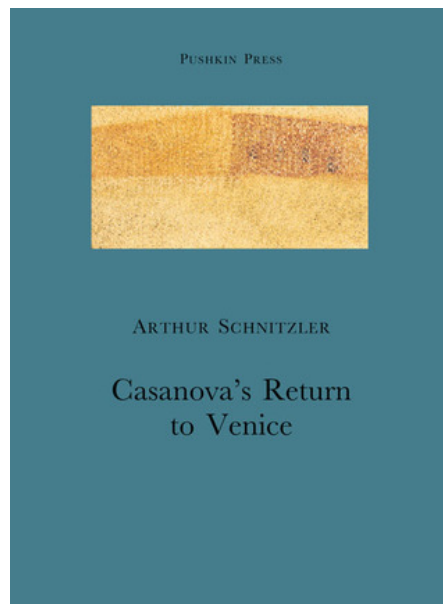




Casanova's Return to Venice

Arthur Schnitzler , Ilsa Barea (Translation)

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ONE OF SCHNITZLER'S most poignant evocations of the passing of time and the ironies of sentiment and love, Casanova's Return to Venice tells the story of an ageing Casanova's desperate desire to return to the city he truly loves after a life of exile, a desire which is contrasted with his still libidinous, sensuous yet weary pursuit of women, money and prestige.

Casanova's Return to Venice Details

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Padmin says

Valeva una rilettura

Incipit mozzafiato e il resto viene di conseguenza.

“A cinquantat  anni Casanova, da tempo non pi  spinto a vagare per il mondo dal giovanile piacere dell'avventura, ma dall'inquietudine dell'avanzante vecchiaia, fu preso da una cos  intensa nostalgia per la sua citt  natale, Venezia, che cominci  a girarle intorno simile a un uccello che vien gi  a morire calando da libere altezze in sempre pi  strette volute”.

Frabe says

Giacomo Casanova, gi  grande seduttore, avventuriero, uomo d'affari, diplomatico, scrittore e giocatore,   ormai vecchio e dopo tante peregrinazioni si accinge a tornare nella sua Venezia. Stimolato dalla giovane Marcolina, bella e intelligente ma poco sensibile al suo fascino in declino, deve ricorrere all'inganno per averla: andr  che... Eventualmente occorre leggere per sapere, ma si pu  anche soprassedere: il romanzo   vecchio (1917) e, pure lui come Casanova, alquanto provato.

Robert says

A lovely book. A meditation on the nature of being, on the subject of aging, on the question of identity. A celebrated man wants nothing more than to return home. Exhausted, in every sense of the word, he is sustained by his illusions but not deluded by them. While waiting for permission to return, he encounters an old acquaintance who invites him to stay at his House in the Country. What Schnitzler manages in this slender book, is a retelling of Casanova's life story, over the span of 48 hours. It is, in a sense, a life in miniature. I recommend it to anyone fascinated by the life of Casanova or simply in a fine story about character and fate.

Benja says

Another Schnitzler book I read while looking for Traumnovelle. I liked this better than La Ronde. Casanova as a pathetic old man looking to make a comeback is a great source for both humor and drama. On the nature of sexuality and its contrived relationship with the human psyche, Schnitzler was clearly ahead of his time.

Hulyac n says

“?nsanlar,kad nlar ve erkekler  zerindeki g c  art k yoktu.Bir ?eyi hat rlayacak olsa,kelimeleri,sesi ve

gözleri bundan kaç?n?yordu hemen.Varl???ndan yoksundu art?k.Onun zaman? art?k geçmi?ti.”

Casanova hani o bildi?imiz h?zl? hayata sahip,kad?nlar? yoldan ç?karman?n tek gayesi oldu?una inanan adam,25 y?l?n ard?ndan Viyana’ya dönme yolundadır ta ki eski bir dost ile kar??la?ana dek.O dostun evinde ise kendisiyle yüzle?mesine sebep olacak bir kad?n ile tan???r.

Kad?na bak?? aç?s?, özgüvenini yitiren erkek taraf?ndan nas?l de?i?ir?Bu novellada sorunun cevab?n? yakalamak mümkün.Her ne kadar rahats?z edici noktalar olsa da..

