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Generación del 27/ hip hop in 2007: cultural vanguard in performance

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ABSTRACT. This paper discusses the production of the so-called Generation of 27 and the documentary *Generación 27 - Creación, vanguardia y vida*, Canal Sur Andalucía, Spain, in honor of the 80 years of the movement. We address the performance matter, according to the theory by Zumthor (2000), which can be compared to what the participants of that generation did during that period in their artistic encounters, and in a parallel way to what some artists that express themselves through rap and graffiti did in 2007, by resuming the poetic, musical and visual creations of the artists of 1927. We develop a comparative analysis of these productions and of what participants of the Spanish movement (ALONSO; GUILLÉN, 1984) and literary historians (CONCHA, 1984) argue about the period, and of authors (REYES-SÁNCHEZ, 2007; HALL, 2011) who research the cultural manifestations that are closer to the new global social reality. We conclude that both movements, Generation of '27 and the artists of 2007, seek, with their productions, to give visibility to the plurality of voices of the popular and street tradition, even though the documentary suggests the presence of a hegemonic and institutional apparatus that somehow interacts and interferes with the maintenance and / or expansion of this process.

Keywords: cultural manifestations, poetry, rap, graffiti, documentary.

Generación del 27/ hip hop de 2007: vanguardia cultural em performance

RESUMO. Este artigo aborda a produção da chamada Geração de 27 e o documentário *Generación 27 - Creación, vanguardia y vida*, do Canal Sur da Andaluzia, Espanha, em homenagem aos 80 anos do movimento. Tratamos da questão da performance, segundo a teorização de Zumthor (2000), que pode ser aproximada ao que os participantes de tal geração realizavam naquele momento, em seus encontros artísticos, e em paralelo ao que alguns artistas que se manifestam por meio de *rap* e *graffiti* realizaram em 2007, ao retomarem as criações poéticas, musicais e visuais dos artistas de 1927. Desenvolvemos uma análise comparativa dessas produções e do que participantes do movimento espanhol (ALONSO; GUILLÉN, 1984) e historiadores da literatura (CONCHA, 1984) consideram sobre o período, e de autores (REYES-SÁNCHEZ, 2007; HALL, 2011) que tratam das manifestações culturais mais próximas à nova realidade social global. Concluímos que ambos os movimentos, Geração de 27 e os artistas de 2007, buscam, com suas produções, dar visibilidade à pluralidade de vozes da tradição popular e das ruas, ainda que no documentário se perceba a presença de um aparato institucional e hegemônico que interage e interfere, de certa forma, na manutenção e/ou ampliação desse processo.

Palavras-chave: manifestações culturais, poesia, rap, graffiti, documentário.

Introduction

The so-called Generación del 27, as it is known, had among its members Federico García Lorca, Pedro Salinas, Rafael Alberti, Luis Cernuda, Jorge Guillén, Dámaso Alonso, in addition to several other prominent names linked to the literature and to the arts in Spain during the first half of the 20th century that became popular in the period immediately before the Spanish Civil War. Most of them were from Andalucía. The designation Generación del 27 has never been free of controversies; the critique of

its country also refers to it as 'poetas universitários', 'generación de 1921-1931', 'generación de Guillén-Lorca' or 'generación vanguardist', among others. (CONCHA, 1984).

The list of names is also object of constant interrogations. It does not include, for instance, Rafael Laffón, a less evident poet in the group and, oftentimes, linked to what happened to be called *El otro 27*. This is how María José Carrasco starts her essay on the *El País* newspaper regarding the opportune publishing of a recent anthology of

poems by the Sevillian, organized by Miguel Cruz Giráldez, and published by S.L. Ediciones:

Es uno de los poetas más representativos de la poesía sevillana del siglo XX, pero su nombre y sobre todo su obra, reconocida por la crítica, ha sufrido un cierto olvido, eclipsado por las grandes figuras de la Generación del 27. Rafael Laffón Zambrano (Sevilla, 1895-1978) es uno de esos autores que no consiguieron la trascendencia que merecían, pese a su valor literario, y sobre los que los críticos reclaman su incorporación al grupo del 27. Prados, Altolaguirre, Villalón, Adriano del Valle, Oliver, Roberto Murube y el propio Laffón forman parte de la nómina de escritores de ese otro 27 (CARRASCO, 2000).

