Petrarch and the Textual Origins of Interpretation

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Petrarch and the Textual Origins of Interpretation

Edited by

Teodolinda Barolini and H. Wayne Storey

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On the cover: The first sonnet (*Laura gentil*) on c. 39*r* of MS Vaticano Latino 3195, the first over erasure, in Petrarch's hand. Reprinted with the permission of the Vatican Library.

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Sequence: Time and Narrative in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*" and whose installments include: "*Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*: The Self in the Labyrinth of Time", in *The Panoptical Petrarch* (eds. Victoria Kirkham and Armando Maggi, Chicago University Press, 2008), and "Petrarch as the Metaphysical Poet Who Is Not Dante: Metaphysical Markers at the Beginning of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*", in *Petrarch and Dante* (eds. Zygmunt Baranski and Theodore Cachey, Notre Dame University Press, forthcoming). She is Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, the Medieval Academy of America, and served as the fifteenth President of the Dante Society of America.

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H. Wayne Storey is Professor of Italian and Director of Medieval Studies at Indiana University as well as the Editor-in-Chief of *Textual Cultures*, the journal of the Society for Textual Scholarship. His work in material philology began with his 1987 article on Guittone d'Arezzo's extant songbook in Escorial e.III.23 and includes "Editorial Forms of Dante's Lyrics" (in *Dante for the New Millennium*, co-edited with Teodolinda Barolini, 2003), "Di libello in libro: problemi materiali nella poetica di Monte Andrea e Dante" (in *Da Guido Guinizzelli a Dante*, 2004), and more recently "Cultural Crisis and Material Innovation: the Italian Manuscript in the XIVth Century" (*Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 2005). His studies of Petrarch's visual poetics appear in *Transcription and Visual Poetics in the Early Italian Lyric* (1993), "Voce e grafia nei *Triumphi* di Petrarca" (1999), "Il *liber* nella formazione delle *Familiares*" (2003), and "All'interno della poetica grafico-visiva di Francesco Petrarca", his essay for the Commentary volume of *Francesco Petrarca*, *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta: Facsimile del codice autografo Vaticano Latino 3195* (co-edited with Gino Belloni, Furio Brugnolo, and Stefano Zamponi, for Antenore [2004]). His diplomatic-interpretative edition of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* nears completion.

Germaine Warkentin is Professor Emeritus of English, University of Toronto, and a former Director of the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies. Her diverse publications—on manuscripts, early library catalogues, aboriginal sign systems, and exploration journals—are unified by her major scholarly preoccupation, the material culture of the book, 1300–1700. A continuing interest, and a formative influence on all her work, has been Petrarch, beginning with her essay "'Love's Sweetest Part, Variety': Petrarch and the Curious Frame of the

Renaissance Sonnet Sequence" (*Renaissance and Reformation* 1975), and continuing with "The Form of Dante's 'libello' and its Challenge to Petrarch" (*Quaderni d'Italianistica* 1980), "Sonnet and Sonnet Sequence" (*Spenser Encyclopedia* 1990), the introduction to James Wyatt Cook's verse translation *Petrarch's Songbook: Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (1995), and her forthcoming "Approaches to the Design of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*" (*Approaches to Teaching Petrarch's "Canzoniere"* [2007]).

INTRODUCTION

Teodolinda Barolini

Petrarch connects multiply to the textual origins of interpretation. Perhaps at first blush he connects most readily as an early humanist: he was an activist on behalf of the need to consider the textual origins of his beloved classical authors in order to interpret them—read them—aright. His activism in this domain led him to work as a cultural entrepreneur and disseminator, arranging for instance for the Calabrian Greek Leontius Pilatus to live with Boccaccio and to translate Homer, as well as to become a veritable adventurer in pursuit of texts, most famously of Cicero's letters to Atticus, which he discovered in Verona in 1345. In other words, Petrarch's humanism put him at the forefront of the movement to clarify the textual origins of interpretation, with at times revolutionary results: ninety-five years after Petrarch's discovery in a Veronese monastery, humanism and its focus on the historicity of the text allowed Lorenzo Valla to debunk the authenticity of the Donation of Constantine in his 1440 treatise *De Falso Credita et Ementita Constantini Donatione*. Once Valla, using philology, proved the falsity of the Donation's alleged textual origins, issues of interpretation, which had preoccupied the likes of Dante, who placed the Donation at the center of his meditation on the relative authority of Church and State, became moot.

There is however also another way to think about the connection between Petrarch and the textual origins of interpretation, which involves thinking not about Petrarch the reader but about the Petrarch whom we read: not the Petrarch who is engaged in interpretation but rather the Petrarch whom we strive to interpret. Perhaps it is not surprising that Petrarch—the author who made such a quest of the search for textual origins and who so thoroughly comprehended the link between this search and hermeneutics—would himself compose in such a way that the two are particularly indivisible. The thesis that undergirds this volume is that Petrarch cannot properly be read and interpreted unless we are conversant with the textual origins of his works. In other words, we believe that some understanding of the rudiments of Petrarchan philology is the essential precondition for reading Petrarch right.

This volume and its ten essays grew out of a conference held at The Italian Academy at Columbia University on December 10, 2004, at the tail end of the centennial year of 2004, the 700th year since Petrarch's birth in 1304. And, in fact, the impetus for the event was precisely the lack in the United States of any other centennial celebration devoted to the philological and textual aspects of Petrarch's work, aspects which we believe should not be segregated from more mainstream literary concerns about Petrarch. I considered the lacuna the more egregious because Petrarchan philology in the twentieth-century was so massively shaped by an American scholar, Ernest Hatch Wilkins, and by his 1951 book *The Making of the "Canzoniere" and Other Petrarchan Studies*. By an interesting cultural convergence, the tradition of an American presence within the community of Petrarchan philologists has continued, most recently with the work of H. Wayne Storey, coeditor of this volume and one of the editors of the new facsimile edition of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* that was published in Italy to honor Petrarch's 700th birthday.

I therefore solicited papers around the carefully chosen theme of hermeneutics and philology, with the express idea of preparing a coherent volume that would address one of the most dynamic and yet potentially challenging aspects of Petrarch research and interpretation: the essential interplay between Petrarch's texts and their material preparation and reception. The purpose of the conference was to look at various facets of the interaction between Petrarchan philology and hermeneutics, working from the premise that in Petrarch's work philological issues are so authorially driven and so philosophically attuned to the author's hermeneutics that we cannot in fact read or interpret him without understanding the relevant philological issues and reapplying them in our critical approach to his works. This crucial topic was additionally highlighted during the centennial year of 2004 by the publication in Italy of a new, color facsimile with commentary of the codex, Vaticano Latino 3195, in which Petrarch both transcribed his lyrics and supervised the transcription carried out by his secretary, Giovanni Malpaghini. Two of the four members of the group involved in preparing the facsimile have contributed to this volume (Brugnolo and Storey).

The thesis that Petrarch's poetics constrains his interpreters to come to grips with the fundamentals of Petrarchan philology has a corollary, which is that we as critics should be responsible about labeling the verifiably philological and transparent regarding our position along the

critical axis from philology to hermeneutics. We are not all obliged to be philologists—and indeed I am not one—but we are all obliged to make clear where our positions are textually and philologically based and where they diverge from that which can be philologically verified. The papers collected in this volume are intended to reflect this spectrum, moving from a metacritical framing of the problematic to essays that combine in differing degrees the philological, codicological, material, historical, and the more broadly hermeneutical.

My essay, "Petrarch at the Crossroads of Hermeneutics and Philology: Editorial Lapses, Narrative Impositions, and Wilkins' Doctrine of the Nine Forms of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*", thematizes the critical issues around the nexus of hermeneutics and philology in Petrarch studies, asking "What is it about this crossroads, this particular intellectual juncture, which is peculiarly Petrarchan?" In this context, I consider the uncritical reception afforded by literary critics to Wilkins' purported philological demonstration that the *Fragmenta* developed through nine successive forms and the naïve—indeed harmful—application of Wilkins' hypothesis accepted as doctrine. I look at the *cruces* that have tormented critics and commentators of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* over the centuries, from Vellutello to Wilkins: *cruces*—in particular the division of the text into two parts and the out-of-order anniversary poems—to which we have responded by narrativizing the text, with the result that the history of Petrarch's reception has been one in which interpretation trumps philology. I conclude by thematizing this same nexus of hermeneutics and philology in other critical discussions of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian texts: the history of *filologia dantesca* harbors not only instances in which interpretation is masked as philology but also the equally problematic example of the abdication of all (necessary) interpretation on the part of the philologist.

