on feast days, and they were always well covered with cloaks and shawls. In the world of Ancient Rome, women had much more freedom to circulate than in Greece; they could go to the theatre or the circus and attend festivities. A woman's role in society was limited, however, she could play no part in political life, but was expected to take care of the home and the family. A classic epitaph on the tomb of a matron would read: 'domi mansit, lanam fecit' (she stayed at home and spun wool). With regards matrimony, girls were married off very young, from between twelve and fourteen years of age, and the husband was chosen by the father. This situation, matrimony at such a young age, still exists in certain parts of the world, the so-called 'child brides.'

In the Germanic populations, women had no role in society: they counted for practically nothing and all decisions were made by the men. In Hun society, on the other hand, the position of women was re-evaluated, they came to be respected as elders and those who did not treat them with respect were punished. Hun women managed the family assets and were competent on horseback. In ancient Chinese society, women depended on men and spent their entire lives in obedience. Women were eternal minors with no legal rights, over whom the men always exerted the role of tutor. A woman had no right to training or education, she was confined to the home and domestic duties. At 15 years old her hair was 'pinned up'

and she would be married by the age of 20; it was the father's job to find a suitable husband, with the help of an intermediary. In the most ancient Indian culture, women were honoured and held an important place in the family and in society, indeed the names of wise women can be found in sacred texts from the Vedic period. At that time, love between the sexes was experienced with freedom and joy. It was only during the first centuries of the modern era that the caste system became more rigid and the increased control of the family brought about a gradual worsening of conditions for females. Polygamy surfaced, women were banned from re-marrying after the death of their husbands, and the custom of arranged child marriages was established (being moved so early into the husband's home meant women lost the right to an education). Later, the advent of Islamic culture in the Moghul Empire brought with it a further accentuation of the inferiority of women in the family. Female children were, in the end, seen as a useless burden, not much good for work in the fields and in need of a dowry upon marriage. In order to provide this dowry, a prestigious social symbol, many families would get heavily into debt and as a result, female infanticide became more widespread.

In Medieval times the role of women didn't undergo too many changes and, in both Christian and Muslim society, women remained under the rule of men. In both cultures, women were expected to take care of domestic matters, while the men took control of affairs outside the home. In the Islamic world, even within the home, male quarters are separate from the female and women only encounter men from their own family. For poor women, who are forced to work outside the home, this separation from the masculine world is not quite so clear cut. This type of segregation is not found in Christian culture, although, depending on the social class a woman belonged to, women were expected to conform to certain rules and, if



they were wealthy, could not go out alone except to attend church. In Christian Europe, if the women were expected to work, paradoxically they had more freedom. In the Western world, from the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, women began to make themselves heard. In mid-eighteenth century, certain philosophers were already beginning to say that men could not bear women to be above them and for that reason they kept them in submission. Between the First and Second World Wars, women in Europe began to work outside the home because their husbands and sons were called to arms to defend the country. In the past, some scholars proposed that Islamic law was the most advanced with regards to female emancipation, although now, unfortunately, conditions for women in Islamic countries are problematic. Some Muslim women have gained access to high office in government, but in general women must still submit to the authority of father, brother, husband, and are still regarded as a demonic temptation by the faithful, their bodies being a 'cause of shame' that should therefore be covered.

Despite all this, history has given us female characters that have in some way changed the world: from Queen Saba or Hypatia, to Deborah and Salome.

There is a saying which goes: "behind every great man there is a great woman". This collection includes many women, some famous, others less so, who have made history without standing behind any man.

## LA DONNA SUDARABICA ATTRAVERSO LA CULTURA MATERIALE E LE ARTI FIGURATIVE

*Sabina Antonini*  
(Monumenta Orientalia, Roma)

L'argomento di questo mio breve contributo riguarda l'immagine della donna sudarabica, ossia dello Yemen di epoca pre-islamica, che gli autori classici chiamavano *Arabia Felix* (Fig. 1).

A parlare implicitamente di questo mondo è la cultura materiale, cioè i corredi funerari, i ritrovamenti nei contesti domestici e, soprattutto, le arti figurative. Proprio queste ultime concorrono ad offrire un quadro abbastanza esauriente sulla figura femminile, dall'inizio del I millennio a.C. fino ai primi secoli dell'era volgare. Non esiste, infatti, alcuna fonte letteraria a riguardo, e per quanto concerne la documentazione epigrafica, solo una piccola percentuale, circa il 10%, fa riferimento al ruolo della donna nella società sudarabica.

A parte la funzione di sacerdotessa nei luoghi di culto, la donna sudarabica non risulta esercitare altri ruoli pubblici. Essa poteva avere una indipendenza economica, come attestano alcune iscrizioni che fanno riferimento alla costruzione di edifici da parte di donne che potevano disporre di un loro patrimonio, indipendentemente dal marito o dalla famiglia di origine. Altre epigrafi, inoltre, testimoniano il sistema matrilineare della discendenza accanto a quello patrilineare più diffuso (Robin, 2018).

I dati epigrafici che ci informano sul mondo umano corrispondono a quelli che riguardano il mondo divino. Sebbene il pantheon sudarabico menzioni diverse dee, la sola divinità femminile con una certa importanza nelle iscrizioni è dhat-Himyâm, e la sola raffigurazione certa di una divinità sudarabica è probabilmente la dea alata Shams (Antonini de Maigret, 2014).

Gli epiteti ‘Madre di Athtar’, ‘Madre delle dee’, oltre a ‘Figlie di il, ‘Figlie di Hawbas’, alludono a un mito teogonico che ci è oscuro, ma che in un certo senso richiama un’origine matriarcale della civiltà. Quest’ultimo aspetto si ricava soprattutto nelle statuette dell’età del Bronzo yemenita (III millennio a.C.), in cui le donne sono caratterizzate da ampie forme, raffigurate in tutta la loro rotondità e abbondanza, che mettono in risalto fertilità e femminilità, insomma una sorta di Grande Madre.

In epoca storica della prima metà del I millennio a.C., abbiamo le statuette femminili cosiddette ‘antenate’, che rappresentano una donna seduta, in posizione ieratica, interpretata come una sorta di *lare*, l’antenata, appunto, lo spirito protettore del focolare, della famiglia e della casa, e come tale essere oggetto di culto domestico (Fig. 2).

Nei più antichi monumenti religiosi yemeniti (IX-VII secolo a.C.), i templi cosiddetti delle Banât ‘Âd (‘le figlie di ‘Âd), la donna viene raffigurata nelle funzioni relative ai rituali religiosi; non sappiamo che ruolo svolgesse: probabilmente impegnata attivamente come sacerdotessa al servizio del tempio, oppure intermediaria tra gli dei e gli uomini. In epoca così remota, la donna ha comunque un certo ruolo sociale accanto all’uomo, il quale, nel medesimo contesto, viene rappresentato in processione religiosa, seduto su un trono in posizione ieratica e impegnato nella caccia sacra. In questi templi la donna viene raffigurata stante su un podio (Fig. 3), o danzante, vestita di una lunga e abbondante veste, coperta da un ampio mantello e dotata di strumenti/attributi, un mazzo di spighe di grano, un’asta, un bastone ricurvo, quest’ultimo simbolo regale e divino.

I capelli sono sciolti, lunghi sino alla base del collo o spioventi e mossi sulle spalle (Fig. 4). Queste sono le Banât il, le figlie di il, semidee, le stesse invocate principalmente da donne, mogli e madri, le cui dediche sono scolpite su alcune statuette femminili qatabanite<sup>1</sup>.

In uno dei sei pannelli del portale del tempio dedicato al dio Aranyada<sup>1</sup> a al-Sawdâ/ *Nashshân* (Jawf yemenita) sono scolpite due figure maschili sedute una di fronte all'altra (Fig. 5). A destra è Almaqah, il dio patrono del popolo sabeo, identificato sia dal nome scolpito, sia dal suo simbolo, una sorta di bastone ricurvo che impugna con la mano sinistra (Antonini de Maigret, 2018, p. 79, Fig. 3). Ai suoi piedi è seduta una figura femminile con un infante in braccio. Questa è l'unica rappresentazione in epoca così lontana di una madre con bambino, il quale potrebbe essere inteso come il re divinizzato del Regno di Saba<sup>2</sup>, figlio del dio Almaqah. L'immagine sudarabica più recente di una madre con bambino in fasce tra le braccia è rappresentata in alcune opere in pietra o terracotta (II sec. a.C. - II sec. d.C.)<sup>3</sup>, e sono probabilmente ex voto dedicati da donne a divinità protettrici della fertilità (Fig. 6).

La documentazione iconografica sulla donna si arricchisce soprattutto nel periodo ellenistico e romano, quando anche in questa parte lontana della Penisola arabica arrivarono le influenze del mondo mediterraneo. Queste nuove mode determinarono un notevole sviluppo del commercio di prodotti di lusso connesso alle nuove esigenze dell'aristocrazia sudarabica.

Con il commercio, via deserto prima e via mare poi, è naturale che oltre agli scambi materiali ci fossero anche quelli di carattere culturale e di costume. Alcuni commercianti minei<sup>4</sup> avevano sposato donne straniere che portarono in patria e presentarono al tempio, e quindi alla comunità, per legalizzare la loro unione. Queste donne erano di Gaza, Sidone, Ammon, Egitto, Dedân, Yathrib, ecc., tutte località dove giungevano le direttrici carovaniere, di cui i Minei avevano il monopolio commerciale, e senza dubbio località maggiormente esposte alle influenze mediterranee.

Come riferisce lo scrittore anonimo del *Periplo del Mare Eritreo*<sup>5</sup>, per l'aristocrazia himyarita<sup>6</sup> e hadramita<sup>7</sup> venivano importati dall'Egitto "... stoffe purpuree, di qualità raffinata e ordinaria; abiti arabi con maniche, con o senza ornamenti comuni o a quadri o intrecciati con fili d'oro; zafferano; cyperus (falso papiro); stoffe;

mantelli; coperte, in numero limitato, senza ornamenti e con ornamenti locali tradizionali; cinture con strisce dorate ... Al re e al governatore vengono donati ... abiti costosi (paragr. 24)<sup>8</sup>. Vestiti arabi, con ornamenti comuni o senza ornamenti o tessuti stampati, in quantità piuttosto grandi; ... Inoltre, per il re ... stoffe di alta qualità senza ornamenti ...” (paragr. 28)<sup>9</sup>.

Dalla descrizione dettagliata che ne fa l'autore del *Periplo*, crediamo che questi tessuti non fossero soltanto di fabbricazione egiziana, ma che l'Egitto fosse un punto di supporto per lo sbarco delle navi che provenivano dai famosi centri di produzione tessile di lana e di lino dell'Asia Minore. Laodikeia, per esempio, era uno dei più importanti centri specializzati nella fabbricazione di tessuti con lunga tradizione, sia per qualità, sia per quantità, sia per varietà. Le stoffe, che venivano prodotte non solo per la distribuzione locale, ma anche per l'esportazione, variavano dalle più semplici a quelle più elaborate e costose, raffinate e di lusso, di porpora e con fili dorati<sup>10</sup>.

Il vero cambiamento nell'iconografia sudarabica femminile avviene nell'acconciatura. Nella scultura a tutto tondo le acconciature possono essere scolpite nella pietra, oppure applicate sul capo come parrucche, modellate nel gesso e dipinte. Alcune pettinature seguono l'antica tradizione, cioè i capelli sono tenuti corti sulle spalle. I capelli lunghi, al contrario, sono pettinati in diverse fogge: sciolti, raccolti in una o due trecce, oppure raccolti in una lunga crocchia verticale (Fig. 7).

Influenzata dalla moda greco-romana, la donna sudarabica, intorno al I sec. d.C. si fa rappresentare con una pettinatura classicheggiante: una scriminatura centrale divide la massa di capelli in due bande morbidamente mosse da onde parallele annodate sulla nuca. In alcuni casi, compaiono due boccoli lungo il collo ai lati del viso e sulla testa un diadema, secondo la moda tolemaica.

Sin dalle più antiche manifestazioni artistiche sudarabiche, le figure femminili mostrano l'uso di gioielli sia applicati nei fori in

corrispondenza dei lobi, del naso, dei gomiti e delle caviglie, dove spesso sono conservati anellini in bronzo, sia scolpiti a rilievo. Per quanto riguarda i gioielli indossati dalle donne sudarabiche in epoca più tarda, essi sono testimoniati naturalmente dai corredi funerari; ma una ricca e autentica documentazione è fornita dalla statuaria, dove spesso i personaggi commemorati appaiono con i gioielli in tutto il loro splendore scolpiti e/o applicati (Fig. 8). Le statue mostrano l'uso di collane, scolpite a rilievo, molto elaborate, pettorali e fasce con pendenti per la testa. Gli ornamenti in oro e argento comprendevano grani di collane finemente lavorati, orecchini, anelli, pendenti e bracciali di fogge diverse (Fig. 9). Il gusto per la policromia era soddisfatto sì con l'utilizzo delle pietre dure, ma anche con le paste vitree e i *millefiori*, questi ultimi importati da Alessandria, città cosmopolita che all'epoca dettava tendenze estetiche.

Nel paese produttore di incenso, di mirra, di balsami e di altre resine, non potevano mancare i profumi e gli unguenti per la cura del corpo. La tradizione biblica così come gli autori greci e latini ci informano che questi prodotti venivano dalla terra della Regina di Saba e che venivano utilizzati per differenti scopi. Nei rituali religiosi, come dimostrano i numerosissimi altari e incensieri trovati nei templi sudarabici e nelle tombe, i sacerdoti e gli adoranti offrivano e bruciavano le resine profumate per purificarsi, prima di presentarsi al cospetto degli dèi. Alcune statuette votive in bronzo mostrano una donna intenta ad offrire un grano di incenso (Fig. 10)<sup>11</sup>.

Le resine, dunque, erano utilizzate nelle cerimonie religiose, ma anche in ambito domestico, come prodotto per la cura del proprio corpo. Sotto forma di unguenti - fabbricati probabilmente in loco con prodotti locali e altri d'importazione dall'India, mischiati con olio vegetale e grassi animali - questi olii e balsami erano indispensabili nella toletta femminile, non solo per la fragranza, ma anche per restituire la morbidezza della pelle inaridita dal clima, come avveniva in tutto l'Oriente e l'Egitto.

Intorno a questi prodotti e belletti si sviluppò anche un artigianato di accessori indispensabili alle varie operazioni, dai contenitori di varie forme e materiali, agli specchi. Tra i corredi funerari e in contesti domestici sono stati trovati alcuni reperti relativi alla sfera muliebre che dovevano servire per contenere gli articoli da toletta e del trucco, e per impastare le polveri e le creme. I numerosi vasetti di alabastro - che secondo Plinio il Vecchio erano indicati per conservare i profumi (“*unguenta optime servantur in alabastris*”, *NH XIII*, 19) - o in terracotta, e poi gli unguentari in vetro soffiato di importazione (classici piriformi variopinti o a forma e del colore del dattero secco, di produzione, quest’ultimo, siro-palestinese<sup>12</sup>) dimostrano la diffusione dell’usanza dei Sudarabici di cospargersi di olii profumati, usanza che poi fu esportata in Italia e a Roma, dove era talmente apprezzata da “svuotare le casse” romane e riempire quelle dell’*Arabia Felix*, o meglio dell’Arabia prosperosa. Plinio il Vecchio ci informa che una libbra (= 327,168 gr) di profumo poteva superare i 400 denari<sup>13</sup> e lo definisce “tra i lussi il più vano”, “infatti, perle e gemme passano agli eredi, le vesti durano nel tempo, i profumi si dissolvono istantaneamente e muoiono appena nati” (*NH XIII*, 20)<sup>14</sup>.

Tra i corredi funerari sono stati trovati piccoli mortai, con macinelli e pestelli che servivano per polverizzare la pietra galena da cui si ricavava il *kuhl*, usato con duplice funzione, estetica e terapeutica, per la cura degli occhi e per proteggerli dalle malattie (Fig. 11). Il *kuhl* ridotto in polvere finissima veniva steso nel bordo degli occhi con un’asticella di bronzo, osso, avorio o legno.

Tra i beni di lusso importati per una committenza più sofisticata vanno annoverate le argenterie, come testimonia il *Periplo del Mare Eritreo* (paragr. 28). Si tratta di vasellame da mensa e preziose pissidi in argento, rifinite in oro, come dimostrano i ritrovamenti nelle tombe sudarabiche di I-III secolo d.C. Argenterie di alta qualità, importate probabilmente da Antiochia in Siria, che riproducono iconografie di derivazione ellenistica e classicheg-

gianti: centaumachie, scene bacchiche, o semplici motivi vegetali. La maggior parte di questi contenitori sono di proprietà femminile, come dimostrato dalle iscrizioni sudarabiche impresse sugli oggetti stessi.

Non solo gli oggetti in materiale prezioso, ma anche quelli di poco valore, come il vasellame in terracotta, venivano personalizzati con l'aggiunta del nome proprio femminile inciso prima o dopo la cottura; numerosi esemplari sono stati trovati in contesti archeologici domestici e funerari, del VII secolo a.C., così come del I secolo d.C. (Fig. 12).

Infine, sono da ricordare alcuni rilievi funerari che mostrano una donna seduta su un trono (*cathedra*) o su un letto (*kline*), intenta a suonare una lira e assistita da un'ancella che batte il ritmo con la mano destra, e con la sinistra impugna un oggetto, che potrebbe essere un sistro (Fig. 13).

È possibile che la donna sudarabica suonasse la lira non tanto in un contesto domestico, quanto in un luogo sacro, probabilmente nella sua veste di sacerdotessa. Lo dimostrano alcune statuette in bronzo raffiguranti una citareda, di cui una fu trovata *in situ* nel tempio di Nakrah a Barâqish (I secolo d.C.); un'altra statuette simile, molto ben conservata e di origine sconosciuta, è conservata al British Museum di Londra<sup>15</sup>.

In sintesi, nella prima metà del primo millennio a.C., la donna sudarabica sembra ricoprire un ruolo pubblico e sacro, partecipando attivamente ai rituali di culto. Nei templi cosiddetti delle Banât 'Âd, infatti, le immagini femminili sono raffigurate accanto a quelle maschili, probabilmente come sacerdotesse, oppure come semidee intermediarie tra dèi e uomini. Nel periodo successivo, dal IV secolo a.C. in poi, la donna sembra essere più coinvolta nella vita sociale quotidiana, in questioni pratiche e terrene, comprese quelle finanziarie. Le opportunità economiche, infatti, dovute all'espansione del commercio dell'incenso nel Mediterraneo, non solo aumentarono la ricchezza e lo status delle donne dell'Arabia Meridionale, ma ne influenzarono anche i costumi.



## NOTE

1 - Il Qatabân è uno dei Regni dell'Arabia Meridionale, e ha come capitale Tamna'.

2 - Il Regno di Saba ha come capitale Marib.

3 - I pezzi sono conservati al Museo Nazionale dello Yemen di Sanaa (n. di inv. YM 1803, YM 1616).

4 - Il Regno di Ma'in ha come capitale Qarnaw.

5 - Si tratta di una sorta di portolano, scritto in greco da un anonimo autore intorno alla metà del I sec. d.C. L'anonimo, nel citare i porti lungo la costa yemenita del Mar Rosso e dell'Oceano Indiano, ci informa dell'intensa attività commerciale marittima tra il Mare Mediterraneo e il Mare Eritreo, ed elenca i prodotti di scambio.

6 - Il Regno di Himyar, che nasce nel 110 a.C., ha come capitale Zafâr.

7 - Il Regno di Hadramawt ha come capitale Shabwat.

8 - Casson, 1989, pp. 63-65.

9 - Casson, 1989, p. 67.

10 - Benda-Weber, 2013, pp. 179-180.

11 - L'incenso (*libân, lûban* in arabo), una resina della specie *Boswellia* che cresce nell'Arabia del sud, così come in Somalia e in India, per il suo gradevole odore e per le sue qualità, era usato dagli antichi yemeniti nei rituali religiosi nel tempio, durante i funerali e in feste profane, ma anche come medicinale. D'altra parte Plinio il Vecchio (*NH*, XII, 54) dice che i raccoglitori di incenso erano considerati sacri come sacro era l'incenso stesso (*sacros vocari ob id*) e durante la raccolta dovevano mantenersi 'puri'. In due iscrizioni sudarabiche (CIH 545 e RES 4336) un dio viene designato con il nome *bšmm*, ossia albero del balsamo.

12 - In vetro piriforme nella tomba ipogea di Kharabat al-Ahjar (Dhamâr), cfr. Antonini 1992, pp. 55 sgg. A forma di dattero da Qaryat al-Fâw, cfr. Al-Ghabban *et alii* 2010: 354-355, n. 198. Tutti i pezzi sono datati al I-II secolo d.C.

13 - Nel I sec. d.C. un aureo era corrispondente a 25 denari, 100 sesterzi, 400 assi. Quindi un denario corrispondeva a 4 sesterzi e un sesterzio a 4 assi. Per avere un'idea, uno schiavo generico costava 625 denari.

14 - "*Haec est materia luxus e cunctis maxime supervacui. margaritae enim gemmaeque ad heredem tamen transeunt, vestes prorogant tem-*

*pus: unguenta ilico expirant ac suis moriuntur horis*”. La parola stessa *pro fumo* rende bene il concetto di Plinio: una fragranza che esala e svanisce.

15 - Simpson, 2002, 125, n. 143.

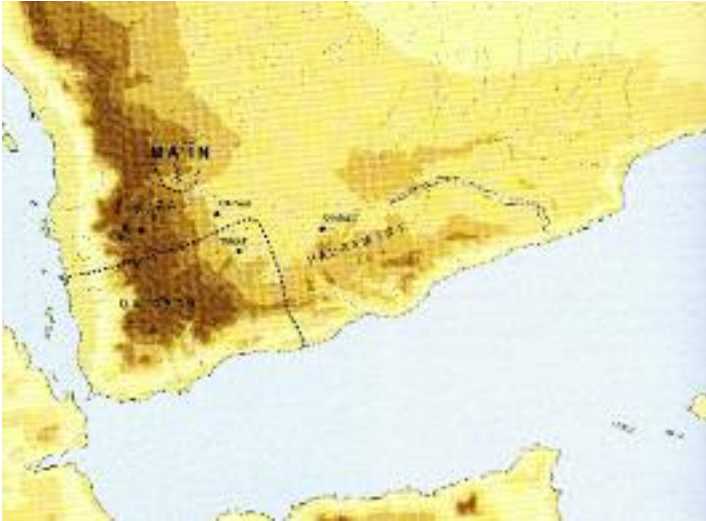


Fig. 1 - Lo Yemen antico e i principali Regni sudarabici: Saba, Ma'in, Qatabân e Hadramawt (dis. H. Davide).



Fig. 2 - Statuetta in calcare di donna seduta, nota come 'antenata' (n. inv. YM 161, per gentile concessione del Museo Nazionale dello Yemen, Sanaa).



Fig. 3 - Dettaglio di una figura femminile stante su podio incisa su un pilastro del tempio delle cosiddette Banât 'Âd a Ma'in (VIII sec. a.C.; foto S. Antonini).

Fig. 4 - Dettaglio di una figura femminile danzante incisa su un pilastro del propileo di un tempio intramuros a al-Sawdâ'/Nashshân (VIII sec. a.C.; Arbach, Audouin 2004, Fig. VII).





Fig. 5 - Tempio intra muros a al-Sawdâ'/Nashshân: ai piedi del dio Almaqah, patrono del Regno di Saba, è una figura femminile con bambino (VIII sec. a.C.; Arbach, Audouin 2004, Fig. IV).



Fig. 6 - Ex voto in terracotta di donna coronata con infante in fasce, probabilmente un'offerta votiva a una divinità tutelare (n. inv. YM 1616, per gentile concessione del Museo Nazionale dello Yemen, Sanaa).



Fig. 7 - Vista laterale di un ritratto funerario femminile in alabastro, con acconciatura applicata in gesso (I secolo d.C.; Museo di Bayhân, per gentile concessione di Khayran al-Zubaydi).

Fig. 8 - Stele funeraria in alabastro con busto femminile a rilievo, da Al-Jûba (I secolo d.C.; YM 71, per gentile concessione del Museo Nazionale dello Yemen, Sanaa).



Fig. 9 - Collana in oro con catena e terminali a teste di antilopi, anello sigillare e coppia di orecchini (I secolo d.C.; collezione privata yemenita)

Fig. 10 - Statuetta in bronzo di devota sudarabica nell'atto di offrire un grano di incenso (I sec. d.C.; n. inv. YM 289, per gentile concessione del Museo Nazionale dello Yemen, Sanaa).



Fig. 11 - Ritratto funerario in alabastro di donna sudarabica; gli occhi contornati di colore nero conservano l'intarsio (I sec. d.C.; n. inv. ATM 583, per gentile concessione del Museo di 'Ataq).

Fig. 12 - Vasetto in terracotta con inciso il nome della proprietaria, dagli scavi di una tomba di Kharabat al-Ahjar, Dhamâr (I sec. d.C.; foto A. de Maigret).





Fig. 13 - Stele funeraria in alabastro: nel registro inferiore la defunta, seduta sul letto, suona una lira ed è assistita da una donna che impugna un sistro seguendo il ritmo della musica. Nel registro superiore, la donna è raffigurata stesa sul letto funebre (I-II sec. d.C.; n. inv. YM 1054, per gentile concessione del Museo Nazionale dello Yemen, Sanaa).



## BIBLIOGRAFIA

**Al-Ghabban A. I. - André-Salvini B. - Demange F. - Juvin C. - Cotty M.** (a cura di), *Routes d'Arabie. Archéologie et histoire du royaume d'Arabie séoudite*. Louvre éditions e Somogy éditions d'art, Paris, 2010.

**Antonini S.**  *Oggetti d'importazione dalle tombe di Kharabat al-Ahjar (Dhamar). Yemen, Studi archeologici, storici e filologici sull'Arabia meridionale*. Roma, 1992, pp. 3-12.

**Antonini S.** *La statuaria sudarabica in pietra*. Repertorio Iconografico Sudarabico 1: Paris, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres; Rome, Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente. Roma, 2001.

**Antonini de Maigret S.** *A Winged Deity in Southern Arabia* in A.V. Sedov (ed.) *Arabian and Islamic Studies*. A collection of papers in honour of Mikhail Borishovich Piotrovskij on the occasion of his his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Moscow, 2014, pp. 234-243.

**Antonini de Maigret S.** *The woman in the figurative arts*, *Semitica et Classica XI*, 2018, pp. 78-89, in S. Antonini de Maigret e C. J. Robin, *The South Arabian woman and her context. La position sociale de la femme dans l'Arabie méridionale antique*. *Semitica et Classica XI*, 2018, pp. 71-92.

**Antonini de Maigret S. - Betti F. - 'Alī 'Aqīl L.** *Gioielli sudarabici da Kharibat Hamdān/Haram (Jawf, Yemen). Osservazioni preliminari*. *Semitica et Classica IX*, 2016, pp. 223-244.

**Arbach M. - Audouin R.** *Nouvelles découvertes archéologiques dans le Jawf (République du Yémen). Opération de sauvetage franco-yéménite du site d'as-Sawdā' (l'antique Nashshān). Temple intra-muros I. Rapport préliminaire*. Sanaa, 2004. (In Francese e Arabo).

**Benda-Weber I.** *Textile Production Centres, Products and Merchants in the Roman Province of Asia* in M. Gleba, J. Pásztoókai-Szeöke (eds), *Making textiles in pre-Roman and Roman times: people, places, identities*. Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2013, pp. 171-191.

**Casson L.** *The Periplus Maris Erythraei*. Princeton University Press, Oxford, 1989.

**Robin Ch. J.** *Les données des textes épigraphiques*, *Semitica et Classica XI*, 2018, pp. 71-78 in S. Antonini de Maigret e Ch. J. Robin *The*

*South Arabian woman and her context. La position sociale de la femme dans l'Arabie méridionale antique.* Semitica et Classica XI, 2018, pp. 71-92.

**Simpson St J.** (ed.) *Queen of Sheba. Treasures from Ancient Yemen.* The British Museum Press, London, 2002.

# UNA REGINA SENZA AUTONOMIA E UNA DONNA SENZA AMORE: CATERINA CORNARO

*Maria Consuelo Ballarino*

(V. Presidente di Dante Alighieri - Comitato di Cipro)

## **Luglio 1510 - Partiamo dalla fine**

Nella notte tra il 10 e l'11 luglio 1510, una caldissima estate veneziana lascia improvvisamente il passo ad un inverno precoce (così raccontano le cronache dell'epoca).

Un mesto e, tutto sommato striminzito, corteo, si muove lentamente verso la Chiesa di San Cassian da Palazzo Corner sul Canal Grande.

Il cielo nero, la pioggia battente e una fitta grandinata, accompagnano così Caterina Cornaro, Regina di Cipro, Gerusalemme e Armenia in quello che sarà il suo ultimo viaggio. È vestita con il saio di terziaria francescana, non certo con gli abiti degni di una regina e, sembrerà una coincidenza, ma la furia della natura, un maltempo inusuale accompagnerà sempre Caterina nei suoi viaggi e nei momenti salienti della sua vita, fino al giorno della sua morte.

In verità il suo funerale, con tutti gli onori adeguati al rango di regina, verrà celebrato tre giorni dopo alla presenza delle più alte cariche della Repubblica, anche se il Doge ed alcuni Senatori disertano la cerimonia. Strana circostanza questa visto l'atteggiamento quasi affettuoso tenuto nei suoi confronti dal Doge Cristoforo Moro, quando la 'fiola diletta' viene scelta come sposa di Giacomo II Lusignano, sovrano di Cipro.

Per la prima volta nella storia della Repubblica, il campanile di S. Marco suona come per la morte del Doge, 9 volte per 7 rintocchi.

Al suo funerale c'è una così grande partecipazione di popolo che

sarà necessario costruire un ponte di burchiele (imbarcazioni veneziane da trasporto) per permettere un agevole passaggio del corteo funebre tra le due sponde del Canal Grande, dal Mercato di Rialto a quello di Santa Sofia.

Termina così la vita terrena di una donna controversa che lascerà un segno indelebile nella storia della Serenissima. E sì... Caterina, più che figlia, direi prigioniera del suo tempo, delle convenzioni, della sua famiglia, della Repubblica Serenissima, del suo sposo. Forse proprio per questi motivi, la figura di Caterina non perde il suo fascino col passare dei secoli: potrebbe essere un'eroina dei nostri giorni, caparbia ed obbediente allo stesso tempo, capace di stupirci con le sue azioni. La sua vita è straordinaria, quasi un romanzo d'appendice, intrecciata saldamente alla storia della Repubblica di Venezia. Una vita in bilico tra sfarzo, mondanità, alterigia e sottomissione; accompagnata sempre da un destino crudele costellato di eventi luttuosi che mettono a dura prova questa donna trasformandola in un'eroina senza tempo.

Caterina è la donna delle contraddizioni: riesce, infatti, tenere testa per lunghi 16 anni alla Repubblica, in un'epoca nella quale il potere è in mano agli uomini ma si piega, in ginocchio, al volere di Venezia lasciando la sua amata Cipro per ritirarsi, forzatamente, in un esilio dorato ad Asolo che trasforma in breve tempo in una delle corti rinascimentali più in vista d'Europa.

Ripercorrere i punti salienti della sua vita, oltre ad essere una cavalcata nella storia veneziana, ci permette di svelare il suo carattere, di comprendere il suo destino e apprezzare fino in fondo la sua forza di donna che non si è mai piegata supinamente agli eventi ma che ha saputo reagire, lottare ma fare un passo indietro al momento opportuno. Gli aspetti psicologici di questo personaggio acquistano ancora più valore se si pensa che tutto sia avvenuto a cavallo del XV secolo, un'epoca dove poche erano le donne tenute in così grande considerazione ma che, soprattutto, ebbero il coraggio di affrontare, con la schiena dritta, avventure che avrebbero piegato il più valoroso dei cavalieri. Ancora oggi

risulta difficile comprendere come, in quei tempi, una donna abbia potuto trovarsi al centro di tante avventure che la portano così lontano dalla sua amata Venezia, dai fasti di una vita agiata e colta ad una sperduta isola, un po' rozza rispetto a Venezia, dell'estremo est del Mediterraneo: Cipro.

È un'epoca dove gli spostamenti sono difficili, le spezie arrivano con lunghe carovane dall'oriente ai porti d'Egitto dove poi vengono imbarcate verso la Repubblica eppure Caterina, partirà da Venezia per un viaggio lungo circa 1.500 miglia per raggiungere il suo sposo, del quale ha solo sentito parlare e forse... non troppo bene.

### **Torniamo all'inizio - Novembre 1454**

Caterina nasce a Venezia, il 25 novembre 1454 nel Palazzo dei Corner a San Cassian, sul Canal Grande, quarta di 8 figli di Fiorenza Crispo e di Marco Corner, ricco mercante veneziano. La sua è una famiglia nobile e molto in vista (la sua trisavola Caterina di Dalmazia era sposa di Marco Corner, Doge dal 1365 al 1368) e suo fratello Giorgio (unico figlio maschio della sua famiglia che tanto influenzerà il suo destino) sposerà Elisabetta Morosini erede di un'altra nobile e molto in vista famiglia Veneziana.

A quell'epoca Venezia è uno stato potentissimo, con una flotta di 300 grandi navi, 3.000 unità minori e 45 navi da trasporto che rendono ricchi i mercanti e lo stato. Quando Caterina muore, Venezia avrà perso la sua imbattibilità per mare, a causa dei Turchi e per terra, a causa della lega di tutta Europa contro Venezia (lega di Cambrai). Cipro entra nel destino della sua futura regina quando, tra il 1456 e il 1457, lo zio di Caterina, Andrea Corner, viene sottoposto al giudizio del Consiglio dei Dieci per fatti, ancora oggi non del tutto chiariti dalla storia, relativi a presunti brogli elettorali. A Venezia le votazioni si effettuano ponendo una pallina (la balota) dentro un'urna: bianca per il sì e nera per il no. Un giorno "triste" dall'urna il numero delle palline depositate superò il numero dei votanti e di questo viene accusato Andrea Corner.

Andrea prende quindi la via dell' esilio, inizialmente, verso l'isola di Creta e successivamente verso Cipro, dove lo segue, a breve tempo, anche suo fratello Marco (padre di Caterina) accusato di copertura nei confronti di Andrea. La causa della condanna, come dicevo, è ancora controversa e oscura ma di certo lo spostamento a Cipro dei due fratelli può essere considerato come un occhio di riguardo, da parte della Repubblica, nei confronti di questi due uomini, che hanno da generazioni interessi economici nell'isola, attività commerciali e di trasformazione della canna da zucchero e che forse hanno finanziato, con le loro enormi ricchezze, gli interessi della Serenissima. Ma come arriva Giacomo II il bastardo nella vita di Caterina? Come s'intrecciano i destini dei Corner e dei Lusignano? La storia viene da lontano e dai tanti debiti che la famiglia regnante di Cipro ha contratto con i Corner nel secolo precedente, debiti mai pagati che generano interessi e che a sua volta vengono tamponati con la cessione di terreni. Non va dimenticato, infatti, che i Corner erano e sono, una delle famiglie più ricche, numerose e in vista di Venezia: grandi mercanti che hanno dato alla Serenissima ben quattro Dogi, alti prelati, letterati e militari ma con il pallino degli affari e dell'arrampicata sociale, sempre pronti ad aumentare le proprie ricchezze. Dobbiamo tornare un po' indietro nel tempo per capire. Siamo intorno alla prima metà del 1300 quando i Corner (detti in seguito della Piscopia dal nome dei terreni che gli vengono ceduti dalla corona Cipriota) arrivano a Cipro: è Federico Corner a salire agli onori delle cronache dell'epoca, per la concessione al re di Cipro (Pietro I di Lusignano) di un imponente prestito di 60.000 ducati per finanziare la guerra contro i Turchi. Dai Lusignano, in cambio, riceve il feudo di Piscopi che viene trasformato velocemente in un centro importante per la produzione di zucchero. I Lusignano sono infatti sempre pronti a combattere il turco, a chiedere prestiti per finanziare le guerre che poi regolarmente non saldano. Così i destini dei Lusignano iniziano a legarsi saldamente a quello dei ricchi mercanti Veneziani e quindi con la madre patria, Venezia.

Non dimentichiamo inoltre che anche Marco, padre di Caterina, tempo dopo, avrebbe concesso un prestito di 100.000 ducati, cifra enorme per l'epoca, a Giovanni II di Lusignano (padre di Giacomo II) e che il Senato della Repubblica interviene direttamente sul Re di Cipro per ottenere indietro i denari prestati che tanto danno avevano recato ai Corner. Questo la dice lunga sui legami tra i Corner e il potere politico veneziano.

Torniamo però, per un momento, alla giovane Caterina che, nel 1464, all'età di 10 anni, come di consuetudine per tutte le ragazze nobili dell'epoca, viene inviata in convento per completare la sua istruzione; la sua tranquillità e il silenzio tra le mura del monastero di Padova non dureranno tanto a lungo perché nello stesso periodo sale al trono di Cipro Giacomo II il bastardo. Il giovane regnante è descritto, o forse immaginato, come un giovane vigoroso e bello, robusto e più dedito alla caccia e alla spada che agli studi. È sempre pronto a menar le mani per vendicare un'offesa e il popolo lo ama proprio per questo suo ardore ma forza e bellezza non sono sufficienti per tenere salda in testa la corona.

Per salire al trono spodesta la giovane Carlotta, erede legittima dei Lusignano chiedendo l'aiuto al sultano del Cairo, il quale gli fornisce non solo appoggio politico ma anche un contingente di Mamelucchi che aiutano Giacomo a spodestare la sorella. Il nuovo sovrano viene quindi a trovarsi nella scomoda posizione di avere nemici all'interno della sua corte (molti dei nobili dei quali inspiegabilmente si contorna e con i quali si accompagna in interminabili battute di caccia), che sono a favore della deposta Regina e, ai confini, i Turchi che minacciano l'indipendenza dell'isola. Giacomo ha quindi assoluta necessità, di consolidare la propria posizione di re intrecciando alleanze che gli possano garantire supporto e aiuto nel momento del bisogno. Non può rivolgersi al Papa Pio II che non ha approvato la sua azione di usurpatore, per di più con l'aiuto dei mussulmani. Chi meglio di Venezia, che possiede l'unica vera flotta potente del Mediterraneo è in grado di difendere l'isola dai Turchi e di rendere contempo-

raneamente più salda la sua posizione? Giacomo è furbo e sa di poter contare sull'appoggio dei Veneziani presenti sull'isola perché hanno forti interessi commerciali a Cipro e per nessun motivo vorrebbero perdere i loro privilegi di esenzione delle tasse sui traffici commerciali. Cosa meglio di un matrimonio può suggerire un'alleanza con Venezia? In fin dei conti, in quei tempi è una cosa piuttosto naturale combinare matrimoni d'interesse dove la sposa, che a 14 è già in età da matrimonio, non ha nessun altro diritto che quello di piegarsi alla ragion di Stato. Cosa escogita il giovane sovrano? Invia a Venezia Guglielmo Gonem, Arcivescovo di Cipro con lo scopo di proporre un possibile matrimonio con una nobile veneziana di grado adeguato per essere sposa di un re. Venezia risponde in maniera prudente, quasi indifferente direi, a questa proposta e addirittura gli consiglia di cercare moglie altrove: i suoi interessi commerciali sono più rivolti verso l'Egitto dove fanno scalo le navi, cariche di spezie provenienti dall'India. I tempi non sono ancora maturi ma come si sa... i venti cambiano e in fretta. Cipro è un crocevia d'interessi politici e commerciali: Famagosta è genovese fino alla conquista da parte di Giacomo nel 1464, Galeazzo Sforza, conte di Milano (che controlla anche Genova) è cognato di Carlotta, re Ferdinando di Napoli, che di certo non ama i veneziani trama affinché suo figlio bastardo, Alfonso di Aragona, sposi Carlotta e per finire... i Turchi sono alle porte, escono da Dardanelli e minacciano i mari che sono così importanti per la Repubblica. Nello stesso tempo i due Corner, che non sono certo uomini sprovveduti, sanno muoversi con destrezza nello scacchiere Cipriota, conteso tra i due pretendenti al trono dell'isola. Dapprima prendono le parti di Carlotta ma, intuito in breve tempo come sarebbero finite le cose, spostano rapidamente la loro scommessa su Giacomo che, guarda caso, nel 1460 si autoproclama re di Cipro e depone, nel 1464, l'ultima legittima erede dei Lusignano (che fra parentesi aveva sposato Luigi di Savoia, alleato di Genova, eterna nemica di Venezia). Nel frattempo Marco rientra dall'esilio, riprende la sua carriera



politica e il suo peso all'interno della vita pubblica Veneziana. Insomma ...il destino di Caterina sta per compiersi.

Le fonti storiche sono in contrasto tra loro ma molto probabilmente la necessità di questo matrimonio, tra la figlia dei Corner e Giacomo di Lusignano parte proprio dalla corte di Cipro e non dalle mire espansionistiche di Venezia ma forse... gli interessi di tutti s'incontrano in questo crocevia mediorientale. I Corner vedono in questo matrimonio la possibilità di entrare nella famiglia regnante e mantenere a vita i loro privilegi sull'isola, Giacomo ritiene di poter rafforzare il suo potere e Venezia... non si tira indietro quando intravede interessi commerciali e la possibilità di arginare il Turco. Fatto sta che Andrea, rimasto a Cipro, con l'aiuto di suo fratello Marco, inizia una faticosa attività per proporre e far accettare a Giacomo, in sposa, la giovane Caterina. Alcune cronache dell'epoca raccontano che Andrea Corner avesse fatto scivolare per caso, ai piedi di Giacomo, un medaglione con l'effigie della bella Caterina e che lui se ne fosse follemente innamorato. Il Colbertardo cronista dell'epoca, nell'Historia di Caterina Corner Regina di Cipro, scritta tra il 1586 e il 1592, descrive Caterina come 'un miracolo di bellezza: la fronte pari ad un chiaro cielo; guance rosa vermiglie, le labbra coralli; i denti perle; il collo neve; le ciglia nere vaghe e lucide; gli occhi due stelle'. Chi non avrebbe potuto innamorarsi di tale bellezza? Sempre nello stesso scritto si narra ancora che Caterina è scelta tra una rosa di 70 contendenti grazie ad un ritratto dipinto da un certo Dario da Treviso che ne esaltava la sua inconfutabile bellezza. Medaglione? Dipinto? Di certo è che Caterina viene richiamata dal monastero di Padova all'età di 14 anni e che il 10 luglio del 1468 (ma alcuni testi riportano il 30 luglio) si fida per procura con Giacomo II in una fastosa cerimonia, alla presenza del Doge e di tutti i nobili della Repubblica.

### **1468 - Caterina una regina senza regno**

Non sappiamo come la giovane Caterina apprenda la notizia del

suo matrimonio, non sappiamo nulla dei suoi sentimenti, delle sue paure e quali cambiamenti avrebbe portato alla sua vita un giovane sconosciuto, re di una lontana isola del Mediterraneo. Quale ragazza di oggi, accetterebbe una simile imposizione? Altri tempi, altre decisioni. Di certo non è un matrimonio d'amore ma d'interesse per tutti, tranne che per la giovane Caterina che si trova catapultata in un mondo che mai avrebbe immaginato.

Venezia, nel frattempo, matura un forte interesse a impossessarsi di Cipro, a sbaragliare i suoi nemici e quindi, questa volta, accoglie con grandi onori gli ambasciatori di re Giacomo che rimangono stupiti dell'accoglienza del Doge. Un matrimonio d'interesse però, non è così facile da realizzare e gli interessi sul piatto sono alti. A pagare sono i Corner, con una dote di 60.000 ducati che sborsano in parte in moneta sonante e in parte tagliando una cospicua quota del debito che re Giacomo aveva contratto con la nobile famiglia di mercanti Veneziani. Possiamo solo immaginare il fasto di questo matrimonio. Si narra che il doge, Cristoforo Moro, famoso per la sua scarsa propensione a spendere, organizza, invece, una cerimonia sontuosa. Tutte le più importanti famiglie patrizie sono invitate al matrimonio che verrà celebrato nella sala del Maggior Consiglio, del Palazzo Ducale, che ha la capacità di ospitare più di mille persone. Possiamo solo immaginare il Doge, in piedi sulle scale che riceve solennemente l'anello, dono di Re Giacomo quale pegno di matrimonio. Una scenografia fastosa per un accordo importante. E la sposa? Caterina, quasi una fanciulla, così giovane, vestita con ricchi broccati, con fili di perle tra i capelli... sarà stata atterrita o solo confusa? Avrà capito fino in fondo il suo destino? Non sappiamo nemmeno questo ma, di certo, non avrà avuto la possibilità di esprimere il suo parere e come l'agnello sacrificale avrà accettato questo matrimonio. Avrà capito il passo che stava per compiere? Cosa l'avrebbe aspettata a Cipro? Qualcuno avrà pensato in quali pensieri la sua mente fosse affannata? Ma cosa importa? Caterina è una donna, deve obbedire alla ragion di Stato e fare figli per rendere immortale la

dinastia. A questo sono dedite, salvo rare eccezioni, le donne in questa epoca. Avrà saputo che suo marito ha il doppio dei suoi anni, tre figli illegittimi, poco colto, piuttosto grezzo e che vive in un palazzo che nemmeno lontanamente avrebbe potuto ricordarle la bellezza, unica al mondo, del suo palazzo sul Canal Grande? O sarà stata solamente frastornata dalla cerimonia e dai personaggi importanti che sono lì, per lei, per sigillare questo fidanzamento... o matrimonio? Certo è che gli stessi pensieri non tormentano Giacomo che ha sicuramente altre gatte da pelare. Messo in tasca il contratto matrimoniale, continua infatti a cercare alleanze che possano consolidare il suo potere ed è quasi sul punto di accettare la proposta del re Ferdinando di Napoli che gli offre in sposa una principessa di sangue reale. Il tempo passa, gli intrighi aumentano e la giovane Caterina rimane in attesa di conoscere il suo sposo. Trascorrono quattro lunghi anni nei quali la giovane Caterina si comporta da regina... ma regina non è. Questo, però, è il volere di Venezia. La giovane ragazza appare in tutte le cerimonie pubbliche, civili e religiose, accanto al Doge e al Patriarca e nei saloni del Palazzo ducale quando vengono ricevuti gli ambasciatori. Il suo sposo la ignora, continua la sua vita fatta di feste, di caccia e di ricerche di alleati. Possiamo immaginare di quanti e quali pettegolezzi la giovane sposa sia fatta oggetto, in una Venezia un po' provinciale dove sicuramente i Corner, grazie alla loro posizione ed alla loro ricchezza, hanno generato invidie? A quali e quante pressioni sarà stata sottoposta Caterina? Dopo quattro anni, la Repubblica prende una posizione netta, non certo per amore verso la sua figlia adottiva quanto perché Venezia non può tollerare più a lungo un'offesa così eclatante. Venezia pretende il rispetto dei patti sottoscritti e non può permettere che il Regno di Napoli metta le mani sui propri interessi d'oltremare. A Caterina chi pensa? Nessuno.

Finalmente, nell'estate del 1472, Giacomo si decide e invia tre ambasciatori per prendere in carico la sua sposa. Il 19 settembre, Nicolo Tron, il doge succeduto a Cristoforo Moro, convoca il ge-

nerale da Mar, Andrea Bragadin e gli comunica che scorterà Caterina a Cipro dal suo sposo. Dalla rada di San Nicolo, al Lido, partono 4 galee veneziane e tre cipriote, tutte riccamente addobbate alla volta di Cipro. Tanto sfarzo e tanta ricchezza per accompagnare Caterina? Forse, anche in questo caso prevalgono però le ragioni di Stato: Venezia deve rafforzare in maniera discreta la sua flotta a Cipro al fine di bloccare l'avanzata turca che sta approcciando pericolosamente lo stretto dei Dardanelli. Accanto ai bauli di vestiti e doni vengono ben stivate e nascoste armi e munizioni.

### **Settembre 1472 - Caterina parte per Cipro**

Il 27 settembre 1472, finalmente il tanto atteso viaggio ha inizio. Caterina sale sulla galea del comandante Girolamo Diedo. Le galee veneziane e cipriote sono circondate da imbarcazioni, patrie addobbate a festa. Anche il Bucintoro, l'imbarcazione dogale, lascia l'arsenale con tutto il fior fiore della politica della Serenissima. Una festa indimenticabile. Settembre è un mese adatto alla navigazione: i venti furiosi dell'estate hanno lasciato il posto alle calde brezze autunnali che avrebbero spinto le galee verso Cipro e invece... il maltempo tormenta Caterina. Il viaggio è lungo, le tempeste che si susseguono una dietro l'altra, rischiano di far affondare la galea sulla quale Caterina ha preso posto. La data esatta non si conosce ma sicuramente Caterina arriva a Cipro, stanca, frastornata. Viene accolta dal suo sposo sconosciuto e da una folla festante raccolta appositamente lungo il porto di Famagosta, che non doveva essere tanto diverso da quello di oggi. Subito avviene la cerimonia e Caterina entra in un mondo che deve esserle sembrato ostile fin dall'inizio. Ma chi si cura dei suoi sentimenti, delle sue paure? Tre figli illegittimi di suo marito, ai quali forse lei farà più da sorella maggiore che da madre, un marito piuttosto rozzo e assente per i suoi bagordi e che tenta in tutte le maniere di sfuggire alla 'tutela obbligata' che Venezia gli ha imposto. Ma tutto questo disastro viene fermato da una precoce gra-

vidanza che sembra acquetare gli animi di tutti. Scoppia la felicità nell'isola: Caterina riesce a farsi amare dal popolo e anche suo marito prova per la prima volta quell'amore che non aveva dimostrato fino a quel momento. La felicità, però, dura un attimo: durante una battuta di caccia Giacomo ha un malore, viene portato febbricitante nella sua dimora di Famagosta e muore in pochi giorni. Prima di morire però riesce a fare testamento e a tutelare Caterina che sarà la Regina di Cipro anche se coadiuvata nel suo operato, durante la gravidanza, da un Consiglio del quale fa parte anche suo zio Andrea. Questa morte improvvisa di Giacomo lascia qualche dubbio negli storici e immagino anche nei suoi contemporanei: un giovane, forte che non ha fatto altro che andare a caccia, muore a seguito di una banale freddatura... Certo che in molti possono volere la sua morte: dalla sua sorellastra Carlotta che vuole a tutti i costi riprendere il trono, alla Repubblica di Venezia che vuole completare definitivamente l'acquisizione di Cipro. In questo clima arroventato, alla fine di agosto nasce il bambino tanto atteso: si chiama Giacomo come suo padre. Il popolo che ha imparato in breve tempo ad amare Caterina, è in festa, acclama questa regina tanto sfortunata che improvvisamente si trova ad essere, moglie, madre, vedova e regina. Come devono esserle sembrati lontani, il palazzo sul Canal Grande, i saloni illuminati, le feste, le cerimonie. Ora è regina, madre dell'erede al trono. Ha nuove responsabilità, deve governare gli intrighi di corte, deve essere fedele a Venezia, deve arginare le mire espansionistiche del regno di Napoli. Fortunatamente ha al suo fianco lo zio Andrea, i cugini Bembo e Contarini e i consiglieri Veneziani presenti sull'isola. La situazione precipita velocemente quando, approdano sull'isola due galere napoletane (la flotta veneziana ha appena lasciato l'isola) con a bordo due messaggeri del re che chiedono a Caterina l'autorizzazione ad un matrimonio tra Ciarla, figlia illegittima di Giacomo e Alfonso d'Aragona. Caterina capisce l'inganno, è un attentato alla corona, nega il consenso e quindi i napoletani iniziano a fomentare il popolo contro di lei.

Nella confusione generale che viene a crearsi in quei momenti, i rivoltosi entrano nel palazzo e uccidono davanti agli occhi di Caterina Paolo Zappa di Nicosia, suo fidato consigliere, e il medico di corte. Stessa sorte subiranno suo zio Andrea e suo cugino Marco Bembo che accorrono in suo aiuto. Caterina rimane sola, atterrita, suo figlio viene rapito: è costretta a scrivere false missive a Venezia contro suo zio Andrea, reo di aver provocato la rivolta per non aver pagato per tempo l'esercito. Caterina piega la testa solo per salvare l'unico vero amore della sua vita: suo figlio. Non mi dilungherò sugli avvenimenti che riportarono, in poco più di due mesi, Caterina sul trono ma di certo posso solo immaginare a quali travagli interiori sia stata esposta questa donna. Riprende la sua vita di regina, presiede le riunioni dei cittadini, visita castelli e casali e riporta il potere nelle sue mani. Quando le cose sembrano volgere al meglio e la vita ritornare a una sana normalità, però, il suo bambino debole, sempre malato, forse la malaria lo aveva colpito in fasce, muore a pochi giorno dal suo primo compleanno. Un'altra disgrazia si abbatte sulla regina. Rimane chiusa a Famagosta, affranta dal lutto, per alcuni mesi ma torna a Nicosia acclamata da due ali di popolo che vogliono far sentire tutto il loro calore ad una regina così sfortunata. A Famagosta ha perso suo marito, suo zio, suo cugino, suo figlio e il suo ruolo di madre dell'erede al trono. Sono anni difficili per Caterina, come se i precedenti fossero stati facili... Sempre al centro di intrighi e congiure e con il pugno di ferro di Venezia sul capo. Non manca anche un tentativo di ucciderla da parte di un innamorato respinto, Marco Venier, fortunatamente sventato in tempo. Sì, perché Caterina è bella, è giovane ed è regina e questo spaventa un po' i Veneziani che guardano con occhi sempre più preoccupati l'insoddisfazione di Caterina nel ruolo di regina 'a mezzo servizio'. Quanto avrebbe resistito ancora senza marito, con poco denaro e uno stile di vita di molto inferiore a quello delle sue sorelle che avevano sposato nobili veneziani? Venezia capisce che è il momento di anettere Cipro allo stato da mar e di far abdicare

Caterina. Sta per arrivare la fine del suo Regno... Questa volta il cammino della Repubblica non sarà così agevole. Venezia impiega oltre un anno a convincere Caterina a lasciare l'isola e la convince solo con le minacce di una rimozione forzata ed una condanna come ribelle in caso diniego. Artefice della sua abdicazione, è proprio suo fratello Giorgio che comunque impiega più di un mese a convincere la sorella.

#### **14 marzo 1489 - Caterina lascia Cipro per sempre**

Anche questa volta, Caterina è vittima della ragion di Stato. Venezia non tiene in alcun riguardo i desideri della sua figlia adottiva: Cipro è strategica e poco importa se il popolo la ama e lei ama il suo popolo. Poco importa se Caterina è regina e vuole continuare a regnare, spinta dall'amore dei ciprioti che hanno imparato ad amarla. Deve essere stata una brava governante Caterina, nonostante tutte le disgrazie, gli intrighi, gli attentati. Ha imparato ad amare questa isola, i suoi abitanti dopo l'iniziale sconforto e forse, proprio nel momento che finalmente ha messo radici, deve abbandonare tutto. Così è! Lascia l'isola e non tornerà mai più a Cipro. Anche questa volta il suo viaggio è funestato da un maltempo tanto che impiega quasi tre mesi ad arrivare a Venezia.

La Repubblica ha raggiunto il suo scopo e quindi è generosa con Caterina: l'obbedienza viene ricompensata con il Castello di Asolo, feudo della quale diventa Signora e il mantenimento del titolo di Regina di Gerusalemme, Cipro e Armenia nonché' del suo appannaggio di 8.000 ducati l'anno. Anche qui si fa amare dal popolo, s'interessa delle questioni economiche, anche dei più deboli ma soprattutto trasforma Asolo in un cenacolo di artisti. Forse, è più regina ad Asolo che a Cipro... Non mi soffermerò sul periodo Asolano così riccamente descritto dagli storici dell'epoca.

Di certo a Cipro, non poté mai sentirsi veramente regina: sempre costretta sotto osservazione, prima del marito, poi dei consiglieri imposti da Venezia. Ad Asolo forse, con un ruolo sicuramente più

dimesso, in una situazione più tranquilla, può riscoprire l'arte e portare a termine in autonomia tutti i suoi progetti artistici.

### **Conclusioni**

Caterina fu vittima sacrificale di tutti? Forse... Della sua famiglia in primis, ossessionata dai commerci, dalla ricchezza, dal desiderio di migliorare la propria condizione sociale e di portare oltre i confini di Venezia il proprio potere. Fu vittima della Repubblica, che non tenne mai in considerazione Caterina come reale figlia adottiva: la utilizzò sempre, fino all'ultimo giorno per raggiungere i propri scopi senza vergognarsi di minacciarla, di usare tutti i mezzi leciti e illeciti per piegarla ai propri ordini. Vittima di un marito che la fece attendere quattro anni per rispettare l'impegno matrimoniale e che continuò a non amarla fino al momento della gravidanza. Vittima della sorte che continuò a tormentarla fino all'ultimo giorno della sua vita, strappandola dalla sua amata Venezia, dalla sua famiglia, dai suoi amori più cari e da quell'unico figlio, morto in tenera età. Eppure io continuo a vederla come un'eroina, come donna con una forza interiore senza pari. Non ebbe paura di viaggiare, di affrontare il mare, un popolo sconosciuto, un mondo sconosciuto del quale forse aveva sentito parlare solo dai racconti della madre. Voglio pensarla così, fiera, con la schiena dritta, vestita elegantemente, con le perle nei capelli e con gli occhi penetranti di chi è stata forgiata dal destino. Sì, il suo mito continua nei secoli, mai scalfito.





*Caterina Cornaro* - Tiziano (Galleria degli Uffizi, Firenze).



*Le nozze di Caterina Cornaro* - Francesco Antonibon  
(Museo Civico Correr, Venezia)

## BIBLIOGRAFIA

**Berra C.** *La scrittura degli Asolani di Pietro Bembo*. La nuova Italiana Editrice, Firenze, 1996.

**Campolieti G.** *Caterina Cornaro, Regina di Cipro Signora di Asolo*. Camunia, Milano, 1987.

**Colbertaldo A.** *Storia di Caterina Corner, Regina di Cipro. La prima biografia a cura di D. Perocco*. Il Poligrafo, Padova, 2012.

**De Mas Latrie L.** *Histoire de l'Île de Chypre*. Paris, 1855.

**Gattinoni G.** *Il Campanile di San Marco. Monografia Storica*. Venezia, 1910.

**Marzo Magno A.** *Una regina serenissima. "I Corsivi"* gli ebook del Corriere della Sera, 2013.

**Molmenti P.** *La storia di Venezia nella vita privata*. Lint, Trieste, 1973.

**Zorzi A.** *Canal Grande*. Rizzoli, Milano, 1991.

**Zorzi A.** *Una città, una repubblica, un impero*. Mondadori, Milano, 1980.

## MARIJA KUMIČIĆ: A CROATIAN AUTHOR AND A CULTURAL WORKER

*Ana Batinić*

(Division for the History of Croatian Literature,  
Institute for the History of Croatian Literature, Theatre and Music -  
Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, Croatia)

The aim of the paper is to explore the life and work of Marija Kumičić (1863-1945), a Croatian literary authoress, journalist, translator, cultural worker and humanitarian. After finishing a two-year girls' college and marrying a Croatian writer and politician Eugen Kumičić (1850-1904), her own public, cultural and political work started. Her literary work comprises three collections of patriotic and sentimental poetry *Pjesme* [Poems] 1903, *Zadnje ruže* [The Last Roses] 1913, *Pjesmom kroz život* [Singing through Life] 1940 and prose works [The Path to Authentic Happiness] 1909, [The Waves of Emotions] 1911. She also wrote memoirs and a very popular cookbook for girls (*Nova zagrebačka kuharica* [New Zagreb's Cookbook] 1888) reprinted in several editions. Marija Kumičić was a prolific publicist (*Žensko pitanje* [Women's Issue] 1903, *Književno cvijeće* [The Flowers of Literature] 1929) and translator from German and French. She was also the initiator of the foundation of the Croatian Women Writers' Association (1936) and the founder of the Croatian Woman Society, a charitable women's organization established in Zagreb in 1921, active in the field of humanitarian, social and cultural and educational work. The Society ceased with its activities in 1943 and its archives were destroyed after the Second World War. This research - based on Marija Kumičić's private and official correspondence as well as other archival documents kept at the archives of the Division for the History of Croatian literature in Zagreb (Croatia) - will attempt to provide new data and supplement se-

veral of the previously published papers on her life and accomplishments. Hopefully, it will offer some yet undiscovered biographical insight and shed new light on the trace this versatile and courageous lady left in (Croatian) history in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> and during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Introduction**

In Croatia, women started to enter into public life only from the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, simultaneously fighting for their at the time non-existent political, economic and social rights. The goal of this paper is to present the life and work of one of those brave pioneers. Her name is Marija Kumičić (1863-1945), and she was a Croatian literary authoress, journalist, translator, cultural worker and humanitarian. Although she was a very important figure in public life during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, she was almost completely forgotten in the period after the Second World War - following political and social shifts that occurred in this part of Europe in 1945, when Croatia became a part of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia<sup>1</sup>. Although the democratic changes during the 1990s and the establishment of the independent Republic of Croatia after the end of the Croatian War of Independence (1991-1995) gave impetus to the reappraisal and acknowledgment of the importance of Marija Kumičić's activities - considered unacceptable by the former regime due to her nationalist spirit - even today she is still mostly known as the wife of Eugen Kumičić (1850-1904), a famous Croatian writer of social and historical novels and a right-wing politician. Her versatile work in many fields has remained largely unknown even in scientific circles<sup>2</sup>, and especially to a wider public. By outlining her personal and professional biography, I will try to explain the reasons why this happened.

This research - based on Marija Kumičić's private and official correspondence as well as other archival documents kept at - yet again - her husband's literary bequest and other bequests at the

archives of the Division for the History of Croatian literature in Zagreb<sup>3</sup> - will attempt to provide some new data and supplement several of the previously published papers, articles and lexicographical entries, which were, not surprisingly, predominantly written by women: historians, literary historians, writers and journalists, such as A. K. C. [Antonija Kassowitz Cvijić] (1925), Marija Jurić Zagorka (1939), Lucija Benyovsky (1996, 2001, 2010), A. D. [Ana Diklić] (2000), Maša Grdešić (2010), K. Č. J. [Katica Čorkalo-Jemrić] (2013) and Agneza Szabo (2015), a Croatian historian who also published two extensive papers about her life and accomplishments in two books of conference proceedings celebrating Marija Kumičić's husband's literary-historical significance (Szabo, 2010, 2012). It is also interesting to compare entries in lexicons and encyclopaedias and see how they approached Marija Kumičić. For example, the one from 1987 (Malbaša) provides an incorrect information that she had no education. (Pic. 1)

### **Marija Kumičić: a versatile cultural promotor, author and humanitarian**

Marija Kumičić was born on December 11<sup>th</sup> 1863 in a distinguished, middle-class family Maršić in Varaždin. After finishing a two-year girls' college, on September 20<sup>th</sup> 1882 she married a Croatian literary author and politician Eugen, a prominent member of the Croatian Party of Rights. They had two sons: Tomo (1885-1940) who later became a writer, and Đuro (1886-1975), who was a lawyer. After her husband died in 1904 (Marija outlived him for 41 years!), she remained alone with two children and without a steady income. She started to work, writing political and social articles, poems, short and long prose, becoming a contributor in many magazines and periodicals, as well as an active participant in all areas of public life.

Marija Kumičić started to write poetry while still in school and soon established a „literary club“ with her fellow students. Her literary work is comprised of three collections of patriotic and

sentimental poetry: *Pjesme* [Poems] 1903, *Zadnje ruže* [The Last Roses] 1913, *Pjesmom kroz život* [With Poems through Life] 1940 and a prose work *Valovi čuvstava* [The Waves of Emotions] 1911). With another Croatian author, a playwright Milan Ogrizović, she made an adaptation of her husband's novel *Kraljica Lepa* [Queen Lepa] into a historical play *Propast kraljeva hrvatske krvi* [The Fall of the Kings of Croatian Blood] (1905). She also wrote memoirs, which remained unfinished, in a manuscript, titled *Putem uspomena* [Along the Path of Memories], thematising childhood recollections of her birthtown Varaždin. (Pic. 2)

Part of her literary work was written for young and adolescent readers. Such is a beautifully illustrated, pocket-size booklet from [1896] published under the title *Za spomenar. Mudre izreke iz naše književnosti*<sup>4</sup> [For an Autograph Book. Wise Sayings from Our Literature] in which she collected sayings on faith, love, homeland etc. from literary works published by prominent Croatian authors. Another book written for Croatian youth is *Put k pravoj sreći. Iz ljubavi za hrvatsku seljačku mladež*<sup>5</sup> [The Path to Authentic Happiness] from [1909], intended primarily for young people who were living in rural areas of the country. In its preface, the authoress emphasised that the main purpose of the book is to be a sort of a guideline, showing the young generation a way through life by encouraging their love for homeland and interest in rural farming. It consists of several chapters written in an epistolary form - structured as letters to a young girl<sup>6</sup> - and accompanied by illustrations, providing instructions regarding food preparation and cooking, gardening, managing the farm, breeding all sorts of domestic animals and taking care of them, fruit growing and wine-growing. Some of the chapters are conveying messages about the importance of keeping personal hygiene, but also providing commentary on universal topics like weaknesses of character and harmful addictions such as smoking or gambling. So, it is, a sort of a "life manual" on how to lead a purposeful and fulfilling life<sup>7</sup>.

In her prolific career as a publicist, a pamphlet *Žensko pitanje*

[*Women's Issue*] from 1903 stands out<sup>8</sup>. In the correspondence kept at Marija and Eugen Kumičić's literary bequest there is a letter sent to Marija Kumičić from St. Petersburg by a Croatian politician, journalist, bookseller and entrepreneur Krunoslav Heruc, who due to political and ideological reasons, primarily his support to the Party of Rights, emigrated first to Bulgaria and later to Russia, where he lived during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, actively working on developing relations between Croatia and Russia (Očak, <http://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=7599>; Vaščenko 2011: 577-586). The letter was written on July 9<sup>th</sup> 1895 and it may be seen as an encouragement to Marija Kumičić for writing her *Žensko pitanje* [*Women's Issue*], because in it, Heruc wrote: "Enough for today, because I have to rush, but I would very much like to talk to you about many things, especially regarding the women's issue in Croatia. I recently wrote a short feuilleton about it, but the editorial board of 'Hrvatska' ['Croatia'] threw it in the trash, explaining that 'Croatian general public was so corrupted by foreign spirit, that it would just shrug off all that fine teaching', as my sworn brother Lovrenčević<sup>9</sup> wrote to me. All the more reason for us to make efforts, to free the Croatian public from that depravity. Maybe you could, Madam, take the necessary steps in that direction?<sup>10</sup>" Eight years later, in a sixteen page booklet *Žensko pitanje* [*Women's Issue*] Marija Kumičić outlined her thoughts and standpoints about feminism, motherhood, family life and other issues concerning the social politics, but actually she was not a feminist. On the contrary, she challenged the goals of the feminist movement by declaring there is no such thing as a separate "women's issue"<sup>11</sup>, because a man and a woman are two parts of a whole. According to her opinion, men and women are not equal because a woman is made to be a mother. Although in her later years she revised some of her viewpoints, especially the one about women's right to vote, which she at first considered unnecessary, her main attitude remained that the freedom of one's homeland should be above all other freedoms.

Marija Kumičić was also a fruitful translator of literary works from French and German. In a few articles and entries there is a piece of information that she translated some twenty five to thirty novels from French into Croatian (eg. A. K. C. 1925: 154; A. D. [Diklić] 2000: 409; Grdešić 2010: 458), but I haven't managed to find evidence for it in the library catalogues. It may be that it refers to her translations published as contributions in periodicals, namely in a magazine *Dom i svijet* [*Home and the World*]. Among others, she translated *Žensko srce* [*Female Heart*], [1904], originally written by Paul Bourget and *Zlatotvorno selo* [*The Goldmaker's Village*], [1912], originally written by a German-Swiss author Heinrich Zschokke<sup>12</sup>. From a letter sent to Marija Kumičić by a Catholic priest Juraj Tomac in January 1907<sup>13</sup> we know that she also translated Emil Zola, a famous French writer who at the time was on the list of proscribed authors - Index Librorum Prohibitorum - issued by the Catholic Church and abolished in 1966. Tomac warned her about that fact: "I give You every right when You say that this particular piece of prose<sup>14</sup> maybe truly is something exquisitely beautiful, moral etc. I also allow that the Catholic Church might be wrong when placing everything that Zola has ever written on the Index, but as long as it is not officially abolished, Catholics are not allowed to read, translate, praise etc. Zola<sup>15</sup>". With regard to the content of this letter, it is interesting to also view it in the light of her husband's literary work, especially his novel *Olga i Lina* [*Olga and Lina*] from 1881, which is (often) considered to be the first Croatian naturalistic novel. Experience of living and studying in Paris made a great impact on Eugen Kumičić, who considered naturalism to be the right way for the literary expression of harsh Croatian reality. His essay "O romanu" ["On the Novel"], sort of a manifesto of naturalism, published in 1883 in "Hrvatska vila", in which Kumičić argued in favour of naturalism, engaged considerable public attention and stirred a polemical response (Brešić, 2015, pp. 64, 137, 201, 307; Šicel, 1993, p. 52). This polemics among Croatian



literary critics that lasted for several years clearly shows the interconnectedness of literature, ie literary trends and political situation: while left-wing political parties, such as the People's Party, inclined towards traditional, romantic literature, right-wing followers supported a different understanding of the meaning of literature, arguing in favour of realism and naturalism, which in their view enabled the necessary social criticism and the right method of representation of truth<sup>16</sup>.

Marija Kumičić was a member of many patriotic, women's and choral Croatian associations, but her lasting merit is the foundation of the charitable women's society called the "Croatian Woman", established in Zagreb in 1921. The main aims of the society were the promotion of Croatian patriotism and culture as well as social, humanitarian and caritative work, such as helping the orphans and the poor. After the end of the First World War and the formation of the unitary monarchy in 1918, from 1929 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, as a reaction to Great-Serbianism and threats to Croatian identity, many different nationally based organizations were established. They, for example the "Croatian Heart", were predecessors of the "Croatian Woman", whose founder and vice-chairwoman was Marija Kumičić, Zora Trnski being the first chairwoman (Benyovsky, 2001). Very soon many of the Society's branches were established in many Croatian towns and in foreign countries (Bosnia, USA), which shows that it was a very well organized society with a serious programme and clearly set goals in four main divisions: educational, feminist, economical and social. The "Croatian Woman" also had its publishing department, which published not only books but also magazines for women. It printed several of Marija Kumičić's speeches and lectures, such as a brochure on a famous Croatian archeologist Frane Bulić (1935) or two speeches<sup>17</sup> honouring a Croatian political leader, patriot and writer Ante Starčević (1823-1896), often referred by Croatian people as "The Father of the Homeland" - a sobriquet first used by Eugen Kumičić. However, the Society's patriotic

viewpoints caused conflict with the authorities who banned its work in 1922 due to “nationalist and separatist activities” - although only temporarily and without much impact neither on the work of the Society’s Zagreb headquarters nor on its more than fifty branches in Croatia and abroad. The women gathered in the “Croatian Woman” continued with their activities until 1943, when their work was prohibited by the law of the newly established Independent State of Croatia, its archives being destroyed after the Second World War. Sadly, in the period from 1945 until the mid-1990-ies, when Croatia, after the War of Independence, gained autonomy, all the Society’s commendable work has been almost completely - and certainly intentionally - historically “forgotten”. Marija Kumičić shared more or less the same destiny, both in history and in literary historical research, despite of the fact that she was also the initiator of the foundation of the Croatian Women Writers’ Association, the first - and so far the last - association of women authors in Croatia. The Association was founded in November 1936 in Zagreb, in the apartment of a Croatian writer Zdenka Jušić Seunik, who became the Association’s president. It gathered some twenty female authors from different generations, not only the most prominent ones like famous Croatian children’s authors Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (1874-1938)<sup>18</sup> and Jagoda Truhelka (1864-1957)<sup>19</sup>, but also those less known, who were at the time still at the beginning of their literary careers. According to the Association’s *Rules*, its main aim was to promote literature in Croatian direction by publishing works of quality written by Croatian female authors; to unite women writers in order to protect their interests, to upgrade their literary status through joined work, and, when necessary, to provide mutual material support. For that purpose, one of the first steps in the Association’s work was establishing its own publishing trade, to serve exclusively for the publication of works by Croatian women writers. The Association’s activities ceased in 1941 (Peić Čaldarović, 1996, pp. 166-179). As it has been mentioned, in the period bet-

ween the two wars, many cultural and/or humanitarian women's societies were founded, establishing connections between women who were becoming more and more active in a public sphere. Many of them already knew each other privately or they became familiar through the process of education. Such is an example of Jagoda Truhelka and Zdenka Marković (1884-1974)<sup>20</sup>: Truhelka was Marković's teacher at the boarding school for girls, but they remained in contact ever since, keeping a vivid correspondence for some fifty years. Among many different topics, Marija Kumičić was the main subject in Jagoda Truhelka's reply (Osijek, August 19<sup>th</sup> 1940) to Zdenka Marković's letter, in which Marković had attached Marija Kumičić's statement published in a newspaper "Večer", regarding the statue of the first Croatian king Tomislav (Anon, 1940a, p. 5)<sup>21</sup>. Its raising stirred a lot of disturbance in public, which is evident in several newspaper articles from "Večer" (Anon, 1940b, p. 4; Anon, 1940c, p. 5; Pisačić, 1940, p. 5). Truhelka agreed with her former student that Marija Kumičić's reaction was inappropriate, mostly because she expressed her own, private opinion, even though she was a member of two main associations that were justified to say their opinion about the matter. Zdenka Marković wanted Truhelka to write to Marija Kumičić, but Truhelka responded that she would gladly do it if she thought it would have any sort of specific success, since Marija's words were already published. From the following lines in her letter, Truhelka's perception of Marija Kumičić's character becomes clear:

"When we talk in private, between ourselves, I can tell her anything what is on my mind and deep in my heart; she is so considerate and loyal that she will hear out everything and accept every reproach as generously as every praise - which she accepts calmly and indifferently. And I am sure that, if I had been in Zagreb on those days, and talked and discussed with Mrs K[umičić]. more often about this subject, as much as I partly do agree with her (I have to admit!), she would surely moderate her opinions to such

a degree, that there would be nothing offensive left in the article. I think that she was under the influence of certain people, I guess irresponsible or such who wanted to shift responsibility to somebody else, so in the first instance she reacted the way she did, and by now is surely already sorry because of it. That is why I think, maybe it wouldn't be amiss if you realized your intention and contacted her - maybe even visited her, to talk to her in person. She thinks highly of you and loves you, her greatest regret being that we could not already recruit you for the Croatian Woman, where you would serve as the most beautiful ornament and source of pride. I do not know whether you will be satisfied with these lines that I have written. But I do wish from the bottom of my heart that this matter straightens out - in public, but even more between you and Mrs. Kumičić, two of our great and meritorious women, because it would be great shame if an irreparable gap appeared, without an attempt to overcome or fill it in"<sup>22</sup>.

### **Conclusion**

It may be speculated about the reasons of Marija Kumičić's marginal position in Croatian history as well as literary history, but the most evident one is that she was a Croatian nationalist who propagated Catholic religious beliefs and fought for the preservation of Croatian identity. Because of that, she was a *persona non grata* during the years of socialist Yugoslavia, after in May 1945 the communist regime was established. This veil of silence is something very difficult to remove after several decades and several generations have passed. It is also reflected today. Some of the newest publications, for example, the popular children's edition on fearless Croatian women (Barat, 2019), do not mention Marija Kumičić. She shares the destiny of many other literary authors who were purposefully neglected or whose literary and public work was officially banned during Communism, which resulted in their falling out of both private (individual) and collective memory<sup>23</sup>. Marija Kumičić died on February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1945 in

Zagreb at the age of 82 (Anon, 1945a), probably just in time to avoid being a witness to this happening. A longtime president of the Croatian Woman and wife of a historian Rudolf Horvat, Jelisa-sava Horvat, gave a speech at the funeral service (Anon, 1945b) and instead of flowers, a collected sum of 3.000 kuna was given to the Children's Home founded by the Croatian Female Teachers' Association (Anon, 1945c). Having in mind all that has been mentioned, I think it may be safely concluded that Marija Kumi-čić was a strong, courageous, ambitious, enterprising and versatile woman who saw many obstacles that life put up for her as chal-lenges. Although her literary work may not be as successful as her husband's opus, seen in the historical, social and cultural con-text in which she worked as an author and a public figure, it must be perceived as valuable. The same applies to all other areas of her public activity, leaving a significant trace in Croatian social, cultural and literary history in the period between the two world wars. Hopefully, this paper will help with placing Marija Kumičić on the map of (future) scientific research in the (Croatian) huma-nities - a place she very well deserves.

## NOTES

1 - Since Marija Kumičić's work cannot be understood separately from the historical and political context she lived in, it should be mentioned that before the First World War, Croatia was part of the Austro-Hunga-rian Monarchy. Then, in October 1918, it became part of the State of Slovenes, Croatsians and Serbs, and from December of the same year of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croatsians and Slovenes, proclaimed in Belgrade - the capital of Serbia - under the rule of the Karađorđević dynasty. In 1929 the state changed its name into Kingdom of Yugoslavia, that fell apart in 1941, following the foundation of The Independant State of

Croatia - a fascist puppet state of Germany and Italy, succeeded by another change of regime in 1945: the transition into Communist Yugoslavia that included six socialist republics: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Serbia, with two autonomous provinces within Serbia: Vojvodina and Kosovo, and with Serbian city Belgrade being the capital.

**2** - In most histories and surveys of Croatian literature, Marija Kumičić is at best only mentioned, without providing much details about her work or offering any kind of a systematic portrait (Detoni Dujmić, 1998, pp. 21, 26, 28-31, 33, 35, 37, 38, 150; Jelčić 2004, p. 325; Brešić, 2015, pp. 99, 223, 325), or else completely omitted (Frangješ, 1987; Prosperov Novak, 2004). What this shows is that she has been given more credit as a cultural and humanitarian worker than as a literary authoress.

**3** - Division for the History of Croatian Literature is part of the Institute for the History of Croatian Literature, Theatre and Music of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, Croatia. The official name of the bequest includes only the name of Marija Kumičić's husband Eugen (Eugen Kumičić's bequest, call number HR-AHAZU-KN-121) - hopefully it will be corrected in the near future.

**4** - Zagreb, Knjižara Lavoslava Hartmana (Kugli and Deutsch).

**5** - Zagreb, Knjižara L. Hartmana (St. Kugli).

**6** - This is not the only example of the girls' literature genre popular at the time. Another very popular book providing advice for young girls written in an epistolary form was Jagoda Truhelka's *U carstvu duše* [*In the Empire of the Soul*] from 1910.

**7** - Marija was also an editor of a very popular cookbook for girls (*Nova zagrebačka kuharica* [*New Zagreb's Cookbook*], [1888]) published in several reprints and new editions. It is the first cookbook written in Croatian language, but the main names and expressions in recipes are bilingual: German words are still present together with the newly introduced Croatian words, because the German ones were more familiar to the Austro-Hungarian readership of the time.

**8** - The issue of women's emancipation became a popular topic in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, the position of women in Croatia was similar to other European countries, which means that it was defined by a traditional (patriarchal) value system. Due to individual efforts, however, the women's issue slowly started to

enter into everyday life, primarily through articles in newspapers and other forms of public media, that contributed to the (new) perception of women and helped to define their role in a modern society (Ograjšek, 2004, pp. 89-100). In this context we can also mention a twenty four page brochure with the same title, *Žensko pitanje* [*Women's Issue*], published in 1902 by Dane Trbojević, who discussed the subject from the Serbian context of the time. Trbojević pointed out that although women are mostly motivated by imagination, God had also given them capacity to feel empathy and sympathy, and with regard to reason, he sees no difference between men and women (Trbojević, 1902, pp. 12-13).

**9** - Martin Lovrenčević (1856-1945), one of the contributors of newspaper "Hrvatska" ["Croatia"] (1886-1895), where Marija Kumičić's husband Eugen was also one of the editors and contributors. Lovrenčević was also a translator from Russian, English and French, (unsuccessfully) engaged by Heruc to work on the Russian-Croatian dictionary. Lovrenčević's daughter Mara was married to Ante Pavelić (1889-1959), a Croatian general and military dictator who governed the fascist Independent State of Croatia (Očak; Spasić, 1987, pp. 680-681; Matković, 2011, p. 830).

**10** - Translation by Ana Batinić.

**11** - It is interesting to make a comparison between Marija Kumičić's and Tomáš Masaryk's thoughts on women's emancipation. Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850-1937), a Czechoslovak politician, statesman, sociologist and philosopher, approached the (so called) women's issue from the viewpoint of democratism. Women's movement is the consequence of democratism - women want equality with men. Since a woman and a man create an intimate union, it is not possible to talk about women's issue separately. Women's issue is not something that concerns only women, but it also includes husbands and children, it is a universal, social issue, since a family is a social unit. In all areas of human life and work, a woman has to be tentatively equal, that is equal in terms of rights and all paths leading into public life should be open for her: "When observing life more closely, I do not perceive any differences in intellectual competences between a woman and a man. A man is physically stronger, he is sexually different, but intellectually and emotionally he is equal to a woman". [translation by Ana Batinić] In Masaryk's opinion, to consider a woman intellectually inferior to a man can

be added to many prevalent prejudices and superstitions in our “modern” world. Besides, Masaryk also promoted political equality of women, advocating for a higher, more thorough and more comprehensive female education (Masaryk, 1911, pp. 89-91).

**12** - Johann Heinrich Daniel Zschokke (1771-1848), best known in literature for his prose works, among which is *Das Goldmachersdorf* (*The Goldmaker's Village*, 1917). The copy kept at the National and University Library in Zagreb has a stamp with a warning “to be censored”.

**13** - The letter was sent from Barilović on January 11<sup>th</sup> 1907. Today it is kept in the literary bequest of Eugen and Marija Kumičić. Translation by Ana Batinić.

**14** - Unfortunately, due to difficulties in reading the handwriting, it is not possible to accurately determine which one. The title might be [*Život u ljubavi / Life in Love*].

**15** - Zola, nevertheless, soon became a well-known writer in Croatian culture. After *Thérèse Raquin*, *La Bête humaine* appeared in the edition of Zabavna biblioteka, a popular Croatian publishing series, translated by Jakša Sedmak (Anon, 1922, p. 6). According to the letter sent to Marija Kumičić by Nikola Andrić, editor in chief of Zabavna biblioteka and the translator of many titles, on September 19<sup>th</sup> 1922, he received 44 pages of Marija's translation of a prose work titled *Za tragom smrti* [*Tracing Death*]. Since he was quite satisfied with the quality of translation, he planned to offer her some titles to be translated for Zabavna biblioteka editions. However, the bibliography of this famous and very successful publishing series in which from 1913 until 1941 more than 600 books were printed, does not include the name of Marija Kumičić among other translators (Andrić, 2007), so the intended plans for cooperation were obviously not realised.

**16** - Kumičić was actually more a naturalist in theory than in practice. The epithet was given to him primarily because of the theoretical knowledge of Zola's comprehension of literature that he displayed in the mentioned article *O romanu* [*On the Novel*], but still relying on the Croatian romanticist tradition in his novels (Šicel, 1993, pp. 51-60).

**17** - *Govor u spomen stogodišnjice rođenja dra. Ante Starčevića 23. V. 1923.: na svečanom sielu društva “Hrvatska žena” izrekla Marija Kumičić*, [*Speech Celebrating the Hundredth Anniversary of Ante Starčević's Birth*] Nakladom Društva Hrvatska žena, Zagreb, [1923?];



*Komemorativni govor u spomen 45. obljetnice smrti Oca domovine dra Ante Starčevića* [Commemorative Speech Remembering the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ante Starčević, the Father of the Homeland], Naklada Hrvatske žene, Zagreb, 1941. Autographs of concepts of many of her speeches are kept at her and her husband's literary bequest.

**18** - Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić is a Croatian children's classic, best known for her children's novel *Čudnovate zgode šegrta Hlapića* [The Brave Adventures of a Shoemaker's Boy] first published in 1913 and translated into many foreign languages.

**19** - Jagoda Truhelka is a Croatian author and paedagogical worker, who spent her active working life in a teaching profession: as a teacher she worked in her hometown Osijek, then in Gospić. After that she gained a teaching position at the boarding school for girls in Zagreb and later in a teacher-training school in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and then finally as the headmistress of the two-year girls' college in Banja Luka. She was also the first president of the Sarajevo branch of the Croatian Woman, established on November 19<sup>th</sup> 1922 (Benyovsky, 1996, p. 22).

**20** - Zdenka Marković is a Croatian author and a literary translator. She studied Slavic studies, art history and philosophy in Zagreb and Freiburg. Letters sent from Truhelka to Zdenka Marković were written in the period from 1901 to 1953. They are deposited in the literary bequest of Zdenka Marković, kept at the archives of the Division for the History of Croatian Literature at the Institute for the History of Croatian Literature, Theatre and Music, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb. The majority of correspondence was published in 2004 (Batinić ed., 2004), apart from several letters and postal cards, from July 1941 to July 1953, which were only recently discovered in a part of Zdenka Marković's bequest still waiting for a detailed archival analysis and an afterward scientific interpretation. Letters cover a range of different topics, from personal life of both women, to professional ones, for example, Truhelka's advice regarding her student's translation of Polish literary works to Croatian (Truhelka's letter to Zdenka Marković, Sarajevo, December 27<sup>th</sup> 1916).

**21** - Marija Kumičić was strongly against placing the statue of the king Tomislav at the place where it was intended, opposite the main railway building in the centre of Zagreb. In her opinion, the devastation of the

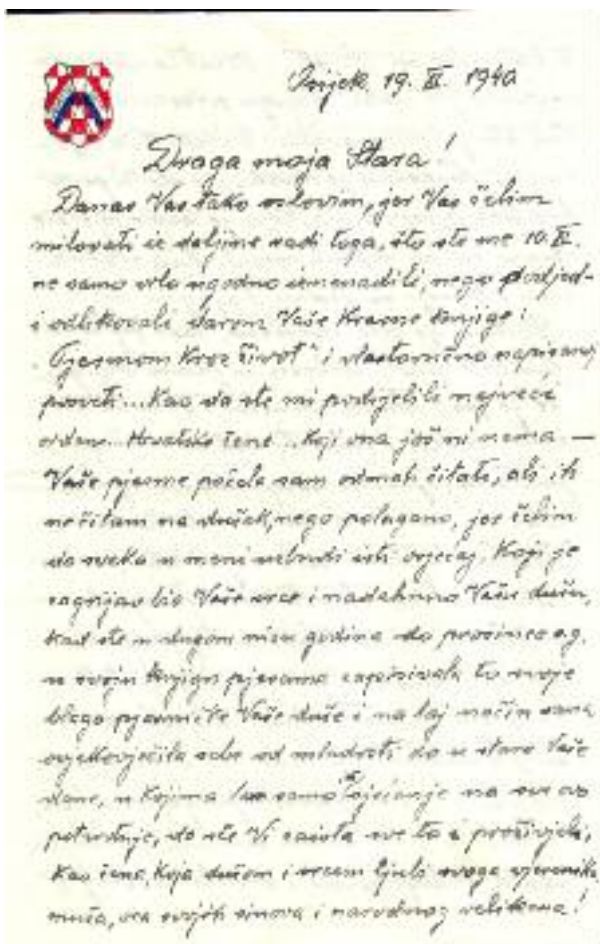
most beautiful park in the city was too much of a price, and called it a “disaster” and “an act of vandalism”, accepting no justification that the spot for the monument was chosen by the sculptor himself, because he was not alive anymore... (Anon, 1940a). The sculptor was Robert Fran-geš Mihanović (1872-1940), who died in January 1940. Zdenka Marković had very friendly connections with him and his family, and that is probably the reason why she was particularly sensitive to the subject and felt compelled to write to her former teacher Jagoda Truhelka about it.

**22** - Translated by A. Batinić. The letter which Jagoda Truhelka sent from Osijek on August 19<sup>th</sup> 1940 is kept at Zdenka Marković’s literary bequest, at the archives of the Division for the History of Croatian Literature at the Institute for the History of Croatian Literature, Theatre and Music, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb (call number HR-AHAZU-KN-135), published in Batinić ed. 2004, pp. 187-188.

**23** - For literary authors, even very well-known and popular ones like Jagoda Truhelka, it meant being excluded from the canon.



Pic. 1 - Photograph of Marija Kumičić (1890)



Pic. 2 - A letter sent to Marija Kumičić from Josipa Glembay (1861-1941), an author and a pedagogue, founder of the Croatian Woman branch in Osijek in 1921, congratulating her on the publication of *Pjesmom kroz život* [*With Poems through Life*], 1940. (Osijek, November 19<sup>th</sup> 1940)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. D. [Diklić A.] Kumičić, Marija** in “Leksikon hrvatskih pisaca”. Školska knjiga, Zagreb, 2000, p. 409.
- A. K. C. [Kassowitz-Cvijić A.] Kumičić, Marija** in *Znameniti i zaslužni Hrvati te pomena vrijedna lica u hrvatskoj povijesti od 925.-1925.* Izdao odbor za izdavanje knjige “Znameniti i zaslužni Hrvati 925.-1925”. Zagreb, 1925, p. 154.
- Andrić N.** *Zabavna biblioteka. Bibliografija. Katalog.* Ed. Mandić Hekman, Ivana. Ex libris, Split - Zagreb, 2007.
- Anon** *Preveden Zolin roman “Čovjek zvijer”.* “Riječ”, 3 (77), April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1922, p. 6.
- Anon** *Potrebno je da banska vlast izvrši uvidjaj i da zabrani uništenje Trga kralja Tomislava.* “Večer”, n. 5921, August 13<sup>th</sup> 1940a, p. 5.
- Anon** *Banska vlast će donijeti odluku u pogledu uništenja Trga kralja Tomislava.* “Večer”, August 14<sup>th</sup> 1940b, p. 4.
- Anon** *Što govore Zagrepčani.* “Večer”, August 16<sup>th</sup> 1940c, p. 5.
- Anon** *Umrle Marija Kumičić. Hrvatska književnica i javna radnica.* “Hrvatski narod”, n. 1268, February 23<sup>rd</sup> 1945a, p. 2.
- Anon** *Sprovod Marije Kumičić.* “Hrvatski narod”, n. 1270, February 25<sup>th</sup> 1945b, p. 2.
- Anon** *Darovi. Dar dječjem domu.* “Hrvatski narod”, n. 1274, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1945c, p. 3.
- Barat T.** *Priče o neustrašivim hrvatskim ženama.* Iris Illyrica, Zagreb, 2019.
- Batinić A.** ed. *Pisma Jagode Truhelke Zdenki Marković.* Poseban otisak “Kronike Zavoda za povijest hrvatske književnosti, kazališta i glazbe Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti”. Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, n. 13-14-15, 2004, pp. 113-198.
- Benyovsky L.** *Putem uspomena Marije Kumičić.* Časopis za suvremenu povijest, 28 (3), 1996, pp. 427-438.
- Benyovsky L.** *Marija Kumičić (1863-1945)* in “*Informatica Museologica*”, 32 (1-2), 2001.
- Benyovsky L.** *Marija Kumičić* in “*Hrvatska revija*”, 10 (4), 2010, pp. 106-117.
- Brešić V.** *Hrvatska književnost 19. stoljeća.* Alfa, Zagreb, 2015.

- Detoni-Dujmić D.** *Ljepša polovica književnosti*. Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 1998.
- Frangeš I.** *Povijest hrvatske književnosti*. Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske - Cankarjeva založba; Zagreb, Ljubljana, 1987.
- Grdešić M.** *Kumičić, Marija*, in *Hrvatska književna enciklopedija*, vol. 2, Gl. Ma, Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, Zagreb, 2010, p. 458.
- Jelčić D.** *Povijest hrvatske književnosti*. 2<sup>nd</sup> expanded edition, Naklada Pavičić, Zagreb, 2004.
- K. Č. J. [Čorkalo-Jemrić K.]**. *Kumičić, Marija* in *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, vol. 8, Kr - Li, Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, Zagreb, 2013, pp. 381-382.
- Malbaša Z.[dravko]** *Kumičić, Marija* in *Leksikon pisaca Jugoslavije*, vol. III, K - Lj, Matica srpska, 1987, p. 529.
- Masaryk T. G.** [Chapter] *Žensko pitanje [Women's Issue]*. Herben, Jan. Sisak, Tisak i naklada knjižare Janka Dujaka. Preface by Ivan Lugiarić, [1911].
- Matković S.** *Starčevićev dom u vihoru rata: pravaške uspomene iz doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske* in "Časopis za suvremenu povijest", 3, 2011, pp. 827-861.
- Ograjšek I.** *Zastupljenost ženskog pitanja u hrvatskim glasilima na kraju 19. stoljeća* in "Radovi - Zavod za hrvatsku povijest", vol. 34-35-36, 2004, pp. 89-100.
- Peić Čaldarović D.** *Ženska profesionalna udruženja u Hrvatskoj 1918 - 1941. godine (Prilog istraživanju društvenog položaja žena u Hrvatskoj između dvaju svjetskih ratova)*. Magistarski rad. Filozofski fakultet, Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Zagreb, 1996.
- Pisačić pl. A.** *Gradjani traže da se uspostavi stari oblik Tomislavovog trga* in "Večer", August 12<sup>th</sup> 1940, p. 5.
- Prosperov Novak S.** *Povijest hrvatske književnosti. Između Pešte, Beča i Beograda*, vol. II. Marjan tisak, Zagreb, 2004.
- Spasić Lj.** *Lovrenčević, Martin* in *Leksikon pisaca Jugoslavije*, vol. III, K - LJ, Matica srpska, 1987, pp. 680-681.
- Szabo A.** *Osvrt na život i djelo Marije Kumičić* in *Zbornik radova: Okrugli stol Eugen Kumičić - život i djelo. U povodu 150. obljetnice rođenja književnika Eugena Kumičića* (14. - 15. listopada 2000., Mošćenička Draga - Brseč). Udruga Jenio Sisolski, Brseč - Zambelli, Rijeka, 2002, pp. 86-97.

**Szabo A.** *Marija Kumičić - istaknuta žena hrvatske povijesti i kulture 19. i 20. stoljeća*, in *Zbornik radova: Kolokvij Eugen Kumičić - 100 godina poslije. U povodu obilježavanja stote obljetnice smrti književnika Eugena Kumičića* (13. lipnja 2004., Brseč, Memorijalna kuća Eugena **Kumičića**). Udruga Jenio Sisolski, Brseč - Zambelli, Rijeka, 2010, pp. 57-66.

**Szabo A.** *Marija Kumičić i njezin doprinos razvoju kulture i prosvjete u 19. i 20. stoljeću*. "Marulić", vol. 48, 3 (264), 2015, pp. 7-27.

**Šicel M.** *Kumičićevi "naturalistički" romani* in "Liburnijske teme", n. 7, 1993, pp. 51-60.

**Trbojević D.** *Žensko pitanje*. Sremski Karlovci, Srpska manastirska štamparija, 1902.

**Vaščenko M.** *Krunoslav Heruc i promidžba velikohrvatske ideje u Rusiji. Nepoznata strana djelovanja "hrvatskog konzula"*. Časopis za suvremenu povijest, n. 2, 2011, pp. 577-586.

### **Archival sources**

Literary bequest of Eugen and Marija Kumičić. The archives of the Division for the History of Croatian Literature at the Institute for the History of Croatian Literature, Theatre and Music, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb (call number HR-AHAZU-KN-121).

Literary bequest of Zdenka Marković. The archives of the Division for the History of Croatian Literature at the Institute for the History of Croatian Literature, Theatre and Music, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb (call number HR-AHAZU-KN-135).

### **Webpage**

Očak, I. Heruc, Krunoslav. <http://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=7599> (visited on December 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019).

**GLI INTERVENTI DI ELENA, VESTINA  
E GALLA PATRICIA  
PER LA “COSTRUZIONE”  
DELLA ROMA CRISTIANA**

*Margherita Cecchelli*

(Roma - Già Università “La Sapienza” -  
Pontificia Università della Santa Croce)

Nel grande allestimento della Roma Cristiana due furono le direttrici fondamentali, la prima riguardò l'organizzazione del territorio urbano e suburbano della città e la seconda la materiale costituzione di una nuova, ben visibile strutturazione architettonica articolata in complessi sia cultuali che relativi ad una serie di servizi siglati sempre dalla presenza della Chiesa e dalla sua operatività per assicurarne un buon funzionamento a vantaggio della popolazione e dei numerosi pellegrini che affluivano nell'Urbe. Quindi per primo ci si impiegò nella suddivisione del territorio urbano in sette regioni ecclesiastiche (Fig. 1) la cui funzione era del tutto sganciata da quella delle 14 regioni augustee che continuavano ad assolvere i loro compiti di natura strettamente civile. (Fig. 2)

La nuova partizione della città fu dettata essenzialmente per attrarre in questa anche tutto l'anello del suburbio, diventato la città satellite della devozione per i martiri romani, dove complessi martiriali e strutture di ospitalità per i pellegrini e di residenza si andavano moltiplicando e possiamo dire urbanizzando questa area. La peculiarità di ciascuna delle sette regioni, a parte quella della loro organizzazione in un certo numero di territori titolari, come oggi avviene per le odierne parrocchie, fu quella che tutte e sette sboccavano, a differenza delle augustee, sulle vie consolari che conducevano ai vari santuari. Così veniva evidenziata la grande importanza che aveva raggiunto il suburbio<sup>1</sup>.



La prima grossa personalità che sentì l'urgenza di collaborare a questo totale rinnovamento di Roma fu proprio Elena, la madre di Costantino. Fu lei che, vivendo a Roma per un considerevole periodo e in seguito avendo preso ispirazione dalla sua attività gerosolimitana, collaborò con il figlio al riguardo in alcune fondamentali iniziative basilari per la "costruzione" della città cristiana<sup>2</sup>. Infatti, per ciò che interessa le attività imperiali, dobbiamo riconoscere, quasi in bilanciamento tra di queste, i loro interventi *intra* ed *extra* urbani del complesso vaticano, di quello paolino sull'Ostiense, ed anche di quello laurenziano della Tiburtina, in stretta correlazione con l'allestimento di un'area episcopale grandiosa *intra urbem* e almeno di una prima fondazione di tipo parrocchiale, nell'area dell'odierna S. Martino ai Monti, di avvio per la sistemazione dei territori delle regioni ecclesiastiche. Ma peculiarità, tutta eleniana nella sua unicità di realizzazione, fu soprattutto la costruzione intramuranea della basilica chiamata *Sancta Hierusalem*, oggi S. Croce in Gerusalemme. (Figg. 3-5) La chiesa fu insediata in una parte della residenza imperiale del Sessorio, abitata e modificata dall'imperatrice, la cui fase più importante attiene all'epoca severiana<sup>3</sup>. L'edificio di culto, per la sua vicinanza al complesso episcopale si può considerare come una sua pertinenza. L'importanza di questa, che non dovette essere mai una cappella di uso esclusivo imperiale, come è stato a lungo sostenuto fino alla scoperta del suo battistero, è ben meditata ed esplicita già nella scelta della sua intitolazione che non la può indicare come istituzione di appannaggio esclusivo della corte<sup>4</sup>. La Santa Gerusalemme a Roma significa che a Roma si celebra l'unione delle due città sante per eccellenza del Cristianesimo e in Roma confluisce la valenza e il portato simbolico della città palestinese. Il significato altamente cristologico di questa fondazione fu sempre intensamente sottolineato attraverso i secoli. Le funzioni della IV domenica di quaresima, detta *Laetare*, alla quale fu connessa la suggestiva cerimonia della Rosa d'oro già sicuramente prima del 1000, lo testimoniano<sup>5</sup>. Questa di Elena fu poi

anche una operazione di notevole significato politico, basilare anche per la costituzione del primato della sede romana la cui questione sarà ampiamente dibattuta specie a partire dalla seconda metà del IV secolo<sup>6</sup>. A completamento dell'alto significato di questa fondazione, non poté mancare l'istituto battesimale. Un battistero che ricordava quelli annessi sia al grande complesso gerosolimitano del S. Sepolcro sia all'altro edificio sul Monte degli Ulivi, detto appunto Eleona, dalla rara forma rettangolare della sua vasca di 73 cm. x 1m. (Fig. 6)

La chiesa, che celebrava il magistero del Cristo e chiamata oggi del Pater Noster, è ritenuta una fondazione esclusivamente eleniana<sup>7</sup>. Ho notato, quando abbiamo eseguito alcuni scavi nell'ambito del complesso di S. Croce, che la pianta originaria della basilica rappresenta un *unicum*, perché non più adottata nella formulazione delle aule ecclesiastiche e altresì che prende ispirazione dall'edificio civile della basilica di Massenzio, terminata da Costantino. (Fig. 7) Tre navate le ebbe soltanto nell'VIII secolo. Ciò dimostra anche come la planimetria delle chiese romane più antiche sperimentasse soluzioni diverse e il problema delle navate non rientrasse spesso nella loro progettazione<sup>8</sup>.

Per altro nella nostra planimetria di S. Croce, nonostante l'aula di culto fosse stata insediata in un grande ambiente preesistente severiano, la funzione del santuario fu molto potenziata dalla presenza di una abside, aggiunta da Elena, eccezionalmente grande, da sembrare sproporzionata. Questa, secondo una ipotesi abbastanza recente, potrebbe essere stata parte di una struttura rotonda idealmente rapportabile a quella relativa all'edificio del S. Sepolcro di Gerusalemme<sup>9</sup>.

La sua sproporzione, ancora oggi ben riscontrabile, nonostante le modifiche intervenute attraverso i secoli e mitigata dalla sistemazione di un transetto medievale (Fig. 5), ne fece quasi edificio a sé, ricordando comunque in qualche modo i rapporti esistenti a Gerusalemme tra la basilica del S. Sepolcro e l'edificio che ospitava la tomba di Cristo<sup>10</sup>. (Fig. 8)

È chiaro che questo intervento dell'imperatrice non può non rapportarsi non solo alla sua dipendenza dalla cattedrale romana, ma anche alla correlazione con i grandi complessi martiriali sopra ricordati di S. Pietro, S. Paolo e S. Lorenzo, che idealmente ne rappresentano una conseguenza e risentono tutti della sua partecipazione alla loro progettazione.

A questo proposito, personalmente, non ho mai creduto alla minor importanza dedicata al complesso dell'Ostiense al tempo di Costantino rispetto a quello petrino del Vaticano, come anche si rivela dalle espressioni di Eusebio: l'imperatore si ispirò a Paolo per molti dei suoi interventi, e non bisogna affatto pensare che avesse onorato l'Apostolo con una basilica memoriale di scarsissima importanza, come ho già anche detto in un mio precedente contributo. (Fig. 9)

La seconda basilica di S. Paolo, quella dell'editto dei tre imperatori, Valentiniano II, Teodosio e Arcadio, alla fine del IV secolo, non è certo un "restyling" di quella costantiniana e ne rappresenta di sicuro un ampliamento insieme alla sistemazione di tutta l'area paolina dell'Ostiense, come indicano le parole dell'editto "*amplificare ed attollere*", ma la basilica costantiniana non fu certo compresa nello spazio dell'attuale sia pur vasto presbiterio<sup>11</sup>. (Figg. 9-10)

I due termini dell'editto potrebbero anche ben riferirsi ad una aggiunta di navate, mantenendo nell'ambito di queste la precedente costruzione, e la precedente abside<sup>12</sup>, come si è potuto appurare in altre occasioni e forse anche nella basilica sistina di S. Maria Maggiore<sup>13</sup>.

Non so quanto l'esempio di Elena possa aver influito sul comportamento delle devotissime patrizie romane che abbracciarono la fede cristiana. Certo è che la Chiesa fu resa potente in massima parte dalla collaborazione del patriziato romano e grandi interventi al riguardo furono opera delle donne. Non poche famiglie romane, (un esempio clamoroso fu quella di Melania Giuniore), si spogliarono di beni più cospicui di quelli imperiali<sup>14</sup> e la potenza

della Chiesa, come è noto, acquisì un elevato censo che fu in grado di gareggiare con quello dello Stato. In alcune passioni di martiri romani, pensiamo a Lorenzo o ai Ss: Giovanni e Paolo, o ai cosiddetti Martiri Greci, le sostanze della Chiesa sono la ragione vera del loro supplizio ed esprimono, nel momento in cui furono scritte, tutta l'acredine dei funzionari statali che pretendevano di impadronirsene<sup>15</sup>. Di continuo avvenivano donazioni veramente consistenti.

Vogliamo ricordare a questo proposito un caso importante per la costruzione della Roma cristiana anche se circoscritto ad un solo episodio. Una tal signora Vestina lasciò per testamento nella disponibilità del papa dei gioielli così preziosi che Innocenzo I (401-417) poté costruire la postazione titolare dei Ss. Gervasio e Protasio, poi S. Vitale sul *vicus Longus*, nella IV regione ecclesiastica molto ampia, il cui territorio arrivava forse anche a comprendere la zona del Foro<sup>16</sup>. La fondazione fu dotata di rendite cospicue per ottemperare alla sua funzione parrocchiale. Sembra anche, da una attenta lettura della fonte, che all'edificio di culto fosse stato annesso a un battistero. Sottolineo che, tra i numerosi battisteri paleocristiani ormai scoperti anche in tempi abbastanza recenti, quello di S. Vitale, qualora si ritrovasse, sarebbe il solo, probabilmente insieme a quello di S. Marco, ad avere un riscontro cronologico così preciso<sup>17</sup>. Non sappiamo molto, anzi nulla, della vita e della famiglia della nostra munifica signora, che forse si originava dall'Abruzzo e da Vestino, un celebre bibliotecario di Adriano. Ella, che coinvolse altresì nella sua donazione una sua cugina, certo fu di rilevanza notevole se le fu dedicata una ampia pagina del *Liber Pontificalis* romano nella vita di Innocenzo I<sup>18</sup>. Vestina poi, come ho avuto già motivo di osservare, anch'essa forse, pur non avendone avuto contezza, contribuì non solo all'accrescimento del tessuto parrocchiale di Roma, fondamentale per l'assetto della città cristiana, ma mise in condizione Innocenzo I di potenziare i suoi rapporti con le sedi imperiali romane di Milano e poi di Ravenna avviando nell'Urbe il culto dei santi molto

venerati in quelle città. Io credo che a questa operazione non fu estranea il vescovo di Milano Ambrogio, cui si deve il rinvenimento delle reliquie di Gervasio e Protasio nel 386, rinvenimento che fu altamente significativo nella sua lotta contro la fede ariana, patrocinata anche dall'imperatrice Giustina e che fu sempre partecipe e collaborativo anche nei confronti delle vicende della situazione romana del suo tempo<sup>19</sup>. Con la creazione a Roma di una istituzione titolare in onore di Gervasio e Protasio e poi di Vitale si potenziò inoltre un legame tra lo Stato e la Chiesa, già avviato durante l'esilio del pontefice a Ravenna al tempo del sacco di Alarico.

La chiesa oggi risulta affossata rispetto al rialzamento del piano della odierna via Nazionale, che ribatte abbastanza fedelmente il tracciato della strada romana. Fu ridotta nel Rinascimento alla sola navata centrale ma, specie alla sua destra (alla sua sinistra c'è il Palazzo delle Esposizioni), si possono vedere, inserite nel muro continuo della navata unica, i resti delle colonne dell'originario edificio basilicale e poi anche le murature paleocristiane dell'abside (Fig. 11) e dell'elegante ingresso, che ci mostrano il più antico uso del pulvino in una chiesa romana. (Fig. 12)

Da rilevare inoltre che la chiesa fu probabilmente la prima a Roma ad avere la facciata aperta a 5 varchi: non aveva porte, un breve colonnato, oggi tamponato, immetteva direttamente nell'aula di culto<sup>20</sup>. (Fig. 13)

Nel panorama dell'attività femminile in relazione al complicato allestimento dell'Urbe cristiana abbiamo ricordato chi dotò Roma di un complesso martiriale, anche se di carattere teofanico come tutti quelli della Palestina, il più importante tra tutti, quello di Cristo, e a chi si deve una importante postazione di tipo titolare, e Vestina non è la sola donna a cui si può riconoscere tale iniziativa nell'arco cronologico che ci interessa; ora, infine, abbiamo scelto un altro esempio relativo ad un'altra donna che fondò probabilmente, ma comunque valorizzò,, con la sua presenza, una delle cinque più importanti antiche istituzioni monastiche del Vaticano.

Si tratta con tutta probabilità del monastero di S. Stefano Maggiore, poi degli Abissini e lei è Galla Patricia, della famiglia di Simmaco, imparentata con Boezio che, rimasta vedova: *apud Beati Petri Apostoli aecclesiam monasterio tradidit*, celebrata da Gregorio Magno nei suoi Dialoghi. (Fig. 14)

Comunque, sia che la donna fosse stata fondatrice del monastero vaticano, sia che vi avesse trascorso il resto della sua vita, i suoi atti di evergetismo erano stati così rilevanti che il sentirli narrare dalle monache anziane del suo monastero rendeva commosse e partecipi le giovani sorelle. Tutte le rendite della donna, si può dedurre dal contesto di Gregorio Magno, andarono alla Chiesa e in opere di bene e abbiamo notizia di altre fondazioni monastiche che potrebbero esserle attribuite. Certo è che Gregorio è la prima fonte che ci rivela l'esistenza di un monastero femminile presso il più importante santuario romano, e sarebbe stato inconcepibile che non ne fosse stato dotato quando S. Paolo e S. Lorenzo f.l.m. ci sono pervenute documentazioni di analoghe fondazioni<sup>21</sup>. Aggiungiamo pure che al tempo di Pasquale I (817-824) il monastero, che era diventato maschile sotto Adriano I (772-795), fungeva anche da nosocomio, curando in particolare gli zoppi e i pellegrini, forse confermando una funzione che non era stata ignota anche alla congregazione femminile<sup>22</sup>.

S. Stefano maggiore è l'unico monastero dei cinque antichi vaticani che ci ha lasciato testimonianze archeologiche pur rappresentando una notevole riduzione della chiesa precedente, dalla quale sono state praticamente escluse le navate laterali e effettuate alcune modifiche arbitrarie. (Fig. 15)

Tutto questo si deve a un restauro della prima metà del '900, che ci impedisce purtroppo di esaminare il complesso che fino ad allora non era, come oggi ridotto, alla sola chiesa. Questa era giustamente inserita nell'edificio del monastero e, nonostante le trasformazioni avvenute, poteva ancora conservare parti della primitiva costruzione e delle fasi che ad essa erano succedute.

Dalla chiesa si può accedere ad una notevole area archeologica,

di difficile interpretazione, che potrebbe anch'essa conservare tracce delle *facies* più antiche del monumento. Il restauro comunque, se si fossero conservate le parti relative al monastero, come è evidente da un esame della chiesa, ci avrebbe proposto non la versione dei documentati interventi di Adriano I (772-795) e di Leone III (795-816), ma almeno sicuramente una testimonianza del risultato della ricostruzione del complesso intrapresa nel medioevo. Proprio la chiesa, infatti, ne ha lasciato memoria, in base all'analisi archeologica delle residue cortine in mattoni con stilatura in mezzo ai letti di malta, tramandateci, nonostante i restauri e le modifiche del '400 e del '700. È una *facies*, quella medievale, cui si collega anche il bel portale del XII secolo ancora oggi in opera nella facciata odierna. (Figg. 16-17)

## NOTE

1 - Sulle regioni ecclesiastiche cfr. Cecchelli Margherita, *Note sui titoli romani e le regioni ecclesiastiche* in "Augustinianum", 55, Fasc.1, Iunius, 2015, pp.185-204.

2 - Cfr. su Elena, della quale si è occupata più volte, il completo studio di Consolino Franca Ela, *Elena. De stercore ad regnum* in "Costantino I. Enciclopedia costantiniana sulla figura e l'immagine dell'imperatore del cosiddetto Editto di Milano 313-2013". Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, vol. I, Roma, 2013, pp. 117-131.

3 - Per l'area del Sessorio cfr. Colini Antonio, *Horti Spei Veteris, Palatium Sessorianum* in "Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia, s.III, Memorie", vol.VIII. L'Erma di Bretschneider, Città del Vaticano, 1955, pp. 137-177. Per le novità su S. Croce cfr. Cecchelli Margherita, *S. Croce in Gerusalemme: nuove considerazioni* in "La Basilica di S. Croce in Gerusalemme a Roma; quando l'antico è futuro" di Affanni Anna Maria. Beta Gamma Editoria, Viterbo, rist. 2003, pp.25-

30. Argentini Susanna-Ricciardi Monica, *Il complesso di S. Croce in Gerusalemme in Roma nuove acquisizioni ed ipotesi* in “Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia di Archeologia” 69, 1996-1997, pp.253-288. Cecchelli Margherita, *Santa Croce in Gerusalemme* in “Roma dall’antichità al medioevo, 2. Contesti tardoantichi e altomedievali” di L. Paroli - L. Vendittelli. Roma, 2004, pp. 223-348.

4 - Ancora di recente, battistero a parte, è stata sostenuta questa interpretazione, non considerando che questa chiesa non fu certo un “oratorio” e che il suo nome, fino a dopo il 1000, fu Santa Gerusalemme e non S. Croce. Che l’imperatrice possa aver avuto un oratorio privato, dove pregare anche insieme ai suoi, è del tutto plausibile, ma qui si tratta di una grande basilica e di una situazione del tutto speciale. Inoltre ancora: non è affatto detto che la basilica si trovasse in uno spazio chiuso della residenza imperiale, tale che non potesse aprirsi verso l’esterno e soprattutto in direzione della vicina chiesa cattedrale: cfr. Spera Lucrezia, *Monumenti cristiani e loro relazioni con i centri del potere: Roma* in “Acta XXVI Congressus internationalis Archaeologiae Christianae, Romae (22-28.9.2013). Costantino e i Costantinidi. L’innovazione costantiniana, le sue radici e i suoi sviluppi”, Pars I, curatela scientifica Brandt Olof, Fiocchi Nicolai Vincenzo, cura editoriale Brandt Olof, Castiglia Gabriele. Città del Vaticano, 2016, pp. 312 e 316-317.

5 - Per la cerimonia della IV domenica di Quaresima cfr. l’opera ottocentesca, più volte ripubblicata di Guéranger Dom Prosper, *L’anno liturgico I. Avvento-Natale-Quaresima-Passione*, Trad. P. Graziani. Edizioni Paoline, Alba, 1956, pp.586-592

6 - A questo proposito cfr. anche Cecchelli Margherita, *Il ruolo delle basiliche patriarcali nel sistema gestionale della Roma cristiana* in “Costellazioni geo-ecclesiali da Costantino a Giustiniano: dalle chiese ‘principali’ alle chiese patriarcali. XLIII Incontro di Studiosi dell’Antichità Cristiana (Roma, 7-9 maggio 2015)”. Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, Roma, 2017, pp. 345-359.

7 - A questo proposito cfr. Bagatti Bellarmino, *L’Eglise de la Gentilité en Palestine*. Jerusalem, 1968, pp.161-165.

8 - In effetti, tranne il caso della basilica Lateranense e di alcuni santuari suburbani, nell’Urbe le più antiche chiese paleocristiane furono anche costruite a navata unica.

9 - Cfr. nota 3 e fig.3.



**10** - A questo proposito si ricordi ancora l'importante ipotesi di S. Argentini - M. Ricciardi, cit. in nota 3.

**11** - Cfr. tra gli ultimi lavori Fiocchi Nicolai Vincenzo, *Vocazione funeraria della basilica di S. Paolo sulla via Ostiense (Roma)*, in "Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana". 85, 2009, pp.313-354.

**12** - Purtroppo, a causa della ricostruzione della basilica dopo l'incendio del 1823, poco si può esaminare delle antiche murature, comunque i resti dell'abside paleocristiana si possono ancora vedere e la muratura in mattoni con il relativo modulo, può ben appartenere sia alla metà che alla seconda metà del IV secolo, cfr. Cecchelli Margherita (a cura), *Caratteri costruttivi dell'edilizia paleocristiana a Roma*. Edizioni De Luca, Roma, 2001, pp. 332-333.

**13** - Al riguardo cfr. Cecchelli Margherita, *Santa Maria Maggiore e la Basilica Liberiana: considerazioni preliminari di una ricerca in atto*, in "Santa Maria Maggiore e Roma" a cura di Luciani Roberto. Palombi, Roma, 1996, pp. 31-38.

**14** - Uno fra gli esempi più clamorosi al riguardo fu proprio quello di Melania la giovane della *Gens Valeria* imparentata con quella dei *Cecioni*, che non smise mai di donare le sue proprietà e i suoi proventi alla Chiesa per i poveri, mettendo anche in scacco l'economia dell'impero romano di Occidente.

**15** - Basta leggere i racconti delle loro passioni per rendersene conto.

**16** - Cfr. nota 1.

**17** - Forse se si fosse indagato sull'oratorio scoperto nell'area del Palazzo delle Esposizioni adiacente alla chiesa potremmo avere avuto maggiori precisazioni sulla sua funzione, non esclusa quella di battistero. Per S. Marco cfr. Cecchelli Margherita, *S. Marco a Piazza Venezia, una basilica romana del periodo costantiniano* in "Costantino il Grande dall'antichità all'umanesimo. Colloquio sul Cristianesimo nel mondo antico. Macerata 18-20 dicembre 1990" a cura di Bonamente G. - Fusco F. Macerata, 1992, t. I, pp. 299-310.

**18** - *Le Liber Pontificalis*, a cura di L. Duchesne. I. Ernest Thorin Editeur, Paris, 1886, pp.220-222.

**19** - Riguardo al presenzialismo di Ambrogio negli avvenimenti della chiesa romana cfr.: Paredi Angelo, *Sant'Ambrogio e la sua età*. Hoepli 1941; Idem, *San'Ambrogio: l'uomo, il politico, il vescovo*. Rizzoli, Milano, 1985; La Piana Giorgio in *Enciclopedia Biografica Universale*.

Istituto dell'Enciclopedia italiana Treccani, Roma, 2006, pp. 434-442.

**20** - Per S. Vitale: Krautheimer et alii, *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae, IV*. Institute of fine Arts, New York University, Città del Vaticano, 1976, pp.299-316.

**21** - A. S. Paolo f.l.m. per il monastero femminile di S. Stefano, v. in Ferrari Guy, *Early Roman Monasteries*. Città del Vaticano, 1957, pp. 254-262; a S. Lorenzo f.l.m. per il monastero femminile di S. Cassiano, v. ibidem, pp. 182-186.

**22** - Per S. Stefano Maggiore cfr. Cecchelli Margherita, *S. Stefano Maggiore, cata Galla Patricia, poi degli Abissini: appunti per una revisione del monumento* in "Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica di Roma". 98,1997, pp. 283-300.



Fig. 1 - Roma, pianta delle regioni ecclesiastiche (rielaborazione E. Sarperi)



Fig. 2 - Roma, pianta delle regioni augustee

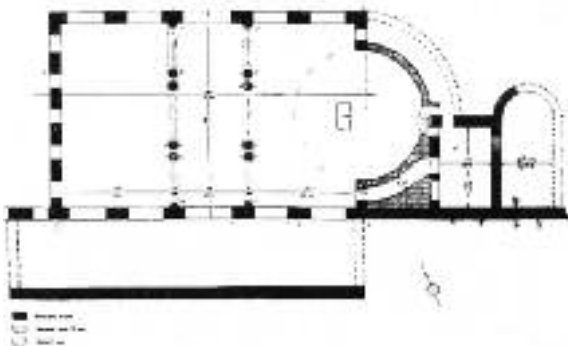


Fig. 3 - Roma, basilica di S. Croce in Gerusalemme. Pianta della chiesa eleniana con inserimento di una struttura rotonda includente la zona presbiteriale secondo l'ipotesi di S. Argentini e M. Ricciardi



Fig. 4 - Roma, basilica di S. Croce in Gerusalemme. La chiesa e il monastero (acquaforte di Giacomo Lauro, 1628) che mostrano l'aspetto del complesso prima della ristrutturazione settecentesca. Si possono notare i due atrî rispettivi e il nartece della chiesa che rispondono ancora ad un assetto bassomedievale

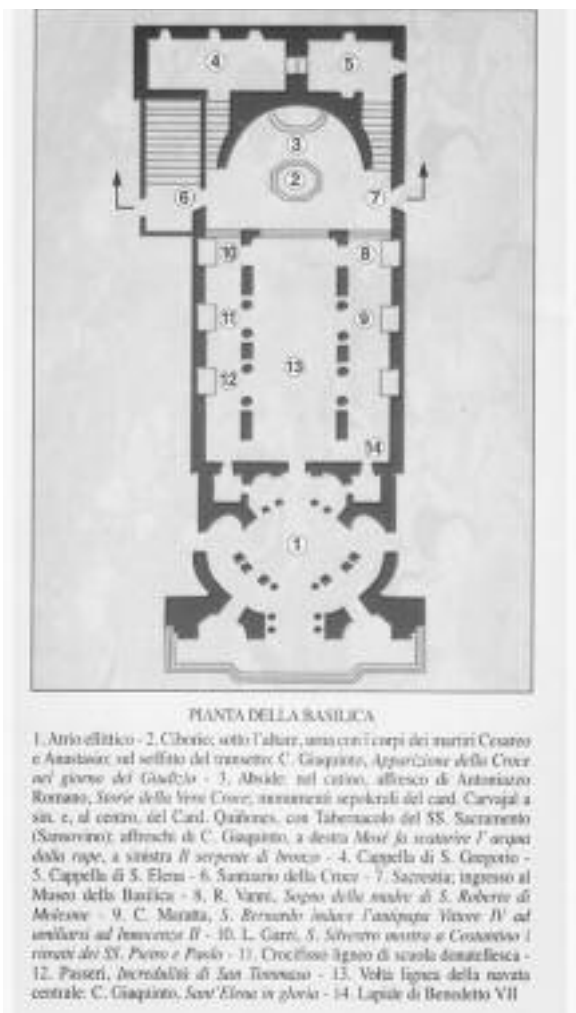


Fig. 5 - Roma, basilica di S. Croce in Gerusalemme. Pianta della chiesa odierna in seguito alla ristrutturazione settecentesca. Si noti il nuovo atrio e al termine delle navate l'inserimento del transetto medievale

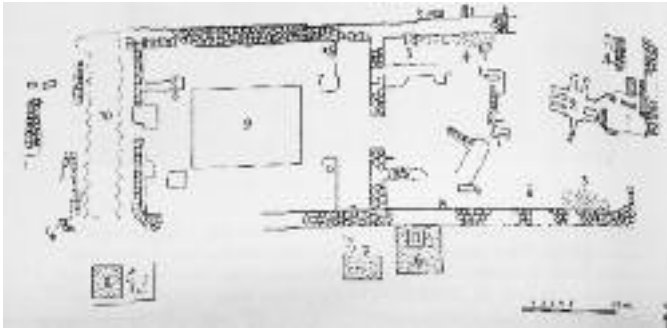


Fig. 6 - Gerusalemme, pianta dei resti della basilica Eleona. Il n. 6 corrisponde alla pianta del battistero (da Bagatti Bellarmino, *L'eglise de la Gentilité en Palestine*)

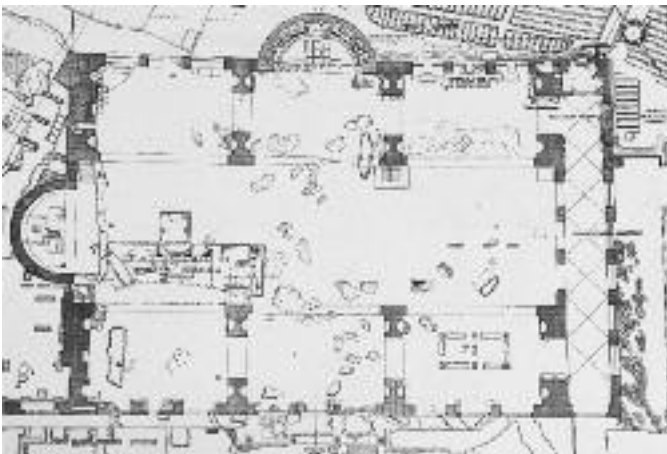


Fig. 7 - Roma, pianta della basilica di Massenzio



Fig. 8 - Roma, basilica di S. Croce in Gerusalemme: abside

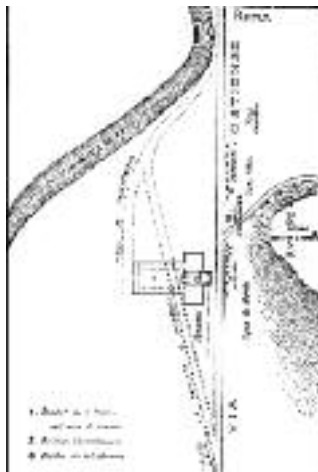


Fig. 9 - Roma, area del complesso di S. Paolo f.l.mura: pianta della basilica costantiniana in rapporto a quella dei tre imperatori. Era compresa, come si crede anche oggi, nell'area del grande transetto della basilica posteriore dei tre imperatori (da G.Ferrari, *Early Roman Monasteries*. Città del Vaticano, 1957)

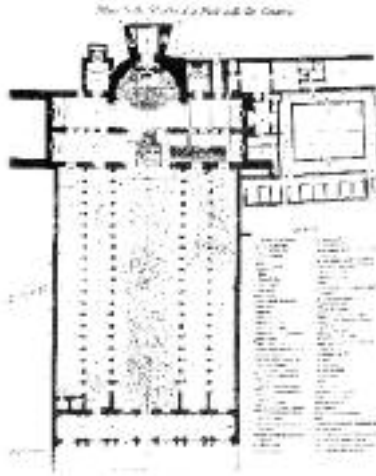


Fig. 10 - Roma, basilica di S. Paolo f.l.mura: pianta di Andrea Alippi (1815), nel volume su S. Paolo del Nicolai, prima dell'incendio del 1823. In seguito a tale evento, si decise di ricostruire la basilica conservando dell'antico edificio solamente la zona del transetto con l'abside (da Krautheimer Richard e Al., *Corpus basilicarum christianarum Romae*. V. Institute of fine Arts, New York University, Città del Vaticano, 1980)



Fig. 11 - Roma, basilica di S. Vitale: veduta parziale dell'abside paleocristiana (inizi sec. V)





Fig. 12 - Roma, basilica di S. Vitale: facciata odierna e narcece che mostra, forse, il più antico uso del pulvino in una chiesa romana



Fig. 13 - Roma, S. Vitale: narcece. Si distinguono gli archi tamponati della pentafora della facciata originariamente aperta



Fig. 14 - Roma, monastero di S. Stefano Maggiore o degli Abissini, il complesso prima e dopo il restauro a cura di Gustavo Giovannoni. Si nota la scomparsa delle parti relative all'edificio monastico

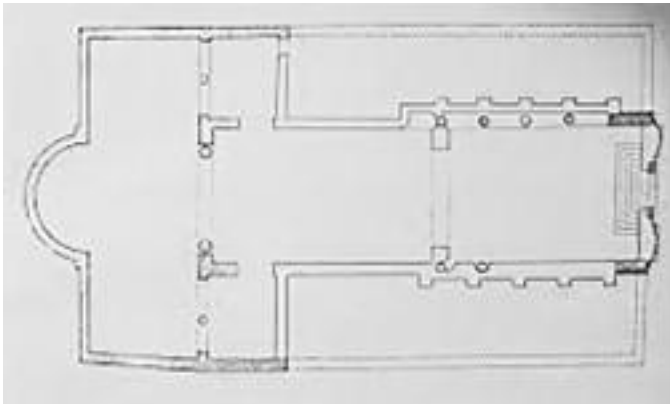


Fig. 15 - Roma, Città del Vaticano, chiesa del monastero di S. Stefano Maggiore o degli Abissini dopo il restauro della prima metà del '900 di Gustavo Giovannoni



Fig. 16 - Roma, Città del Vaticano: abside della chiesa del monastero di S. Stefano Maggiore o degli Abissini



Fig. 17 - Roma, Città del Vaticano: portale della chiesa del monastero di S. Stefano Maggiore o degli Abissini

**FONDARE CITTÀ, MALEDIRE CITTÀ:  
LA VICENDA DI DIDONE NELL'IMMAGINARIO  
COLLETTIVO ANTICO E MODERNO  
TRA FONTI LETTERARIE E  
TESTIMONIANZE NUMISMATICHE**

*Francesca Ceci*

(Ph. D Independent Research)

*Annarita Martini*

(Dottore di ricerca in archeologia)

Tra le donne che “hanno fatto la storia” rientra senz’altro a pieno titolo, sul piano mitistorico e letterario, uno dei personaggi femminili più celebri del mondo antico, la regina di Cartagine nota a tutti con il nome di Didone. Nella tradizione di origine punico-cartaginese il nome della fanciulla, di stirpe regale in quanto figlia del re di Tiro in Fenicia, è Elissa o Teiosso, che ella muta una volta giunta in terra d’Africa<sup>1</sup>. (Fig. 1)

Figura iconica dell’immaginario collettivo occidentale, è divenuta tale fundamentalmente per merito dell’*Eneide* di Virgilio. La sua personalità eccezionale animata da un virile agire pieno di coraggio che le ha fatto meritare il titolo di “virago” e nel contempo completamente femminile nel suo voler morire per il vile abbandono di Enea, scagliando perciò una maledizione potente contro Roma (per mano proprio di Virgilio), l’ha resa un modello immortale. Diventata in questo modo una protagonista la cui vicenda di vita e di morte ha trapassato i secoli, ha trovato larghissima fortuna in ogni campo dell’arte, dalla pittura alla letteratura, dalla lirica al cinema, ai fumetti e financo, oggi, ai giochi di ruolo on line<sup>2</sup>. (Fig. 2)

La fondatrice di Cartagine, è definita, come già ricordato, *virago* in un commento di Servio (IV sec. d.C. circa) all’*Eneide*, ovvero colei che agisce come un uomo<sup>3</sup> e anche Boccaccio, nel suo *De*

*mulieribus claris*, lodando Didone ricorda come questo nome in fenicio fosse equivalente al latino *virago*<sup>4</sup>. (Fig. 3) L'epiteto, oggi considerato temibile e in un certo senso spregiativo, ha nell'intenzione del commentatore Servio un'accezione chiaramente positiva. Questi infatti vuole esaltare la sovrana come scaltra eroina in fuga, fondatrice di città, colei che dà leggi e governa il suo popolo (che sarà poi quello cartaginese): tutte qualità e attività tipiche dell'uomo-eroe. Ma la tempra virile che essa dimostra è anche nella scelta di uccidersi gettandosi su di una pira, un olocausto personale che la trasformerà in una sorta di divinità<sup>5</sup>, piuttosto che sottostare a un matrimonio non voluto e tradire, così, la memoria del marito strappatole alla vita con la violenza e l'inganno dal fratello, come racconta, e si vedrà di seguito, l'originaria versione della storia della regina cartaginese.

