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*Space-time and tetradimensionality in the post-war poetics of Lucio Fontana,
Toti Scialoja and Amelia Rosselli*

At the beginning of the twentieth century the transition from Newtonian physics to Einsteinian physics determined a paradigm shift in the scientific panorama. As the theory of relativity spread among the community of intellectuals and among people, the whole of society underwent a progressive change, not only on an epistemological level, but also on a social, philosophical and artistic scale. The paradigm shift, thus, led to a change in worldview. One of the emblematic concepts emerged from the theory of relativity is that of *chronotope*, or space-time. This essay aims to adopt the epistemological concept of space-time as the axis along which to compare the poetics of three artists, who managed to incorporate the reflections on space-time in their artistic production. I shall start from analysing the four-dimensional art proposed by Lucio Fontana's spatialism and I will then discuss the issues of space-time in the painting and poetry of Toti Scialoja, who will function as a link to reveal the deep interconnection between visual arts and poetry. Finally, I will consider the spatial metrics of Amelia Rosselli and her poems considered as four-dimensional cubes.

We refuse to think that science and art are two distinct facts, and that the gestures made in one of the two disciplines do not also belong to the other. Artists anticipate scientific gestures, scientific gestures always provoke artistic gestures.¹

Primo Manifesto dello Spazialismo, Milano, 1947

Art and science are indistinguishable facts, such is the provocative statement Fontana made in his *Primo Manifesto dello Spazialismo*, in 1947. Katherine Hayles would define these two disciplines 'isomorphic', Edgar Morin would speak of 'recursivity' and Pierpaolo Antonello would not hesitate to add philosophy and technology to the equation². The artwork throughout the Twentieth Century, indeed, becomes rhizomatic, since it ingests and in return offers a series of different stimuli, in open dialogue with other art forms, with science, with philosophy and with technology. The artistic research of post-war Italy at large was entangled in this discovery; the fading anachronism of realism (and neorealism) coexisted with new lines of research in the visual arts, as well as in music and writing. The experimental wave looked back and added to the avant-garde movements of the first half of the century, which were now considered «museal art»,³ ready to become a tradition for much needed innovation after the impasse generated by autarchism and by the fascist regime. Art finally opened up to contamination which was at once transnational and transdisciplinary.

In this paper I shall particularly investigate the transdisciplinary impact of science on the poetics of three post-war artists, Lucio Fontana, Toti Scialoja and Amelia Rosselli. I shall specifically focus on the epistemological concept of space-time⁴ and propose it as illustrative of such influence, following Eco's intuition that a work of art functions as an «epistemological metaphor»⁵ and it stands for a cultural way of understanding the world. Eco's new form of criticism, presented in his influential work *Opera aperta* (1962), furthermore justifies an interdisciplinary comparison; even though Fontana was a visual artist, Scialoja a painter and poet and Rosselli a poet, they all shared a particular



interest for matters of space, which became a highly distinctive trait in their poetics. The space they were drawn to ceased to be that of Euclidean geometry and embraced non-Euclidean systems; it was an Einsteinian space energized and brought to dynamism by the fourth dimension of time. The word 'tetradsimensional', as a matter of fact, became an active and pivotal term in the shaping of these three artists' poetics, showing how the artistic process can be read as a complex result of heterogeneous and shared cultural stimuli. Under this perspective, it is possible to interdisciplinary compare their work, thus catching a glimpse of what lays hidden beyond the artistic artefact, being it painting, writing or any other art form.

And what lays hidden beyond the artwork is deeply intertwined with the cultural context in which artists lived and created their own art. Interestingly, the decade of the 1950's was a time of opening up to new horizons. After realism, and neorealism in cinema and literature, had mostly proved to anchor to a national, or more specifically 'southern',⁶ dimension, a quest for a type of art disentangled from political interferences made its way. Deemed to be populist and rhetorical, realism was gradually rejected and the field was thus made clear for an unbiased research on forms and models. The creative turmoil manifested itself in the emergence of remarkably active cultural and artistic clusters, with radial points in Milan, Rome, Naples and Venice. Rome, in particular, became an avant-garde centre of cross-contamination, lively and unwearied. It was the city of Fellini, Moravia, Rosselli, Scialoja and it attracted artists from all over Europe and America. In Rome, in 1953, Leonardo Sinisgalli, also referred to as the 'poet-engineer', started publishing *Civiltà delle Macchine*, which closely focused on the relationship between art, culture, science and technology.

Milan was an equally vibrant centre, home of the Spatialist and of the Nuclear artistic movements; here, in 1951, philosopher Enzo Paci and art critic Gillo Dorfles founded *Aut-Aut*; a couple of years later in 1955, artist Enrico Baj created the magazine *Il gesto*,⁷ which published works both from visual artists, such as Lucio Fontana, Enrico Baj himself, Jean Dubuffet, and from experimental writers like Edoardo Sanguineti⁸ and Nanni Balestrini. In 1956, furthermore, Luciano Anceschi gave life to *il verri*, which became the cultural point of reference for the Neo-avantgarde movement and for Gruppo 63.⁹

The foundation of so many different journals was a clear sign of intellectual liveliness and it expressed the wish to broaden the field of discussion. Among the new publications *Aut-Aut*, a highly influential periodical characterized by a versatile and interdisciplinary editorial line, particularly illustrates how science had progressively caught the interest of several Italian thinkers and artists. Since its very first issue, the magazine warmly encouraged a comparison between different art forms,¹⁰ it discussed the latest philosophical debates and it called the attention to the changes in paradigm occurred at the beginning of the century. Particularly interesting for the discussion of the time-space concept is Vittorio Somenzi's article *Relatività e fisica nucleare*, in which the author describes the shift of 'paradigm'¹¹ from Newtonian to Einsteinian physics, explaining how such change brought about a «curvature of the time-space *continuum*, generated by the addition of the time dimension to the three dimensions of traditional space».¹²

Somenzi's article can be read as yet another manifestation of a country ruled by the desire of new and up-to-date cultural perspectives; the intention of 'opening' up, not only to transnational influences, but also to transdisciplinary suggestions, constituted a response to the experience of the war, with its stifling autarchic impostures on a national level and with its philosophical repercussion on a broader scale. If, on the one hand, Theodor Adorno had warned on the impossibility of writing after the war, on the



other hand, this was also the moment, according to geocritic Bertrand Westphal (2008), when the notion of space-time re-entered the cultural scenario stirring the creativity of many an artist. The concept itself had remained latent for several decades; Westphal identifies a first turning point in 1905, when Poincaré, Minkowski and Einstein first published their works. The following years were characterized by a limited circulation of such discoveries, which remained prerogative of a restricted circles of intellectuals (and, it might be noted, of artists such as Apollinaire, Dalí, Joyce and Duchamp). Only through time did these scientific revolutions actually translate into phenomenological revolutions for the ordinary people. Thus, for Westphal, 1945 can be seen as the ultimate turning point for the breaking through of the space-time concept, in strict relation to Second World War. Time, which had always been perceived as a relentless river, now disintegrated under the blows of the war, responsible, with its horrors, of an irreparable «rupture between progress and progression».¹³ Westphal writes:

It was only after 1945 that the space-time revolution finally took place. The end of Second World War forced people to surrender to a bewildering and unprecedented obviousness; temporal instants did not flow into a single progressive duration. On the contrary, more durations existed which, in a lack of hierarchy, could multiply; the single temporal line was then divided in a variety of lines, time 'produced surface'. The perception of historical time was seized by the laws of space-time. It was therefore necessary to wait until 1945 to ascertain that this new conjunction was not a vision abstracted from the universe, but it applied to the time and space of all human beings, in all moments and in all places.¹⁴

This spatial dimension of time was integrated, more or less consciously, in the research of several artistic groups.¹⁵ It stood out as a way to enlarge, broaden and open up the artwork itself, a way to free it from its former limitations so as to reach an unprecedented form. Umberto Eco promptly registered this phenomenon by introducing the notion of 'open work' (*Opera aperta*), not one, but a cluster of poetics which shared structural features, such as the 'open' interpretation, or even execution, of the artwork; the state of indefiniteness; the meta-artistic reflections. Elements which represented «the repercussion, in the formative¹⁶ activity, of specific acquisitions from contemporary scientific methodologies».¹⁷ In particular, these acquisitions took on a generative value meant to counteract the utter destruction brought about by the war. Art, then, had to enact people's need for palingenesis.

Lucio Fontana was one of the first and most exemplary artists of post-war Italy to consciously bring together art and science in an attempt to create an utterly new and multidimensional concept of art. In 1946 he wrote *Manifiesto blanco* in Argentina, the following year he gave birth to the Spatialist movement in Milan, publishing *Primo Manifesto dello Spazialismo*. Agnoldomenica Pica thus brilliantly described the movement's inception:

When in 1946, from Buenos Aires, Lucio Fontana launched his *Manifiesto blanco* which represented the birth act of Spatialism, the world had just emerged from its last and most dreadful bloodbath and it had witnessed, half astonished and half aghast, the inauguration of the so called atomic age. The youth who, animated by Fontana, designed and signed that manifest believed in an utter palingenesis of the art, by that time disanchored from the humiliating limits of naturalism, freed from the millenarian anthropomorphic myth and from the traditional modules, and finally liberated from terrestrial parameters. Just like Einsteinian relativity, the new



quantum physics, and the dissociation of the atom had amplified, moved and finally subverted the old order of Euclidean physics, they believed that, inevitably and in the same manner, the world of representation and expression, namely the world of art, had to undergo more than just a radical renewal, but really a new birth.¹⁸

Since 1946, Fontana had advocated for a «tetradiimensional art», which eluded the boundaries of artistic genres; what he had in mind was a fusive and all-encompassing art form which demanded «the surpassing of painting, of sculpture, of poetry, of music» to embrace «a greater art complying with the needs of the new spirit».¹⁹ The fourth dimension, then, stood as a metaphor for the wish to exit the static and bidimensional space of both the canvas and the white page. Art had to be total,²⁰ it had to include space as well as time, colour as well as sound; in other words it had to become synthetic, as Fontana clarified in the 1947 manifest:

After several millennia of analytical development in the arts, the moment has come for the synthesis. At first separation was necessary. Today it constitutes a disintegration of the understood unity. We conceive synthesis as a sum of physical elements: colour, sound, movement, time, space, which integrate a physic-psychic unity. Colour, the element of space, sound, the element of time, movement which develops in time and space, are the fundamental forms of the new art, which contains the four dimensions of existence. Time and space.²¹

Fontana's challenge was that of bringing several dimensions into the same artwork, thus surpassing the fixity of the canvas. As a consequence, materiality ceased to represent a passive tool in the hands of the artist and it became a source of potential energy. The artwork had to maintain that same energetic potential even in its form, it had to be dynamic, swarming alive with its emanation. An attempt at achieving such a goal was made by Fontana in 1949 when, for the first time, he physically intervened on the canvases by piercing them and making holes in what he called his *Buchi* series; he later went on to cut deep slashes, or *Tagli*, on the monochrome surface of the paintings.

The dynamic gestures, the twisting and lacerations, were meant to deform the plane and two-dimensional surface of the canvas. The artwork was thus brought to motion through shadows and ruggedness, while its cracks and breaks stood as a prelude to empty

space. Holes, slashes and scratches were successful in displacing the work from its traditional frame, giving depth to new dimensions and opening up the piece to different possible meanings. It was a quest to go beyond matter in an adventure which echoed that of the spatial conquering of the universe and of the macrocosm. As a matter of fact, through the piercing, Fontana sought to open «a space, a new dimension in the tendency of contemporary art: the end of sculpture or of a tradition of easel-painting; but also a new dimension of the cosmos».²²

The ultimate opening of matter to a space-time dimension was fully achieved, according to Francesca Alinovi (1983),²³ by Fontana's neon-light environments, exhibited since 1951. Fontana believed that «matter [was] a pretext to contain



Lucio Fontana mostra uno dei suoi primi quadri della serie *Buchi*, Milano Galleria del Naviglio, 1952 © Fondazione Fontana



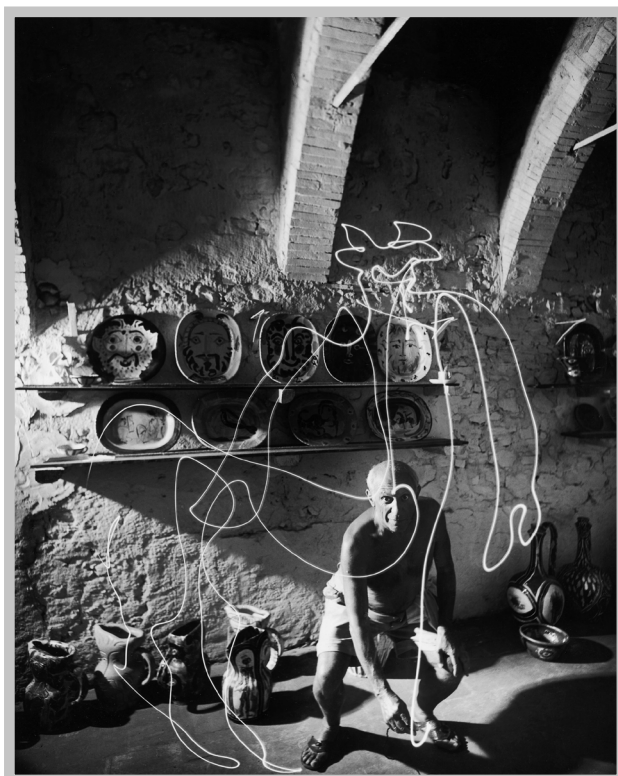
Lucio Fontana, Struttura al neon per la IX edizione della Triennale di Milano, 1951 ©Fondazione Fontana

light», as he wrote in a letter to Giò Ponti.²⁴ His work *Lucespaziale* (Spatial light), the first artificial luminescent installation designed together with architect Luciano Baldessari for the 1951 Triennale in Milan, created a multidimensional space, shared both by the artwork and by the observer.

