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The transformations of Milan in the eyes of Italian contemporary poets

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ABSTRACT.— The works of Milanese poets, from the “Lombard line” to “young Italian contemporary poetry” display a remarkable commitment to Milan and attention to the changes that the city has undergone in recent decades. The testimony of these writers contributes to the geographical understanding of urban territory.

GEOGRAPHY, MILAN, POETRY,
URBAN TRANSFORMATION

RÉSUMÉ.— *Les transformations de Milan sous le regard de poètes italiens contemporains.*— Dans les œuvres de poètes milanais, de la « Ligne lombarde » à « la jeune poésie italienne » contemporaine, s’observent un attachement remarquable à Milan et une attention aux transformations que la ville a connues au cours des dernières décennies. Le témoignage de ces écrivains est une contribution à la compréhension du territoire urbain.

GÉOGRAPHIE, MILAN, POÉSIE,
TRANSFORMATION URBAINE

With the publication of an anthology titled “Lombard line” in 1952, by the critic and essayist Luciano Anceschi, literary critics began to take an interest in the Lombard¹ poets, by birth or by adoption, the majority of whom had grown up in Milan before the Second World War. The close ties of these poets who share the same conception of poetry formed during the post-war years. By associating them under this label, Luciano Anceschi highlights their affiliation to a common literary culture and the similarity of their thematic and formal choices: a lyrical poetry completely different from Hermetism, focusing on moral values, irony and self-mockery. These poets of the “third generation” of twentieth century Italian lyricism, along with those of the “fourth generation” and their successors of, “Young Italian

1. Linea lombarda. Sei poeti. Published and unpublished writings of V. Sereni, R. Rebora, G. Orelli, N. Risi, R. Modesti and L. Erba.

2. These include Giovanni Giudici (1924-2011), Giovanni Raboni (1932-2004), Alda Merini (1931-2009), Maurizio Cucchi (1945), included in the anthology of Young Italian Poetry (Simeone, 1995).

3. "Lo spazio si copre di case popolari, di un altro segregato squallore dentro le forme del vuoto" (Space is covered in low-income housing, of another misery squeezed into empty shapes), "Intervista a un suicida" (Interview from a suicide). *Gli strumenti umani*, 1965, (*Human Instruments*, 1991).

4. "Ma così come hanno fatto, abbattere case, distruggere quartieri, qui e altrove (Vetra, Fiori Chiari, Bottonuto), a cosa serve?" (But how could they tear down houses and destroy areas here and there, what is the point?), "Risanamento" (Recovery), *Le Case della Vetra (The houses of Vetra)*, 1966, (transl. Muriel Rosemberg, M.R.).

5. A vitality, in the period considered, Nobel Prize winner which in 1975 crowned the poetic works of Eugenio Montale, from Milan, by adoption.

6. *Raboni Autoportrait*, 2004 (transl. J.-C. Vegliante).

7. The victory of the Christian Democrats in the elections of April 18 1948. The tramp is the writer of "Trieste Saba", much admired by V. Sereni.

8. "un'Italia di macerie et di polvere" (an Italy of dust and ruins), "Da un piazza all'altra/dall'uno all'altro caffè di Milano/inseguito dalla radio. "Porca – vociferando – porca" (from one place to another, from one Milan café to another, haunted

Poetry", demonstrate² a profound knowledge of the city and a keen interest in its material and cultural changes. They may therefore arouse the interest of the geographer who, in his effort to reconstitute and understand the changes in the urban territory over recent decades, would not be limited to an objective analysis, but would choose to involve literature for its potential to promote a new perspective on space. On one side, there is the description and explanation of the metropolitan dynamics of Milan and the spatial forms of globalization, while on the other, there is the will to grasp the way these phenomena are perceived, lived and interpreted by those who experience them. These two approaches are not contradictory, even if it is very difficult to connect them.

As a matter of fact, all these poets have witnessed the spatial reconfiguration and social upheaval occurring in Milan after the war and the "economic miracle" which strengthened its position as the economic capital of Italy. Their texts convey their worries and amazement in regards to the reconfiguration of the urban landscape (Ramat, 1976) or the changes in the countryside. They anxiously perceive the new behaviors appearing in society, without really understanding them (Bigatti, Lupo, 2014). Thus the city and its suburbs make their appearance in the texts of Vittorio Sereni, as illustrated: "Space is covered in low-income housing, of another misery squeezed into empty shapes"³, there is also the factory, as in the poem titled "Una visita in fabbrica" ("A factory visit"). Several poets a few years later, admire the urban renewal in amazement, like Giovanni Raboni: "But how could they tear down houses and destroy areas here and there, what is the point?"⁴ More recently, from a similar perspective to the writers of the Lombard Line, other Milanese poets, like Alda Merini or Maurizio Cucchi, have equally put into words their experience of a city that has changed so much they are unable to recognize it, but continue to like it even if they can no longer understand it, its original image being the significant backdrop of their inner lives and thoughts (Bigatti, Lupo, 2014).