Germaine Warkentin's "*Infaticabile maestro*: Ernest Hatch Wilkins and the Manuscripts of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*" is a meditation on the life—and the methods—of the man whose scholarship shapes so many current discussions of Petrarch's work, and not just of his manuscripts. Warkentin offers us a careful review of Wilkins' contributions, both negative and positive, and places his work into its cultural moment, weaving a tapestry made not only of published scholarship but also of unpublished correspondence between Wilkins and various Italian scholars. "*Infaticabile maestro*" contributes therefore also to the reconstruction of twentieth-century American cultural history, to what Warkentin calls "an optimistic phase in the history of American textual scholarship",

and to the mapping of the scholarly pathways between Italy and the United States in the second half of the last century. One of the most interesting aspects of Wilkins' story from a cultural perspective is the extraordinary and quite anomalous reception accorded him in Italy: a reception accorded to an American writing in English at a time when Italian scholars were on the whole not very receptive to work done on major Italian authors outside of Italy. And yet Wilkins was received as an authority. One wonders if this reception was related to the philological and codicological bases of his work, as well as to the dry and authoritative positivism of his writing style. Also worth noting is that Wilkins achieved this authority without frequent trips to Italy (Warkentin notes that "as far as can be ascertained, he never travelled to Europe after 1903"); in fact he conducted his research on the manuscripts by way of microfilm rather than by way of hands-on consultation. At the same time, we should remember that, as Warkentin points out, Gianfranco Contini did not consult Petrarch's manuscripts either, so this inattention to the physical and material record seems more generational than cultural.

Much has changed since the time when Wilkins would write to a colleague asking for description or verification of a marking on a manuscript. In order to properly decipher Vaticano Latino 3195 in preparation of the facsimile, H. Wayne Storey studied the codex not only directly but indeed under ultraviolet light. The animating belief of the editors of this volume is that, now more than ever therefore, there is no reason for our literary scholarship to remain uninformed by the wealth of the manuscript evidence.

Petrarch, more than most authors, more for instance than Dante or Boccaccio, created an opus that in fact *requires* would-be interpreters to understand the relevant philological and codicological issues—not just to rely on a presumed authority like Wilkins. This occurs because of the high degree of constructedness of Petrarch's texts, or better because of the nature of their constructedness, which is precisely codicological: with respect to his collection of lyrics, for instance, we know that Petrarch transcribed poems from drafts, some of which are preserved in the codex Vaticano Latino 3196, into a standing order. The last order is preserved as the autograph codex Vaticano Latino 3195. The construction of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* can therefore be visualized in a very precise way as an interaction between material codices, followed by the material mechanics of what occurs within the final codex. Thus in this volume H. Wayne Storey examines the hermeneutic implications

of the material mechanics of erasure. A similar process underlies the construction of Petrarch's letter collections, treated in this volume by Roberta Antognini and Kathy Eden. The existence of an autograph, which we possess for instance in the case of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, is not in itself enough to produce a poetics that is so markedly material, so profoundly codicological.

From this perspective then—from the perspective of an author whose poetics is so deeply informed by the material and codicological features of its composition—we believe that this volume has a specific role to play: precisely because philology is forbidding to many literary critics (and indeed many philologists are complicit in making it seem a discourse only for the initiated), we feel it is paramount to demonstrate the value of a philologically-informed approach to a more general scholarly public. Petrarch is the perfect test case for our project, because he is an author who more than most requires at least the rudiments of philological understanding. He is by the same token an author whose reception has been particularly deformed by neglect, even willful neglect as I show in my essay, of the philological facts. So these essays—by a medley of scholars who include non-philologists—are intended to make more accessible the discourse of Petrarchan philology and show the ways in which it illuminates and indeed makes possible an authentically Petrarchan hermeneutics.

H. Wayne Storey's essay, "Doubting Petrarca's Last Words: Erasure in MS Vaticano Latino 3195", takes us to the heart of Petrarchan codicology and illuminates the nexus between philology in its most material approach to a text and its interpretation. Even though erasure is one of Petrarch's principal poetic tools, it has received only cursory attention as a scribal phenomenon. As a result of the deployment of new technologies, it is now possible to establish two separate categories of erasure (Malpaghini's scribal technique and Petrarch's authorial interventions) and four methods by which the author eliminates previous readings. However, in light of the scribal and the authorial techniques of erasure still available to us (from copyists such as Francesco di Ser Nardo, the Bolognese Enrichetto della Quercia and Boccaccio to authorial interventions by writers as different as Joachim of Fiore, Antonio Pucci and, again but from a different point of view, Giovanni Boccaccio), it is also valuable to note those methods that Petrarch does not use. Petrarch's techniques include a system for marking off with curved and straight pen strokes, either as a *pro memoria* or for a separate collaborator responsible for erasures, those words and phrases he wishes

to change (not to correct). Some, but not all, of these markings were subsequently erased, leaving the residue of an editorial punctuation we were probably never meant to see but that have subsequently seeped by mistake into the syntactic punctuation of various passages.

The implications of Storey's study are twofold. The primary results reveal distinct practices for correction and emendation that shift as the autograph changes from a "fair" to a "service copy", suggesting additional linkage not only between the material and the poetic but between the register of the copy and diacriticals whose value we have usually presumed to be operative when editing Petrarch's *Canzoniere* (also known by Petrarch's title, *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*). The second product of these findings causes us potentially greater concern: that not all we find in the ruled writing space of this holograph—including erasures, expunction points, letter tracings and rewritten text—belongs to Petrarch and Malpaghini. These additional interventions, subsequent to Petrarch's death in 1374, represent a different layer of erasure that forces us to consider once again the significance of diverse strata even of the most important material icons of early Italian literature, as well as the often intricate histories attached to those manuscripts, in order to assess our cultural relationships to literary texts themselves.

Dario Del Puppo's essay, "Shaping Interpretation: Scribal Practices and Book Formats in Three 'Descripti' Manuscripts of Petrarca's Vernacular Poems", brings the material philology of Storey's essay into the context of the history of the book by looking at three later manuscripts of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. As we have noted, scholars have the manuscript basis and the textual critical data they need in order to edit Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. The same can roughly be said to be true of the *Triumphi*. But alongside the authoritative manuscripts of these important works, there are literally hundreds of copies preserved in manuscript libraries. Textual editors frequently refer to these books as *codices descripti*. By definition they are useless for the purposes of reconstructing the *stemma codicum* of Petrarch's poems. However, they attest to his widespread popularity and are historical evidence of scribal practices, materials used in book productions, and literary "taste" from the mid-fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries in Italy. By comparing and contrasting three different types of collections (anthologies, miscellanea, and authorial poetry books) of Petrarch's poems, Del Puppo demonstrates that book formats and material features of manuscripts contribute significantly to readers' understanding of the poems and helped shape the literary canon. This paper is, therefore, a case study in material philology and

also deals with the methods for studying the documentary sources of Italian literature.

Martin Eisner looks at Petrarch's *Triumphi* and asks whether Boccaccio might have influenced Petrarch rather than the other way around; philology helps him to answer in the affirmative. Eisner's paper, "Petrarch Reading Boccaccio: Revisiting the Genesis of the *Triumphi*", considers the relationship between Petrarch's *Triumphi* and Boccaccio's *Amorosa visione*. The topic of their affiliation has recently been raised by some critics, who have argued, perhaps influenced by Petrarch's status as *magister* with respect to the author of the *Decameron*, that there is no relationship between the two works. An attentive analysis of the manuscript tradition, however, can provide us with the material evidence for a strong disproof of that claim. "Petrarch Reading Boccaccio" examines a connection between Petrarch's canzone *Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade* (*Rvf* 23) and Boccaccio's *Caccia di Diana* that was first noticed by Santagata and used to evince the early circulation of the Petrarchan poem. The evidence of Petrarch's autograph manuscript, however, with its carefully dated marginalia, shows that the elements common to both works did not exist in the Petrarchan text until over twenty years after the *Caccia*'s composition. By reversing the flow of influence, showing that in this instance the senior Petrarch was influenced by his good friend Boccaccio, Eisner offers us an example of how genetic criticism can inflect and nuance our understanding of the interrelations between the authors who, with Dante, form the basis of the Italian canon.

Furio Brugnolo moves from philology to interpretation of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* in his "'Il suon che di dolcezza i sensi lega': grammatica ed eufonia nei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*". In a famous essay of 1953, the linguist Giovanni Nencioni observed that many of Petrarch's choices among the polymorphic grammatical endings made available in early Italian are determined by euphonic considerations. Noting that Nencioni's insight has not been picked up and investigated sufficiently, Brugnolo proposes that the time has come—now that we have a systematic description of Petrarchan language and a sound material basis for the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*—to deepen Nencioni's findings. This essay gives ample exemplification of the euphonic basis for Petrarch's choices between different grammatical endings, arriving at a system by which we can identify precise constants in Petrarch's "material" disposition of his verse. Brugnolo's essay also contributes to a larger ongoing project to which we should all subscribe with respect to poetry: we must always affirm that a poem cannot be reduced to its thematic

value, that its form—and this includes its sound—is its essence. As scholars of modern and contemporary poetry begin to recuperate the importance of form and sound, we offer Petrarch as the poet for whom the structure of the sound was never, as Brugnolo shows, absent from his conception of making a poem.