Carrasco then highlights the importance of said anthology, whose intention was "[...] romper eses *numerus clausus* generacional – que ha venido siendo lo habitual [...]" (CARRASCO, 2000), since Gerardo Diego published in 1932 his *Poesía española contemporánea* selection.

The common tendency among Spanish literature historians until a while ago, as Rozas (1984) comments, to characterize it as being generational seems, at the same time, to be contested by some as being reinforced by ‘contactos personales’ and ‘amistades duraderas’, according to what Dámaso Alonso and Jorge Guillén evidence in “Una generación poética”:

¿Se trata de una generación? ¿De un grupo? No se intenta, en realidad, definir sino sólo mostrar coincidencias, sin olvidar lo mucho que les distingue. Lo primero que hay que notar es que esa generación no se alza contra nada, ni en política ni en literatura [...]. Comienzan a publicar poesía y a relacionarse a comienzos de los años veinte (ALONSO; GUILLÉN, 1984, p. 261).

The critics highlight that there was a huge variety of literary techniques employed by those who were associated with said ‘generation’. However, what would lead it to receive this name would be the “[...] coetaneidad, compañerismo, intercambio, reacción similar ante excitantes externos” (ALONSO; GUILLÉN, 1984, p. 262). What brought them together was, so to speak, the affinities that comprehended literature, music, theater, painting and sculpting. With this, they stress that the members of this generation acted collectively, although each one of them produced their works in their own way. It was a group of intellectuals and artists that were together to experiment and do something in a moment of congregation, which is remembered by the words of Zumthor when he tries to define ‘performance’:

The majority of the definitions of performance highlight the nature of the environment, oral and gestural. Following Hymes, I underscore emergency, iterability, recognition, which I encompass under the term ritual. ‘Poetry’ (if we understand by it that which is permanent in the phenomenon that for us has taken the form of ‘literature’) ultimately rests on the language ritualization fact. Hence a deep convergence between performance and poetry, as both aspire to the quality of rite (ZUMTHOR, 2000, p. 51, emphasis added)¹.

The participants of the so-called Generación del 27, according to some scholars, focused on poetry, on the written word, but also dedicated themselves to the sang word, represented or even fixed through images:

El lenguaje que presume de ser muy racional – el de la política ‘verbi gratia’ – ¿no encierra ya un semillero de confusiones? Será más fértil en confusiones el lenguaje de quien acude, refiriéndose a su vida más profunda, a la ambigüedad de las imágenes. Aquellos poetas hablaban por imágenes (ALONSO; GUILLÉN, 1984, p. 263, emphasis added)

This group of poets, painters, filmmakers, musicians, that is, performing artists, began to produce before the Spanish Civil War and, due to it, were banned from their country or sent themselves into exile. Some others, like Lorca, less fortunate, lost their lives during the period. Nevertheless, several of these names had their productions disclosed, are remembered and even worshiped as the creators of a group of great importance in that moment in Spain.

An example of this was the tribute to the eightieth anniversary of the group, held by Docus Andalucía in 2007, for the Canal Sur Televisión Andalucía, the documentary *Generación 27 – Creación, vanguardia y vida*. The variety of artistic perspectives and the plurality of names linked to the group were emphasized, and we anticipate here: Laffón gains prominence in the documentary for the Andalusian channel, cited in the first minutes and dominating the final moments.

The documentary

As ‘frame’ to a content that is for some people widely known, especially in conventional book and film supports, as we will see and hear in testimonies,

¹ “A maior parte das definições de performance põem ênfase na natureza do meio, oral e gestual. Seguindo Hymes, destaco a emergência, a reiterabilidade, o re-conhecimento, que engloba sob o termo ritual. A “poesia” (se entendemos por isto o que há de permanente no fenómeno que para nós tomou a forma de “literatura”) repousa, em última análise, em um fato de ritualização da linguagem. Daí uma convergência profunda entre performance e poesia, na medida em que ambas aspiram à qualidade de rito”.

