

"Radici", "roots" in English, is the fourth studio album of the Italian singer and songwriter Francesco Guccini. It may be considered F. Guccini's most important album, also for the inclusion of his masterpiece "La locomotiva", maybe his most known and famous among his songs.

In the present essay I'm going to focus my attention on the song "La Canzone dei dodici mesi" because its lyrics are strongly influenced by T.S. Eliot's poetic production, in particular by "The Waste Land" and "Gerontion".

My analysis starts from the structure of the song. F. Guccini's lyric has the same structure in every stanza telling of the passing of time, month by month. The stanzas show the cyclical months follow each other and some of them seem to take inspiration from T.S. Eliot's "The Burial of the Dead", when the poet writes about a season and then another one completing the yearly seasonal cycle.

The most important and direct reference to T.S. Eliot refers to April. Indeed, F. Guccini sings: "Con giorni lunghi al sonno dedicati il dolce aprile viene, quali segreti scopri in te il poeta che ti chiamò crudele, ma nei tuoi giorni è bello addormentarsi dopo fatto l'amore come la terra dorme nella notte dopo un giorno di sole". Let's proceed from the "dolce aprile", "sweet April" in English. With the expression, F. Guccini confirms Geoffrey Chaucer's line from the *Canterbury Tales*, "*April is the sweetest month*". The same Chaucer's line is totally overturned by T.S. Eliot, when he writes that "April is the cruellest month". This pushes the songwriter to wonder what kind of secrets T.S. Eliot discovered when he wrote *The Burial of the Dead*, to make of April the "cruellest".

In traditional poetry, spring has always had a positive connotation. It was seen as the regeneration of nature and it was usually connoted by flowers and the rebirth of other natural elements. In this case even flowers have a negative connotation because they are violet and thus recall the violet decorations of priests' clothes during funerals. It is clear that T.S. Eliot was going to break with tradition, considering spring at the same level of a desolated and isolated human spirit. It is also important to say that spring means also "zampillo", an additional connotation that deals with life, energy, movement. All in all they are all images in strong opposition to the sterility of the human spirit, the main theme of the poem.

Speaking of sterility, it is useful to analyse the second part of F. Guccini's lyrics about April. "Addormentarsi dopo fatto l'amore come la terra dorme nella notte dopo un giorno di sole". "Fare l'amore" is the English "to make love" and it can obviously be seen as the opposite of sterility. Besides, F. Guccini recalls the importance of the ground, personified in something that sleeps in the night after a sunny day. Two aspects are worth being considered: the first one is the personification of a natural element, used by T.S. Eliot in his "The Burial of the Dead" with his reference to the snow; the second one is the theme of the land that plays an enormous relevance in T.S. Eliot's poetry, so much so that the title of one of his most important short poems is "The Waste Land", where the waste land is compared to human spirit.

Still considering the condition of the land, in *The Burial of the Dead* sterility is represented also through the image of drought roots from which nothing can be born. It is not a case that, as I said before, F. Guccini's album is called *Roots*.

One more reference to T.S. Eliot is "nasce Cristo la tigre", obviously in December. T.S. Eliot refers to Jesus Christ as a tiger in his poem "Gerontion", a dramatic monologue with a strong religious meaning that shares several features with The Waste Land and other T. Eliot's poems, features such as the theme of nature, sterility in opposition to rain and the overlapping of different levels of times, following Henri Bergson's new conceptions.

In conclusion, I can say that there's a strong influence of T.S. Eliot's work in Guccini's "La canzone dei dodici mesi", but also in other Italian singers-songwriters such as Fabrizio De André in his "Via della Povertà". My intention was to demonstrate that the intertextuality is really active not only in literary texts, both in fiction and poetry, but also in music, which I consider my favourite art expression.