Liedzeit says

Sehr schöne Geschichten, speziell Der Tod eines Junggesellen. Der läßt nach seinen Tod seine Freunde zusammentreffen und teilt ihnen in einem Brief mit, daß er mit allen ihren Frauen ein Verhältnis hatte. Jeder der Freunde denkt an seine Frau und entschließt sich, die Sache zu ignorieren. Der Dichter unter ihnen will den Brief zu seinen Papieren legen, auf daß seine Frau ihn nach seinem Tod finden möge und ihn für einen Großen, Edlen halte. Die Casanova-Geschichte trifft genau den richtigen Ton. Fräulein Else mit dem berühmten inneren Monolog.

Lorenzo says

Cosa succede al mito quando spuntano le rughe?

Giacomo Casanova è nel Pantheon dei più grandi seduttori di ogni epoca. se anche solo la metà di quanto scritto nelle memorie fosse vera, al confronto un certo George che vive nel Comasco sarebbe un'educanda. Un nome immortale, che evoca avventure - galanti e non- , fughe rocambolesche, intrighi; difficile invece associarlo a rughe, capelli bianchi, denti traballanti.

È il 1917 quando Schnitzler inizia la stesura de "Il ritorno di Casanova". Ha 53 anni e l'impero asburgico che conosce è un gigante dalle gambe di creta, ormai prossimo al tracollo nel fango delle trincee. Il suo mondo sta per finire.

Non stupisce allora che il Casanova messo in scena da Schnitzler sia vecchio, povero, stanco. Incidentalmente ha anche lui 53 anni. Il brillante avventuriero ha imboccato la china del declino, sostituito da un livoroso randagio impegnato in una impari disputa filosofica con Voltaire senza che questi ne sia al corrente. Fa ancora colpo sulle donne, ma solo quelle di età non più verde; fatica con le giovani, su cui il suo mito ha ben poca presa.

Il problema è che l'ego del grande seduttore non può accontentarsi di placide milf, ma richiede prede ben più ardue come nutrimento. È quindi inevitabile che il Nostro si innamori di Marcolina, mentre attende la revoca dell'esilio presso un amico (di cui è stato sia benefattore che cornificatore). Lei è giovane, colta, bellissima; almeno in apparenza si tratta di una creatura di puro intelletto. Respinto con perdite, il vecchio libertino comincia quindi a muovere le pedine per l'ultima malefatta, in cerca del suggello per la sua uscita dalle scene.

Schnitzler racchiude in 150 pagine un'amara riflessione sulla vecchiaia e i bilanci di vita che questa costringe a stilare. Persino Casanova non è immune dal rimpianto, ma si rammarica per il tempo perduto e le occasioni non colte. Invecchiare significa perdere la forza, la bellezza e il potere che da queste ne deriva; non sempre si acquista saggezza. Il processo di accettazione del declino è impervio, talora conosce passaggi a vuoto: emblematica la scena del duello, in cui l'energia della giovinezza soccombe divorata da un anziano e indifferente leone, a cui poco importa dello scampolo di vita residuo.

Casanova desidera solo fare ritorno in patria, per chiudere il cerchio di una lunga e faticosa esistenza. Pur di ottenere il rimpatrio si presterà all'umiliazione suprema, piegandosi a spiare i sediziosi per conto del regime veneziano. L'uomo che ha incarnato l'avventura più sfrenata diventa strumento di conservazione. Un ritorno alle radici tanto desiderato quanto vano. La rivoluzione incombe, anticipata dagli scritti dell'odiato Voltaire: il mondo del protagonista, come quello dell'autore, è ormai prossimo al tramonto.

Morale della favola: non importa quanto tu sia figo, alla fine diventerai vecchio e non ti cagherà più nessuno.

Se esistessero le mezze stelle, sarebbe un 4,5. Consigliato.

Gabril says

“A cinquantatré anni Casanova, da tempo non più spinto a vagare per il mondo dal giovanile piacere dell'avventura, ma dall'inquietudine dell'avanzante vecchiaia, fu preso da una così intensa nostalgia per la sua città natale, Venezia, che cominciò a girarle intorno simile a un uccello che vien giù a morire calando da libere altezze in sempre più strette volute.” Ecco il sontuoso inizio del racconto di Schnitzler, con il suo passo mesto e danzante.