Generación 27 presents a group of young boys preparing their (re)reading of the alluded generation. The plot mixes images and narration about the *Generación del 27* with a mosaic of elements – visual, sounding, narrative – identifiable as the ‘hip hop scene’, more specifically, the Andalusian one.

It evidences the intention of simulating a performing game, an action that is constructed as the documentary develops. Friends coming together by means of a renewing art and common cause; turning around them there is also the movie, mimicking the somewhat diffuse character of the portrayed group.

The option of the makers of the documentary for the complex of artistic forms that constitutes hip hop and where performance plays a primary role leads us to resort once again to Paul Zumthor’s theorization, which, turned to orality matters and to the ‘operation of the poetic voice’ proves a privileged instrument for reflecting on such phenomena. About the notion of performance, Zumthor explains:

Between the suffix designating an ongoing action but that will never be finished and the globalizing prefix referring to an inaccessible, if not inexistent, totality, performance sets the ‘form’, unlikely. Word that is admirable for its value and implication, as it refers less to some completeness than to a desire of realization. But the latter does not remain unique. Globality, provisional. Each new performance questions everything. The form is perceived in performance, but it transmutes at every performance (ZUMTHOR, 2000, p. 38-39, emphasis added)².

A little ahead he formulates a more radical proposition (though not distant from the attitude of hip hop artists and perhaps corresponding exactly to what they claim) that “[...] performance is the only living mode of poetic communication” (ZUMTHOR, 2000, p. 39-40)³.

It is worth observing that also in Spain the hip hop phenomenon develops with great vivacity and, in the last few years, has been calling the attention of even academic investigation. In this way, the Information Science course of the Complutense University of Madrid offered in 2007 a doctoral subject for the study of ‘Graffiti, hip hop y medios de comunicación’, taught by Professor Francisco Reyes-Sánchez, PhD, being himself a former

member of the cultural movement during its beginnings in that country, still in the 1980s.

This is how Reyes-Sánchez defines what hip hop is:

El Hip Hop es un movimiento urbano, juvenil y trasgresor que surge en Nueva York a finales de los años 60 y que engloba tres disciplinas artísticas: la pintura (el graffiti), la danza (el breakdance) y la música (rap, electro, breakbeat, beat-box, ragga...) [preserving the spelling employed by the author concerning the use of capital and lowercase letters and absence of cursives to mark nonvernacular terms] (REYES-SÁNCHEZ, 2007, p. 125).

And explains what the term itself means:

Literalmente, en inglés, ‘hip’ es saltar y ‘hop’ caedera, y sobre la palabra Hip Hop, algunos de los pioneros de la vieja escuela de Nueva York opinan que hace referencia al gesto, al movimiento de los DJ’s al saltar de um plato (giradiscos) a outro en sus sesiones: ‘you hip and you hop’ (REYES-SÁNCHEZ, 2007, p. 125, emphasis added).

The complex of artistic-cultural hip hop manifestations includes, therefore, the ‘spoken-song’ of rap (which, by the way, stands for ‘rhythm and poetry’), sang by the so-called B.Boys, with the aid of the technical intervention by the DJ’s mixing (disc jockey), eventually accompanied by dance (break dance) and by the visual language of graffiti, being the latter present in the documentary as well.

Reyes-Sánchez provides an interesting information about the way that members of the hip hop movement refers to ‘taggers’ [graffiti artists]:

Al grafitero se le llama ‘escritor’, traducción del inglés writer, y lo que pretende es dejarse ver, ‘getting up’, destacarse sobre el resto de escritores por dos vías bien distintas: su calidad artística o su cantidad, la profusión de sus firmas (REYES-SÁNCHEZ, 2007, p. 126, emphasis added).

Regarding the spoken song, it is worth recalling what Luiz Tatit states, defending that rap, instead of representing the death of the song, constitutes its privileged degree of purity:

It is as if the song came to its root, because it is somebody speaking, with some metric organizations. Rap wants to pass on a message and, to do so, it is necessary that it gets the closest to speech (TATIT apud COSTA e SILVA, 2007)⁴.

