

DIALOGUE AT THE FEET OF THE SCULPTURE

by Emilio Vergani

The old Master and his student arrived to the feet of the sculpture in the morning, while flowers were opening. They sat down on the floor, adjusting their dresses as they used to do when they had to pray or think.

Student: "Why did we come here, Master?"

Master: "Do not you like it?"

S: "Yes I do", answered the student who saw the sculpture for the first time.

They remained in silence for a few long minutes looking again at the sculpture. A butterfly landed for an instance on the shoulder of the old Master. Afterwards, he said: "Tell me what you see"

The student began to sense that his Master had taken him to this place for a certain reason he could not yet understand. After some minutes he answered: "On the left I see a slab with the shape of a naked man and on the right another slab receiving its print."

The Master smiled amused, nearly moving his beard.

S: "Why are you laughing, Master? That is what whoever will see!"

M: "Exactly", said the Master while his look became melancholic. "Your must is to see the invisible things"

The student bowed his head defeated as the athlete, who unsucceeding his jump, comes back to his position to try it again.

M: "Maybe an Arab who writes from the right to the left would have answered in a different way, wouldn't he?"

S: "But what will be the difference in the essence?", answered the student in a low voice

M: "In that case, the print would print its print on the naked man. Wouldn't it?"

The student changed his expression slowly. At that moment, looking at the sculpture, he felt a special music that invited him to follow it.

M: "Why do you think the man is naked?"

S: "Maybe to imitate the Ancient peoples..."

At this moment the student really understood that their common research had finally begun, and he felt deeply touched by his Master's gratitude.

M: "Maybe... Think again about our trip in China, do you remember their sculptures? Have you ever seen any nude?"

S: "It is true! They do not paint nudes..."

M: "For the Greek, nude expressed the real essence, the truth without any mask"

S: "So... Does this sculpture express the real truth of the human being?"

M: "A human being that does not take any pose, as if he were emerging from the water of Eternity", said the Master raising the palm of his open hand and making tinkle his bracelet slowly. "But the whole secret of the work is in the empty space between both slabs"

The student listened to his Master and began to understand his purpose. As he had said to him many times, in the shadow of the tower that lies to the sea, the succeeding works indicate us exactly what words nearly say in a confused way.

M: "Those who do not question themselves cannot live a real human life, that is what wrote the Master of the Masters. However, for knowing ourselves we need to respond to a call. This call is the invitation to run away from ourselves in order to find the essence. This is called Exodus, and the exodus towards the inside is the result of questioning ourselves. In this case, the exodus is the empty space"

The student listened to what his Master was saying, words that seemed to translate for him, with a natural elegance, a mysterious language, using a difficult art, that is, the art of seeing and understanding. For a moment he remembered all the ancient libraries he had visited with his Master, their long afternoons in the halls of Prague, Baghdad, and Aleksandria... He thought again about the serenity of these places and the sense of their research, about those men for whom everything was too much, about their patience. That morning the student realized that his Master was showing him the complete essence.

After some minutes, the young man and the old Master got up slowly in silence. Meanwhile they disappeared in the first lights of the morning, the Master, smiling, saw by his side himself many years ago.

That morning, both slabs of the sculpture joined together.