The 'environment', thus, established an inter-action, a *continuum* which was meant to draw the onlookers within the artistic space. It was finally possible to 'enter' the artwork, while the boundaries between painting, sculpture, architecture and design

gradually blurred into non-existence. If Fontana's 'pierced paintings' could be seen as the first attempt to move form analytics to synthetics, the neon-light environments, as hybrid and polyfunctional constructs, complied with the manifest's proposition to create a tetradimensional (hence space-time) type of art. Fontana himself declared:

It will be possible to speak of spatial art only after the conquering of the fourth dimension in space: the flight... flight creates the fourth dimension, the detaching of man from the earth, from the line of the horizon which had been, for millennia, the basis for man's aesthetics and proportions. A new aesthetics affirms luminous forms through spaces and within spaces. Time space.²⁵



Picasso drawing with light, ©Gjon Mili in 1949

Light was therefore conceived as a source of space-time energy which could be released through the artwork; and one of the neon-light environments of 1961 was indeed titled *Fonti di energia* (Energy sources). It will not be too surprising, then, to discover that the neon environments had been inspired by a photograph of Pablo Picasso, published in 1950 on the magazine *AZ: arte d'oggi*.

In the image, obtained through long-exposure, the famous painter traced some stringy and luminous forms in the air using a source of light. Through photography (literally 'writing with light') it was possible to really 'see' the pathway travelled by light, which was astoundingly impressed in space and time. The intertwined neon works were then a tribute to the traces of light and to light's gestures, which ultimately embodied that tetradimensional art



Fontana had so longed for.

Like Fontana's, the visual work of painter and poet Toti Scialoja was also concerned with a tetradimensional, space-time type of art, while at the same time evoking photography and the concept of 'trace'. What Fontana and Scialoja had in common, artistically speaking, was the interest in discovering and then exposing to the public a further dimension, able to transcend both traditional form and matter. Even though the formal solutions they came up with belong to different artistic movements (i.e. Spatialism and Informel), a shared quest for a time-space *continuum* within the artwork lied at the core of their research; a quest that furthermore constituted a collective concern for the artistic community at large, including visual artists and writers alike. For this very reason, a cross analysis of Scialoja's visual and literary work provides a rare opportunity to see how the reflections and thoughts, hence the poetics, which are at the basis of his painting also permeate in his writing research, though with different declinations.

A compared analysis of Scialoja's painting and poetry has been attempted, among the others,²⁶ by Francesco Galluzzi²⁷ who identifies, as a linking concept between the two disciplines, the notion of *smemoratezza* ('forgetfulness'). Even though Galluzzi argues that the state of 'forgetfulness' takes on different realizations in painting or poetry, what seems most interesting for the purpose of this analysis is that Scialoja also linked 'forgetfulness' to the concept of space-time. In both art forms the artist tried to reach a primordial dimension (being that of humanity or of personal experience, i.e. childhood), so as to re-enact the far and forgotten past in the present of the artwork. The concept of space-time was used, like in Fontana's case, as a way to elude the ordinary dimensions of traditional art, or of life itself; if Fontana had tried to go beyond matter in the virtual space of the universe, Scialoja's longed dimension was that of primordial existence.

The idea of 'trace' is illustrative of this quest. In 1956, after having abandoned cubism to embrace abstract research, Scialoja 'discovered' his first *Impronte*, figures produced by impressing on the canvas thick and dense materials either by hand or using a cloth imbued with colour.



Toti Scialoja, *Bluthner piccolo N.2*, 1960

If on the one hand the trace existed (and was presently perceived) in the space of the painting, on the other hand it also incorporated a time dimension, being it an imprint produced in a specific moment of the past. The imprint stood as evidence of a physical contact occurred within time, which was, in turn, the result of a movement, therefore of a 'gesture': «born as physicality through contact, it *remains there*, germinated and inextricable, lid and

seed, matrix and negative, evidence and grain of inviolability».²⁸ The gesture was, for Scialoja, «the everything» as it was able to generate «a defined and animated nucleus of perception: a meeting point and a lightened time, mutually manifest and creative, between gesture and all converted matter».²⁹ The imprint was both «manifest and creative», both recording and exposure. It was a phenomenological stance for which the subject came to terms with the outer world; used as pictorial technique it could also be seen, borrowing Merleau-Ponty's words, as a «technique of the body» which, as such, «represented and amplified the metaphysical structure of our flesh».³⁰



In *Opera aperta*, while commenting on the Informel experience,³¹ Umberto Eco defined the gesture as «a sketch which ha[d] a spatial and temporal direction, of which the pictorial sign [wa]s the account».³² Signs, imprints in Scialoja's case, «continuously speak of the originating act»³³ by testifying the creative will of the author. And Scialoja's painting is clearly traversed by a sense of primordality, partly the result of a universalization of the pictorial sign and partly the outcome of the artist's personal research. The nature of the imprint itself revealed the existential and originary condition of the human being at large, recalling prehistoric cave painting, hence the first attempts of mankind at art. Scialoja's quest for temporality, then, took place on the rhythm of the surface; for the artist:

the spatial vision of painting shall be the vision of this feeling and pure necessity which is time, determined in its two poles of absolute identity of the subject with the imprint and of the inexorability of its occurrence as repetition. Repetition, perpetually renewed and perpetually modified is the visual symbol of such pure feeling which is the subjective-flux of each live expressed yet invisible.³⁴

The imprint and its modified repetition became metaphorical for the human race in its entirety, with its incessant renewal and modification, with its constant coming to life and going through death; the subject being at once unique and inessential, at once present and past.