### **Le storie di Didone**

Vale qui infatti dare un breve riassunto delle vicende di Didone, così come sono state tramandate dalle due differenti tradizioni che la riguardano. Quella originale, collegata in qualche modo a fonti di origine fenicio-cartaginese sulla regina, risale nella sua più antica attestazione nota allo storico greco Timeo di Tauromenio (III sec. a.C.), alla quale si affianca l'*Epitome* di Pompeo Trogo (età augustea), redatta da Giustino (II sec. d.C.?). Questa tradizione non menziona il rapporto di Didone con Enea e celebra esclusivamente il carattere volitivo della regina presentandola come sposa devota, pronta a morire pur di restar fedele al ricordo del marito defunto. Questa versione sarà ripresa dagli autori cristiani di origine africana, come si vedrà poi.

La seconda tradizione, celeberrima, creata in forma compiuta dalla poetica virgiliana, prende le mosse dalla già nota donna d'eccezione in fuga ed epica regnante che amministra saggiamente il suo popolo, per trasformarla in una persona interamente dominata e travolta dall'amore e dall'eros, che la condurranno alla morte suicida sulla spada di Enea dopo aver apprestato una

pira sacrificale, divenendo così la causa fondante dell'inimicizia tra Cartagine e Roma. Tuttavia, anche Virgilio è chiaro nel sottolineare che questa passione ingestibile non è nata per volontà di Didone e della sua debole conformazione muliebre, ma su impulso divino. A seguito di fedifraghi accordi con Giunone, è Venere tramite Eros ad imporre alla regina l'amore per Enea, peraltro ricambiato<sup>6</sup>. Va ricordato a questo proposito che un incontro tra Enea e Didone, benché incongruente dal punto di vista cronologico, è già presente in fonti latine previrgiliane<sup>7</sup>. (Fig. 4)

### **In fuga dalla madrepatria**

Le fonti originarie del mito di Didone (che prenderà questo nome una volta giunta sulla riva africana), di probabile matrice punica come detto, narrano quanto segue: Elissa/Teissò era figlia di Belo re di Tiro, città fondata da coloni fenici della vicina Sidone (oggi Saida in Libano); entrambe le città, potenti sul mare, erano considerate superbe e ricchissime. Per questo motivo Didone è spesso definita da Virgilio "Sidonia"<sup>8</sup>, evidenziandone così l'origine prima della sua stirpe. Il termine è usato anche come sinonimo di "fenicia" e di opulenza. Inoltre ella è, naturalmente, donna *pulcherrima* dalle bionde chiome<sup>9</sup>. Elissa, Anna e Pigmalione erano i tre figli di Belo<sup>10</sup>, discendente da Fenicio, eroe eponimo della stirpe fenicia, figlio di Agenore, il quale a sua volta era figlio di Poseidone, quindi con linfa divina nel sangue. Silio Italico ricorda infatti che a Cartagine vi era un tempio dove erano venerati Agenore, Fenicio, Belo e Didone<sup>11</sup>. Alla morte di Belo, Pigmalione divenne re e per invidia e bramosia delle sue ricchezze, uccise di nascosto il ricchissimo zio-cognato Sicheo-Acherbas sacerdote di Ercole-Melqart, amato sposo della sorella. Sicheo apparve in sogno alla disperata sposa che non si capacitava della sua scomparsa e raccontando l'orrendo assassinio le consigliò la fuga dopo averle svelato il luogo dove aveva nascosto i suoi tesori, che la giovane riuscì con uno stratagemma a salvare e a portare con sé. (Fig. 5) Elissa fuggì dal fratello caricando furtivamente su delle

imbarcazioni i beni e i *sacra* appartenuti al marito, la sorella Anna e un manipolo di uomini fidati. Pigmalione dopo averla inseguita per un tratto, rinunciò a raggiungerla e tornò a Tiro quando vide gli uomini dalla nave gettare in mare i sacchi che lui credeva contenessero le ricchezze mentre erano stati riempiti di sabbia, convinto che i tesori fossero ormai perduti. L'astuzia di Elissa è qui già chiaramente manifesta, riuscendo a salvare con la sua intelligenza se stessa, i suoi e i preziosi.

I fuggitivi fecero una sosta a Cipro, certo in un insediamento amico di fondazione fenicia che è stato identificato con Kition<sup>12</sup>, sulla costa sud orientale dell'isola presso Larnaka. Qui si imbarcò con gli esuli un sommo sacerdote, probabilmente di Zeus, insieme alla sua famiglia, con la promessa che lui e i suoi figli avrebbero conservato questo ruolo ereditariamente nella nuova fondazione. Elissa inoltre fece rapire ottanta giovanette le quali, dopo un unico episodio di prostituzione sacra, sarebbero divenute le spose degli esuli una volta giunti a destinazione<sup>13</sup>. (Fig. 6)

Raggiunta la costa della Libia (l'odierna Tunisia), la regina al re locale Iarba di poter acquistare tanto terreno quanto ne potesse entrare nella pelle di un bue, suscitando certo anche la derisione da parte del venditore, che gliela concesse. La regina, sempre più scaltra oltre che bellissima e intrepida, ne ricavò striscioline sottilissime con cui circoscrisse un'area di ampiezza sufficiente a edificare la sua città, che sarebbe diventata tanto grande, forte e potente da divenire uno dei nemici storici di Roma: Cartagine, dal fenicio *Karth Hadash*, la "città nuova" rispetto alla vecchia Tiro. (Fig. 7)

### **Didone e i Vichinghi**

Per inciso, la brillante trovata di Didone ha dato origine a un complesso problema matematico che ha preso il suo nome, incentrato sulla definizione della forma geometrica che le strisce di pelle di bue dovevano formare per racchiudere l'area più grande: la soluzione è una semicirconferenza, che permise di includere nella sua

nuova città anche la costa, aperta sul Mediterraneo e fondamentale per il futuro sviluppo dell'insediamento<sup>14</sup>.

È interessante qui ricordare come vi siano diversi eroi fondatori di città ai quali è attribuito lo stratagemma della pelle animale per delimitare il più ampiamente possibile il perimetro di un futuro insediamento.

Tra questi si annovera, inaspettatamente, la tradizione vichinga narrata nel libro IX delle *Gesta Danorum*, redatto nel XII secolo in latino dallo storico danese, forse un chierico, noto come Saxo Grammaticus, e *La Saga di Ragnarr Loðbrók e dei figli di Ragnar* (cap. 3), composti nel XIII secolo in lingua norrena, relativi a eventi databili nell'VIII-IX secolo d.C. In queste narrazioni si ritrova un interessante episodio di cui è protagonista uno dei figli di Ragnar, l'astutissimo, spietato e grande condottiero Iwar, soprannominato *inn Beinlausir* (il Senzossa, morto forse nell'873), personaggio storico probabilmente affetto dalla nascita da una malattia delle ossa che gli impediva di camminare ma che non lo fermò nel divenire glorioso e feroce guerriero. Egli guidò i suoi vichinghi in Inghilterra per vendicare la morte del padre, ucciso dal re Aelle II di Northumbria. (Fig. 8) Le fonti letterarie, celebrando la scaltrezza di Iwar, raccontano che il giovane propose al re in cambio della morte del padre un guidrigildo, ovvero un bene che l'offensore doveva dare all'offeso per riscattarsi dalla sua vendetta. Allora Iwar chiese allo spaventatissimo Aelle, che ben conosceva le spietate rive vichinghe, soltanto un pezzo di terra quanta ne poteva racchiudere una pelle di cavallo o di bue, a seconda delle fonti letterarie, proposta che subito il re accolse, certo con ingenuo sollievo. Ma Iwar tagliò il pellame in minutissime striscioline, tanto da racchiudere un vasto perimetro di terreno che subito muni e che viene di regola identificato con la città di York. E comunque, il re Aelle non scampò alla vendetta dei figli di Ragnar, che lo uccisero secondo la dibattuta modalità nota come l'aquila di sangue.

Viene da chiedersi se i letterati del Nordeuropa medievale fossero



consci di attingere, per questo specifico episodio, al patrimonio mitistorico del mondo antico relativo al celebre stratagemma di Didone. Ben più di mille e cinquecento anni separano Didone da Iwar, ma questo *escamotage* che basa la nascita di una città su un'azione sagace e apparentemente folle, ha attraversato tutto il mondo antico e medievale, attribuendo a un re vichingo, ovvero quanto di più “virile” e aggressivo vi sia tra i popoli del nord, una modalità di fondazione, insolita ma legalmente valida, ideata da una donna dell'antichità classica<sup>15</sup>.

### **Cartagine e la morte di Didone**

Ritornando a Didone e alla tradizione previrgiliana, l'acquisizione di un settore della costa africana la cui dimensione è stata calcolata a livello teorico in 9 ettari circa<sup>16</sup>, è datata, in un dibattito già in atto tra gli storici antichi, al 814 a.C.<sup>17</sup>.

La città così nata, dotata di sbocco sul mare, fondamentale per la sua futura crescita e nel rispetto della vocazione commerciale e marinara dei Fenici - quali erano i nuovi Cartaginesi - prosperò e crebbe amministrata saggiamente da Didone, alla quale tutti riconoscevano il comando. Tuttavia ben presto la regina, forte, potente, giusta e senza l'ansia di trovare un nuovo marito che inevitabilmente ne avrebbe ridimensionato il prestigioso ruolo politico nonché sentimentalmente e ideologicamente legata alla monogamia<sup>18</sup>, venne attaccata dal re Iarba. Questi minacciava di annientare la città se ella non fosse divenuta sua sposa, spinto certo non solo da velleità romantiche ma da opportunità politica. Sollecitata anche dai suoi sudditi a nuove nozze, Didone, sapendo di non poter resistere a tanta pressione, si uccise gettandosi su una pira per restare indipendente come regina e moglie fedele alle memorie dell'amato Sicheo, divenendo così anche oggetto di culto quasi divino<sup>19</sup>. In questo modo divenne anche simbolo della donna casta benché pagana, celebrata dagli apologeti cristiani di origine nord-africana, come Tertulliano e Orosio<sup>20</sup>. Macrobio (385-430 circa) nei suoi *Saturnalia* (V, 17, 5) racconta della bella favola di

Didone ed Enea, che - dice - come sanno tutti è di pura invenzione virgiliana<sup>21</sup>. Infine, in un frammento incluso negli *Epigrammata Bobiensia* (45 Sp., del IV-V sec. d.C.), Didone difende se stessa dall'aura di immoralità conferitale da Virgilio rivendicando la sua fedeltà allo sposo e ribadendo la falsità di tutta la vicenda che la volle vittima della folle passione per Enea, che neanche ebbe modo di conoscere<sup>22</sup> (e per la quale, possiamo aggiungere noi, è invece a tutt'oggi celeberrima).

### **L'iconografia monetale dedicata a Didone**

La raffigurazione della regina di Cartagine, che trovò grande fortuna nell'arte antica, ricorre anche su alcune serie monetali in bronzo emesse nel III secolo d.C. nella provincia romana di Siria-Fenicia. La moneta provinciale romana, destinata a circolare principalmente nelle regioni soggette a Roma, rappresenta in maniera esemplare l'immagine-simbolo dell'identità civica prescelta dalle città che la emisero. Essa è caratterizzata da una maggiore libertà creativa rispetto alle tipologie tradizionali dell'Urbe ed è volutamente incentrata sulla celebrazione delle glorie patrie dei territori annessi, fossero esse divinità, eroi, culti specifici, edifici e paesaggi.

A queste composizioni è riservato il rovescio, mentre l'*auctoritas* romana è suggellata sul dritto dal ritratto imperiale o dalla personificazione delle città emittente, il tutto inserito nel sistema politico romanocentrico; è evidente che l'autorità centrale doveva avallare la scelta, che si suppone fatta da magistrati locali. A partire dal II sec. d.C. e poi in particolare nel III secolo, le zecche provinciali acquisiscono una progressiva autonomia nelle rese dei tipi, sempre più legati a motivi ed eroi locali. In alcuni casi le immagini furono realizzate dagli incisori secondo modelli "nuovi" rispetto a quelli consueti usati a Roma: nelle monete provinciali si nota infatti una ricerca stilistica più narrativa e dinamica, che spesso si focalizza su azioni in corso da parte di un determinato personaggio<sup>23</sup>.

Il passato mitico (mitico per noi moderni, reale per l'epoca) della regione che batteva moneta sotto l'autorità romana viene quindi utilizzato per (ri)costruire e ribadire la propria identità originaria attraverso i tipi da apporre sulle monete, sentiti come un vanto "nazionale" che rappresentava, esaltandola, la comunità civica.

La serie fenicia dedicata a Didone e battuta a Tiro nel III sec. d.C. si compone di tre diversi modelli: Didone davanti al Tempio di Ercole-Melkart, Didone in barca, Didone che fa costruire Cartagine<sup>24</sup>. Vi è poi una rara moneta in bronzo emessa dalla zecca di Sidone, sempre in Fenicia, dove la donna è seduta in trono, come una divinità. Tutte le raffigurazioni parlano di una eroina fondatrice, che a seguito di peripezie sfugge ai nemici e si pone a capo di un nuovo regno, dove riveste un ruolo di completa signoria. È facile rilevare che si tratta di vicende che di regola sono attribuite a uomini, e che invece sono qui proprie di una donna.

Le iconografie prescelte dalla città di Tiro rispecchiano dunque il racconto delle fonti letterarie relative a Didone, ma senza Enea.

Nel primo gruppo, emesso sotto alcuni imperatori e le loro consorti (tra cui Treboniano Gallo, Volusiano, Valeriano I, Gallieno e Salonina), è raffigurata sul rovescio, in primo piano, una donna ammantata e con un copricapo a forma di *kalathos* (la cesta sacra attribuito di divinità o sacerdotesse), in atteggiamento devozionale con le braccia alzate, davanti a un'ara illuminata e a un tempio a due colonne e con la clava di Ercole all'ingresso. Nel campo è presente una conchiglia del tipo *Murex*, il mollusco dal quale i Fenici estraevano la pregiata e preziosissima porpora, come insegnò loro, secondo una tradizione, addirittura Ercole (che a sua volta lo scoprì osservando il proprio cane mentre giocava con queste conchiglie facendone uscire un colore rosso), e divenendo una delle mercanzie alla base della ricchezza della Fenicia e delle sue città<sup>25</sup>. (Fig. 9)

La leggenda, in latino, riporta la consueta denominazione dell'autorità civica emettente: *COL(onia) TYRO METRO(polis)*<sup>26</sup>. Questa immagine pare davvero la trasposizione figurata e sintetizzata

di quanto narrato dalle *Istorie* di Pompeo Trogo compendiate da Giustino<sup>27</sup>: prima di partire per un'avventura estrema, senza destinazione sicura e sfidando i mari, Elissa-Didone, abbigliata come una divinità o come una sacerdotessa - così come lo era il marito - invoca davanti al suo tempio il favore di Eracle-Melkart, simboleggiato semplicemente dalla clava. Ed è evidente che i magistrati preposti alle emissioni della Tiro sotto il giogo di Roma si rifacessero alla versione fenicia delle vicende della loro regina, raffigurando l'episodio della visita propiziatoria per il viaggio, con accanto il simbolo famoso della porpora, la conchiglia.

Il secondo momento della storia di Didone è il suo viaggio verso una terra dove trovare rifugio e iniziare una nuova vita con il suo seguito. Su alcuni rovesci di Giulia Maesa, Elagabalo, Gordiano III e poi di Treboniano Gallo battute a Tiro, campeggia una galea a nove remi in navigazione, sulla quale vi è una donna con fare perentorio e con cornucopia; seppure non nominata, così come per l'altro tipo, si tratta con alta probabilità proprio di Didone che veleggia verso la costa libica. Due marinai sono impegnati in varie manovre, uno dei quali getta qualcosa in mare da un sacco, forse allusione all'astuzia con la quale l'eroina riuscì a ingannare il fratello quando lui la inseguì per riprendersi le ricchezze di Sicheo caricate a bordo. Sulla poppa campeggia una ruota (la ruota di poppa) con un aplustre (decorazione a ventaglio), mentre in esergo possono comparire delle conchiglie di murice, consueto simbolo di Tiro<sup>28</sup>. (Fig. 10)

Il terzo tipo utilizza un paradigma figurato di tipo narrativo, che si potrebbe supporre ispirato a modelli derivati dalle arti maggiori: qui Didone assiste e sovrintende alla costruzione di Cartagine (bronzi di Elagabalo e famiglia, Octacilia Severa, Gordiano III, Treboniano e Volusiano, Valeriano I, e Gallieno). La regina, di maggiori dimensioni rispetto alla scena intera, quasi a sottolinearne la sua eccezionale posizione che *post mortem* ne farà una divinità, si rivolge verso un edificio, una sorte di torre o porta in costruzione, sopra il quale vi è un omino intento al lavoro, mentre

un altro, in basso, sta picconando il terreno. La donna, riccamente abbigliata e in una posizione di tipo divino, indica il lavoratore in basso con una sorta di lungo scettro, insegna di comando o forse bastone del sovrintendente agli edifici da innalzare; con l'altro braccio tiene una lancia. In alcuni esemplari ricorrono in alto il consueto murice e a destra una palma, pianta tipica di Cartagine come di Tiro. La leggenda del rovescio riporta abbreviato (COL TYRO METR) il nome "romano" della città, divenuta colonia con *ius italicum* sotto Settimio Severo (*Septimia Tyros Colonia Metropolis Phoenices et aliarum civitatium*), oppure più semplicemente *Tyrriorum* (dei cittadini di Tiro). Quando compare il nome della regina, Dido, esso è scritto in greco: forse un riferimento alla derivazione dell'alfabeto greco da quello fenicio e usato per ribadire la maggior gloria antica della città di Tiro<sup>29</sup>. (Fig. 11)

Concludono la serie monetale provinciale dedicata a Didone gli esemplari di Sidone, la seconda celebre città fenicia poco lontana da Tiro e sempre legata alla stirpe regale di Belo, emessi sotto Elagabalo sino a Severo Alessandro (218-235 d.C.), dove compare al rovescio la leggenda con il nome abbreviato della città - *Col(onia) Aur(elia) Pia Metropolis Sidon* - e in campo una figura femminile in trono di tre quarti, probabilmente a busto nudo o forse vestita solo di una leggera camicciola pressoché invisibile, e con ampio manto che le discende sulle gambe (BMC, *Phoenicia*, 262-263). La testa e una mano sono rivolti leggermente verso destra, ma i conii non permettono di determinare e interpretare definitivamente il gesto<sup>30</sup>. Si tratta certamente di una figura divinizzata, parte del patrimonio mitistorico di Sidone, che in alcune emissioni è designata come *DIDO* dalla inequivocabile leggenda in esergo<sup>31</sup>. (Fig. 12)

La monetazione provinciale delle città fenicie, da dove dovette fuggire l'intrepida giovane vedova, celebra le eccezionali capacità di decisione e comando della sua Didone, la quale fondò Cartagine, la città che più di tutte rimase impressa, nell'immaginario collettivo romano, come un nemico temibilissimo.

Con un salto cronologico enorme ma che ripropone la stessa progettualità iconografica e ideologica, si ricorda la banconota da 10 denari emessa nel 2005 in Tunisia dove al rovescio compaiono Cartagine e la regina Elissa. (Fig. 13)

Per concludere, va sottolineato come in queste serie monetali non vi sia alcuna traccia della tragica vicenda di amore, tradimento e morte tra Didone ed Enea, certo ben nota nell'ecumene romano del III secolo d.C. e che fa della eroica regina fenicia una donna che per amore rinuncia a se stessa e a tutto quello che ha costruito. (Fig. 14)

Figura che in tal senso era più accettabile dalla mentalità romana, che non prevedeva donne che esercitassero il potere in prima persona, a meno che esso non fosse esercitato in maniera "sotterranea", tramite gli uomini di famiglia.

## NOTE

1 - La bibliografia su Didone è ricchissima e si ricordano gli studi relativamente recenti e con aggiornata bibliografia precedente, i quali danno conto delle varie tradizioni relative a Didone e la sua fortuna nel corso dei secoli, ai quali questo scritto fa riferimento nelle varie tematiche: Bono Paola - Tessitore Maria Vittoria, *Il mito di Didone, avventure di una regina tra secoli e culture*. Mondadori, Milano 1998; Vanotti Gabriella, *Storia, mito e rito nella fondazione di Cartagine*, in Jorge Martínez-Pinna Nieto Pinna Martínez (ed.), "Mito y ritual en el antiguo Occidente mediterráneo". Thema, Universidad de Malaga, 2002, pp. 55-71; *Il mito di Didone nel Tempo. Atti del seminario del 10 gennaio 2007*, Università degli Studi Roma 3 (<https://www.queendido.org/monografiaDidone.pdf>); Ribichini Sergio, *Didone l'errante e la pelle di bue*, in Buttitta I.E. (a cura di), "Miti mediterranei. Atti del convegno internazionale, Palermo-Terrasini, 4-6 ottobre 2007". Fondazione Ignazio Buttitta, Palermo 2008, pp. 102-114. Interessante anche il contributo nel blog on line di "Lese- ratte", *E se Didone non avesse mai conosciuto Enea?* Parte I e II

(<https://blog.libero.it/ChiederePerSaper/12612248.html?ssonc=350529781>, 17 gennaio 2014). Altri studi in Stella Sabina, *Didone tra mito e realtà*. Università degli Studi di Pisa, Dip. di Civiltà e forme del sapere, Corso di Laurea in Storia A.A. 2013-14 (file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/DIDONE\_TRA\_MITO\_E\_REALTA.pdf); Ricco Renato, *Sulle tracce di Didone. Fra Età Classica e Rinascimento, l'evoluzione letteraria di un mito*, I-II. Guida Editori, Napoli 2015 con le recensioni di Brancati Francesco, in "Italianistica" XLV/2, 2016, pp. 288-292 e di Tinelli Elena, in "Studi giraldiani. Letteratura e teatro" III, 2017, pp. 297-304. Ancora on line Rigotti Francesca, *Didone fondatrice di Cartagine* (<https://www.doppiozero.com/materiali/didone-fondatrice-di-cartagine>, 9 aprile 2017). Si veda poi Ziosi Antonio, *Didone. La tragedia dell'abbandono. Variazioni sul mito (Virgilio, Ovidio, Boccaccio, Marlowe, Metastasio, Ungaretti, Brodskij)*. Marsilio, Venezia 2017.

2 - Interessante anche il riassunto, alquanto documentato, della vicenda di Didone quale eroina scritto dal creatore del gioco di ruolo in [http://www.dndjunkie.com/civilopedia/it-it/LEADER\\_DIDO.aspx](http://www.dndjunkie.com/civilopedia/it-it/LEADER_DIDO.aspx), che fa della regina un personaggio perfettamente inserito nella cultura pop contemporanea.

3 - Servio, *Commentarii in Vergilii Aeneidos libros*, IV, v. 36.

4 - Boccaccio, *De Didone seu Elissa, Cartaginensium regina*, in "De mulieribus claris" XLII dove, come si vedrà, fa sua la versione che vede in Didone un esempio di virtù vedovile per la sua fedeltà alla memoria di Sicheo; si vedano anche Ziosi (2017), cit. in nota 1, e Zudini Claudia, «*Carnea non ferrea sum*»: il corpo femminile nel *De mulieribus claris*, in "Arzanà. Cahiers de littératures médiévale italienne" XVIII, 2017, pp. 83-91, passim.

5 - Secondo Giustino, Didone sarà ricordata come dea (*quam die Karthago invicta fuit pro dea culta est*: Giustino XVIII, 6, 8).

6 - Virgilio, *Eneide*. I, 657-660 e IV, 90-128.

7 - Sintesi in Vanotti (2002), cit in nota 1, pp. 61-62.

8 - Virgilio, *Eneide*. I, 613 e passim.

9 - Per esempio in Virgilio, *Eneide*. IV, 590 (*flaventisque abscissa comas...*).

10 - Denominato anche Methre o Metto: in Servio, *Commentarius ad Aeneidem*. I, 343.

11 - *Punica*. I, 87-90.

- 12 - Yon Marguerite - Childs William A.P., *Kition in the Tenth to Fourth Centuries B.C.*, in “The City-Kingdoms of Early Iron Age Cyprus in Their Eastern Mediterranean Context. Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research”. 308, Nov. 1997, pp. 9-17, in part. p. 11.
- 13 - Pompeo Trogo in Giustino, XVIII, 5,1 e 4.
- 14 - Si veda tra gli altri Di Meglio Guglielmo, *139. Il problema isoperimetrico classico, storia e mito*, in “Matematicamente.it”, nr. 13, Agosto 2010, pp. 15-21 <https://www.matematicamente.it/magazine/agosto2010/139-Dimeglio-problema-isoperimetrico.pdf> e Schirru Claudia, *Il problema di Didone ed altri problemi isoperimetrici*. Università degli Studi di Cagliari, Facoltà di Scienze Matematiche, Fisiche e Naturali, Corso di Laurea in Matematica, A.A. 2010/11 in [https://www.luciocadeddu.com/tesi/Schirru\\_triennale.pdf](https://www.luciocadeddu.com/tesi/Schirru_triennale.pdf).
- 15 - Si veda a questo proposito Ceci Francesca, *Uno stratagemma di successo* in “Archeo”, 399, maggio 2018, pp. 106-107.
- 16 - Ipotesi proposta a livello sperimentale in Di Meglio cit. in nota 14.
- 17 - Vannotti, 2002 cit. in nota 1, pp. 58-59.
- 18 - In Tertulliano, *De monogamia*, XVII, 3.
- 19 - Fr. 82 Jacoby (*FGrHist*, 566) di Timeo di Tauromenio; Trogo/Giustino XVIII,6.
- 20 - Tertulliano, *De exhortatione castitatis*, XIII; Orosio, *Historiae adversos paganos*, IV, 23, 4.
- 21 - Macrobio, nel citato passo dei suoi *Saturnalia*, parla di “pittori, scultori, tessitori d’arazzi” che traggono spunto dalle vicende dell’eroina (V, 17, 5).
- 22 - Brescia Graziana, *La parola a Didone: esercizi di confutazione (Quando si confuta una storia, 3)*, in “AOFL”, X, 2015, 1, pp. 86-103, con analisi anche delle fonti negli apologeti cristiani. V. anche Bono - Tessitore, 1998, pp. 54-76, cit. in nota 1.
- 23 - Sul significato ideologico e politico dell’iconografia nella monetazione imperiale provinciale romana v. Howgego Christopher - Heuchert Volker - Burnett Andrew (eds.), *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces*. Oxford 2007, in part. per Tiro, Sidone e Didone: pp. 14, 151-152, 157 e Pl. 1.4, 41-42.
- 24 - Una raccolta dei nominali romani dedicati a Didone è in <http://ancientcoinage.org/dido-and-the-founding-of-carthage.html> e in *Roman Provincial Coinage* on line: <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/search/>



browse?q=Dido. Si vedano poi in nella rivista “Archeo” nn. 398-401, maggio luglio 2018, gli articoli di Ceci Francesca dedicati alla monetazione con Dido: *Una storia di amore e odio* (398, pp. 110-11); *Uno stratagemma di successo* (399, pp. 106-107); *L’eterna fedeltà di Sicheo* (400, pp. 110-111); *La volitiva figlia di Belo* (401, pp. 110-111).

**25** - Questa versione del mito è tramandata da Giulio Polluce, *Onomasticon*, 1, 45. Per una sintesi sulla produzione della porpora si veda Karali-Giannakopoulos Lilian, *Testimonianze della produzione della porpora nell’Egeo nell’antichità*, in “Preistoria Alpina”, Suppl. 1, v. 40, 2004 (Museo Tridentino di Scienze Naturali Trento 2005), pp. 161-166; Peyronel Luca, *Il ruolo della porpora nell’industria tessile siro-palestinese del Bronzo Tardo e dell’età del Ferro. Le evidenze storico-archeologiche dei centri costieri*, in “Rivista di Studi Fenici” XXXIV, 1, 2006, pp. 49-70.

**26** - Si veda come esempio il tipo *RIC IX* on line, nr. 1991, a nome di Treboniano Gallo, 251-253 d.C. (<https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/9/1991>).

**27** - Giustino, XVIII 4, 12-15.

**28** - Si vedano per esempio le emissioni di Giulia Maesa (222-235 d.C.), in Rouvier Jules, *Numismatique des Villes de la Phénicie*, in “Journal International d’Archéologie Numismatique” 7, 1904, n. 2408, o di Treboniano Gallo (251-253 d.C.) in *RPC IX*, 1989 <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/9/1989>.

**29** - Si vedano per esempio gli esemplari di Octacilia Severa (244-249 d.C.), in Rouvier, cit. a nota 25, n. 2454 var. 23; Treboniano Gallo (251-253), in *RPC IX*, 1988 <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/9/1988>.

**30** - Hill George F., *Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum: Phoenicia*. London 1910, n. 263 (Elagabalo); Rouvier cit. in nota 25, n. 1602 (Severo Alessandro).

**31** - Si vedano l’immagini nn. 21-22, senza riferimento bibliografico, riportate da Ziad Sawaya in [www.academia.edu/35046919/The\\_Numismatic\\_Evidence\\_of\\_Rivalry\\_between\\_Sidon\\_and\\_Tyre\\_2nd\\_c.\\_BC-3rd\\_c.\\_AD](http://www.academia.edu/35046919/The_Numismatic_Evidence_of_Rivalry_between_Sidon_and_Tyre_2nd_c._BC-3rd_c._AD).



Fig. 1 - Alessandro Cesati (1538-1564), detto “Il Grechetto”, al dritto Didone ΔΙΔΩ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΑ e al rovescio Cartagine con le mura, il porto e tre navi ΚΑΡΧ[ΗΛΩΝ] (da <https://www.engcoins.com/Coin.aspx?CoinID=316755>; ultima visita 31 12 2019).



Fig. 2 - Didone nel mondo moderno: opera lirica, fumetti, videogiochi e nella ceramica.



Fig. 3 - Giovanni Boccaccio, *De Claris mulieribus*, traduzione anonima in francese del *Livre des femmes nobles et renommées*, con miniature dei Maestri des Cleres femmes du duc de Berry e del Couronnement de la Vierge, 1401. Parigi Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Collezione Reale ([https://www.europeana.eu/portal/it/record/9200519/ark\\_\\_12148\\_btv1b84521932.html#p=133](https://www.europeana.eu/portal/it/record/9200519/ark__12148_btv1b84521932.html#p=133); ultima visita 31 12 2019).



Fig. 4 - Miniatura tratte dall'*Eneide*, MS 76 E 21 III (XV secolo): Didone, parlando con la sorella Anna, si scopre innamorata di Enea; Enea e Didone vanno a caccia insieme e durante la caccia si ameranno; Enea lascia Cartagine; Didone si uccide su una pira con la spada donatale da Enea. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, L'Aia.



Fig. 5 - Guillaume Rouillé, *Prontuario de le medaglie de più illustri, & famosi huomini & donne, dal principio del Mondo insino al presente tempo, con le lor vite in compendio raccolte*. Parte prima, Lione 1577 (Florenz, Bibliothek des KHIs).



Fig. 6 - Mappa del viaggio di Didone



Fig. 7 - *La fondazione di Cartagine*, stampa ottocentesca colorata ripresa da *Didone che fonda Cartagine*, stampa di Mathias Merian il Vecchio, *Historische Chronica*. Frankfurt am Main 1630.



Fig. 8 - A. Malmstrom, *Il messaggero di re Aelle davanti i figli di Ragnar Lodbrok*, 1857. Svezia, Norrköping Art Museum. ([https://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fil:Konung\\_Ellas\\_s%C3%A4ndebud\\_inf%C3%B6r\\_Ragnar\\_Ladbroks\\_s%C3%B6ner\\_\(1857\)\\_av\\_August\\_Malmstr%C3%B6m.jpg](https://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fil:Konung_Ellas_s%C3%A4ndebud_inf%C3%B6r_Ragnar_Ladbroks_s%C3%B6ner_(1857)_av_August_Malmstr%C3%B6m.jpg)).



Fig. 9 - Tiro (Fenicia), moneta in bronzo di Treboniano Gallo, 251-253 d.C. Al dritto il busto dell'imperatore e iscrizione IMP C C VIBIVS TREBO GALLVS AVG; al rovescio Didone che esegue un sacrificio su un'ara accesa davanti al tempio di Eracle-Melqart, con una clava. Nel campo una conchiglia del genere Murex; iscrizione COL TYRO METR (da <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/9/1991>; ultima visita 31 12 2019).



Fig. 10 - Tiro (Fenicia), moneta in bronzo di Giulia Maesa, 218-224/5 d.C. Al dritto busto di Giulia Maesa e iscrizione IVLIA MAE SAAV[G]; al rovescio una figura femminile identificata con Didone con cornucopia su una nave con due marinai; iscrizione: TVRIORVM (https://www.cointalk.com/threads/five-julias-of-ancient-rome-collection.319173/page-2; ultima visita 30 12 2019).



Fig. 11 - Dido ingegnere Tiro (Fenicia), moneta in bronzo di Octavia Severa, moglie di Filippo I, 244-249 d.C. Al dritto busto dell'imperatrice e leggenda OCTAC SEVERA AVG; al rovescio Didone che sovrintende alla costruzione di Cartagine e leggenda COL TYRO METR (da @ Roma Numismatics - <http://ancientcoinage.org/dido-and-the-founding-of-carthage.html>; ultima visita 31 12 2019).



Fig. 12 - Sidone (Fenicia), emissione in bronzo di Elagabalo (218-222 d.C.). Al rovescio una donna in trono di tre quarti, a busto nudo e manto che scende sulle gambe. Leggenda COL AVR PIA METR SIDON e in esergo DIDO (da Zyad Sa-waia, in [www.academia.edu/35046919/The\\_Numismatic\\_Evidence\\_of\\_Rivalry\\_between\\_Sidon\\_and\\_Tyre\\_2\\_nd\\_c.\\_BC-3\\_rd\\_c.\\_AD.](http://www.academia.edu/35046919/The_Numismatic_Evidence_of_Rivalry_between_Sidon_and_Tyre_2_nd_c._BC-3_rd_c._AD.)).



Fig. 13 - Moneta tunisina da 10 dinari emessa il 07.11.2005, con Cartagine e il volto di Elissa-Didone.

Fig. 14 - Villa romana di Low Ham (Inghilterra), mosaico con le storie di Didone ed Enea, 350 d.C. circa. The Museum of Somerset (da <https://sومersetcollections.org.uk/object/tncm-75-1991/>, ultima visita 31 12 2019).



## IL LATERANO NELLA TARDA ANTICHITÀ: UN'AREA A VOCAZIONE FEMMINILE?

*Alessandra Cerrito*

(Sovrintendenza Capitolina ai Beni Culturali)

Dopo un primo sviluppo urbanistico di età repubblicana, in età imperiale il Celio diventò la sede di numerose *domus* aristocratiche, oltre che di *praedia* e di più modeste *insulae* che ne cambiarono la fisionomia<sup>1</sup>. Nel IV secolo d. C. i Cataloghi Regionari annotavano ben tremilaseicento *insulae* e centoventisette *domus*, molte delle quali erano frutto di trasformazioni di *insulae* abbandonate<sup>2</sup>. Tra i proprietari di queste lussuose dimore ricordiamo la potentissima *gens Valeria*, che ha dato i natali ad una figura femminile di rilievo, Melania la giovane. Convertitasi al cristianesimo assieme al marito, Valerio Piniano<sup>3</sup>, Melania ereditò una prestigiosa residenza sul Celio, non lontana dal Laterano, i cui resti sono stati riconosciuti dove oggi sorge l'Ospedale dell'Addolorata. Il raffinato apparato pittorico della *domus* (Fig. 1) non oltrepassa gli inizi del III secolo d. C., quando la casa fu interrata e ristrutturata ad una quota superiore<sup>4</sup>. Nei primi anni del V secolo, poco prima di cadere in rovina in seguito all'incendio della città nel 410 da parte dei Goti di Alarico, la *domus* ospitò uno dei primi oratori domestici che conosciamo dalla letteratura. Dopo l'abbandono sappiamo che la casa venne trasformata in un *xenodochium*, di cui ci parla anche papa Gregorio Magno<sup>5</sup>.

Nell'area lateranense, le fonti antiche attestano sul Celio tre importantissimi complessi<sup>6</sup>: le *aedes Laterani*, i *praedia Anniorum* e gli *horti* di Domizia Lucilla. Le *aedes Laterani* costituiscono verosimilmente le proprietà donate da Settimio Severo alla fine del II secolo all'amico *T. Sextius Lateranus*, menzionato in un passo dell'*Epitome de Caesaribus*<sup>7</sup>. Si tratta del console del 197, la cui residenza nell'area lateransense è confermata dal ritrova-



mento di alcune *fistulae aquarie* bollate con il suo nome presso la zona dove più tardi sorgerà la basilica costantiniana<sup>8</sup>. Si ritiene che vadano distinte dalle *aedes Lateranorum* citate da Giovenale<sup>9</sup>, il quale ci racconta che vennero confiscate da Nerone, perché il proprietario, Plauzio Laterano, console designato nell'anno 65, aveva partecipato alla congiura dei Pisoni. I beni di Plauzio Laterano entrarono così a far parte del demanio imperiale.

Il ricordo dei Laterani è associato al sito dove Costantino erigerà la cattedrale e sopravvive sino ad oggi nella toponomastica: una *domum Laterani* è menzionata nel IV secolo nell'iscrizione funeraria di *Quintus lactearius*, proveniente dalla catacomba di Pretestato sulla via Appia Pignatelli<sup>10</sup>. Intorno al 400, S. Girolamo raccontava in una lettera di una penitenza compiuta dalla matrona Fabiola nella basilica *quondam Laterani, qui Cesariano truncatus est gladio*<sup>11</sup>; Prudenzio, all'inizio del V secolo, ricordava le *aedes magni Laterani*<sup>12</sup>. Stando alle fonti antiche, le proprietà dei Laterani erano limitrofe ai *praedia Anniorum*, i possedimenti di Annio Vero, nonno di Marco Aurelio, dove il futuro imperatore trascorse parte della sua infanzia; nella biografia, si racconta che il giovane Marco Aurelio nacque e fu educato nella casa del nonno, *iuxta aedes Laterani* (Fig. 2). Anche gli *Horti* della madre Domizia Lucilla si trovavano sul Celio non lontano dalle proprietà degli Annii<sup>13</sup>.

L'identificazione del possedimento dei *Domitii* è un'acquisizione degli anni Sessanta del Novecento, quando si misero in luce le strutture degli *horti*, articolate in un settore produttivo, ambienti di carattere funzionale e residenziale<sup>14</sup>. Qualche dubbio sussiste sui resti di un peristilio con altri ambienti circostanti, oggi visibili sotto l'ala Mazzoni dell'Ospedale di S. Giovanni, che, secondo alcune ipotesi, farebbero parte della casa di Annio Vero piuttosto che degli *horti*<sup>15</sup>. La titolarità di questi ultimi è assicurata dal ritrovamento di tre *fistulae aquarie* con il nome della proprietaria, *Domitia Lucilla*, i cui possedimenti dovevano estendersi fino all'attuale piazza di S. Giovanni in Laterano<sup>16</sup>. È peraltro probabile

che all'eredità materna degli *horti*, Domizia Lucilla avesse aggiunto anche quella acquisita per linea ereditaria paterna, dato che il nome del padre, il console *Publius Calvisius Tullus*, figura su una *fistula aquaria* scoperta nel comprensorio del Palazzo del Vicariato, a Piazza di S. Giovanni in Laterano<sup>17</sup>.

Il possesso delle *figlinae* da parte di *Domitia Lucilla* minore rientra a pieno titolo nel quadro socio-economico romano del II secolo: fino a questa epoca le *figlinae* appartenevano generalmente a famiglie dell'ordine senatorio; a partire da questo periodo, gradualmente cominciarono ad affiancarsi alle famiglie aristocratiche anche esponenti della *domus Augusta* e, in particolare, le sue donne. La presenza femminile si incrementerà nel III secolo fino a diventare esclusiva. Con questo processo le officine doliari entrano a far parte della proprietà imperiale, attraverso trasferimenti per eredità, adozione o matrimonio. In età antonina si iniziava peraltro a distinguere il patrimonio statale da quello privato dell'imperatore, la *res privata* appunto, di cui la casa imperiale disponeva liberamente; i beni privati potevano quindi essere trasferiti anche ad eredi diversi da quello designato, per esempio alle esponenti del ramo femminile. In questo modo Marco Aurelio, che aveva ereditato le *figlinae* dalla madre *Domitia Lucilla*, poté trasferirle alla moglie Faustina, figlia di Antonino Pio, e poi alla figlia Lucilla; naturalmente, assieme alle officine venivano trasferiti anche i *praedia* che le contenevano. Con l'adozione di Settimio Severo nella famiglia degli Antonini, si legittimava anche la successione della titolarità del patrimonio imperiale, nonché l'acquisizione delle *figlinae* da parte di Settimio Severo e dei suoi successori; ciò porterà al monopolio imperiale sulla produzione di laterizi. Questo sistema di trasmissione dei beni non era ovviamente limitato alle sole *figlinae*, ma si applicava a tutti i possedimenti della famiglia imperiale. L'età severiana corrisponde peraltro ad un momento di ampliamento e di riorganizzazione della proprietà privata dell'imperatore, ma occorre ricordare che quando il patrimonio familiare di un imperatore passava in quello imperiale

non era più possibile distinguere tra le due cose<sup>18</sup>.

L'assorbimento nel demanio imperiale del patrimonio familiare degli imperatori e l'acquisizione di beni tramite confische, come nel citato caso dei Laterani<sup>19</sup>, determinò la formazione di un'estesissima proprietà imperiale, nella quale, è impossibile discernere tra beni statali e beni della *res privata* della famiglia imperiale. Nel settore sud-orientale della città di Roma<sup>20</sup>, la proprietà imperiale si estendeva dal Celio fino all'Esquilino, dove si trovavano gli *Horti spei veteris*, noti anche come *Horti Variani*. Qui Settimio Severo edificò una residenza imperiale, il cd. *Sessorium*, che nel IV secolo divenne la dimora privilegiata dall'imperatore Costantino. In realtà, il palazzo fu abitato principalmente dall'Augusta Elena, madre dell'imperatore, che vi dimorò in rappresentanza del figlio oramai insediato a Costantinopoli, la nuova Roma. Ad Elena si deve peraltro la costruzione della *basilica Hierusalem*, oggi S. Croce in Gerusalemme, in un'aula del complesso Sessoriano, dove la tradizione vuole che portò da Gerusalemme le reliquie del legno della croce di Cristo. Fuori dal perimetro delle Mura Aureliane, il demanio imperiale proseguiva lungo le vie Labicana e Prenestina antiche; al III miglio della Labicana, nel latifondo imperiale noto con il toponimo "*ad duas lauros*", Costantino edificò il mausoleo circolare che accolse le spoglie della madre, annettendolo ad una spettacolare basilica a forma di circo, non lontano dalla catacomba cristiana dei SS. Pietro e Marcellino. L'Augusta fu tumulata in un sarcofago di porfido con scene di battaglia, forse originariamente destinato ad accogliere i resti umani dello stesso Costantino Magno<sup>21</sup>.

Ritornando al Laterano, come noto, Settimio Severo alla fine del II secolo fu promotore della costruzione dei *Castra nova equitum singularium*<sup>22</sup> presso le *aedes Laterani* e di un programma di riassetto urbanistico della zona, che si inquadra in un più vasto intervento edilizio; alla moglie, Iulia Mamaea, si attribuisce nell'area Lateranense una *domus*, che sarebbe documentata ancora una volta da una conduttura plumbea iscritta, che la cita<sup>23</sup>. Qualche

studioso ritiene che nell'alto medioevo se ne conservasse ancora il ricordo nella *domus Iulia* che “*super campum respicit*”, citata nella biografia di papa Sergio I (687-701), nel *Liber Pontificalis*<sup>24</sup>. Più sicura sembra essere l'immissione nel demanio imperiale delle proprietà oggi comprese nell'area dell'Ospedale di S. Giovanni in Laterano, dove si collocano, come abbiamo visto gli *horti* di Domizia Lucilla, la *domus* dei Quintili e, forse, i *praedia* degli Annii. Questa possibilità è avvalorata dal ritrovamento di ben tre basi marmoree iscritte, che sono tuttora visibili all'interno di una lussuosa sala di rappresentanza di epoca severiana (Fig. 3) e in un oratorio cristiano, che si situa al piano inferiore. Tutti e tre i frammenti sono pertinenti a piedistalli marmorei di statue; con probabilità erano raffigurazioni di bronzo delle dedicatarie delle epigrafi onorarie, tutte e tre donne della famiglia imperiale. La prima base<sup>25</sup> è dedicata a Costantina, figlia di Costantino Magno, tra 337 e 340; l'onorificenza è posta da *Flavius Cavianus*, un funzionario dell'amministrazione imperiale, di ordine equestre, il quale si definisce *praepositus rerum privatum*, cioè preposto all'amministrazione dei beni privati dell'imperatore. Della seconda<sup>26</sup> si conservano le prime cinque dell'iscrizione, dalle quali è tuttavia possibile ipotizzare che si tratti di una dedica alla sorella di Costantina, Elena, da parte dello stesso *Flavius Cavianus* o di qualche altro funzionario dell'amministrazione imperiale, pressappoco nello stesso periodo. Come noto, le due sorelle furono sepolte sulla via Nomentana<sup>27</sup>, dove fu edificato un altro mausoleo circolare annesso ad una basilica “circiforme”, conosciuto anche come mausoleo di S. Costanza<sup>28</sup>, presso la catacomba di S. Agnese, intitolata alla martire ivi sepolta<sup>29</sup>. L'ultima base<sup>30</sup>, come la prima interamente conservata, circa un secolo dopo è dedicata a Licinia Eudossia, moglie dell'imperatore Valentiniano III, ed è stata posta da un senatore di nome *Flavius Florinus*. Non sappiamo se anche costui avesse qualche incarico nell'ambito dell'amministrazione dei beni della *domus imperatoria*. La dedica è posta tra il 6 agosto 439, momento della proclamazione ad Au-

gusta della figlia di Teodosio II, a Ravenna, e 16 marzo 455, data dell'uccisione di Valentiniano III a Roma, proprio nel latifondo denominato "*ad duas lauros*"<sup>31</sup>.

Una sensibilità tutta al femminile potrebbe ricercarsi nella cura e nell'assistenza dei bambini, verosimilmente orfani, presso un'antica struttura assistenziale di cui è rimasta la testimonianza di un oratorio cristiano nell'area dell'Ospedale di S. Giovanni<sup>32</sup>. Intorno alla fine del IV secolo- inizi del V, l'oratorio occupò alcuni ambienti di servizio, presumibilmente pertinenti agli *horti* di *Domitia Lucilla*, seminterrati e, forse, ormai caduti in disuso. L'oratorio si trova al piano inferiore della sala di rappresentanza dove oggi si conservano le basi marmoree dedicate a Costantina e Licinia Eudossia<sup>33</sup>. La piccola aula di culto sopravvive solo parzialmente, perché è stata danneggiata da interventi antichi e contemporanei; parte della decorazione pittorica è stata staccata poco dopo la scoperta, nella seconda metà del Novecento, ed è esposta nell'Antica Spezieria dell'Ospedale dell'Angelo, il fabbricato trecentesco che costituisce il nucleo centrale dell'Ospedale di S. Giovanni<sup>34</sup>.

Il ciclo pittorico cristiano può essere ascritto ad almeno due distinte fasi<sup>35</sup> e costituisce un vero e proprio percorso di catechesi attraverso la traduzione in immagini delle storie dell'Antico e del Nuovo Testamento: la resurrezione di Lazzaro<sup>36</sup>, la Samaritana al pozzo<sup>37</sup>, Daniele tra i leoni assistito dal profeta Abacuc, il quale, portato in volo dall'Angelo del Signore reca a Daniele il cibo sotterico<sup>38</sup>, i tre giovani ebrei condannati a bruciare in una fornace a Babilonia<sup>39</sup>, l'Adorazione dei Magi<sup>40</sup> e figure di santi. Tra i martiri celebrati (Fig. 4) troviamo Vito, Modesto e Crescenzia, un gruppo agiografico di origine lucana o siciliana composto dal giovane Vito, un bambino di otto o dodici anni, dalla nutrice Crescenzia e dal pedagogo Modesto, ai quali Cristo porge la corona del martirio<sup>41</sup>. Nel pannello vicino sono raffigurate altre due martiri alle quali Cristo porge la corona; l'immagine a destra rappresenta una giovane in ricche vesti di gusto bizantino, che è forse possibile identificare dai resti della didascalia con Agnese, martirizzata a

dodici anni<sup>42</sup>. Non conosciamo purtroppo la committenza di questo importante ciclo pittorico, che è forse riconducibile ad un atto di evergetismo di una donna della *domus imperatoria*.

Un'altra famosa dama della casa imperiale o di una illustre famiglia aristocratica romana fu probabilmente proprietaria di un'altra sontuosa dimora localizzata nell'area lateranense, nel sito oggi occupato dal palazzo dell'I.N.P.S. Al momento della scoperta la *domus* è stata identificata con la residenza di *Flavia Maxima Fausta*, figlia di Massimiano, sorella di Massenzio e moglie dell'imperatore Costantino<sup>43</sup>. La casa avrebbe peraltro inglobato quelle dei Pisoni e dei Laterani. La ricca dimora è nota soprattutto per le sue megalografie, oggi conservate nel Museo Nazionale Romano<sup>44</sup> (Fig. 5), che erano accompagnate da iscrizioni dipinte riconducibili secondo alcune interpretazioni alla casa imperiale. In queste strutture, qualche studio ha anche proposto di riconoscere la già ricordata *domus Iuliae* e ad esse viene riferito un passo di Ottato di Milevi<sup>45</sup>, il quale narra che i partecipanti al concilio del 313, riguardante lo scisma donatista, *convenerunt in domum Faustae in Laterano*. Sulla base del passo di Ottato si è anche ipotizzato che il palazzo imperiale nel IV secolo fosse stato acquisito nell'ambito della proprietà ecclesiastica. Un'altra parte della critica preferisce invece identificare la Fausta proprietaria della *domus* con un'esponente della celebre *gens Anicia*<sup>46</sup>.

La pertinenza alla proprietà imperiale anche della *domus Faustae* lascia intravedere nell'area lateranense un considerevole possedimento che fino all'inizio del IV secolo si estendeva intorno ai *Castra Nova Equitum Singularium* e poi, dopo la loro soppressione, attorno alla basilica costantiniana. Alla gestione di questo latifondo imperiale certamente ha contribuito la carrellata di figure femminili che abbiamo presentato, carrellata che si aggiunge al novero delle gentil dame che hanno plasmato la storia del Laterano e delle sue adiacenze, da Melania la giovane all'Augusta Elena. Le opere di queste donne ne emettono in evidenza il ruolo politico, sociale ed economico nella società antica. Esso è certa-

mente un ruolo centrale e, per quel che concerne le donne della *domus imperatoria*, si estrinseca tra l'affermazione della politica dinastica e la gestione dei beni della casa imperiale. Si tratta di un aspetto strategico per la storia economica e sociale della città, ma anche per l'espansione del cristianesimo e per il suo radicamento nel tessuto urbano.

#### NOTE

- 1 - Sulla topografia del Celio essenzialmente: Colini, 1944, pp. 323-333, tav. XIX; Pavolini, 2006.
- 2 - Valentini - Zucchetti, 1940, pp. 95, 166-167.
- 3 - Rampolla del Tindaro, 1905, pp. XXXIX-XL, 16-173.
- 4 - Bottiglieri - Palladino, 2015, p. 3.
- 5 - *Ep.* IX, 67, 83.
- 6 - Su questi complessi, oltre alla bibliografia cit. in nota 1, si veda Liverani, 1988, pp. 891-915; Liverani, 2004, pp. 17-49.
- 7 - 20, 6.
- 8 - *CIL* XV, 7536.
- 9 - X 15-18; *Schol. in Iuven.* X 15.2.
- 10 - *ICUR* 14583.
- 11 - *Epist.* 77, 4.
- 12 - *Contra Symm.* I, 585-586.
- 13 - HA, *Aur.* I,5-7; V,3.
- 14 - Scrinari, 1995.
- 15 - Scrinari, 1995, pp. 153-214.
- 16 - Colini, 1944, p. 329; Liverani, 1988, pp. 894-895.
- 17 - Scrinari, 1968-69, p. 172 e n. 10, fig. 8.
- 18 - Lo Cascio, 2005, pp. 95-102.
- 19 - Un altro esproprio è quello della *domus* dei Quintili, i quali oltre alla celeberrima villa sull'Appia antica erano proprietari di una dimora accanto agli *horti* di *Domitia Lucilla*, nell'area dell'Ospedale di S. Gio-

vanni in Laterano. I loro beni furono confiscati da Commodo alla fine del II secolo, dato che due esponenti di questa *gens* furono accusati di avere congiurato contro l'imperatore. Sulla questione vedi Liverani, 1995, p. 168; Liverani, 1999, p. 253.

**20** - Sulla proprietà imperiale in questo comparto della città: Coarelli, 1986, pp. 1-58; sul palazzo Sessoriano: Colli, 1996, pp. 771-815; Bottiglieri - Colli - Palladino, 2016, pp. 133-144.

**21** - Sul mausoleo: Vendittelli, 2011.

**22** - Tra i contributi più recenti vedi Haynes - Liverani - Piro *et Alii*, 2014, pp. 125-144.

**23** - *CIL* XV 7336.

**24** - *LP*, I, 371; Liverani, 1988, pp. 906-907.

**25** - *CIL* VI, 40790.

**26** - Cerrito, 2019, pp. 289-311.

**27** - *Amm. Marc.* XXI,1,5.

**28** - Magnani Cianetti - Pavolini, 2004.

**29** - Frutaz, 1969.

**30** - *CIL* VI 40806.

**31** - Volpe, 2004, pp.153-161.

**32** - Cerrito, 2007, pp. 375 - 482.

**33** - Cerrito - Saturno, 2014, pp. 255-264.

**34** - Cerrito - Yamada, 2015, pp. 687-693.

**35** - Cerrito - Yamada, 2019, pp. 275-321.

**36** - *Gv* 11,1.

**37** - *Gv* 4,4.

**38** - *Dn*, 14,31-39.

**39** - *Dn*, 3, 48.

**40** - *Mt*, 2,1-12.

**41** - Sul racconto agiografico: Campione, 2000, pp. 139-145.

**42** - Amore, 1975, pp. 78-80.

**43** - Scrinari, 1991.

**44** - Sapelli, 1998, pp. 54-55.

**45** - *De schisma Don.* I, 23.

**46** - Liverani, 2004, pp. 22-23.





Fig. 1 - Decorazione parietale della domus dei Valerii  
(da Bottiglieri, Palladino, 2015)



Fig. 2 - Planimetria dell'area archeologica dell'Ospedale di S. Giovanni  
in Laterano (Rilievo e disegno P. Vitti; rielaborazione grafica K. Nischimura)

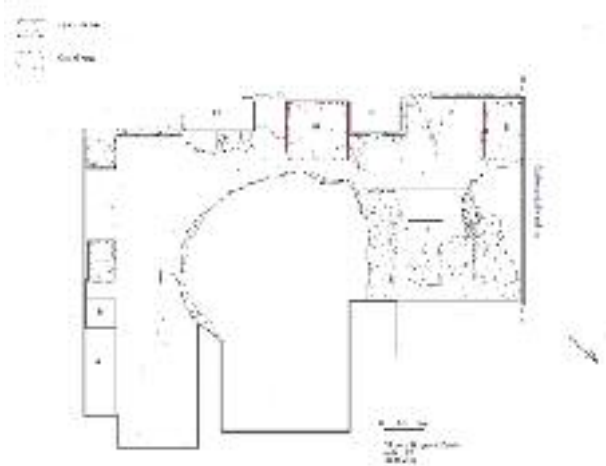


Fig. 3 - Ipotesi ricostruttiva dell'aula di rappresentanza pavimentata in *opus sectile* (rilievo e disegno A. Cerrito)

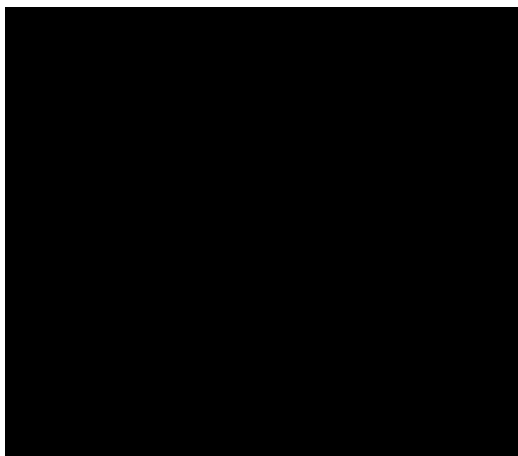


Fig. 4 - Oratorio cristiano, pannelli con *coronatio sanctorum*: a destra, S. Vito affiancato da Crescenza e Modesto; a sinistra, Cristo incorona S. Agnese e un'altra martire (ortofoto M. Limoncelli).



Fig. 5 - Pannello decorativo della *domus Faustae*: figura femminile ammantata con patera nella mano destra (da Scrinari, 1991)

## BIBLIOGRAFIA

**Amore A.** *I martiri di Roma*. Roma, 1975.

**AISCOM, XIX atti: Angelelli C.** (ed.) *Atti del XIX Colloquio dell'Associazione Italiana per lo Studio e la Conservazione del Mosaico, Isernia, 13-16 marzo 2013*. Tivoli, 2014.

**Bottiglieri L. - Palladino S.** *Ricostruzione e restituzione tridimensionale del corridoio e del viridarium della domus dei Valerii sul Celio, dagli scavi nell'Ospedale dell'Addolorata* in [www.fastionline.org/docs/FOLDER-con-2015-1.pdf](http://www.fastionline.org/docs/FOLDER-con-2015-1.pdf)

**Bottiglieri L. - Colli D. - Palladino S.** *Il comprensorio archeologico di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme a Roma: nuovi interventi di riqualificazione e recenti scoperte (2013-2014)* in "Bollettino di Archeologia online" VII, 2016/1-2, pp. 133-144.

**Bruun Ch.** (ed.) *Interpretare i bolli laterizi di Roma e della valle del Tevere: produzione, storia economica e topografica. Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae*, 32. Roma, 2005.

**Campione A.** *La Basilicata paleocristiana. Diocesi e culti*. Edipuglia, Bari 2000.

**Cecchelli M. - Cerrito A. - Milella A. - Orlandi S. - Roperti A. - Garrisi A. - Carta C.** *L'assetto culturale della Roma carolingia* in *CNAC, IX Atti*, pp. 375 - 482.

**Cerrito A.** *Oratori ed edifici di culto minori di Roma tra il IV ed i primi decenni del V secolo* in Guidobaldi F. - Guiglia Guidobaldi A. (edd.), *Ecclesiae Urbis*, in "Atti del Congresso Internazionale di studi sulle chiese di Roma (IV-X secolo)" Roma, 4-10 settembre 2000. Città del Vaticano, 2002. pp. 399-418.

**Cerrito A.** *Gli oratori* in Cecchelli M. - Cerrito A. - Milella A. - Orlandi S. - Roperti A. - Garrisi A. - Carta C. *L'assetto culturale della Roma carolingia* in *CNAC, IX Atti*, pp. 375 - 482.

**Cerrito A.** *Un inedito frammento di iscrizione onoraria proveniente dal comprensorio dell'Ospedale San Giovanni-Addolorata* in "Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Römische Abteilung" 125, 2019, pp. 289-311.

**Cerrito A.** *Il pavimento marmoreo della cosiddetta Statio Patrimonii nell'area del Laterano*, con una nota tecnico-analitica a cura di P. Sa-

turno in *AISCOM, XIX Atti*, pp. 255-264.

**Cerrito A. - Yamada J.** *Nuovi scavi e ricerche sulle prime fasi insediative cristiane nel complesso degli horti Domitiae Lucillae e della “domus Anni” (comprensorio ospedaliero S. Giovanni-Addolorata, Roma)* in *CNAC, XI Atti*, pp. 687-693.

**Cerrito A. - Yamada J.** *Scoperta di nuove pitture nell’oratorio paleocristiano sotto l’Ospedale dell’Angelo (complesso ospedaliero S. Giovanni-Addolorata, Roma)* in “Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia”, s. III, 91, 2018-2019, pp. 275-321.

**Coarelli F.** *L’Urbs e il Suburbio* in A. Giardina (ed.), *Società romana e impero tardoantico*, 2. Roma. *Politica, economia, paesaggio urbano*. Laterza, Roma-Bari, 1986, pp. 1-58.

**CNAC, IX Atti: Bonacasa Carra R. M. - E. Vitale E. (edd.)**, *La cristianizzazione in Italia fra tardoantico e altomedioevo* in “Atti IX Congresso Nazionale di Archeologia Cristiana” (Agrigento 20-25 novembre 2004). Palermo, 2007.

**CNAC, XI Atti: Martorelli R. - Piras A. - Spanu P. G. (edd.)**, *Isole e terraferma nel primo cristianesimo. Identità locale ed interscambi culturali, religiosi e produttivi* in “Atti XI Congresso Nazionale di Archeologia Cristiana” (Cagliari, 23-27 settembre 2014). Cagliari 2015.

**Colini A. M.** *Storia e topografia del Celio nell’antichità* in *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia. Memorie*, 7, Città del Vaticano 1944.

**Colli D.** *Il palazzo Sessoriano nell’area archeologica di S. Croce in Gerusalemme: ultima sede imperiale a Roma?* in “Mélanges de l’École française de Rome - Antiquité”, 108, 2, 1996, pp. 771-815.

**Frutaz A. P.** *Il complesso cimiteriale di Sant’Agnese*. Tipografia poliglotta vaticana, Città del Vaticano, 1969 (2 ed. riveduta e ampliata).

**Guidobaldi F. - Guiglia Guidobaldi A. (edd.)** *Ecclesiae Urbis* in “Atti del Congresso Internazionale di studi sulle chiese di Roma (IV-X secolo)” Roma, 4-10 settembre 2000. Città del Vaticano, 2002.

**Haynes I. - Liverani P. - Piro S. - Spinola G.** *Progetto Laterano: primi risultati*, in *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia*, 86, 2013-2014, pp. 125-144.

**Liverani P.** *Le proprietà private nell’area lateranense fino all’età di Costantino* in “Mélanges de l’École française de Rome - Antiquité”, 100, pp. 891 - 915.

- Liverani P.** s.v. *Domus: Quintilii Condianus et Maximus*, *LTUR*, II, p. 168.
- Liverani P.** s.v. *Domus: Quintilii Condianus et Maximus*, *LTUR*, V, p. 253.
- Liverani P.** *L'area lateranense in età tardoantica e le origini del Patriarcato* in "Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Antiquité", 116, 2004, pp. 17-49.
- Lo Cascio E.** *La concentrazione delle figlinae nella proprietà imperiale (II-IV sec.)* in Bruun, 2005, pp. 95-102.
- Duchesne L.** *Le Liber Pontificalis. Introduction, Commentaire et texte*, vol. I. E. Thorin ed., Parigi, 1886.
- Steinby E. M.** (ed), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, ed. *Arbor Sapientiae*, I, Roma, 1995; V, Roma, 1999.
- Magnani Cianetti M. - Pavolini C.** *La basilica costantiniana di Sant'Agnese: lavori archeologici e di restauro*. Electa, Milano, 2004.
- Pavolini C.** *Archeologia e topografia della regione II (Celio). Un aggiornamento sessant'anni dopo Colini* in "Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae, Supplementum" III. Edizioni Quasar, Roma, 2006.
- Card. Rampolla del Tindaro M.** *Santa Melania Giuniore Senatrice Romana*. Tipografia Vaticana, Roma, 1905.
- Santa Maria Scrinari V.** *Scavi sotto la sala Mazzoni dell'Ospedale di S. Giovanni in Roma* in "Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia", 41, 1968-1969, pp. 167-189.
- Santa Maria Scrinari V.** *Il Laterano imperiale, I. Dalle «aedes Laterani» alla «domus Faustae»*, *Monumenti di antichità cristiana*, 11. Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, Città del Vaticano, 1991.
- Santa Maria Scrinari V.** *Il Laterano imperiale II. Dagli "horti Domitiae" alla cappella cristiana*, *Monumenti di antichità cristiana*, II, 11. Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, Città del Vaticano, 1995.
- Sapelli M.** *Museo Nazionale Romano. Arte tardoantica* in "Palazzo Massimo alle Terme". Electa, Milano, 1998.
- Valentini R. - Zucchetti G.** *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, I. Tipografia del Senato, Roma, 1940.
- Vendittelli L. (ed.)** *Il mausoleo di Sant'Elena. Gli scavi*. Electa, Milano, 2011.
- Volpe R.** *La problematica storica alla luce delle fonti e dei documenti d'archivio*, in Gioia P. - Volpe R. - Arnoldus Huyzendveld A. (edd.) *Centocelle. Roma S.D.O., le indagini archeologiche. Studi e materiali dei musei e monumenti comunali di Roma*. Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli, 2004, pp.153-161.

**LE PARCOURS DU PERSONNAGE  
FÉMININ DANS LA RÉCEPTION DU THÉÂ  
TRE OCCIDENTAL EN CHINE AU DÉBUT  
DU XX<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE**

*Gezhi Cheng*

(CERC - Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Comparatistes  
Ecole doctorale 120 - Littérature française et comparée  
UNIVERSITE SORBONNE NOUVELLE - PARIS 3)

Les défaites de la Chine dans les deux guerres de l'opium (*yapian zhanzheng* 鸦片战争, 1839-1842, 1856-1860) ont forcé le pays à s'ouvrir aux pays occidentaux. Les lettrés réformistes, dont des fonctionnaires de haut niveau dans le gouvernement impérial, ont tenté de chercher le remède contre la crise profonde du pays et le déclin de l'Empire. Le mouvement d'auto-renforcement (*yangwu yundong* 洋务运动, 1861-1895), visant à une modernisation technologique et militaire, est un échec en face de la défaite de la Chine dans la première guerre sino-japonaise (*jiawu zhanzheng* 洋务运动, 1894-1895). Divers mouvements nationalistes se sont succédés, et finalement, la révolution Xinhai (*xinhai geming* 辛亥革命, 1911-1912) a renversé la dynastie des Qing et a terminé le régime impérial qui gouvernait la Chine depuis des millénaires. Au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, une nouvelle génération d'élite intellectuelle ayant reçu une éducation moderne à l'occidentale a commencé à exercer son influence, le mouvement du 4 mai 1919 (*wusi yundong* 五四运动) est donc une deuxième révolution nationaliste subversive guidée par de jeunes intellectuels progressistes, lesquels contribuent activement à l'introduction des œuvres et des courants d'idées occidentaux. Le mouvement de la Nouvelle culture (*xinwenhua yundong* 新文化运动), marqué par la rupture avec la tradition et la reconstruction de la culture chinoise, est directement associé au mouvement du 4 mai. La Chine a

connu une vitalité et une prospérité des expressions culturelles dans la courte période relativement paisible avant la réapparition de la menace de guerre au tout début des années 1930.

### **La réforme théâtrale et l'établissement du théâtre parlé**

En plus de la modernisation technologique et de l'industrialisation du pays, l'influence occidentale s'est étendue aux aspects culturels de la société chinoise, en particulier, le théâtre occidental, présenté d'abord par des immigrants occidentaux dans leur propre cercle amateur à Shanghai, est ensuite réintroduit au public chinois par des étudiants d'écoles missionnaires et des étudiants qui sont rentrés de l'étranger.

*Huaju* (话剧, «théâtre parlé»), littéralement «théâtre de paroles», envisage de faire la distinction entre soi-même et *xiqu* (戏曲, «théâtre traditionnel»), ainsi, de mettre l'accent sur l'abandon du chant et de la danse du style traditionnel et sur l'utilisation de la langue parlée dans un nouveau genre dramatique d'inspiration occidentale. Le terme *huaju* que nous utilisons aujourd'hui ne s'est établi qu'à partir de l'année 1928, sur la proposition d'un des pionniers du théâtre moderne chinois Hong Shen 洪深 (1894-1955) à l'occasion de la réunion de la commémoration du 100<sup>e</sup> anniversaire d'Ibsen en Chine. Avant l'établissement du terme *huaju*, le développement du théâtre moderne chinois a connu déjà plusieurs grands genres de transition, du théâtre civilisé (*wenmingxi* 文明戏) au nouveau théâtre (*xinju* 新剧) en passant par le théâtre amateur (*aimeiju* 爱美剧), le théâtre chinois s'est reformé en répondant aux engagements esthétique et artistique, et aussi social et idéologique de différents groupes théâtraux et intellectuels de l'époque. Le renouveau de la nation et l'éveil du peuple restaient le leitmotiv de l'histoire moderne de la Chine et aussi de la création artistique de cette période historique.

Les étudiants d'écoles missionnaires étaient les premiers à tenter ce nouveau genre théâtral en 1896, une mise en scène du *Marchand de Venise* représentant la scène où Portia se déguise en avo-



cat et défend son fiancé devant la cour marque le début de la tradition du théâtre d'étudiants, laquelle a joué un rôle important tout au long du développement du théâtre moderne chinois. Des étudiants d'écoles missionnaires de Shanghai ont mis en scène d'autres pièces de théâtre shakespeariennes lors des événements festifs, ces représentations faisaient partie des démonstrations de leur apprentissage des langues étrangères et étaient donc moins accessibles au grand public (Fig. 1-2).

Considéré par la plupart des chercheurs comme le pionnier incontestable du théâtre parlé en chinois, un groupe d'étudiants a fondé à Tokyo le groupe Chunliu (春柳, «saule du printemps») en 1906. L'année suivante, ils ont adapté en chinois *La Dame aux camélias* d'Alexandre Dumas et *La Case de l'oncle Tom* d'Harriet Beecher Stowe. La performance de ces dramaturges et acteurs amateurs a connu un grand succès, le nouveau style et les pièces de théâtre représentés par le groupe Chunliu ont été tout de suite adoptés par les partisans de la réforme théâtrale et ont continué d'exercer une influence forte dans la première décennie du développement du théâtre moderne chinois, qui témoignait la grande prospérité et la popularité des troupes professionnalisées de nouveau théâtre.

La réclamation du remplacement du chinois classique (*wenyan* 文言) par le chinois parlé (*baihua* 白话) se réalise à travers le mouvement de la Nouvelle culture, ce changement favorise davantage la traduction, la réception et la création d'œuvres dramatiques, les genres romanesque et dramatique modernes sont considérés «populaires», mais aussi «instructifs» dès leur introduction en Chine (Fig. 3).

Beaucoup de revues littéraire et artistique sont apparues avec de différentes écoles de pensée créatives, parmi lesquelles, la revue emblématique *Nouvelle Jeunesse* (*xin qingnian* 新青年) a consacré en juin 1918 un numéro spécial à Henrik Ibsen. La pièce *Une maison de poupée* traduit par le directeur Hu Shi lui-même y est publiée. Le personnage Nora a suscité un intérêt profond et est

devenu dans les milieux intellectuels chinois un symbole de la nouvelle femme rebelle contre les valeurs traditionnelles, malgré l'article critique de Lu Xun «Après le départ de Nora» qui constitue une réfutation de l'optimisme sur le futur de ce personnage féminin (Fig. 4).

L'établissement de la troupe de théâtre du peuple (*minzhong xijushe* 民众戏剧社) et la mise en scène de *La profession de Madame Warren* en 1920 ont marqué l'établissement de facto du théâtre parlé en Chine, et l'adaptation sinisée de *L'Eventail de Lady Windermere*, *L'Eventail de la jeune maîtresse*, mise en scène par Hong Shen en 1924 a eu tellement de succès auprès du public qu'une adaptation cinématographique a été reproduite.

Un dernier mouvement théâtral déclenché par la troupe de théâtre Nanguo (*nanguo she* 南国社) à la fin des années 1920 a vu la mise en scène de deux pièces représentatives, *Salomé* et *Carmen*. Ces deux pièces ont été traduites par Tian Han et reflètent son changement d'orientation de l'esthétisme à l'engagement gauchiste. Après l'interdiction de représentation de *Carmen* en juin, la troupe de théâtre Nanguo a été saisie par les autorités en septembre 1930.

La quête identitaire du personnage féminin représente donc l'esprit de cette époque où la révolution et les réformes ont entraîné des bouleversements dans la société. Le public chinois s'est émerveillé de personnages féminins de caractère anticonformiste dans leur réception des **œuvres** dramatiques occidentales, un bon nombre de dramaturges et de théoriciens, comme Tian Han, Hong Shen, Ouyang Yuqian, Cao Yu, etc., se sont formés durant cette période et ont créé par la suite les pièces de théâtre et des personnages féminins emblématiques du théâtre moderne chinois, sous l'influence de la tradition littéraire chinoise et de l'inspiration dramatique occidentale.

### **Le problème des femmes**

L'introduction des idées occidentales et la réforme sociale ont in-

cité beaucoup d'intellectuels à prôner la rupture avec la tradition et la morale confucéenne, mais face à l'impact de l'occidentalisation sur les bonnes mœurs établies et la confusion de valeurs dans la société, certains intellectuels se sont intéressés de nouveau à la renaissance des principes de l'idéologie confucéenne, qui se permet en fait d'être réinterprétée dans le nouveau contexte social après sa constante évolution au cours des âges. En dépit des fluctuations de l'opinion sur l'orientation des valeurs sociales, le problème des femmes restait l'un des thèmes les plus importants de l'époque, l'émancipation de la femme s'est opposée naturellement à des pratiques culturelles néfastes liées à la morale confucéenne.

C'est au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle que les femmes enfermées dans leur chambre ont commencé à sortir de la maison et à jouer davantage un rôle social. Mais il faut encore plus d'une décennie pour que les femmes chinoises deviennent visibles sur la scène publique, présentes dans de nouvelles écoles, des restaurants et des théâtres et aussi des groupes sociaux. Le droit à l'éducation, l'abolition du mariage arrangé, du concubinage etc. font tous partie du problème des femmes. Ce leitmotiv de l'époque s'est lié étroitement avec le renouveau de la nation chinoise, au cours de ce processus, les arguments des défenseurs des femmes libérées se sont également conformés à des discours nationalistes.

Avec l'exemple du bandage des pieds, c'est surtout dans les deux dernières dynasties que la coutume des pieds bandés s'étend des filles issues des classes sociales plus favorisées à une part plus large de la société chinoise. Les filles «aux pieds de lotus» étaient physiquement contraintes de rester à la maison, leur champ restait limité, cette coutume qui entravait la contribution des femmes à la prospérité de la société a suscité de nombreuses critiques et a été finalement abolie. Quant à l'éducation des filles, elle visait d'abord à former des citoyennes qualifiées pour l'entretien et l'éducation des enfants. La libération physique et intellectuelle des femmes les a encouragées à revendiquer plus de droits, en particulier dans de grandes villes plus cosmopolites comme Shanghai.

## Le parcours du personnage féminin

Shanghai est le centre culturel incontestable de l'époque républicaine, dans cette ville où le nouveau théâtre se déclenche et se développe, l'idée, la propagande et le comportement social s'encouragent, le personnage féminin, l'actrice et la spectatrice s'accomplissent dans le théâtre. L'ensemble du répertoire du début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle sait mettre en valeur le caractère des personnages féminins, leur rôle capital dans le déroulement de l'intrigue et le développement du thème principal a fait une profonde impression sur les lecteurs et spectateurs chinois.

L'importance de l'héroïne se manifeste souvent directement dans l'intitulé des pièces occidentales introduites, parmi lesquelles un bon nombre sont nommées directement d'après leur protagoniste comme *Carmen* et *Salomé*, tandis que d'autres se font connaître avec l'appellation courante du personnage féminin principal dans l'histoire, qu'il s'agisse de la dame aux camélias, Madame Warren ou Lady Windermere.

Par rapport aux personnages masculins, quels genres de rêves, d'espoirs et d'aspirations les personnages féminins peuvent-ils nourrir dans un environnement décourageant? Comment le changement de contexte influence-t-il l'introduction et l'interprétation de ces personnages féminins étrangers? Comment les femmes chinoises, voire les hommes chinois, se reflètent-ils dans l'évolution des personnages féminins de ce nouveau théâtre?

Le nouveau théâtre s'est popularisé en tant qu'instruction civique au public chinois. Les textes dramatiques étrangers choisis par des traducteurs et auteurs chinois portent un témoignage sur le changement du personnage féminin dans la réception du théâtre occidental, qui reflète d'abord une vision collective d'intellectuels progressistes sur les changements de l'état de survie et de l'état mental des femmes chinoises et s'oriente ensuite vers une représentation de l'image symbolisée et idéalisée.

Des participants de la réforme théâtrale chinoise cherchent à renverser les valeurs confucéennes fondamentales de la société chi-

noise et souhaitent vulgariser de nouvelles idées importées, les personnages féminins dans les pièces traduites et adaptées pendant la période de transition du règne du théâtre traditionnel à la puissance du théâtre parlé se sont engagés dans une évolution inéluctable. L'on peut constater le changement en trois phases du personnage féminin dans la réception du théâtre occidental en Chine au cours des trois premières décennies du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle.

Dans une société fondée sur le système patriarcal, une femme devait se connaître en tant que la fille, la femme ou la mère de quelqu'un à différentes étapes de sa vie. Dans la première phase où les réflexions et les débats sur le féminisme viennent de se soulever en Chine avec l'introduction et la réception de nouvelles idées occidentales, transportées à travers la littérature et le théâtre. Les milieux intellectuels, dont la grande majorité continue d'être composée d'hommes, sont tombés en admiration devant les personnages féminins comme Portia du *Marchand de Venise* et Marguerite de *La Dame aux camélias*, caractérisés par leur beauté, leur intelligence, leur dévouement pour l'amour et aussi leur docilité aux enseignements de certaine autorité.

濮 白山奴少爷，你瞧，我就是这么样一个平常的人：为我自己，我不愿望有什么野心做一个更好的人；但是为了你，我愿意比现在好五六十倍；比现在美一千倍，比现在富一万倍；使我在你心目中占个高的地位，我在贤德上，美貌上，财产上，朋友上，自以为都还过得去；但是以我所有的一切总加起来只不过是——这么一点；简括说起来，我是一个没有家教，没有教育，没有经验的姑娘。不过可以喜欢的是她年纪不大，还能够学习；更可以喜欢的是她并不生得怎样笨，能够学习；最可以喜欢的是她把温柔的灵魂整个儿交给你，受你的指引，受你的熏陶，你是她的主人，她的官长，她的君王。现在把我自己跟我所有的一切都交给你。<sup>1</sup>

[Pu: Jeune maître Bai Shannu, vous voyez, je suis une personne tout à fait normale: pour moi-même,

je n'ai pas d'ambition d'être une meilleure personne; mais pour vous, je veux être cinquante ou soixante fois meilleure qu'aujourd'hui; mille fois plus belle, dix mille fois plus riche qu'aujourd'hui; pour que je puisse occuper une place plus importante dans votre cœur, je ne suis pas mauvaise, en matière de vertu, de beauté, de richesse et de commerce; mais tout ce que j'ai n'est que... un petit peu; après tout, je ne suis qu'une fille sans instruction, sans éducation, sans expérience. Mais ce qui en vaut bien la peine, c'est son âge encore jeune, elle peut encore apprendre; de plus, elle n'est pas née stupide et est capable d'apprendre; mais surtout qu'elle donne son âme douce tout entier à vous et qu'elle se laisse guidée par vous, formée par vous, vous êtes son maître, son chef, son roi. Maintenant, je donne tout ce que j'ai et moi-même à vous.]<sup>2</sup>

PORTIA

You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,  
Such as I am; though for myself alone  
I would not be ambitious in my wish,  
To wish myself much better, yet for you,  
I would be trebled twenty times myself,  
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times  
More rich, that only to stand high in your account  
[...]

She is not bred so dull but she can learn;  
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit  
Commits itself to yours to be directed,  
As from her lord, her governor, her king.  
Myself, and what is mine, to you and yours  
Is now converted. [...]<sup>3</sup>

La confession de Portia à son fiancé montre le caractère de ce genre de personnage, leur docilité et compréhension, en parallèle avec un peu d'initiative audacieuse, se conforment à la nouvelle image de la femme idéale dans la réforme des lettrés chinois. Des contradictions évidentes se manifestent, leurs actions sont en conformité avec les principes sociaux établis et ne s'écartent pas trop du bon chemin, bien que leur pensée ne se conforme pas strictement aux bonnes mœurs traditionnelles. Evidemment, la caractéristique docile manifestée par ces personnages féminins n'est pas la conséquence de l'ancrage du confucianisme, mais le résultat de la croyance et de la mentalité profondément enracinées dans la société occidentale, cela n'empêche pas que l'intrigue et le personnage d'origine occidentale éveillent chez les lecteurs chinois des résonances profondes. Les traducteurs et les auteurs chinois ont établi leurs critères de sélection des œuvres occidentales en conformité avec le contexte chinois, leur rôle dans le processus de réception n'est pas passif, des modifications, des omissions et des réécritures sont courantes, et l'adaptation sinisée, en concurrence avec la traduction «fidèle», jouit également d'une grande popularité auprès des spectateurs.

Quels sont les enjeux de la réforme des personnages féminins dans le théâtre moderne chinois? C'est un changement qui se précipite à partir de la deuxième phase de l'introduction du théâtre occidental. Nora d'*Une maison de poupée* et Margaret de *L'Eventail de lady Windermere* sont les deux personnages féminins représentatifs dans l'histoire de théâtre moderne et populaires auprès du public qui «s'éveillent» et mettent en question la réalité de leur vie.

娜 正是如此，你从来不曾懂得我。我一生吃了大亏，先吃我爸爸的亏，后吃了你的亏。

郝 什么话？世上谁能像我同你爸爸那样爱你？

你还说吃了我们两人的亏！

娜（摇摇头）你何尝爱我？你不过觉得恋爱着我是很好玩的。<sup>4</sup>

[Na: ça y est, tu ne m'as jamais comprise. J'ai subi

des pertes dans ma vie, d'abord avec Papa, puis avec toi.

Hao: Quoi! Ton père et moi, qui t'avons!

Na: (secouant la tête) Vous m'avez aimée? Il vous a paru amusant d'être en amour avec moi<sup>5</sup>.]

NORA Nous y voici. Tu ne m'as jamais comprise... On m'a fait grand tort, Torvald. D'abord papa, puis toi.

HELMER Quoi! Nous deux... nous deux, qui t'avons le plus aimée?

NORA (secouant la tête) Vous ne m'avez jamais aimée. Il vous a paru agréable d'être en adoration devant moi, voilà tout<sup>6</sup>.

La déclaration de Nora devant son mari porte clairement le message de l'éveil de sa conscience de soi. Elle rejette les rôles que la société lui distribue et ne m'abaisserai plus à répondre aux attentes de son mari après sa «trahison». Elle ne se fait plus d'illusions et se tient sur le seuil d'une ère nouvelle, qui est également un seuil incertain entre l'espoir et la réalité. La similarité et la différence entre Nora et lady Windermere montre la confrontation des idées dans la deuxième décennie du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle (Fig. 5).

En entrant dans la troisième phase, Vivie, Carmen et Salomé sont plus audacieuses et inébranlables que leurs prédécesseurs, elles s'en tiennent à leur philosophie de la vie à tout prix. Ce n'est pas dans l'ordre où ces œuvres étaient créées, mais dans l'ordre où ces œuvres étaient introduites et reçues que nous voyons le changement de centre d'intérêt d'intellectuels chinois, et aussi ce qu'ils voulaient privilégier dans leur propre création dramatique.

Par rapport à la femme idéale dans la tradition littéraire chinoise, le modèle occidental dont les intellectuels progressistes font l'éloge ne répond pas toujours aux attentes de son audience. L'accueil du public à l'aspiration enthousiaste des réformistes théâtraux n'a pas été toujours favorable, la représentation de *La*



*profession de Madame Warren* a essuyé un échec auprès du public, et avec l'exemple de *Salomé*, cette héroïne est aussi attirante pour un petit nombre d'admirateurs esthètes qu'elle est étrange et inaccessible pour une plus large audience.

Dans les pièces de théâtre où les vertus et les rôles traditionnels des femmes européennes ont été mis en question, les lecteurs chinois trouvent la projection de la réalité, de la difficulté et du devenir des femmes, ou plus largement, du peuple chinois. Les héroïnes qui se rendent compte de la réalité et de la vérité de leur vie doivent prendre une décision pour elles-mêmes et ne plus se soumettre à la décision des autres. Le pouvoir des valeurs traditionnelles a été très fort, l'esprit d'insubordination ne domine que dans le caractère d'une minorité des personnages féminins étrangers qui se faisaient admirer dans les trois premières décennies du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, beaucoup d'entre elles n'ont pas choisi de rompre avec la situation présente, au contraire, c'est la théâtralité de circonstances qui les oblige à faire face à la réalité.

沙乐美 唉！你总不许我亲你的嘴，约翰。好！现在我可要亲它了。[...] 好，约翰，我依然活着，可是你呢，你已经死了，你的头归了我了。我任把它怎么样都随我的意。[...] 唉！约翰，约翰，你是我唯一的爱人。其他一切的男子我都厌恨。惟有你，你真美丽啊！[...] 你那时若望了我，你一定爱了我，我深知你一定会爱了我，并且爱的神秘比死的神秘还要大些。除了爱我们什么都不必管呀。<sup>7</sup>

SALOME [...] Ah! Iokanaan. Eh bien, je la baiserais maintenant. [...] Eh bien, Iokanaan, moi je vis encore, mais toi, tu es mort et ta tête m'appartient. [...] Ah! ah! Pourquoi ne m'as-tu pas regardée, Iokanaan? Si tu m'avais regardée, tu m'aurais aimée. Je sais bien que tu m'aurais aimée, et le mystère de l'amour est plus grand que le mystère de la mort. Il ne faut regarder que l'amour<sup>8</sup>.

La réinterprétation du personnage biblique Salomé porte en soi une esthétique fort symbolique, mais pour ses admirateurs chinois, qui ne sont pas familiers avec l'évolution artistique de ce personnage, quel est le symbolisme de Salomé? L'affaiblissement de l'homme et une esthétique raffinée mais morbide qui reflète une réflexion philosophique du désir et de la mort. L'héroïne figure une impudeur candide avec cruauté, elle se trouve à l'extérieur de la prison du prophète en se présentant «[j]e suis Salomé; fille d'Hérodiad, princesse de Judée»<sup>9</sup>, ignore le malheur et la douleur de ses adorateurs, et demande au roi la tête de l'homme qu'elle aime mais qui la repousse. Quand nous abordons un personnage féminin comme Salomé, nous savons qu'elle ne représente plus une femme réelle et qu'elle s'éloigne de l'intrigue quotidienne. Au fur et à mesure du développement du théâtre moderne chinois, un nombre d'auteurs manifeste un enthousiasme pour des thématiques féminines plus symboliques. Il ne s'agit plus pour eux d'interroger la quête identitaire des femmes dans la société chinoise, mais de créer l'incarnation de leur aspiration à l'autodétermination et à la liberté? Le personnage féminin est devenu une forme abstraite d'expression.

### **Conclusion**

Bien que nous divisons le développement de cette période en trois phases, la femme docile, la femme rebelle et la femme symbolique ne sont pas complètement séparées l'une de l'autre. Des personnages féminins plus obéissants aux bonnes mœurs manifestent aussi des caractéristiques qui ne se conforment pas aux normes établis, et des personnages rebelles qui s'éloignent du contexte social actuel, représentés par Carmen et Salomé de la troupe de théâtre Nanguo, sont devenus symboliques à l'égard des intellectuels chinois. Le comportement et la parole de ces femmes fatales envers leur amant pourraient même être jugées scandaleux au plan moral, le progrès social et l'émancipation des femmes n'ont pas encore atteint un tel niveau.

La littérature chinoise a la tradition de raconter les choses du lieu étranger fantastique pour faire allusion au présent, dans son processus de modernisation, elle trouve une nouvelle source d'inspiration qui se fusionnait avec la tradition. Le parcours du personnage féminin dans la réception du théâtre occidental en Chine reflète clairement les changements de la société chinoise au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Dans une société bandée auparavant par des manières strictes et des principes moraux, des œuvres étrangères et leurs personnages permettent aux lecteurs et spectateurs chinois de prendre leurs distances et mettre en regard l'ensemble de l'évolution des thèmes féminins dans le développement du théâtre moderne occidental. Les intellectuels chinois ont reçu dans les trois premières décennies du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle divers courants et styles apparaissant dans le développement d'environ deux cent ans du théâtre occidental, la reconstruction du personnage féminin se poursuit ensuite dans la création dramatique proprement chinoise.

Dans l'atmosphère révolutionnaire au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, surtout le jeune public est passé d'un extrême à l'autre, la mise en accent sur l'individualisme était en rupture avec la tradition confucéenne chinoise, qui fait de la famille la pierre angulaire de la société. Le conflit de valeurs entre l'individualité et la famille traditionnelle est devenu un leitmotiv récurrent dans la littérature et le théâtre du temps moderne chinois, et les personnages féminins, en situation de vulnérabilité dans le régime patriarcal, font souvent la manifestation la plus dramatique dans des tragédies familiales.

A commencer par la montée en scène des étudiantes, traductrices, écrivaines et actrices, les œuvres occidentales, avec leurs personnages féminins vedettes, choisis et interprétés au début par des auteurs et intellectuels masculins chinois, font partie d'un processus parallèle de l'émancipation des femmes, de la connaissance de l'individualité, de l'établissement de la rhétorique nationaliste et de la formation du discours et de l'esthétique nouveaux dans cette période historique de crise, de bouleversement, mais aussi de création.

## NOTES

- 1 - *Le Marchand de Venise*, Gu Zhongyi (trad.). Xinyue shudian, 1930, p. 92-93.
- 2 - Traduit par l'auteur.
- 3 - *Le Marchand de Venise*, Jean-Michel Déprats (trad.). Gallimard, 2010, p. 158.
- 4 - *Une maison de poupée*, Luo Jialun, Hu Shi (trad.). *La Nouvelle Jeunesse*, vol. 7, He`nan wenyi chubanshe, p. 91.
- 5 - Traduit par l'auteur.
- 6 - *Une maison de poupée*, Régis Boyer (trad.). Flammarion, 2015, p. 212-213.
- 7 - *Salomé*, Tian Han (trad.), *Œuvres complètes de Tian Han*, vol. 19. Huashan wenyi chubanshe, p. 41-42.
- 8 - Oscar Wilde, *Salomé*. Flammarion, 2006, p. 161, 163.
- 9 - Oscar Wilde, *Salomé*. Flammarion, p. 77. *Salomé*, Tian Han (trad.), p. 17.



Fig. 1 - Souvenir de la représentation de *La Dame aux camélias* du groupe Chunliu



Fig. 2 - Représentation de l'adaptation de *La case de l'uncle Tom* par le groupe Chunliu



Fig. 3 - Couverture du numéro spécial d'Ibsen dans *La Nouvelle Jeunesse*, juin 1918



Fig. 4 - Annonce publicitaire de la représentation de *L'Eventail de la jeune maîtresse* dans l'*Illustré de Shanghai*



Fig. 5 - Troupe de théâtre *Nanguo*, lors de la représentation de *Salomé*

## BIBLIOGRAPHIE

**Fu J. (éd.),** *Ershi shiji Zhongguo xijushi* 二十世纪中国戏剧史 (Histoire du théâtre chinois au XXe siècle). Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2016.

**Ibsen H.** *Une maison de poupée*, Luo Jialun, Hu Shi (trad.), *La Nouvelle Jeunesse*, vol. 7. He'nan wenyi chubanshe, 2016.

**Ibsen H.** *Une maison de poupée*, Régis Boyer (trad.). Flammarion, 2015.

**Seto H.** *A Study on the Formation of Chinese Spoken Drama* (Une étude sur la formation du théâtre parlé chinois), Chen Linghong (trad.). Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2015.

**Shakespeare W.** *Le Marchand de Venise*, Jean-Michel Déprats (trad.), Gallimard, 2010.

**Shakespeare W.** *Le Marchand de Venise*, Gu Zhongyi (trad.). Xinyue shudian, 1930.

**Wilde O.** *Salomé*. Flammarion, 2006.

**Wilde O.** *Salomé*, Tian Han (trad.), *Œuvres complètes de Tian Han*, vol. 19. Huashan wenyi chubanshe, 2000.

**Zhang J. - Deng S. - Lang Y. - Wang B. (édd.),** *Zhongguo wenxue tongshi 7, jindai wenxue* 中国文学通史-近代文学 (Histoire de la littérature chinoise, volume 7, littérature moderne). Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 2013.

**Zhu S.** *Xinju shi* 新剧史 (Histoire du drame). Dongfang chubanshe, 2015.

**Shanghai Theatre Museum (éd.)**. *Shanghai huaju bainian tuzhi* 上海话剧百年图志 (Cents ans d'histoire du théâtre parlé à Shanghai en images, 1907-2007). China Theatre Press, 2015.



**SALOME AS THE REPRESENTATION  
OF THE *FEMME FATALE*  
ICON IN THE ART OF THE EUROPEAN SYMBOLISM:  
AN ICONOGRAPHICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL,  
PSYCHOANALYTICAL APPROACH**

*Steiakakis Chrysovalantis*

(Dr. in “Studies in Hellenic Culture”

Open University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus - Art Historian)

The subject of Salome (14/5-1<sup>st</sup> century AD)<sup>1</sup> and her visual representation has always occupied artists. However, anyone studying the movement of Symbolism will note that the depictions of Salome became more popular in Europe, from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to 1922 and were dominant in all forms of art<sup>2</sup>. Symbolist artists in the West did not recognise any other “priestess” beyond Salome. They envisioned her as a part of a world of ideas, beyond reality. A world dominated by subjectivity, darkness, melancholy, mysticism, eroticism, dreams, music, exoticism and everything unknown to the ordinary people<sup>3</sup>. For example, in Paris, from 1850 to 1912, there can be found up to 6 paintings a year which portray Salome and 2,789 poems written in her honour<sup>4</sup>. But why was this particular heroine of such intense interest to the European intelligentsia of that time? Many recent scholars mention her legend, which they call the “*fin de siècle*” legend or the “myth of Decadence”, which developed in France, but also in Austria, Italy and England<sup>5</sup>.

An observer of pictorial representations and depictions of Salome in Europe, during the years in question, would conclude that - in most works - the heroine is portrayed as an Oriental Princess in love (Pic. 1), but also ruthless (Pic. 2). She is sometimes portrayed as an Oriental dancer (Pic. 3), or musician (Pic. 4) and she often appears as a modern woman who is proud of her acquisition, feel-

ing no remorse (Pic. 5). There are also instances where Salome is depicted with two heads - John's the Baptist (late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC - 28-36 AD) and Herod's (before 20 DC - after 39 AD), as a comment on the end of the story - accompanying her (Pic. 6), and cases where she is holding a phallus instead of a head (Pic. 7). There are also several works where one can see the Salome's vision (Pic. 8) and the execution of John the Baptist and his decapitation (Pic. 9). On the other hand, portrayals of Salome in prison (Pic. 10), or lamenting in front of the dead John the Baptist (Pic. 11), or indeed of the death of Salome herself (Pic. 12), are considerably rarer. Often, Salome is confused with her mother (Pic. 13). So, what was it that the artists wanted to highlight? Their aim was to emphasise the idea of the *femme fatale* who incarnates destruction and death. Through this identification of Salome with Herodias (c. 15 BC - c. 39 AD), the direct/indirect perpetrator and the executioner, an innocent, wounded, woman in love, her feminine nature becomes even more fatal and corrupt.

In all these representations of the specific heroine, even when she appears as an innocent, repentant, frightened woman or even in love, Salome retains elements of the *femme fatale*. She is shown as frosty, as unmoving as a statue, neurotic, wicked or hedonistic, with sexual impulses which at times approach necrophilia. Her representations always personify the archetypal, negative feminine element, the morbidity and the evil. The woman, the favourite subject matter in the art of the European Symbolism, embodies the fatal beauty that leads to death. At the same time, she symbolizes the conflict between good and evil, which finds physical form in the "priestess" worshiped by the symbolists and decadent artists of the West. When she is dancing (Pic. 8), she is portrayed between motion and immobility, in a stance that reminds us of a snake - the symbol of the original sin. In many works of that period, the heroine is shown as deformed and is depicted as androgynous with birds' feet. This is not merely coincidence, as at that time the British naturalist, geologist and biologist

Charles Robert Darwin's (1809-1882) ideas on evolution of the species were highly prominent. Contemporary European artists presented the transition from animal to human in these representations of Salome and in doing so, they criticized the new scientific theories, that were close to the spirit of materialism. At the same time, in almost all visual representations, Salome is shown as hypnotized, in a world of hallucinations, between sleep and waking (Pic. 14). She reminds us of the hysterical women with their eyes open or closed and with expressions of terror on their faces, left to the absolute control of their male creators and admirers (Pic. 15). Moreover, the fact that Salome is given the characteristics of Eastern women - in the context of the "discovery" of exotic civilizations - makes her even more deadly. This exposes the men's imagination and their deepest aspirations in the conservative, puritanical western society of the present age. Salome is usually depicted with half-closed provocative eyes and a half-open mouth - an image which is full of sensuality. At the same time, in the majority of her representations, she has black hair which is reminiscent of the Medusa's head and makes her even more mysterious, seductive, enigmatic, desirable and deadly.<sup>6</sup> The European symbolists' art was preoccupied by the depiction of the *femme fatale*. The composition itself, with its closed, enigmatic, theatrical mood - which creates an evocative whole - played an important role in this depiction. Darkness has a part to play as it is identified with the darkness in the protagonist's character. Black, which dominates the compositions, is the colour of universal matter, chaos, fertility, unrequited love, denial of life and death. As the Russian expressionist painter and art theorist Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) comments, black is like an eternal silence, without a future or hope.<sup>7</sup> It is something immobile, like the silence of the body after death. At the same time, it is easy for someone to find intense shades and strange, unrealistic lighting in a large number of paintings of that period. These also help to integrate the figures into unreal spaces, which are not chrono-

logically or spatially defined, linking the external with the internal. Even where an attempt is made to determine the space, this becomes difficult, as the game the images play by linking the external with the internal disorients the viewer. The aim of the art of the European Symbolism was to evoke and here it is also served by the depressed atmosphere and the mist which overwhelm the compositions, by reminding a dream world, an ideal where musicality dominates<sup>8</sup>. Everything takes place as part of a synaesthesia. The European symbolists sought out the obscure, what is hidden behind the real, the myths, the legends, the demons, in a world dominated by mysticism and eroticism. All the portraits of Salome, in that period, combine the world of dreams and fantasy, the fantastic and the unreal, the world of magic and the interior world, the world of sleep and of death. Everywhere there is an enigmatic atmosphere that takes the viewer on a journey into the worlds of fairy tales and dreams, where the sound of silence dominates. There is a pervasive pessimistic mood, reminiscent of the German pessimist philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer's (1788-1860) views. Even the French romantic painter Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) said that "...*The power of silence speaks first only to the eyes and then wins over all the faculties of the soul...*"<sup>9</sup>. Similarly, the Swiss symbolist painter Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901) argued that "... *an image must say something, give the viewer something to think about, as a poem does, and must leave an impression, as music does...*"<sup>10</sup>. In this sense, the German art historian Hans Hoffstätter states that "... *the dream, the illusion, allow us to penetrate deeper into the world of the invisible, to continue the perpetual search for reality...*"<sup>11</sup>. In this idealistic whole, to which Salome belongs, an important role is played by the symbols used by artists such as the lotus, roses, birds, peacocks, panthers, statues and musical instruments. All - even the purest - are transformed into symbols of debauchery, animal power and abomination, in the prevailing atmosphere of corruption and decadence.

The subject of Salome must be integrated into its contemporary cultural context. It should be interpreted in relation to the wider aesthetic ideology, which emerged in Europe after the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), the resulting changes in social, economic, political structures, the rise of positivism and the evolution of science and its dominance in the intellectual field. It was within this context that the story of Salome flooded western art, from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The love of European symbolist artists for everything exotic and unknown was a catalyst for this, and should also be seen in the context of the Orientalism, which met the wishes of the modern western bourgeoisie. The East was a source of inspiration, which nourished the public with everything that 19<sup>th</sup> century western reality deprived it of.<sup>12</sup> Exoticism, the need to escape from the home, the everyday, and the desire to experience new situations and unusual feelings became urgent needs in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and found expression through the concerns and aspirations of the art of the European Symbolism.

But out of all the figures and motifs from the East, Salome and her dance were to become the most popular. The motif of decapitation, linked to that of the *femme fatale*, was deeply rooted in the fears and concerns that fuelled and divided the western intellectual elite of that era. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, thanks to several European writers, it became understood that women could no longer remain out of public life. At a time of morality, moral panic and puritanism, when people spoke about sex they only referred to sexual dangers. On the other hand, thoughts about violent, beautiful and seductive women dominated in the conservative Victorian society. Women from the European bourgeoisie were presented as asexual. Eroticism was identified with the East and Africa, while in the West it was connected with the working class alone<sup>13</sup>. However, in the years of the Industrial Revolution (1760-1820/1840), there were set the foundations of democratisation, liberalisation and the upgrading of the women's

position in the working environment<sup>14</sup>. This eventually led to a kind of competition between women and men, who had - up to that point - monopolized the public arena.

At the same time, it must not be forgotten the current trend of anti-feminism, which had reached the level of misogyny<sup>15</sup>. In the men's eyes, who held the reins of bourgeois society in the West, Salome - a leader of other modern women - was capable of provoking fear. But the futility of her act - although she received John the Baptist's head she was the loser in the story as this led to her death - was reassuring for the male population, as they used this irony inherent in her myth as if it was a protective spell. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the male ego crisis was born, and the men's role was renegotiated as a result of the changes in Europe and the liberation of women. This development terrified the male population of that era. This is proven by the Austrian physician - founder of the psychoanalytic school of psychology - Sigmund Freud' (1856-1939) theories, which centred on the fear of castration and the theory of penis envy, which saw women as castrated males, who were trying to imitate, compete and displace the "strong sex"<sup>16</sup>. However, it would be generally dangerous to argue that the European artists of that era decided to depict Salome as the new woman-threat, sharing the fears of men of this particular class.

Additionally - according to Sigmund Freud - the women's new position, the sexuality and the unconscious played an important role in the emergence of the myth of Salome at that time. Repressed sexual desire, women and hysteria were inalterably linked<sup>17</sup>. Hysteria, a psychiatric condition, was classified as psychoneurosis and was associated with excessive aesthetic, physical and psychological reactions, which with repetition tended to be stabilized. It was understood as appearing more often in those of inferior intelligence, which made it easier for it to be associated with women, who were considered to be inferior in all areas in the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>18</sup>. It is no coincidence that the European Symbolism was developed alongside psychology, and also of parapsy-

chology and idealism, which emphasized the psyche (soul). The psyche became the centre of artistic internal battles, against matter, a subject in which the church remained absent. Depictions of hysterical women in the art of the European Symbolism were seen as usual, not at all paradoxical at that time, as the American art historian Lynn Gamwell notes<sup>19</sup>. The French author and critic Charles-Marie-Georges Huysmans (1848-1907), who was a follower of the Decadent movement, identifies the characteristics of the hysterical woman in paintings - such as *L'Apparition* (1874-1876, 1897), by the French symbolist painter Gustave Moreau (1826-1898) (Pic. 8) - which depicts Salome as sleepwalking - characteristic of patients, suffering from hysteria. The American scholar S. W. Mitchell argues that "... *the hysterical woman was not sick but corrupt, it was an epidemic that drove doctors to despair ...*"<sup>20</sup>. The hysterical woman was seductive, a *femme fatale*. And so was Salome. Through her depictions, she personified the concept of hysteria in the context of corruption. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, she was the subject of commentary by the European symbolists, who adopted the Greek philosophers Plato's (427 BC - 347 BC) and Aristotle's (384 BC - 322 BC) ideas. According to Plato, frenzy - the state that characterises a woman too, who is hysterical - was considered to be a divine gift. Aristotle connected it with melancholy, in order to produce the idea of a "...*charismatic, melancholic person...*". It is a mental state that could lead to madness and to intellectual inspiration, according to the English historian Theodore Zeldin (1933)<sup>21</sup>. It is no coincidence that melancholy and pessimism are characteristic elements of the art of the European Symbolism. If someone examines the Salome's actions, which are what make her deadly, it is easily noticed that this particular subject brings deeper symbolic dimensions to the discussion. The action of this attractive and, at the same time, abominable woman, symbolizes the act of abscission or mutilation. But this is not a symbolic act of abscission performed on a simple hero. John the Baptist was

the last Jewish prophet and the first Christian martyr. His decapitation was not so much a challenge against people, but against God, at whom this symbolic castration is aimed. But the heroine's action had the opposite effect from that which was expected. The death of John the Baptist, in fact, led to the birth of Christianity. So Salome, the first winner in the battle of human against the divine, was in fact the final loser. On the other hand, as the French realist author Emile Zola (1840-1902) points out, referring to *L'Apparition* by Gustave Moreau (Pic. 8), the tetrarch was the incarnation of the old world, that was about to collapse with him<sup>22</sup>. For Catholics in the narcissistic society of the West, which preserved and promoted a material culture, identified - mainly in France - with Napoleon III (1852-1871), whose fall considered to be a divine punishment for betraying the Pope and the church. By now, the major religions had adopted a defensive stance. Under attack from positivism and science, they gave contradictory answers. On the one hand, the modernist movement wished the adjustment to the new world, but at the same time those who were in favour of the tradition fell back on the strict observance of doctrines. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Catholic Church in West, as a conservative institution, regained the ground which it believed it had lost due to the French Revolution (1789-1799). Pope Pius I (1870-1878) strengthened his authority and instituted papal infallibility as a doctrine of the faith under the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Catholic Church organized missionary expeditions to Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Pacific, as well as breadlines and charity to take care of the industrialised poor, who were victims of exploitation. In this way the Catholic Church took on the mantle of the good protector and returned to the "natural religion" of early Christian times, which - as the Greek scholar Theodoros Kontidis notes - is consistent with Neoplatonic ideas<sup>23</sup>. Did Salome become a symbol of this power, promoting the return of Catholicism? Despite the fact that their Luciferianism brought them into conflict with the Catholic



Church, European symbolists found something metaphysical in neo-Catholicism after 1890, which served their own purposes<sup>24</sup>. The conflict between humans and God was transformed into a conflict between material and spiritual culture and between materialism and idealism.

The art of the European Symbolism was a reaction to the idea of progress, mainly material progress. This fact makes it synonymous with Decadence. Through the multiple depictions of the only priestess acknowledged by the symbolists - the absolute *femme fatale* - their reaction was personified, acquired substance, became recognisable, and assumed a special place in the field of western art. It is no coincidence that after 1890, the deterministic structure, into which all scientific knowledge had been organised, remained virtually immune. However, over the next fifteen years it suffered a series of attacks from the explorers and scientists themselves and this seriously damaged its foundations.<sup>25</sup> The European symbolists were not at all moved by the scientific facts. Instead, they sought access to more spiritual and psychological spaces, dominated by pessimism and Decadence. All this effort to defend ideas and the soul against science, positivism and materialism recalls Neoplatonic theories, which derived from Plato, Plotinus (203 AD - 270 AD), Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), and from modern philosophers too, such as Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900). In this construction, against materialism, can be seen a collaboration between art, religion (neo-Catholicism) and philosophy (neoplatonism-idealism), in connection with the development of psychology and parapsychology<sup>26</sup>.

On the other hand, it must be also taken into account the western artists' personal anxieties and their fears of women, who hurt them or betrayed them. It is no coincidence that artists, such as the French symbolist painter Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (1824-1898), portrayed John the Baptist's face with the painters' own facial features (Pic. 9). Others, such as the Austrian symbolist painter Gustav

Klimt (1862-1918), gave Salome the facial features of their wives or mistresses (Pic. 16). At the same time, there were also cases of painters, such as the Norwegian expressionist Edvard Munch (1863-1944), who chose to give Salome their own facial characteristics (Pic. 17), in an effort to take her place and avenge the devastating female being in the name of the threatened male sex.

By far the majority of the artists who depicted Salome were men, and the majority of these works came from France. This is no coincidence, if there are taken into consideration the political modifications - the fall of Napoleon III, the Franco-Prussian War, the Paris Commune (1871) - the crisis enveloping the field of science and positivism and the fact that France was the birthplace of the guillotine. In any case, the wider impact of the changes and developments in social structures and science affected Europe. As a result, the subject of Salome, as a woman with power entrenched as a model of the *femme fatale*, was a form of reaction and outcry against this. Artists occupied with her depictions, tried to record their era, reflecting the dominant aesthetic ideology from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. As the French novelist and theoretician of the movement of Symbolism Joséphin Péladan (1858-1918) said, “...*the artist must, like another medieval knight fighting in the quest for the Holy Grail, become a crusader raging against the bourgeoisie...*”<sup>27</sup>.

## NOTES

1 - About Salome and her story, see: Clal, 1971, pp. 689-692; Herbermann, 1913, p. 403; Martinos, 1960, pp. 1132-1134.

2 - About Salome in the field of literature, see: Bernardakis, 1998-1999, pp. 27-41; King, 1986, pp. 3-180, 443-450; Praz, 1970, pp. 199-434. About Salome in the field of music, see: King, 1986, pp. 3-38, 315-432,

460-464. About Salome in the field of theatre, see: King, 1986, pp. 14-21. About Salome in the field of cinema, see: King, 1986, p. 22.

**3** - About the movement of the European Symbolism, see: Argan, 1998, pp. 90-93, 158-160; Cassou, 1984, pp. 7-51; Chadwick, 1989; Charalampidis, 1990, pp. 19-25; Dorra, 1994; Delevoy, 1982; Ferrari, 1967, pp. 792-840; France - Moréas - Bourde, 1983; Gibson, 1999; Hofstatter, 2000; Lusie Smith, 1972; Reed, 1985, pp. 1-17.

**4** - Bernardakis, 1998-1999, p. 28.

**5** - The paternity of reviving and spreading the myth of Salome belongs to the German romantic writer and poet Hans Heine (1797-1856), who published his satirical poem *Atta Troll* in 1843. See: Bernardakis, 1998-1999, p. 28; Ellmann, 1960, p. 39. In fact, the first who introduced the subject of the cut head into European literature was the French realist writer Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle, 1783-1842) in the novel *The Red and the Black* in 1827. See: Stendhal, 1987, p. 633. Many writers, after Hans Heine, dealt with this particular issue often confusing the daughter with the mother, Herodias, a confusion that may be done deliberately. Indicative is the case of the French parnassian poet Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898), who wrote *Hérodiade* in 1864-67. See: Block, 1977, pp. 5-133; Patriarcheas, 1992, pp. 55-72.

**6** - Hoffstatter, 2000, p. 20.

**7** - Kandinsky, 1981, pp. 110-111.

**8** - See: Hoffstatter, 2000, p. 18; Scott, 2000, p. 65.

**9** - Cassou, 1984, p. 29.

**10** - Cassou, 1984, p. 29.

**11** - Cassou, 1984, p. 30.

**12** - The military campaign of Napoleon I (1769-1821) in Egypt in 1789, the conquest of Algeria by the French in 1830 and the opening of the Suez canal in 1869, as well as the romantic spirit of that time created the conditions for an excursion of travelers, photographers, painters and writers in the East, composing what research calls Orientalism. See: Alexaki, 2000, p. 18.

**13** - See: Bahrani, 2001, pp. 168-169; Elman, 1986, pp. 33-41; Walkowitz, 1993, pp. 369-388.

**14** - During the period mentioned, the origins of the emancipation of women and their liberation were laid, while the first feminist movements began to be established. See: Hobsbawm, 2000, pp. 304-311; Hughes,

1997, pp. 141, 149, 151-152; Kappeli, 1993, pp. 483, 487-490, 495-508; Lefevre, 1902, pp. 297-317; Shapiro, 1994, pp. 1-23; Zeldin, 1993, pp. 354-347.

**15** - Kapelli, 1993, pp. 509-510.

**16** - Davis, 1982, pp. 198-202.

**17** - See: Breuer - Freud, 1962, pp. 1-305; Davis, 1982, p. 409; Fine, 1979; Leathey, 1997, pp. 227, 229.

**18** - The subject of hysteria was a subject matter for many scholars, before Sigmund Freud. In France, the neurologist Ambroise-Auguste Liebeault (1823-1904) founded a school in Nancy, where he applied hypnosis as a way of treating hysteria with his French-Jewish student, Hippolyte Bernheim (1837-1919). Accordingly, the French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893) gave lectures with live examples of hysterical women at Salpetriere, in 1883 (Pic. 15), making diagnoses with a guide to the outward appearance of his patients. Sigmund Freud, together with the Austrian physician Josef Breuer (1842-1925), used hypnosis - which has its roots in the Mesmerism theory, promoted by the Viennese physician Med Mesmer (1734-1815) - to recall memories. They found out that the revival of the past in patients was achieved with the discussion, which led to the formation of the term psychoanalysis. See: Gamwell, 2002, pp. 140-147; Leathey, 1997, pp. 172-174, 230.

**19** - Gamwell, 2002, p. 142.

**20** - Gamwell, 2002, p. 142.

**21** - Zeldin, 1993, p. 829.

**22** - Harter, 1998, p. 44.

**23** - Kontidis, 2000, pp. 55-61.

**24** - France - Moréas - Bourde, 1983, pp. 24-25.

**25** - Bernstein - Milza, 1997, pp. 226-227.

**26** - During the specific era, there was a keen interest in spiritualism. See: Dontas, 1919, pp. 17-22; Maeterling, n.d.; Tsinoukas, 1954, pp. 33-35.

**27** - Dorra, 1994, p. 269.



Pic. 1 - Lucien Lévy-Dhurmer, *Salome*, 1896, pastel  
(Delevoy, 1982, p. 134)



Pic. 2 - Aubrey Vincent Beardsley, *The Scale*, 1893, drawing in black ink for the illustration of the *Salome* written by Oscar Wilde, Toronto, Musée Royal de l'Ontario (Théberge, 1995, pp. 327-330)



Pic. 3 - Franz von Stuck, *Salome*, 1906, oil on canvas  
(Nika-Sampson, 1998-1999, p. 3)



Pic. 4 - Alphonse Mucha, *Salome*, 1897, lithography, 40,3 x 30,3 cm, Paris, Galerie Documents (Thomson - Eidenbenz, 2003, pp. 10-11)

Pic. 5 - Jean Benner, *Salome*, about 1899, oil on canvas, 117,3 x 80,9 cm, Nantes, Musée des Beaux-Arts (Rosenblum - Stevens - Dumas, 2000, p. 141)



Pic. 6 - Max Klinger, *Salome*, after 1893, marble, Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum, Cat. 210 (Théberge, 1995, p. 324)



Pic. 7 - Julius Klinger, *Salome*, 1909, zinc engraving with colour, 19,5 x 21 cm, Munich, Galerie Michael Pabst (Gibson, 1999, p. 129)



Pic. 8 - Gustave Moreau, *The Vision (L'Apparition)*, 1874-1876, 1897, oil on canvas, 142 x 103 cm, Paris, Musée National Gustave Moreau, Cat. 222 (Lacambre, 1999, p. 169)





Pic. 9 - Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, *The Decapitation of St. John the Baptist*, 1869, oil on canvas, 124,5 x 166 cm, Birmingham, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts - The University of Birmingham, Inv. 56.5 (Price, 1994, pp. 127-129)



Pic. 10 - Gustave Moreau, *Salome in Prison, or Salome with the Rose*, 1872, oil on canvas, 40 x 32 cm, Tokyo, National Museum of Western Art, Matsukata Collection, P. 1959-196 (Lacambre, 1999, pp. 113-115)



Pic. 11 - Aubrey Vincent Beardsley, *The Platonic Lament*, 1893, drawing in black ink for the illustration of the *Salome* written by Oscar Wilde, Toronto, Musée Royal de l'Ontario (Théberge, 1995, pp. 327-330)

Pic. 12 - Aubrey Vincent Beardsley, *The Bottom of the Bottle*, 1893, drawing in black ink for the illustration of the *Salome* written by Oscar Wilde, Toronto, Musée Royal de l'Ontario (Théberge, 1995, pp. 327-330)





Pic. 13 - Alastair, 1922, drawings in black ink for the illustration of the *Salome* written by Oscar Wilde (Wilde, MCMXXV, pp. 25, 33, 56)

Pic. 14 - Gustave Moreau, *Salome at the Column*, about 1885-1890, watercolor, 35,5 x 17,5 cm, Gingins, Neumann's Collection (Thomson - Eidenbenz, 2003, pp. 20-21)





Pic. 15 - André Brouillet, *Jean-Martin Charcot giving lectures at Salpêtrière*, 1887, oil on canvas, 290 x 430 cm, Paris, Paris Descartes University (Gamwell, 2002, p. 141)



Pic. 16 - Gustav Klimt, *Judith I*, about 1901, oil on canvas, 84 x 42 cm, Vienna, Österreichische Galerie (Neret, 2000, p. 28)



Pic. 17 - Edvard Munch, *Salome-Paraphrase*, 1898,  
Holzschnitt (Werner, 1969, p. 69)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexaki E.** [Αλεξάκη Ε.] *Οριενταλισμός: Η Δυτική περιπλάνηση στην Ανατολή. Η Ελληνική εκδοχή. Η περίπτωση του Νικηφόρου Λύτρα* in Χ. Χρήστου & Ε. Αλεξάκη (eds.), *Νικηφόρος Λύτρας* (Exhibition Catalogue, 2000). Thessaloniki, Municipal Gallery, 2000 pp. 18-23.
- Argan G. C.** [Αργκάν Γ. Κ.] *Η Μοντέρνα Τέχνη*, Greek translation Λ. Παπαδημήτρη. Herakleion, Crete University Press, School of Fine Arts, 1998.
- Bahrani Z.** *Women of Babylon, Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia*. London, New York, Routledge, 2001.
- Bernardakis M.** [Βερναρδάκης Μ.] *Η Ηρωδιάδα, οι κόρες της, η Σαλώμη του Όσκαρ Ουάιλντ και εμείς* in Ε. Νίκα-Σαμψών (ed.), *Richard Strauss, Σαλώμη*. Athens, The Athens Concert Hall, 1998-1999, pp. 27-41.
- Bernstein S. - Miilza P.** *Ιστορία της Ευρώπης, 2, Η Ευρωπαϊκή συμφωνία και η Ευρώπη των Εθνών, 1815-1919*, Greek translation Α. Κ. Δημητρακόπουλος. Athens, Alexandria, 1997<sup>3</sup>.
- Block H. M.** *Mallarmé and the Symbolist Drama*. Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press Publishers, 1977.
- Breuer J. - Freud S.** *Studies on Hysteria (1893-95)* in J. Strachey (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 2, English translation J. Strachey. London, Hogarth Press, 1962, pp. 1-305.
- Cassou J.** *The Concise Encyclopedia of Symbolism*, English translation S. Saunders. Hertfordshire, Omega books, 1984.
- Chadwick Ch.** *Συμβολισμός*, Greek translation Σ. Αλεξοπούλου. Athens, Ermis Publishing House, 1989.
- Charalampidis A.** [Χαραλαμπίδης Α.] *Η Τέχνη του Εικοστού Αιώνα, Ζωγραφική, Πλαστική, Αρχιτεκτονική*, vol. I, 1880-1920. Thessaloniki, University Studio Press, 1990.
- Clal** (ed.). *Salome* in *Encyclopedia Judaica Jerusalem*, vol. 14. Jerusalem, Keter Publishing House, 1971, pp. 689-692.
- Delevooy R. L.** *Symbolists and Symbolism*. Geneve, Skira, 1982.
- Davis E. G.** *Το Πρώτο φύλλο*, Greek translation Α. Βερυκοκάκη-Αρτεμη. Athens, Livanis Publishing House - «Νέα Σύνορα», 1982.

- Dontas S. A.** [Δόντας Σ. Α.] *Πνευματισμός και Υπνωτισμός (διαλέξεις της λέσχης επιστημόνων)*. Athens, Typos, 1919.
- Dorra H.** et al. (eds.) *Symbolist Art Theories. A Critical Anthology*. Berkely, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1994.
- Ellmann R.** *Ouvertures to Salome*. London, O.U.P., 1960.
- Elman R.** *Μια ερωτική σχέση στο τέλος της βικτωριανής εποχής*, Greek translation M. Σαρδή, *Διαβάζω* 152, October 1986, pp. 33-41.
- Ferrari O.** et al. (eds.) *Symbolism and Allegory in Encyclopedia of World Art*, vol. XIII. New York, Mc-Graw, 1967, pp.792-840.
- Fine R.** *A History of Psychoanalysis*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1979.
- France A. - Moréas J. - Bourde P.** *Τα πρώτα όπλα του Συμβολισμού*, Greek translation E. Πανταζής. Athens, Gnosi Publishing House, 1983.
- Gamwell L.** *Exploring the Invisible, Art Science and the Spiritual*. Princeton, Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Gibson M.** *Symbolism*. Germany, Taschen, 1999.
- Harter U.** *Gustave Moreau et la Religion. Un Peintre d'un foi violante*, Dossier de l'Art 51, October 1998, pp. 38-47.
- Herbermann C.** et al. (eds.) *Salome in The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. XIII. New York, Knights of Columbus Catholic Truth Committee, 1913, p. 403.
- Hobsbawm E. J.** *Η εποχή των αυτοκρατοριών 1875-1914*, Greek translation K. Σκλαβενίτη. Athens, M.I.E.T, 2000.
- Hofstatter H.** *Symbolism in Germany* in I. Ehrhardt - S. Reynolds et al. (eds.) *Kingdom of the Soul, Symbolist Art in Germany 1879-1920*. Munich, London, New York, Prestel, 2000.
- Hughes S. S. - Hughes B.** *Readings from 1500 to the present* in A. Com-mire (ed.) *Women in World History*, vol. 2. Armonk, New York, London, M. E. Sharpe, 1997.
- Kandinsky W.** *Για το Πνευματικό στη Τέχνη*, Greek translation M. Παράσχη. Athens, Nefeli Publishing House, 1981.
- Kappeli A.-M.** *Feminist Scenes* in G. Duby - M. Perrot - G. Mouillaud-Fraisse (eds.) *A History of Women in the West. Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*, English translation A. Goldhammer, vol. 4. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993, pp. 483-510.
- King D. A.** *Salome: A Multi-Dimensional Theme in European Art:*

- 1840-1945. Colorado: University of Northern Colorado, D. A., 1986.
- Kontidis Th.** [Κοντίδης Θ.] (ed.) *Ο Καθολικισμός*. Athens, Hellenic Letters, 2000.
- Lacambre G.** *Catalogue* in G. Lacambre et al. (eds.) *Gustave Moreau, Between Epic and Dream* (Exhibition Catalogue, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, September 29 - January 4, 1999; the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, February 13 - April 25, 1999; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, June 1 - August 22, 1999). Paris, Chicago, New York, La Reunion des Musées Nationaux, The Art institute of Chicago in association with Princeton University Press, 1999, pp. 42-274.
- Leathey T. H.** *A History of Psychology: Main Currents in Psychological Thought*. New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1997.
- Lefevre M.** *La femme à travers l'histoire*. Paris, Albert Fontemoing, 1902.
- Lusie Smith E.** *Symbolist Art*. London, Thames and Hudson, 1991.
- Maeterling M.** *Ο Θάνατος*, Greek translation A. Χαρά. Athens, G. Papadimitriou et al. Publishing House, n.d.
- Martinos A.** [Μαρτίνος Α.] (ed.) *Σαλώμη*, in *Θρησκευτική και Ηθική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια*, vol. 10. Athens, A. Martinos Publishing House, 1960, pp. 1132-1134.
- Neret G.** *Gustav Klimt, 1862-1918*. Germany, Taschen, 2000.
- Nika-Sampson E.** [Νίκα-Σαμπσών Ε.] (ed.) *Richard Strauss, Σαλώμη*. Athens, The Athens Concert Hall, 1998-1999.
- Patriarcheas G. S.** [Πατριαρχέας Γ. Σ.] *Τα ποιήματα του Stéphane Mallarmé*, Greek translation Γ. Σ. Πατριαρχέας. Athens, Ideogramma Publishing House, 1992.
- Praz O.** *The Romantic Agony*, English translation F. Kermode. London, Oxford University Press, 1970<sup>2</sup>.
- Price A. B.** *Catalogue*, in A. B. Price (ed.), *Pierre Puvis de Chavannes* (Exhibition Catalogue, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam; Waanders Uitgevers, Zwolle). Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum; Zwolle, Waanders Uitgevers, 1994, pp. 70-133.
- Rosenblum R. & Stevens M. & Dumas A.** (eds.) *1900, La Belle Epoque de l' Art*. Paris, Éditions de la Martinière, 2000.
- Reed J. R.** *Decadent Style*. Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1985.
- Scott C.** *The Poetry of Symbolism and Decadence* in P. McGuinness



(ed.) *Symbolism, Decadence and the fin de Siècle. French and European Perspectives*. Exeter, University of Exeter Press, 2000, p. 65.

**Shapiro A. L.** *Feminist's Revision History*. New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1994.

**Stendhal.** *Το κόκκινο και το μαύρο*, Greek translation, introduction Γ. Σπανός. Athens, Exantas Publishing House, 1987.

**Théberge P.** et al. *Paradis Perdue: L'Europe Symboliste* (Exposition présentée au Musée des Beaux Arts de Montréal, 8 Juin - 15 Octobre, 1995). Montréal, Flammarion, 1995.

**Thomson H. B. & Eidenbenz C.** (eds.) *Salomé, dance et décadence*. Paris, Somogy éditions d'art, 2003.

**Tsinoukas B. G.** [Τσινούκας Β. Γ.] *Ο πνευματισμός, επιστημονικός - θρησκευτικός - υλιστικός και οι χριστιανικά εκκλησία. Απάντησις εις το βιβλίο του Καθηγητού κ. Τρεμπέλα «Ο Πνευματισμός»*. Athens, no edition, 1954.

**Walkowitz J. R.** *Dangerous Sexualities*, in G. Duby - M. Perrot - G. Mouillaud-Fraisse (eds.) *A History of Women in the West. Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*, English translation A. Goldhammer, vol. 4. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993, pp. 369-388.

**Werner T.** *Edvard Munch Graphik*. Berlin, Georg Westermann Verlag by Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1969.

**Wilde O.** *Salomé*. Paris, Les éditions G. Crès et C<sup>ie</sup>, MCMXXV.

**Zeldin Th.** *A History of French Passions 1848-1945. Ambition, Love and Politics*, vol. 1. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993.

# SELMA LAGERLÖF IN LITERATURE TEXTBOOKS

*Christoffer Dahl*

(Fil dr/PhD Universitetslektor i svenska med didaktisk inriktning/Associate Professor in Swedish Didactics - Höskolan Kristianstad/Kristianstad University)

## **Background**

The Swedish writer Selma Lagerlöf was the first woman to receive the Nobel Prize in literature (1909). She is a prominent example of a woman who made history. Historically, Lagerlöf is one of the most distinguished and translated female Swedish writers. Lagerlöf's first novel *The Story of Gösta Berling* (1891), is a significant representation of the Swedish romantic revival in the end of the 1900th century. In the novel *The Miracles of Antichrist* (1897), Lagerlöf explores how to combine ideas from socialism and Christianity. She wrote a geography reader for children, *Nils Holgersson's Wonderful Journey Through Sweden* (1906-1907) and has inspired writers such as Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse and Miguel Torga, to name a few. Nevertheless, Lagerlöf's significance as a literary innovator has been toned down in the Swedish literary historiography (Nordlund 2008), even though the research on Lagerlöf is extensive and has been revitalized by scholars like Maria Karlsson (2002) who problematizes the functions of the melodramatic in Lagerlöf or Lisbeth Stenberg (2001) who analyzes how Lagerlöf challenged and transgressed traditional ideas of gender in her authorship. In this article, I will analyze the discourse of Selma Lagerlöf's authorship in a selection of literature textbooks for upper secondary school in Sweden. Literature and gender equality have key roles in the Swedish curriculum. Therefore, it is important from a didactic, cultural and democratic point of view to analyze how con-

temporary literature textbooks introduce the study of male and female authorships to the students. Textbooks are also relevant empirical material though they have prescriptive functions in teaching, i.e. they tell the students how the literary history is supposed to be understood.