In a city that today seems to control an economic frenzy of trade and finance, a city more European than Italian, poetry retains all its vitality⁵. It is this spatial dimension which will orient the reading that we propose on it. We therefore seek to bring to light, on the basis of a selection of writers and some of their texts, the way in which they convey an experience of the city, the ordinary places, daily life. We show equally the emotion they express faced with the city upheavals. Their Milan experience is subjective, but nevertheless remains a valuable composition that can enrich our understanding of the transformation of the territory.

The post-war city and economic miracle in the eyes of Sereni and Erba

"Around 1950, Milan was spoken of in the literary domain, and in poetry especially, this desire for rupture, to break away from the lyricism of the thirties in which I was trained. We felt the demand for a more discursive poetry, less narratively, advantageously connected to reality." This conviction expressed by Giovanni Raboni (2004)⁶ is shared by Sereni as well as by Luciano Erba: much of their poetry distinct from the Hermetic lyricism of writers that preceded them.

The third collection of poems by Vittorio Sereni, *Human Instruments*, demonstrates that his poetry is "a response to the provocation of the world", in the words of

Michel Collot (2005, p. 407). The poem “Saba” reproduces a place and a time, Italy of the immediate post-war years, “an Italy of dust and ruins” where, driven crazy by the shock of the April 18 political defeat, a tramp⁷ wanders “from one place to another, from one Milan café to another haunted by the radio, ‘Bitch, screaming bitch’”; alternatively, there is the sinister atmosphere of the city after the lost battles conjured up in the poem “Nel sonno” (In their sleep): “these steps mounting to death consolidated since the dispersed order of September”, “tattered posters fall in pieces, the promises of yesterday and along sidewalks, are already debris of fragmented cicadas”. Yet even if the poet gives a disillusioned view of the world where he lives: “I don’t like my time, I don’t like it”⁸, he generally offers an attentive view of beings and things.

The poetic prose of Sereni, where Philippe Renard claims “the common language and stylistic features” (Renard, 1991, p. 268) naturally co-exists, referring to a world marked by absurdity or at least by the vacuity of existence, “the infiltration of hidden voids also in things” (Simeone, 1991, p. 11). This feeling of vacuity highlighted by B. Simeone, “the discovery in his heart”, is demonstrated in the words of Sereni in these notations⁹: “Italy, an interminable Sunday”; “the doors (of the tram) open wide to the void on the misty night”¹⁰. His simple language, almost familiar, also expresses a loving attention to the world: “a flock of high-heeled adolescents” who burst into Scarlatti Street, the sudden arrival of “the long awaited Spring after some years”¹¹ and invariably focuses on ordinary places of the city or of life, a street, a stadium, a factory. Amidst these streets, Scarlatti Street where the poet resides, located “between two gulfs of sound”, that “maybe the Spring sunshine” will illuminate, where we cross “puny kids” and “worn out faces”¹². Yet this particular street which may vibrate from “a flock of high-heeled adolescents” or “an operatic duet” is adequate, as the closing words of the poem suggest: “And here I await you”¹³. In “Altro Compleanno” (Another Birthday), which concludes his last collection of poems, *Stella Variabile* (Variable Star), Vittorio Sereni, under the arbor of a San Siro bar¹⁴, glimpses across the grills and archways towards the area of the Stadium beneath the sunshine. The empty esplanade invites him to “measure life and death within their daily forms”, according to Franco Fortini, in the preface of *Variable Star* (1987): “mirror of squandered time”, the empty space invites him to pass “this threshold one more time”, “provided that slate spreads the color of summer”¹⁵.