With Marcello Ciccuto's contribution, "Petrarca fra le arti: testi e immagini", we move into the visual and aesthetic domain. Petrarch's rich contribution both to the rhetoric of the figurative arts and to the actual commissioning of art works is examined here, as the author considers the modalities through which Petrarch confronted the problem of the image and the relationship of image and text. In this work of historical scholarship, Ciccuto gleans all the references to images and art from Petrarch's work, especially from his voluminous letter collections, and offers us the platform from which in the future we can begin to consider the influence of art on Petrarch's own textuality. The historical question of the miniatures commissioned by Petrarch for the codices in his library, and the larger cultural implications of the nature and composition of the library itself, viewed as a synthesis of texts and images from antiquity, moves our volume in the direction of the history of the book and the transmission of classical antiquity.

The history of the book is at the center of John Ahern's essay, "Goodbye, Bologna: Johannes Andreae and *Familiares* IV 15 and 16", which situates Petrarch within the context of university textual production, teasing out of Petrarch's life and correspondence a repudiation of the books being produced in the university climate of Bologna in favor of a different textual aesthetic. Ahern's essay begins with the young Petrarch in Bologna in 1326, at the moment that he abandoned the seven-year course of law study just before completing his degree, and then locates the book-obsessed poet within the study and production of the massive legal texts that lay at the heart of the city's economy and the university's intellectual life. In the preceding century the city had developed a system for the rapid efficient production of the largest possible number of complex, mainly legal texts, with no thought for desires of authors, much less readers. University legislation regulated the process and controlled its costs. Bolognese texts served to safeguard the wealth of the city and its professors as the university prepared young men for lucrative careers throughout Europe. Reaching its apogee in the final decades of the Duecento, the university and its system still flourished even if signs of decline had become visible by the time the sixteen-year old Petrarch arrived.

Ahern recreates the life of early fourteenth-century Bologna from the perspective of the book, noting that Petrarch could hardly have been blind to the tradition of creative encounter between vernacular poetry and university textuality, and the possibility of combining the poet's and jurist's careers. He did indeed "see" it and walked away from it—"Bononiam vidi et… non inhesi" as he says in one of his letters to the famous jurist and law professor Johannes Andreae—deliberately abandoning not just a lucrative legal career but also a certain way of producing literary texts. He operated in a wider frame of reference with a deeper knowledge of ancient texts, their formats and hands, than did his contemporaries. Eventually, decades later, in works like the *Bucolicum Carmen* and *De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*, he moved towards small reader-friendly formats not unlike his beloved pocket edition (now lost) of Augustine's *Confessions* given him by Dionigi da Borgo San Sepolcro in 1333. Such small formats harked back to the portable Bibles that had begun appearing in Paris in the 1220's—an innovation in striking contrast to the then recent Bolognese practice of the glossed legal text in the same period. Petrarch *puer* had understood that cumbersome, expensive legal texts, no matter how sophisticated their formats, did not lend themselves to the kind of intimate, conversational writing and textual engagement that he treasured.

There are no texts that more bespeak the Petrarchan sense of self than his letter collections, whose composition is addressed in Roberta Antognini's "*Familiarium rerum liber*: tradizione materiale e autobiografia". While the letters have traditionally been read as a biographical source for Petrarch's life, and all of the biographies that have been written of him over the years are based on his own accounts in his many letters, at the same time only individual letters of the *Familiarium rerum liber* have been deemed autobiographical documents per se, thus depriving this work of the unity imposed by the very act of making the collection, in which the individual letters achieve a new meaning because of their position. It is precisely the dialectic between the fragmentation of the single individual letters on the one hand and the unity of the collection on the other, similar in many ways to the dialectic in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* between the single lyric and the overarching *raccolta* that contains and orders them, which makes the *Familiarium rerum liber* a highly original undertaking: an autobiography that has been shaped out of a sequence of letters.

Petrarch took twenty-one years to complete his project, from the first idea inspired by Cicero's epistolaries discovered in Verona in 1345, to

its completion by Giovanni Malpaghini in 1366. During this time his letters circulated freely among his friends and admirers, not only as single letters but also as working parts of the final collection. This dual circulation in fact contributed to the dual reading of this work, both as fragments and as collection. Moreover, the manuscript tradition itself of the *Familiarium rerum liber* testifies to this double nature. As it happens, together with the manuscripts containing the entire collection, there are many others that contain only the first eight books (the so called β form), others that contain only some of the books, and others still where only a few letters are present, sometimes only one letter together with letters written by other authors. Such a rich and composite tradition has been the object of an intense philological effort resulting in the four volumes of the critical edition of the Edizione nazionale edited by Rossi between 1933 and 1942 (the *Familiarium rerum liber* is one of the few of Petrarch's Latin works, together with the *Africa* and the *Rerum memorandarum libri*, to have been published in the Edizione nazionale so far).

In the wake of Rossi's edition, many studies on the *Familiares* have followed, but critical attention to the collection as a whole is still sparse. The interpretive problems that surface in discussions of the *Familiarium rerum liber* are strikingly similar to those that we can discern in the critical history of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*: as critics have imposed a chronological narrative on the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and have been troubled to the point of resistance by signs that Petrarch thwarts chronology (see my essay in this volume), so critics of the *Familiarium rerum liber* have been troubled by the presence of fictitious letters. As in the collection of poems, so in the collection of letters, the dates of the individual fragments—some of them explicit, some recovered through philological spadework—do not always follow chronological order; the order of the collection follows its own logic, not strictly chronological. And, as with the poems, there has been a tendency on the part of critics to respond to these divergences by overriding them in various ways: the fictitous letters generate a critical response similar to that generated by the out-of-order anniversary sonnets. Again, philology can help us overcome our desire to impose a simpler template than the poet allows: the philological evidence reveals that Petrarch does not feel bound to chronology and that he clearly understands his project in his letters as artistic rather than documentary—hence the occasional fashioning of the self in "fictitious" letters constructed only for the collection,

not for a prior biographical purpose. Only a close diachronic reading that acknowledges the order in which the letters have been carefully arranged enables us to transform the biography of some of the letters into the autobiography of the entire collection. And only philological effort can put together the pieces of the puzzle and protect us from our own simplifying tendencies so that we can arrive at a proper Petrarchan epistolary hermeneutics.

Both the conversational intimacy of the small book format discussed by Ahern and the project of writing one's life treated by Antognini are picked up in Kathy Eden's essay, "Petrarchan Hermeneutics and the Recovery of Intimacy". This essay argues for a Petrarchan episotolary hermeneutics grounded in a concept of intimacy or *familiaritas*, itself grounded in Aristotelian and Ciceronian ethical and rhetorical theory. Here we come full circle to the Petrarch who reads and interprets his classical authors, or rather, his intimates—his *familiares*—and we connect the Petrarch who reads to the Petrarch whom we read: Eden traces philosophical and stylistic features of Petrarch's letters back through Cicero's identification of writing and speaking or *sermo* to Aristotle's very early defense of writing, in opposition to speaking, as a *techne* for bridging physical distance. Whereas letter-writing for Cicero, building on Aristotle, overcomes space, the letter for Petrarch looks to overcome time. Focusing on temporal distantiation, moreover, Petrarch extends the intimacy between letter-writer and letter-reader to the relation between writers and readers more generally.

Eden's essay completes our hermeneutic circle, moving from the Petrarch whom we read and interpret to the Petrarch who reads and interprets his classical forebears, and who constructs the letters in which we read and interpret him as he reads and interprets himself through reading and interpreting his *familiares*: linking himself to them in a chain soldered with *familiaritas*, textual devotion, and an intimacy rooted in the material perusal of manuscripts. At the same time, Eden's argument that "the principles of literary reception, theoretically understood, derive from principles of literary production—a derivation that stands to reason if, as Gadamer and others have argued, interpretation reverses composition"—beautifully illuminates what we have endeavored to propose in this volume: if interpretation reverses composition, then to neglect Petrarch's methods of composition, methods which we can only access through philology, is to imperil our ability to read Petrarch right, to read him as he himself would read. Although the

history of the reception of Petrarch's works does not in fact confirm the validity of Gadamer's principle—in actual rather than theoretical terms, interpretation has not reversed composition but ignored it (most blatantly in the case of Vellutello's edition of the *Canzoniere*, discussed in my essay)—it is never too late to start a new kind of reception. That is precisely what this volumes hopes to do.