### **Previous research**

Research on gender and literary canon in literature has been extensive. Influential feminist critical works, such as Gilbert and Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) and Fetterley's *The Resisting Reader* (1978) displays the fact that specific aesthetic values have underpinned a literary male canon in the history of literature. In Sweden, researchers as Ebba Witt-Brattström (1993) and Birgitta Holm (1988) have criticized an institutionalized male literary canon in the Swedish literary historiography. An important work is Anna Williams (1997), who has analyzed women and canon formation in twentieth-century Swedish literary historiography. The material contains all the major books of literary history, and one of William's conclusions is that male authors are portrayed as more literary refined than female authors. Williams means that it is also apparent that female authors, because of their gender, are placed in special women's sections, and that their literary expression is dealt with on the basis of the fact that they are women. These results are significant because they show that there are still differences in the discourses of female and male authorship in literary historiography. A relevant question is to which extend the above-discussed literary research on canon and gender has affected the discourse of female and male authorship in literature textbooks. Comparative analysis on how female and male authorships are introduced in literature textbooks are overall few in Sweden. Studies by Caroline Graeske (2009), Anna Nordlund (2008) and Williams (1997) indicate that the discourse of Lagerlöf's authorship in literary historiography is tied to emotions, social qualities and foremost Lagerlöf as a harmless

storyteller. In comparison, male authorship “have the political primacy in interpretation and become innovators and idea holders» (Nordlund 2008). Palm (2019) and Nordlund (2018) discusses how Lagerlöf got involved in the fight for women’s suffrage and how she worked alongside the radical women of the time. However, there is virtually nothing about Lagerlöf’s ideological and political engagement in the literary historiography. My question is if there seems to be a tendency that literature textbooks reproduces discourses from the academic discourse of history of literature, and more precise if the depiction of Lagerlöf is similar in the literature textbooks for upper secondary school.

The empirical material contains of following literature textbooks: *Svenska i tiden B röd* (2003) by Anita Danielsson & Ulla Siljeholm; *BRUS #01. Din guide till litteraturen och språket* (2006), *BRUS #02. Din guide till litteraturen & språket* (2007) by Annika Bayard & Karin Sjöbeck; *Känslan för ord. Svenska B* (2007) and *Texter med känsla* (2009) by Pia Cederholm & Anders Danell and *Svenska timmar. Litteraturen* (2012) by Svante Skoglund. In these literature textbooks, Selma Lagerlöf is the female writer given largest space.

### **Dialogicality, intertextuality and interdiscursivity**

The analytical framework in this article differs from the ones in the above-mentioned studies by Graeske, Williams and Nordlund. In order to discuss both the content of the discourse and how the discourse are constructed, I use the concepts manifest intertextuality and interdiscursivity which derive from the sociolinguistic field rather than the field of comparative literature. These concepts are build upon Bakhtins theory of dialogism and Julia Kristevas concept of intertextuality and have been adopted by sociolinguistics and critical discourse analysts like Norman Fairclough (1992/2003) whose interest is the relationship between the represented voices in a text and the potential dialogicality. Fairclough says that “[d]ialogicality is a measure of the extent to

which there are dialogical relations between the voice of the author and other voices, the extent to which these voices are represented and responded to, or conversely excluded or suppressed” (2003, p. 153). Texts that allow several independent voices are according to Bakhtin (2010) dialogical and in extreme cases polyphonic, i.e. they contain multiple voices that reflect a diversity of perspectives, without a hierarchy among the voices. Bakhtin argues that polyphony is characteristic for Fyodor Dostoevsky’s poetics, and consequently associated with genres of fiction. The concept of polyphony is therefore hardly useful in the analysis of textbooks because textbooks are characterized by one dominating voice, the textbook writer’s. Instead, I will use the concepts homophony and monophony in my analysis. Tønnesson (2002) says it is more relevant to use the concept of homophony in analysis of non-fiction genres, for instance the textbook. Homophony means that voices are subordinated to the writers’ voice and whose functions are to provide different aspects on a certain topic. The opposite of homophony is the concept of monophony, which means that the writer provides only one perspective. According to Bakhtin, monophonic texts are more authoritative because they contain a low degree of dialogicality.

Manifest intertextuality “is the case where specific other texts and voices are overtly drawn upon within a text” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 117). The important questions in the analysis of manifest intertextuality in literature textbooks are as follows: Whose voices are represented in the text and how are they marked linguistically (textbook author’s voice and/or other voices)? The methodological aspects I take into account in the analysis of manifest intertextuality is indirectly speech (embedded) or direct speech, for example quotation mark and/or reporting verb as “mean” and “says”. Intertextuality is also expressed through negations. According to Fairclough “negative sentences carry special types of presupposition which work intertextually, incorporating other

texts only in order to contest and reject them” (1992, pp. 121-122). For instance, the sentence “Strindberg was not a misogynist” implies that critics/scholars have claimed that Strindberg was a misogynist. Fairclough also talks about tense: the use of present tense or passed tense. The importance of tense is that it encodes a validity claim in relation to a perceived reality.

Interdiscursivity is closely related to intertextuality but is not as clearly marked on the surface of the text as manifest intertextuality. Fairclough says that “*interdiscursivity* of a text is a part of its intertextuality, a question of which genres, discourses and styles it draws upon, and how it works them into particular articulations” (2001, p. 124). It should more be perceived as different types of relationships, both implicit and explicit, between genres, social languages and discourses in a written or spoken texts. It is comprehensible that the theoretical and methodological openness in the definition of interdiscursivity enables different analytical approaches. My interest is how the textbook writer communicates to the reader about Lagerlöf’s authorship in a certain way. A textbook writer is able to communicate in different ways, using different types of voices, to the reader about the content. In the analysis of interdiscursivity in a literature textbook, I define following questions as central: How can the represented voices be characterized. What discourses of literature is being expressed?

Interdiscursivity has been used by several sociolinguistics in Scandinavia in different pedagogical contexts and my analysis is based on their analytical framework. A relevant study is Veum’s textbook analysis from 2013. Veum shows how the textbook writer’s voice changed from a challenging to a dramatizing voice in three materials: a history book for elementary school from 1945, a textbook in introductory topics from 1973 and a textbook of science and social studies from 2006. Veum gives examples of how textbooks from 2006, unlike the older textbooks, contain a dramatizing voice, i.e., a directed and fictional voice, which in-

tertwine with a realistic textbook writers' voice, that is, the typical and more formal textbook writers' voice. Veum (2008) has also used appraisal theory when analyzing paratexts in the Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet* in which she identifies evaluative voices. Evaluative refers to a voice articulating subjective opinions and emotional attachment to the subject, which linguistically can be realized with adjectives, adverbs and evaluative metaphors. Another relevant study is Halleson (2011) in which she identifies how some textbooks contain a specialized discourse, i.e. a discourse that is analytically challenging for the students, and related to a specialized domain that requires prior knowledge.

In conclusion, this study will discuss how the above-mentioned voices - evaluative, authoritarian, personal and specialized - are realized in the literature textbooks. The first part of the analysis is concentrating on different intertexts and the second part deals with the concept of interdiscursivity. Each analysis contains a comparative aspect in which I give examples on intertextuality and interdiscursivity on male authorship. The purpose of this comparative section is to illustrate the differences. The male writers are represented by August Strindberg, who was a contemporary of Selma Lagerlöf and is, together with Lagerlöf, considered as the most acclaimed Swedish writer from a national and an international perspective.

### **A monophonic discourse**

In the sections on Selma Lagerlöf, manifest intertextuality is overall unusual. Two types of intertextuality occur: references to anonymous writers/filmmakers influenced by Lagerlöf's prose and references to Lagerlöf's own statements about her life and writing. In this first example, from the literature textbook *BRUS*, we can see that the excerpt from the textbook contains intertexts to both national and international authors:

Even today, she has many readers and some writers, both in Sweden and abroad, who high-

lights her work as an important source of inspiration. Selma Lagerlöf's narrative includes everything from fantasy and reality to the drama and mystery. Her narrative style has been very important for the development of the great Swedish prose (*BRUS#02*, 2007, p. 125).

The textbook writers refer to anonymous readers and writers “who highlights her work as an important source of inspiration”. It is notable that nothing is said about the reader of Lagerlöf's fiction or how we can understand her popularity. Nor do the textbook writers further discuss the anonymous writers, who have been influenced by Lagerlöf, and how they more specifically have been influenced. Similar questions can be directed to the last sentence of the quote. In what way has Lagerlöf's narrative style been important for the development of the great Swedish prose? References to Lagerlöf's own statement occurs, but these references are not about Lagerlöf's poetics, but about her sexuality. For example, the section of Lagerlöf in *Svenska Timmar* contains a picture that depicts Selma Lagerlöf together with Sophie Elkan and they hold each other hands. Lagerlöf sits in an armchair with her head slightly immersed in her hand, looking at Elkan next to her in an armchair. The caption says:

‘I had to bite the bullet, holding onto the couch with my fingers to not go crazy and kiss you wildly’, Selma Lagerlöf wrote in a letter to Sophie Elkan (*Svenska Timmar*, 2012, p. 315)

The excerpt is interesting because Sophie Elkan played a key role and was probably, according to Lagerlöf expert Vivi Edström (1991, 2002), the most important person in Selma Lagerlöf's life. Elkan was an author, an intellectual from an influential family in Gothenburg and Lagerlöf's life companion. The mail correspondence reveals how Lagerlöf and Elkan were discussing challenges in their writing, analyzing a great variety of topics, for instance



different contemporary authors and the art of writing, the Swedish Academy, critics and ideology. However, the textbook writers do not indicate anything about these, from an artistic perspective, vital topics in order to understand the progress of Lagerlöf's authorship. Nor do they clarify the intertext to the mail correspondence, or explain why the relationship to Sophie Elkan is relevant for understanding Lagerlöf's authorship and poetics at all. Rather, the intertext fills a dramatizing function. Lagerlöf's own words about sexual desire seems to be used to awaken the curiosity of the reader for Lagerlöf's sexuality rather than giving an insight in the fruitful collaboration between the two authors.

The recurrent theme in Lagerlöf's writing is, according to *Svenska timmar*, the power of love. This notion is signaled in the section heading and is discussed in the text:

Selma Lagerlöf was no childish storyteller of fairytales [...]. She shows how human being can feel pain and become ill from lack of warmth and understanding, but also how love - at best - makes life brighter (*Svenska timmar*, 2012, p. 317).

As mentioned earlier, the negation is a type of intertextuality. The phrase "Selma Lagerlöf was no childish storyteller", can be interpreted as the textbook writer's critical comment to the above-mentioned male literary critics, who claimed that Lagerlöf is the naïve storyteller. Nevertheless, there are no manifest intertexts to experts supporting the point of view that Lagerlöf was not a naïve storyteller. Intertexts to literary research and scholars in the field of comparative literature are more frequent in the sections of male authors, not least Strindberg. One example is how *Svenska i tiden* recognizes that there periodically has been a lively discussion among literary scholars of the relationship between fact and fiction in Strindberg's work. Another example is *Svenska timmar*, which highlights the recurring question whether August Strind-

berg was mentally healthy or not. The textbook writer argues that Strindberg was not crazy and uses intertexts to Strindberg expert Olof Lagercrantz to reinforce his arguments.

Many have argued that Strindberg periodically was mentally ill. Strindberg expert Olof Lagercrantz means that Strindberg was experimenting with his life to get materials to his works. A person who is unhinged would never be able to create such elaborated works and Strindberg's discipline was huge - he could write a play in a couple of weeks. 'He was a sane man in a sick world', summarizes Lagercrantz' (*Svenska timmar*, 2012, p. 135).

Strindberg's detractors are equated with an anonymous collective "Many", and the phrase "have argued" is passed tense which indicates that this perspective is obsolete. The textbook emphasizes Lagercrantz as particularly important, for instance, the use of epithet in "Strindberg expert", reporting verb "summarises" and present tense indicates that this is an expert's point of view and present tense legitimizes the perspective that Strindberg was not crazy, but a genius writer. In comparison, the manifest intertexts in the sections on Lagerlöf are not used to clarify or deepen the perspectives at Lagerlöf's authorship. They do not underpin the argument of the textbook writer. Although other voices are invited, this type of discourse has more in common with a monophonic discourse than a homophonic.

### **Evaluative and authoritative voices**

The section on Selma Lagerlöf in *Texter med känsla* includes 9 pages, and in the introduction you can read as follows:

Selma Lagerlöf (1858-1940) is, together with August Strindberg, our main Swedish author. She made a great career and was rewarded with both a chair in the Swedish Academy (first

woman) and the Nobel Prize in literature (the first woman and the first Swede). Moreover, she began at the top with the most successful authors' debut in Sweden, *Gösta Berlings saga* (1891), which is currently translated into 50 different languages! (*Texter med känsla*, 2009, p. 130)

The distinctive voice in the excerpt is an evaluative, highlighting success factors in Lagerlöf's career with phrases such as "our main", "great career", "the first woman and the first Swede", "began at the top", "successful author debut" and "translated into 50 different languages!". Besides the evaluative voice, the authoritative voice is the most common in the sections on Lagerlöf:

The underlying message of Lagerlöf's storytelling is that love, forgiveness and selfless kind, can save you how far you have fallen. The one who sacrifices something for others is in the end the great hero, regardless if he or she is a fanatic, mentally ill, alcoholic, criminal or just have made a series of bad decisions - until now. However, the road of Lagerlöf always goes over many exciting events, strange coincidences and unexpected twists. Lagerlöf can really capture the reader! (*Texter med känsla*, 2009, p. 135)

In the first sentence, it is a typical authoritative voice that is realized in the phrase "the underlying message", but we can also discern a more subjective formulation, an evaluative voice, in the phrase "can save you how far you have fallen". Then again, the authoritarian voice reoccurs and establishes, according to the textbook, the only possible interpretational framework for Lagerlöf's narrative as a whole: "However, the road of Lagerlöf always goes [...]". The authoritarian voice concentrates on clarifying the "message" of all works of Lagerlöf.

Unquestionably, it is sometimes necessary to identify recurring literary theme or motif in a particular authorship, but to use words as “message” in a literature textbook for secondary school is unusual and it banalizes the discourse of literature as well as the discourse of Lagerlöf’s authorship. Albeit there are several possible perspectives on Lagerlöf’s writing as a whole to discuss in this context, *Texter med känsla* chooses to reproduce the traditional historiography in which Lagerlöf is described as a great storyteller but naïve and melodramatic in her portrayals of human emotions and conditions. In this historiography, Lagerlöf is portrayed as almost non-intellectual, but an author with an affinity for effusiveness, romanticism and the folksiness, which is expressed in an evaluative voice in the last sentence, “she can really catch the reader!”. The use of adverb (really) and exclamation mark underline the subjective attitude.

Same type of focus on folksiness can also be found in the textbook *BRUS*. Even if the voice still is to be considered as evaluative, the emotive and subjective characteristics are tone down: “Selma Lagerlöf was the famous storyteller in the first half of the 1900 ‘s. She wrote literature that captivated readers”. The discussion about folksiness is relevant. Just like Dickens, Lagerlöf wanted to reach out to a broad audience. She told Sophie Elkan in a letter that “It is only life and the people that interest me” (Edström, 1991, p. 9). However, this is only one aspect of Lagerlöf’s authorship, and it reveals very little about her literary qualities and values per se. Williams notes that female writers in literary histories are tied to emotions while the men “have the political interpretation and become innovators and idea holders” (1997, p. 180). This study shows similar tendencies. Only one of the textbooks in this study mentions the fact that Selma Lagerlöf was a part of the literary movement *nittitalistserna*<sup>1</sup>, although the textbook does not explain how this movement more specifically is manifested in her works. None of the textbooks explores such things as political

and ideological significance, technique of narration or characteristics of the language in Lagerlöfs authorship, which is remarkable because these aspects are typical in the discourse of the male writers. The differences are evident if we compare interdiscursivity in the sections on Strindberg. More precisely, when the textbooks depict male authors, the voice is less authoritative and evaluative but more reasoning using a specialized discourse, which is typical for the academic context. One example is the above-discussed excerpt in which there was a manifest intertext to Olof Lagercrantz. Characteristic for a specialized voice is the frequent use of manifest intertextuality to establish or questioning a point of view, which unlike the authoritative voice enables a more homophonic discourse. Another characteristic for a specialized voice is the reasoning style. For instance, the discussion whether Strindberg is supposed to be considered a misogynist or not has a long tradition in the Swedish literary historiography and in literature textbooks (Ullström 2002). In *Texter med känsla*, the basic standpoint seems to be that Strindberg's criticism of inequalities in society as well as the compliments from the labor movement are incompatible with the image of Strindberg as a misogynist and therefore the image is misleading.

During his life, Strindberg was considered a misogynist, but it is probably more fair to see him as a committed debater, in gender issues as well as in many others. He devoted a large part of his activities to criticizing inequalities in society. The labor movement saw him as his hero. (*Texter med känsla*, 2009, p. 240)

Although the arguments against the misogynist depiction of Strindberg are debatable, it is obvious that the textbook writer's voices are less authoritative trying to problematize the image of Strindberg as misogynist, by stressing Strindberg as an ideological force and a central opinion-maker for the labor movement. As I

have discussed above, this specialized voice is almost nonexistent in the sections on Lagerlöf.

### **Conclusions**

In this article, I have analyzed the the discourse of Selma Lagerlöf's authorship in a selection of literature textbooks for upper secondary school in Sweden, using the concept manifest intertextuality and interdiscursivity. The analysis of manifest intertextuality indicates that the discourse on Lagerlöf's authorship is characterized by a monophonic discourse in which there are few intertexts overall to research and literary experts. This means that there are few quotes, reporting verbs or named persons that the textbooks refer to, but the voices that are given space are generally anonymous. The indirectly or directly cited voices are also mixed with the textbook writers voices, which is creating a monophonic framing - the only voice that can be clearly distinguished is the textbook writer's. According to Theo van Leeuwen (2007), references to experts have a legitimizing function, providing authorization to a specific point of view. Thus, the absence of references to relevant research and experts in the construction of the discourse on Lagerlöf indicates that the legitimation of Lagerlöf is weak. The analysis indicates that the discourse of Lagerlöf, articulated in the manifest intertextuality, is rather superficial and at times incoherent. The intertexts provide the reader with insufficient information about Lagerlöf's oeuvre and in what ways she has influenced other authors, nationally and internationally. It is also difficult to understand the function of some of the intertexts, e.g. the intertext about Sophie Elkan.

The analysis displays that the specialized voice, typical in the sections on Strindberg and other prominent male authorship, is almost non-existent in the sections on Lagerlöf. Instead, the voice of the textbook writer is normative and evaluative focusing on Lagerlöf's sexuality as well as social and empathetic abilities, rather than Lagerlös aesthetic contribution to the history of

literature. This conclusion is in line with Anna Williams that female literature in literary historiography is tied to emotions and social qualities while men are depicted as a literary innovator or vital trailblazer.

My study indicate that the analysed textbooks represent a discourse which largely reproduces the image of Lagerlöf as a typical female author rather than an important author. According to both Nordlund and Williams this discourse have a long tradition. Major Swedish critics like Oskar Levertin and SvenDelblanc established the discourse of Lagerlöf as a vital but naïve storyteller, and traditions are difficult to change, because they create a sense of belonging, manifesting cultural values that become significant in a culture's self-image. The discourse in literature textbooks is a social and cultural construction characterized by slow changes. It is noteworthy, however, that the discourse of Selma Lagerlöf as the harmless storyteller with a penchant for the melodramatic is still so influential in Swedish literary history. Especially since there is extensive research, which I mentioned above, that in various ways has problematized that discourse, demonstrated that in many respects it is incorrect, and based on incomplete analyses.

According to literary historian Gunnar Hansson (1995), the history of literature can be, and must be, scrutinized and reconstructed from time to time by the fact that there are a variety of voices in the literary history and not one universally. I believe that from a both intellectual and democratic point of view, it is crucial that literature textbooks contain a variety of authorship and a variety of voices about authorship. If we want the students to develop a critical democratic thinking and a substantial literary competence, the study of literature must be inclusive and based on relevant contemporary research when it comes to women in history of literature, not least a major author as Selma Lagerlöf.

## NOTES

1 - Nittiotalisterna was a literary movement in Sweden during 1890's, represented by authors like Selma Lagerlöf, Gustav Fröding and Verner von Heidenstam. They were inspired by Swedish folklore, romanticism as well as French symbolism, and the movement can be described as a reaction to the Swedish literary realism in 1880's as well as Émile Zola's naturalism.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### *Textbooks*

- Bayard A. - Sjöbeck K.** *BRUS #01: Din guide till litteraturen och språket.* Natur och kultur, Stockholm, 2006.
- Bayard A. - Sjöbeck K.** *BRUS #02: Din guide till litteraturen & språket.* Natur och kultur, Stockholm, 2007.
- Cederholm P. - Danell A.** *Texter med känsla.* Gleerups, Malmö, 2009.
- Danielsson A. - Siljeholm U.** *Svenska i tiden, B röd.* Natur och kultur, Stockholm, 2003.
- Skoglund S.** *Svenska timmar: Litteraturen.* Gleerups, Malmö, 2012.

### *References*

- Bachtin M.** *Dostojevskijs poetik.* Anthropos, Gråbo, 2010.
- Edström V.** *Selma Lagerlöf.* Natur och kultur, Stockholm, 1991.
- Edström V.** *Livets vågspel.* Natur och kultur, Stockholm, 2002.
- Fairclough N.** *Discourse and Social Change.* Polity Press, Cambridge, 1992.
- Fairclough N.** "Critical discourse analysis as a method in social scientific research", *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis.* Ruth Wodak - Michael Meyer (Eds.). SAGE, London, 2001, pp. 121-138.
- Fairclough N.** *Analyzing Discourse. Textual Analysis for Social Research.* Routledge, New York, 2003.
- Fetterley J.** *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction.* Indiana U.P., Bloomington, 1978.
- Gilbert S. - Gubar S.** *The Madwoman in the Attic. The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination.* Yale University Press, New Haven, 1979.
- Graeske C.** "Värdefull eller värdelös? Om värdegrund och genus i läroböcker i svenska", *Tidskrift för litteraturvetenskap*, (3-4). 2010, pp. 119-132.
- Halleesson Y.** *Högpresterande gymnasieelevers läskompetenser.* Stockholms universitet, Stockholm, 2011.
- Hansson G.** *Den möjliga litteraturhistorien.* Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm, 1995.
- Holm B.** "Kvinnor, kanon och kvalitet: ett försök att initiera en debatt

kring värdering av litterära verk, speciellt ur feministisk synvinkel”, *Tidskrift för litteraturvetenskap*, (3-4). 1988, pp 113-116.

**Karlsson M.** *Känslans röst. Det melodramatiska i Selma Lagerlöfs romankonst*. Diss. Symposion, Stockholm/Stehag, 2002.

**van Leeuwen T.** “Legitimation in discourse and communication”, *Discourse & Communication*, 1 (91). 2007, pp. 91-112.

**Nordlund A.** *Litteraturvetenskaplig analys genom hundra år: åtta sätt att läsa Gösta Berlings saga*. Liber, Stockholm, 2008.

**Nordlund A.** *Selma Lagerlöf. Sveriges modernaste kvinna*. Bokförlaget Max Ström, Stockholm, 2018.

**Palm A. K.** *En biografi över Selma Lagerlöf. “Jag vill sätta världen i rörelse”*. Bonniers, Stockholm, 2019.

**Stenberg L.** *En genialisk lek. Kritik och överskridande i Selma Lagerlöfs tidiga författarskap*. Diss. Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg, 2001.

**Ullström S. O.** *Likt och olikt. Strindbergsbildens förvandlingar i gymnasiet*. Diss. Symposion, Lunds universitet/Malmö högskola, Lund/Malmö, 2002.

**Veum A.** “Lærebokstemma i tre generasjoner”, *Læreboka. Studier av ulike læreboktekster*. Norunn Askeland, Eva Maagerø - Bente Aamotsbakken (Eds.). Akademika forlag, Trondheim, 2013, pp. 19-34.

**Veum A.** *Avisas andlet. Førstesida som tekst og diskurs: Dagbladet 1925-1995*. Diss. Universitetet i Oslo, Oslo, 2008.

**Williams A.** *Stjärnor utan stjärnbilder: Kvinnor och kanon i litteraturhistoriska översiktsverk under 1900-talet*. Gidlunds förlag, Hedemora, 1997.

**Witt-Brattström E.** *Ur könets mörker. Litteraturanalyser*. Norstedt, Stockholm, 1993.

# CASTE OF WOMEN: AN INQUIRY INTO THE DIFFERENCES IN INTER-CASTE MARRIAGES IN AN ADIVASI SAMAJ AND OTHER

*Kumar Dhiraj*

(M. Phil. in Development Practice, Centre for Development Practice,  
Ambedkar University Delhi)

**Abstract.** This paper seeks to present a part of an ongoing action-research at Gadh-Bansla, a village in Bhanupratappur Block in the Kanker District of Chhattisgarh State, India. The paper asks how the caste system regulates a woman's life-world in marriages in an Adivasi village. I am working with six couples who have married outside their caste. The *samaj* (the Adivasi village's society) charges a fine on couples who have married outside their caste however the amount charged depends on the caste of the woman. Additionally if the caste of the woman is lower in the hierarchy than that of the husband then she has to face caste discrimination (untouchability, humiliation, etc.) from the husband's family. She is not accepted either by the husband's family or the *samaj*. The same does not hold true if the caste of the woman is higher in the hierarchy than that of the husband. The child however is accepted in both cases. It is generally accepted that caste society does not operate in Adivasi villages. By using literature on Humiliation studies as well as that on intersectionality of gender and caste I hope to explore this difference in inter-caste marriages, and attempt to show how, even in an Adivasi context, it is the regulation of the rural lower caste woman's life-world that is at the core of the reproduction of hierarchy in the *samaj*.

## **Introduction**

Marriage in India is primarily based on the social stratification of caste system. In this chapter, we discuss the issues and challenges faced by the traditional culture of marriage organized in order to enter an intermarriage marriage in rural Indian context.

It is not true to say that marriages are made in heaven. Kamleshwari didi, an old OBC woman<sup>1</sup>, said to me "I got married to the

person my parents chose for me. Neither did I see the boy, his house, his family, nor did I have the courage to ask about these things. I became his who my family chose for me. Whether the husband turns out to be alcoholic, smoker or good for nothing, we have to live with him against our will. But today's generation is not as it was during our times. Nowadays, boys and girls interact with each other and they agree for marriage only if they like each other”.

Marriage is a sacred institution that binds a man and a woman in a sacred relation. It gives meaning to this relationship. When a marriage takes place, two hearts become one and it opens up new directions and gives new meanings to their life. But, humans are so selfish that we have almost ruined the purity of these relations. Marriage, in India, has always been a major concern in the Indian society. Surnames of the bride and groom are of great importance during marriage. In fact, respect and honor of a person is associated with his surname, i.e., his ancestors and the family name he is associated with which decides who one can get married to. Caste, creed and culture are the three most important elements, which are kept in the top priority list with respect to decision making of a marriage. The groom and the bride must be of the same religion, community, language, culture and region. Without matching the religious and financial status of both the families, the bride and groom are strictly prohibited from marrying each other. For years, the mindset of Indians have been conservative. Inter-caste marriages were unimaginable in the Indian society. They believed that marriage is possible only in one community and caste. Talking about inter-caste and inter-social and inter-religious marriage was a taboo in earlier days. However, over time, things changed and inter-caste marriages also became part of the society. Today, though in Indian society, we can see inter-caste marriages, but mostly it is a part of the urban culture. There is still a long way to go in the rural areas of the country. Honour killings in the name of caste and religion are common, especially in North

India. There are many such incidents of violent forms of punishment meted out by the enemies of inter-caste marriage. Marriage is considered as the most important social custom. Hence, marriage can be seen as the best tool to break the caste system.

### **Caste and Community**

In the Indian society, one is born with a caste and cannot get rid of it even after death. In the ground reality of life, caste system means unequal availability of material resources and power, creating one who has in abundance and the other with lack of it, one who is privileged and the other who is oppressed. Caste is not just an abstract form but a deep-rooted ground reality. It has shaped and given form to the Indian society and it still plays an important role at the socio-economic and religious level. That is why Sangita in Bansla, who belongs to the Ganda caste (SC category), says that “I am a Hindu and Bhuvneshwari is Adivasi (Halba)”. For a while, Sangita feels proud of herself but she feels the weight of the tag of her birth caste as Adivasi consider the SC community as lower caste Hindus and do not allow them to enter their house, and eat or drink with them. On the basis of this caste system, neither can she eat or drink with Bhuvneshwari, nor can she invite her to her house or visit Bhuvneshwari’s house. Here, when Sangita says that Bhuvneshwari is an Adivasi (and not Hindu) but she is Hindu, it clearly shows that there is no caste of Adivasi as they are not Hindu. But when Bhuvneshwari prohibits Sangita from entering her house, it shows that she practices the caste system. This shows that by practicing the caste system and untouchability, the Adivasi communities have gradually started to imbibe the caste practices of the Hindu religion.

This is not surprising as Hindu organizations like RSS, Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad have been working at the grass-roots level for a long time, such as running Saraswati Shishu Mandir (school run by RSS), going from village to village to select the priest for the temple<sup>2</sup> and even to decide which God

should be worshipped so that their prayers do not go in vain. Pointing out the similarities between the Adivasi and the Hindu God Shiv as being forest dwellers and with respect to the kind of food they eat, clothes they wear and their way of life, the Hindu organizations like RSS portrayed Shiv, the Hindu God as their God as well. In this way, they began the process of Hinduisation in the area. Similarly, they started bringing in other Hindu Gods into the Adivasi society. Today, one can easily see the idol of Hanuman in the courtyard of every house in an Adivasi society. Yet, the strict rules as followed in the Hindi-speaking belt, such as prohibition of eating meat and fish, and cutting hair on Tuesdays and Thursdays are not followed among the Adivasi. There is no festival in the village where people are forbidden from eating meat. But the Hindu organizations are still persistently working towards their agenda even today by explaining to the barber in the village that he should not cut hair on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If they do not agree, they try to lure the barbers by paying money and get the salons in the market closed on those days to spread the message among all that the salons are closed because hair “should not” be cut on these days. In this way, gradually, the Adivasi customs and culture are being Sanskritized and eventually leading to destruction. Perhaps, for the first time in 2017, during the festival of Navratri, the meat shops in all the markets of Bhanupratappur block were forcibly shut down by Hindu organizations. Public display of swords and spears during processions to show the Hindu power is becoming a common thing. Moreover, the Hindu organisations address the Adivasi as *vanvasi*. This can also be seen in the rallies of BJP and even in Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s speeches. The Adivasi are addressed as *vanvasi* to change their identity from Adivasi, i.e., first people to *vanvasi*, i.e., forest dweller. This is done in order to destroy the claim of the Adivasi on the country as the first people by reducing their identity to being just forest dwellers.

## Case Study

*Case Study 1.* Bhuvneshwari Dehari, a 30 years old unmarried Halba Adivasi woman says “Brother, I don’t practice untouchability. Satyawati and Sangita who are from the Ganda caste and residents of the School Para where only lower castes live, come to my house. Like other Halba Adivasi, who restrict their entry to the courtyard, I don’t stop them from entering my house. I bar them from entering only the *pooja* room. When my father’s younger sister had run away and married a Gond man, my father had to pay fine. After paying fine, the Halba society accepted the Gond man. Now my aunt is no more but her husband keeps visiting our house and the Halba society does not have any issue with it. But her daughter, who has always been studying in a Christian school, says that she will get married to a Christian only”.

During one of my conversations with Sarika, Bhuvneshwari’s sister-in-law, said “I was married off at a very young age. When I had told my mother that I didn’t want to get married then, my father said in anger that in that case, he will get my younger sister married. In the fear of being slandered in the society, I got married without even having a look at the man I was getting married to. My sisters and I used to go to the field of the Marwadi to work where the Marwadi’s son used to like me. He had told my sister that he wanted to get married to me. I liked him too. When my father got to know about it, he got me married to another man. But I will let my children get married to whoever they want to. My husband threatens me that if I don’t listen to him he will put kerosene on me and set me ablaze. I don’t want to see my children suffer the same way”. Here, male domination is so severe that if a woman doesn’t listen to him or obey him, he threatens her with violence and even death. Where does this kind of arrogance come from in the man? Is it the patriarchal society that sows the seeds for such behaviour? In this context, while the caste system (endogamy) prohibits her from marrying the man of her choice, the patriarchal society threatens her with violence in the voice of the

man. Endogamy, practiced according to the caste ideology, is the basis of the regulation and organization of women's sexuality.

*Case Study 2.* When I had gone to Bansla for the first time during first immersion, an inter-community marriage had taken place in the Bada Para. The groom belonged to the Kumhar caste which falls under the OBC category and the bride was a Halba Adivasi woman. The boy and the girl were in love with each other since a few years. Yet, despite the opposition from the girl's family and community, they got married to each other in February 2017 where the Sarpanch and Mukhiya<sup>3</sup> were the main witnesses. I was happy to see this. I thought that my idea about the Adivasi society being an egalitarian one matched with the scenario on ground.

But when I went back for my second immersion, that inter-community marriage still remained an issue among the Halba. Every community in the village hold a monthly meeting in the village level where one member from every household of the respective community has to be present. Similarly, a monthly meeting is held in the village level which has to be attended by at least one person from every household in the village. This meeting is headed by the Sarpanch and the Mukhiya. The issue was discussed in every monthly meeting that happened between all the villages in the Panchayat. Rohit (a member of the host family) told me that after I had left after the first immersion, the Halba called the meeting of their community in the block level twice (in addition to the three fixed meetings during a year) only to discuss this issue and it was decided by the block level Panch of the Halba community that the girl's family has to pay thirty thousand rupees as fine. Further, it was decided that the couple be excommunicated from the village. But when this demand was put forward in the meeting of the Bansla village Panchayat meeting, it was dismissed because the Sarpanch and Mukhiya, who are the highest authorities of the village, were witnesses and decision makers of the wedding as any decision in the village level is ultimately made by the Mukhiya after discussion with the people. Here, it is important to



interrogate who can dismiss decisions made by who. Every community has one Panch each at the village, Panchayat, block, and district level. The decisions taken by Panch of one community cannot be challenged by Panch of another community. In case of the decision to excommunicate the couple from the village, the village level decisions override the decisions made by the Panch at the block level as the decision to be made pertained to the village (who can reside in the village). On the other hand, the decision by the Panch of the Halba community to charge the girl's family a fine of thirty thousand rupees and the decision by the Panch of Kumhar community to charge the boy's family a fine of fifty thousand rupees cannot be challenged by the Sarpanch of the village because the decision pertained to the communities and their rule of endogamy.

*Table 1 - Inter-caste and inter-community marriages in Bansla*

<b>Sl.n.</b>	<b>Man</b>	<b>Woman</b>
01	Halba	Kalar
02	Gond	Halba
03	Kumhar	Halba
04	Halba	Gond
05	Kumhar	Yadav
06	Bengali	Gond

### **Mode of Action**

The issues with respect to inter-caste and inter-community marriage was not identified as an issue in the village. But when I persistently talked about it with people, they admitted that it is a problem in their society. For two months, I tried to talk to the women in the Naya Para about this which did not succeed in convincing them to work on it. I waited for their SHG meeting to be held so that I can talk to the women together in a gathering which did not happen either. Bhuvneshwari didi who is from the Naya Para, complained that women of all other Para hold SHG meetings except the women of Naya Para. I understood her complaint but considering that the women work day and night every day

and want to rest on Mondays which is their only holiday, I did not insist on forcing them to work with me.

I had continuous discussions with other women on working on the issue of inter-caste and inter-community marriage. As the discussions were going on with women, I had also thought about working with the young men and women in the village. For this, I had tried to talk to the young women, who refused to talk on this topic. I had talked to three young men of the Kalaar OBC community who were brothers. Of these three, two were of the opinion that there is no problem in marrying into other castes or communities but they cannot fight with the community. They thought that imposition of fine on inter-community marriage was wrong. But they cannot oppose the decision of the community elders as they are wiser people who guide them. So I dropped that idea.

After this, I decided to work with four women who belonged to different castes and Adivasi society. In all of their families there have been at least one inter-caste or inter-community marriage. First, Leeleshwari didi, who belongs to the Gond Adivasi society, has six sisters, three of them ran away and got married to men from other castes. Second is Kamleshwari didi, from the Kalaar OBC community, whose brother-in-law got married to a woman in the same caste but different sub-caste (which is only fined and not punished). Her brother-in-law's son and her nephew married women of different castes. Her nephew did not pay the fine imposed on him by the Panch of their community. He has been ostracized by the community for non-payment of fine. Third is Bhuvneshwari didi, from the Halba community, whose father's sister ran away and got married to a man from the Gond Adivasi society. Fourth is Bhuvneshwari didi's sister-in-law who believes that everyone should have the right to get married to whoever they want and in case of opposition from the community, one should protest against it.

### **Arrival at Research Problem**

On the morning of 11 August 2017, around 400 residents of

Bansla village and the Halba Adivasi from across seven Panchayats had gathered around and were gearing up to decide the fate of a couple on whether they should be ostracized or be relented upon. The couple under trial hails from the Aawaas Para of the village who were in a romantic relationship for several years and on 13 February 2017, they tied the knot in the Anganwadi of the village. The wedding was organized by the village community where they were given gifts like a bed, gas stove, utensils etc. After the constant pressure from the society, they got married constitutionally in a court. The man is a Hindu from the Kumhar caste whereas the woman is a Halba Adivasi who worship Goddess Danteshwari. This community's mindset closely resembles the Brahmanical mindset as was evident when the Halba tribe demanded the Panch that the couple be banished from the village moments after the Panchayat commenced, but the Panch patiently listened to both the sides and other people who were present at the gathering and because of legal pressure, decided to let the couple remain in the village and lead a normal life. They also said that legal action would be taken against anybody found mistreating the family. This was the final Mahapanchayat that was called for this couple. The Halba had already carried out 3 meetings before this, not only this, the society<sup>4</sup> that the couple belonged to had also called for other societal meetings as well wherein the Kumhar community imposed a fine of fifty thousand rupees on the boy and a fine of thirty thousand rupees was imposed on the girl's family by her society, they even decided to banish the boy and if he didn't go away, the couple was to be socially boycotted<sup>5</sup>. This social boycott would mean that their community would neither invite them to gatherings during marriages, deaths or other religious functions, nor go to their house till they paid the fine. Any family even mistakenly found to invite them to any function or gathering or visit their house would have a fine imposed on them as well which they would have to pay for violating the code of conduct. For fear of such a boycott, the families of the couple

paid their respective fines. A fine of fifty thousand rupees was not a trivial matter for the family, had it been so, there would have been honour killing instead of the imposition of such a hefty fine. The woman is happy after marriage and being treated well in her husband's home because she belongs to the Halba community who are economically more prosperous, politically more powerful and socially superior as compared to the man's caste, Kumhar. The situation would have been different if the woman was from an inferior community. In the case of a love marriage in Bansla between a woman of Ganda (SC) community girl and a man belonging to Gond society. The girl has been discriminated her entire life in her husband's house by her family. Despite being a part of the family, she hasn't been accepted in the society. Even in the house, she isn't allowed to go anywhere near the worshipping place, worship or offer prayers or even consume *prasad*. When a lower caste woman gets married to a male belonging to a higher caste, the woman receives treatment worse than slaves. She faces untouchability, discrimination and is disrespected her entire life by her husband's family and society. No matter how hard slaves work, they are never respected, neither do they receive the wages they deserve despite the fact that their hard work is the sole reason of the master's prosperity. They don't have an independent existence and neither do lower caste women. The cultural oppression that lower caste women suffer is way more inhuman and grievous than any form of economic oppression. Due to caste based disparity, the inaccessibility of lower castes to material resources is more painful than class based oppression, i.e. the collection of surplus from their labour isn't as painful as their inaccessibility to material resources as a result of caste based discrimination. Though the Halba woman can enjoy the benefits of having born into a superior community, her children's identity will be dictated by that of their father. The patriarchal male dominant society limits her caste identity to herself while the man's caste identity is carried on by the children. It is noticeable that if a higher caste

woman is married to a man from a lower caste family, she doesn't face difficulty in living in the household, but what we can't turn a blind eye to is that the identity of the next generation is the same as that of the father's caste, religion and society. Women don't have even a modicum of respect in this patriarchal society. Whenever they are married to a male, it doesn't matter whether she belongs to a caste higher than that of the male or even earns more than him, the next generation will be identified by his/her father's identity regardless of everything.

### **Conversations with young women**

An attempt has been made to have conversations on different views on inter-caste marriage with six families in Bansla village. The conversations happened especially with women, young men and young women. The conversations revolved around their experiences within the family and samaj of inter caste marriage and how they are reinforced. According to Shyambati Padda who is a gond "I do not believe in untouchability. I eat with everyone (irrespective of their caste) but I can do this only outside the village. My samaj (gond samaj) does not allow me for taking any step on this issue. Even if I try to initiate a conversation on inter-caste or inter-tribe marriage, samaj bluntly tells me that I have forgotten my limits of how to be in the samaj because I am educated". In India, there is no caste in adivasi life worlds but sanskritization and hinduization have started penetrating the adivasi samaj and it is at its peak right now. Bhimrao Ambedkar (1993) says that scholars have agreed to the fact that the caste system is either a veneer of morality imposed by policy makers or has prevailed under the norms of society - a society obsessed with social development.

Sanskritization is feeding caste discrimination through strengthening rotten traditions, untouchability, discrimination and inequality. Ambedkar (1993) argues that caste is not just a structural problem but a behavioural problem as well. As much as it is rooted in the behaviour, the structural and principles on which it

is based forms the basis for such behaviour. Ambedkar strongly argues that till the time caste system exists inter caste marriages will be a difficult possibility. Ambedkar says that this might not hold true only for India but for the world when Hindus start moving out of India to other parts of the world. Bhuvaneshwari Dehari, who belongs to Halba tribe argues that Halba samaj participates the most in discrimination and untouchability. She cites the example of budding liking between juvenile man staying in Badepara of the village who belongs to Halba samaj and a woman (juvenile) from Schoolpara who belongs to Scheduled caste. Being cautious of the samaj they used to meet each other where people wouldn't spot them. Once, people caught them making love in one of the gardens and they had to flee. The very next day, father of the woman went to the Halba family to talk about marriage of his daughter with their son but Halba family outrightly refused. The reason for the refusal was that the woman belonged to scheduled caste. In response to this, the father of the woman lodged a complaint against the boy in local police station charging the boy of rape. Both woman and boy were insisting on getting married but the mother of the boy took a staunch stand against this marriage. She was fine with the child being in the prison for years than marrying a lower caste woman. The woman is still waiting for her lover in a hope that they will get married one day. What can be inferred from this is that caste system is penetrating adivasi life worlds and is constantly sanskritizing the adivasi life world. Hitherto we have differentiated castes from tribes but through this incident perhaps we need to take a careful look at this distinction. Adivasis might mark themselves as different from the castes but it is important to take note that when there is a case of caste-tribe marriage, adivasi samaj follows the rules of the caste system stringently. The difference which also needs to be pointed out is that if there would have been any other caste involved in this case apart from Scheduled caste, the adivasi family might have paid the fine and allowed boy and woman to get married.

Initially there was one caste with four categories or classes (varnas) viz. Brahmins (or Purohits), Kshatriyas (or warriors), Vaishyas (or merchants), and Shudras (or artisans or labourers). It should be noted that earlier, this stratification was on the basis of 'worth' wherein anyone could change their category. However, the Brahmins at some point in history enclosed themselves so as to not allow others to enter their category; to protect themselves from non-Brahmins in Ambedkar's words. Other classes followed suit and thus categories became rigid which now means that stratification happens on the basis of 'birth'. The result is that today, Shudras or Dalits are the lowest class and women, especially are the most targeted by this kind of system. Ambedkar proposes that a time in history of the Hindus, the priestly classes crystalized following which the other classes imitated thus resulting in the caste-system, and caste becoming eventually the dominant form in this region. The result of that is that Dalits, backward classes, especially women are victims of this system today. Such incidents are increasing day by day. If we look at the plane of the country, then such incidents have become commonplace.

On August 15, 2018, Independence Day was being celebrated at the high school of Bansla. In which about 200 villagers including school children along with the chief guest, village head (Patel), sarpanch, and secretary were gathered to celebrate this festival. This school has two guards, one male from Halba community and the other female from Ganda. Both guards were the busy in feeding everyone on this day. Meanwhile, the male guard got busy with some other work and the teacher asked for water from the stage, which the female guard got for him. The teacher did not drink water and called the male guard next to the stage, and scolded both the guards but for different reasons. Angry at the male guard because he was engaged in some work except the service of the main guest, and angry at the woman because how dare the Dalit woman serve the water with hands to a non-Dalit. The teacher treated the Dalit woman very badly and the next day

fired her because she is a Dalit. It was easy for him to get rid of this woman because she was not permanent. The villagers came to know about this incident, but no one except the Dalit community spoke or did anything against it. To say that we are saying that our society is developing, but what is the measure of development, that one society should not drink the touched water of another society and use its power to humiliate the lower castes? And it is not just one or two people in the society who is doing this, but a substantial majority who do not even speak a word against it. Will we just advocate the interests and power of our caste or religion alone or will we relate to each other on a humanitarian level? That there is no humanity we cannot say, but we cannot deny that only those people come out in whose family, *samaj*, caste, or religion some incident takes place, the rest just watch. Such things are mostly seen in Hinduism itself. Dr. BR Ambedkar has stated in the caste system in India that there is “no such bond in Hindus, which binds Hindus with a unity formula. There is no such organizational power in Hindus, which can end the fragmentation made by caste system. But in non-Hindus, there are many systematic fibers that bind them in unity.”

Apart from this, it has to be remembered that though there are castes among non-Hindus as they are among Hindus, their social importance to non-Hindus is not as much as it is for Hindus. “If anyone asks a Muslim or Sikh who he is, he says whether I am a Muslim or a Sikh. He does not reveal his caste, although he has a caste. You will be satisfied with this answer. When he states that he is a Muslim, one does not ask him further whether he is Shia or Sunni, Sheikh or Syed, Khatik or Pinjari. When he says that I am Shikh, you do not ask him whether he is a *jatt* or a Rhoda, a devotee or a Ramdasi. It is not the same for Hindus. You must ask his caste. The reason for this is that caste is so important for Hindu that without knowing it, you cannot determine what kind of person he is.” This point may be clarified with an illustration. I went to talk to a teacher of the Halba *samaj* at the *nayapara* Pri-



mary girls' school about caste. She ignored the subject and moved towards the third-grade classroom. Even though this issue of caste is linked to the discrimination of the women. I was not trying to talk to a common woman, but she is the teacher of the school, who would teach the children in that school that we humans should not consider caste, untouchability, but to end this practice we should come forward. I started thinking many things in my mind, thinking that the teacher who is not talking to me on caste discrimination, is teaching the fifth grade a chapter in social science class which is based on Dr. Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar's life. How would she teach this chapter? After a few days I tried to find out about who is the teacher or teacher who read the biography of Dr. Ambedkar. The school has one male teacher who is from SC, and three female of which one is SC and the other two are from Halba *samaj*. One day I took it upon myself to teach the chapter of biography of Dr. Ambedkar and asked the children if they have read this social science book? Kanchan Thakur, who is from the Halba *samaj*, had read it. The teacher I spoke to, his name is Trishunis Dihari, a Halba. I cannot say that this chapter should be taught only by a teacher from a lower caste, but from what I have seen, I would definitely say that the teacher should teach a subject in which she is knowledgeable.

According to IANS, March 15, 2018, in the society, the marginalized Dalit community has suffered a lot in the past 10 years. According to the statistics of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), in the last 10 years (2007-2017), there has been an increase of 66% in cases of Dalit persecution. During this period, cases of rape were registered against six Dalit women in the country, which is twice as compared to 2017. According to the statistics, every minute in India, criminal incidents took place with Dalits. Through the National Crime Records is minimized. According to statistics, cases of anti-Dalit violence have increased very rapidly in the last four years. In 2006, a total of 27,070 cases of crimes against Dalits were reported, which increased to 33,719 in 2011. In

2014, 40,401 cases of crime with Scheduled Castes were registered, 38,670 in 2015 and 40,801 in 2016. According to NCRB data, in 10 years, cases of rape with dalit women increased twice, according to the report, where in 2006 every day there were only three cases of rape with Dalit women, which increased to 6 in 2016.

Dronitist Chandrabhan Prasad, a noted Dalit thinker on the rise in the cases of Dalit oppression in the country, told the US by giving examples of blacksmiths in India, the slavery started in America from 1618 and ended in January 1863. When the blacks were liberated from this slavery, then the events of linking began to appear there with blacks. They began to be beaten on the streets, they were tortured. In the same way when the Dalit community in India is free from casteism then they are being attacked. He said, in the changing times, leaders in the dalit society have started to emerge and those voices raise for independence. Earlier Dalit was hesitant to answer but now the Dalit is responding. The first people used to sympathize with the dalit but now the log has adopted the attitude of Goddess towards them. That is why they are now being targeted as more and more, and in the coming time, attacks on them will increase.

### **Conclusion**

Even today, men and women in Bansla agree to get married to people of the same caste and Adivasi community. The good thing about this society is that they do not practice the dowry system which is strictly practiced in states like Bihar, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh etc. In case of failing to give dowry altogether by the woman's family, she is subjected to abuse and violence in her husband's home. The practice of dowry is mostly practiced by the Hindus. It affects the society in many ways. Due to dowry system, there is a rise in gender inequality, illiteracy, malnutrition etc., which shows less in Bhanupratappur block.

The practice of untouchability has reduced in Bansla as compared to earlier days when the different castes maintained dis-

tance from each other at the tap for taking water and upper castes and Adivasi washed the tap after a lower caste filled water from the same tap. Today, the lower castes, upper castes and Adivasi take water from the same tap without the practices of washing the tap and maintaining distance. In spite of being fined, inter-caste and inter-community marriages are still happening. Such marriages despite opposition and punishment indicate that the different communities are in close proximity and spending time with each other more than before. At the same time Hinduisation has played a big role in opposing inter-caste and inter-community marriages. It is sanskritising the Adivasi society which has the biggest impact on the Halba community. This is the reason that there has not been a single marriage between Halba Adivasi and the Ganda caste in Bansla. The economically, socially and politically strong communities play a major role in perpetuating violence, murder, etc. in case of inter-caste and inter-social marriages.

#### **ABBREVIATIONS**

AUD	Ambedkar University Delhi
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CDP	Centre for Development Practice
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OBC	Other Backward Class
PRADAN	Professional Assistance for Development Action
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SC	Scheduled Caste
SHG	Self Help Group
ST	Scheduled Tribe
VO	Village Organization

#### **GLOSSARY**

<i>Didi</i>	Name used for women in the village part of the SHGs
<i>Gotra</i>	Used to denote a clan either among the Adivasi or within a caste

<i>Jati</i>	Caste
<i>Marvari</i>	Businessman, usually to denote Bengali businessman
<i>Mukhya</i>	Another name used for the Sarpanch
<i>Para</i>	A hamlet in a village, particularly in Chhattisgarh
<i>Patel</i>	The cultural head of a village in Chhattisgarh, usually a Gond
<i>Pooja</i>	Form of worship
<i>Prasad</i>	The offering given either to a deity or to people after Pooja
<i>Samaj</i>	A community of a caste group or Adivasi. Also used to denote society in general
<i>Samanti</i>	Feudal
<i>Tendu patta</i>	A lead used to make beedi
<i>Vidyalaya</i>	School

## NOTES

1 - I stayed in Kamleshwari didi's house during the course of all three immersions in Bansla. Apart from her, her husband Dayaram Jain, her elder son Komal Jain and his wife Durga, her grandsons Keshav and Vimesh, her younger son Rohit, and her young daughter Sailen stay at the house. Apart from Komal, who teaches at Prathmik Saraswati Shishu Mandir (a private primary school run by RSS), the rest of the household members' primary occupation is farming.

2 - The priest is selected on the basis of caste hierarchy (among OBC and SC) and power hierarchy (among the different Adivasi communities). In case of OBC and Adivasi, OBC gets preference.

3 - Mukhiya, also known as Patel, is the head of the village. He makes all the important decisions in the village.

4 - *Samaaj* here means the community of any particular caste or tribe.

5 - There are many cases where the ostracized couple has converted to Christianity.

## REFERENCES

- Ambedkar B. R.** *Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development* in F. W. Pritchett (Ed.) “Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches” Vol. 1 (pp. 3-22). Bombay: Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1979.
- Ambedkar B. R.** *Annihilation of Caste* in S. Anand (Ed.) “Annihilation of Caste: The Annotated Critical Edition” (pp. 181-317). New Delhi: Navayana, 2014.
- Anandhi S. - Kapadia K.** *Dalit Women: Vanguard of an Alternative Politics in India*. Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2017.
- Chakravarti U.** *Gendering Caste: through a feminist lens* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2018.
- Chowdhury P.** *Political economy of production and reproduction: caste, custom, and community in North India*. New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Guru G.** RESERVATIONS AND THE SANSKRITIZATION OF SCHEDULED CASTES-SOME THEORETICAL ASPECTS. *Sociological Bulletin*, 33 (1/2), 1984, 29-38. <https://doi.org/10.2307/23620094>
- Rao A.** *The Caste Question: Dalits and the Politics of Modern India*. Berkley, USA, Cambridge University Press Teltumbde, A. (2011). Satta Samaj aur Dalit. New Delhi, Granth Shilpi, 2009.

## **ART (RE)PRESENTING HISTORY: ANNA AND THE KING**

*Teodora Narcisa Giurgiu*

(Student of the University of Bucharest  
Doctoral School in Literary and Cultural Studies)

In a world as globalized as it can get, we take it for granted that nowadays we are starting to unite in diversity, nurturing a reconciliation of our differences and uncovering our shared values - we also believe this is possible first of all due to an unparalleled advancement in human understanding as well as in technological progress, but undoubtedly also based on the pre-existing cultural gap(s) founded on extended dissimilarities among societies around the globe.

Looking on the surface of things, one necessarily must see the great distinction among the West and the East: even more so between a 19<sup>th</sup> century imperial Britain and a remote kingdom as Siam. Today we are taught to think of such differences as positive signs of the amazing variety which humanity presents, yet so many of us treat this with a type of benevolence which fails to recognize the immense similarities amongst people and nations that have always been present even when veiled by dissimilar moral and behavioural precepts.

When looking at the specific context, the nineteenth century Western society generally thought that the peak of spiritual and material gain is to be found in the West, yet it overlooked how close it was in essence to the rest of the world, the difference being mostly coverable from a material point of view. Turning towards modernity and what is called “contemporary civilization”, one must necessarily take into account the concept of equality, in all aspects of life, between men and women - yet just how far from such a state of affairs was the nineteenth century Western and Anglo-based

society can be seen without too much ado, hence:

[w]hile always crucial to the ideological formation of society, theories of gender division took on in the nineteenth century a near unprecedented power and importance [...]. The ideological separation of public and private [...] was predicated upon a fundamental division between male and female spheres. Furthermore, economic ideologies of the free, independent agent, the self-controlled actor in charge of his own destiny, were supported and sustained by theories of gender division which contrasted male self-control with female subjection to the forces of the body (Shuttleworth, 1996, p. 4).

Therefore, to have reached the level of equality and freedom women enjoy nowadays in the Western world, there have been battles to win, injustices to face and convincing to carry out by daring women who have not yielded to the *status quo*. Most of these heroines have known great trials at home, but amongst them some have had to endure also the suffering that distance imposes, living in far-off lands harbouring unfamiliar customs. One such example is Anna Harriette Leonowens - the Englishwoman who went in 1862 to Siam to the court of King Mongkut (Rama IV) with a mission to educate the royal progenies, but in the end became a mentor for the ruler himself.

Of Mistress Leonowens' life and deeds in the Kingdom of Siam the public knows, originally, through Margaret Mortenson Landon's book *Anna and the King of Siam*, published in 1944 by The John Day Co. It is a work that has come to light after years of extensive research and represents "seventy-five per cent fact, and twenty-five per cent fiction based on fact", as the author herself states in the preface (Landon, 2000, p. xii).

No later than 1946 the first filmic adaptation of this written work has appeared, with Rex Harrison and Irene Dune as leads - and since then numerous visual adaptations have been released, presenting the story of the English governess.

But, as a starting point, in order to assess exactly how daring a

deed it was for a widow to go as schoolmistress into a Far East country for a monarch with a harem and sixty-seven children it is best to have a clear picture of what the English world was in Anna's time.

First and foremost, coming from a Christian society, the idea of a harem, as well as the army of offspring resulting from it, most naturally came as troubling for Anna's mind and soul, fact which is stressed forcefully in both book and adaptations - the English-woman recurrently comparing it to slavery in Landon's writing and its horridness to her spirit being underlined in various forms in the filmic remakes. The rather puzzling part when looking at the vehemence with which the heroine is appalled by the idea of the King's multiple marriages is the fact that her lifelong servant, Moonshee, was a Muslim, hence the idea of polygamy was not alien to him, and she had lived in India for a long time, the only difference in Siam being that "the harem [...] was not walled of as in India", so the institution was not something new for Anna - her reactions to it rather indicating otherwise (Landon, 2000, p. 42). One would think Anna - even if definitely not embracing polygamy - to at least accept the idea that various societies present various conjugal patterns, as would be expected from a person that has lived in various (exotic) places, in various (contrasting) cultures, since childhood.

In Andy Tennant's 1999 filmic adaptation, *Anna and the King*, this situation, of Anna's staying inside the Palace and quartered exactly within the harem, takes a joke-like turn, with a feministic twist to it, when Louis asks Moonshee why the king has more than one wife, the servant directing the child to his mother for such an explanation - in the end the conclusion comes as a question put by Louis, who inquires why Queen Victoria doesn't have several husbands (min. 20:38-21:30). (Pic. 1)

But, from a social and consequently financial point of view, one should bear in mind that in England in those times women's status was not what it is today, quite far from it, they enjoyed limited



freedom and had little rights, hence:

John Stuart Mill became a pillar of the mid-Victorian Liberal Party, eccentric only in his desire to extend 'incorporation' to the half of the population whom politics ignored - women (whose slow progress to civic and legal equality started, however, to accelerate during the 1850s) (Harvie - Matthew, 2005, p. 61).

The fact that English women didn't enjoy the same privileges as the English men does not mean to say that female subjects in Queen Victoria's England were on the same level with Siamese women in King Mongkut's time, but nevertheless, since women struggled in England to gain equal rights to men, it would be expected that an English teacher would see some parallels between the social systems and harbour some deeper understanding of the situation than what the reader can grasp.

One other area and the situation in which it presented itself at the time should be mentioned - education in England: "it was already admitted by the 1860s that voluntary effort by the Churches could not supply an elementary education system [...] and in 1870 the Liberal government passed an act to set up School Boards" (Harvie - Matthew 2005, p. 105). Therefore, secular and state organised schooling was a system at its beginning even there.

Yet, it must be stressed that the British were at that moment one of the world's strongest nations, many others looking up to them, and - under the rule of a woman - became even more so, one of the great empires in human history, fact which is revealed not only and necessarily by the vastness of its territories, but also by the capacity of Great Britain to change radically in less than a century:

In 1837, when eighteen-year-old Victoria became queen, relatively few of England's people had ever travelled more than ten miles from the place where they were born. Little more than half the population could read and write, children as young as five worked in factories and mines, and political power was entirely in the hands of a small minority of men who held property. By the time Queen Victoria died in 1901, railways provided fast and

cheap transportation for both goods and people, telegraph messages sped to the far corners of the British Empire in minutes, education was compulsory, a man's religion (or lack of it) no longer barred him from sitting in Parliament, and women were not only wives and domestic servants but also physicians, dentists, elected school-board members, telephone operators, and university lecturers. Virtually every aspect of life had been transformed either by technology or by the massive political and legal reforms that reshaped Parliament, elections, universities, the army, education, sanitation, public health, marriage, working conditions, trade unions, and civil and criminal law (Nelson, 2007, pp. IX-X).

Such was the world in which Anna Leonowens lived, her personality being in part, as anybody else's for that matter, the result of her society's ways of understanding and organizing life, or as the famous Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset worded it "I am myself and my circumstances". ([https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9\\_Ortega\\_y\\_Gasset](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9_Ortega_y_Gasset); translation mine)

In these times, Siam was a country with which the British had little interaction of any kind. Its culture, as expected, was entirely different to that of a European one, or even to that of India as British colony. Yet, Siamese society was also organized according to the principles that include education, health, religion in the basic needs of everyday human life, thus in its capital city, Bangkok, "[m]ore wats were built during the reigns of Rama II (1809-24) and Rama III (1824-51). They served as schools, libraries, hospitals, and recreation areas, as well as religious centres." (<https://www.britannica.com/place/Bangkok#ref390860>) Under the rule of King Mongkut (Rama IV) - 1851-1868 - the Siamese nation opened itself up to the world. The king was well-known for his desire to establish relations with the great powers from the West, enhance international commerce and improve internal conditions for his subjects. (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mongkut>)

Nevertheless, the differences between nineteenth-century England and Siam are extremely significant - whilst European life, socially and politically, attempted to base itself on paradigms of thought established in the Enlightenment, under the rule of reason, in the Orient leadership found its decisional inspiration largely in the subjectivity of the ruler and the pseudoscientific dictates of esoteric groups of influence.

One such example, in the book, is the manner in which pressure from colonial powers as to Siam's foreign policy was dealt with: [w]ithin the Palace panic reigned. The astrologers, magicians, and wise men of the court were called. After consulting the stars and the oracles they said: "The times are full of omen. Danger approaches from afar. Let His Majesty erect a third gate on the east and on the west."

At the close of every year a thread of unspun cotton of seven fibers, consecrated by the priests, was reeled around all the walls of the Palace (Landon, 2000, p. 379).

Even the decision as to when the school for the royal family should start was based on the assessment of the astrologers in order to gain the favour of the god of knowledge, *Brihaspati* - which is ironical, since the king wished his offspring and wives to be educated in science, himself placing great importance on it. This point, of the monarch's fascination with the scientific world is stressed upon greatly, mostly in the filmic adaptations, hence in every one of them there is a recurrence as to objective matters and even more, the first encounter between Anna and the king is turned into a joke because Mongkut thinks she is too young to be a scientific person, at which she answers that she is one hundred and fifty years old.

But Anna had been living in exotic places almost all her life, and since early in life had been exposed to cultural differentiation. Yet it was always in places under British command, as it appears also from the book, when Captain Orton expressed his concern that a lady should live alone in Bangkok:

"[...] I've lived in the Orient ever since I was fifteen."

“Yes, in British colonies with British soldiers to protect you. [...]” (Landon, 2000, p. 3).

The problems the Englishwoman encountered were less frequently related to (individual) safety, though the defiant attitude of some Siamese officials, men, put her in an uncomfortable spot at times, and there was a violent attempt to intimidate her. But most of the times her discomfort was linked to misunderstandings grounded on the incapacity to grasp the lifestyle and personal choices of the other, and this on both parts.

Therefore, it is most understandable that to Anna Siam presented itself more than exotic - almost otherworldly, with its luxurious nature, striking architecture and strange inhabitants, with bizarre customs and rules that appeared from a different era altogether.

But how does a proper Englishwoman, a lady, get the idea to go to such a far-off alien country?

The book underlines greatly that, even since early in her life, Anna gave signs of having a strong, independent will of her own, defying her stepfather’s wishes - in times when daughters were supposed to obey their parents’ choices for their future - and this, at the cost of her financial and general comfort. Against her stepfather’s desire, she marries a British officer, Thomas Louis Leonowens, but very young in life she was widowed, and not wanting to accept her stepparent’s conditions or to remarry, she found herself in the position to sustain herself and her two children.

In the book these features are pictured not only as something personal, but also as the inevitable result of the environment’s influence upon her:

[s]he had been born in Carnarvon in Wales on November 5, 1834. [...] There was much in that countryside to remind one of the heroic past [...] The Romans had never fully subjugated them [...] The Druids were fanatic lovers of their country’s freedom [...] Reared in this land of elf and Merlin, it was not strange that Anna [...] carried away from it through the years a profound

love of freedom, a deep religious faith, a courage and a pride that never deserted her (Landon, 2000, pp. 4, 5).

This image of the strong English lady, a pioneer who by venturing where few men have dared to venture or have been successful in their attempts, thus establishing new boundaries in the understanding that between men and women the distance is one based on social limitations and not human determinations, is not something unique - but rather part of a more ample illustration of what Englishness and English femininity represent. There is a series of Englishwomen who have challenged the general notions of what a woman's place is, opening the way to a repositioning of femininity. Among such exemplary women are Queen Elizabeth I, Queen Victoria, or closer to Anna's social status, Florence Nightingale - the Victorian heroine whose name is intrinsically linked to nursing and women becoming active players in wars, Mary Edith Durham, the anthropologist who went to Albania at the very beginning of the twentieth-century, and "contributed frequently to the journal *Man* and became a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute", or Dorothy Lawrence, who "was a journalist who secretly posed as a man to become a soldier during World War I". ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith\\_Durham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith_Durham); <https://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life/british-women-who-have-changed-the-world-inspiring-a3784506.html>, emphasis mine)

Among the features that characterise Anna are also, and very important, an attraction towards the exotic, "the pleasure that the strange and bizarre always aroused in her" being of great importance in her decision of accepting King Mongkut's proposal to teach his children "English language, science, and literature, and not for conversion to Christianity" (Landon, 2000, pp. 53, 23). Of high significance, not only as a characteristic of her own personality, but as marker of a cultural conditioning - hence the old English saying "your word is your bond" - is her determination to keep her promise regardless of the difficulty which such a situation implies:

[t]he woman [Anna] bit her lip, but did not turn her eyes toward him [Captain Orton]. "I can't go back now. I've given my word." "You will not go back now?"

"I cannot!" (Landon, 2000, p. 3).

On the other hand, the King is portrayed in striking opposition to all that Anna represents: he is an Oriental man - and a leader, which, based on Western preconceptions, must inevitably result in him being a despot. (Pic. 2)

From the first moment when he appears in front of Anna's and our own eyes, he embodies all that the (Far) East means to a Western audience, from his external presence, to his manner of being and treating others:

[a]ll [noblemen] were crouched on their elbows and knees with their heads down, facing the golden throne at the far end. On it sat the King [...] dressed in what from that distance seemed to be cloth of gold. As he sat cross-legged and motionless, he appeared to have been carved of a piece with the glittering throne [...] sitting impassive and remote, like Buddha on his throne. [...] His feet were encased in gold slippers turned up at the toe and crusted with gems that refracted little gleams of light [...]

(Landon, 2000, pp. 59, 60).

One central point linked to the opposition Anna-Mongkut is precisely the keeping of one's promise, a persistent issue in both the book and the adaptations:

"[...] I beg Your Majesty to remember that in your gracious letter you promised me 'a brick residence adjoining the Royal Palace', not within it."

"I do not know I have promised. I do not know former condition. I do not know anything but you are my servant" - the voice was climbing higher and higher toward a shriek - "and it is our pleasure that you must live in this Palace, and YOU SHALL OBEY!" The last three words were screamed in her very face (Landon, 2000, p. 79; capital letters belonging to text).

This theme is of high relevance due to the cultural disparity it

wishes to underline and the preconceived ideas about the people of the East, which is perfectly expressed by Edward Said “Orientals are inveterate liars, they are ‘lethargic and suspicious,’ and in everything oppose the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race”. (2003, p. 39)

The notion of cultural disparity is paramount to the story - in the book there is little political correctness, many of Anna’s opinions on the Siamese mores being excessively blunt, if not pejorative, whilst in the cinematic redos there is a major focus on Oriental markers and their contrast to the Western ones, aided by images which convey messages more diligently. It is interesting to see how in time, according to the agenda of the moment, these visual indicators vary. One example of such an opposition, which doesn’t appear in the book, is in the 1946 version, when Anna waits on the opening day at the school - she is on time, with her son, whilst nobody else is there or seeming to come. For a moment the idea given is that the children and women are late - unlike the English teacher and her son - therefore the Siamese are impolite, inefficient and moreover, unable to keep their word to be at an agreed time at the appointed place.

With all the tension between the two protagonists, the monarch and the governess, plus all the misunderstandings, regardless of the problems they had to face during the time Anna was at the court of Siam, both find common ground and develop mutual respect, so much so that at the end of five years when she wishes to return to England, the King opposes the idea, whilst Anna’s impression of the sovereign is that he is “the most systematically educated, the most capacious devourer of books and news, of any crowned head of that day, either Oriental or European” (Landon, 2000, p. 155).

Both Anna and King Mongkut share an extremely valuable trait: they are people of vision, looking towards the future and wishing to leave something behind, which in the end will prove to be the foundation on which their reciprocal admiration lies.

Anna Leonowens sees her experience in Siam as a prophetic one:

[h]er decision to come to Siam had not been dictated entirely by the need for employment. She had felt a sense of destiny. [...] It was possible [...] that like Queen Esther in the Bible she had come into the world “for such a time as this” (Landon, 2000, p. 46).

The linkage with the name of a female monarch, albeit a Biblical one, is not dictated by chance, if one takes into consideration that Anna lived in Siam in the 1860s and that King Mongkut himself had diplomatic correspondence with Queen Victoria, hence it is only too natural to understand how a sense of empowerment related to Englishness and women-rulers would not be strange to Mrs Leonowens.

And her intuition was not misplaced, even if thoroughly op-pugned, hence at the completion of her stay “her influence with the King was greater than it had ever been. Her quarrels with him seemed to have enhanced her position rather than otherwise” (Landon, 2000, p. 377). Even more, her tutoring of the heir to the throne, Prince Chulalongkorn, was so inspiring that it gave his mind a pro-Western orientation and kindled the desire to make monumental changes when having ascended to power, which became obvious even as Anna was still there:

“Mem *cha*,” he said, “if I live to reign over Siam I shall reign over a free and not enslaved nation. It will be my pride to restore this kingdom to the original constitution under which it was founded by a small colony of Buddhist many centuries ago. They fled from Magadah [...] They called the country they had chosen ‘*Muang Thai*’, which means ‘The Country of the Free’. Maybe some day I can change it back into ‘The Country of the Free.’” (Landon, 2000, p. 377).

As Bolter and Grusin underline,

[o]lder electronic and print media are seeking to reaffirm their status within our culture as digital media challenge that status [...] Filmmakers routinely spend tens of millions of dollars to film on location or to recreate period costumes and places in order to make their viewers feel as if they were ‘really’ there. (1999, p. 5)



In this battle to win over the audiences, there is a tough selection when it comes to stories from previous epochs. There is an unquestionable attraction towards romanticised revisitations of the past, yet not all histories present interest for the wide public, therefore cannot become or remain subjects of entertainment.

Therefore, the fact that the story of the Englishwoman who went in 1862 as governess to the royal progenies in Siam has been and still remains inspiring is proven by these recurrent adaptations and Landon's book has known several: in 1946, only two years after the book's publishing, John Cromwell's film *Anna and the King of Siam*, starring Rex Harrison and Irene Dunne, was released, receiving two Oscars; in 1951 Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein II staged their musical *The King and I* which has known some thousands of performances and won many awards, and due to its immense success this musical was turned, in 1956, into a classic film by 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox with Yul Brynner and Deborah Kerr as leads - winning five of the nine Oscars for which it was nominated; then there is the famous 1999 period drama filmic remake, featuring Jodie Foster and Chow Yun-fat, and from the same year the Warner Bros animated version; and the latest restaging at The Palladium London, in 2018, with Ken Watanabe and Kelli O'Hara in the main roles. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_King\\_and\\_I\\_\(1956\\_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_King_and_I_(1956_film))); [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_King\\_and\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_King_and_I); <https://officiallondontheatre.com/show/the-king-and-i-111406592/>) (Pic. 3)

Most obvious, each text, starting with the book and including the multiple visual revisitations, follows the agenda of their creators, in accordance with the times of production and the specific medium.

In the book the prevailing feeling one gets is that of a great adventure undertaken by an English woman - and the great difference she encounters in the land of Siam, to her constant amazement and often revolt. In the first two filmic adaptations there is a lesser degree of spectacular in Anna's going to Siam,

but more a stress on the need of her presence there, the heroine acquiring a more motherly quality about herself, and it is exercised in both relation to the royal offspring as to the monarch himself. In the last cinematic revisitation, the one from 1999, there is a marked shift in the characteristics and deeds that Anna presents - she displays much more agency and is no longer the woman behind the man, but the woman next to him, a diplomat and even warrior.

This change in the way Anna's role is understood is most clearly visible if one makes the parallel between the 1956 film and this last one: whilst in the 1956 adaptation, the first wife, Lady Thiang asks Anna to go to Mongkut and subtly advise him on the subject of the Shanghai letters, but not letting him understand she is doing so, in the 1999 production Anna is extremely active at the anniversary party the king gives for strengthening diplomatic ties with the English, she helps Mongkut win the battle against the rebels and generally acts as though she is "not the equal of a man [...] [but] the equal of a king!", as the sovereign himself will tell the Kralahome. (*Anna and the King*, 1999, min. 38:40-38:48)

Another major point in the story, taken from the book, is the degree to which Anna influences the crown prince and therefore the future destiny of Siam.

From the three films, the one from 1946 places the greatest emphasis on the importance of the legacy left by both Anna and, most naturally, King Mongkut to his son, elected as the next sovereign. In Louis D. Lighton's 1946 production the film ends with Chulalongkorn as the new king, after his father's death, establishing the first law which eliminated the century-old Siamese custom of "obeisance on hands and knees" in front of the monarch, and his proclaiming that "all men shall stand before king and among one another, as men should do". (*Anna and the King of Siam*, 1946, min. 1:40:38-1:41:09)

The one in which the emphasis on the future generations is the most ambiguous and yet complex is the 1956 version: in the first

place, here the crown prince is still a child, not fully matured as to become a head of state, secondly, the old king, Mongkut is not yet dead, but on his dying bed, from which he supervises the two new rules which Chulalongkorn wishes to put in place - the first being a childish demand, based on the prince's preferences, for festivities and boat races, the second one having to do with the abolishment of the ancient custom of bowing before the monarch. This scene transmits to the audience that old habits die hard, yet there is hope for the future, if and when the right guidance is given.

It is no wonder that, just as Lighton at the end of World War II, producer Charles Brackett, in the middle of the Cold War, chose to present the story of a king who brought about immense changes to his backward kingdom, yet, since despotism ran through his veins, he must be punished with the capital penalty - therefore the ruler is shown dying, moreover in front of the Englishwoman who has enabled him to be better acquainted with the Western modes and vision and has helped him in taking such a path as to lead his nation towards such standards as those of the modern, civilised nations. This perspective is entirely different to what the book by Margaret Landon tells us, hence there Anna leaves Siam with the King very much alive and ruling over his people.

In these first two filmic remakes the final outcome is changed one hundred and eighty degrees, not only by the death of Mongkut but also by the fact that Anna Leonowens remained at the court, it being underlined that both Siam and the new sovereign had need of her valuable assistance, furthermore that she was persuaded to remain, and rather easily, since her feelings towards the Siamese crown were strong.

In the 1999 filmic adaptation Anna's departing from the court of Siam and leaving behind the king is not shown, yet the idea is most clearly expressed - and there is a step made towards the future - in a melodramatic fashion, since the closing scene shows the crown prince pondering, on what is the bequest he is receiving

from his father and on Anna's role, paralleled by the pair Anna-Mongkut waltzing tenderly, (finally) alone, in a secluded balcony. In this account the death of the king is not included - one does not know anything of what the future brings for him - which again is of significance, at the threshold of a new century many of us having wondered what the prospects were for humanity.

The very end of this version presents on a black screen a few closing lines - a very short history of the greatness of King Chulalongkorn reign, his most remarkable achievements being mentioned, as well as the acknowledgment of both his father's and his teacher's influence upon his character and life-vision. (*Anna and the King*, 1999, min. 02:21:07) (Pic. 4)

In Andy Tennant 1999 remake there is also much more emphasis laid on the romantic side of the story - one theme that is not apparent in the book and quite shyly depicted in the former visual adaptations. Most probably, in times in which the lack of erotic tension between people, even more between men and women, is seen as questionable, as well as an insatiable desire for proofs of intimate bonding, a film much too subtle as to love would not have appeal to the public.

By watching the trailer for the animated tie-in one can understand just how big the impact the story has had during the decades - it is stated that the audience is well acquainted and undeniably fascinated with the adventures of Anna Leonowens in Siam and her encounter with King Mongkut, and that it is time to pass on to the new generations of spectators the knowledge of such worthy deeds. The fact that Warner Bros took over this narrative and turned it into an animated picture shows that its message is not only not timeworn, but more up-to-date than ever. (Pic. 5)

But, as much interest as the book on Anna's endeavours might hold, the cinematic industry must and will apply various changes to the original text, since "[e]very work of art is torn between pure illusion, its "real magic," and pure commodification, its "thing-like rationality." (McGee, 1997, p. 66).

Starting from the physical traits, there have been changes made in the onscreen adaptations - Anna is represented as a ginger blond or blondish woman, with light, blue or green, eyes, when in the book she has brown hair and dark brown eyes (Landon, 2000, pp. 2, 6). As for the king, from a “medium height and excessively thin” man, he becomes either a tall man - Rex Harrison, or a well built, athletic figure such as Yul Brynner and Chow Yun-fat (Landon, 2000, p. 59). And this is not by chance or some caprice of the producers - the outward aspect of the protagonists carries a cultural message: their mere appearance stands for cultural signifiers. There are also personality traits that vary.

Rex Harrison’s character reminds one of the childish impetuosity the king displayed in the book, hence Anna’s first impression on the interview with him was that “[s]he had begun to enjoy the battle, which was like a child’s game of wooden swords.” (Landon, 2000, p. 61). These traces spring from his mode of speaking and behaviour, though from his exterior, he is extremely conservative and though not entirely Western in his attire, far from what one would imagine of an Oriental monarch’s choice of clothing. (Pic. 6)

Then there is Yul Brynner’s variant of the king - the image of the Oriental despot *par excellence*, a whimsical tyrant who rules almost entirely as his subjectivity dictates, making display of very little logic or common sense. His imposing physical presence, contrasting to the description in the book, is completed by a dominant and forceful disposition, as well as by a selection of clothing that enhances his personality’s traits - these being very much in line with what is found in the book everywhere, expressed either by parallels made with the Pharaohs and their slaves or directly, as when Anna describes how she worked long hours for his correspondence, since “His Majesty was both fickle and tyrannical. It seemed impossible to please him.” (Landon, 2000, pp. 69, 135). Probably the most refashioned King Mongkut of them all is the one played by Chow Yun-fat, in the 1999 production. His looks

are to a great extent Europeanised, as he is tall and with a slightly whiter complexion, and even more important, his conduct is a mixture of (popular) Buddhist philosophy, (romanticized) Western logic and a manly determination that is far less misogynistic than his predecessors'. (Pic. 7)

As André Bazin has stated "photography and the cinema [...] are discoveries that satisfy, once and for all and in its very essence, our obsession with realism", and this indeed seems to be the ultimate preoccupation of cinema producers - to offer its audience the illusion of reality. (qtd. in Bolter - Grusin, 1999, p. 26).

Yet, the very survival of period dramas and (romanticised) historical subjects is proof of a counter-obsession, that with a reality beyond our reach - there are here two forces at play: on the one hand, the need for palpability, hence realism, and on the second hand, the fascination towards times and places far from our immediate surroundings.

From these two standpoints, both Landon's book *Anna and the King of Siam* as well as the numerous adaptations made after it stand the test of desirability, endurance and moreover, relevance. In times of globalization as the current ones - with issues such as human rights being of paramount interest due to the struggle between unifying towards the maximum level of equity the civil liberties that people have around the world, women's rights being far from a fortunately resolved situation, but nevertheless keeping variety alive - the story of an English teacher and an Oriental ruler remains of vital significance, it being more than an exotic piece of history from a different time and place, but an enticement for perseverance, valour and the understanding that as long as there is respect for everybody's freedom, diversity can only enrich the human condition.



Pic. 1 - *Louis' Questions* (*Anna and the King*, 1999)



Pic. 2 - *Anna and King Mongkut* (*The King and I*, 1956)



Pic. 3 - *Shall We Dance (The King and I, 2018*, <https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2018/king-ken-watanabe-review-london-palladium/>)

Thanks to the vision of his father, King Mongkut, and the teachings of Anna Leonowens, King Chulalongkorn not only maintained Siam's independence, but also abolished slavery, instituted religious freedom and reformed the judicial system.

Pic. 4 - *Short History (Anna and the King, 1999)*



Pic. 5 - *Animated Version (The King and I, 1999*, <https://ro.pinterest.com/pin/860750547501369116/>)





Pic. 6 - Rex as Oriental Ruler (*Anna and the King of Siam*, 1946,  
<https://midcenturycinema.wordpress.com/tag/rex-harrison/>)



Pic. 7 - Latest version of Mongkut adapted image  
(*Anna and the King*, 1999)

## WORKS CITED

### *Written texts*

- Bazin A.** quoted in Bolter J. D. - Grusin R. *Remediation. Understanding New Media.* U.S.A., Graphic Composition, Inc., 1999.
- Bolter J. D. - Grusin R.** *Remediation. Understanding New Media.* U.S.A., Graphic Composition, Inc., 1999.
- Matthew H. C. G.** *Nineteenth-Century Britain: A Very Short Introduction.* U.S.A., Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Landon Mortenson M.** *Anna and the King of Siam.* New York, Harper-Collins Publishers, 2000.
- McGee P.** *Cinema, Theory, and Political Responsibility in Contemporary Culture.* U.K., Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Nelson C.** *Family Ties in Victorian England.* U.S.A., Praeger Publishers, 2007.
- Said E.** *Orientalism.* Reprinted edition. U.K., Penguin Books Ltd., 2003.
- Shuttleworth S.** *Charlotte Brontë and Victorian Psychology.* U.K., Cambridge University Press, 1996.

### *Online articles*

- 15 inspiring British women who changed the world* in <https://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life/british-women-who-have-changed-the-world-inspiring-a3784506.html>
- Bangkok.* Encyclopaedia Britannica in <https://www.britannica.com/place/Bangkok#ref390860>
- Durham, Edith* in [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith\\_Durham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith_Durham)
- Mongkut, King* in <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mongkut>
- Ortega y Gasset, José* in [https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9\\_Ortega\\_y\\_Gasset](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9_Ortega_y_Gasset)
- The King and I (1956 film)* in [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_King\\_and\\_I\\_\(1956\\_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_King_and_I_(1956_film))
- The King and I.* Official London Theatre in <https://officiallondontheatre.com/show/the-king-and-i-111406592/>
- The King and I.* Wikipedia. The Free Encyclopaedia in [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_King\\_and\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_King_and_I)

### *Visual texts*

*Anna and the King of Siam*. Fig. 6, in <https://midcenturycinema.wordpress.com/tag/rex-harrison/>

*Anna and the King of Siam*. U.S.A., Twentieth Century Fox, 1946 in <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aem-Aw70rPE>

*Anna and the King*. U.S.A., 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1999. DVD.

*The King and I*. Animated version. U.S.A., Warner Bros, 1999 in <https://www.videodetective.com/movies/the-king-and-i/8144>

*The King and I*. Fig. 5, in <https://ro.pinterest.com/pin/860750547501369116/>

*The King and I*. U.K., London Palladium, 2018 in <https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2018/king-ken-watanabe-review-london-palladium/>

*The King and I*. U.S.A., 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1956. DVD/Digital HD.

## ESSERCI PER CAMBIARE IL MONDO: TINA ANSELMI

*Paolo Giuntarelli*  
(Università di Tor Vergata, Roma)

*“Eppure non possiamo sottrarci dallo scegliere,  
perché il problema della Pace esige che noi ci siamo,  
che noi decidiamo oggi, per un domani dove la vita  
ci sia e sia una vita degna dell’Uomo”*

Una donna contro i poteri occulti che negli anni Settanta avevano invaso le istituzioni come cellule tumorali che avvelenano un corpo sano. Di eccezionale coraggio. E di straordinaria normalità. Bassano del Grappa, 26 settembre 1944. I nazisti impiccano 31 partigiani sul corso. Ogni impiccato penzola a un albero. Sono tutti giovanissimi, come giovanissimi sono i nazisti e i fascisti che perpetrano la strage, i fascisti ex Fiamme Bianche inquadrati nella divisione Flak, agli ordini di un ss, Karl Franz Tausch. Nessuno degli esecutori e ideatori della strage sarà sottoposto a processo nel dopoguerra. Tra i testimoni dell’esecuzione, molti studenti portati dalle scuole ad assistere alla lugubre esposizione. Tra loro, una ragazza di 17 anni che frequentava a Bassano l’istituto magistrale, Tina Anselmi, colei che sarebbe diventata la prima donna ministro della repubblica italiana. Dopo quell’episodio, la ragazza decise di entrare a far parte attivamente della resistenza e divenne staffetta della brigata Cesare Battisti - prendendo il nome di battaglia di Gabriella - e poi del corpo regionale veneto dei volontari della libertà. Una ragazzona del profondo Veneto, campionessa di giavellotto e pallacanestro a livello regionale, «in un tempo in cui lo sport era un’attività prevalentemente maschile», a 17 anni entrò nella Resistenza dopo un colloquio con un’amica che aveva il fidanzato partigiano, «una ragazzina passata direttamente dalla vita in famiglia alla lotta armata». Aveva scelto il nome Gabriella

come l'arcangelo Gabriele, il messaggero dell'annunciazione: staffetta partigiana, cento chilometri al giorno in bicicletta, la fame e la paura. Un impegno politico che segnò da quel momento il corso della sua vita.

«Mio padre ha chiamato la prima figlia Tina, perché era il nome della cagnetta che gli aveva salvato la vita quando era militare, ed era diventata la mascotte del suo gruppo. Per accontentare il parroco, che non voleva un nome del genere, ha chiamato la seconda figlia, me, Maria». È la sorella di Tina Anselmi a raccontare l'origine di un nome che per la storia politica italiana sarebbe poi diventato fondamentale.

Tina Anselmi era nata nel 1927 a Castelfranco Veneto da una famiglia cattolica. La madre gestiva un'osteria, il padre invece era un aiuto farmacista di idee socialiste, per questo perseguitato dal fascismo. Nel dicembre 1944, ancor prima della fine della guerra, Tina Anselmi aderì alla Democrazia Cristiana, obbedendo a quella passione politica che ispirerà tutta la sua vita e che darà il titolo a un suo bel libro di memorie, scritto con Anna Vinci, Storia di una passione politica. Nel dopoguerra, si laureò in lettere all'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore a Milano e divenne maestra elementare. Ma la sua vera strada era la politica: una politica intesa in senso lato, come attenzione ai problemi sociali, a quelli del lavoro, alla vita quotidiana oltre che alla gestione della cosa pubblica.

Nei primi vent'anni dopo la liberazione fu sindacalista (prima CGIL poi della CISL), impegnandosi intanto attivamente nella Democrazia Cristiana (DC) fino a diventare, nel 1959, membro del suo consiglio nazionale. Militante dell'Azione cattolica, amica e discepolo di Aldo Moro, l'unica ammessa dalla famiglia in casa durante i 55 giorni del sequestro del leader dc, eletta deputata nel 1968, prima donna a essere nominata ministro, nel 1976, a 49 anni, nel terzo governo Andreotti, ministro del Lavoro e poi ministro della Sanità. Una donna in politica che portava uno spirito inedito nelle stanze del governo: spiritosa, anti-retorica, il contra-

rio esatto di certi successivi modelli narcisisti e tutti auto-riferiti, una che di sé scriveva, con semplicità: «La ventata di leggerezza che nella mia infanzia ha spazzato tante volte via la malinconia mi accompagnerà fino alla fine, e avrà sempre per me l'odore del cocomero di nonna Maria e del panetto con l'uva di nonno Ferruccio». Ingenua, eppure consapevole di tutte le sottigliezze della politica. Esponente di quella generazione che aveva ricostruito l'Italia e che alla politica attribuiva primato e nobiltà, non in nome di una parte ma di tutti.

Nel 1968 fu eletta per la prima volta alla camera dei deputati, carica che mantenne per molte legislature, fino al 1992. Durante gli anni dei suoi mandati parlamentari, fece parte delle commissioni su lavoro e previdenza sociale, igiene e sanità, affari sociali. Dopo essere stata tre volte sottosegretario, divenne nel 1976, sotto la presidenza di Andreotti, ministro del lavoro e della previdenza sociale.

Era la prima donna a occupare quel ruolo in Italia, ed erano passati solo trent'anni dal voto che aveva portato le donne per la prima volta alle urne, nel 1946. In questa carica, Tina Anselmi fece approvare nel 1977 una legge che prevedeva la parità di trattamento e di assunzione sul lavoro fra uomini e donne. Era una battaglia che il ministro Anselmi combatteva da molti anni, da quando, nel 1962, al congresso di Napoli della DC, in rappresentanza delle giovani donne democristiane, aveva sostenuto con determinazione, rompendo molti tabù, la necessità di cambiare la legislazione per sostenere i diritti delle donne lavoratrici. Anche sua fu, più tardi, nel 1993, la clausola «di genere» che consentì l'aumento, nella nuova legge elettorale, delle elette donne e che, dando avvio all'introduzione del sistema delle quote, suscitò molte polemiche. Ma se nel 1986 la percentuale delle donne elette al parlamento era del 6 per cento, nel 2017 era del 30 per cento.

Dal 1978 al 1979 Tina Anselmi fu ministro della sanità, in due successivi governi Andreotti. E anche qui legò il suo nome a una riforma di grande importanza, quella sul Servizio sanitario nazio-

nale, che attuava quel diritto alla salute che era stato sancito dalla Costituzione: «La Repubblica tutela la salute come fondamentale diritto dell'individuo e interesse della collettività, e garantisce cure gratuite agli indigenti». Fu una riforma inizialmente molto osteggiata, soprattutto da parte dei medici. Così Tina Anselmi la raccontava nel 2003: «Devo dire che in quegli anni, segnati da posizioni molto diversificate, sicuramente c'era lo scontro. E tuttavia esisteva un'adesione di fondo a quel principio sul quale è stata costruita la riforma del Sistema sanitario italiano: l'adesione ai valori su cui costruire la tutela e il diritto del cittadino ad avere una garanzia da parte dello stato per quanto riguarda la sua integrità. Per costruire un sistema che assumesse, come suo valore fondante, la tutela della persona». La legge 833 del 23/12/78 (relatrice appunto Tina Anselmi) diede all'Italia quello che venne riconosciuto, all'estero, come il Sistema sanitario più avanzato di tutto il mondo occidentale. Il legislatore di allora, infatti, ebbe la semplice intelligenza di ispirarsi ai sistemi sanitari più avanzati dell'epoca, soprattutto quelli scandinavi e britannico (poi demolito dagli anni del neo-liberismo che sarebbero venuti da lì a poco). Un percorso tutt'altro che facile, innanzitutto per l'opposizione di lobby professionali e farmaceutiche che videro messi in discussione privilegi e “corsie preferenziali”. Prima dell'istituzione del SSN, il sistema assistenziale-sanitario era basato su numerosi “enti mutualistici” o “casse mutue”. Il più importante tra di essi era l'Istituto Nazionale per l'Assicurazione contro le Malattie (INAM). Ciascun ente era competente per una determinata categoria di lavoratori che, con i familiari a carico, erano obbligatoriamente iscritti allo stesso e, in questo modo, fruivano dell'assicurazione sanitaria per provvedere alle cure mediche e ospedaliere, finanziata con i contributi versati dagli stessi lavoratori e dai loro datori di lavoro.

Il diritto alla tutela della salute, in precedenza, era quindi correlato non all'essere cittadino, ma all'essere lavoratore (o suo familiare)

con conseguenti casi di mancata copertura; vi erano, inoltre, spe-requazioni tra gli stessi assistiti, vista la disomogeneità delle prestazioni assicurate dalle varie casse mutue. Questo sistema era complessivamente e popolarmente chiamato mutua (sanitaria), termine che in Italia è stato utilizzato per tantissimo tempo anche dopo il suo superamento tanto che ogni tanto è tuttora impiegato come sinonimo dell'attuale SSN.

Due riforme, quindi, quelle da lei messe in atto, di grande portata, fra quelle che più hanno inciso sulla società italiana degli ultimi cinquant'anni. Ma Tina Anselmi ha lasciato il suo nome legato anche a un'altra questione di grande importanza nel mondo politico italiano. Dopo anni di impegno politico-istituzionale, nel 1981 il destino le affida la missione più difficile: il 17 marzo, nell'ambito delle indagini sull'omicidio di Giorgio Ambrosoli, i pm di Milano Giuliano Turone e Gherardo Colombo ordinano alla Guardia di Finanza di perquisire l'abitazione e gli uffici di un certo Licio Gelli, ex repubblicano, già dirigente della Permaflex. Sbucano documenti «impressionanti». Tra questi, l'elenco degli iscritti ad una loggia massonica riservata (ovvero, come si dimostrerà, «segreta»), di cui Gelli è il capo: Propaganda 2.

Il 12 luglio 1984, nella relazione di maggioranza della Commissione Anselmi, si afferma che «tale organizzazione, per le connivenze stabilite in ogni direzione e a ogni livello e per le attività poste in essere, ha costituito motivo di pericolo per la compiuta realizzazione del sistema democratico». Sono gli anni del terrorismo, sono gli anni dell'assassinio di Moro, a cui, come già evidenziato, Tina Anselmi era molto legata. Tre anni dopo la sua morte, nel 1981 fu scelta a presiedere la Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta che doveva far luce sulla loggia massonica P2. Era un incarico che la avrebbe esposta a minacce di ogni tipo, portandola a scavare in trame oscure che avevano segnato pesantemente la storia del paese. Era però anche uno straordinario riconoscimento della sua profonda e indiscussa onestà politica.



Un'onestà che si leggeva anche sul suo volto, aperto, pulito e coraggioso e che la portò all'incontro e lo scontro con il volto oscuro del potere. Quella coltre di mistero, fango, sporcizia, ricatto che inquinava, e inquina ancora, la vita pubblica italiana. Per l'ex partigiana una sfida più rischiosa di quella con il fascismo perché più sottile, con le parti in gioco non dichiarate. La Anselmi ha raccontato giorno per giorno quegli anni nelle pagine di diario pubblicate da Chiarelettere nel 2011. La pedinarono («esco da Palazzo San Macuto e mi accorgo di essere pedinata fino a casa da un uomo di statura piuttosto bassa, robusta, dell'età di quaranta, quarantacinque anni», annota all'una e un quarto di notte l'8 febbraio 1983), indagarono su di lei («Il giorno 7 gennaio 1985 sono venuti da me Lo Presti di Treviso e un suo collaboratore. Si sono dichiarati di professione agenti investigativi privati. Mi hanno raccontato di essere stati incaricati di indagare su di me, sui miei beni, sui miei parenti, per avere elementi contro di me. Hanno rifiutato di collaborare»), fu lasciata sola dagli uomini del suo partito, la Democrazia Cristiana. «Lei ritiene di non poter fare nulla per impedire che materiale giudiziario venga sfruttato contro di me. Lei aveva tutti gli strumenti per bloccare un'operazione infame. Non li vuole usare», le scriveva Flaminio Piccoli, presidente della DC.

Dai socialisti: «Formica (PSI) mi ha detto ieri che la commissione P2 va chiusa e basta». E dall'opposizione comunista: «Non mi pare che il PCI voglia andare fino in fondo. Il gruppo pare abbandonato a se stesso. La stessa richiesta loro di non approfondire il filone servizi segreti fa pensare che temano delle verità che emergono dal periodo della solidarietà. Ipotesi: ruolo di Andreotti che li ha traditi? O coinvolgimento di qualche loro uomo?». «Nulla si può escludere, neppure che Tina Anselmi sia una calunniatrice», scrisse infine Gelli al presidente della Repubblica eletto nel 1985, Francesco Cossiga.

Tina Anselmi si convinse che fra l'assassinio di Moro e le vicende legate alla loggia P2 ci fosse stato uno stretto collegamento, che

ambidue le vicende avessero rappresentato soprattutto una minaccia alla democrazia italiana. E lo si vede nella relazione di maggioranza della Commissione sulla P2, che porta la sua firma e che contiene l'affermazione netta che la P2, per le connivenze stabilite in ogni direzione e a ogni livello e per le attività poste in essere, aveva costituito motivo di pericolo per la compiuta realizzazione del sistema democratico. Affermazioni analoghe farà, negli anni successivi, parlando del caso Moro. Conclusioni che la esposero, questa volta, non agli attentati ma alla delegittimazione, al ridicolo, ad accuse di dietrologia. Quel che è certo, però, è che, dopo la conclusione della Commissione parlamentare d'inchiesta, Tina Anselmi non fu più candidata al parlamento e che nel partito ebbe una posizione sempre più marginale. Ricoprì ancora, alla fine degli anni novanta, l'incarico di presidente della Commissione di indagine sui beni sottratti ai cittadini ebrei negli anni delle persecuzioni antisemite (1938-1945), lavorando a stretto contatto con Tullia Zevi, presidente dell'Unione delle comunità ebraiche italiane e facendo emergere, contro l'opinione comune, il cieco zelo con cui in Italia la burocrazia aveva messo in atto le leggi razziste del 1938.

Gli Italiani non l'avevano mai dimenticata. I vertici del Paese, colpevolmente, sì. Loro, Licio Gelli e i suoi amici, no. Non la dimenticavano e la odiavano come la loro peggiore nemica. Lo si capì nel 2004 quando il ministero delle Pari Opportunità commissionò a Pialuisa Bianco un dizionario biografico delle donne italiane. Alla voce Anselmi Tina si leggevano parole come queste: «Moralismo giacobino, istinto punitivo [...] I 20 volumi degli atti della Commissione, che stroncò Licio Gelli e i suoi amici, gli interminabili fogli dell'Anselmi's list, infatti, cacciavano streghe e accchiappavano fantasmi». E ancora: «improbabile guerriera. Furbizia contadina». Così un governo aveva ben pensato di ricordare la prima donna ad aver occupato l'incarico di ministro in Italia.

La sua profonda onestà, il carisma di cui godeva, portarono il suo nome fra quello dei candidati alla presidenza della repubblica nel

1992, dopo la presidenza di Cossiga. Ebbe 19 voti e fu eletto Oscar Luigi Scalfaro. Morì quasi novantenne nel 2016. Nello stesso anno le era stato dedicato un francobollo, onore che in genere non viene tributato a chi è ancora in vita. Fu in tutti i sensi una donna di valore. Grazie a lei possiamo dire che la democrazia italiana non ha avuto solo padri ma anche madri.

Ricorda di lei Lucia Fronza Crepaz, sua allieva politica: “Guarda che se non impari a degustare il vino, non puoi fare campagne elettorali” fu la prima frase che mi rivolse. Aveva chiamato noi giovani candidate della Democrazia Cristiana, da tutti i collegi vicini a casa sua, per darci qualche consiglio. Voleva che sfondassimo, perché diceva: “Quando le donne si sono impegnate nelle battaglie le vittorie sono state vittorie per tutta la società. La politica che vede le donne in prima linea è politica d’inclusione, di rispetto delle diversità, di pace”.

## BIBLIOGRAFIA ESSENZIALE

*Il complotto di Licio Gelli*, Relazione di Tina Anselmi in “Supplemento de L'Espresso”, 1984.

**Anselmi T.** *La rocca del paradiso*, con illustrazioni di Gianni Peg. SEI, Torino, 1985.

**AA.VV.** *Intorno a Macondo: itinerario per i giovani alla ricerca di un nuovo impegno civile*, a cura di Gioventù aclista. CENS, Cernusco sul Naviglio, 1993.

**Anselmi T.** *Zia, cos'è la Resistenza?* Manni, San Cesario di Lecce, 2003.

**Anselmi T.** *“Bella Ciao”. La Resistenza raccontata ai ragazzi*. Edizioni Biblioteca dell'immagine, Pordenone, 2004.

**Anselmi T. - Vinci A.** *Storia di una passione politica. La gioia condivisa dell'impegno*. Sperling & Kupfer, Milano, 2006.

**Vinci A.** *La P2 nei diari segreti di Tina Anselmi*. Chiarelettere, Milano, 2011.

## WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND STRATEGIES OF POWER: THE *GENS CAECINA*

(CENTURIES 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> AD)

*Valentina Limina*

(Università di Pisa, Dipartimento di Civiltà e Forme del Sapere)

The paper focuses on strategies of power and especially on the way Roman elite families<sup>1</sup> conceived and conducted them. Concerning this, it is crucial to keep in mind what Ronald Syme said about Roman history when he defined it as «the history of the governing class»<sup>2</sup>. Recently, Nicola Terrenato underlined the existence of power negotiation systems between Rome and local elites of the Empire. Elite families were cautious in aligning themselves with imperial policies and, at the same time, in maintaining their own cultural identity inside local communities<sup>3</sup>. Of course, the power needed to be acknowledged in order to be maintained<sup>4</sup>; that is why families with their networks of friendship and clientship were a primary source of power<sup>5</sup>.

In the complex system of elites in Roman Empire, the first condition for a municipal family in order to climb at the top of imperial hierarchies was a reliable local base of power in support of their policies and patrimony. Marriages were thus fundamental ways to strengthen alliances with other elite groups<sup>6</sup>. The contemporary adoption of opposite political positions inside the same *gens*, as well as the strategic use of philosophical and religious ideologies to fit private interests, could be useful to achieve the goal: the survival of the family; in this way, it was ensured whatever the results of political struggle would have been<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, actions promoted by *gentes* were real family strategies often developed from a *longue durée* perspective less explicitly or directly conducted. Women often had a crucial role in both these different kinds of projects in support of their families. Despite the com-

plaint about data insufficiency on ancient women<sup>8</sup>, literary sources and archaeology reveal some clues in order to build up a different perception of some female characters<sup>9</sup>.

The consistency of available information on the Etruscan *gens* Cecina, attested in the centuries 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> AD at the highest ranks of the Roman Empire<sup>10</sup>, allows studying the development of ancient elite's strategies.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, some branches of the Cecinas moved to Rome from Volterra, one of the main cities of northern Etruria. In that region, where the importance of family, the tradition of ancestors<sup>11</sup> and the role of kinship were particularly strong<sup>12</sup>, the *gens* Cecina was relevant, as attested by Cicero<sup>13</sup>.

According to the model suggested by Danielle Slootjes about local elites in the Roman Empire, the *gens* Cecina belonged to the group of supra-local *potentes* who acted in a supra-regional or imperial context<sup>14</sup> (Pic. 1). Thanks to extensive networks of friendship, clientship, kinship, they were involved in several economic affairs in Italy, and abroad in North Africa, Asia and Spain<sup>15</sup>. Approaching now, the Cecinas' case from women's perspectives, the aim is to demonstrate their crucial role. Considering them not only potential instruments for marriages to strengthen or bond alliances between elite families, but also their centrality in managing specific family projects, their essential role also appears.

Even if several Greek and Latin authors considered women as the perfect embodiment of vices<sup>16</sup> their centrality inside family contexts was out of doubt. Concerning Etruscan women, there is agreement on the fact that they had more freedom than Greek and Roman ones<sup>17</sup>. Marjatte Nielsen underlined that women in Etruscan funerary contexts were always related to the domestic domain and the fact that women's benches were furnished with gables, alluding to houses, and grave markers had houses configurations, contributed to emphasize their secure connection and influence on the family<sup>18</sup>. Then, the link between the female world of textile production and that of culture is of some importance.

From ancient times, textile production was considered as a female dominion, and literary sources, archaeology and funerary iconography confirmed the Etruscan women's involvement in this activity<sup>19</sup>. The fact that the primary texts of the Etruscan culture, unluckily lost for us, were written on linen tissues is significant to imply a female involvement in preparation for literary and religious texts as well as for memories kept in family archives<sup>20</sup>.

It is crucial to keep in mind that in Nielsen's opinion women were best represented in such sites, for examples in Northern Etruria, where Etruscan influential families had dominated society and the Etruscan culture was still vigorous in Roman times. In fact, within these families, women had never lost their influence<sup>21</sup>. The importance and the public role of Etruscan women belonging to the local elites of Roman cities were mainly underlined by some aspects: their presence in urban theatres, their involvement in some specific cults<sup>22</sup>. The Etruscans were in a sense the Romans' ancestor and, in the new context of the Empire, the "conquered" considered very important and useful, to keep vital their ancient culture, tradition, identity.

The case of the Etruscan *gens* Cecina is paradigmatic to show the implicit process of adoption of some virtuous Etruscan women in a typical imagery that progressively shaped the concept of the virtuous Roman woman. The fact that this family was strictly tied to its Etruscan values, even if integrated into the Roman imperial social system, is of primary importance. The analysis of literary texts as well as epigraphy, prosopography and archaeological evidence were the keys in order to gather information on this case-study. Not only the Cecina's women had an active involvement in elite relationships inside a Mediterranean context, but they also succeed in a progressively structured iconic image of themselves, then preserved by the ancient authors.

This paper deals with the diachronic analysis of five women from the Cecinas: Clodia Fannia, Cecinia Lolliana, Laeta, who descended from the original family strain, Aulus Caecina Severus's

anonymous wife and Glaphyra, acquired in the *gens* through marriage. The diachronically consideration of these women is essential to reveal the consistency of family strategies between the centuries 1<sup>st</sup> BC-6<sup>th</sup> AD.

The anonymous wife of Aulus Cecina Severus is quoted by Tacitus' *Annales*<sup>23</sup>. In his famous speech to Roman senators occurred in 21 AD, Cecina Severus aimed to convince his colleagues to vote for the abolition of wives' attendance in the Provinces, arguing for governors' moral and political corruption due to female presence abroad. Even if previous scholars abandoned the idea of Cecina Severus' misogyny<sup>24</sup>, it seems still essential to reflect on Severus' speech. His principal argumentation was the opposition between the ambitious women who followed their partners abroad, and the traditional ones, who stayed home managing the *domus*. These women were embodied by Cecina Severus' wife, the icon of familial devotion and prosperity. In the words of the proud husband, his wife, member of some noble Etruscan *gens*, became the embodiment of traditional virtues.

According to Antony Barrett, Cecina's real intent was to pursue a private interest in aligning himself to the Tiberian policy against Agrippina *maior* after Germanicus' death<sup>25</sup>. Cecina Severus, a supporter of Augustus and *consul* in the 1<sup>st</sup> BC, was a famous general and as his brother Caius Silius Cecina Largus<sup>26</sup>, was *legatus* of Germanicus in the years 14-16 AD<sup>27</sup>. The sense of Severus' whole speech in 21 AD and the role of his wife could be understood only bearing in mind his kinship in the broader context of Pisonian conspiracy, which led to Germanicus' death<sup>28</sup>. If one agrees with recent debate about Tiberius' innocence on Germanicus death<sup>29</sup>, and Livia's engagement instead, the kinship between Aulus Cecina Severus and Caius Silius Cecina Largus (Pic. 2), as well as the involvement of this latter in Pisonian conspiracy<sup>30</sup>, could justify Severus' attempt to rehabilitate the *gens* Cecina at the eyes of the emperor<sup>31</sup>. In his speech, the image of the virtuous



wife, who gave him six children and managed the house during his forty military campaigns, had an essential duty. The *exemplum* was, in fact, useful in order to strengthen the image of the Cecina family as devoted to those ancient virtues shared by the imperial family. Moreover, the description of Severus' wife as *concordem* with the husband, stood as a positive case opposing to that of Tiberius's female enemies, like Agrippina *maior*, who belonged to the «sexum ambitiosus, potestatis avidum»<sup>32</sup>. Cecina Severus argued the whole speech using the opposition between the virtuous and the ambitious women, that is why it is essential to remark that without his wife example, he could not have developed it. In this sense, the role played by this anonymous woman was fundamental not only for her active role as *mater familias*. As the icon of Roman virtuosity, this anonymous woman was useful in supporting her family rehabilitation.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, the cases of Arria *maior* and Clodia Fannia show the increased participation of some branches Cecina family in policy plots. In 42 AD, the involvement of the consul Cecina Petus and his wife, Arria *maior*, in Scribonianus' plan against the emperor Claudius<sup>33</sup> (Pic. 3), inaugurated a period of «inherited ethic for conspiracy»<sup>34</sup>. Reasonably, for a “dissident” branch of the family, the adoption of different political positions could be useful to ensure the survival of part of the *gens* in case of an imperial turn over. Arria *maior* became a very popular heroine in typical Roman imagery, and until the XVIII century<sup>35</sup>, because of her heroic suicide and her famous words «Paete, non dolet»<sup>36</sup> to encourage the husband. She was praised by Persius<sup>37</sup>, Martial<sup>38</sup>, Pliny the young<sup>39</sup>, not only for her stoic courage but also for her chastity and devotion to the spouse<sup>40</sup>. Another woman of the Cecina family, Clodia Fannia, was as “mythical” as her grandmother. Close friend and correspondent of Pliny the young, belonging to the original branch of the Cecinas, Clodia Fannia was the daughter of Arria *minor* and Trasea Peto, and the wife of Elvidius Priscus *maior*. Her father, Trasea, and her husband, Elvid-

ius, were both members of the stoic circle and were involved in the Pisonian conspiracy against Nero<sup>41</sup>. Trasea Peto committed suicide in 66 AD<sup>42</sup>, Elvidius, firstly exiled in 66 AD, was sentenced to death in 75 while trying to avenge his father-in-law Trasea<sup>43</sup>. Later, in 93 AD, Fannia's stepson, Elvidius Priscus *iunior*, was condemned for his defamatory play with negative allusions on emperor Domitian<sup>44</sup> (Pic. 3). Fannia was exiled three times. The first and second time she followed her husband's sentence, finally she was exiled after the personal admission of guilt during the trial occurred in 93 AD. In her words, she had an active role in the plot, having given the diary of Elvidio Prisco *maior*, her deceased husband, to Erennio Senecione who wanted to write his biography. In Pliny's words: «Metius Carus with a threatening gesture asked her whether she had made such a request. 'I did request him' was the answer. 'Did you give him materials to write from?' he went on. 'I did give them' 'Did your mother know?' 'She did not know.' Not a word did she utter to show that she shrank from the perils which threatened her»<sup>45</sup>. Therefore, Fannia (as her closer relatives) could be considered supporter of the stoic circle, thus implying the fact to have received a philosophical education<sup>46</sup>. Moreover, her crime underlines the importance of memory for her family, as attested by the keeping of diaries<sup>47</sup>. Fannia's courage was not indifferent as Jacqueline Carlon remarked: «surely it was perilous for Fannia to have in her possession materials that the senate had ordered destroyed, but so determined was she to preserve Helvidius's fama that she even risked directly contravening a *senatus consultum*»<sup>48</sup>. One could understand why in his letters, Pliny makes of Fannia one of his female icons praised for *castitas*, *sanctitas*, *gravitas*, and *constantia*. She was representative of familial devotion but also a woman directly involved in politics; that is why her character takes on mythic proportions<sup>49</sup>. Presented as a model of integrity and coherence to stoic and political ideals<sup>50</sup>, the importance of Fannia's active role in the perpetuation of a family project in order to ensure the survival of

part of the *gens* is now evident.

Another essential member of the original branch of the *gens* Cecina was, in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, Cecinia Lolliana. Reasonably, she was the granddaughter of Cecina Sabinus, consul in 314 AD, while her uncle, Antonius Cecina Sabinus, was the consul of 316 AD (Pic. 4). The alliance between the Cecinae and the Ceionii Rufii, a noble family among those of Etruscan origins, was then strengthened by marriages<sup>51</sup>. The wedding between Cecinia Lolliana and Caius Ceionius Rufius Volusianus Lampadius reinforced the alliance between the two families. At that time the Cecinas were pagan, as suggested by some inscriptions found in Rome<sup>52</sup>, and in close friendship with other pagan elite families such as that of Vettius Agorius Pretextatus and Symmachus<sup>53</sup>. Cecinia Lolliana's name occurs in some inscriptions found in Rome as CIL VI, 512; this epigraph quoted her as *deae Isidis sacerdotis*<sup>54</sup>. The alabaster statue of Isis, found at San Vincenzino<sup>55</sup>, identified as the villa later described by Rutilius Namatianus<sup>56</sup>, attests the link of the family with oriental cults and the existence of properties in the *ager Volaterranus*, the original base of power. Cecinia's public role as *Isis sacerdos* was very important to underline her family's pagan ideology shared within the senatorial circle in a more and more Christianised Empire<sup>57</sup>. As a perfect *matrona*, Cecinia Lolliana also embodied the ancient traditional virtues being the mother of four sons and two daughters (at least)<sup>58</sup>. Thanks to a *relatio* by Symmachus, we know that she was also actively involved in the patrimonial management for her orphan nieces, Severilla and Catianilla<sup>59</sup>. Concerning this, Symmachus made a critical annotation: Lolliana's family had no male heirs in life. Therefore, one could not underestimate Cecinia Lolliana's crucial role, mainly for three reasons. First, thanks to her marriage, she bonded the alliance between the *gentes* Cecina and Ceionia, and her heirs will ensure the continuity of the family. Second, her role, like her relatives' one, within pagan cults was reasonably functional for the safety of family interests, linked to

the public priesthood, in keeping private entries derived from the patrimony of temples<sup>60</sup>. Third, giving her famous *gentilicium* to some of his male sons, she made possible the survival of the *gens* Cecina. In this respect, it is possible to argue that bearing the mother's name was a promise for prestige, power, values and virtues, for sure very desirable to be inherited<sup>61</sup>. In this sense, only thanks to Lolliana, the *gens* Cecina survived.

Since the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the Roman Empire became more and more Christianised. Of course, there were several sincere conversions, but it is necessary to consider the coexistence of religions and so, the importance, for pagan elites to be acquainted with the new Christian groups growing in power. In this respect, the promotion of mixed marriages was not so rare, even if the husband or the eldest son, in noble families, usually kept the pagan faith. In fact, for a male member, the conversion and eventual monastic entry could have represented a danger for the survival of the family and the patrimony. Women had more freedom in religious matter, but it seems that they should convert, and eventually partially dispose of their patrimony, only because of their widowhood or only after having granted a certain number of heirs to the family<sup>62</sup>. The links between the traditional elite and the new Christian one became progressively very strong as in the case of the Cecinas. One of Cecinia Lolliana's sons<sup>63</sup>, Publius Ceionius Caecina Albinus<sup>64</sup>, married a Christian woman who gave him three children at least<sup>65</sup> (Pic. 5). One of these, Cecina Decius Albinus, governor of Numidia, was pagan<sup>66</sup>, while his sister, Laeta, was Christian. Laeta's role in family dynamics was crucial. Laeta married Tossotius, Saint Paula's son (Pic. 5). Saint Paula, belonging to another elite family, was a close friend of Saint Jerome and founder of a monastery in Bethlem<sup>67</sup>. This fact is essential because it underlines the connections of the pagan family, still bearing the name Cecina, with the most important members of Christian elites. Moreover, Laeta's action of voting to Christ her daughter, Paula *iunior*, before her birth was crucial. Paula ju-

nior's destiny would be the managing of the monastery founded by her grandmother, Saint Paula, under the spiritual education of Jerome<sup>68</sup>. With her action, Laeta became the icon of the wise mother: even if she would lose her daughter, she consented her to become a perfect Christian intellectual, like her grandmother, Saint Paula. Regarding this, it is essential to underline that the most detailed prescription of how an upper-class girl should be educated is that of Jerome instructing Laeta to prepare little Paula for the ascetic life. Apart from learning to read and write both Greek and Latin, Paula had to study the Scriptures, to pray and to learn working in wool<sup>69</sup>. The most critical aspects of Laeta's action in family dynamics emerge from Jerome's words: «Who would ever have believed that the granddaughter of the Roman pontiff Albinus would be born in answer to a mother's vows; that the grandfather would stand by and rejoice while the baby's yet stammering tongue cried "Alleluja"; and that the old man would nurse in his arms one of Christ's virgins?»<sup>70</sup>. Paula's grandfather, the senator Albinus, a pagan *pater familias*, was forced to accept the little granddaughter singing *alleluja* while on his knees<sup>71</sup>. Actually, after the years of Theodosius, the reaction against paganism increased and, after 398 AD, conversion progressively became necessary in order to maintain power and social networks of friendship<sup>72</sup>. Even if could not be excluded that Laeta's action was an attempt to conquer an individual level of freedom against family constraints, nor the psychological aspect of Christian conversion, it is possible to read her case differently. In a family where mixed marriages and Christian members were accepted since two-generation, Laeta's action in the changed context of the Empire symbolize the final passage of the *gens* in a new set of values, the Christian ones when it became necessary to display them. The destiny of Paula *junior* was to manage the monastery founded by Saint Paula in Bethlem after her aunt Eustochio. In this way, Laeta's action implied as a future consequence the direct control of part of the Christian patrimony on behalf of her daughter. Laeta

with her vow was a vital part of those family strategies aimed to maintain power to grant the perpetuation of the family. Apart from the psychological aspect of religion, power was the real element required and desired by elite families; as *Vettius Agorius Pretestatus*, one of Cecinas' friends and *defensor* of paganism, said to Pope Damasus: «Facite me Romanae urbis episcopum, et ero protinus Christianus»<sup>73</sup>.

In the following centuries, epigraphy attests several senators bearing the name Cecina involved in public and private euergety<sup>74</sup> (Pic. 6). Not only they were entailed in the most relevant imperial political and religious controversies<sup>75</sup>, but the whole family continued to be praised in the words of Cassiodorus in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD<sup>76</sup>. The support of Theodoric was out of doubt and remarked on different levels. The euergety of Cecina Mavortius Basilius at Terracina<sup>77</sup>, on behalf of the king, must be read in this sense (Pic. 6). Moreover, one branch of the Cecina reasonably maintained properties and potential pressure on local policies in Volterra; here, the support of Theodoric was attested by the action of the local bishop, Elpidio. Pope Gelasius reproached this latter for having rendered honour to the king before than to him<sup>78</sup>. Then, the election of the new Roman pope and the competition between Laurence and Symmachus was crucial for the family. Symmachus, the winner, was supported by the bishop of Volterra Elpidius before his election (501-502) and finally won thanks to the judgement of Theodoric<sup>79</sup>. In this context, the *Liber Pontificalis Acta Synodi Romani* mentioned Cecina Decio Albino *iunior*, *praefectus pretorii* in 510 AD, and Glaphyra, his wife (Fig. 6), as founders of a church dedicated to Saint Peter in one of their estates near Rome. Pope Symmachus itself inaugurated the church<sup>80</sup>. It is essential to highlight the character of Glaphyra. Maybe, she had no real independent action but considering her oriental name, the wedding with Cecina Decio Albino is significant because it could imply the alliance between the *gens* Cecina with some family of the Constantinopolitan elite. Other proofs of the family re-

relationships with Oriental elites were the diplomatic missions of some of the Cecina-Decii to Constantinople on behalf of Theodoric (490, 522)<sup>81</sup>. Albinus, probably to be identified with Cecina Decio Albino married with Glaphyra, was then involved in a conspiracy against the king, at the side of Boethius and Symmachus. This political position was crucial for his family<sup>82</sup>. Albinus was accused of having secret relationships with the Byzantine emperor and for having announced him the election of new Roman Pope, John I, well accepted by Byzantine elites, with an appreciation for Giustinus' interdiction of Arianism. In this way, Albinus was acting against the arian Theodoric<sup>83</sup>. In this elaborate contest, Glaphyra's role was then a crucial one. She was the chain between the western elites and the eastern ones. Beside the loyalist branch of the Cecinas, Glaphyra stands on the other line, in one last effort to ensure family survival. Reasonably, she had a fundamental role in the mediation of family power in the new Mediterranean context.

In this complex system of varied family strategies developed by the *gens* Cecina in the *longue durée* at different levels in social, cultural, political, economic domains, women had an essential role. Without consistent differences among those belonging to the original family branch and those acquired on it, the Cecina women acted in a very independent, courageous way, in Volterra, as well in the Mediterranean context, inside the loyalist branch of the family and in the dissident branches too. The relationship between these women, their family, and the most relevant events of Roman history is significant. Each of them had its physical consistency, and the action in support of the family reached a potential pressure in domains, such as policy, philosophy, religion, generally precluded to women.

The simple fact that the record of these women, all related to the same *gens*, reached us, as well as their iconic aspect eternified by eminent authors from Cicero to Cassiodorus, attest not only their exceptionality but also their real impact on history.

## NOTES

1 - The Latin word *familia* has to be read in the broader sense of *gens*, or *clan*. Because of this meaning, those who had a common male ancestor were considered members of the same family. On this topic, see Corbier, 1990, pp. 225-28; Frazzoni, 2016, p. 72.

2 - Syme, 1939, p. 7.

3 - Terrenato, 2014.

4 - Concerning Modern Europe society and military domain, Braddick underlined that «nobody would bear arms under the command of a social inferior»: Braddick, 2000, p. 189.

5 - On the importance of social networks of friends and *adfines* see the central volume edited by Jean Andreau - Hinnerk Bruhns (Andreau-Bruhns, 1990) and Verboven, 2002.

6 - Corbier, 1990, p. 229. Regarding this, Ronald Syme said: «women are a prize or a weapon in games of politics». Syme, 1986, p. 19.

7 - In Mario Pani's and Ronald Syme's opinions, this phenomenon was tied to domestic problems and generational conflict. Syme, 1939; Pani, 2003; Morelli, 2009.

8 - Duby-Perrot 1990: V-XVII; Maria Grazia Celuzza summarizes the gap between sources and problems of perspective when approaching to the case of ancient women. Maria Grazia Celuzza, 2016, pp. 9-17.

9 - See the volume edited by Averil Cameron - Amélie Kurth (Cameron-Kurth, 1983).

10 - Cicero defined the *gens* Cecina «amplissimo nomine totius Etruriae» (CIC., *Cecin.*, 104), while other members of the family were protagonist of Tacitus' *elogia*, Ovid (maybe about Cecina Severus), Martial and Persius (about Arria *maior*), Pliny the young (about Fannia), Macrobius, Rutilius Namatianus, Cassiodorus. For a summary of primary information about the *gens*, see Capdeville, 1997.

11 - Some examples about the importance of ancestors' memory for Etruscan elites could be some verses of the Volaterran Aulus Persius. In his words, he underlined the importance given by noble Etruscans to the descent «stemmate Etrusco ramum» (PERS., *Sat.*, III, 37-38; VI, 57). Other examples about the importance of ancestors were the famous *Elogia Tarquinensia*, epigraphs dating to the Claudian era, recording



events of the *gens* Spurinna, as well as the monumental burial chambers designed to gather the family members through several generations (Torelli, 1975; Torelli, 1995; Nielsen, 1975).

**12** - The complex system of Etruscan ethnic identity based on family and the sharing of cultural patrimony. Etruscan religion had a fundamental role in this system and was one of the main aspects to be transmitted in elite families, a central feature of the so-called «Etruscità» (Mazzarino, 1957; Ramelli, 2001). On ethnic identity, see Jones, 1997; about Etruscans, Ethnic identity and the importance of religion and ancestors, see Aigner Foresti, 1992; Ramelli, 2003; Neil, 2016; Ceccarelli, 2016.

**13** - Cic., *Caecin.*, 104.

**14** - Slootjes, 2009.

**15** - These data are part of the author's doctoral dissertation under review at this moment for future publication.

**16** - The traditional misogyny was shared by ancient authors from Esiod to Aristotles, from Lucianus to Cato and the Church Fathers. Sordi, 1981; Celuzza, 2016, pp. 13-14.

**17** - About Etruscan women's freedom and their family role: Sordi, 1981, pp. 49-67; Rafanelli, 2016, pp. 45-68.

**18** - Nielsen, 1975.

**19** - Rafanelli, 2016, pp. 51-52.

**20** - Rafanelli, 2016, p. 52.

**21** - Nielsen, 1998; Rafanelli, 2016, pp. 45-68.

**22** - On Etruscan women see Sordi, 1981, pp. 49-67; about their presence in urban theatres see Viccei, 2016, p. 376; on women involvement in religion: Duby-Perrot, 1990, pp. 416-517; concerning Etruscan women and religion: Rafanelli, 2016, pp. 61-63.

**23** - TAC., *Ann.*, III, 33: «In the course of the debate, Caccina Severus moved that no magistrate, who had been allotted a province, should be accompanied by his wife. He explained beforehand at some length that he had a consort after his own heart, who had borne him six children: yet he had conformed in private to the rule he was proposing for the public; and, although he had served his forty campaigns in one province or other, she had always been kept within the boundaries of Italy [...]».

**24** - Syme, 1986; Sordi, 1981, pp. 49-67; Valvo, 1998, pp. 187-203.

**25** - Barrett, 2005, pp. 301-314.

- 26** - Before the adoption in the *gens* Silia, he was named Aulus Cecina Largus. The kinship between the two is based on several pieces of evidence. First, Aulus Severus and Caius Largus were both registered as *Aulii filii* in the dedicatory inscription of the theatre in Volterra built at their expense between 1 BC-25 AD. Then, we know of a consul in 13 AD, belonging to the circle of Augustan supporters, whose name was *C. Silius P.f. P. n. A. Cecina Largus*. This name reflected the adoption of Caius Cecina Largus in the *gens* Silia. On this topic: Valvo, 1998, pp. 187-203; Pizzigati, 1997; Munzi, 1994, p. 389; Munzi-Terrenato, 2000.
- 27** - On the professional career of Cecina Severus: Barrett, 2005; Capdeville, 1997; Di Vita-Evrard, 1979; Lewin, 2005; Roberto, 2018.
- 28** - Germanicus was killed because of his designation as the heir of Augustus. His adoption by Tiberius was forced after Claudius Marcellus's death and that of Lucius' and Gaius' Caesari. In Suetonius' opinion, Germanicus gathered in his person all the best qualities, and he was very popular among the Romans (SUET., *Calig.*, 3).
- 29** - Germanicus's death occurred in Antioch in 19 AD where he was sent by Tiberius to share the military imperium with the proconsul of Syria, Calpurnius Piso. Piso and his wife, Plancina, were accused of Germanicus' death by poison, while a crisis for the succession to imperial throne opened between Tiberius and Agrippina *maior*, wife of Germanicus.
- 30** - Caius Silius Cecina Largus married Sosia Galla, a close friend of Livia and maybe of Plancina, wife of Calpurnio Piso. Probably due to this dangerous friendship, Silius Cecina Largus and his wife were condemned for Germanicus' death. Cecina Largus committed suicide in 24 AD. On this topic: Barrett, 2005.
- 31** - Tiberius' enmity towards Cecina, and on the contrary, Cecina's attempt to rehabilitate the family, is also attested by the imperial prohibition to his request of the dedication of an altar to Germanicus (TAC., *Ann.*, III, 18).
- 32** - TAC., *Ann.*, III, 33; on the contrast between Tiberius, Cecina and Agrippina *maior*: TAC., *Ann.*, I, 69, 5; Barrett, 2005; Sordi, 1981; Valvo, 1998.
- 33** - SUET., *Claud.*, 13, 2; 35, 2. It seems that Arria *maior* and Cecina Petus were in Dalmatia with Scribonianus at the beginning of the rebellion. On Arria, see also Carlon, 2009, pp. 44-45; Cantarella, 2011, pp. 221-222.

**34** - On this topic, Morelli, 2009. The loyalist side of the family was represented in this period by C. Cecina Largus, defined by Tacitus as one of the few close friends of Claudius (TAC., *Ann.*, XI, 12, 3).

**35** - The death of Arria and Petus was a trendy theme in art since the XVII<sup>th</sup> century. It was represented on oil canvas by West, Vincent, Bouchet, Bin, in sculpture by Lepautre and Nollekens. The myth also inspired theatrical adaptations. On this topic, see Moormann-Uitterhoeve 2004.

**36** - TAC., *Ann.*, VI, 29; XVI, 10; PLIN., *Ep.*, III, 16.

**37** - Aulus Persius was linked to the *gens* Cecina. He was the cousin of Arria *minor*, daughter of Cecina Petus and Arria maior, wife of Trasea Peto. Cornutus destroyed Persius' verses on the famous suicide of Arria. After Persius' death, he burned the verses in order to escape the revenge of Nero, considering the allusions against the emperor (*Vita Persii*, VIII-X). See also Ramelli, 2003, pp. 71-73.

**38** - MART., *Epigr.*, I, 13.

**39** - PLIN., *Ep.*, III, 14; 16, 7-12.

**40** - Carlon, 2009, pp. 163-165.

**41** - This conspiracy was strictly tied to the instrumentalization of stoic philosophy. The presence of a main Etruscan faction in Pisonian conspiracy was crucial. Regarding the importance of links of friendship and kinship between the conspirators: Morelli, 2009; Ramelli, 2003; Sordi, 1998.

