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Archaeologies of Diving: Paul Carter's Engagement with Italy

Abstract I: Il prolifico autore e artista australiano Paul Carter (1951-) ha dato un importante contributo alla riconcettualizzazione delle culture coloniali e delle loro prospettive postcoloniali. Come artista e creatore di luoghi (*placemaker*), il suo lavoro è ampiamente pubblicato e studiato. Tuttavia, l'importante coinvolgimento con l'Italia che sottende alla sua produzione accademica e creativa non è stato estesamente studiato. Questo articolo mira a rettificare questa omissione. Offre infatti una visione d'insieme cronologica sul coinvolgimento di Carter di quarant'anni negli ambiti dell'urbanesimo italiano, dell'arte e della filosofia italiane. Mette in evidenza anche dei temi chiave: un senso del luogo arcipelagico, principi di comunicazione ecoica mimetica, e un'epistemologia migrante radicata nella nozione di 'diventere se stessi in quel luogo', che può essere produttivamente collegata al ritorno 'non finito' di Carter in Italia, un processo di incontro ripetuto che è un equivalente biografico del ricorso storico di Giambattista Vico.

Abstract II: The prolific Australian author and artist, Paul Carter (1951-) has made an important contribution to the reconceptualisation of colonial cultures and their postcolonial prospects. As an artist and place-maker, his work is widely published and studied. However, the important Italian engagement underwriting his scholarly and creative production has not been widely studied. This article attempts to rectify the omission. It offers a chronological overview of Carter's forty-year engagement with situations in Italian urbanism, art and philosophy. It also isolates key themes: archipelagic sense of place, echoic mimetic communicational principles, and a migrant epistemology rooted in the notion of 'self-becoming at that place', which can be productively linked to Carter's unfinished return to Italy, a process of repeated encounter that is a biographical equivalent of Giambattista Vico's historical *ricorso*.

[1] The co-authorship proposed here solves a problem frequently encountered when a theme emerges dialogically: responding to Trapè's enquiries, Carter found himself reflecting in a new way on the present topic. For her part, Trapè recognised with fresh alertness the close relationship between ideation and expression in Carter's writing. The present hybrid text attempts to preserve the 'writing through the other' that lies behind its emergence. In a way, it is another variation on the individuality of Carter's engagement with Italy.

In an earlier article Australian writer Paul Carter's 'migrant poetics' was discussed in the context of his 1994 'anti-novel' *Baroque Memories* (published in Italy as *Memorie barocche*)[2]. At the heart of his 'migrant poetics' is an improvised conversation between themes in Italian culture and their possible transformation in the colonial and potentially postcolonial setting of Australia. However, the foundations of his distinctively polytopic (in both senses) writing practice in an encounter with Italy extend well beyond one work of fiction. In this article, it is argued that key themes in Carter's postcolonial geography, radiophonic art and public space design are clarified when traced back to his abiding fascination with Italian culture. Finally, evidence is provided that the transmission of ideas is not all one way: through his current involvement with events associated with the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the (now famous) Greek-Lucanian tomb painting known as *il tuffatore* outside Paestum (Campania), an importation of interpretative practices is occurring that facilitates the reappraisal of our own peninsular heritage.

A biographical outline of Carter's engagement with Italy was provided in the earlier article. In terms of the evolution of his 'migrant poetics', a provisional classification of Italian-related work includes: first Australian work where the Italian connection is *implicit* in the reappraisal of Australia's colonial formation and postcolonial prospects (*The Road to Botany Bay*, 1987); Australian works where the Italian location is explicit but the migrant position implicit (*On the Still Air*, radiophonic production, 1992; *Outis*, music theatre libretto for Luciano Berio, 1992-1994); Australian works where the Italian location is explicit and the migrant position explicit (*Columbus Echo*, radiophonic proposal for the Acquario di Genova, 1992, and its radiophonic sequel, *The 7448*); first expression of a developed migrant poetics in which Italy/Australia are 'doubles' (*Baroque Memories*, 1994); first Australian work where the Italian connection is *explicit* in the reappraisal of Australia's colonial formation and postcolonial prospects (*The Lie of the Land*, 1996); first work where the migrant dialogue with Italy is assumed as normative (*Repressed Spaces*, 2002)[3]. While this dialectical road map has the virtue of simplicity, it obscures the recursive nature of Carter's invocation of Italian mentors, scenes and artifacts. Indeed, Giambattista Vico's recursive theory of historical development is invoked by Carter as integral to his 'migrant poetics', the necessity of return twinned with its impossibility representing a typical site of migrant self-division leading (ideally) to a new, provisional 'self-becoming at that place'[4]. Certainly, Carter's preoccupation with the interpretation of *il tuffatore*, originating in his first exposure to the work in the late 1970s, prior to his move to Melbourne, suggests a Vichian approach to intellectual production, one in which successive traverses of the subject lay down the strata of understanding whose material provides the basis of the later archaeological investigation.