A process of transatlantic exchange develops there, configuring a cultural translation. Spanish youths of the 21st century appeal to a form of

² “Entre o sufixo designando uma ação em curso mas que jamais será dada por acabada e o prefixo globalizante, que remete a uma totalidade inacessível, se não inexistente, performance coloca a “forma”, improvável. Palavra admirável por sua riqueza e implicação, porque ela refere menos a uma completude do que a um desejo de realização. Mas este não permanece único. A globalidade, provisória. Cada performance nova coloca tudo em causa. A forma se percebe em performance, mas a cada performance ela se transmuta.”

³ “a performance é o único modo vivo de comunicação poética”

⁴ “É como se a canção chegasse em sua raiz, pois é alguém falando, com algumas organizações de métrica. O rap quer passar mensagens e, para isso, é necessário aproximar ao máximo da fala.”

expression coming from the United States to talk about ‘themselves’, or at least about their non-contemporary fellow citizens.

The reinterpretation of the Generación del 27 by its protagonists and by the very documentary in its language could have also resorted to a form of a typically Andalusian song bearing some similarities in the way it is sang, the ‘cante jondo’. Moreover, the performing work has an equally outstanding relevance in flamenco. They have opted for the hip hop performance. It perhaps seemed to them that an experience with elements of a globalized culture would be more radical.

The venture of the Spanish young boys from the hip hop universe appears to configure the way that Homi Bhabha describes such a process:

It is not a mere appropriation or adaptation, it is a process through which individuals demand from cultures a review of their own systems of references, norms and values, by distancing their habitual or ‘inherent’ rules of transformation. Ambivalence and antagonism follow each act of cultural translation, for to negotiate with the ‘difference of the other’ reveals a radical insufficiency of our own systems of meaning and signification (BHABHA apud HALL, 2011, p. 71, emphasis added).

Evidently we are before a broadcasting and state production, consequently appropriating (co-opting, some people would say) the peripheral discourse, to approach an object – the group of 27 and its members – representative of a ‘marginality’ that is different from that experienced by those who, by the end of the 20th century, raise their voice, synthesize their songs, exhibit their dance or their graffiti in the hip hop movement.

It is not, of course, in the documentary case, about a spontaneous manifestation of artists in the argumentative universe of established institutions and norms. But, in any way, one cannot deny the finished ‘fact’ of the entanglement of both universes in the realization of the documentary we are addressing.

Thus we have, beyond the recited poems – only incidental on the film, in the voice of street anonyms –, the spoken songs, framing the documentary itself, which makes over (and makes up!) not only the path of the group of 27 but the process that in the last decades popularized as a form, making of, of the rap representation of the poem *Invitación a la vida*, by Rafael Laffón.

Along with the course that starts with the poetry fixed on the writing of the ‘Generación’ and comes to the rap of the group of Andalusian young boys there is a subjacent one, wide, of cultural nature, in

which, at the starting point, originators and protagonists in the last decades of the 20th century were not Spanish artists but black youths from New York’s suburbs. Their poetry was not academic but a composition of elements generally standing on the margin of the formal education system, committed to register their voice and presence. However, the ‘marginal’ movement ends up being incorporated by mainstream cultural manifestations and becomes a ‘globalized’ cultural phenomenon. That is how white Spanish youths equipped with a computer with graphic software and a recording studio appear involved in the production of a documentary. And the very pioneer professor of the Spanish hip hop movement previously mentioned is now the author of advertising works as well.

As a primary piece in the documentary, the famous photography in which the writers appear together in the Ateneo de Sevilla, of 1927, stands out, taken at the event held to honor Luis de Góngora – Andalusian too, baroque poet and playwright – for the three hundred years of his death. The admiration of all those creator youths was the basic motivation for them to constitute themselves as a group. Such iconographic milestone also appears subjected to the ‘intervention’ of the guys of 2007, as we will see.

The first part of the film is titled *La ruta del sueño* and starts with the image of a young guy busy on his computer in an atelier with ‘graffited’ walls; the background music is a rap song in Spanish. Then we see small handmade puppets made out of spray paint lids and cans. On the screen before the guy, the image of a wall covered with graffiti. As the film opens, with successive cuts, showing varied elements of the urban young culture of his time – caps with graffiti, details of the garments of another young boy getting closer to and entering the atelier, the off speaker reports: “Hace ochenta años un grupo de personas se propuso revolucionar las artes, la forma de vivir, la forma de cantar a la vida, la forma de divertirse” (BULLÓN, 2007, 1:18).

