

Paul Sage



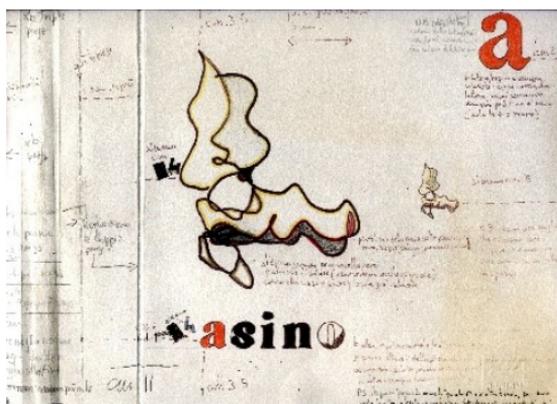
Chunks of life

Excerpts from mc7858attitude.blog

Accra 2019 

A as ABC Book

11 September 2011



I started the ABC Book (expression much less effective than *Abbecedario*) for my cousins' sons.

Then I added the French definitions for my nephews and my goddaughter.

And finally, I updated it in three languages (not in English,

unfortunately, but with Spanish addition) for little Paula.

I used some of my drawings, sometimes widening them with the Russian zoom lens I used for printing photos (I had got it in exchange for my collection of Tex strips, but that is another story).

The job was not simple, I passed many hours on the desk; when I started, I did not use the computer but pencils and an Indian ink pen.

Later on, I prepared an electronic version; smaller.

You may find it here:

<http://ilmiolibro.kataweb.it/schedalibro.asp?id=128967>

B as Benjamin Molise

14 September 2011

Benjamin Moloise was a South African poet who was hanged by the apartheid regime.

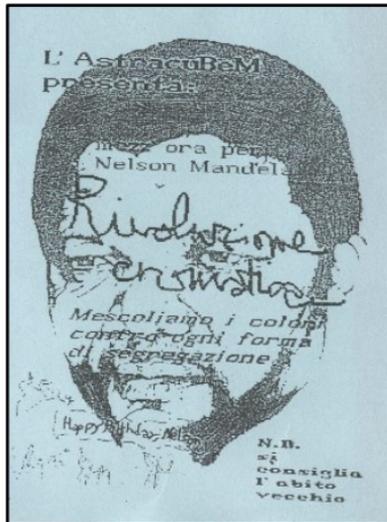
We thought he was the right person to whom dedicate the transcultural association we wanted to create, and the ASTRACUBEM was born.



We arrived soon on the pages of the new newspaper: *La Repubblica*, protesting for the

representative of ANC (at the end of the 80s, Mandela was far to be freed). We then tried with the Israeli Embassy and PLO, but again we couldn't debate.

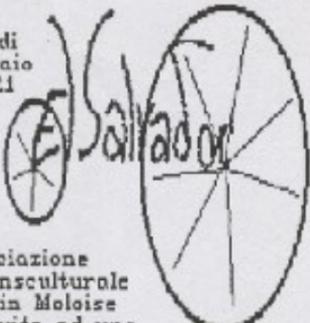
We had to restrain ourselves to less complicated activities: a celebration for Nelson Mandela seventieth birthday,



a tombola to collect money for
sending bicycles in El Salvador ,

Diamo ruote ai campesinos
de El Salvador

Venerdi
8 gennaio
alle 21
.....

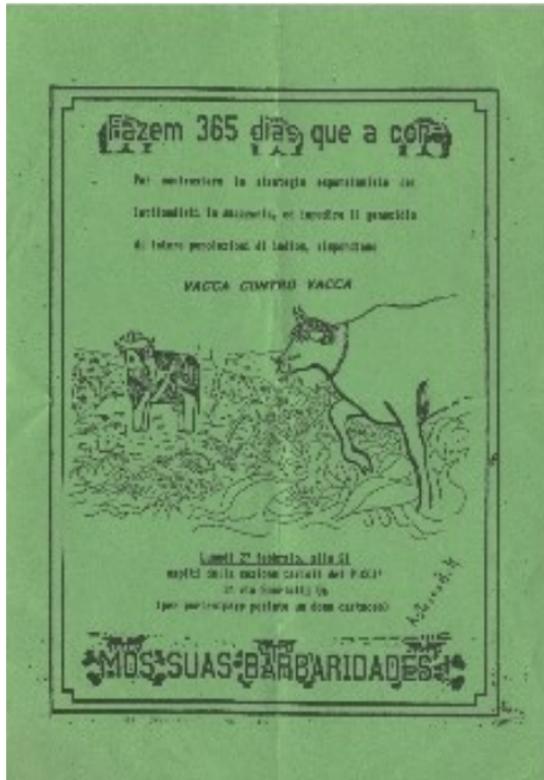


.....
L'Associazione
transculturale
Benjâmin Moloise
vi invita ad una
TOMBOLA INTERNAZIONALISTA
per finanziare la
mobilita' sociale di
alcune individualita'
rurali de El Salvador

LE REGOLE:

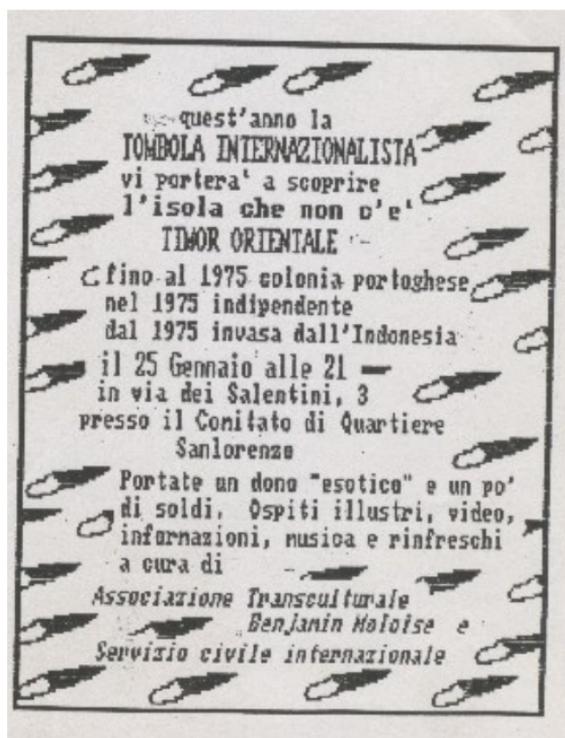
- * ogni invitato offre un premio
per la tombola
- * l'Astracudem offre musica,
rinfreschi e cotillons
- * ogni cartella prevede una
offerta "libera"