If the imprints phylogenetically evoked the ancestral past of man, Scialoja's poetic research dealt with an ontogenetic quest for the past, i.e. that of childhood. The artist reconnected his poetic experience with 'the space-time of childhood',³⁵ a dimension characterized by unmeasurable spatiality and eternal temporality towards which it was possible to travel 'chronesthesically'. For example, in the following poem

Under your skirts I'll lay
a doghouse where to slumber
from the autumn's first day
till the end of December.

We will sip on an egg
for the New Year's return
and I'll later go back
where it is dark and warm.³⁶

the journey in space and time allows for a double reading; on the one hand 'under your skirts' indicates a physical place (in its literal sense), on the other hand it also stands for the metaphorical space of the mother's «dark and warm» womb, a possibility here reinforced by the symbolic value of the egg and by the figurative birth of the new year. For Scialoja, in fact, «the word of the poem exists in this spatiality and temporality of origin» which furthermore implies that «its acoustics is rustling, a buzz which contains the potential of all sound; it is germinating acoustics, swarming with virtuality».³⁷ The poem, and language as well, almost become 'environments' to inhabit, «language is a country to inhabit», and consequently the poem is conceived as a «syllabic organization which establishes a place, labyrinth, garden, paradise-hell».³⁸ For Scialoja the poetic word functioned as a place, which materialized and acquired body through the process of articulation and phonation.

The word of poetry, therefore, was not that which was written, but rather that which



was spoken. Scialoja's imprints had evoked prehistory, namely the time before writing was invented; similarly, his poetry dealt with the prehistory of an individual's life – the oral phase before learning to write – and it resembled the spoken babbling of infants; as in «A dragonfly / sings by and by / “Tralaladra / tralagonfly [...]”». ³⁹ The word of poetry was then the ludic, inventive language of childhood and it asked the body, «the vocal chords, the teeth, the tongue, the lips, the throat» to give it form «in the signifying act of producing sounds». ⁴⁰ This creational act occupied a performative time, thus determining a «virtual» and hologrammatic dimension, teeming with potential. The poem was consequently a latent place, assembled through syllabication, with the acoustic clusters used as building blocks:

Under a ce
dar tree the rhinoc
even though lace
rated, even though pieced
sleeps in great peace.
Under a red rose
in front of his nose
snores the ceros. ⁴¹

Scialoja proposed a sub-atomic dimension of the word, which had deflagrated and exploded, thus revealing its stratifications, its syllabic and sub-syllabic micro-components: «Even the syllables belong to a conceptual sphere, they are facets of meaning, flickering particles, reflectors, magnetized by their possible aggregations». ⁴² Syllables were attracted by force of gravity and when clashing they generated unexpected meanings. Such is the way Scialoja used to write, gravitating from one sound to another until meanings self-determined. The writing mechanism is explained by taking as example *Una zanzara a Zanzibar* (A mosquito in Zanzibar), a poem written in the 19060's:

This is how one of my poems can come to life: let's take the word 'zanzara' ('mosquito'). That wish which I mentioned makes me perform several actions on this word. The first is the easiest, syllabication: zan-za-ra. The word crumbles, it fleets from me. I syllabicate it again, eating its tail. Zanza-zara. Things get better. Zanza doesn't mean anything but Zara ('Zadar') does. Zanza, on the other hand, sounds a lot like zonzo ('to go around aimlessly'). (For the Tommaseo the word zonzo actually comes from the buzzing of mosquitos wandering around). It is natural, then, that a mosquito would wander around in Zadar. But why exactly Zadar on the Adriatic sea and rather not the more buzzing Zanzibar on the Indian Ocean? By wandering around one becomes a wanderer ('zuzzurellone') and ends up in a bar. A quick adulteration of vowels transforms zanzara in zenzero ('ginger'), a good cure for hungover nausea. The poem is completed:

A humming mosquito in Madagascar
wandered around, entered a bar
«Silly one, silly!» whispered someone
«If you are sea-sick chew on some gum». ⁴³

Scialoja acted on the word material, he distorted, decomposed and recomposed it to obtain unexpected results. When describing the relationship between painting-making



and poetry-making he concluded that in both disciplines he operated within a field of potential meanings, «taking action in the unknown». Gesture was conceived as both 'intentional', as it was generated by the creative will of the author, and 'unintentional', since it had origin in an unknown dimension. Poetry and painting shared this same gestural nature; the poetic text itself was the result of an «unforeseen and fast strike of the hand with two or three words» which determined a nonsense through an «unintentional act».⁴⁴

Scialoja's *nonsense* was reminiscent of Lewis Carroll's⁴⁵ and James Joyce's and it occupied the page with its mythical and enigmatic form. «Nonsense – like Gilles Deleuze brilliantly clarified – is not the lack of meaning, but rather an excess of it, that which gives meaning to both the signifier and the signified. Meaning here results from the functioning of the structure, in the movement between the serial components».⁴⁶ Meaning, then, remained open to interpretation, it was layered and complex, directly stemming from the mobile structure of the text. With no need to further quote from Eco's *Opera aperta*, it might be interesting to note how both painting and poetry maintained that sense of indefiniteness and potentiality which characterized not only Scialoja's work, but the artistic research of many writers and visual artists active in the 1950's and 1960's.

In the writing scene particularly, Renato Barilli identified a new trend of linguistic experimentation emerging in those decades. Carroll and Joyce were again the literary fathers of such phenomenon, which the critic, in his book *Viaggio al termine della parola* (1981), defined as «intra-verbal research». The linguistic research reached a sub-atomic stratum of the word, which underwent fractures, segmentations, paronomastic torsions, stuttering syllabifications, morphological deformations. The acoustic components were attracted to one another and bound by auditory gravity; words came together through omophonic suggestions giving birth to neologisms or *portmanteaus*. According to Barilli, this new approach to the poetic word was formulated in response to three different factors; it firstly stemmed from Saussure's early century linguistics developments, which separated the signified from the acoustic materiality of the signifier; secondly, it resented of the psychopathologic research carried out by Sigmund Freud, who linked humour to lapsus; finally it was influenced by scientific and technologic innovations, such as the emerging of acoustical physics and the development of sound recording and analysis machines, for which sound became more interesting than meaning, and could evolve into *noise*.