Casanova sta invecchiando e non è facile da accettare l'inevitabile declino per un uomo che ha fatto dell'avventura e del rischio il suo stile di vita. Ma il ricordo del lussureggiante passato si contrappone inesorabilmente e di continuo alla miserabile condizione del presente. Non più ricco, non più giovane, non più seducente...o almeno non più per la bellissima e intelligente Marcolina, il nuovo oggetto del desiderio che l'impenitente seduttore incontra all'inizio del suo viaggio.

La sua brama è (ancora) così potente che Casanova è disposto a commettere le peggiori bassezze pur di raggiungere l'agognata meta. Ma tutto ciò che un tempo era motivo di vanto e di onore: l'ebbrezza invereconda, lo sprezzo del pericolo e il temerario inganno, ordito ai danni di chiunque e incurante dei cadaveri lasciati per via, ora appare soltanto un sordido e vano tentativo di scambiare l'inganno con la verità. Che si fa strada, invece, irrompendo dalla notte e squarciando le sue tenebre: rivelando al grigio chiarore dell'alba la più squallida, terribile verità.

Racconto della solitudine e del disinganno, emblema della fine di un mondo felice (l'Austria felix ha appena imboccato la strada del suo declino) Il ritorno di Casanova narra da un lato il declino malinconico di un personaggio circondato di aura mitica e dall'altro la prospettiva intima dell'angoscia e della rivolta, il problema della consapevolezza e del rifiuto a farne strumento di opaca rassegnazione. Ne emerge il ritratto di un eroe negativo di tempra sublime, poiché sublime indubbiamente è la qualità di questa narrazione.

Francisco Paniagua says

Los últimos días del veneciano ilustre cuyo nombre es sinónimo de seducción y aventura: un reencuentro con lo que significa envejecer, resignarse a la incapacidad física del cuerpo y que nuestras glorias sean ajenas a una nueva generación... Todo esto contado por el introductor del diálogo interno en la literatura alemana, Arthur Schnitzler.

Paolo Nardi says

<http://speloncalibro.blogspot.it/2010...>

Tim Pendry says

Written in 1918 and usually translated as 'Casanova's Homecoming' (a title which better captures the tone of the story), this novella by Arthur Schnitzler is written in prose that, as the useful translator's note at the end states, is 'immaculate, lucid and elegant'.

The story is a simple one - Casanova is late middle-aged, no longer at the peak of his powers and finds himself in Mantua drawn back to his Venice after an enforced absence of over two decades and prepared to do almost anything to return home.

The rest of the story is a picture from within of an amoral individualist within an aristocratic 'shame culture' and prepared to do anything to meet his desires, even if they are waning and certainly not caring whether they are destructive.

The story grips as a psychological portrait until about two thirds of the way through when we are forcibly reminded that Schnitzler was primarily a dramatist and the plot becomes a theatrical stratagem.

This stratagem gets the story where the author wants it to be taken but it lessens the psychological tension and moves us into a literary formalism that loses us some what has been gained in the previous 120 pages.

The momentum is lost, the inner life of Casanova becomes that of any other wilful sociopath and the story ends somewhat peremptorily though not in a way that requires me to offer a spoiler.

Still, the novella is well worth reading for the early insights into the mentality of an aging sex-obsessive whose powers are waning and for superb story telling that engages us in the place and the time.

Eddie Watkins says

A bit of a letdown after Dream Story, though well plotted and structured and a very enjoyable period piece.

Casanova is fading and wants to return to Venice, but gets distracted on the way by his inveterate lusts. The object of his lust is an interesting character in the form of a beautiful young woman who claims chastity, being more turned on by mathematics than men. In Casanova's pursuit of her there's an interesting subtext (as I read it) of him being not only too old but out-dated as well as the Age of Enlightenment gains control of people's minds. Casanova does what he can to fight it by trying to compose an anti-Voltaire tract and by discoursing on the power of cabala over applied mathematics, but it all goes nowhere. He's just an old man whose world and time has passed.

But then, beyond the confines of the end of this little book, Casanova does go on to write his famous memoirs. So he still had quite a bit left in him afterall.

Frank says

AS greift wieder nach dem ur-architypischen österreichischen Thema, dem Sexualität, diesmal in Hinblick der Selbsttäuschung eines alternden Lüstlings.

AS schrieb eine Menge und wir sehen hier wie er die Volumen vollbracht. Obzwar sauber geschrieben, es haftet unverkennbar etwas schablonenhaft an dieser Novelle.