cows in the Amazonia,

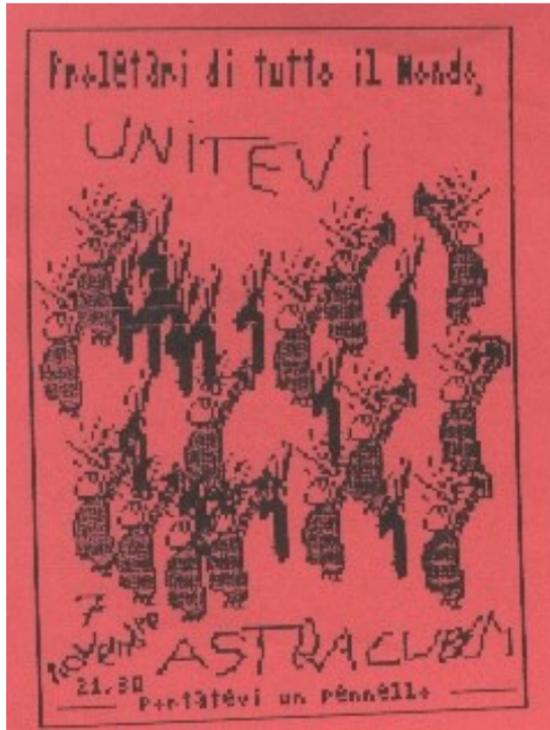


Chunks of life

and for the independence of Timor
Este



After 1989, also celebrations (and even a movie) to remember the October revolution.





7 Novembre 1990
LA FESTA CONTINUA

L'Associazione Transculturale Benjamin Moloise festeggia anche quest'anno (ed è rimasta probabilmente l'ultima a farlo) l'anniversario della Rivoluzione.

Nel corso della cerimonia fra musica, cori e vodka a fiumi, verrà trasmesso per la prima volta:

TUTTI I POTERE AI SOVIET

reportage esclusivo con immagini originali della presa del Palazzo d'inverno e intervista all'autore.

Sono invitati Comuniste e Comunisti,
 Rivoluzionari di ambo i sessi, Curiosi.
 Sono multivisti i destri di ogni genere.
 Quasi d'obbligo un contributo alle spese.

*Venerdì 7 novembre, dalle 21,30
 al Centro Sociale Occupato Alice
 nella città via Andrea Doria, 60*



Et voila the group photo



C as *Cravates d'Afrique*

6 November 2011

Cravates d'Afrique stemmed from a double challenge.

During a travel in Burkina Faso I liked very much the local materials (*les pagnes*) produced in the country of the incorruptible human beings as a tool to disseminate political and development programmes.

Those materials were very coloured and brilliant and it was quite difficult to employ them properly.

On the other hand, I started working in an organization where I was required to wear a tie, and I had no one.

Therefore, I searched the Yellow Pages (paper version, no google available yet) and I found a small atelier on the Prenestina road, where they were curious enough to accept to produce just two or three examples.

Then I produced more, I drew a logo (a sage leaf) and a sticker



and with some friends we organised some gatherings to present the collections

Realità:
 È la stoffa giacca a vento con la quale vengono illustrati gli abiti fatti per lo sviluppo del Faso.

Forma, realismo:
 È la stoffa viola, verde e cebra con cui si illustrano i burinchi ed utilizzano quasi tutti i che conosciamo sono figure.

L'Atto produttivo:
 L'ordine dei e hanno
 Distingue musica e cultura.
 Trovare stile.

Faso Faso
 cravates d' Afrique

In Burkina Faso le "Faso Faso" (stoffe) del faso vengono utilizzate per divulgare valori e programmi di sviluppo.

Il 29 maggio, dalle 21,30

FASO FESTA al **MURONCO**

Via Triumfale 18 **bar sottomarino**

Musica, immagini, profumi dal Burkina Faso

Forma, realismo:
 È la stoffa verde, rosso e nero dedicata alle figure di Thomas Sankara, uno dei principali artefatti del "passo degli uomini integri".

Forma, realismo:
 È la stoffa azzurra, con i fiori e la figura di Thomas Sankara, uno dei principali artefatti del "passo degli uomini integri".





Soon, other products came out,
first of all the shopping bags:
more elegant than the plastic
ones, more handy because of the
long handle and less bulky as one

could fold it and put in the purse
or in a pocket.



Later on, in Ivory Coast, the activity grew up and we tried to structure it better, more details in the dedicated website

www.cravatesdafrique.com (first answer if you search by google: cravates and Afrique).

D as Dance

18 January 2012



Never been a good dancer. Being a kid, I remember rather disrupting parties while others were dancing.

Still dance has always appealed to me and finally in 1993, in London, I joined a ballroom course, very interesting experience.

It was organised in the same school where I was attending a language course and attendants were quite diverse, most of them British with some foreigners, all ages, and the two most interesting features were that:

1. there were not pre-fixed couples, but everyone had to dance with all others and
2. males were a minority, and one got the impression to be sought after (for once....).

In London we also went to a *salsa* place where there were a few minutes' instructions beforehand, but this is another story.

Later on, in Roma, we joined a *salsa* course, but here couples were established and the different

approaches to dancing lessons emerged, based alternatively on learning the steps or having fun. It did not work very well.

Finally (for the moment) another ballroom course, but in Brussels, not as good as the first one (and probably I had changed too).

or D as drawing

27 April 2012

Another note for D could have more conspicuously been dedicated to Drawing. As I have always drawn, and everywhere.

As many others do, when attending a meeting or a conference I fill the borders of any page with doodles.

Sometimes there was reference to politics,



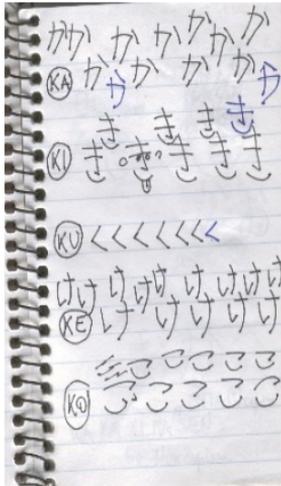
other times with feelings



or any other subject



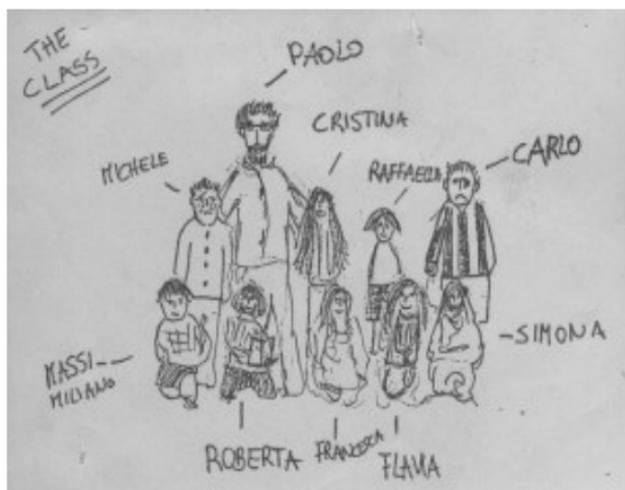
In some cases sketches made it to the text, as in language lessons



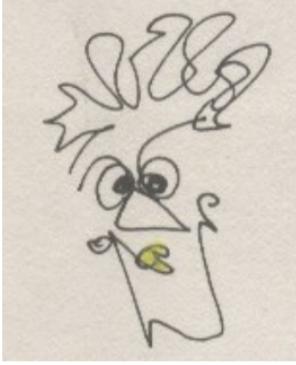
and now and then I singled out
some scribble for some reason,
ready to use.