A NOTE ON THE APPLICATION OF PETRARCHAN TEXTUAL CULTURES

H. Wayne Storey

In the relationship between textual scholarship and literary criticism, we usually think of the former leading the way toward the discoveries of the latter. Without well-prepared texts, criticism gropes in the dark among half truths and conjecture. But for certain literary icons, and for any number of cultural reasons, textual studies can lag strangely behind philological inquiry and critical interpretation. Years after the independent philological investigations of Petrarca's "visual poetics",[1] we still read and construct elaborate critical structures from a fifteenth-century *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, a condition for which I hope to offer one potential solution with my diplomatic-interpretative edition based not only on the scribal structures and micro-/macropoetics of the poet's own ideograph, the Vatican manuscript Latino 3195, but on intermediary copies from the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries that help us to reconstruct those sections of Latino 3195 today left in doubt by time, erasure, or subsequent alteration by other hands. In truth, the form in which we read Petrarca's *Canzoniere* is as much a question of cultural convenience, creating—alas—an inaccurate culture icon, as it is of philological conviction and textual study. The fifteenth-century shift to a transcriptional style of one verse per line became the norm in print culture for the genres of the "Canzoniere", giving us six hundred years to form our reading habits for Petrarca's lyrics. By the same token, we would no more attempt to force the verses of E.E. Cummings into such poetic strictures than we would, or probably could for that matter, "standardize" the unique formal poetic experiments of the Brazilian baroque poet Gregório de Matos, the ninth-century pattern poetry of Rabanus Maurus, or the pertinent visual-formal structure of the anonymous *Biedny poeta*, from the journal *Kurier Swiatecny* (1896), which

[1] See Brugnolo 1991 and Storey 1993, 201–433.

"describes the [poor] poet going up the steps to his publisher's office and bouncing down them afterwards".[2]

There is little doubt that Petrarca's works in particular present often unique textual problems for scholars attempting to establish an edition. The poet's passion for minute revisions and reworkings of form and order have left us with fundamental textual uncertainties that affect not only the *Fragmenta*, but also the *Triumphi*, the *Seniles*, the *Familiares*, the unassembled *rime disperse*, and the *Bucolicum carmen*, to name the most glaring examples. Yet in many ways the textual condition of the *Fragmenta* remains to this day the most problematic because it has seemed the easiest to resolve since the nineteenth-century authentication of the partial holograph (Lat. 3195), reinforced by Wilkins' virtually life-long studies of its evolution.[3] Yet as I delved into the philological constructions and critical presumptions surrounding Petrarca's partially autograph manuscript, the textual tradition from the earliest even partial manuscripts of poems from the *Fragmenta*[4] to the multinational diffusion of a highly interpreted *Canzoniere* at the hands of Vellutello and others, and the often intertwined traditions of Wilkins' conjectures and twentieth-century editions, I came to realize that there was a serious disconnect between the poet's fourteenth-century texts on the one hand and current-day editions and interpretation on the other.

Thus were launched three projects to begin systematic reappraisals of essential materials in this textual tradition. The first, devoted to the partial holograph itself and assembled with the collaborative expertise of specialists such as Gino Belloni, Furio Brugnolo, and Stefano Zamponi (2003–2004), offers a new orientation to and material-historical commentary for a work we thought we knew inside and out but which few, including many editors, have in reality ever consulted: Petrarca's last—though not necessarily definitive—copy of the *Fragmenta*. The second, nearing completion after years of research, is a translation into Italian

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[2] Higgins 1987, 140. For Gregório de Matos, see Storey 1993, 100n1; for an orientation to the problems of text and codex, see especially Holter 1973 (volume 2 = *Kommentar: kodikologische und kunsthistorische Einführung*), Ferrari 1999, and the studies in Rabanus Maurus 1973.

[3] We recall that Wilkins originally referred to Petrarca's shaping of the *Fragmenta* as an "evolution", a term discouraged by the editor of Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Don Giuseppe De Luca (from the personal correspondence of Wilkins and De Luca, now edited by Del Puppo and Storey), see Del Puppo and Storey 2003.

[4] Such as MSS Dantesca 2, of the library of the Società Dantesca Italiana, and Vatican Chigiano L VIII 305.

of all the relevant chapters of Wilkins' *Making of the "Canzoniere" and Other Petrarchan Studies*.[5] My long-time colleague and fellow codicologist, Dario Del Puppo, and I have returned to the sources to clarify where necessary—and always we hope with critical transparency—Wilkins' text so that Petrarch scholars can assess more accurately the development of many of Wilkins' conjectures and conclusions today mostly consulted in their "final form" in a translation only of Chapter Nine of the *Making of the "Canzoniere"*.[6] The third is the diplomatic-interpretative edition of the *Fragmenta*, also near completion, which should have appeared in the 2004 Antenore project, but which was delayed by additional studies to guarantee the accuracy of the text's apparatus that could not be sacrificed to the centenary date of publication. Along the way there have been additional studies that have been integral to the edition: the revelation of the importance of MS Morgan M. 502, the clarification of the role and reordering system of MS Laurenziano 41.17.[7]

The opportunity to bring together studies in *Petrarch and the Textual Origins of Interpretation* by such a distinguished and unique group of specialists in Petrarchan textual cultures seemed to my colleague, friend, and interlocutor of many years, Teodolinda Barolini, and me to require a particular care for textual accuracy, to practice what we preach. This moment of editorial attention coincided with my own final design skirmishes and decisions for the first number of the new journal of the Society for Textual Scholarship, *Textual Cultures: Texts, Contexts and Interpretation* (Indiana University Press), in which a clear distinction between the punctuation of the quoted author has to be distinguished from the punctuation of the quoting scholar in spite of the editorial conventions of American publishing, which too often and inconsistently repunctuates the cited author within the quotation marks.[8] We have therefore adopted for this volume the punctuation style that I adopted for *Textual Cultures*. We have also adopted the use of some standardized terms across all the essays, such as "charta" for the more common but less accurate "folio" to distinguish a manuscript "page" from the material foundation of the bifolium, made by folding a folio in half, and the

[5] Preliminary findings of our analysis of Wilkins' methodology were published in Del Puppo and Storey 2003.

[6] The chapter first appeared in Ceserani 1964.

[7] See respectively Storey 2006b and Storey and Capelli 2006.

[8] See Storey 2006c on the problematic punctuation of the variants in the 2004 facsimile edition of Sylvia Plath's *Ariel: The Restored Edition*.

primary building block of most medieval codices. It is our belief that agreement on how we talk about citation and materials will encourage greater dialogue among philologists, editors, and literary critics.

In addition to offering rich investigations of Petrarchan textuality, every essay in this volume explores—and often with different methodologies—the meaning and application of "textual cultures", a notion not designed to usurp editorial integrity ("all variants are equal") but to recognize that philological and editorial inquiry are not free of cultural and interpretative influence. Authorial errors in holograph copies of Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Petrarca's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* teach us there is rarely a perfect copy even in the author's own hand. Yet the textual and interpretative opportunities invoked by the careful study of the textual cultures of any given work extend well beyond the field of scholarly editing, reaching into the formation of critical attitudes that define even our own mechanisms of inquiry. For example, as we shall see in several studies in this volume, while Alessandro Vellutello's interpretative reordering of the poems of Petrarca's *Canzoniere* might be an extreme example of "cultural intervention" in one of the most popular editions of the Cinquecento, other more subtle manipulations of the texts reflect equally strident cultural mechanisms of "reproducing" Petrarca's lyrics in forms significantly alien to the poet's original. But rather than being simply bad examples of the treatment of texts, these "cultural translations" provide important information about critical attitudes and editorial practices that have often been integrated, perhaps unwittingly, into our own methods of transmitting and interpreting the same texts.

Aside from the extraordinary historical-critical feat of Vellutello's chronological reorganization of Petrarca's lyrics, on the heels of the 1470 *editio princeps*—designed like the 1472 Valdezoco with empty space for initials, illustration, or added commentary—and of Scinzenzeler's 1507 *Petrarcha con doi co(m)menti sopra li soneti (et) canzone*, Vellutello's 1525 and 1528 editions codify the practice of commentary that virtually engulfs the poems, notably separating and "disembodying" stanzas of canzoni.[9] This same disembodiment of the microtext from the

[9] Scinzenzeler's 1507 Milanese edition prints some poems two verses per line not in an effort to imitate Petrarca's "visual poetics", but rather in order to accommodate the commentary. For general introductions to issues of the conversion of Petrarca's vernacular works into print culture, see Trovato 1991 and Richardson 1994, which incorporates and expands on Trovato 1991.

macrostructures of the manuscript charta and Petrarca's originally unglossed poetry book itself, the latter a model adopted for Bembo's sparse Aldine edition of 1501, haunts many modern editions, where—as in Vellutello—commentary overshadows textual scholarship. We recall Vellutello's finely honed argument for this critical orientation, that the order of the Aldine edition is flawed because it is not, as Aldo says and Bembo has denied in conversations with Vellutello, that of Petrarca's original:

> Ma perche Messer Piero Bembo, col quale sopra di tal cosa ho alcuna volta parlato dice, non da l'originale del Poeta, come Aldo vuole, ma d'alcuni antichi testi, e specialmente i Sonetti e le Canzoni da vno che noi habbiamo veduto, & anchor hoggi è in Padoua appresso Messer Danielle da Santa Sophia, hauer quest'opera cauata, & anchora per hauerne veduto alcuni altri similmente antichi, e nondi meno in molte cose differenti. secondo ch'è piaciuto a gli scrittori, senon de l'ordine, il quale di tutti è vno medesimo, noi habbiamo per cosa certa, che dal Poeta non ne sia stato lassato originale ordinato, ma fu diuersi separati fogli, e che poi l'ordine che parue di darli a colui che fu'l primo a raccoglierla & metterla insieme, tutti gli altri habbiamo seguitato.[10]

Vellutello's methodological transparency is refreshing: critical interpretation trumps philology in the presence of Bembo's reported denial of having used Petrarca's original and in the face of a corrupt tradition altered by the cultural interests of subsequent readers and copyists (Vellutello uses "scrittori"). As it turns out, Vellutello's assessment was incorrect: Bembo had indeed consulted Petrarca's original, a codex that Bembo would later come to own.[11] But the impact of his edition, reprinted throughout the sixteenth century, is nevertheless noteworthy

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[10] Abbreviations have been expanded from the 1528 edition, p. 3.

