

“Posse ipsum est omnium quiditas et hypostasis,  
in cuius potestate tam ea quae sunt, qua mea quae  
non sunt, necessario continentur”

NICOLAUS VON KUES, De apice theoriae, 1464

1. It had seemed very haphazard setting a communications machine into operation which is of the nature of possessing a dual soul, a humanistic one and a scientific one, while at the same time pretending that such an apparatus was suited to carrying out surveys in all the numerous variations that are to be found in the world of technics in all its vastness, in that immense area of industry where application and research chase one another, generating an infinite number of processes, in the reading of which lies the forge of most meaningful contemporary art, and in particular, cinema.

Drawing up a balance sheet of the results that have been achieved is, at present, a rather impractical operation: the nature and the ambition of the project need greater temporal breathing space in order to come to significant conclusions. However, it appears to be more legitimate and appropriate to verify the interest aroused and the way in which the various stirred sectors have reacted: a virtuous chain of questions and responses has started, collaboration relationships have given rise to others, and whoever has found himself to have been involved in the organisation tends to change himself into an active party to extend the scope and range of the sphere of its influence.

A vast network of potential, operativeness, synergies, has begun to establish itself and grow with the luxuriance of a beneficial plant. A network which is “magnetic” in character that produces a great energy, which adds and interconnects projects of vast remit, it decodifies them into the world of art, and establishes a relationship between differing subjects, from whose meeting other outcomes may derive.

2. Other companies have started to pay attention, when not to adhere to the “numbers” and “letters” that the “Atlante...” is collating. Perhaps they have identified a typology of quality, perfectible of course, as well as a new attempt to observe and narrate things, underpinned by enthusiasm and passion. It is then that the doors of these places of contemporary reality, where things come about, open. Sure, there is so much pain still in the world of work, and so many of those old hells, too, but it is precisely for this reason that witness must be borne to new situations, to other possibilities, to human landscapes where work activity becomes, may become the expression of the self.

Therefore, the lofty and sincerely civilised lesson of Adriano Olivetti has not gone amiss. And it presents itself anew with the added strength of the necessity of a technology that is not separate from an intrinsic humanistic value. The process has already begun. First and foremost, as a reflection and cultural recognition. And here have we the disused mines turned into a museum, or the children who go to see how chocolate or paper is “made”. It is then possible to find yet other levels, in ever more evolved contexts, as is the case for the new Volkswagen building, designed completely to be a thoroughly modern and transparent museum, a truly advanced system of visibility and transparency, in the absence of all caesuras between the outside and the inside.

The Seavision structure might seem like a modern art museum, also from the outside of the building; inside, the spaces, the objects, the situations, the whole context itself prompt us to consider that “exploration” of a company maybe similar to exploring a museum. It is possible to continue to move about and observe and gather those smells and those sensations (the positive and warm energy as described by Diego Spreti), but comprehension is limited by using this approach. Only words will still be able to talk of culture and humanism which together govern that reality. Maybe, the aesthetics of imprinting could have suggested the figure of Adriano Olivetti in the sky of myths as deductions taken for granted, or the cultural good as non-marginal destination of reinvestment, or more of the quality in work relations, where autonomy and responsibility are strongly valued (“it’s as if everybody was himself a company”).

We must journey further in order to truly understand, to grasp that inkling of the other side of the moon, the possibility of another world. It can then happen to get to know that, in that entourage, coming home from work we find children without television, “distorted image of the world”, and that those town children experience that parents read books or bring them to see cows and hens.

We may also hypothesize something much more important, the state of being in the relationship between production and consumption, for which something similar to that which happened in the area of agricultural production (the advent of agri-tourism and “organic” produce) might also occur in the business area. Industrial espionage, just as it is not the case of good wine or some precious floral cultivar or else of so many other food treasures, is certainly not being discussed here. Rather, it is a new opening of vision towards objects, in the end, for a certain knowledge of that which contributes to shaping the world around us, that it is necessary that it becomes cultural heritage, and as such, may become to be known, evaluated positively, appreciated, compared and sometimes refused: but with tools which are the results of a cultural path and not the mere product of commercial communication.

The world of art has returned with renewed generosity, taking and donating according to the opportunities offered by this new upturn. Added now are other artists, and here, it is difficult not to pause on each one of them individually: it withholds the fear of unintentionally placing a differing importance upon them who are all equally important in their contribution to the illustrated writing of this editorial piece. Yet another prestigious contribution has come from two prestigious art galleries, that of Pio Monti and Francesca Monti (Rome and Macerata), as well as that of Mimmo Scognamiglio (Naples). No less conspicuous, finally, is the contribution of the Fine Arts Academy of Macerata, which was organised into a working team co-ordinated by two professors in the Department of decoration and ornamentation (Pierpaolo Marcaccio and Paola Taddei), which permitted us to produce an innovative collaboration experiment: the task of “interpreting” certain texts according to their sensibility and skills was handed to some young artists.

The exponents of the research world did not even manifest any particular sense of intolerance towards an object of communication, considered to be not so orthodox in character, and with the burden of the many (inevitable?) naiveties of the first issue: maybe they captured a new spirit, and they have certainly helped strengthen and mould again this second issue in its structure, come to a first calibration. And in order to evaluate the support, all we have to do is assess who adhered and with which contribution.