**42** - TAC., *Ann.*, XVI, 22, 1-3; XVI, 35, 1.

**43** - SUET., *Vesp.*, 15.

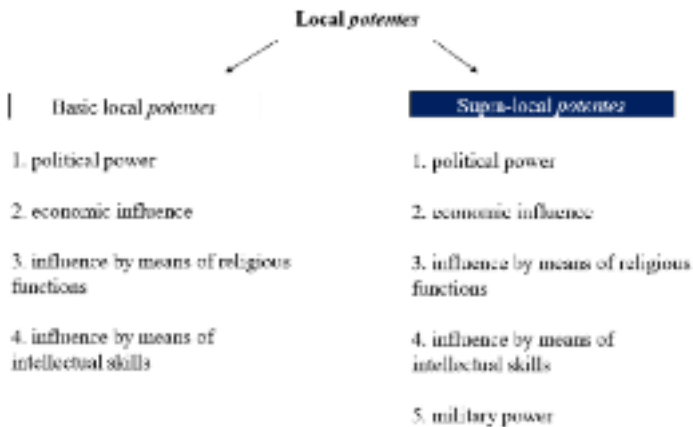
**44** - TAC., *Agr.*, II, 45; Suet., *Dom.*, 10.

**45** - PLIN., *Ep.*, VII, 19, 4, 6; 16; 5.

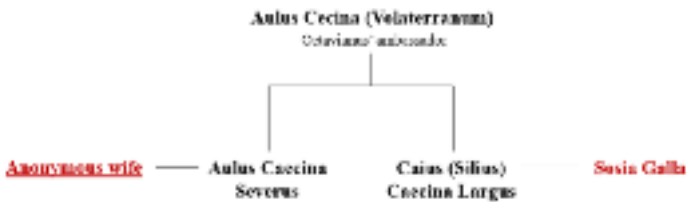
**46** - It has been noted that among moral philosophers of the first two centuries AD, such as Musonius Rufus and Plutarch, and their followers among cultured upper-class Roman families, a thorough education for girls was recommended, comprising literature, philosophy and, possibly, some mathematics. This extensive education was not meant to make a girl into a public speaker or a professional philosopher, but served a more common aim: to make her a chaste wife, a prudent manager of the household and a good mother, who would guide her children and grandchildren by her example. Moreover, the study of philosophy fortified against the blows of fortune and taught her courage. On this topic, see Heimelrijk, 1999, p. 60.

- 47 - On the importance of family archives and ancestors' memories: Aigner Foresti, 1992; Ramelli, 2003; Sordi, 1989, p. 9.
- 48 - Carlon, 2009, p. 56.
- 49 - While describing Fannia as an *exemplum*, not just for wives but also for men, Pliny asks himself «Will there ever be another whom we can point to as a pattern to our wives? or another from whom even we men may take a lesson in personal courage - one who inspires us when we see and hear her with the admiration we feel for the heroines of history about whom we read?» (PLIN., *Ep.*, VII, 19, 7).
- 50 - Carlon, 2009.
- 51 - Endogamy inside the group of Etruscan senatorial *gentes* was also justified by the perpetuation of cultural traditions and the sharing of economic interests.
- 52 - Found in the *Phrygianum Vaticanum* the inscriptions CIL VI, 30966 and CIL VI, 509 record the religious titles of members of the family. They were involved in the rituals in honour of Attis, Isis, Cybele, Magna Mater, Mithra. About the *Phrygianum Vaticanum*, see Liverani, 2008; on the relationship between the Roman elite and oriental cults: Hemelrijk, 1999; Mangiafesta, 2008; Ramelli, 2003.
- 53 - Chastagnol, 1956; Chastagnol, 1961; Kalhos, 2002.
- 54 - Even if usually excluded from public priesthoods there were exceptions such as the Vestals and the priestess of oriental cults. Concerning the cult of Isis, it was widespread since the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, especially among elites. On the topic of women and cults, see Schied, 1990; Mangiafesta, 2008; Cantarella, 2011, pp. 228-230.
- 55 - Donati, 2012.
- 56 - Rutil. Nam., I, 465-474.
- 57 - Chastagnol, 1961, pp. 744-758; Hemelrijk, 1999.
- 58 - See also Capdeville, 1997, pp. 303-304.
- 59 - SYMM., *Rel.*, XXX; About women and patrimony affairs see Chastagnol, 1961, p. 746; Cantarella, 2011, pp. 208-217.
- 60 - On this topic, see Mangiafesta, 2008; Kahlos, 2002; Verboven, 2002.
- 61 - Chastagnol, 1961, pp. 744-758.
- 62 - On this topic, see Chastagnol, 1956; Salzmann, 1992; Yarborough, 1976.
- 63 - About the sons of Cecinia Lolliana, see also CIL VIII, 25990.

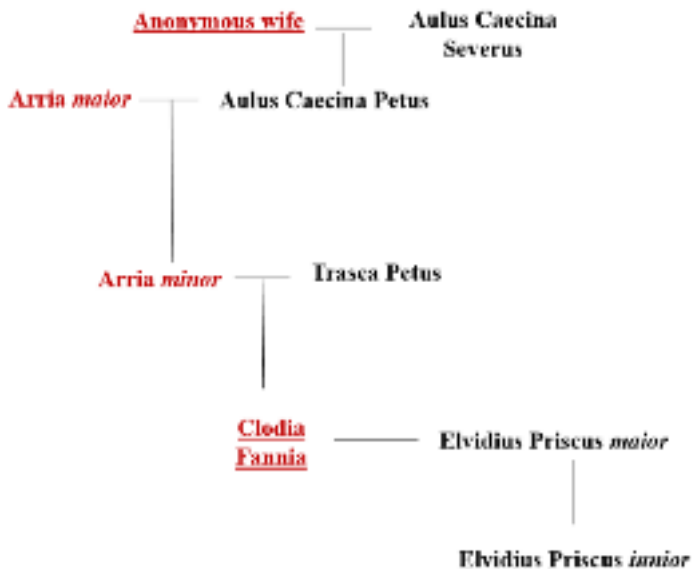
- 64** - We know from *Macrobius* that he was pagan as his brother, Ceionio Rufio Albino. They were both married to Christian women. Clemente, 1994, p. 74; Marinone, 1977; Malfa, 2009.
- 65** - For sure, Cecina Decius Albinus, C. Contucius Gregorius, Laeta; Fig. 5.
- 66** - We know this from the several epigraphs of euergesy for the restoration of pagan temples in Numidia. Graham, 1902.
- 67** - *HIER., Ep.*, 23; 107; Girotti, 2004. Saint Melania, Saint Paula, Saint Marcella were friends and belonging to the same elite group of pagan senatorial families (Ceionii-Cecina-Anicii-Pretextati).
- 68** - *HIER., Ep.*, 107, 1. Girotti, 2014, p. 89.
- 69** - Heimelelijk, 1999, p. 60.
- 70** - *HIER., Ep.*, 107, 1.
- 71** - Girotti, 2014, p. 39.
- 72** - Chastagnol, 1994; Clemente, 1994; Ramelli, 2003.
- 73** - *HIER., Joan.*, I, 8. «Make me bishop of Rome, and I will at once be a Christian» (tr. after Visotzky, 1995, p. 166). On religious controversies and the elections of the Roman Pope: Raimondi, 2009.
- 74** - For a summary of evidence: Capdeville, 1997, pp. 305-308.
- 75** - Cracco Ruggini, 2003.
- 76** - *CASSIOD., Var.*, X, 11, 12.
- 77** - *CIL X*, 6850 e *CASSIOD., Var.*, II, 32.
- 78** - Cavallini, 1972, pp. 7-8.
- 79** - Cavallini, 1972; Cracco Ruggini, 2003.
- 80** - *Lib. Pont., Symmacus*, 53, 10. The *praedium* of the family was the *fundus Pacinianus* along Via Tiberina. On the private edification of cult places by elite members: Wood, 2006; Bowes, 2008.
- 81** - One of them was Albinus, first consul of Theoderic and son of Flavius Cecina Decio Basilio Maximo *junior*. Cracco Ruggini, 2003, p. 239.
- 82** - About the plot, see Cracco Ruggini, 1994.
- 83** - Saitta, 1993; Fumagalli-Brocchieri-Parodi, 1996.



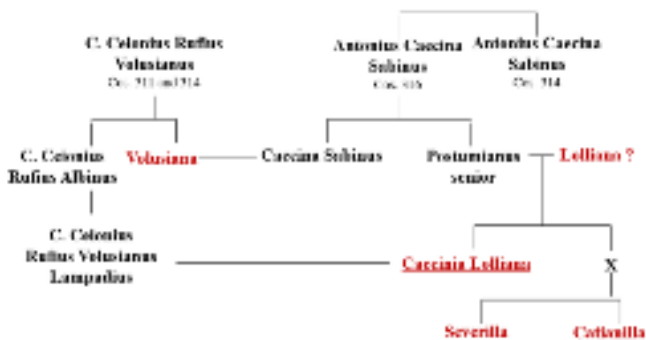
Pic. 1 - Local “Potentes” in the Roman Empire (after D. Sloomjes 2009, p. 417)



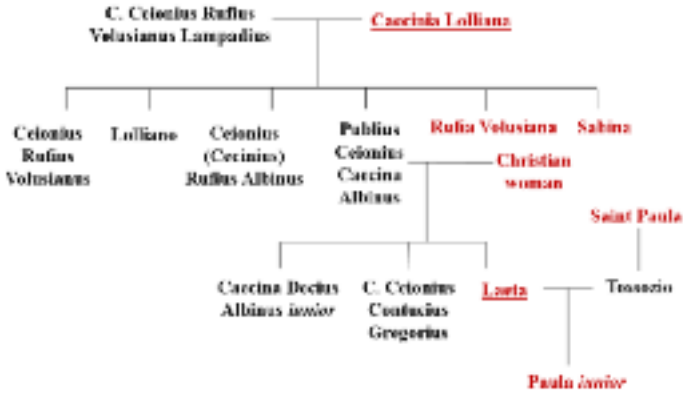
Pic. 2 - The family: Cecina Severus' wife (1<sup>st</sup> century AD)



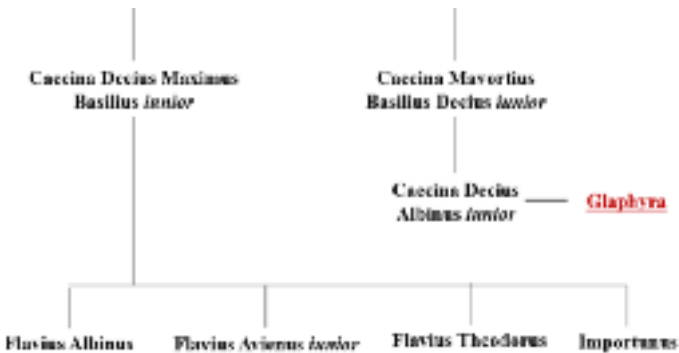
Pic. 3 - The family: Arria and Clodia Fannia (1<sup>st</sup> century AD)



Pic. 4 - The family: Cecinia Lolliana (4<sup>th</sup> century AD)



Pic. 5 - The family: Laeta (5<sup>th</sup> century AD)



Pic. 6 - The family: Glaphyra (6<sup>th</sup> century AD)

Sources: Prosopography data are based on epigraphy, literature reviews and profiles after the volumes of *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Classics* (Abbreviations follow Lewis-Short's *Latin dictionary*)

CASSIOD., Cassiodoro

*Var. Variarum libri XII*, ed. Giardina A. - Cecconi G. A., Tantillo I. Roma, 2014.

CIC., Cicerone

*Caecin., Oratio pro Caecina*, ed. D'Ors A., Milano, 1965.

HIER., Gerolamo

*Ep., Epistulae, Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum, vols. LIV-LVI*, ed. Hilberg I., Wien, 1906.

*Joan., Contra Joannem Hierosolymitanum*, ed. Patrologiae cursus completus, Migne J.P., Paris, 1845.

*Lib. pont., Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Ropes Loomis L., New York, 1916.

MART., Marziale

*Epig., Epigrammata.*

PERS., Persio

*Sat., Saturarum liber*, ed. Barelli E., Milano, 1959.

PLIN., Plinio il giovane

*Ep., Epistulae*, ed. Lenaz L. - Rusca L., Milano, 1994.

RUTIL. NAM., Rutilio Namaziano, ed. Fo. A., Torino, 1992.

SYMM., Simmaco

*Rel., Relationes*, Commento storico alle *Relationes* di Quinto Aurelio Simmaco, ed. Vera D., Pisa, 1981.

SUET., Svetonio, *Le vite di dodici Cesari*, ed. Vigevani A., Milano, 1971-1973.

*Calig., Caius Caligola.*

*Claud., Claudius.*

*Dom., Domitianus.*

*Vesp., Vespasianus.*

TAC., Tacito

*Agr., Agricola*, ed. Lenaz L. - Ceva B., Milano, 1998.

*Ann., Annales*, ed. Centre Traditio Litterarum Occidentalium. Turnhout, 2010; Loeb Classical Library edition of Tacitus, 1931.

*Vita Persii*, ed. Barelli E., Milano, 1959.

\* \* \*

**Aigner Foresti L.** *Gli Etruschi e la loro autocoscienza* in M. Sordi (ed.), “Autocoscienza e rappresentazione dei popoli nell’antichità”, *Contributi dell’Istituto di Storia antica*, 18. Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 1992, pp. 93-113.

**Andreau J. - Bruhns H.** (eds.) *Parenté et stratégies familiales dans l’antiquité romaine*, Actes de la table ronde des 2-4 octobre 1986 (Paris, Maison des sciences de l’homme). Ecole Française de Rome, 1990.

**Barrett A. A.** *Aulus Caecina Severus and the Military Woman* in “Historia”. LIV, 3, 2005, pp. 301-314.

**Bowes K. D.** *Private Worship, Public Values and Religious Change in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge University Press, New York, 2008.

**Braddick M.** *State formation in early modern England, c. 1550-1700*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000.

**Cameron A. - Kurth A.** (eds.) *Images of women in antiquity*. Wayne State University Press, London, 1983.

**Cantarella E.** *L’ambiguo malanno. La donna nell’antichità greca e romana*. Feltrinelli, Milano, 2011.

**Capdeville G.** *I Cecina e Volterra* in G. Maetkze (ed.), “Aspetti della Cultura di Volterra etrusca fra l’età del Ferro e l’età Ellenistica e contributi della ricerca antropologica alla conoscenza del popolo etrusco”. Atti del XIX Convegno di Studi Etruschi ed Italici, Volterra, 15-19 ottobre 1995. Olschki, Firenze, 1997, pp. 253-311.

**Carlson J.** *Pliny’s women: constructing virtue and creating identity in the Roman world*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009.

**Cavallini M.** *Vescovi volterrani fino al 1100. Esame del Regestum Volaterranum con appendice di pergamene trascurate da F. Schneider* in “Rassegna Volterrana”, XXXVI, 1972, pp. 3-83.

**Ceccarelli L.** *The Romanization of Etruria* in S. Bell - A.A. Carpino (eds.) “A companion to the Etruscans”. Blackwell, Oxford, Chichester, Malden, 2016, pp. 28-40.

**Celuzza M.G.** *Prefazione* in C. Casi (ed.), “La donna nell’antichità. Archeologia e storia della condizione femminile dalla Preistoria al Medioevo”. Laurum, Pitigliano, 2016, pp. 9-20.

**Chastagnol A.** *L’evoluzione dell’ordine senatorio nei secoli III e IV della nostra era* in S. Roda (ed.), “La parte migliore del genere umano: aristocrazie, potere e ideologia nell’occidente tardoantico”. Scriptorium, Torino, 1994, pp. 9-23.

**Chastagnol A.** *La famille de Caecinia Lolliana grande dame païenne du IV e siècle après J.-C.* in “*Latomus*”, XX, 4, 1961, pp. 744-758.

**Chastagnol A.** *Le sénateur Volusien et la conversion d’une famille de l’aristocratie romaine au Bas-Empire* in “*Revue des Études Anciennes*”, 58, 3-4, 1956, pp. 241-253.

**Clemente G.** *Cristianesimo e classi dirigenti prima e dopo Costantino* in S. Roda (ed.) “La parte migliore del genere umano: aristocrazie, potere e ideologia nell’occidente tardoantico”. Scriptorium, Torino, 1994, pp. 59-68.

**Cracco Ruggini L.** *Rome in Late Antiquity: Clientship, Urban Topography, and Prosopography* in “*Classical Philology*”, XCVIII, 4, 2003, pp. 366-382.

**Cracco Ruggini L.** *Nobiltà romana e potere nell’età di Boezio* in S. Roda (ed.) “La parte migliore del genere umano: aristocrazie, potere e ideologia nell’occidente tardoantico”. Scriptorium, Torino, 1994, pp. 105-140.

**Corbier M.** *Les comportements familiaux de l’aristocratie romaine (II siècle av. J. -C.-III siècle ap. J. -C.)* in J. Andreau - H. Bruhns (eds.) “Parenté et stratégies familiales dans l’antiquité romaine”, Actes de la table ronde des 2-4 octobre 1986 (Paris, Maison des sciences de l’-homme). Ecole Française de Rome, 1990, pp. 225-249.

**Di Vita Evrard G.** *Le plus ancienne milliaire de Tripolitaine: A. Caecina Severus, proconsul d’Afrique* in “*Lybia Antiqua*”, 15-16, 1979, pp. 9-44.

**Donati F.** *La testimonianza di Rutilio Namaziano e l’identificazione della villa di Albino Cecina una vexata quaestio* in F. Donati (ed.) “La villa romana dei Cecina a San Vincenzino (Livorno), materiali dello scavo e aggiornamenti sulle ricerche”. Felici, Pisa, 2012, pp. 55-79.

**Duby G. - Perrot M.** *Storia delle donne in Occidente, L’antichità*, vol. I. Laterza, Roma-Bari, 1990.

**Frazzoni L.** *La donna nel mondo romano* in C. Casi (ed.) “La donna nell’antichità. Archeologia e storia della condizione femminile dalla Preistoria al Medioevo”. Laurum, Pitigliano, 2016, pp. 69-102.

**Fumagalli M. - Brocchieri B. - Parodi M.** *Storia della filosofia medievale: da Boezio a Wyclif*. Laterza, Bari, 1996.

**Graham A.** *Roman Africa; an outline of the history of the Roman occupation of North Africa, based chiefly upon inscriptions and monu-*

*mental remains in that country*. Longmans, Green & Co., London/New York/Bombay, 1902.

**Girotti B.** *Paola omnium Romae Matronarum exemplum*. BraDypUS Communicating Cultural Heritage, Bologna, 2004.

**Heimelrijk E. A.** *Matrona Docta: Educated women in the Roman élite from Cornelia to Julia Domna*. Routledge Classical Monographs, London/New York, 1999.

**Jones S.** *The archaeology of Ethnicity. Constructing identities in the past and present*. Routledge, London-New York, 1997.

**Kahlos M.** *Vettius Agorius Pretextatus. Senatorial life in between*, Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae, 26, Roma, 2002.

**Lewin A.** *Storia militare e cultura militare nei primi due secoli dell'impero* in L. Troiani - G. Zecchini (eds.), "La cultura storica nei primi due secoli dell'Impero Romano" (Milano, 3-5 giugno 2004). L'Erma di Bretschneider, Milano, 2005, pp. 129-143.

**Liverani P.** *Il "Phrygianum" vaticano* in B. Palma Venetucci (ed.), "Culti orientali tra scavo e collezionismo". Artemide, Roma, 2008, pp. 40-47.

**Malfa V.** *Volusiano, dramma spirituale di un magistrato del IV secolo*. Bonferraro, Enna, 2009.

**Mangiafesta M.** *I culti orientali e Vettio Agorio Pretestato* in B. Palma Venetucci (ed.), "Culti orientali tra scavo e collezionismo". Artemide, Roma, 2008, pp. 103-113.

**Marinone N.** (ed.) *I Saturnali di Macrobio Teodosio*. Edizioni U.T.E.T., Torino, 1977.

**Mazzarino S.** *Sociologia del mondo etrusco e problemi della tarda etruscità* in "Historia", VI, 1957, pp. 98-122.

**Moormann E. M. - Uitterhoeve W.** *Miti e personaggi del mondo classico. Dizionario di storia, letteratura, arte, musica*. Mondadori, Milano, 2004.

**Morelli U.** *Lotta politica e per il potere nei principati di Domiziano e Nerva. Crisi dinastiche, complotti, strategie occulte: le oscure radici del "saeculum aureum"*. Tesi di dottorato in Storia, Università di Pisa, 2009.

**Munzi M.** *Due bolli dei Caecinae dal teatro di Volterra. Un contributo per un nuovo console suffetto nell'anno 13 d.C., in Epigrafia della produzione e della distribuzione*. Actes de la VIIe Rencontre franco-ita-

lienne sur l'épigraphie du monde romain (Rome, 5-6 juin 1992). Ecole Française de Rome, Rome, 1994, pp. 385-395.

**Munzi M. - Terrenato N.** (eds.), *Volterra. Il teatro e le terme*. All'insegna del giglio, Firenze, 2000.

**Neil S.** *Materializing the Etruscans: The Expression and Negotiation of Identity during the Orientalizing, Archaic, and Classical Periods* in S. Bell - A. A. Carpino (eds.), "A companion to the Etruscans". Blackwell, Oxford, Chichester, Malden, 2016, pp. 15-27.

**Nielsen M.** *The lid sculptures of Volaterran cinerary urns* in P. Bruun - P. Hohti et Alii (eds.), "Studies in the Romanization of Etruria" volume 5. Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae, Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, Roma, 1975, pp. 269-399.

**Pani M.** *La corte dei Cesari: fra Augusto e Nerone*. Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2003.

**Pizzigati A.** *Il teatro romano di Volterra: nuovi elementi epigrafico-protopografici dall'iscrizione scenica dei Caecinae* in "La Parola del Passato", LII, 1997, pp. 124-156.

**Rafanelli S.** *Da Tanaquilla a Larthia Seianti: la donna etrusca nel pubblico e nel privato* in C. Casi (ed.), "La donna nell'antichità. Archeologia e storia della condizione femminile dalla Preistoria al Medioevo". Laurum, Pitigliano, 2016, pp. 45-68.

**Raimondi M.** *I «partiti» dei Papi nel IV secolo* in G. Zecchini (ed.), "Partiti e fazioni nell'esperienza politica romana". Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2009, pp. 183-212.

**Ramelli I.** *Cultura e religione etrusca nel mondo romano*. Edizioni dell'Orso, Alessandria, 2003.

**Roberto U.** *Il nemico indomabile. Roma contro i Germani*. Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2018.

**Saitta B.** *La civiltas di Teoderico: rigore amministrativo, "tolleranza" religiosa e recupero dell'antico nell'Italia ostrogota*. L'Erma di Bretschneider, Roma, 1993.

**Salzman M.R.** *How the West was won: the Christianization of the Roman aristocracy in the west in the years after Constantine* in "Latomus", 217, 1992, pp. 451-479.

**Schied J.** *Indispensabili "straniere": I ruoli religiosi delle donne a Roma* in G. Duby - M. Perrot (eds.), "Storia delle donne in Occidente, L'antichità" vol. I. Laterza, Roma-Bari, 1990, pp. 424-464.

**Slootjes D.** *Local "Potentes" in the Roman empire: a new approach to the concept of Local Elites* in "Latomus", 68, 2, 2009, pp. 416-432.

**Sordi M.** *Lo stoicismo in Etruria nel I secolo a.C.* in L. Aigner Foresti (ed.), "Die Integration der Etrusker und das Weiterwirken etruskischen Kulturgutes im republikanischen und kaiserzeitlichen Rom". Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, 658. Wien, 1998, pp. 337-344.

**Sordi M.** *La donna etrusca* in "Misoginia e maschilismo in Grecia e a Roma". Istituto di filologia classica e medievale, Genova, 1981, pp. 49-67.

**Syme R.** *The Augustan Aristocracy*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1986.

**Syme R.** *The Roman Revolution*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1939.

**Terrenato N.** *Private Vis, Public Virtus. family agendas during the early Roman expansion* in T.D. Stek - J. Pelgrom (eds.) "Roman Republican Colonization. New Perspectives from Archaeology and Ancient History". Papers of the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome, 62, Roma, 2014, pp. 45-59.

**Torelli M.** *Studies in the Romanization of Italy*. University of Alberta Press, Alberta, 1995.

**Torelli M.** *Elogia tarquiniensia*. Le Lettere, Firenze, 1975.

**Valvo A.** *Onomastica e integrazione degli Etruschi nell'Italia settentrionale. Due cavalieri di Brixia di età giulio-claudia* in L. Aigner Foresti (ed.), "Die Integration der Etrusker und das Weiterwirken etruskischen Kulturgutes im republikanischen und kaiserzeitlichen Rom". Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, 658. Wien, 1998, pp. 187-204.

**Verboven K.** *The Economy of Friends. Economic aspects of Amicitia and Patronage in the Late Republic*. Collection Latomus, 269, Bruxelles, 2002.

**Vicci R.** *Non solo spettatrici. Le donne nei teatri della Regio VII Etruria* in S. Lusuardi - C. Perassi - F. Sacchi - M. Sannazaro (eds.), "Archeologia classica e post-classica tra Italia e Mediterraneo. Scritti in ricordo di Maria Pia Rossignani". Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2016.

**Visotzky Burton L.** *Fathers of the world. Essays in Rabbinic and Patristic Literature*. Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 1995.

**Wood S.** *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006.

**Yarborough A.** *Christianization in the Fourth century: the example of Roman women* in "Church History", 45, 1976, pp. 146-164.

# Η ΜΟΡΦΗ ΤΗΣ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑΣ ΣΤΗ ΛΟΓΟΤΕΧΝΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΥΣ 16<sup>ο</sup>-17<sup>ο</sup> ΑΙΩΝΕΣ

*Cristiano Luciani*

(Letteratura Neograeca - Università “Tor Vergata”, Roma)

Περιορισμένη καθώς ήταν στον προκαθορισμένο ρόλο της μητέρας, της συζύγου ή της κόρης, της παρθένου ή της πόρνης, της καλόγριας ή της μάγισσας, η γυναίκα χαρακτηρίστηκε από τη Μεσαιωνική εποχή και έπειτα σύμφωνα με ένα πολύ άκαμπτο και ουσιαστικά αρρενωπό κοινωνικό πρότυπο. Όποιες δεν εντασσόταν σε αυτές τις κοινωνικές κατηγορίες θεωρούνταν ύποπτες προσωπικότητες αμφιβόλου χαρακτήρος. Πέρα όμως από αυτές τις γενικευμένες κοινοτοπίες, ως ένα βαθμό ο ρόλος της γυναίκας σε μια ανδρική κοινωνία ήταν μόνο επιφανειακά δευτερεύων σε σχέση με τους άνδρες: ο άνδρας συχνά έπρεπε να βασίζεται σε αυτήν, ως αναπόφευκτο σημείο αναφοράς, για την προσωπική του κοινωνική αναγνώριση και αξία. Φαίνεται μάλιστα πως, ο πρώτος λόγος ανήκε σ' αυτήν ενώ στον άνδρα βάραινε το καθήκον της προστασίας της αγνότητας και της διασφάλισης του σεβασμού στο προσώπό της.

Ως εκ τούτου, η γυναίκα διατηρούσε ένα χώρο διαφορετικό, απομονωμένο και ξεχωριστό από το σημερινό κοινωνικό πλαίσιο των ανδρών, είτε αυτό ήταν ένα προνομιούχο δωμάτιο είτε ένα κελί σε μοναστήρι. Η κατάσταση αυτή ενισχύθηκε κυρίως από την ιδεολογική τοποθέτηση που προωθούσε η Εκκλησία, η οποία εν συνεχεία αντικαταστάθηκε από μια πιο κοσμική και λαϊκή αποτίμηση η οποία συνδεόταν με τον κόσμο της ιπποτικής αριστοκρατίας. Ο κόσμος της ιπποσύνης επέβαλε στον άνθρωπο τον αυστηρό ηθικό κώδικα μιας φεουδαρχικής



υποταγής, ενώ άφηνε στη γυναίκα το υψηλό καθήκον να πρεσβεύει αρχές ανώτερες και ευγενέστερες από αυτές του άνδρα, σύμφωνα τουλάχιστον με τους όρους που κωδικοποιήθηκαν στην ιταλική λυρική του 12<sup>ου</sup> και του 13<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα, με τη συμβολή της σικελικής και στυλνοβιστικής ποίησης. Η μορφή της γυναίκας έγινε τώρα τόσο ακριβοθώρητη κι εξιδανικευμένη που θα ήταν δύσκολο στη λογοτεχνία εκείνης της περιόδου να βρεθεί μια πραγματική και χοϊκή υπόσταση που θα μπορούσε να την ενσαρκώσει. Κι έτσι σκιαγραφούνται μόνο αφηρημένες και αιθέριες γυναικείες μορφές, που καταλήγουν να έχουν μια σχεδόν συμβολική και απρόσωπη λειτουργία, εκτός τόπου και χρόνου.

Αντίθετα, η λογοτεχνική αντίστιξη ήρθε από την κωμική ποίηση, η οποία παρήγαγε μια αυστηρή παρωδία αυτού του ευγενικού (αυλικού) προτύπου, εφόσον η γυναίκα ενσάρκωνε πλέον την πιο απειλητική και υλιστική πλευρά της αγάπης. Εδώ η γυναίκα είναι ένας τύπος ατιθάσευτος και παραπλανητικός, κυνικός και αδίστακτος. Οι σελίδες αφιερωμένες σε αυτό το είδος ατόμου εντάσσουν τη γυναικεία μορφή στην μισογυνική παράδοση ενός Γιουβενάλη ή των Πατέρων της Εκκλησίας ή ακόμα και στην ηθοπλαστική ποίηση των *fablieaux* και των περιπλανημένων κληρικών (*clerici vagantes*). Κατά τους αιώνες του Ουμανισμού και της Αναγέννησης! παρατηρούμε γυναίκες που, αντίθετα, εξυμνούνται με διάφορους τρόπους: σύμφωνα με τη νεοπλατωνική σύλληψη ως προς τον έρωτα αναφέρονται μορφές που θυμίζουν ποικίλα κλασικά παραδείγματα (Ξανθίππη, Αντιγόνη, Ελένη, Καλυψώ, Κίρκη, Διδώ), ή σύμφωνα με τη Βιβλική παράδοση (Βηρσαβεέ, Δάλιλα, η γυναίκα του Πετεφρή), προβάλλονται γυναίκες που αποκαλύπτουν τις αρετές και τις αδυναμίες του ανθρώπου ενώπιον της σαγηνευτικής τους δύναμης, ακολουθώντας εν γένει την ερμηνευτική γραμμή που

εγκαινιάστηκε με τον Βοκκάκιο με το παρενθετικό του δοκιμίου *De claris mulieribus* (1361). Αντιθετική φωνή σε αυτό το σύγγραμμα του Βοκκακίου υπήρξε, ως γνωστό, η αλληγορική διαθήκη *Le Livre de la Cité des Dames* (ολοκληρώθηκε το 1405) της συγγραφέας Christine de Pizan (1364-1430περ.), η οποία καταπιάστηκε με την υπεράσπιση διάσημων γυναικών σε όλη την ιστορία. Η Pizan οραματίζεται την ιδανική της πόλη με διάφορες διάσημες γυναίκες να αποτελούν θεμέλιο λίθο για τους τοίχους και τα σπίτια αυτής της πόλης λες και πρόκειται, εν ολίγοις, για στηρικτικούς κίονες όπως τις Καρυάτιδες. Και από αυτό προκύπτει ότι η γυναίκα θεωρείται πως διαθέτει πνευματικές ικανότητες ισότιμες με αυτές του άνδρα, αλλά δεδομένου ότι σε σύγκριση με αυτόν έχει λιγότερες πιθανότητες πολιτισμικής αφομοίωσης ώστε να καταφέρει να επικοινωνήσει την εμπειρία της, παραμένει θύμα, χωρίς να μπορεί να είναι κύρια της μοίρας της<sup>2</sup>.

Συνεπώς, η εικόνα της Ελληνίδας μεταξύ του 15ου και του 16ου αιώνα δεν διαφοροποιείται πολύ από αυτή των άλλων χωρών της Ευρώπης μεταξύ του Μεσαίωνα και της Αναγέννησης, αν και τα δεδομένα που προκύπτουν από τα λογοτεχνικά, και μη, κείμενα μας υποχρεώνουν να παραδεχτούμε πως είναι μια μερική και περιορισμένη προσέγγιση και είναι αδύνατο να την αξιολογήσουμε σε γενικευμένη κλίμακα. Θα ήταν αναγκαίο να συγκεντρωθούν διάφορες και ετερογενείς πηγές για να αποκτηθεί μια πληρέστερη και ταυτόχρονα πολύπλευρη εικόνα της γυναίκας στο κοινωνιολογικό, λογοτεχνικό και ιστορικό πλαίσιο.

Οι διοικητικές πηγές, συνήθως συμβολαιογραφικές πράξεις προδιαγράφουν γενικά στη γυναίκα που γεννά μια ζωή σχεδόν απόμερη και κλειστή, αλλά χωρίς αυτό να σημαίνει ότι η γυναίκα δεν χρειάζεται να διαθέτει μια συγκεκριμένη παιδεία. Στους πρώτους αιώνες της Βυζαντινής

Αυτοκρατορίας, επί παραδείγματος, σύμφωνα με τη μαρτυρία των Πατέρων της Εκκλησίας, θα επικρατούσε ένας τύπος γυναίκας η οποία έζησε κατά πολύ στο γυναικωνίτη του Παλατιού ή στο ιδιωτικό σπίτι της, κοινωνικά υποβαθμισμένη και χωρίς κανένα πολιτικό δικαίωμα. Επιπλέον, η κατάσταση των γυναικών διέφερε μεταξύ πόλης και επαρχίας. Από την άποψη αυτή, η γυναίκα στο Βυζάντιο είχε πολλά κοινά σημεία με τους πολιτισμούς της Μέσης Ανατολής. Με την πάροδο του χρόνου, όμως, η γυναίκα κέρδισε όλο και μεγαλύτερη θέση μέσα στην κοινωνία, αφού η λειτουργία της πατριαρχικής εξουσίας του άνδρα έγινε σταδιακά μια μορφή προστασίας και όχι πια άσκηση απόλυτης εξουσίας.

Στην ιστορία της ρωμαϊκής/βυζαντινής νομοθεσίας, κατά την εποχή κυρίως του Ιουστινιανού (527-565) και των Κομνηνών (από το 1057 έως το 1185), η γυναίκα έφθασε να απολαμβάνει ίσα δικαιώματα σε θέματα διαζυγίου, αν και πρακτικά δεν ήταν εύκολο αυτό να εφαρμοστεί<sup>3</sup>. Εξάλλου, η γέννηση ενός κοριτσιού τότε δεν κρινόταν ως ευπρόσδεκτο γεγονός, γιατί σήμαινε για την οικογένεια την διακοπή της συνέχισης του οικογενειακού (πατρικού) ονόματος και μια μεγάλη οικονομική υποχρέωση όσον αφορά την εκπαίδευση και την προίκα της<sup>4</sup>.

Η πολιτιστική εκπαίδευση μιας κοπέλας πραγματοποιείτο συνήθως μέσα στην οικογένεια χάρη στη δουλειά της μητέρας. Διαφορετικά η γυναίκα φοιτούσε σε γυναικεία μοναστήρια. Επί τρία χρόνια τα κορίτσια μάθαιναν να διαβάζουν (και να γράφουν) τα βασικά στοιχεία της λογοτεχνίας, κυρίως με βάση την Αγία Γραφή, την αριθμητική και τη μουσική. Στο πλαίσιο της καλύτερης κοινωνικής κατάστασης των αριστοκρατικών οικογενειών, η εκπαίδευση μιας γυναίκας έφτασε στο απόγειο κι έτσι ορισμένες γυναίκες κατάφεραν να γίνουν ακόμα και λόγιες συγγραφείς. Είναι γνωστές οι περιπτώσεις γυναικών που

έκαναν καριέρα τους σε διοικητικές θέσεις, καθώς και σε διάφορα επαγγέλματα πλάι του συζύγου τους.

Για τις υπόλοιπες, προορισμός τους παρέμεινε η οικιακή εργασία. Η προίκα τους ήταν ένα από τα κύρια προνόμια που έπρεπε να παρουσιάσει μια νεαρή γυναίκα στον μέλλοντα σύζυγό της· μετά έρχονταν η ομορφιά και τα πνευματικά χαρίσματα. Εντούτοις, ένα σαφές εμπόδιο ορθωνόταν στα διάφορα κοινωνικά στρώματα: οι γάμοι ανάμεσα σε μέλη διαφορετικών τάξεων δεν γίνονταν αποδεκτοί στο Βυζάντιο<sup>5</sup>. Αυτή είναι μια αρκετά ευρέως διαδεδομένη πραγματικότητα σχεδόν σε όλη την Ευρώπη και η υπέρβαση αυτών των αυστηρών συμβάσεων έχει κωδικοποιηθεί στη λογοτεχνία ως σήμα της αληθινής αγάπης, του πάθους που ξεπερνά τους περιορισμούς και τις κοινωνικές επιβολές.

Εστιάζοντας τώρα την προσοχή μας στην θέση της γυναίκας στις αιγαιο-ανατολικές αποικίες της Γαληνότατης Δημοκρατίας της Βενετίας, οι μαρτυρίες των τοπικών διοικητών και των περιηγητών συμφωνούν να τεκμηριώνουν ότι η ζωή μιας γυναίκας μεσαίας τάξης, π. χ. στην Κρήτη, είναι περιορισμένη μέσα στο σπίτι με σπάνιες δυνατότητες εξόδου<sup>6</sup>.

Ωστόσο, η εικόνα της γυναίκας που προκύπτει από τα λογοτεχνικά συγγράμματα της Κύπρου και της Κρήτης αντιπροσωπεύει προφανώς μια στυλιζαρισμένη άποψη της τοπικής ιστορικής πραγματικότητας ανάμεικτη με διάφορα παραδοσιακά ευρωπαϊκά ρεπερτόρια (κυρίως ιταλικής προέλευσης), τα οποία κωδικοποιούνται στη λυρική δημιουργία, στη γενικότερα λόγια και λαϊκή ποίηση, στο θέατρο και στο έμμετρο μυθιστόρημα<sup>7</sup>.

Η ερωτική λυρική σε δημόδη ελληνική βρίσκει την πιο σημαντική έκφρασή της στην νησιωτική περιοχή του Αιγαίου μεταξύ του 14<sup>ου</sup> και του 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα, κατά την περίοδο της Φραγκοκρατίας και στη συνέχεια της Βενετοκρατίας. Τώρα η μεγαλύτερη επιρροή προέρχεται από

τη δυτική λογοτεχνία, ακόμη και αν η βυζαντινή ποίηση δεν ήταν εντελώς ξένη στο ερωτικό είδος. Αρκεί να λάβουμε υπόψη παραδείγματα από τα ερωτικά ποιήματα του επιγραμματοποιού και ποιητή Παύλο Σιλεντιάριο (6<sup>ο</sup> αι. μ.Χ.), τα οποία παραδίδονται από την Παλατινή Ανθολογία, όπως και το εξής (AP V 250):

Ἡδύ, φίλοι, μείδημα τὸ Λαΐδος· ἡδὺ καὶ αὐτῶν  
ἠπιοδινήτων δάκρυ χέει βλεφάρων.  
χθιζά μοι ἀπροφάσιστον ἐπέστενεν, ἐγκλιδὸν ὄμφ  
ἡμετέρῳ κεφαλῇν δηρὸν ἐρεισαμένη.  
μυρομένην δὲ φίλησα· τὰ δ' ὡς δροσερῆς ἀπὸ πηγῆς  
δάκρυα μιγνυμένων πίπτε κατὰ στομάτων.  
εἶπε δ' ἀνειρομένῳ· Τίνος εἵνεκα δάκρυα λείβεις; -  
Δεῖδια, μὴ με λίπης· ἐστὲ γὰρ ὄρκαπάται.

*Το χαμόγελο της Λαίδης είναι γλυκό, φίλοι. Γλυκά  
ακόμη και τα δάκρυα χύνοντας από τα μάτια που κινούνται με  
τρυφερότητα.*

*Χθες έκλαιγε χωρίς λόγο, κλίνει το κεφάλι της  
στον ώμο μου για πολύ καιρό.*

*Την φίλησα ενώ φώναζε: σαν από δροσερή πηγή  
τα δάκρυα έπεσαν στα ενωμένα στόματα.*

*“Γιατί φωνάζεις;” την ρώτησα. Εκείνη απάντησε:*

*“Έχω μεγάλο φόβο να με αφήσεις: δεν είσαι τίποτα παρά ψεύτη”,*

στην οποία η γυναίκα εμφανίζεται ταυτόχρονα ως θύμα και ως αντικείμενο βαθιάς αγάπης.

Μπορεί να θυμηθεί κανείς και το ανώνυμο ποίημα *Εἰς τον Ἐρωτα*, συνθεθειμένο κατά τον 12<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα, που σώζεται στο μαρκιανό κώδικα ( *Marc. XI XI 22* [1235], φφ. 52ν-53), που αποδίδεται στο Θεόδωρο Πρόδρομο, το οποία πρόσφατα δημοσιεύθηκε.

Η μεγαλύτερη όμως συλλογή ερωτικών δημοδών στίχων από τη βυζαντινή εποχή είναι αυτή που συμβατικά επιγράφεται *Ερωτοπαίγνια*. Μας έφτασε μέσω ενός χειρόγραφου

αντιγράφου που χρονολογείται από το δεύτερο μισό του 15<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα και διαιρείται σε τέσσερα μέρη: 1) *Ερωτικός αλφαβητός* (στ. 1-108) σε δεκαπεντασύλλαβους στίχους ταξινομημένους σύμφωνα με αλφαβητική ακροστιχίδα (μέχρι το μ, λείπουν όμως θ και ι), και που απαγγέλλονται εναλλάξ από έναν εραστή κι ένα κορίτσι. 2) Ένα δεύτερο μέρος (στ. 109-139) παρουσιάζει πάλι αλφαβητική ακροστιχίδα απ' όπου λείπουν μερικά γράμματα. Πρόκειται για μια συλλογή ερωτικών δίστιχων μεγάλης αξίας και με ευρεία απήχηση στον προφορικό λαϊκό πολιτισμό (λαϊκά τραγούδια). 3) Το τρίτο μέρος (στ. 140-330) επικαλείται *Εκατόλογα* ή *εκατό υποσχέσεις* (;) και ξεκινάει με ένα κορίτσι που αρνήθηκε έναν νεαρό άνδρα, επειδή είναι άπειρος, ενώ αυτός αντιδρά, μέχρι τη στιγμή της δοκιμασίας, που αποτελείται από το ακόλουθο παιχνίδι:

***Εκατό πράγματα, νεαρός, θα σε ρωτήσω.***

Ο νεαρός πρέπει να αναφέρει ένα αντικείμενο αντίστοιχο με κάθε αριθμό, π.χ.: μια γυναίκα, δύο μάτια, τρία χρόνια φυλάκισης για την αγαπημένη του που μοιάζουν με τρεις μέρες και ούτω καθεξής. Ικανοποιημένη από τις δέκα πρώτες λύσεις, η κοπέλα θα του ζητήσει από τώρα χρόνο να μετρήσει για δεκάδες έως το εκατό, που σηματοδοτεί τον τελικό στόχο και την επίτευξη του στόχου. Η ιστορία τελειώνει με την κοπέλα που υποχωρεί και εξαπατάται από τον θριαμβευτικό διαφθορέα της. 4) Το τελευταίο μέρος (στ. 331-714) αποτελείται από ερωτικές επιστολές, καταγγελίες για την απιστία των εραστών και από άλλο ένα αλφαβητάρι<sup>8</sup>. Στην ίδια γραμμή των *Εκατολόγων* κινείται και το ποίημα *Ριμάδα κόρης και νέου* σε 154 ομοιοκατάληκτους δεκαπεντασύλλαβους στίχους (η εκδοχή με 198 στίχους είναι μεταγενέστερη διασκευή) που χρονολογείται στις αρχές του 15<sup>ου</sup> αι. Το έργο αφηγείται για μια γυναίκα που αρνείται ένα νεαρό άνδρα, ώσπου ο γάμος δεν πραγματοποιείται. Μόνο

δια της βίας ο άνδρας καταφέρνει να την κάνει δική του, ακούγοντας τελικά προσβολές και ένα μακρύ υβρεολόγιο. Από γλωσσική άποψη φαίνεται ότι το κείμενο συντάχθηκε στην Κρήτη, όπου άλλωστε εκτιμήθηκε πολύ. Απηχήσεις του ποιήματος βρίσκονται όμως και στην Κέρκυρα και στην Κω. Με την εγκαθίδρυση της λατινικής (γαλλική και βενετσιάνικης) κυριαρχίας στο νότιο Αιγαίο και τη συνεπακόλουθη πολιτισμική επίδρασή της, η στάση των Ελλήνων ποιητών απέναντι στην ιδέα της γυναίκας αλλάζει και εμπλουτίζεται με νέα στοιχεία, επηρεασμένα κατά πολύ από τη δυτική λογοτεχνία, κυρίως από τη γαλλο-προβηγκιανή και την ιταλική. Η ελληνική λογοτεχνία καλλιεργεί τώρα τόσο τη φιλογυνική φλέβα όσο τη μισογυνική θεματολογία, εξειδικεύοντας συνεπώς και το λεξιλόγιο, το οποίο χρησιμοποιεί τώρα αφενός την επίσημη ορολογία της αυλικής αριστοκρατίας με λέξεις όπως *κυρά*, *κερά*, *κεράτσα*, κλπ. Αφετέρου, τη σατυρική και υποβαθμιστική πλευρά της λαϊκής ορολογίας με λέξεις όπως *πουτάνα*, *πόρνη* και “πολιτική” με την έννοια της ηθικά ελαφριάς γυναίκας.

Οι παλαιότερες λογοτεχνικές τεκμηριώσεις του μισογυνικού είδους χρονολογούνται στο δεύτερο μισό του 14<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα, με το έργο του κρητικού ποιητή Στέφανου Σαχλίκη (1331ca.-post 1391), ο οποίος ξεχωρίζει για την ικανότητα να διασταυρώνει στην ποίησή του με κάποια πρωτοτυπία και επιδεξιότητα βιογραφικά στοιχεία με διάφορα λογοτεχνικά στερεότυπα. Έτσι η άσωτη νιότη του συγγραφέα γίνεται το θέμα χυδαίων ποιημάτων, όπως *Η Βουλή των πολιτικών*, *Το Κατάλογον της Πόθας* και *Η γκιόστρα των πολιτικών*, τα οποία περιέχουν, μεταξύ άλλων, αρκετές αναφορές σε γνωστές μορφές γυναικών της εποχής που συχνά αναφέρονται ως “αρχιμαυλίστριες” οι οποίες πρόσφεραν τις υπηρεσίες τους για την εξυπηρέτηση της μαστροπείας. Ο ίδιος έγραψε και ποιήματα με ηθικότερο περιεχόμενο και δογματικό

υπόβαθρο, όπως οι *Συμβουλές στον Φραντζίσκη*, όπου ο ποιητής, σε απόλυτη συμφωνία με τα μεσαιωνικά λογοτεχνικά παραδείγματα της προβηγκιανής και της ιταλικής παράδοσης, παροτρύνει τον νεαρό, γιο ενός φίλου του, να προσέχει τις ελαφρές γυναίκες και να αποφύγει τις ταβέρνες και τα τυχερά παιχνίδια<sup>9</sup>.

Λίγα χρόνια αργότερα, άλλος πρώιμος ποιητής της Κρήτης ο Λινάρδος Ντελλαπόρτας (1350-1410/20) γράφει ένα εκτενές έργο, με τίτλο τα *Ερωτήματα και αποκρίσεις Ξένου και Αλήθεια* με ηθικολογικό περιεχόμενο (σύμφωνα με το πνεύμα των *Splanamenti de li proverbi de Salomone* ή της *Διόπτρας* από τον Φίλιππο Μονότροπο), στο οποίο ένα σημαντικό μέρος του (II, 1436-2275) αφιερώνεται στο κίνημα των καλών και των πονηρών γυναικών, εναντίον των οποίων αντιστέκεται η Αλήθεια με μια σειρά παραδειγμάτων από την κλασσική μυθολογία, μεταξύ των οποίων και το περίφημο μοτίβο της απαρηγόρητης Ματρόνας της Εφέσου, καθώς και από την Αγία Γραφή<sup>10</sup>.

Στη μισογυνική λογοτεχνία του δεύτερου μισού του 15<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα ξεχωρίζει το σατιρικό ποίημα *Έπαινος των γυναικών*, το οποίο ακόμη και στην επιλογή του στίχου, του ομοιοκατάληκτου οκτασύλλαβου, οφείλει πολλά στη δυτική λογοτεχνία. Ο ανώνυμος ποιητής στοχεύει ανοιχτά στα έθιμα των γυναικών της εποχής, ακριβώς όπως έκανε ο Σαχλίκης με το ποίημα *Η Βουλή των πολιτικών*, από το οποίο ο *Έπαινος* είναι εμπνευσμένος<sup>11</sup>. Σε μια χρονολογικά ενδιάμεση εποχή, τοποθετείται η αξιόλογη συμβολή του κρητικού ποιητή Μπεργαδή ο οποίος, με το έργο του τον *Απόκοπο* (πρώτη έντυπη έκδοση: Βενετία 1509), προσφέρει έναν ισχυρό πίνακα της καθημερινής ζωής των “αρχοντισσών” της Κρήτης, ενώ ασχολούνται με τα κοσμικά τους επαγγέλματα και παρουσιάζονται ως μια ομάδα από (ανώνυμες) φιγούρες, ιεραρχικά τακτοποιημένες, από τις λιγότερο ενάρετες μέχρι τις πιο ηθικές οι οποίες ειλικρινά



αναστενάζουν για τους καημένους άνδρες που πέθαναν πρόωρα:

*Αναστενάζουν ωγιά σας, για λόγου σας λυπούνται,  
του κόσμου λησμονήσασιν και εσάς μόνον θυμούνται*  
[στ. 235-236],

ενώ οι άλλες, χήρες πια το ίδιο, σκέφτονται μόνο να έχουν καλό χρόνο με τους εραστές τους ή με τους κληρικούς. Στην Κύπρο, όχι μόνο η επαφή με την λατινική και τη νεολατινική παιδεία, αλλά και η πλήρης ελληνικοποίηση των προϊόντων αυτών των λογοτεχνιών ήταν την εποχή εκείνη στοιχεία ήδη δεδομένα στις καλλιτεχνικές επιχειρήσεις των κυπρίων διανοουμένων, οι οποίοι αναλάμβαναν να μεταφράσουν ή να επεξεργαστούν ένα σημαντικό ποσοστό έργων από διαφορετικά λογοτεχνικά είδη, αυξάνοντας έτσι την τοπική πολιτιστική περιουσία. Το φαινόμενο αυτό ξεκινάει από τα τέλη του 13<sup>ου</sup> και τις αρχές του 14<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα, όπως τεκμηριώνει η διάδοση των δυτικότερων έμμετρων μυθιστορημάτων, όπως η *Διήγησις Απολλωνίου της Τύρου*, και κορυφώνει στα μέσα του 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα, στα πρόθυρα της οθωμανικής εισβολής, την περίοδο δηλαδή της γεννήσεως μιας ανώνυμης συλλογής λυρικών, η οποία αδιαμφισβήτητα αποτελεί την πιο ενδιαφέρουσα συνεισφορά στην ελληνική λογοτεχνία αυτής της περιόδου.

Πράγματι, το τέλος της βενετοκρατίας στην Κύπρο, το 1571, συμπίπτει κατά προσέγγιση με τη σύνθεση μιας σειράς ποιημάτων, *Οι Ρίμες αγάπης*, αλλιώς γνωστές ως *Κυπριακά* ή *Κυπριώτικα ερωτικά*, γραμμένα στο τοπικό ιδίωμα, στα οποία πειραματίστηκε μια ποικιλία νέων μετρικών σχημάτων και θεμάτων που εισάγονται για πρώτη φορά στη νεοελληνική ποίηση και όπου η επίδραση της ιταλικής αναγεννησιακής και μανιεριστικής ποίησης, ειδικότερα του πανευρωπαϊκού ρεύματος του πετράρχισμού είναι πρόδηλη. Ανάμεσα στα πιο χαρακτηριστικά στοιχεία του πετράρχικου

ύφους που εισήχθησαν στον κυπριακό λαϊκό πολιτισμό, βρίσκουμε τον ορισμό της σκληρής γυναίκας που προκαλεί πόνο σε όσους την αγαπούν: δηλ. *γλυκιά κυράμου*, που αντιστοιχεί με τις ιταλικές εκφράσεις *madonna*, *donna mia*, *mia signora* (II, στ. 3)· η γυναίκα που ερεθίζει τον καημένο εραστή της είναι *κείνη που μ' έκαψεν το ξένον* (στ. 13) όπου η λέξη *ξένος* σημαίνει *κακομοίρης*, *δυστυχισμένος* (*lasso*) και όχι *αλλότριος*, *αλλοδαπός*, ή ακόμη - με ένα μεταφορικό παιχνίδι των χρωμάτων που ακολουθεί το μοντέλο του ποιητή Nicol da Correggio, αλλά με διαφορετική ταξινόμηση στη δομή και διαφορετικό πνεύμα. Με την αλληγορική εικόνα του βιβλίου/εραστή, ο ανώνυμος Κύπριος ποιητής μιλάει για τα μαύρα ρούχα ως σύμβολο του πένθους που αυτός φέρει στην καρδιά του

*μαύρα στη μέση, μαύρα λυπημένα τα οποία  
ταιριάζουν στην καρδιάμ μου μένα* (στ. 23-24).

Επίσης ενδιαφέρουσα είναι η εικονιστική αξία του βιβλίου, συνεκδοχικά παραπέμποντας στις εμπειρίες του προσώπου που αφηγείται· εδώ μοιάζει με είδος αποθήκης της ερωτικής εμπειρίας (βλ. *GDLI*, λ. *Libro*, 28). Το ποίημα κλείνει με την επίκληση του ελέους της “κυράς μου” από τον καημένο ποιητή:

*αν τύχως ν' αγρικήση η κυρά μου τάχα και να  
λυπήθην τα λαμπρά μου* (στ. 31-32).

Άλλο ένα παράδειγμα είναι το ποίημα αρ. 5 της έκδοσης στο οποίο ο ποιητής αναπαριστάνει το θέμα της παράλυσης, που φτάνει μέχρι την απονέκρωση των αισθήσεων, την οποία προκαλεί η έντονη ορμή τη στιγμή που αυτός κοιτάζει το λαμπερό πρόσωπο της γυναίκας:

*γλυκύν δεισ* [= δειν < ιδείν ] *γλαμπρίζει* (στ. 2).

Το θέμα της παράλυσης των μελών επαναλαμβάνεται και στην επόμενη σύνθεση (αρ. 6), ενώ η 7η επιμένει στην

ομορφιά της γυναίκας: γλυκά μάτια, χρυσαφένια μαλλιά, ωραία και μορφωμένα χείλη, καθώς και στην αδυναμία από τον ποιητή να φτιάξει μια ζωγραφιά της γυναίκας ως άνθρωπος, αφού αυτή απαιτεί τη συνδρομή υπερφυσικών δυνάμεων.

Διαμέσου ρητορικών σχημάτων όπως τα οξύμωρα (του τύπου: *παγωμένη φωτιά, καυτό χιόνι, ζεστό χιόνι, πικρή γλύκα, ύπνος ζύπνιος*) και μεταφορικές εικόνες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των αντιθετικών ζευγαριών (*ζεστό/κρύο, νιότης/ γήρας, δήμιος/θύμα, μέσα/έξω, πάνω/κάτω, κοντά/μακριά, ψυχή/σώμα, φύση/άνθρωπος, αγάπη/θάνατος, θλίψη/χαρά, καλοσύνη/σκληρότητα*) ο ποιητής προσπαθεί να αναπαράγει τις συμπεριφορές που οριοθετούν τη φυσιολογία της αγάπης.

Τα θέματα και τα μοτίβα, η γλώσσα και το ύφος αυτών των στιχουργημάτων μπορούν να συγκριθούν με τα καλύτερα αποτελέσματα της σύγχρονης ή λίγο μεταγενέστερης κρητικής ποίησης, του Χορτάτση ή του Κορνάρου.

Θα πρέπει να περιμένουμε τουλάχιστον μερικούς αιώνες, πρώτα με τον Σολωμό και μετά με τον Παλαμά και την γενιά του 1880, ώστε να μπορέσουμε να απολαύσουμε ξανά τη γεύση και τη φινέτσα μιας όμορφης λυρικής σύνθεσης όπως αυτή που αναφέραμε παραπάνω.

Ίσως ήρθε η στιγμή να μιλήσουμε και για τις γυναίκες ως συγγραφείς καθαυτές και όχι μόνο ως θεματικό αντικείμενο. Το καλύτερο παράδειγμα προτείνεται από ένα ποίημα που θα μπορούσε να είναι από τις αρχές του 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα, ένα *plahn* της γυναίκας που ένας άνδρας απαρνήθηκε, δηλαδή μια σπουδασμένη διασκευή ενός διάσημου ειδυλλίου του Θεοκρίτου, που μαρτυρεί την αποδοχή και στην Κρήτη αυτού του είδους που κατά την Αναγέννηση είχε ξανακερδίσει πλήρη ζωντάνια:

*Αλέμονο η τάλαινα, πώς άρξομαι του λόγου,*

της τύχης μου της πονηράς το παν ειπείν καθόλου;  
Τις μου την θλίψην εξελεί, τίνος αυτό θαρρέσω,  
και τις ακούσαι δύναται, και τούτω μεν αρέσω;  
Την φλόγα, την πολλήν πυράν, την έχει μου η καρδιά μου 5  
τις να την σβέση δυνηθή και να 'ν' η παρηγορία μου;  
Τις να γιατρεύση την πληγήν, την έχει ο απατός μου,  
την μῶδωκεν, αλίμουνον, κ' ἔσφαξε τα εντός μου;  
Ουδέν ηξεύρω ή και ζω ή ζωντανή δεν είμαι·  
από τον πόνο τον πολύν δεν ξεύρω πόθεν κείμαι. 10  
Πληγήν μεγάλην μῶδωκεν ο νέος οπού ηγάπων,  
οπού 'χα πάντα μετ' εμού, και τούτον πάντ' εθάλπων.  
Δώδεκα μέρες αριθμώ, αφού κείνος ουκ ήλθεν  
εἰς τον ισπίτιν το εμόν, και φαίνεται και απήλθεν.  
Πορευσόμαι λοιπόν εγώ εκείνον να βρω τώρα,  
νά 'ρθη στο σπίτι και καλά, εις των Χανίων την χώρα,  
και να 'δω τούτον να μεμφθώ και να κατηγορήσω  
εἰς α μοι κάμνει ο άθλιος, και να τον ονειδίσω. 15

Αυτό το σύντομο ποίημα έχει μια μελετημένη δομή που διαιρείται σε τρεις ενότητες: στους στ. 1-8 παρουσιάζεται το μοτίβο της γυναίκας που απομακρύνεται από τον άνδρα. στους στ. 9-12 γίνεται σαφές ότι η άρνηση προέρχεται από τον εραστή της που της έχει προκαλέσει μια βαθιά πληγή στην καρδιά. Στο τελευταίο μέρος (στ. 13-18), η γυναίκα είναι αποφασισμένη να πάει και να τον κυνηγήσει ώστε να τον φέρει πίσω στα Χανιά και να τον κατηγορήσει.

Συνολικά, το αποτέλεσμα δεν είναι υψηλής ποιητικής αξίας. Ωστόσο, το ποίημα αποτελεί μαρτυρία της πρόσληψης στην κρητική λογοτεχνία του Θεόκριτου<sup>12</sup>, του οποίου ο συγγραφέας (ή η συγγραφέας) επαναπροσδιορίζει σύμφωνα με ό, τι συμβαίνει και με άλλα έργα του ελληνικού μανιερισμού, πιστό στην αρχή της μίμησης<sup>13</sup>.

Σχετικά με το μοτίβο της γυναίκας που απορρίφθηκε, η Κρήτη παρουσιάζει και το μύθο της Φαίδρας, χάρη στην ομώνυμη τραγωδία από τον νεαρό Francesco Bozza,

(Βενετία 1578), φοιτητή νομικής στην Πάντοβα που μέχρι σήμερα είναι η πρώτη γνωστή τραγωδία στην ιστορία του νεοελληνικού θεάτρου<sup>14</sup>.

Επίσης, με τον τίτλο πρώτα του *Περί γερόντος, να μην πάρει κορίτσι* (Wagner), και πρόσφατα του *Η κακοπαντρεμένη* (van Gemert) είναι γνωστό ένα ανώνυμο σατιρικό ποίημα των αρχών του 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα (ή του τέλους του 15<sup>ου</sup>), σε 198 ομοιοκατάληκτους δεκαπεντασλλάβους. Το έργο αναπτύσσει το μοτίβο ενός ακατάλληλου γάμου μεταξύ ενός γέρου και μιας νεαρής κοπέλας<sup>15</sup>.

Η γελοιοποίηση ενός γέρου εραστή και η προειδοποίηση των νεαρών κοριτσιών που προορίζονται για γάμους συμφέροντος, είναι θέματα που καλλιεργούνται μεν από τις κωμωδίες του Μένανδρου και του Πλαύτου, ωστόσο, αποκτούν μια ευρεία διάδοση στη Δυτική Ευρώπη του Μεσαίωνα, όπου οι αρχαιότερες μαρτυρίες ήταν διαδεδομένες στη Γαλλία τον 13<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα. Σε κάποιο *Τραγούδι της κακοπαντρεμένης* (ή της *Καημένης απαρηγόρητης*) η γυναίκα θεωρείται κακοπαντρεμένη όταν παντρεύεται, υποτασσόμενη στη θέληση των γονέων της, έναν άνδρα (γέρο, παραμορφωμένο ή παράφρονα) που δεν επιθυμεί, ή και επειδή παντρεύεται, ενάντια των γονικών προειδοποιήσεων, έναν ανάξιο νεαρό (τζογαδόρο, μεθύστακα, γυναικά, κλπ.)<sup>16</sup>.

Ίχνη του μοτίβου αυτού στην ιταλική λογοτεχνία του 14<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα εμφανίζονται στο έργο του Βοκκακίου *Ninfa d'Ameto*, όπου στο κεφάλαιο 32 η νύμφη Agapes διηγείται ότι αναγκάστηκε να παντρευτεί έναν ηλικιωμένο δικηγόρο, αδύναμο και δύσσομο. Το ελληνικό ποίημα, πιθανώς γραμμένο στην Κρήτη ή στα Επτάνησα, όπως αποδεικνύεται από τη χρήση ορισμένων ιταλικών λογοτεχνικών δανείων (*ρίμα*, στ. 13, *φαμελιά*, στ. 96 και *ιντράδα*, στ. 112.), χρησιμοποιεί μια πολύ απλή γλώσσα καθομιλουμένη, κατανοητή ακόμα και από τους λιγότερο μορφωμένους,

γεμάτη εικόνες και συγκρίσεις που σίγουρα απευθύνονταν σε ένα γυναικείο κοινό.

Για το λόγο αυτό υπάρχει η υποψία ότι κρύβεται μία γυναικεία πένα πίσω από τη σύνταξη του έργου. Πράγματι, σε ένα σημείο του κειμένου, ο ποιητής, αγανακτισμένος με αυτούς που επέτρεψαν αυτόν τον άδικο γάμο, δηλώνει ότι δεν θα το σκεφτόταν ποτέ να παντρευτεί έναν γέρο, αν μόνο μπορούσε να αποφασίσει από μόνος του:

*Τότε γουργό να το 'κουσα, ατή μου να το είδα,  
να τον επάρει ο δαίμωνας στον Αδη δια μερίδα,  
διατί επέτρεπε ο κακότυχος καλόγερος να 'γένη,  
να ξεδουλεύει την ψυχή πολύ μαγαρισμένη,  
έπρεπε τον να φόρεσε μαντί και καμηλαύχι  
και ράσινο ποκάμισο, δια την ψυχή να πάσχει,  
να 'φα το πρικοφάρμακο αντάμα με τον πόνο,  
διατί έφθειρε της κορασιάς τον ζαχαράτο κλώνο.  
Του πόθου τες ξεφάντωσης, της νιότης τες τρομάρες  
έφαγεν ο αχρόνιστος, δίχως χαρές και αντάρες.  
Ετού με σφάζει το λοιπόν και συμπονώ και κλαίγω,  
θυμούμενη συχνοτρομώ και όλη μέσα φλέγω.*

Σε ένα σημείο, στο στ. 123, η παρουσία της θηλυκής αντωνυμίας *ατή μου* «από μόνη μου» καθιστά δυνατή την υπόθεση ότι πρόκειται για μια γυναίκα που γράφει. Και όπως είδαμε, μέσω συμβολαιογραφικών πράξεων και, γενικά, της ιστορίας της πολιτιστικής εκπαίδευσης στην Κρήτη, δεν είναι αδύνατο μια γυναίκα που έχει τύχει μέσης εκπαίδευσης, να γνωρίζει τον Βοκκάκιο και το παραινετικό έργο του Κρητικού ποιητή Μαρίνου Φαλιέρου (1397-1474), και να είχε συνθέσει ένα απλό ποιηματάκι σαν κι αυτό που αναφέραμε, και παράλληλα να είναι πολύ προσεκτική στις κοινωνικές και σεξιστικές διακρίσεις της εποχής.

## ΣΗΜΕΙΩΣΕΙΣ

1 - Η σκέψη μας τρέχει αμέσως προς τους γυναικείους αντιπροσώπους του πετράρχισμου όπως την Vittoria Colonna (1490-1547), που στάθηκε και πρότυπο για μεταγενέστερες συγγραφείς, ανάμεσα στις οποίες έχουμε τις Veronica Gambara (1485-1550), Chiara Matraini (1515-1604), Gaspara Stampa (1523-1554) e Isabella di Morra (1520-1546)· πρβλ. Borsetto 1983.

2 - Για μια γενική επισκόπηση ως προς την κατάσταση των γυναικών στην Ευρώπη από την όψιμη αρχαιότητα έως την Αναγέννηση πολύ χρήσιμα είναι τα στοιχεία που αναφέρονται στο Bjork 2010: 1739-1769 και, επίσης, Lazard 1985.

3 - Βλ., κυρίως, Τρωιάνος 1983.

4 - Πρβλ. Νικολάου 2005· βλ. επίσης το αφιέρωμα La donna a Bisanzio.

5 - Βλ. σε επιλογή: Λάμπρος 1923· Κουκουλέ 1948· Diehl 2007· Laiou 1981· Nasaina 2018 (με πρόσφατη βιβλιογραφία).

6 - Πρβλ. Belon 1588: 49. Βλ., κυρίως, Μαλτέζου 1983-1984 και Μαλτέζου 1986.

7 - Πρβλ. Bancroft-Marcus, 1983; Spadaro, 1972; Spadaro, 1999 και Spadaro, 2003 (με περισσότερη βιβλιογραφία). Το τελευταίο άρθρο αυτό δυστυχώς δεν δικαιώνει όσα υπόσχονται στον τίτλο, αλλά παρουσιάζει απλώς μια άκριτη σειρά γυναικείων μορφών από διάφορα δημώδη ποιήματα των 14ου-15ου αιώνων, όπως τον Πόλεμος της Τρωάδος, με τη Μήδεια, την Πολυξένη (που υπάρχει και στην Διήγηση του Αχιλλέως καθώς και στο έργο του Λινάρδου Ντελλαπόρτα Έρωτήματα και αποκρίσεις Ξένου και Αληθείας), την Ελίνη, την Πενθεσίλεια, Ερμιόνη, Βρισηίδα, Εκάβη κι άλλες, τις περισσότερες παρμένες από τη λεγόμενη δημώδη Βυζαντινή Ιλιάδα· τον Διγενή Ακρίτη, με τις μορφές της Ειρήνης, της Ευδοκίας και της Αμαζόνας Μαξιμού και, τέλος, από την Ίστορία της Σωσάννης (Βενετία, 1569) του Ζακύνθιου στιχουργού Μάρκου Δεφαράνα. Αναφέρονται φευγαλέα τη μορφή της Σάρας από το κρητικό δράμα Ήθυσία του Άβραάμ και την πρωταγωνίστρια του Ερωτόκριτου την Αρεθούσα (ούτε λέξη για τη νένα της, τη Φροσύνη).

8 - Πρβλ. Beck, 1971, 183-186.

9 - Πρβλ. π. χ. κείμενα όπως τα Enchet, Enseignements Trebor, Urbain le courtois, Insegnamenti a Guglielmo, Lo schiavo di Bari κλπ. στα οποία παίζει κεντρικό ρόλο η λειτουργία της προσποιητής διδασκαλίας σε κάποιον έτσι ώστε να αποδεχθούν πιο εύκολα “in-segnamenti di morale e di galateo” (Segre, 1968, 87).

10 - Βλ. Μανούσακα, 1995, 46-48 (εισαγωγή): 260-292 (κείμενο)· πρβλ. Castagna, 2007, 287-295 και τις προαναφερόμενες μελέτες του Spadaro (υποσημ. 7).

11 - Βλ. Panaghiotakes, 1995, 314-317. Αξιόλογη είναι η γενική κρίση για τα ποιήματα με μισογυνικό θέμα αυτής της συγκεκριμένης περιόδου κατά την οποία, παρόλο που η κριτική των γυναικών φαίνεται να απουσιάζει, όπως π.χ. στα ποιήματα του Μαρίνου Φαλιέρου, ωστόσο και σε αυτό το συγγραφέα το μισογυνικό στοιχείο δυσκολεύει να εξαφανιστεί εντελώς: «a streak of misogyny runs through the poems of Sachlikes and is also present in Dellaportas; even Falieros is not entirely free of it. The culmination, however, of anti-female invective is represented by two poems of the second half of the fifteenth century [scil. il Συναξάριον τῶν εὐγενικῶν γυναικῶν εἰς τὸν Ἑπαινοῦ τῶν γυναικῶν], composed in Crete by an ungifted and inept verifier who was a Chatolic» (αυτόθι). Πρβλ. Καπλάνης 1999.

12 - Πρώτος ο Ν. Γ. Πολίτης επεσήμεινε στενές αναλογίες ανάμεσα στο κρητικό ποίημα και τους ακόλουθους στίχους από τον Β΄ ειδύλλιο του Θεοκρίτου II (Αι φαρμακεύτριαι):

πᾶ μοι ταῖ δάφναι; φέρε Θεστυλί: πᾶ δὲ τὰ φίλτρα;  
στέψον τὰν κελέβαν φοινικέῳ οἶδς ἄώτῳ,  
ὡς τὸν ἐμὸν βαρὺν εὐντα φίλον καταθύσομαι ἄνδρα,  
ὅς μοι δωδεκαταῖος ἀφ' ᾧ τάλας οὐδέποθ' ἵκει,  
οὐδ' ἔγνω πότερον τεθνάκαμες ἢ ζσοὶ εἰμές. 5  
οὐδὲ θύρας ἄραξεν ἀνάρσιος. ἦ ρά οἱ ἀλλᾶ  
ᾤχετ' ἔχων ὁ τ' Ἔρωσ ταχινὰς φρένας ἅ τ' Ἀφροδίτα;  
βασεῦμαι ποτὶ τὰν Τιμαγήτοιο παλαιίστραν  
αὔριον, ὡς νιν ἴδω, καὶ μέμφομαι οἶά με ποιεῖ.

13 - Το κείμενο σώζεται στο χρ. Bodl. Baroccianus, 216, (φ. 179r), που χρονολογείται στις αρχές του 16ου αι.· βλ. Morgan, 1954, 67, 71. Το ανέκδοτο κείμενο είχε επισημανθεί από τον Krumbacher 18972, 814, και δημοσιεύτηκε για την πρώτη φορά από τον Πολίτη



1909, 97-99, ενώ στη συνέχεια από τον Morgan (πρβλ. άνωθεν) και με βελτιώσεις από τον Πολίτη 1958, 300-305.

**14** - Βλ. Luciani, 1996.

**15** - Καινούργια έκδοση: van Gemert, 2010.

**16** - Για το λογοτεχνικό μοτίβο αυτό βλ. σε επιλογή. Paris, 1892; Bartsch, 1870; Parducci, 1909; Novati, 1889; Novati, 1912; Nigra, 1888; De Musset [χ.χ.]: 4-5.

## ΒΙΒΛΙΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ

- Bancroft-Marcus R. E.** *Women in the Cretan Renaissance (1570-1669)* in “Journal of Modern Greek Studies” 1/1, 1983, σ. 19-38.
- Bartsch K.** *Altfranzösische Romanzen und Pastourellen*. Λευγία, 1870.
- Beck H. G.** *Liebespoesie* in “Geschichte der byzantinischen Volksliteratur”. München, 1971, σ. 183-186 (ελλ. μετάφρ. *Ιστορία της βυζαντινής δημόδους λογοτεχνίας*. Αθήνα, 1988, σ. 283-287).
- Belon P.** *Les observations de plusieurs singularitez et choses memorables trouvées en Grèce, Asie, Judée, Egypte, Arabie et autres pays estranges*. Paris, 1588.
- Bjork R. E.** (επιμ.) *The Oxford Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, τ. 4. Οξφόρδη, 2010.
- Borsetto L.** *Narciso ed Eco. Figura e scrittura nella lirica femminile del Cinquecento: esemplificazioni e appunti*, στου Μ. Zancan (επιμ.) “Nel cerchio della luna. Figure di donna in alcuni testi del XVI secolo”. Βενετία, 1983, σ. 171-233.
- Castagna L.** *La matrona efesina dal Lombardo-Venetico duecentesco alla Grecia medievale: due redazioni poco note*, στων L. Castagna -E. Lefevre (επιμ.) “Studien zu Petron und seiner Rezeption. Studi su Petronio e sulla sua Fortuna”. Berlin-New York, 2007, σ. 287-295.
- De Musset A.**, *Voyage pittoresque en Italie, Partie septentrionale*, Παρίσι [χ.χ.] Diehl Ch., *Figure byzantine*, ιταλ. μετάφραση Torino 2007.
- Krumbacher K.** *Geschichte der byzantinischen Literatur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Oströmischen Reiches (527-1453)*. München 1897<sup>2</sup>. *La donna a Bisanzio*, “Porphyra” 18, 2012 στην ηλεκτρονική ιστοσελίδα [www.porphyra.it](http://www.porphyra.it).
- Laiou A. E.** *The Role of Women in Byzantine Society*, “Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik” 31, 1981, σ. 233-260.
- Lazard M.**, *Images Littéraires de la femme à la Renaissance*. Παρίσι 1985.
- Luciani C.** (επιμ.) Francesco Bozza, *Fedra*. Manziana, 1996.
- Morgan G.** *Three Cretan Manuscripts*, “Κρητικά Χρονικά” 8, 1954, σ. 67, 71.
- Nasaina M.** *Woman's Position in Byzantine Society*, “Open Journal for Studies in History” 1.1, 2018, σ. 29-38.

- Nigra C.** *Canti del Piemonte*. Torino, 1888.
- Novati F.** *Contributi alla storia della lirica musicale italiana* in “Scritti varii in onore di R. Renier”. Torino, 1912.
- Novati F.** *Studi critici e letterari*. Torino, 1889.
- Panaghiotakes N. M.** *The Italian Background of Early Cretan Literature*, “Dumbarton Oaks Papers” 49, 1995, σ. 281-323.
- Parducci A.** *La canzone di «mal maritata» in Francia, nei secoli XV-XVI* in “Romania”, 38/150, 1909, σ. 286-325.
- Paris G.** *Les orig. de la poésie lyrique en France au moyen âge*. Παρίσι 1892.
- Segre C.** *Le forme e le tradizioni didattiche*, στον H. R. Jauss (επιμ.) “Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters, τ. VI/1: La littérature didactique, allegorique et satirique”. Heidelberg, 1968, σ. 58-145.
- Spadaro G.** *La donna nei testi greci medievali in demotico*, στον A. Proiou-A. Armati (επιμ.) “La presenza femminile nella letteratura greca”, Testi e Studi bizantinoneoellenici XV. Ρώμη, 2003, σ. 3-30.
- Spadaro G.** *La novella della matrona di Efeso in un testo greco medievale*, στον τόμο “Studi classici in onore di Q. Cataudella”, τ. II. Catania, 1972, σ. 449-463 (“Letteratura Cretese e Rinascimento Italiano”. Soveria Mannelli, 1994, σ. 79-89).
- Spadaro G.** *Una matrona in viaggio*, στον A. Pioletti-F. Rizzo Nervo (επιμ.) “Medioevo romanzo e orientale: Il viaggio dei testi”. Soveria Mannelli, 1999, σ. 273-281.
- van Gemert A.** (σε συνεργασία με την I. Beijerman), *Η κακοπαντρεμένη (Ρίμα για τον γέρο και το κορίτσι)*, από τον, [ΠΚΝΛ], Θεσσαλονίκη, 2010.
- Καπλάνης Τ.** “Καθρέφτες γυναικών” ή μυσογυνικά κείμενα της μεσαιωνικής ελληνικής δημόδου γραμματείας;, στον A. Arghyriu-K. A. Dimadis-D. Lazaridu (επιμ.), *Ο ελληνικός κόσμος ανάμεσα στην Ανατολή και τη Δύση, 1453-1981. Πρακτικά Α' Ευρωπαϊκού Συνεδρίου Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών* (Βερολίνο, 2-4 οκτ. 1998), τ. I, Αθήνα 1999, σ. 295-316.
- Κουκουλέ Φ.** *Βυζαντινόν βίος και πολιτισμός*, τ. I-II, Αθήνα, 1948.
- Λάμπρος Σπ.** *Η γυνή παρά τοις βυζαντινοίς*, “Νέα Εστία” 17, 1923, σ. 258-285.
- Μαλτέζου Χρ.** *Η γυναίκα στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη με βάση τις*

- νοταριακές πηγές, “Αρχαιολογία και Τέχνες” 21, 1986, σ. 37-40.
- Μαλιτζού Χρ.** *Η παρουσία της γυναίκας στις νοταριακές πράξεις της περιόδου της Βενετοκρατίας, “Κρητολογία”* 16-19, 1983-1984, σ. 62-79.
- Μανούσκα, Μ. Ι.** (επιμ.), *Λεονάρδου Ντελλαπόρτα, Ποιήματα (1403-1411)*, Αθήνα, 1995.
- Νικολάου Κ.** *Η γυναίκα στη μέση βυζαντινή εποχή. Κοινωνικά πρότυπα και καθημερινός βίος στα αγιολογικά κείμενα*, Αθήνα, 2005.
- Πολίτης Λ.** *Παρατηρήσεις σε κρητικά κείμενα: 1. Η απαρνημένη των Χανίων*, “Κρητικά Χρονικά” 12, 1958, σ. 300-305.
- Πολίτης Ν. Γ.** *Ανέκδοτον κρητικόν ποίημα*, “Κρητικός Λαός” 1, 1909, σ. 97-99.
- Τρωιάνος Σ.** *Το συναινετικό διαζύγιο στο Βυζάντιο*, “Βυζαντικά” 3, 1983, σ. 9-21.

**A “FEMINIST” IN A PATRIARCHAL  
ACADEMIC INSTITUTION:  
THE LIFE AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE POLISH  
AESTHETICIAN MARIA GOŁASZEWSKA (1926 - 2015)**

*Natalia Anna Michna*

(PhD, Jagiellonian University in Kraków - Poland)

**Introduction**

In the history of Poland, very few women have occupied themselves with philosophy, and even fewer have made a lasting and significant contribution to both national and world philosophy. One unusual and heretofore unappreciated exception is represented by the person and academic achievements of the philosopher Maria Gołaszewska. This philosopher was associated throughout her life with Poland's oldest academic institution, the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, where she earned all of her degrees under the direction of the phenomenologist Roman Ingarden, himself a student of Edmund Husserl.

Gołaszewska, with whom I became personally acquainted at the end of her career at the University, was an outstanding and important figure, not only in Polish and world philosophy, but also on the Polish academic scene in general. Though she never declared herself a feminist, both her work and the attitude she adopted towards academic institutions can be described as feminist. My goal is to bring the figure of this Polish scholar - both as an academic organizer of academic life in Poland who was deeply involved in university affairs, and an outstanding author of original academic papers in the fields of philosophy and aesthetics - to the attention of an international group of researchers. I am going to present Gołaszewska's academic achievements in the context of selected threads of contemporary feminist philosophy. Indeed, I believe that Gołaszewska's thought possesses a deeply

feminist character and constitutes an interesting proposal for a theoretical description of aesthetic experience that takes the perspective of gender into account.

### **A woman philosopher in patriarchal Academia**

Gołaszewska was born in 1926 in Kurzelów, a small village in central Poland. Beginning in 1935, she was raised in Kielce, a small city to the east of her birthplace. Her father, a forestry engineer, educated at the Polytechnic University in St Petersburg, had moved there with his family on account of poor health. In Kielce she completed middle school and Błogosławiona Kinga [Blessed Kinga] High School (partly in secret under the German occupation during World War II).

In the years 1945-50 Gołaszewska studied philosophy at the Faculty of Humanities at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, defending in 1950 her master's thesis, entitled *Teoria spostrzeżenia według Maine de Birana* [Theory of observation according to Maine de Biran]. In 1956 she defended her doctoral dissertation, entitled *Twórczość a osobowość twórcy. Analiza procesu twórczego* [Creativity and the personality of the creator: an analysis of the creative process], written under the direction of Roman Ingarden, at the Catholic University of Lublin. In 1957, she began work as a research assistant (later an assistant professor) at the Department of Philosophy of the Jagiellonian University, under Ingarden's direction. Her entire academic career was associated with this Cracovian university and with Ingarden personally. In 1974 she obtained the title of associate professor, and ten years later, in 1984, that of full professor. She achieved habilitation in 1964 on the basis of a paper on the subject *Filozoficzne podstawy krytyki literackiej* [The philosophical foundations of literary criticism]. (For political reasons, she did not obtain her docentship for another five years.)

In the years 1981-96, Gołaszewska directed the Aesthetics Department, which she had organized herself, at the Jagiellonian

University. This was a significant achievement in an institution dominated and ruled by men. As the head of this department, she demonstrated great organizational and leadership skills. She was a strong and determined woman, devoted to institutional as well as academic issues. Her involvement in administrative work did not hinder her from carrying out systematic academic research and activities. Gołaszewska left a legacy of impressive and original academic achievements, which to this day serve young philosophy students as an important source of knowledge on aesthetics and the philosophy of culture.

Throughout her academic career, Gołaszewska collaborated with numerous academic centers in Poland and abroad and carried out numerous functions in Polish and international organizations and philosophical societies. She was a member of the British Society of Aesthetics, Société Hellenique d'Etudes Philosophiques, and the Polish Philosophical Society. For ten years (1960-70) she served as the secretary of the Aesthetic Section of the Polish Philosophical Society, and was also a member of the Committee for Philosophical Learning of the Polish Academy of Sciences. She participated in numerous International Aesthetic Congresses, and organized four: Crisis of Aesthetics (1979), Eidos of Art (1985), Metrum of Art (1991), and Aesthetics for the Future (1996). Beginning in 1971, she served as the organizer of the annual Aesthetic Seminars, to which she invited academics from around the world.

Gołaszewska was the promoter and reviewer of numerous doctoral and habilitational dissertations. In her long career at the University, she taught several successive generations of Polish philosophers, many of whom are still active in the academic world and conduct their own research, continuing the thought of their mentor. From the recollection of these students, a picture emerges of Gołaszewska as a committed and reliable researcher and a charismatic lecturer who was extremely demanding but fair in her grading practices.

Gołaszewska's publishing activity encompasses approximately three hundred scholarly publications in the field of philosophy. These include books, dissertations, and articles included in such journals as *Aesthetics*, *Aesthetic Studies*, *Philosophical Movement*, *Philosophical Studies*, and *Reports on Philosophy*. The philosopher edited over a dozen volumes of papers from the field of aesthetics, including *Aesthetics in the World* (five volumes, published 1985-96): an anthology of the most important articles on contemporary aesthetics, translated into Polish.

### **Voices from the past: Letters of Gołaszewska in “The Roman Ingarden Digital Archive”**

One valuable source of information about the philosopher and her work in academia consists of the letters she exchanged with her teacher, Ingarden. These letters can be found in Ingarden's unusually extensive epistolary legacy, which I am studying along with my colleagues from the Jagiellonian University within the framework of an academic project entitled “The Roman Ingarden Digital Archive”<sup>1</sup>. The Archive is the result of intensive long-term research, documentation, and substantive efforts, consisting, *inter alia*, of finding, gathering, translating, and digitizing Ingarden's correspondence. The Archive provides Internet access to typologically and materially elaborated archival materials, such as the unknown academic work of Ingarden and his correspondence with scholars from all over the world. In the Archive one can find Ingarden's correspondence with such eminent representatives of world learning in the twentieth century as Hedwig Conrad-Martius, Izydora Dąmbska, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Felix Kaufmann, George Edward Moore, Helmuth Plessner, Amélie Rorty, Edith Stein, Władysław Tatarkiewicz, Anna Tymieniecka, Gerda Walther, Karol Wojtyła, and many more (Czakoń - Michna - Sosnowski, 2018a; Czakoń - Michna - Sosnowski, 2018b). The collected correspondence between Gołaszewska and Ingarden, though not extensive, says a great deal about Gołaszewska



herself and her relationship with her mentor (Czakon - Michna - Sosnowski, 2018a, pp. 125-128). From these letters, there emerges an image of a young philosopher deeply involved in her studies and seeking opportunities to develop her knowledge and academic competence. In the mid-1960s, Gołaszewska prepared herself for a study trip to Paris and Toulouse, where she was to deliver several lectures. Inordinately preoccupied with this trip, she prepared for it carefully. In a letter to Ingarden dated April 1966, Gołaszewska recalls this in detail:

I've prepared three lectures - I'm currently finalizing them - just in case I manage, by some miracle, to get to Toulouse (which is doubtful, due to the - so far - rather fragile financial basis for my trip, which is paid for only to and from Paris). One of the lectures will concern the aesthetic sensitivity of children and adults (making use of materials collected during research at the National Museum on the behavior of children in the museum, as well as other materials from research on adults) - this lecture, to the extent necessary in terms of the quality of the audience (e.g., educators, teachers), could be supplemented by a film I want to take with me; just in case, I've prepared two versions: one theoretical, on the topic of aesthetic sensitivity, the other more informative-descriptive, based strictly on research. The second topic is the same one I sent to the Congress of Philosophy of the French Language, 'The role of language in understanding a work of art'; the third will probably be about aesthetic methods, but I've rewritten it, and it will no longer contain criticism of your views; however, it may encompass the issue of the mutual relations of the artist, viewer, and critic, i.e., a piece of the subject matter in my new book, which is waiting its turn at Wydawnictwo Literackie [Literary Publishers]. (Letter from Gołaszewska to Ingarden, April 24, 1966)<sup>2</sup>.

From a letter sent to Ingarden on May 22 of the same year, we learn that Gołaszewska ultimately reached Toulouse, where her

lectures proved a success:

I'm now proud to report that the lecture has taken place, and went fairly well - there was even a discussion which brought up some new issues for me [...]. I'm going to have some of the best memories of my life from Toulouse - was welcomed so cordially - and the friendly atmosphere certainly contributed to my success. (Letter from Gołaszewska to Ingarden, May 22, 1966)<sup>3</sup>.

However, considering the political situation prevailing at that time in Poland, travel abroad required a great deal of institutional and administrative effort. In her letters, Gołaszewska asked Ingarden, who at that point already occupied an acknowledged position in the academic community and had extensive contacts, for help in organizing this trip: "I would like to ask you to be so kind as to write some letters for me, recommending me as a student of yours working in the field of aesthetics and philosophy, to a professor of philosophy in France whom you know. Apparently they greatly respect such forms there, and don't want to deal with just anybody" (Letter from Gołaszewska to Ingarden, April 24, 1966)<sup>4</sup>. A trip to France was a unique opportunity for her to establish numerous academic contacts, cultivated in subsequent years, and collaboration with foreign scholars. In the same letter she wrote: "The main goal of my trip is to establish some academic contacts abroad, in connection with which, if you know someone who could make it easier for me to deliver a lecture in Paris, I'd also be very grateful if you could write a few words" (Letter from Gołaszewska to Ingarden, April 24, 1966)<sup>5</sup>.

From another letter, dated May 1968, we learn about a planned meeting between Gołaszewska and Ingarden at the Philosophical Congress in Vienna in 1968. As we know from the notes of Ingarden himself, this event brought together the most eminent philosophers of the day, from Europe as well as from the United States. Accordingly, in a letter to Ingarden, Gołaszewska mentions her preparations for this event, as well as her intensive study of

foreign languages:

In connection with hopes for the trip, I am energetically working on improving my French, and I'm also resuming English lessons. I'm going to try to get permission for the trip in accordance with what you wrote to me. At the moment I'm occupied with - along with other matters - writing the book I spoke to you about (entitled *Awareness of Beauty* - a subtitle; I have my doubts whether this title makes a favorable impression; it may be necessary to modify it). (Letter from Gołaszewska to Ingarden, May 13, 1968)<sup>6</sup>.

Unfortunately, Gołaszewska's speech has not been preserved, but the lecture that Ingarden gave at the time remained part of his legacy and can also be found in the resources of The Roman Ingarden Digital Archive (Ingarden's lecture at the 14th International Congress of Philosophy in Vienna, 1968)<sup>7</sup>.

In returning to Gołaszewska's career, I would like to briefly present her academic achievements. This, however, is not a simple report on her views. Even though Gołaszewska never declared herself a feminist thinker, I believe her academic achievements can be described as feministically engaged, fulfilling the theoretical postulates of feminist philosophers of the second half of the twentieth century.

### **Anthropologically oriented aesthetics**

During the postwar and communist years in Poland, Gołaszewska conducted research focusing on issues related to art and aesthetics. Whereas she made reference to the phenomenological findings of Ingarden and Husserl, as well as to existentialism and structuralism, her research extended beyond formal and theoretical descriptions of art and experience thereof. Gołaszewska created her own conception of aesthetically and anthropologically oriented aesthetics, taking empirical methods into account (Serafin, 2014a). The main points of her aesthetic research concerned the concept of artistic creativity (Gołaszewska, 1958), types of cre-

ativity (Gołaszewska, 1973), issues involving the typology of viewers of a work of art, the dissimilarity between artist and viewer (Gołaszewska, 1967a), and the concept of the aesthetic situation (Gołaszewska, 1970). Although in the case of Gołaszewska's thought one cannot speak of a systemic and multifaceted philosophy of humankind, the synthetic solutions she proposed undoubtedly constitute an original and coherent whole. The essential and best-known element of Gołaszewska's philosophy is the concept of the aesthetic situation, which she derived from phenomenology, structuralism, and the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre. The term "aesthetic situation" was proposed by Gołaszewska for the first time in the 1967 article "I due poli dell'estetica" [Italian: The two poles of aesthetics] (Gołaszewska, 1967b). This concept was then developed, mainly in two papers, "Świadomość piękna. Problematyka genezy, funkcji, struktury i wartości w estetyce" [Awareness of beauty: the issues of genesis, function, structure, and values in aesthetics] (Gołaszewska, 1970) and "Zarys estetyki. Problematyka, metody, teorie" [An outline of aesthetics: problems, methods, theories] (Gołaszewska, 1973), but she also addressed it in many of her other publications (Gołaszewska, 1964; 1983; 1984a; 1984b; 1986; 1995). In expanding issues from the field of aesthetics to include the entire axiological field, Gołaszewska described the existential and metaphysical situation of humankind in terms of the real world, the world of values, and the creative process. Let us take a closer look at Gołaszewska's concept of the aesthetic situation in the broader context of philosophical reflection on the condition of humankind and the surrounding reality.

Gołaszewska's inspiration for taking up the issue of the aesthetic situation was Sartre's concept of "the human situation in the world" (Gołaszewska, 1973, p. 7). This concept is connected with the conviction that a human is not a "being in itself," but is shaped by events and develops his or her existence in the activities and situations he or she encounters in the world. These activities and

situations shape and define a human being, even if he himself/she herself is their creator. It was in this context that Gołaszewska presented a description of reciprocal interdependencies between the artist, the creative process, the work of art, the process of aesthetic cognition, and aesthetic values.

The point of departure for describing the aesthetic situation presented by Gołaszewska is the overarching phenomenon, i.e., the axiological situation, meaning the involvement of a human being in various types of opposition, of which he or she is both an observer and a source. Oppositions found in the surrounding world reach the subject; at the moment their existence is realized, the conscious existence of the human being in the axiological situation - and thus in a situation necessitating the choice of certain values - begins. One of the ways to overcome the contradictions inherent in the world and in the subject himself/herself is for the subject to take action on his or her own initiative. He/she then creates the states of things and objects in relation to his/her own guiding purposes and intentions. This leads to decision-making, executing specific choices, and, in effect, taking a stand in favor of the values consistent with the ideas he or she professes. An intention that determines a human action is essential to the axiological situation; most often it is modified by other factors, such as decisions, projects, plans, or the process of action itself. However, this intention is not the decisive factor in the axiological situation, which remains dependent on the will and intellect of the human being. The axiological situation, as Gołaszewska understood it, encompasses all human actions directed towards the realization of values, and therefore also artistic activity, i.e., the creative process. From this perspective, artistic creativity is thus presented as a process of creating values to be realized in the real world, which is external to the subject (Serafin, 2013).

The main elements of the aesthetic situation, according to Gołaszewska, are: the viewer, the creator, the work of art, the world of humans, and aesthetic values. The last two items con-

stitute the determinants of every aesthetic situation (Gołaszewska, 1970, p. 55), as the other elements, namely the viewer, creator, and work of art, through their relationship to aesthetic values, are considered in succession. This results - similarly to feminist postulates in the field of sensitizing philosophy to social, cultural, gender, race, and other factors - in typologization of individual elements of the aesthetic situation. The context of the artist takes into account the psychology of the creative process as well as the social and cultural (including racial, denominational, and those related to gender and sexual orientation) conditions of the artist's personality. The context of a work of art takes into account the diversity of works of art, their kinds and genres in various cultures, places, and times. The context of the viewer takes into account factors determining human attitudes and experiences, and thus sensitivity, emotionality, intellectual level, or sociocultural environment. Situated in a specific place and time, the viewer (*vide* the feminist *situated subject*) perceives and co-creates aesthetic value. The artist - who also finds himself/herself in specific sociocultural situations - brings about, in the course of the creative process, the emergence of a work of art containing value. The work of art that emerges thus possesses, and has the capacity to provide access to, the values of the viewer. Therefore Gołaszewska emphasized that:

it is specifically aesthetic value that binds these three basic elements [artist, work of art, viewer - author's note] into a unified whole, resulting in their reciprocal affinity, to the degree that they cannot be fully understood or specified in isolation either from other elements of the aesthetic situation, or from the question of value (Gołaszewska, 1976, p. 7). (Pic. 1)

A study of Gołaszewska's concept of the aesthetic situation shows that it is essential for aesthetics to include all of its contexts in close connection, as analyzing them independently of one another leads to an incomplete description of the studied elements and the

phenomena to which they are subject. This approach to the aesthetic situation refers to the inclusion in aesthetic studies, postulated by Gołaszewska, of the theoretical and empirical planes. In this sense, it can be assumed that Gołaszewska's concept constitutes a universal field for contemporary research in aesthetics. The aesthetic situation can indeed be described theoretically as a specific event and compared with other events in which the work of art, the artist, and the viewer are involved. At the empirical level, however, it is an example of the application of theoretical achievements in aesthetics to examples of specific artistic accomplishments. It is within this framework that a combination of theory and practice in contemporary philosophical reflections - particularly in feminist philosophy - is then to be sought.

I believe that Gołaszewska's theory of the aesthetic situation is a proposal for a comprehensive approach to the aesthetic attitude of a human being towards reality, and serves to describe not only the components of the aesthetic situation but also the relationships between them. This theory is linked to the methodological postulate of the practice of empirically oriented aesthetics, that is, the resultant of axiology and directly acquired empirical facts. Thus understood, aesthetics possesses an interdisciplinary character, based on the results of research in other empirical disciplines, e.g. sociology, psychology, art theory and history, and cultural theory.

It is worth noticing that, in many places, Gołaszewska links the aesthetic concepts she developed to Ingarden's phenomenological findings; however, significant differences exist between the philosophical work of these two thinkers. While Gołaszewska's aesthetics should be placed within the philosophical continuum of Husserl and Ingarden, it transcends phenomenology, constituting a proposal to reinterpret the latter's main assumptions (Serafin, 2014b). Gołaszewska's work is a mosaic of many different themes and philosophical traditions. I believe that her philosophy can be described as inclusive, transgressive, and transformative, and thus, in my opinion, has a place with the area of research indicated by the

feminist perspective in philosophy. Her multifaceted description of the aesthetic situation and related aesthetic experiences is a prime example of a theory that accounts for the perspective of gender, and in this sense should be acknowledged as an important contribution to contemporary gender-sensitive philosophy.

### **Feminist philosophy and Gołaszewska's aesthetic theory**

The description of the aesthetic situation presented by Gołaszewska brings to mind feminist standpoint theories developed mainly in the field of feminist epistemology by such contemporary researchers as Sandra Harding, Donna Haraway, Elizabeth Potter, and Nancy Hartsock. The central concepts of these theories are *situated knowledge* and the *situated subject*. Within the framework of these concepts, it is acknowledged that a subject's social position shapes and limits that subject's knowledge, because it affects her experience and world view. Hence knowledge, or any cognitive activity on the part of the subject, including, of course, the creation and contact with art, is situated, limited, and conditioned on many levels.

The author of the concept of *situated knowledge* is Donna Haraway (Haraway, 1988). This concept, as noted by, among others, Elizabeth Anderson, is the most important in feminist epistemology in general: "The central concept of feminist epistemology is that of a situated knower, and hence of situated knowledge: knowledge that reflects the particular perspectives of the subject" (Anderson, 2000). The thesis concerning the situatedness of knowledge leads to the statement that this is achieved by a research community which includes members of marginalized social groups, because only they, due to their situation, possess epistemic privilege and a more rigorous critical consciousness of research problems. In this sense, as Helen E. Longino writes, situated knowledge is *social knowledge*, because all the factors of the cognitive process from which it results are of a social nature (Longino, 1990).



On the basis of feminist standpoint theories, the thesis on the positioning of knowledge has undergone numerous elaborations (Assiter, 1996; Benhabib, 1992; Braidotti, 2006; Harding, 1991; Smith, 1990), but the first and most representative discussion was presented by Haraway, who stated that the traditional science and philosophy practiced by men was based on the doctrine of a disembodied scientific objectivity. The disembodied discourses that emerged in this way constituted “a series of efforts to persuade relevant social actors that one’s manufactured knowledge is a route to a desired form of very objective power” (Haraway, 1988, p. 577). In pointing out that the subject of the process of cognition as thus understood was disembodied, Haraway emphasized that knowledge formulated from the point of view of a subject completely abstracted from its properties, isolated from individual experiences, unidentified, and situated nowhere, “is truly fantastic, distorted, and so irrational” (Haraway, 1991, p. 193). The disembodiment of traditional science and philosophy thus meant a theoretical ideal of mastery of the world by an anonymous, ahistorical, distanced subject, detached from circumstances, using universalized tools whose application constituted a guarantee of results characterized by a high degree of objectivity. This ideal not only depreciated corporality as a useful and cognitively valuable research perspective, but abstracted the resulting sense-oriented material from its source. Sense-oriented data collected with the help of the senses, whose source is *de facto* human corporeality, was segregated from this knowledge.

One proposal offered as an alternative to disembodied objectivity is “new,” feminist objectivity, characterized by situated knowledge, and thus accounting for a number of conditions in the world in which both the subject and object of cognition find themselves. The concept of situated knowledge is based on the statement that every human being is capable of investigating the world or a part thereof exclusively from a specific point of view, as well as with the help of a specific method and research tools (Anderson, 2000).

Hence, situated knowledge is embodied knowledge; to describe it, Haraway employs the metaphor of vision. Let us note, however, that the vision characterized by Haraway differs in essence from the traditional idea of seeing “in depth,” that is, a view of things that is unmediated, impartial, and free from valorizations that “penetrate” to their essence. Haraway asserts that this ideal of cognitive activity is only a “divine art,” which leads us to delude ourselves into believing that this essence exists and - what is more - is cognitively accessible to us.

Situated, embodied perception of things does not imply exclusive cognition of their essence and of the universal laws to which they are supposedly subject. On the contrary, our perspective on and our perception of the world are never complete; the result of the interaction of the cognitive subject with the object of study is not only knowledge, but a transformed subject and a transformed object, which, moreover, are never present in finite form. Only when understood in this way is the embodiment of knowledge - taking into account the location, individual experience, and relational involvement of the subject as well as the subjective selection of research methods and of the subject of the research itself - a condition for its objectivity. Indeed, as Haraway writes: “Objectivity is not about disengagement but about mutual and usually unequal structuring, about taking risks in a world where ‘we’ are permanently mortal, that is, not in ‘final’ control” (Haraway, 1988, p. 596). Thus this represents neither a bird’s-eye view (a metaphor applied to androcentric methods of practicing science and philosophy) nor a guarantee of certain and objective knowledge, but a conglomerate of partial views, brief Derridean narratives, and embodied and positioned perspectives. Looking is always done from a specific point of view focused on deconstructing, contesting, creating, and changing the shape of knowledge and methods of perception. Situated knowledge is knowledge from a perspective centered in the social relationships of the body, which are always complex, full of contradictions, structured and structuring. Its ob-

ject is the world, which is constantly changing, acting and operating on the subject, not standing in place waiting to be deciphered.

The concept of the situated subject of knowledge associated with the theory of situated knowledge is based on the assertion that social position shapes and limits the subject's knowledge because it influences his or her experience and worldview (Potter, 2006, pp. 120-122). When we speak of a situated subject within the framework of feminist philosophy, a key role is played by the postulate of valorization of those subjects who are oppressed within the framework of the dominant system of social relations. This valorization, as Anderson writes, means granting them a privileged status in the process of cognition of reality and production of knowledge. Anderson notes: "Where the standpoint of the privileged tends to represent existing social inequalities as natural and necessary, the standpoint of the disadvantaged correctly represents them as socially contingent, and shows how they could be overcome" (Anderson, 2000). This means that the point of view of the dominated groups possesses not only the potential for the development and transformation of knowledge about reality but at the same time a practical dimension, meaning the capacity to transform the existing political and cultural order.

It seems unusually interesting that Gołaszewska's description of the aesthetic situation - and thus a situation in which the subject encounters art - expresses intuitions close to these feminist assertions. Importantly, Gołaszewska created and developed her concept of anthropologically oriented aesthetics long before the emergence of feminist academic research in the field of philosophy. Therefore I assert that she anticipated certain ideas which were undertaken and developed several decades later by feminist philosophers. Let us note, therefore, that in Gołaszewska's approach the aesthetic situation always occurs in the context of a specific place and time and specific cultural and social conditions. An important role in the description of the aesthetic situation is

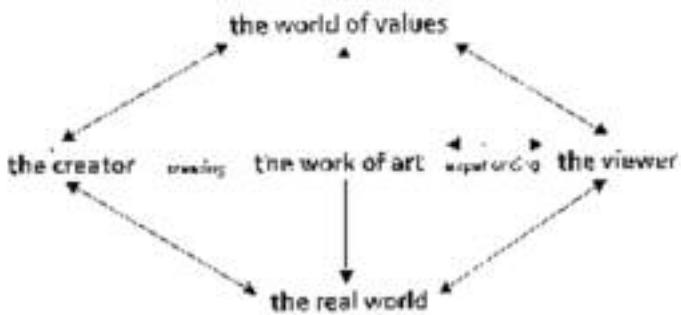
played by psychological and sociological perspectives, which, within the scope of the research, incorporate the subject herself, situated socially and culturally and therefore in possession of a specific set of tools for viewing and interpreting art. I argue that this model of aesthetic experience, thus understood and characterized, is an inclusive concept, as various differing subjects, not only those appropriately prepared for the reception of art, are included in research. In Gołaszewska's approach, the aesthetic experience also possesses a transgressive character - because her theoretical proposal transcends the boundaries of traditional aesthetic concepts, as well as a transformative nature - because the traditional concepts of the creator, work, and viewer are essentially transformed.

### **Conclusion**

During her long career in Academia, Gołaszewska became known as an indefatigable social activist, an outstanding and inspiring thinker, and the teacher of many generations of contemporary Polish philosophers. She was also an important figure in the framing of academic life in Poland, which, given the times in which she lived, was an extraordinary and unique achievement. Her academic *oeuvre*, which is being discovered and read afresh, may also serve as an important voice in the international debate on art and its reception and interpretation. In particular, I believe that Gołaszewska's aesthetics and philosophy of culture constitutes an interesting proposal for a theoretical description of the aesthetic experience within the framework of feminist philosophy. Perhaps this internationally obscure Polish philosopher offered the solutions to the still-current problems in gender-sensitive aesthetics and philosophy that feminist researchers have been seeking since the 1970s.

## NOTES

- 1 - The Roman Ingarden Digital Archive, <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/> [accessed, august 4, 2019].
- 2 - Letter from Golaszewska to Ingarden, April 24, 1966, <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/letter-from-maria-golaszewska-written-4-24-1966/> [accessed, august 4, 2019].
- 3 - Letter from Golaszewska to Ingarden, May 22, 1966, <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/letter-from-maria-golaszewska-written-5-22-1966/> [accessed, august 4, 2019].
- 4 - Letter from Golaszewska to Ingarden, April 24, 1966, <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/letter-from-maria-golaszewska-written-4-24-1966/> [accessed, august 4, 2019].
- 5 - *Ibidem* [accessed, august 4, 2019].
- 6 - Letter from Golaszewska to Ingarden, May 13, 1968, <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/letter-from-maria-golaszewska-written-5-13-1968/> [accessed, august 4, 2019].
- 7 - Ingarden's lecture at the 14th International Congress of Philosophy in Vienna, 1968, <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/lecture-of-roman-ingarden-on-14th-international-congress-of-philosophy-02-09-1968-09-09-1968/> [accessed, august 4, 2019].



Pic. 1 - Diagram of the aesthetic situation according to Maria Gołaszewska

## REFERENCES

- Anderson E.** *Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science* in "Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy", <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-epistemology/#object>, [accessed, August 4, 2019].
- Assiter A.** *Enlightened Women: Modernist Feminism in a Postmodern Age*. Routledge, London 1996.
- Benhabib S.** *Situating the Self*. Polity Press/Blackwell, Oxford 1992.
- Braidotti R.** *Posthuman, All Too Human: Towards a New Process Ontology* in "Theory Culture" Vol. 23, 2006, pp. 197-208.
- Czakon D. - Michna N.A. - Sosnowski L.** *Polskie badaczki w korespondencji Romana Ingardena* in "Kwartalnik Filozoficzny" Vol. XLVI, n. 2, 2018a, pp. 113-131.
- Czakon D. - Michna N.A. - Sosnowski L.** *Roman Ingarden w środowisku akademickim Getyngi i Fryburga* in "Kwartalnik Filozoficzny" Vol. XLVI, n. 3, 2018b, pp. 117-135.
- Golaszewska M.** *Twórczość a osobowość twórcy. Analiza procesu twórczego*. Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Lublin 1958.
- Golaszewska M.** *Zagadnienie rozumienia dzieła sztuki* in "Studia Estetyczne" Vol. I, 1964.
- Golaszewska M.** *Odbiorca sztuki jako krytyk*. Wyd. Literackie, Kraków, 1967a.
- Golaszewska M.** *I due poli dell' estetica* in "Revista di Estetica", A. XII, Fasc. III, IX-XII, 1967b.
- Golaszewska M.** *Świadomość piękna. Problematyka genezy, funkcji, struktury i wartości w estetyce*. PWN, Warszawa, 1970.
- Golaszewska M.** *Zarys estetyki. Problematyka, metody, teorie*. PWN, Kraków, 1973.
- Golaszewska M.** *Artysta w sytuacji estetycznej* in "Zeszyty Naukowe PWSM" Vol. 15, Gdansk, 1976, pp. 5-59.
- Golaszewska M.** *Aesthetic Situation as the main subject of aesthetics* in "Reports on Philosophy" n. 7, 1983, pp. 133-151.
- Golaszewska M.** *Estetyka i antyestetyka*. Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa, 1984a.
- Golaszewska M.** *Universum sztuki*. Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Kraków, 1984b.

**Golaszewska M.** *Ars in crudo - An outline of problems in "Philosophica"* Vol. 38, n. 2, 1986, pp. 131-142.

**Golaszewska M.** *Poetyka idei ogólnych*. Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Kraków, 1995.

**Golaszewska M.** *Letters in "The Roman Ingarden Digital Archive"*:

- "Letter from Golaszewska to Ingarden, April 24, 1966", <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/letter-from-maria-golaszewska-written-4-24-1966/> [accessed, August 4, 2019].

- "Letter from Golaszewska to Ingarden, May 22, 1966", <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/letter-from-maria-golaszewska-written-5-22-1966/> [accessed, August 4, 2019].

- "Letter from Golaszewska to Ingarden, May 13, 1968", <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/letter-from-maria-golaszewska-written-5-13-1968/> [accessed, August 4, 2019].

**Haraway D.** *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective* in "Feminist Studies" Vol. 14, n. 3, 1988, pp. 575-599.

**Haraway D.** *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. Free Association Books, London 1991.

**Harding S.** *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca-New York, 1991.

**Ingarden R.** *Lecture on 14<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Philosophy in Vienna, 02.09.1968-09.09.1968* in "The Roman Ingarden Digital Archive", <http://ingarden.archive.uj.edu.pl/en/archiwum/lecture-of-roman-ingarden-on-14th-international-congress-of-philosophy-02-09-1968-09-09-1968/> [accessed, August 4, 2019].

**Longino H.E.** *Science as Social Knowledge. Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1990.

**Potter E.** *Feminism and Philosophy of Science. An Introduction*. Routledge, London-New York, 2006.

**Serafin K.** *Ogólna teoria wartości w filozofii Marii Golaszewskiej* in "Kultura i wartości" 4(8), 2013, pp. 75-90.

**Serafin K.** *Antropologiczne podstawy estetyki w twórczości Marii Golaszewskiej* in "DYSKURS: Pismo Naukowo-Artystyczne ASP we Wrocławiu" Vol. 17, 2014a, pp. 262-281.

**Serafin K.** *Koncepcja wartości estetycznych ujęcie Romana Ingardena*



*i Marii Golaszewskiej* in “Świdnickie Studia Teologiczne” Vol. XI, n. 2, 2014b, pp. 153-169.

**Smith D.E.** *The Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge*. Northeastern University Press, Boston 1990.

## REPRESENTATION DE LA FEMME EN INDE

*Umberto Mondini*  
(Università Pontificia Salesiana)

*Sandrine Prévot*  
(Ethnologist, CEIAS, France  
Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud)

### **Place des femmes dans la chanson de geste, à travers l'exemple l'épopée de Pabuji (*Umberto Mondini*)**

La société indienne depuis le temps des Vedas était divisée en 4 *Varnas*: les *Brahmanes*, la caste sacerdotale, les *Ksatriyas*, les rois et les guerriers, les *Vaisya*, les marchands et les propriétaires fonciers, et les *Sûdras*, les employés et servants.

Les lois de Manu dictaient les règles de vie pour chaque varna, selon certains principes de pureté. Les varnas étaient divisés en une myriade de sous-groupes, les jati. Les varna et les jati formaient une structure rigide et hiérarchique. Les positions sociales impliquaient des droits et des obligations.

Les femmes et les hommes obéissaient aux règles de caste, et en particulier aux règles de mariage. Ils devaient respecter l'endogamie de caste, c'est-à-dire se marier dans la caste.

Les femmes auraient eu soi-disant une période de liberté pendant l'époque védique (Torri, 2000, p.124). Mais leur condition se dégrada pendant la période Gupta ( 4<sup>e</sup> au 6<sup>e</sup> siècle). Dans la vie réelle, la position des femmes dans la société était clairement inférieure et dépendante des hommes. Les femmes de classe élevée recevaient une éducation pour être une compagnie agréable pour les hommes. Mais les femmes considérées les plus libres étaient surtout les prostituées et les courtisanes.

Toutefois, les chansons de gestes, qui contaient l'histoire des chevaliers à la guerre, exaltaient la figure des femmes. Les femmes étaient idéalisées poétiquement. Nous verrons ici le lien entre la chanson de geste et le réalisme social.

### **Le cas de Phulvanti**

Dans l'épopée de Pabuji, du 14<sup>e</sup> siècle, nous rencontrons un épisode où la jeune Phulvanti, fille du roi Surajmal Sodho qui régnait sur Umarkot, voit notre héros Pabuji de la fenêtre de la tour de son château alors qu'elle était en train dévider et filer. Il est en train de parler avec ses capitaines. Elle tombe amoureuse de lui. La princesse appelle la femme de son jardinier et lui donne un petit chapeau incrusté de pierres précieuses qu'elle avait cousu. Elle lui ordonne de le porter à Pabuji, sans lui révéler qui est l'expéditrice. (Fig. 1)

C'est une scène classique de la chanson de geste. Elle court chez sa mère et lui dit qu'elle veut se marier avec Pabuji. La reine se met à réfléchir et pense que c'est un choix approprié. Pabuji est un prince, il a son château et maintenant, il est même un héros célèbre. Elle va chez son mari, le roi, pour l'informer qu'elle a décidé de marier sa fille avec Pabuji et qu'il doit prendre les actions en conséquence pour réaliser le mariage. C'est un cas typiquement poétique mais avec très peu de réalisme social. Autrefois c'étaient toujours les hommes qui décidaient du mariage de ses filles.

### **Le cas de Pema**

Dans le même poème, dans un autre épisode. Le roi Buro, pour faire la paix avec un royaume voisin avec lequel il était en guerre, décide de marier une fille de sa famille avec son adversaire. La seule candidate possible c'est sa sœur Pema. Sans perdre de temps, et spécialement sans demander à Pema si elle est d'accord ou pas, il envoie immédiatement un de ses capitaines avec des cadeaux nuptiaux à la cour de son voisin. Il décide donc sans l'avis de son épouse et de la jeune fille.

Ce cas est le plus proche de la réalité sociale.

Le cas précédent, celui de Phulvanti, c'est au contraire, une idéalisation poétique où la jeune fille peut réaliser un mariage d'amour. Alors même que depuis l'antiquité, le mariage d'amour a toujours été désapprouvé par la société.

### **Le cas de Kelam**

Dans un autre épisode de l'épopée de Pabuji, nous trouvons notre héros en train de prendre un bain rituel au bord du lac sacré de la ville de Pushkar. Il trébuche et risque de tomber dans les eaux profondes du lac mais une main l'agrippe l'empêchant de tomber. Pabuji veut remercier le jeune homme qui l'a sauvé d'une mauvaise chute et lui dit « dis-moi ce que tu veux que je fasse pour toi?. Je peux te recouvrir d'or et de pierres précieuses. Mais avant tout je veux savoir ton nom et à quelle jati à qui tu appartiens. (Fig. 2)

Le jeune homme répond qu'il s'appelle Gogaji et qu'il est le fils du roi Pitalde, mais qu'il refuse une récompense en or ou en soie. Il veut se marier avec la fille de Pabuji. Notre héros répond que c'est impossible car il n'a pas de femme et donc pas même de fille. Mais il a une solution. Gogaji peut se marier avec la fille de son frère, appelée Kelam. Le seul problème avec cette fille, c'est qu'elle n'a pas encore passé son premier Shraavan Teej. (Fig. 3)

Dans cet épisode, le mariage est arrangé entre les hommes et concentré sur tout le groupe agnatique, et non entre le fiancé et la fiancée. Ce sont des alliances à l'intérieur d'un groupe local afin de créer un réseau d'alliance fait pour garantir la fin d'un conflit et donc amener la paix.

Kelam était promise par Pabuji avant d'entrer dans l'âge adulte. Ceci était possible car, dans l'Inde ancienne, les mariages d'enfants étaient fréquents. Il y avait en effet deux cérémonies: l'arrangement (*sagai*) de mariage et la vraie cérémonie de mariage (*shadi*). Kelam devait célébrer son 1<sup>er</sup>

Teej, une cérémonie d'initiation où elle laisse son enfance derrière elle, et devient une femme, prête pour la procréation et donc son mariage. Ce rituel est encore réalisé, de la même façon que dans l'époque ancienne, le 3<sup>e</sup> jour de la lune pleine du mois de Shraavana, entre juillet et août. Le Teej c'est un festival qui a lieu principalement en Inde centrale et du Nord. C'est un rite réalisé par les femmes pour le bien-être de leur mari. Teej veut dire littéralement 3<sup>e</sup>, car il se fait tous les mois, le 3<sup>e</sup> après la lune nouvelle et après la lune pleine. Dès que le mois de Shravan arrive en période moisson, les pâturages sont verts, et c'est pour ça qu'il prend le nom de Hariyali teej (green teej). Il est dédié à la déesse Parvati, en commémoration de son union avec Shiva, il est célébré pour que soient atteints le bonheur sexuel, le bien être du mari et la purification du corps et de l'âme. Le festival dure 3 jours pendant lequel de grand repas sont alternés avec des moments de jeûne. La chose typique de Teej est que les jeunes filles pas encore mariées se balancent sur des balançoires attachées aux arbres. C'est aussi une manière de souhaiter la bienvenue aux moussons. Particulièrement dans le désert du Rajasthan où les pluies apportent fertilité et de bonnes récoltes.

Durant cette cérémonie féminine dédiée à Parvati, protectrice des femmes et de fertilité féminine, les femmes dessinent des motifs sur leurs mains et leurs pieds avec du henné. Les balançoires sont décorées avec des guirlandes de fleurs et attachées aux branches des arbres dans tout le village. Les jeunes filles qui prennent part pour la première fois à ce rituel s'appellent «teejanis» et en se balançant, elles chantent des chansons dévotionnelles dédiées à Parvati.

Dans l'antiquité, et quelque fois même maintenant, les fiancés ne se rencontrent jamais dans la période de leur engagement. Le processus est géré avec les deux groupes de parentèle, sans que l'épouse soit mise en courant de ce qui est en train de se passer. Comme Kelam, elles ne savent qu'elles ont été pro-

prises et ne connaissent pas les arrangements mis en acte pour leur mariage.

Ainsi le fait que Phulvanti prenne l'initiative est anormal. Ceci même si de toute façon, elle ne fait que parler à sa mère. Laquelle prend la situation dans ses mains: en envoyant des cadeaux nuptiaux à Pabuji puis en informant ensuite son mari, le roi. Dans ce cas, c'est une situation exceptionnelle liée principalement à la chanson de geste où les femmes ont un rôle dans la vie réelle.

### **Conclusion**

Je voudrai terminer pour dire qu'en Inde, la femme passe sous la protection de son père à celle de son mari.

Dans la culture indienne, Parvati est la femme parfaite. Dans le Mahabharata, Shiva demande à Parvati de lui dire les devoirs de la femme. Parvati répond: «les devoirs d'une femme sont créés dans les rites du mariage, quand devant le feu nuptial, elle devient l'associée de son seigneur, pour la réalisation de tous les besoins. Elle doit être merveilleuse et gentille. Elle doit considérer son mari comme son Dieu, et le servir dans la fortune comme la pauvreté, dans la santé comme la maladie, obéissant même s'il lui demande de faire des choses injustes ou des actes qui peuvent provoquer sa destruction. Elle doit se lever tôt le matin, servir les dieux, maintenir la maison propre, prendre soin du feu sacré domestique, manger seulement après les dieux, les hôtes et toute la maison, d'être dévouée à ses parents et à ceux de son mari. La dévotion à son mari est l'honneur de la femme et son paradis. (Fig. 4)



Fig. 1 - Buro e Sargda Khinchi in guerra per la lepre



Fig. 2 - Pabuji e Gogo al lago di Pushkar



Fig. 3 - Gogoji, sotto le sembianze di un serpente



Fig. 4 - Pulvanti ferma Pabuji attaccandosi alla staffa



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agrawal A. - Narain S.** (Eds) *Dying Wisdom: Rise, Fall and Potential of India's Traditional Water Harvesting Systems*. New Delhi, 1997.
- Agrawal D. P.** *Man and Environment in India through Ages*. New Delhi, 1992.
- Allen C. - Dwivedi S.** *Lives of the Indian Princes*. Arena Edition, Mumbai, 1998.
- Auboyer J.** *Daily Life in Ancient India: From 200 BC to 700 AD*. Phoenix Press, London, 2002.
- Basham A. L.** *A Cultural History of India*. Oxford, 1975.
- Chakravarti U.** *Social Pariahs and Domestic Drudges. Widowhood among Nineteenth Century Poona Brahmins* in "Social Scientist" 21, 9-11, 1993, pp. 130-158.
- Courtright P.** *The Goddess and the Dreadful Practice*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1984.
- Goyal S. R.** *A History of Imperial Guptas*. Central Book Depot. Allahabad, 1967.
- Hardgrave R. L. Jr.** *The Representation of Sati: Four Eighteenth Century Etchings by Baltazard Solvyns*. Bengal Past and Present, 117, 1998, pp. 57-80.
- Hawley J. S.** *Sati, the Blessing and the Curse: The Burning of Wives in India*. Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1994.
- Hooja R.** *The History of Rajasthan*. Rupa, New Delhi, 2006.
- James L.** *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India*. 1998.
- Kishwar M.** *Deadly Laws and Zealous Reformers* in "Manushi" Issue 115.
- Kumar R.** *From Chipko to Sati: The Contemporary Indian Women's Movement* in "The Challenge of Local Feminisms: Women's Movements in Global Perspective". Ed. Amrita Basu, Boulder, Westview Press, 1995.
- Lo Turco B.** *La sati: Operatrice del Sacro e Spirito Tutelare*. In *Corpi Sciamanici*. Ed. Sergio Botta - Marianna Ferrara. Roma, Sapienza, 2017.
- Mondini U.** *L'Epopea di Pabuji*. Progetto Cultura Editore, Roma, 2016.
- Moore L.** *Maharanis: The Extraordinary Tale of Four Indian Queens and Their Journey from Purdah to Parliament*. India, Penguin Books, 2004.

**Oldenburg V. T.** *The Continuing Invention of the Sati Tradition in “Sati, the Blessing and the Curse: The Burning of Wives in India”*. Ed. John Stratton Hawley, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1994.

**Parrilla V.** *Sati: Virtuous Woman through Self-Sacrifice*. James Pegg (1999), n.d. Web. 04 Oct. 2013

**Shakuntala R. S.** *Women in the Sacred Laws - The Later Law Books*. 1960.

**Smith J. D.** *The Epic of Pabuji*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991.

**Smith V. A.** *Early History of India*. Oxford, 1904.

**Stein D. K.** *Women to Burn: Suttee as a Normative Institution* in “Signs” 4 (2), 1978, pp. 253-268.

**Thapar R.** *History of India*. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1966.

**Torri M.** *Storia dell’India*. Laterza Editori, Roma, 2000.

## **BharatMata, une représentation politique de la femme idéale (Sandrine Prévot)**

Cette présentation porte sur une figure idéale de la femme: BharatMata. Il s'agit d'un concept politique créé au 19<sup>e</sup> siècle dans le cadre du mouvement d'indépendance et du nationalisme naissant en Inde. Il signifie «mère patrie», «mother india».

Ce concept est d'abord apparu sous la plume de l'écrivain Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, en 1882, dans son roman *Anandamath* avec la chanson *Vande Mataram* («Victoire de la mère»). Un des protagonistes, Bhavananda, explique: «pour nous, il n'y a pas d'autre mère [...]. Nous, nous disons que la terre natale est notre génitrice. Nous n'avons ni mère, ni père, ni frère, ni ami, ni épouse, ni fils, ni foyer, ni maison. Pour nous, il n'existe rien d'autre que cette mère qui est arrosée de belles eaux, riche en fruits, rafraichies par une douce brise, tapissée de vertes récoltes» (Bhattacharya, 1985, p. 44).

Cette représentation de la nation a été ensuite adoptée par l'intelligentsia indienne sous l'occupation britannique dans le cadre de la conquête vers l'indépendance. L'élite indienne avait le sentiment d'être mal considérée par les colonisateurs. Formée pour être leurs administrateurs locaux, elle se voyait refuser des postes à responsabilité (Jaffrelot, 1988). De plus, les britanniques avaient une image déplorable des coutumes indiennes. S'ils reconnaissaient l'héritage brahmanique et védique, ils considéraient que le pays était peu respectueux envers les femmes, en raison notamment des coutumes comme la sati ou les mariages d'enfants. Ce sentiment d'agression culturelle encouragea le développement du nationalisme et favorisa ainsi la création d'images qui ont servi de support au mouvement d'indépendance: à travers BharatMata, les indiens posent la femme comme symbole et mère de la nation, montrant ainsi la supériorité des femmes et le respect qu'on leur doit.

## Un vaste projet d'union nationale

Avant le mouvement nationaliste, il n'existe pas de conscience nationale (Angot, 2012). Pendant longtemps les catégories "patrimoine national" et «caractère national» n'existeront d'ailleurs pas dans la vie émotionnelle de la population (Schulze, 2002). Donc pour mettre en œuvre l'indépendance, à partir du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle, les politiques, les intellectuels et les artistes s'attachent à inventer et à populariser une culture nationale indienne imaginaire. C'est là qu'apparaît BharatMata. Incarnation de la nation, elle doit être défendue par tous. Les hommes doivent être prêts à donner leur vie pour la mère patrie, l'intérêt individuel est ainsi sacrifié au profit du collectif. BharatMata sera considérée comme un hymne au sacrifice.

BharatMata participe à la construction du sentiment national, mais elle vise aussi à caractériser l'indianité et la tradition indienne. À travers elle, se façonne une image de la féminité basée sur la patriarchie: la fidélité, le sacrifice et le renoncement à soi sont considérés comme des éléments nécessaires à la condition féminine.

Icône de la tradition indienne inventée, BharatMata ne se réfère aucunement à l'émancipation des femmes et à leur indépendance vis-à-vis du cadre familial. Elle ne reflète pas non plus la situation réelle des femmes, c'est-à-dire leur subordination au sein de l'univers familial ni les conflits internes au sein de la société régie par l'ordre brahmanique. BharatMata s'adresse au nationaliste, et non au citoyen indien - homme ou femme - qui attend des réels changements sociaux et politiques pour une vie meilleure. Il s'agit d'une représentation idéologique qui a une ambition politique d'union nationale.

BharatMata est au cœur du maintien de l'ordre social traditionnel et sert de base morale à la jeune nation indienne. En effet, tout en représentant la dévotion à la nation (*desh bhakti*), elle met également l'accent sur la dévotion à la mère (*matri bhakti*). BharatMata est avant tout une gardienne des traditions et elle entretient une morale fortement régulée par le pouvoir patriarcal (Jasbir Jain, 2006).

Cet emblème confine la femme à l'univers domestique, et la maternité est présentée comme son rôle majeur. Cela est aussi en cohésion avec la vision puritaine de la société indienne. D'une part la famille est le seul cadre respectable dans lequel peut s'inscrire le désir et la sexualité, et hors du cadre marital, la sexualité est condamnée. D'autre part l'amour, le plus valorisé et le plus profond, est déconnecté de la dimension sexuelle. Cet amour, incarné par l'amour maternel, est vu comme une force douce et tendre apportant une force puissante et auspiciuse.

Aujourd'hui cette image persiste dans l'Inde moderne. Ainsi Savatri, directrice d'une ONG, commente ce maintien de la domination masculine: «Avec BharatMata, la femme doit procréer et enfanter des hommes qui vont défendre la nation. C'est une vision très traditionnelle. Les séries télé sur le Ramayana sont du même ordre. L'idée c'est toujours une femme qui doit être à la maison et dévouée à son mari».

### **Evolution de la représentation iconographique**

BharatMata a été fortement utilisée par le gouvernement post-colonial dans les années 40-50. Nehru souhaitait construire l'unité de la nation indienne, et le cinéma l'a aidé dans cette tâche<sup>1</sup>. Dès 1949, les producteurs et les réalisateurs indiens ont été appelés à coopérer avec le gouvernement et à partager la responsabilité de l'édification de la nation (Schulze, 2002). Ils ont répondu à l'appel et produit de nombreuses œuvres patriotiques. Par exemple, le cinéma indien a lancé une saga épique *Mother India* (1957) de Mehboob Khan. Le film dépeint l'icône de "la femme indienne", Radha, qui, en sacrifiant son fils au profit du collectif, représente une métaphore émouvante de la soumission à l'État-nation.

Au fil des années, les représentations de BharatMata et la chanson *Vande Mataram* sont devenues une partie intégrante de l'imaginaire collectif de la nation indienne. Les iconographies dans l'art calendaire se sont multipliées. Prenant une signification à la fois esthétique, dévotionnelle et politique, elles ont évolué en fonction

des idées de chaque époque (Malvika Maheshwari, 2010).