On occasion, I used drawing for a purpose, as in this rough postcard



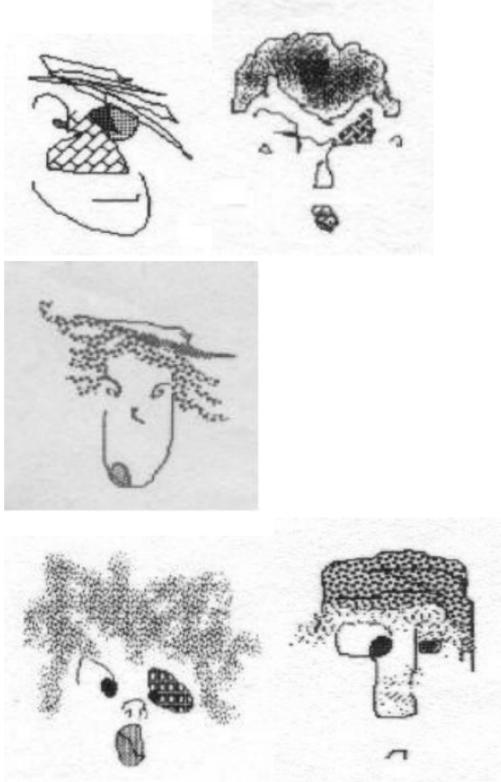
Every so often there were, and
are, faces



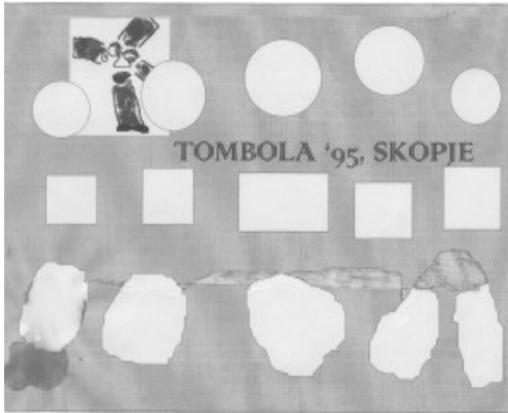
And the advent of colours added a
lot



The new technologies represented a jump forward, both for the actual drawing



but also for the possibility to scan the handmade drawing and treat them digitally, adding text or creating new products



I soon created my own logo

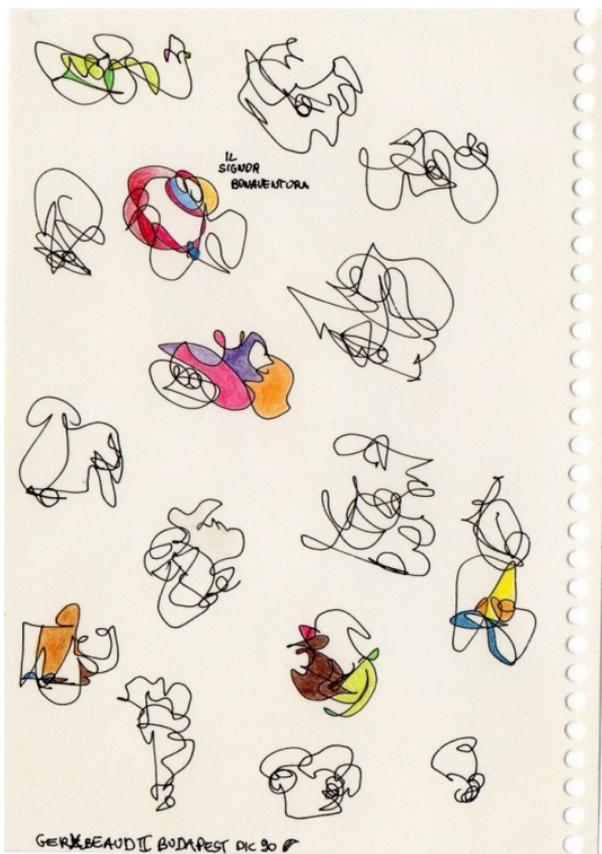


to be replicated in many of my later productions.

At a certain point, I started drawing in a more structured way, using an Indian ink pen for the main line and small pencils (Japanese ones) for the colours.

That way, I had souvenirs, from several places and countries.

I especially remember some drawing from Budapest with locally acquired pastels.



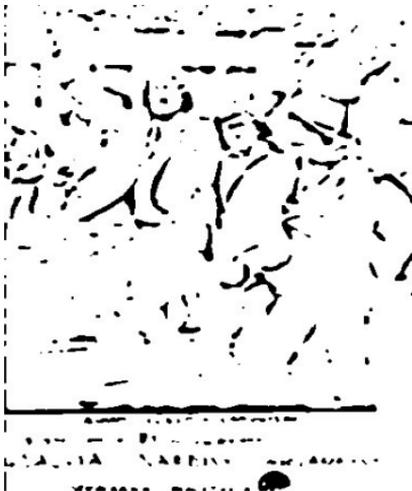
Other examples are scattered through the blog. Then I began using some of the drawing as character for the stories, and so came full circle. But here we are rather at **T as tales**

E as Elections

1 May 2012

Elections represent a reference in my life, and for no special reason, if you ask me.

First, I became 18 just in time for voting the first time, and at the same time I was a candidate, for the local administration: 36 votes.



That outcome stopped my career as a politician but may be started a process that would have taken over later on.

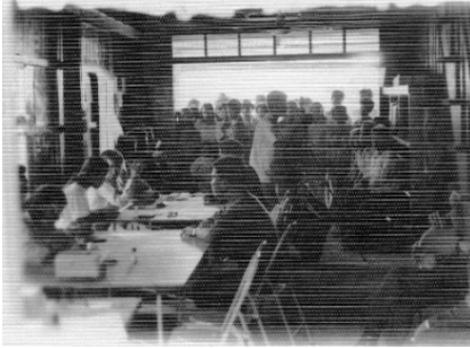
After my degree (thesis on *The Right to Development and the New International Economic Order*) I found a job in a strange NGO that I had found in the Yellow Pages.