In an interview cited by P. Renard (1991, p. 265), Sereni indicates that he is “a writer who starts from an autobiographical base”. “If I had seen, listened or lived something directly, there is a chance for that to yield poetic fruit”, he adds. “Una visita in fabbrica” (previously translated as ‘A factory visit’) illustrates this focus of Sereni’s poetry on a restructured experience of the world. He makes the strangeness of a place discernable from afar by way of the whistling sirens, filled with the noise of machines in motion: “drawing machines and radiator grills, these nouns rendered for me by a single sound in the darkness of the mind, a noise which noise is added to quickly frightening me, an alien to the widespread motion but caught by it”. It is a strange place, for the poet and his reader: “what do we know you and me, ignorant of their art...”; but this place is there where men and women live, suffer and die: “the ruin of lives which waste away here”, “which will fade in the pits of accidents and oblivion”, “others taken too soon in the fires of the oppressor”¹⁶.

The work of Luciano Erba, another important representative of the Lombard Line, is characterized by the influence of his mentor and friend Vittorio Sereni, and by

by the radio. ‘Bitch, screaming bitch’); “quei passi che salivano alla morte/ indrappellati/dall’ordine sparso di un settembre”(These steps mounting to death consolidated since the dispersed order of September), “manifesti a brandelli, vanno a brani/le promesse di ieri e lungo i marciapiedi/è già il tritume delle cicale scoppiate”(tattered posters fall in pieces, the promises of yesterday and along sidewalks, are already debris of fragmented cicadas); “Non lo amo il mio tempo, non lo amo” (I don’t like my time, I don’t like it), “Nel sonno”(In their sleep), *Gli strumenti umani* (Human Instruments).

9. “Non nelle casse del comune/l’ammanco/era nel suo cuore”(It was not in the municipality funds there lay the shortfall, but in his heart), “Intervista a un suicida”(Interview from a suicide).

10. “L’Italia, una sterminata domenica”(Italy, an interminable Sunday), “Nel sonno”(In their sleep). “Una motocicletta solitaria/Nei tunnel, lungo i tristi/cavalcavia di Milano”(Riding a solitary motorcycle towards a long gloomy tunnel), “Il male d’Africa”(The trouble in Africa). “Le portiere spalancate a vuoto sulla sera di nebbia”(the doors (of the tram) open wide to the void on the misty night), “L’alibi e il beneficio”(The alibi and the benefit).

11. “uno scatto di tacchi adolescenti”(a flock of high-heeled adolescents), “Via Scarlatti”(Scarlatti Street); “la primavera/che si aspettava da anni”(the long awaited Spring after some years), “Finestra”(Window).

12. "Tra due golfi di clamore" (between two gulfs of sound), "e forse il sole a primavera"(maybe the Spring sunshine), "sparuti monelli"(puny kids), "Via Scarlatii"(Scarletti Street).

13. "E qui t'aspetto"(And here I await you).

14. San Siro is a suburb of Milan.

15. "a specchio del tempo sperperato"(mirror of squandered time),"passiamola questa soglia una volta di più"(pass this threshold one more time), "sol che [...] un'ardesia propaghi il colore dell'estate"(provided that slate spreads the color of summer), *Altro Compleanno*, V.Sereni, 1982.

16. "Le trafile e calandre/questi nomi per me presto di solo suono nel buio della mente/rumore che si somma a rumore e presto spavento per me/straniero al grande moto e da questo agganciato"(drawing machines and radiator grills, these nouns rendered for me by a single sound in the darkness of the mind, a noise which noise is added to quickly frightening me, an alien to the widespread motion but caught by it); "Che ne sappiamo tu e io, ignari dell'arte loro..." (what do we know you and me, ignorant of their art...); "Di vite trascorse qui la brezza"(the ruin of lives which waste away here), "Quello che precipitò/nel pozzo d'infortunio e di oblio", "l'altro che prematuro dileguò/nel fuoco dell'oppressore"(which will fade in the pits of accidents and oblivion, others taken too soon in the fires of the oppressor), "Una visita in fabbrica"(A factory visit).