Even though Barilli fails to explicitly mention Einstein relativity and non-Euclidean geometry, it is evident that these, too, have contributed to the unrolling of the intra-verbal research throughout the century – and it would be easy to link some post-war experimental writing, in which the unity of the word appears intentionally fractured and disintegrated, to the aftermath of the nuclear bombing. Barilli, on the other hand, cites Joyce as the greatest example, and as the forerunner, of the intra-verbal research; interestingly, Eco's *Opera aperta* was profoundly inspired by Joyce's poetics and it was initially conceived as an analysis of this author's work. Donald F. Theall, in the book *James Joyce's Techno-poetics* (and more specifically in the two chapters entitled *The Rhythmick of Our Eternal Geomater* and *The New Techno-Culture of Space-Time*), investigates the multiple references, that Joyce made both in *Ulysses* and in *Finnegans Wake*, to non-euclidean geometry, to Einstein and to the concept of space-time.⁴⁷ It is then possible to argue that intra-verbal research, widely spread in post-war Italy,⁴⁸ was also innerly dealing with matters of space-time; furthermore, intra-verbal research can be easily included in the macropoetics of the *Open work*, since the deformations and alterations exerted on words determined a surplus of potential meanings, allusions that called for the reader's intervention to recreate their personal understanding of the text.



Amelia Rosselli's⁴⁹ early trilingual writing (1952-1963) shares with Scialoja's the constructive and generative experimentation with micro-sounds and syllabifications while at the same time offering further evidence of a research closely dealing with issues of space-time, which constituted a structural feature of both Scialoja and Fontana's art making. Highly influenced by James Joyce's work, Rosselli particularly sought to recreate a space-time reality in her art by investigating and by stretching the possibilities offered by language. Furthermore, the concept of space-time and of a tetradimensional reality not only was reflected in Rosselli's linguistic experimentation, but it also contributed to the shaping of her own metric system, which she referred to as *Spazi metrici* (Metric spaces), a notion directly borrowed from mathematics. The analysis of this last author's poetics can then serve to further reveal how scientific matters, and the space-time concept in particular, actively stimulated and propelled the artistic research of post-war Italian artists, among which Scialoja and Fontana stand out.

For Rosselli, as for Scialoja, the poem functioned as a place; but if Scialoja's poems were built so as to travel to a state of past 'forgetfulness', Rosselli carefully constructed hers with the aim of creating 'tetradimensional cubes' meant to encage the author's phenomenological perception of reality or of time past, «If I lay back layers of time I might be ready to open the list of places, addresses of all our lives».⁵⁰ The poem thus generated a virtual place, a space teeming with energy in which words acted as forces and vectors.⁵¹ The grid and infrastructure of such a construct was provided by the *Metric space*, the functioning of which Rosselli described in her 1962 essay on meter.⁵² A 'metric space', in mathematics, is a space of geometric and algebraic measurement; when the notion is transferred to poetry it primarily refers to 'meter', i.e. the rhythmic structure of verse. Nevertheless, by conceiving meter as a 'space' (*spazio*) to be filled, Rosselli succeeded in making apparent two different spatial levels; firstly, the typographic configuration of the poem, which visually mimicked the base of the cube (thus being square or rectangular in shape) and which contained the words; secondly, the virtually projected cube which contained the energy and the phenomenological experience of the poet. The space-time perception of the author was thus captured within the formal construction of a tetradimensional «cube-architecture»,⁵³ where the fourth dimension was that of time.⁵⁴ Rosselli wrote:

I went back to my five classifications; letter, syllable, word, sentence and period. I framed them within an absolute space-time. My verses could not escape the universality of the unique space; the length and time of the verses were established in advance, my organizational unit was determinable, rhythms adapted not only to my will, but also to the pre-planned space, and this space was entirely covered by experiences, realities, objects and sensations. By transferring the rhythmical complexities of written and imagined, but unspoken, language, through a copious varying of timbric and rhythmic particles within a single and limited typical space, my meter, if not regular, was at least total; all possible and imaginable rhythms carefully covered my square with its timbric depth, my rhythm was musical as much as the latest post-webernist⁵⁵ experiments, my regularity, when present, was contrasted by a swarming of rhythms which were not translatable in feet or in short or long measures, but in microscopic durations, which could be hardly marked, if one wanted to, with a pencil on graph paper.⁵⁶

The intra-verbal and 'micro-timbric' research was used to create a dynamic «swarming of rhythms» at a phonetic and acoustic level; rhythms that, by belonging to 'noise', could lead to a universal language:



the most harmonious relations and the most dissonant relations [...] may I
unite
in such changing such terribly dissident universe
that only the Glory of God we believe can bring glory
know how to reunite.⁵⁷

Noise, and sound in general, could indeed be equally perceived in all languages.⁵⁸ The materiality of language was thus liable of being altered, deformed and moulded not only syntactically but also phonetically and morphologically:

O if mine owne
rabbits running through the nervs and through
brimmed canals of mine lymph (o life!) [...] finde that Sublime Word, return
to that understood language which makes love stay.⁵⁹

Pasolini (1963) spoke of *laspus*⁶⁰ in relation to Rosselli's work and even though the writer's intuition needs some adjusting, it is not entirely lacking grounds. The poetic lapsus generated in Rosselli's writing was not simply caused, as Pasolini's argued, by the author's linguistic uncertainty; it was rather a technique implemented to test out language itself, to stretch it and to drag it out of its ordinary limits so as to cause it to short circuit and thus reach a universal dimension.⁶¹ Even in Rosselli, then, the wish to elude ordinary limits and to travel beyond them is connected to a research of form. If Scialoja's poetry sought to bridge universality by hinting at an ancestral or childhood past, Rosselli's universality lies in the materiality of language itself. She wrote:

I started, at one point of my teenage years, to look for universal forms. To find them I firstly searched for my (western and rational) minimal element of organization in writing. And this clearly resulted to be the letter, either acoustic or not, timbric or not, typographic or formal, symbolic and functional at the same time.⁶²

Language and personal experience provided the starting point to recount the linguistic and historical experience of all men. Poetry became a *medium* for capturing and taming⁶³ reality; the phenomenological experience of the outer world was then transferred within a conceptual poetic structure that ideally worked as a space-time construct:

child who regains memory as a loaf of bread is turned is child with no childhood.
Fotos of places are better than places or memories, fotos in our brain same ways.
Curve the triangle out of escape and the landscape into curved belonging.⁶⁴

Rosselli's metric system can then be defined as a *geo-metrics*, measuring both space and time; a system that in a certain sense resembled photography, as it was designed to record processes and experiences, that is, to capture a given moment in space and time. In the transfer from the space-time of reality to the tetradimensional one of poetry a deforming contraction took place; a threshold which made it possible to glimpse the gap between biographical and collective, between the language of the individual and universal language.