In contrast with this temporal archaeology, Carter's conception of spatial history, advanced in his first major publication, *The Road to Botany Bay*, is a phenomenological account of the appearance of things as they appear in the line of flight. The historical data supporting

[2] Trapè 2018.

[3] Carter has recently collected ten radiophonic scripts (including *On the Still Air* and *The 7448*) under the title *Absolute Rhythm*; this collection remains unpublished.

[4] See notably the discussion of 'the new iconography' in Carter 2008.

this focus are the exploration journals and accompanying maps through which 'Australia', the imperial territory, emerged out of a cobweb of often unfinished or inconclusive journeys. Commenting on Carter's attention to the poetics of colonial landscape representations, Iain Chambers draws attention to a feature of Carter's spatialisation of time also found later in his fictional *Baroque Memories*:

> Carter's work presents us less with a stable archaeology […] than with an undulating series of landscapes in which history is always now. The "lie of the land" […] *evokes* the uncertainty of the terrain across which the eye travels and from where the body receives its senses. The terrain is not merely an object or context to be appropriated, but is rather the limited, historical form, in which time and being occur. Carter's detailed excursion into its folds taps the inconclusive baroque logic that overflows the form in multiple directions to reveal the creased, underside of language, time, and a "storied land". In the fold lies the depth, the profundity, that never abandons the surface, the sensuous plane that grounds it all. Further, what is folded into time also unfolds across time: the plane of the senses often provides the potential for ex-planation (Chambers 2006: 60-61).

As the allusion to Carter's 1996 study of colonial and postcolonial poetics, *The Lie of the Land*, suggests, Chambers regards Carter's 'spatial history' as simultaneously a critique of 'imperial' historiography, a migrant interpretation of novel surroundings and a stylistic strategy: "Such a history is not exhausted by the naming, colonisation and appropriation of the other. It prospects a differentiated, negotiated envelopment by time and tempos that are neither simply unilateral nor necessarily mono-rhythmic" (Chambers 2006: 63). And when Chambers writes, "Here the teleology of the all-seeing gaze is blinded, bent and diverted in the performative poetics of place, where the curvilinear horizons promoted by the earth disturb and dislocate the tabular rationale of the map", he evokes the remarkable chapter in *The Lie of the Land* where Carter compares the circumstances of the emergence of the Venetian art of *macchiare* with the beginnings of the Central Desert Painting Movement (Chambers 2006: 63; Carter 1996: 21-114). Carter finds in similar gestures of marking, provoked at comparable moments of political crisis, a 'curvilinear' sense of time, analogous to Vichian *ricorso* (Carter 1996: 334ff). In this account, time, which is embodied in historical action and history, freed from the fixed coordinates of linear time and space, is mortal or horizontal:

> In such a critical disposition, replete with "baroque memories", the language of mimesis gives way to an altogether more ragged narrative that arrives through a rent in occidental sense to insist on another way of telling, another way of being, in which the gesture of the body, the performance of a poetics, the distillation of being in a sound, exceed the conclusive logic of a monument, a book, a map, an archive, a law (Chambers 2006: 63-64).