the French poets he translates, like Reverdy and Ponge. His poetry, writes Pilippe Jaccottet (1992, p. 8), evokes "the mist and gray of Milan", and his lyricism has the muffled sound "of skepticism, reserve, and abject modesty", the only one to define "a period so disastrous", in this period where upon his disillusioned contemporary writer Giovanni Raboni exclaims: "Better and better, every day. It's an adjustment"¹⁷. Erba portrays scenes of daily life, places and ordinary or shared events of common existence, with a slight irony. Thus, in the poem "Tabula Rasa?" (Clean Slate?), the poet proceeds with "an ordinary evening crossed by half empty trams", "in these areas without memories"¹⁸. In the words of Philippe Jaccottet (1992, p. 8), in the scenettes of Erba, "here we see rental housing, an iron bridge, a hospice; we take the route by tram or by bike, in the train we follow streets and alleyways". His poetry defines the fragments of life in spatial forms, such as the traveler in the train following "a prairie slightly out of town among objects in use or out of use, among houses without balconies" ("Travelers"); or of the lights of Milan, of its "golden red sunsets", of "vegetable gardens in the inner suburbs beyond the barracks of Umanitaria" ("Solari area"). Sometimes the city is merely a space as in "Altrove" (elsewhere) whose verses successively evoke "intermediate spaces", "the plots of streets and avenues", "limits of sky over the Atlantic" one day in winter¹⁹. The irony employed by Erba is often slight, as cited above, and may permeate a whole text. "Lombardo-Veneto" (Lombard Veneto) denounces with a bittersweet irony the fate of "the women descended to serve in the hotels on the shore". The text is ironic from beginning to end. In this fall: "I remember having read in a newspaper that women down here are victims of the industrial revolution". In this juxtaposition of incongruous objects (to clean), "the tiles of the verandah", "the deer heads and a gaming table". By opposing the present condition, "they clean", and the past existence acknowledging a lived space (places where to look for mushrooms, the tone of noises depicting how the weather is, in a joyful way ("they laughed and smelled of wood")²⁰.

Milan landscapes in the works of Alda Merini and Maurizio Cucchi

It is certainly questionable to associate two very different writers who belong to different poetic generations. In fact, in the anthology of the young Italian poetry published by Bernard Simeone (1995), Maurizio Cucchi is classed among the "post poets", meaning "after the post-avant-gardist 'economic boom', following the ideologies of the 'years of lead' " (Simeone, p. 13), whereas the work of Alda Merini, and that of Giovanni Raboni who made it known, is positioned between the poets of the Lombard Line and those who form the literary generation that emerged from the 1980s. It may be noted that this Young Italian poetry does not constitute a literary movement, its identity coming from a shared quest for meaning and a common conviction on the powers of language. With respect to the work of Alda Merini begun in 1950, then interrupted by years of mental illness and internments in psychiatric hospitals, it seems unclassifiable, having only really been read at the end of the 1980s: "the poetry house will never have doors"²¹ is in conformity with the poetical approach of Merini. Likewise, what connects these poets is their love of Milan that they celebrate in their poems.

The way Alda Merini sees Milan is particularly interesting, as the city haunts her

texts for over 40 years, from *Tu sei Pietro* (You are Peter), published in 1961, to *Canto Milano* (I sing Milan), her last collection of poetry (2007). The poet sings about the places that she frequents and likes: her quarter, located on the banks of the Naviglio Grande (Grand Canal), where she lived most of her life; the alleyways of the Lavandai (laundryers); the quays of the Darsena; the taverns of Porta Ticinese, special places for her poetry as for her life: “I like the dark corners and the sleepy bars”²². She refers to people that she comes across in these streets, the laundryers, the Moroccan doll seller, the vegetable market, the woman selling lottery tickets, the barber, the priest, the artist (“Album”, *Canto Milano*). However, her love of the “Milan of swirling thoughts or of the death of a thousand joys crying on the Canal”²³ overcomes rejection of a city that she no longer recognizes. Starting with the verses that open the *Canto Milano* collection she states: “I don’t like Milan anymore. It has become a savage beast and no longer our city. At present it is a fat woman full of useless rags”. Another piece from *Canto Milano* resumes her perception of urban transformation: “It is dead. The city dearest to my heart [...] is dislocated like a dummy which has lost its head”²⁴. Despite everything, “It is nice to come back to Milan, at night”²⁵.