Dans une première illustration, BharatMata est dépeinte dans une atmosphère dorée et éthérée par l'artiste Abindranath Tagore, en 1905. Un halo blanc encadre son visage, elle porte une robe de couleur safran, des bracelets. Elle tient dans ses quatre mains, un manuscrit qui symbolise l'éducation, un drap blanc qui représente les vêtements, des gerbes de riz qui évoquent la nourriture, et un *mala* qui indique sa foi et sa posture de non-violence. Elle offre alors une image de sérénité, de renoncement et de grâce, sans connotation hindoue ou védique. Elle représente une femme indienne.

Puis progressivement, la chaste et éthérée jeune fille se transforme en déesse et le raffinement de la vision de Tagore n'est plus présent. L'iconographie la plus commune est celle de BharatMata avec une carte en arrière-plan ou avec le corps prenant la forme du sous-continent. Le drapeau tricolore indien est placé de façon très visible sur l'image. Des conventions sanscrites sont également employées: par exemple elle est positionnée sur un pétale de lotus, a des gestes expressifs symbolisant le *abhaya mudra* (mouvement de la main) qui accorde intrépidité, tranquillité et protection à l'adorateur. Elle est aussi drapée dans un sari rouge, la tête coiffée d'une couronne, telle une reine sereine et gracieuse. Elle rappelle alors fortement les déesses hindoues et en particulier le déesse de la prospérité, Lakshmi.

### **L'adoption par les extrémistes hindous**

Alors que BharatMata ne fait pas partie du panthéon des dieux et des déesses hindous, progressivement ce concept politique a pris une dimension hindoue et védique. Il est devenu un symbole largement utilisé par les extrémistes hindous. Selon ces derniers, BharatMata, la mère de la nation, est hindoue car l'indianité doit se résumer à l'hindouïté. Tout indien est supposé de nature «hindoue». Les indiens musulmans et chrétiens sont regardés comme des étrangers et des menaces. Cette conception

de la nation ne traduit pas l'histoire du sous-continent qui a amené au pluralisme religieux de l'Inde, et, je le rappelle, si les hindous sont majoritaires, il y a des minorités importantes: les musulmans totalisent 14% de la population, les chrétiens 2%, les sikhs 1%, les bouddhistes 1%.

La transformation «hindoue» de BharatMata va s'accroître à partir des années 1980 -90, avec la montée en puissance du communautarisme et du nationalisme politique hindou. La déesse perd son calme et sa sérénité, elle assume désormais une posture militante. Le drapeau du RSS, un mouvement fondamentaliste hindou (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, «association des volontaires nationaux»)² remplace le drapeau tricolore.

Cette orientation nationaliste hindoue n'est bien sûr pas générale. Il y a eu d'autres iconographies. Par exemple, en 2006, le célèbre artiste moderne Maqbool Fida Husain a symbolisé BharatMata dans un corps de femme nue dont les contours se confondent avec ceux du sous-continent indien. Cependant cette toile a été critiquée par l'extrême droite hindoue qui a jugé la nudité peu respectueuse de la nation. Et de nombreuses galeries d'art ont été saccagées.

## NOTES

1 - Afin de diffuser l'idée de l'unité nationale dans la diversité, le gouvernement a utilisé les symboles, les icônes et le monde du spectacle. Le cinéma indien, avec son influence psychologique, est en effet instrument efficace pour construire le sentiment national (Neikolie Kuotsu, 2012).

2 - Mouvement créé en 1925 dont était membre le meurtrier du Mahatma Gandhi.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIE

**Angot M.** *L'invention de l'Inde par les Indiens. L'Inde, sous la direction de Angot Michel.* Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 2012, pp. 401-414.

**Bhattacharya F.** *Le monastère de la félicité.* B.C. Chatterji, publications orientalistes de France, 1985.

**Jaffrelot C.** *L'émergence des nationalismes en Inde. Perspectives théoriques* in "Revue française de science politique" 4, 1988, pp. 555-575; [https://www.persee.fr/doc/rfsp\\_0035-2950\\_1988\\_num\\_38\\_4\\_411152](https://www.persee.fr/doc/rfsp_0035-2950_1988_num_38_4_411152)

**Jasbir J.** *Daughters of Mother India in Search of a Nation: Women's Narratives about the Nation* in "Economic and Political Weekly" 41 (17), 2006, pp. 1654- 1660.

**Neikolie K.** *Metropolis and peripheral life: Digital cinema dialects in 'Northeast' India.* 2012 [Majlis\_Project Cinema City].

**Malvika M.** *Comment représenter la nation indienne? Le nationalisme ordinaire à travers l'art calendaire* in "Raisons politiques" 1 (37), 2010, pp. 53-64.

**Schulze B.** *The Cinematic 'Discovery of India': Mehboob's Re-Invention of the Nation in Mother India* in "Social Scientist" 30 (9/10), 2002, pp. 72-87.



**THE ART OF SHOWING  
“L’INTRINSICO CON LO ESTRINSICO”:  
THE MAGNIFICATION OF FEMININE VIRTUES IN  
PIRRO LIGORIO’S DRAWINGS  
IN THE UNPUBLISHED MS. LONDON COLL.  
DEL DUCA ROBERTO FERRETTI 216**

*Giulia Moretti Corsi*  
(University of Rome, Tor Vergata)

Taking up some of the questions posed by the well-known paper by Joan Kelly in 1977, “Did women have a Renaissance?”, we will try to analyse the ancient characters identified by Ligorio in his manuscript as a model of virtue and as an emulation term for women in the complex Italian political landscape of the Renaissance. In the introduction Pirro Ligorio identifies, in particular, four virtues (Prudence, Temperance, Justice and Modesty) to each of which he associates peculiar aesthetic hairstyles commonly used by the Roman noble women and illustrated in the manuscript.

Through the case studies of Iulia Augusta (Foll. 18 - 19), Marciana (Foll. 21 - 22 - 23), Sabina (Foll. 37 - 38 - 39 - 40 - 41) and Annia Faustina (Foll. 54 - 55 - 56), it will be underlined the perception of women in the Renaissance through the *media* of extrinsic forms and feminine embellishments of antiquity.

In this perspective, Renaissance women have so far received little attention in literature except for a fortune in traditional and sometimes fictional historical biographies or for scholarly works like *Gynevera de le clare donne* by Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti (1483).

The novelty in this sense is displayed by the intention to bring out the role of the *clarae* women in consideration of some changes occurred in the management of private law cases, e.g. the frequent

recourse to exceptions in matter of feudal law that excluded women from heredity or from investiture depriving them of freely disposing of their goods.

This paper aims to illustrate the manuscript<sup>1</sup> LONDON Coll. Of Duke Roberto Ferretti 216<sup>2</sup> attributed to Pirro Ligorio that with its rapid glimpses of the setting of small collectors, antiques dealers and coin dealers settled between the two districts of Borgo and Campo dei Fiori, offers a lively slice of Rome in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

There will therefore be proposed into two thematic sections: a first part focused on the analysis of the extrinsic and intrinsic forms of the manuscript with appropriate references to the literary tradition and a second part in which will be presented four examples representing the female virtues celebrated by Pirro Ligorio in the introduction.

### **Extrinsic and intrinsic forms**

This manuscript was presumably drawn up by Pirro Ligorio in Rome probably between 1566 and 1571 and it is now preserved in original in the private collection of Duke Ferretti of Ancona<sup>3</sup>. It starts with the dedication to the “*illustrissima et eccellentissima signora donna Virginia*” (Fol. 3; Pic. 1) and contains a detailed treatment of ancient hairstyles with numerous sketches by famous female personalities that P. Ligorio drew from busts, gems, coins and funerary monuments.

The manuscript consists of 61 folios measuring 200 x 135 mm held together by a 16<sup>th</sup> century embossed gold binding. The portraits in the manuscript are generally accompanied by a brief description and indications of provenance. Some, however, do not report the name of the subject reproduced. Both the title page and the plate are lost.

On the first folio, under a small stamp with the effigy of Minerva, there is a notation that says: “*Fra i libri di Bernardino Sarzetti 1766*” (Fol. 1; Pic. 2).

At the bottom, in the center of the folio, there is the family crest of the Ferretti dukes, banded with silver and red of four pieces, surmounted by the ducal crown.

In the following seven sheets there is an introduction, written by Pirro Ligorio, in which the artist describes the history of women's hairstyles from the typical simplicity of the Republican age to the growing complexity of the early imperial age up to the most complex creations of the II and III century AD.

The introduction opens with an explicit reference to the beauty of women of antiquity, who were "*meritevoli di essere inalzate per la bellezza loro naturale et per l'arte delle inventioni vagamente da esse ritrovate con bellissimi ligamenti di concieri di teste*" (Fol. 3).

The narration continues with the enumeration of a nomenclature created to define the various shapes assumed by female hairstyles: *Camacis, Canistron, Calatho, CalyPtra, Callipirgas, et Tutulus*. The hairstyles called "tutuli" are assimilated by the author, due to their considerable expansion in height, to the fortresses of ancient cities, while those defined as "Callipirgas" are said to be similar to city towers.

There is also mention of a third hairstyle "*simile ai canestri, che le vaghe fanciulle, portavano nella festa de Diana*" (Fol. 3v).

The beauty with which these women are endowed, which makes them resemble "*al Mare, che porge l'acqua' tutta la terra, et all'aere et à tutti i luoghi che esso bagna*" (Fol. 4) spreads in "*tutti gli animi de mortali desiosi di vedere cose nuove*" (Fol. 4).

The majesty of the past female beauty collides, in the continuation of the narrative, with "*la vaghezza della nuova stagione dell'anno*" (Fol. 4v) which can only benefit from the attempt to approach the reflection of past beauty. The exaltation of Roman women is perceived by the author of the manuscript as the result of the elaboration of previous models "*li cui essempii furono, fatti da Phydia et Praxitele in marmo e in metallo, da Pergotele in gemme, et da Apelles*" (Fol. 5) filtered through the "*cose piu lu-*

*cide della varietà della natura prodotte*” (Fol. 5v) thus making it possible to show “*lo intrinseco con lo estrinseco*” (Foll. 5v - 6). The superiority of Roman women in approaching the most varied ornaments (gems, pearls, gold etc) is also celebrated by the combination of the chosen hairstyles and the virtues to which they suited. The personifications of virtues mentioned here are those of Prudence, Temperance, Modesty and Justice, each corresponding to a specific way of styling hair.

Those who wanted to fit in with the ideal of Prudence wore “*una corona in testa ordinata de pietre pretiose, le quali erano talmente lucide, che lo splendore della sua fulgente rossezza è pareggiata alla lucidezza delle stelle [...] dimostrando in ciò le cose semplici di Natura, parevano che fussero state mischiate con la delicatezza, et grata bellezza della faccia, che per la rara eccellenza i capelli d’oro intrecciati sostenevano*” (6v).

Those who wanted to resemble Temperance instead wore “*negli sguardi et tutti i suoi vestimenti, che erano bianchi, di cose bianche lavorate et d’oro, tenendo in capo una corona, non con testa de pietre pretiose, ne di perle, ma di foglie, et de fiori, con la capillatura non molto longa, per esser’raccolta nella rivolgitura della piu parte attorno la corona, et annodati, poi di dietro della collottola*” (Fol. 7).

The hairstyle emblem of Justice “*dimostrava una chiarissima serenità, con dispositione e’ gravità singolare accio che paresse essere grande et formosa col vestimento dipinto di color di grana con ornamenti bianchi calandogli poi giù a’ destra et a’ sinistra delle spalle con rara vaghezza ornavano la gola et il petto et l’ondegianti capelli cinti di una triangolare Diadema rapresentava quell’aspetto*” (Foll. 7 - 7v).

Finally, modesty presented “*l’acconciati capelli della Diadema in dietro, et il volto et i capelli in parte sotto l’ombre del velo istesso mostrava bello et sereno. la Nobiltà et la Maestà regale facevano ancho con la pulchra vitta cinti, che era ligata con una bianca benda nel resto il conciero era come dicevano i Greci Cal-*

*liplocamos, per havere il crine puro et chiaro, come l'usava sapho poetessa lirica*" (7v).

The introduction ends with a long mythological periphrasis on the physical imperfections of the god Vulcan, in contrast to the perfection of the works of art of which he is the author (Fol. 8). From this consideration the author draws inspiration to refer his work to the judgment of the illustrious recipient mentioned at the beginning with a formula of *captatio benevolentiae* in which he puts all the limits of human creations "*reservando la fattezza delle cose più perfette à iDdio immortale*" (8v).

At the end of the introduction, on the front of folio 10, it says: "*Questo libro è di Gio. Angelo Barbello<sup>5</sup> al \*\*\* per che sono troppo in inidia \*\*\* et per questo io lo fatto in Carlo Antonio Barbello Pitore in Crema nel 1647*" (Fol. 10; Pic. 3).

While on the reverse of the same folio the drawings of a young man and an old man appear accompanied, in the register below, by studies of nasal septa. It is probably the hand of a 17<sup>th</sup> century draftsman. On the front of folio 11 we read: "*Questo libro e di me Carlo Antonio Barbello<sup>6</sup> Pitore in memoria (?) nel 1647*" (Fol. 11; Pic. 4) and, further down, "*Questo libro è di Domenico Bassi dissignatore 1660*".

According to L. Dania, the ink of the last notation, the one indicating the authorship of Domenico Bassi's manuscript, would be the same as the drawing on the reverse of the folio. An examen of the manuscript, which allows to analyze possible structure of the files, of the papers and of the inks, may clarify some of the internal contradictions.

Based on the data previously exposed, two elements of historical and narrative interest emerge: the presence of an initial dedication and the exaltation of female virtues through the *medium* of the sketch.

The commendation motif of the dedication does not, however, represent a novelty in the literary field but has illustrious historical precedents. The same motif appears in Boccaccio's *De mulieribus*

*claris*<sup>7</sup>, whose nucleus dates back to 1360 but to which he worked until his death in 1375.

The dedication<sup>8</sup> presented in Boccaccio's work, addressed to the noblewoman Andrea Acciaiuoli is a dedication-screen with which the author hoped to recommend himself to Giovanna of Naples, queen of Jerusalem and Sicily, nephew of Roberto d'Angiò and sister of the king Philip VI of France. Boccaccio, dedicating vast space to women of classical antiquity, invents a new genre in western literature: the collection of female biographies. The first printed vernacular version was by Vincenzo Bagli and dates back to 1506<sup>9</sup>.

The Italian fortune of the work is mainly due to a new vulgarization that occurred in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century by Giuseppe Betussi<sup>10</sup>, who also translated *Casi degli uomini illustri* (1545) and *Genealogie degli dei* (1547), and who wrote a biography of Boccaccio as the introduction to the first of the two previously mentioned books, which was followed by an Addition which updated the catalogue with figures of exemplary women contemporary to him, such as the women of the Gonzaga court in Mantua, who lived after 1375.

As far as the dedication made out to the aforementioned Virginia is concerned, it can be identified with the noblewoman Virginia della Rovere<sup>11</sup> (1539-1571), daughter of Guidobaldo II and Giulia Varano and wife, from 1560 to 1562, of Federico Borromeo, nephew of the pope Pius IV, and later, from 1564 until his death in 1571, of Ferdinando Orsini, Duke of Gravina. It is believed that by virtue of this relationship, she came into contact with Pirro Ligorio who signs the manuscript in question with the formula "*Architetto di N.S. del Sacro Palazzo Apostolico*<sup>12</sup>". (Fol. 9; Pic. 5).

The caption below bearing the words "*sotto il pontificato di Gregorio XIII vide Roma Sacra e Moderna pluribus locis*" has marked cursive elements and different alterations in the form of the letters, so it is presumably a 17<sup>th</sup> century addition. In consideration therefore of the title present in the signature of Pirro Li-

gorio and of the biographical information previously exposed on the figure of Virginia della Rovere, it is desirable dating of the manuscript between 1566 and 1571, the year of death of Virginia della Rovere.

Guidobaldo II, father of Virginia, inclined together with his brother Giulio towards the liberal arts much more than towards the military ones in which their parent Francesco Maria I distinguished himself, worked to revive the refinement of customs and culture that made famous the court of Urbino. The musical activities of the della Rovere court in the third and fourth decade of the century are reduced to private pleasure or sporadic initiatives accompanying spectacular events<sup>13</sup>. Among them stood out the ambassador Costanzo Porta who, with more constancy than any other musician, corresponded to their intentions to publicize the magnificence and the flourishing of the Duchy through encomiastic musical compositions. He dedicated the first madrigal book at five voices (Venice, Gardano, 1559) to Virginia Della Rovere, opening it with a composition addressed to her: *Alma qual deve 'io dir bella o gentile*<sup>14</sup>.

### **Prudence, temperance, justice and modesty**

Continuing the analysis of the illustrious women in Renaissance manuscripts, the interpretation of the female effigies presented in the manuscript is configured as a process similar to that operated in reading the ancient sources from the ancient: compare, interpret, understand, according to an approach that characterizes the whole Ligorian investigation.

Among the gifts that the promised bridegroom offered to his fiancée in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there are some majolica plates with the representation of female busts accompanied by a ribbon on which the girl's name is associated with an epithet that aims to enhance her moral qualities<sup>15</sup>. This type of tableware is generally indicated with the term *belle donne* because the adjective *bella* appears with a great frequency. The period of greatest

flowering of this kind of amateur pottery was the period between 1520 and 1550. These are portraits made from life or stereotyped images made in series and personalized at the time of purchase with the insertion of the name of the recipient.

Based on some artistic considerations we can distinguish two different manufacturing strands: a more refined production commissioned by the elite in which the portrait was required to have a certain degree of similarity with the young woman, at least in the colour of the eyes and hair, and a serial production intended for a less demanding market, which was content to have the name of the beloved affixed on the scroll left blank. The influence of literary *topoi* on this ceramic production is confirmed by the verses that in 1557 Andreano da Concorde from Todi addressed to a Deruta potter inviting him to produce dishes with female busts accompanied by proper names, providing him with a long list that included both ancient both contemporary women sometimes even associated with those of their lovers.

This rapid rundown of ideas and artistic expressions that, starting from antiquity, reaches up to the modern age, connoting the philosophical innovations introduced by the reborn Aristotelian and neo-Platonic philosophy seems to have as its common denominator the exaltation of female virtues in view of a renewal of the female condition.

Let's now pass to the direct analysis of the hatching and the drawing of four female effigies present in the manuscript. Executed with precision and with great calligraphic skill, the sketches in question can be compared with some folios in the manuscript XIII, B.7 of the National Library of Naples<sup>16</sup>. During the 35 years in which he lived in Rome<sup>17</sup> Pirro Ligorio<sup>18</sup> collected *data* for the compilation of an encyclopedic study of the antiquities of Rome in 50 books still largely unpublished and today divided between the National Library of Naples and the State Archive of Turin, following the noble tradition of contemporary antiques dealers with whom he was in close contact<sup>19</sup> (Antonio Augustin<sup>20</sup>, Onofrio



Panvinio, Fulvio Orsini, Gentile Delfini, Paolo Manuzio, Stephen Pighius, Benedetto Egidio, Ottavio Pantagato, Jean Jacques Bois-sard, Martin Smetius).

The first of these effigies is the one reproducing Iulia Augusta<sup>21</sup> in two different types. The numerous portraiture types of Iulia (5 on coins and 4 sculptural), daughter of the emperor Titus, mark the stages: daughter of the heir designated to the throne, adoption of the title of Augusta, marriage with Titus Flavio Sabino and dynastic descent prospects, ascent to the throne of her father, daughter of the deified Titus and, finally, deified herself.

The evolution of the hairstyle is with a development in height and volume of the curly diadem, behind the cap the hair is divided into thin flattened braids, the chignon pinned on the upper part of the head (II type, Fol. 18; Pic. 6) appears replaced in the posthumous type (III type, Fol. 19; Pic. 7) by a crown of braids on the occiput, which can perhaps be read as a reference to Livia, honored after death.

The shape of the diadem on the forehead and its importance found since 90 AD give particular emphasis to the face and imply a laborious preparation of the hairstyle, suggesting a connection with Domitian's concept of "unbridled" power and the luxury of his court, widely reflected and disparaged by literary sources in terms of excess and moral degradation.

A possible dependence on the shape of traditional tragic masks, crowned by a thick cascade of curls on the head, the so-called *Onkos*, cannot be excluded.

The influence of the theatrical world, and of the shows in general, which women also followed with passion and with fanaticism for artists and gladiators on which Martial and Juvenal ironize, is called upon to justify the fashions and customs they had caught on since Nero's time. The hairstyle worn by Iulia, daughter of Tito and Domizia Longina, had to have a great impact in publicly representing the belonging to the *gens flavia* and the solidity of the new dynasty which was in reality exhausted in few years due

to the lack of heirs.

This hairstyle, formed in the 80-90 AD, is widespread among the portraits of private women (in the round or on funerary reliefs) crowned by a rounded *tiara* that frames the front and temples in which the thick overlapping curls, irregularly marked by drill holes, lose their contours in the mass of the characteristic “sponge” (also called “honeycomb”) appearance, with a rounded profile and a soft texture that is well perceptible even in marble, reaching the best specimens remarkable qualities of pictorial and chiaroscuro effects, in line with the local artistic tendencies. The shape of the bun is also characteristic, originating from the thin braids in which the entire cap is articulated, which are brought back on the right side of the neck, behind the ear, and then rolled up on the back, if they are not made to fall on the shoulders, as in the portraits of Domitia. This unstable crowning mass of the head, difficult to carry out, is defined *orbis* by literary sources (Stazio, *Le selve* I, 2, 113-114; Giovenale VI, 502-504). The difficulty in positioning the locks and stabilizing them to build the *tiara* in several orders of curls, triggered the cruelty of the mistress against the handmaids who combed her as soon as she saw an unsatisfactory result in the mirror (Martial II, 66; Giovenale VI, 487-504).

Compared to the precedents of Iulia Augusta, Marciana<sup>22</sup>’s three sketches (Pics. 8-9-10) reveal the tendency on the part of imperial women not to give up the idea of verticality that presides over the flavian hairstyles, even replacing the curls with superimposed registers of strands modelled in the form of braids and flattened on the shell.

The basic elements of the hairstyle are also repeated in the effigies of the other women symbol of the *Ulpia* family: the decorative elements of the diadem, consisting of small leaves, vary, while the band of thick strands engraved with an arch on the edge of the forehead and the spiral ring in front of the ears, which becomes a real sign of belonging to the imperial family. Both Mar-

ciana, Trajan's sister, and Matidia, Marciana's daughter, share the honor of being depicted on the coins of 112 AD, on the occasion of the celebration of the emperor's fifteen years. The hair is gathered in an elegant and elaborate hairstyle: the edge of the forehead is surrounded by a band of curved locks, turned towards the centre and distinguished by deep drill grooves, interrupted in the middle by a transversal bridge, at the meeting point in the centre of the forehead the two sets of locks formed a pattern with opposing spirals.

Above, the hair diadem is structured in two rows of protruding locks with a particular "tongue" or shell shape, striated inside with overlapping arches (12 in the lower row, 10 in the second).

A disc-shaped tuft descends in front of each ear. Behind the *tiara*, on the cap, the hair is articulated in plastic locks combed backwards (like *Melonenfrisur*), with a parting in the center of the neck, and gathered in a voluminous crown of overlapping braids, which lead in two opposite directions. They gather on the back and are linked transversely by a plait below. Three intertwined locks are visible on the top of the cap, inside the bun. Some small locks protrude from the sides of the neck, long and robust.

Marciana's official image corresponds to only one type of portraiture and is handed down from the coins issued in 112 AD, the year of his death, for the celebration of the fifteen years of Trajan's empire. The same model used for the coins was also used for the sculptural representations of Marciana, variously honored during the reign of Trajan and his successor Adriano, who had two *basilicas* erected in the name of Marciana and Matidia in relation to the temple of the latter in Campus Martius. The physiognomic similarity of Marciana with her brother is particularly evident in the profile view. The type of hairstyle, although in the singular style that distinguishes each of the women of the Ulpia-Elia family, has in common the basic scheme with that of the daughter Matidia and the granddaughter Sabina, in the first type, which followed so much also in the private portraiture of the early

decades of the II century AD: a high decorative hair diadem on the forehead, surrounded by a band of curved locks, and a voluminous crown of braids on the back. Marciana's depiction must be judged without any doubt as posthumous, following his death and deification.

Marciana's own hairstyle is also shared initially by Vibia Sabina<sup>23</sup>, Adriano's bride, combined with a face with an equally severe expression. His first type of portraiture, the so called Vaison type, was related to Hadrian's accession to the throne in 117 AD and it shows an elaborate hairstyle with a frontal diadem, formed by two overlapping hair bands, rendered with fine radial undulations and decorated in the centre by a lyre motif, curls in front of the ears and a large braid crown on the back of the head, also present in the portraits of Marciana and Matidia.

The empress will adopt a completely different hairstyle in the course of the principality of Hadrian (so-called Principal type, created in conjunction with the adoption of the title of Augusta, of a discussed date, from 119 to 128 AD), inspired by that of the classical divinities, and therefore limited to its iconography, without following in a private context: the hair is parted in the centre of the forehead, wavy only on the sides and gathered on the back in a soft bun. The choice may reflect the Hellenic current pursued by her husband, with whom Sabina shows that she is in harmony at least in her official role, touted by coins, historical reliefs and honorary statues. Two other monetary types attest, albeit with a lower diffusion in the sculptural sphere, a simplification of the hairstyle in a classicistic sense, with central discrimination and wavy side bands, combined with a tail or a low bun, in order to recall the iconography of de empresses-model Plotina and Livia. In the first official image of the empress (Fol. 37 - 40 - 41; Pics. 11-12-13) the hairstyle is very elaborate: the forehead is crowned by two overlapping bands of hair, the second much higher than the first, rendered with fine radial undulations and topped with a smooth half-moon diadem (which reproduces a metallic element).

Two spiral curls descend from the first band of the diadem in front of the uncovered ears. Large and obliquely arranged strands occupy the space between the diadem and the chignon behind it, in which the hair is tied in numerous thin braids, knotted in the back and originating from three braids, visible one next to the other inside the wide bun. Two short scythe-shaped locks emerge at the hairline, on the neck, behind the ears. The bust is covered by a cloak, wrapped in front of the chest, with a flap thrown on the left shoulder, below, in the centre, part of the tunic is visible, which was to be stopped on the lay by *fibulae*.

The portrait depicts Vibia Sabina, Adriano's wife, from 100 BC, in the so-called "Vaison" type, the first of the four recognized so far on coins and official images. At this stage the hairstyle of the empress is still very close to those of her grandmother and mother, respectively Marciana and Matidia. The fine and delicate features of the face, young and severe, correspond to those of the women of the Trajan family: the shape of the forehead, mouth and especially the eyes find significant comparisons in the images of Marciana, sister of the emperor. The creation of this type celebrated, as has been proposed, the adoption of the title of Augusta or more likely the ascent to the throne of Hadrian, which occurred in 117 AD. The type had to remain valid until the years around 128-130 AD, as confirmed by the monetary profiles and the existence of replicas with engraved eyes.

The following drawings (Fol. 38 - 39; Pics. 14-15) show instead a portrait of Sabina main type in which the hair, discriminated in the center of the forehead, becomes thickly wavy on the sides.

The fringe is stopped by a smooth, convex section, which is covered by the band that acquires greater plastic evidence before the height of the ears, on each side, and by curving it covers the upper edge of the ear. The band on the left side rises diagonally on the back, wrapping itself in a wide and soft bun, which surrounds the top of the head and descends by inserting itself under the crossed band coming from the left, going to join with the hair band carried on the

right side of the head. The lower part of the neck is divided by a vertical line, on the sides of which the equally wavy and plastic locks are arranged oblique. A small lock descends in front of each ear.

Compared to the Vaison type, the face is fuller and with a hint of relaxed skin under the chin. The chronology is discussed: the type is attested in coinage after 128 AD, given the presence in the legend of Adriano of the title *Pater Patriae*, however we also note the contemporary use of different types, perhaps dictated by needs of representation. Perhaps it is to be related to the date of return of the imperial couple from eastern provinces (Carandini 134, 132 AD, after their stay in Athens in 131/2). Klaus Fittschen instead proposed the realization of this image with the adoption of the title of Augusta (to which the attribute of the *cercine* refers, or, alternatively, of the semi-lunar diadem), which appears in all monetary issues, but whose dating remains uncertain, from 119 to 128 AD. The existence of sculptural replicas with engraved and non-engraved eyes, the aging of the face and the great distance with respect to the hairstyle of the first type lead us to hypothesize a creation of the model in the years close to 130 AD, perhaps precisely in 128 AD, in conjunction with the celebration of Hadrian's *Decennalia* and the awarding of the title *Pater Patriae*, following the appointment of Augusta by his wife. The type remained in force until the death of the empress and also in her posthumous images.

Under the Antonines, the female hairstyles are characterized by containment effects in the play of curls, which, in the marble versions, are revealed to have no dramatic effects due to the non-invasive use of the drill. Very long hair (natural and hairpieces) is required to create the hairstyles, based on those worn by the empresses in charge. By Faustina Maior<sup>24</sup>, wife of Antoninus Pius, who died only after three years of reign (141 AD) and immediately consecrated as a diva, the youthful portraits escaped, while over fifteen editions of an official effigy of her are known made in conjunction with his ascent to the throne.

The portrait, taken when Faustina was about 30 years old, presents soft and calm face shapes, large and dilated eyes, long flex neck and exhibit a mature and “respectable” woman’s hairstyle. The parting starts from the centre of the forehead, held by a tie hidden in the hair, just moved on the temples. On the nape, however, the mass of hair is divided into braids closed in an oblong and compact bun, which rises from the occiput to the top of the head, where it forms a donut. Only a short curl falls on the neck. This hairstyle remains on the monetary coins with the image of the *diva Faustina* which continues until the death of *Antoninus Pius* (161 AD).

The portraits of *Faustina maior* communicate the image of a reserved and learned matron, educated according to the teachings of stoicism that banned the execrable perturbations (*appetitio, voluptas, metus, aegritudo*), a source of disturbance for *humanitas*. Its hairstyle can be understood as a reworking of the so-called “turban” hairstyles. The name derives from the appearance that the turns of overlapping braids take, which become real headpieces made with hair (natural or hairpieces). The fashion lasted until the full Antoninian age, when the large turbans are still found, associated with a smooth or more often wavy fringe, even duplicated, and embellished with ornamental elements, next to the narrower ones placed on the top of the head, with the shape “tower”, usually tapered upwards, brought into vogue by the iconography of *Faustina Maior*, wife of *Antoninus Pius* and taken up by her daughter around the middle of the II century AD (portrait types III and IV, years 150-151 AD).

The hairstyle reproduced in the manuscript on folios 55 and 56 (Pics. 16-17-18) reproduces a tight turban of braids.

The hair is separated in two by a short parting, wavy backwards and very neat, tied in the back with a braid, which is collected above with a bun, creating a crown of hair. Some curls can be seen on the back of the neck. In the bust the upper part of a dress with many small folds is held by a fibula on the right shoulder, while the left one remains free.

## Abbreviations

ActaAArtHist	Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia
AOMBg	Archivio dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Bergamo
Fol.	Folio
Foll.	Folios
MemLinc	Memorie: Atti della Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche
MM	Madriider Mitteilungen
RendLinc	Atti dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei: Rendiconti
RStPomp	Rivista di studi pompeiani
v	verso

## NOTES

**1** - The study of this manuscript would not have been possible without the valid help and support offered by Dr. M. Sanchez, assistant of the photo library of the Hertziana Library in Rome, where there is a photo-static copy for study purposes, and of Dr. Taylor, curator of the photographic collection of the Warburg Institut in London, where the negatives of the reproduced images are kept. There is a Census record for the codex and all of the drawings contained in it, inserted by Brendan Francis Cassidy in 1988. Since 1998 the manuscript is kept at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada (DANIA 1977: 22-25, 75-78; McTAVISH 1986: 52, 53, no. 19; SCHREURS 2000: 26).

**2** - The signature indicated refers to the numbering affixed in the section dedicated to the drawings from the antique of the Photo Library of the Hertziana Library in Rome.

**3** - Although the manuscript is kept at the Agnes Etherington Art Center at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada, it was preferred to maintain the original number and title reference as its authorship is still of the Ferretti collection in Ancona.

**4** - This is presumably the same Sarzetti, land surveyor and notary at



the service of the hospital of S. Marco in Bergamo, author of a cabreo executed in 1723 which reproduces the fair of Bergamo (AOMBg, Disegno della Fiera di Bergamo dell'anno 1723, fatto da Bernardino Sarzetti in MENCARONI ZOPPETTI 2002: 7).

**5** - Born in 1633 and son of the painter (Giovanni) Giacomo Barbello di Crema and younger brother of Carlo Antonio Barbello. he worked together with his father and brother at Palazzo Mori in Bergamo, as evidenced by a payment registered in 1653, in SAUR - Allgemeines Künstler Lexicon, 6, München - Leipzig 1992: 657. More numerous are the news on the father, the painter Giovanni Giacomo Barbello di Crema, remembered by the artistic literature as the author of the frescoes with the stories of Santa Caterina martire in the church of S. Maria del Carmine in Brescia, of the canvas of S. Maria Maddalena above the two confessionals of the left nave of the church of Ss. Faustino and Giovita in Brescia, the paintings of the chapel of San Francesco in Santa Maria di Valvendra in Lovore and the altarpiece of S. Nicola da Tolentino created for the church of the monastery of the Eremitani of S. Agostino in Bergamo (AVEROLDI 1700: 19, 32, 33, 92, 102; PASTA 1775: 56, 62, 66).

**6** - Born in 1632, eldest son of the painter (Giovanni) Giacomo Barbello and brother of (Giovanni) Angelo Barbello with whom he worked on the frescoes of Palazzo Moroni in Bergamo as it is confirmed by a receipt from 1652 in SAUR - Allgemeines Künstler Lexicon, 6, München - Leipzig 1992: 657.

**7** - PLASTINA 2017: 55, 56.

**8** - ZACCARIA 1970<sup>2</sup>: 3-16; ZACCARIA 2001: 1-84; CAPUTO 2008: 131, 132.

**9** - KOLSKY 2005: 1; PLASTINA 2017: 54.

**10** - NADIN BASSANI 1992: 36-43, 47-54; CAPUTO 2007: 87-102; CAPUTO 2008: 132; PLASTINA 2017: 54.

**11** - The biographical information about this figure is scarce and fragmentary: SCHREURS 2000: 26; DAENENS 2008: 145 - 167.

**12** - This formula has been attested since 1566, the year in which it appears in the document dated 9.4.1566 certifying the construction of the funeral monument of Pope Paul IV in the Carafa chapel in S. Maria sopra Minerva and in the receipt dated 25.5.1566 (CERASOLI 1894: 131f.) addressed to P. Ligorio and to S. Peruzzi for the realization of the

works on the occasion of the coronation of Pius V (PODBRECKY 1983: 280, no. 98; SCHREURS 2000: 12).

**13** - LUNI 2001: 111-126; FRANCINE 2003: 145-268.

**14** - LUNI 2001: 111-126; PIPERNO 2001: 53-76; 375-402.

**15** - ALBERTI 1960: 39 fig. 13; FIOCCO - GHERARDI 1981: 68 - 78; RAVANELLI - GUIDOTTI 1985: 114-115; RAVANELLI - GUIDOTTI 1998: 199-200 Pl. 116, 210, 211 Figg. 59-61 Pl. 21; LURATI 2015: 50 Pl. 12.

**16** - Here it is meant, in particular, the reference to f. 124 bearing the herms of Sappho Eresia in MANDOWSKY - MITCHELL 1963: cat. 71 Pl. 87-88, Pl. 40a.

**17** - DESSAU 1883, p. 1077, no. 1; SCHREURS 2000, p. 11. The first document in which he appears as “magister Pirrolus Ligorius de napolii pictor” is reported in Lanciani 1906, p. 102. In 1568 Pirro Ligorio left Rome where he had gained considerable fame by virtue of the architect of Paul IV and Pius IV to follow Duke Alfonso II d’Este in Ferrara as court antique dealer. According to his biographer G. Baglione, during the first years spent in Naples (1513 - 1534) Pirro Ligorio was trained at the school of Raphael’s followers (Sallustio Peruzzi, Giulio Romano and Giovanni da Udine).

**18** - For biographical information on Pirro Ligorio see COFFIN 1960; MANDOWSKY - MITCHELL 1963; COFFIN 1964; GERE 1971; RAUSA 1997; PALMA 1998; WATAGHIN 1988: 165-220; GASTON 1988; SCHREURS 2000: 11-21; RANALDI 2001; PALMA 2005.

**19** - See in this regard: ; FILERI 1985: 5-54; FEJFER - FISCHER HANSEN - RATHJE 2003; VORSTER SATZINGER 2018; CELLINI 2004: 277; CELLINI 2004: 477-530.

**20** - In these same years, the departure of A. Augustin from Bologna, which took place in October 1544, to fulfill the rule of judge of the Rota is attested, in FLORES SELLÉS 1979; CARBONELL I MANILS 1992 - 1993; CARBONELL I MANILS 2009; CARBONELL I MANILS, GONZÁLEZ GERMAIN 2012. In this regard, see also Augustin’s IV dialogue, in De Maria - Parada López de Corselas 2014, p. 340 n. 59: “*A. Del circo Máximo y de otros que había en Roma no he visto medallas, solamente he visto ciertos debuxos de Pyrrho Ligori Napolitano, conocido mío y gran antiquario y pintor; el qual sin saber Latín ha escrito más de quarenta libros de medallas y edificios y de otras cosas. B. Cómo puede*

*ser, que sin saber Latin sepa escribir bien destas cosas? A. Como escriven Humberto Volcio59 y Enea Vico y Jacomo Estrada y otros que quien lee sus libros piensa que han visto y leído todos los libros Latinos y Griegos que hai escritos. Ayúdanse del trabajo de otros, y con debuxar bien con el pinzel, hacen otro tanto con la pluma .”*

**21** - DALTROP - HAUSMANN - WEGNER 1966: 49, 115, Pll. 42-50; 489 Pl. 92; HAUSMANN 1975: 325, Pll. 110 -112; FITTSCHEN - ZANKER 1983: 49, n. 62 (Zanker P.); GIULIANO 1983: 32-35, no. 15 (de Lachenal L.); JUCKER - WILLERS 1983: 106-109, nn. 42-3; CHAMAY - MAIER 1989: 11-12, no. 12, Pl. 22; GUIRAUD 1994: 94-5, Pl. 2, Figg. 5-7; JOHANSEN 1994: 42-45, nn. 10-11; MANNSPERGER 1998; MADERNA-LAUTER 1999: 184, Pll. 43, 3-4; ALEXANDRIDIS 2004: 173-174; ROSSO 2007: 142-143, Fig. 9; CRISTILLI 2008: 35-44, Fig. 2; 55, Pl. 26; DE ANGELIS D'OSSAT 2002: 65; COARELLI 2009: 416-417, nn. 12-13 (Rosso E.), p. 489, n. 92 (Stefani G.); ROSSO 2009: 205-227.

**22** - FITTSCHEN - ZANKER 1983: 60-61, no. 80, Pll. 100-101 (Zanker P.), 61-67, nn. 83-88, Pll. 104-109 (Fittschen K.); JUCKER - WILLERS 1983: 30-31, no. 8; BONANNO ARAVATINOS 1990: 261-308; CARINCI 1990: 141-142, no. 78 (Musso L.); BOSCHUNG - VON HESBERG - LINFERT 1997: 46-50, no. 45, Pll. 36, 38-39 (Boschung D.); ROMIOPOULOU 1997: 69, no. 67; RAUSA 2000: 76-79, no. 13; SALADINO 2000: 128-130, no. 43, Pl. 40 (Buccino L.); STROCKA 2000: 72-81 (Schmidlin C.); FITTSCHEN 2006: 177, Fig. 18, 180, Fig. 20, 125-129, no. 16 (Rossetti A.M.); GASPARRI 2009: 82-83, no. 56 (Coraggio F.); PICOZZI 2010: 115 - 116, no. 13; LA ROCCA - PARISI PRESICCE 2011: cat. 4.23 (Buccino L.).

**23** - TEMPORINI 1978; RAEPSAET - CHARLIER 1987: nn. 533, 631, 681, 802, 824; TALIAFERRO BOATWRIGHT 1991: 513-540; FITTSCHEN 1996: 42; KELTANEN 2002; ROCHE 2002: 41-60; TEMPORINI - GRÄFIN VITZTHUM 2002: 187- 264; MARI 2004: 15-19; REGGIANI 2007: 23-29; GRANINO CECERE 2007: 39 - 49.

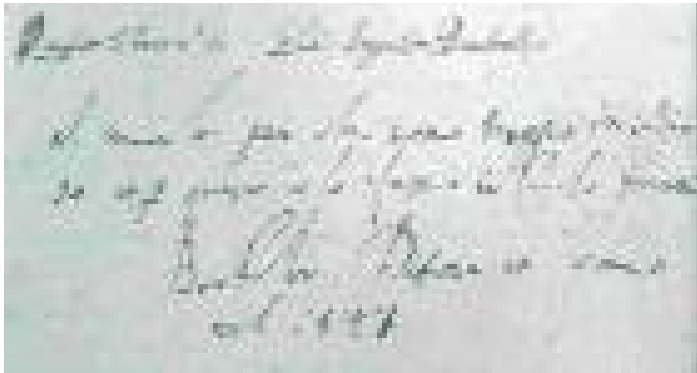
**24** - FITTSCHEN - ZANKER 1983: 13, nn. 13-18, Pll. 13-23 (Fittschen K.); ALEXANDRIDIS 2004: 187; EQUINI-SCHNEIDER 2004: 311-314, Figg. 1-3; COLLARETA 2008: 82-87, 270-271, n. VII.7 (Rausa F.); WAELKENS 2008: 5-6; MEYERS 2009: 37 -53, fig.1; RUIZ-NICOLI 2009: 324-326, no. 11, Pl. 44.



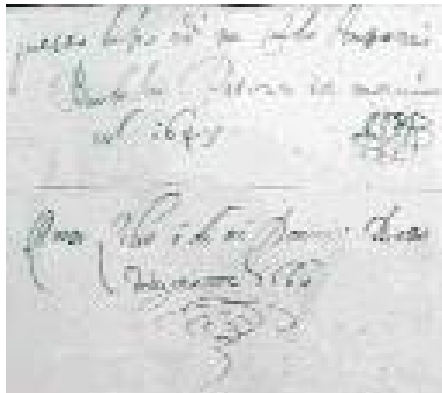
Pic. 1 - Page 1 of the Introduction to the "Tract on Roman Feminine Hair Styles".  
Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 369011)



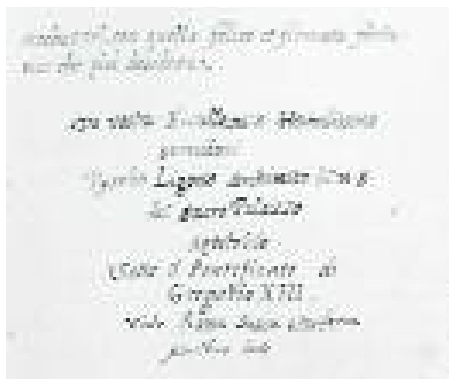
Pic. 2 - First folio of the manuscript with the "Tract",  
*cited work* (neg. 369013)



Pic. 3 - Folio 10 of the manuscript with the "Tract", *cited work* (neg. 369012)



Pic. 4 - Folio 11 of the manuscript with the "Tract", *cited work* (neg. 368948)



Pic. 5 - Page 7 of the introduction to the "Tract", *cited work* (neg. 368995)



Pic. 6 - Folio 18: IULIA AUGUSTA FIGLIOLA DI TITO VESPASIANO AUGUSTO, chiamavano questa sorte di composizione di testa Tutulus, perchè hanno saggezza come fanno le alte Rocche. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368992)

Pic. 7 - Folio 19: Della medesima Iulia di Tito Vespasiano di un'altra età et differenze del conciar di Prima. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368993)





Pic. 8 - Fol. 21: MARCIANA SORELLA DI TRAIANO IMPERATORE. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368985)

Pic. 9 - Fol. 22: MARCIANA Imperatrice. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368986)



Pic. 10 - Folio 23: MARCIANA. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368987)



Pic. 11 - Folio 37: Le effigie di Sabina Augusta secondo le etate et i concieri così si trovano di varia forma di le gatura et di faccia. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368971)

Pic. 12 - Folio 40: SABINA MOGLIE DI HADRIANO DI ETÀ PIÙ GIOVANE. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368974)



Pic. 13 - Folio 41: SABINA DI HADRIANO VARIA DI ETÀ DALL'ALTRE EFFIGIE. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368965)





Pic. 14 - Fol. 38: SABINA MOGLIE DI HADRIANO IMPERATORE. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368972)

Pic. 15 - Fol. 39: SABINA MOGLIE DI HADRIANO DI UNALTRA ETÀ. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368973)



Pic. 16 - Fol. 54: FAUSTINA MOGLIE DI ANTONINO PIO AUGUSTO DELLA FAMEGLIA DELL'ANNII FU NOBILE dell'animo, pietosa, la quale donò a tutte le fanciulle italiane la doto et il nutrimento alle più bisognose, onde quelle poi furono dette PUELLULE FAUSTINIANE. La maniera di questo conciero si chiamava Tutulus. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368957)



Pic. 17 - Fol. 55: Il modo di questo conciero è Tutulato et Calyprato perche il velo si dice calyptro et altezza del conciero tutulo. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368955)

Pic. 18 - Fol. 56: ANNIA FAUSTINA MOGLIE DI ANTONINO PIO ET MADRE DI FAUSTINA MOGLIE DI MARCO AURELIO IMPERATORE. Questo conciero oltre al Tutulo sul fronte ha la Diadema a giusa di Lunone o di unaltra Dea, o Donna chiamata Immortale. Ancona, Private Collection (Warburg Institut, neg. 368950)



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Alberti A.** *Ceramiche italiane del Cinquecento in Arte figurativa antica e moderna*, 8, 1960, 47, pp. 34-40.

**Alexandridis A.** *Die Frauen des römischen Kaiserhauses. Eine Untersuchung ihrer bildlichen Darstellung von Livia bis Iulia Domna*. Mainz am Rhein, 2004.

**Averoldi G.** *Le scelte pitture di Brescia additate al forestiere*. Sala Bolognese, 1977.

**Bonanno Aravantinos M.** *Un ritratto femminile inedito già nell'Antiquarium di S. Maria Capua Vetere. I ritratti di Marciana: una revisione*, 1990. Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia vol. LXI, 1988-1989.

**Boschung D. - von Hesberg H. - Linfert A.** *Die antiken Skulpturen in Chatsworth, sowie in Dunham Massey und Withington Hall*. Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani, Great Britain 3, 8, Mainz am Rhein, 1997.

**Cantino Wataghin G.** *Archeologia e "archeologie". Il rapporto con l'antico, fra mito, arte e ricerca*, in *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana: I, L'uso dei classici*. Roma, 1984, pp. 169-218.

**Caputo V.** *Una galleria di donne illustri: il De mulieribus claris da Giovanni Boccaccio a Giuseppe Betussi*. Cahiers d'études italiennes, 8, 2008, pp. 131-147.

**Caputo V.** *Il mestiere delle armi. Scrivere vite nel secondo Cinquecento*. Dottorato di ricerca "Il testo tra filologia e storia". Istituto Italiano di Scienze Umane (sede di Napoli), 2007.

**Carbonell i Manils J.** *Fulvio Orsini i Antonio Agustín, pre-cursors de la moderna numismàtica*. Annals de l'Institut d'Estudis Gironins 32, 1992-1993, pp. 169-186.

**Carbonell i Manils J.** *Ambientes humanísticos en Roma (1545- 1555). El cenáculo de Ottavio Pantagato, Antonio Agustín y Jean Matal* in C. de la Mota, G. Puigvert (a cura di) "La investigación en humanidades". Madrid, 2009, pp. 47-70.

**Carbonell i Manils J. - González Germain G.** *Jean Matal and his annotated copy of the 'Epigrammata Antiquae Urbis' (Vat. Lat. 8495). The use of manuscript sources*. Veleia 29, 2012, pp. 149-168.

**Carinci F.** *Catalogo della Galleria Colonna in Roma: sculture*. Bramante,

Busto Arsizio, 1990.

**Cellini G. A.** *Il contributo di Fulvio Orsini alla ricerca antiquaria* in MemLinc, s. IX, XVIII, 2, 2004, p. 227 ss.

**Cellini G. A.** *Le imagines di Fulvio Orsini nella Calcografia Nazionale?* in RendLinc, s. IX, 15, 2004, pp. 477-530.

**Cerasoli F.** *Il monumento di Paolo IV nella chiesa della Minerva.* Roma, 1894.

**Chamay J. - Maier L.** *Art Romain. Sculptures en pierre du Musée de Genève*, II. Mainz am Rhein, 1989.

**Coarelli F.** (a cura di) *Divus Vespasianus. Il bimillenario dei Flavi.* Catalogo della Mostra, Roma, 2009.

**Coffin D.** *The Villa d'Este at Tivoli.* Princeton, 1960.

**Collareta M.** *Diva Faustina. Una donna, una pettinatura* in F. Trevisan - D. Gasparotto (a cura di) "Bonacolsi l'Antico. Uno scultore nella Mantova di Andrea Mantegna e di Isabella d'Este". Catalogo della Mostra, Milano, 2008, pp. 82-87.

**Cristilli A.** *Tra evergetismo e culto imperiale: le statue-ritratto dal Maecellum di Pompei* in RStPomp 19, 2008, pp. 35-44.

**Daltrop G. - Hausmann U. - Wegner M.** *Die Flavier: Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Nerva, Julia Titi, Domitilla, Domitia.* Berlin, 1966.

**Dania L.** *An Unpublished Manuscript by Pirro Ligorio.* Master Drawings, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring, 1977), pp. 22-25, 75-78.

**De Angelis D'Ossat M.** (a cura di) *Scultura antica in Palazzo Attemps. Museo Nazionale Romano.* Milano, 2002.

**De Maria S. - Parada López de Corselas M.** *Antonio Agustín, Bologna e l'antiquaria del Cinquecento* in S. De Maria - M. Parada López de Corselas (a cura di) "L'impero e le Hispaniae da Traiano a Carlo V. Classicismo e potere nell'arte spagnola". Bologna, 2014, pp. 331-355.

**Dessau H.** *Römische Reliefs, beschrieben von Pirro Ligorio.* Berlin, 1883.

**Daenens F.** *Debiti e crediti di una gentildonna: Isabella Sforza* in Peyronel Rambaldi S. - Arcangeli L. (a cura di) "Donne di potere nel Rinascimento". Roma, 2008.

**Equini Schneider E.** *Faustina maggiore da Leptis Magna* in "Studi di archeologia in onore di Gustavo Traversari". Roma, 2004, pp. 311-314.

**Fejfer J. - Fischer-Hansen T. - Rathje A.** (a cura di) *The rediscovery of antiquity. The Role of the Artist.* Atti Convegno Copenaghen, settembre 2001 (Acta Hyperborea 10). Copenaghen, 2003.

- Fileri E.** *Giovanni Bologna e il taccuino di Cambridge* in “Xenia”, 10, 1985, pp. 5-54.
- Fiocco G. - Gherardi G.** *Vasellame amoroso e neoplatonismo a Faenza* in “Romagna arte e storia”, 1, 1981, 2, pp. 68-77.
- Fiocco G. - Gherardi G.** *Museo Internazionale delle ceramiche di Faenza. Ceramiche Umbre dal Medioevo allo Storicismo. Orvieto e Deruta.* Faenza, 1998.
- Fittschen K. - Zanker P.** *Katalog der römischen Porträts in den Capitolinischen Museen und anderen kommunalen Sammlungen der Stadt Rom*, III. Mainz am Rhein, 1983.
- Fittschen K.** *Alte Bekannte. Zur Identifizierung verschollen geglaubter antiker Bildnisse* in “Pegasus” 8, 2006.
- Flores Sellés C.** *Antonio Agustín, estudiante en Italia (1536-1541)* in “Studia Albornotiana” XXXVII (n. speciale “El cardenal Albornoz y el Colegio de España” VI), 1979, pp. 315-373.
- Gasparri C.** (a cura di) *Le sculture Farnese, II. I ritratti.* Napoli, 2009.
- Gaston R. W.** (a cura di) *Pirro Ligorio artist and antiquarian.* Cinisello Balsamo, 1988.
- Gere J. A.** *Some Early Drawings by Pirro Ligorio 'Master Drawings*, IX, 1971, pp. 239- 50.
- Granino Cecere M. G.** *Legittimazione e partecipazione al potere. Le donne della domus imperiale durante il principato adottivo* in Adembri B. - Nicolai R.M. (a cura di) “Vibia Sabina. Da Augusta a Diva”, Catalogo della Mostra. Milano, 2007, pp. 39-49.
- Guiraud H.** *Intailles et camées à l'époque de Domitien* in J.-M. Paillet - R. Sablayrolles (a cura di) “Les années Domitien”. Colloque organisé à l'université de Toulouse-Le Mirail (12-14 octobre 1992). Toulouse, 1994.
- Giuliano A.** (a cura di) *Museo Nazionale Romano, Le sculture*, I, 5. Roma, 1983.
- Hausmann U.** *Römerbildnisse, Württembergisches Landesmuseum Stuttgart.* Stuttgart, 1975.
- Johansen F.** *Catalogue Roman Portraits, I, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.* Copenhagen, 1994.
- Jucker H. - Willers D.** (a cura di) *Gesichter. Griechische und römische Bildnisse aus Schweizer Besitz.* Catalogo della Mostra. Bern, 1983.
- Kolsky S.** *The ghost of Boccaccio: writing on famous women in Renaissance Italy.* Turnhout, 2005.

**La Rocca E.** *L'età dell'equilibrio, 98 - 180 d.C.: Traiano, Adriano, Antonino Pio, Marco Aurelio.* Roma, Musei Capitolini, 4 ottobre 2012 - 5 maggio 2013, mostra e catalogo di La Rocca E. - Parisi Presicce C. (a cura di) con Lo Monaco A. 2012.

**Luni M.** *Ipsa ruina docet. Antichità riscoperta e collezionismo archeologico a Pesaro tra Quattrocento e Seicento* in AA.VV. "Pesaro nell'età dei Della Rovere" v. II. Venezia, 2001.

**Lurati P.** (a cura di) *Doni d'amore: donne e rituali nel Rinascimento.* Rancate, Pinacoteca cantonale Giovanni Züst, 12 ottobre 2014 - 11 gennaio 2015, catalogo della mostra. 2014.

**Maderna-Lauter C.** *Das Porträt einer Römerin im Frankfurter Liebieghaus. Von der Bedeutung des Stils* in von Steuben H. (a cura di) "Antike Porträts. Zum Gedächtnis von Helga von Heintze". Möhnesee, 1999.

**Mandowsky E. - Mitchell C.** *Pirro Ligorio's Roman antiquities: the drawings in MS XIII. B. 7 in the National Library in Naples.* London, 1963.

**Mannspurger M.** *Frisurenkunst und Kunstfrisur. Die Haarmode der römischen Kaiserinnen von Livia bis Sabina.* Bonn, 1998.

**Mari Z.** *Donne e potere al tempo di Adriano* in Reggiani A.M. "Adriano le memorie al femminile". Milano, 2004, pp. 15-19.

**McTavish D.** *Italian Drawings from the Collection of Duke Roberto Ferretti.* Toronto, 1986.

**Mencaroni Zoppetti M.** (a cura di) *L'ospedale nella città: vicende storiche e architettoniche della Casa Grande di S. Marco.* Bergamo, 2002.

**Meyers R.** *Representations of the Antonine Empresses on the Nymphaeum in Olympia* in "ActaAArtHist" 22, 2009, pp.37-53.

**Nadin Bassani L.** *Il poligrafo veneto Giuseppe Betussi.* Padova, 1992.

**Palma B.** (a cura di) *Pirro Ligorio e le erme di Roma.* Roma, 1998.

**Palma B.** (a cura di) *Edizione Nazionale delle opere di Pirro Ligorio, Libri degli Antichi Eroi e Uomini Illustri.* Roma, 2005.

**Pasta A.** *Le pitture notabili di Bergamo.* Bologna, 1976.

**Picozzi M.G.** (a cura di) *Palazzo Colonna. Appartamenti. Sculture antiche e dall'antico.* Roma, 2010.

**Piperno F.** *Musiche e musicisti attorno ai Della Rovere* in AA.VV. "Pesaro nell'età dei Della Rovere", II. Venezia, 2001.

**Plastina S.** *Mollezza della carne e sottigliezza dell'ingegno: la natura della donna nel Rinascimento europeo.* Roma, 2017.

- Podbrecky I.** *Beiträge zu einer Biografie Pirro Ligorios (1513 - 1583)*. Wien, 1983.
- Raepsaet-Charlier M. T.** *La donna nella Roma antica*. Firenze-Milano, 2003.
- Ranaldi A.** *Pirro Ligorio e l'interpretazione delle ville antiche*. Roma, 2001.
- Rausa F.** *Pirro Ligorio, Tombe e Mausolei dei romani*. Roma, 1997.
- Rausa F.** (a cura di) *I marmi antichi. Rilievi greci e neoattici*. Mantova, 2000.
- Ravanelli Guidotti C.** *Ceramiche occidentali del Museo Civico Medievale di Bologna*. Bologna, 1985.
- Ravanelli Guidotti C.** *Thesaurus di opere della tradizione di Faenza nelle raccolte del Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche in Faenza*. Faenza, 1998.
- Reggiani A. M.** *Donne al potere nella famiglia Ulpia* in B. Adembri - R.M. Nicolai (a cura di) "Vibia Sabina. Da Augusta a Diva" catalogo della Mostra. Milano, 2007, pp. 23-29.
- Romiopoulou K.** *Ελληνορωμαϊκά γλυπτά του Εθνικού Αρχαιολογικού Μουσείου* (Δημοσιεύματα του Αρχαιολογικού Δελτίου 61). Athina, 1997.
- Rosso E.** *Culte imperial et image dynastique: les divi et divae de las Gens Flavia* in T. Nogales - J. Gonzáles (a cura di) "Culto imperial. Política y poder". Actas del Congreso Internacional (Mérida, 18-20 de mayo, 2006), Roma, 2007.
- Rosso E.** *Les portraits de Julie, fille de Titus. Image individuelle, image familiale, image dynastique* in "Ktema" 34, 2009, pp. 205-227.
- Ruiz-Nicoli B.** *Die Sammlung römischer Kaiserporträts im Museo Arqueológico Nacional*. MM 50, 2009.
- Saladino V.** (a cura di) *Le Antichità di Palazzo Medici Riccardi, II. Le sculture*. Firenze, 2000.
- Schreurs A.** *Antikenbild und Kunstanschauungen des neapolitanischen Malers, Architekten und Antiquars Pirro Ligorio*. Köln, 2000.
- Strocka M.** (a cura di) *Römische Bildnisse. Porträts der Berliner Antikensammlung in Freiburg*. München, 2000.
- Temporini H.** *Die Frauen am Hofe Trajans. Ein Beitrag zur Stellung der Auguste Principat*. Berlin, 1978.
- Vorster C.** *Die Antikenalben des Alphonsus Ciacconius in Braunschweig, Rom und Pesaro: Dokumentation und Deutung antiker Skul-*

*pturen im 16. Jahrhundert*. Braunschweig, 2018.

**Waelkens M.** *Colossal Heads of Faustina and Marcus Aurelius Discovered at Sagalassos, Turkey* in “*Minerva*” 19, 2008, 6, pp. 5-6.

**Zaccaria V.** *Introduzione* in Branca V (a cura di) *Tutte le opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*. Milano, 1970<sup>2</sup>, vol. X, pp. 3-16.

**Zaccaria V.** *Boccaccio narratore, storico, moralista e mitografo*. Firenze, 2001.



## FEMMINISMO ITALIANO E POESIA FEMMINILE (FEMMINISTA) DAGLI ANNI SETTANTA

*Anna Natkańska*

(Università della Slesia, Katowice, Poland)

Cominciando a parlare del femminismo italiano e letteratura femminista non si può omettere la figura di Sibilla Aleramo (1876 - 1960), una delle animatrici e pioniere del movimento. In quei tempi si parlava del *pericolo roseo*, cioè un notevole aumento della produzione letteraria femminile, non sempre di altissimo livello. Nella sua *Apologia dello Spirito Femminile*, pubblicato per la prima volta nel 1911 sul Marzocco, Aleramo sosteneva che si dovesse valutare quelle proposte femminili in un altro modo, prendendo in considerazione il fatto che le donne percepiscono il mondo diversamente dagli uomini e che il fatto che la loro scrittura è diversa da quella degli uomini non significa che è peggiore. Aleramo scrive:

Bisogna che il valore della parola *creare* si illumini alle donne. Finora l'uomo ha creato, la donna no. Noi conosciamo l'immagine che attraverso i tempi tutte le cose hanno avuto nella coscienza dell'uomo; su tutte le cose l'uomo ha riflettuto, poi le ha riplasmate e lanciate nella vita> la donna si è accontentata di questa rappresentazione del mondo fornir dall'intelligenza maschile> e di tutto ciò che ella parallelamente intuiva, nulla, o quasi, ha mai detto agli altri, perché purtroppo, nulla o quasi ha mai detto a se stessa. Il mondo particolare della donna è rimasto un mondo d'istinti (Aleramo, 1911, p. 4).

Come scrive Anita Kłos nella sua notevolissima analisi di Aleramo e i suoi rapporti con la cultura polacca agli inizi del XX secolo, le *creazioni* di Aleramo in quei tempi non hanno riscosso un successo di particolare peso. La situazione è cambiata con la

rivolta degli anni Sessanta e la ristampa del suo libro *Una donna* (1978). Dopo il '68 il femminismo italiano ha ripreso una nuova forza inarrestabile e i critici hanno notato che le parole di Aleramo corrispondono di più alle circostanze degli anni Settanta che quelli dell'emancipazione dei primi anni di Novecento o almeno restano quanto mai attuali.

Lucia Chiavola Birnbaum di origine italo americana ha scritto un ampio lavoro sul femminismo italiano *Liberazione della donna: Feminism in Italy* pubblicato nel 1986. Sostiene che in Italia il femminismo dovrebbe essere valutato come un fenomeno nato sotto l'ombra delle forti radici cattoliche e dell'influsso di Partito Comunista Italiano, dunque come derivato da una difficile relazione tra un mondo di chiesa cattolica e mondo di comunismo. Birnbaum elenca:

Figures of the sash of this ancient and advanced feminism fuse into one another: the primordial earth mothers Greaco-Roman goddesses, early judeo-christian women, popular madonnas, familiar saints, persecuted witches and healers, peasant godmothers, peasant women socialists, feminist socialists, women marxists, antifascist women partisans - and contemporary feminists who are a galaxy of different women from catholic matrons and housewives to prostitutes, lesbians, nuns, and others. (Birnbaum, 1986, p. 35)

Da ciò risulta chiaro che la struttura della popolazione femminile italiana del dopoguerra era fortemente diversificata e l'insorgere di un movimento femminista forte e autorevole era ostacolato dalle circostanze.

I movimenti dell'ambito femminista italiano si sviluppano più significativamente negli anni Settanta ma non sarà sfuggito che alcuni erano presenti già prima. Basta menzionare Unione femminile nazionale fondata nel 1899 a Milano. Una delle istituzioni più importanti nell'ambito del femminismo italiano (se non la più importante) è Unione Donne In Italia, un certo discendente dai Gruppi di difesa della donna. I Gruppi nascono a Milano nel 1943

per iniziativa di Partito Comunista Italiano e ad opera di cinque donne: Giovanna Barcellona, Ada Gobetti, Lina Merlin, Rina Piccolato e Lina Fibbi con lo scopo di coinvolgere il maggior numero di donne in attività resistenziali, indipendentemente dall'appartenenza politica.

La posizione delle donne nel ventennio fascista era notevolmente svantaggiata. La donna era considerata come un "sottofodotto" (Pieroni Bortolotti, 1978, p. 99). Basta ricordare le parole di Mussolini espresse in un'intervista del 1932:

La donna deve obbedire. Essa è analitica, non sintetica. Ha forse mai fatto dell'architettura in tutti questi secoli? Le si dica di costruirmi una capanna, non dico un tempio! Non lo può! Se io le concedessi il diritto elettorale, mi si deriderebbe. Nel nostro Stato essa non deve contare. (Ludwig, 1932, p. 166)

Nonostante che il posto di una donna nella società fascista non sia il tema principale del mio articolo, ma si tratta di un fenomeno di cui non si parla molto in Polonia - se studiamo il fascismo, di solito se lo analizza come una struttura politica, militare. Non si può sorvolare sull'impatto che questo sistema aveva anche sulla vita quotidiana delle donne.

Roberta Sassano nel suo articolo *Camicette nere: le donne nel Ventennio Fascista* scrive:

Aldilà delle apparenze iniziali, il fascismo discriminò le donne sotto ogni profilo, giuridico, lavorativo e soprattutto politico, non arrivando mai a concedere il tanto agognato suffragio universale.

Sotto il profilo giuridico<sup>1</sup> il padre rappresentava nella famiglia lo Stato e, come nella legge romana, donava allo stato un cittadino, il figlio, che non aveva alcuna libertà, essendo proprietà del padre.

Rispetto al rapporto marito-moglie, il nuovo codice decretava che il marito era il capo famiglia: la moglie doveva assumerne il cognome e seguirlo ovunque egli ritenesse necessario stabilire la residenza; moglie e marito dovevano

vivere sotto lo stesso tetto, essere fedeli e cooperativi (art. 130 C.C.)<sup>2</sup>

La sessualità fuori dal matrimonio era considerata anche un «delitto contro la moralità familiare», anche se le norme riaffermavano la «doppia morale». L'adulterio della donna infatti veniva considerato un crimine a differenza di quello dell'uomo (art. 559, C.P.); l'uomo commetteva un reato solo allorché costringeva la moglie a vivere sotto lo stesso tetto con la sua amante (art. 560 C.P.)<sup>3</sup>

La legge, inoltre, considerava una donna adultera anche per un solo incontro clandestino, mentre un uomo veniva accusato di concubinato soltanto nel caso di una relazione di lunga durata. Il marito infine poteva uccidere la moglie adultera, mentre lo stesso non era consentito alla donna.

Anche dal punto di vista lavorativo le donne furono discriminate: la perdita d'importanza della donna fu accompagnata dall'istituzionalizzazione della sua inferiorità attraverso una serie di provvedimenti che la espellevano dal mercato del lavoro e le negavano qualsiasi diritto politico. (Sassano, 2015, pp. 254-256)

Il ruolo della donna nella società era dunque limitata ad essere madre e casalinga, per sostenere questa tesi sarà sufficiente quest'annuncio di premi per la fertilità. (Fig. 1)

Non va però dimenticato il fatto che il fascismo aveva la propria organizzazione femminile; i Fasci Femminili, fondata nel 1921 da Elisa Mayer Rizzoli. Rizzoli sosteneva comunque che i gruppi femminili non potevano essere permesse di svolgere qualsiasi attività politica, il loro compito era piuttosto quello di tutelare la famiglia e sviluppare il culto della casa.

Al mondo letterario di quest'epoca viene collegata Ada Negri, l'unica donna ammessa all'Accademia d'Italia, fondata durante il regime fascista e sua diretta emanazione. Comunque è una delle prime poetesse italiane che nella loro creazione letteraria rispecchiano la triste condizione della vita femminile; segnata di solitudine, di incomprendimento, di grandi passioni e di grandi delusioni

(Santoro 1989; 277). Oltre a Negri, non si parlava di nessun'altra poetessa del periodo, almeno non di una che costituisse una voce così importante.

Tornando alla questione del femminismo italiano contemporaneo, occorre fermarci un po' sulla storia della Unione donne italiane. Dopo la fine della guerra, UDI faceva parte del Partito Comunista Italiano e ne era dipendente. In questo punto vorrei presentare alcuni slogan<sup>4</sup> e parole d'ordine dell'UDI per le manifestazioni dell'8 marzo, Giornata internazionale della donna di quell'epoca a partire dal 1945:

1945 - Giorno di lotta e di speranza per un domani di libertà e di progresso

1946 - Valorizzazione della donna di casa e del suo lavoro

1947 - Per le rivendicazioni femminili: parità di contingenza, protezione della maternità

1948 - La donna è vita, la vita è nella pace, nella libertà, nel lavoro

1949 - No alla guerra! No alla morte! Sì al lavoro e alla vita

1950 - Per la gioia e la tranquillità della tua famiglia, difendi la pace

1951 - Tutte le donne si uniscano per la pace e contro la guerra

1952 - Giornata di festa e di lotta per la pace. Pace per salvare i nostri figli e la nostra economia

1953 - Per il successo dei congressi delle donne italiane e per la preparazione della campagna elettorale

1954 - Parità di diritti, difesa della famiglia

1955 - Ci unisca il nostro ideale di emancipazione e di pace per impedire la strage atomica

1956 - Unite conquistiamo i nostri diritti, combattiamo la miseria e chiediamo il disarmo, certezza di pace

1957 - Ad ogni donna dal marito, dai figli, dai colleghi di lavoro, un dono gradito che esprima la riconoscenza per il suo contributo alla famiglia e alla società

1958 - Sia il voto delle donne un voto per i loro diritti e per la pace

1959 - Per l'emancipazione femminile, rinnoviamo il nostro impegno di pace nello sviluppo della democrazia e del progresso  
1960 - Cinquant'anni di lotte per l'emancipazione femminile.

Fino ai primi anni Sessanta gli slogan dell'UDI si concentravano sulla pace, esprimevano un forte disaccordo sull'uso della bomba atomica e, al mio parere, in modo piuttosto sottile ricordavano la lotta per i diritti della donna.

Gli anni Settanta invece, non solo in Italia, portano con sé lo spirito di cambiamento sociale e spirituale. In quei tempi si formulavano le teorie femministe di grande peso e di grande valore, basta notare Kate Millet e il suo *Sexual Politics*, in cui emerge il concetto della politica del sesso, Judith Fetterley *The Resisting Reader. A feminist approach to american fiction* del 1977, o Elaine Showalter *A literature of Their Own* del 1977.

Hélène Cixous riferendosi al periodo della rivolta sociale di questi anni scrive: “fino a questi giorni le donne non si esprimevano, non scrivevano”. (Cixous - Celement, 1975, p. 252)

È molto severo il giudizio di Cixous, comunque non si può dimenticare che la scrittura femminile nella prima metà del Novecento non era presa troppo sul serio, basta ricordare questo *pericolo roseo* di cui ho scritto all'inizio. Meritano di essere segnalate adesso le cause della mancanza della creazione femminile. Come scrive Tillie Olsen, in *Silences* sono le responsabilità domestiche e familiari ad ostacolarla:

As for myself, who did not publish a book until I was fifty, who raised children without household help or the help of the “tecnological sublime” (the atom bomb was manufacture before the first automatic washing machine), who worked outside the house on everyday job as well (...) as distant from the world of literature most of my life as literature is distant (in content too) from my world: The years when I should have been writing, my hands and my being were at other (inescapable) tasks. (Olsen, 1971, pp. 38-39)

Tornando alla questione di UDI e i suoi slogan, si deve notare che

dagli anni Settanta la sua attenzione si sposta di più sul potere e sulla forza delle donne come un gruppo intero e i suoi postulati risultano più coraggiosi:

1961 - La società per la donna e la famiglia

1962 - Parità, libertà, cultura per le donne nella società moderna

1963 - Una società rinnovata nelle leggi, nel costume, nelle strutture, per la donna e la famiglia

1964 - Dalla Resistenza alle nuove mete di emancipazione: una grande associazione femminile unitaria nella storia d'Italia

1965 - A 20 anni dal diritto di voto, un rinnovato impegno unitario per le più avanzate conquiste di emancipazione e di progresso

1966 - Per l'emancipazione della donna e per il progresso, non armi ma spese di pace, non guerra ma libertà e coesistenza

1967 - Impegno civile e politico delle donne per costruire una civiltà nuova

1968 - Più potere alle donne per trasformare la società

1969 - 8 marzo, giornata di lotta delle donne

1970 - Non vogliamo più aspettare: le donne aprono la vertenza nazionale sui nidi e le scuole per l'infanzia

1971 - Per l'emancipazione femminile una svolta nella spesa pubblica, nei costumi, negli investimenti: asili nido, scuola per tutti dai 3 ai 14 anni

1972 - Emancipazione. Sì: diritto al lavoro, scuola e servizi sociali, riforme. No: emarginazione della donna, referendum, repressione

1973 - Contro l'attacco all'emancipazione, unità e lotta delle donne

1974 - Crisi, referendum, disoccupazione femminile. Le donne dicono no. Dalla crisi non si esce senza le donne

1975 - Maternità valore sociale, non ruolo, ma scelta

1976 - Emancipazione '76: libera nella maternità, autonomia con il lavoro, protagonista nella società

1977 - Usciamo dalle case, troviamoci in piazza per dire che ciascuna di noi ha coscienza della sua oppressione, che fra noi donne

crece la solidarietà, che deve vivere nella società la forza delle nostre proposte

1978 - Parliamo noi

1979 - Non ci fermano gli attacchi alle nostre conquiste, il terrorismo, la paura, il dolore. La vita di tutte può cambiare se la prendiamo nelle nostre mani

1980 - Prendiamoci la parola

1981 - Il nostro NO al referendum.

1982 - Le donne affermano il loro diritto a contare come uguali nella società. Scendiamo in piazza a gridare che vogliamo una società a misura di donna.

Per tirare la fila del discorso sulla letteratura, conviene rammentare che nella prima metà del Novecento la presenza femminile nelle antologie della letteratura italiana del dopoguerra era, come nota Biancamaria Frabotta, trascurata:

In generale la presenza delle donne nelle antologie della poesia italiana del dopoguerra tradizionalmente quasi inesistente. Basterà qualche esempio: nessuna poetessa nella prima edizione *Lirica del novecento* curata da L. Anceschi e S. Antonielli (Firenze, Vallecchi, 1953); una sola poetessa nella prima edizione della *Poesia italiana contemporanea* curata da G. Spagnoletti (Parma, Guanda, 1959); tredici poetesse nell'ampissima raccolta di E. Falqui, *La giovane poesia* (Roma, Colombo 1956) che nella seconda edizione conta ben 140 poeti. Le cose non miglioreranno con l'avvento della neoavanguardia e del Gruppo '63: il *Manuale di poesia sperimentale* di G. Guglielmi e E. Pagliarani (Milano, Mondadori, 1966) non conta presenze femminili. (Frabotta, 1977, p. 18)

Come ho già menzionato gli anni Sessanta e Settanta costituiscono un periodo di grandi cambiamenti sociali ed economici, allora non sorprende il fatto che anche la letteratura femminile si è trovata in una posizione di "resistenza e di opposizione" (Ferroni 2015; 219). Yasmine Ergas nota: "during the first five years of its development<sup>5</sup>, the Italian feminist movement was normally trea-



ted by the principal political forces (parties and trade unions) as a substantially marginal, elitist, and fairly insignificant phenomenon (Ergas, 1982, p. 263), ciononostante gli anni Settanta nella poesia italiana risultano abbastanza fruttuosi nel campo della letteratura femminile. In diverse regioni italiane cominciano ad apparire case editrici specializzate nelle edizioni della letteratura femminile, tra i quali Eidos a Venezia, Giunti a Firenze oppure La Tartaruga a Milano.

La prima importante antologia femminile s'intitola *Donne in poesia* ed è curata da Frabotta, esce nel 1976 presso la casa editrice Savelli, poi, un'altra che riguarda comunque solamente poesia femminista è quella di Laura Di Nola intitolata *Poesia femminista italiana*, edita anche da Savelli, a Roma nel 1978.

Qui dobbiamo porre delle domande fondamentali - si puoi parlare di una letteratura femminile? Che cosa significa? Letteratura femminile deve sempre essere scritta da una donna? Possiamo mettere un segno di uguaglianza tra letteratura femminile e quella femminista? O anzi, una sta all'opposizione totale verso l'altra? Le definizioni di poesia femminile, sono molto difficili da creare. Secondo Borkowska "sulla poesia o letteratura femminile possiamo parlare solamente nel momento in cui l'io lirico rivela la propria sessualità, effettuerà un'autoidentificazione sessuale (Borkowska, 1995, p. 71). Se basta usare qualche sostantivo femminile per fare questa identificazione, non ne sono certa. La propria sessualità (femminilità) può essere rivelata grazie alla scelta di concetti, parole, metafore.

Una donna che nella sua vita collega la politica femminista e la poesia, e allo stesso momento si oppone fortemente alla femminilità nel senso stretto è Edda Billi, che viene chiamata da se stessa "Femminista-Poeta", una voce importantissima nel femminismo romano degli anni settanta. Billi, nata nel 1933, pubblica le sue prime raccolte poetiche nel 2014 sotto il misterioso titolo *Isolanotte*. Oggi vorrei proporre una lettura di un'altra sua opera, del titolo molto significante, cioè *Donnità*, che è apparso

in una raccolta<sup>6</sup> sotto lo stesso titolo.

*Donnità*

Sono una poeta maldestra  
perché non scrivo rime  
per addomesticare il cuore.  
Avrei bisogno di pozzi e di fontane,  
di donne dalla testa rossa  
che cantassero antiche melodie  
e persino di un contrabbasso  
che facesse da sfondo.  
Rimango muta  
di fronte al ragno che tesse  
le sottili malinconie dei giorni  
dispari,  
aspetto che si svegli  
la vita  
perché sono soltanto  
una poeta maldestra  
che ama le donne  
dai grandi piedi  
che poggiano con cura  
sulla terra.

In questa poesia quello che in un certo modo colpisce per primo sono alcune forme usate da Billi. Prima di tutto la parola *donnità* creata dalla poetessa. Perché non ha scelto per esempio *femminilità*, la parola usata molto spesso e usata con chiarezza? Seguendo la definizione del dizionario della parola *donna* leggiamo che “Nella specie umana, è l’individuo di sesso femminile, soprattutto dal momento in cui abbia raggiunto la maturità anatomica e quindi l’età adulta” (Treccani Online, Consultazione: 26.11.2019). *Individuo* in questo caso risulta una parola chiave per tutta la scrittura di Billi. Non ha scelto *femminilità* proprio perché questo concetto viene attribuito al complesso delle caratteristiche (psicologia, gusti, atteggiamenti, aspetto fisico esterno, ecc., e anche grazia, delicatezza, tene-

rezza) che sono proprie della donna in quanto si differenzia dall'uomo, o che a lei tradizionalmente si attribuiscono. Da ciò risulta chiaro che Billi vuole definitivamente staccarsi da un paragone con un uomo e, che, secondo lei, la questione di questa *donnità* non può essere valutata nel contesto di qualsiasi relazione uomo - donna. Donna, come ho già accennato sopra, è un individuo è solo in quest'ottica deve essere guardata.

Non ci deve sfuggire che Billi sceglie l'uso di un femminile particolare - *una poeta*, che ovviamente è considerata sbagliata o almeno non appropriata. Se ritiene la parola *poetessa* impropria, la parola che sminuisca la posizione di una donna - poetessa, non ne possiamo essere sicuri, ma da diversi suoi scritti emerge in modo chiaro che la parola *poetessa* non la usa mai. In un modo si giustifica - "*Sono una poeta maldestra / perché non scrivo rime / per addomesticare il cuore*" - sa, che da una poetessa si esigerebbero le rime parlanti dell'amore, della casa, della maternità' o qualsiasi altro concetto, appunto, femminile.

Dopo un'antitesi *contrabasso che facesse da sfondo / rimango muta* l'io lirico rivela la propria speranza del *risveglio della vita* e confessa la sua omosessualità.

Non ci troviamo forse un tipo di paradosso? Da una parte, Billi vuole "nascondersi" sotto la figura di un uomo - poeta, dall'altra non vuole che si guardi verso una donna attraverso la lente di un maschio. Questa divergenza mi fa venire in mente il concetto di *Paura di essere autore* di Sandra Gilbert e Susan Gubar in quanto "this anxiety (...) is exacerbated by her (female poet) fear that not only can she not fight a male precursor on "his" terms and win, she cannot begget art upon the (female) body of the muse (Gubar - Gilbert, 1979, p. 49). Non solo l'uso dell'espressione *una poeta*, ma anche l'aggettivo *maldestra* in questo contesto può confermare la mia constatazione.

Il concetto di *paura di essere autore* è manifestato in un certo modo anche nella poesia di Beatrix Bracco pubblicata nel volume *Poesia Femminista italiana*.<sup>7</sup>

*Il mio corpo non è limite sufficiente*

Analizzo i delitti commessi con la parola  
e la paura si affretta  
accade  
che ignoro il senso vero delle cose  
anche se la parola rimane  
quando mi separo da essa  
sono vicina alle mie viscere  
comincio a confondere i limiti  
e le definizioni si perdono  
come una candela in una mattina d'estate

Il corpo, corpo femminile, non impedisce comunque la creazione della poesia. Tuttavia, la poesia di Bracco, è come un *delitto*, è piena di timore, di sdoppiamento, di dicotomia. Sul primo piano emerge la distinzione tra il mondo della parola (il vero senso delle cose) e il mondo reale, carnale in cui si confondano i limiti e le definizioni (delle cose).

Entrambe le poesie sono i frutti delle prime fasi del femminismo italiano, cioè i tardi anni Sessanta (anche se Billi pubblica i suoi lavori solo negli anni duemila).

Un'altra poetessa del campo femminile è Livia Candiani, nonostante che le sue poesie non possano essere del tutto messe nel canone femminista. La sua sensibilità e il suo modo in cui guarda e presenta il mondo fanno sì che si possa giudicarla come una poetessa che lotta per la libertà, non solo femminile, ma umana del tutto.

Molto spesso da Candiani appare un concetto di una bambina, ultimamente ha pubblicato una raccolta *Vista dalla luna* in cui sulle prime pagine scrive: "le poesie di *Vista dalla luna* parlano di una bambina che si chiama *Io*". Tornando all'analisi delle tracce femminili nella poesia degli ultimi anni vorrei proporre una lettura di un frammento tratto dalla raccolta *Fatti vivo*<sup>8</sup> del 2017.

Hai detto:  
il migliore degli uomini

è il samurai  
il migliore degli alberi  
il ciliegio.  
E ora sto sul crinale  
indecisa  
a chi assomigliare  
quale dei due splendori:  
sobri vegliare e vegliare  
ebberi gettarsi  
in una nuova fioritura,  
incendiare.

Candiani in modo eccezionale rivela la propria difficoltà di auto-definirsi. Ciò che balza in primo piano è la scelta di alcuni sostantivi maschili nella ricerca di una sua personalità: il samurai, il ciliegio. Questo primo si riferisce ovviamente alla forza tipo maschile, forza spirituale e quella carnale che di solito viene attribuita ai maschi. Dall'altra parte sta il ciliegio, i cui delicati e sottili fiori fanno pensare alla sensibilità e bellezza femminili, ma, sorprendentemente nascoste sotto un sostantivo di genere maschile. Possiamo dedurre allora che l'io lirico si trova nelle circostanze di un raddoppiamento, non sa quale dei due atteggiamenti imposti dalla società dovrebbe scegliere. Una donna per soddisfare gli altri si troverà in un bivio di esigenze che, a volte, si escludono.

Per concludere queste considerazioni vorrei ricordare le parole di Simone de Beauvoir che donna non si nasce, o si diventa. È proprio di questa creazione; del diventare una donna, parlava anche Aleramo, non limitandola solamente alla questione letteraria, ma alla creazione di una donna come genere. Creazione che, qualche volta, può risultare ostacolata dall'incomprensione e troppe esigenze da parte della società che la circonda.

## NOTE

- 1 - Cfr. Graziosi M. *La donna e la storia: identità di genere e identità collettiva nell'Italia liberale e fascista*. Liguori, Napoli, 2000.
- 2 - Cfr. Ferri G. B. *Fascismo e concezioni del diritto*. Cedam, Padova, 2008; Cipriani F. *Il Codice di procedura civile tra gerarchi e processualisti*. Edizioni scientifiche italiane, Napoli, 1992.
- 3 - Cfr. Sbriccoli M. *Codificazione civile e penale* in De Grazia V. - Luzzatto S. (eds.) "Dizionario del fascismo", vol. 1. Einaudi, Torino, 2002, pp. 301-305.
- 4 - Tutti gli slogan vengono da Maurizia Morini *Gli slogan dell'UDI*. La Clé des Langues, Lyon, ENS de LYON/DGESCO (ISSN 2107-7029), novembre 2007. <http://cle.ens-lyon.fr/italien/civilisation/xxe-xxie/le-mouvement-des-femmes/gli-slogan-dell-udi> (consultato il 26/11/2019).
- 5 - Cioè agli inizi degli anni Settanta.
- 6 - Eda Billi, *Donnità*. Iacobelli, 2018.
- 7 - *Poesia Femminista Italiana* a cura di Laura di Nola. Savelli, Roma, 1978.
- 8 - Livia Candiani, *Fatti vivo*. Einaudi, Torino, 2017.



AMMINISTRAZIONE PROVINCIALE DI MILANO

## CONFERIMENTO DI PREMI DI NATALITÀ PEL 1938

Il Rettorio provinciale, con deliberazione 23 dicembre 1937-XVI, approvata dall'Os. G. P. A. con decisione 19 gennaio 1938-XVII, n. 328, ha stabilito di distribuire anche per l'anno XVII, in occasione della « Giornata della Madre e del Fanciullo » (24 dicembre 1938-XVII), 300 premi di natalità di L. 500, — ciascuno, alle madri legittime più onestevoli, che nel quinquennio 28 ottobre 1933-XII-28 ottobre 1938-XVI abbiano avuto almeno tre figli i quali siano viventi a questa ultima data.

Fig. 1 - Premi di natalità (fonte: <http://www.1001storia.polimi.it>)

## BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Aleramo S.** *Apologia dello spirito femminile*. Il Marzocco, 1911, Vol. XVI, 15.
- Billi E.** *Donnità*. Iacobelli, 2018.
- Birnbaum Ch.** *Liberazione della donna: Feminism in Italy*. Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1986.
- Borkowska G.** *Metafora drożdży. Co to jest literatura/poezja kobieca. in Cialo i tekst. Feminizm w literaturoznawstwie. Antologia szkiców*. IBL PAN, Warszawa 2001.
- Candiani L.** *Fatti vivo*. Einaudi, Torino, 2017.
- Cipriani F.** *Il Codice di procedura civile tra gerarchi e processualisti*. Edizioni scientifiche italiane, Napoli 2008.
- Di Nola L.** *Poesia Femminista Italiana*. Savelli, Roma, 1978.
- Ferri G. B.** *Fascismo e concezioni del diritto*. Cedam, Padova.
- Frabotta B.** *Donne in poesia*. Savelli, Roma, 1977.
- Gilbert S. - Gubar S.** *The Madwoman in the Attic* in "Women's studies. A reader" in S. Jackson - K. Atkinosn (eds.). Harvester Wheatsheaf, Londra, 1993.
- Graziosi M.** *La donna e la storia: identità di genere e identità collettiva nell'Italia liberale e fascista*. Liguori, Napoli, 2000.
- Kłos A.** *Apologia kobiecego ducha. Sibilla Aleramo i jej związki z polską kulturą literacką*. Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin, 2019.
- Ludwig E.** *Colloqui con Mussolini*, Milano, Mondadori, 1932.
- Morini M.** *Gli slogan dell'UDI*. La Clé des Langues, Lyon, ENS de LYON/DGESCO (ISSN 2107-7029), novembre 2007. Consultato il 26/11/2019. URL: <http://cle.ens-lyon.fr/italien/civilisation/xxe-xxie/le-mouvement-des-femmes/gli-slogan-dell-udi>
- Olsen T.** *Silences* in "Women's studies. A reader" in S. Jackson - K. Atkinosn (eds.). Harvester Wheatsheaf, Londra, 1993.
- Pieroni Bortolotti F.** *Le donne della Resistenza antifascista e la questione femminile in Emilia Romagna: 1943-1945*. Vangelista Editore, Milano, 1978.
- Santoro M.** *Letteratura italiana del Novecento*. Le Monnier, Firenze, 1989.
- Sassano R.** *Camicette Nere: le donne nel Ventennio fascista*. El Futuro



del Pasado, 6, pp. 253-280. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14516/fdp.2015.006.001.011> (consultato il 26/11/2019).

**Sbriccoli M.** (2002). *Codificazione civile e penale in De Grazia V. - Luzzatto S. (eds.) "Dizionario del fascismo" vol. 1.* Einaudi, Torino, 2002, pp. 301-305.

**Treccani Dizionario**, <http://www.treccani.it/> (consultato il 26/11/2019).

## THE MAKING OF MARGUERITE DURAS - A VISIONARY OF LOVE AND LOSS - IN FRENCH LITERARY HISTORY

*Nikolova Ofelia R.*

(Valdosta State University, Georgia, USA)

Marguerite Duras is one of the foremost French women writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The public outside of France becomes familiar with her independent and original voice for the first time through the screenplay for Allain Resnais' film "Hiroshima, mon amour" released in 1959. It is followed by a string of unsettling, even haunting texts, plays, and films in the 60s and 70s. (Calder, 1996). Yet true world-wide notoriety does not come early to Duras. She becomes universally famous at age 70, after the publication of her novel *L'Amant* with *Les Editions de Minuit* in 1984 and the prestigious prix Goncourt that the book earns her. Despite Duras' popularity, especially after the publication of *L'Amant* and the release of the English-speaking movie *The Lover* made by Jean-Jacques Annaud based on the novel in 1992, it has always been difficult to label her as a representative of a particular literary movement or school. In a way, the originality of her work is her major contribution to the history of French literature. She is elusive, although she sometimes gets lumped in with the *Nouveau Roman* writers because of some similarities in style and themes. Or mostly because of the company she keeps with them in *Les Editions de Minuit*, a publishing house that originated as an underground publisher in WW II during the French resistance movement and continued with a leftist agenda after the war, one of the stomping grounds of the new novelists (Mollier, 1997; Simonin, 2008). But Duras is quite distinct from them. They are all writers and theorists whereas she has a truly cavalier disdain for theories and theorizing. As Leslie Garis (1991) quotes her conversation

with Peter Brooks, Professor of Humanities at Yale University in the *New York Times*:

[...] *the other Nouveau Roman writers got more attention than Duras when the movement began because there was "something more technicolor about their technique. Their theorizing and their break with the traditional novel were overt and total. But Duras is the one from that whole generation who really is going to last."*

Although considered by many a feminist writer, Duras is criticized by a number of feminists (Hope, 2014) for the perceived submissiveness of her female characters (*L'homme assis dans le couloir*, *Le ravisement de Lol V. Stein*, *Moderato cantabile*, *L'amour*, *La maladie de la mort*) and for her fascination with crimes of passion frequently inflicted upon a female character (*Moderato cantabile*). Others like Borgomano (1984) find her women absent, silent, emaciated, isolated, yet resilient and mysterious, opposed to the world and open to it at the same time. Reluctant to adhere to any -isms, Duras is annoyed by too much attention to the formalization of the relationship between men and women. Nonetheless, she contributes regularly to women's magazines, most notably *Les sorcières - Witches* and is one of 343 prominent French women to sign *Le manifeste des 343 salopes* (*The manifesto of the 343 sluts*) published on 4-5-1971 in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, a document expressing their protest against criminalizing of abortions in France.

Duras' experts point out the two emotions central to her texts, love and loss (Borgomano, 2011; Kristeva, 1992; Porte, 2012). In her works, both themes are constantly intertwined with loss often casting a longer shadow, but love is omnipotent and at the end *amor vincit omnia*. Days before her death, Duras writes in her last text *C'est tout* "Le mot amour existe." (n.d.). Loss in the Durassian context can be loss of life, i.e. death, loss of a lover, loss of memory, i.e. forgetting, loss of mind, i.e., madness, loss of self and identity, and finally a void, *l'abîme*, the ultimate loss

of everything, it is overpowering, and mesmerizing. Her characters, of whom the most notorious is Lol V. Stein, are haunted by the memory of an event/non-event, which they can neither recall nor forget (Office of ... 1964). They move in a jungle of fragmented texts and scenes and relive the same loss from narrative to narrative. She creates whole cycles, such as the *India Cycle* with recurring characters and issues. Julia Kristeva sees her work as a *mise en abîme intertextuelle*, which makes for a surprising coherence (1980).

Our task in this paper is to uncover the sources of this obsession with loss in the life of the author. We will follow the making of the writer Duras and her fascination with the idea of loss in different contexts looking at formative experiences in her early years. We will start with her childhood in French Indochina, go through World War II and the resistance movement in France at the side of François Mitterrand, and end with the 60s, a pivotal decade in the life of many French intellectuals. In many ways we will look at how history shaped a woman who made history with her writing. Among the most important events of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century that created the writer Duras as we know her, are French colonialism, the educational reform of 1882, WWII, its concentration camps and its paper crisis, the French resistance, the victory of communism in the Soviet Union and its spread in Europe, the War in Algeria, and the unrest of the 60s.

### **The Domineering Mother and the Little White Savage**

Marguerite remembers her childhood in Indochina not because it is quiet, uneventful, and warm, but because those first memories of a remote and exotic world will remain forever with her, materializing in many of her novels. The daughter of two teachers, she starts life in Gia, Dinh, Saïgon, Vietnam, in 1914 under the name Marguerite Germaine Marie Donnadieu. Her parents, both French nationals of modest origins - her mother is a baker's daughter and her father, the son of farmers from the southwest - are educated

as teachers thanks to the generous educational reform of 1882 (“Les lois scolaires,” n.d.). They have come to Indochina independently as a result of Jules Ferry’s colonial and educational reforms, whether because of their flair for adventure or their belief in enlightening the population of the colonies, we will never know. The fact remains that they come each already married to someone else. After the death of their respective spouses, they marry and raise a family in which Marguerite is the youngest child.

The family moves frequently from city to city according to the parents’ professional assignments and each move is a loss in the life of little Marguerite. In the film *Worn Out with Desire to Write*, she says:

*C’est comme je n’ai pas eu de maison natale. J’en ai eu une, mais elle était inaccessible et je n’ai jamais pu la revoir. Cette maison m’a tenu lieu d’une maison natale. Mais le passé est peut-être ici, dans le présent. Cet endroit-ci, il est déjà dans le passé. Je peux m’en servir pour dire exactement ce que je veux, comment dirai-je, de mon existence. L’histoire de ma vie n’existe pas... Ça n’existe pas. Elle n’a jamais eu de centre. Pas de chemin pour y aller, pas de ligne. Il y a des endroits vastes .. qui ont fait croire qu’il y avait quelqu’un. Mais ce n’est pas vrai, il n’y avait personne. Avant, j’avais parlé des périodes claires de ma vie, de celles qui étaient éclairées et ici, je parle de périodes cachées de cette vie, de cette même jeunesse.*

However, she remains generally a happy child, running in the fields with the local children, sunburnt and badly dressed, more Vietnamese than French (Garis, 1991, p. 44). According to Duras, the desire to write comes to her there, in the marshes and rice fields of the Mekong delta, in the woods, stifling with heat and humidity, scented with the exotic perfume of the jasmine. (Porte, 2012). This world will become later a gaping loss and thus a

tempting point of fictionalization after the writer's permanent move to France.

But there is already trouble on the horizon and at age seven, Marguerite experiences the first significant loss of a close human being. Her father Henri, whose health had been frail for a long-time, dies at age 49. The impressionable child is devastated, all the more that her mother is not her favorite parent. Marie Donnadiou is cold, domineering, and ambitious, although she has a soft spot. However, this soft spot is not for her daughter, but for her first-born son, Pierre, the "older brother" in Duras' works, a good for nothing, rough, and violent young man. Marguerite and the "younger brother" Paul, are left to their own devices and feel neglected and abandoned. (Vallier, 2006). This strengthens the bond between the two of them, a bond that some, including Duras herself (Wiles et al., 2002) claim goes beyond fraternal love, but which also brings more horrific loss to Marguerite with Paul's early death from septicemia in 1942 at age 30.

Marie Donnadiou is firmly decided to create a better future for her children, especially for her oldest and engages in a prolonged battle with French bureaucracy after the death of her husband, fighting for his estate. She takes her children to France several times and on one of these occasions they remain there for almost two years. Marguerite is already torn between two worlds and the losses accumulate. But at the same time, a myriad of impressions are formed during the long boat trips between Asia and Europe, some of which quite opulent, and young Marguerite starts developing a taste for luxury.

Marie and Marguerite are in constant conflict, butting heads because of their incompatible characters. Marguerite may be flighty and absent minded, but she is just as resolute as her mother (Vallier, 2006). In 1927 Marie buys 200 hectares (5,000 acres) of land in Indochina in the hope of transforming it into a fertile rice field. The whole family's, but particularly the mother's fight for this land against the salt water of the ocean, becomes for Marguerite

an allegory of human destiny with its precarity and potential for loss. This monstrous struggle is at the basis of some of the first novels written by the young writer, starting with her first one, *Les Impudents*, published in 1943. It is particularly well described in *Barrage contre le Pacifique* (1950), but the sands of the desert and the family's vicissitudes are present also in many of her later works, including *The Lover* (1984), her greatest commercial success. [Like a number of her novels, *Barrage* is turned into a movie and not only once but twice - in 1958 under the title *Angry Age* (or the *Sea Wall*), an American - Italian co-production produced by Dino de Laurentis and starring Silvana Mangano in the role of the daughter and, more recently in 2008 directed by Cambodian director Rithy Panh, starring Isabelle Huppert in the role of the mother. Duras hated the first iteration of the movie and did not live to see the second.]

For Marguerite, the mother becomes a frightening symbol of a constant fight for survival against the forces of nature and society, bordering on madness. In fact, Marguerite claims frequently that her mother was insane and insanity defines many of the characters in her books. (Duras - Cohen, 1987; Gauthier, 1974; Porte, 2012). In her typical fashion, she exaggerates the mother's social consciousness in *Barrage contre le Pacifique* and Marie, who has spent her entire life trying to gain access to a finer society and be accepted by the *haute bourgeoisie*, the upper middle class, is horrified by the portrait her daughter paints of her in the novel. Marguerite's hints about her mother's preference for the older brother in *Des journées entières dans les arbres* (1954) do not help, and mother and daughter do not speak or see each other until Marie's death in 1956. There are conflicting accounts of Marguerite's last encounter with her mother. According to Vallier (2006), Marguerite pretends that she did not attend the funeral and even claims until the end of her life that she does not know where her mother is buried. On the other hand, Adler (1998) recounts a much more believable story of Marguerite's arriving at Marie's death bed in

drunk stupor after a trip with her then lover Gérard Jarlot, the man who changed her life and writing style. Whatever the truth might be, the loss of the powerful mother figure became one more of the series of losses which defined Duras as a writer.

### **France and the Specter of the War**

In 1933, at age 19, Marguerite leaves Indochina for good. She will start a new life in France and the rice fields, the desert, and the younger brother remain forever behind her. She is the only one from the family to attend university and her mother is finally satisfied. Marguerite will study mathematics at first, but she is ultimately attracted by the law and political science. She will later remember her college years as uneventful.

She is good looking, well dressed, flirtatious, and thirsty for knowledge. She devours the newest books and the latest movies. She has a lot of catching up to do, the little white savage is finally going to overcome her colonial provincialism. In these pre-war years when the conflicts of the century develop and ripen, she remains oddly outside of any political movement, notwithstanding the fact that political activism becomes the very essence of her later life.

*Marguerite was never part of any group action; crowds frightened her. When in the general election, the Popular Front won the second ballot, at midnight on 3 May 1936, she did not go out in the streets, as did a good many intellectuals singing 'The Internationale' and chanting, 'Down with Fascism.'* Marguerite was leading a very bourgeois life. She wanted to do well and get as much of life as possible. (Adler, 1998, p. 79)

Upon graduation, Marguerite Donnadiou is employed by the Ministry of French Colonies and writes a book - a thick volume titled *The French Empire*, extolling the French colonial system - with the attaché of minister Mandel, Philippe Roques, himself as coauthor. She has a "suitable" boyfriend - Robert Antelme, a classmate



from Law School - whose father is the former *sous préfet* of Bayon. Mother Marie is delighted. Her daughter gets married on September 23, 1939, three weeks after France declares war on Germany.

The war is a thunderous wake-up call that shakes the whole generation of easy-going French students who did not have many cares in the world. Pain, and death will remain forever in Duras' work after this moment. Losses follow one after the other on a personal level. The first winter of the war, she loses her job because the Pétain administration makes it illegal for married women to work for the government. Blinded by their obsession with the Popular Front, the Pétainists see emancipated women as anathema for their credo *Travail, famille, patrie*. Women are sent back home and tasked with having as many children as possible (Perrinaud, 2017). Marguerite is not too sad, she will concentrate on writing. But 1942 becomes a year of two major personal losses which, even though far from the madness of war, foreshadow the suffering to come. Marguerite mourns her first child, still born, and her brother Paul, the "younger brother" in her books, the one she tenderly loved. With him, her childhood and her years in Indochina are gone forever, only to be resuscitated in her books.

But Marguerite resumes work and what a fabulous job it is. She is hired as a secretary by the Paper Allocation Agency (Adler, 1998) with paper an incredibly precious resource during the war. This event alone has possibly the biggest influence on her as a professional of the written word. It puts her in connection with the major publishing houses in Paris where she eventually meets Dionys Mascolo, editor at *Gallimard*, her future partner and father of her only son Jean. Her first book *Les Impudents* comes out in 1943, but not without some difficulties. She is rejected first by *Gallimard* and by none other than Raymond Queneau who will later become a close friend. But les éditions *Plon* accept her manuscript and the writer Duras is born at the expense of the entire Donnadiou family - the main protagonists in the book. (Mar-

guerite uses her pseudonym here for the first time; it comes from the name of a region near her father's village in southwest France).

But 1943 will be also the year that marks war's nightmarish invasion of Duras' private life. She and her husband have become friendly with one of their classmates from Law School, a clandestine resistance guerilla - François Mitterrand, who goes by the nickname Morlan - and have started attending meetings of the *résistants*. Soon, Robert and his sister are arrested by the Gestapo and, being Jewish, are sent to a concentration camp. Marguerite remains free, but the horror of this experience never leaves her and continues to haunt her life and her texts until her death. Something greater than her personal comfort is lost, something much greater. It is the innocence of the world, the belief in the goodness of the human soul. Later, she can only compare this to the horrors of Hiroshima, but in her typical style she refuses to name them (Halfon - Daumon - Resnais, 1959). The world has gone beyond human and this metamorphosis cannot be processed. The juxtaposition of the words *nothing* and *everything* - *rien* and *tout* in French - in the opening dialogue of *Hiroshima, mon amour*, makes it excruciatingly clear that no perception and no logic are involved and the role of the present is to keep the memory alive yet this memory slides between our fingers and brings the horrible fear of forgetting.

At the end of the war, Robert returns home, barely alive. He had been to Buchenwald and Dachau. He weighs 38 kilos. His sister, also liberated from the camp does not make it all the way back and dies on the road home. Marguerite nurses Robert back to health and learns the truth about the camps from him. During the war and immediately after it she keeps a journal called *Cahiers de la guerre*, that she revisits later and uses for her book *La douleur* published in 1987 when she is already seventy-three. *Cahiers de la guerre et autres textes*, an integral rendition of her journal that she bequests to the institute *Mémoires de l'édition*

*contemporaine* in 1995, a year before her death, is published much later as a part of her legacy.

### **The Years after the War - Political Activism and Flirting with Communism**

The years after the war bring anxiety to a large number of French intellectuals. The feeling of guilt daunts them because of their apathy in the first years of the war, their lack of information about the horrors, and their inability to change the course of history. Many are looking for an alternative to the forces that brought war and are finding it in the ideas of communism. So are Duras, her husband Robert, and their friend Dionys Mascolo who all join the communist party. For Mascolo, the communist idea is a “reaction against the lack of humanity that has overtaken the world” (Vallier, 2006, p. 94). Marguerite fulfills her obligations in the communist party with passion and earns herself the nickname “the chekist lady.” However, this enthusiasm is short lived and another loss is about to occur. With Stalinist Moscow’s increasing control of the French communists, Duras is disenchanted and asks to leave the party. But the Communist Party is like a fickle girlfriend, you do not break up with her, she breaks up with you. In response to her request, Duras is expelled from the party along with her two sidekicks. However, in her own words, she remains a communist until her last days.

The late 40s and the early 50s see a new force in the intellectual life in France. There are so many social and political issues at stake - colonialism, workers’ demands, avoiding new catastrophes. Marguerite and Robert live in an apartment on rue St. Benoît in Saint Germain-des-Prés, a neighborhood that has become fashionable after the war as a place for young intellectuals to gather, particularly Jean-Paul Sartre and his followers. Duras, Robert, and Dionys also form a kind of “salon” frequented by many of the prominent names of the time - Raymond Queneau, Jacques Lacan, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Michel Leiris, and

Georges Battaille - among others. Marguerite is a charming and witty hostess and knows how to prepare well the rice her mother sends from Saïgon, while the food in Paris is still rationed. (Adler, 1998)

But another loss is looming, one that will become a major theme in Duras' writing in the 60s and 70s - the gradual erosion of desire and the demise of the couple, love triangles and swapping of partners, voyeurism, and blurring of many psychological lines. Marguerite and Robert divorce and Dionys moves into the apartment on rue St. Benoît to help raise his and Marguerite's son Jean. Nevertheless, Dionys and Robert remain the best of friends and soon enough Robert brings his new wife, Monique, to the apartment. The two couples spend their summer vacations together in Italy and in 1953 the disintegration of couples appears in *Les petits chevaux de Tarquinia* to be followed later by *Moderato cantabile* (1958) [one of the initial sources of Duras' fame, preceding *Hiroshima mon amour*, also made into a movie directed by Peter Brook and starring Jean-Paul Belmondo and Jeanne Moreau] *Dix heures et demi du soir en été* (1960), *Les après-midi de Monsieur Andesmas* (1962), also a movie directed by Michelle Porte, and others.

### **Passion, Madness, and Alcohol: the Dissolute Years**

In the late 50s and early 60s Duras' fame continues to grow and her activism has attained new heights. She is campaigning against the experiment with the H bomb, the war in Indochina, and above all against the war in Algeria, the main conflict of that period in France. Marguerite is an accomplished journalist and her frequent media appearances and flirting with American universities contribute to her growing popularity.

At that time, a fascination with annihilation of the object of desire as the strongest manifestation of true passion, becomes her new obsession. It is no surprise that the root of this fascination is in another major loss and change in her life. She has split up with

Mascolo and he has put their son in a boarding school despite Marguerite's protests. She is too often drunk now to be a reliable mother. And this all is due to the new man in her life, Gérard Jarlot. Jarlot brings a change that gives Marguerite her individual voice from that point on. He becomes a source of passion Marguerite has never thought possible. He is a handsome, charming, educated man, a journalist who dabbles in writing in his spare time. But above all, he is a lover and a voyeur who brings to the love-making a raw visceral passion that enchants Duras. She has never experienced anything like that before.

*There had been times in the past when Duras thought her life was in danger - as an adolescent with the Chinese lover, before and after her marriage to Antelme when she was sleeping around with strangers, at the end of the war with Delval. For once, she wasn't in control to what was happening to her. There was life before Jarlot and life after Jarlot. (Adler, 1998, p. 205)*

During the next ten years Gérard Jarlot will give her passion and eroticism bordering on violence, stronger than she has ever dreamt of. These exalted emotions will permeate her work and will shake her world, like in *L'homme assis dans le couloir* (started in 1962, but finally published in 1980) about which she says that she could have not written it had she not lived it. Duras and Jarlot travel in luxury, indulge in their passion, and drink. They drink a lot. Later, Marguerite will suffer of severe alcoholism whose seeds have been planted during the Jarlot period. At age 78, it puts her in an alcohol-induced coma. To the surprise of those around her who expected it to be the end, the coma lasts for six months and she survives.

In 1958, appears the first of a multitude of female characters steeped in alcohol and unable to feel passion but through the love of others, preferably one that leads to death. It is Anne Desbaresdes of *Moderato Cantabile*, the young bourgeoisie already emo-

tionally dead in the stifling unloving life her class and her upbringing have predestined her for. Her desperate attempts to relive the passion of the young woman killed by her lover are the precursors of the fragile psyche and voyeuristic path of more Durasian protagonists to come.

Meanwhile, Marguerite has made money after filming *Barrage* and has bought a house in Nauphle-le-Château near Paris which becomes her new serene refuge. She buys also a beach house in Trouville, and there she will create the enigmatic beach town of S. Thala, the eerie place where her most emblematic female character Lol V. Stein meets her rapture the day her fiancé leaves her for another woman.

Lol is by far the most analyzed of all Durasian characters, her appearance marks the beginning of the maturity of Duras' talent, the end of the formative years. In an interview given to Pierre Dumayet on April 15, 1964 Duras talks about writing the book and the genesis of the character of Lol. *Le Ravissement* is the first book she writes without the help of alcohol apprehensive of whether she would be able to work without it. She recalls meeting the young woman in a mental health institution (a psychiatric asylum as she calls it) at a Christmas ball. She names her Lol after actress Lolleh Bellon, her first choice for an actress who would play the character. What strikes her in Lol is that she is not ravaged physically by her mental disease at all (unlike her colleagues), but she is like an automaton, she almost does not talk, just like them. She talks little and her words are extraordinarily *banals*. She takes Duras for a doctor and talks to be considered like the others, but the more she talks, the more she seems unique and fascinates the writer and at the same time makes her even more apprehensive of her ability to write. Madness becomes more familiar without alcohol.

We are in the town of T. Beach - in England - *le bal de la saison* at the time of Lol's engagement. Her fiancé Michael Richardson falls in love with another woman- Anne-Marie Stretter - a middle aged woman for whom this is also love at first sight. At that very

moment Lol becomes their most fervent admirer fascinated by this incredible passion and oblivious of her feelings which are, according to Duras, no longer existent. Lol's only desire is to be the witness of the couple's love, she is the voyeur who lives through the passion of others. For Duras:

*Lol a assisté à cet amour naissant à cette chose jusqu'à se perdre de vue. Elle a oublié que c'était elle qu'on n'aimait plus. Elle était en faveur et avec cet amour naissant. (comparer à Les après-midi de M. Andesmas) Et c'était si merveilleux cette éviction, cet anéantissement de Lol. C'est admirable de pouvoir voir son propre amour s'éprendre d'une autre. Elle en est tellement émerveillée qu'elle en était marquée pour la vie, voilà [ and she goes on in dialog with Pierre Dumayet ] ... MD - Elle n'a pas souffert d'amour du tout. Elle a souffert d'être séparée d'eux. Si vous voulez, elle aurait consenti à une sorte de vie parasitaire. Une vie à trois, je n'hésite pas devant le mot, greffée sur le couple, le vécu comme ça. PD- Elle aurait voulu les voir? MD Elle aurait voulu les voir. PD - vivre, s'aimer MD - oui, dans l'oubli d'elle-même absolu, elle aurait voulu tout voir; tout, jusqu'à l'accouplement sans doute. (Office national, 1964)*

Jacques Lacan (1964), himself, writes about Duras' mastery in creating Lol's psyche in *Homage à Marguerite Duras du Ravissement de Lol V. Stein*:

*[...] le seul avantage qu'un psychanalyste ait le droit de prendre de sa position, lui fût-elle donc reconnue comme telle, c'est de se rappeler avec Freud qu'en sa manière, l'artiste toujours le précède et qu'il n'a donc pas à faire le psychologue où l'artiste lui fraie la voie. C'est précisément ce que je reconnais dans le Ravissement de Lol V. Stein, où Marguerite Duras s'avère savoir sans moi ce que j'enseigne.*

All elements are here now for Duras to continue to surprise her audience. The losses are internalized, they take a life of their own and continue to populate Duras' texts. Until the day she writes "Le mot amour existe" (Duras, n.d.) with her last breath.



## REFERENCES

- Adler L. - Glasheen A.-M.** *Marguerite Duras: A Life*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1998.
- Borgomano M.** *Une écriture féminine. A propos de Marguerite Duras* in "Littérature" 53. 1984, pp. 59-68. Retrieved from [https://www.persee.fr/doc/litt\\_0047-4800\\_1984\\_num\\_53\\_1\\_2216](https://www.persee.fr/doc/litt_0047-4800_1984_num_53_1_2216).
- Borgomano M.** *De la forme au sens*. L'Harmattan, Paris, 2011.
- Calder J.** *Obituary: Marguerite Duras* in "The Independent", 4 March, London, 1996. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-marguerite-duras-5625876.html>.
- Duras M.** *C'est tout* (Ed. définitive. ed.). POL, Paris, n.d.
- Duras M. - Cohen E.** *Mothers* in "The Threepenny Review", 30, 5-5. 1987. Retrieved from [www.jstor.org/stable/4383559](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4383559).
- Durham C.** *The Contexture of Feminism: Marie Cardinal and Multicultural Literacy*. University of Illinois Press, Champagne, 1992.
- Garis L.** *The Life and Loves of Marguerite Duras* in "The New York Times Magazine". New York, 20 October, 1991. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/10/20/magazine/the-life-and-loves-of-marguerite-duras.html>.
- Gauthier X.** *Les parleuses*. Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1974.
- Halfon S. - Daumon A.** (Producers) - **Resnais A.** (Director). *Hiroshima, mon amour*. Pathé Films, Paris, 1959.
- Kristeva J.** *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1980.
- Kristeva J.** *Black Sun*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1992.
- Les lois scolaires de Jules Ferry: Loi du 28 mars 1882 sur l'enseignement primaire obligatoire.* (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.senat.fr/evenement/archives/D42/1882.html>.
- Mollier J-Y.** *Anne Simonin, Les éditions de Minuit, 1942-1955. Le devoir d'insoumission* in "Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine" 1997, 44-2. pp. 383-384.
- Office national de radiodiffusion, télévision française** (Producer) - **Prat J. - Porte M.** (Directors) - **Dumayet P.** (Host) *M. Duras à propos du Ravissement de Lol V Stein*. TV interview on April 15, 1964. Retrieved from <https://www.ina.fr/video/I04257861> (consulted on August 3, 2019).

**Perrinaud M.** *Quelle place pour la femme sous le régime de Pétain?* 23 November 2017. Retrieved from [https://www.lamontagne.fr/vichy-03200/actualites/quelle-place-pour-la-femme-sous-le-regime-de-petaain\\_12640024/](https://www.lamontagne.fr/vichy-03200/actualites/quelle-place-pour-la-femme-sous-le-regime-de-petaain_12640024/)

**Porte M.** *Les lieux de Marguerite Duras.* Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 2012.

**Simonin A.** *Les Editions de Minuit, 1942-1955.* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. IMEC, Paris, 2008.

**Vallier J.** *Marguerite Duras: La vie comme un roman.* Les Editions Textuel, Paris, 2006.

**Wiles D. - Benson A. - Chadwick H. - Duras. M. - Rider E.** *Worn Out with Desire to Write.* (DVD). Princeton, N.J., 2002.

## WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN THE INTERWAR YUGOSLAVIA<sup>1</sup>

*Ida Ograjšek Gorenjak*

(University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities  
and Social Sciences, Department of History)

**Introduction.** Paper presents a survey of a small group of women journalists in interwar Yugoslavia. It is divided in two parts. In the first part it aims to define the concept of “journalist” at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the way different political, economic and social processes of the time reflected on the position of female journalists. In the second part authoress, examines limits and potential of professional career and social impact of women journalist and how their journalist efforts were perceived by their colleagues, families and themselves.

\* \* \*

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Budapest parliament faced an unusual problem: a female reporter. Her appearance was met with a great astonishment and the presidency held a special meeting to determine whether she was to be allowed to participate during parliament discussions or not. Her fellow colleagues were equally puzzled, and they informed their readers of this odd phenomenon: “There is a peculiarity in the Hungarian parliament. (...) A small monster with a journalist talent that made it the most modern parliament in Europe”<sup>2</sup>.

From the moment they appeared on the public scene, women journalists evoked interest, admiration or outrage of their contemporaries. They weren't the only career women of their time, but the female journalism challenged the “great divide” of private and public spheres more than other professions, and, it also gave women a chance to participate in the shaping of public opinion. Their social and political influence were recognized by the International Council of Women (ICW)<sup>3</sup>, women's umbrella organi-

zation, which founded a special press committee to monitor the coverage of women's issues in the press of the time and to support the position of women journalists.

Within the last few decades women journalists became topics of the analyzes of gender and women historians. The overviews of women's press, and the coverage of women's issues inevitably shed some light on the producers of the texts<sup>4</sup>. There are also several biographies and papers on prominent journalists and writers who were involved in various aspects of the press industry<sup>5</sup>. Other historians studied women journalists using the methodology of prosopography, giving either a collection of individual biographies or trying to categorize journalists by the type of texts they wrote. Their scope of investigation is usually rather inclusive. For example, the book on German women journalists of the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century included all writers who "regularly placed fiction or nonfiction contributions in periodicals and/or newspapers"<sup>6</sup> and Cathrine Clay in her analyzes on British women journalists in the interwar period divided their efforts in three categories: women's magazines, literary journalism and political journalism<sup>7</sup>. This paper aims to analyze women journalist in the interwar Yugoslavia regarding their social status, education, type of employment, income and most frequent topics they covered. It also, examines limits and potential of their professional career, their social impact, how their journalist efforts were perceived by their colleagues, families and themselves.

The basis of my analysis are the documents of the Yugoslav women's alliance (YWA)<sup>8</sup> press committee, autobiographies of one of the most famous Croatian journalist Marija Jurić Zagorka and various press articles of the time. The YWA press committee was one of the nine committees of the women's umbrella alliance in Yugoslavia and it aimed to keep track of the press coverage of the activities of women's organizations and the progress of women journalists. The reports were written by Pavla Hočevar (1889-1972)<sup>9</sup> and Minka Govekar<sup>10</sup> (1874-1950) who contributed

to various periodicals themselves. They provided the historical analyses of the women's press and journalism and the surveys on the status and position of Yugoslav journalists of the time. Those surveys were interesting for two reasons. The members of the press committee investigated the position of women journalists by reading through the press, by interviewing women they were acquainted with, and by carrying out polls with the editors of the papers that employed women and women journalists themselves. There, the members of the Yugoslav press society gave information about their name, education, years of service, papers they worked for, topics they covered, their codes, whether they were members of a professional organization or not and whether the journalism was their primary profession. Even though those data were often partial and incomplete, they provided us with some basic synthesis on women journalism of that time. More importantly, though, the surveys can be read as a construct that can discover the way the members of the women's movement contemplated on women journalism. What were the most important questions, and what were the preferable answers? What problems did they identify, or did they miss to identify? What elements of journalist profession did they find particularly interesting?

\* \* \*

One of the first challenges the press committee and the present historians of journalism had to face was the very definition of their topic of investigation. Who is a journalist? Even though the question seems simple enough, the answer was very complex. At the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, journalism experienced an identity crisis due to the boost of the print media and its new role in the consumer society. A profession that had once been considered artistic and informative was now being reduced to the commodity and a tool of economics<sup>11</sup>. Furthermore, there was still no specific education or qualification required for practicing journalism nor a consensus on what set of actions and factors made one a pro-

professional of the print media. Was everyone whose texts were being published in a newspaper or a magazine a journalist? Or, could every employee of a print media be qualified as a journalist? Obviously, there was still a certain number of authors and workers who believed so. The Yugoslav press conferences were attended by a diverse group of participants that included teachers, publishers, actors, pharmacists, administrative workers etc.<sup>12</sup> The polls conducted by the YWA press committee were also answered by a multifarious group of women whose education varied from middle school to PhD in law and who performed different types of jobs for their magazines: they wrote feuilletons, anecdotes or coverages, performed stenography, translation, proofreading etc. All of them declared that journalism was their main profession<sup>13</sup>. Finally, not all women or men that participated in the print media were on a payroll. Some of them were a part-time writers and others waived their fee. Were they journalists too? And more importantly how did their actions reflect on “professionals”? Therefore, the first half of the century was marked by a set of efforts to regulate professional journalism: founding professional organizations, discussing and defining the position of the journalist and sifting through the dross of contributors.

Unfortunately, the regularization of any profession usually led to the segregation of women. Declining the reputation of journalism was frequently linked with the emergence of women as writers, topics and the readers of newspaper articles<sup>14</sup>. This antifeminist sentiment was intensified in the years that followed the Great War, when the society was generally oriented toward the “normalization” and “return to the old ways” so it tended to be more traditional and conservative. It was an unfavorable time for women to peruse any kind of carrier, especially the one that would challenge the image of acceptable women’s competences<sup>15</sup>. As a result, female journalists were removed from “important” stories and they were encouraged to write about topics that targeted female market<sup>16</sup>.

On the other hand, during the interwar period, consumer econo-

mics, different political options or feminist movement aimed to reach female readers. Therefore, a certain number of political and daily press such as *The morning paper* (*Jutarnji list*, Zagreb, 1912-1941), *Politics* (*Politika*, Beograd, 1904-), *The morning* (*Jutro*, Ljubljana, 1920-1943) launched a type of “women’s pages” or they introduced a column that addressed “female” topics. The increase in the number of female readers also induced the emergence of various women’s magazines which can be divided in three categories:

a) Magazines that aim to inform and help women to organize an aspect of their life (fashion, housework, an activity in women’s organization etc.) were the ones with the longest tradition that went back as far as the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These were for example *The housewife* (*Domaćica*, Belgrade, 1879-1941), *Paris fashion* (*Pariška moda*, Zagreb, 1895-1938; *Pariska moda*, Belgrade, 1902), *At the home hearth* (*Na domaćem ognjištu*, Zagreb, 1901-1914). etc;

b) Magazines that were launched to promote a certain type of political worldview among women emerged at the beginning and at the end of the period. In the early 1920ies there was a real chance for the new Constitution of the Kingdom to grant suffragette rights to women, so for a short period of time, there was a number of women’s magazines that promoted certain political options: democratism *Jugoslav women* (*Jugoslavenska žena*, Zagreb, 1918-1919), socialism *Equality* (*Jednakost*, Belgrade, 1920), catholic conservatism *Women’s thought* (*Ženska misao*, Zagreb, 1919-1921) and *Sloevnka* (1919) etc. During the thirties some parties tried to earn sympathies of the masses, which of course, included women. Once again it was important to reach female readers. So there were women’s magazine like *Our women* (*Naša žena*, Zagreb 1935-1938) that promoted the ideology of Croatian peasant party, the most popular party in Croatiaia, or socialist *Women today* (*Žena danas*, Beograd, 1936-1941)<sup>17</sup>. Throughout the period feminist movement also launched their

own periodical *Women's Movement* (*Ženski pokret*, Belgrade, 1920-1938);

c) an illustrative commercial type of magazines with the goal to entertain and shape a “modern type of women” appeared in the mid-twenties and they soon became the most popular magazines among the female readers. The most widespread magazines in Yugoslavia were *Women's Magazine* (*Ženski list*, Zagreb, 1925-1938), *Women and the World* (*Žena i svet*, Belgrade 1925-1941) and *Women's world* (*Ženski svet*, Ljubljana 1923-1941)<sup>18</sup>.

Due to those trends a certain number of educated women could find a job or at least a part time income in one of the prestigious newspapers, periodicals and journals of the time, or they could contribute to various women's magazines. Most of them covered similar topics; they usually wrote about women's movement and pacifism, education and homemaking, reported social, fashion, and feminist news, or they covered interesting lawsuits<sup>19</sup>. The YWA press committee, however, struggled with the questions whether all of them could be considered “real journalists”?

The answer to that question depended on the objectives of reports. The analyses of the history of women's journalism in Yugoslavia included all women from the area that were involved in any kind of newspaper business from the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century. They mentioned women's effort to support national newspapers, different type of women's press and even editors of professional magazines such as *Midwife news* (*Babški vesnik*) or *Tobacco worker* (*Tobačni delavec*)<sup>20</sup>. The survey on the state of journalism of the time, however, specifically dismissed women to whom journalism was only an occasional profession and it was rather reserved toward journalists and editors of women's magazines. In this report, the professional women journalists were defined as “those who work for big weekly or daily newspapers”<sup>21</sup>. Just like generations of historians of journalism in the years to come, the YWA press committee believed that a successful women journalist should follow a male career model and preferably in the male sur-



roundings. To a certain degree, this attitude was accepted and perpetuated by women's magazines themselves. In *Women's World* (*Ženski svet*, Beograd, 1930-1934) there is an interesting interview with Anđa Buniševac, a female journalist working for *Politics*. The interviewer announced Anđa B. with the following words:

*She writes for 'Politics' and that's why she is valuable. Because the authoress [of the article] is a journalist herself. Her way into 'Politics' was not based on writing about women's issues (...) She sent a number of articles that hadn't been published, and then she came up with the idea of a chronicle about the morning tea in the Vienna Club (of which she was a member), and the soiree with the Japanese guards and so her articles started to get published regularly<sup>22</sup>.*

Even though the authoress of the article considered herself to be a journalist and both of them practically wrote about similar topics, authoress believed that Anđa B. and she were not part of the same business world. The authoress wrote for the magazine that was “an epitome of femininity” and Anđa B. worked for a paper defined by terms of masculinity where “you have to suppress all the kindness, you have to turn down all the sensitivity, you need to toughen up all the roughness and forget that you are a woman”<sup>23</sup>. Importance of Anđa's employer seemed to define and elevate her status among her fellow colleges of the same gender. It was not until the feminist turn of the 1970s that such views were revised and the impact and importance of both editors and contributors of women's press were revalued<sup>24</sup>.

It is interesting that none of the surveys of the YWA press comity included contributors to radio broadcasts, even though the first radio show in the region was broadcast in Zagreb in 1926, and the first announcer was actress Božena Begović. During the 1930ies almost every radio station of a major city in Yugoslavia introduced a “women hour” where prominent women of the time discussed various aspects of “the woman question”. Radio had

soon become a rather popular media, radio shows were followed and commented by the daily press, cafes that traditionally provided newspapers for their customers started to install radio headsets. Nevertheless, the neglect of women who worked for radio went hand in hand with the undefined public attitude toward prospects of this form of media. Sports journalist Hrvoje Macanović (1904-1980) remembered that the informative, political and journalistic potential of the new media wasn't recognized before Hitler and the war in Abyssinia<sup>25</sup>.

\* \* \*

The YWA press reports were often concerned with the numbers. How many women in Yugoslavia practiced journalism and what was their overall ratio? They had mostly concluded that women journalists were a rather small group that made approximately two percent of journalists in Yugoslavia. Some reports even tried to bring more specific numbers: sixteen members of the Yugoslav journalist society, around fifteen editors of women's magazines and about sixty independent associates of various monthlies and journals<sup>26</sup>. Most of those women were part of a nameless group but several names stood out in almost every report.

One of the most prominent journalists in Yugoslavia was a Croatian authoress Marija Jurić Zagorka (1873-1957), who started to practice journalism at the turn of the 19th century. This was in the days before newspaper editors had developed successful strategies for directing women journalists towards trivial topics. Women who had ventured into journalism were scarce but, nevertheless, they had a chance to engage in various important political and social issues of the time. For example, American journalist Nellie Bly<sup>27</sup> investigated the corruption in Mexico or the conditions in the Blackwell's island psychiatric asylum, French journalist Louise Weiss worked as a foreign correspondent (from Prague and Russia) during the Great War<sup>28</sup> and Ida Minerva Tarbell<sup>29</sup> was an eager and equal part of "the muckrakers", a group of reform journalists who reported on politics and corruption wi-

thin the government. Marija Juric Zagorka could easily be included in this group of advantageous pioneers of female journalism. The first two decades of Zagorka's career were very exciting. She was employed by *Obzor*; the leading Croatian opponent magazine<sup>30</sup>, and after all the other editors had been arrested during the turbulent political disturbances in 1903<sup>31</sup>, she even ran the magazine for a short period of time. Due to her multilingualism, she became the first female correspondent from the Budapest Parliament and her vivid and dynamic style of writing was recognized and admired by both readers and her colleagues from other countries. Some historians of journalism even argue that her reports significantly raised the circulation of *Obzor*. She had also covered two major political scandals in Austro-Hungary: "The High treason" and The Friedjung mounted trials<sup>32</sup>, and she took active part in founding the first journalist professional organization, the Croatian press society (Hrvatsko novinarsko društvo) in 1910. However, the launch of *Little papers (Male novine)*, an unpolitical supplement of *Obzor* changed her career path and her position in the working environment. The editors had decided to remove her from the political scope of the paper, so she was assigned to write historical romance cliffhangers in sequels which aimed to boost the circulation of *Little papers*. Her readers afterwards remembered the tremendous success of her novels, long queues when the new issue of *Little paper* with the next sequel of her novel would finally be released, collective reading of her novels in the common yards of the buildings and strong identification with the characters in the books<sup>33</sup>. Zagorka's autobiography, on the other hand, records her frustration with the new situation and extremely aggressive editors who had constantly pressured her to write swiftly, catchy and cursory. All her protests were met with disdain and cynicism: "If you want to marry the publishing industry, you have to give a dowry. Your novels! ... No dowry ... no salary!"<sup>34</sup>. At the end of the Great War she finally quit her position, but her journalist career wasn't over, it just shifted from political towards

women's press. During the interwar period she had launched and edited two very successful commercial women's magazines: *Women's Magazine* (*Ženski list*, 1925-1938) and *Croatian woman* (*Hrvatica*, 1939-1941), and she also occasionally worked as a correspondent for *The morning paper* and later on *Obzor* again<sup>35</sup>. Her cooperation with the political press, though, was always on condition that she provided them with romance novels in sequels. Zagorka's impact and importance was recognized by the representatives of women's movement and they wrote several lectures and reports on Zagorka's career to the International press comity<sup>36</sup>. The YWA reports on the state of Yugoslav female journalism, however, didn't emphasize Zagorka's exceptional role. After all, most of her achievements as, what was considered to be "a professional journalists" took place before the Great War so they were not considered to be part of the Yugoslav state of affairs in journalism<sup>37</sup>. In one of the reports Marija Jurić Zagorka wasn't even identified as a journalist. M. Govekar simply made a note on the poll attached to the survey: "Marija Jurić Zagorka - an editor of *Women's magazine*. Anyway, she isn't in journalism anymore, she writes novels"<sup>38</sup>. Therefore, those reports tended to be more impressed by Zagorka's Slovenian contemporary Ivanka Anžič Klemenčič (1876-1960).

