

Contact points

Opiemme discovers Zanzotto

Text by Stefano Dal Bianco

‘What remains is founded by poets’. This verse by Hölderlin, made famous by Martin Heidegger's interpretation, encapsulates the great German lyricist's mission and serves as a warning for us. Salvation against the ephemeral, which pollutes everyone's existence, lies in language- hidden in the silences of every natural language, is the realm explored by the poets. In the language of poetry, Andrea Zanzotto seeks to grasp the only possibility of psychic and psychic survival against the devastating intrusiveness of the historical process. Here, Nature and language converge and, in some ways, coincide, offering refuge from History, which is the great antagonist of his poetry and Opiemme's works. History, particularly our own, tends to cling to geography: not only a geography of places, profoundly diluted by historical becoming, but also a geography of the mind. As if the map of each person's psyche, eroded by scientific-technological ‘progress’, were threatened in its sensitive coordinates. Thus, both the mind - i.e. the memory - of the place, and the place of the mind, its psychic tracing, must be defended. It can be said that Zanzotto does nothing else, and the two aspects are always co-present in his poetry, a poetry that we could already call *ecological* in the 1950s, well before the term was in the common domain.

This perspective, more than any rational assessment, is what Opiemme's works embrace. Through his humble reinterpretations, Zanzotto's words merge as pure mnemonic traces, blended without explicit quotation into the cartography of the world. The trace-word becomes layered upon our image of the planet, as if in an attempt to protect us- even from ourselves.