The concept of space-time – and of tetradimensionality – constitutes a prominent and shared feature in the shaping of these three artists' poetics. The possibility to embed a new dimension in the artwork seemed to comply with the wish to elude the



fixity of either the canvas or the page, while conferring dynamicity to the artwork. This dynamicity was what allowed the artwork to emanate and project out a further spatiality, being it physical, like in Fontana's 'walkable' environments; or conceptual, like for the time-travelling dimension emanating from both Scialoja's paintings and poems, or for the tetradsimensional cube-constructs which engaged Rosselli's experience. In all three cases, the tetradsimensional time-space concept was implemented to 'experiment' and, particularly, to slowly push art out of its traditional boundaries, in a process which was soon to become programmatic and which led to intermediality in the arts, like for example in kinetic installations, in visual and acoustic poetry, or in performances. The need for a new kind of art reflected the changed cultural, philosophical and scientific panorama of post-war Italy which had universally experienced that 'rupture between progress and progression' the war had made apparent and which finally appeared to be complex, multi-layered and rhizomatic.

¹ In L. CAMEL, *Arte in Italia 1945-1960*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1994, p. 130: «Ci rifiutiamo di pensare che scienza ed arte siano due fatti distinti, che cioè i gesti compiuti da una delle due attività possano non appartenere anche all'altra. Gli artisti anticipano gesti scientifici, i gesti scientifici provocano sempre gesti artistici». This and all following translations are carried out by the author of this paper.

² See N. K. HAYLES, *Chaos Bound: Orderly Disorder in Contemporary Literature and Science*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1990, and EAD. (ed.), *Chaos and Order. Complex Dynamics in Literature and Science*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1991; E. MORIN, *Introduzione al pensiero complesso*, Milano, Sperling & Kupfer, 1990; P. ANTONELLO, *Il ménage a quattro (Scienza, filosofia, tecnica nella letteratura italiana del Novecento)*, Firenze, Le Monnier, 2005.

³ This is how Edoardo Sanguineti refers to the avant-garde movements, both in his *Poesia informale?* (now in R. BARILLI, A. GUGLIELMI (ed.), *Gruppo 63. Critica e teoria*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1976) and in his E. SANGUINETI, *Per una critica dell'avanguardia poetica in Italia e in Francia*, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri, 1995.

⁴ For an overview of the shift in perceiving time and space in the early Twentieth Century see S. KERN, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2003.

⁵ U. Eco, *Opera aperta*, Milano, Bompiani, 2013.

⁶ As Claudio Spadoni cleverly points out in his *L'immediato dopoguerra e l'uscita dall'autarchia*, in R. BARILLI et al., *L'arte in Italia nel secondo dopoguerra*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1979. On the same topic see also M. DE MICHELI, 'Realism and the Post-war Debate', in E. BRAUN (ed.), *Italian Art in the 20th Century, Painting and Sculpture 1900-1988*, Munich, Prestel-Verlag, 1989.

⁷ For a document on the transnational influences which helped shaping *Il gesto* see M. NICHOLLS, A. WHITE, 'Il gesto: Global Art and Italian Gesture Painting in the 1950s', *Humanities Research*, vol. 19, 2, (2013), pp. 81-97.

⁸ On Sanguineti and his relationship with visual arts see T. LISA, *Pretesti ecfrastici. Edoardo Sanguineti e alcuni artisti italiani*, Firenze, Società Editrice Fiorentina, 2004; and also P. CHIRUMBOLO, 'Signs and Designs: Sanguineti and Baj from Laborintus to The Biggest Art-Book in the World', in P. CHIRUMBOLO, M. MORONI, L. SOMIGLI (ed.), *Neoavanguardia. Italian Experimental Literature and Arts in the 1960s*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2010, pp. 233-253.

⁹ An anthology of texts by Gruppo 63 can be found in N. BALESTRINI, A. GIULIANI (ed.), *Gruppo 63. L'antologia*, Torino, Testo & Immagine, 2002.

¹⁰ Dorfles advocated for a compared investigation of different art forms in the first issue of the journal: «I rapporti tra le singole arti [...] avrebbero bisogno d'esser sviscerati ed approfonditi [...]. Ho già accennato altre volte a certo parallelismo, facilmente esemplificabile, tra l'evoluzione del linguaggio musicale (dal modalismo al tonalismo, da questo alla dodecafonia, attraverso le tappe del politonalismo e dell'atonalismo) un'analogia evoluzione del linguaggio pittorico (dalla bidimensionalità alla tridimensionalità prospettica, alla riconquista di una cromaticità di superficie, attraverso lo sviluppo



del colore da tonale a timbrico). Ritengo ora che anche nelle arti della parola, un'indagine di tal fatta [...] sia da sviluppare e approfondire. Pochi studi sono stati rivolti, ad esempio, alla sonorità e ritmicità della parola e del suono, *alla composizione spaziale del poema e del dipinto*, all'intervallo, in musica e nella plastica, e via dicendo» (G. DORFLES, 'La letteratura e le arti', *Aut-Aut*, 1 (1951), p. 49).

¹¹ The term refers to Kuhn's work, as in T. S. KUHN, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1962.

¹² V. SOMENZI, 'Relatività e fisica nucleare', *Aut-Aut*, 1 (1951), p. 72.

¹³ B. WESTPHAL, *Geocritica: reale finzione spazio*, Roma, Armando, 2009, p. 22.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 23.

¹⁵ Even though it would be interesting to analyse the influence of this epistemological concept on a broader scale, here I will focus on the authors mentioned. Of course, Fontana influenced much of the visual research from the 1950's onwards. It is also interesting to note that in the first issue of *Aut-Aut*, which I already had the chance to mention, composer Luigi DALLAPICCOLA wrote about the fourth dimension of time in music in 'Sulla storia della dodecafonìa', *Aut-Aut*, 1, 1951, pp. 30-45.

¹⁶ And here Eco refers to the aesthetics of Luigi Pareyson: L. PAREYSON, *Estetica: teoria della formatività*, Torino, Edizioni di filosofia, 1954.

¹⁷ U. Eco, *Opera aperta*, p. 159.

¹⁸ A. GARCÍA, *Fontana*, Milano, La Prora, 1953, p. 263.

¹⁹ 'Manifiesto blanco', Buenos Aires, 1946, in L. FONTANA, *Fontana: mostra Firenze, palazzo Pitti, aprile-giugno 1980*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1980.

²⁰ This idea of total art spread endemically and became mainstream from 1960's on. In the poetry scene see Adriano Spatola's pseudo-manifest, A. SPATOLA, *Verso la poesia totale*, <http://www.archiviomauriziospatola.com/prod/pdf/protagonisti/P00242.pdf> [accessed 15 June 2016].