Carter's cultural analysis seeks to fold time into space, to provide an archaeology of the surface in which heights and depths are also amplified. In this context, it has not hither-

to been remarked how much this conception of narrative space owes to Carter's encounter with Venice. Carter's original purpose in taking up a British Council bursary in Venice in 1978 was to carry out research for a book that was imagined at that time as the completion of an unfinished trilogy commenced by the English aesthete and Italianist, Adrian Stokes. Stokes, he had learnt, intended to complete the suite of books begun with *The Quattro Cento* (sic) and *Stones of Rimini* by writing a treatise on poetics (Stokes 1932; 1934). The immediate impulse for this had been an admiration for the early cantos of Ezra Pound – which, even at this stage, displayed a non-linearist and multifocal historical sensibility, expressed through a remarkable polyrhythmic (and polyvocal) style. As Stokes had renounced this project, so, under the impact of Venice's labyrinthine design and the inexhaustible terrain of exploration it announced, Carter's topic altered. Venice has remained an accompaniment in Carter's creative geography: his forthcoming publication, *Decolonising Governance: Archipelagic Thinking* dwells (in characteristic migrant fashion) on the mimetic relationship between Venice and the Spice Islands (the Moluccas, now Maluku), expressed in shared fantasies of multiplied exchange. Here, though, the point is that the impossibility of complete control, which Carter sees as the redeeming confession of colonial exploration narratives, has its counterpart in the Venetian archipelago, where, as Carter has remarked in his new book, the number of the parts always exceeds what can be counted. Just as the deceptiveness of colonial appearances brings about an ironic reflection on the limitations of Enlightenment reason to classify, subordinate and exploit, so the continuous dissolution of forms in the reflective surface of the canal signifies the inseparability of observer and observed. Carter sees this sensibility played out in Venetian politics: in navigating a path between imperial powers, Paolo Sarpi, according to Carter, "with the image of the sea in mind, imagines motion as grounded in a viscous medium, itself elastic, continuous, curvilinear and, if properly navigated, ultimately supportive" (Carter 1996: 186).

If the Lagoon experience informing Carter's archipelagic Australia has to be deciphered from structural parallels, the impact of Italy's dialectal diversity is easier to discern. The six-part soundscape, *Columbus Echo*, originally commissioned for the new Acquario di Genova (1992), is among other things a decolonisation of Italian dialects: working outwards from medieval Genoese, the script celebrates the diversity of post-Latin Romance dialects contemporary with Columbus' first voyage. The amplification of dialectal differences produces a counter-impulse to improvise a lingua franca – which, in characteristic fashion, Carter derives from the mimetic impulse inherent in any communication across linguistic and cultural difference. So much for the *representandum* – the multilingual Mediterranean of early modern maritime trade and imperial expansion – but no less important in Carter's conception of this scene was the possibility of performing and recording it in Melbourne. Carter has observed in an interview that migrancy involves both multiplication and subtraction. Echoic mimicry – the compositional principle at the base of the *Columbus Echo* script – finds communication in a doubling with difference, in which the lexicon of exchange is both simplified and gesturalised. Represented as the historical function of a go-between language of the kind found in Sabir and other pidgins or proto-creoles, the creative appeal of the script in a transplanted multilingual theatre community was to re-enact (perhaps therapeutically)

the sound-alike confusion of mingled tongues experienced at first on the shores of *their* new world (Australia).

In a forthcoming chapter, Carter has noted that the preparation of the *Columbus Echo* script coincided with the passage of the first comprehensive immigration legislation in Italy; and it is important to realise that the Melbourne recording sessions also arose out of a concrete historical and political moment, the emergence in Australia of the category of non-anglophone 'migrant writer' (Carter forthcoming 2018). Scholars like Sneja Gunew argued that the identification of Australian literature with an Anglo-Celtic tradition not only marginalised Australian writers with non-Anglo European backgrounds (Gunew *et al.* 1992): it prejudiced the reception of experimental non-normative styles of writing arising directly from the peculiar linguistic circumstances in which migrants found themselves. Essays such as "Lines of Communication: meaning in the migrant environment" and "Baroque Identities: migration and mimicry" produced at this time were perceived as contributions to this politico-cultural debate. It is notable, however, that, in contrast with Gunew's poststructuralist theorisation of the poetics of production, Carter's points of reference were largely indigenous. Carter linked the new subaltern voice to a long tradition of Aboriginal colonial subjects 'writing back' (Carter 1994). In linking poetics and politics in this fashion Carter gave a new twist to the familiar *traduttore/traditore* conundrum, a theme that, in the 1990 radio work, *On the Still Air*, becomes explicit.

