

INTERVIEW WITH PIER PAOLO PASOLINI

My life's story is the story of my books, here are my books, therefore here on this sofa is practically my whole life.

My first book has been published in 1942, it is a poems' book, these poems are written in "friulano" (dialect of the Friuli region) which is my mother dialect. I wrote this book when I was 18, it has been published when I had exactly 20 years. In 1942 I was twenty.

Why did I write it in "friulano" ? Then I did not realise it well, I understood ~~immediately~~ as soon as my book was published. When the book appeared some critics would have liked to write about it, they could not do it because then the reviews - these were the last years of fascism which did not want dialect to be spoken, -fascism did not want a literature in dialect and why ? Because Italy then the official Italy of these years was a completely false Italy. Practically Italy was out of any form of realism, even not wholly poetical as my book was. They did not want dialect to be spoken in Italy, they did not want practically peasants and workers to exist then.

However in this book there is absolutely nothing of what afterwards has been named "engagement", it is only a poetical book, a sort of romantic and fantastic love of mine, for the land of my mother, for the peasants from Friuli, etc.

Some years afterwards, in '45, during the war, in Casarza, in Friuli, (it is my mother's village) I instituted what might be called an academy, I called it small academy of "friulan" language. Then, by our own means, we published some small books, and this is the second small one which was published. The title is "Daily notes", this book however is in Italian. Still pre-war poems, cultural atmosphere, still symbolic or overrealistic, neo-classic we could say, with some relations with "ermetismo". But in this book are already some elements of my future poetry, that means that here I already refer for instance <sup>about</sup> of my brother, a partisan death. It is already very clearly a new theme in my poetry.

In the next 6 years I continued, both in "friulan" and in Italian; the friulan poems I published them together only ten years afterwards, in a volume which title is "My youth", and the Italian poems are here, I published them only a little time ago, the title is " of the catholic church"

Until then I considered myself ~~what~~ from the literary point of view what is technically called a poet. But at a certain moment I started seeing films (si può dire anche pictures) Though I studied in Bologna, at Bologna's University, I spent my young years mostly in my mother's village and I was then completely isolated ~~from~~ whatever cultural contacts. My years' ~~with~~ Italian culture was communicated to me through the cinema and I saw the first neo-realistic films. These first films of Italian neo-realism made me think that I could write small stories, novels.

I made some attempts but they remained in my drawers, only one was published two or three years ago. The title is "the dream of a thing".

But when I came to Rome, where I came in 1950, immediately, the change of traditions, habits, new persons, etc. made me get richer in my capacity of saying things, which previously I did not have the possibility to do, and I started as soon as I arrived in Rome to write small stories about Roman life, and now I have put them all together, ~~giving~~ giving to these stories a sort of unity and published them in one volume which appeared in 1955 with the title of "Boys of that life".

With this book started ~~my~~ literary success, but also my preoccupations because with this book I was submitted to my first trial. I won it and was absolved because the book was considered a work of ~~poetry~~ art, a poem, at least my intentions writing it were considered such and I could not therefore be accused of scurrility, obscenity, as they attempted to do.

Before writing the second novel I continued writing ~~many~~ much and these three volumes were published, the first is "Gramsci's ashes", and the second one, published almost immediately afterwards, in '59, "The reason of my time" and the last one, which appeared only two or three years ago, "Poems as ~~is~~ a rose".

The contents of these books I consider the most valid side of what I have done up till now.

The novels have been sometimes for me just an adventure, I do not consider myself a novelist, I came to novels when I was about thirty, I made two or three experiences, only partly a success, I do not know. They were considered ~~so~~ in the cultural life ~~whenever~~, around the years 1950, I think, but I continue to consider myself especially a poet.

Here is the other novel which continues with the same arguments, the same persons, the same sort of life of "Lads of this life", the title of this novel is "a Violent life". It tells about the story of a young man who goes through a period of completely unconscious civil and political positions, passing through several experiences, coming to a class consciousness though himself, however, does not belong to any class, but to a sort of urban lumpenproletariat which has been fascist and is therefore incapable to bring to a real conscience.

