

The 20th century breakthrough

The Philological Society reaps the harvest of 19th-century developments, anticipating further ongoing strides ahead. The turning point in Friulian literature instead shows in its breakdown. While 1942 marks 150 years since the birth of Pietro Zorutti with almost unanimous acclaim, two authors resolutely distance themselves, namely Pier Paolo Pasolini and Giuseppe Marchetti. As regards language and poetry the break with tradition occurs outside Friuli. 'Zoruttismo', despite dissenting voices, restricted the expressive possibility of Friulian poetry.

It is thanks to Pasolini (Friulian mother from Casarsa) that Friulian asserted itself for the first time, beyond regional border, as a complete and modern tool. In 1942, a short collection of poems entitled *Poesie a Casarsa* published in Bologna, immediately noted by Gianfranco Contini, where Friulian is used in a totally new manner. This Friulian is «practical and imperfect [...] a hybrid mix of the Casarsa dialect» of his mother and koiné drawn from the *Nuovo Pirona* (Belardi and Faggin).

The poems are nonetheless revolutionary: thanks to the sensitivity and refined culture of Pasolini these poems are «outside [...] dialect» and beside great modern literatures. In this variant that is «initially not written» but later mastered by him, Friulian is above all the language of poetry, a young and unexplored land, the world which expresses a universe that is «out of time and history» (Belardi e Faggin). Il nini muart Sera imbarlumida, tal fossal a cres l'aga, na fèmina plena a ciamina pal ciamp. Jo i ti recuardi, Narcìs, ti vevis il colòur da la sera, quand li ciampanis a sùnin di muart. [The dead child / Bright evening, in the ditch / the water rises, a pregnant woman / walks through the field. / I remember you, Narcissus, you had the colour / of the evening, when the bells / knell]. (Translation by O. Bisegna) In the same way it depicts a poetic code that needs to be renewed, along with the traditions of «small Romance countries».

From 1942 to 1949 Pasolini lived in Casarsa, he taught and initiated a group of young and very young people to poetry. In 1945 Pasolini founded the Friulian Language Society (*Academiuta di lenga furlana*) and in 1944 he launched a number of magazines (four «Stroligut» and the «Quaderno romanzo» in 1947), where a sort of modern writing emerged. Thanks to this exercise, the publication of small editions by the poets of the Academiuta (Cesare Bortotto, Tonuti Spagnol, Nico Naldini), also resorting to translations from French and Italian contemporary authors, the Friulian language took on what Contini, reviewing *Poesie a Casarsa*, had defined as «the true nobility of a minor language» (in «Corriere del Ticino», 24 April 1943).

In 1949 Pasolini is forced to abandon Friuli and the Friulian season comes to a halt, in 1954, with the collection of poems entitled *La meglio gioventù*, a sort of «desperate tribute to the far myth, to a happy and uncontaminated Friuli» (Pellegrini). Twenty years later, in 1975, faced with the collapse of peasant culture, *La nuova gioventù* will be its tragic counter melody.