[11] Bembo's consultation of the Santasofia family codex of the *Fragmenta*, Petrarca's original which would become MS Latino 3195 of the Vatican Library, came late in the process of his preparation of the copy-text (Vatican Latino 3197) he would use for the 1501 Aldine edition. Bembo seems to have collated the Santasofia manuscript against the two base manuscripts he had used to produce his edition: the "obiciano" manuscript noted on c. 29*v* of Latino 3197 and a Tuscan codex (*tuscus*) referred to on c. 78*r*, adding marginal notes (often marked "P") and integrating some—but certainly not all—the readings he found in Petrarca's original. Recent speculation on Bembo's lack of consultation of the Santasofia manuscript in the production of Latino 3197 awaits a systematic collation of Bembo's copy-text and marginalia against the 1501 edition. Vattasso (1905, xxvi–xxxi; and 1908, 15) expressed certainty of Bembo's careful consultation of Petrarca's original but doubt about his systematic integration of the readings he had culled from the manuscript ("più tardi, prima però di consegnare il suo ms. al Manuzio, esaminò di nuovo queste lezioni, ed allora in gran parte le rifiutò ed in parte le accolse […]" [1908, 15]).

in the spread of unique matrices for interpretation that would inform European Petrarchism.

Turning the same critical eye to the impact of the studies of Ernest Hatch Wilkins will be a common activity of several of the essays in this volume and I will not linger here on the topic. In a 2003 essay, Dario Del Puppo and I examined Wilkins' methodology, what we termed his "millimetricità", in combination with his conjectures based on probability, which often resulted in chaining together repeated constructions founded on the probable in the same paragraph to arrive at firm dates, work periods, and thus separate redactions and versions of the *Canzoniere*. In 2004, working directly from the evidence provided by Petrarca's holograph, the paleographer Stefano Zamponi arrived at a similar assessment of Wilkins' procedures and conclusions, remarking particularly upon the wide and uncritical acceptance his work has enjoyed.[12] Zamponi notes especially that Wilkins' conclusions founded on his method of dating work periods according to changes of pen and/or ink are "without scientific basis":

> [...] il 'metodo dell'inchiostro e della penna' [di Wilkins] è radicalmente errato, perché né il diverso modulo della scrittura, né il mutamento di colore dell'inchiostro, fatti che possono presentarsi in scritture contemporanee della stessa mano, offrono indizi suscettibili di trasformarsi in un'ordinata e fissa diacronia, dal giorno al mese all'anno. [...] ne consegue che tutte le affermazioni di Wilkins basate solo su tale metodo sono destituite di ogni fondamento scientifico.[13]

Neither Zamponi's critique nor Del Puppo's and mine is a wholesale dismissal of the entirety of Wilkins' contributions to the field of Petrarchan studies. But they do call into question those conclusions arrived at by conjecture, strings of probability, and unscientific methods which over many years have become the foundation of numerous critical interpretations, especially the nine "forms" of the "Canzoniere". With so many collections of essays and *acta* published to commemorate the seventh centennial of Petrarca's birth and his profound cultural contributions, it is fitting that this volume follow most of these with cautious assessments of some of the texts so widely celebrated.

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[12] Zamponi 2004, 29–31; "Come è noto, il progredire del lavoro di Petrarca, la minuta successione di tempi di copia distesi su piú anni sono stati indagati e fissati da Wilkins in contributi ormai classici, che in buona sostanza non sono mai stati messi in discussione" (29).

[13] Zamponi 2004, 29.

Once you have finished reading the essays in this volume, I believe you will agree that the contributors are of no single doctrine: anti-Wilkinsian, philo-philological, pro-hermeneutical. Rather their reassessments and investigations are linked by a common interest in material origins, in the text in its diverse permutations that links copyists, readers, editors, and later texts—often by imperfect if not failed means and understandings—to Petrarca's own difficult, studied, labored, simultaneously ponderous and soaring relationship to his own work as author (*auctor*), editor, compiler, copyist, and corrector.

CHAPTER ONE

PETRARCH AT THE CROSSROADS OF HERMENEUTICS AND PHILOLOGY:

EDITORIAL LAPSES, NARRATIVE IMPOSITIONS, AND WILKINS' DOCTRINE OF THE NINE FORMS OF THE *RERUM VULGARIUM FRAGMENTA*

Teodolinda Barolini

The goal of this paper is to isolate a core constituent of Petrarch's intellectual and poetic identity, one that suggests that when handling Petrarchan texts even the non-philologist will benefit from acquiring the rudiments of Petrarchan philology. I will endeavor to explain why I think that the point where hermeneutics and philology intersect is a crossroads to which the serious student of Petrarch must almost inevitably arrive, even if then to depart again—as most of us will—for a place more fully philological or more fully interpretive. What is it about this crossroads, this particular intellectual juncture, which is peculiarly Petrarchan? That question furnishes the framework of this paper.

Given my topic, it is perhaps best to declare at the outset that I am not a philologist. However, over the course of an intellectual life spent thinking about thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian texts I have been drawn, apparently ineluctably, ever further into matters philological, undoubtedly because in this field philology continues to collide with interpretation and the two cannot be neatly segregated. Nowhere is this collision more evident than in Petrarch studies, though it occurs in other intellectual domains as well. Recently I critiqued the edition of Dante's lyrics published in 2002 by the present dean of Italian philologists, Domenico De Robertis, precisely because the edition in question thought to privilege philology over hermeneutics without acknowledging the necessary quotient of interpretation that is part of the practice of philology—without acknowledging, in other words, that philology *is* a form of interpretation.[1] I will come back to

[1] See Barolini 2004.

this story, for the problems of the De Robertis edition are exemplary with respect to the juncture I hope to illuminate; they pivot at the nexus of hermeneutics and philology. For now, my point is autobiographical: in my adult life, the original solicitation to engage with philological issues came from Petrarch.

When I went to graduate school in the 1970s, theory was newly in vogue and philology seemed quite déclassé and outmoded; the work of editing was rarely mentioned in graduate school. It was not then possible to foretell the fortunate turn of the wheel whereby philology would become fashionable again via interest in material culture on the one hand and hermeneutics on the other. A classicist as an undergraduate, I was familiar with the philological discussions that can be found in the notes of Latin and Greek editions, and this background gave me an appreciation for the importance and hermeneutic complexity of the editorial enterprise. I engaged with philology through Petrarch, while writing an essay entitled "The Making of a Lyric Sequence: Time and Narrative in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*"[2] (other names for Petrarch's vernacular masterpiece are *Canzoniere*, *Rime*, and *Rime sparse*, but the only authorized name, given by Petrarch in his final copy, is *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*). In other words, I found that I had to read and digest Ernest Hatch Wilkins' seminal philological and codicological study, published in 1951, *The Making of the "Canzoniere" and Other Petrarchan Studies*.[3]

My goal was to conceptualize the intertwined problems of narrative and time in Petrarch's lyric sequence; to do this it turned out that I needed to understand the basic philological problems inherent in the construction of Petrarch's text. Let me add, the better to underscore the specificity of the Petrarchan problematic, that at the same time I was also working on conceptualizing the problems of narrative and time in Dante's *Paradiso*, and that philosophy—not philology—was required to solve those problems.[4]

The experience of reading Wilkins was a watershed for me, although not for entirely positive reasons. I was interested in the constructedness of Petrarch's vernacular masterpiece, which Wilkins had illuminated; indeed, the title of my essay, "The Making of a Lyric Sequence", is

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[2] See Barolini 1989. Citations of this essay are from the 2006 reprint.
[3] See Wilkins 1951a.
[4] See Barolini 1992, especially chapter 8.

intended to refer to his title, *The Making of the "Canzoniere"*. Wilkins' reconstruction of the text's construction involved much description of the manuscripts and—although his description is dated by today's standards, in ways discussed by Dario Del Puppo and H. Wayne Storey and in the context of standards set by the new facsimile edition of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* by Gino Belloni, Furio Brugnolo, H. Wayne Storey, and Stefano Zamponi—it was essential reading at the time.[5] I was working on an idea that could not be verified without understanding to some degree the story told by the manuscripts: the idea that Petrarch used narrative devices as a means of bringing time into a text which simultaneously resisted temporality, and that he saw the lyric sequence (and eventually also the letter collection) as a genre which was uniquely qualified to achieve these ends. I needed to understand how the construction of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* was achieved in material terms because it seemed clear that the material and the ideological would reflect each other. The experience of thinking about the material construction of Petrarch's text in turn stimulated an ongoing meditation on the dialectical interplay of interpretation and philology in other early Italian contexts, leading me eventually to the controversies that swirl around Dante's lyrics.