But I still wanted to go to Africa, to contribute to the cause of development.

After some years, I got the unique proposal to leave to the South of the world, as a UN volunteer to organise elections in Cambodia.

That was not exactly what I was looking for, but I couldn't expect

many other opportunities to come up, then I accepted.



After one year in Cambodia, with some friends and colleagues, we wrote to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposing ourselves as observers for the Mozambican electoral process and, to our big surprise, we got first an answer and then the proposal to go to South Africa for the first real elections: Mandela elections.

After that one, there were many others: Mozambique, Bosnia, Albania, Palestine, Togo, Moldova, Bangladesh, Malawi, Indonesia, Ecuador, Madagascar, Congo Kinshasa, Ivory Coast, Venezuela.

Sometimes it was useful, sometimes not too much so, almost always it was interesting.

The first memories which come up relate to minor details, funny or potentially tragic, but not historical at all.

In Cambodia, I remember when, after the vote, I was travelling to the Provincial town with almost twenty of the local elections officials which worked with me on the pick up; they had just got their last salary.

A military tried to stop us, he had a machine gun, was probably drunk and surely not happy about the election outcome. I slowed down and then accelerate again and passed by him. He shot, luckily up in the air. Sometimes I wonder

In Bangladesh, I remember when with Francesco we went to meet some responsible of the incumbent party, which had lost the elections. We hadn't had lunch and on the table there were some peanuts; we ate them fast and furious and after some minutes they had some chicken served for us.

In Togo I met the President, I was alone and had to travel in his

stronghold in the North as I met him in his role of candidate.

He was big, quite aged and had a 'preacher', attitude. For a moment I thought he was out of his mind, but perhaps he was only acting to impress the young stranger.

In Madagascar, I remember when we interviewed the candidates for the clerical jobs, almost 200 interviews in two or three hours. Finally, the people recruited were not bad at all.

In South Africa I remember that walking in *Guguletu* I was quite scared. Since we arrived in the country everybody was insisting that we had to take care, that it was unsafe for us to go around,

that this township was a dangerous place.

Maybe it was, but there were schools and bakeries and people doing their life as everywhere. The election day, among those long queues, I eventually felt completely safe.

In Mozambique, in a remote village in the district of *Muecate*, if I remember the name well, I took a photo of the party agents seating one up on the other in the only small bench available. Few days before they were fighting each other and now they were there; impossible to distinguish one from the other. We arrived in the village by helicopter, myself and a Malaysian colleague, an army man. Both of us did not

speak any Portuguese, and the local people didn't either. But we communicated quite well. They proposed to bring us hunting the *gazela*, unfortunately we declined, it would have been a fantastic story.



In Kinshasa I went to a meeting of the Electoral Commission with the parties' representatives. The programme mentioned that the

meeting would have started with the national hymn.

I thought they would have played a cassette. But they all stand up and sang all together. In the song was often repeated the name of the country: *Congo.... Congo*

In Bosnia I was deployed in *Serpsko Goradze*, where some of the terrible pages of that conflict were written.

On election day, people from the other part of the town came to vote under the escort of the Portuguese army.

My driver, who was a candidate for the Nationalist Party and was proud of having taken part to the chase against the others, said he was moved as it was a very long

time he didn't see his former neighbours. Once again, I could not tell apart the ones from the others.

What I have learned from these experiences?

That you cannot trust anybody. It is not a totally bad realization. It just means that the rules are important and have to be respected by everyone. Nobody could stand above the rules.

And that elections are not the solution to each problem, do not guarantee democracy and participation but sometimes offer some surprise and allow people to actually declare their will. But that lasts only a moment if there are not the conditions to keep the momentum.

F as Finger (the small one)

12 June 2012

I broke my little finger playing volleyball. It couldn't stand right, tended to bow. No pain, though.

I went to the hospital and they said that a surgical intervention was needed.

I politely declined.

Then my mother suggested keeping it straight with an ice cream stick (actually it was a '*cremino*').

And it worked.

I can't recognize one from the other anymore.



I know, this is not the small one

or F as Family olive tree

31 October 2020



In the eighties, my father brought two young olive trees from Picerno to Roma to be planted somewhere.

They were put into big terracotta pots awaiting to be planted.

Years passed, one of the olive trees died and the second one remained on my mother's balcony.

It didn't grow much but was producing many offshoots.

When we bought our garden apartment in Bruxelles, in the new century, we transferred some of those to see if they would have resisted Belgian different climate.



One actually did, and was still alive when the original olive tree dried up in Roma, few weeks after my mother's departure.

Then a very cold winter came and the last of its breed gave up.



But then, just around Easter time,
new life came up



and this year we finally had the
first harvest.



G as Great Game

28 June 2012

The Great Game (lousy translation for the Italian '*Grande Gioco*'); which nevertheless has the advantage to keep the double G initials) is an amazing experience of the scout tradition.

Usually, it consisted of a half day activity, with the group divided in two factions fighting for the accomplishment of some objective.

Strategy, strength, shrewdness, group-relation, mutual trust, role-playing, patience and some courage were involved.

Even more in the night version: '*Grande Gioco Notturmo*', when the darkness and the ability to

move in an unknown environment contributed to the excitement.

There were different fighting techniques, and most of the time the introduction to the Game was a story about some exotic and long-lasting conflict.

It was something magic, especially at the beginning (8-9 years old) but also when planning and managing the activity as an adult.

I think those games served to prepare for other kind of endeavour later on.



H as Hair

27 November 2012

The one point my mother was very sensitive to (and very inflexible with) is hair.

Notwithstanding the actual state or length of my thatch, a reference to it has always been the first remark at any reunion.

As a reaction, I stopped using and actually owning a comb at the age of 14, and I never regretted it.

In Cambodia, I thought being finally free to let grow my hair without nasty comments and recurring injunctions. But people in the village felt concerned too and started calling me “*Sok wegn*” meaning Long Hair.

Then, a progressive whitening and rarefaction process started and is still going on.

I wouldn't mind to end up with a semi bold head, which to me entail a certain degree of respectability and wisdom.



or H as Haiku

31 March 2004

I prepared an haiku for a competition organised by the Japanese Embassy in Roma.

I did not win.

Perhaps, I did not respect carefully the strict rules about Haiku writing. Please, read:

*Swallow in a cage
cat is looking for
wild brawl
feathers for dinner*

NB this was my very first blog note

I as Italian

7 January 2013

As bad as I can criticise national weaknesses and flaws, I still am an Italian, sharing with my fellow countrymen those same flaws as well as the many strengths.