Also in the poetic prose of Maurizio Cucchi, Milan occupies an important role. It is a place which deconstructs the self in “Il Disperso” (The Dispersed), a collection where the poet “through realism expresses what claims to be the daily horror of urban alienation” (Renard, 1986, p. 17). In *Malaspina* (2013)²⁶, the city appears as a space of mobile and changing borders redrawn in infinite variations that the poet explores in the manner of a detective or an archeologist. He thus seeks beneath “the geographical reality spilling over”, “the fossilized remains, and the hidden streams”, or else he hunts down some traces of the past in keeping with geological records, “between the mud and the rubble and the piles of foliage” or “between the muted piles of buried stories” of Saint Ambrose Square, since the poet portrays himself as an animal “pre-historic, Oviraptor or Brachiosaurus”²⁷. In fact, his spatial experience consistently offers a reflection on time, giving a dreamlike vision of existence that combines descriptive notations of reality and hallucinatory images (Emmi, 2001). “Notwithstanding the strange and hallucinatory atmosphere of Maurizio Cucchi’s texts”²⁸ (Linguaglossa, 2014) where references to the reality of Milan remain identifiable, particularly in the urban landscapes of the periphery. Nostalgic landscapes like “the grand spectacle of the grey sky on empty factories”²⁹, like Lake Malaspina “underneath the pure white frost in a Siberian glacial landscape”³⁰. Suburban landscapes which are the heart of the city, these “clotted outskirts” of Lambrate or of Niguarda³¹. In short, the whole city that the poet strolls across while he listens to the rhythms – *Il Ritmo di Milano* (The Rhythm of Milan, 2015) is the title of his last book dedicated to a visit of Milan – from which he delivers some secrets in “La Traversata di Milano” (The passage of Milan, 2007). A city traveler³², Maurizio Cucchi leads the reader into alleyways and parks, through monumental or anonymous squares, following ordinary Milanese people or rereading the works of writers who celebrated the city, listening to rumors, memories or fantasies still vivid in the collective memory. He not only refers to the center, but also devotes chapters of “The Passage of Milan” to peripheral districts. Thus, in the Bovisa district where he arrived at the beginning of the 1950s, this “industrial Milan periphery by excellence” where “there were factories, blue collar workers, an atmosphere very human, while simultaneously heavy, anonymous and full of hope”. Today Bovisa “has become a desolated field of ruins” – it is called ‘Indus-

17. “Si migliora a tutt’andare. Conviene abituarsi”(Better and better, every day. It’s an adjustment), transl. Riccardo Donati, 2009.

18. “E’ un sera qualunque/traversata da tram semivuoti”(an ordinary evening crossed by half empty trams); “nei quartieri senza ricordo”(in these areas without memories), “Tabula rasa”(Clean Slate), *Il male minore* (the lesser evil), 1960, transl. G. Cartier, Secousse, 2011, no 3.

19. “È un prato un po’ fuori città/tra corse in uso e in disuso/tra case senza balconi”(a prairie slightly out of town among objects in use or out of use among houses without balconies), “Viaggiatori”(Travelers); “Tramonti rosso oro”(golden red sunsets), “gli orti di periferia/dopo i casoni della ‘Umanitaria’”(vegetable gardens in the inner suburbs beyond the barracks of Umanitaria), “Quartiere Solari”(Solari area); “Gli spazi intermedi”(intermediate spaces), “i tracciati per strade e viali”(the plots of streets and avenues), “i tratti di cielo sull’Atlantico”(limits of sky over the Atlantic), “L’altrove”(elsewhere), *L’Hippopotame* (Hippopotamus), 1992, transl. B. Simeone.

20. “Le donne [...]scese a servire/in locande di lungofiume”(the women descended to serve in the hotels on the shore); “Ricordo che ho letto su un giornale/che le donne quaggiù sono le vittime/della rivoluzione industriale; ridevano e che odore di bosco!”(I remember having read in a newspaper that women down here are victims of the industrial revolution; they laughed and smelled

trial Archeology⁷ –, as for the future of its inhabitants, it is considered that they belong to “prehistory”³³.

20 (continued) of wood!),
“Lombardo-Veneto”
(Lombard Veneto). *Il male minore* (the lesser evil),
transl. G. Cartier,
Secousse, 2011, no 3.

21. “La casa della Poesia non avrà mai porte” (the poetry house will never have doors), *Aphorismes et grigri* (Aphorisms and charms), transl. P. Reumaux, 2008.

22. “A me piacciono gli anfratti/bui/delle osterie/dormienti” (I like the dark corners and the sleepy bars), “Le osterie” (the tavern), *Canto Milano* (I sing Milan), transl. M.R.

23. “Milano dai vorticosi pensieri/dove le mille allegrie/muiono piangenti sul Naviglio” (Milan of swirling thoughts or of the death of a thousand joys crying on the Canal), “Per Milano” (For Milan), *Tu sei Pietro* (You are Peter), transl. M.R.

24. “Non l’amo più Milano. È diventata una belva non è più la nostra città. Adesso è una grassa signora piena di inutili orpelli” (I don’t like Milan anymore. It has become a savage beast and no longer our city. At present it is a fat woman full of useless rags); “E’ morta. La città più cara al mio cuore [...] si è accasciata come un fantoccio che abbia perduto la testa” (It is dead. The city dearest to my heart [...] is dislocated like a dummy which has lost its head), *Canto Milano*, transl. M.R.