On the Still Air interweaves four stories of betrayal whose distinguishing peculiarity is that the betrayal occurs in language. Readers familiar with Leonardo Sciascia's book, *The Moro Affair*, will have no difficulty understanding this thesis, which, as Sciascia argues in his critique of the way the Moro communications were *not* read, implicates the reader as much as the writer[5]. In *On the Still Air* a collage of passages derived primarily from the letters themselves, from Andreotti's later memoir and from the premonitory political diagnoses of Pier Paolo Pasolini are woven into two occasions of literary, or, more precisely, poetic betrayal: firstly, Dante's reduction of Guido Cavalcanti's metaphor of *inner* feeling – "aria serena quand apar l'albore/ e bianca neve scender senza venti"[6] – into a purely *external*, visual metaphor in the *Divina Commedia*, where flakes of fire are described as "Piovean di foco dilatate falde,/ Come di neve in alpe senza vento"[7]. The new image may be more powerful but fundamentally misrepresents the spirit of the original. It is a failure of responsibility that, *On the Still Air* suggests, is consistent with Dante's role in the expulsion of Cavalcanti from Florence and his subsequent death[8]. Secondly, a comparable betrayal occurs, according to Carter's script, in the relationship between the poets Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot and, ironically, it arises in the context of translating Cavalcanti into English. When, in *Ash Wednesday*, Eliot produced his incomparable rendering of the opening lines of Cavalcanti's *canzone*

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[5] Carter used the recently translated English version: Leonardo Sciascia. 1987. *The Moro Affair and the Mystery of Majorana*. Manchester: Carcanet.

[6] 'Biltà di donne e di saccente core' Guido Cavalcanti, *Le Rime*, 1902, 109.

[7] Dante Alighieri, *Commedia, Inferno*, Canto XIV, 29-34. Italo Calvino discusses this ambiguous borrowing in *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*. London: Random House, 1996, 14-15.

[8] Carter returns to this distinction in *The Lie of the Land*, 325-328.

"Perch'i' no spero di tornar giammai", he managed what Pound (labouring on the English translation of Cavalcanti for twenty-five years) could never achieve: an original, completely modern style (Eliot 1969: 89-99)[9].

Brought together in this way, these three betrayals could be assumed to occupy a fictional space; however, Carter goes out of his way to provide a concrete mise-en-scène for this work, the immediate environs of the Trevi Fountain in Rome. Here what might be called a distinctively migrant perspective enters in, as the fourth story of betrayal concerns two lovers whose mutual failure of trust places a jinx on the fountain: for these lovers, castigated by Pasolini as 'the consumerist couple', there is no coming back. But, evidently, this personal banishment mimics the historical and geographical banishment migrants experience when they betray their fatherlands and mother tongues, translating themselves to the ends of the world. Carter is always a circumstantial opportunist, and at the time of composing this work he was struck by the closure of the Trevi Fountain for maintenance, an event that dramatised the artifice involved in sentimental declarations of undying love. In the wake of the water drying up, he detected the echo of something deeper, an admonition to renounce nostalgia and embrace present circumstance: "Dante: The echo was the still air renouncing song. Andreotti: Because there is no going back. No Man: *I am writing his report*. Questa: *Echo*. No Man: *To stop the music freeing*. Questa: *All this was a long time ago*".

As an avatar of Homer's Outis, the self-effacing name Odysseus gives himself to deceive Polyphemus, No Man appears in Carter's work in a number of guises. There is his appearance in Luciano Berio's eponymous music theatre work, on whose libretto Carter worked, and fragments of which were eventually recycled in his later radiophonic production *The Letter S* (2007). But an early, and surprising, heteronymy (to borrow Fernando Pessoa's distinctive conception of split identity) is the possibly Sicilian Vincenzo Volentieri, a fictional immigrant architect invented to meet Australia's embarrassing lack of a world class creative genius. Proposed as a suitable candidate for Bicentennial celebration, Carter supplied an overview of the architect's career, sufficiently circumstantial to persuade many readers that this migrant figure – so disposed to blend with his surroundings that he had disappeared from historical consciousness – might have existed! Amused by the success of this hoax, Carter followed up in 1992 with "Getting In, from the sayings of Vincenzo Volentieri", a selection of instructions to newly-arrived migrants that, Carter claimed, were transcribed from the architect's diaries. "Getting In" was published in *The Sound In-Between*, a heterogeneously constructed set of texts intended to exemplify the plural identity of migrant writing. Ironically, this may have meant that Carter's most intense fictional engagement with the conditions of local migrant cultural production went largely unrecognised: "your dreams are reverse genealogies, tracks leading into it. Until we get in and learn its name, 'Talk, talk' must do, I'm afraid" (Carter 1992b: 149-158).