"To my knowledge the only woman who has reached the editorial title - is Ivanka Anžič Klemenčič"<sup>39</sup> stated Minka Govekar in one of her reports on the journalism in Yugoslavia. Of course, this petty sentence dismissed numerous female editors of both professional and women's press. The uniqueness of Ivanka Anžič Klemenčič came from the fact that she acted as one of the editors in a political magazine which indicated that she was being treated as "equal to her male colleagues"<sup>40</sup>. In a certain way, Ivanka's path was opposite to Zagorka's. She started as a correspondent and then she worked as an editor of *Slovenka* (Trieste, 1900-1902), the first Slovenian feminist magazine and, at the time, the most progressive women's magazine in the region. Upon her marriage to

Franje Klemenčič her career took a more conservative route. Both found their jobs in the catholic political magazine *Slovenec* where Ivanka wrote about family topics, prisoners of war, Sarajevo assassination and the emperor's biography. She, of course, continued to contribute to various women's magazines and for a short period of time she even edited another *Slovenka* (1919), but her employment in *Slovenec* was her constant source of stability, income and professional achievement. Even though her husband had died in the War, she continued working for *Slovenec* throughout the interwar period. She was promoted to the editorial position where she managed the correspondence with Slovenian immigrants in America and news about women's movement<sup>41</sup>. This promotion distinguished Ivanka A.K. from all other Yugoslavian female journalists of the time. It seemed that she met every criterion the YWA had looked for. She worked for an "important" paper, she was paid for her job and she had a certain power to influence the content of the magazine.

The YWA press committee took a somewhat ambiguous attitude towards women professionals working for political magazines. On the one hand, those women were highlighted as "real journalists" as opposed to those who worked for women's magazines. On the other hand, the ICW reports tend to criticize the way women's issues were addressed in "women's pages" and an obvious lack of power and influence of women reporters. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it wasn't implied that women's magazines or columns should be edited by women. There were numerous examples of women's press edited by males, and that was especially the case in Serbia<sup>42</sup> and even the feminist magazine *Women's movement* was first edited by Petar Milosavljević<sup>43</sup>. Apparently, the problem was the usage of gender in an article of the press law. Since it wasn't specifically allowed for women to edit magazines, some of the officials were reluctant to verify such decisions<sup>44</sup>. This practice was abandoned at the beginning of 1920ies and since that time women's magazine were usually edited by

women. “Women’s pages” of political and daily press, though, were directed by males throughout the period. The YWA press committee noted that the “women’s pages” competed for the same market as the women’s magazines, but their concept was usually organized and designed by males whose primary goal was to boost the circulation of the newspapers. They promoted “appealing news and gossips”, thus creating a distorted image of what women stood for. Women journalists were merely associates who executed editorial decisions, but they had almost never got a chance to write a cover article or make a name for themselves<sup>45</sup>. The editors of women’s magazines, however, could hardly be accused of anonymity. Most of them were already prominent public figures with noticeable professional achievement in other areas of their lives. Among them, one can find well-known feminist and Slovenian, Croatian and Czech authoress Zofka Kveder Dmetrović (1878-1926), the aforementioned journalist and writer Marija Jurić Zagorka, high school teacher and cofounder of the Society of Croatian women writers Zdenka Smrekar (1886-1946), one of the first students of Zagreb and Moscow University Božena Deželić (1891-1971), cofounder of the Feminist Alliance of Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes Alojzija Štebi (1883-1956) and translator and distinguished member of Yugoslav women’s movement Paula Lebl Albala (1891-1967). Their magazines differed in goals, approaches, attitudes and political orientation but they had one thing in common: they were all marked and shaped by the strong individuality of their editor. It was partly because women’s magazines were usually readers-writers type of newspaper and their survival depended on the zest and enthusiasm of their editors. This was also one of the reasons most of them didn’t last for more than a couple of years<sup>46</sup>. *Women’s magazine* and *Women and the world* were both popular women’s magazines of a commercial type, but their concepts and messages were somewhat different. While Marija Jurić Zagorka promoted her own version of feminism and modernism and she tried to

reach common women with culinary, housekeeping or crochet pieces of advice, Jelena Zrnić focused on the reports on Yugoslav elite and especially the royal family. When Marija Gregorić took over *Women and the world* at the beginning of 1930ies she modernized the concept and the messages of the magazine. The editorial board of *Women's Movement* changed several times in the course of eighteen years<sup>47</sup> and every new editor made an impact on the concept, frequency or even the format size of the newspaper. Furthermore, even though women's magazines usually avoided addressing political issues directly, they weren't apolitical. Editors could use numerous tactics to promote their ideas and points of view. Zofka Kveder created her own concept of Yugoslavism and democracy in *Yugoslav women*. It promoted multiculturalism rather than hegemony and dialog instead of oppression. She accepted and printed articles in both letters (Cyrillic and Latin) and all three languages of the Kingdom. She opened discussions on various topics such as morality, education or minorities and she didn't hesitate to publish texts that were inconsistent with her point of view. Of course, she reserved the right to write her own comment at the end of those articles<sup>48</sup>. Women's magazines could also address political topics indirectly, from the women's perspective. Women wrote reports on the situation in their region or in their neighborhoods, they talked about their war experiences and the debates on women's rights also opened the possibility to discuss legislation or social policy of the state. The editors of the commercial women's magazines had a political agenda too. For example, Zagorka explained that she had started *Women's Magazine* in order to counter the excessive influence of German culture in Croatia. Apparently, she had made that decision after meeting with a representative of the German publishing house Ullstein who expressed interest to launch the Croatian version of their most popular women's magazine and he offered Zagorka the editorial position<sup>49</sup>. She, however, concluded that such a magazine would only amplify the influence of German culture

and language and she decided to launch autonomous commercial women's magazine where she encouraged her readers to use Croatian words in place of Germanisms and she promoted American instead of German culture<sup>50</sup>. Marina Vujnovic also emphasized the influence of the editors of popular women's magazine on everyday life and she concluded that those magazines gave women a chance to participate in shaping the democratic and modernization processes of the time. "In many ways, through popular culture, women of the growing middle class were, for the first time, presented with the material form of the discussion, a public sphere where they could share their views on the changing post World War I society"<sup>51</sup>.

Of course, it would be interesting to see what those women thought about their own engagement in journalism. Did they consider themselves to be a part of the press community and were their journalist efforts recognized in public discourses of the time? The poll among the members of the Yugoslav journalist society confirmed the expectations of the committee. Every female intransigent declared she was a journalist even though some of them obviously did only administrative work for a newspaper. Nevertheless, as a rule, editors of women's press didn't make a habit of joining journalist societies. Their biographies of the time rarely highlighted their journalist careers as well. Zofka Kveder Demtrović was primarily described as a writer and a translator who had also worked as theater reporter for *Agramer Tagblatt* and *The news (Novosti)* and edited *Jugoslav women*<sup>52</sup>. Minka Govekar was presented as a writer, a teacher, leading member of women's movement in Slovenia and author of newspaper articles in various papers<sup>53</sup>. Even Ivanka Anžič Klemenčič was tagged as a clerk who edited and wrote for many journals and actively participated in women's movement<sup>54</sup>. However, when Minka Govekar talked about herself she addressed all aspects of her professional life. She was a teacher because that had been the only profession acceptable for women, her passion was writing, and she practiced journalism



because her family responsibilities robbed her of “concentration and tranquility necessary for literary work”<sup>55</sup>. Marija Jurić Zagorka, on the other hand, took a great pride in her journalist career. In her autobiography, she claimed that the four months she had worked as the editor of *Obzor* were the happiest period of her life and “...the only beautiful and bright days in the dessert of darkness...”<sup>56</sup>. She emphasized that her journalist efforts were admired by her foreign colleagues and that she received praise from Tomaš G. Mararyk himself. She was a cofounder of the Croatian press society and she strongly protested when they had announced their intention to cancel her membership on a count of the fact that she was a writer: “(...) ‘I have never been and I will never be a writer, nor have I tried to be one. My occupation is journalism. I write novels only to fight the influence of German literature.’ (...)”<sup>57</sup>. Therefore Zagorka was really touched by the gesture of her co-worker who threw a big party in the National Theater to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Zagorka’s journalist career<sup>58</sup>.

During the interwar period most of career women faced a dilemma at some point in their lives: whether to pursue their career or to devote their time to marriage and family. “It is quite possible that some women journalists got married in the meantime or they left their career for another reason”, Minka Govekar made a half-joke at the beginning of her report for the ICW conference in Vienna. It seems, though, that that rule could only apply to a certain number of career journalists who made their living by writing for the paper. Most of the editors and contributors of magazines enjoyed the support of their families and their activities could even be interpreted as supporting their husbands’ career path. Minka Govekar pointed out that she gained journalist experience when she was helping her husband who was a journalist himself. She provided him with all the help he needed in editing and proofreading different magazines and journals and they were “true colleagues in joy and sorrow”<sup>59</sup> Ivanka Anžič Klemenčič didn’t quit her career upon her marriage either. She and her husband

worked together until his tragic death and one could even agree that the fact that she was a war widow helped her promote chances in a rather conservative magazine. After the Great War some people believed that a widow should inherit her husband's place in public life. Jelena Zrnić edited *Women and the World*, the paper that had been launched and owned by her husband. After the change of ownership, she lost her position. Zofka Kveder Demetrović edited pro-democrat and pro-Yugoslav women's magazine and by doing so she indirectly supported her husband who was a distinguished member of the Democrat party. Božena Deželić, on the other hand, edited catholic and conservative *Women's Thought* (*Ženska misao*) that corresponded with political views and goals of her husband, a member of the Croatian people's party. The exception was, of course, Zagorka who literally had to sneak out of her house dressed as a servant in order to run away from her abusive husband after he had found out about her publishing some texts in a newspaper. The problem, however, was not her writing per se, but the fact that she took political stand opposite of him. Apparently, he even locked her up in the attic in a futile attempt of persuading her to use her talent for promoting his political option. This dramatic event was a starting point of her career as a journalist and she never made up with her first husband but after he had passed away, she got married to her fellow colleague<sup>60</sup>.

Women journalists' relationship with their colleagues was far less supportive and idyllic. Zagorka's autobiography abounds in descriptions of her bitter conflicts with the editors and coworkers in *Obzor*. They were trying to conceal her contributions to the paper, demanding that she used a male name. Furthermore, she was constantly underpaid because they thought they were doing her a favor for even allowing her to work in the first place. A.G. Matoš (1873-1914), one of the famous Croatian writers, put it to her in plain words:

'I myself, a modern writer, have attacked your pen and I will attack it again, even though I admit that you are not without a talent

(...) but I must attack you and say that you are incompetent because your satires and your international success as a journalist inspired ambitions in other women who now believe that they are as capable as we are. Here is the example: the daughter of the editor of *People's paper* (*Narodne novine*) translates and writes feuilletons for the paper. That used to be my job! (...) And when women realize that we attack you, they won't dare to get out<sup>61</sup>.

The editors of other magazines that employed women expressed similar point of view, only in a little bit more polite language. When asked about their satisfaction with women's work performance they said it was "(...) excellent. Women are irreplaceable when it comes to the coverage of social and educational topics and women's issues. And they are very diligent and dedicated to their work." One of them even felt compelled to add that women are not suitable for political activity and journalism. "Since their engagement is limited to certain tasks, however, they carry on completing their assignments with satisfactory results"<sup>62</sup>.

\* \* \*

Women journalists in the interwar Yugoslavia were a small and diverse group whose collective identity was constantly being (re)discussed and (re)defined by different authorities: press professionals, women's movement and women journalists themselves. Their activities, career choices and topics, they covered, were steered by political, social and economic factors. The efforts to regulate journalism, as a profession, resulted in seclusion of women journalist to specific topics or specific types of newspaper. Feminist movement and democratization of political life used press, as a media to communicate their ideas to the female readers, and consumer economy launched several women's magazines in order to shape women's needs, ideas or practices. Women journalists participated in those processes, as writers of literary texts, articles on social events and women's issues or editors of various women's magazines.

Journalism was simultaneously both an unusual and a traditional choice of profession for women. On one hand, it challenged the gender concepts of the time because it enabled women to participate in shaping public opinion- On the other hand, journalists were required to have writing skills, and women were authors of different literary genres throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, most of the women who wrote for various papers in interwar period were also or even primarily writers.

Of course, there is a question of the impact of women journalist. How did they make history? First of all, women editors and women magazines created a space for women to discuss and shape modernization, political and social processes of their time. It also allowed women who didn't have the suffrage rights to express their political views or values and, finally, women journalists in interwar Yugoslavia were the pioneers who opened the doors and paved the path for and the new generation of women professionals.

## NOTES

1 - This research emerged as part of a project funded by the Croatian Science Foundation, IP-2018-01-3732, *Modern Women Thinkers: Intellectual Development of Women in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Croatia*, led by Andrea Feldman.

2 - Zagorka, "Što je moja krivnja", 465. The text cited a local women's magazine *At the home hearth (Na domaćem ognjištu)* and it quoted an article from a French magazine *Figaro*.

3 - International Council of Women (ICW) was an umbrella women's association founded in Washington in 1888. It gathered national umbrella women's alliances of countries from all over the world. It was very inclusive, and it accepted women's associations of different worldviews and goals, from the very conservative to

the extremely liberal.

4 - In Yugoslav case see for example: Todorović Uzelac, *Ženska štampa i kultura ženstvenosti*; Čizmić Horvat, “Ženski listovi u hrvatskom novinarstvu”; Coha, “Konstrukcija i reprezentacija ženskog identita u Zagorkinom *Ženskom listu*”; Vujnović Marina, *Forging the Bubikopf Nation. Journalism, Gender and Modernity in Interwar Yugoslavia*; Ograjšek Gorenjak, “Politika ženskog tiska”; Barać, “Žena i svet (1925-1941) između moderne i nove žene: ambivalencija ilustrovanog ženskog (modnog) magazina”; Peković, “Ženski časopisi u Srbiji na početku 20. stoljeća”; Sefanović, “Ženska štampa: Žena i svet 1925-1941”.

5 - In Yugoslav case see for example: Jakobović Fribec, “Velika novinarka malog puka”; Eadem, “Marija Jurić Zagorka” and “Adela Milčinović”; Eadem, “Marija Jurić Zagorka- protagonistica nenapisane povijesti hrvatskog feminizma”; Vujnović Marina, *Forging the Bubikopf Nation. Journalism, Gender and Modernity in Interwar Yugoslavia*; Honzak Jahić and Jensterle- Doležalová (ed.), *Zofka Kvederová (1878-1926). Recepte její tvorby ve 21.*

6 - Sprietzler (ed.), *Discovering Women's History. German-Speaking Journalists (1900-1950)*, 4.

7 - Clay, “The Women Journalist 1920-1945”.

8 - Yugoslav women's alliance (YWA) was the women's umbrella alliance of Yugoslavia. It was founded after the Great War as the National women's alliance of Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. It changed its name after the Kingdom had been renamed. It was a member of the ICW.

9 - Pavla Hočevar was publicist, clerk and member of YWA. She edited *Women's world (Ženski svet)*.

10 - Minka Govekar was Slovenian authoress, teacher, journalist a distinguished member of women's movement. She edited women's magazine and she was correspondent of numerous monthlies and periodicals.

11 - Clay, “The women journalist 1920-1945”, 109-201.

12 - Čubelić Pilija, “U prvome poraću”, 362.

13 - Arhiv Republike Slovenije (ARS), 1666, Minika Govekar, pe 147.

14 - Clay, “The women journalist 1920-1945”, 109-201.

15 - Ograjšek Gorenjak, *Opasne iluzije*, 49-55, 122.

- 16 - Clay, "The women journalist 1920-1945", 109-201.
- 17 - Ograjšek Gorenjak, "Politika ženskog tiska", 146-164; Barać, "Pacifistički i antifeministički diskurs u listu žena dans (1936-1941)", 218-231.
- 18 - Clay, "The women journalist 1920-30", 201, Vujnović *Forging the Bubikopf Nation. Journalism, Gender and Modernity in Interwar Yugoslavia*, 53., Ograjšek Gorenjak, "Politika ženskog tiska", passim.
- 19 - ARS, 1666, Minika Govekar, pe 133, 147.
- 20 - ARS, 1666, Minika Govekar, pe 133; ARS 1668, Zbirke dokumentov, Hočevar Pavla, "Ženski tisk v Sloveniji".
- 21 - ARS, 1666, Minika Govekar, pe 133, 147.
- 22 - *Ženski svet* 5 (May 1930): 7.
- 23 - Ibid.
- 24 - Vujnović, *Forging the Bubikopf Nation. Journalism, Gender and Modernity in Interwar Yugoslavia*, 71.
- 25 - Novak, *Hrvatsko novinarstvo u 20. stoljeću*, 150-154.
- 26 - ARS, 1666, Minika Govekar, pe 147.
- 27 - Nellie Bly, pseudonym of Elizabeth Cochrane. An American Journalist (1864-1922) who wrote for *Pittsburgh Dispatch* and *New York World*.
- 28 - Kershaw, "Women's Writing and the Creation of Political Subjectivities in the Interwar France. Louise Weiss: Novelist, Autobiographer and Journalist", 64-69.
- 29 - Ida Minerva Tarbel (1857-1944), American journalist and biographer. She wrote a famous research on Standard Oil Company (1904).
- 30 - At the time Croatia was part of Austro-Hungary. *Obzor* opted against pro-Hungarian politics in Croatia.
- 31 - The year was marked by riots against Károly Khuen-Héderváry, ban of Croatia who was hated by Croats because of his Magyarization politics. In the end he had been removed from the position of ban and he became prime minister of Hungary.
- 32- "High - treason" (1908) mounted trial against 53 Serbs and Firdjung (1909) mounted trial against Croatian politician Frano Supilo. Both emerged during the political crises in Austro-Hungary caused by the annex of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the latter was

- vastly covered by European press of the time.
- 33 - ARS 1666, Minka Govekar, pe 128.
- 34 - Zagorka, “Što je moja krivnja?”, 475
- 35 - Jakobović Fribec, “Velika novinarka malog puka”; Vujnović, *Forging the Bubikopf Nation. Journalism, Gender and Modernity in Interwar Yugoslavia* 73-115.; “Koronilogija života i rada Marije Zagorke” <http://zagorka.net/biografija/> (12.12.2020).
- 36 - ARS, 1666, Minika Govekar, pe 128, 129, 130, 131, 132.
- 37 - The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) was established in 1918 from the South Slavic territories of Habsburg Monarchy (Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) Kingdom of Serbia and Kingdom of Montenegro.
- 38 - ARS, 1666 Minka Govekar, pe 147.
- 39 - ARS, 1666, Minka Govekar, 147.
- 40 - ARS, 1688, Zbirke dokumentov, Hočevar Pavla, “Ženski tisk v Sloveniji”.
- 41 - Vodoprivec, “Ivanka Anžič Klemenčič (1876-1960)”.
- 42 - For example, the first editor of *The housewife* was Jovan Popović, and at first *Women and the World* had been edited by Ivan Zrnić but later on he left that position to his wife Jelena Zrnić.
- 43 - Peković, “Ženski časopisi u Srbiji na početku 20. stoljeća”, 123-137.
- 44 - “Zakon o štampi”, *Ženski pokret* 1/1 (April 1920): 3.
- 45 - ARS, 1666, Minka Govekar, pe 133, pe 147.
- 46 - Exceptions were commercial type of magazines or periodicals that were published by an organization or an association.
- 47 - It was edited by Zorka Kasnar, Katarina Bogdanović, Mileva B. Milojević, Vera Jovanović, Alojzija Štebi and Darinka Stojanović.
- 48 - Ograjšek Gorenjak, “Politika ženskog tiska”, 145-160.
- 49 - Zagorka, “Što je moja krivnja”, 486.
- 50 - Vujnović, *Forging the Bubikopf Nation. Journalism, Gender and Modernity in Interwar Yugoslavia*, passim.
- 51 - Ibid., 66.
- 52 - “Kveder, Zofka”. *Slovenski bijografski leksikon*.
- 53 - “Govekar, Minka”. *Slovenski bijografski leksikon*.
- 54 - “Klemenčič, Ivanka”, *Slovenski bijografski leksikon*.

- 55 - ARS, 1666, Minika Govekar, pe 120.  
56 - Zagorka, "Što je moja krivnja", 461.  
57 - Ibid., 486.  
58 - Vujnović, *Forging the Bubikopf Nation. Journalism, Gender and Modernity in Interwar Yugoslavia*, 101-103.  
59 - ARS, 1666, Minika Govekar, pe 120.  
60 - Jakobović-Fribec, "Velika novinarka malog puka"; 361-365.  
61 - Zagorka, "Što je moja krivnja", 474.  
62 - ARS, 1666, Minka Govekar, pe 147.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARHIV REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE (ARS)

Fond 1666, Govekar Minka, 1922-1941.

Fond 1668, Hočevar Pavla, 1925-1947.

Press: *Women's Magazine, Women's Movement, Women and the World*

**Barać S.** *Žena i svet (1925-1941) između moderne i nove žene: ambivalencija ilustrovanog ženskog (modnog) magazina* in "Knjiženstvo, časopis za studije književnosti, roda i kulture" 4 (2014). <http://www.knjizenstvo.rs/sr-lat/casopisi/2014/zenska-knjizevnost-i-kultura/zena-i-svet-1925-1941-izmedju-moderne-i-nove-zene-ambivalencija-ilustrovanog-zenskog-modnog-magazina> (December 12th 2019).

**Barać S.** *Reprezentacija žene u beogradskoj periodici iz vremena međuratne Jugoslavije* in "Desničini susreti 2005 - 2008, zbornik radova". Drago Roksandić and Ivana Cvijović Javorina (ed.), 67-79. Filozofski fakultet, Centar za komparativnohistorijske i interkulturalne studije: Plejada, Zagreb, 2010. <http://ckhis.ffzg.unizg.hr/files/file/pdf/Desnicini-susreti/DS-2005-2008-pdf/DS-2005-2008-07-Barac.pdf> (December 12th 2019).

**Barać S.** *Pacifistički i antofeministički diskurs u listu žena dans (1936-1941* in "Intelektualci i rat 1939-1947. Zbornik radova s međunarodnog skupa Desničini susreti 2011", Drago Roksandića - Ivana Cvijović Javorina (ed.) 218-231. Plejada, Zagreb, 2012. <http://ckhis.ffzg.unizg.bhr/files/file/pdf/Desnicini-susreti/DS-2011-pdf/DS-2011-15-Barac.pdf> (December 12th 2019).

**Clay C.** *The Women Journalist 1920-1945* in "The history of British women's writing 1920-1945" 8, Maroula Joanou (ed.), 199-214. Pelgrave Macmilan, London, 2013.

**Coha S.** *Konstrukcija i reprezentacija ženskog identiteta u Zagorkinom Ženskom listu* in "Neznana junakinja- nova čitanja Zagorke", Maša Grdešić - Slavica Jakobović Fribec (ed.), 257-297. Centar za ženske studije, Zagreb, 2008.

**Čubelić Pilića I.** *U prvome poraću* in "HND Prvo stoljeće. Hrvatsko novinarsko društvo 1910-2010", Marija Bošnjak et al. (ed), 55-101. Press dana, Zagreb, 2010.

**Čizmić Horvat M.** *Ženski listovi u hrvatskom novinarstvu in "Riječ"* 11 (2005), 101-107.

**Govekar M.** *Slovenski biografski leksikon*, 2. Erberg - Hinterlechner - Izidor Cankar et al. (ed.), Ljubljana, Zadrúžna gospodarska banka, 1926. *Slovenska biografija. Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU*, 2013. <http://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi210709/#slovenski-biografski-leksikon> (December 29th 2019).

**Honzak Jahić J. - Jensterle-Doležalová A.** (ed.) *Zofka Kvederová (1878-1926). Recepte její tvorby ve 21. století*. Prague, 2008.

**Jakobović Fribec S.** *Velika novinarka malog puka in "HND Prvo stoljeće. Hrvatsko novinarsko društvo 1910-2010"*, Marija Bošnjak et al. (ed), 361-365. Press dana, Zagreb, 2010.

**Jakobović Fribec S.** *Marija Jurić Zagorka and Adela Milčinović in "A Biographical Dictionary of Women's Movements and Feminisms: Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries"*, Francisca De Haan, Krassimira Daskalova and Anna Lontfi (ed.), 340-344. CEU press, New York, Budapest, 2006.

**Jakobović Fribec S.** *Marija Jurić Zagorka - protagonistica nenapisane povijesti hrvatskog feminizma in "Književna republika"*, 4/5-6 (2006), 43-52.

**Kershaw A.** *Women's Writing and the Creation of Political Subjectivities in Inter-War France. Louise Weiss: Novelist, Autobiographer and Journalist in "Women in Europe between the Wars. Politics Culture and Society"*, Angela Kershaw - Angela Kimyongür (ed.), 55-72. Ashgate, Aldershot, 2006.

**Klemenčić I.** *Slovenski biografski leksikon*, 3. Hintner - Kocen. Izidor Cankar et al. (ed.), Ljubljana, Zadrúžna gospodarska banka, 1928. *Slovenska biografija. Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU*, 2013. <http://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi275822/#slovenski-biografski-leksikon> (December 29th 2019).

**Kronologija života i rada Marije Zagorke** in <http://zagorka.net/biografija/> (December 12th.2020).

**Kveder Z.** *Slovenski biografski leksikon*, 1. Abraham - Erberg. Izidor Cankar et al.(ed), Zadrúžna gospodarska banka, Ljubljana, 1925. *Slovenska biografija. Slovenska akademija znanosti in umet-*

nosti, Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU, 2013. <http://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi171065/#slovenski-biografski-leksikon> (December 29th 2019).

**Novak B.** *Hrvatsko novinarstvo u 20. stoljeću.* Golden marketing, Zagreb, 2005.

**Ograjšek Gorenjak I.** *Opasne iluzije. Rodni stereotipi u međuratnoj Jugoslaviji.* Srednja Europa, Zagreb, 2014.

**Ograjšek Gorenjak I.** *Politika ženskog tiska* in “Kako je bilo... O Zagorki i ženskoj povijesti”, Sandra Prlenda (ed.), 145-190. Centar za ženske studije, Zagreb, 2011.

**Peković S.** *Ženski časopisi u Srbiji na početku 20. stoljeća* in “Slavica Tergestina” 11-12 (2004), 123-137.

**Sefanović S.** *Ženska štampa: Žena i svet 1925-1941* in “Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima 19. i 20. veka, 2, Položaj žene kao mjerilo modernizacije”. Latinka Perović (ed.), 408-420. Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Beograd, 1998.

**Sprietzer C.** (ed.) *Discovering Women's History. German-Speaking Journalists (1900-1950).* Petar Lang, Oxford, 2014.

**Šubić Kovačević I.** *Prisutnost žena u zagrebačkom političkom tisku od 1920.-1927. godine* in “Politička misao” 53/1 (2016), 103-128.

**Todorović Uzelac N.** *Ženska štampa i kultura ženstvenosti.* Naučna knjiga, Beograd, 1987.

**Vodoprivec N.** *Ivanka Anžič Klemenčič (1876-1960)* in “Pozabljena polovica. Portreti žensk 19. i 20. stoletja na Slovenskem”, Alenka Šelih et al.(ed.), 88-91. Založba Tuma, Ljubljana, 2007.

**Vujnović M.** *Forging the Bubikopf Nation. Journalism, Gender and Modernity in Interwar Yugoslavia.* Peter Lang, New York, 2008.

**Zagorka Jurić M.** *Kako je bilo.* Izdanje redakcije zabavnog romana, Beograd, 1953.

**Zagorka Jurić M.** *Što je moja krivnja* in “Autobiografija hrvatskih pisaca”, Vinko Brešić, (ed.), 451-499. Agm, Zagreb, 1997.

## LA FIGURA DELLA DONNA ARTISTA DALL'ANTICHITÀ AL XXI SECOLO

*Francesca Pandimiglio*  
(Professor MIUR, ISS Midossi)

*«...Per tutti questi secoli le donne hanno avuto la funzione di specchi, dal potere magico e delizioso di riflettere raddoppiata la figura dell'uomo ... Questo serve a spiegare come li fa sentire inquieti la critica femminile. ... Perché se la donna comincia a dire la verità, la figura nello specchio rimpicciolisce; l'uomo diventa meno adatto alla vita.». Virginia Woolf ("A Room of One's Own" - Una stanza tutta per sé, 1929).*

In occasione della mostra Women  $\cong$  RESILIENCE<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 1), ideata e diretta da chi scrive nel giugno 2018, tenutasi nella I Edizione presso la città etrusca di Tarquinia (Fig. 2), l'antica Gravisca, poi in II edizione presso la città falisca di Civita Castellana (Fig. 3), l'antica Falerii Veteres, nasce la ricerca mirata al fine di monitorare, censire e catalogare le donne artiste dall'antichità fino ai nostri giorni, in questa sede le più note.

Quante donne sono entrate a far parte della Storia dell'arte? Per molti secoli queste restano totalmente tenute nascoste dedite al loro lavoro fra le mura di una casa o di un convento, devote alle arti minori quali il ricamo, la tessitura, la miniatura. Sembra, all'apparenza, che non vi sia un'arte al femminile nel mondo sumero e babilonese, come non sembra esistere anche nelle civiltà mediterranee pre-classiche. In verità non è attendibile, ed è ancora in fase di studio ed approfondimento, accertare il ruolo delle donne nelle società faraoniche dell'Antico Egitto fino alla cultura minoica a Creta, ma anche fino all'Iran con i primo impero persiano achemenide e il secondo impero persiano sasanide. Sin da un'osservazione della produzione artistica dell'antico Egitto si può invece facilmente verificare che accanto a grandi opere d'arte

e capolavori, anche molto conosciuti e studiati, siano del tutto assenti gli approfondimenti riguardanti le personalità artistiche che le hanno progettate e create. Vi sono davvero rare eccezioni e spesso queste opere restano totalmente anonime. Nell'antico Egitto la firma dell'artista non veniva affatto utilizzata e forse sarà un'impresa ardua accertare testimonianze documentarie della presenza femminile nel campo delle arti, o meglio in un mondo dove non esiste alcuna differenza concettuale fra arte e artigianato e dove, come detto sono celati nomi e identità in un anonimato generale pre-classico. Però uno spiraglio di luce c'è, infatti l'arte della musica, ci occorre in soccorso, in quanto ha svolto nella società egizia un ruolo fondamentale, sia per le sue connessioni con il mondo religioso, sia per la sua presenza in aspetti importanti della vita profana. Anche se non sono stati rinvenuti testi musicali in quanto gli egizi non avevano elaborato un modo per scrivere le note, conosciamo invece molto bene gli strumenti musicali, giunti a noi dagli scavi, e i nomi di musicisti, strumentisti e cantanti specialmente di donne, e le stesse regine quali Nefertiti, Hatshepsut e Cleopatra rientrano a pieno titolo nelle figure femminili fortemente rivoluzionarie alle prese con un mondo in cui il potere e la cultura era completamente gestito ed affidato a figure maschili. A loro veniva impartita ed insegnata l'arte del sapere, dell'oratoria e la pratica del diletto nel suono. Nelle classi agiate le bambine, già dall'età di quattro anni, erano istruite dagli scriba a leggere, scrivere e suonare strumenti musicali. Tra le classi popolari le donne venivano educate all'interno delle famiglie dove svolgevano attività domestiche o lavori nei campi. La donna responsabile della vita domestica, la casalinga diremmo oggi, veniva chiamata Nebet "la padrona della casa", organizzava la vita quotidiana, gestiva i beni della famiglia, lavorava anche nei campi assieme al marito raccogliendo grano, frutti, lino o preparava la birra, tesseva, filava e confezionava abiti. È nel mondo greco, però, che l'artigiano, quindi colui che si occupava anche di arti minori, diventa ben presto artista intellettuale

e nello specifico la presenza femminile nel campo della produzione artistica, nota nella storiografia e nei dati archeologici, viene testimoniata per la prima volta dal Pittore di Leningrado nel 470 - 450 a.C. su un'hydria (Fig. 4, 4a) o kalpis attica a figure rosse, dell'altezza di circa 32,2 cm, con un diametro all'orlo di 13 cm e un diametro al piede di 12 cm. di proprietà della Banca Intesa. L'artista che ha realizzato quest'interessantissimo manufatto è un ceramografo attico ed è una delle personalità più significative del gruppo dei "Manieristi" attivi sulla tradizione di Myson e del Pittore di Pan. È un pittore di forme ampie e di buona monumentalità e realizza crateri a colonnette, grandi hydriae con tratto pittorico facile, immediato ed esuberante. L'immagine rappresentata sul lato destro dell'opera è di una figura di donna intenta a dipingere un cratere a volute, il contesto di realizzazione e ambientazione è l'occasione della premiazione, per mano di Atena e Nike, di tre ceramografi durante una competizione artistica dedicata agli dei. La pittrice è chiamata al sacro compito di immortalare la scena ed è riccamente vestita e seduta su uno sgabello posto su un'alta pedana dalla quale sembra osservare e controllare tutta la scena. La sua figura è autorevole, forse è la proprietaria della bottega vincitrice o forse è lei stessa l'autrice del vaso, in tal caso forse ci troviamo di fronte all'unica opera originale di mano femminile dell'antichità. Sarà Plinio il Vecchio<sup>2</sup> che nella *Naturalis Historia*, compendio scritto durante la sua vita e che pubblicò nel 77 d.C., nel libro 35 riporta i nomi delle prime pittrici greche: «*Pinxere et mulieres: ... Irene Cratini pictoris filia et discipula, puellam, quae est Eleusine, Calypso [senem] et praestigiatores Theodorum, Alcisthenen saltatorem*». («Dipinsero anche le donne: ... Irene, figlia del pittore Cratino e sua discepola, dipinse la fanciulla che si trova ad Eleusi, Calipso e Teodoro il prestigiatore, Alcistene il danzatore.» Plinio il Vecchio, *Naturalis Historia*, XXXV, 147). Lo storico narra *in primis* di Timarete o Tamiri (Fig. 5), pittrice (IV sec. a.C.) e figlia di Micone il minore, l'autore la pone al principio del catalogo delle pittrici ricordandone un quadro di Artemide in

Efeso<sup>3</sup>, che lui giudica di stile “di disegno arcaico”. Kalypso, pittrice greca, Plinio le attribuisce il ritratto del vecchio prestigiatore Theodoros e del ballerino acrobatico Alkisthenes, ricordato a Delfi in una iscrizione del 200 circa a.C., Helene Alessandrina, figlia di Timone e quindi vissuta a cavallo fra l’età di Alessandro Magno e quella dei Diadochi, viene ricordata anche da Tolomeo di Efestione e citata in Fozio. La suo opera più celebre era una “Battaglia di Isso” considerata fra i possibili modelli per il noto mosaico pompeiano insieme al dipinto di analogo soggetto di Philoxenos di Eretria e ad una battaglia di Gaugamela di Apelle secondo la proposta di Paolo Moreno<sup>4</sup>. Va comunque segnalato l’impegno come pittrice di storia - uno dei generi nobili per eccellenza delle arti figurative - e ritenendo improbabile una commissione privata per un simile soggetto non sembra improprio considerarla al diretto servizio dei primi Tolomei. Plinio poi cita la figlia ed allieva del pittore Narkos, Aristarete, e ricorda un suo quadro raffigurante Asklepios, che sembrerebbe indicare una datazione non anteriore al IV secolo, probabilmente in età ellenistica. Viene citata anche Eirene<sup>5</sup> o Hirene (Fig. 6) (III - II sec. a.C.), suo padre, il pittore Cratino (o Cratinax o Kratinos), viene ricordato per averle insegnato l’arte pittorica per cui lei è diventata celebre. Ad Eleusi era stata collocata una sua tavola dipinta raffigurante Proserpina. Iaia, pittrice di Cizico (Lala nel Codex Bambergensis), vissuta a Roma e a Napoli al tempo di Marco Varrone, quindi intorno al 100 a.C., Plinio dice di lei che svolse la sua carriera fra l’Asia Minore e Roma e che dipingeva velocemente utilizzando la tempera, l’encausto con rapidi tocchi di luce e di colore anziché di una rigorosa preparazione del disegno. Plinio la chiama *perpetua virgo* per cui è stata avanzata l’ipotesi che fosse una sacerdotessa, dipingeva anche sull’avorio, che i suoi quadri erano venduti a caro prezzo e che prediligeva il genere ritrattistico, ne menziona un autoritratto e una figura di vecchia. Infine cita Hera, ignota alle fonti il suo nome appare sull’elmo di Atena in una moneta da Velia nello spazio normalmente destinato

alla firma dell'incisore. Pur con tutti i dubbi del caso ci si potrebbe trovare di fronte ad un'intagliatrice di conii per monete incarico quindi di natura sicuramente pubblica ed istituzionale. In epoca romana le raffigurazioni di pittrici sono presenti anche negli affreschi delle città vesuviane (Fig. 7) di Pompei ed Ercolano e ci attestano una pratica dell'esercizio anche amatoriale dell'arte, così come ci testimoniano le tavolette di Vindolanda<sup>6</sup>.

C'è da sottolineare che nell'età tardo antica e poi nel Medioevo, gli artisti, sia uomini che donne, raramente erano menzionati personalmente. Essi erano considerati degli "artigiani" e raramente firmavano le loro opere. In altri settori le donne però venivano nominate: come membri delle corporazioni miniaturistiche, illustratrici di libri o ricamatrici. La maggior parte di esse però erano normalmente suore o aristocratiche. Nel Medioevo le donne potevano sentirsi libere, soltanto quando entravano nei conventi dove ricevevano un'adeguata preparazione culturale. Dai laboratori monastici sono usciti paramenti, stole, stendardi, arazzi, codici miniati firmati da tantissime ricamatrici miniaturiste, in particolare, Maria Badessa di Girona, Elisava di Urgell, Gisella di Chelles, Ende, Predslava, Eufrosinija, Ildegarda di Bibgen. Nella chiesa di Sant Feliu o San Felix di Girona si conserva una stola magnificamente tessuta e ricamata, conosciuta come "la stola di San Narciso" (Fig. 8), sulla quale appaiono delle parole che identificano una ricamatrice Maria (*Maria me fecit*) come autrice del lavoro, probabilmente una badessa del convento di Girona, vissuta alla fine del X secolo. Il lavoro della suora artista è di grande bellezza: a una delle estremità vi è il martirio di San Lorenzo, in un'altra l'immagine è rappresentato il battesimo di Cristo, nella sezione centrale è ricamata l'immagine della Madre di Dio con il vestito dorato e il lemma *Santa Maria ora pro nobis*. Una parte della stola presenta il ritratto di Narciso, vescovo di Girona, ucciso intorno al 307<sup>7</sup> durante una funzione religiosa insieme al suo diacono San Felix. Anche Elisava firmò la sua opera, il cosiddetto stendardo di San Ottone (Fig. 9) (XII sec.), proveniente dalla Cat-



tedrale di Urgell, conservato presso il Museo dell'abbigliamento di Barcellona. Qualche storico dell'arte considera Elisava una committente dell'opera, ma l'affermazione, *Elisava me fecit* è più probabile che alluda a chi ha veramente realizzato l'opera. Lo stendardo ricamato, in toni rossicci e dorati, è incentrato sulla figura del Salvatore dentro la mandorla mistica avvolta nei simboli degli evangelisti e ornata da un bordo di motivi vegetali. Dallo stendardo pendono tre strisce ricamate con figure di donne oranti od offerenti. Ma probabilmente la vera artista del ricamo, in grado di raggiungere la perfezione nei dettagli, anche i più minuti, è la regina Matilde d'Inghilterra, moglie del re Guglielmo il Conquistatore. La regina, tra gli anni '66-'77 dell'XI secolo, ideò un'opera monumentale, in collaborazione con il vescovo Odone di Bayeux, fratellastro del duca-re Guglielmo il Conquistatore, e la realizzò, con gli abili decoratori della sua organizzatissima bottega, da lei supervisionata. Si tratta di un autentico capolavoro dell'arte medievale che racconta le imprese del Conquistatore, in onore dello sbarco in Inghilterra di Guglielmo. Il *Telle du Conquest*, noto come Arazzo di Bayeux, conservato presso il Musée de la Tapisserie a Bayeux, è realizzato in lino ricamato, composto da nove pezze di tessuto per una lunghezza totale di 68,50 mt. x 30 cm. di altezza L'“arazzo”, così chiamato, comprende più di 1500 immagini, delle quali oltre 600 sono figure umane e 700 animali. È un vero documento unico nel suo genere, una ricca fonte storica che testimonia armamenti, flotte, metodi di combattimento, aspetti di vita civile, scene di banchetti, sepolture, caccia col falcone. Tra l'VIII e il IX secolo il convento femminile di Chelles, retto da Isberga, che poi acquisì il nome religioso di Gisella (757<sup>8</sup> - 30 luglio 810, Chelles), sorella di Carlo Magno, produsse 13 volumi di manoscritti miniati, tra cui uno firmato da amanuensi donne. Lei in veste di badessa di Chelles, supervisionava uno dei più importanti e prolifici *scriptoria* di suore del tempo. Della trentina di manoscritti miniati del Commentario all'Apocalisse redatto da Beatus nell'abbazia di San Toribio de

Liébana tra il 776 e il 786, ventidue sono miniati. Sappiamo per certo che un noto miniaturista Magius ha realizzato le illustrazioni del *Beatus*<sup>9</sup> della Pierpont Morgan Library, e che il suo allievo Emétérius fu lui stesso coadiuvato da una monaca, Ende, una delle più antiche donne pittrici identificabili nella storia dell'arte occidentale, per la realizzazione del *Beatus* di Gerona, oggi conservato nella omonima Cattedrale, in Spagna. Il *Beatus* è l'espressione dell'arte mozarabica, nata dall'incontro nella penisola iberica della tradizione cristiana e di quella musulmana, ed è da sottolineare la bellezza dei disegni e dei colori oltre alla forza espressiva delle immagini. La mano di Ende è ben riconoscibile nelle sue immagini fantastiche di draghi, angeli, demoni e santi (Fig. 10). Altra figura importante dell'XII secolo è la nobile Predslava (Polozk, Bielorussia, 1104 - Gerusalemme 1167). Lei rifiutò il matrimonio con un principe di Kiev, prese i voti con il nome di Eufrosinija, la sua popolarità fra la gente comune la spinse a cercare un luogo isolato, tranquillo e soprattutto autonomo, non sottoposto all'autorità dell'episcopo di Polozk. Ottenne in proprietà la località di Sel'zo dove fondò il monastero femminile di San Salvatore, ricostruì la chiesa sui resti della chiesa di legno della Trasfigurazione. L'architettura della Chiesa univa elementi di stile bizantino-ellenistico e caratteri dell'arte slava. Verso il 1155, non lontano dalla chiesa del San Salvatore, Eufrosinija decise di costruire una seconda chiesa dedicata alla Madre di Dio e un secondo monastero, questa volta maschile. L'attività della badessa nei due monasteri del Salvatore e della madre di Dio coinvolgeva gli abitanti delle campagne di Sel'zo e della città di Polozk, che andavano per studiare canto, le note musicali, per imparare a leggere, a scrivere, per dipingere icone nei laboratori di pittura e per fare le *rize*<sup>10</sup> delle icone. Eufrosinija stessa era impegnata negli *scriptoria*, nella traduzione dei testi dal greco e dal latino nella propria lingua madre. Manteneva una corrispondenza in greco con l'imperatore bizantino Manuele I Comneno ed era in rapporti epistolari diretti con i principi kieviani. L'autorità che Eufrosinija

esercitava nel monastero mostrano che il monastero non era un luogo di asceti, chiuso, isolato dal contesto, separato dalla società, ma al contrario, contribuiva a tessere e garantire relazioni di pace e di prosperità. Nei suoi *scriptoria* vennero creati veri tesori dell'arte religiosa dell'antica Russia, in particolare codici miniati, quali il Vangelo Pogodinskoje. All'età di 63 anni da badessa diventò pellegrina<sup>11</sup>. Ildegarda di Bingen (Fig. 11) (Bermersheim vor der Höhe, 1098 - Bingen am Rhein, 1179), è il nome più famoso di una donna scienziata, forse una Leonardo da Vinci al femminile, nota per aver lasciato importanti opere che toccano tematiche teologiche, filosofiche, naturalistiche, mediche, scientifiche, tradusse in miniature le sue visioni mistiche<sup>12</sup>. Fu la prima donna musicista della storia cristiana, scienziata e poetessa, donna di potere, badessa nel monastero femminile Benedettino di Bingen, da lei stessa fondato, dove concepì la vita monacale come una vita di predicazione aperta verso l'esterno. Le monache della sua comunità vivevano con gioia e armonia, al suo fianco, ed erano sempre dedite a leggere, a cantare, a tessere, a scrivere. Nome influente della cultura medievale è anche quello di Herrade di Landsberg (1130-1195), badessa dell'abbazia di Hohenburg, in Alsazia, in verità di lei si sa poco, ma di certo sappiamo che è stata la prima donna a scrivere un'enciclopedia, l'*Hortus Deliciarum* tra il 1175 ed il 1185. Sono gli anni in cui quasi contemporaneamente nel monastero di Rupertsberg veniva redatto il grande manoscritto miniato del *Liber Scivias* di Ildegarda. Di Herrade abbiamo soltanto un autoritratto in un'unica miniatura del suo manoscritto, il quale raccoglie una serie di testi tratti dalla Bibbia, dai Padri, dagli scrittori medievali, passando anche attraverso alcuni autori latini, testi relativi alle varie discipline sacre e profane, con larga utilizzazione dell'interpretazione allegorica ed inseriti in una prospettiva storica che ha al suo centro la vita di Cristo. L'opera è ampiamente illustrata da miniature non solo esornative, ma chiaramente esplicative di un piano didattico: quasi sicuramente il libro veniva utilizzato per l'insegnamento, soprat-

tutto nella cultura monastica. Herrade vi aggiunse poesie che lei stessa compose in esaltazione del Redentore, accompagnandole a note musicali. Il prezioso manoscritto dell' Hortus, ricco di centinaia di illustrazioni, di mano della stessa Herrade (anche se alcuni studiosi hanno ritenuto il codice copia degli inizi del XIII sec.), fu distrutto nell' incendio della biblioteca di Strasburgo (24-25 agosto 1870) durante la guerra francoprussiana. Il testo è stato poi ricostruito e pubblicato in base a precise copie fatte in precedenza<sup>13</sup>. La prima pittrice della storia dell' arte spagnola Teresa Dieç affrescò i muri del Real Monasterio de Santa Clara de Toro (Zamora) tra il 1310 e il 1320. Si tratta di un ciclo di affreschi su episodi della vita di Santa Caterina d' Alessandria e sottolinea il ruolo di questa donna rispetto al potere patriarcale, alla sua vasta saggezza e conoscenza e soprattutto alla sua mediazione risolutiva. La narrazione si susseguisce in riquadri e registri concepiti come se fossero vignette di un fumetto illustrato da didascalie, scene destinate alle monache che avrebbero letto quei dipinti, seguito l' esempio della santa e avrebbero pregato con devozione. Il linguaggio della pittrice è un invito alla vita, pieno di poesia, di luce; il tratto è sicuro ma allo stesso tempo spontaneo, il disegno lineare argina i colori. Teresa oltre al ciclo di Santa Caterina, dipinse una sezione dedicata a San Giovanni Battista, con dieci scene e testi, infine un terzo murale, mutilato, con immagini di San Cristoforo ed altre sante, oltre agli episodi della vita di Cristo. La più nota fra le scrittrici laiche del tardo Medioevo invece è Christine de Pizan (Venezia, 1365 - Monastero di Poissy, 1430 ca.) e la sua opera più importante è un libretto intitolato *Livre de la Cité des Dames* (Fig. 12), in cui traccia i profili delle più interessanti figure femminili dell' antichità, regine, sante, guerriere, poetesse, scienziate, indovine, come Minerva, Medea, Saffo, Didone, Giuditta, abitatrici di un' immaginaria città fortificata dove imperano esclusivamente Ragione, Rettitudine, Giustizia e Fortuna. Questo testo fu scritto in pochi mesi tra il 1404 e il 1405 ed è il documento un' antesignano del femminismo in quanto la scrit-

trice tratta della sua battaglia contro la misoginia e denuncia, in polemica contro tanti scrittori, *in primis* Boccaccio e il suo " *De mulieribus claris*", tutti gli stereotipi riguardanti le donne, come la debolezza fisica, l'inclinazione alla seduzione e al peccato, la scarsa capacità di comprendere. Inoltre Christine accusa Dio per essere nata donna, denunciando con lucidità e ironia il ruolo ingiustamente subordinato entro cui vivevano le donne<sup>14</sup>. Le sette armi spirituali", è lo scritto più conosciuto di Suor Caterina de' Vigri, (Bologna, 1413-1463) nel quale, rivolgendosi esplicitamente alle consorelle, intende presentare la sua esperienza spirituale perché serva loro da esempio. Educata alla corte estense, presso suo padre che era dottore in legge, ricevette una buona educazione in musica, pittura, danza e divenne esperta nella copiatura e nella miniatura. Lasciò poi la corte per unirsi a un gruppo di giovani di famiglie gentilizie che facevano vita in comune, e seguivano la spiritualità agostiniana. Nel 1432 entrò nelle Clarisse, e a Bologna fondò il monastero del Corpus Domini, di cui fu badessa fino alla morte. Fu venerata già in vita, ancora oggi il suo corpo si conserva intatto ed è esposto in una cappella del monastero, venne canonizzata nel 1712. Nel libro parla delle battaglie che l'anima deve affrontare e per vincere i peccati ci si deve armare di sette armi, quali la diligenza, la "propria diffidenza", "in Dio confidarse", "in memoria Passionis", "in memoria mortis propriae", "in memoria gloriae Dei", "in autorità della Santa Scrittura". Le virtù invece che per l'autrice appaiono le più importanti sono l'amore verso il prossimo e soprattutto l'umiltà. L'esercizio di queste virtù permetterà alle consorelle di non giungere a mani vuote e confuse davanti al loro sposo celeste. L'opera ebbe una larga diffusione, le monache ne trascrissero numerose copie dall'originale autografo della consorella, una ventina furono le edizioni a stampa, dalla prima, e numerose furono le copie tradotte. Caterina miniò personalmente i propri scritti ed altri codici, fu anche un'artista raffinata ed elegante, f'interprete attenta ai dettagli e ai particolari delle sue opere, che oggi, in parte, sono cu-

stodite presso il Santuario del Monastero del Corpus Domini di Bologna (Fig. 13), Pinacoteca nazionale di Venezia e agli Uffizi. La scultrice Properzia de' Rossi (Bologna, 1490 ca. - Bologna, 1530) invece eccelse come intagliatrice di gemme. Figlia di un notaio, si formò nello studio dell'incisore bolognese Marcantonio Raimondi. Tra il 1525 e il 1526 eseguì dei lavori per la basilica di San Petronio. La sua biografia è inclusa tra le *Vite* del Vasari, che affascinato dalla personalità della “femmina scultora”, le riservò un elogio “... giovane virtuosa, non solamente nelle cose di casa, come l'altre, ma in infinite scienze, che non che le donne, ma tutti gli uomini l'ebbero invidia”.

Dal XVI secolo grandi donne pittrici riescono a farsi conoscere al di là dei confini cittadini, ed alcune s'impongono addirittura in ambito europeo. Il pittore e architetto aretino Giorgio Vasari, ne *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architettori* è una serie di biografie di artisti, scriveva «*Poiché le donne sanno benissimo dare alla luce (creare) gli uomini, non c'è da meravigliarsi che vogliano poter anche creare, con la stessa facilità (disinvoltura) degli uomini a partire dalla pittura*». La “prima pittrice fiorentina” fu Suor Plautilla Nelli (Firenze 1524 -1588), le sue opere erano disseminate nei conventi e nelle dimore dei gentiluomini fiorentini. Fu citata anche da Giorgio Vasari, il quale scrive “*avrebbe fatto cose meravigliose se, come fanno gl'uomini, avesse avuto comodo di studiare ed attendere al disegno e ritrarre cose vive e naturali*”. Non potendo usufruire di alcun tipo di educazione artistica, fu soltanto copiando disegni e dipinti e usando corpi femminili come modello, che raggiunse la sua maturità artistica, riuscendo a dar vita a una fiorente bottega con numerose allieve. Come accennato alcune pittrici riescono a farsi conoscere e ad avere importanti commissioni addirittura nelle più importanti corti europee. Accade alla primogenita del *Tintoretto*, Marietta Robusti, che lavora per quindici anni nella bottega del padre dimostrando un'abilità sorprendente al punto da essere invitata dal re spagnolo Filippo II, senza che il padre però le conce-

desse di recarsi in terra straniera. Anche Sofonisba Anguissola (Fig. 14) (1532 Cremona - 1625 Palermo) poté esercitare, alla corte di Spagna, la funzione di ritrattista ufficiale dal 1559 al 1580 perché suo padre glielo consentì, essendo di idee liberali e un appassionato di pittura. Nello stesso periodo la miniaturista fiamminga Levina Teerline lavora al servizio dei sovrani inglesi Edoardo VI, Maria Tudor ed Elisabetta I affermandosi come artista di prim'ordine al punto da guadagnare cifre ragguardevoli e superiori a molti famosi pittori (maschi) del suo tempo. Dal Rinascimento all'Impressionismo le cose cominciano davvero a cambiare: le donne artiste veramente grandi, quelle insomma che possono essere considerate a tutti gli effetti vere professioniste dell'arte. Sono Artemisia Gentileschi, Lavinia Fontana, Elisabetta Sirani, la simpatica olandese Judith Leyster, Rosalba Carriera, Élisabeth Chéron, Elizabeth Vigée-Le Brun, Angelika Kauffmann. Artemisia Gentileschi (Fig. 15) (8 luglio 1593 Roma - 1653 Napoli), è forse in assoluto l'artista donna più famosa, senz'altro la più amata e conosciuta, è figlia d'arte e suo padre era il noto pittore Orazio. La sua figura ha un'immagine di donna impegnata a perseguire la propria indipendenza e la propria affermazione artistica contro le molteplici difficoltà e pregiudizi incontrati nella sua vita travagliata. Era infatti il 27 novembre 1612 quando il pittore Agostino Tassi, al quale la giovane Artemisia venne affidata negli studi, fu condannato per la violenza nei danni della giovane, la corruzione dei testimoni e la diffamazione nei confronti di Orazio Gentileschi, fecero sì che il giudice Gerolamo Felice, con sentenza depositata, separata dagli atti, negli Archivi Vaticani impose al Tassi di scegliere l'esilio da Roma. L'imputato, aiutato dal capitano Pietro Paolo Arcamanni, arrivò a Bagnaia dove, ospite del cardinale Alessandro Peretti Montalto, nipote di Sisto V, lavorò magistralmente, svolgendo una vita agiata e tranquilla, agli affreschi del nuovo casino di Villa Lante e diresse anche una vasta squadra di artisti. Nel 1562 a Firenze venne fondata l'Accademia europea del Disegno e soltanto nel 1616 vi fu ammessa la prima

donna, era Artemisia, la maggiore pittrice del Seicento, una dei massimi artisti italiani d'ogni tempo. Tre anni prima del suo ingresso in Accademia, Artemisia aveva già dipinto il suo capolavoro intitolato *Giuditta che decapita Oloferne*<sup>15</sup>, una tela di 159x126 cm. che rievoca il cruento episodio biblico trattato anche da Caravaggio. Artista che invece entrò in contatto con illustri committenti, artisti, eruditi, crescendo nel rispetto delle norme morali e sociali della propaganda tridentina fu Lavinia Fontana (Fig. 16) (1552 - 1614). Si formò nella fervida bottega del padre, dal quale apprese i primi insegnamenti. Oltre Barbara Longhi<sup>16</sup> (Ravenna, 21 settembre 1552- 23 dicembre 1638 Ravenna) figlia del pittore manierista Luca ed eccellente ritrattista di molte Sante e Madonne in piccolo formato, un caso straordinario di precocità artistica fu quello della bolognese Elisabetta Sirani (Fig. 17) (8 gennaio 1638, Bologna - 28 agosto 1665, Bologna). Fin dalla più tenera età lei, dimostrò una precoce propensione per la pittura, alla quale fu avviata, dopo le iniziali resistenze, da suo padre Giovanni Andrea Sirani (Bologna, 1610-1670), allievo di Guido Reni. Bologna a quel tempo era una città ricca di celebrità femminili in campo artistico. Elisabetta quindi poteva dar compimento alla sua creatività artistica, pur esercitandola tra le quattro mura del suo studio, poiché il padre non le consentiva di frequentare altri studi o di viaggiare. A soli 17 anni, era già considerata *un maestro* in grado di gestire una sua *Scuola d'arte per fanciulle* dove insegnava le più raffinate tecniche della pittura e dell'incisione. Nella sua breve esistenza produrrà più di 200 dipinti in puro stile barocco e verrà apprezzata nelle maggiori corti europee per la raffinatezza e l'intensità espressiva dei suoi quadri. Un'ulcera perforata la stroncherà giovanissima, nel 1665, a soli 27 anni. Si sospetterà un avvelenamento procurato da una sua cameriera invidiosa, ma l'autopsia evidenziò come fossero state del tutto naturali le cause della sua morte improvvisa. Nel XVII secolo, il cenacolo di pittrici, creatosi attorno alla figura di Elisabetta Sirani, diventa ben presto un tiaso capace di esprimere il talento artistico



femminile e creare un “paradiso artistico delle donne”.

Nel corso del Seicento si afferma rapidamente, soprattutto nel nord Europa, una ricca borghesia mercantile che vuole arredare elegantemente le proprie case, richiedendo ai pittori soggetti sempre nuovi o decisamente decorativi. In particolare si diffonde il genere della “*natura morta*” in cui eccellono le pittrici olandesi Clara Peeters, Maria Van Oosterwijck e Rachel Ruysch.

In Italia al nuovo genere si dedica la milanese Fede Galizia, (Milano, 1578? - Milano, 1630) alla quale si deve una *natura morta con frutta* risalente al 1602, forse la prima della nostra storia artistica. Dotata di eccezionale talento seppe dipingere su tavola opere bellissime e caratterizzate stilisticamente da una luce *fredda, tagliente* in grado di esaltarne la perfetta armonia compositiva. Pittrice barocca, figlia del pittore miniaturista trentino Nunzio Galizia, iniziò a lavorare all’età di 12 anni. Fra le sue opere ci sono ritratti e scene di soggetto religioso, ma è conosciuta soprattutto per i dipinti di nature morte, infatti tra le 63 opere inserite nel suo catalogo generale, ben 44 sono nature morte (Fig. 18). Fede Galizia preferì la pittura al matrimonio, dal quale sarebbe stata certamente allontanata dall’attività, e rimase pertanto nubile. *Paolo Morigia*, scrittore e storico gesuita immortalato nel ritratto conservato all’Ambrosiana di Milano l’aveva descritta già un anno prima come “virtuosa” autrice di “rare pitture”. Il biografo d’arte Carlo Cesare Malvasia riporta anche un elenco di allieve dell’*Accademia del disegno* della Sirani fra cui le due sorelle della pittrice, Barbara ed Anna Maria, le quali furono attive assieme ad un’artista molto raffinata di nome Ginevra Cantofoli. Ginevra (Bologna, 1618 - 1672)<sup>17</sup>, era una pittrice di immagini religiose e allegoriche, nella sua città natale dipinse diverse pale d’altare e fra queste opere si ricordano un’*Ultima cena* per la chiesa di San Procolo, un San Tommaso da Villanova per la Basilica di San Giacomo Maggiore, una *Madonna con il rosario* presso la chiesa di San Lorenzo ed una Santa Apollonia. Della Cantofoli è conservata una *Figura femminile inturbantata* (già attribuita a Guido

Reni) presso la Galleria Nazionale di Palazzo Barberini a Roma. Di Barbara Sirani è visibile un *Ecce Homo* nella chiesa di Santa Maria dei Servi a Bologna, mentre di Anna Maria Sirani sono visibili due pale d'altare site rispettivamente a Medesano (*Santissima Trinità e San Martino*) e nella chiesa di San Vitale a Granarolo (*Madonna di San Luca e Santi*). Un bellissimo Autoritratto, firmato e datato 1678, di Lucrezia Scarfaglia (Fig. 19), pittrice bolognese attiva dal negli anni sessanta e settanta del XVII secolo, è fruibile nella Galleria Pallavicini di Roma, dove lei lavorò in tarda età ponendosi come un'artista colta e devota. L'opera la rappresenta mentre dipinge come San Luca un'immagine della Vergine col Bambino. Della sua vita e della sua carriera non si sa quasi nulla, solo che fu allieva della Sirani, dopo la cui morte prese lezioni con Domenico Maria Canuti. Fu descritta da Carlo Cesare Malvasia come "non una pittrice mediocre". Le sue opere sono prevalentemente a soggetto religioso, realizzò anche un ritratto di Eleonora Gonzaga. Le forme artistiche di altissimo spessore si hanno anche con la naturalista e pittrice tedesca Maria Sibylla Merian (Fig. 20) (Francoforte sul Meno, 2 aprile 1647 - Amsterdam, 13 gennaio 1717). Artista specializzata nell'illustrazione botanica ed entomologica, al punto da essere inviata dalle autorità olandesi nella colonia del Suriname per illustrare i risultati di una spedizione scientifica<sup>18</sup>. La Merian disegnò e dipinse fiori, immagini d'insetti e di piante con la pittura ad olio, l'acquerello e l'incisione e tramutò il disegno naturalistico da strumento di documentazione scientifica, a riproduzione puramente artistica del mondo naturale. La veneziana Rosalba Carriera (Fig. 21) (Venezia, 7 ottobre 1675 - Venezia, 15 aprile 1757) fu una pittrice e ritrattista, tra le più note del Settecento. Cominciò la sua carriera artistica dipingendo le tabacchiere, piccoli contenitori raffinati utilizzati per conservare il tabacco sfuso, proteggendone l'aroma, decorati con figure di damine graziose che divennero poi la sua fortuna trasposte nelle miniature su avorio. Fu la prima che utilizzò l'avorio nelle miniature dandogli quella lucentezza caratte-

ristica delle sue opere. Fu inoltre la prima a non seguire le regole accademiche che volevano la miniatura dover essere realizzata con tratti e punti brevi e ben amalgamati. Lei invece vi trasportò il tratto veloce caratteristico della pittura veneziana. I suoi primi lavori con la tecnica a pastello, si collocano nel periodo in cui frequentò la bottega del suo primo maestro, Giuseppe Diamantini e quella di Antonio Balestra. Grazie alle sue opere raffinate e dai colori tenui, ottenne riconoscimenti e commissioni da principi e principesse, perfino dal re di Francia Luigi XV.

Il viaggio nel mondo delle più importanti artiste, che con la loro tenacia e impegno sono riuscite ad emergere e a rimanere salde alle espressioni più elevate del mondo dell'arte, continua in Europa e vanno ricordate almeno due pittrici vissute tra la fine del Settecento e gli inizi dell'Ottocento, sono la svizzera Maria Anna Catharina Angelika Kauffmann (Fig. 22) (Coira il 30 ottobre 1741 - Roma, 5 novembre 1807) e la francese Marie-Guillemine Benoist. La prima, pittrice specializzata nella ritrattistica e nei soggetti storici, nutriva una passione anche per le altre arti come la musica e il canto. Suo padre pittore la avviò alle belle arti, anche accompagnandola, al fine di una più completa e mirata formazione, in alcuni viaggi in Italia dove il suo talento si mise da subito in mostra, in seguito si recò anche a Londra e fu l'unica donna fra i fondatori della Royal Academy of Arts. La Benoist (Parigi, 18 dicembre 1768 - Parigi, 8 ottobre 1826), allieva del grande pittore napoleonico Jacques-Louis David, si batté per l'abolizione della schiavitù anche attraverso una serie di quadri simbolici, come il *Ritratto di donna negra* (Fig. 23). Il dipinto, realizzato solo sei anni dopo l'abolizione della schiavitù, è considerato un manifesto dell'emancipazione delle persone di colore e del femminismo. Il quadro verrà poi acquistato dallo Stato nel 1818. Al *Salon des Femmes* del 1804 ottenne la medaglia d'oro e una pensione governativa. In questo periodo aprì uno studio riservato alle sole donne. La pittura del XIX secolo verrà profondamente rinnovata, negli ultimi decenni, dall'impressionismo di cui fecero

parte quattro donne, Mary Cassat, Berthe Marie Pauline Morisot, Suzanne Valadon ed Eva Gonzales. La Morisot (Fig. 24) (Bourges, 14 gennaio 1841 - Parigi, 1 o 2 marzo 1895) è stata una pittrice impressionista francese. Nella sua vita, come le altre artiste del periodo, dovette lottare contro chi trovava disdicevole per una donna la professione di pittrice, i pregiudizi le vietarono di dipingere all'aperto o in luoghi pubblici, quindi preferì dipingere interni e scene domestiche, donne eleganti della media e alta borghesia ritratte in casa o in giardino, in varie ore della giornata. Fu un'artista molto profonda, che si esprime attraverso un'analisi interiore dei personaggi. Si circondò di amici letterati, in particolare Stéphane Mallarmé. Lei fu anche la prima donna ad unirsi al gruppo dei grandi maestri francesi di fine Ottocento, fu lavorò anche come modella bellissima e prediletta di Monet, si legò affettivamente a lui e fu unita da profonda amicizia con Renoir e Rodin, tutti insieme organizzarono la prima collettiva parigina per sole donne, al *Salon des Femmes*. Più libera e spregiudicata fu Suzanne Valadon (Fig. 25) (Bessines-sur-Gartempe, 23 settembre 1865 - Parigi, 7 aprile 1938) pittrice e circense francese, il cui vero nome era Marie-Clémentine, modella ed amante di Toulouse-Lautrec, nonché madre di un figlio illegittimo che diventerà famoso con il nome di Maurice Utrillo. La sua pittura fu estremamente realistica nell'ambientazione e anticipò i forti contrasti di colore che saranno tipici dell'espressionismo. Artista impressionista austriaca Regina Leopoldine Blau, meglio nota come Tina Blau-Lang (Vienna, 15 Novembre 1845 - 31 ottobre 1916). Suo padre chirurgo comprese il talento di sua figlia, la incoraggiò negli studi e la accompagnò nei numerosi viaggi per rendere la sua formazione più completa e matura. In particolare, in Olanda e in Italia (Fig. 26) la ragazza fu affascinata dall'ampio paesaggio e dalla luce, elementi ideali per studiare e tradurre il momento della percezione, di ciò che l'occhio vede nell'immagine dipinta. La Blau iniziò la sua carriera di pittrice all'età di ventidue anni e nel 1873 presentò uno dei suoi quadri all'Esposizione universale

di Vienna. Tra il 1875 e il 1876 divise uno studio con Emil Jakob Schindler, ma presto ruppero il sodalizio artistico per divergenze personali. Nel 1883 sposò l'artista Heinrich Lang e si trasferirono a Monaco, dove Tina tenne corsi di didattica della pittura del paesaggio e della natura morta. Nel 1891 rimase vedova e nel 1893 tornò a Vienna e la sua carriera di pittrice ed insegnante proseguì brillantemente per molti anni ancora. Nell'ambito del gruppo delle artiste impressioniste molto apprezzata fu Eva Gonzales<sup>19</sup>, d'origini spagnole e anche lei modella di Manet, non fece in tempo a veder riconosciute le sue doti d'artista in quanto morì di parto nel 1883 a trentaquattro anni. Il primo Novecento si caratterizzò per il rinnovamento radicale della pittura attraverso la diffusione delle *avanguardie storiche* a cui partecipano molte artiste di talento, sebbene abbiano spesso avuto un ruolo marginale di compagne o muse ispiratrici di grandi maestri. Accade a Gabriele Munter, musa di Kandinskji, Marie Laurencin di Apollinaire, Leonora Carrington di Ernst, Frida Kahlo di Rivera, Jeanne Hébuterne di Modigliani.

Il sostegno alla campagna di sensibilizzazione al rispetto nella figura della donna si amplifica tra il XX e del XXI secolo con la volontà di riscattare la presenza femminile all'interno del mondo artistico. Un riscatto in forte aumento rispetto ai secoli precedenti, in un percorso costituito da alcuni punti nevralgici. Si inizia con le pittrici del primo Novecento, per passare poi attraverso la grande parentesi femminista degli anni Settanta, fino all'acquisizione di nuove tecniche artistiche del tutto lontane dalla tradizione come la fotografia, la video-art, la Digital art, la performance, il cinema. Sono artiste come Tamara de Lempicka, Frida Kahlo, Cindy Sherman, Marina Abramovic, fino alla bellissima interpretazione dell'attrice Uma Thurman in veste di Sposa/Beatrix in Kill Bill vol. 1 di Quintin Tarantino. Tutto ciò vuole porre in evidenza il desiderio di conferire una pari importanza tra le artiste donne e i grandi artisti, oltre al fatto di volersi chiedere se sia veramente l'appartenenza ad uno specifico genere sessuale a determinare il

genio artistico dell'atto creativo. In Russia, dopo la Rivoluzione d'ottobre, le artiste delle avanguardie vengono riconosciute come protagoniste con un ruolo di primo piano sia nella pittura che nel design. Le più importanti firme della nuova arte che si affermava in Unione Sovietica furono Nataljia Goncarova, Liubov Popova, Alexandra Exter, Varvara Stepanova. Nel periodo tra le due guerre "l'arte delle donne" si addentrò in generi e settori creativi dai quali erano state da sempre escluse. Il cubismo orfico di Sonia Delaunay, poi approdato nell'astrattismo, la fotografia della friulana Tina Modotti, l'Art Deco di Tamara de Lempicka sono soltanto alcuni degli esempi della mutazione del linguaggio delle nuove correnti. Proprio la de Lempicka (Varsavia, 16 maggio 1898 - Cuernavaca, 18 marzo 1980), diventò famosissima per la serie dei ritratti femminili nei quali rappresenta donne volitive, moderne, definitivamente emancipate da ogni tutela maschilista, è la nuova concezione della donna<sup>20</sup>. Le sue opere, trascurate per decenni dal mercato artistico, sono oggi musealizzate e introvabili sul mercato. *L'autoritratto nella Bugatti Verde* (Fig. 27) del 1929, emblema dell'emancipazione femminile, evidenzia la perfezione della sua arte e la personalità stessa della pittrice, indipendente, potente, seducente, libera di guidare e sfrecciare ovunque voglia. È forse l'opera più famosa della de Lempicka, dove la pittrice si ritrae in caschetto e guanti di daino al volante di un'auto sportiva, immagine diventata simbolo di un'epoca e della donna indipendente che si afferma. È importante capire come è cambiata la percezione della libertà personale e proprio da Tamara, la "donna d'oro" come la definì D'Annunzio durante il suo insistente corteggiamento, con il pennello e più spesso con la spatola racconta le donne più belle del '900. Molti critici considerano i suoi ritratti "freddi", ma guardandoli da un'altra prospettiva, al contrario trasmettono una forte visione interiore che l'artista ci ha offerto di se stessa, con la sua personalità misteriosa e forte. All'opposto Frida Kahlo (Fig. 28) (Coyoacán, 6 luglio 1907 - Coyoacán, 13 luglio 1954), una delle artiste tra le più amate e conosciute al

mondo, è un grande esempio di forza e di creatività. Il rapporto ossessivo con il suo corpo martoriato, a causa di un terribile incidente del 1925, caratterizza uno degli aspetti fondamentali della sua arte. Frida crea le visioni del corpo femminile e coglie al contempo l'occasione per difendere il suo popolo attraverso l'ostentazione del folclore messicano. La donna, che lei rappresenta, ha uno suo sguardo visionario e vista anche la sua condizione fisica, interpreta una immagine di sé stessa in preda alla disperazione e alla tristezza. Con i suoi colori ha trasformato il dolore in bellezza e la sua opera è interessante non soltanto sul piano pittorico, ma anche su quello psicologico. I suoi quadri più famosi hanno come soggetto eventi come l'aborto, la nutrizione forzata, la rappresentazione di un corpo con cicatrici, busti, lacrime, chiodi che lo trafiggono, eppure, di fronte alla drammaticità del soggetto, lo sguardo osservante non fugge via, ma al contrario ne è attratto. La malattia poliomielitica e la tragedia dell'incidente, che la bloccano inferma per molto tempo, l'invalidità che resta come "segno" per tutta la sua esistenza, il rapporto conturbante di odio e amore con il marito l'artista Diego Rivera, la perdita del bambino in grembo, la disperazione dei ripetuti tradimenti da parte del coniuge, la passione con Trotskij, sono soltanto alcune delle fasi della vita di Frida. Le "malattie" della Kahlo sono state interpretate come una sorta di musa ispiratrice del suo processo di pittura inteso come "terapia". A fare di questa pittrice un'icona è stata la sua caparbia, quella di una donna, che nella prima metà del ventesimo secolo ha mosso i passi verso una vera indipendenza. La donna da lei interpretata non ha paura di esporsi né nella vita, tantomeno nell'arte e rappresenta il vero "sesso forte", usando e abusando del proprio corpo, delle proprie "ferite" per raccontare al mondo i suoi sentimenti. Donna dal carattere altrettanto forte fu Margherita Sarfatti, già Grassini, (Venezia, 8 aprile 1880 - Cavallasca, 30 ottobre 1961), scrittrice e critica d'arte italiana nota anche per la sua relazione con Benito Mussolini. Di lui scrisse una delle prime biografie agiografiche, intitolata *Dux* che

uscì nel 1926 e, nello stesso anno, anche in inglese dal titolo *The life of Benito Mussolini*. A seguito delle leggi razziali antisemite, nel 1938, fuggì in Argentina. Ebbe un'ottima istruzione, parlando correntemente quattro lingue. Fu educata in casa e poté usufruire di insegnanti quali Antonio Fradeletto, Pietro Orsi e Pompeo Gherardo Molmenti. Grazie alla posizione del padre, ebbe inoltre modo di conoscere personalmente numerosi letterati quali Israel Zangwill, Gabriele D'Annunzio e i Fogazzaro, Giuseppe e Antonio. Giornalista, critica e promotrice dell'arte italiana tra le due guerre, Margherita brilla nel panorama internazionale del primo Novecento per cultura, talento e ambizione. La sua spiccata personalità delineano la figura di una donna colta e appassionata, ma anche complessa e controversa. Fu amica di intellettuali ed artisti, socialista e poi sostenitrice del regime fascista, legò il suo nome al gruppo di Novecento Italiano. Erano gli anni del ritorno all'ordine e del recupero della tradizione artistica, che Sarfatti interpreta coniano la celebre definizione di “moderna classicità”. L'artista più originale dell'arte del secondo dopoguerra italiano è stata Carla Accardi (Fig. 29) (Trapani, 9 ottobre 1924 - Roma, 23 febbraio 2014). Con la sua pittura ha contribuito poi dal 1946 frequentò l'Osteria Fratelli Menghi, noto punto di ritrovo per pittori, registi, sceneggiatori, scrittori e poeti tra gli anni '40 e '70. Nel 1947 con Consagra, Dorazio, Guerrini, Concetto Maugeri, Perilli, Sanfilippo, sposato nel 1949, e Turcato, fondò il Gruppo Forma I di ispirazione formalista e marxista. Nel 1954 iniziò ad affrontare problematiche di riduzione cromatica e segnica documentate dalla personale del 1955 alla Galleria San Marco di Roma. La ricerca di Carla Accardi mirò all'analisi dell'automatismo segnico e nel 1965 l'artista abbandonò le tempere a favore di vernici colorate e fluorescenti da applicare su supporti plastici trasparenti, uscendo dalla dimensione del quadro e coinvolgendo lo spazio. Negli anni Settanta tornò agli schemi geometrici reiterati su grandi tele chiamate *Lenzuoli* che saranno presentati alla Galleria Editalia di Roma nel 1974. Le esperienze degli anni Settanta continue-



ranno ad essere approfondite in una serie di installazioni fino al recupero di una dimensione più tradizionale negli anni Ottanta. Fece parte del femminismo in Italia, e costituì il gruppo “Rivolta Femminile”. Nel 1996 fu nominata membro dell’Accademia di Brera e nel 1997 fu membro della Commissione per la Biennale di Venezia nel ruolo di consigliere. Un volo oltreoceano ci porta a conoscere una delle interpreti più trasversali e poliedriche dell’arte contemporanea, Cindy Sherman (Fig. 30) (Glen Ridge, 19 gennaio del 1954). Artista performativa, fotografa, attrice e regista statunitense, conosciuta per i suoi autoritratti concettuali, produce serie di opere, fotografando se stessa in una varietà infinita di costumi. Nelle serie come “Centerfolds” (1981), richiama l’attenzione sullo stereotipo della donna come rappresentazione di grande forza e dei diversi possibili “io” che possono coesistere in ognuno di noi. Nel 1977 inizia “Untitled Film Stills”, la celeberrima serie ispirata ai B movie degli anni Cinquanta che la renderà celebre in tutto il mondo e sarà acquistata dal MoMa di New York nel ’95 per oltre un milione di dollari. Vi si dedica fino al 1980 e sono 69 immagini in bianco e nero, di piccolo formato, che prefigurano già tutti i temi che contraddistinguono la sua successiva produzione: l’autoritratto, l’uso del travestimento, la parodia degli stereotipi imposti dalla società alle donne dalla cultura, o dalla sottocultura una ricostruzione dell’identità personale in un continuo sdoppiamento e “decostruzione” dei parametri linguistici figurativi femminili e dai rispettivi immaginari mediatici, lo “spaesamento” delle ambientazioni, per proteggere se stessa, come un funambolo in equilibrio fra la registrazione di performance e la vera e propria fotografia. “Fairy Tales” (’85), commissionata da «Vanity Fair», è invece un’incursione nel mondo delle fiabe, il punto di partenza di una nuova fase di ricerca personale, che porta l’autrice ad allestire per i suoi scatti una realtà spesso grottesca e dai risvolti addirittura carnascialeschi, connotata a tratti da un surreale e perturbante humor nero. La punta d’avanguardia della performance e della body art fin dai primi

anni '70 è sicuramente Marina Abramović (Fig. 31), nata a Belgrado nel 1946. Nel 1976 inizia una relazione e collaborazione con un altro artista, Ulay, nato peraltro nel suo stesso giorno. Dopo dodici anni di relazione, decideranno di interrompere il loro rapporto con una lunga camminata sulla Grande Muraglia Cinese. Marina ha segnato in maniera profonda e innovativa l'arte degli ultimi trent'anni e le scelte tematiche vanno dalla rappresentazione della sessualità e della femminilità, dalla dimensione intima e quotidiana, all'interpretazione etica e sociale della realtà contemporanea. Fin dagli esordi ha scelto il proprio corpo come oggetto della sua arte, indagando i confini estremi della resistenza fisica e psicologica<sup>21</sup>. C'è sempre qualcosa di sacro nel lavoro della Abramović, che non è da riferirsi esclusivamente al rimando più o meno esplicito ai personaggi, fatti e momenti biblici, ma nel modo in cui profetizza o testimonia il martirio dell'essere. Lei si abbandona alle mani del pubblico che inevitabilmente diventa "artefice del suo destino", ad esso si offre nelle vesti di vittima sacrificale ed è come se gli dicesse: "eccomi, prendimi, sono qua, fai di me ciò che vuoi", ma allo stesso tempo evidenzia una donna seduttiva, avvolgente, coinvolgente, capace di "far piangere" il mondo con il solo potere dello sguardo, una donna che indaga i propri limiti, li sconfigge, li supera. L'ultima tra le artiste più innovative e accreditate, nel panorama contemporaneo internazionale, c'è senza dubbio l'italiana Vanessa Beecroft (Genova, 25 aprile 1969). La sua scelta espressiva si anima nel pensare e realizzare performance, utilizzando il corpo di giovani donne, lei entra nel profondo dell'animo femminile attraverso lo sguardo e vuole ridare il valore al soggetto femminile, che la cultura moderna ha trasformato in oggetto. La Beecroft restituisce una nuova fisicità al corpo della donna, come se la nuova rinascita e la purezza, profondamente legate alla cultura classica, ricreassero le muse o meglio le sacre ninfe moderne che comunicano con un linguaggio totalmente personalizzato, legato al mondo della comunicazione digitale. A conclusione di questo scritto, il tributo va

al cinema e alla protagonista del film Kill Bill vol. 1, una resiliente ed animalesca Uma Thurman (Fig. 32). “*Une Femme est une Femme*”<sup>22</sup> e la protagonista, il cui nome, sostituito sempre da un sintetico “beep”, può essere Arlene Machiavelli, Beatrix Kiddo, Black Mamba, Uma Thurman, Mommy, differenti incarnazioni del vettore/creatore del flusso: Kill Bill è il suo obiettivo. Uma Thurman è chiamata a riassumere in sé ognuno di questi nomi, cui corrispondono movenze, riferimenti, digressioni, nel superstile aggregante di Tarantino. L’inno alla sua protagonista e ai suoi modi in cui lei vuole farsi giustizia sono quelli propri dell’ambiente in cui è cresciuta. Bill è il suo capo, lei era “la donna di Bill”, ha deciso di andarsene ed ha scelto un altro uomo. A Bill non è andato giù ed è per questo che ha cercato di ucciderla, ma Bill morirà. È un film di genere, in cui tutto è esagerato ed iperbolico e la storia della protagonista è la storia di tutte le donne che soffrono e si risollemano. Bill e gli altri uomini accetteranno l’entrata della donna nel tempio di Atena.

## NOTE

1 - Pandimiglio F., *Women ≅ RESILIENCE*, Catalogo della Mostra (a cura di). Spazio Grafica 2.0, Viterbo, 2018. La resilienza, tema dell’evento, consiste nella capacità di far fronte in maniera positiva e propositiva ad eventi traumatici, ma specificatamente di riorganizzare positivamente la propria vita dinanzi alle difficoltà, restando sensibili alle opportunità positive che la vita offre, senza alienare la propria identità. Le donne protagoniste, in questo scritto, sono persone resilienti che, immerse in circostanze avverse, sono riuscite, nonostante tutto e talvolta contro ogni previsione, a fronteggiare efficacemente le contrarietà, a dare nuovo slancio alla propria esistenza e perfino a raggiungere l’importanza di siglare il proprio nome nella storia. Le donne artiste resilienti,

ce l'hanno fatta e si sono risollevate dalle situazioni difficili, superando gli ostacoli delle famiglie stesse o della società del loro tempo e attraverso l'espressione del linguaggio delle immagini.

2 - Melina G., *Plinio il Vecchio e la sua Storia dell'arte antica* in "Ars & Humanitas", 1 (1), 127-152. Univerza v Ljubljani 2007. <https://doi.org/10.4312/ars.1.1>.

3 - «...*tabula ... antiquissimae picturae*» (Plinio, *Naturalis Historia*, XXXV, 147).

4 - Moreno P., *Apelle. La battaglia di Alessandro*. Ginevra, Milano 2000. Frumusa G., *Alessandro Magno, Eracle e la leonté nella glittica ellenistica e romana* in "LANX" 3, pp. 13-35 (2009).

5 - Arrigoni G., *Quando le donne raccontano i miti: Penelope, le nutrici e le pittrici* in "Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica" New Series, Vol. 87, n. 3, pp.20-21. Fabrizio Serra Editore, Pisa, Roma, 2007.

6 - Le tavolette del I e II secolo d.C. consistono in una serie di reperti archeologici ritrovati nel 1973 nella Britannia romana, presso il forte di Vindolanda nei pressi del Vallo di Adriano in Inghilterra settentrionale. Sono sottili tavolette di legno (20 x 8 x 0,3 cm.) di betulla, ontano e quercia su cui furono scritti a inchiostro una serie di dittici riguardanti atti ufficiali e privati. Furono studiate all'epigrafista Richard Wright, poi da Alison Rutherford alla Scuola di Medicina dell'Università di Newcastle dove attraverso l'analisi fotografica multispettrale e le foto all'infrarosso fu possibile interpretare per la prima volta i testi. In seguito furono Alan Bowman dell'Università di Manchester e David Thomas dell'Università di Durham che riuscirono a studiare e a decifrare la grafia corsiva riuscendo a produrre le trascrizioni. Attualmente sono conservate al British Museum.

Birley R., *Vindolanda: extraordinary records of daily life on the northern frontier*. Roman Army Museum Publications, 2005.

Bowman A.K., *Life and letters on the Roman frontier: Vindolanda and its people*. British Museum Press, 1994.

7 - *Catalunya Romànica I*. Barcellona, Gran Enciclopèdia Catalana, pp. 143-144, 1994.

Spargere luci e colori: l'impronta di alcune artiste medievali MariaElisa Varela Rodríguez e Teresa Vinyoles Vidal. <http://www.ub.edu/duoda/diferencia/html/it/secundario13.html>.

8 - Eginardo, biografo di Carlo Magno, dice che Gisella, destinata alla

vita religiosa, divenne badessa nell'abbazia di Chelles. In tale veste supervisionava uno dei più importanti e prolifici *scriptoria* di suore attivo tra l'VIII e il IX secolo, e che ebbe sempre buoni rapporti con il fratello Carlo Magno, che «la trattava con lo stesso rispetto che dimostrava alla madre». Sempre secondo Eginardo, Gisella morì nell'810 nel convento dove aveva trascorso la maggior parte della sua vita, pochi anni prima di Carlo. Carlo Magno e la moglie Ildegarda battezzarono la loro figlia con il nome di Gisella, in onore della zia. Nell'*Annalium Angliae Excerpta*, Gisella, figlia di Pipino, viene citata quando ricorda che il padre venne unto re dal papa Stefano II.

McKitterick - Rosamond, *Books, Scribes and Learning in the Frankish Kingdoms, 6th-9th Centuries*. Ashgate Publishing Limited, pp. 1-35, 1-43, Aldershot (Inghilterra), 1994.

**9** - *Beatus* è il nome con il quale sono identificati i manoscritti spagnoli del X e XI secolo, più o meno abbondantemente miniati, contenenti la riproduzione dell'Apocalisse di Giovanni e i vari Commentari al testo redatti nell'VIII secolo da Beato di Liébana. I *Beatus* non sono una vana parafrasi dell'Apocalisse (o del suo commentario scritto dal monaco di Liébana): sono delle immagini generate da una visione, nuovi strati di verità aggiunti al testo profetico. In tal modo il Bello non è più una tappa sulla via che conduce al Vero: il fuoco dei colori si mescola al braciere di parole per lanciare nelle nostre anime abbacinate nuove faville di significati.

AA. VV., *Dictionnaire culturel de la Bible*. Ed. Cerf/Nathan, Paris, 1990.

AA. VV., *Dictionnaire culturel du Christianisme*. Ed. Cerf/Nathan, Paris, 1994,

**10** - La *riza* è una sottile lamina in metallo, di solito d'argento, che lascia scoperti i volti, le mani e a volte anche il busto degli effigiati, per far riconoscibile l'identità dei personaggi. È un'opera d'arte in sé, derivata da tecniche orafe specifiche e raffinate a sbalzo, cesello, incisione, è una scultura devozionale caratteristica delle Chiese orientali. Spesso veniva impreziosita con smalti policromi, con filigrane, perfino con perle e con pietre dure e preziose. La lamina veniva poi ripiegata sui quattro lati e fissata con piccoli chiodi sullo spessore della tavola dipinta. La *riza* è un omaggio all'immagine sacra e al messaggio che ne deriva, ma anche una protezione materiale dell'icona, per preservarla cioè dall'annerimento, prodotto dalla fuliggine delle lampade e dai fumi dell'incenso.

**11** - Si mise in cammino prima per un pellegrinaggio a Costantinopoli, dove venne ricevuta dall'imperatore Manuele I Comneno e dal patriarca Michele II Curcuas, in seguito si recò in Terra Santa, dove fu ricevuta dal re crociato Amalrico I di Gerusalemme e dal patriarca Amalrico di Nesle, successivamente si avviò verso il monastero di Mar Saba per poi giungere al Giordano, dove voleva bagnarsi nelle acque, ma, arrivata sul luogo, morì nel 1173 per le fatiche subite durante il lungo viaggio. Fu sepolta nel monastero di San Teodosio. Dopo la conquista di Gerusalemme da parte di Saladino nel 1187, le sue reliquie furono trasportate al Monastero delle Grotte di Kiev. Nel 1910, sono finalmente tornate nella sua città natale, a Polack.

**12** - Ildegarda ideò, intorno alla metà del XII secolo, una lingua artificiale, una delle prime di cui si abbiano notizie, conosciuta come "Lingua ignota". Lei la utilizzava per fini mistici ed è composta da un alfabeto di 23 lettere, definite *ignotae litterae*. La santa ne parla nella sua opera *Lingua Ignota per hominem simplicem Hildegardem prolata*, di cui oggi sono rimasti due manoscritti, il *Codice di Wiesbaden* ed un manoscritto detto di Berlino il cui testo è un glossario di 1011 parole in Lingua Ignota, con traslitterazione in latino, e in tedesco medioevale. Non è noto se altri, oltre la sua creatrice, abbiano avuto familiarità con essa, ma si pensa che la Lingua Ignota sia stata concepita come un linguaggio segreto, simile alla "musica inaudita" che Ildegarda ha appreso per ispirazione divina.

Ildegarda di Bingen, *Il libro delle opere divine* (testo latino a fronte) a cura di Cristiani M. - Pereira.M. Mondadori, Milano, 2003.

Fella A., *Hildegarde de Bingen, la sentinelle de l'invisible*. Le Courier du Livre, Paris, 2009.

Massari M., *Ildegarda di Bingen. Sibilla e dottore della chiesa*. Elemento, 2017.

**13** - "L'opera enciclopedica, illustrata con 344 miniature, fu scritta in latino e riassumeva il sapere teologico e profano di quei tempi, allo scopo d'istruire le suore dell'abbazia. Il manoscritto consiste di 324 fogli in pergamena (di cui 255 in gran formato e 69 in piccolo formato) e non è stato redatto prima del 1175 (secondo la testimonianza di una tavola di calendario e la lista dei pontefici fino a papa Lucio II), ma neppure molto dopo. Il prezioso manoscritto fu conservato con cura nell'Abbazia di Hohenburg. Dopo il grande incendio del 1546, che distrusse quasi

completamente l'abbazia, l'ultima badessa, Agnese di Oberkirch, lasciò la proprietà della medesima al vescovo di Strasburgo e così l'*Hortus Deliciarum* entrò a far parte dell'archivio diocesano a Saverne. Più tardi il manoscritto si trovò nel convento certosino di Molsheim, dove nel XVII secolo fu realizzata una copia del testo. Durante la rivoluzione francese, il manoscritto passò alla biblioteca distrettuale di Strasburgo. L'originale bruciò nella notte fra il 24 e il 25 agosto 1870, nel corso della guerra franco-prussiana, in un incendio divampato durante l'assedio di Strasburgo, nella Biblioteca nazionale e universitaria di Strasburgo dove a quel tempo era conservato. Ne rimasero quindi solo delle copie, tra le quali un facsimile quasi di pari valore, opera realizzata da Christian Moritz Engelhart nel 1818, che attrasse persino l'attenzione dello scrittore tedesco Goethe. Attraverso un instancabile impegno erudito, grazie alla disponibilità di copie e riproduzioni di gran parte delle miniature e dei testi in latino che le accompagnavano, a si è riusciti a ricostruire una stampa di questa testimonianza unica della storia culturale e religiosa medievale dell'Alsazia, ancora oggi disponibile. Le più importanti copie per la ricostruzione del manoscritto furono quelle conservate nella Biblioteca nazionale di Francia a Parigi, lasciate in legato dallo storico dell'arte Jean-François-Auguste, comte de Bastard d'Estang (1792-1883).

**14** - «Ahimè, mio Dio, perché non mi hai fatto nascere maschio? Tutte le mie capacità sarebbero state al tuo servizio, non mi sbaglierei in nulla e sarei perfetta in tutto, come gli uomini dicono di essere ...» da Christine de Pizan, *Livre de la Cité des Dames*. Christine spiega con un sogno la nuova consapevolezza che ha di sé e del suo ruolo dopo essere rimasta vedova. Si trova su una nave in mezzo ad una tempesta, il nocchiero, che sarebbe suo marito, è sparito e lei è sola con i suoi bambini, disperata vorrebbe affogarsi. Sopraggiunge però la dea Fortuna, la quale come una buona fata comincia a toccare Christine trasformandola in un uomo. La donna una volta compiuta la metamorfosi, col corpo più forte e animo più ardito, comincia ad aggiustare la nave con chiodi e martello. Si sente alla pari con un uomo, pur rimanendo donna.

**15** - La *Giuditta che decapita Oloferne* di Artemisia Gentileschi è un tema riportato in due tele, una del 1612 oggi ma Capodimonte (Napoli) e una gigantesca del 1620 ca. oggi agli Uffizi di Firenze, provenivano entrambe dalle collezioni medicee, commissionate da Piero de' Medici e dal Granduca Cosimo II. Le due opere si soffermano sul momento più

violento del racconto biblico, l'attimo cruciale in cui la giovane donna sferra il colpo mortale, creando scene di forte impatto emotivo. Il tema dell'eroina ebrea, modello di virtù e coraggio, che riscatta il suo popolo uccidendo il generale assiro Oloferne, si arricchisce in entrambe le versioni di significati ulteriori. Originariamente destinata al giardino del palazzo di via Larga (l'attuale Palazzo Medici Riccardi), la *Giuditta e Oloferne* di Donatello assume una valenza politica quando, nel 1495, a seguito della cacciata dei Medici, l'opera viene confiscata e trasferita sull'arengario di Palazzo Vecchio, sede del nuovo governo fiorentino, quale simbolo di libertà repubblicana. Nella versione di Artemisia Gentileschi è possibile leggere riferimenti più strettamente personali. Difficile non mettere in relazione la brutalità della scena con la violenza sessuale subita dall'artista il 6 maggio 1611 da parte del pittore Agostino Tassi, amico del padre Orazio Gentileschi e suo maestro di prospettiva e di disegno. La determinazione di *Giuditta* ricorda quella di Artemisia che coraggiosamente affronta il lungo processo intentato dal padre contro il suo violentatore e dopo la condanna di quest'ultimo, superata la vergogna subita, riesce perfino ad affermarsi come pittrice assicurandosi importanti commissioni in Italia e presso le principali corti europee. Al di là di ogni riferimento strettamente biografico, l'opera può essere letta ancora oggi come un manifesto di denuncia della violenza di genere, un simbolo di accusa e di riscatto, in nome di tutte le donne vittime di violenze. Nella fredda violenza del gesto di *Giuditta* che decapita *Oloferne* si può cogliere il rancore di tutte le donne violentate nei secoli; per cui Artemisia Gentileschi e i suoi magnifici quadri sono stati spesso assunti a simbolo dal femminismo del XX secolo.

**16** - Gaze D., *Concise dictionary of women artists*. Chicago, Fitzroy Dearborn publishers, 2001.

Simoni S., *La Madonna in trono con il Bambino fra i santi Benedetto, Paolo, Apollinare e Barbara di Luca Longhi* in "Romagna arte e storia", XXI, n. 62, pp. 93-99. Rimini, 2001.

Zama R., *Un'inedita Santa Caterina siglata Barbara Longhi* in "Romagna arte e storia", XXII, n. 65, pp. 79-84. Rimini, 2002.

**17** - Pulimi M., *Ginevra Cantofoli, La nuova nascita di una pittrice nella Bologna del Seicento*. Bologna, 2006.

Malvasia prosegue poi con «una Signora de' Franchi, e due piccole signorine e figlie, l'una del Sig. Dottor Muratore, l'altra del Sig. Riniero



Panzacchi: Una figliuola del tante volte mentovato Cavalier Coriolani, intagliatore di stampe di legno, una del Sig. Baldassar Bianchi pittore ordinario, ed assalariato del Serenissimo di Modena, ed una del già morto Bibiena, una Scarfaglia, una Lauteri, una Mongardi, una Fontana... ed altre, che ora non sovengono». Altre notizie più dettagliate sulle discepoli della Sirani si possono trovare nelle informazioni raccolte da Antonio Masini per *l'Aggiunta della Bologna Perlustrata* (1690), dove vengono confermate alcune sue allieve come, ad esempio, Lucrezia Bianchi. Di difficile credibilità è il passaggio dallo studio dell'artista Angela Teresa Muratori, poiché nacque nel 1662 e alla morte di Elisabetta aveva solo tre anni. Rivela problemi cronologici anche l'alunnato di Elena Maria Panzacchi, poiché, nata nel 1658, sarebbe stata troppo giovane per frequentare con profitto lo studio di Elisabetta. Prima di giungere presso la bottega di Carlo Cignani (1628-1719), la pittrice Maria Oriana Galli Bibiena passa un periodo di apprendistato da Elisabetta Sirani e, tra le sue opere, ricordiamo la pala di Fossombrone eseguita prima del 1680. Veronica Fontana si dedica all'arte dell'incisione (esercitata pure da Elisabetta), nel 1677 si occupa dell'apparato illustrativo del *Museo Cospiano* e, nel 1678, esegue le incisioni dell'*Albero genealogico dei Carracci* e il *Ritratto del pittore Francesco Brizio* per la *Felsina Pittrice* di Malvasia.

**18** - «In gioventù mi dedicai a ricercare insetti: cominciai con i bachi da seta nella mia città natale di Francoforte. Osservai poi che essi, come altri bruchi, si trasformavano in belle farfalle notturne e diurne. Questo mi spinse a raccogliere tutti i bruchi che potevo trovare per osservarne la trasformazione. Ma, per disegnarli e descriverli dal vero con tutti i loro colori, ho voluto esercitarmi anche nell'arte della pittura.» (Merian M. S., *Metamorphosis insectorum Surinamensium*, Introduzione).

**19** - È stata una pittrice francese (Parigi, 9 aprile 1849 - Parigi, 6 maggio 1883) considerata una delle più sensibili interpreti del movimento impressionista. Suo padre Emmanuel aveva origini spagnole ed era molto famoso in quanto era il presidente della *Société des gens de lettres*, e la sua opera *Frères de la côte* aveva riscosso un vasto successo. La personalità artistica di Eva tra le più significative e vivaci all'interno del movimento impressionista. La Gonzalès sia stata una *pittrice* di grande rilevanza alla luce del fatto che operò in un periodo storico in cui la pittura era considerata una prerogativa esclusiva maschile. Anne Higonnet

scrisse che «molti artisti potevano pensare di dipingere donne moderne, ma ben pochi potevano immaginare di vedere donne moderne dipingere».

**20** - L'immagine della donna protagonista, amazzone, non più soltanto "angelo del focolare", è la nuova visione che ne presentano i futuristi. Proprio il *Manifesto della donna futurista* redatto da Valentine de Saint Point, nel 1914, recita: "... Le donne sono le Erinni, le Amazzoni; le Semiramide, le Giovanna d'Arco, le Giovanna Hachette; le Giuditta e le Caroline Corday; le Cleopatra e le Messalina, le guerriere che combattono più ferocemente dei maschi, le amanti che incitano, le distruggitrici che spezzando i più fragili contribuiscono alla selezione, mediante l'orgoglio o la disperazione, «la disperazione che dà al cuore tutto il suo rendimento» ... Ecco perché nessuna rivoluzione deve rimanerle estranea; ecco perché invece di disprezzare la donna, bisogna rivolgersi a lei. RIACQUISTI LA DONNA LA SUA CRUDELTÀ E LA SUA VIOLENZA CHE FANNO CH'ELLA SI ACCANISCA SUI VINTI, PERCHÈ SONO VINTI, fino a mutilarli. Cessate di predicarle la giustizia spirituale che invano s'è sforzata d'acquistare. DONNE, RIDIVENTATE SUBLIMAMENTE INGIUSTE, COME TUTTE LE FORZE DELLA NATURA! Liberate da ogni controllo, ritrovato il vostro istinto, voi riprenderete posto fra gli Elementi, opponendo la fatalità alla coscienza volontà dell'uomo. Siate la madre egoista e feroce, che custodisce gelosamente i suoi piccoli avendo su loro ciò che si chiama i diritti e i doveri, FINCHÈ ESSI ABBIANO FISICAMENTE BISOGNO DELLA SUA PROTEZIONE ... Invece di ridurre l'uomo alla servitù degli esecrabili bisogni sentimentali, spingete i vostri figliuoli e i vostri uomini a superarsi. Siete voi che li fate. Voi avete su loro ogni potere. ALL'UMANITÀ VOI DOVETE DEGLI EROI. DATEGLIELI!"

**21** - In *Relation in Space* del 1976 (MoMa), l'artista afferma "Siamo in piedi, nudi, sull'ingresso principale del Museo, una di fronte all'altro. Il pubblico che entra nel Museo deve oltrepassare, mettendosi di traverso, il piccolo spazio tra di noi. E ogni persona che passa deve scegliere chi di noi due affrontare?". ancora in *Balkan Baroque* del 1997 alla Biennale di Venezia, seduta accanto a una montagna sanguinolenta di ossa di animale, mentre per tre lunghi giorni, ininterrottamente, cantando litanie e lamenti, grattava e puliva quel poco di polpa che quei resti conservavano. Intanto, tutt'intorno dei video ricordavano la sua appartenenza a

un paese che in quegli anni era pesantemente dilaniato dalle guerre. *The Artist is present*, volume pubblicato nel 2010 in occasione dell'omonima performance tenutasi al MoMA di New York, l'artista avrebbe descritto la decisione di "brevettare" il suo percorso artistico in un "metodo", *The Abramović method*: "quando un'artista presenta il proprio lavoro, offre un'immagine allo specchio nella quale anche il pubblico può riflettersi, può ritrovarsi", ma è un viaggio che impone delle regole e una ferrea disciplina per entrambi, perché il compito è estenuante, spesso al limite della sopportazione fisica e psicologica, proprio perché si vanno a toccare tutti i punti nevralgici del corpo e dell'essere, dell'esistere e del pensare: "la performance è una trasmissione diretta di energia".

**22** - *Une femme est une femme* è un film del 1961 diretto da Jean-Luc Godard, interpretato da Anna Karina, Jean-Paul Belmondo e Jean-Claude Brialy. È un tributo alla commedia musicale americana ed uno dei film più importanti della Nouvelle Vague. È il primo film a colori girato da Jean-Luc Godard. «*Une femme est une femme* è uno dei più bei documentari che io conosca dedicati a una donna, [...] una tappa importante del cinema moderno. È il cinema allo stato puro» (André S. Labarthe, *La chance d'être femme*, Cahiers du cinéma n. 125, novembre 1961).



Fig. 1 - Le due edizioni della mostra



Fig. 2 - Veduta di Tarquinia



Fig. 3 - Veduta di Civita Castellana



Fig. 4 - Pittore di Leningrado, Hydria e dettaglio



Fig. 5 - *Timarete dipinge la dea Diana*



Fig. 6 - *Eirene in una miniatura del 1440*



Fig. 7 - *La Pittrice*, Casa del Chirurgo, IV stile pompeiano (50-79 d.C.)



Fig. 8 - La Stola di Narciso



Fig. 9 - Lo Stendardo  
di San Otone



Fig. 10 - Ende  
*Giudizio Universale*



Fig. 11 - Miniatura di Ildegarda di Bingen intenta nella scrittura dei testi sacri



Fig. 12 - *Christine de Pizan offre una copia dei suoi lavori alla regina Isabella di Baviera, (Miniatura, dettaglio)*



Fig. 13 - *Caterina de' Vigri, Madonna con Bambino, tempera su tavola, 1450 ca.*





Fig. 14 - Sofonisba Anguissola, *Autoritratto*, 1556-65,  
olio su tela, Castello di Łańcut Polonia



Fig. 15 - Artemisia Gentileschi, *Autoritratto come suonatrice di liuto*,  
1615-17



Fig. 16 - Livia Fontana, *Autoritratto nello studio* (firmato e datato 1579).



Fig. 17 - Elisabetta Sirani, *Autoritratto idealizzato come allegoria della pittura*, 1658 (olio su tela, Museo Puškin delle Belle Arti, Mosca).



Fig. 18 - Fede Galizia, *Alzata da frutta in cristallo con pesche, mele cogue e fiori di gelsomino* (olio su tela, 1607, Sotheby's London)



Fig. 19 - Lucrezia Scarfaglia, *Autoritratto* 1678, Galleria Pallavicini, Roma



Fig. 20 - Georg Gsell,  
*Ritratto di Maria Sibylla Merian*,  
circa 1710-17



Fig. 21 - Rosalba Carrera,  
*Autoritratto con il ritratto  
della sorella* (1715)



Fig. 22 - Angelika Kauffman,  
*Autoritratto*, 1780-85



Fig. 23 - Marie Guillemine Benoist,  
*Ritratto di donna negra*, 1800



Fig. 24 - Édouard Manet,  
*Ritratto di Berte Morisot*, 1872



Fig. 25 - Pierre Auguste Renoir,  
*Ritratto di Suzanne Valadon*, 1887



Fig. 26 - Tina Blau-Lang, *Un vicolo a Venezia*, 1916



Fig. 27 - Tamara de Lempicka, *Autoritratto nella Bugatti Verde*, 1929, olio su tavola



Fig. 28 - Frida Kahlo, *Ritratto fotografico*, 1944



Fig. 29 - Carla Accardi nel suo studio, 1998



Fig. 30 - Cindy Sherman, *Am I Cured Doctor*; 2017



Fig. 31 - Marina Abramović, Belgrado 16 agosto 2019



Fig. 32 - Uma Thurman in Kill Bill 1 (2003)



## LE DONNE CHE HANNO FATTO LA SICILIA

*Antonella Piscitello*  
(Università degli Studi di Palermo)

La Sicilia è un *topos*, un luogo, che si può sfogliare come un libro. Un libro che racconta la storia del mondo mediterraneo. I miti dell'età classica, le vestigia archeologiche, i siti monumentali, le singolarità geologiche, già nei secoli trascorsi facevano della Sicilia una meta del Grand Tour di letterati, esteti e naturalisti da Hermann Von Riedesel a Johann Wolfgang Goethe il quale, nel suo *Italienische Reise*, definì questa terra come “chiave di tutto” (*Viaggio in Italia*, 1991). «Nessuna isola erge sull'orizzonte della civiltà una fronte più radiosa della Sicilia. Essa punta su tre continenti e ne sintetizza le caratteristiche» scriveva Peyrefitte, quasi settanta anni fa, in *Du Vésuve à l'Etna* (1952). Tre volte nel corso dei secoli fu il più fulgido centro del mondo mediterraneo: quando esprese la cultura mediterranea in forma greca, araba e normanno-sveva (Mazzetti, 2004). È stata una terra da sempre dominata da popoli conquistatori e, al tempo stesso, dalla bellezza che le hanno donato. La Sicilia è anche ben altro. La Sicilia è Donna.

Si distingue sin dai tempi antichi per il coinvolgimento che le donne, grazie alla loro tenacia, hanno avuto nella sua rinascita politica, sociale e culturale. In alcuni casi le donne della trinacria sono state le esponenti di un notevole cambiamento - talvolta subendolo, talaltra anticipandolo - capaci di influire in modo estremamente significativo sugli eventi dell'epoca, ma non solo. Si va dagli episodi del risorgimento fino ad arrivare alle proteste della più moderna lotta alla mafia, passando per tutte le donne d'arte, poetesse, letterate, scrittrici e pittrici che hanno cambiato gli esiti della storia e della cultura di un popolo e di un'intera isola.

La Sicilia è Donna, lo è sempre stata, fin dalle sue origini. Secondo un'antica leggenda, risalente al periodo bizantino, pare che abbia preso il nome da una bellissima - ma altrettanto sfortunata - principessa, figlia di un re del Libano, che finì con l'approdare sulle coste siciliane in seguito ad un nefasto presagio: era stato predetto al padre che, una volta compiuti sedici anni, la figlia sarebbe stata divorata da un terribile mostro. Al compimento del quindicesimo anno d'età, i genitori, onde scongiurare il pericolo, la fecero salire su un'imbarcazione affidandola al mare. La principessa approdò su un'isola meravigliosa e immensa, ricca di tutto ciò che di bello può offrire la natura ma assolutamente deserta. Quando la giovane ebbe pianto tutte le sue lacrime per disperazione e solitudine, apparve improvvisamente accanto a lei un ragazzo scampato alla terribile pestilenza che aveva reso disabitata l'isola. Tra i due nacque l'amore e da questi fiori la stirpe che ripopolò l'isola. Da quel momento anziché Trinacria venne chiamata Sicilia, dal nome di colei che vi aveva fatto rinascere la vita.

Dalla leggenda alla storia il passo è breve. Protagoniste guerriere di un capitolo storico sono le donne palermitane che, per amore della patria, durante la prima guerra punica del 250 a.C., hanno tagliato le loro lunghe trecce per costruire corde per gli archi (Inveges, 1649). Un gesto di totale ribellione nei confronti dei cartaginesi che furono costretti a ritirarsi dal campo di battaglia.

La Sicilia è donna come Damarete di Agrigento, regina di cultura e di pace, moglie del tiranno siracusano Gelone. Nel 480 a.C., si concluse la battaglia di Imera, che vide combattere e vincere i siciliani contro i cartaginesi. Si deve a lei la celebre clausola del trattato di pace di Imera in cui i siciliani imposero ai vinti cartaginesi la rinuncia ai sacrifici umani nei loro riti religiosi (Palmeri, 1856). È donna al tempo stesso come Costanza D'Altavilla e Costanza di Svevia, che per molti anni regnarono saggiamente al posto dei loro figli, ancora troppo piccoli per un compito così grande. O come Cleopatra di Sicilia, figlia dell'emiro Abbad, che

riuscì a tener testa all'imperatore Federico II vendicando la propria famiglia, massacrando i suoi avversari e avvelenandosi pur di non cadere in mano ai nemici. La famiglia di Cleopatra era diretta verso Tunisi, durante la navigazione però, costoro vennero chiusi in sacchi e buttati in mare dai marinai. La figlia dell'emiro attese pazientemente nella rocca in cui viveva, ignara - almeno in un momento iniziale - di quanto fosse accaduto. Le si presentò un'occasione che le permise di prendere coscienza di quanto successo e fu proprio in quel momento che decise di attuare la propria vendetta: scrisse all'imperatore che gli avrebbe offerto Entella<sup>1</sup> se fossero arrivati trecento guerrieri svevi nella notte (cento per ogni parente massacrato) che, lei stessa, avrebbe fatto entrare nascostamente nei punti nevralgici del castello. Federico accettò ma, quando arrivarono i guerrieri, la giovane li fece entrare a piccoli gruppi nella rocca massacrandoli man mano. Federico II restò però colpito dal gesto della giovane, carico di coraggio e astuzia, tanto da offrirle protezione e manifestando il desiderio di voler avere un figlio da lei, donna che non aveva eguali al mondo. Cleopatra, orgogliosa, rifiutò la proposta dell'imperatore e, allo stremo della resistenza, si avvelenò facendosi mordere da una serpe velenosa così come Cleopatra d'Egitto aveva fatto (Fortuna, 2012).

La Sicilia è donna come una delle più grandi donne della storia siciliana, Franca Florio. La "regina di Sicilia" venne altresì denominata "stella d'Italia" dall'imperatore Guglielmo II e definita, per la sua bellezza e avvenenza regale unita ad una cultura fuori dal comune, *l'unica* da Gabriele D'Annunzio (D'Annunzio e Jung, 1980). Si intendeva d'arte e manteneva un contatto epistolare con il giovane Montesquieu. Quegli occhi verdi, così fulgidi e veri, seppero ammaliare regnanti, artisti e poeti. La Sicilia di quell'epoca, anche grazie a Donna Franca, visse uno dei periodi più floridi e fecondi della sua storia, collocandosi con rispetto anche in contesto europeo. L'intento dei Florio era quello di donare a Palermo, e a tutta la Sicilia, un ruolo centrale negli assetti

politici e strategici d'Europa: grazie alla loro prestigiosa rete di conoscenze, Palermo divenne promotrice d'avanguardia dello stile liberty. Splendidi palazzi fecero la loro comparsa nel centro della città, che esplose in una magnificenza assordante e memorabile. Non vi era aspetto di questa società su cui non influisse il disegno propositivo di Donna Franca. Non si può non citare anche Nina Siciliana, la prima donna a poetare in volgare (Gallo, 1867). Visse nel XII secolo e, anche grazie alla passione per la poesia di Costanza D'Altavilla, conobbe la scuola poetica siciliana, alla quale si ispirò per comporre i suoi versi. Non si hanno notizie certe sul suo nome: viene anche chiamata Nina da Messina, Monna Nina, Nina del Dante, né tantomeno sulla sua provenienza: secondo alcuni è vissuta a Messina, secondo altri a Palermo.

La Sicilia è donna come le tante donne dei fasci siciliani che anticiparono l'immissione delle masse femminili nelle lotte sociali e politiche. Le contadine della Sicilia furono l'avanguardia del movimento (Puglisi, 2005), in alcuni comuni si organizzarono in sezioni femminili e in altri addirittura nei più ben noti "fasci" femminili: Maria Cammarata fu la direttrice del fascio di Piana degli Albanesi, la sezione più forte e numerosa. Per il Fascio le donne abbandonarono la Chiesa ma non il sentimento religioso. Per protestare contro i preti, che avevano tentato di spaventarle e di isolarle minacciandole di scomunica, organizzarono una clamorosa manifestazione: la defezione in massa alla processione del Corpus Domini del 1893. Al congresso di Palermo del maggio di quell'anno, nel quale si costituì l'unione di tutti i Fasci di Sicilia, Maria Cammarata incitò la platea a curare l'iscrizione delle donne. Il numero delle contadine, delle casalinghe, delle donne di ogni ceto e cultura che si iscrissero ai Fasci aumentò rapidamente e ben presto comparvero le prime propagandiste ed oratrici ufficiali che viaggiavano per la Sicilia a predicare la giustizia sociale nel nome di Gesù (ibid.).

La Sicilia è donna così come lo fu Accursia Pumilia, ardimentosa donna agrigentina, che nel 1906 fu la prima a chiedere di essere inserita nelle liste elettorali (Correnti, 2015), contravvenendo così alla legge che escludeva espressamente le figure femminili dall'elettorato amministrativo. Naturalmente ai tempi la domanda non fu accolta, si dovette infatti aspettare il referendum del 1946 per trovare le donne italiane fra gli aventi diritto al voto.

La Sicilia è donna, come colei che nel 1808, in virtù dell'articolo 296 del Codice Napoleonico allora vigente, ottenne per la prima volta il divorzio in Italia: la baronessa catanese Maria Paternò (ibid.). Al marito aveva mosso le accuse di essere *seviziatore, turpe, taccagno e spilorcio*. Il divorzio non intaccò però la sua fiducia nell'istituzione coniugale: dieci mesi dopo averlo ottenuto convolò a nuove nozze con l'avvocato che l'aveva assistita. La Sicilia è donna anche come colei che indossò per la prima volta i pantaloni in Europa, la passionale Francisca Massara (Vadalà, 2015). Erroneamente da quanto si pensi non fu la scrittrice francese George Sand, ma la siciliana Francisca. Si trattava di un abbigliamento decisamente molto arditò per l'epoca, al punto che nessuno osa raccontare i dettagli se non che si trattava di una donna siciliana e correva l'anno 1698. Passeranno più di cento anni prima che la Sand ripettesse l'esperienza, e altri cento per l'ingresso in palcoscenico di Sarah Bernhardt in pantaloni, sfidando un'ordinanza francese del 1900 che impediva alle donne di "vestirsi da uomo" (ibid.).

La Sicilia è donna come l'urlo di colei che diede inizio ai Vespri siciliani, o come le femministe *ante litteram* Genoveffa Basso, poetessa palermitana e Suor Dorotea Bellini, che nei loro scritti risalenti al 1735 (rispettivamente *La verità manifesta in favore delle donne* e *Apologia filosofica e storia in cui di mostra il sesso della donna superiore a quello degli uomini*) furono le prime a parlare di pari opportunità, ben cinquanta anni prima che accedesse in Francia. È donna come le rivoluzionarie Santa Miloro -

che il 12 gennaio 1848 sparò a Palermo il primo colpo di fucile nella rivoluzione che dopo sedici mesi espulse i Borbone dalla Sicilia: «- *Vede chi son io?* - aggiunse poco dopo, con un certo tono di orgoglio nel quale c'era anche un po' di vanità. - *Io sono stata una di coloro che liberarono la patria dalla tirannia!*» (Natali, 2016) - Antonina Cascio, Rosa Donato e Maria Teresa di Lana che combatterono in prima persona nel periodo del risorgimento, simbolo delle quali è indubbiamente la famosa postina di Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto, Giuseppa Calcagno, detta "Peppa 'a cannonera", che nel 1860 a Catania riuscì a conquistare un cannone e lo fece piazzare nell'atrio di un palazzo, alle spalle dei borbonici, ordinò poi di spalancare il portone e lei stessa accese la miccia che scompaginò le fila dei nemici prima ancora che Garibaldi giungesse in città (Doni, 2011).

La Sicilia è donna come la coraggiosa Maria Occhipinti che, sebbene incinta di cinque mesi, il 4 gennaio 1945 si sdraiò dinnanzi alle ruote di un autocarro militare impedendo la partenza delle giovani reclute ragusane che in guerra non volevano andare (Occhipinti, 2004). Sono sempre donne le siciliane che hanno iniziato la resistenza italiana nei primi di agosto del 1943, ancora prima dell'armistizio dell'otto settembre.

Siciliana è la prima donna italiana ad essere votata come Presidente della Repubblica nel 1946, Ottavia Penna Buscemi, come siciliana è la prima donna sindaco di un capoluogo, Elda Pucci eletta sindaco di Palermo nel 1983, e siciliana è anche la prima donna preside della facoltà di architettura dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo, Margherita De Simone.

Donna nata in Sicilia fu anche Elvira Giorgianni che, insieme al marito Enzo Sellerio, diede vita a quella che oggi è una delle case editrici più importanti d'Italia. Per lei hanno scritto tra tutti Leonardo Sciascia, Antonio Tabucchi, Gesualdo Bufalino, Vincenzo Consolo e Andrea Camilleri.

Siciliane sono anche le numerose figure femminili che si sono opposte al losco strapotere della mafia, come Franca Viola, che nel 1965 si rifiutò di sposare l'uomo che l'aveva rapita e violata. È grazie a lei se una norma barbara come quella riguardante il "matrimonio riparatore" è stata eliminata dal nostro codice civile. Nel 1965 Franca aveva 18 anni, venne rapita e violentata da un mafioso locale, tornata a casa decise - contro ogni abitudine consolidata - di denunciarlo. La sua famiglia la sostenne sempre, la comunità no: non furono poche le minacce e le intimidazioni. Il parere unanime della popolazione la additava come la "svergognata" che avrebbe dovuto sposare il suo aguzzino per riparare il proprio onore ed evitare a lui una condanna. Franca tenne duro e riuscì infine ad ottenere giustizia (Di Bella, 2011). Per questo suo gesto di coraggio e dignità, divenne simbolo della crescita dell'Italia e dell'emancipazione delle donne. Nonostante ciò dovettero trascorrere ancora circa vent'anni perché venisse abolito l'articolo del codice civile che estingueva il reato di stupro se la vittima acconsentiva a sposare il suo violentatore.

Donne coraggiose sono state anche Felicia Impastato, Francesca Serio, Saveria Antiochia, Michela Buscemi, Piera Lo Verso, Rita Atria, Rita Borsellino, Sonia Alfano, Maria Falcone, madri e sorelle che non si sono tirate indietro e hanno combattuto strenuamente contro la mafia e a favore della ricerca della verità e della preservazione della memoria.

La Sicilia, in conclusione, è donna come la testa della Gorgone simbolo della sua bandiera, e come le tante donne che ogni giorno in silenzio e con grande dignità studiano, lavorano, accudiscono i propri figli e portano avanti la cultura dell'eguaglianza, del rispetto della diversità, delle reciprocità.

## **NOTE**

1 - Fortezza in cui viveva Cleopatra. Sita in Entella (antica città siciliana) presso l'omonima Rocca.



## BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Correnti S.** *Guida insolita ai misteri, ai segreti, alle leggende e alle curiosità della Sicilia*. Newton Compton Editori, Roma, 2015.
- D'Annunzio G. e Jung C. G.** *D'Annunzio e Jung*. Quaderni del Vittoriale, 1980, pp. 84.
- Di Bella M. P.** *Dire o tacere in Sicilia. Viaggio alle radici dell'omertà*. Armando Editore, Roma, 2011.
- Doni E.** *Donne del risorgimento*. Il Mulino, Bologna, 2011.
- Fortuna A.** *A storia ra Sicilia... cuntata 'm puìsia*. Booksprint, Romagnano al Monte, 2012.
- Gallo A.** *Sugli scrittori moderni di storie di Sicilia*. Tipografia Barcellona, Palermo, 1867.
- Goethe J. W.** *Viaggio in Italia*. BUR Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, Milano, 1991.
- Inveges d. A.** *Annali della felice città di Palermo. Palermo Antico*. Parte prima degli annali di D. Agostino Inveges, 1648, pp. 398.
- Mazzetti E.** *I punti nel lago. Storie, geografie e immagini dell'Italia insulare* in S. Conti - P. Bonavero "Riflessi italiani. L'identità di un paese nella rappresentazione del suo territorio". Touring Club Italiano, Milano, 2004, p. 84.
- Natoli L.** *Rivendicazioni. La rivoluzione siciliana del 1860 e altri atti storici sul risorgimento siciliano*. I buoni cugini editori, Palermo, 2016.
- Occhipinti M.** *Una donna libera*. Sellerio, Palermo, 2004.
- Palmeri N.** *Somma della storia di Sicilia*. Giuseppe Meli, Palermo, 1856.
- Peyrefitte R.** *Du Vèsuve à l'Etna*. Flammarion, Paris, 1952.
- Puglisi A.** *Donne, mafie e antimafia*. Di Girolamo, Trapani 2005.
- Vadalà V.** *Donne e diritti dieci storie da primato* in "la Repubblica" 03.07.2015.

# **BRITISH FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

*Brygida Pudelko*  
(University of Opole, Poland)

## **Feminist Ideology and Feminism as a Social Movement**

Late nineteenth century English feminists based their arguments for equality largely on grounds of social justice. This was also combined with the belief that women in political life would imply the abolition of patriarchal cultural hegemony. So votes for women would abolish the public/private divide and allow women to bring their nurturing, and other womanly qualities, to the benefit of the public domain and inaugurate social reform. Socialist-feminists were keener to focus on the unequal economic position of women. They sought to combine class and gender analysis and believed that ultimately women could only be emancipated in a socialist society.

In the area of local government, women had already made gains. During the nineteenth century the growth of local government and the increasing range of provision meant that a very large number of elected officials were involved in running local services such as schools and sanitation. Women succeeded in becoming members of school boards, vestries and many other local bodies, although they tended to be well off and in practice much of their work blended in with philanthropy, which had long been a pastime of ladies. Women guardians or councillors either stood as independents or were supported by the Liberals or Labour, in some form. From 1907 women ratepayers could stand in borough and county council elections. Few were successful and only about 50 women were borough or county councillors by 1914. The big metropolitan areas were particularly difficult for women. It can

be attributed partly to a “cordon sanitaire” which was erected between local and national politics (Hollis, 1987, p. 463). Local government service had come to be seen as an appropriate activity for women, but national politics was still perceived as a man’s world. City and county councils were regarded as too close to the national scene for women to be welcome. So, although by 1914 over a million women could vote in national elections and 1800 held elected local office, the hopes of feminists that this example of public power could be used as a springboard to national politics were in vain (Hollis, 1987, pp. 462-463).

But women were not entirely absent from the national political scene. Following the growth of a mass electorate in the late nineteenth century, local and national party structures had emerged for the purpose of mobilising the electorate. Women became members of the Primrose League<sup>1</sup>, which sought to promote popular Toryism, but they were not expected to play a political role. Liberal women had their own separate organisation, the Women’s Liberal Federation, which by the turn of the century had 470 branches and 80000 members (Hollis, 1987, p. 57).

From the 1880s the British socialist movement had grown in strength and influence. Edward Carpenter wrote that women under capitalism could be divided into three types: “the ‘lady,’ the household drudge and the prostitute [...] it is hard to know which is more wretched, which is the most wronged” (Carpenter, 1986, p. 67). Socialist-feminist intellectuals also made a visible presence in the Fabian Society, who had their own women’s group from 1908<sup>2</sup>. Fabian women were particularly interested in women’s economic position. The Fabians were the first socialist group to take seriously the idea of state endowment of motherhood<sup>3</sup>. There were also many women activists who worked within the labour and socialist movement raising feminist issues. Isabella Ford was a leading member of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and author of the influential pamphlet *Woman and Socialism* (1907). She emphasised that “women’s suffrage<sup>4</sup> and the emancipation

of all working people had to go hand in hand” (Hannam, 1989, p. 101). Ada Nield Chew, who had no formal education beyond the age of 11, became a formidable speaker, writer and organiser. She was an exponent of the right of married women to work. She opposed the endowment of motherhood, arguing that it would further imprison women in their domestic drudgery. Instead she proposed state nurseries and co-operative housekeeping (Nield Chew, 1982, pp. 230-234).

The Social Democratic Federation (SDF) regarded the unequal position of women as something which could only be resolved in a future socialist society, so it became irrelevant to the party leadership. There were, however, active SDF women. Dora Montifiore, for example, sought to work on women’s issues within this limited theoretical framework. The acceptance of limited property-based women’s suffrage by the main suffrage organisations as a first step led to accusations that working class women were to be duped by “bourgeois feminists” (Bruley, 1999, p. 27). Marxists argued that women’s suffrage as the key to emancipation was in any case an illusion, as only socialism could bring about a real transformation of women’s position. No doubt many socialist men used this anti-feminist Marxist fundamentalism as a means of defending patriarchal privileges.

Socialist-feminists faced, therefore, a real dilemma - to stay in the socialist movement or to work outside it. By 1914 the Women’s Labour League (WLL) had a sizeable membership of women in the Labour Party (Collette, 1990, p. 140). Labour women worked on many women’s issues, but the League’s position in the party was always marginal and it had to struggle (not always successfully) to avoid the danger of “sliding into the political ghetto of tea-making, sewing banners and other duties which the male comrades regarded as ‘women’s work’” (Bruley, 1999, p. 27). This led many, including Dora Montifiore, Ada Nield Chew and Isabella Ford, to decide to concentrate their efforts on the autonomous women’s movement. Here, other dangers were evident,

such as the lack of a class perspective and the unrealistic expectations of what women's suffrage could actually achieve. Socialist-feminists were forced to make a choice, to become woman-centred and join a women's suffrage organisation or to give the class question a higher priority and stay within the socialist movement.

Suffrage narratives were mostly organised on the basis of a clear distinction between the constitutionalists of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) and the militants of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). This distinction emanates from the administrative separation of the two bodies and the divergent strategies and tactics employed. In the early years, particularly, dual membership was common and there was no irreconcilable break between the two groups until 1912. The Women's Coronation Procession of 1911<sup>5</sup>, the most spectacular of all the suffrage demonstrations, united all the women's suffrage organisations. Although the suffrage movement was divided over how the vote could be achieved, it was ideologically homogenous (Holton, 1986, p. 28). Neither constitutionalists nor militants sought to deny sexual difference, but the right to redefine it. Both utilised conventional Edwardian female dress, "with its flouncy dresses and wide-brimmed impractical hats, in an effort to assert that feminism was not incompatible with the 'womanly woman' and was indeed an essential part of it" (Bruley, 1999, p. 28).