3. But we could also speak much about that which succeeded least, even among those medium-term goals. We can also envisage the “Atlante di numeri e lettere” project being once and for all adjusted, along its basic guidelines, in the next issue. As for arriving at an observatory of objects that have been chosen in advance, through which we capture material for reflection upon the changing course of life. Naturally, there is still a lot to be done if we are to meet the original goals. As far as business situations are concerned, for example, the idea of going into a business, and narrating it by means of a project, a story, an occurrence. Only services, for now, have occurred. But they wanted to be the beginning of a discussion, the shaking of hands in a sign of acknowledgement and recognition, in a sign of agreement to do more.

We wish to establish more organic links with those who are concerned with science and technology: and the goal is that of arriving at agreed thematic co-ordination which is sustained by common debate, as extended as possible, as is the case of the forum, and via this path arrive at defining, according to necessity, how such contributions are structured, in order to define the stages of a common route, and especially to infer a mean communications language: not unimportant is the debate which concerns the level or quality of writing, the expertise or otherwise, the mean value, the choice of final user. All of these questions would never be posed publicly? And it is perhaps also true that when all this is resolved at origin, it is the sign of another position. It is possible, instead, to establish a self-constructed shape within the whole of the continuous debate that should come about between co-workers and readers: in sensical research which aims at studying its own development, rather than abstractly following a pre-constructed pattern.

As far as art, finally, is concerned the original reference framework is somewhat failed. Compared to the initial aim of a rather limited reference field (the idea of an art book with a regional vocation), the constant extending of relations has remoulded intervention criteria, which though does not renege on its initial philosophy, now spreads it towards new “fields”, establishing themselves into theme-based contexts.

4. From this second issue, the thematic centre of gravity moves towards the index, intended as series of sections, which in filigree allow a reconfiguration of the supporting structure to filter through. It is probable, with the accentuation of this process, that the need fails for defining a given theme, from time to time: which is now dedicated to energy. The appearance of a sub-title: ethics and aesthetics within the becoming of technics confirms this reconfiguration. We therefore outline those values that have come out till now, or better still certain original intentions are confirmed, others are cleared of obscurity, or else they evolve or change, or new ones are aroused.

Reading the world then follows in accordance with a dual code, or better still, with a multitude of codes, pursued with the intention of creating sense. "Atlante di numeri e lettere" starts its path all over again, through Beuys' meditation and provocative statements, read by Giorgio Conti with the happiness and precision that finally lead to understanding an energetic tallying, in the impossibility of separating art and life and science. And the journey goes on with children on their trip to school on foot. Using simple and innocent gestures we can still achieve "revolutions", to go outside looking at the sky and letting the air (in the right proportion, let's hope) leave the first trace of the day on the skin. Somebody must be concerned with the cleanliness of the world so that this may continue to be within our grasp, or somebody must be in charge of making it less dirty, be they using cogeneration and regenerating or using low-impact fuels, like natural gas. Raising the head further still, we can gather together yet other points of fact, of an ethical, political and economic import, all important in their own way, so that the planet can yet be something civilly and aesthetically worthy of all its inhabitants. And methods adopted to achieve these results are not at all those that make dialogue between business and ethics an impossibility.

"Science" and technology, too, which also have an intrinsic need to be described in a "numerical" universal language, are indeed no strangers to that literary universal language, and they do not disdain that escape route following external lines, on the path of intuition, or of memory, which goes to chase the passions of the protagonists, bearers of the magical spark out of which the most complicated of inventions is unleashed.

And continue to read life in those othernesses that there are, for example, between being and having, being and becoming: and a supreme form of comprehension appears to always develop, in that scanning generated by a relationship of dialogue. And the self is recovered and released, wherever it is, and finds freedom again.

And thus does theatre in prison become utopian experience: that continual duality between having and being, between object theatre, place of predefined emotions and sensations, and the capacity to arouse within ourselves the sense of that action that brings us, anyway, to be actors in the world: our souls being capable of clearing the barrier imposed by prison.

That same duality has been so well analysed, in the relationship between to be and to become. And even though Adriano Segatori demonstrates a clear-cut stance, even the reader who does not agree is well helped to sort himself, in order to better know his position. But it is exactly this helping to understand the diversity of positions that it becomes the highest form of communication.

In the same way, it is an inter-exchanging of parameters which – after this experience – will, perhaps, push young artists of the Fine Arts Academy to mould themselves into the reading of graphics and mathematical formulae, in order to then create works of art from it. To make an attempt to understand, we need to continually go after other codes, other numbers and other letters, unconventional ones.

5. Cultural traces being considered, do not seem to be lacking in similarities. Giulio Giorello's thinking, for example, like a bright shining light magnificently helps this type of pan-communicative syncretism that can be revived in those routes that "Atlante di numeri e lettere" tries to imprint into its surveys. Thus it is for philosophy which has to be transported everywhere and let mix together with other disciplines, be part of every type of degree course. And the argument could extend both to one's own and foreign (chosen among the many) literature. Philosophy and literature risk dying, since their exercise spaces are ever more limited, asphyxiated, artificial. They need objects upon which to let the lava energy of thought flow in order to remain alive. And it is implicit in the fate of things, when they were reduced to the sole function of goods, to precipitate into the damnation of the only possibility of recognition, entrusted to fixed mirrors. It is only the sense value or a function value which may alienate those objects from the unique and oppressive value of goods.

Only a varied reading of their being, so as to clasp them to a human horizon, may enrich the latter renewing it, rather than continuing to reduce it to a depressed and exclusively functional thought.



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