Lincoln Kirstein: Mosaic. Variety in 'Rhymes of a PFC'.

"Lincoln Kirstein: Mosaic
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Use this identifier to cite or link to this document:
Publisher: Università Ca' Foscari Venezia
Date: 2014-10-29
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Abstract:
The main purpose of this work is to try to cast a new light on one of the most singular, yet neglected, Second World War poetry collections in American Literature. Created by the brilliant mind of the ballet impresario and art amateur, Lincoln Kirstein, "Rhymes of a PFC" could be interpreted as a "mosaic" of motifs, characters, stories, tones and styles, which compose the whole scenario of the poet's experience as a soldier. Indeed, what proved fascinating to me, was finding a distinctive trait in "Rhymes of a PFC": a certain tendency to variety. It was the double connotation of the term, as both "multiplicity", and "difference", that helped me analyze the various ways Kirstein's many interests, passions, inclinations and initiatives affected the making of "Rhymes of a PFC".

dissertation has been divided into three main sections, according to the different applications concept of variety to the creative process of "Rhymes of a PFC". The first section deals with the biographical material that underlies the collection. Here, I have considered the various features of Lincoln Kirstein's public and private life, and his essential experience in the Monument, Fine Arts and Archives program, during the Second World War. In the second section of the work, I have tried to place the collection within the various, and wider literary context of the tradition of American war poetry. Particular reference has been made to the influence that the wartime poetic production of the British writers Rudyard Kipling and W.H. Auden had on the author. The third and last section consists in an in-depth analysis of the variety of themes, voices and formal features that constitute the inner structure of "Rhymes of a PFC", and which determine, as Auden has stated, its status as "the most convincing, moving and impressive (...) picture of the late war".

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