Both guys greet each other with a fist bump – when two people close their hands and the bones of the upper part of their fingers slightly touch – also followed by a brief hand shake. The guy that had just arrived unfolds to his friend a famous black and white picture of members of the Generación 27. The speaker continues: “Quisieron abrir el conocimiento y expandirlo por la tierra” (BULLÓN, 2007, 1:54).

The boys discuss how they will work on that photographic record, transforming it with new elements. From the speaker we then hear: “Les

gustaba la tradición, pero quisieron renovarla y ver lo que pasaba si se fundía con lo más contemporáneo” (BULLÓN, 2007, 2:06). And, as we follow the addition of computer graphics elements to the original image: “Quisieron compartir, equiparar, dar a todo el mundo las mismas oportunidades” (BULLÓN, 2007: 2:27).

After the gathering of materials (from a big pile of spray paint cans), a new segment of the documentary starts, titled “La vida en verso” (BULLÓN, 2007, 3:38). Subsequently, we see both guys walking down the city streets, in a course interspersed with several cuts in which the number 27 is shown, ludically located at the most varied places: from the illuminated sign displaying the temperature in degrees Celsius to price tags, passing by bus stops, house numbers. The number 27, therefore, marks the entire journey of these young boys until they meet with a third member of their group. At a certain moment, we see the fragment of an advertisement that reads ‘nueva generación’.

The off speaker then raises the questions: “Pero... ¿Qué sabemos de la Generación del 27? ¿Quiénes eran? ¿Qué hicieron?” (BULLÓN, 2007, 5:14). We followed the answers given on the streets and, apparently, in some cases, at a college campus by young people mostly. They range from an inexact guess like “[...] un grupo de literatos que se reunieron para celebrar lo que fue... no recuerdo... creo que el centenario de la muerte o el nacimiento de Góngora” (BULLÓN, 2007, 5:14), to some quite vague ones (like “[...] unos artistas que buscaban un mundo completamente diferente” – (BULLÓN, 2007, 5:14).

Didactically the following images and narration of the documentary clarify that the members of the group of 1927 “[...] e]ran poetas y mucho más. Escribían, sí; pero también jugaban, estudiaban y enseñaban. Hacían teatro y cine. Hicieron ciencia y también política. Dejaron muchas huellas” (BULLÓN, 2007, 6:58).

The next scenes show a girl consulting books by authors of the Generación del 27 in a bookstore. In one of the volumes through which she leafs we see the abovementioned famous picture of the group. Meanwhile, the off speaker references the appreciation of those writers for Góngora and lists fundamental names of the group (which also appear on a sign):

Rafael Alberti, Federico García Lorca, Pedro Salinas, Dámaso Alonso, Gerardo Diego. Pero también Luis Cernuda, Emilio Prados, Manuel Altolaguirre, Ignacio Sánchez Mejías [...] (BULLÓN, 2007, 8:18).

Several of these names can be seen in signs, christening streets and other public places – as the documentary shows as well –, although many people that pass through these locations cannot say exactly who those personalities were.

The volume lowers little by little, with ‘María Zambrano’, ‘Miguel Hernández’ and, almost inaudible (‘saved’ by the sign) ‘Salvador Dalí’ emerges. (BULLÓN, 2007, 8:36). Started by the surrealism in the plastic arts with Dalí, the film then continues with the reference to another artistic manifestation other than literary cultivated by the group: music (the ‘cante jondo’, for instance). Ahead we have: “Componían versos para ser cantados. Más allá de la rima o la métrica que, a fin de cuenta, sirven para hacer música. Para componer canciones” (BULLÓN, 2007, 8:53). It is the opportunity to go back to the hip hop group of young boys, the ‘protagonists’ of the documentary. They are now all in a studio discussing questions related to their way of treating verses, defining what they understand by rap: “El rap es un deporte, ¿no? Es una competición. Todo tiene que rimar; cuanto más, mejor” (BULLÓN, 2007, 9:06). (It is worth noting the importance of bodily work, without which there is no sport).