In retrospect, I see that the experience of reading Wilkins also incubated the thesis that Petrarch, more than most authors, more for instance than Dante or Boccaccio, created an opus that in fact *requires* would-be interpreters to understand the relevant philological and codicological issues. (The work of Dante's for which we would have to make an exception is not the *Commedia* but the *Vita Nuova*, whose proper interpretation also requires from us an understanding of the rudiments of its material construction and editorial history.) This condition occurs because of the high degree of constructedness of Petrarch's texts, or better because of the nature of their constructedness, which is to be located precisely in the codices he used and how he handled and manipulated them.

How is this behavior different from that of any other author? After all, all textual construction is ultimately located in the material form in which it was first made, whether that be in clay tablets or computer files or parchment codices. In the case of Petrarch's collection

[5] Del Puppo and Storey 2003, and Belloni, Brugnolo, Storey, and Zamponi 2004.

of vernacular lyrics, the key individualizing factors are: first, that it is indeed a collection, a grouping of poems placed in a pre-determined order (and this is why the *Vita Nuova*, which also arranges previously written lyrics in a new order, generates some of the same critical problems as the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*); and, second, that Petrarch built his collection by literally moving poems from one codex to another in ways that we can still trace (as compared to the *Vita Nuova*, where all material traces of Dante's manipulation have vanished).

In composing the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, Petrarch took previously written lyrics and literally moved them in the process of arranging them in a new—and to him significant—order. Petrarch transcribed poems from drafts, some of which are preserved in the codex Vaticano Latino 3196, known as the *codice degli abbozzi*,[6] into a standing order. The last of these orders is preserved as the partial autograph, codex Vaticano Latino 3195. Let me mention here that, while Vaticano Latino 3195 is technically only a partial autograph because Petrarch did not personally copy all the poems in it himself, the poems not transcribed by Petrarch were transcribed by his secretary Giovanni Malpaghini under his direct supervision. As a result, the entire codex is authorial and, in the etymological sense of the word, "authoritative".[7]

The construction of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* can therefore be visualized in a very precise way as an interaction between material codices, followed by the material mechanics of what occurs within the final codex, within Vaticano Latino 3195 (one feature of the codex's material construction, its erasures, is discussed by Storey in this volume). A similar process underlies the construction of Petrarch's letter collections (as discussed by Roberta Antognini in this volume). My point here is that, while the existence of an autograph, which we possess for instance in the case of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, is always of enormous significance, since an autograph always provides invaluable insight into a text's genesis and creation, nonetheless an autograph is of lesser specifically *hermeneutic* value in the absence of a poetics that is so markedly material, so profoundly codicological. And, in fact, once the authen-

[6] See Pacca and Paolino 1996 for their useful edition of Vaticano Latino 3196.

[7] Giovanni Malpaghini transcribed 244 poems, 189 in part 1 and 55 in part 2; Petrarch transcribed 123 poems, including one retranscription, 75 in part 1 (the retranscription is number 121) and 48 in part 2. See Wilkins 1951a, 75–76.

ticity of Staatsbibliothek Hamilton 90 as Boccaccio's autograph was established, the Boccaccian interpretive enterprise has not continued to focus on it in the same way that the Petrarchan interpretive enterprise has remained focused on Vaticano Latino 3195.

The thesis that Petrarch's poetics constrain his interpreters to come to grips with the fundamentals of Petrarchan philology has a corollary, which will motivate many of my remarks in this paper: we as critics should take responsibility for labeling the verifiably philological and should be transparent regarding our positions along the critical axis from philology to hermeneutics. Again, my position was shaped by the encounter with Wilkins, for I did not emerge from reading *The Making of the "Canzoniere"* with a charitable view of the application of Petrarchan philology to literary criticism—quite the opposite. The experience was fruitful in terms of thinking of the boundary permeable and impermeable between philology and interpretation and the discourses that are situated along that boundary precisely because I was shocked by the acritical and hermeneutically naïve applications of Wilkins that dotted the landscape of Petrarchan literary criticism. Thus, the "The Making of a Lyric Sequence" contains a subtext intended to be corrective of Wilkins and even more of Wilkins' reception. This subtext of yore will be my main text in this essay, a text preached with all the more vigor because the intervening years did not produce as much correction as I (alas, naïve myself with respect to the reception of critics by their peers) would have hoped.

In "The Making of a Lyric Sequence" I considered the philosophical implications of the macro-structures of Petrarch's text. Chief among these macro-structures is his division of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* into two parts. For readers who are not familiar with Petrarch's method of composition, let me briefly explain that, in the final collection of 366 poems, poems 1 and 264 were fixed as the beginnings respectively of an unnamed part 1 and an unnamed part 2, and poem 366, *Vergine bella*, was fixed as the conclusion. The collection grew by a process of accretion to each of the two parts: poems were copied from drafts and transcribed into the poet's *ordo* (we have autograph draft sheets containing lined-through poems and marginal annotations indicating transcription "in ordine"). We know that Petrarch had divided his collection into two parts before doing so in Vaticano Latino 3195, because an earlier form of the collection (copied by Boccaccio in Chigiano L V 176 and

hence known as the Chigi form) is also divided into two parts.[8] Moreover, the canzone *I' vo pensando*, a meditation on the transitory nature of all earthly attachments akin to a versified *Secretum*, begins part 2 in both the Chigiano codex and in Vaticano Latino 3195. (*I' vo pensando* is not number 264 in the Chigi form, because the Chigi collection consists of a total of 215 poems, 174 in part 1 and 41 in part 2.) Therefore, we know that the decision to divide the collection into two parts with *I' vo pensando* as the hinge was one of long standing.

The significance of the division, the most overt exploitation of formal structure in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and a creative act without precedent in the lyric tradition, is immense. The very act of composing a text—in this case the very act of collecting the lyrics—in and of itself generates a beginning and an ending, but the willed and constructed nature of a beginning or of an ending is less evident if a text contains no other formal structure (no chapter divisions or other segmentations). Petrarch's division is a formal structure that, by generating a textual "middle"—in the narratological sense of *in medias res* rather than in the mathematical sense (poem 264 is closer to two-thirds of the way through the *Fragmenta* than to the half-way point, suggesting as a model Augustine, who structures his *Confessions* so that the conversion experience occurs at roughly two-thirds of the way through the text)—also has the effect of throwing into relief the willed and constructed nature of the collection's beginning and ending.

As an interpreter, one engaged in hermeneutics, I read the significance of Petrarch's division of his collection into two parts as follows. I take this novelty in the lyric tradition to be an abstract—that is, an order-based rather than content-based—way of probing the very nature of transition. Transition is thematized by the division itself, since the division entails a transition from a "1" to a "2", and it is then highlighted by Petrarch's consistent choice for his textual new beginning of the canzone *I' vo pensando*: a poem about the poet's inability to make a new beginning in the manner of Augustine in the *Confessions*, his inability to effect a true and complete transition. The question posed by the content of the canzone—is the poet capable of conversion, capable of a new beginning, capable of transition?—is answered in the negative

[8] Wilkins dates the Chigi form to 1359–62; work on Vaticano Latino 3195 begins ca. 1366. For a description of the Chigi form, see Phelps 1925; the codex itself is described by De Robertis 1974.

by the canzone's famous Ovidian last verse: "et veggio 'l meglio, et al peggior m'appiglio" (v. 136).[9] This same question is also posed formally and abstractly: the formal transition from part 1 to part 2 signifies the idea of change as surely as anything the poet can say. The collection thus makes the transition that the poet himself says he cannot make, and Petrarch has found an abstract non-thematic way of articulating structurally his central theme of transition versus transition manqué.

But, as we try to understand the significance of this division for Petrarch, we are distracted by another story: the story of centuries of editorial mishandling, of editorial and philological lapses. Early on the editorial enterprise narrativized Petrarch's opaque and rubric-free division by adding the rubric "in vita di madonna Laura" to part 1 and the rubric "in morte di madonna Laura" to part 2. And then, in a further assault on the integrity of the authorized text, because apparently the addition of unauthorized material in the form of the headings to the autograph was not sufficient to guarantee the narrative transparency, the interpretive legibility, that editors and commentators sought, another change was made: the beginning of part 2 was moved in order to accommodate the narrative story-line told by the invented rubrics. From Bembo's 1514 edition until Mestica's 1896 edition, part 2 begins with sonnet 267, *Oimè il bel viso*, the first poem to register Laura's death, rather than with canzone 264, *I' vo pensando*.[10]

The tenacity of the editorial tradition—or, better, of the centuries-long editorial lapse—that begins part 2 with the sonnet *Oimè il bel viso* is remarkable. Even after Mestica made the correction and placed the beginning of part 2 at *I' vo pensando* in 1896, Carducci and Ferrari return to the error in their edition of 1899; and they do so consciously, noting that "Non osammo seguirlo [Mestica], tenuti dal rispetto alla quasi religiosa consuetudine".[11] The division of the *Rerum vulgarium*

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[9] Citations of the *Rvf* are from Santagata's revised edition of 2004.