Dies war meine zweite Erfahrung mit AS. Ich denke nicht, es wird eine Dritte nötig sein.

Tony Sullivan says

Ageing, weary, his money gone, Casanova is travelling to Venice, to ask its overlords to forgive his past misadventures there, so that he can live out the rest of his days in "the city of his youth... enshrined in all the charms of memory".

He is no longer handsome. "His power over his fellows, over women no less than over men, had vanished. Only where he evoked memories could his words, his voice, his glance, still conjure... His day was done!" But such self-admissions surge up against his narcissism, creating great turmoil in his heart. Intellectually he fancies himself the equal or superior to Voltaire, against whom he is preparing a polemic. But he remains addicted to sexual conquest and can't settle calmly into the life of the mind.

A chance meeting on the road leads him into the lives of a group of local people, creating a forum in which the tensions of his inner life play out. There is his amiable and generous host Olivo; his hostess Amalia, hot to resume an old liaison with Casanova; their 13 year old daughter. There is a playful aristocratic Marchesa and her husband the Marchese, who is enraged at being openly cuckolded by the coolly insolent young soldier Lorenzi. There is the calm and lovely young Marcolina, focused on intellectual pursuits. This group spend two days and nights together, in gardens, bedrooms, at dinners and at the gambling table.

Spoiler alert

The charms of Amalia are stale to Casanova, who tries to put her off by emphasising his own physical decay. It is Marcolina who he must have: Marcolina, who holds the youth and beauty that he has lost. She offers

him a dignified friendship across the generational and gender divide, with gentle intellectual sparring between equals, but she recoils at every glimpse of his lust. In fact she is sending him into a confused frenzy of despair, self-deceiving hope, and desperate calculation.

At their introduction, Casanova and Lorenzi “exchanged glances of cold aloofness that seemed to offer assurances of mutual dislike”; but moments later Casanova was staggered by the sense that his own youthful persona stood before him. He is temporarily soothed when he learns that Marcolina has rejected Lorenzi’s offer of marriage, but when he discovers they have a secret relationship the blood rushes to his head.

In the end, it is only by literally taking over Lorenzi’s identity - impersonating him in the dark - that Casanova beds Marcolina. But this “return to youth” is pitiful: when she realises what has happened she feels loathing and disgust, then deep sorrow. His second return to youth, in the form of Venice, is also pathetic: he is only allowed back as a police spy, reporting on hot headed young men of the kind that he once was.

Casanova also manages to rape Amalia’s 13 year old daughter. The girl does not show any distress during or after the event, rather she is excited and conspiratorial. Casanova cynically reflects that he managed to have grandmother, mother and daughter. The incident seems designed to throw further light on his character, but it may overshadow the rest of the story for many modern readers.

Most of the text is a close observation of Casanova’s state of mind. During the climatic events in Olivo’s house it shifts style, and feels more like one of Schnitzler’s plays recast into novelistic form.

Czarny Pies says

Schnitzler is clearly a very skilled writer. He very successfully recreates the tone of libertine era and specifically of Casanova's writing.

While I enjoyed Casanova's memoirs in places I simply found Schnitzler's work to be morally repugnant. In this novel Casanova sleeps with a grandmother, her daughter and finally her thirteen year old granddaughter. All three appear to enjoy the experience.

Casanova faces two problems in this novel. The first is that after a life of wandering, he wishes to return to his native Venice but cannot because he is a convicted felon and will be imprisoned if he is not pardoned before returning to city. The second is that as he is aging fewer women want to sleep with him. Casanova is particularly infuriated by one young lady who is doing advanced studies in mathematics and is a supporter of Voltaire. When he realizes that she is repelled by him physically he resorts to trickery to achieve his goal. Shortly afterwards, he kills her handsome young lover in a duel.

Casanova also achieves his second goal as a friend of his brokers a deal whereby Casa will receive a pardon and a salary from the State of Venice in exchange for which Casanova must spy on the known progressives in the city. The terms are clearly dishonourable but recognizing that he has no choice, Casanova accepts.

Being inside the skin of such an odious person is a difficult and unsettling experience. However, the mere fact that a work makes the reader uncomfortable does not necessarily mean that it is great literature. This work is simply nasty and nothing more.