Carter's engagement with Italian themes in the period 1988 to 1996 is evident. Equally apparent is a turning away from Italy in the subsequent decade. However, it could be argued that this impression of redirected interests is overdrawn. Towards the end of the 1990s Cart-

[9] "Because I do not hope to turn again…" T. S. Eliot, "Ash Wednesday", *The Complete Poems and Plays.*

er resumed work on a study of the Diver (*il tuffatore*). In 2001 he proposed an international environmental heritage project called 'Little Venices' – elements of this unrealised proposal surface in *Decolonising Governance*. In 2002, in Padua, he began a short story collection. Yet it is fair to say that, in terms of public outcomes, the yield of these activities during that period was minimal. Carter's creative energies had migrated to the challenge of conceptualising, and designing, public space and, characteristically, in his first major public art commission, *Nearamnew* at Federation Square, Melbourne, he drew a link between the achievement of a just society and the migrant's Vincenzo-like *disponibilità*. From this perspective, the 1998 invitation to be 'writer-in-residence' at Melbourne's yet-to-be-built Federation Square represented an ideal opportunity to reconceptualise the initial conditions of sociability. In migrant fashion, he imagined an exfoliation of space contemporary with his own arrival: "Describe an instant, a timeless moment towards which the project was always tending; a vision that it was necessary to hold in mind, a ground upon which these buildings, these rainswept spaces, these silhouettes of hurrying people stand, but of which they are necessarily unaware" (Carter 2005: 80). Such a ground, he suggested in 'The Migrant's Vision', one of the texts later carved into the surface of Federation Square, could be compared to the continuously exfoliating candid rose of Dante's *Paradiso*, 'unfolding its divisionless petal within petal' (Carter 2005: 84)[10].

This materialisation of time in space can be traced back to Carter's reading of Adrian Stokes' studies in Venetian art and architecture with their focus on the externalisation of the artist's inner world through the encounter with the image in form. The emergence of a stable identity, one able to navigate the vicissitudes of coexistence, involves reconceptualising space as a matrix to be carved. The agoraphobia of isolation is overcome when public space is perceived to have the humanity of marble into which the tracks of encounter are continuously carved, deepened and modified. Obviously, conceived like this, the spatio-temporal manifold of encounter – the form, if you like, of the meeting place – is always emergent, continually, self-transforming. Interestingly, when Carter was commissioned to create a public artwork for the ground plane of Federation Square, Venetian creativity also found *sculptural* expression. The polychromatic cobbles and tiles of Federation Square come from a remote quarry in north-west Australia. The finder of the quarry, Dario di Biasi, an immigrant stonemason from the Veneto, is celebrated in 'The Builder's Vision', and a significant link is made between di Biasi's stone advocacy and John Ruskin's emotional identification with the stones of Venice. But the comparison extends beyond this, as the same Vision also explains the compositional principles of *Nearamnew*'s design in Venetian terms: the 'colourful creation' that emerges from the 'happy chaos' will have the same quality of dapple found in the art of *macchiare*. Commenting on the effect he wanted to achieve, Carter has written, "when people ask me to evoke the feeling of Federation Square, I have thought of the Grand Canal as it must have been in the sixteenth century when the walls of the places were frescoed and the reflected water light mingled with the painted figures and landscapes" (Carter 2005: 92).

Carter transposed Stokes and the associated Venetian milieu to migrant Melbourne,

[10] For full text and reference, see Carter 2005: 84.