[10] While Bembo's 1501 edition places the division correctly before canzone 264, his 1514 edition transposes the division, placing it before sonnet 267, as noted by Gino Belloni: "a parte qualche variante di minor conto, è da notare nell'aldina del '14 un fatto assai importante che riguarda il *Canzoniere*: lo spostamento di demarcazione fra la prima e la seconda parte. La prima volta, aldina del 1501, la bipartizione conferma, tra 263 e 264, il Vaticano latino 3195, l'autografo del Petrarca collazionato dal Bembo alla fine del suo lavoro, ed il 3197, autografo del Bembo, alla base—come s'è detto—dell'aldina del 1501; ora, aldina del 1514, la nuova divisione tra 266 e 267 smentisce silenziosamente questa opzione" (Belloni 1992, 297).

[11] Carducci and Ferrari 1899, xxiii. Mestica's full title page (1896) shows his dedication to the material texts: *Le rime di Francesca Petrarca, restituite nell'ordine e nella lezione*

fragmenta has continued to elicit editorial lapses, as witnessed by the fact that Cudini (1974), Bezzola (1976), and Durling (1976) fail to indicate its existence.[12] All this editorial deviation from the autograph occurred despite the fact that in the final form of the collection the demarcation is clearly placed at canzone 264: *I' vo pensando* is marked, like the collection's opening sonnet, with a large ornamental initial, and there are seven blank pages between it and sonnet 263, the last poem of part 1.[13] In the Chigi collection as well, *I' vo pensando* is distinguished by an ornamental initial; one blank page and a portion of another separate it from the last poem of part 1.

And yet, despite the unambiguously clear philological facts of the case, the division that Petrarch placed before poem number 264 in the final form (or before poem number 175 in the Chigi form) was moved by the text's editors. When the material and philological witness—the autograph codex—collided with the hermeneutic imperative to explain and read the text in more explicitly narrative and biographical terms, the hermeneutic imperative won. And the results of this victory were ever more egregious deviations from the autograph, culminating in the 1525 edition of Vellutello, who, in what would prove to be the most successful of the sixteenth-century editions of the *Fragmenta*, imposed a tripartite division onto the *Fragmenta*, moving the political and moral poems into a separate third section that one scholar has compared to an "appendix".[14] Parts 1 and 2 are maintained by Vellutello but they are no longer Petrarch's parts 1 and 2: they have been reordered to bring about a clear chronology and purged of the original order's offending chronological inconsistencies. Vellutello's espoused goal, as explained in his opening editorial manifesto, "Trattato de l'ordine de' sonetti et canzoni del Petrarca mutato", was to assert a chronological, biographical, and narrative history within the *Fragmenta*, which he lovingly reconstructs with the use of a map of Vaucluse as a visual aid.[15]

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del testo originario, sugli autografi, col sussidio di altri codici e di stampe, e corredate di varianti e note. Edizione critica.

[12] Contini (1964) scrupulously leaves a blank page and uses the running headers "Prima parte" and "Seconda parte", as do Bettarini (2005) and Santagata (1996); Santagata 1996 reverses to "Parte prima" and "Parte seconda" as his headers.

[13] These blank pages caused Wilkins to believe that Petrarch intended to continue adding to part 1 and that the total number of poems is not therefore set at the numerologically significant 366.

[14] See Belloni 1992: "La terza è intesa come un'appendice" (66).

[15] Belloni 1992 includes a plate of the map and prints Vellutello's "Trattato de l'ordine de' sonetti et canzoni del Petrarca mutato" on pp. 89–93. See also Storey 2006a, an account of the vagaries of the material reception of the *Fragmenta*.

Vellutello's edition of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* is worth looking at because it provides a convenient synthesis for the resistant reception accorded Petrarch's vernacular masterpiece, brilliantly crystallizing the features of the *Fragmenta* that have proved most enduringly difficult for readers to accept. In Vellutello's hands these features "prove" that the previously transmitted order of the collection could not have been Petrarch's. In other words, the very features that we now identify as quintessentially "Petrarchan"—systematic variability, organically disposed mutability, a shifting and metamorphic kaleidoscope of labyrinthine textuality that exploits the principle of *ordo* as a means of defying order[16]—all this is what proves to Vellutello that the text purporting to be Petrarchan was not really Petrarch's.

In justifying his systematic reorganization of the text, Vellutello vehemently denies the Petrarchan paternity of the Aldine editions. He says that he will prove that in the order as it was transmitted there is no order—"proverò in esso ordine non essere ordine alcuno"[17]—thus inadvertently characterizing the carefully crafted disorder, the intentional disruption of too overt an order, that modern critics associate with the Petrarchan lyric sequence. But for Vellutello the collection's manifest disorder is the sign not of Petrarch's deliberately subversive deployment of the idea of *ordo* but of the literally non-Petrarchan pedigree of Aldo's edition. Thus he argues that Petrarch, having included in his collection poems that count the years since his first falling in love (poems called by modern scholarship "anniversary poems"), would never have placed some of them out of chronological order. And so Vellutello, after carefully listing all the *Fragmenta*'s anniversary poems, draws our attention to the two anniversary sonnets, numbers 145 and 266, which are out of chronological order:

> Questi sonetti & canzone dovebbono adunque esser posti nel procedere dell'opera per ordine, ma noi veggiamo che avanti a quel sonetto *Ponmi ove 'l sole occide i fiori et l'herba* [145], che il XV anno del suo amore dinota, essere stato posto quello *Rimansi a dietro il sesto decim'anno* [118], et quell'altro *Dicesett'anni ha già rivolto il cielo* [122], che l'uno il XVI, l'altro il XVIJ anno dinota. Veggiamo similmente quell'altro, *Signor mio caro ogni pensier mi tira* [266], che 'l XVIIJ anno significa, essere non solamente posto dopo i due che di sopra habbiamo detto, che il XX anno dinotano, ma anchora […].[18]

[16] See Barolini 2008.
[17] Belloni 1992, 89.
[18] Belloni 1992, 91.

Vellutello goes on to note that sonnet 266 should also not have been placed among the poems *in morte*, an error that he says applies as well to the placement of canzone 264 and sonnet 265.[19] Vellutello thus alerts us to the major *cruces* that have bedeviled Petrarch scholars, who have agonized in particular about the out-of-order anniversary poems and the beginning of part 2.

The editorial history of the *Fragmenta* clearly has its own significance: Petrarch's readers resisted his abstract, order-based, and non-biographical mode of signifying and insisted on narrativizing his text as much as possible. The act of narrativizing through the insertion of *in vita/in morte* rubrics and the shifting of the beginning of part 2 culminated in Vellutello's wholesale reorganization of the text. All these editorial moves testify to the need to simplify and to tame Petrarch's endlessly tantalizing—because systematically opaque—"spider's web": "opra d'aragna" (*Rvf* 173.6). Vellutello's tripartite editorial transgression certainly has the effect of simplifying: the removal of political, moral and occasional poems into an independent third group results, for instance, in readers not facing the interpretive challenge of finding the political canzone *Italia mia* (number 128 in Petrarch's order and the canzone cited by Machiavelli at the end of the *Prince*) embedded in a sequence of love poems.

There is a story about the Italian imaginary, indeed ultimately about the European imaginary, encoded into the editorial history of these *rime non affatto sparse* which are nonetheless editorially *sparse*—textually redistributed—to suit readers' tastes. On another occasion we could probe further the cultural significance of the systematic violation visited upon the text of this most imitated of poets: a violation all the more interesting because it happens within a cultural context that simultaneously fetishizes the "opera organica"—like the *Vita Nuova* and the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*—and degrades the lyrics that have not had the good fortune to be included by the author in an "organic" whole, lyrics that are dubbed "estravaganti" or wandering outsiders.[20] But for now, let us come back to the interplay of hermeneutics and philology around the issue of the division of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* into

[19] "Oltre a questo, quella canzone *I' vo pensando & nel pensier m'assale* [264], et il seguente sonetto *Aspro core & selvaggia & cruda voglia* [265], posti fra l'opere fatte in morte, le quali per la loro sententia manifestamente si conoscono dover andare fra quelle fatte in vita" (Belloni 1992, 91).

[20] See Barolini 2004 [2006], 266.

two parts. The editorial lapses that occurred around a philologically quite straightforward matter, a division of the text that is present in the autograph, signal the presence of interpretive pressures that trumped the philological evidence, pressures that for instance arguably conditioned Vellutello's stunning reverse reclassification of a fully authorial and "organic" work into a "fragmented" and non-authorial one. Let me repeat a point that puts us squarely at the crossroads of philology and hermeneutics: in the case of the division of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, interpretive pressures for centuries trumped the philological evidence.