Living abroad, I don't suffer for the distance, and when coming back I am stricken first from the many things not working properly than from the evident beauty and richness of this country.

Fact is that the positive factors seem stemming from nature, climate and ancient culture and history, while the shortcomings are a straight product of ours, contemporary inhabitants.

Probably this kind of extreme self-criticism is part of the problem. We tend to be more ready to complain about our own faults than to contribute to their overcoming.

Italy for me is the language, the food, the history. And, probably first of all, the *genius* represented by Giulio Cesare, Leonardo, Michelangelo but also Armani, Rivera, Caruso, Pertini and probably Al Capone.

And Italy is the landscape, so varied and intense, made of natural forces and human labour: a *Pino Loricato*, the *Colosseo*, Tuscany countryside, Positano, Venezia, Dolomiti Mountains.

Giorgio Gaber states in one song: *I don't feel as to be an Italian, but by fortune, or by force, I am one.*



thanks to

<http://noizkrew.deviantart.com/art/Italian-Flag-158235515>

or I as International Juridical Organization for Environment and Development

17 October 2020

In the late 80s I found my first job at IJO, an organization created by a lawyer based in Roma, Avv. Mario Gutierrez.

UNEP(OCA)MED WG.18/Inf.2
page 8

OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AUTRES ORGANIZATIONS INTERGOUVERNEMENTALES ET NON GOUVERNEMENTALES

INTERNATIONAL JURIDICAL
ORGANIZATION FOR ENVIRONMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT (IJO)
ORGANIZATION JURIDIQUE
INTERNATIONALE POUR L'ENVIL-
RONNEMENT ET LE DEVELOPPEMENT
(OJI)

Mr. Mario Gutierrez
President
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00187 Rome
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Tlx. No.: 43-814046 IJO I
Cable : JOURICOUNTRIES, Rome
Fax. No.: (39)6) 474 5779

He was quite successful dealing with separations and divorces of famous people, but had a penchant for international affairs.

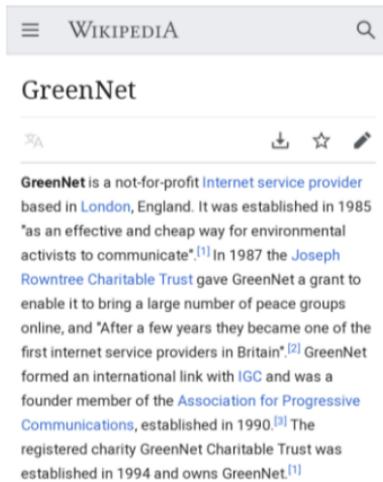
One of the few people I met in that world who was spending money with international cooperation rather than making it.

He was also member of the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity, based in Moscow at Gorbachev time; Sakharov was also a member.



The screenshot shows a web browser interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a hamburger menu icon, the text "SourceWatch", and a search icon. Below this is the title of the article: "International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity". Under the title, there are four icons: a star, a download arrow, a star, and a share icon. The main text of the article begins with: "In 1988 the New York Times reported that 'the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity is settling into its new headquarters on a tree-shaded block in central Moscow. When the final obstacles are overcome, as expected, the foundation will be the first of its kind on Soviet soil - an organization set up to function independently of the Government, financed by private contributors in this country and abroad with freedom to choose its own activities...".

I remember we were exchanging messages with Moscow and Washington from the lawyer's studio, with one of the first modem, just few words at a very slow and irregular pace. We were using Greennet, an antecedent to what is now known as Internet, which did not exist at the time.



At a very little scale, but it was history. I also attended the European preparation meeting in Paris for the first Earth Summit in Rio. Remember a concert of Mory Kante.

☰
WIKIPEDIA
🔍

Earth Summit

🗨️
📄
☆
✎

For other uses, see [Earth Summit \(disambiguation\)](#).

The **United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)**, also known as the **Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit**, the **Rio Summit**, the **Rio Conference**, and the **Earth Summit** (Portuguese: ECO92), was a major [United Nations conference](#) held in [Rio de Janeiro](#) from 3 to 14 June in 1992.



The Earth Summit was a [UN event](#)

Earth Summit was created as a response for [Member States](#) to cooperate together internationally on development issues after the [Cold War](#). Due to issues relating to [sustainability](#) being too big for individual

J as jacket

January, 17 2013

My first jacket was part of a grey suit my parents bought for me in Potenza, probably on sales. I was about 10-12 years old and remember it with fondness. It probably did include even a waistcoat with buttons, as peasants' Sunday outfit.

Indeed, the first jacket I purchased myself was a yellowish corduroy one, found at Latina second hand market and paid 2.500 lire, as far as I may recall.

Afterwards, I had another similar jacket that I still keep in Roma. I was planning to give it to my nephew, but he grew up before I could pass it to him.

For a long time, I kept buying second hand clothing, in markets or at a little shop next to *Via 20 Settembre* (but that seemed to me already a luxury).

Reacting to winter inconveniences, I used to stitch a button on the back of the collar, in order to be able to protect my chest (I always suffered of sore throat).

I bought my first new jacket on the occasion of my first regular job, when the President of that small organisation mentioned that my recently acquired position would have requested a more appropriate outfit. I decided anyway to wait for my first salary (paid quite a long time after starting) before investing in

fashion. This model was grey, with little lines in colours; not bad but not exciting either.

Fortunately enough, jackets are my preferred piece of clothing; since that first job I am almost obliged to wear one of them every day. Together with a tie (but this is another story...).



K as *Kampuchea*

6 October 2013

Kampuchea, or Cambodia or *Prateh Kmae*, represents my sliding door.

Before, my life was enclosed in a few km squared area: home, school and politics, scouts, university, civilian service, the first job, everything next to each other.

Then, the first 4 missions in 4 different continents (Cambodia, South Africa, Guatemala and Bosnia) and a permanent wandering from country to country.

Among all experiences, people and flavours I remember Chamroeun, the Interpreter (from French), a long and terrible experience trapped in his eyes.



L as Law

6 March 2014

I studied the law. Not sure why. Other options seemed less practical. It was the time of the ‘assault praetors’ who were trying to convert justice into something more concrete and closer to people’s preoccupations.

The most famous of them ordered the requisition of the empty apartments in Rome in order to rent them at ‘equitable lease’ to people in need.

Even if I didn’t perceive it clearly at the time, there was surely a family soft pressure towards what was considered a safe area to get a fine job, possibly in the public service.

Another factor that had some relevance was a conference with Stefano Rodotà, who came to my school to talk about working with the law. He was quite inspiring.

I never worked in the classical law professions. Yet, my first job was in a juridical organization, but my role was marginal. And I worked in Guatemala for the UN mission on human rights. There we dealt with legal matters, tribunals, judges and especially victims, but I stayed only few months.

