

A RAVING REVERIE

A SUBSTANTIAL ANTHOLOGY
of

MARINO PIAZZOLLA's

FLAMBOYANT POETRY AND WITTY PROSE

TRANSLATED BY

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Postface

Piazzolla in English

Not unlike all those writers who, in the past, escaped from the bondage to fashions and fads for closed forms or trobar clus, Marino Piazzolla is an Author who can be translated into other idioms with surprising results since they may reveal the “seeds” of his own poetry. As a matter of fact, his verse – when it does not emerge, impromptu, from his native language – flares up and shines reflected by specks and motes and dust of a contiguous (cultural, philosophical, over-segmental) expression. In lieu of an “absolute diction” here is an experience of those semiotic exchanges and interwoven relations which the poetry, moving away from its own specificity, entertains with the world at large – real, fantastic, literary, visual worlds.

If this is, in general, the first feature of that definition of some textual domains which the “translation act” offers to our interpretation, in Marino Piazzola’s case there is a second feature originating from his early “mythological” experience. This experience took place in France, in the season of Piazzolla’s beginnings, under the aegis of André Gide and Paul Valery, foreshadowing a cosmopolitan spirit waiting to put down roots into the heart of our civilization and into the core of our imagination. But, in order to do so, in Italy, that spirit had to wait for a link connecting it to other cultures. Today, it seems, something is happening in the opposite direction, as Piazzolla’s poems now tend to reveal themselves in foreign poetic tongues. Within the schemes and the extravagancies we contemplate in our comparative and translational literary studies, the English language appears – more than any other idiom – to exert a peculiar appeal in Piazzolla’s case. In fact, the Apulian poet’s

excentricity, as regards both the metric structure and the phoné, glides down in a natural way on the open versification that is proper to prosody in William Blake's and Walt Whitman's language. Thus, his style acquires a new dynamism and a novel light and integrates, in other words, in an ampler system than Italy's provincial one (chiefly the shabby and opaque one of recent decades).

This "substantial anthology" gathered with wisdom by Pier Francesco Paolini – gathered, we mean to say, with a skill and a promptness alert to the semantic comparison – sets free from any form of awe and subjection to tonalities and ways and means of our late-nineteenth century poetry. Don't deem it a paradox, but it is the testo a fronte, or parallel text, that allows us to walk through a textual landscape which would, apparently, seem precluded to Piazzolla's poetry. This, because his page is a crucible where native ingredients freely mingle and get confused and blend with potential elements the prima facie text refers back to.

Infact, when his poetic or sentimental journey trepasses into English forms it projects itself towards a new horizon. His writing does not condemn to inanity its closed terms and its peculiar modus operandi but rather becomes an active agent of a discourse which results original because it is discontinuous (as a matter of fact it is easy to observe in Piazzolla how he agilely crosses the boundary between a code and another code, without any reduction to a foreordained and motionless order, not at all: rather this is the very soul of his poetry).

One can easily hypothesize an unexpected movement towards a sort of estrangement which has been able to propitiate the passage or conversion from a style to another style, from prose to poetry and, thus, also from an idiom to another idiom – yet remaining this side of a horizon wherein he is defined as a coherent author just because he is unpredictable, always the

inventive artist.

Finally, the problematic barycentre of Piazzolla's poetry and, essentially, of his entire oeuvre (including also his drawings) which tends not to exhaust itself in a representation of a poetic wisdom worn out by the mechanisms of power, can, for this reason, establish a dialogue with whatsoever appears divided from the fortuitous, split from the contingent, the immediate. This is not to say that the deep nature of his verse – sometimes concealed in the Italian text and, anyway, occulted to their receivers – reappears with beautiful clarity in the Englished Piazzolla.

This confirms that his poetry doesn't exhaust itself in any formal gesture nor in any alleged purity, but rather looks for those diversities which would seem immanent in such textual mechanics that be played against the transcendency of the unique paradigm, whatever it be supposed to be.

Lastly, the articulations of this writing foresee a sort of falsche Bewegung: a different free movement played on more than one reading level and aiming at an ampler arc of expressive possibilities. To this end, translator Paolini's deep grooves, compact racecourses and settled pathways are also concurring: a "rhetoric magma" which creates relations between numerous expressive rivulets and a hypertext controlled, instead, and ruled by the norms of a transposition which is also an explication as well as an intimate reading.

Gualtiero De Santi