exploring the parallels conceptually and artistically. But it is possible that a discursive framework also migrated, found in Carter's characteristic speaking position, his self-dramatisation as a permanent outsider, always operating at the margins of the national clearing. Certainly, his historic personae (Adelaide's founder, William Light, whose Italian connections Carter has also studied or the sculptor Alberto Giacometti, whose models of human meeting haunt Carter's writing) possess an intensity attributable to their hybrid insider/outsider status. Consider, for example, the opening sentence of *The Road to Botany Bay*: "No sign of life on the shore this morning. From the bridge the glass picks out nothing. No wordless mime of figures crouched on their haunches; no Indians, more unaccountably still, pursue their way 'in all appearance entirely unmov'd…'" (Carter 1987: xiii). The 'instant' described in 1998 is essentially a migrant transmutation of this colonial moment. In both cases the lack of recognition and what follows from it – the recognition that others exist outside our reduction and control – is interpreted as hopeful. At the beginning of one history (colonial) there is glimpsed the possibility of other historical narratives, postcolonial in inflection. In this context it is surely striking that Carter's rhetorical trope elaborates on the opening lines of Stokes' *The Quattro Cento*: "No sign of Frederick Hohenstaufen in the railway station at least […]" (Stokes 1932: 3) – an observation that signals Stokes' intention to write a heterodox history of art.

The reproduction of Henri Cartier-Bresson's famous photograph, Alberto Giacometti in the rue d'Alésia on the front cover of *Repressed Spaces* indicates the importance of this artist in Carter's work. Carter discovers in Giacometti's sculptures and in his conversations, imprint clues to the challenge of living in a new country. For example, Giacometti's description of 'a fissure in reality' associated with a new post-perspectival insight into the relationship between near and far, and therefore between people suspended in space, has analogies with the interruption in time experienced by the migrant. More recently, Carter has explored the relevance of Giacometti's 'breakthrough' moment to an understanding of *il tuffatore*, the Paestum tomb painting discovered in 1968 when a pickaxe broke through the lid of the tomb (Carter 2015). Giacometti also provides a through line to *Meeting Place, the human encounter and the challenge of coexistence* (2013), ensuring that, despite the eleven-year gap between these publications, *Repressed Spaces* and *Meeting Place* are read in dialogue with each other. Once again in *Meeting Place* we find Carter's favoured trope of non-meeting: in this case a man awaits his lover at the central Station in Milan, only, inexplicably, to miss her arrival. The quest that springs from this 'fissure in reality' traverses the city in search of a public Eros that can locate personal loss within a larger economy of encounter, one in which intimacy is twinned with extreme isolation – the mise-en-scène Carter also detected in Giacometti's group figurines. The Eros evoked in this quest is Venetian, and in contrasting it with the sensibility governing Florentine culture – "for every Florence there is a Venice, and within Venice there is a shimmering organisation of liquid space where channels and vessels fuse into one reticulated, many-arched, and arching body" (Carter 2013: 114-115) – Carter faithfully reproduces the aesthetic antithesis at the heart of Stokes' *The Quattro Cento*. We can take this one step further: having defined Florence as Venice's antithesis, Stokes had to make exceptions. Among these was Paolo Uccello, whose handling

of perspectival composition brought to "ferment psychological and physical" a "sense of completeness" that was achieved because the artists transformed "time into terms of space" (Stokes 1932: 158). Reproducing Uccello's *La Caccia* in *Meeting Place*, Carter perceives in it "the recovery of the middle ground" where a "multitude of crossroads" open up. These sites of "fatal encounter" are preferred to the emotional emptiness focused on the "vanishing point" (Carter 2013: 163).

As already indicated, the turning away from Italian themes in the late 1990s can be overstated. Rather, Carter's media of expression had changed, with consequences for the manner in which the Italian presence manifested itself. We mentioned the resumption of the study of *il tuffatore:* in 2001, Carter, together with his fellow artist, Ruark Lewis, introduced the outline of this figure into *Relay*, a major public art work for the Sydney 2000 Olympics[11]. While a specific reference was intended to the story of the site where the artwork was located, the painting had a more genuine relevance. *Relay* attempted to put into poetic language and typographical design the experience of the athlete, the sensation of constant change paradoxically experienced in the instant. In spatialising time, athletes perform a different kind of history, one evoked by Franz Kafka's aphorism, "the history of mankind is the instant between two strides taken by a traveller" a phrase whose interpretation permeates *Dark Writing*[12]. The Diver is the image of a movement form that resists the Zenonian paradox: it cannot be analysed into successive moments. In a curious way, it resists the kind of visualisation associated with photography. In a clear echo of his earlier fascination with the Venetian art of *macchiare*, Carter suggests that at the heart of *photologos* – the kind of Enlightenment reasoning associated with imperial discourses of conquest and enslavement – there exists a blind spot that possesses its own kind of dark writing: "The dark is instead the interest of the phenomenal environment, its tendency to fall to movement forms, but for which stable ideas could not take shape" (Carter 2008: 232). In suggesting that dark writing "underwrites" the "the interests of light" (Carter 2008: 232) Carter is perhaps also alluding to the role a migrant poetics plays in the 'underworld' of postcolonial emergence.

