



The Italian Cantastorie

The Cartellone, the Lyrics and their Musical Setting

MAURO GERACI:

The cartellone is a semi-objective source. Very often it is painted by the storyteller himself. Sometimes it is painted by artists who specialise in this.

The cartellone provides a starting point to rethink history... It is a device that enables us to reconsider, to reset our judgement. Let's reset our own judgments, by going back to the poster. Let's look at the events again ... and see whether we reach the same moral conclusions.

The storyteller questions the cartellone as it has an explicative function. It summarises within a single picture the sequence of the events.

The poster's function is not only to explain. It also invites questioning. I'll direct my questions to it. The storyteller may stop while singing and ask:

"What did you do, why did you have to shoot"...

The cartellone helps one to keep the thread of thoughts

(Song)

Ladies and gentlemen, even cantastorie do not know anything about Antonello da Messina.

MAURO GERACI:

His mother, as you can see in the cartellone at the tableaux number two, there was called Margherita, "Garita". His father's name was Giovanni, "Vanni". Both the poetic and the visual texts provide a starting point. Storytellers do not belong to the so-called oral tradition. As we said, they narrate and write ballate. They write storie.

In regards to the specifications of a storyteller's text... A storia may be a very long composition. It can last as long as an hour and a half. It may portray the life and adventures of a character. Or it may be inspired by real-life events... for example the sinking of the Titanic.

The ballata differs from the storia as it does not have the same descriptive connotations ballata belongs to a more sentimental realm. It dwells on certain aspects of the events and tries to identify its symbolic and sentimental contrasts. It dwells on a more thoughtful perspective of a single facet. They are two different ways to look at the same reality