

Baroque 17th century and the 18th century

The 17th century is the century of academies and Baroque. In literature, poetry celebrates wonder and intelligence, the search for amazement through complex syntactic constructions and witty metaphors. In Udine, the taste for gathering in literary societies is evident in the Brigata udinese, a poets society with members (three Notaries Public, a painter, a magistrate, two priests and a lawyer) that adopt curious pseudonyms, namely Lambin (Girolamo Missio), Mitit (Brunello Brunelleschi), Nator (Daniello Sforza), Ritit (Giovanni Pietro Fabiario), Ritur (Francesco di Cucagna), Rumtot (Gasparo Scarabello), Ruptum (Plutarco Sporeno) and Turus (Paolo Fistulario). The initial group comprising Turus, Lambin and Rumtot extended its membership to other people, but it is Turus-Fistulario who transcribed the compositions of the brigata onto a manuscript housed at the Civic Library of Udine and currently in bad state of preservation. The themes are linked to the exchange of rhymes between poets and rhyming poems to celebrate special events. These are mostly humorous and focused on love themes, with a trend to emphasize and eventually exaggerate the poet's technical ability and play on surprising metaphors. But what matters is experimentation, and «all-round» (Pellegrini).

In the translation of verses 57- 72 of the fourth song and 7-51 of the fifth song of The Frenzy of Orlando (or more literally Raging Orlando), Paolo Fistulario does not seek the parody or ridiculous remake, on the contrary, it tries to comply with the model, composing it without betraying it, bending the Friulian language to the high register.

This holds true for the four sonnets «Di Turus si chu chel dal Petrarchie», in Petrarch's style, where change starts to become evident. Svergonzantmi ben spes ch' anchimò io tasi, signore Stelle, lis vuestris belezis, io pensi al timp ch' Amor chu lis soos frezzis fazè sì chu niun'altre al mont mi plasi. [...] [Often ashamed of still remaining silent / Lady Star, your beauty, / I think of the time when Love and its arrows / was such that I liked no other in this world] (Translated by O.Bisegna) Original: Vergognando talor ch' ancor si taccia, donna, per me vostra bellezza in rima, ricorro al tempo ch' i' vi vidi prima, tal che null'altra fia mai che mi piaccia. [...] Though with evident deviations, it is the system of equivalences that provides the measure of rhetoric ability and the novelty is noted on the language plane.

The corpus of the brigata (224 poems of which 40 were published) deserves appropriate reading not only for the changing tones but also for the wealth of lexical and linguistic information, and for the new features it provides on the context in which the authors lived. The classical example taken from the canzoniere, always by Fistulario, is Lu zuuch dal biel floor (game of the beautiful flower, by Ariosto), a short poem dedicated to Mitit-Brunelleschi that, through a parlour game between boys and girls, depicts the environment of the Udine area with lively traits and interesting cues for the history of the language. Thus, in the first half of the century, Udine provides evidence of a literary dialogue that has reached us thanks to the work and probably the role played by Fistulario, a dialogue which seems to be restricted to the area of the city.

On the other hand, the work by Eusebio Stella (1610-1671), the author who dared use very realistic and uninhibited language, secretly spread in Spilimbergo, perhaps thanks to the closed loop, with particular emphasis on the sexual sphere.

It should not be forgotten that the control of the Counter-reform was active in the 17th century, with the long list of banned books and their covertly reading. The compositions by Stella, almost three hundred texts collected in an autograph code preserved at the Civic Library of Udine, deal with a large variety of topics, ranging from praising jokes, yet focused on the licentious tale, and display versatile intelligence as well as unprecedented open-mindedness.

These characters have placed Eusebio Stella, in the second half of the 20th century, among the most interesting Friulian poets, but the 17th century was dominated by the figure of Ermes di Colloredo, who reaped undeniable endorsement and success in his time, such as to deserve the handwritten circulation of his works and critical fortune which were completely new to literature in Friulian. Born in the castle of Colloredo di Montalbano from a noble family, the poet spent his adolescence (1637-1644) as a page in Florence. He then became a man of arms in Germany and Dalmatia, and for a brief period at the court of Vienna, but he quickly waived both life in the army and at court, preferring the tranquillity of his house in Gorizso near Codroipo, where he composed verses for a ring of friends (and for his beloved Polimia).