The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies was formed in 1897 from an affiliation of the sprawling network of suffrage groups which had sprung up from the time of the reform Bill. It grew steadily and established its own paper *The Common Cause*, its own premises and paid staff. It was organised on democratic principles and its President, Millicent Fawcett, was elected. It was the largest of all the suffrage groups (Garner, 1984, p. 11). The constitutionalists adopted the conventional methods of pressure groups politics: they lobbied MPs, pressed for a private members' bill, organised petitions and peaceful public meetings and demon-

strations. The activities of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies captured most of the press attention; and also, in due course, interest from historians. Although many leading figures in the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies were prosperous Liberals, as was Millicent Fawcett, the membership was extremely diverse and included many working class women. The content of *The Common Cause* reflected this diversity and included articles across a broad spectrum of women's issues. From the start the women's suffrage movement had a strong following in Lancashire and Cheshire where working class women activists linked suffrage, socialist and labour movement involvement. The centre of suffrage agitation in the north-west was the North of England Suffrage Society, which combined a network of local groups and in turn affiliated them to the wider movement through membership of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. From the early 1890s the textile women activists and their friends began to develop a separate working class women's movement, which was only brought to light in 1978 by the publication of *One Hand Tied Behind Us: The Rise of the Women's Suffrage Movement* by Jill Liddington and Jill Norris. Women such as Selina Cooper, Helen Silcock and Sarah Dickenson became committed to "womanhood suffrage," that is, one woman one vote. They wanted suffrage in order to instigate a programme of radical social reform (Bruley, 1999, p. 29). The radicalism of the textile women distanced them from the more conservative elements in the North of England Suffrage Society. Women weavers contributed to the election of David Shackleton of the Darven Weavers' Association, as MP for Clitheroe in 1902 and to his subsequent salary. The textile women were thus in the anomalous position of paying for an MP whom they were denied an opportunity to vote for. Shackleton was only the third Labour member to be returned and the textile women had high hopes for him in Parliament. Despite numerous petitions, Shackleton's promises to promote women's suffrage were not fulfilled. This

provoked the radical suffragists to launch their own group. In summer 1903 they formed the Lancashire and Cheshire Woman Textile and other Workers Representation Committee. Unfortunately, the new organisation did not thrive and did not get beyond the area of Lancashire and Cheshire. Additionally, hostility to women's suffrage, from powerful male interests in both the early Labour apparatus and local weavers' and miners' organisations, destined it to political isolation.

The question of the Labour Party's approach to women's suffrage was a complex one. In those years, over a third of adult men were still without a vote. This led the Labour Party in 1904 to adopt a policy of adult suffrage rather than a specific commitment to women. The labour leadership were suspicious of any limited women's suffrage bill on the grounds that it would advantage only "fine ladies" at the expense of their poorer sisters. The National Union, which was prepared to support a limited bill on the "half a loaf is better than none" principle, was equally suspicious of Labour's concept of adult suffrage, fearing that it would eventually turn out to be manhood suffrage only (Bruley, 1999, p. 30). As the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies understood, hiding behind the adult suffrage tag were Labour men who were completely hostile to any women's suffrage measure.

Eventually a Conciliation Committee was formed of suffrage MPs of all sides which sought to achieve a compromise. The resulting Conciliation bills of 1910 and 1911 and their defeat made the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies realise that its best hope lay with Labour. The Labour Party Conference of January 1912 voted not to support any electoral reform measure which did not include women, which removed any remaining doubts among the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies leadership that an alliance was desirable.

The Women's Social and Political Union originated in Manchester in 1903. Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters Christabel and Sylvia were deeply rooted in the Independent Labour Party

and the North of England Suffrage Society (NESS). The Pankhurst women tried to motivate ILP men towards the suffrage issue, but found little interest. Emmeline and Christabel were also impatient with the constitutional policies of the national Union and became convinced of the need to put direct pressure on the Government, rather than relying on private members' bills. Militant tactics began in 1905 with the heckling of Ministers at public meetings, symbolising women's right to access the male public discourse. Between 1906 and 1907 the WSPU broke its remaining ties with Labour and moved offices to London. Militant acts followed, culminating in mass window-smashing, destruction of property, including art treasures, and arson. No life was put at risk except their own. Thousands of women across the country were swept up into the campaign.

Working class women were also involved in the campaign. Hannah Mitchell, a young mother from Ashton-under-Lyne, was a member of the ILP and a Poor Law Guardian. She met the Pankhursts and became a WSPU organiser in Oldham. In 1906 she went to London and spoke at several rallies. It was not easy to combine the heavy demands of suffrage activity and running a household and very soon ill-health forced her to give up the WSPU (Bruley, 1999, p. 31). For working class women who were imprisoned for the cause, the conflict was even more severe. Over a thousand of women were imprisoned for suffrage activities. Medical doctor Elizabeth Chalmers Smith and artist Ethel Moorhead were caught red-handed trying to burn down an empty house in the west end of Glasgow. They both received eight-month sentences, in spite of the fact that Chalmers Smith had six children (King, 1992, p. 145). The refusal of the government to grant suffrage prisoners political status led to hunger strikes from 1909 and a horrific regime of force-feeding, which those enduring it linked to rape (Bruley, 1999, p. 32).

Force-feeding was not the only aggressive act towards the suffragettes. Attempts at public meetings were often met with show-



ers of rotten eggs and tomatoes or by the speaker being dragged from the platform. There were men who supported women suffrage, and some of these were prepared to act as bodyguards for suffrage speakers. Obviously, there was also a great deal of male anger and hostility towards feminists of any type, particularly suffragettes. All this reached a peak on 18 November, subsequently known as "Bloody Friday." When it became known that Prime Minister Asquith was not going to allow any time for the Conciliation Bill, Mrs. Pankhurst called for a march on Parliament. The charge of the suffragettes, symbolically demanding access to forbidden places, and the police retaliation, led to a battle lasting for six hours. There were 119 arrests and many injuries caused by the aggressive tactics of the police, which included dragging women into side streets for a beating (Morrell, 1980, p. 33).

Christabel, the acknowledged leader of the WSPU from 1907, did not tolerate any compromise solutions. Democratic procedures such as annual conferences for policy-making were dropped and unquestioning obedience to instructions from the leadership was demanded. Christabel saw the struggle as a sex-war and focussed on the destructive aspects of women's relationships with men, particularly the male regulation of sexuality and the dangers of male-inflicted venereal disease. She stressed female power, female solidarity and the factors which united women and not those which divided them, such as class. Driven by an unyielding opposition, and its renunciation of constitutionalism, to more and more desperate acts, the movement reached the limits of militancy. Christabel, Emmeline and other WSPU leaders had become virtual outlaws. By early 1914 most of the rank and file were burnt out and exhausted.

Not all of the WSPU membership lasted this far. Formidable women such as Charlotte Despard and Teresa Billington Grieg could not tolerate the loss of internal democracy and adoption of an autocratic structure and split off to form the Women's Freedom League (WFL) in 1907. The WFL developed a policy of tax re-

sistance and also organised a boycott of the 1911 Census. The League retained strong links with labour and in 1912 fell in with the NUWSS-Labour alliance. The second Pankhurst daughter, Sylvia, a talented artist, designed many WSPU banners and emblems and also participated fully in the campaign. Unlike her mother and sister, Sylvia retained her links with the labour movement and favoured building up a working class women's movement, which they considered futile. The turning point came soon after when George Lansbury resigned his seat in Poplar, East London, and fought the by-election on the suffrage issue. Sylvia and other WSPU women were sent to help Lansbury, although they were under strict instructions to work independently and not take orders from men. After Lansbury had been defeated, the WSPU leadership favoured pulling out the area, but Sylvia was captivated by the East End and stayed for twelve years (Bruley, 1999, p. 34). Sylvia Pankhurst succeeded in building around her a base of working class women such as Mrs. Jane Savoy, a brushmaker and Mrs. Jessie Payne, a shoemaker, with whom she lodged, into the East London Federation of Suffragettes (ELFS). Like the radical suffragettes they were not interested in the vote for its own sake, but to alleviate sweated labour, maternal and infant mortality and other evils, and to build a more equal society. She established close links with the local labour movement, particularly the Lansbury's. Sylvia's socialist-feminism alarmed the WSPU leadership and, in January 1914, it was decided that a split was necessary (Bruley, 1999, p. 35). The ELFS remained a local phenomenon.

### **Votes for Women**

After 1880 the situation, particularly for middle class women, began to improve. Women were allowed to vote and to be elected to borough or country councils. In 1897 women started to demand the right to vote in national elections. Within ten years the suffragettes had become famous for the extreme methods they were willing to use. Many politicians who agreed with their aims were

shocked by their violent methods and stopped supporting them. However, if they had not been willing to shock the public, the suffragettes might not have succeeded.

Upon the declaration of World War One Emmeline Pankhurst called for suspension of militant tactics. The militant campaign had exhausted itself and all the leading activists were battle weary. *The Suffragette* ceased publication. Suffragette prisoners were released. Within a week the Pankhursts had swung the WSPU behind the government and began an ultra-nationalist campaign to support the war effort. Christabel returned from exile in France. Mrs. Pankhurst held recruiting meetings and called upon men to go to war. In the spring of 1915 *The Suffragette* reappeared as a pro-Government paper. Later renamed *Britania* it was suppressed by the government for its wild accusations about traitors. The Pankhursts encouraged the persecution of naturalised Germans and called for their internment. They were strong supporters of military conscription for men and industrial conscription for women (Bruley, 1999, pp. 46-47).

Mrs. Pankhurst was horrified by the attitude of the organised labour movement towards the introduction of women. With the encouragement of Lloyd George (he was Minister of Munitions from May 1915) she launched the “right to serve” campaign, which culminated in a “national procession” in July 1915 when the Pankhursts pulled out their supporters for one last great rally. The difference this time was that it was supported and funded by the government. Both Emmeline and Christabel travelled abroad promoting the British cause. According to Jaqueline de Vries, the Pankhursts always saw the vote as part of a wider struggle towards national regeneration (de Vries, 1994). This gendered patriotism did not cast aside feminism during the war, but rendered up its own elitist, xenophobic version of it.

There is little evidence that more than a handful of WSPU activists actually followed the Pankhursts down this road. The decline in numbers forced the WSPU leadership to move to smaller,

less prestigious offices. In 1917, when the constitutional suffragists were pressing for a women's enfranchisement clause in the forthcoming Reform Bill, the Pankhursts took little interest, indicating that enlisted men had a greater cause. Only when some form of women's suffrage seemed certain to come about they took some interest. In November 1917 the WSPU was relaunched as The Women's Party, under the slogan "Victory, National Security and Progress." Although it had demands which related to women, it was clear that the old days were over.

After the outbreak of war the gulf between Sylvia Pankhurst and her mother and sister became a chasm which remained for the rest of their lives. While Emmeline and Christabel became supporters of the war, Sylvia condemned it. The ELFS, now formally separated from the WSPU, continued to build a socialist-feminist movement of the East End of London, based on the independent self-activity of working class women.

In the years 1915-1916 the Federation distributed milk for destitute babies, with money begged from wealthy sympathisers. It also opened two cost-price restaurants, five mother and infant welfare clinics, a toy factory for unemployed women, a nursery, a Montessori school and a women's employment bureau. All services were offered at cost price or whatever people could afford. As a result most of them were permanently in deficit. Although Sylvia believed in autonomous working class women's movement, in practice she was heavily reliant on a small group of wealthy supporters (Romero, 1990, p. 120).

As Sylvia's anti-war views became more well known, her middle class friends deserted her, particularly as she shifted further to the left. She also met with hostility within the East End for her anti-war views. In 1916 the ELFS became the Workers Suffrage Federation and ceased to make a particular appeal to women. In 1918 the name of the organisation was changed to the Workers Socialist Federation. Sylvia, now an integral part of the British revolutionary left, spoke of class welfare and hardly ever mentioned women.

Not surprisingly, almost all of her original ELFS supporters melted away.

The other major split from the WSPU, the Women's Freedom League, also opposed the war. Determined to keep the suffrage issue alive, it formed the Women's Suffrage National Aid Corps with the indomitable Charlotte Despard as its president, numerous relief projects followed, many of which were located in the London area. The Corps opened milk clinics, soup kitchens and a guest house for exhausted mothers (Bruley, 1999, p. 49). Despard remained politically solid and campaigned against conscription and invasions on civil liberty as well as more directly women's issues.

The largest women's suffrage society, the NUWSS, the grouping for all the non-militant constitutional suffrage groups, had a more complex approach to the war. For women such as Millicent Fawcett and Ray Strachey, the pressure to rally round the men in the cause of patriotism was overwhelming. For them, once war had been declared, any talk of a negotiated peace amounted to treachery. Such opinions alarmed other more pacifist inclined NUWSS leaders such as Kathleen Courtney and Maude Royden, the editor of the Union's paper, *The Common Cause* (Alberti, 1989, p. 52). In 1915 the Union split. Half of the executive resigned, who were pro peace, including Courtney, Royden, Alice Clark and Isabella Ford.

Although the NUWSS remained loyal to the cause of women, women did not remain loyal to it. By 1918 the NUWSS was behaving much more like a middle class pressure group, and the mass movement of women for democratic reform became nothing more than a memory.

Within a year of the war starting, electoral registers became practically worthless as the male population was so transient. Even when functioning efficiently, the franchise did not allow large sections of the male population to vote. With such men at the front dying for their country it was a matter of some political urgency

to extend the franchise. In May 1916, when Sir Edward Carson and a group of MPs began to agitate a reform bill, the NUWSS pressed their case for inclusion. By late summer the proposal for an all-party conference on electoral reform, under the chair of the Speaker, had been accepted and most people expected some sort of “votes for women” clause to be included. Despite the efforts of Sylvia Pankhurst and other adult suffragists for full, universal adult suffrage, the mood was very much one of compromise (Bruley, 1999, p. 50).

Opinions which were expressed about women’s suffrage and votes for women were now generally in favour. Women had to be given the vote. In the summer of 1917 the bill which made its way through Parliament included an age qualification for women voters of thirty (as against twenty-one for men). On 6 February 1918, the Representation of the People Act finally became law. The new law gave the vote to eight and a half million women, which meant that women formed just under 40 percent of the new electorate. But it was not until ten years later that the voting age of women came down to twenty-one, equal with men (Pugh, 1992, p. 34). On 22 May 1928 F. E. Smith, Earl of Birkenhead delivered in the House of Lords a speech recommending passing the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act, which would give women the same voter qualifications as men. The speech, full of dramatic sarcasm and sense of humour, presents the history of women’s emancipation from the point of view of a witty, but pragmatic male chauvinist. Smith concludes:

let us realise that when once both Houses have affirmed as a matter of principle in the Preamble to the 1919 Act, as the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack [i.e. the Speaker] reminded us, that men and women were to be equal, there was indeed a kind of hypocrisy and insincerity in relation to which we had little defence, when we put it off year after and said that women of twenty-one are not as mature and not as sophisticated as men of twenty-one. Everyone of us in our hearts knows that a woman

of twenty-one is far more mature and far more sophisticated than a man of twenty-one. The moment, therefore, you had settled the principle that women were to have votes at all it became a lost cause to argue that there should be differentiation between people of the same ages... My recommendation to your Lordships is to go into the Lobby in favour of this Bill, if without enthusiasm yet in a spirit of resolute resignation (Misztal 2000: 267)<sup>6</sup>.

John Stuart Mill, a radical thinker, had tried unsuccessfully to include votes for women in the 1867 Reform Bill. The Parliamentary Qualification of Women Act 1918 allowed women to stand for Parliament as well as to vote, but attempts to gain entry for women to the House of Lords failed. Only 36 women actually were MPs in this period and their marginality is underlined by the fact that most of them were in office for less than three years (Misztal, 2000, p. 201).

Constituency associations tended to be reluctant to select women for anything except a hopeless seat. Prejudice against women with children worked against them. Once in Parliament, the overwhelmingly male ethos struck them. Although elected members in their own right, women still faced restrictions on use of the Commons dining room and other humiliations. Not surprisingly, they tended to stick together, especially in the early years. The only independent feminist to get elected was Rathbone who sat for the Combined English Universities from 1929. Ironically, she represented middle and upper class interests, but took it upon herself to be the leading spokesperson for working class women (Bruley, 1999, pp. 82-83).

### **A New Femininity**

After World War One the “first wave” feminism, as a mass movement, was dead, but feminist issues were still pursued by a dedicated group of predominantly middle class “new” women.

There was no mass basis for militant feminism to resume at the end of the war, and Christabel Pankhurst’s Women Party quickly

ceased. Christabel no longer had any serious interest in feminism, and after a difficult period of adjustment, devoted herself to an evangelical form of Christianity. Mrs. Pankhurst, whose politics had steadily drifted to the right, spent six years lecturing in the USA and Canada. After her return, she became a prospective parliamentary candidate for the Conservatives in the safe labour seat of Whitechapel in East London, but her health deteriorated and she died in 1928. Sylvia Pankhurst had lost most of her socialist-feminist support by the end of the war and became preoccupied with ultra-left wing communist politics. Of all the militant groups and splits, only the Women's Freedom League appears to have survived. It continued to campaign on feminist issues until 1961 (Bruley, 1999, p. 79).

The largest suffrage organisation, the non-militant National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, also survived. In 1918 the National Union felt that a change of name was required to symbolise the need to broaden the basis of its work, and the following year it became the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC). Soon after, Millicent Fawcett, who had left the constitutional movement for over half a century, felt that it was time for her to make way for a younger woman as a president. Eleanor Rathbone, the new leader, was the most significant inter-war feminist and her book *The Disinherited Family* (1924) became the most important feminist tract of the time. According to Banks, Rathbone's "new feminism" was distinct from the equal rights feminism of the suffrage period, which had its origins in the Enlightenment (Banks, 1986, p. 162).

Rathbone owed much more to the evangelical tradition of moral reform, which gave women a special superiority and commitment to social reform, and gave her strong links with "new Liberalism." Rathbone's most distinctive contribution to feminism lies in her campaign for family endowment. In *The Disinherited Family* and earlier works, she argued against the concept of a "family wage." She pointed out that the wage structure was built upon the idea



of an adult man having to support a family, yet less than half adult men were in fact supporting dependants. This patriarchal policy was used to justify unequal pay between men and women as women were assumed not to have dependants. Rathbone argued that as a result of this practice men without dependants were able to squander unnecessary income, while large families were left in extreme poverty. She pointed out that “the greatest cause of primary poverty is the failure of the wage system to adapt itself to the needs of variously sized households” (Rathbone, 1986, p. 147). Rathbone wanted all workers to be paid on the basis of a single adult wage, and children to be catered for separately through payments to the mother for the maintenance of children. In her view, this would lead to true equal pay as there was no longer any excuse to pay men more. She would not support equal pay in isolation as she felt that it should only be implemented as part of a new wage structure, with family endowment as an integral part.

In 1927 a split occurred in the NUSEC over the issue of protective legislation specifically for women, opposition to which had always been an inseparable part of equal rights feminism. According to this view, protective legislation equalled restrictive legislation. Rathbone’s narrow victory in shifting the NUSEC from absolute hostility to a position closer to conditional support, led to the resignation of 11 members of the executive (Smith, 1990, p. 60). Those who resigned continued to press for equal rights, equal pay and equal opportunities. The equal rights tradition continued in several smaller groups, principally the Open Door Council, the Six Point Group and the Women’s Freedom League.

Another strand of NUSEC began to detach itself in the late 1920s with the formation of the Townswomen’s Guilds. The guilds grew in response to the huge success of the Women’s Institutes (WIs) which had started during the war for rural women. The Guilds, in the towns, and the WIs, mainly in the countryside, focussed on

traditional crafts and “home making” activities (Harrison, 1987, p. 7). This division was made complete in 1932 when the National Union of Townswomen’s Guilds became a separate organisation. The Second World War brought with it something of a renewed interest in feminist issues. In 1940 a London Women’s Parliament was organised by Mary Corsellis. This and another women’s parliaments campaigned on issues such as nurseries, reduced working hours and provision of canteens. In Parliament, the small number of women MPs acted more like a cross-party “women’s lobby” than ever before (Bruley, 1999, p. 108). Their attempts to push through equal pay were stopped. The abolition of the marriage bar in teaching and the introduction of family allowances could be explained as feminist victories, but in fact both have quite complex causalities, which only partly involved feminist motivations. In many respects wartime conditions were favourable for feminists to promote women’s issues, but the attempt to push through a comprehensive bill which would outlaw all forms of discrimination did not succeed. This measure, which arises from the Six Point Group during discussions about conscription of women, did not win widespread support, even within feminist circles.

The growth of modern feminism, therefore, corresponds both to notions of equality, and the idea that equality of opportunity can be achieved through law in the form of legal rights. The very language of rights, which was so challenging to the conservative order, was both empowering in that they could be claimed by everyone no matter what class or sex, and limiting in that it constructed law as the centre of so many political campaigns. This was particularly true of feminist campaigns which sought to extend the philosophy of the “rights of man” to encompass woman. Feminists campaigned in the areas of matrimonial property, child custody, divorce, domestic violence, maternity benefits and votes for women. They all, in different ways, argued that the existing law denied women’s citizenship or membership of a democratic

order. Feminist discourse constructed women as citizens, as individuals worthy of sharing the privileges of the newly emergent democratic order of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was part of the feminist strategy to celebrate the work that women did in the family, to draw attention to the responsibilities they held in both the private and public spheres.

### Abbreviations

ELFS	East London Federation of Suffragettes
ILP	Independent Labour Party
MP	Member of Parliament
NESS	North of England Suffrage Society
NUSEC	National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship
NUWSS	National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies
SDF	Social Democratic Federation
WFL	Women's Freedom League
WIs	Women's Institutes
WLL	Women's Labour League
WSPU	Women's Social and Political Union

### NOTES

1 - The Primrose League was an organisation for spreading Conservative principles in Great Britain. It was founded in 1883 and active until the mid-1990s.

2 - The Fabian Society, a British socialist organisation founded on 4 January 1884 as an offshoot of a society founded a year earlier called The Fellowship of the New Life. Fellowship members included poets Edward Carpenter and John Davidson, sexologist Havelock Ellis and the future Fabian secretary Edward R. Pease. The society laid many of the foundations of the Labour Party.

3 - Fabian Tract n. 149, *The Endowment of Motherhood*, 1910.

**4** - The Suffragists were set up in 1897 by Millicent Fawcett. They campaigned peacefully through means such as meetings, debates, leaflets, petitions etc. They also put forward male candidates in elections as opposition to liberal and Tory candidates who opposed women suffrage. The Suffragettes were founded in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst, a suffragist who was frustrated by the suffragists apparent lack of progress. They campaigned through more direct action such as harassing MPs, disrupting meetings, and even burning postboxes and buildings.

**5** - During the Women's Coronation Procession, held in London on 17 June 1911, women from diverse backgrounds came together to parade their political views.

**6** - Mariusz Misztal *An Outline of British History*, p. 267. (Source: *The Parliamentary Debates*. House of Lords, 5<sup>th</sup> series, 71, pp. 251-254).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Alberti J.** *Beyond Suffrage: Feminists in War and Peace*. Macmillan, London, 1989.

**Banks O.** *Faces of Feminism*. Blackwell, Oxford, 1986.

**Bruley S.** *Women in Britain since 1900*. Macmillan, London, 1999.

**Carpenter E.** *Love's Coming of Age*. Labour Press, Manchester, 1986.

**Collette C.** *For Labour and For Women: The Women's Labour League 1906-1918*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1990.

**de Vries J.** *Gendering Patriotism: Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst and World War One* in S. Oldfield (ed.) "This Working-Day World". Taylor and Francis, London, 1994.

**Garner L.** *Stepping Stones to Women's Liberty: Feminist Ideas in the Woman's Suffrage Movement 1900-1918*. Heinemann, London, 1984.

**Hannam J.** *Isabella Ford*. Blackwell, Oxford, 1989.

**Harrison B.** *Prudent Revolutionaries: Portraits of British Feminists Between the Wars*. Clarendon, Oxford, 1987.

**Hollis P.** *Ladies Elect, Women in English Local Government 1865-1914*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987.

**Holton S. S.** *Feminism and Democracy: Women's Suffrage and Reform Politics in Britain 1900-1918*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986.

**King E.** *The Scottish Women's Suffrage Movement* in E. Breinenbach - E. Gordon (eds.), "Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945". Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1992.

**Misztal M.** *An Outline of British History with Illustrative Documents and Annotated Index*. Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogicznej, Kraków, 2000.

**Morrell C.** "Black Friday: Violence Against Women in the Suffragette Movement. Women's Research and Resources Centre, London, 1980.

**Nield Chew D.** *The Problem of the Married Working Woman* in "Common Cause", 6 March 1914 (reproduced in D. Nield Chew (ed.) *The Life and Writings of Ada Nield Chew*. Virago Press, London, 1982, pp. 230-234).

**Pugh M.** *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959*. Macmillan, London, 1992.

**Rathbone E.** *Disinherited Family*. Falling Wall Press, Bristol, 1986.  
**Romero P.** *Sylvia Pankhurst, Portrait of a Radical*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1990.  
**Smith H.** *British Feminism in the 1920s* in Harold Smith (ed) "British Feminism in the Twentieth Century". Edward Elgar, Aldershot, 1990.

**OLYMPIAN GODS AND MORTALS:  
EURYDICE AND ORPHEUS IN ION D. SÎRBU'S  
*FARWELL, EUROPE!***

*Dana Radler*

(Bucharest University of Economic Studies,  
Faculty of International Business & Economics,  
Department of Modern Languages &  
Business Communication, Romania)

**Introduction**

*Dansul ursului* (*The Dance of the Bear*, first heavily censored edition, 1988), begins, as often the case in Sirbu's writing, with an anecdote: Nicolae Rogoz, the head engineer of the forestry section in Târgul Lăpuș (Maramureș county, in northwestern Romania), attends an international conference in Freiburg. Instead of discussing environmental issues, he collects, decodes and re-expresses elements related to the bear, a once majestic presence in Europe's highest mountains. While staying at the "Alpen Bär" hotel, he enjoys an "Ursus" beer, watches films presented at the Berlin festival, the best ones getting the Golden, respectively the Silver Bear, and tastes a delicious dried salami known as "medze szalámi" or "bear salami". Later, Ursu Nicolae<sup>1</sup>, an official at the Romanian Embassy, invites him on a trip to Switzerland. There, Mr Pachoud explains to his *invité* that the French are currently trying to reintroduce a pair of young bears into the area of Chamonix. Not only do these particular bears - surprisingly, not a couple, but two males only - prefer to plunder local human settlements instead of hunting on their own, but they also have acquired a supernatural aura among the locals: "they are full of imagination and have some sort of a *haiduk*-like bravery"<sup>2</sup>. Perplexed by the behaviour of *Ursidae*, Mr Pachoud comments upon a picture of the two: "here it is in this one, the bear Pierre. He

looks as if he is making faces. I think that he is mocking something. And this gesture, with his back leg laterally up, it is undoubtedly wicked, truly obscene”<sup>3</sup>. *The Dance of the Bear* represents a sharp satire against the communist regime - an intellectual cannot employ overt sarcasm, but uses tales as tools to criticize and expose the restrictive and repressive system. The society it refers to relies on false pretensions, repetitive jargon and a severe ideological mechanism: dehumanization. This volume advances a theme recurrent in Sîrbu’s novels and in his memoirs: an ongoing alternance between reclusion and togetherness, ascent from or descent into the private or the public.

In *Farewell, Europe!* (completed in 1985 but published posthumously)<sup>4</sup>, it leads to a reading of Desiderius, the main protagonist, as a reflective Orpheus, forced to retreat into the underworld. The male character’s source of resilience and resistance is Olympia, his wife, friend, adviser and companion. While Desiderius’s own name suggests that the protagonist is the quintessence of hope and life, his partner’s appellative, Olympia, hints at Mount Olympus in the Hellenic Peninsula, inhabited by ancient gods and heroes and which humans can only temporarily access. The couple’s parallelism with Greek mythology opens the reading along a fluctuating and unpredictable life journey. At the end, survival and insanity transform Desiderius into both a victim and a hero capable of eluding a whole tyrannical system, a postmodern parallel of his ancient equivalent who managed to descend into Hell but could not resist his own human flaws: the temptation to look back and/or depend on physical contact with the beloved one.

Critical contributions to this date about Sîrbu’s works have broadly focused on two directions: firstly, those exploring the biography, even when referring to elements from his fiction as well, and secondly, content analysis, supported by various literary/cultural approaches. Ioan Lascu has completed a revised overview of Sîrbu’s biography versus his main works, linking formative years to his subsequent experiences in Baia de Arieș, Cluj and



Petroșani, and outlining his stories, novels or plays<sup>5</sup>. Clara Mareș has detailed Sîrbu's experiences recorded in 1680 pages (7 volumes) archived at the National Council for Studying of Securitate Archives<sup>6</sup>. Mareș presents Sîrbu's biography, his years in prison starting with his first arrests and detentions, followed by a brief intermezzo (1963-1969) and then the renewal of Securitate vigilance, as of 1970, the writer being sometimes monitored by over 30 different informers<sup>7</sup>, while after 1984 his file is transferred from Craiova to Bucharest, attesting to the threat seen to be posed by the novelist during this decade.

In a 2012 interview with Clara Mareș conducted by Ada-Maria Ichim, the former describes the technique of learning about the Securitate's filing system, or her reserve to present personal details such as clothes inventory, or particular references, including Sîrbu's comments about his friends. During this interview, Mareș cites the unusual position of the writer himself, rather unaware of the fear he might have inspired: "I don't understand why everybody has to run mad because I refuse to be trampled on, because I wish to tell the truth. I don't get it why everybody needs to stay *en garde* because I don't wish to give way"<sup>8</sup>. To supplement such a perspective, Daniel Cristea-Enache examines the biography of the author in relation to Sîrbu's correspondence and his writing, trying to decode messages transmitted in letters or literary works<sup>9</sup>. He notes the diverse display of topics, initially introduced and then gradually developed under the fictional canopies, and ending in a sharp, transparent conclusion<sup>10</sup>. Antonio Patraș looks at Sîrbu's works<sup>11</sup>, with particular reference to his connection with the theatre: his role as a literary secretary at the National Theatre in Craiova, along with his own plays and his reviews of stage productions, beginning in 1956. Patraș appreciates, with regard to Sîrbu's own plays, "the pre-eminence of the text in relation to the production"<sup>12</sup>. In his introduction to *Crossing the Curtain: Correspondence with Ion Negoițescu, Virgil Nemoianu, Mariana Șora*, Virgil Nemoianu proposes a key to understanding Sîrbu: the epistolary

protagonist, completing the profile of the individual and the writer;<sup>12</sup> Nemoianu rounds out Sîrbu's portrayal with the accuracy and warmth of a close friend, mentioning Sîrbu's moments of high concern, premonitions, fears and the techniques he used to ensure mental survival. Gabriela Gavril's chapter („Cazul Gary" / "The Gary Case") surveys earlier critical contributions while highlighting the reaction of "Cerchist" members (the Literary Circle in Sibiu), a group of writers and critics aiming at the revival of Romanian culture<sup>13</sup>. If Sîrbu's contemporaries were highly immersed in vivid storytelling, the warm, and sometimes controversial, critical reception of his writings could actually be linked to the emergence of his posthumous works. From this perspective, Gavril mentions Sîrbu's rise on the post-1990s literary scene as a late *débutant*, generating a subsequently avid critical appetite, including intense debate of political issues arising from his prose<sup>14</sup>. In their collective article, Ruxandra Cesereanu *et al* explore the reception, as well as the context of his biography and writing<sup>15</sup>. Cesereanu has recently further looked into the dystopic world created by Sîrbu in the novel under question, *Farewell, Europe!*<sup>16</sup> In his overview of Romanian contemporary literature, Alex Ștefănescu suggests that the novel is merely a "pretext for ample considerations, occasionally developed to the extent of certain dissertations"<sup>17</sup>, that Olympia, the main female character, has a "possessed articulacy" and that the novel presents its "brouhaha rather than the text"<sup>18</sup> as a corollary for the amateurism in philosophy showcased by the author. His critique contrasts with Magda Carneci's praise: she sees in Sîrbu a "*grand romancier*" in a completely full oppressive era<sup>19</sup>. Following Anca Urșa's paper on dissidence<sup>20</sup>, Andreia Suciuc presents a comparative analysis of totalitarian regimes in the works of three different writers: George Orwell, Anthony Burgess and Ion D. Sîrbu<sup>21</sup>. Maria Dărăbaș's recent article explores the role of an unlikely intellectual played by the main protagonist, noting the tribute to the emergent structure of the modern novel and the cult of the personality during

Ceașescu's time<sup>22</sup>.

A reading of the novel along the lines of Greek mythology has not been initiated yet, a possible difficulty being the obviously hybrid-structured narrative, including both classical and realist elements, applied to a dystopian vision mixed with elements of satire. As connections with European philosophy or Christianity emerge when the text is closely inspected, the transposition of the Greek myth of Orpheus into Sirbu's last novel brings to the surface connections between history and philosophy in Eastern Europe, with the role of the artist and resilience versus *sparagmos*<sup>23</sup> as inherent ingredients. Such a task demands establishing a firm ground, a prerequisite being the understanding of how the Orphic journey into the underworld has developed in literature. According to Dániel Puskás quoting Sándor V. Kovács, in the Middle Ages Orpheus' descent followed either a religious or a secular pattern. With the advent of modernity and the reshaping of literary genres, the journey acquired a more personal focus, denoting a substantially-driven interior quest<sup>24</sup>. In *Farewell, Europe!*, Sirbu puts forward a recreation of the Orphic myth based on allegory and parable, the two key fictional personae exhibiting substantial change and scope.

### **Symbolism, (dis)order and resistance**

The novel presents a couple supporting each other in confronting an entire political system: Desiderius Candid, former philosopher and professor, currently employed as proof-reader at the local spirits manufacturer in Isarlâk, while Olympia is the speaker at the radio unit of the marmalade and beverages factory. "Olympia" is the English equivalent of Romanian "Olimpia", the female protagonist being often referred to as Limpi. Olympia's nickname hints at "limpid" (equivalent of "transparent", "clear", or "bright") as the main quality associated with her constantly critical yet pragmatic personal approach to the couple's affairs. While Olympia often plays the rational, practical and more highly versatile character of the two, Desiderius stands out as a political incompetent,

being outspoken when unnecessary, expert *gaffeur* in volatile social situations. United by marriage, both display certain differences (identity, orality, relationships building and resistance, for instance) and affiliations (their faith in each other, a profound religiosity, and a deep feeling for nature and rural traditions). Desiderius is unable to live according to the system's ideology, to cajole or palaver unless forced to by the political and authoritarian terror pervading Isarlâk, a society modelled on that of the Ottoman Empire where the couple spend their dull existence. In fact, onomastic symbolism plays a major role in the narrative: Isarlâk stands for Craiova, the metropolis of the south-eastern region of Oltenia (rather marginal in the novel in terms of authentic values) where communism is mixed with feudalism; the names of *Osmanli* officials are Caftangiu<sup>25</sup>, Osmanescu, Ilderâm, Carasurduc<sup>26</sup> and Tutilă Two<sup>27</sup>; "He" or "His" refers to the Supreme Leader of the country, also indicated as "Suleiman the Magnificent" or "the most beloved son of the people", while the "Sublime Porte" is a synecdoche for the central communist establishment dependant on Moscow's instructions.

Dărăbanț has noted the classical format of the novel inspired by the work of Hendry Fielding, such as chapter headings which use summaries meant to keep the reader alert and to expose narrative layers<sup>28</sup>. Earlier, in her comprehensive study, Gavril had attributed this structure to Voltaire's works<sup>29</sup>. In Fielding's farce, *Euridice, or the Devil Henpeck'd*,<sup>30</sup> Charles B. Woods has noted the use of comedy as a vehicle for social criticism. In Fielding's work, Euridice states: "it is a long way from hence to the other World; and you know by Experience, my Dear, I am an exceeding bad Traveller." Sîrbu's Euridice would not "cheat on her lover" or prefer "hell to married state"<sup>31</sup> as Woods remarks, yet Olympia's humour parallels that of Fielding's heroine. Drawing on the unpopular Gin Act of 1736 which "prohibited the sale of spirituous liquors in smaller quantities than two gallons"<sup>32</sup> except on payment of a huge annual tax, Fielding recurrently ridicules such a public de-

cision, his Orpheus being willing to “buy two Gallons [of liquor] and carry them”<sup>33</sup> around with him. In *Farewell, Europe!*, Olympia is a devoted and witty wife, contrasting with Fielding’s female protagonist. However, Sîrbu’s Orpheus resembles his 18<sup>th</sup> century counterpart as far as his appetite for spirits is concerned. When travelling, or during meals or conversations, this Romanian intellectual and outcast enjoys strong drinks, some of them being homemade, while others are refined imports which only a select few from the secret *agha* or police can usually obtain.

The novel also presents considerable autobiographical elements from Sîrbu’s life, including his family background, his experiences in WWII, as well as from his marriage to Elisabeta Sîrbu, who provided his inspiration for the character of Olympia. As Mareş has pointed out, the original cause for Desiderius/Orpheus’ descent - his laughter - also had its source in real-life - being inspired by Sîrbu’s own father’s reaction against the import of Hungarian machinery in a place and at a time when the Romanian government had been using an increase in tension in its relations with Hungary to track down and punish suspected disloyalty at home<sup>34</sup>.

In *Farewell, Europe!*, Desiderius, an ordinary proof-reader, laughs in public when he sees a poster advertising the name of Karl Marx instead of Karl May in a series of lectures about fantastic fiction, and this apparently minor reaction throws local order and regional politics into chaos. Desiderius’ uncontrolled response triggers the instant attention of local authorities, gradually stirring up commotion in the highest social and political networks. Comrade Sommer, in charge of authorising the publication of public documents, describes the laughter of the proof-reader, an authentic intellectual despite his intention to stay unnoticed, as an unpardonable rebellion: “whoever laughs says good-bye to the past, as well as to the future”<sup>35</sup>. Party members, representatives of the municipality and the secret police rapidly and systematically employ a vast range of techniques and resources to silence Desiderius, but the key issue is that he needs to be annihilated without be-

coming a dissident, not to mention a hero.

The copious resources of the public and secret services compete with Desiderius's own resourcefulness and determination. Olympia relentlessly seconds him in this unequal combat, using humorous language to divert the attention of persecutors, invoking, for instance, a serious and embarrassing disorder which she acknowledges in a low voice: "I'm even afraid to say it, [but Desideriu is] a *self-governed*... intellectual (...) He hasn't got over it *yet*. He is a subacute, self-governed one, I truly fear that he may become a chronic one or an anachronistic one, which would be really tragic"<sup>36</sup>. This instantly solicits empathy from local potentates such as Ilderim, who immediately comforts Olympia because of her husband's shameful condition, failing to grasp the absurdity of the phrase, with its pseudo-medical terminology. In order to cover their ignorance, party members readily accept these seemingly scientific explanations, eccentric though they may be, and turn their attention towards another victim. It is the very juxtaposition of two levels, the private and the public, which makes the narrative work in parallel, as either distanced or closely-related layers, denoting the complex social structures of the Ottoman Empire whose legacy Desiderius and his close allies cannot avoid despite their greatest efforts. Hierarchy, lack of logic and *omerta* dominate public life.

In terms of political and social ranking, Olympia thinks about another bipolar separation, where the layer of the rich and powerful is fully severed from that of the poor and the powerless. The image she employs is close to that of a map with strictly separated regions: "At the top are the rich and the powerful: the ones nobody and nothing (they think!) can change: under the equator, it's us, the poor in spirit and *vozdukh*, the ones unable to change anything or anyone"<sup>37</sup>. The Candids lives in a society clearly ruled by terror: "Gods have, first of all, created fear"<sup>38</sup>. In such an environment, Desiderius/Orpheus has one sole anchor: his wife. When separated from her or falling asleep, Desiderius sees himself descending into an old abyss:

“I was floating in a boat, over a black Styx, and instead of Virgil I had the goddess Limpi with me”<sup>39</sup>.

Desideriu’s uncontrolled laughter breaks the couple’s settled routine, pushing both the couple and many other locals into close or distant contact in order to recalibrate their ethical or political affiliations. The two undergo surrealist experiences, receive unusually large plaster statues which they cannot easily dispose of, search for support beyond familiar individuals/ groups, and employ subtleties of communication which their opponents cannot compete with. Desideriu’s laughter breaks the calm pace of life for the Candids, and pushes consciousness into turmoil: sleep becomes restless, fragmented, invaded by bizarre presences. In his effort to resist *regressum* into darkness, Desiderius falls into unconscious numbness: “I have indifferently floated on the black water of a fear (...) I was in striped prison clothing, guilty, followed. I had no identity card, had forgotten the name of the cave, the name of the mountain, the name of my wife. My boat had no oars”<sup>40</sup>. In order to resist the fatal, symbolic descent of his own country which gets further away from European values and turns closer to Asian despotism or anarchy, Desiderius describes one of his dreams to Olympia. In his dream, he is presenting a symbolic solution to Napocos, the great philosopher and mentor: “With these plough blades I’d like to anchor my country in Europe: the three capitals<sup>41</sup> represents the pillars of our historic becoming...”<sup>42</sup>. Such an act would be, in his eyes, a final means of escape from slow and systematic terror. In order to achieve this, Desiderius attempts to get in touch with Limpi’s grandfather, the Old Man, and to convince a former student to give up intelligence work. Similarly to the lyre player, he uses his instruments, his intellect and his knowledge, to persuade the others to resist. This is far from being a feasible task, and both he and his wife understand the risks of their underground resistance.

According to Uždavinyš, Orpheus provides a parallel to Prometheus’ role in relation to the world of mortals since “he taught

men things unknown to them before, expounding the mysteries of the soul's descent and ascent"<sup>243</sup>. In *Farewell, Europe!*, Desiderius Candid conceals his critical opinions from most locals, especially those in power, because his thoughts target the incoherence of the system. His psychological profile turns him into a discreet adviser and advocate, yet one who, in political or public affairs, needs constant guidance in order to avoid tactless behaviour.

### **Descent into the underworld and *sparagmos***

After his unfortunate laughter in the central public square, Desiderius delivers a lecture in which he puts his earlier action in context. Before his speech, however, he realizes that Olympia and he are going down through a "Dantesque spiralled stairs"<sup>244</sup> into a windowless basement full of pipes symbolically painted in red and white. Later, returning from his search for the Old Man, Olympia's grandfather, who is able to provide moral support to the couple in need, Desiderius mentions a particular place appearing in his dream: "I think that after I had asleep, my sleep was as that of a frog or of a crayfish in the thick and warm mud of a happy pool. Then, I don't know how, I found myself in Böklin's oarless boat. Alone. I was standing, waiting to see the islands of cedars. The water was ink-coloured, I believed it full of hidden monsters. I was, of course, in striped prison clothes. I had run from somewhere, I was followed. I was afraid"<sup>245</sup>. This is a premonition of his descent evoked by the work of the Swiss artist, Arnold Böklin, whose painting of human silhouettes, one lying, one standing in a still-like boat in front of a dark island suggests a departure to or return from the otherworld<sup>246</sup>. The risks associated with such an enterprise are but heightened by Desiderius' acknowledgement that he had two shadows at that moment, an alarming sign for any human. The two shadows inspire equivocal feelings: his known shadow was rather comforting and secure, but the unfamiliar one induced guilt and perceptible threats. In his earlier conversation with Desiderius, engineer Marcus Winter,



a one-time disciple of the politically clumsy proof-reader now employed by the secret services had reminded the former academic that the sign of the permanent instalment of evil mankind would be the apparition of two shadows, one naturally provided by the sun according to the known laws of physics, the being but a marker of one's belonging to *the otherworld*. The result is a human being suspended between his natural condition and that of a doomed creature.

Desiderius/Orpheus attempts to decode his own premonitions as they occur: in his interior monologue he reflects on his own dreams, where his wife is also in an unnatural condition: "I always see Limpi cornered by German shepherds, I see her large eyes which know all my wounds, the eyes she prays for me with, for Anca and Petrică [their niece and nephew], for the whole world except herself"<sup>747</sup>. He constantly recognises her personal sacrifice and strong spirit.

As his search for supporters against the system becomes a journey into the unknown, Desiderius foresees that his existence will primarily depend on Olympia's luminous presence: "my objectified spirit, the white angel I have looked for all my life (...)"<sup>748</sup> Alternating between the proclamation of power as the ultimate purpose, and the assessment of his politically 'clean' dossier<sup>49</sup>, Tutilă One acknowledges that Olympia represents a cleaner and fresher character than himself (although they are cousins), and takes Desiderius to the listening unit of Intelligence-led policing to intimidate him. Echoing engineer Winter's opinion about each individual carrying a part of the communal guilt, the head of the listening intelligence unit aims to detect a certain incriminating phrase in Olympia's discourse. Tutilă One delivers a conference to a secret conclave, which Desiderius is obliged to attend. There, Tutilă One returns to the initial element of disorder: Candid's laughter, He shows that Marx has ceased to be an ideological pillar. In fact, Marx is for the secret *agha* force, a primeval adversary, challenging the very role of the information services. This is ab-

solutely unacceptable for the elite of the *agha* structure. Desiderius gradually loses his reason as a nurse serves him a mixture of tomato juice and narcotics, feeling both a prey and a predator. As through a blurred screen, he sees reddened silhouettes accompanying Marx, Engels, Leibniz and his mentor, Napocos. He then remembers the once “happy Olympus of our home”<sup>50</sup>, the disobedient intellectual hardly breathing in the infected atmosphere. The infernal realm contains military cohorts able to capture and hold supreme power, proclaiming Karl Marx as the ultimate ideological adversary. Although Olympia never utters the expected incriminatory remark awaited by the secret police, Tutilă One finally crushes Desiderius, by telling him that she was hit by a truck at night, in her desperate efforts to find her husband. Desiderius, the intellectual and rebel, has therefore become an accomplice to Olympia’s brutal elimination. While classical representations of Orpheus’ *sparagmos* consisted of physical dismemberment, Sîrbu’s protagonist undergoes this ultimate traumatic experience of learning about her death despite his efforts to avoid a tragedy. He has not been torn to pieces physically but psychologically. This is the moment when Desiderius Candid’s whole moral edifice collapses as Tutilă One had correctly deduced: “Olympia loves you, Professor, and this is her Achilles’ heel”<sup>51</sup>. The finale, entitled “Instead of a will”, presents an ambiguous and desolate human being, under severe treatment in a mental hospital, where the finally passive Desiderius Candid delivers a written confession. He declares that he has lost his memory, but he recounts numerous incidents and describes several *tortionnaires* and key characters who had eluded the system. He has stopped invoking Christian values and impatiently expects the moment when “SHE”, (written in capital letters), the life partner whom he had lost, will lead him to the sacred path. The end thus presents an additional hybrid representation of Eurydice, physically absent yet fully able to rescue Orpheus from his mental abyss, under the Latin dictum: “*non omnis moriar*”<sup>52</sup>. While the

beginning of the novel placed Desiderius in a predictable Dantesque descent, the ending entails distinctive hope: the proof-reader insists on his lunacy, and firmly plays on his victimhood. In his conclusive vision, SHE, the blessed shade of his unique love and his *Heimat* invites him to an upper divine Eden, where humans can mix laughter with “hope and the fear of courage with the courage of hope”<sup>53</sup>. His secondary, diabolic shadow has vanished. Eurydice has then finally undertaken her lover’s role and brings him into a realm where neither can be reached by their persecutors. They are victorious, beyond the control of any despotic establishment. From the perspective of the couple, the ending provides a startling result: though Olympia has lost her life, she continues to invisibly support her partner; Desiderius, on the other hand, only *plays* the role of the submissive lunatic - in fact he has switched from open resistance to subversive information tactics, reporting on his opponents in an extensive memorandum, fighting the system from the inside by exploiting its regular mechanisms. His confession is prolix, a mix of reality and subversive hypotheses that the secret services cannot process easily or draw clear conclusions from. The artist could not bring his Eurydice back, but he destabilizes the communist establishment at the heart of its most effective machinery: information and repression.

### **Art and reclusion in (after)life**

Referring to Jean Delumeau, Desiderius thinks that if the French historian of the Catholic church had had the opportunity to talk with himself, the historian would confess: ““*Mes chers collègues*, it is not the same for one to be afraid of darkness or to be into the dark, it is not the same to be afraid of barbarians, or to be in the very midst of barbarity”<sup>54</sup>. Acknowledging the role of the history of ideas, Desiderius realizes that his entrapment in the communist society not only limits his own potential for debate, but that Western society can hardly capture the scale of communist grotesqueness. In his interior monologues or in his dialogues with Olympia

or with close family members whom he trusts, Desiderius constantly affirms that he believes in the leading force of science and arts, starting with his own dictum: “my country is a library”<sup>55</sup>. However, individuals can actually back a totalitarian system, either voluntarily or unknowingly. The proof-reader’s thinking often becomes a reflexive confession where he deplores the condition of literature. In Desiderius’ opinion, the divide between political writing and literature has taken a tragic twist: “[t]he Westerners owe their inability to understand our misfortune to the huge literature which has been written about this misfortune. When the crime is recounted in newspapers, you find out, take position, classify a piece of information, forming some kind of an opinion about the very executioners and victims. But when you read a great novel (usually Russian) about these crimes, reality turns into literature, the whole emotion is purely artistic, and even the crime becomes a work of art”<sup>56</sup>. Since the communist ideology operates with reversed elements, defying logic and common sense, the intellectual cannot but reject fiction as such: “[a]ll my life I have feared literature, I avoided literature (and the literate), I have always declared that misfortune will strike when life starts to take on the fantasies of novelists possessed by demons or science or politics”<sup>57</sup>. When he refers to the role of an artist, Desiderius starts with a cathartic vision: “this time it is about a dream: a total dream, inscribed in my memory, as on a wax tablet or a lead sheet. There are artists who *see* ideas, musicians who *hear* ideas, I often happen to *dream* ideas. I admit it”<sup>58</sup>. He is not afraid of what, for others, appears as purely utopian: respect for the European heritage, for nature and for the legacy of his ancestors. Mocking false pretensions, kitsch and perverted taste, Desiderius listens to the comments of Olympia’s female friends, who analyse the gypsum busts delivered to the Candid’s flat. Jenny, the representative of the “cyclopedical” (sic!) wing, praises the virtues of plaster as an expressive material: “No need, comrades, to cast bronzes: they are costly, difficult to melt and after

being melted cannot be reused, not even by the artillery. Instead, plaster, in its modest and intermediary manner, saves the clay where it was moulded at the beginning of taking shape"<sup>59</sup>. Therefore, plaster becomes suitable for matching artistic performance targets. Such reported data was during the communist era a tacitly accepted fraud, top leaders thinking that communism would eventually prove its superiority in the face of inept capitalism. The so-called proof resided in higher declared figures, honest results being never inspected. The dystopian Alutanian society exists at the border of the fairy tale, mythology, futurology and apocalypse, but its members fail to see beyond the temporary, communist-shaped illusion. The theatre itself has ceased to parallel the Greek medium, which once inspired the audience to achieve catharsis; it has developed into an eroded space where words are slaughtered and phrases turn into decomposed, meaningless utterances. At the level of cultural institutions, since science-fiction has replaced classical works, officials working in culture are more often than not qualified in name: "The most modern type of folly is connected to power, updated bibliography, titles and *patalamas*"<sup>60</sup>. In such a context, Olympia explains the current role of language in society to her own husband: "language is a means to hide, cover, cut classes and elude. Only children, the idiot-idiots and the last 'intellectuals' such as yourself believe in the word, speaking, honesty and truth"<sup>61</sup>. For her practical nature, it is clear that silence or speech breaks are occasionally more meaningful than verbalised content; although often highly praising Desiderius' minute etymological commentaries, she guides him and alerts him to routine communication errors.

Art plays a key role in Desiderius's and Olympia's survival. Parallel to his strategy to render a different meaning to his laughter, the proof-reader knows that humanism guides political acts once repression breaks, trusting the separation of opportunists and agents from the small group of authentic *intelligentsia*: for him, history represents "a heavy inquiry: it is followed by judgement,

and then by long punishment-repentance”<sup>62</sup>. Poetry attracts, by comparison, contrasting comments. At the funeral of Omar Omarovici Kaimakov, the local poet laureate, Comrade Sommer makes a speech at the funeral, hinting at Kaimakov’s wife. He suggests that an intelligent woman has found it impossible to live with the species of existing poets, given the gap between their pursued ideals and personal visible traits: many are, in fact, “cowards, quitters, vain, dictatorial, selfish, snitches, filth...”<sup>63</sup>. The amoral characteristics discussed at Kaimakov’s burial connect to Olympia’s unusual intuition: she embraces her spouse and encourages him to stay fearless. Feeling that her radiant presence is fading, Desiderius, almost benumbed, joins a secret conclave where he learns that his full name, Desiderius Candid, carries a divinely ordained *nomen* and *omen*. He is initiated in the darkest area of Barzania<sup>64</sup>, the lowest realm on earth, where Tutilă One leads the congregation to engage in the battle with a most bizarre opponent: the very founder of the ideology, Karl Marx. Marxist idealism obstructs the ultimate goals of this secret assembly: full annihilation of humanism and critical thinking. This is in contrast to Olympia’s own down-to-earth visionary statement: “Without freedom, culture is a mere fashion we aspire to”<sup>65</sup>.

In his encounter with Itzac Sommer, Comrade Sommer’s son and a gifted violin player, Desiderius summarizes the mission of the artist: I told him [Itzac] that even Dionysus - who is a kind of patron-god of these Doric regions - chained himself in a cave, to later undo his own chains with difficulty. This is the symbol of art, it chains and also frees one”<sup>66</sup>. And then he talks about Orpheus’ own assumed role and failure: “Orpheus, the lyre-player, also descended into a cave to save his lover, Eurydice. He succeeded - he was a great artist - but, while leaving, he turned his head. He was not allowed to: when leaving the realm of the shadows, one should not look back. In my opinion (...), Orpheus is somewhat the symbol of heroism half achieved: he succeeds in taming evil, in suspending it and even delaying it, but he is incapable of making that sacrifice

by which that evil is destroyed for good. Eurydice is the victim of a frightened, limited artist; very talented, a player of genius, but incapable of fighting and resisting...<sup>67</sup>. According to the former professor, ancient mythology stands as the beginning and the end of religious or artistic effort and it brings meaning to man's spiritual effort to find the good or to join the divine.

### **Conclusion**

In *Farewell, Europe!*, Desiderius is a failed Orpheus in the view of most of his fellows; for Olympia and their close relatives, his idealism, subtleties of knowledge and humour require maximum attention and precaution. To display intellectualism supported by humanism is contrary to the hard-core goals of communism. Laughter unleashes terror, personal and group changes: the *agha* forces aim at regrouping themselves and implementing a final solution, the mechanism to reduce people to fully submissive entities. According to Gavril, the characters lack the depth and psychological traits typical of characters in the European modern novel, all of them, but especially Olympia, being either alter egos or fully opposing typologies of the former philosophy professor. The rather flattened structure of the narrative allows the author to employ a vast repertoire of dramatic techniques meant to replace an intricate plot: ample monologues, essay-like delivered dialogues or paremiological constructs. Desiderius/Orpheus doubts, explains, or incriminates philosophical concepts trivialized into brutal ideology, while Olympia/Eurydice takes care of his hesitations and dilemmas and assumes the lead in their shared defensive plan. Orpheus debates on, disputes and condemns the decadent role of arts, suggesting through his commentaries, provided during the journey to find the Old Man, that only a return to authentic, ancient values can rescue citizens from apocalypse. The knowledge accumulated by peasants, folk tales and rural traditions represent the unique means of salvation in the face of urban and political damnation. From this perspective, this con-

temporary Orpheus has looked back and secured his art by connecting it to countless anonymous artists. He preserves his gift because he has not lost touch with his ancestors.

Despite his publicly-noted tragic discourse, Desiderius resists political coercion and censorship as long as he has Olympia's backing. Realising that the couple can become a model for others, Barzania officers finally eliminate the female spouse. Not only does the former professor feel guilty for her death, which he can hardly cope with, he also loses his sanity, his interior equilibrium. The novel thus presents the couple as one sole entity, able to inspire others to follow them, even if they have no such ambition. Though he believes in Olympia's pragmatism, affection and good will, Desiderius/Orpheus officially expresses doubts about her being able to find a solution to his original blunder. Later though, he intuitively and correctly reframes his own trust in her skills, resorting to an irrefutable maxim: "*Olimpia dicit. Veritas dicit. Ut salvavi animam meam*"<sup>68</sup>. The reading of *Farewell, Europe!* offers multiple nuances, numerous switches and further analysis openings, possible directions being directed to folklore, philosophy in fiction, political discourse or religiosity versus atheism.

## NOTES

1 - Ion. D. Sîrbu, *Dansul ursului [The dance of the bear]*. București, Cartea Românească, 1988, p. 8. If "urs" means "bear" in Romanian, capitalized "Ursu" is familiar in local onomastics. Sîrbu's own nickname in the archives of the Secret Services, a routine procedure for both targeted individuals and agents, was "Ursu" or "Suru" [the grey one], an anecdotically yet meaningfully as they appear to post-communist readership.

2 - Ion. D. Sîrbu, *Dansul ursului [The dance of the bear]*. București,



Cartea Românească, 1988, p. 19. “Haiduk” equals a local bandit, familiar in numerous Romanian folkloric productions. The author of this paper has translated quotes from Sîrbu’s prose novels/or texts from critical sources from Romanian into English.

3 - Ion. D. Sîrbu, *Dansul ursului [The dance of the bear]*. București, Cartea Românească, 1988, p. 13.

4 - Maria Dărăbanț, I. D. Sîrbu - *An unlikely intellectual as self-portrayed in Adio, Europa! (I)* in “Dialogos”, vol XVIII, n.35/2018, pp. 196-206.

5 - Ioan Lascu, *Ion D. Sîrbu sau exemplaritatea unui destin [Ion D. Sîrbu or the Exemplariness of Destiny]* in “Convorbiri Literare”, 23 August 2016, <https://convorbiri-literare.ro/?p=6644> (accessed 20 May 2019).

6 - Clara Mareș, *Zidul de sticlă: Ion D. Sîrbu în arhivele Securității [The Glass Wall: Ion D. Sîrbu in the Archives of Securitate]*. București, Curtea Veche, 2011. “Securitate” is the Romanian term for secret services in communism.

7 - Clara Mareș, *The Glass Wall*, p. 189.

8 - Ada-Maria Ichim, “...a apreciat viața, cu puținul bine pe care i l-a dat”, interview with the author of the volume *The Glass Wall*. Ion D. Sîrbu in the archive of Securitate”, *Teatrul azi*, 15 April 2012, <https://www.teatrul-azi.ro/eveniment-editorial/clara-mares-%E2%80%9E%E2%80%A6a-apreciat-viata-cu-putinul-bine-pe-care-i-l-dat%E2%80%9C-interviu-realiza> (accessed 1 February 2020).

9 - Daniel Cristea-Enache, *Un om din Est [A Man from the East]*. București, Editura Curtea Veche, 2006.

10 - Daniel Cristea Enache, *A Man from the East*, p. 276.

11 - Patraș Antonio, *Ion D. Sîrbu. The Man behind Letters* in “Transilvania”, 10/2009, pp. 77-84.

12 - Antonio Patraș, *La răsăritul temniței. Despre suferință și revelațiile durerii [Eastward the Cell. About Suffering and the Revelations of Sorrow]*, in the volume of the National Conference “*Text și discurs religios [“Text and Religious Discourse”]*”, 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Editura Universității, Al. I. Cuza, Iași, 2009, pp 281-293.

12 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Traversarea cortinei: corespondență cu Ion Negoîtescu, Virgil Nemoianu, Mariana Șora [Crossing the Curtain: correspondence with Ion Negoîtescu, Virgil Nemoianu, Mariana Șora]*. Timișoara, Editura de Vest, 1994, pp.8-9.

- 13 - Gabriela Gavril, *De la „Manifest” la „Adio, Europa!”*. Cercul Literar de la Sibiu [From «Manifesto» to «Farewell, Europe!»]. The Literary Circle from Sibiu]. Iași, Ed. Universității, Al. I. Cuza, 2003.
- 14 - Gavril, *From «Manifesto» to «Farewell, Europe!»*. The Literary Circle from Sibiu, p. 257.
- 15 - Ruxandra Cesereanu - Clara Mareș Cosmineanu - Gheorghe Grigurcu - Ovidiu Pecican - Bogdan Crețu - Nicolae Oprea - Daniel Cristea-Enache - Luigi Bambulea - Sorina Sorescu - Ioan M. Tomuș - Iulia Ramona Teuțișan - Siviu Marn - Ion Barbu, *Dosar I. D. Sîrbu... între o generație care nu îl vrea și una care nu îl cunoaște*, [File I. D. Sîrbu... between One Generation Who Does Not Accept Him, and One Who Does Not Know Him] in “Verso”, anul 4, n. 71, 2009, pp.1-24.
- 16 - Ruxandra Cesereanu, *Distopias y alegorias sobre la Rumania comunista*, in “Revista Hélice”, vol. 4, n. 9, otoño-iverno 2018, pp 15-23.
- 17 - Alex Ștefănescu, *Istoria literaturii române contemporane: 1941-2000* [The History of the Contemporary Romanian Literature: 1941-2000]. București, Mașina de scris, 2005, p. 527.
- 18 - Alex Ștefănescu, *The History of the Contemporary Romanian Literature: 1941-2000*, p. 527.
- 19 - Magda Carneci, *Un grand romancier du communisme: Ion D. Sîrbu*, in “Studia Universitas Babeș-Bolyai”, Philologia, LIV 2, 2009, pp. 79-86.
- 20 - Anca Ursa, *Failed Recovery of Dissidence Literature in Romania. I. D. Sîrbu - An Exemplary Case*, in “Transylvanian Review”, vol. XXV, n. 2, Summer 2016, pp. 56-64.
- 21 - Andreia Suci, *A Totalitarian Regime Subverting Tradition - From George Orwell’s Modernity in “Nineteen EightyFour”, to Anthony Burgess’s Postmodernity in 1985 and the Romanian Reality of the 80’s* in I. D. Sîrbu’s “Farewell, Europe!”, in “Proceedings of the European Integration: Between Tradition And Modernity”, vol 5. Editura Universității “Petru Maior”, Târgu-Mureș, pp. 682-692, coord. Iulian Boldea, Cornel Sigmirean, 2013. <http://www.diacronia.ro/ro/indexing/details/A23420/pdf> (accessed 5 November 2019).
- 22 - Maria Dărăbanț, op.cit.
- 23 - The Greek term for dismemberment practised by Dionysus’ worshippers, see Patricia Vicari, *Sparagmos: Orpheus among the*

*Christians* in “Orpheus: The Metamorphoses of a Myth”, edited by John Warden, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Buffalo, London, 1982, pp. 63-84. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctvfrxfgt.7](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctvfrxfgt.7) (accessed 7 Jan. 2020).

**24** - *Orpheus in the Underground Descends to the Underworld in 20th-Century and Contemporary Literature*, in “Acta Universitatis Sapientiae”, *Philologica*, 7, 1 (2015) 45-54, DOI: 10.1515/ausp-2015-0034, p. 46.

**25** - Turkish “caftan”, denoting a full-length rather loose garment worn by nobles in the medieval or Ottoman era in the Romanian provinces until mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

**26** - “Osman” is a Turkish first name; “Ilderim” is associated with Bayazet II, known as “the lighting”, another hint to Ceaușescu as a supreme leader. “Surduc”, derived from Turkish “surduk”, stands for a steep and narrow valley, a suggestion to the space where Dezideriu endures his final test in Barzania, the territory of the secret police.

**27** - Nicolae Ceaușescu’s office was known as “Office One”, while Elena Ceaușescu’s was “Office Two”; “tut” (masculine) or “tută” (feminine) stands for “unintelligent” in colloquial speech. “Tutilă” One and Two stand as two brothers in the novel, number two being a local leader in Isarlâk, while the first was a party leader in the capital. The full name of the first brother is Ilie Tutilă, a potential hint to Ilie Verdeț from the central Party nomenclature. Though such names are suggestive for real politicians under the communist regime, some of the characters may, in fact, hold composite features as multi-layered constructs pointing to communist leaders. In contrast, Desideriu’s own mentor, Napocos is the appellative of the famous poet and philosopher Lucian Blaga; there are clear autobiographical elements presented in the narrative: similarly to Desiderius, Sîrbu had been working as Assistant Professor in Cluj-Napoca for three years, before he had spent seven years in prison for omitting to report on his mentor and his own ideas.

**28** - Maria Dărăbanț, *I. D. Sîrbu - an unlikely intellectual as self-portrayed in Adio, Europa! (I)*, in “Dialogos”, vol. XVIII, n.35/2018, pp. 199.

**29** - Gavril, *From «Manifesto» to «Farewell, Europe!»: The Literary Circle from Sibiu*. Iași, Ed. Universității, Al. I. Cuza, 2003, p. 299.

**30** - Charles B. Woods, *Notes on Three of Fielding’s Plays*, in “PMLA”,

vol. 52, n. 2 (Jun., 1937), pp. 359-373.

31 - Idem, p. 368.

32 - Idem, p. 368

33 - Idem, p. 368.

34 - Ada-Maria Ichim, *...a apreciat viața, cu pușinul bine pe care i l-a dat*, interview with the author of the volume *The Glass Wall*. Ion D. Sîrbu in the archive of Securitate, *Teatrul azi*, 15 April 2012, <https://www.teatrul-azi.ro/eveniment-editorial/clara-mares-%E2%80%9E%E2%80%A6a-apreciat-viata-cu-putinul-bine-pe-care-i-l-dat%E2%80%9C-interviu-realiza> (accessed 1 February 2020).

35 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 31.

36 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 177.

37 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 273.

38 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 223.

39 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 229.

40 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 190.

41 - Rome, suggesting the legacy of the Roman Empire; Vienna for its contribution to philosophy and ideas; and Paris for its cultural role and the support to unite the Romanian provinces in 1859 and 1918.

42 - I. D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 211.

43 - *Orpheus and the Roots of Platonism*. London, The Matheson Trust, 2011, p. 39.

44 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 141.

45 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 209.

46 - See Stefan Banz, *Arnold Böcklin: Die Toteninsel*, <https://banz.tv/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/stefan-banz-boecklin-the-isle-of-the-dead-03-03-14.pdf> (accessed 20 May 2019).

47 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 35.

48 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 225.

49 - During the era, all citizens were asked to provide a detailed biography; those whose close relatives had either left abroad or had been connected with former landowners, wealthy capitalists, entrepreneurs or political opponents, such as the liberals, for instance, could not get access to education or employment and were severely marginalized.

50 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 307.

51 - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 292.

52 - Horace, *Odes*, III, 30, 6: "Not all of me will die", <https://www.loeb->

classics.com/view/horace-odes/2004/pb\_LCL033.217.xml (accessed 23 May 2019).

**53** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 371.

**54** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 226.

**55** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 86.

**56** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 236.

**57** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 236.

**58** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 217.

**59** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 243.

**60** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 103. “Patalama” [pronounced ‘patalamá’], from Turkish “batalama”, stands for “diploma” or “certificate”, the reference being often ironical towards the quality of that particular training/programme.

**61** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I, p. 130.

**62** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 167.

**63** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 234.

**64** - Romanian “Barză” standing for “stork”, colloquial for secret agents, also suggesting their blue eyes or uniforms.

**65** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. I p. 113.

**66** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 187.

**67** - Ion D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*, vol. II, p. 187.

**68** - “Olympia spoke. Truth she spoke. And saved my soul,” I. D. Sîrbu, *Farewell, Europe!*. București, Cartea Românească, 1992, vol. I, p. 106.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Banz S.** *Arnold Böcklin: Die Toteninsel*, <https://banz.tv/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/stefan-banz-boecklin-the-isle-of-the-dead-03-03-14.pdf>. Accessed 20 May 2019.

**Carneci M.** *Un grand romancier du communisme: Ion D. Sîrbu* in “Studia Universitas Babeş-Bolyai”, *Philologia*, LIV 2, 2009, pp. 79-86.

**Cesereanu R. - Mareş Cosmineanu C. - Grigurcu G. - Pecican O. - Creţu B. - Oprea N. - Cristea-Enache D. - Bambulea L. - Sorescu S. - Tomuş I. M. - Teuţişan I. R. - Marn S. - Barbu I.** *Dosar I. D. Sîrbu... între o generaţie care nu îl vrea şi una care nu îl cunoaşte* [File I. D. Sîrbu... between One Generation Who Does Not Accept Him, and One Who Does Not Know Him”] *Verso*, anul 4, nr. 71, 2009, pp.1-24.

**Cristea-Enache D.** *Un om din Est [A Man from the East]*. Bucureşti, Editura Curtea Veche, 2006.

**Cesereanu R.** *Distopias y alegorias sobre la Rumania* in “Revista Hélice”, vol. 4, n. 9, otoño-iverno 2018, pp 15-23.

**Dărăbanţ M. I. D.** *Sîrbu - An unlikely intellectual as self-portrayed* in “Adio, Europa! (I), *Dialogos*”, vol. XVIII, n.35/2018, pp. 196-206.

**Gavril G.** *De la “Manifest” la “Adio, Europa!”*. Cercul Literar de la Sibiu [From «Manifesto» to «Farewell, Europe!»]. The Literary Circle from Sibiu]. Iaşi, Ed. Universităţii, Al. I. Cuza, 2003.

**Horace O.** *III, 30*, [https://www.loebclassics.com/view/horace-odes/2004/pb\\_LCL033.217.xml](https://www.loebclassics.com/view/horace-odes/2004/pb_LCL033.217.xml) (accessed 23 May 2019).

**Ichim A.-M.** *...a apreciat viaţa, cu puţinul bine pe care i l-a dat* [“He has appreciated life, with the least good it provided him”, interview with the author of the volume «The Glass Wall. Ion D. Sîrbu in the archive of Securitate», Teatrul azi, 15 April 2012, <https://www.teatrul-azi.ro/eveniment-editorial/clara-mares-%E2%80%9E%E2%80%A6a-apreciat-viata-cu-putinul-bine-pe-care-i-l-dat%E2%80%9C-interviu-rea-liza> (accessed 1 February 2020).

**Lascu I.** *Ion D. Sîrbu sau exemplaritatea unui destin* [“Ion D. Sîrbu or the Exemplariness of Destiny”], *Convorbiri Literare*, 23 August 2016, <https://convorbiri-literare.ro/?p=6644> (accessed 20 May 2019).

**Mareş C.** *Zidul de sticlă: Ion D. Sîrbu în arhivele Securităţii* [The Glass Wall: Ion D. Sîrbu in the Archives of Securitate]. Bucureşti, Curtea Veche, 2011.

**Patraş A.** *Ion D. Sîrbu. The Man behind Letters*. Transilvania, n. 10/2009, pp. 77-84.

**Patraş A.** *La răsăritul temniţei. Despre suferinţă şi revelaţiile durerii* [At the East of the Cell. About Suffering and the Revelations of Sorrow], in the Volume of the National Conference Text şi discurs religios. Text and Religious Discourse], 1st edition. Iaşi, Editura Universităţii, “Al. I. Cuza”, 2009, pp 281-293.

**Puskás D.** *Orpheus in the Underground Descents to the Underworld in 20th-Century and Contemporary Literature*, Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Philologica, 7, 1 (2015) 45-54, DOI: 10.1515/ausp-2015-0034, pp. 45-54.

**Sîrbu I. D.** *Adio, Europa!* [Farewell, Europe!]. Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, Vol. I and II.

**Sîrbu I. D.** *Dansul ursului* [The dance of the bear]. Bucureşti, Cartea Românească, 1988.

**Sîrbu I. D.** *Traversarea cortinei: corespondenţă cu Ion Negoïtescu, Virgil Nemoianu, Mariana Şora* [Crossing the Curtain: correspondence with Ion Negoïtescu, Virgil Nemoianu, Mariana Şora]. Timişoara, Editura de Vest, 1994.

**Suciu A.** *A Totalitarian Regime Subverting Tradition - From George Orwell's Modernity in 'Nineteen Eighty Four', to Anthony Burgess's Postmodernity in '1985' and the Romanian Reality of the 80's in 'I. D. Sîrbu's 'Farewell, Europe!'*, in Proceedings of the European Integration: Between Tradition And Modernity”, vol. 5. Editura Universitatii “Petru Maior”, Târgu-Mureş, pp. 682-692, coord. Iulian Boldea, Cornel Sigmirean, 2013. <http://www.diacronia.ro/ro/indexing/details/A23420/pdf> (accessed 5 November 2019).

**Ştefănescu A.** *Istoria literaturii române contemporane: 1941-2000* [The History of the Contemporary Romanian Literature: 1941-2000]. Bucureşti, Maşina de scris, 2005.

**Ursa A.** *The Failed Recovery of Dissidence Literature in Romania I. D. Sîrbu - An Exemplary Case* in “Transylvanian Review”, vol. XXV, n. 2, Summer 2016, pp. 56-64.

**Uždavinys A.** *Orpheus and the Roots of Platonism*. London, The Matheson Trust, 2011.

**Vicari P.** *Sparagmos: Orpheus among the Christians* in “Orpheus: The Metamorphoses of a Myth” edited by John Warden. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Buffalo, London, 1982, pp. 63-84. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctvfrxfgt.7](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctvfrxfgt.7) (accessed 7 january 2020).

**Woods C. B.** *Notes on Three of Fielding's Plays*, PMLA, vol. 52, n. 2 (Jun., 1937), pp. 359-373.



## IL PELLEGRINAGGIO DI EGERIA. UN PONTE TRA ORIENTE E OCCIDENTE

*Monica Ricciardi*  
(Ricercatrice indipendente)

Il racconto di Egeria\* costituisce una testimonianza straordinaria dei pellegrinaggi compiuti da una viaggiatrice temeraria, vissuta nel mondo della tarda antichità<sup>1</sup>.

Alla fine del IV secolo d.C., la pellegrina, presumibilmente originaria della Galizia (*Hispania Citerior* o *Tarraconensis*), partendo dall'estremo occidente, con un viaggio certamente impegnativo, ha raggiunto l'Egitto e la Palestina, spinta dal desiderio di scoprire le radici della fede cristiana (Fig.1).

Il diario dei suoi viaggi, giunto fino ai nostri giorni attraverso la tradizione manoscritta, ha suscitato notevole interesse nel mondo accademico, sia per le caratteristiche letterarie e linguistiche sia per l'argomento trattato. Dal momento della scoperta del manoscritto, avvenuta alla fine del XIX secolo, gli studiosi ne hanno fornito diverse interpretazioni finché si è giunti all'ipotesi più plausibile sulla cronologia e sulla paternità del testo<sup>2</sup>.

L'*Itinerarium*, un diario anonimo di un pellegrinaggio in oriente, fu scoperto nel 1884 da Gian Francesco Gamurrini in un codice di una biblioteca di Arezzo (l'*Aretinus*, manoscritto n. 405, VI,3) proveniente dall'Abbazia di Montecassino<sup>3</sup>. Il codice aretino, in scrittura beneventana dell'XI secolo, costituisce l'unico testimone diretto dell'*Itinerarium*, privo della parte iniziale (*incipit* e titolo) e della fine e con alcune lacune nel testo. Questo documento, secondo la maggior parte degli studiosi, era noto a Pietro Diacono, il quale all'inizio del XII, per comporre un'opera sulla Terra Santa, avrebbe raccolto notizie da alcuni scritti, attingendo presumibilmente allo stesso codice aretino, più integro, o a un altro manoscritto sconosciuto<sup>4</sup>. La fonte indiretta più significativa del-

\*Ringrazio il collega e amico Leonardo Di Blasi che con grande disponibilità mi ha supportato nell'elaborazione grafica delle figure a corredo di questo testo.

l'*Itinerarium*, segnalata all'inizio del secolo scorso dal Férotin, risalirebbe, invece, alla fine del VII secolo<sup>5</sup>. Nella lettera indirizzata da un monaco-asceta galiziano, Valerio della regione del Bierzo (attuale distretto di Leon in Galizia), ai suoi confratelli (forse del monastero di San Pedro de Montes), datata intorno al 680, è presente infatti l'esortazione a prendere come loro modello le straordinarie doti spirituali della "beatissima Egeria superiore in coraggio a tutti gli uomini del suo tempo" che "con intrepido cuore, intraprese un viaggio interminabile attraverso tutto il mondo"<sup>6</sup>.

L'epistola del monaco Valerio, dal tono particolarmente enfatico, costituisce un documento preziosissimo che ha permesso di completare le informazioni sugli spostamenti della pellegrina nelle regioni orientali (il monaco disponeva infatti di un testo più completo del manoscritto aretino) e soprattutto di recuperare con sicurezza il nome dell'autrice dell'*Itinerarium*, seppure con minime variazioni riportate nei diversi codici, dei quali cinque antichi, attraverso cui è stata tramandata la lettera (*Egeria*, *Eiheria*, *Echeria*, *Heteria*, *Etheria*).

In un primo momento, si era ipotizzato, invece, di identificare la pellegrina con Silvania, originaria della Gallia (S. Silvia d'Aquitania), di cui parla Palladio nella *Historia Lausiaca*, sorella o cognata di Rufino, il ministro di Teodosio I (379-395) e di Arcadio (377-408) oppure addirittura con Galla Placidia, figlia di Teodosio I (379-395)<sup>7</sup>.

Riguardo lo status di Egeria, definita *beatissima sanctimonialis* nella lettera di Valerio (in testi più tardi abbatissa), in assenza di altre prove, l'ipotesi che si tratti di una monaca resta la più plausibile, anche se non si può escludere lo stato laicale. Di certo doveva appartenere ad una classe elevata se si considerano i larghi mezzi finanziari necessari per compiere un viaggio così impegnativo e gli onori con cui venne ricevuta da monaci e presbiteri, ma anche da alcuni vescovi. La presenza di una scorta militare, attestata soltanto in alcuni punti del viaggio, nei luoghi presidati

dall'esercito romano, resi insicuri dalla minaccia di eventuali predoni, non sembrerebbe riguardare, invece, l'alto rango del personaggio e non indicherebbe il pericolo di guerre<sup>8</sup>.

La pellegrina possedeva una approfondita conoscenza biblica e un grande interesse per la dimensione religiosa e spirituale che non sembrano escludere, come alcuni hanno sostenuto, una formazione culturale di base classica. Gli studi linguistici e filologici hanno permesso di mettere in luce le diverse sfumature del linguaggio usato, molto vicino alla lingua parlata, come è ovvio per il genere del racconto epistolare (presenti nel testo iberismi, gallicismi ma anche grecismi). L'uso del latino tardo, semplice e diretto, è arricchito da richiami biblici e citazioni testuali, dalla presenza di vocaboli talvolta ricercati e da puntuali riferimenti geografici, da cui emerge, il profilo dell'autrice, certamente di non basso livello<sup>9</sup>.

Lo spirito intraprendente e il temperamento esuberante della donna si riscontrano, invece, soprattutto nelle notevoli facoltà decisionali che dimostra di possedere e nella grande libertà di movimento di cui può godere. Il diario riesce a trasmettere forti emozioni e un notevole slancio spirituale e, allo stesso tempo, stupisce per la concretezza e il pragmatismo, soprattutto quando la pellegrina non indugia, se necessario, a modificare, di tappa in tappa, il percorso previsto. Emerge dal testo un forte sentimento di pietà religiosa sempre unito a una profonda sete di conoscenza e al desiderio di visitare i luoghi prescelti lungo il cammino. L'interesse e la curiosità della pellegrina, lei stessa si definisce una persona curiosa<sup>10</sup>, ed è anche questo un aspetto peculiare della sua personalità, si manifestano nella capacità, che le è propria, di redigere programmi dettagliati di viaggio e nella scelta puntuale e accurata degli itinerari.

La contemplazione estatica del paesaggio, le numerose occasioni di incontro, di cui sono riportati i dialoghi, le dettagliate descrizioni delle usanze delle chiese locali e soprattutto delle feste liturgiche della comunità Gerusalemme, a cui Egeria ha potuto

partecipare, sono tra gli aspetti più vivaci e caratteristici delle pagine del diario<sup>11</sup>.

Attraverso l'esperienza del viaggio la pellegrina riesce a soddisfare le aspettative più profonde del proprio percorso spirituale: verificare per conoscenza diretta ciò che aveva appreso dalla lettura dei testi sacri. Lo scopo del diario è dunque nel valore della testimonianza. Con la descrizione autoptica dei luoghi visitati, Egeria intende trasmettere alle consorelle, le *dominae sorores*, destinatarie del testo, la forza e la veridicità delle esperienze vissute<sup>12</sup>.

La data del viaggio e la cronologia dello scritto è alquanto controversa: gli ultimi studi collocano il periodo centrale del pellegrinaggio tra la Pasqua del 381 e la Pasqua del 384, e la composizione del diario presumibilmente nel 384, parte a Costantinopoli e parte a Gerusalemme<sup>13</sup>.

Il testo che è giunto fino a noi descrive il periodo finale del pellegrinaggio di Egeria, tra dicembre del 383 e giugno del 384, e comprende quattro viaggi con partenza da Gerusalemme (Fig. 2). Del primo viaggio, in Egitto, si conserva la descrizione dell'ultima parte del percorso di andata con l'arrivo al Monte Sinai e il ritorno a Gerusalemme (Capitoli 1-9; Figg. 3-5); il secondo viaggio, attraverso le regioni al di là del fiume Giordano, aveva come meta il Monte Nebo (Capitoli 10-12; Fig. 6); il terzo, nella regione dell'Idumea, in direzione della valle del fiume Corra (Capitoli 13-16; Fig. 7); il quarto, infine, in Mesopotamia di Siria, a Seleucia, con ritorno a Costantinopoli (Capitoli 17-23; Figg. 8-9).

Non si conserva, invece, la descrizione del viaggio di andata da Costantinopoli a Gerusalemme (Figg. 1-2). Sulla base delle fonti indirette e di qualche cenno presente nel testo si riesce a ricostruire il percorso attraverso l'Egitto, nella Tebaide e in Palestina fino alla Galilea. Le tappe dell'itinerario coincidono con i luoghi della geografia biblica, sulle orme di Mosè e del Popolo di Israele e nel paese di Giobbe, e costituiscono i diversi momenti del percorso spirituale compiuto dalla pellegrina Egeria come una sorta di

“memoriale” e di liturgia itinerante.

Particolarmente suggestiva la rappresentazione del paesaggio: i deserti (quello del Feran, accanto al Mar Rosso, capitolo VI, 1), gli imponenti massicci montuosi (del Sinai e del Nebo) e le fertili vallate irrigate dai corsi d’acqua (la terra di Gessen, lungo il Wadi Tumilat del delta del Nilo e le valli del Giordano e del Corra), vengono descritti con una straordinaria attenzione ai particolari e una sensibilità vicina al gusto moderno<sup>14</sup>. Le bellezze del paesaggio, infatti, appaiono allo sguardo della pellegrina, come lo scorrere delle immagini nelle riprese video, in modo inaspettato, e generano stupore e meraviglia: gli scorci tra le montagne, la vista del mare, le pianure sconfinite<sup>15</sup>.

Nel procedere lento del viaggio, in gran parte a dorso di animali ma anche a piedi nei tratti montuosi più impervi (come il Sinai e il Monte Nebo), l’ambiente naturale costituisce un elemento imprescindibile dell’esperienza vissuta. È la geografia che fa da sfondo ai fatti narrati, a legare idealmente la pellegrina alle vicende bibliche che si svolsero negli stessi luoghi, quelli appunto della memoria storica dell’Antico e del Nuovo Testamento. La fatica e l’impegno fisico, che un viaggio di questo genere comportava, sono più volte ricordati: la pellegrina, sempre protesa verso nuove mete, si mostra pronta ad affrontare difficoltà di ogni tipo pur di raggiungere gli obiettivi prefissati. È particolarmente significativo, infatti, che lo scritto si chiuda con il proposito di intraprendere un nuovo pellegrinaggio, a Efeso, per visitare il santuario dell’apostolo Giovanni.

Le soste previste durante il percorso, in alcuni casi prolungate anche per più giorni, necessarie per riprendere le forze e per proseguire verso le successive tappe del cammino, rappresentano, in alcuni casi, dei momenti particolarmente significativi arricchiti dalle esperienze di preghiera e dalle occasioni di incontro. Sono proprio i particolari inerenti al viaggio, inoltre, come la scelta dei percorsi più adatti, i tempi previsti per le tappe diurne e notturne (le *mansiones*), cui spesso l’autrice fa cenno, che conferiscono al

racconto concretezza, vivacità e singolare modernità.

Gli incontri che si svolgono nei luoghi di sosta avvengono sempre in un clima di preghiera, amicizia fraterna e calorosa accoglienza. I monaci, dai loro eremitaggi, accolgono la pellegrina e il gruppo che viaggia con lei, quest'ultimo composto dagli 'uomini di Dio', come Egeria usa chiamarli, nei quali si possono forse riconoscere altri monaci oppure chierici o semplicemente fratelli nella fede. Non di rado i monaci più giovani si rendono disponibili ad accompagnare la pellegrina e talvolta si uniscono al gruppo con il ruolo di guide affidabili e premurose; nel percorso da Gerusalemme a Gerico sono accompagnati, inoltre, da un presbitero e dai diaconi (capitolo 10,3).

La lettura dei passi corrispondenti tratti dai libri della Sacra Scrittura accompagnava la visita ai luoghi venerati, secondo lo schema reiterato della liturgia itinerante. Questi momenti erano spesso accompagnati dallo scambio di doni, così durante la visita al Monte Sinai e al Monte Nebo e presso Charra, vicino al luogo dove era venerato il pozzo di Giacobbe. Le generose offerte, le *eulogiae*, cioè i frutti donati dai monaci o dai presbiteri (dal significato fortemente simbolico visto che la stessa parola, di origine greca, indicava la parte restante del pane offerto per l'eucarestia e aveva anche il significato di benedizione e di consacrazione), sono molto apprezzate dalla pellegrina che con spirito di gratitudine loda l'ingegnosa capacità produttiva dei monaci<sup>16</sup>. Alcuni di loro, infatti, mostravano una particolare perizia nel coltivare le piccole pianure in prossimità degli eremi, anche nei luoghi più aridi, ai piedi dei monti; attività che svolgevano per provvedere al proprio sostentamento.

I monasteri visitati da Egeria, nella maggior parte dei casi, avevano le caratteristiche di eremitaggi più o meno estesi che solitamente erano ubicati nelle immediate vicinanze di un edificio di culto, anche se di piccole dimensioni, dove un presbitero prestava servizio. Sul Monte Sinai, ad esempio, oltre ai monasteri e agli eremitaggi, vi erano ben quattro chiese. Una si trovava ai piedi

della montagna, presso l'eremo in cui la pellegrina aveva sostato la notte prima di salire sulla cima; un altro edificio, più piccolo, dedicato al profeta Elia, era ubicato più in alto; nell'area dove poi fu costruito, nel VI secolo (557), al tempo di Giustiniano, il monastero dedicato alla madre di Dio e alla Trasfigurazione e successivamente a Santa Caterina di Alessandria, una martire della persecuzione di Diocleziano (284-305), si trovava, infine, un'altra chiesa, quella della grotta del roveto ardente di Mosè (capitolo 4, 7).

Le descrizioni di questi edifici, di alcuni dei quali, come ovvio, al giorno d'oggi non è più riconoscibile l'aspetto originario, e le notizie riguardanti le attività svolte dei monaci e dai presbiteri, soprattutto in riferimento alla cura dei santuari e dei *martyria* e al servizio dell'accoglienza dei pellegrini, rivelano un notevole interesse storico e archeologico.

Nei villaggi e nei centri maggiori, come ad esempio a Edessa, dove Egeria visita una grande chiesa che era stata oggetto di un recente rifacimento, alcuni monaci abitavano vicino ai cimiteri, più prossimi alla città, altri vivevano negli eremitaggi più lontani. I cimiteri, inoltre, erano solitamente attigui alle chiese dove officiavano i presbiteri e abitavano i chierici.

Nel quarto pellegrinaggio, in Mesopotamia di Siria, Egeria incontra i vescovi delle città di Bathna, Edessa e Harran (Charris), definiti confessori, dunque testimoni della fede durante la persecuzione. Il riferimento alla persecuzione ha permesso di identificare i tre personaggi, con Abraham, Eulogio e Protogene, tutti e tre colpiti dalla persecuzione ariana dell'imperatore Valente (364-378), alla quale erano sopravvissuti meritando il titolo di *confessor*, e contemporaneamente vescovi delle rispettive città dal 381 al 387. È questo un dato interessante per la cronologia dell'*Itinerarium* insieme all'esplicito termine *post quem* deducibile dal colloquio con il vescovo di Harran. Da quest'ultimo, infatti, Egeria aveva appreso che la città di Nisibi, al di là del Tigri, non faceva più parte dell'impero romano, essendo passata sotto il controllo

dei Persiani, cosa che avvenne nel 363 sotto l'imperatore Gioviano (363-364).

L'ultima parte dell'opera, sulla liturgia di Gerusalemme, costituisce, infine, una fonte imprescindibile per lo studio dei monumenti e della liturgia della Terra Santa. I particolari sullo svolgimento delle processioni quotidiane, feriali e domenicali e in occasione delle celebrazioni per le feste religiose dell'anno liturgico, forniscono, infatti, numerose informazioni utili per la ricostruzione degli edifici costantiniani e, in particolare, per il Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme, il cui aspetto è fortemente mutato nei secoli.

Le ipotesi ricostruttive proposte dagli archeologi sulla disposizione originaria dell'interno degli edifici che componevano il complesso costantiniano del Santo Sepolcro si basano, dunque, in gran parte, sulle descrizioni del testo di Egeria<sup>17</sup>. In particolare risulta controversa l'ubicazione dei due ordini di cancelli menzionati più volte nel testo per descrivere il percorso compiuto dal vescovo, dal presbitero e dal popolo durante le liturgie. I fedeli, infatti, si radunavano nella basilica della Risurrezione (la rotonda dell'*Anastasis*), nell'*ecclesia maior* e nell'ampio spazio del Triportico, i tre edifici che costituiscono il complesso del Santo Sepolcro (Fig. 10). Nell'*Anastasis*, un cancello, più interno, proteggeva la grotta o cavità del sepolcro mentre, un altro cancello, sul cui andamento gli studiosi non sono concordi, era collocato forse più all'esterno. Sono, inoltre, diverse le ipotesi riguardo l'ubicazione di uno spazio (nella basilica del *Martyrion* o in un ambiente annesso alla *ecclesia maior*?) che veniva occupato nelle processioni del giovedì e del venerdì Santo dall'*Anastasis* alle reliquie della croce (la roccia del Calvario su cui si alzava la Croce) con soste *ante Crucem* e *post Crucem*. Un altro aspetto controverso è quello relativo all'uso del termine basilica che forse indicava l'*ecclesia maior* oppure i portici ovvero un diverso edificio (forse esterno?). Le ipotesi per la ricostruzione dell'area del Triportico e per determinare l'ubicazione del battistero nell'ambito del complesso gerosolimitano si basano sul con-



fronto con fonti diverse, in particolare, i testi di Eusebio di Cesarea e di Cirillo, vescovo di Gerusalemme dal 347.

Il racconto di Egeria, inoltre, è risultato determinante per l'identificazione del memoriale di Mosè sul Monte Nebo e per chiarire l'interpretazione di alcune fonti romano-bizantine. La pellegrina visita sul luogo una piccola chiesa che fu presumibilmente inglobata dall'edificio tricono, più grande, portato in luce dagli scavi; della chiesa più antica si conservano dei mosaici<sup>18</sup>.

Nel complesso emerge un quadro di insieme di importanza non trascurabile per la conoscenza del mondo cristiano antico. I riferimenti ai vescovi, ai presbiteri, ai monaci, la menzione di chiese e di insediamenti monastici, di antichi edifici e di tombe e la qualità eccezionale dei dati topografici e geografici, con nomi e notizie di città, di presidii e fortificazioni militari, offrono spunti eccezionali per diversi ambiti di ricerca. Dati interessanti si sono ricavati, in particolare, dallo studio linguistico e filologico del testo, dalla ricostruzione storica ed archeologica dei contesti descritti e dalle numerose informazioni che hanno notevolmente arricchito le conoscenze su gli usi liturgici delle antiche chiese orientali.

Il viaggio di Egeria, come è noto, si inserisce nel fenomeno più ampio del pellegrinaggio in Terra Santa, che stando alla testimonianza di Eusebio, coinvolgeva i cristiani provenienti da tutto il mondo (*Dimostrazione evangelica* 6, 18, 23). Sull'esempio della madre di Costantino, la prima pellegrina sui luoghi santi di Palestina, presumibilmente intorno al 326 (Eusebio, *Vita di Costantino* 3,42), hanno intrapreso questa suggestiva esperienza, certamente difficile e pericolosa, anche altre donne illustri e prevalentemente di ambito monastico<sup>19</sup>. Infatti, ad eccezione del pellegrino di Bordeaux, che visitò i luoghi santi nel 333 d.C., qualche anno dopo l'Augusta Elena, del cui viaggio si conserva un racconto abbastanza dettagliato, le descrizioni degli altri pellegrinaggi hanno come protagoniste figure femminili dal temperamento forte e coraggioso. La presenza femminile in Terra Santa è dunque ampia-

mente documentata nella letteratura cristiana dell'epoca, tanto che Gregorio di Nissa (fratello di Santa Macrina), riferendosi in particolare alle monache, ha ritenuto opportuno scoraggiare questo tipo di viaggi, ritenendoli non adatti per le religiose. Oltre al rischio oggettivo di situazioni contingenti che avrebbero favorito la promiscuità, la pratica del pellegrinaggio, secondo il suo giudizio, avrebbe alimentato forme di culto poco legate più agli aspetti concreti e materiali dei luoghi che al loro significato spirituale. Tra le figure femminili, prima fra tutte, Eutropia (madre di Fausta, la moglie di Costantino - cfr. Sozomeno, *Storia Ecclesiastica*, 2,4), Melania - la giovane - Paola e sua figlia Eustochio, queste ultime legate all'ambiente monastico di Girolamo (S. Girolamo, *In memoria di Paola*), il quale descrive nel dettaglio il loro viaggio in Terra Santa<sup>20</sup>.

Nel caso di Egeria è singolare che sia lei stessa a scrivere: una donna viaggiatrice, alla fine del mondo antico, racconta in prima persona le emozioni suscitate dal viaggio e le esperienze vissute. Il diario che ci ha lasciato è, per diversi aspetti, un documento unico, ma soprattutto un testo coinvolgente dal punto di vista dell'esperienza umana.

## NOTE

1 - Tra i contributi abbastanza recenti che forniscono un inquadramento storico sul personaggio di Egeria e, in generale, sui pellegrinaggi nell'antichità, oltre quelli del Fabrini (Fabrini, 1990, pp. 21-75) e del Cardini (Cardini, 1997, pp. 257-273, in partic. pp. 261-262; Cardini, 1990, pp. 333-353; Cardini 1989, pp. 3-30), si vedano: Bartolozzi - Casti 2015, pp. 32-50 e Bisconti, 2013, pp.129-133.

2 - Le edizioni del diario di Egeria sono dotate, nella maggior parte dei casi, di un ampio apparato critico e di una ricca bibliografia di riferi-

mento. In particolare si vedano: Petré, 1948 (ristampe del 1957, 1964, 1971, 1975); Maraval, 1982; Siniscalco 1985 (ristampa del 2000); Natalucci, 1991; Giannarelli, 1992; Wilkinson, 2002.

**3** - Gamurrini, 1884, pp. 81-107. Per un approfondimento sugli aspetti inerenti la storia del manoscritto e la struttura del testo si vedano, in particolare, i contributi del convegno organizzato ad Arezzo nel 1987 in occasione del centenario della pubblicazione del *Codex Aretinus* (Melani, 1990, pp. 85-91; Campana, 1990, pp. 77-108; Smiraglia, 1990, pp. 93-108; Milani, 1990, pp. 109-135).

**4** - Il trattato di Pietro Diacono, bibliotecario di Montecassino nel XII secolo, riveste un'importanza notevole perché ha contribuito, almeno in parte, a ricostruire le lacune del codice aretino (cfr. Weber, 1975).

**5** - Férotin, 1903, pp. 367-397.

**6** - García, 1910, pp. 377-385; Natalucci, 1983, pp. 3-24. Per il testo della lettera del monaco Valerio, cfr. PL, vol. LXXXVII, coll. 421-426.

**7** - Fabbrini, 1990, pp. 26-27.

**8** - Sul personaggio di Egeria in generale, cfr. Giannarelli, 1992, pp. 32-43.

**9** - In generale, sulle problematiche linguistiche cfr. Milani, 1990, pp. 109-135, con ampia bibliografia di riferimento.

**10** - Capitolo 16,3: “... *Tun ego, ut sum satis curiosa, requiere coepi, quae esset haec vallis, ubi sanctus monachus nunc monasterium sibi fecissset, non enim putabam hoc sine causa esse*” (...Allora io, siccome sono molto curiosa, cominciai a chiedere che valle fosse quella in cui un santo monaco si era fatto un eremitaggio; non pensavo che ciò fosse senza ragione).

**11** - La seconda parte del testo è interamente dedicata alla descrizione della liturgia della chiesa di Gerusalemme (capitoli 23-49).

**12** - Capitolo 3, 8 “... *Illud autem vos volo scire, dominae venerabiles sorores...*” (Questo io voglio che voi sappiate, signore sorelle venerabili).

**13** - Siniscalco - Scarampi, 1985, pp. 27-30; Giannarelli, 1992, pp. 42-47.

**14** - Capitolo 1,5: «*Mons autem ipse per giro quidem unus esse videtur; intus autem quod ingrederis, plures sunt, sed totum mons Dei appellatur; specialis autem ille, in cuius summitate est hic locus, ubi descendit ma-*

*iestas Dei, sicut scriptum est, in medio illorum omnium est»* (La montagna poi vista dall'intorno dà l'impressione di essere una sola; quando però vi entri dentro, sono più picchi; ma tutto l'insieme è chiamato monte di Dio; quella cima speciale, sulla cui sommità è questo luogo in cui *discese la maestà di Dio*, come sta scritto si trova al centro di tutte le altre).

**15** - Capitolo 1, 1: "... *Interea ambulantes pervenimus ad quendam locum, ubi se tamen montes illi, inter quos ibamus, aperiebant et faciebant vallem infinitam, ingens, planissima et valde pulchram, et trans vallem apparebat mons sanctus Dei Sina*" (...Poi a piedi siamo arrivati a un luogo in cui quei monti, fra cui passavamo, si aprivano e formavano una valle senza fine, immensa, tutta pianeggiante e bellissima, al di là della valle appariva il monte santo di Dio, il Sinai).

**16** - Sul significato di questi particolari doni, cfr. Siniscalco - Scarampi, 1985, p. 53.

**17** - Corbo, pp. 1981-1982; Testini, 1983, pp. 451-460; Tolotti, 1986, pp. 471-512; Corbo, 1988, pp. 59-66; Testini, 1990, pp. 215-230.

**18** - Piccirillo, 1990, pp.193-214.

**19** - Maraval, 1990, pp. 315-331; Cardini, 1990, pp. 333-341; Giannarelli, 1992, pp. 9-27; Bartolozzi - Casti, 2015, pp. 32-50; Bisconti, 2013, pp.129-133.

**20** - Giannarelli, 1992, pp. 46-47; Cardini, 1997, pp. 257-273, con bibliografia relativa e puntuali riferimenti alle fonti.

## Sintesi del pellegrinaggio di Egeria

### 4 pellegrinaggi (Fig. 2)

Itinerario estesissimo, qualità eccezionale dei dati topografici e geografici con nomi e notizie di città, di città fortificate, di monti e valli di strade e mansiones, di mari e di fiumi, di province e di regioni, di chiese di monasteri, monumenti, rovine, tombe, incontri con monaci, presbiteri, vescovi, scambio di doni, liturgie, preghiere, comunione, offerte, ecc.. ritualità ben definita che si ripete in ogni luogo (lettura della sacra bibbia, preghiere, offerte, comunione e scambio di doni, *eulogias*).

### 1° pellegrinaggio (Figg. 3-5)

*Monte Sinai con ritorno a Gerusalemme attraverso la terra di Gessen/Gosen o Heroopolis/Hero (capp. 1-9): 16 dicembre 383 - 7 gennaio 384.*

Nell'attraversare la località kibrot-Taava (sepolcri dell'ingordigia) e la vallata di er-Râha (il riposo) e nell'ascesa al Sinai ricorda gli episodi biblici dell'A.T. delle quaglie, dell'ascesa di Mosè al monte per le tavole della legge, del vitello d'oro, di Mosè che pascolava le greggi del suocero, del roveto ardente non nell'ordine della sequenza biblica ma secondo la geografia del cammino compiuto. Il suo percorso non coincide con quello della salita attuale che parte dal versante del monastero di Santa Caterina (lato roveto ardente) da dove lei invece scende. Il Sinai e L'Oreb, che costituiscono lo stesso monte, sono considerati, come si credeva, due vette distinte. L'anfiteatro di montagne con al centro il monte principale (visibile solo dall'alto) doveva apparire da valle una sola montagna. La sosta per la notte, prima dell'ascesa mattutina, avviene presso un eremo non lontano da una chiesa. Presenza di numerosi monaci, eremi, chiese e presbiteri sia nella salita sia nella strada di discesa. *Monasteria- monachi* (tanti) - *ecclesiae* (4 chiese, una alla partenza, una piccola in vetta, una sull'Oreb - oggi chiesa di Elia - e una al roveto dove poi verrà costruito al tempo di Giustiniano il monastero dedicato alla madre di Dio e alla Trasfigurazione e poi a Santa Caterina, martire egiziana della persecuzione di Diocleziano con la tradizione degli angeli che avrebbero portato sulla cima del Sinai il suo corpo) - *presbyteri* (sul Sinai anche un venerando monaco, poi diventato presbitero). I presbiteri della chiesa in cima offrono doni, frutti delle loro coltivazioni. Alcuni di questi uomini di Dio (i più giovani e in forze)

prendono parte al pellegrinaggio seguendo, per alcuni tratti, Egeria e gli uomini che l'accompagnano.

In viaggio verso Clysmā (riva, lido dal greco) ripercorrendo la strada dell'andata (Fig. 4): Tappa di Faran regione desertica, città con sede vescovile forse dal 400, quindi dopo il viaggio di Egeria (alla fine del VII secolo il suo vescovo Teodoro fu condannato dal concilio di Costantinopoli del 681 e la sede nel IX secolo fu trasferita a Santa Caterina); 4 tappe notturne (*mansiones*) per totali 200km (7 giorni di cammino con 6 *mansiones* intermedie), a nord nel deserto di Faran, sulle rive del M. Rosso, tra Arandara e Maran e a Maran. Egeria vuole ripercorrere le tappe del popolo di Israele ma compie un errore di interpretazione del libro dei Numeri (deserto di Paran è a nord-est nella penisola sinaitica). Da Clysmā (per il popolo di Israele luogo del passaggio del Mar Rosso) una sosta ad Oton-Etam, partiti da Succot e prima ancora da Ramse, alla città di Arabia (4 tappe nel deserto con distaccamenti di soldati e ufficiali, scorta da un forte all'altro) (Fig. 5). Epauleo, Magdalo, forte con ufficiale e guarnigione militare dell'autorità romana; Pithom costruita dagli Ebrei. Si fermano a Heroonpolis (Hero che coincide con Gessen?) lungo un braccio del fiume Nilo (Wadi Tumilat) e ad Arabia per 2 giorni (Phacusa) nella terra di Gessen (Gosen). Incontro con il vescovo di Arabia molto anziano anche lui fu monaco, nel giorno della vigilia della festa dell'Epifania con veglia nella chiesa. Congedati i soldati e arrivo a Tatnis (Egeria la scambia per Tanis dove si diceva fosse nato Mosè). Arrivo a Pelusio (città antichissima dal VII a.C., porto commerciale, centro militare e sede arcivescovile) poi altre tappe lungo la via del mare e ritorno a Gerusalemme.

## 2° pellegrinaggio (febbraio 384) (Fig. 6)

*Al di là del Giordano oltre la città di Livias fino al monte Nebo (capp. 10-12).*

Partenza da Gerusalemme con un presbitero, diaconi di Gerusalemme e alcuni monaci verso il punto in cui gli ebrei attraversarono il Giordano (luogo importante visitato anche da altri pellegrini). Attraversamento del fiume Giordano e arrivo a Livias (luogo degli accampamenti di Israele; luogo dove Mosè scrisse il Deuteronomio e benedisse i figli di Israele; città romana da Erode Antipa figlio di Erode il grande che dominò la Galilea e che chiamò come la moglie dell'imperatore, centro

militare e commerciale). Preghiera, lettura, salmo, preghiera prima di partire secondo la sequenza che si ripeterà sempre (liturgia di viaggio). Sono accompagnati da un presbitero di Livias. Una prima Chiesa ai piedi di un monte non il Nebo e molti monaci. Accoglienza e dono delle eulogie. Si aggiungono anche i monaci al cammino. Chiesa sulla sommità non grande. Memoriale di Mosè con vista sul Giordano, sul Mar Morto, su Gerico e Livias, vista della Palestina. Rientro a Gerusalemme per la stessa strada fatta.

### **3° pellegrinaggio**

*Idumea fino a Carneas nel paese di Giobbe (capp. 13-16): fine febbraio - inizio marzo 384.*

Partenza da Gerusalemme. Desiderio di visitare il luogo della tomba di Giobbe alimentato dai racconti dei monaci che tornavano da lì a Gerusalemme.

Da Gerusalemme a Carneas 8 tappe. Percorso lungo il Giordano in una valle con acqua, viti e alberi. Il grande villaggio di Sedima (la Salem di Melchisedek) si trovava nella pianura con al centro un monticello, le tombe e più in alto una chiesa. Incontro con un presbitero, anziano che precedentemente era stato monaco (giudizio positivo dei vescovi sul suo operato); dono dei frutti (*eulogie*) dal frutteto del Battista. Proseguimento lungo il Giordano e arrivo a Tesbe, città di Elia. Poi una valle (valle del Corra, episodio di Elia e il corvo) con l'affluente del Giordano, il Corra. Presenza di un eremitaggio e incontro con un monaco, proseguimento del percorso e vista di un grande monte (Hermon?, Carmelo?).

Arrivo a Carneas, racconto del ritrovamento della tomba, la chiesa in onore di Giobbe e sul luogo della sepoltura. Partenza il giorno dopo con oblazione e benedizione. Ritorno a Gerusalemme con lo stesso percorso.

### **4° pellegrinaggio (25 marzo - giugno 384) (Figg. 8-9)**

*Mesopotamia attraverso Antiochia, Batanis (o Bathnae), Edessa fino a Charris passando per Tarso e Seleucia e poi per la via che attraversa la Cappadocia, la Galazia e la Bitinia fino a Calcedonia e infine a Costantinopoli (capp. 17-23).*

Parte mancante nei 2 anni prima...

Costantinopoli, Bitinia, Galazia, Cappadocia, Porte Cilicie, Antiochia, Gerusalemme, Egitto, Tebaide, Alessandria, Gerusalemme (382), Sa-

maria (383), Galilea, Cafarnao, lago di Tiberiade, oltre il Giordano, Gerico, Mambre, Hebron, Gerusalemme, Pelusio, Clysmas, Maran, deserto di Sur, Arandara, Pharan, Sinai (inizio racconto del testo...).

Mesopotamia di Siria: viaggio in 25 tappe da Gerusalemme.

Arrivo ad Antiochia e partenza per Batanis.

Batanis: chiesa, vescovo *confessor* (Abraham? - Esiliato dalla sede episcopale per ordine dell'imperatore), guarnigione militare con tribuno.

Edessa (3 giorni di sosta, 19 - 21 aprile del 384): chiesa grande ricostruita da poco (ricostruita a più riprese dopo l'alluvione del 201 e fino al 369-370, Egeria potrebbe riferirsi a uno dei rifacimenti dell'edificio!) e tomba di san Tommaso (vede la basilica fuori dalle mura? prima della traslazione del corpo dentro la città nel 394?); altre tombe, monaci (monasteri vicino ai cimiteri più prossimi alla città e eremitaggi fuori); un vescovo *confessor* (Eulogio? Esiliato in Egitto, vescovo di Edessa dal 379 al 387), in discorso diretto, dice che Egeria si era spostata dall'estremità della terra (estremo occidente?) e si presta come guida per vedere il palazzo (risistemazione cristiana del palazzo) del re Abgar (VII il grande -197-212- convertito al cristianesimo o leggenda di un altro re Abgar che avrebbe avuto un carteggio con Cristo) e il suo ritratto. Il vescovo regala a Egeria alcune lettere.

A Charris / Harran tra 22 e 23 aprile (Carran luogo di sosta di Abramo) visita una chiesa fuori dalla città (dagli scavi 2 chiese una grande e una piccola interna alla città; Egeria visita la grande chiesa legata alla tradizione della casa di Abramo, fuori dalla città, dove c'era la tomba di un monaco, Elpidio, martire e incontra un vescovo *confessor* (Protogene? Prima monaco e vescovo dal 381, esiliato da Valente) che diventa la sua guida alla vigilia della festa del martire, presenza dei monaci della Mesopotamia accorsi a Charris. Egeria chiede al vescovo notizie di Nisibe dei Caldei. Il vescovo risponde che la città Nisibe non può essere visitata perché occupata dai Persiani (elemento cronologico importante: Nisibi, al di là del Tigri, fu ceduta ai Persiani dall'imperatore Gioviano nel 363, quindi Egeria è a Charris dopo il 363). Il terzo giorno si recano al pozzo di Giacobbe a sei miglia dove c'è una chiesa, chierici, monaci. Dono delle eulogie. Pianura con villaggio (Fadana) di Labano il Siro, il suocero di Giacobbe. Visita alla tomba di Labano. Ritorno ad Antiochia.

Riferimento cronologico certo per il viaggio di Egeria: i 3 vescovi furono confessori (colpiti dalla persecuzione ariana di Valente, allontanati dalle



loro sedi) e negli stessi anni vescovi delle tre città dal 381-387.

Una settimana ad Antiochia e partenza per Seleucia (centro più vicino al santuario di S. Tecla) con alcune tappe in Cilicia e in Isauria. Tarso - Pompeiopoli - Corico (porto di Seleucia e sede vescovile dal IV secolo).  
- Seleucia di Isauria: incontro con il vescovo ex monaco e visita di una chiesa e poi tappa di due giorni al santuario di Tecla (chiesa santuario della martire con monasteri femminili e maschili, apotattiti; incontro gioioso con la diaconessa Marthana, amica conosciuta a Gerusalemme, che dirigeva monasteri) protetto da mura dai briganti Isauri. Ritorno a Tarso per tre giorni. Sosta di un giorno a Mansocrenas sotto il M. te Tauro poi salita sul massiccio e attraversamento delle province di Capadocia, Galazia, e Bitinia e arrivo a Calcedonia (santuario di Sant' Eufemia martire nel 303; nella basilica concilio di Calcedonia del 401) e il giorno dopo arrivo a Costantinopoli dal mare. Proposito di fare un altro viaggio in Asia ad Efeso (santuario di S. Giovanni apoastolo).

### **Liturgia della chiesa di Gerusalemme**

La descrizione delle Liturgie della chiesa di Gerusalemme ha inizio dalla liturgia quotidiana feriale e da quella domenicale, per passare poi alle feste religiose dell'anno, ricordando i fatti salienti della vita di Cristo. Queste descrizioni assumono un'importanza particolare per la ricostruzione degli edifici costantiniani. Si descrivono i riti, le cerimonie, le processioni, le basiliche e i santuari, fino a Betania e a Betlemme.

- Liturgia della settimana con l'ufficio delle singole ore (capp. 24-25)
- Le grandi feste dell'anno: Epifania, Presentazione al Tempio, Quaresima, settimana santa, Pasqua, ottava di Pasqua, Pentecoste, tempo liturgico che segue (capp. 25-44)
- Catechesi battesimale (capp. 45-47)
- Festa della Dedicazione (*enceniae*) della basilica costantiniana del Santo Sepolcro e della Risurrezione a metà settembre (capp. 48-49)



Fig. 1 - Pellegrinaggio di Egeria. Traccia ipotetica del percorso di viaggio.



Fig. 2 - Pellegrinaggi di Egeria In Terra Santa (381-383 d.C.).



Fig. 3 - 1° Pellegrinaggio, dal Sinai a Gerusalemme.  
Sulle orme di Mosè e del popolo di Israele  
(dicembre 383-gennaio 384 d.C.)



Fig. 4 - 1° Pellegrinaggio, particolare. Dal Sinai a Clysma  
(16-31 dicembre 383 d.C.)



Fig. 5 - 1° Pellegrinaggio, particolare. Da Clysmma a Pelusio (31 dicembre 383-7 gennaio 384 d.C.)



Fig. 6 - 2° Pellegrinaggio: al di là del Giordano verso il Mt. Nebo (384 d.C., febbraio?)



Fig. 7 - 3° Pellegrinaggio: lungo il Giordano nel paese di Giobbe (fine febbraio-inizio marzo 384 d.C.)



Fig. 8 - 4° Pellegrinaggio: Mesopotamia di Syria (381 d.C.).



Fig. 9 - 4° Pellegrinaggio: Mesopotamia di Syria (381 d.C.), particolare

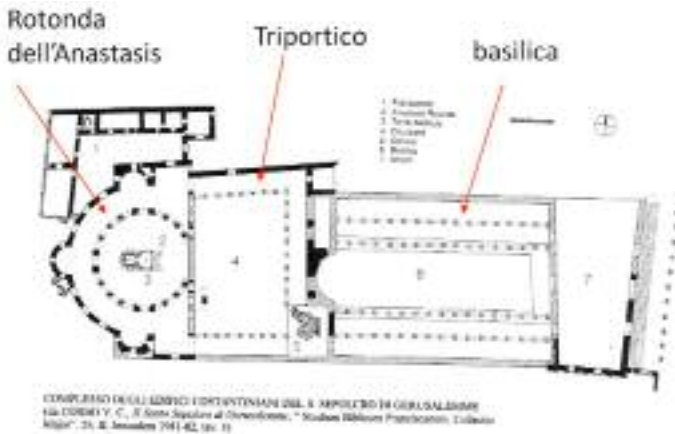


Fig. 10 - Il Santo sepolcro di Gerusalemme (Rotonda dell'Anastasis, Triportico, Basilica)

## BIBLIOGRAFIA

Atti del Convegno Internazionale sulla *Peregrinatio Egeriae*. Nel centenario dalla pubblicazione del *Codex Aretinus 405* (già *Aretinus VI*, 3). Arezzo 23-25 ottobre 1987, Città di Castello, 1990.

**Bartolozzi Casti G.** *Le origini del pellegrinaggio. Egeria e Demetria donne in cammino*, in “Studi Romani”, LXII, n. 1-4, 2015, pp. 32-50.

**Bisconti F.** *La settimana Santa raccontata da Egeria*, in Bisconti F. “Primi cristiani. Le storie, i monumenti, le figure”. Città del Vaticano, 2013, pp.129-133.

**Campana A.** *La storia della scoperta del Codice Aretino nel carteggio Gamurrini - De Rossi*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp. 77-84.

**Cardini F.** *Egeria la pellegrina*, in “Medioevo al femminile” (a cura di Bertini F.). Roma, 1989, pp. 3-30.

**Cardini F.** *La Gerusalemme di Egeria e il pellegrinaggio dei cristiani d'Occidente in Terrasanta tra il IV e il V secolo*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp. 333-341.

**Cardini F.** *Il pellegrinaggio in Terrasanta. Temi e problemi*, in “Santità, culti, agiografia. Temi e prospettive” (a cura di Boesch Gajano S.). Roma, 1997, pp. 257-273.

**Corbo V. C.** *Il Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme. Aspetti archeologici dalle origini al periodo crociato*, I-III, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Collertio maior, 29. Jerusalem, 1981-1982.

**Corbo V. C.** *Il santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme, Nova et Vetera*, in “Liber Annuus” 38, 1988, pp. 59-66.

**Fabbrini F.** *La cornice storica della “Peregrinatio Egeriae”*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp. 21-75.

**Férotin M.** *Le véritable auteur de la “Peregrinatio Silviae” la vierge espagnole Éthérie*, in RQH 74,1903, pp. 367-397.

**Gamurrini G. F.** *I Misteri e gl'Inni di S. Ilario vescovo di Poitiers ed una “Peregrinazione” ai luoghi santi nel quarto secolo scoperti in un antichissimo codice*, in “Studi e Documenti di Storia e Diritto”, 5 (1884). Roma 1884, pp. 81-107.

**García L.** *La lettre del Valerius aux moines du Vierzo sur la bienhereuse Aetheria*, in “Analecta Bollandiana”, XXIX, 1910, pp. 377-385.

**Giannarelli E.** (a cura di) *Egeria. Diario di viaggio*. Milano, 1992.

- Marval P.** (a cura di) *Égérie, Journal I de voyage, Sources Chrétiennes* 296. Paris, 1982.
- Maraval P.** *Egeria e Gregorio di Nissa. Pellegrini ai luoghi santi di Palestina*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp. 315-331.
- Melani L.** *Sul MS. 405 della Biblioteca di Arezzo*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp. 85-91.
- Milani C.** *Note di linguistica egeriana*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp. 109-135.
- Natalucci N.** *L’“Epistola del monaco Valerio e l’“Itinerarium Egeriae”*, in “Giornale Italiano di Filologia”, 35, NS 14, 1983.
- Natalucci N.** (a cura di) *Egeria. Pellegrinaggio in Terra santa. Itinerarium Egeriae*. Biblioteca Patristica, Firenze, 1991.
- Petré H.** (a cura di) *Éthérie, Journal de voyage*, in “Sources Chrétiennes” 21. Paris, 1948 (ristampe nel 1957, 1964, 1971, 1975).
- Piccirillo M.** *Il pellegrinaggio di Egeria al Monte Nebo in Arabia*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp.193-214.
- PL**, *Patrologia Latina*.
- Siniscalco P. - Scarampi L.** (a cura di) *Egeria, Pellegrinaggio in Terra Santa*. Roma, 1985.
- Smiraglia P.** *Il testo di Egeria. Problemi di struttura*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp. 93-108.
- Testini P.** Recensione al volume di Corbo Virgilio Canio, in “*Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana*” 1983, pp. 451-460.
- Testini P.** *Egeria e il Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme. Qualche appunto per il traduttore*, in Atti “Peregrinatio Egeriae”, pp. 215-230.
- Tolotti F.** *Il S. Sepolcro di Gerusalemme e le coeve basiliche di Roma*, in “*Mitteilungen Deutsche Archäologische Institut Röm*”, 93, 1986, pp. 471-512.
- Weber R.** (a cura di) *Pietro Diacono, De locis santis*, in “*Itineraria et alia geographica, Corpus Christianorum*”, Series Latina 175, 1975.
- Wilkinson J.** (a cura di) *Egeria's Travels*. Warminster England, 2002.



# WOMEN WHO MADE HISTORY: MARY MAGDALENE AND THE POWER OF MYTH

*Frank Shapiro*  
(Independent Researcher)

## **Introduction**

One of the first women in western history to be cloaked in the mantle of fame and mystery was Mary Magdalene. She emerges as a semi-mythical figure. However, judging by the spiritual message of love she has instilled into the hearts of millions of Christian believers, and by viewing the thousands of works of art evoking her supposed attributes, deeds and influence, and in surveying the numerous churches, convents and other religious institutions erected in her honor as their patron saint, one can say that her shadow bridges the divide between myth and history.

The point is that the composite image of this woman, part myth, part legend, part fact, has had an enormous influence on western civilization. No less than the earliest royal dynasty of France, namely, the Merovingian, considered Mary Magdalene as engendering their blood line<sup>1</sup>. According to this legend, Mary apparently married Jesus who had a daughter by the name of Sarah. Mary and Jesus' descendants married into the French royal family of the Merovingian dynasty. Yet, the most predominant theme is that the cause of Christianity might have been lost had she not intervened in the early apostolic movement's darkest hours. As a redeemed sinner, she became the embodiment of hope and love for millions of people. Her charisma and the values she upheld inspired the world of art to project her power.

Naturally, the religious aspect concerning Mary Magdalene is not

being disputed here. Among believers, the biblical text is considered to be of divine inspiration. Religious belief in Christ's divine exclusivity and the theocratic basis of the papacy is not the framework here. The endeavor is the pursuit of the historical antecedents of the rise of Christianity and its infrastructure focusing on Mary Magdalene's pivotal role.

### Sources

The primary basic references to Mary Magdalene are those found in the New Testament<sup>2</sup>. Fortunately, today we are now also enriched with supplementary sources. Additional scrolls and gospels have been discovered which were composed around the same time as the New Testament texts, namely, in the first centuries CE, and these writings were not included in the canon of the New Testament. The Church Fathers ruled which gospels were to be included in the final canon of the New Testament and which were to be excluded. Among those never accepted into the Christian canon was the *Gospel of Mary* - an apocryphal scroll highlighting, inter alia, the importance of Mary Magdalene in the Christ narrative.

The *Gospel of Mary* was discovered in the late nineteenth century in Upper Egypt together with other ancient texts known as the *Gnostic Codex* (ancient collection of Gnostic texts). The *Codex* is from the fourth or early fifth century and contains Coptic translations of three very early Christian Gnostic texts: *Sophia of Jesus Christ*, *Apocryphon of John* as well as the *Gospel of Mary*. The original texts were written in Greek at the same time as the Gospels of the New Testament, namely the first or second century. The codex holds the most complete extant fragment of the *Gospel of Mary*, these fragments are now supplemented by two other fragments of the Gospel discovered later in lower Egypt.

By combining the information given in the apocryphal scrolls with that in the New Testament a more complete picture of Mary Magdalene can be composed. Yet this picture purports to relate

only to the period in the Holy Land during Christ's lifetime, the Passion and soon after his death. The lingering question is what happened to Mary Magdalene following these events, after we depart from the biblical story.

Folk tales and oral histories substituted for the written narrative in early illiterate societies. Such was the case for the vast majority of inhabitants during the Early Middle Ages in Europe. Over the course of time legends and myths crystallize out from folk tales and other oral material related from generation to generation, such as the founding myth of Rome having its antecedents in the ancient city of Troy. In the High Middle Ages, hagiographies became popular, such as the *Golden Legend*<sup>3</sup>, composed in the thirteenth century. This work also relates to the events surrounding Mary Magdalene in the wake of the crucifixion. In this medieval account we learn of Mary Magdalene's activities, sojourn and death in France.

Historians have learnt to treat myths and legends with respect. It is now assumed that grains of historical relevance can be filtered out of such memories. And in the case of Mary Magdalene the historian is faced with the challenge of some astonishing findings. In short, the early New Testament references, as well as the apocryphal writing and later legends enable this quasi-historical figure to transcend the passing of time and enrich our culture and civilization.

### **Gender Equality, Apostle of the Apostles, Status of Peter**

The early apostolic sources pinpoint Mary Magdalene as one of the earliest woman activists practicing gender equality and highlighting women's rights<sup>4</sup>. And this took place within the framework of the early apostolic church. The New Testament indicates that Jesus, head of the band of disciples, included among his followers a significant number of women: "*And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him. Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary*

*the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children."*<sup>5</sup> Other examples of women followers are Joanna, Susanna, and Martha and Mary of Bethany. However, chief among them was Mary Magdalene.

The Gospel of Mary indicates that Mary Magdalene and Jesus shared a definite intimacy, and this relationship seemed to have aroused jealousy among some of the other Apostles, for we read thus:

*Then Andrew began to speak, and said to his brothers:  
'Tell me, what do you think of these things she has been telling us?  
As for me, I do not believe  
that the Teacher would speak like this.  
These ideas are too different from those we have known.'  
And Peter added:  
'How is it possible that the Teacher talked  
in this manner, with a woman,  
about the secrets of which we ourselves are ignorant?  
Must we change our customs,  
and listen to this woman?  
Did he really choose her, and prefer her to us?'*<sup>6</sup>

From this excerpt we can also gather the growing animosity of Peter towards Mary. There was certainly a strong case for Peter's dislike, and even growing envy of Mary. This we can discern as the story of Christ unfolds.

While Mary proves to be far more valiant than Peter in maintaining her faith in Jesus, Peter denies Christ three times<sup>7</sup>. Also, Jesus displays animosity toward Peter when the latter discounts Jesus' prophecy of the days to come leading to his crucifixion: "...he rebuked Peter, saying, *Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things of that be of God, but the things that be of men.*"<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, when Christ's followers panicked and abandoned him from the moment of his capture by the Romans and up to his crucifixion, Mary Magdalene stayed at his side weeping at the foot of the cross during Christ's Agony. During

his ordeal on the cross it was Mary Magdalene who had the courage to stay with him up to his last moments. Mary Magdalene's fortitude never weakened: she stayed put throughout his agonies, while the other apostles and disciples fled. Fear of the authorities seems to have overclouded their belief and ideals.

Mary Magdalene helped to take down Jesus' body from the cross and lay it in the tomb prepared by Joseph of Arimathea. Mary's sincerity and attachment to Jesus knew no bounds. At dawn she went to his tomb together with Mary Salome and Mary the mother, bringing with them sweet spices to anoint his body. And it was then that they discovered that the tomb was empty. Soon afterwards, Mary witnessed the miracle of Jesus' resurrection. This event of her encounter with the resurrected Jesus on the third day after his execution led to Mary's eternal fame. *"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene"*<sup>9</sup>.

The account in Mathew is slightly different from that in the other Gospels, in that Mary Magdalene together with another Mary encounter an angel at the sepulcher who instructs them to tell the disciples that Christ has risen from the dead *"...he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him...and on their way to the disciples they meet Christ...they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him"*<sup>10</sup>. In the Gospel of John, Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb alone. *"Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb"*<sup>11</sup>. She then goes to tell Peter and John, who run to the tomb. Only after the men have left again does Mary encounter, not an angel, but the risen Christ himself. In the Gospel of Peter, Mary Magdalene and her friends arrive at the tomb early on Sunday morning. *"Now at the dawn of the Lord's Day Mary Magdalene, a female disciple of the Lord (who, afraid because of the Jews since they were inflamed with anger, had not done at the tomb of the Lord what women were accustomed to do for the dead beloved by them), having taken*

*with her women friends, came to the tomb where he had been placed*"<sup>12</sup>. As in the canonical Gospels they find the stone rolled away and the tomb empty. They are informed by "*a certain young man seated in the middle of the sepulcher, comely and clothed with a splendid robe*"<sup>13</sup> that Jesus is not there but has risen.

The significance of this act is that Mary Magdalene, being the first to witness the miracle of Jesus' resurrection raised Mary's status, for she was now referred to as the '*Apostle of the Apostles*' as she was the one to bring the news of his resurrection to the other disciples.

Following the crucifixion the disciples sank into despair: "*How shall we go to the Gentiles and preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of the Son of Man? If even he was not spared, how shall we be spared?*"<sup>14</sup> Thus, in the wake of Christ's death, Christianity sank to its lowest point. At this nadir it would either have vanished or become just another marginal Jewish sect. It is doubtful whether the disciples would have had the courage to continue advancing the cause of Christianity without Mary. It was at this stage that Mary virtually takes over the leadership of the dispirited band and encourages and urges them to have faith: "*Let us rather praise his greatness, for he prepared us and made us into men*"<sup>15</sup>.

If Peter's behavior leading up to the arrest of Christ, throughout the passion, and in its aftermath, is compared to that of Mary Magdalene's, and if we add that Mary's popularity and intimacy with Jesus easily overshadowed Peter's importance and authority, it seems a legitimate historical question to ask: why was Peter rather than Mary nominated to take over the leadership of the nascent Christian community?

According to the New Testament, the transmission of leadership was designated during Christ's lifetime and not after. Jesus had nominated Peter before his capture and execution. The stamp of approval is found in the biblical justification for this authorization as recorded in the New Testament, where Jesus says: "*I tell you,*

*you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*"<sup>16</sup>.

Yet from the historical perspective the authorization provided by this Christ-given statement remains suspect. First, can we be sure that the description of Peter's selection and his status as possessor of the keys of heaven as written in the New Testament was not added or amended later to justify his qualification? After all, the Gospels were composed, and the Canon was completed, well over one hundred years after the death of Christ. Second, it is noteworthy that two chapters further on to the 'keys' statement, in the same Gospel of Mathew, Jesus uses the identical words "...ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven..."<sup>17</sup>. Yet this time Jesus addresses all his disciples, and not just Peter. It can be deduced from this second usage of the identical words that they were intended as a general statement, and if so, surely this undermines the uniqueness and significance of the formula first spoken to Peter.

### **Patriarchal Society**

As already stated, female adherents were prominent among Christ's milieu, and it is accepted that Christianity's early maturation period held an egalitarian approach to the gender issue, considering it as an accepted norm in the early Christian Church<sup>18</sup>. Nevertheless, the vast majority of Jesus' disciples were males, and despite Mary's status and closeness to Jesus she was ensnared in the web of a male patriarchal society. With the passing of time, this patriarchal trend grew still stronger within the Church hierarchy, especially when Christianity was officially adopted as the sole legitimate religion of the Roman Empire at the end of the 4th century. Christianity now evolved into an integral part of western

culture. Although within this religious-political-cultural matrix, women continued to strive for equality in virtually every field, men in their patriarchal hierarchy, held the upper hand. Consequently, by the early 6th century women found themselves stigmatized and demoted from almost all the major roles in the church service and liturgy.

### **Expunging Mary Magdalene**

The memory and heritage of Mary Magdalene took a corresponding blow. The veneration of the image of a charismatic woman at the pinnacle of the church hierarchy was not to be tolerated in this male-dominated culture. Mary's central role could lead to a situation where the status of women in the Church would be equal to that of men - or even to a woman becoming Christ's vicar on earth. In the eyes of the ruling Church elite, Mary had fulfilled her mission; her image had become not only superfluous but dangerous. Her memory was indeed threatening, as Mary, in her role as *Apostle of the Apostles*, who had empowered Christianity with the tools to persevere; and possibly could have superseded Peter in importance. Could she also engender a dynasty of women Popes?