²¹ 'Primo Manifesto dello Spazialismo', Milano, 1947, in L. CAMEL, *Arte in Italia 1945-1960*, p. 130, my italics: «Passati vari millenni di sviluppo artistico analitico, giunge il momento della sintesi. Prima la separazione fu necessaria. Oggi costituisce una disintegrazione dell'unità concepita. Concepiamo la sintesi come una somma di elementi fisici: colore, suono, movimento, tempo, spazio, la quale integri una unità fisico-psichica. Colore, l'elemento dello spazio, suono, l'elemento del tempo, il movimento che si sviluppa nel tempo e nello spazio, sono le forme fondamentali dell'arte nuova, che contiene le quattro dimensioni dell'esistenza. Tempo e spazio».

²² B. HESS, *Lucio Fontana*, Milano, Taschen, 2006, p. 8.

²³ F. ALINOV, 'Spaziali e nucleari. L'informe abnorme', in R. BARILLI, F. SOLMI (ed.), *L'informale in Italia. Mostra dedicata a Francesco Arcangeli*, Milano, Mazzotta, 1983. See also F. ALINOV, 'La crisi dell'opera e il progetto di superamento dell'arte negli anni '50', in R. BARILLI et al., *L'arte in Italia nel secondo dopoguerra*, pp. 53-87.

²⁴ B. HESS, *Lucio Fontana*, p. 82.

²⁵ F. ALINOV, 'Spaziali e nucleari. L'informe abnorme', in R. BARILLI, F. SOLMI (ed.), *L'informale in Italia. Mostra dedicata a Francesco Arcangeli*, p. 36: «Si parlerà di arte spaziale solo con la conquista della quarta dimensione nello spazio: il volo [...] il volo crea la quarta dimensione, il distacco dell'uomo dalla terra, dalla linea d'orizzonte che per millenni fu la base della sua estetica e proporzioni. Una nuova estetica afferma forme luminose attraverso gli spazi e dentro gli spazi. Tempo spazio».

²⁶ Another interesting contribution, in which Scialoja's work is taken to exemplify the concept of the 'sguardo-evento' (event-look), can be found in R. DONATI, *Nella palpebra interna. Percorsi novecenteschi tra poesia e arti della visione*, Firenze, Le Lettere, 2014, pp. 34-66.

²⁷ F. GALLUZZI, 'Il ritmo del corpo. Pittura e scrittura in Toti Scialoja', *Italianistica: Rivista di letteratura italiana*, vol. 29, 3 (2000), pp. 451-459.

²⁸ Note the use of the words 'negative' and 'evidence', which are evocative of photography, in T. SCIALOJA, *Giornale di pittura*, Roma, Editori riuniti, 1991, p. 127, italics of the author.

²⁹ *Ivi*, p. 134.

³⁰ M. MERLEAU-PONTY, *L'occhio e lo spirito*, Milano, SE, 1989, p. 27.

³¹ For a definition of the Informel movement and for its general understanding see R. BARILLI, *L'informale e altri studi di arte contemporanea*, Milano, All'insegna del pesce d'oro, 1964; G. DORFLES, *Ultime tendenze nell'arte d'oggi. Dall'Informale al Neo-oggettivale*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1999; and see also the monographic issue of *il verri* dedicated to Informel, L. ANCESCHI (ed.), *il verri*, 3 (June 1961).

³² U. Eco, *Opera aperta*, p. 124.

³³ *Ibidem*.

³⁴ T. SCIALOJA, *Giornale di pittura*, p. 113, my italics: «la visione spaziale della pittura sarà visione di questo sentimento e necessità pura che è il tempo, determinata nei due poli della identità assoluta del soggetto



come impronta e nella inarrestabilità del suo attuarsi come *ripetizione*. La ripetizione perennemente rinnovata e perennemente modificata è il simbolo visuale di tale sentimento puro che è la soggettività-fluenza di ogni vita espressa-invisibile».

³⁵ «The space time that I call childhood» (ID., 'Come nascono le mie poesie', *il verri*, 8 (1988), p. 13).

³⁶ ID., *La mela di Amleto*, Milano, Garzanti, 1984, p. 119: «Mi farò per l'autunno / una cuccia di cane / fino alla fin dell'anno / sotto le tue sottane. // Ci sorbiremo un uovo / il primo di gennaio / poi tornerò di nuovo / dove fa caldo e buio».

³⁷ ID., 'Come nascono le mie poesie', p. 13.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 10.

³⁹ ID., *La mela di Amleto*, p. 19: «Una libellula / mi canterella: / "Trallerallibe / trallerallulla [...]».

⁴⁰ ID., 'Come nascono le mie poesie', p. 10.

⁴¹ ID., *La mela di Amleto*, p. 14: «Sotto un ace / ro il rinoce / benché lace / ro e di pece / dorme in pace. / Sotto un noce / ch'è di fronte / ronfa il ronte».

⁴² ID., 'Come nascono le mie poesie', p. 12.

⁴³ *Ibidem*: «Ecco allora come può nascere una mia poesia: prendiamo la parola 'zanzara'. Quella voglia di cui ho detto mi fa compiere alcune azioni su questa parola. La prima è la più semplice, sillabarla: zanza-ra. La parola si disfa, mi sfugge. La sillaba diversamente, mangiandomi la coda. Zanza-zara. Le cose vanno meglio. Zanza non vuol dire niente, ma Zara sì. Zanza, d'altronde, somiglia moltissimo a zonzo. (Per il Tommaseo la voce zonzo deriverebbe proprio dal ronzio delle zanzare che vanno a spasso). È naturale, quindi, che la zanzara vada a zonzo per Zara. Ma perché la piccola Zara sull'Adriatico e non la più zanzarosa Zanzibar sull'Oceano Indiano? Andando sempre a zonzo si diventa zuzzurelloni e si finisce in un bar. Una rapida adulterazione di vocali trasforma la zanzara in zenzero, ottimo rimedio contro la nausea alcolica. La poesia è completata: Una zanzara di Zanzibar / Andava a zonzo, entrò in un bar, / 'Zuzzurellona!' le disse un tal / 'mastica zenzero se hai mal di mar'».

⁴⁴ *Ivi*, p. 19.

⁴⁵ To know more about Scialoja's relationship with the tradition of nonsense of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear see A. GIAMMEI, *Nell'officina del nonsense di Toti Scialoja. Topi, toponimi, tropi, cronotopi*, Milano, Edizioni del verri, 2014. On Scialoja see also Eloisa Morra: E. MORRA, *Un allegro fischiettare nelle tenebre. Ritratto di Toti Scialoja*, Macerata, Quodlibet Studio, 2014.

⁴⁶ G. DELEUZE, *Lo strutturalismo*, Milano, SE, 2004, p. 50.