Something from those studies remains in my *forma mentis*; I consider the respect of rules as an important factor, both in the personal life and for the society.

And this has certainly been a permanent reference in my

different jobs. Including when I was a steward in the London stadiums of Wembley, Millwall and Chelsea.

M as Moto Guzzi 50 Dingo Super Sport

29 March 2014

My first experience with an engine vehicle was the most difficult: a friend's peugeot 50 cc,



quite old, a solid beast that required an enormous effort to be woken up.

I risked to get a motobecane,



via the intermediation of my uncle who supposedly could get hold of it at very special conditions and I finally entered the (relatively) comfortable world of piaggio cyclo-motors, with a yellow ciao



then a blue boxer



maybe even a bravo



Several years later, I bought the guzzi dingo 50 super sport



from a friend for few 'lire' and this represented a tremendous shift to the universe of speed, oil and risk.

The dingo was small and orange, with an impressive acceleration and good cruise-speed.

This specific piece had a problem with brakes, though. The anterior one was very weak, while that one

in the back was too sturdy,
completely blocking the wheel at
the minimum touch.

I was risking my life anytime I
tried to slow down. And all of that
in the not-so-friendly traffic of
Roma.

At a certain point I decided an
upgrade and I gave away the dingo
(as a gift, there was too much
sentiment involved to sell it) and
did buy a morini 3½



That was a moto! I still can hear its roar. It had a nice life and a deceiving death, cut out in pieces by a friend's brother after getting all the useful pieces and then disposed in the rubbish containers. How sad.

Afterwards, I just had a nice suzuki 50, green with blue reflexes, while being back to Roma for some time.



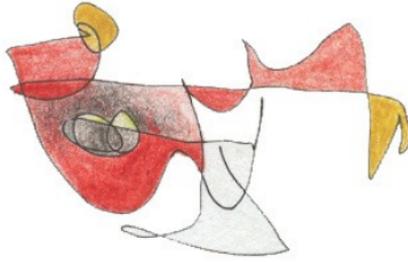
And that was the end. I owned no 2 wheels engines anymore, just rented something for few days in vacation. But I am waiting the right moment to go for a vespa

or M as Ida Margar

3 April 2004



Ida Margar didn't use to work on Mondays. In the last years, she performed only once.



It was the day she had to help an enchanter who needed someone to enchant.

Ida was among the crowd, with the fingers narrowed around her leather belt.



At the moment she had to intervene in the show, she was distracted by a pair of doves that, after being extracted from the top hat, were wondering what to do.



So, it happened that the enchanter had to enchant himself and, for a fate's joke, he disappeared.



Miss Margar was not disappointed in the role she had played in the departure of the nosed magician and, back home in time for dinner, she thought she would rather prepare a tortilla.

N as *Nix Palix*

10 April 2014

I don't know where this neologism come from. The meaning was nothing, absolutely nothing, *nicht*, *nada*, no way.

These words carry me back to my childhood.

I think it was quite a good period. It was peaceful, comfortable, safe, interesting.

My parents were there, I can still feel the security given by their presence.

There were brothers, cousins, aunties, grandparents, the large family.

And parents' friends, whom we called *zii* as in the Southern Italy tradition.

There was everything we needed, without luxury and superfluous. Frequently, we could not get what we wanted or do what we would have liked, but that was not a problem.

Nix Palix was used when we were asking for more *freselle* to zia Sitta or, among us, when there were no french fries left, always too soon.

It was a healthy childhood, or I remember it so now. We were going to *Piazza delle Muse* to play with the friends almost every day. We went to the school just in front of the house and we were

buying the *sorpresine* from the *signorina* at the corner for 10 lire.

Everything seems more complicate now for children. No more *sorpresine*.



O as olderbooking

7 November 2014

Since I have got a smartphone, I changed my habits during transfer to and from the office. Before I was thinking, now I do read. On the phone.

In order to get free books to read I thought to go back to the stories I read many times during my childhood (now out of copyrights) starting from Verne's Mysterious Island. This is the exercise that I decided (today) to define 'olderbooking'.

Of course, I read them now in their original language and full version, as it was not the case many years ago.

There is a sort of comfort-feeling re-discovering the old friends and one understands several things about oneself, as the people and events described in those books certainly played an important influence on putting up a values system and mindset.

Should I have read different books would now I be a different person?

I do think so.

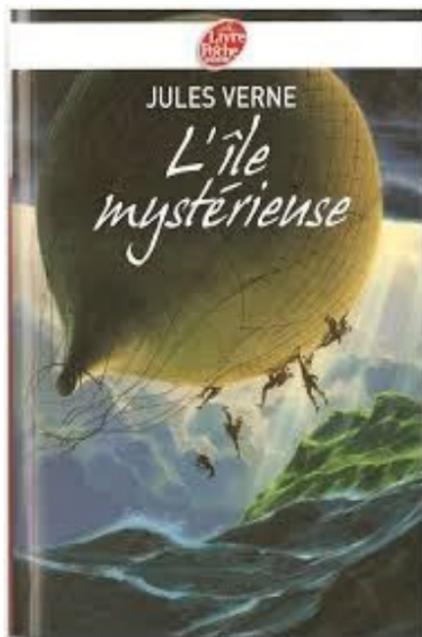
Reading is an important part of personality building and as some of those books were repeatedly read, their impact is undeniable.

Ex post, would I change my reading selection?

Certainly so. I do not think my choices were particularly apt to

build a secure and open-minded personality. And they did go all more or less in the same direction: good will, nice feelings, be supportive, respect the elders, sentimentalism etc. Not a lot of sense of adventure (or very controlled one) neither real respect for difference. And a quite classist vision of the world and the life.

I have read different things afterwards, but it was too late.....



PS in fact I had in mind a different word starting with O to define the same concept, probably coming from Latin, but cannot recall it

P as Photo(s)

5 February 2016

I told already as I exchanged my collection of Tex for a Russian zoom lens that I used to print myself my photos.



I bought it at *Porta Portese* market, in the zone next to the main road where Russian people

used to sell their stuff. 50.000 lire, if I remember well.

At that time, I had (I have it still) a Pentax MX bought nearby Regina Coeli (the very central penitentiary in Roma) and was quite intensively using it.



One example of output is in the heading for this blog-page.

I was not very good at it but enjoyed looking at the images composing themselves progressively in the acid soup.

I took some photos during holidays
and trips. In 1980 at Mirafiori, for
the occupation of the FIAT



in 86 in Burkina Faso



Chunks of life

and then in Cambodia in 92 and 93



Then I passed to smaller cameras and finally to digital ones, but at that point there was less enthusiasm and I thought it was also interesting to focus on what is actually happening rather than trying to capture it into a piece of paper.