During these years, those of the "engagement", my activity has also been very dense writing essays and critics. All my essays are published in one volume which title is "Passion and ideology". But I was in particular chief Editor together with Leonetti and Reversi of a political and literary review, "Workshop".

My activity has been interrupted several times and I started working again in that direction when I accepted to participate together with Carocci and Moravia to a new series of the review "Nuovi Argomenti".

How can be characterized my whole production <sup>in</sup> and a quite schematic and simple way? It has been characterized first of all by a deep and instinctive hate against the state in which I live, I mean exactly state and I intend to say state of things and state in its real political meaning of the word. The capitalistic state, of the petty bourgeoisie which I started hating since I was a child. Naturally you can do nothing just hating, and in fact I never could write one word which could describe or denounce the human type of the Italian petty bourgeois. My repulse is so strong that I cannot manage to write. Therefore in my novels I only wrote about persons belonging to the people. I live that is to say without any relations with the Italian petty bourgeoisie, I have contacts with the people, or with intellectuals.

The petty bourgeoisie, could succeed in having contacts with me. And she could do using all the means which are in its hands, that means the police, the justice, and attacked and made several trials to by work, whose characteristics are not only hate against the bourgeoisie, but a marxist view of things, a marxist analysis of my society.

These <sup>trials</sup> ~~processes~~ started with "Lads of this life", and continued with the trial against my film "La ricotta" because they said I attacked religion.

In the meantime I passed to making films, I partly abandoned literature, both novels and poems, in order to work exclusively for cinema.

This happened about the years around '60 and there is a reason to it because those years are the years of a deep crisis in Italian culture. Italy was passing from the phase of old-capitalism to a form of capitalism, or we may say to neo-capitalism. This meant a crisis of all ideologies existing in Italy, especially of marxist ideology, the ideology of "engagement".

Then it was said of the novel's crisis and some new vanguard movements, breaking with traditions arose, those closed and classical forms of saying things and of writing poems, it was spoken of "anti-novel period" etc. I could not adhere to such a movement because by then my personality was formed, my literary character is precise, I could not make a treason and come back arrears, so I passed instinctively to cinema, I substituted that is to say the way of saying things by writings with the way of saying things through cinema.

At first I thought it was the choice of a new technique, in reality I found out that it has been the choice of a real language, because cinema is a real language, according to me, may be in that way I realised somehow my wish which might be considered funny of abandoning the Italian language; and come to an international language.

And so I made my first film "Accattone". ~~Heretics~~ Immediately afterwards "Mother Rome", then the episode in the "Ricotta" which I mentioned before, accused of having attacked religion, and immediately afterwards, astonishing those who condemned me for attacking religion, "The vangelo secondo S. Matteo" which was realised during the years of Pope John XXIII, and has represented a sort of concrete dialogue and of relation between the communist, though I am not a member of the I.C.P., and the most advanced forces among Italian catholics.

My last picture "Uccellacci, uccellini" in which as if it was a fable, just in a symbolic way, I relate about the crisis I referred to before, that means the crisis of the ideology of engagement of the years around '50 and the coming of a new ideological horizon, that is to say relating about the new Italian society.

As for the future, who will live will see.

Intervista con Pier Paolo Pasolini

Aprile 1967 Bianco e Nero 16mm. (18')

Regia Carlo di Carlo

Fotografia Angelo Bevilacqua

Una rubrica per le televisioni intitolata "Primo Piano" prodotta dall'UNITELEFILM

Pier Paolo Pasolini è tra le personalità più interessanti della cultura italiana. ~~Egli è passato~~ attraverso l'esperienza della poesia e del romanzo ed è approdato ~~ora~~ al racconto cinematografico. Di formazione cattolica si è avvicinato sin da giovane al marxismo. In questo "Primo piano" si vedono ~~alcune riproduzioni dei suoi scritti, fotogrammi dei suoi film, e gli ambienti, ossia le borgate romane,~~ *ffla* da cui egli ha tratto i ~~seguenti~~ *temi* delle sue principali opere. —

*Il film  
bu le*

*Sono veduti un' intervista con  
Pasolini, la ~~rapresentazione~~ *rapresentazione* di  
~~alcuni brani della sua opera~~  
*letteraria.**