We then hear an extract from ‘Nocturno miedo’, poem by Vicente Alexandre (as the subtitles inform us as well), half spoken and half sang by the rapper. The way it is recited is remarkable, rhythmically stressing the starts of verses, and evidences a peculiar and expressive manner to arrange breathing it self (BULLÓN, 2007, 9:38).

The next poem is *Invitación a la vida*, by Rafael Laffón, recited in full by the famous Spanish MC Zatu (pseudonym for Saturnino Rey García, also known by other nicknames, like ‘El Ingeniero’). It is introduced by some kind of interjections game – ‘¡A-já! ¡Yeoo!’ – a way through which the rapper establishes a contact with his audience and starts his show (BULLÓN, 2007, 10:31).

The ‘sang-spoken’ performance about the poem advances more markedly and unequivocally rap, in a faster succession of verses that barely allows breathing – which is expressively highlighted and promotes in this case an identity of form and content, since Laffón’s poem claims for an hedonist and desperate enjoyment of life. Such a form of ‘singing-speaking’ with interrupted breathing seems to mimic, in the rapper’s body, what the sound equipment of the DJ produces in the form of scratching. His last verses precisely warn that “¡No hay más que al fin de los caminos, sobre una lápida, la cruz!” (BULLÓN, 2007, 10:33). As we will see, at present, it may be considered an essay.

A new part of the documentary begins, “El poder de la imagen” (BULLÓN, 2007, 11:11). The young boys walk (one of them pulls a bicycle) through an unpaved way; at the back we see a long wall covered with graffiti; they reach the ‘meeting point’, by a supporting column of a bridge (equally colored by graffiti). Other guys join them and prepare paints. They start to cover the previous painting, preparing the background for a new intervention. The painting itself begins, which will be reproduced there, transformed, the image of the group of 27, accompanied by the sign Generación del 27 in a typical graffiti style. The soundtrack is a rap song with the typical scratching (a back-and-forth movement on the vinyl, as if one is trying to scratch it).

At this point, a backdrop displays pictures of the times of the members of the group of 27, parts of films, and the off speaker states:

Tan cerca de las vanguardias, ¿cómo no iban estos poetas a dejarse atrapar por las nuevas artes que estaban revolucionando el mundo? La imagen se movía, se fijaba, se saltaban todos los patrones y todos los ciudadanos del mundo comenzaban a soñar despiertos (BULLÓN, 2007, 12:10).

During this speech, the soundtrack is typically hip hop, with a well marked rhythmic beat and vinyl scratchings.

A new image, now with the counterpoint by rapper Zatu: “[...] de todo lo que hay establecido y tú intentas representarte y hacer tus cosas dentro de este mundo e intentar cambiar esas cosas [...]” (BULLÓN, 2007, 12:30).

The documentary goes on – once again, with the iconography of the years around 1927 – focusing the cinema and the plastic arts. Then, when addressing pioneerism as a common trait of all artists in the group, it points out:

Esta vocación pionera del 27, su condición de vanguardia, está arraigada en lo popular, en lo que se considera más auténtico, en la tradición, en la raíz (BULLÓN, 2007, 13:07).

Moments ahead, amidst speeches by previously introduced anonyms interviewed on the streets, we see and hear a woman reciting an excerpt from *La casada infiel*, by Lorca.

The documentary then stresses the role of technological advances of that time:

La técnica también es arte. Son los ojos del artista los que cambian el mundo. El futurismo canta el automóvil, el surrealismo nos libera de nuestros fantasmas, la medicina nos cambia el concepto de alma. La vida es pura magia (BULLÓN, 2007, 14:19).

In a new sequence – now longer – (BULLÓN, 2007, 15:06, our italics), based on testimonies collected from anonyms in the 21st century, we hear the way that they define what art would be:

Un disco de música, como un equipo de fútbol [...] sobre todo como arte divertido, algo sin pretensiones, hay gente que dice que un gol de ‘Ronaldinho’ es arte [...] el hecho que pongan un retrete en el medio de un museo, eso no lo entiendo, por ejemplo, como una manifestación artística, pero si hay gente que lo valora como tal, pues me parece muy bien [etc.].

The climactic speech is the rapper’s:

Yo no tengo arte, porque meto un trompo en la pared, para hacer una estantería, y sale agua por la pared, por la tubería, y viene uno que es un artista, y con una bolita así, y me lo arregla; y yo digo ‘es un artista’ (BULLÓN, 2007, 16:56, our italics).