Considered as the «father of Friulian literature» which he says «it is fully aware of its artistic abilities» (Chiurlo), Colloredo is an author endowed with great expressive power and rich inspiration, who feels free to range from the serious genre to the burlesque one, as well as to the criticism of customs. The following century, which witnessed the dissemination of many a copy of handwritten and non-autographed copies of his verses, consecrated him as a canon, a model of language and taste, differentiating him from the Baroque 17th-century style, of which he reflects some of the key themes though with originality: *Chel tic e toc, cu conte ogni moment ju pass, che il timp misure in nestri dan, e veloz trapassand dal mes a l'an, cun chei pass nus condûs al monument. Polimie, pense pur, che a chel concent anchie i flors dal to volt e spariran, e ad onte dal to fast prest finiran la to crudel beltat e il miò torment. [...]* [That ticking, counting every moment / those steps time measures to our detriment, / and moving quickly from month to year / it leads us to the tomb by those very steps. / Polimia, do think that then / also the flowers will disappear from your face, / and, in spite of your splendour / your cruel beauty and my torment will end soon].

The transmission of the manuscripts, the use of a Friulian language that is close to today's koiné, contribute to set the features of literary Friulian that, starting from Colloredo, then stabilises on its central varieties. The publishing of his manuscripts proposed in 1785 (Udine, Murero) is of crucial importance. Although it did not create a true tradition, Colloredo's legacy which straddles the two centuries, will be found in some authors that continued working along the explored strands, but above all started using the koiné. The names of these authors are Antonio Dragoni (1632-1702), Giusto Fontanini (1666-1736), koiné being anthologized by a sonnet that closely follows the burlesque strand (*A di un plevan ch'al veve la massarie brutte*), Bernardino Cancianini (1690?-1770), and Gabriele Paciani (1712-1793) from Cividale.

While this uniform framework of reference starts consolidating, perhaps as a reaction or due to its own maturity, also the marginal varieties of Friulian become more widespread between the 17th and the 18th centuries. It is the area of Gorizia that starts imposing itself, through the works of Gio Maria Marussig (1641-1712), Gian Giuseppe Bosizio (1660-1743) and Marzio di Strassoldo (1736- 1797). The works of Marussig place a lot of emphasis on chronicle, and more specifically on gruesome facts, that the 17th is century renown for, but developed with personality (see *Le morti violenti o subitane successe in Goritia o suo distretto*, the description of over two hundred deaths occurred between 1641 and 1704, where the verses are completed and sometimes act as real support to greatly effective drawings). Bosizio is the author of difficult translation from Virgilio, that are interesting for diverging reasons. We know nothing about the version of the Eclogues. *La Georgica di Virgili* translated into viars furlans is handwritten (until 1857) whilst *La Eneide di Virgili* translated into viars furlans bernesch is published in Gorizia in 1775. If the Georgics pursue the equivalence with Latin, though always change the adopted metre, and are particularly relevant for their wealth of lexicon linked to the abundance of peasant technical terminology, whereas, Eneide, by its title, denounces the deforming, 'mocking' perspective.

Hexameters are written in octaves of hendecasyllables, that, though closely following the model, input many humorous parts, excessively dilating the theme cues or including utterly anachronistic information.

In the 18th century, some manuscripts and printed works still come from western Friuli and the Carnia area, which bear a light-hearted preach and the parody of a will, but the verses are scarce. As a result one cannot state that the century was particularly vivid.

Printed works of the last decades (and from different geographical areas: central Friuli, Collored, Gorizia, Bosizio) remain nonetheless important, whilst in highly-educated environments individuals meditate on the features of the language and pulpit preaching in Friulian becomes more widespread.