Mary Magdalene would now become ousted from the Christian narrative, almost completely. Towards the end of the sixth century, in a Stalinist-style rewriting of history, Mary Magdalene was removed from her central position in the Western Christian matrix. The image and standing of Mary Magdalene that had developed in the early apostolic infrastructure was now considered undesirable. Like the swift fall of the guillotine, the role model of Mary Magdalene was severed from the axis of Christianity.

Fearing Mary's superiority over the Apostle Peter and her primacy in the Christian narrative, Pope Gregory the Great associated Mary's image with the unnamed 'harlot', mentioned in the book of Luke in the New Testament<sup>19</sup>, and in this way sought to discredit her with charges of human depravity and sin. Gregory pro-



claimed Mary's sexuality and beauty as a threat, which could undermine pure Christianity as formulated in the various ecumenical councils since the first one in 325 at Nicaea.

The 'putsch' took place in 591. Exploiting the textual vagueness of a number of rather ambiguous New Testament statements, Pope Gregory the Great labeled Mary Magdalene as a prostitute and sinner. In a dramatic '*j'accuse*', Pope Gregorius I, the Great, proclaimed in his homily 33, "*She whom Luke calls the sinful woman, whom John calls Mary, we believe to be the Mary from whom seven devils were ejected according to Mark. And what did these seven devils signify, if not all the vices?*"<sup>20</sup>

Rather than stressing Mary Magdalene's conversion to Christianity and attributes, he sought to identify her as the woman "*out of whom went seven devils*". Once he had identified her as Mary Magdalene, Pope Gregory belittled the actual exorcism and the fact that Christ had claimed that her sins had been forgiven. Instead, Gregory deliberately identified and characterized her in her state of pre-converted sin. The church now made the most of the seven devils haunting her, by associating them with the seven vices considered directly responsible for the corruption of the human race. The devils or demons were considered sins. For the Church, Mary's pre-conversion state, in which she was afflicted with the Seven Sins, symbolized humanity's overall debased state of immorality. It now became the Church's mission to act to redeem humanity from this state and lead it to salvation. Thus, the central role of the Church involved creating an awareness of mankind's sinful state while offering up the hope of salvation. And salvation could only be obtained through the pursuit of Christian virtue and the acceptance of divine grace through the sacraments. The core message of Catholic Christian Orthodoxy resulting from this formulation was a clear statement that outside the One Universal Catholic Church there is no redemption. Mary's indictment as the unnamed sinner now legitimized her banishment from official Christian mainstream.

## **Pope Gregory connects between Mary Magdalene, Sex and Beauty**

Pope Gregory went one step further: by associating Mary Magdalene with depraved sexual activity he was able to establish a direct link with female qualities of natural beauty and natural sexual appeal, and to claim that these qualities themselves were contaminated by sin. Of course Gregory was not the first to take this attitude, for the compilers of the nascent Christian canon, a censorious attitude to beauty was unavoidably connected to the issue of women in general and their role in the Church in particular. For fourth- and fifth-century churchmen such as St. Ambrose of Milan and St. Augustine of Hippo it was quite clear-cut: feminine allure and sexuality were immersed in sin<sup>21</sup>.

The Church Fathers too were not saying anything new in their approach to sexuality, but simply following in the footsteps of St. Paul, who had reinforced his demeaning attitude towards femininity by identifying celibacy as the preferred state and virginity as the ideal - even though he did mutter something about it being better to marry than to burn<sup>22</sup>.

All in all, Pope Gregory succeeded not only in removing the female threat to the papacy but in forging a new and discredited female stereotype. The act of Immaculate Conception in the narrative of Jesus' birth was now elevated to an ideal of chastity, while sexual indulgence was frowned upon. And henceforth, for the next five hundred years, the enjoyment of sex was characterized as sinful.

Pope Gregory's interpretation was received as nothing less than the gospel truth. Henceforward, this depiction of Mary Magdalene (and the projected inferior female stereotype) became part of the Christian Canon throughout the Middle Ages. In doing so he ignored or downplayed the virtuous role of women throughout biblical history: among them exemplars of the Old Testaments such as Deborah the prophetess from Mount Tabor<sup>23</sup>; Miriam, Moses' sister who led the children of Israel out of Egypt in song

and dance<sup>24</sup>; Lydia a seller of purple fabrics of the New Testaments<sup>25</sup>; and Queen Esther who saved the Jewish People in Persia<sup>26</sup>.

Pope Gregory's two-pronged attack on beauty and sexuality on the one hand, and on the status of women in the church on the other, had resounding consequences for the Christian world, for this was in complete opposition to the original Christian ethic. Women had figured prominently and very positively in Jesus' milieu and had been on an equal footing with men. Jesus had no qualms about treating even harlots in an egalitarian manner. Throughout the Gospels there are numerous instances of Christ's willingness to accept gifts and services from women. He interacted with them quite naturally and seemed to value their gentleness. In the Book of Luke alone, there are over twenty such references<sup>27</sup>.

By abandoning Mary Magdalene Pope Gregory had cemented the theocratic basis for an exclusive dynasty of male popes. By abandoning Mary Magdalene Pope Gregory was intentionally leading the Christian world directly back to Eve - the symbolic mother of sinful mankind. Sin, vice and hell were now to predominate in the outlook of the Western world.

### **The Return of Mary Magdalene**

Between the 10th and 13th centuries of the High Middle Ages western Europe came out of its lethargy and took on new strengths. Among the evolving positive changes were a demographic increase in population, an improvement in climate, the resuscitation of cities together with the rise of the new merchant class, the birth of universities and the nascent maturation of national entities. The overall development in these numerous fields created a new tapestry of Europe, and the phenomenon is often referred to as the first Renaissance.

Despite the increasing absolute power of the papacy, the memory of Mary Magdalene was evoked anew. The history, myths and

legends shaping her biography were retold and reinvented to intertwine among forgotten memories, and simultaneously she became adopted as the patron saint of numerous churches, convents and organizations. The question is, how did this now come about when her memory had been suppressed for some five hundred years?

## **Departure from the Holy Land**

### **a. Rome**

On her departure from the Holy Land, Mary Magdalene's aim was to spread the Gospel, the 'Good News'. Tradition has it that her first destination was Italy, and of course - the heart of the pagan Roman Empire - Rome. Apparently, her daring and initiative enabled her to get a hearing with the Roman Emperor Tiberius (14-37 CE). She was probably listened to with interest, because she was, after all, Jesus' closest adherent, and an alleged actual witness to Christ's execution and resurrection.

Christian folklore has it that she presented Tiberius with a gift, an egg, a well-known symbol of resurrection and of the spring season in the pagan world. Preaching Christianity's message she proclaimed the words: *'I have seen Christ risen from the dead'*, or as she had called out to the Apostles: *'I have seen the Lord'*. Tiberius was neither impressed nor convinced. No one could rise from the dead, he claimed, just as her egg couldn't turn red. And lo and behold the egg turned red; but, like the obstinate Pharaoh in the story of Moses, this 'miracle' didn't persuade Tiberius to see the light<sup>28</sup>.

This bizarre story is accepted as fact especially by the Russian Orthodox Church, to the extent that it is memorialized in an impressive wall painting in the Russian Orthodox Monastery Church of St. Mary Magdalene. The church is situated on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Built by Tsar Alexander III in 1888, the Russian Orthodox Church with its easy-to-spot neo-classical Russian architecture is a well-known landmark on the

Mount of Olives skyline.

Apparently, Mary did salvage something important from that meeting, for the Emperor granted her request to remove Pontius Pilate, the despised Roman procurator, from Judaea, and he was relocated to Gaul, where he later died of some excruciating illness<sup>29</sup>. A classic example of poetic justice?

### **b. Turkey**

Mary then waited in Rome for the Apostle Paul's arrival, and left some two years later. According to the sixth century historian, Gregory of Tours, Mary now went on to Ephesus in Turkey where she helped the Apostle John to compose part of his Gospel, spending here the rest of her life. One source claims that Emperor Leo VI removed her relics to a monastery in Constantinople at the end of the ninth century<sup>30</sup>.

### **c. Britain**

According to yet another legend, Mary Magdalene's remains reached Europe's western extremities - the British Isles. Allegedly, Joseph of Arimathea (who purchased Christ's burial plot in Jerusalem) was the one who brought Mary's remains to southern England and buried them in the crypt of the Glastonbury Abbey<sup>31</sup>. What was Joseph doing in chilly England, so far away from the sunny Holy Land? Legend has it that Joseph arrived here with ten friends to spread the Gospel, and was inspired to build the church in honor of Mary and bury her on this spot.

### **The Golden Legend**

The new spirit of the High Middle Ages produced numerous legends and romances. The *Golden Legend*, a hagiography of early Christian saints, composed by Jacobus da Varagine, includes the story of Mary Magdalene after Christ's death. This work presents a vivid narrative describing Mary's activities and biography beyond that of the known New Testament Christ story. The legend echoes the zeitgeist of the High Middle Ages, and gained popularity with the renewed religious zeal surrounding the memory of

Mary. This extraordinary tale evolved into a medieval best seller. The Golden Legend claims that Mary was expelled from the Holy Land by the Roman authorities, together with a considerable party of friends and relatives: Mary Jacob, Jesus' Mother's sister who was James' mother, Mary Salome, the mother of the apostles James and John, Mary Magdalene's brother Lazarus and her sister Martha, their maid Sarah, Maximinus, one of the seventy-two disciples, and the formerly blind Cedonius, whose sight had been restored by Christ. This expulsion scene is depicted in the Basilica of St. Maximin in Provence, it is a beautiful low-relief gold-leafed woodwork centered on Mary as she steps into the boat.

After having crossed the Mediterranean under Providence's guidance, Mary and her party of friends and relatives reached a safe haven on a coastal site close to the future bustling city of Marseille. On their arrival at Oppidum-Râ (as St Maries de la Mer was originally called), The Holy Land pilgrims did not receive a particularly warm welcome. In the mid-first century AD in France, or Gaul as it was then known, the region was very pagan. Furthermore, the xenophobic local residents refused to give them any form of succor. Eventually, Mary and her party found refuge in the porch of a pagan temple.

By the time Mary had reached Provence the region had become fully Romanized. The Romans had conquered the territory some two hundred years before, calling it Provincia Nostra, and establishing permanent settlements such as Aix-en-Provence and Narbonne. Hence, Roman custom and beliefs were well and strongly embedded in the region. Mary's new location made her task infinitely more difficult than in the Holy Land, where nascent Christianity was taking a hold among certain Jewish communities.

Here, in Provence, Mary found herself among a Romanized, cosmopolitan society holding a diversity of pagan beliefs. Although Mary's approach stood in stark contrast to the dominant pagan culture of her time she also began to distance herself from the essence of her Jewish upbringing. Her Jewish roots posited the

greatest emphasis on the here and now. Jewish culture stresses happiness and the 'joie de vivre', while Mary's soul-searching Christian doctrine viewed earthly existence as replete with sin. Before long Mary Magdalene began preaching to the local inhabitants exhorting them to relinquish their idol worship and join the Christian community. It seems that her powers of oratory plus one or two miracles that she and her sister performed did the trick. Some of the pagans were soon baptized and converted to Christianity. Eventually, the community became organized within the framework of Christianity and Maximinus was appointed the first Bishop of Marseilles, to be followed after his death by Lazarus. But Mary didn't stay put at St. Maries de la Mer. What triggered her departure? What motivated her to travel north to the Sainte-Baume Mountain range? According to the legend, after leaving Saintes Maries de la Mer, Mary Magdalene went north to the mountains of Sainte Baume, deep in the heart of Provence country. Here she continued her preordained mission to convert the region to Christianity. Mary Magdalene's final home was the Grotto of St. Baume.

The grotto is a vast empty dome carved from natural rock rising up several hundred feet. Water drips incessantly through numerous crevices. Today, a beautiful white altar stands out prominently and a number of shrines to Mary Magdalene dot the vast cavern. The cave is lit by a pale, weak light while the sun's rays radiate through a number of colored-glass windows.

Here, in this cave, among the mountains of Sainte Baume, Mary is said to have retired and given herself up to a life of penance that lasted for thirty years. She converted the grotto of Sainte-Baume into her home. Making penance for the sins of her early life style, she possibly pioneered the first framework for female monasticism. Was Mary acting consciously as a role model, or did her deeds simply imply a personal quest? It's not clear whether Mary was intending her personal endeavors to be emulated in the extreme, and demanding that others also go into iso-

lation and live a life of abstinence.

The point is that the significance of her acts supplied an essential spiritual core to the context of Christianity. Out of her actions, Christian charity, compassion and love, could be formulated. And her isolation in the mountains eventually evolved as a model for Christian monasticism. By not creating a communal monastic society, Mary probably became the forerunner of anchorite monasticism (individual habitation) for women, becoming a role model for Christian asceticism.

In the cave of St Baume you can still view a magnificent reliquary supposedly containing a few remains of Mary Magdalene; a fragment of a tibia and a tuft of hair, although most of the relics were scattered during the French Revolution. The reliquary represents typical medieval craftsmanship at its best: a beautifully enameled metalwork casket fashioned in gold and ornamented with precious stones and gems. Small, delicately carved angels stand at the corners - perhaps suggestive of the seraphim which guarded the Ark of the Covenant, or possibly the two standing angels mentioned in Luke (Luke, 24:4) whom Mary meets on arriving at the empty tomb.

Angels are also mentioned as consoling and sustaining her with the food of the Eucharist for thirty years during her sudden disappearance into the mountains of Sainte Baume. Following her death, the story of Mary Magdalene's demise soon spread to Marseille: a local hermit reported that he had witnessed the scene of Mary in the arms of angels, ascending to heaven, singing songs of triumph. Like Mary the Mother, she too, according to Christian belief, was spared mortal death and was assumed to heaven<sup>32</sup>. If so, we are presented with a paradox in that we are faced with an earthly tomb and remains.

Soon after the spread of the hermit's report, the Sainte Baume grotto, where Mary was believed to have settled in her sacred devotion to God, evolved into a holy site for Christian pilgrims.



## **Mary Magdalene and the goddess Venus**

The challenge to convert the pagan population of Provence to Christianity was enormous. Only a gifted and charismatic personality stood any chance of confronting this task. And it goes without saying that Mary's preaching against idolatry must have met with serious resistance, especially when it focused on the vanities of the goddess of beauty, Venus, and the cult of the Vestal Virgin.

Mary's struggle to Christianize the region of Provence in France was also hampered by the additional hurdle of a patriarchal, female-restricted world. This was the Roman milieu of the *Pater Familias*, where the household father reigned supreme. Total reverence was paid to the head of the house, whether it came from slave, child, or wife. This was the fiercely male-oriented world of Roman society, where women were present primarily to serve and satisfy. This male-dominated culture was also the likely source of the Christian Fathers' sexist outlook, which would later manifest its antagonism to the rise of Mary Magdalene.

It was no coincidence that the symbolism of Mary Magdalene was used by the early Church to face off with Venus - probably no other Christian imagery could have brought down the cult of the Vestal Virgin so completely as she did. After all, it was the most human of struggles: the battle of divine love against the pagan adoration of physical beauty. This battle was also to determine the single, triumphant, feminine archetype, which in Jungian terms is an embedded basic truth built into our being. The Mary Magdalene imagery had taken on one of Christianity's greatest challenges - the fight for the mind and the heart, to triumph over the symbolism and earthly representation of Venus.

In this battle for the heart Mary was more than just flesh and blood; she represented a spiritual symbol and vision of a just and better world-to-come. She was a counterpart to the idea of Christ who was also human and spirit. Over the years, through the repeated recounting of her biblical deeds, post-biblical legends and

extraordinary virtues, Mary Magdalene's aura penetrated ever deeper to illuminate Western consciousness.

The newly converted Christians were now told that the human soul must strive to possess part of God's intrinsic love by imbibing the Holy Spirit. And this is the divine love. By following the Christian precepts each can find that love, which is shared with God and is a part of God. The revolutionary feature of divine love is that by possessing such love, man takes on part of God's nature and essence, and the human soul, to some degree, becomes divine.

Mary Magdalene's spiritual elevation of Christianity is nothing less than a revolution in the engineering and modification of human behavior. Mary represents the lynch pin fastening one mind-set, infused with the pagan notion of beauty, to a new mind-set of the divine spark of Christian beauty. This subliminal grafting of the new Christian worldview onto human consciousness provided a conceptual compensation for the loss of the Vestal Virgin cult and the worship of Venus.

Eventually, the Vestal Virgin cult faded into the history of a by-gone Rome. The banishment of the Vestal Virgins encapsulated the excision of female beauty adulation and natural human love. In their place, the Christian world took on board the new notion of love: Divine Love - the love of God. And so, quite amazingly, the Church, in a very short time, did indeed succeed in planting its saplings of divine love and metaphysical beauty, while uprooting any other aesthetical trend. The newly proclaimed divine essence of love and beauty spread fast and wide in Christianizing Europe. We can still witness divine love in the thousands of richly portrayed works of art that are displayed in art galleries throughout the world. Original depictions are extant on numerous church walls, divine love is also commented upon and elaborated in fine detail in handwritten historical vellum manuscripts, illuminated in magnificent papyrus, and gazes at you from sculptures and friezes in churches and monastic tympanums and portals. Divine

love crystallized into an ideal, penetrating into every aspect of daily life.

As Venus receded from the collective memory, Mary Magdalene took over, becoming the most prominent and favorite saint. She provided solace and comfort in harsh times but was worshipped chiefly for her metaphysical powers - saving souls through divine intervention.

The purified and Christian Mary Magdalene, the Apostle of Apostles, makes her entry. Until her censure some five hundred years later, Mary as a symbol is elevated to the metaphysical Christian model. Mary's natural gifts of compassion and empathy were reinforced by her spiritual power of being able to intercede in the celestial spheres. It is she who is now held up to supersede Venus. Though the inherent notion of pagan beauty cannot be fully erased from the popular mind, it does change form and ownership. Pagan beauty now becomes Christian beauty and its aesthetical essence is expressed spiritually through the language of the Gospels. This is the infrastructure by which the Church Fathers skillfully transmute the ideal of pagan sexuality and beauty into a sublime Christian concept.

### **The Basilica of St. Maximin**

If Mary Magdalene had evolved into such a prominent link in the triumph of Christianity during her lifetime it follows that she had to be worshipped after her death too. Yet at what spot, gravesite? Where did her followers assemble to commemorate her memory? Where were her remains interred apart from a few body parts in the cave of St. Baume? Were there other memorial sites? The answer to this question lies not far from St. Baume, it is in the neighboring town of St. Maximin, which is a charming ancient Gallo-Roman township, and evolved into one of the first centers of early Christianity in Provence.

Except for Magdala, Mary Magdalene's town of birth in the Holy Land, Saint Maximin is the only town in the world whose renown

and attraction are anchored entirely in the legend and history of Mary Magdalene. For it was here that Mary's remains were supposedly laid to rest. Having received the last rites from Maximinus (the later St. Maximin), she was buried here and the site has since become a center of pilgrimage.

The Basilica of St. Maximin lies at the foot of the Sainte Baume mountains and is situated forty kilometers east of Aix-en-Provence<sup>33</sup>. Nestling high up on a hilltop overlooking the town, the church stands majestically, shining bright in the morning sun. Its grand size and thirty three meter height make it the highest church in Provence - and it is visible from every angle.

In the deep ancient crypt there are four marble sarcophagi. Three of the sarcophagi hold the remains of saints, including Saint Maximin. And the fourth, the remains of Mary Magdalene!

The plaque above Mary's sarcophagus states: "*Mary Magdalene was buried in the crypt just after having received communion from the Bishop Maximin.*" At the rear of the cavernous sarcophagi niche the golden shrine of Mary Magdalene stands prominently behind a thick glass partition. A dark skull-like death mask set in gold, peers at you. The skull, veiled by the mask, is alleged to be that of Mary Magdalene and is graced by two small exquisitely sculpted angels.

A musty smell redolent of hundreds of years of decrepit human bones suffuses the air. The relics of Mary Magdalene continue to attract considerable numbers of visitors and pilgrims to the Basilica from near and far. On July 22 of each year, Mary Magdalene's Saint's day, an impressive procession takes place here and the cranium is covered by a golden mask.

Mary the Mother has no grave - as she did not die a mortal's death - and the apostles John and Paul have no identifiable burial sites. It's generally accepted that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, where Christ was crucified, and the Church of Saint Peter in Rome, where the first pope was buried, are the two most famous Christian tombs. St James' tomb at Compostella, is often

considered as the third in importance, but as there's no consensus in this matter, it's reasonable to assume that the third most important tomb could be the Basilica of Saint Maximin, where Mary Magdalene is buried. After all, as stated, Mary Magdalene was Christ's most intimate companion, and the first of his devotees to actually see him resurrected, and by bringing this news was named the Apostle of the Apostles. Mary then went on to instill hope and to encourage the other followers to continue with Christ's work.

The Basilica of St. Maximin, which was built twelve hundred years after the death of Mary Magdalene, was founded by Charles II d'Anjou in 1280 and dedicated to Mary's honor and glory. Built over Mary's remains, the basilica received the blessing of Pope Boniface VIII and the right to hold her relics.

How and why did some of the relics of Mary Magdalene, a fragment of her tibia and a tuft of her hair also reach Vézelay?

### **The Vézelay Abbey Church**

Deep in the heart of Burgundy, close to the Rhone River, nestles the sleepy little town of Vézelay. It is famous for historical milestones: it was here that Pope Urban II conceived the idea of the First Crusade to the Holy Land, knights assembled here for the Second Crusade, and Richard Lionheart and King Philip Augustus and their armies also set off on the Third Crusade from Vézelay. For generations, penitents gathered in Vézelay to begin their pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella in Spain where James, the son of Zebedee and one of the twelve Apostles, is allegedly buried.

According to the legend we have been tracing, Mary Magdalene died at Sainte Baume and was interred at Saint Maximin - both in Provence. If so, why was the church at Vézelay in Burgundy dedicated to her? First, Mary Magdalene had never been to Vézelay, and second, hadn't Mary Magdalene been removed from the Christian matrix by Pope Gregory the Great in 591 C.E.? If so,

why was this striking medieval church proudly sporting her name?

The answer to both the above questions is: relics!

Theft is obviously not an acceptable form of behavior in normative society, and all the more so when it concerns one church robbing another. But in the Middle Ages, who's to say what was right and wrong when it concerned saintly relics?

It's also well documented that in medieval times, a church without relics suffered rather badly from an 'inferiority complex'. Being 'relic-less' meant it couldn't boast of any outstanding importance. Relics empowered the church with a special sacerdotal status, which also upgraded its ranking in the lucrative market for the pilgrim tourist trade. It put the town with its church 'on the map', so to speak.

This former minor Cluniac abbey church of Vézelay attained its reputation as a result of a skillful act of thievery. According to legend<sup>34</sup>, a monk from Vézelay announced in the mid-eleventh century that he had noticed a sarcophagus carved with a representation of the 'unction at Bethany' in the crypt at St. Maximin. The 'unction' is the biblical scene where Mary Magdalene anoints Jesus' feet with perfume, and then wipes them with her hair. In the Middle Ages, Mary of Bethany was considered to be none other than Mary Magdalene.

Without debating the nexus between mammon and Christian ethics, the narrative relates that the shrewd monks succeeded in removing several of the body parts from St. Maximin and had them interred in their own abbey church at Vézelay.

The Vézelay monks insisted that the St. Maximin sarcophagus was the one bearing Mary Magdalene's remains. It seems that they had no pangs of conscience about grabbing some of her relics for themselves. After all, it was all good business - and sacred at that. As a result of acquiring the relics, the Vézelay abbey church's revenues soared from pilgrim visits, enabling the church to be renovated, and to evolve into one of the richest examples of Ro-

manesque architecture in Europe.

It didn't, of course, take long before anger and accusations in Provence evoked an anti-Vézelay smear campaign. In turn, the monks of Vézelay prepared a counter-story<sup>35</sup> to remove any whiff of wrongdoing. The relics of Mary Magdalene, now interred at Vézelay, had reached the abbey directly from the Holy Land back in the ninth century, so they claimed, through the efforts of the abbey's founder, Saint Badilo, who later affiliated the abbey to the Cluniac reform order.

As with all quasi-historical accounts, it is easy to find all kinds of inconsistencies and contradictions. According to the medieval chronicler Sigebert of Gembloux<sup>36</sup>, the relics were indeed removed from St. Maximin in Provence and interred at Vézelay in Burgundy in 1112, but he justifies this by claiming that this was carried out in order to protect them from the invading Moslems. Jacobus da Voragine, famed for the Golden Legend, a hagiography on western European saints, wrote in the mid-thirteenth century, claiming that the relics were actually removed from St. Maximin, by the founder of the Vézelay abbey, Gerard, Duke of Burgundy as early as 771<sup>37</sup>.

These assorted legends concerning Vézelay point to two conclusions: First, it makes no real difference which narrative you adopt, because pilgrims continue to throng and venerate the relics of Mary both at the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Vézelay and at Saint Maximin where, as stated, a huge Basilica was built in the thirteenth century in her honor. Second, it explains how the Church in Vézelay became dedicated to Mary Magdalene - or does it? For the question still remains: why was there a need to have her remains interred in Vézelay and have the Church dedicated to her if Mary had been removed from the core of the Christian matrix?

It can only mean one thing: six hundred years after Mary had been struck off the Christian register she was being reintroduced into the Christian matrix by popular demand! And it was this come-

back which gave the impetus for the Church to possess and display her remains.

The dedication of the Church to Mary Magdalene was the official stamp of approval for the rehabilitation of Mary Magdalene. Mary's personality and central role in the early Christian narrative were rediscovered and adopted anew. The power of the papacy was now so well established and safe that any thoughts of a female papal dynasty were long dead and buried. The path to Mary's official rehabilitation actually began in 1969, when Pope Paul VI claimed that the identification of Mary Magdalene with Mary of Bethany and the "sinful woman" had now been removed from the General Roman Calendar. But even now, the possibility of a claim for Mary being entitled to a place alongside Saint Peter as head of the Catholic Church has never been raised.

### **Art in the Rehabilitation of Mary Magdalene**

In Italy, at the Scrovogni Chapel in Padua and at the Church of St. Francis in Assisi, the wonderful creations of the Florentine artist Giotto di Bondone (1266 - 1337) can still be viewed in full clarity. His works are more than artistic creations; they are detailed, realistic narratives providing us with full cycles of biblical stories. Distancing himself from the two dimensional Byzantine tradition, Giotto revolutionized painting in Western Europe. Executing his works in the mediums of fresco, sculpture and mosaic, Giotto received commissions to adorn palaces and churches. Triggering a return to representational and three-dimensional art he affected the entire art movement in Western Europe, and in doing so paved the way for the Renaissance. Giotto's art also played a part in the rehabilitation of Mary Magdalene by painting the amazing legend we have been following of Mary Magdalene and her journey to southern France<sup>38</sup>.

Giotto was not alone in the artistic restoration of Mary Magdalene. The new spirit of the High Middle Ages also finds expression in the illustration of medieval literature. One example is that



of the Psalter - a medieval religious book comprising mainly psalms. The St Albans Psalter, also known as the Albani Psalter, is an English illuminated manuscript, one of several Psalters known to have been created at or for St Albans Abbey in England in the 12th century. Here one can see a depiction of Mary Magdalene relating her witnessing of the reincarnation of Christ to the other disciples. An assortment of human personalities radiate through a spectrum of colors.

Donatello, the early Renaissance artist, perhaps expressed better than any other, the convergence of Christian and secular values. In his extraordinary sculpture of a realistic aging Mary Magdalene<sup>39</sup>, Donatello made his artistic and humanistic statement in perceiving the saintly Mary Magdalene's renewed centrality in the human drama here on Earth. Donatello attributed her importance to the age of Humanism. The ethos of compassion and empathy as embodied in this creation embraces the very essence of Humanism.

The military Order of Knights Templar, whose name originates from the fact that they set up their first headquarters on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, was established to protect the Christian pilgrims and the Christian holy sites in Jerusalem. It also dedicated itself specifically to the memory and qualities of Mary Magdalene. In Mary's image, they saw all the virtues they most admired. Naming her the patroness of their Order, they honored her Feast Day on the 22 July by saying special prayers in her memory.

A plethora of guilds, chapels and institutions now honored Mary as their patron saint. Fairs, festivals and various sites were named in her honor, and important church services and prayers were conducted in her memory.

Thus, by the mid-thirteenth century, the image of Mary Magdalene was once again very visible and significant in a myriad of aspects of the medieval religious-political matrix.

Symbolically, Mary Magdalene's revamped image was akin to a bright light signifying greater spiritual freedom. It was symbol-

ized by the natural light now penetrating the magnificent multi-colored windows of the huge Gothic churches and palaces, sprouting across town and countryside.

In the secular domain, the spiritual and emotional messages of Mary Magdalene have resulted in this artistic inspiration in the visual arts and so inspired generations of artists, particularly since the Renaissance. Hundreds of years later, this impact resurfaced to become a major theme in the Romantic Movement. Today Mary Magdalene's multidimensional image has become an accepted major figure in the western cultural and spiritual matrix.

### **Conclusion**

Whatever grains of historical accuracy can be filtered out of the intricacies of the myths and legends in this narrative, the point is that in reality the import of these accounts is considerable. Assorted Christian movements and sects ardently evoked Mary Magdalene's influence on Christianity, and subsequently on western civilization. The Order of the Dominicans not only believed in the sources of Mary's earlier life, but accepted much of the legend's content as well, and promulgated their beliefs accordingly. In the main, the Dominicans viewed Mary Magdalene as a penitential model seeking repentance<sup>40</sup>. The evangelical movement also claimed Mary's significance and viewed her as a model inspiring hope and as an exemplar of a soul in love with God<sup>41</sup>. All these devotees see in the penitential Mary Magdalene as proof of one's potential to rise to the peak of intimacy with God after having sunk into the lowest depths. Finally, in 1969, Pope Paul VI cleared Mary Magdalene's name by declaring that she was not the harlot and sinful woman as written in Luke and identified as such by Pope Gregory the Great. On June 3 2016, Pope Francis, went even further by enhancing Mary's status in his announcement that the memorial day for Mary Magdalene is to be elevated to a major feast day to be held in her honor<sup>42</sup>. According to Lucetta Scarrafia, editor of the Vatican-published *Women Church World*

monthly magazine, “*By doing this, he (Pope Francis) established the absolute equality of Mary Magdalene to the apostles, something that has never been done before and is also a point of no return for women in the church*”.

Yet the paramount point is, that it is doubtful whether Christianity could have survived without Mary Magdalene. So surely Mary Magdalene can be ranked as one of the most significant personages in Christianity.

## NOTES

1 - The ‘historical’ aspects of this tale were first told in Baigent M. - Leith R. - Lincoln H. *The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail*. Jonathan Cape, London, 1982.

2 - The New Testament Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John place Mary as witness to Jesus’s crucifixion, burial and resurrection.

3 - Voragine da Jacobus, First Edition Published 1470, *The Golden Legend or Lives of the Saints*, compiled by Archbishop of Genoa, 1275.

4 - Regarding gender equality in the Early Apostolic Church see for example Paul’s letters: Phil.4.2; Rom.16; Mark 15-4-41; Mathew 27.55; Luke 8.1-3; John 4-9.27.

5 - Mathew Ch. 27 vs.55-56.

6 - Gospel of Mary 17, 9-20.

7 - Mathew Ch.26 vs 69-75 and Mark Ch.14 vs 66-72.

8 - Mark Ch. 8 v 33.

9 - Mark 16:9.

10 - Mathew Ch.28 v.7-9.

11 - John Ch.20 v.1.

12 - Gospel of Peter 50-51.

13 - Gospel of Peter 55b.

14 - Gospel of Mary p. 9, 8-9.

15 - Gospel of Mary p.9, 16-17.

16 - Matthew 16,18-19.

- 17 - Mathew Chapter 18, verse 18.
- 18 - See note 3.
- 19 - Luke, Ch. 8 v.2.
- 20 - Homily 33 is recorded in Homiliarum in evangelia, Lib. II, Patrologia Latina, vol. 76 (Paris, J.-P. Migne, 1844-1864), cols. 1238-1246.
- 21 - Confessions of Augustine, Book 2.
- 22 - Paul, 1 Corinthians 7, 9.
- 23 - Judges 4, 6-7.
- 24 - Exodus 15, 20-21.
- 25 - Acts 16, 24.
- 26 - Book of Esther; in Writings (also called Hagiographa), the third section of the Hebrew Bible.
- 27 - The high standing of women in Luke's Gospel is evident from the beginning with two women playing enormously important roles in the history of salvation - Mary and Elizabeth, as well as Anna - roles which are described in such detail only by Luke 1-2. In addition, it is also evident that there is concern for widows in the Gospel; they are mentioned occasionally (Luke, 2, 37; 4, 25-26; 7, 12; 18, 3; 20, 47; 21, 2).
- 28 - The Orthodox Church also tells us that Mary Magdalene travelled to Rome, as the official website of the Antiochian Orthodox Church in North America explains: <http://www.antiochian.org/node/19008>.
- 29 - In fact, the circumstances surrounding Pontius Pilate's death in circa 39 A.D. are something of a mystery and a source of contention. According to some traditions, the Roman emperor Caligula ordered Pontius Pilate to death by execution or suicide. By other accounts, Pontius Pilate was sent into exile and committed suicide of his own accord.
- 30 - The Greek Church maintains that the saint retired to Ephesus with the Blessed Virgin and there died, that her relics were transferred to Constantinople in 886 and are there preserved. Gregory of Tours (*De miraculis*, I, xxx) supports the statement that she went to Ephesus.
- 31 - Origin in the Grail romances of the early Middle Ages. There was a Romance from around 1200 called *Joseph Of Arimatea*, depicting him and his followers (not the Church) as Keepers of the Grail, never reaching Britain but founder of a secret Order whose members in the "vale of Avaron" knew the "secret" of the Grail - the words which will end the "enchantment of Britain." The *High History Of The Holy Grail*, alias *Perlesvaus*, of c1225 AD, and later Romances, even imply a dy-

nasty from Joseph and Christ to Sir Galahad.

**32** - According to The Golden Legend, seven times a day angels carried her aloft to heaven, where she glimpsed her coming reward. This scene of ecstasy arose during the Counter-Reformation and became represented in Baroque art as a medium to emphasize the veneration of saints.

**33** - The following description is detailed in: Shapiro, F, 2014 *Eve and Mary*, Axis Mundi Books.

**34** - Haskins S, 2011, *Mary Magdalen: Truth and Myth*. Random House.

**35** - The primary source for the history of Vézelay is a codex compiled in the twelfth century, containing the abbey's annals, a cartulary, a history of the early counts of Nevers, and much besides, in the Bibliothèque municipale, Auxerre, MS 227; it was edited by R. B. C. Huygens, in his magisterial *Monumenta Vizeliacensia: Textes relatifs à l'histoire de l'abbaye de Vézelay (Corpus Christianorum)* Turnhout, Belgium, 1976.

**36** - Sigebert of Gembloux, *Chronicon ab anno 381 ad 1113*.

**37** - Varagine Jacobus da, 1290 circa, *Legenda Aurea*. Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence.

**38** - Scenes from the Life of Mary Magdalen: 1320s, Fresco Magdalen Chapel, Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi.

**39** - Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence.

**40** - In 1295, the Dominican Order was given care of the Shrine of St. Mary Magdalene at Le Sainte Baum (the Holy Cave), in southeastern France...from the beginnings of the Dominican Order, she was proclaimed co-patroness of the newly founded apostolic Order of Friars Preachers.

**41** - McKnight S. 2008, "The Mary We Never Knew". *Christianity Today*. Retrieved 2008-05-07.

**42** - <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/saints/07/22/st-mary-magdalene-disciple-of-the-lord.html>.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Baigent M. - Leith R. - Lincoln H.** *The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail*. Jonathan Cape, London, 1982.

**Haskins S.** *Mary Magdalen: Truth and Myth*. Random House, 2011.

**Leloup J.-Y.** *Gospel of Mary*. Inner Traditions, Rochester Vermont, 2002

**McKnight S.** *The Mary We Never Knew*. *Christianity Today*. 2008.

**New Testament** in Holy Bible, King James Version Zondervan, 1983.

**Shapiro F.** *Eve and Mary*. Axis Mundi Books, 2014.

**Varagine J. (da)** *Legenda Aurea*. Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, 1290 circa.

**DALLA BIELORUSSIA ALLA SIBERIA:  
VITA BREVE E OPERA POLITICA E SOCIALE DI  
MARIA BOHUSZEWICZ (1865-1887),  
COFONDATRICE E LEADER  
DEL “WIELKI PROLETARIAT”,  
LA PRIMA INTERNAZIONALE POLACCA**

*Anna Tylusinska-Kowalska*  
(Università di Varsavia)

**Introduzione**

L'intervento ha per obiettivo presentare la figura e l'opera politica e sociale di una donna speciale che si trovò unica tra gli uomini a fondare l'Associazione ovvero il primo partito socialista polacco, “Wielki Proletariat” [«Grande Proletariato»]: la risposta polacca alla nascita dei movimenti socialisti in Europa e negli Stati Uniti. L'Associazione polacca, fondata e poi diretta dalla giovanissima Maria Bohuszewicz precedette di un paio d'anni la Seconda Internazionale di Parigi. La Polonia in quel tempo non era paese indipendente e i movimenti liberali rimanevano legati a quelli patriottici che avevano per obiettivo far rinascere il Paese, oppresso da oltre 100 anni dalla Russia zarista, dall'Austria e dalla Prussia (la giovane Bohuszewicz viveva nella parte occupata dalla Russia). Occorreva coraggio e determinazione per operare in quelle circostanze sul campo politico e sociale promuovendo idee di sinistra in un paese oppresso e privo di qualsiasi forma di libertà, in cui ogni minima violazione delle leggi imposte dal governatore che rappresentava lo zar aveva conseguenze gravissime: sentenze di morte, incarcerazioni, infine espulsione dalla patria e esilio forzato in Siberia. Tutto ciò riguarda la breve vita della Bohuszewicz, in privato cognata di mia nonna materna, una vera eroina dei suoi tempi: dopo che venne scoperta la sua attività clandestina dalle autorità zariste, fu carcerata, processata, deportata

in Siberia. Morì, ormai affetta da tisi, malattia che purtroppo decimava tutta la sua famiglia, durante un viaggio estenuante, lasciando a un amico il suo *Pamiętnik* [Memorie] che rimane una fonte preziosissima di quel pezzo della storia della Polonia e, insieme, dell'opera di grande umanità e coraggio di Maria Bohuszewicz.

Un personaggio storico quindi degno di massima attenzione che s'inscrive perfettamente nel quadro di 'donne che cambiarono il mondo', tema chiave del convegno. Mi è sembrato doveroso presentare a un pubblico più vasto la figura di una donna eccezionale, di cui, ironia della sorte, paradossalmente si parlava di più sotto il regime comunista le cui autorità sfruttavano ogni occasione per distorcere a scopi propagandistici le ideologie di sinistra e quasi impadronirsene. Significativa poi rimane la data 1984 della pubblicazione delle sue memorie. Ora invece, da quando la Polonia si è liberata da quel sistema e sono ormai 30 anni suonati dalla caduta del regime, la sinistra, anche quella storica, non viene particolarmente pubblicizzata, e nemmeno minimamente valorizzata, sicuramente non dall'attuale governo di destra populista, ma anche prima, quando a governare è stato il partito liberale e centrista.

Dai documenti reperiti in famiglia, ma anche dalle fonti storiche perché si tratta di un'importante persona nello sviluppo del movimento politico-sindacale, Maria Bohuszewicz nasce nel 1865, cioè quasi 160 anni fa, in una famiglia nobile sul territorio dell'odierna Bielorussia, la più grande di tre figli. Sua sorella, Zofia, sposerà un fratello di mia nonna, Antoni Gabszewicz, un medico di fama europea. Una curiosità: nella mia famiglia si parlava da sempre di una lontana discendenza di Tadeusz Kościuszko, grande eroe nazionale polacco, anche statunitense, e solo grazie al presente studio ho capito che si tratta di quel ramo dei Bohuszewicz: in effetti, la madre di Maria fu nipote della sorella del grande patriota polacco di fine Settecento. La testimonianza della breve vita di Maria, il suo *Pamiętnik* di cui si parlerà più avanti,



riporta un ricordo d'infanzia che per la formazione ideologica di Maria divenne fondamentale: la visita che compì con il padre quando aveva 10 anni in casa di Kościuszko a Siechnowicze (nell'odierna Bielorussia), la cui memoria fu custodita pietosamente nella famiglia Bohuszewicz. Nel diario Maria vi dedicherà alcune pagine sulle quali con una forte portata di emozionalità confesserà la tragedia personale del padre. Quell'uomo onesto, frustrato per via di tutte le insurrezioni patriottiche antirusse finite con la sconfitta, ormai privo di ogni speranza e illusione per il futuro, le chiese di operare in modo da non tradire mai la patria e rimanere sempre fedele alle proprie idee: «Magari la vostra generazione sarà più fortunata della nostra», avrebbe detto.

La famiglia, venduti i beni in campagna, si trasferì a Varsavia in via Złota, un palazzo di 5 spaziosi appartamenti in pieno centro di Varsavia - oggi vi sta il Palazzo di Cultura, edificio eretto in omaggio a Stalin nel 1955. A Varsavia Maria ebbe modo di frequentare il collegio femminile, uno dei più prestigiosi della città, che concluse con il massimo dei voti nel 1880. Come tutte le giovani adolescenti di buona famiglia e da marito, veniva portata dalla madre a balli, ricevimenti, spettacoli, una vita tipica della nobiltà del tempo, colma di pettegolezzi, invidie, segnata da false amicizie. Come poi scriverà nel diario si trovava malissimo in quegli ambienti. Le mancava un'attività vera in cui sentirsi utile e realizzare i propri sogni ed ideali che lei decise fermamente di tramutare in obiettivi concreti: prestare aiuto ai bisognosi. Nel frattempo continuava gli studi, nel 1881 sostenne con successo l'esame statale per gli insegnanti nelle scuole private; sognava la laurea universitaria. Non fece in tempo, la sorte decise diversamente.

Nel 1881 capitò in casa loro la sorella del padre, affetta da tisi, che li trascinò gli ultimi mesi della vita, amata ed assistita da Maria che le rimase al capezzale durante i lunghi mesi d'agonia. Poi venne il turno dei genitori di lei. Assistette la madre che si spegneva giorno dopo giorno e ne abbiamo una descrizione stra-

ziente nel diario di Maria. Infine toccò al padre di seguire la sorte della madre anche se si trattava di un paio di mesi vissuti tra la vita e la morte e la cessione di tutte le pratiche burocratiche e amministrative (una parte del palazzo veniva affittata ad alcune famiglie) che ormai pesavano tutte sulle spalle della giovane donna. Non le fu risparmiata la cura dei due fratelli più piccoli: Jan e Zofia che sposando mio prozio entrò nella mia famiglia. Il padre che morì un anno e mezzo dopo la madre, nel 1883. Maria visse malissimo tutte le tragedie familiari, sfinita, ‘à bout des forces’, come dice nel suo diario, subì anche lei un primo attacco di tisi che la costrinse a recarsi in campagna dove trascorse alcuni mesi e, come poi scrisse nel diario, si riprese quasi completamente. Tornata a Varsavia, iniziò la collaborazione con due riviste di sinistra “Prawda” [“Verità”] e “Przegląd Tygodniowy” [“Rassegna della settimana”] che diedero il via alla sua vera e propria attività politica. A questo punto sarebbe necessario soffermarci un attimo sull’ appena consolidatosi partito ‘Proletariat’ nel cui seno intraprenderà la sua attività e la cui direzione la porterà nel carcere prima e poi in Siberia.

L’associazione, o se vogliamo, il primo partito socialista polacco che portava forti segni sindacali ebbe una vita breve, di soli 4 anni. Gli storici questa vita breve la dividono in 3 tappe: dall’autunno del 1882 all’autunno del 1883 (cfr. Perl: 202). A capo di quel movimento socialista si pose Ludwik Waryński, anch’egli con origini nobili, che coinvolse nell’organizzazione la gioventù studentesca, nobili, borghesi, operai, artigiani, perfino contadini. Riuscì a estendere le strutture, oltre che a Varsavia dove nacque, su tutte le città di rilievo della zona dipendente politicamente in quel periodo storico dalla Russia zarista. Il partito oltre a denunciare l’ingiustizia sociale in tanti campi di vita economica e lavorativa, esortava alle azioni patriottiche attirando nell’orbita delle attività di ‘Proletariat’ anche i russi, giovani militari e impiegati che stazionavano a Varsavia. Su iniziativa dei membri e dei simpatizzanti del partito nacque l’Associazione della Croce Rossa. Nell’autunno

del 1883 Waryński fu incarcerato, passò più di due anni nella Cittadella di Varsavia, durissima prigione per ribelli politici in funzione dal 1832, morì poi in Siberia, appena trentatreenne. Con la sua morte inizia la seconda tappa dell'attività del 'Proletariat' chiusosi con le repressioni dell'estate del 1884. Il timone del partito passa nelle mani di Stanisław Kunicki sotto la cui direzione il partito continua la sua attività, pubblica il giornale 'Proletariat', riallaccia la collaborazione con gli emigrati di Ginevra.

Nel corso del 1884 ebbero luogo successive incarcerazioni. Lo stesso Kunicki fu arrestato. La stessa sorte condivisero il gruppo di giovani che portarono avanti l'operare del partito, capeggiati dalla giovanissima, appena ventenne Maria Bohuszewicz (1865-1887). Processati alla fine del 1885 29 membri del Proletariato subirono gravi condanne: 4 di essi ebbero la sentenza a morte, gli altri finirono in Siberia. Nel gennaio del 1886 ebbe luogo l'esecuzione di Kunicki e altri compagni tra cui un russo, Piotr Bardowski. Il "Grande Proletariato" finì la sua esistenza, ma non morirono le sue idee che in forme varie verranno continuate. (Trzeciakowski, pp. 561-562)

Ancora prima, negli ultimi mesi del 1883 la giovanissima, appena diciottenne Maria Bohuszewicz operava sempre più attivamente nel seno dell'Associazione della Croce Rossa, e il già menzionato appartamento dove viveva a Varsavia in via Żłota 26 divenne punto di ritrovo e discussione. Alla fine dell'anno era lei che presiedeva ormai l'Associazione. Gli arresti di massa del 1884 sconvolsero l'operare del Partito anche perché i prigionieri venivano trattati non solo come ribelli di sinistra, bensì anche come ribelli politici. Della sorte degli arrestati decidevano gli uffici dello zar e le decisioni si prendevano direttamente a San Pietroburgo. Quegli eventi chiudono la seconda fase dell'attività del Proletariat e la terza e l'ultima è legata direttamente al nome della Bohuszewicz che si era distinta nel frattempo per la sua determinazione,

empatia verso il prossimo, coraggio. Arrestati i capi e il fondatore del Partito, a un incontro clandestino del gruppo di membri che per puro caso si erano salvati, tutti all'unanimità decisero di affidarle la direzione. Ricordiamo che Maria ha appena 21 anni. Le strutture politiche andavano immediatamente ricostruite e la giovane donna si buttò a capofitto in quell'attività. Si notarono immediatamente le nuove adesioni, vi si unì anche il giovanissimo fratello di Maria, allora studente universitario, Jan (persona acculturata, nella collezione dei libri che timbrava scrupolosamente con il proprio nome, anni fa trovai anche i versi di Leopardi), coinvolto anch'egli nell'intensa attività, anche di propaganda. Maria si impegnò con tutta se stessa nella ristrutturazione del partito, organizzava corsi di formazione politica, si allacciarono contatti con i prigionieri della Cittadella progettando fughe. La Bohuszewicz di persona forniva loro cibo e vestiti, correndo fino allo sfinimento alle riunioni dei vari gruppi di nuovi membri. Il 7 marzo su sua iniziativa fu organizzata la prima, nella storia di Varsavia e nella storia del movimento operaio-sindacale polacco, manifestazione degli sfollati e dei disoccupati che passarono per le vie centrali della capitale. Fu un successo politico, ne parlarono il giorno dopo tutti i quotidiani di Varsavia. Ovviamente anche le autorità russe che seguivano attentamente gli eventi della capitale non restarono indifferenti. La dimora della Bohuszewicz fu da allora spiata, sorvegliata quotidianamente. Come ben si può prevedere nelle fila del partito si insinuarono anche le spie che regolarmente denunciavano e riferivano tutte le mosse dei membri del nuovo 'Proletariat'. Veniva sequestrata e controllata tutta la corrispondenza. Nella notte dal 29 al 30 settembre del 1885 si procedette agli arresti: 40 membri del gruppo di Maria furono arrestati, solo 4 riuscirono a fuggire, tra cui suo cugino Aleksander Dębski. Il famigerato padiglione X della Cittadella, conosciuto per il terrore e le torture che lì subirono i prigionieri politici (anche quelli internati dopo l'insurrezione del 1863) che complottavano contro lo zar e la sua politica nei confronti dei polacchi, ebbe

come prigioniera Maria Bohuszewicz per un anno e mezzo. La giovane donna li visse atroci sofferenze: il susseguirsi di processi e pene di morte inflitte ai suoi più stretti collaboratori, i suicidi dei compagni che non riuscirono a sopportare i disumani trattamenti dei prigionieri: interrogatori, sevizie. Tanti poi morirono di tisi per via delle condizioni disumane delle celle.

Il 12 maggio del 1887 arrivò infine la sentenza: Maria con altri 3 membri del partito fu condannata a 5 anni di esilio forzato nella Siberia Orientale. Le si vietava rigorosamente il ritorno in patria. Il corpo di Maria, estenuato dai lunghi mesi di carcere non resse alle disumane condizioni del viaggio se di viaggio in queste condizioni parlare si può parlare. Giunse con due compagni di sventura solo a Krasnojarsk. Lì, sperando che lei si riprendesse, i due aspettarono un mese, poi furono costretti a proseguire. Maria Bohuszewicz si spense nell'autunno inoltrato del 1887.

Strada facendo, correggeva e scriveva frettolosamente il suo *Pamiętnik* [*Memorie*] come se presentisse la morte e cercasse di fare in tempo a raccontarsi per fermare il tempo e trasmettere ai posteri almeno i momenti più importanti della sua vita. Lo stese in forma di lettera o dialogo con Leonard Frenkel, amico di famiglia e suo collaboratore. E quindi si tratta di un testo difficilmente classificabile.

Nell'*Introduzione* al *Pamiętnik* [*Memorie*], Żanna Kormanowa osserva che si tratta in questo caso di un documento e, per di più, di un documento particolare. «È un diario intimo e la sua intimità e i suoi valori letterari, la sua risonanza profondamente umana fanno sì che esso sia non solo una fonte storica, bensì - e non di meno - per uno scrittore o drammaturgo. Non è solo un documento dell'epoca che fece nascere il 'Proletariat', si tratta anche di un documento del partito nelle cui fila combatté e per cui morì l'autrice.» (Kormanowa, p. 19). Ricordiamo che una grande studiosa polacca, traduttrice dei saggi di Philippe Lejeune, nel suo lavoro *Style wypowiedzi pamiętnikarskiej* sviluppa l'idea che i

diari possano essere letti in due modi diversi: come opera letteraria o come documento storico: o diventano quindi oggetto di interpretazione oppure l'autore viene considerato come testimone degli eventi della sua epoca che sta raccontando (Cfr. Lubas-Bartoszynska, p. 16). Il testo della Bohuszewicz strutturalmente è complicato, per l'intimità di emozioni e la densità del pensiero suggerisce un 'diario intimo', racconto del sé profondamente personale (cfr. Lejeune, p. 6), d'altra parte invece abbiamo a che fare con un testo di carattere memorialistico (cfr. Tylusinska-Kowalska, pp. 18-19) in cui le vicende esterne, i fatti storici svolgono un ruolo fondamentale e su tale sfondo, timidamente, appare la figura dell'Au-trice (Cfr. Cienski, pp. 28-30; Ceruti, p. 17).

Sarebbe ora interessante ricostruire in breve la storia del *Pamiętnik* lasciato dalla Bohuszewiczówna che fino alla sua scoperta restava una figura nota per la costruzione della sinistra polacca, ma unicamente nei ristretti circoli politici. Era costretta ad operare nel massimo segreto, la sua attività fu clandestina, ignorata dalla gran parte della società di Varsavia, anche 'alta società' che era il ceto a cui apparteneva. Fu cauta, non solo per via dell'occhio vigile dei gendarmi russi e della censura, bensì anche per non essere scoperta dalle 'cugine' che dopo la morte dei suoi genitori apparentemente vegliavano su di lei e sulla sua vita, ma sarebbero state anche pronte a denunciarla. Era una donna introversa, non si confidava con nessuno, tranne con il fratello che fu l'unico della famiglia che la seguì nell'operare in politica. Apparteneva allo stretto gruppo direttivo del Partito, i suoi compagni furono incarcerati insieme a lei, e una parte rimase poi nella Cittadella di Varsavia, altri insieme a lei furono condannati all'esilio in Siberia. Gli anni che succedettero immediatamente alla sua morte non furono un periodo adatto a rendere pubblico il ruolo della Bohuszewiczówna nella formazione del partito di sinistra nonché palesare qualsiasi attività avversa alla politica zarista. La giovane donna nelle brevi soste dell'estenuante viaggio alla volta

della Siberia si dedicava alla frettolosa scrittura del suo diario. Non si sapeva chi sarebbe poi tornato in terra polacca e quindi amici e compagni di sventura si cucivano i fogli separati nei vestiti. I venti fogli furono custoditi religiosamente dai compagni superstiti. Si suppone che fossero rilegati in seguito da Michał Mancewicz, amico di vecchia data di Maria, oppure da Leonard Frenkel, immaginario destinatario della scrittura. In seguito gli esiliati ne fecero alcune copie. Purtroppo resta ignoto chi di preciso fosse in possesso dell'originale, nemmeno delle copie. Si sa invece che una delle copie fu mandata a Jan, fratello di Maria, in esilio forzato nella Siberia occidentale. Poco dopo la morte della Bohuszewiczówna dell'esistenza del diario venne al corrente il suo fidanzato, Jan Józef Potocki, che in memoria di lei assunse lo pseudonimo Marian Bohusz. Si diede a cercare il *Pamiętnik* ancora in Siberia senza tuttavia trovarne una traccia. Ugualmente la famiglia di Maria procedette verso le indagini appena venne a conoscenza del fatto che la copia di Jan fu sequestrata dai gendarmi. Solo dopo la morte di Potocki furono pubblicate su una rivista che usciva a Londra i frammenti del *Pamiętnik* sulla rivista «Przedświt», ricordi anonimi intitolati: *I ricordi di un prigioniero*, ma scritti da un testimone oculare degli eventi, Michał Wojnicz nel cui gruppo operava la Bohuszewicz. La famiglia riuscì a contattarlo, ma non seppe dell'esistenza del *Pamiętnik* più di quanto scrisse Potocki in base alle informazioni dirette delle giornate siberiane trascorse in comune. Nel 1887 sulla stessa rivista fu pubblicato il necrologio che commemorava tutti i periti in Siberia in cui una parte cospicua fu dedicata alla memoria della Bohuszewicz, appunto. In seguito, sulla stessa rivista, nel 1889 nella rubrica "I nostri compagni" apparve la foto della Bohuszewicz, con un'informazione tutt'altro che precisa. Invece il summenzionato Bohusz, sul "Głos", nel 1887 pubblicò una nota bibliografica con informazioni ben camuffate, ma pienamente conformi alla verità. I lettori ormai sapevano leggere tra le righe... La Bohuszewicz divenne eroina nazionale, una martire che combattendo per una

causa giusta subì una morte precoce. Il numero del giornale esaurito nel giro di poche ore, Maria fu sulla bocca di tutti. La sorella di Maria non riuscì ad acquistarlo, lo stesso Bohusz le portò una copia il giorno dopo. Ma già si era diffusa la leggenda: la giovane donna che diede la vita per la causa del miglioramento della vita di operai e gente povera, chiamata dai più ‘nipote di Kosciuszko’ per dare più importanza al suo ricordo.

Successivamente su vari quotidiani, soprattutto simpatizzanti con la sinistra, ogni tanto apparivano articoli che pubblicavano brevi note sull’attività della Bohuszewiczówna e del ‘Proletariat’. Ma soltanto Adam Próchnik, noto pubblicista di Varsavia, in base ai documenti conservati nell’Archivio Centrale di Varsavia stese la prima quasi completa nota biografica nella *Cronaca del movimento rivoluzionario in Polonia* (Kronika ruchu rewolucyjnego w Polsce) e in seguito nel *Dizionario biografico*. Próchnik in quell’occasione confessò di aver cercato il *Pamiętnik* per ben 30 anni senza successo. Intanto, per le strane vie della sorte, le 20 pagine del testo personale della Bohuszewicz, dalla Siberia Orientale giunsero a Varsavia e già il 15 ottobre del 1931 fu inserito nel catalogo dei Manoscritti della Biblioteca pubblica di Varsavia, oggi al numero 3503. Sta ugualmente nel catalogo dei manoscritti del 1935 come *Autobiografia di Maria Bohuszewicz*, il che conferma l’inclassificabilità del testo. Stranamente *Pamiętnik* si salvò dalla burrasca della guerra, dall’incendio della biblioteca, dai bombardamenti del 1944 anche se alcuni fogli subirono danni. Venne ritrovato nelle cartelle con documenti di Wanda Umińska, impegnata nelle lotte patriottiche del 1863 e poi anche simpatizzante con il partito della Bohuszewiczówna.

Il *Pamiętnik* dunque è steso in forma di lettere o colloquio indirizzato alla persona che le era cara a cui si decise a raccontare la storia della sua vita, il nascere delle sue idee, la realizzazione dei sogni dell’uguaglianza e del miglioramento di vita delle classi lavoratrici che suscitavano pietà in chi era più sensibile alle sorti degli umili. Come destinatario, come abbiamo menzionato, fu scelto Leonard



Frenkel, amico di famiglia di vecchia data, compagno di sventura, anch'egli costretto all'esilio forzato in Siberia. Fino a Tiumeń arrivarono tutti i proscritti insieme. Da lì partirono in gruppi più ristretti giacché sedici di loro furono diretti nella Siberia occidentale, a Tobolsk. Chi, seguendo la sentenza processuale andava, come Maria, nella Siberia orientale, ebbe la prima sosta a Tomsk e da lì i condannati partivano ormai in piccoli gruppi di 10-12 persone. Proprio a Tomsk Maria e Leo furono separati e si suppone che i fogli del suo diario fossero riempiti di ricordi dopo la partenza dalla città. Chi la accompagnò fino all'ultimo fu Michał Mancewicz il quale soleva raccontare di quel periodo della sua vita, menzionando la Bohuszewicz e le vicissitudini del tempo. Al ritorno dalla Siberia raccontava anche della morte di Maria, del funerale, ma non disse nemmeno una parola del *Pamiętnik*. Sembra strano perché fu l'unico del gruppo che accompagnò Maria nel suo ultimo viaggio e le fu compagno fino alla sua morte. Si può supporre comunque che fosse in possesso dei fogli personali della compagna di sventura e che appena incontratosi con il destinatario del triste racconto della Bohuszewicz glieli consegnò. Lo stesso Frenkel tornato dalla Siberia nel 1896 rendeva visite regolari alla famiglia di Maria, sapeva dell'esistenza dei fogli, ma mai disse una parola in merito. L'anno dopo partì per l'estero e morì a Vienna nel 1919.

Michał Mancewicz morì solo nel 1930, invece il *Pamiętnik* fu rintracciato nella Biblioteca Pubblica nel 1931, annoverato nel catalogo senza ulteriori informazioni. Dalle relazioni della figlia di Mancewicz risulta che a Frankel ne diede una copia, invece l'originale se lo tenne come unico ricordo della donna amata. Dopo la permanenza siberiana sarebbe tornato in terra polacca munito del *Pamiętnik*. Il testo si compone di 20 fogli separati. Lo stato dei fogli è pessimo, ma resta visibile la scrittura chiara e tonda, i fogli portano anche i numeri di pagina. Si vede ben chiaro che la carta mancava, l'autrice scrive in maniera da accostare massimamente le lettere per risparmiare lo spazio. Lo stile scorrevole, la scrittura tipica delle donne di fine Ottocento. Alcuni frammenti

rimangono illeggibili: nel decifrarli diede aiuto la nipote (figlia della sorella Zofia) Zofia Orłańska (morta nel 1979), in privato la prima cugina di mia madre che ricordo ancora benissimo. Di soccorso si rivelarono anche gli album di famiglia di cui la curatrice del *Pamiętnik* ebbe modo di servirsi.

Che cosa sarebbe di particolare nell'opera politica e sociale di questa donna che potrebbe farle meritare l'appartenenza al gruppo di 'donne che cambiarono il mondo'? Quali rischi correva per realizzare i suoi scopi, meglio dire, per quell'epoca, i suoi sogni? La risposta a queste domande viene fornita, appunto, dalle brevi memorie che lasciò morendo. La scrittura personale, soprattutto quella stesa sotto vari regimi, nelle condizioni umane estreme, diventa fonte storica. Il testo di Maria è molto intimo: veniamo a conoscere la sua infanzia, l'adolescenza, i primi passi in campo politico. Solo i primi, perché tutto inizia per lei nel 1885 dopo la morte del padre e finisce con la morte sua nel 1887.

Non si capirà l'importanza del suo operare e il contributo che diede alla formazione della sinistra polacca senza avere uno sguardo sulla situazione politica nelle terre polacche occupate dalla Russia zarista e senza il quadro sociale in cui le toccò di operare. La Polonia sotto il regno dello zar Alessandro II, zona vasta che si estendeva sull'attuale quasi metà del Paese, gran parte dell'odierna Bielorussia, della Lituania. I Polacchi abitavano anche l'odierna Lettonia e Ucraina. Gli anni 1864-1905 sono segnati dalla crescita economica anche nella parte 'russa' della Polonia, da uno sviluppo dell'industria, della produzione anche agricola. La Polonia seguiva alla lettera e rispecchiava tendenze europee, essendo al contempo priva di qualsiasi identità politica: dopo la sconfitta dell'insurrezione del 1863 i leader finirono in Siberia e la politica di russificazione veniva introdotta a tutti i livelli culturali e sociali. In queste circostanze, come abbiamo menzionato, nasceva il partito 'Wielki Proletariat' a cui nell'estate del 1884 aderì la Bohuszewicz, donna umile, modesta, particolarmente sensibile alle sorti degli altri: tutte qualità che emergono

dalla lettura del *Pamiętnik* e ci fanno capire come mai ebbe un ruolo così rilevante nel seno dell'organizzazione. Ci si chiede al contempo da dove questa donna fragile, di salute debole trovò il coraggio di mettersi a capo di un movimento operaio tanto impegnativo.

Occorre dunque dare uno sguardo più attento al *Pamiętnik* stesso che ci presenta da più vicino la figura di questa donna eccezionale, tuttavia ribadiamo che il regime comunista si è appropriato del 'Wielki Proletariat' considerandolo il primo vero partito comunista, di idee di estrema sinistra, cosa non del tutto vera. Si insisteva sul fatto che fosse fondato da borghesi, aristocratici e intelligenza di Varsavia di idee progressiste a tal punto da unirsi per la lotta con i rappresentanti della classe operaia e contadina. Maria Bohuszewicz per il regime costituiva un'icona di come ci si può staccare dal proprio marcio e corrotto ceto sociale (cioè la nobiltà) per dedicarsi alla lotta di classe. Varie città hanno chiamato vie col suo nome, hanno affidato a lei il patrocinio di un paio di scuole materne e licei in Polonia. Non dimentichiamo tuttavia che la protagonista stessa del nostro racconto finì in Siberia per essere stata leader di un partito clandestino, di idee sociali nuove, ma anche di un partito che cospirava contro la dittatura dell'oppressore. Si trattava di un partito che, com'era successo ai tempi delle sette segrete, allacciò i contatti con un'organizzazione politica di un affine programma politico-sociale operante sul territorio della Russia (San Pietroburgo): si preparava un attentato contro lo zar. E quindi non solo attività nel campo sociale, bensì nella politica contro l'oppressore. Purtroppo Maria non ebbe modo di vedere la Polonia rinata, la sua vita si spense ben prima del 1918, suo fratello e sua sorella furono ben più fortunati.

Il *Pamiętnik* è breve ed è un autoritratto psicologico che permette di scoprire la personalità della Bohuszewicz, la sua dedizione alla famiglia, alla causa per la quale le toccò di combattere, il suo patriottismo. Inizia con un lontano ricordo d'infanzia: la visita alla tomba di Kościuszko, eroe nazionale della Polonia, eroe anche

degli Stati Uniti: prozio di sua madre. Il padre, ex combattente nelle file dei soldati dell'insurrezione antirussa di gennaio (1863), dopo averle fatto vedere la casa di famiglia e deposto i fiori sulla tomba di Kościuszko, le disse: «Noi perderemo la battaglia. Che Dio aiuti voi a vincerla.» (Bohuszewicz, p. 39). Su questo ricordo, rivolgendosi sempre all'amico, si tesse tutta la storia della sua vita: scuole, sogni di studiare all'Università che dovettero svanire per via della salute debole dei genitori e la necessità di occuparsi dei piccoli fratello e sorella. Veniamo a conoscere i conflitti tra la sua famiglia e i cugini, la gelosia, l'incomunicabilità. Tutto ciò, come confessa, contribuì al suo carattere chiuso e introverso. Le zie e le cugine ostentamente le cercavano marito ma i candidati venivano regolarmente rifiutati cosa che le costò tanto, vedendone afflitti i genitori. Stranamente, scrivendo nelle condizioni estreme non si astiene da un'autoanalisi profonda, forse prevedendo la morte vicina. Il 13 marzo dell'81 fu il giorno di svolta: leggendo sul giornale di socialisti che manifestavano per le vie di Varsavia, parecchi di loro poi incarcerati, anche suo padre che fino ad allora aveva mantenuto le distanze esclamò: «Sono eroi!». Processati e fucilati: capì il prezzo di una tale attività. Non mancano descrizioni strazianti dei lutti familiari e la causa ne fu la tisi: prima la zia che Maria amava sin dall'infanzia che morì tra le sue braccia, lo zio paterno morì qualche settimana dopo. Cominciarono così settimane, mesi, di una totale dedizione alla cura dei familiari che morivano l'uno dopo l'altro e nel frattempo bisognava badare al palazzo, alle formalità bancarie, agli affitti che non tutti i condomini pagavano e badare ai fratelli. I primi lutti influirono sullo stato di salute della madre che ancora fece in tempo a rallegrarsi per la felice chiusura degli studi di Maria (Corsi per insegnamento). La diagnosi per la madre fu incontrovertibile: tubercolosi. Contemporaneamente le si ammalò il padre e quindi le toccava di passare da un letto all'altro e badare sempre alla casa e ai fratelli. Con sconvolgente precisione descrive la malattia della madre che proseguiva inesorabilmente, l'agonia lunghissima segnata da

una perdita quasi totale di coscienza e alternata a momenti di lucidità. In uno di quei momenti, la morte ormai vicina: «Ti prego, suona il pianoforte, voglio morire in compagnia tua e della musica.» (Bohuszewicz, p. 64). Cadde nel sonno e la mattina dopo alle 6 si spense. Poi fu il turno del padre che prima ebbe ancora una depressione e poi nel momento di un miglioramento psicologico cedette a Maria tutte le incombenze della manutenzione del palazzo. L'Autrice descrive con dettagli la malattia del genitore, le difficoltà che dovette affrontare. La famiglia fu nota a Varsavia, ma l'esercito di zie e cugini non fecero nulla per prestare un minimo aiuto. Il padre morì il 24 giugno del 1883, un anno e mezzo dopo la madre. E cadde malata lei, diagnosi ancora terrificante: tubercolosi. Le salvarono la vita i 3 mesi trascorsi in piena tranquillità in campagna. Al ritorno prese una decisione fissa: ormai si sentiva pronta all'operare per il bene altrui: nel gennaio del 1884 si mise a cercare contatti nelle fila del Wielki Proletariat: «Li trovai facilmente. All'inizio mi misi a collaborare senza appartenere al partito.» (Bohuszewicz, p. 83). In questo modo si avvicinò al movimento socialista, conobbe i futuri compagni, tra cui anche Waryński, il fondatore. «In luglio ebbero luogo arresti di massa. Allora dovetti prendere in mano la situazione e con me altri compagni che rimasero in libertà.» (Bohuszewicz, p. 85). Si conclude così il *Pamiętnik*: «Se avessi qualche domanda da pormi, fa pure. Risponderò sinceramente oppure (in casi rari) non risponderò affatto. E allora? Ora mi conosci meglio? È vero che ormai sono vecchia? Non tutte rose trovai sulla mia strada di vita piuttosto spine, vero? Spesso mi chiedo se aveva ragione mia madre quando diceva: 'E chi soffre sarà migliore'... Sono giunta alla convinzione che non avesse ragione. Dovrei già essere molto buona invece, ti dico sinceramente, non è così.» (Bohuszewicz, p. 88) Firmato: 'M'.

## BIBLIOGRAFIA

**Bobrzyński M.** *Historia Polski w zarysie* [*Breve storia della Polonia*]. Nakł. Gebethnera i Wolfa, Warszawa, 1927.

**Bohuszewiczówna M.** *Pamiętnik* [*Memorie*]. Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa, 1984.

**Borucki M.** *Historia Polski* [*Storia della Polonia*]. Mada, Warszawa, 2009.

**Ceruti T.** *Per una tipologia dell'io autobiografico* in "L'autobiografia, il vissuto e il narrato". Ed. Liviana, Padova, 1986.

**Cieński A.** *Pamiętnikarstwo polskie XVIII w.* [*La scrittura diaristica in Polonia nel XVIII s.*]. Opole, 2002, pp. 28-30.

**Czubiński A. - Topolski J.** *Historia Polski* [*Storia della Polonia*]. Ossolineum, Wrocław, 1988.

*Dzieje Polski*, a cura di Jerzy Topolski. PWN, Warszawa, 1975.

**Kieniewicz S.** *Polska XIX w.* [*La Polonia dell'Ottocento*]. Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa, 1977.

**Koberdowa I.** *Socjalno-Rewolucyjna Partia Proletariat*. Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1981.

**Kormanowa Ż.** "Pamiętnik" jako źródło historyczne [*"Pamiętnik" come fonte storica*] in Bohuszewiczówna M. "Pamiętnik" [*"Memorie"*]. Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa, 1984, pp. 15-19.

**Lejeune Ph. - Bogaert C.** *Un journal à soi*. Ed. Textuel, Paris, 2003.

**Lubas-Bartoszyńska R.** *Style wypowiedzi pamiętnikarskiej*. Wyd. Naukowe, Kraków, 1983, pp. 11-16.

**Perl F.** *Dzieje ruchu socjalistycznego w zaborze rosyjskim (do powstania PPS)*. Drukarnia Ludowa, Warszawa, 1932.

*Polska i Polacy: studia z dziejów polskiej myśli politycznej XIX i XX* [*La Polonia e i Polacchi: studi della storia del pensiero politico polacco del secolo XIX e XX*] in AA. VV. "La Polonia e i Polacchi" a cura di M. Mroczko. Wyd. Uniw. Gdańskiego, Gdańsk, 2001.

**Topolski J.** *Polska w czasach nowożytnych: od środkowoeuropejskiej potęgi do utraty niepodległości* [La Polonia nei tempi moderni: dalla potenza dell'Europa centrale alla perdita dell'indipendenza]. UAM, Poznań, 1994.

**Tylusińska-Kowalska A.** *Imparare dal vivo. La scrittura autobiografica italiana romantico-risorgimentale*. Ed. UW, Warszawa, 1999

**Tymowski M.** *Historia Polski* [La storia della Polonia]. Spotkania, Warszawa, 1990.

**UNA PROTAGONISTA DEL FEMMINISMO  
NOVECENTESCO ITALIANO:  
SIBILLA ALERAMO**

*Margherita Verdirame*  
(Università di Catania)

C'è una singolare figura di letterata e intellettuale che si staglia all'orizzonte culturale dell'Italia otto-novecentesca, incidendo profondamente nella politica e nella scrittura "donesca" (per usare un termine antico, già comune in Boccaccio) giungendo fino alla nostra contemporaneità: Marta Felicina (Rina) Faccio, nota con lo pseudonimo di Sibilla Aleramo (nata ad Alessandria nel 1876, scomparsa a Roma nel 1960). Di lei i manuali registrano soprattutto il racconto autobiografico, dai risvolti sociologici oltre che intimistici, intitolato *Una donna* (1906)<sup>1</sup>, resoconto scandaloso della sua "indecente" liberazione e del suo rigetto degli stereotipi del muliebrismo che l'autrice-protagonista denuncia con piglio guerriero, senza esitare ad affrontarli per abbatterli anche tramite scelte tormentose, disordinate, arruffate spesso, sempre gagliarde e temerarie. Un itinerario rivissuto e trascritto, durante il quale la riservatezza - ché la femmina sarebbe per natura un «essere naturalmente sottomesso e servile» - si scioglie in "spudoratezza" dietro un «nuovissimo impulso di audacia indipendente». Questo testo segna una svolta nel dibattito italiano sulla questione femminile, richiamando l'attenzione di personaggi come Pirandello, il quale additava nel libro un esempio di nobiltà e schiettezza, capace di restituire, nella sua semplicità, le coordinate della società del tempo. Oltre che narratrice Sibilla fu poetessa, ispirata e libertaria, nella silloge *Selva d'amore*<sup>2</sup>; e fu pubblicista infaticabile nella pressante richiesta di diritti civili da estendere alle donne (le quali, per inciso, in Italia ottennero il diritto di voto alle elezioni amministrative soltanto nel 1945; l'anno



seguinte fu legiferato il suffragio universale e la loro possibilità di entrare nell'elettorato attivo e passivo). Questa pensatrice militante, la cui azione battagliera si estese dal versante della letteratura al piano globalmente ideologico e operativo, con una assidua partecipazione alle lotte rivendicazioniste novecentesche, si ritagliò sempre un ruolo protagonista. Fu insomma una letterata e un'intellettuale a tutto tondo, di cui forse l'esempio più recente può ritrovarsi in Dacia Maraini.

Prima di schizzare il profilo della scrittrice è necessario tuttavia procedere con qualche precisazione, due in particolare: non condividiamo l'ipotesi di costringerla - come troppo di frequente è stato fatto - dentro i margini di una scrittura di genere. Infatti, è indubbio che gli attuali movimenti di donne riescono a trascinare una numerosa platea di cittadine e cittadini e che ciò è dovuto all'azione delle pioniere novecentesche, delle nostre nonne e bisnonne, Sibilla in testa, che si sono battute per il riconoscimento dell'eguaglianza dei sessi, cioè per l'avanzamento intero e radicale della civiltà, ovvero quell'«accrescimento generale di civiltà» a cui questa profetessa di una femminilità nuova fa appello nell'*Apologia dello Spirito Femminile*<sup>3</sup>. Però l'attività dell'Aleramo si dirama in più direzioni e la sua sperimentazione letteraria investe forme e modi espressivi differenti, cosicché è limitativo classificare la sua personalità geniale e pronta all'azzardo con una definizione univoca.

Con la seconda precisazione desideriamo spiegare le ragioni del silenzio che abbiamo deciso di serbare sugli intrecci sentimentali della sua vita, che furono spregiudicati e tempestosi; lei stessa peraltro in un veemente romanzo epistolare, *Amo dunque sono*, pubblicato nel '27 da Mondadori, confessava: «Non so se sono stata donna, non so se sono stata spirito. Son stata amore»<sup>4</sup>. Ma la variegata gamma erotica che ne ha caratterizzato la lunga parabola esistenziale ha finito quasi per oscurarne la caratura ideologica e la novità della produzione artistica. Non cadremo perciò nella trappola del “pettegolezzo” e ci limiteremo a ricordare che uomini

di grande nome furono al suo fianco, da Giovanni Cena, che dirigeva la prestigiosa “Nuova Antologia” e che sarà il suo pignone, a Dino Campana compagno negli anni della prima guerra mondiale, e che fu il suo amore più turbolento e folle, come folle era peraltro il poeta degli splendidi *Canti orfici*; un’attrazione che finisce con lui in manicomio e con lei criticatissima per averne rievocato le scabrose peripezie nel secondo romanzo, tacciato di immoralità, *Il passaggio* del 1919; una passione che è entrata nell’eterna mitologia dei sentimenti, tanto che alla loro relazione s’ispira il film del 2002 *Un viaggio chiamato amore* (identico titolo del carteggio intercorso tra il ’16 e il ’18 tra i due amanti e pubblicato a cura di Bruna Conti) con la regia di Michele Placido<sup>5</sup>.

Molti altri furono i suoi incontri, di cui appunto taceremo perché condividiamo il parere espresso da un’altra narratrice femminista, Fausta Cialente, sulle colonne del quotidiano “Paese Sera”: «Non so, - scrive la Cialente - probabilmente ho torto a non volerle lasciare il vanto d’essere stata una grande amatrice, *Circe* è stata l’etichetta affibbiatole da alcuni suoi studiosi [...] a me piace di più l’altra Sibilla, quella che affronta la vita con coraggio [...] cercando - come si direbbe oggi - una sua faticosa liberazione di donna» (6 novembre 1977). Liberazione ed emancipazione in verità sono le parole d’ordine della pugnace Aleramo; termini che stanno alla base della sua volontà di innalzare argini contro gli inutili, ridicoli e dannosi schemi di rappresentazione con cui l’uomo sociale cerca fissare le regole della convivenza civile. Pertanto il suo primo impulso è rifondare i costumi ancora prepotentemente patriarcali e imprimere una svolta decisiva all’*habitus* comportamentale e dottrinario tradizionale, ancora soggetto al sistema valoriale romantico-ottocentesco, presuntamente immutabile, borghese, conservatore, dominante nella penisola da poco indipendente e unita, e che a qualche decennio di distanza sarebbe sprofondata nei traumatici eventi della dittatura fascista - sappiamo quanto prepotentemente maschilista - e della seconda

guerra mondiale. Ricusando la fossilizzazione di comportamenti, ruoli e funzioni, il racconto di *Una donna* dimostra invece che ogni individuo, a prescindere dal sesso e dalla classe, porta l'impronta di un continuo succedersi diacronico, ciclicamente attraversato dalle intersezioni sincroniche di morti e rinascite dell'animo, nel ribollire agitato dell'esperienza. Ogni esistenza coincide - per l'autrice - con un atto creativo aperto e complesso, impossibile da cristallizzare dentro norme invariabili e leggi pre-costituite.

Ma è giunto il momento di ripercorrere le tappe cruciali della biografia esterna e interiore dell'errabonda di Sibilla dal fascino perennemente ammaliante, nelle tre stagioni della giovinezza, della maturità, della vecchiezza<sup>6</sup>.

La prima fase della sua vita - quella delle attese, delle fantasticherie, dell'immedesimazione con le eroine delle letture predilette - è bruscamente interrotta da tre accadimenti drammatici: il tentato suicidio della madre, che sarà internata in manicomio («Di lei, di quel ch'ella era stata non sarebbe rimasto a noi che la memoria, come un oscuro ammonimento»); la scoperta di una relazione adulterina del padre («mio padre aveva un'amante [...] quasi ogni sera andava a trovar colei [...]. Mio padre, l'esemplare raggiante, si trasformava in un tratto in un oggetto d'orrore»); lo stupro subito a quindici anni da parte di un dipendente dell'azienda paterna («un mattino fui sorpresa da un abbraccio, insolito, brutale; due mani tremanti frugavano le mie vesti, arrovesciavano il mio corpo»). Alla violenza faranno seguito il matrimonio riparatore e la nascita, nel 1895, dell'unico figlio.

Un matrimonio infelice, la depressione, il tentativo di suicidio con il laudano. Confida con pudica introspezione: «Vi sono periodi che non possono risolversi e che sembra vadano chiusi bruscamente con una pietra sepolcrale». Sopraggiunge per fortuna la rivolta attraverso lo studio da autodidatta curiosa e indiscreta, la meditazione, la prefigurazione di un libro che sia «il» Libro che possa «mostrare al mondo intero l'anima femminile moderna, per

la prima volta», e che sia autobiografico: «il capolavoro equivalente ad una vita». Alla sua vita. Negli anni '90 dell'Ottocento incrocia le indomite propugnatrici del femminismo «e quella parola dal suono così aspro mi indicò un ideale nuovo». Sedotta dalle loro tesi, ne coltiva la frequentazione; a Milano si aggrega all'emancipazionista Giorgina Craufurd Saffi e al marito di questa Aurelio Saffi, patriota mazziniano e repubblicano. Sempre a Milano nel 1899 dirige due importanti testate progressiste: "L'Italia femminile" fondata dalla maestra sindacalista, anch'essa mazziniana, Emilia Mariani, e il "Corriere delle donne italiane". La cultura milanese, epicentro del cosmopolitismo, è per lei una rivelazione, consolida il suo disagio per i *clichés* e l'insofferenza per le convenzioni, con cui i filistei ammantavano la normalità mediocre tanto apprezzata nel consorzio sociale: «Povera vita, meschina e buia, alla cui conservazione tutti tenevan tanto! Tutti s'accontentavano: mio marito, il dottore, mio padre, i socialisti come i preti, le vergini come le meretrici: ognuno portava la sua menzogna rassegnatamente. Le rivolte individuali erano sterili o dannose, quelle collettive troppo deboli ancora, ridicole quasi, di fronte alla grandezza del mostro da atterrare». Una proposizione che muove, chiaramente, dall'impianto dottrinario del sociologo Max Nordau, teorico nel 1892 di *Entartung, Degenerazione*, libro che sviluppa la linea concettuale già esposta in *Die conventiellen Lügen der Kulturmenschheit*, 1883, ovvero in quelle *Menzogne convenzionali della nostra civiltà*, che fu - insieme con il primo saggio - un'opera cruciale nella determinazione della cultura della crisi; un'opera che in Italia venne tradotta immediatamente, che circolò ampiamente fra i nostri letterati (dal Capuana a Carlo Del Balzo), che influenzò i pensatori darvinisti e positivisti della penisola (a Nordau Cesare Lombroso dedicò il suo *L'uomo delinquente*) e che ella studiò fervidamente, colpita dalla diagnosi che veniva avanzata dall'ungherese sulla sindrome che ammorbava il decadente spirito europeo contemporaneo. In quel crepuscolo dell'Ottocento si squadernano dunque dinnanzi ai suoi occhi

scenari inediti; sia a Milano sia a Roma, dove risiede dal 1902 seguendo l'enclave della rivista "Nuova Antologia" sulle cui colonne scrive recensioni con lo pseudonimo di Nemi. Da questo momento la Aleramo conosce e corrisponde con le romaniere più affermate e con i più agguerriti riformisti, gli effettivi iniziatori del cammino di sprovvincializzazione della nazione: Paolo Mantegazza, Alessandrina Ravizza, Maria Montessori, Anna Kulisciuff e Filippo Turati, e ancora Neera, la poetessa "vergine rossa" Ada Negri, il futuro premio Nobel (lo sarà nel 1927) Grazia Deledda, la greco-partenopea Matilde Serao e la giurista napoletana Teresa Labriola, e Cardarelli, Quasimodo, Papini, Rebora, Boccioni... È nella capitale che comincia la seconda stagione di Rina/Sibilla; Roma è il catalizzatore del cambiamento: «l'itinerario di formazione e di crescita della nuova donna riparte da lì»; è quello il luogo fisico e sociale del riscatto, lo spazio simbolico dei suoi giorni finalmente rigenerati che si aprono alla creatività, alla notorietà, allo scambio intellettuale, alle imprese comunitarie: lavora nelle scuole dell'Agro romano, si immerge nella sconvolgente realtà della gente insediata nelle paludi pontine, aiuta i giovani dei quartieri popolari della capitale, come Testaccio. Nel frattempo (siamo tra il '98 e il 1905) Sibilla si addentra nella conoscenza di Nietzsche, Ibsen, Amiel... Tiene un diario di nascoste riflessioni, dove si avvertono precisi indizi di una consapevolezza che esula dall'ambito soggettivo. Scriverà: «Bisogna riformare la coscienza dell'uomo, creare quella della donna!». Concetto che, rispondendo alle asserzioni di Otto Weininger, non manca di ribadire anni dopo: «La donna deve, nel campo dello spirito, crear se stessa»<sup>7</sup>. Intanto si dedica alla rivista "Unione femminile" fondata, con altre colleghe, da Ersilia Majno Bronzini, nelle cui colonne si auspica un femminismo pratico-educativo. In una parola, tutti questi nomi di sodali e "consorelle" attestano come Sibilla si muovesse nell'affresco ampio, diversificato e tuttavia omogeneo negli scopi da perseguire, che era il contesto di riferimento dell'Italia tra Otto e Novecento, di cui lei era una voce

presente e ascoltata. La sua fama, dunque, esplose con l'apparizione, nel 1906, dell'autobiografia, tracciato eterodosso di un profilo e di un destino di donna. Il successo di lettori e di critica (l'accosero con entusiasmo Gor'kij, Anatole France, Vernon Lee...), in Italia la promosse la Montessori - che con l'autrice condivideva il dramma di una maternità spezzata - nonostante non mancassero contestazioni, per esempio sa parte della scrittrice cattolica Sofia Bisi Albini o dell'emancipazionista laica Emilia Mariani), la prontezza delle traduzioni (dalla Spagna alla Germania agli Stati Uniti), il clamore fra gli intellettuali (tale da generare nel 1908, l'*Inchiesta sulla donna e il problema dell'amore* voluta da Rosalia Jacobsen per la testata "Pagine libere", 1 novembre) furono straordinari; l'autrice fu osannata come una rivelazione delle patrie lettere e d'ora in avanti sarà accolta nell'empireo delle grandi teorizzatrici della *gender equality*. Due anni dopo Sibilla fu l'astro splendente del primo Congresso Nazionale delle Donne Italiane, inaugurato il 23 aprile 1908 a Roma dalla regina Margherita di Savoia e organizzato da una federazione di associazioni per il miglioramento della condizione e dell'alfabetizzazione delle "consorelle", indipendentemente dalle idee politiche e dall'appartenenza religiosa, nonché ramo italiano dell'*International Council of Women*, istituito a Washington nel 1888.

Già dal titolo - *Una donna*, con l'articolo indeterminativo in evidenza e la conseguente esemplarità del racconto - questo testo intessuto di memorialità, riflessione, utopia, rivela l'intento di proporsi come paradigma non di un'avventura individuale bensì di una dimensione collettiva. Da quella prosa autologica di sorprendente sincerità, altre ne scaturiranno nei tre decenni seguenti, ciascuna con un proprio timbro. Per esempio Neera lascia, se pure incompiuta, la sua positiva e propositiva *Una giovinezza del secolo XIX* (1919, postuma), che voleva essere esemplificativa del modello virtuoso di formazione culturale ed educazione all'intelligenza emotiva sul quale era cresciuta. Con *Una donna*, invece, il discorso di sé è carico di più intenso *pathos* contestativo, di-

struttivo e rivoluzionario in quanto la protagonista-attrice stravolge i parametri dell'ammaestramento e del galateo socio-familiare per proporre alternative dirimpenti. Ella contravviene al codice patriarcale, abbandona il marito, soprattutto infrange il tabù della maternità lasciando il figlio Walter, che rivedrà solo dopo trent'anni affrontandolo in un colloquio che commenterà così: «Tristezza irreparabile del nostro rapporto, dappoi che ci siamo rivisti dopo trent'anni d'intervallo e invano abbiamo provato a sentire come una realtà il fatto che io sono sua madre e lui è mio figlio...»<sup>8</sup>. Tristezza certo, e insieme comprensione del senso più autentico della maternità, che l'autrice estrinseca appieno in *Una donna*: «Per quello che siamo, per la volontà di tramandare più nobile e più bella in essi la vita, devono esserci grati i figli, non perché, dopo averli ciecamente suscitati dal nulla, rinunziamo all'essere noi stessi».

Guardiamo a questo punto un altro testo autoreferenziale di trent'anni successivo a *Una donna* ma riferibile al medesimo ambito letterario, ovvero *Cosima*, firmato da Grazia Deledda e stampato nel 1937. La cronaca degli avvenimenti vissuti da una ragazzina nata in un'isola appartata, desiderosa di coronare il suo osteggiato sogno di diventare narratrice, apre un'ulteriore prospettiva, ovvero quella di una fanciullezza e giovinezza che vengono rievocate nostalgicamente perché si snodano dentro il mondo antico e rustico della Sardegna primitiva, sede di riti arcaici e di paesaggi incontaminati, carissimi alla nuorese. Siamo agli antipodi dell'impostazione dell'Aleramo, la quale vuole piuttosto sfuggire alla comunità pettegola e conformista della «cittaduzza del Mezzogiorno» (alludeva a Porto Civitanova Marche), un ambiente intramato di paure e ipocrisie odiose per chi, come lei, aspira alla città, «col suo formicolio umano, con la sua esistenza vibrante». In egual modo, nella struttura e fin dalle sequenze incipitarie notiamo sostanziali differenze nella succitata triade: l'io narrante si effonde predominante seppur anonimo nelle pagine di Sibilla; più umbratile nella prosa di Neera; la terza persona onnisciente ge-

stisce la narrazione di *Cosima*. Ciò che più conta però è che, al di là delle disparità, con i ventidue capitoli in cui sgrana la propria autoanalisi la Aleramo si erge a capostipite dell'autobiografia muliebri del Novecento, a cavallo tra romanzo di formazione, articolazione diaristica, modalità saggistica, vivificando un progetto ideologico incentrato - come è stato notato - sulla figurazione di un pensiero di donna che rifletteva l'immagine di sé dinamicamente, tra passato (memoria) e futuro (proiezione).

Dopo esperienze e delusioni innumerevoli, esaurito il rapporto con Giovanni Cena, per l'inquieta Sibilla a partire dal 1910 s'avvia un ventennio che la vede tra l'altro pubblicista su fogli filosocialisti e non. Nel 1911, a Firenze s'accosta al cenacolo della "Voce" e del "Marzocco", periodici all'avanguardia; nel 1913, a Milano, si avvicina al movimento futurista; nel 1914, a Parigi, è catturata dalle innovazioni di poeti come Apollinaire e il simbolista belga Verhaeren. Coll'avvento del fascismo, schedata per il suo attivismo socialista, accusata di essere in amicizia con un deputato coinvolto nel fallito tentativo di uccidere Mussolini, nel 1925 viene incriminata di complicità e arrestata. Alla fine è rilasciata, nondimeno quanto accaduto marca la fine della sua carriera giornalistica. Tre anni dopo, ridotta in miseria, torna a Roma. Cosa la spinge allora a precipitarsi a Palazzo Chigi non appena, il 18 gennaio 1929, il dittatore la convoca? La fame. Lui, il duce, ha 45 anni ed è al colmo della potenza. Lei ha 53 anni, è una celebre scrittrice drammaturga poetessa pacifista e socialista nonché firmataria nel '25 del manifesto degli intellettuali antifascisti di Benedetto Croce, ma economicamente è sul lastrico, salta i pasti e vive in una soffitta di via Margutta gelida d'inverno e rovente d'estate, abbandonata dalla critica e dal pubblico che l'avevano portata in palmo di mano. Da allora, per 14 anni, Sibilla se la caverà alla meno peggio come uno dei tanti artisti graziosamente sovvenzionati dal regime. Il sussidio l'aiuta a mantenere alto il proprio nome, articoli a favore dell'azione mussoliniana le procurano piccoli introiti, la protezione governativa la tiene lontana



da qualsiasi fastidio. Comunque, quando nel 1943 il Ministero della Cultura Popolare, il famigerato MinCulPop, le ordina di trasferirsi a Salò, lei rifiuta bollando come vergognoso quell'estremo tentativo di salvare il fascismo.

Nel 1936, ormai sessantenne, è ancora famosa, ma la sua narrativa insistentemente autobiografica adesso non vende più, i suoi drammi vengono fischiati, le sue poesie ignorate. Si mette in moto il suo quarto corso vitale, accanto al nuovo amore per un giovane uomo di cui lascia traccia nel rendiconto che verga ininterrottamente fino alla morte, parzialmente edito dalla casa romana Tumminelli nel 1945 sotto l'epigrafe *Dal mio Diario (1940-1944)*<sup>9</sup>. Il 3 gennaio 1946, invia una lettera alla direzione del PCI chiedendo l'iscrizione al partito. Palmiro Togliatti l'accoglie a braccia aperte. Attingendo al piglio pedagogico che le era peculiare ella si dedica ad attività politico-sociali e al contempo fa lunghi viaggi nei paesi dell'Est, collabora con le Case del Popolo, con circoli ricreativi e firma interventi sull'"Unità" e su "Noi donne", diretta emanazione del partito. Coei che fu "un poeta" («Diversa da ogni altra, insostituibile, sola e di me stessa signora./ Perché io son nata poeta, non santa» proclama in *Amo dunque sono*), accolta da Mussolini, percorre ora il viale del tramonto, ma incensata e protetta dall'apparato culturale comunista. Dopo più di quarant'anni, l'opera dell'esordio è ancora il suo vessillo, la sua corazza e anche la sua gabbia: *Una donna* viene continuamente ristampato, recensito e venduto, gli altri suoi libri però non li legge più nessuno. Le sue poesie raccolte nel volume *Selva d'amore* («La mia fiamma,/ che niun aspro vento ha mai domata,/ ancora guizza e lotta») le meritano il Premio Viareggio nel 1948; nel 1956, esce la nuova raccolta poetica *Luci della mia sera*, che con *Aiutami a dire*, 1951<sup>10</sup>, testimonia il suo credo comunista ma trova accoglienza effimera e tiepida. I lettori latitano, i critici si defilano, la letterata vive sul crinale di glorie ormai offuscate. La favola dell'indomabile Sibilla si conclude il 13 gennaio 1960, quando si spegne all'età di ottantaquattro anni. Al suo capezzale

era appena giunto il figlio; la madre alzò un po' la testa, lo guardò e morì.

Con lei spariva la brillante e combattiva antesignana dei moti per l'eguaglianza di genere esplosi nei nostri anni Settanta, che con i suoi libri da un lato aveva lanciato un formidabile *j'accuse* contro il sessismo misogino diffuso nell'Italia tra i due secoli; dall'altro, aveva estrinsecato la sua militanza con gesti pratici e concreti. L'Aleramo, quindi, rappresenta la remota icona del fecondo interscambio politica-letteratura, che le consente di occupare ancora oggi un posto apicale sia nell'Olimpo delle lettere italiane novecentesche, sia nell'orizzonte politico della dissidenza, sia nel panorama della rivoluzione femminile a lei coeva. In conclusione, a lei, la trasgressiva Sibilla che si espone senza reticenze in *Una donna*, è possibile applicare l'epitaffio nerudiano: "confesso che ho vissuto".

## NOTE

1 - Sibilla Aleramo, *Una donna*. STEN Società Tipografica Editrice Nazionale (già Roux e Viarengo), Torino, 1906). Tutte le citazioni testuali che seguono, quando non diversamente indicate, sono tratte dall'edizione milanese di Feltrinelli, 1976.

2 - La silloge dei versi composti tra il 1912 e il 1942 da Sibilla Aleramo, *Selva d'amore*, fu stampata a Milano da Mondadori nel 1947, trovando qualche consenso, tanto da essere in seguito ristampata. Per le altre fonti primarie che qui non ricordiamo, rinviamo alla bibliografia curata da Alessandra Spada nel volume allestito da Annarita Buttafuoco e Marina Zancan, *Svelamento. Sibilla Aleramo: una biografia intellettuale*. Feltrinelli, Milano, 1988.

3 - L'articolo, scritto nel 1911 è seguito nel '14 da un altro di analogo tenore, *La Penserosa*. I due scritti - insieme con quello intestato a Otto Weininger - furono riuniti nel 1921 nella miscellanea di saggi di Sibilla

Aleramo *Andando e stando*, edita dalla casa fiorentina Bemporad.

4 - Sempre in *Andando e stando*, la Aleramo presenta la sua proposta di una rinnovata poetica basata sulla natura maieutica del sentimento amoroso e sul testo come prodotto sessuato: «Ch'io imprima alla mia volontà d'amore in tutte le sfere dell'essere il segno dello spirito, il fiero segno della coscienza; e l'uomo, superbo di sentirsi vivo sol quando pensa, si volgerà verso me pensosa d'amore e valorizzerà infine questa ch'egli ha creduto sempre soltanto forza oscura amorfa arbitraria ... Amo, dunque sono».

5 - Nel 1958 esce il carteggio *Aleramo-Campana*, a cura di Nicolò Gallo, Vallecchi, Firenze. L'epistolario *Un viaggio chiamato amore (Lettere 1916-1918)*, a cura di Bruna Conti, è stato pubblicato da Feltrinelli, Milano, 2000.

6 - Per una visione completa dei materiali bio-bibliografici primari e secondari, è imprescindibile la consultazione dell'Archivio di Sibilla Aleramo (ora *on-line*), puntigliosamente presentato da Marina Zancan e Cristiana Pipitone: *L'archivio Sibilla Aleramo: guida alla consultazione*. Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, Roma, 2006.

7 - Vale la pena di precisare che quella era l'epoca in cui ancora prevalevano i fondamenti pseudoscientifici positivistici e che insisteva sul concetto di superiorità del maschio anche l'affermata teoria evolutivista di Darwin, la cui *Origine della specie* circolava in traduzione italiana accolta dall'editore torinese Bocca fin dal 1888, trovando autorevole validazione nel 1893 in Cesare Lombroso, autore insieme con Guglielmo Ferrero del volume *La donna delinquente, la prostituta, la donna normale*. Inoltre, è del 1903 *Geschlecht und charakter* di Otto Weininger, ferocemente misogino nell'argomentare che, dal momento che l'essere è morale e logico e invece la donna in quanto tale è amorale e alogica, ne consegue che la donna non è. Sibilla, che legge *Sesso e carattere* nella traduzione italiana del 1912, pubblicata sempre per i tipi di Bocca, non manca di commentare con durezza (nell'articolo *Ottone Weininger* confluito in *Andando e stando*, cit.) le parole vergate «dall'ebreo suicida Weininger», a cui oppone l'idea che la donna deve affermare la sua spiritualità facendo appello alla propria essenza identitaria: debba cioè «estrarre i caratteri specifici del proprio essere».

8 - Sibilla Aleramo, *Un amore insolito. Diario 1940/1944*, a cura di Alba Morino. Feltrinelli, Milano, 1979, p. 57.

**9** - Una seconda e ultima parte era stata stampata nel volume Sibilla Aleramo, *Diario di una donna (inediti 1945-1960)*, a cura di Alba Morino. Feltrinelli, Milano, 1978.

**10** - Il primo titolo apparve con gli Editori Riuniti di Roma, casa storicamente vicina agli intellettuali di sinistra; le poesie di *Aiutami a dire* furono incluse nel catalogo delle romane Edizioni di Cultura Sociale, anch'esse di ispirazione socialista.

## BIBLIOGRAFIA

- Cavaliere P. L.** *Sibilla Aleramo, Gli anni di "Una donna". Porto Civitanova 1888-1902.* Affinità Elettive, Ancona, 2011.
- Cavalli A.** *Femme fatale o vittima predestinata?: la figura femminile nella narrativa fin de siècle.* Guaraldi, Rimini, 2013.
- Cenni A.** *Gli occhi eroici.* Mursia, Milano, 2011.
- Ioli G.** (a cura di) *Sibilla Aleramo: una donna nel Novecento,* Atti del Convegno internazionale. Interlinea, Novara, 2019.
- Morino A.** *L'analista di carta: Sibilla Aleramo. Un'esperienza, un metodo.* La Mandragora, Imola, 2003.
- Rasy E.** *Le donne e la letteratura.* Editori Riuniti, Roma, 2000.
- Scaramuzza E.** *La santa e la spudorata. Alessandrina Ravizza e Sibilla Aleramo.* Liguori, Napoli, 2006.
- Zancan M. - Pipitone C.** (a cura di) *L'archivio Sibilla Aleramo: guida alla consultazione.* Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, Roma, 2006.

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

**Sabina Antonini**, obtained a PhD in Archaeology and Art History of the Near East at the University of Naples L'Orientale with a thesis on 'South Arabian stone sculpture'. Since 1984 in Yemen, she has taken part in archaeological surveys and excavations of prehistoric sites in Khawlan al-Tiyal and Ramlat al-Sab'atayn, and of South Arabian sites, including Yala, Tamna', Hayd ibn 'Aqil, and Baraqish. From 2002 to 2008, she was adjunct professor at the University of Naples L'Orientale, where she taught a series of courses on South Arabian Antiquities. She also has taken part in archaeological campaigns in Italy, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia. Dr Antonini is the author of numerous monographs and articles on South Arabian Archaeology and Art History. Her last contribution, 'The Italian Archaeological Mission at Shibam al-Ghiras, Yemen' in Festschrift in honour of Professor Mikhail Piotrovsky (2019).

**M. Consuelo Ballarino**. Laureata a pieni voti in Economia e Commercio e specializzata in discipline bancarie presso l'Università La Sapienza di Roma. IT Manager di Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, vive a Venezia da oltre 30 ed è studiosa e appassionata di storia veneziana. Quale Direttrice della Sezione Culturale della Dante Alighieri, Comitato di Cipro, organizza cicli di conferenze sulla Storia e la Cultura Italiana.

**Ana Batinić** (1979, Zagreb, Croatia) graduated in Croatian and English language and literature (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb), obtained a PhD in 2011. Employed as a research fellow at the Division for the History of Croatian Literature, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Her topics of research include Croatian children's literature, literary animal studies and women authors. Currently is the member of a team working on the scientific research project *Modern Women Thinkers: Intellectual Development of Women in the 20th Century Croatia* (University of Zagreb, Faculty of Teacher Education). Has participated in some thirty scholarly symposia and published some fifty scientific and professional papers.

**Margherita Cecchelli**. Già professore ordinario di Archeologia Cristiana, nell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza" ha lungamente insegnato anche presso le Università "G. D'Annunzio" di Chieti e Suor Orsola Benincasa di Napoli e, come professore visitante, nell'Istituto Patristico Augustinia-

num dell'Università Lateranense. Tuttora insegna nella Pontificia Università della Santa Croce a Roma. I suoi studi riguardano argomenti in territorio italiano, nell'Africa romana e temi romani. A Roma ha diretto campagne di scavo in S. Marco, S. Marcello, S. Susanna, S. Croce in Gerusalemme, S. Bartolomeo all'Isola Tiberina. Uno degli ultimi contributi è stato quello sulla Confessione Vaticana.

**Francesca Ceci**, archeologa in servizio presso i Musei Capitolini di Roma, è laureata e specializzata in Numismatica Greca e Romana. È Ispettore Onorario per conto del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali (territorio viterbese) ed è membro del Comitato Scientifico della rivista *Archeo*. Ha al suo attivo cinque volumi dedicati all'Etruria e al Lazio, ed è autore di numerosissimi articoli scientifici e divulgativi di carattere archeologico e storico-artistico.

**Alessandra Cerrito**, archeologa, studiosa della tarda antichità e del medioevo, vive e lavora a Roma, presso la Sovrintendenza Capitolina ai Beni Culturali. La storia e la topografia della Roma cristiana costituiscono il suo principale campo di ricerca; si è dedicata in particolar modo allo studio di chiese e catacombe, oggetto di numerosi contributi scientifici.

**Cheng Gezhi** is a PhD student in General and Comparative Literature at New Sorbonne University. She takes an intertextual and intercultural approach in her doctoral research that focuses on the formation and development of Chinese spoken drama in the early twentieth century under the dual influences of the introduction of western drama and the tradition of Chinese classical literature. She holds a master's degree in Comparative Literature from the Paris-Sorbonne University, that investigated the intertextuality and interculturality of the early dramatic works of Cao Yu and Eugene O'Neill.

**Chrysovalantis Steiakakis**, is an Art Historian – Dr. in “Studies in Hellenic Culture”. He has taken part in research programs and he has worked as an archaeologist too. Currently, he teaches history of art, in the public and private sector in Greece. At the same time, he is a freelancer curator and he remains searchingly active, attending congresses, publishing studies and giving lectures on issues related to aesthetics.



**Christoffer Dahl** is PhD in Swedish language and didactics and is associate professor in Swedish didactics at Kristianstad University in Sweden. In his research he has explore how to combine theories and methods from linguistics with comparative literature in order to analyze different perspectives on didactic materials, mainly literature textbooks. A central question in Dahls research is how the study of literature is legitimized in literature textbooks for upper secondary school.

**Kumar Dhiraj**. M.phil in Development Practice, School of Human Development, Ambedkar University, Delhi, Kashmere gate, New Delhi, India.

**Teodora Narcisa Giurgiu** is a PhD student within the Doctoral School of Literary and Cultural Studies, University of Bucharest, Romania. Her research deals with the modern and postmodern afterlife of the Brontës. Teodora has a Master's degree, magna cum laude, in American Studies and during her undergraduate years she benefited from an Erasmus scholarship, studying at Universidad de Salamanca, Spain, where she collaborated with the students' publication *Revista Anayita*, <http://canayita.usal.es/autores/>. Teodora maintains a personal blog where she posts her personal writings: <http://fairyteo.blogspot.ro>.

**Paolo Giuntarelli**, dirigente dell'area predisposizione interventi della Direzione formazione e lavoro della Regione Lazio, professore a contratto negli insegnamenti di Sociologia dello Sviluppo locale e di Turismo Sportivo presso il corso di laurea in Scienze del Turismo dell'Università di Roma Tor Vergata, membro della task force on cities and protected areas dello Iucn/Wcpa, già direttore di diverse aree protette regionali e Presidente della Fondazione Bioparco di Roma è autore di diversi libri e pubblicazioni sui temi dell'ambiente e del turismo, recentemente ha pubblicato "Turismo, Ambiente e Sviluppo Locale" edito da Universitalia.

**Valentina Limina** graduated in Archaeology at Pisa University with a thesis on landscape analysis and pottery production in northern Etruria. In 2019, she earned her PhD in History at the University of Pisa with a dissertation concerning the integration of Etruscan elites into the Roman Empire and the development of family strategies to maintain power in the

centuries 1st BC-5th AD. Since 2010, she joined surveys and archaeological digs in Italy and abroad. In 2017 she was visiting scholar at KU Leuven. As a member of the Landscape and Maritime Archaeology Team at Pisa University, her research interests focus on the Roman Empire, Elites, Transition to Middle Age, Cultural production in Mediterranean area.

**Cristiano Luciani** (Terni, 1963) è docente di Letteratura Neogreca all'Università di Roma "Tor Vergata". Si è occupato in particolare dell'attività letteraria di autori greci del Cinque-Seicento che hanno scritto le loro opere in italiano, pubblicandole in edizione critica: Gian Carlo Persio, *La nobilissima barriera della Canea*. Poema cretese del 1594 (Venezia 1994); Francesco Bozza, *Fedra* (Manziana, 1997); Antonio Pandimo, *L'amorosa fede* (Venezia 2003). Ha trattato inoltre di autori e di poemi della letteratura cretese delle origini. Ha pubblicato in greco i poemi del *Κάτης και ὁ μπουτικός* (Salonicco 2010) e del *Πένθος θανάτου* (Salonicco 2019) e ha studiato vari aspetti dell'Ottocento e del Novecento, delineando, fra l'altro, i rapporti di E. Montale con la Grecia (Montale, Kavafis e la Grecia moderna, Roma 2006). Altri studi monografici e traduzioni: *Voci dalla Grecia moderna* (Roma 2007), *Manierismo cretese* (Roma 2005), Antonio Matesis, *Il basilico: dramma in cinque atti* (Roma 2008), Dimitrios Vikelas, *Cinque racconti (1877-1899)* (Roma 2009). Recentemente è uscito il saggio: *Vicentzos Kornaros, Erotokritos*, testo, traduzione e note, Atene 2020.

**Annarita Martini** ha studiato Archeologia e Storia Medievale in Italia e in Germania, in questo ultimo Paese ha svolto il dottorato di ricerca, i cui risultati sono stati pubblicati nella monografia *Die Mittelalterliche Keramik aus Ingelheim am Rhein*. Ha pubblicato numerosi contributi su diverse riviste scientifiche con particolare attenzione alla ceramica e sul suo uso all'interno di vari contesti e agli ambiti rituali. Ha preso parte a numerosi convegni internazionali in Italia e all'estero ed è membro della Società Italiana di Storia delle Religioni.

**Natalia Anna Michna**, PhD in philosophy. Employed as an assistant professor at the Institute of Philosophy, Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland. Principal developer of the research project "The Roman Ingarden Digital Archive," financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Educa-

tion of the Republic of Poland. Director of the project “The Concept of Female Experience and the Problem of Feminist Aesthetics,” financed by the National Science Center in Poland. Deputy editor-in-chief of the philosophical-aesthetic quarterly *The Polish Journal of Aesthetics*. Has recently published a book entitled *Women and Culture: The Problem of Experience in Feminist Philosophy* (2018). Research interests concern feminist philosophy, feminist aesthetics, contemporary art, and the aesthetics and philosophy of Roman Ingarden.

**Umberto Mondini** taught History of Religions and Tribal Religions of India at the Sapienza University in Rome, and at the Universitas Pontificia Salesiana in Rome, he is coordinator of the History of Religions International Seminars at the Cornaro Art Institute of Limassol (Cyprus) and President of the International Centre for Studies of Arts and Humanities in Cyprus and President of the Società Dante Alighieri Comitato di Cipro. He is the author of several books in this field, including: *Indian Divinities: Ganesh, Analysis of a Mythopoetic Phenomenon in Pre-Vedic India*; *From the Belly of the Whale to the Shadow of the Gourd, An Historical-Religious Analysis of a Prophetic book*; *Jonah and the Fish, An Excursion through the Minor Prophets*; *Raika, Came Herders of Rajasthan* (with Vinay K. Srivastava); *Adivasi* (with Vinay Srivastava); *The Epic of Pabuji: The Nuptial Ceremonies*; *The Cult of Pabuji*.

**Giulia Moretti Cursi**. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Cultural Heritage Sciences at the University of Roma Tre with a thesis on the roman historical relief aimed at elaborating a hypothesis on the possible location of the reliefs found under Palazzo della Cancelleria in Rome, preserved at the Gregorian Profane Museum in the Vatican Museums. She continued her studies at Sapienza University of Rome, where she specialized in Classical Archaeology with a thesis on the topography of Palazzo Cardelli. During her university studies she participated in several archaeological excavations including: Polledrara di Cecanibbio (Roma Tre), Portus Project (Roma Tre - Southampton), Vigna Barberini (Ecole Francoise and Sapienza), Veio- Piazza d'Armi (Sapienza), Vallo di Diano (Roma Tre). She currently attends the second year of PhD at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata" where she carries out a project on the Cardelli collection proposing an integrated study between archival documents and archaeo-

logical materials. At the same time, she obtained the certificate in Archival sciences, Palaeography and Diplomatic studies at the State Archives of Rome to acquire skills regarding the reading and critical interpretation of ancient documents.

**Anna Natkańska.** Laureata in italianistica nel 2010, attualmente lavora come docente presso il Dipartimento della Filologia Romanza dell'Università della Slesia di Katowice. I suoi interessi ruotano attorno alle problematiche della letteratura italiana del Novecento, cui ha dedicato vari articoli. Prepara il dottorato di ricerca sui crepuscolari, in cui fa un paragone tra i maggiori rappresentanti di questo movimento. Insegna la lingua italiana nelle sue diverse varianti (lingua scritta e linguaggio specialistico).

**Ofélia R. Nikolova** is a professor of French and Department Head of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia, USA. She has taught French language, linguistics, and translation for more than 35 years. She has published articles on French writer Marguerite Duras and has translated three of her books in Bulgarian.

**Ida Ograjšek Gorenjak** is an assistant professor (docent) at History Department of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, where she teaches courses on Modern History and Gender History for undergraduate, graduate and PhD studies. Her research interests and publications focus on gender history, history of education and cultural history.

**Francesca Pandimiglio.** Conservatore dei beni culturali, critico e storico d'arte, archeologo medievista. Negli anni universitari partecipa agli scavi presso il settore medievale nel sito di Ferento con la Prof. Gabriella Matetke, successivamente al monitoraggio e alla diagnostica di vari siti, in particolare la chiesa di Santa Maria in Castello a Tarquinia, la Basilica di San Pietro a Tuscania, Palazzo dei Papi e la chiesa di San Giovanni in Zoccoli a Viterbo, Villa Adriana e Villa d'Este a Tivoli, il mitreo di Sutri, il teatro di Marcello a Roma. Si laurea presso l'Università degli Studi della Tuscia in Storia dell'arte Medievale con i Professori Francesco Carlo Gandolfo e Salvatore Lorusso, si specializza in Archeologia Medievale presso La Sapienza, consegue un Master biennale in Didattica dell'Antico presso

l'Università di Ferrara, acquisisce una formazione giornalistica come Ad-detto Stampa e diventa Assistente all'Unitus prima alle cattedre di Analisi merceologica e di Teoria e tecniche dei materiali lapidei poi in Storia delle tecniche artistiche. Fino al 2010 con la sua società Valorart, tra i tanti eventi, organizza la I^ mostra su Balthus presso il castello di Montecalvello e la prima apertura straordinaria di Villa Lante entrambi nel comune di Viterbo, coordina il restauro della sala di Apollo oltre ad una serie di mostre a Castel Sant'Angelo e a Palazzo Venezia a Roma, gestisce il Museo del Colle del Duomo a Viterbo e il personale di assistenza alle sale di Palazzo Corsini a Roma. Attualmente è Professore di Storia dell'arte presso il Liceo Artistico Midossi di Civita Castellana, nella sede di Vignanello (VT). La sua mission, con un'intensa attività associazionistica, è la ricerca, la ricognizione, la documentazione, la conservazione, la valorizzazione, la tutela e la divulgazione del Patrimonio Artistico, Paesaggistico e soprattutto Archeologico in particolare della Tuscia.

**Antonella Piscitello** graduated in Languages at Palermo University in 2019. After spending a short period in Cyprus where she carried an international mobility exchange, she decided to change the focus of her career. The Cyprus dispute raised in her a deep interest in the dynamics of international relations in particular with regard to the human rights. She is now about to complete a postgraduate programme in International Relation and International Protection of Human Rights at SIOI with a dissertation concerning the Cyprus dispute and a special focus on the Loizidou case.

**Sandrine Prévot.** Ethnologue, docteur de l'université Paris Nanterre et chercheuse associée au Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CEIAS) à l'EHESS. Ces thèmes de recherche portent sur le changement culturel, l'organisation sociale, les relations de parenté et les mariages. Elle travaille depuis 18 ans avec les communautés locales au Rajasthan. Auteur d'articles et de deux livres sur la société contemporaine indienne: Un ouvrage spécialisé sur la caste des Raika, éleveurs au Rajasthan (Les éleveurs raika en Inde: nomades d'aujourd'hui, l'harmattan 2010) et un ouvrage généraliste sur la culture des castes (Inde, comprendre la culture des castes, ed de l'aube, 2014). Consultante dans le secteur privé, elle enseigne la culture indienne dans les écoles de commerce et conseille les entreprises sur les problématiques interculturelles.

**Brygida Pudelko** – Associate Professor at the University of Opole, Opole, Poland. She is the author of two books: *Ivan Turgenev and Joseph Conrad: A Study in Philosophical, Literary and Socio-Political Relationships* (2012) and *TOWARDS THE NEW WOMAN. Historical and Socio-Political Changes in Britain and their Reflection in the Selected Novels by May Sinclair and H.G. Wells* (2019). She has also published numerous articles on Conrad and Russian writers (Turgenev, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky), and May Sinclair and H.G. Wells.

**Dana Radler** completed her PhD at University of Bucharest with a monograph on “Memory and Fiction in John McGahern’s Works”, following an MA in International Relations at the Faculty of Political Science in 2004. She currently teaches at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies as Assistant Professor. In between 2010-2014 she acted as co-editor of the Global Issues Newsletter and member of the Global Issues Special Interest Group, IATEFL (International Association for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), University of Kent. Her present interests combine global issues, memory and Irish studies, with a particular focus on identity, cultural theories, and gender as constructs or de-constructs of modern societies. She has authored several papers on Irish or Romanian writers in journals/volumes published in Poland, Sweden, Turkey and Romania.

**Monica Ricciardi.** Ricercatrice indipendente nell’ambito delle discipline archeologiche, ha conseguito la laurea in lettere con indirizzo archeologico nel 1994 presso l’Università degli Studi di Roma “La Sapienza” con una tesi in Archeologia Cristiana. Si è poi specializzata in Archeologia con indirizzo Tardo Antico e Medievale presso la Scuola di Specializzazione in Archeologia dell’Università degli Studi della Basilicata e in Archeologia Cristiana presso il Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana a Roma (PIAC). Ha collaborato con la Soprintendenza Archeologica in numerosi cantieri di scavo a Roma e nel Lazio, con la Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra e con i Musei Vaticani. Si occupa prevalentemente di archeologia funeraria, dello scavo e dello studio dei contesti di età romana e delle catacombe cristiane.

**Frank Shapiro** in an independent researcher and lecturer. Graduated at Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel, post graduate studies at London

University. Specializes in medieval history and contemporary Holocaust research connected to Africa. Authored history books and published articles. See my website: <http://fshapiro.com/>

**Anna Tylusińska-Kowalska**, professore ordinario di letteratura italiana presso il Dipartimento di Comunicazione Specialistica ed Interculturale dell'Università di Varsavia, vicepresidente della Facoltà di Linguistica Applicata, è autrice di oltre 150 pubblicazioni sui rapporti storici, culturali e letterari italo-polacchi dell'Ottocento, sulla letteratura italiana moderna e sul Risorgimento. Visiting Professor presso 23 atenei tra europei e americani. Nel 2000 ha pubblicato un'ampia monografia sulla memorialistica risorgimentale italiana (*Imparare dal vivo*, Ed. UW, Polonia), dedicandovi una cospicua parte del lavoro allo studio del genere autobiografico. Tra le monografie da elencare: *La letteratura italiana romantico-risorgimentale* in 3 volumi, *L'Italia all'epoca del romanticismo* (2004), *Włochy w czasach romantyzmu* ["L'Italia nell'epoca del romanticismo"] in lingua polacca. Sotto la sua redazione, nel 2011 è uscita la raccolta di saggi e antologia di testi *Literacki pejzaż Sycylii* ["Il paesaggio letterario di Sicilia"] (Leonardo Sciascia, Luisa Adorno, Gesualdo Bufalino, Vincenzo Consolo, Matteo Collura) e nel 2015 una raccolta di saggi *Io nel pensier mi fungo... Omaggio a Joanna Ugniewska* [ed. DiG, Varsavia]. Nel 2012 ha pubblicato la vasta monografia *Viaggiatori polacchi in Sicilia e Malta tra Cinquecento e Ottocento* (Caltanissetta, 2012). Da oltre quindici anni collabora alla «Rassegna della Letteratura italiana» ed altre riviste di critica letteraria italiane. Ha promosso 150 tesi di laurea di italianistica e 9 dottorati di ricerca.

**Margherita Verdirame**, già professore ordinario di Letteratura Italiana presso il Dipartimento Scienze Umane dell'Università di Catania. È membro del Comitato scientifico della Fondazione Verga e dirige una collana di testi odeporeici rari o inediti. Studiosa di autori dell'Otto e del Novecento, ha allestito nel 1988 l'edizione critica dei due romanzi di Giovanni Verga, e portato alla luce un testo dello scrittore catanese, Felis-Mulier (1999). Sempre nell'ambito verghiano, sta lavorando alla riduzione teatrale delle *Storie del castello di Trezza*. Nella prospettiva della scrittura di genere otto-novecentesca, ha pubblicato *Narratrici e lettrici 1850-1950* (2009) e *Il ricciolo della signora. Inferni e misteri nella letteratura claustrale* (2017).

## **CONTENTS**



Riguardo alle immagini che corredano i diversi articoli, gli autori si rendono disponibili verso eventuali aventi diritto, esentando da ogni responsabilità la casa editrice.

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> <i>by Umberto Mondini</i>	5
<b>LA DONNA SUDARABICA ATTRAVERSO LA CULTURA MATERIALE E LE ARTI FIGURATIVE</b> <i>Sabina Antonini</i>	9
<b>UNA REGINA SENZA AUTONOMIA E UNA DONNA SENZA AMORE: CATERINA CORNARO</b> <i>Maria Consuelo Ballarino</i>	26
<b>MARIJA KUMIČIĆ: A CROATIAN AUTHORESS AND A CULTURAL WORKER</b> <i>Ana Batinić</i>	42
<b>GLI INTERVENTI DI ELENA, VESTINA E GALLA PATRICIA PER LA “COSTRUZIONE” DELLA ROMA CRISTIANA</b> <i>Margherita Cecchelli</i>	63
<b>FONDARE CITTÀ, MALEDIRE CITTÀ: LA VICENDA DI DIDONE NELL’IMMAGINARIO COLLETTIVO ANTICO E MODERNO TRA FONTI LETTERARIE E TESTIMONIANZE NUMISMATICHE</b> <i>Francesca Ceci Annarita Martini</i>	83
<b>IL LATERANO NELLA TARDA ANTICHITÀ: UN’AREA A VOCAZIONE FEMMINILE?</b> <i>Alessandra Cerrito</i>	103
<b>LE PARCOURS DU PERSONNAGE FÉMININ DANS LA RÉCEPTION DU THÉÂ TRE OCCIDENTAL EN CHINE AU DÉBUT DU XX<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE</b> <i>Gezhi Cheng</i>	118

<b>SALOME AS THE REPRESENTATION OF THE <i>FEMME FATALE</i> ICON IN THE ART OF THE EUROPEAN SYMBOLISM: AN ICONOGRAPHICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL, PSYCHOANALYTICAL APPROACH”</b> <i>Steiakakis Chrysovalantis</i>	136
<b>SELMA LAGERLÖF IN LITERATURE TEXTBOOKS</b> <i>Christoffer Dahl</i>	161
<b>CASTE OF WOMEN: AN INQUIRY INTO THE DIFFERENCES IN INTER-CASTE MARRIAGES IN AN ADIVASI SAMAJ AND OTHER</b> <i>Kumar Dhiraj</i>	178
<b>ART (RE)PRESENTING HISTORY: ANNA AND THE KING<sup>97</sup></b> <i>Teodora Narcisa Giurgiu</i>	197
<b>ESSERCI PER CAMBIARE IL MONDO: TINA ANSELMi</b> <i>Paolo Giuntarelli</i>	219
<b>WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND STRATEGIES OF POWER: THE GENS CAECINA (CENTURIES 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> AD)</b> <i>Valentina Limina</i>	228
<b>Η ΜΟΡΦΗ ΤΗΣ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑΣ ΣΤΗ ΛΟΓΟΤΕΧΝΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΥΣ 16<sup>ο</sup>-17<sup>ο</sup> ΑΙΩΝΕΣ</b> <i>Cristiano Luciani</i>	255
<b>A “FEMINIST” IN A PATRIARCHAL ACADEMIC INSTITUTION: THE LIFE AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE POLISH AESTHETICIAN MARIA GOŁASZEWSKA (1926 - 2015)</b> <i>Natalia Anna Michna</i>	276
<b>REPRESENTATION DE LA FEMME EN INDE</b> <b>Place des femmes dans la chanson de geste, à travers l'exemple l'épopée de Pabuji</b> <i>Umberto Mondini</i>	297

<b>BharatMata, une representation politique de la femme ideale</b> <i>Sandrine Prévot</i>	306
<b>THE ART OF SHOWING “L’INTRINSICO CON LO ESTRINSICO”: THE MAGNIFICATION OF FEMININE VIRTUES IN PIRRO LIGORIO’S DRAWINGS IN THE UNPUBLISHED MS. LONDON COLL. DEL DUCA ROBERTO FERRETTI 216</b> <i>Giulia Moretti Cursi</i>	312
<b>FEMMINISMO ITALIANO E POESIA FEMMINILE (FEMMINISTA) DAGLI ANNI SETTANTA</b> <i>Anna Natkańska</i>	344
<b>THE MAKING OF MARGUERITE DURAS - A VISIONARY OF LOVE AND LOSS - IN FRENCH LITERARY HISTORY</b> <i>Nikolova Ofelia R.</i>	361
<b>WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN THE INTERWAR YUGOSLAVIA</b> <i>Ida Ograjšek Gorenjak</i>	378
<b>LA FIGURA DELLA DONNA ARTISTA DALL’ANTICHITÀ AL XXI SECOLO</b> <i>Francesca Pandimiglio</i>	403
<b>LE DONNE CHE HANNO FATTO LA SICILIA</b> <i>Antonella Piscitello</i>	448
<b>BRITISH FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY</b> <i>Brygida Pudelko</i>	457
<b>OLYMPIAN GODS AND MORTALS: URYDICE AND ORPHEUS IN ION D. SIRBU’S FARWELL, EUROPE!</b> <i>Dana Radler</i>	478

<b>IL PELLEGRINAGGIO DI EGERIA. UN PONTE TRA ORIENTE E OCCIDENTE</b> <i>Monica Ricciardi</i>	504
<b>WOMEN WHO MADE HISTORY: MARY MAGDALENE AND THE POWER OF MYTH</b> <i>Frank Shapiro</i>	528
<b>DALLA BIELORUSSIA ALLA SIBERIA: VITA BREVE E OPERA POLITICA E SOCIALE DI MARIA BOHUSZEWICZ (1865-1887), COFONDATRICE E LEADER DEL “WIELKI PROLETARIAT”, LA PRIMA INTERNAZIONALE POLACCA</b> <i>Anna Tyłusinska-Kowalska</i>	558
<b>UNA PROTAGONISTA DEL FEMMINISMO NOVECENTESCO ITALIANO: SIBILLA ALERAMO</b> <i>Margherita Verdirame</i>	575
<b>BIOGRAPHIES</b>	589

**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF THE BOOK SERIES  
“RESEARCH NOTEBOOKS”**

**Prof.ssa Maria de Lourdes Beldi de Alcântara**

Antropologia, Università di San Paolo e Columbia University, New York

**Prof. Sergio Botta**

Storia delle Religioni, La Sapienza Università di Roma

**Prof.ssa Alessandra Chiricosta**

Filosofia e Interculturalità, Università Roma Tre

**Prof. Mario Cimosà**

Scienze Bibliche, Università Pontificia Salesiana di Roma

**Prof. Alfredo Coppa**

Antropologia, La Sapienza Università di Roma

**Prof.ssa Galina Ershova**

Archeologia, Russian State University for the Humanities

**Prof. Bruno Lo Turco**

Religioni e Filosofie dell'India, La Sapienza Università di Roma

**Prof. Mauro Mantovani**

Filosofia Teoretica, Università Pontificia Salesiana di Roma

**Prof.ssa Mara Matta**

Lingua e Letteratura Tibetana, Università di Napoli Federico II

**Prof. Theodoros Mavrojannis**

Storia Antica, University of Cyprus

**Prof. Umberto Mondini**

Storia delle Religioni, Università Pontificia Salesiana di Roma

**Prof. Scaria Thuruthiyil**

Storia della Filosofia contemporanea, Università Pontificia Salesiana di Roma

**Prof. Vinay Kumar Srivastava**

Social Anthropology, Delhi University



**RESEARCH NOTEBOOKS  
REFERENCE LIBRARY**

- 1 - Umberto Mondini, Vinay Kumar Srivastava:** *I Raika - Allevatori di cammelli del Rajasthan*
- 2 - Aldo Cagnoli:** *11 settembre. le nuove rotte del terrorismo aereo*
- 3 - Umberto Mondini, Vinay Kumar Srivastava:** *Adivasi - Le minoranze etniche dell'India*
- 4 - Aldo Cagnoli:** *Terrorismo aereo e prevenzione*
- 5 - Scaria Thuruthiyil:** *Principi e valori educativi nella tradizione indiana*
- 6 - Umberto Mondini, Silvia Berini:** *Il sacro monte - Dal culto della bona Dea a quello della madonna del carmine nel territorio di Quadroni*
- 7 - Umberto Mondini:** *L'epopea di Pabuji - Le cerimonie nuziali*
- 8 - Maria Angelillo:** *I Kalbelia di Pushkar*
- 9 - Oltre la porta degli spiriti - Ricerca sul campo tra gli Akha** (a cura di Umberto Mondini)
- 10 - Umberto Mondini:** *L'epopea di Pabuji - Tra mito, storia e leggenda*
- 11 - Giuseppina Semola:** *Cipro fra mito e storia nella cultura italiana*
- 12 - Umberto Mondini, Silvia Berini:** *Moqoit - Uno sguardo sulle minoranze etniche del chaco argentino*
- 13 - The victim as a cultural expression. Representation, perception, symbolism** (Edited by Umberto Mondini, Rossitsa Terzieva-Artemis, Sandrine Prévot)
- 14 - Women who made history** (Edited by Umberto Mondini)



ISBN 978-88-3356-166-0

Edizioni Progetto Cultura 2003 S.r.l. - Roma  
diffonde quest'opera pregevole  
stampata con carattere TIMES NEW ROMAN 11  
nel mese di aprile 2020 da  
Universal Book S.r.l. - Rende (CS)

© 2020 Edizioni Progetto Cultura.  
Tutti i diritti sono riservati

[www.progettocultura.it](http://www.progettocultura.it)  
[info@progettocultura.it](mailto:info@progettocultura.it)