We see the return of one of the guys earlier shown in testimonies of our time, now with a clown nose and reciting an excerpt from “Muerte de unos zapatos”, by Jorge Guillén, while a few notes are played in a small string instrument (BULLÓN, 2007, 17:17).

The next part of the documentary is titled ‘Cambiar el mundo’. It starts by showing the young graffiti artists discussing and practicing their intervention about the picture of the ‘del 27’ on the bridge column, accompanied by a rap song with scratchings in the background. The off speaker, few moments later: “Una vez de libertar las palabras, las imágenes y las músicas, ¿cómo no iban a tenerla también las personas?” (BULLÓN, 2007, 18:52). We see images of somebody hanging a poster of the ‘La Barraca’ theatre company, in addition to Lorca’s arrival, wearing dungarees with its logo. The audio continues: “Además de vivir la realidad, los del 27 fueron capaces de imaginar un ideal de sociedad. Más justa. Más igual. Más solidaria” (BULLÓN, 2007, 19:02). It underscores the social role of the generation in favor of education, of the publicizing of different arts in the most remote places of Andalucía, of the equality of rights between men and women.

After the search for new testimonies on the streets, the documentary finishes with the reappearance of MC Zatu, now in the ‘final’ version for *Invitación a la vida*, which, reiterated in the film, constitutes to him some kind of emblem. The text of the original poem *Invitación a la vida* reads:

Pasan las aguas por el cauce
y no terminan de pasar;
mas si de un agua no bebimos
nunca aquel agua tornará.

Y mientras corre el tiempo y llega
la hora feliz que imaginamos,
se va la vida, huyendo siempre,
cual se va el agua entre las manos...

Gocemos hasta marchitarlas
todas las flores del camino,
ya que el dolor jamás perdona
ni un paso de nuestro destino.

Gocemos la vida, gocemos...
¿Quién del mañana gozará?
Gocemos hasta embriagarnos
con una absurda saciedad.

Y aunque de luz se abraza el alma,
presto vayamos a la luz...
¡No hay más que al fin de los caminos,
sobre una lápida, la cruz! (LAFFÓN, 1921, p. 12).

The verses of *Invitación a la vida* present a strong regularity of metric and rhythm. The poem is divided into octosyllabic verses and each fourth syllable is stressed, producing a nearly-steady 'metronome'. The only exception is found at the very center of the poem, when, completing the enjambement of 'ya que el dolor jamás perdona', we have 'ni un paso de nuestro destino'. We can assume that this exceptional 'paso' formally corresponds to the exception of the verse with the central stressing in the fifth syllable. In any case, it seems implicit to say that the conjunction 'ni' tends to sound so weakly that it barely compromises a verse that is overall quite regular – we have there three anapaests (metrical feet with two unstressed or short syllables followed by a long one), if we opt for an analysis by feet.

There are rhymes in the even verses of each stanza. In the first stanza, between 'pasar' and 'tornará' there is a 'toante' type of rhyme (rhyme that matches only vowels). The same happens with the following ones, between 'imaginamos' and 'manos', then 'gozará' and 'saciedad', respectively. With 'camino' and 'destino' (third stanza), we have perfect rhymes, just as it happens with 'luz' and 'cruz', by the end of the poem.

Having done this very brief analysis of the formal traits of the poem we can outline some of the most remarkable characteristics in its realization as a spoken song, rap, artist Zatu's performance.

As it can be seen and heard in the documentary the rhymes fit well the interpretation in rap. In addition, integrated into the musical basis that sets the rhythm, the poem merges with the gestures and verbal formulas that are typical of rap.

It is part of the 'ceremony' – and MC means exactly Master of Ceremonies – to draw attention to

oneself and to the important message he or she has to send. This time the MC situates his performance temporally, 'dos-zero-zero-siete', and his condition as a member of a group, SFDK (initially meaning 'Straight from Da Kranny'; then it had its name changed to 'Siempre Fuertes de Konciencia'), and appeals to his 'hermano' audience with a '¡oyelo!', inviting them to listen to a 'texto de Rafael Laffón', *Invitación a la vida*.