Recently a friend gave me one tool to pass old negatives to a digital format, exploitable in the



computer and it was nice to see again some faces, some places.



I am not sure if I was still using the Pentax in South Africa, for the photo of Mandela that I have already presented in a blog note

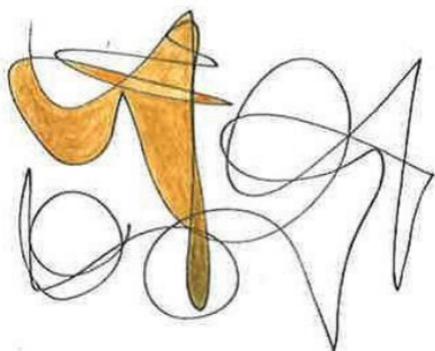


And now is mainly the telephone. But some photos are still surprising



or P as Poldo

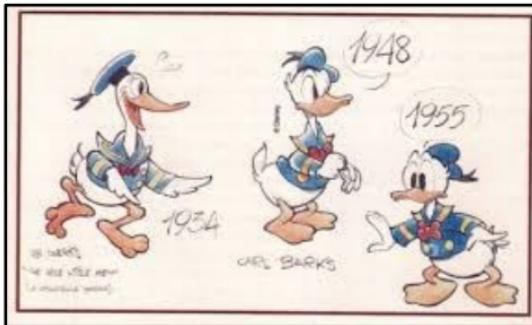
22 September 2015



Q as Quack

29 June 2016

I have always been a cartoons aficionado. Probably because of their immediacy or because it was easier than reading a book (but I was a big book-reader too).



The first were probably from the 'Giornalino' a comics review oddly distributed in churches, where there were good stories such as those of Blueberry or Michel

Vaillant, Lucky Luke or the Schtroumpfs. And Coccobill.

One in some Arab country with a shrewd Gran Vizir, cannot remember the name

But maybe even before that I read *Il signor Bonaventura* and someone (perhaps Auntie Concetta?) gave me as a gift the book entitled *Fortunello, la Checca e i loro amici*

Later on, war stories and *Nonna Abelarda*, Geppo the young devil, *Cucciolo* and *Tirammolla*. And more elaborated series such as Bleck Macigno and Captain Miki.

At this time, or a bit later, there was of course *Topolino*, I was reading it regularly but never kept a collection.

The following step was represented by Tex Willer and Zagor, but at the same time I discovered Alan Ford and the stories in the '*Intrepido*' or '*Il monello*'.

Some cousins of mine were reading Linus, totally another world, but I get used to it. The Peanuts were among my favorites and the *Mondadori Oscar* book *Il bambino a una dimensione* still is a reference.

And Mafalda.

And Popeye, Beetle Bailey, Andy Capp. Some of these booklets accompanied me for many years. For a carnival party I once dressed up as Corto Maltese, one of my best costumes ever.



And the superheroes: Spider Man, Captain America, the Fantastic Four.

The only collection I ever kept was that one of Tex, which I exchanged for the Russian zoom lens.

Recently I have bought the series of different comics published by main newspapers in Italy.

I still like reading comic strips; it is unfortunate that there are no more magazines worth buying it.

R as Reason

24 March 2017

I have always trusted that eventually the reason will triumph.

If the conditions exist for something to happen and there is engagement from somewhere or someone to make it happen, at the end that will indeed happen.

I also thought that if someone is a jerk, he might go up and progress in his career faster than others but then there will be the time when he will go down. And anyway he will probably not have an happy life.

And that if someone deserves something, if he does not get

discouraged, he will finally get it.
The reason will triumph.

Of course, with some flexibility
and common sense.

In my life this happened, more or
less.

Maybe I was not expecting too
much, but I arrived approximately
where I wanted to be.



S as South

13 May 2017

I was born in the South.

As I use repeating to foreign acquaintances, exactly where the Italian boot splits in two, just in the middle, in a quite remote area.

And I worked in the South (of the world) most of my life time starting from 1992.

Sometimes from Europe and more often directly based in or visiting a country: Cambodia, Southafrica, Mozambique, Guatemala, Palestine, Chad, Togo, Botswana, Peru, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Madagascar, Indonesia, Malawi, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Congo RDC, Venezuela, Niger, Pakistan, Mali,

Honduras, Guinea Bissau, Nepal,
Paraguay, Sri Lanka, Ghana.

Of course South is not an exact categorization. In some countries the North is the actual South. Others may be geographically South but are rather (or consider themselves) North.

But everywhere there is a Southern dimension, in the wider sense.

I prefer being a Southerner, don't have any characteristic of one from the North.

Don't know if by choice or by destiny.



or S as (zia) Sitta

7 December 2006



Zia Sitta passed away today.
I will not be home for the funeral.
She was a milestone for my
growing up and my sense of

family, and it is an odd coincidence that she dies while I am in Venezuela repeating the travel that our grandgrandparents did at the end of the nineteenth century to build our house in Picerno.

I found here a missing part of our family and I've lost while here a crucial part of my family in Italy.

Zia Sitta was and is a nice company for small talks next to the fireplace and a supporting person for any kind of enterprise.

I miss her already.

T as Father

17 May 2017

In many languages the familiar way for father starts with a T. Tata or Tad, Tatay, Tay, Taica or just Ta.

My father was important to me. He was a good man. He liked to speak with people, especially simple people.

He was very close to the impoverished farmers in his remote birthplace.

His life was not simple and he resented the difficult circumstances of his delivery, but he did not show this openly.

He had a very nice smile and feet similar to mines.

For some reasons at a certain point I stopped talking to him.

Actually for no reason, he was very kind and we never doubted, I never doubted, about his love and care.

This is the most sorrowful of my regrets. I do not have too many, probably because even if apparently eventful, my life was quite plain.

Once, while I was a child, at the beach, he convinced me to set free a little fish I had caught, and he taught me many other lessons without being pedantic.

He explained us the chlorophyll photosynthesis that he considered the secret of life.

I would like to meet him again, to talk a bit, to see his smile.



U as Untranslated

16 August 2017

The possibility to communicate with people using another language, to watch a movie or read a book in its original idiom is one of the human capabilities more similar to a superpower.

I started learning languages very young but with little effect.

My first trip to Burkina Faso convinced me of the necessity to improve and a subsequent seminar in Kandersteg consolidated that resolve.

I was following the discussion in the French group, to understand something of what was said but then had to move to the English group to express my ideas.

More courses followed.

At private schools and at Rome University (strangely quite good).

Then I had the opportunity to attend a French course at the Council of Europe Youth Center in Strasbourg. A worthwhile experience.

After Cambodia, I went to London and while looking for a job I was studying English, of course.

