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## **Life, Love and Death, in search of a consolation. Kenneth Krabat's poetics**

Never stop the propagation of the world behind the veil  
With resignation life and worlds come to an end  
    In blood and ignorance  
    or both.

The poems that make up this new issue of "Versi Guasti" appear at first reading very heterogeneous; different styles and metrics with which the poet, Kenneth Krabat, composed his texts. A multifaceted Danish poet, who writes in his mother tongue and at the same time in English, Krabat is a living figure of the Copenhagen underground or, as he himself would say, of København, performer and lyricist.

We have chosen to dedicate a volume of "Versi Guasti" to this author, because Krabat fits perfectly into the poetic research that this series is trying to carry out, finding out there all those poets who take poetry, tear it from the high school desks, they shake it violently and transform it, almost magically, into a contemporary product. Words to read and through which to understand a little more the real that surrounds us, this real, this "here and now" of a 2016 that is coming to an end.

Let us return, however, to Krabat's poetics. We said that, at first reading, these texts appear disparate from each other, with long digressions in the form of rhythmic prose, surreal tales of flying men, sweet poems set in lands with a vague science fiction flavor, texts that are screams against the wind and against everything and all.

But just stop for a moment, let the words, images, cries, whispers and moans that emerge from these poems flow, and then you understand that they all have a common topic, a very strong and evident narrative topos, which recurs and recurs.

It is not a rational and philosophical choice of the poet. Here Kenneth Krabat is not reasoning to try to investigate the world around him; he is simply living, and in living he tells us about his passage along the whole path that is life. Krabat is not writing poetry; they are a sort of simple epiphenomenon of his living. Almost a waste product of his goings and passages in the world, of Denmark, of the people he meets and of the feelings he experiences.

All of Krabat's poems tell of life, death and love; apparently, the most repeated, popular and usual tradition of making poetry. Telling of the life we live, death and its fear and love, a mysterious feeling.

Is Krabat then a banal poet? No he is not. He is not at all. He is not so because of how he writes, of how his imagination explodes every time he grasps pen and paper and prints his very short or very long lines, but he is not, especially from how he reinterprets the story of life in poetry.

Krabat lives the same contemporaneity of every reader, that senseless frantic Western life, and apparently without any purpose other than the accumulation, the alienated repetition of work and the thousand hypocrisies of a non-authenticity, the true paradigm of our age.

It is an imposed life, what Krabat describes:

...the terribly ordinary  
with foisted partner foisted offspring foisted  
family in foisted reality in foisted culture

A slow senseless struggle, or as the poet himself says, a "Fight, Fight, Fight":

a friend asked for the rest of my morphine pills

from when I had cancer

*Those I will keep to myself* I said

An existence that flows inexorably towards old age, the end. And the poet can only try to scream, to oppose vainly and in vain to contrast what awaits him, what he is destined for.

I don't want to grow old  
my love grows old  
my memory grows old  
my gait and my antics grow old

[...]

so aging  
so so so much growth  
yet to do

A life that slips and that has no other destination than death. Death that is not the end and form of a path: there is no teleological value in death (let alone theological!), Indeed, it is the triumph of the senseless that characterizes human living. The apotheosis of nonsense.

If this death does not serve as proof of the fundamental absence of purpose of existence, the score must shed light on biological and psychological inevitability. A clock that stops, like this!

But here is the turning point in this death which has no meaning and does not make sense. Kenneth Krabat tells it in a tremendous and at the same time very sweet way in two of the poems collected here: "As I *Must Go*" and "Meeting death".

In the first, raw, aseptic as the plan of a mortuary, the poet faces his own end with cynical detachment, a perspective observation that appears, initially, devoid of any feeling, emotion, involvement. Suddenly, however, at the end of the composition, in his last, unexpected verse, Krabat asks:

will someone lie down close to me  
for a while?

A question asked to himself, a silent prayer, an empathic invocation, a simple request for help. The poet wonders: will someone be with me or will I be alone?