25. “È bellissimo tornare a Milano, di note” (It is nice to come back to Milan, at night), *Un poeta della sventura* (A poet of misfortune), <http://finestagione.blogspot.it/fr/2009/11/un-poetadella-sventura.htm>

Conclusion

In an interview which he gave in 2016, Maurizio Cucchi talks about the great Lombard, or rather the Milanese poetic tradition, which has contributed to the coexistence of “great inventiveness and moral tension in language and form”³⁴. Beyond the common poetics which these poets of different generations share, what connects them is their commitment to a city which was a home for all of them: “Milan has always been my home”, Cucchi states, – a home to understand better, to explore and to genuinely enjoy³⁵. Although the city these poets describe stands out as an existential map where their imaginary is oriented and expressed, it has nevertheless witnessed urban changes in recent decades since the Second World War. In our study of contemporary Milanese poetry we hope to have shown that literature constitutes a type of seismographic record of reality, capable of recording and exposing environmental changes, in this case, of the Milan metropolitan area. We must not underestimate these poetical representations of Milan (and of any other place), the way they can sustain ordinary or scholarly thinking, for it is clear how much poetry in Italy remains an integral part of the common culture (Vegliante, 2014).

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26. Malaspina is the name of a small lake located in the eastern suburb of Milan, close to the Linate airport, in a transitional zone between town and country.

27. “Come un archeologo” (like an archeologist), “[mentre] trabocca la sua realtà geografica [...], [verso] residui fossili, e rivoli nascosti” ([beneath] the geographical reality spilling over [...], [towards] the fossilized remains, and the hidden streams); “Tra fango e macerie e cumuli/fogliame” (between the mud and the rubble and the piles of foliage), “fra strati muti di sepolte storie” (between the muted piles of buried stories); “Come una bestia [antica], preistorica, un oviraptor o brachiosauo” (as a prehistoric animal, an Oviraptor or a Brachiosaurus), Malaspina, transl. M.R.

28. “L’estraneazione e l’atmosfera allucinata” (the strange and hallucinatory atmosphere), G. Linguaglossa, 2014.

29. Malaspina, transl. J.-C. Vegliante, <http://uneautrepoesieitalie.nne.blogspot.fr> (The original version in Italian is not given).

30. “Nel gelo, nel bianco totale, in un estremo paesaggio ghiacciato, siberiano” (underneath the pure white frost in a Siberian glacial landscape), Malaspina, transl. M.R.

31. “borgo raggrumato” (clotted outskirts), “Vetrina” (Showcase), Poesia della Fonte, 1993, transl. M.R.

32. *Viaggiatore di città* (A city traveler), (2004) is the title of another book by Maurizio Cucchi. In *A tribute to Milan* the writer highlights the works he published in *La Repubblica* between 1991 and 1992.

33. “Periferia industriale per eccellenza della città di Milano” (Industrial Milan periphery by excellence), “Alla Bovisa c’erano le fabbriche, le tute degli operai, un’atmosfera al tempo stesso umanissima, e pesante, anonima e piena di speranza” (there were factories, blue collar workers, an atmosphere very human, while simultaneously heavy, anonymous and full of hope), “[...] le fabbriche sono diventate desolato campo di rovine, archeologia industriale, come si dice” (it has become a desolated field of ruins, it is called Industrial Archeology), “La mia Bovisa”, *La Traversata di Milano* (The Passage of Milan), transl. M.R.

34. “C’è una grande tradizione lombarda o milanese (preferisco) [...] che ha sempre portato alla coesistenza di grande tensione morale e di invenzione nel linguaggio e nella forma” (It was the great Lombard tradition, or rather the Milanese poetic tradition (I prefer) [...] which has contributed to the coexistence of great inventiveness and moral tension in language and form). Interview with Maurizio Cucchi in Pasquale di Palmo, 2016, <http://www.succedeoggi.it/> (transl. M.R.)³⁵. “[...] di capirla meglio, di perlustrarla e in fondo amarla” ([...] a home to understand better, to explore and to genuinely enjoy), Interview with Maurizio Cucchi by Francesco Filia, 2014, <https://poetarumsilva.com/> (transl. M.R.).

35. “[...] di capirla meglio, di perlustrarla e in fondo amarla” ([...] a home to understand better, to explore and to genuinely enjoy), Interview with Maurizio Cucchi by Francesco Filia, 2014, <https://poetarumsilva.com/> (transl. M.R.)