⁴⁷ It would be interesting to linger more on the way Joyce incorporated recent scientific revolutions in his writing. To quickly sum it up Eco's words prove again to be effective: «In *Finnegans Wake* we are really facing an Einsteinian cosmos, folded onto itself – the initial word welding to the last one – and therefore *finite*, though for this reason *infinite*. Each event, each word, stands in a potential relation to any other and it is through the semantic choice made about an element that the sense of the others is determined» (U. Eco, *Opera aperta*, p. 43).

⁴⁸ For example in the work of Andrea Zanzotto, Edoardo Sanguineti, Antonio Porta, Nanni Balestrini and of course of Toti Scialoja and Amelia Rosselli.

⁴⁹ For an overview of Rosselli's work see S. GIOVANNUZZI (ed.), *L'opera poetica*, Milano, Mondadori, 2012 and A. CORTELLESA (ed.), *La furia dei venti contrari: Variazioni Amelia Rosselli con testi inediti e dispersi dell'autrice*, Firenze, Le Lettere, 2007.

⁵⁰ In A. ROSSELLI, *L'opera poetica*, Milano, Mondadori, 2009, p. 125.

⁵¹ In her book (F. FUSCO, *Amelia Rosselli*, Palermo, Palumbo, 2007), Fusco resorts to the metaphor of vectors and forces to analyse the poet's work.

⁵² A. ROSSELLI, *Spazi metrici*, in EAD., *L'opera poetica*, pp. 337-342.

⁵³ EAD., *L'opera poetica*, p. 102.

⁵⁴ In her *Diario in tre lingue* (1955-1956) Rosselli wrote: «time in poetry becomes volume of the cube; i.e. depth through the space-expectation between verses» (EAD., *L'opera poetica*, p. 104).

⁵⁵ See S. COLANGELO, *Metrica come composizione*, Bologna, Gedit, 2002. Scholarly works have often discussed Rosselli's interest in music by focusing on her research in musicology and composition, as in S. SGRAVICCHIA, 'Gli armonici di Amelia Rosselli', in D. SCARPA (ed.), *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, Torino, Einaudi, 2012, pp. 831-835. Though Rosselli's studies and attendance at Darmstadt need to be taken into consideration, it is also true that an interdisciplinary comparison among poetics was typical of post-war experimental research. See for example F. MUSSGUG, 'Writing Like Music: Luciano Berio, Umberto Eco and the New Avant-Garde', *Comparative Critical Studies*, vol. 5, 1 (2008), pp. 81-97; and also P. SOMIGLI, 'Gruppo 63 and Music: a Complex Relationship', in P. CHIRUMBOLO, M. MORONI, L. SOMIGLI (ed.), *Neoavanguardia. Italian Experimental Literature and Arts in the 1960s*, pp. 254-282.

⁵⁶ A. ROSSELLI, *Spazi metrici*, p. 340, my italics: «Ripresi in mano le mie cinque classificazioni: lettera,



sillaba, parola, frase e periodo. Le inquadravi in uno *spazio-tempo assoluto*. I miei versi non potevano più scampare all'universalità dello spazio unico: le *lunghezze* ed i *tempi* dei versi erano prestabiliti, la mia unità organizzativa era definibile, i miei ritmi si adattavano non ad un mio volere soltanto ma allo spazio già deciso, e *questo spazio era del tutto ricoperto di esperienze, realtà, oggetti e sensazioni*. Trasponendo la complessità ritmica della lingua parlata e pensata ma non scandita, tramite un numerosissimo variare di particelle timbriche e ritmiche entro un unico e limitato spazio tipico, la mia metrica se non regolare era almeno totale: *tutti i ritmi possibili immaginabili riempivano minuziosamente il mio quadrato a profondità timbrica*, la mia ritmica era musicale fino agli ultimi esperimenti del post-webernismo, la mia regolarità, quando esistente, era contrastata da un formicolio di ritmi traducibili non in piedi o in misure lunghe o corte, ma in durate microscopiche appena appena annotabili, volendo, a matita su carta grafica millesimale».

⁵⁷ EAD., *L'opera poetica*, p. 191: «I rapporti più armoniosi e i rapporti più dissonanti [...] / [...] voglia io unirvi / in un universo sì cangiante sì terribilmente dissidente / che solo la gloria di Dio noi crediamo porti gloria / sa riunire».

⁵⁸ Cfr. EAD., *Spazi metrici*, p. 338: «the language in which I write each and every time is only one, whereas my acoustic logic and associative experience is definitely that of all people and reflected in all languages».

⁵⁹ EAD., *L'opera poetica*, p. 174: «O sei muiei / conigli correnti peri nervu ei per / brimosi canali dei la mia linfa (o vital!) / [...] trova queia Parola Soave, tu ritorna / alla compresa favella che fa sì che l'amore resta».

⁶⁰ On the concept of *lapsus* as a way to carry out linguistic experimentation, and for a possible link to the tradition of nonsense, already mentioned for Scialoja, see Emanuela Tandello's article on the monographic issue of *Trasparenze*, entirely dedicated to Amelia Rosselli: E. TANDELLO, 'Alle fonti del lapsus: pun, portmanteau, wordscape. Appunti sull'inglese letterario di Amelia Rosselli', *Trasparenze*, 17 (2003), pp. 173-192.

⁶¹ Yet another understanding of Rosselli's linguistic experiments, halfway between Pasolini's argument and the one here discussed (see P.P. PASOLINI, 'Notizia su Amelia Rosselli', *Il Menabò*, 6 (1963), pp. 66-69), is provided by Alberto Casadei who argues that the associations made by Rosselli result from a negotiation between a «conscious need to express her own suffering and a surfacing of unconscious states» (A. CASADEI, 'Amelia Rosselli dopo le *Variazioni*: analisi e appunti di metodo', *Forum Italicum: A Journal of Italian Studies*, vol. 44, 1 (2010), pp. 81-96). For a cognitive approach to Rosselli's work see also ID., *Poetiche della creatività. Letteratura e scienze della mente*, Milano, Mondadori, 2011.

⁶² A. ROSSELLI, *L'opera poetica*, p. 338: «io mi misi a un certo punto della mia adolescenza a cercare le forme universali. Per trovare queste cercai da prima il mio (occidentale e razionale) elemento organizzativo minimo nello scrivere. E questo risultava chiaramente essere la lettera, sonora o no, timbrica o no, grafica o formale, simbolica e funzionale insieme».

⁶³ On the deforming mechanism of 'taming' implement by Rosselli, see E. CARLETTI (2015), 'Il chiarore che deforma – Processi deformanti nella poetica di Amelia Rosselli', *altrelettere*, 16 January 2015, [accessed 9 October 2015].

⁶⁴ A. ROSSELLI, *L'opera poetica*, p. 125.