That "someone" is not just another indistinct human being, but a living creature in the same, senseless real, a man or woman who offer and receive consolation.

That same consolation that Krabat tells in one of his most poignant, sweeter, more melancholic and beautiful poems: "Meeting death", a long text inspired by the photographs of Cathrine Ertmann, in which the poet pays a loving farewell to his grandfather who is recently gone over.

It is as if this time it was the poet, who was the one who stretches out next to the one, who dies to try to make the last moment of the journey less painful, less senseless and less lonely.

The poet lends his body to the task of memory, and it is thanks to this gift that Krabat manages to keep the missing grandfather alive. To make him eternal.

I do know  
that you are here thanks to your body and as that fails  
you are here only thanks to mine  
I know  
I know it well  
you will never come back  
as new stories  
without me making you up  
so I make you

alive forever

It is here, in death, that this communion reaches the absolute level of memory lived through the body. Well, this search for communion with the other, as an extreme attempt to survive in the present world, is present in all Krabat's poetics: it is the tension to love. Love, the great viaticum of human salvation.

Let the reader not delude himself: there is no sense even in love. It, as a fact of life, can only continue to be, almost ontologically, senseless but - and this is where Krabat's whole poetics unfolds - is consolation. Comfort and relief, deceptive happiness, affection and joy that allows us to go on and continue to survive.

This love answers Albert Camus' first philosophical question: "There is only one serious philosophical problem: that of suicide".

Krabat's love is a rambunctious, heterosexual, affective and anaffective, sexual and platonic love, it is the love that every human being crosses on his or her own path. There is no idealization, no ethical or even eschatological value.

The world is not made for love, which is not on the agenda:

*It's the news taking the wrong turn she says  
read listen watch  
the news no editor  
any longer dares claim love as an answer to anything*

The feeling that the poet tells is therefore that of every day, the dirty and sweaty one, the painful and tiring one, the senseless and absolute one, that of a red rose during a dinner: the most romantic love possible.

The love of our daily lives lived in its being so crazy as to be true, fantastically real. A bit like in the poem "The air of last night", in which Krabat imagines the day after the journey on a distant, sandy planet, populated by mythological creatures called tyrons. "Savoring the

air” (the memory) of that science fiction night just passed, the poet meets a woman. He falls in love immediately, hopelessly. She can't love him now, because she doesn't know him at all, she is in love with another, it is natural that it is so. But this present, current love is destined to end, and then the poet will wait, submerged by the sand of the distant planet, until she is finally free to love him and then:

I will return to live out the rest of your life

At the beginning of this introduction we underlined how the intent of "Dead Verses" was to reach, find and publish those poets who constantly transform poetry into the current expression of our contemporaneity. “We have mentioned that, through them, it is possible to see what binds, in an apparent or inapparent way, the world, the secret connections that meander in this real”.

There is an epistemological intent at the basis of the poetry that we are looking for, a more or less passionate investigation of the world all around; poetry becomes the instrument, magical rather than scientific, with which to interrogate the existing in the most profound way possible. Poetry as a more sincere form of human knowledge.

This is not the case in Kenneth Krabat. In the poems that we have collected here and in all its poetic production there is no cognitive intent; the poet is not at all interested in going to the window and trying to make sense of what meaning in itself does not have and cannot have.

Kenneth Krabat opens the window, inhales the air of the world and throws himself out.

He precipitates without any parachute, without any protection, falls and falls, faster and more deeply, in the reality of his life, of his experiences, of his feelings, of pain, of death, of love, of everything. Not only does he observe and tell, but he lives. Kenneth Krabat is a life eater, and these poems are nothing more than the result of what he has swallowed, chewed, digested and thrown out.

It is the life that has passed within him, inside his body, along the whole digestive tract.

And you should not be surprised, dear readers, of how much these poems also speak to you, of what they also tell of you, of how much you will recognize yourselves in them.

All of us, human beings, move forward, walk, feed, digest, chew, defecate, the same wonderful, senseless, painful, bloody, impossible, mysterious and barking life.

And Kenneth lives.

Alex Tonelli

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