Still about the figure of the MC, Reyes-Sánchez (2007, p. 126) explains:

El MC en un principio era una figura de acompañamiento, de apoyo al DJ, pero poco a poco se fue haciendo cada vez más importante hasta el punto de que hoy en día el DJ ocupa en la mayoría de los casos un papel secundario, dejando todo el protagonismo al MC. El MC también es egocéntrico y narcisista, las letras de un MC, a parte de ser auténticas crónicas de poetas urbanos, salvo excepciones, suelen ser un canto al auto bombo y exaltación de su persona utilizando muy frecuentemente un lenguaje soez y un tanto agresivo.

As already stated above, the content of the original poem, which claims for the urgency of an extreme hedonist living ('hasta embriagarnos / con una absurda saciedad', 'Y aunque de luz se abraza el alma / preso vayamos a la luz', etc.), corresponds to the way that Zatu chants it, almost losing his breath, adding to the original dimension of the poem the scratchings of the art of his time.

The slight variation in the above mentioned rhythmic scheme of the poem is compensated by the performer's gestures, voice, bodily work.

The set of procedures adopted by the group of young protagonists of the documentary reminds those of a creative transposition – using Roman Jakobson's terminology, which makes it unnecessary to resort to the posterior notion of 'transcreation' proposed by Haroldo de Campos. Jakobson refers to it as the only possible way to deal with poetry:

Poetry, by definition, is untranslatable. Only creative transposition is possible: either intralingual transposition – from one poetic shape into another, or interlingual transposition – from one language into another, or finally intersemiotic transposition – from one system of signs into another, e.g., from verbal art into music, dance, cinema or painting (JAKOBSON, 1985, p. 72)⁵.

The poetic work that Zatu presents (interprets, performs), though in a foreign language, that of rap,

⁵ '[a] poesia, por definição, é intraduzível. Só é possível a transposição criativa: transposição intralingual – de uma forma poética a outra –, transposição interlingual ou, finalmente, transposição inter-semiótica – de um sistema de signos para outro, por exemplo, da arte verbal para a música, a dança, o cinema ou a pintura'.

does not appear translated ‘inter-linguistically’. It operates, at the same time, as an intra-linguistic and inter-semiotic transposition. The process of transatlantic cultural exchange creates, in the rap’s performance about *Invitación a la vida*, a new dynamics, and there the language is only part of a broader complex that involves the peculiar way that, in this case, sounds and words articulate, phrases join or separate and are recomposed in the MC’s interpretation, which cannot do without the formulas to which we alluded above.

The complex operation that converts the printed letter of the original poem into a spinning of vinyls manipulated by a hip hop-like voice, gestures and attitude, more than (re)reading and re(interpreting) the work by the young artists of 27 gives evidence that, revalorizing origins, it remains up to date and updatable, ‘invitación’ to successive new performances.

Conclusion

In 2007, the production of the video that honors the poets of ‘27 gives voice to graffiti artists, to the MC and to the interviewed public so they comment on what they understand by art, on the diversity of the cultural manifestations they know or produce and so they say what they think about the famous generation of Spanish artists. We have heard their voices, and most of the times the strong Andalusian accent is very clear – province where the video’s producer is located and from where most of the honored people came from, a fact that seems, somehow, to echo the popular voices that the honored artists brought into their productions.

However, it is also remarkable that the off voice, the one narrating and guiding the TV viewer, uses the predominant standard variant, Castilian, also allied to a documental and didactical narrative tone. In this way, even though the interviewed people, whether artists or not, conquer a space for expression, the voice that unites them, organizes the images and makes room for the other ones is normative and institutional.

Rapper Zatu, one of the stars of the production, seems to remember Rafael Laffón’s name in special, just as seven years earlier Miguel Cruz Giráldez had done, giving visibility to a less popular name of the movement and seeking to carry out a movement for the appreciation of that which is more peripheral – though today these artists are so famous that they have their names written on street signs –, as it is the case of the production itself. However, in the documentary as whole there is a predominant tone according to which

both the generation of ‘27 and the group of artists of 2007 end up being guided and supported by official institutions so they take their place in new streets and conquer further popular recognition.

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