We have noted Carter's geographical *ricorsi* – the way in which sedimented biographical data are repeatedly revisited from different experiential and poetic perspectives. This phenomenon also operates longitudinally across time: the persistence of themes announced in *Repressed Spaces* is an example, another the abiding presence of *il tuffatore*, whose plunge into the void may serve as a metaphor for mastering the turbulence of migration, and whose interpretation remains as open as the enigma of arrival, which, for the migrant, is never completed. In his recent book length essay, *Metabolism: the exhibition of the invisible*, Carter seems to integrate geographical and thematic *ricorsi*. Focusing on the moment in June 1968 when *la tomba del tuffatore* was discovered, he ponders the ethical and aesthetic issues associated with its curation. These, and other Lucanian tomb paintings, were evidently designed for the dark: in what way, then, can exposure to the light (and the public gaze) respect the

[11] A post opening modification to the landscape where Relay was located created an opportunity to revisit and augment the original design. See Carter 2008: 223-224.

[12] Discussed in Carter 2008: 12.

artist's intent? More generally, what culture of memorialisation evaporates when darkness is stripped away and the image alone survives? Posing these questions from outside the archaeological profession, Carter offers a methodological provocation, one that (in the manner of Nora) differentiates between history and memory. But it is also clear that Carter identifies emotionally with the figure who voluntarily plunges from sight in search of an underwriting whose expression may always be oblique.

Unexpectedly, Carter says, the publication of *Metabolism* has stimulated a new *ricorso*. Its local uptake is evident in the exhibition (current at the time of writing) that Gabriel Zuchtriegel, Director of the Paestum Museum, has curated as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of *il tuffatore*'s discovery. In the catalogue for *L'immagine invisibile: la tomba del tuffatore nel cinquantesimo dalla scoperta*, Zuchtriegel writes: "L'invisibilità – intesa come sottrazione del contenuto sia in senso letterale (realizzazione di un dipinto per l'interno di una tomba), sia in senso metaforico (ambiguità dei segni, che sono ridotti all'essenziale) – è probabilmente l'aspetto che ha fatto sì che la Tomba del Tuffatore sia divenuta una delle opera antiche più rivisitate in assoluto, nonostante sia stata nota solo per 50 anni" (Zuchtriegel 2018: 92). An interesting feature of Carter's meditation is its conclusion in a listing of political events unfolding at the time of the tomb's discovery. As he comments, "these news items are the debris of a larger patterning of human history, in which rise and fall follow one another in an endless cycle" (Carter 2015: 58). Implied here is a Vichian theory of historical time within which *il tuffatore*'s return is predictable. From this point of view, the Diver is a new kind of history: if, etymologically, the historian is associated with the eye-witness, then this new historian is concerned with the memory of the dark, that is, with the traces of absence that persist and shadow our daily lives. Clearly, this position suggests migrant nostalgia, a sense of ancestral bereavement redeemed in the act of return. But it also has another inflection: *Metabolism* is notable for its detailed description of the Museum, its interior, its visitors, its tourism venues. It is as if even here Carter wants to invert historical genealogy and deduce the inevitability of the Diver from the phenomena of the everyday. After all, in a certain sense, the history of *il tuffatore* does begin on 3rd June 1968. In this context, it is significant that Carter concludes his essay with a reference to the English writer, George Gissing, who around 1897 visited Crotone, and fell into "a visionary state which, while it lasted, gave me such placid happiness as I have never known in my perfect mind" (Gissing 1986: 82). The lucid dream in which the embarkation of Hannibal for Carthage passes before his eyes in cinematographic detail marks the terminus of Gissing's classical adventure, just as it signified the end of the Carthaginian commander's Roman ambitions. It is a suitable place to conclude these notes: Carter's migrant poetics, and the Italian *ricorsi* that inform it, depend on reliving the moment of severance when 'the fissure in reality' opened up the possibility of returning in a different way.

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