And I continued afterwards (didn't find any job there, though).

I have some basic notions of spoken Khmer and happily noticed that when going back to the country after several years, the little knowledge I had of that strange language was kept almost intact, as freezed in my memory.

Still, communication is not made by linguistic knowledge alone.

Actually, the most important factor is the urge to pass a message and to get some from the interlocutors.

Without that any conversation remains an empty exercise.

V as Vegetarian

2 October 2018

The vegetarian T-shirts are my last invention.

Actually the last to be produced because the idea is a very old one.

I finally went for them as my two goddaughters both became vegetarian.

This gave me the occasion to discover a completely different version of my drawings that shocked me at first but then won me over.

Bernie, who produces the shirts for me, took some of the drawings and transformed them with a software in order to make them more fit for printing.

The result is sometimes better than the original.

Below few examples.



W as walking

11 November 2018



Walking is important in my life,
even if I am quite a lazy
character.

There is this song by Gaber that
says the road is the only salvation.



Several times I felt that way.

That going on the road could help
to redefine its own objectives or
help overcoming difficult periods.

I walked a lot with the scouts,
normally going up somewhere. It
was before the use of the
'trekking' vocabulary, before

decathlon, when the equipment was rather bought second-hand from old military stuff.

I didn't reach any exciting destination, several times stopped before getting the top of a mountain but this is not really the point. Not for me, at least.

Did less road since I am working in offices, but also going from country to country for the job was a sort of walking exercise.

Still, start getting into action has never been simple and I need indeed a clear goal to get into motion, I am never tempted by wandering without a plan.

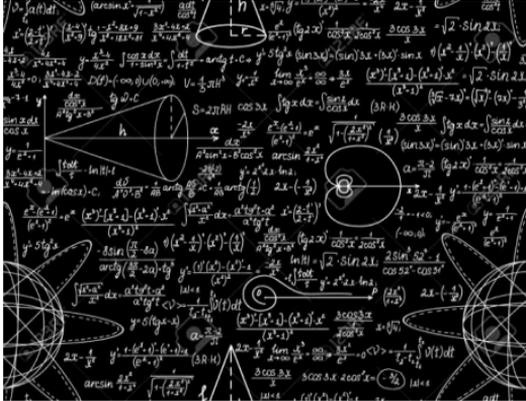
I described elsewhere how after the fifties I got back to a tour with

rucksack and tent and my try at
Camino de Santiago.

Hope to have time and energy to
do more.

X as multiplication

27 January 2019



At primary school I was strong in mathematics.

Later, I progressively lost interest for scientific topics and focused on humanities.

Of course, the teachers at secondary level were not very inspiring, but it is also true that I found difficult (and still do)

understanding formulas and abstract theories.

Actually, the same apply for philosophical or artistic theories. I tend to shy away from more complex reasoning; not sure if that is for laziness or structural limits.

Besides, I am not particularly ambitious.

I wondered sometimes where I would be if I had pursued one determined purpose with everything I had got.

Probably, in the same place.

Y as yeast

21 February 2019

Some years ago two friends from Pavia gave us a small quantity of '*pasta madre*', the natural yeast that you have to refresh every week and use to prepare bread, pizza and more.

Preparing our bread ourselves was a refreshing experience that we brought with us in different countries.



Making bread is a fundamental life experience that I would recommend to anybody.

And the nice thing with '*pasta madre*' is that you cannot buy it but it is always possible to find someone ready to hand it over.

Making things with one own hands is important for a balanced physical and mental growth.

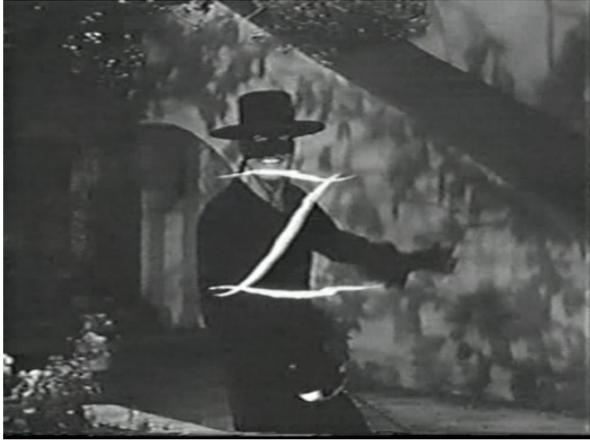
It is a pity that after the adolescence there are few occasions for it.

There are not many things I am able to do, not good with wood or repairing house appliances, never tried pottery and limited knowledge in gardening.

Still, during the last ten years I have done more than in the previous twenty.

Z as Zorro

29 February 2019



Zorro was one of the first American serial fiction showed by Italian tv.

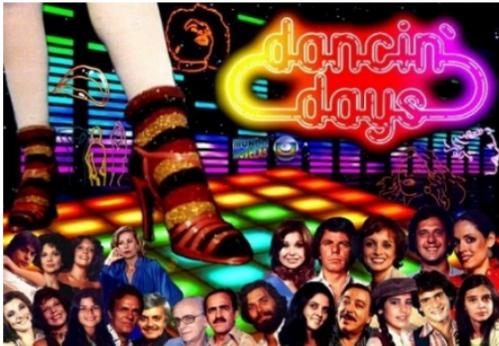
Much before the Brazilian telenovelas or the upmodern series such as Dallas.

Of course this was not a semi-real story as the others but the

important element here is the seriality, getting the audience used to coming back and watching tv day after day.

I have been quite a follower of tv stories and indeed also wrote a blog note on how differences between relationships with real and fiction interlocutors tend to vanish.

After Zorro there were Happy Days, Sonia Braga's Dancing Days and many others.



The tv series do probably influence the character building of an adolescent as much as books.

It is indeed possible that the approach of few parents (now as then) forbidding their children to yield to tv influence was not as idiotic as we thought.

Of course, this approach make those children 'different' from the others.

But difference might not be bad if well managed.

NB upmodern may be a neologism I invented today. Cannot find it by google

By the same author:

Storie

Compendio di letteratura domestica

mc7858 attitude I, II and III

Abbecedario

All'assemblea, all'assemblea.....

Aboliamo l'eredità

di Phnom Penh non ricordo molto

La Tontine

Il labirinto di specchi

In March 2004 I created the blog ***mc7858attitude*** in order to practice English but also to keep memory of occurrences of my daily life. Indeed, I felt then, and even more now, that important fragments of my past are vanishing.

Hence, I decided to go backwards and look at some relevant moments of my life (relevant to me, of course) in order to preserve them.

Some important occurrences are missing, but that's life.

I chose to use an alphabetical order rather than a chronological one.

And I started on 11 September 2011 with a blog-note entitled ***A as ABC Book***.