Petrarch is undoubtedly provocative in his resistance to an overdetermined interpretive template, for reluctance to accept canzone 264 as the starting-point for part 2 has been fueled by the fact that sonnets 265 and 266 treat Laura alive. We have seen that Vellutello found the placement of poems 264–266 *in morte* troubling; their position was still troubling critics in 1925, when Ruth Shepard Phelps summed up the critical problem created by their presence in part 2 thus: "The great objection to accepting the division into parts as indicated in Chigi L. V. 176, Laur. XLI, 17, and V. L. 3195 is the fact that it throws into Part II the two sonnets *Aspro core* and *Signor mio caro*, the one a complaint against Laura's cruelty, in the old key of so many of the songs in Part I, and the other a tribute of love and friendship to Cardinal Colonna and to Laura".[21] To our text's chronology-obsessed critics, sonnet 266, *Signor mio caro*, ostentatiously displays its unsuitability for part 2 as part 2 was editorially defined by the inserted rubric "in morte di madonna Laura": it is an anniversary poem that expressly instructs us to view it as composed in 1345, 18 years after the poet's *innamoramento*, and thus three years before Laura's death in 1348.[22] But Petrarch never declares that he is telling an accurate biography or autobiography, that his poems are in chronological order, or that the poems of part 2 all treat Laura dead. Rather, Petrarch declares, through the material witness of the autograph, only that *I' vo pensando* starts part 2. Petrarch's readers, a group that includes the subsequent cultivators of the sonnet sequence

[21] Phelps 1925, 193. As Phelps (1925, 194) reminds us, Cesareo argues that Petrarch intended to transfer 265 and 266 to the end of part 1.

[22] While the 1350 date of poem 265 (provided by Petrarch's notes; see Phelps 1925, 157) is not apparent to the reader, it too is of interest, because it tells us that Petrarch was capable, if he deemed the effort advisable, of writing as though Laura were alive after her death, and thus further underscores the painstaking construction that characterizes this portion of the text.

throughout Europe who moved the genre in the direction of greater biographical clarity and fidelity, created the relentless biographical and chronological prism through which we view the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. When the text failed to conform to our prism, we altered the text. An interpretive framework completely (and hence simplistically) dependent on chronology and biography has been superimposed onto a text that simultaneously invokes and evades biography and is not so much dependent on chronology as selectively engaged in exploiting it.

Since the contributions of Ruth Shepard Phelps, the author of an important 1925 study of the Chigi form titled *The Earlier and Later Forms of Petrarch's "Canzoniere"*, have been obscured by Wilkins' subsequent work, it gives me pleasure to note that "Miss Phelps" (as Wilkins refers to her) provides a much more sophisticated reading of the presence of sonnets 265 and 266 than either her predecessors or her successors: "A conceivable explanation of their position here is that they are a kind of corollary to that last line of *I' vo pensando*, proving that although he sees 'the better' he still follows 'the worse'".[23] This is an example of a philologist accepting the philological evidence, and then, rather than trying to alter the philological record, turning to interpretation and showing real interpretive intelligence. For centuries, however, editors responded by simply overriding the philological evidence. In other words, rather than acknowledging the *interpretive*—not philological—challenge posed by sonnets 265 and 266 and asking what Petrarch intended to signify through his order, perhaps arriving at the conclusion that Petrarch inserted sonnets 265 and 266 into their positions in the sequence precisely to deter us from too much privileging of Laura and her individual death and to goad us in the direction of more universal issues of transition and conversion, the very editors who should be the custodians of the philological and material evidence have typically responded by overriding and suppressing it.

Let me now come to Wilkins' doctrine of the nine forms of the *Fragmenta*, another case where there has been a massive contamination of philology by interpretation. I use the word "doctrine" advisedly, for despite the absence of material proof of their existence, the nine forms have taken on the status of received truth. In the decades since the 1951 publication of *The Making of the "Canzoniere"*, Wilkins' scholarly readers,

[23] Phelps 1925, 199–200.

precisely those who should know better than to read acritically, have taken on the role of acolytes in disseminating the master's doctrine.

There are two issues here. The first is that Wilkins himself frequently engaged in speculation, a fact that in itself should cause no alarm, since philologists are permitted to engage in interpretation, and indeed are required to engage in interpretation (we will come to the case of De Robertis' refusal to engage in interpretation, as troubling as its converse)—but must be vigilant and transparent about labeling it as such. The second is that Wilkins' speculative hypotheses are frequently treated as factual by literary critics (and even by philologists) who have used his work as the empirical and philological foundations for their interpretive castles, a fact that should cause great alarm but that instead has gone relatively unnoticed. Again, the problem is less that Wilkins engaged in interpretation than that others have represented him as though he did not. If one approaches *The Making of the "Canzoniere"* from the perspective of subsequent Petrarch criticism, one is startled by the disjunction between his hypotheses and the disseminated "facts" around the question of the nine forms, which are treated in the critical literature as though they exist.

Wilkins does not misrepresent what he is doing, although it is fair to say that he asserts his hypotheses with great confidence, writing in a dry and factual manner that lulls the reader into forgetting that he is hypothesizing. With respect to the nine forms, Wilkins clearly states that the Chigi form (the one copied by Boccaccio in Chigiano L V 176), which he calls the fourth form of the *Canzoniere*, is the "first extant".[24] He also states, in presenting the fifth or Johannine form (that is, the form copied by Petrarch and by Giovanni Malpaghini, whose first name in Latin produces the adjective "Johannine"): "All that follows might indeed have been presented under the heading of 'The Fifth and Final Form,' with appropriate subdivisions".[25] In other words, Wilkins acknowledges that there are only two material, or as he puts it "extant", forms. Forms five through nine are successive elaborations of the (one) form preserved as Vaticano Latino 3195. And forms one through three are hypotheses regarding the successive elaborations that led to the (one) Chigi form. As one sees when one reads *The Making of the "Canzoniere"*, some of these hypotheses are more convincing than others, and, rather

[24] Wilkins 1951a, 93, 160.
[25] Wilkins 1951a, 165.

than being accepted in bulk, each one needs to be evaluated individually. In any case, midst the hypotheses and the extrapolations, Wilkins unambiguously states the facts. Two forms exist: an earlier form, the Chigi, and a later form, Vaticano Latino 3195, which (unlike the Chigi) bears the traces of much revision and emendation.

Therefore, the nine forms are best conceived as metaphors that permit Wilkins to set forth his personal vision of the progressive construction of the making of the *Canzoniere*. In fact, they are a narrative conceit, rather like the nine heavens that permit Dante the pilgrim to experience paradise diachronically while Dante the poet insists on its synchronicity. If we on the receiving end could be clear about the status of the nine forms, there would be no harm done, but that is not what has occurred. Rather, these forms have taken on a rhetorical life of their own, apparently more important than their lack of a real historical or material life, so that not only is their existence taken for granted in the critical literature but also their very contours.

The rhetorically institutionalized life of the nine forms was a concern to me already in my essay of 1989. Interestingly, this concern came to the surface in the discussion of the out-of-order anniversary poem, sonnet 145, *Ponmi ove 'l sole occide i fiori et l'erba*, which we touched on in the discussion of Vellutello's complaints about the Aldine edition and to whose status we now need to turn in greater detail.

The *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*'s fifteen anniversary poems, poems that commemorate the date on which Petrarch fell in love with Laura, are scattered throughout the collection, explicitly dating themselves by marking the number of years that have elapsed since that fatal day of April 6, 1327. They are on the whole ordered chronologically, but, as we have already noted, there are two members of the set that are out of chronological order. If there is a message in the deliberate flouting of chronology demonstrated by these two poems, it has gone unheeded; rather the critical enterprise has collectively wrung its hands over such a breach of what it had decided was the text's decorum.

The first out-of-order anniversary poem is poem 145; as Vellutello pointed out in 1525, it refers to the fifteenth year of the poet's love ("il mio sospir trilustre" [*Rvf* 145.14]) but nonetheless is placed subsequent to anniversary poems that commemorate the sixteenth and seventeenth years.[26] The second out-of-order anniversary poem is sonnet 266, *Signor*

[26] *Rvf* 118 refers to "il sestodecimo anno" in its incipit and *Rvf* 122 begins "Dicesette anni".

mio caro, which commemorates 18 years of love for Laura and follows anniversary poems referring to 20 years of passion. Much is revealed about the nature of Petrarch criticism and its relationship to chronology by its treatment of these two poems: poems 145 and 266, the two members of the exclusive set of "out-of-order anniversary poems", have played disproportionately large roles in reception history. *Signor mio caro*, the most gravely out of sequence of the anniversary poems,[27] is a poem that we have already seen to be central to the controversy over the text's division.[28] The disproportionate impact of *Ponmi ove 'l sole* on recent scholarship is related to the excessive importance ascribed to it by Wilkins in elaborating his doctrine of the nine forms—an importance that in turn is derived from its being out of chronological sequence.

In order to understand the importance given by Wilkins to poem 145, we must recall that, prior to the Chigi form, Wilkins' fourth form, he posits a Pre-Chigi or Correggio form. ("Pre-Chigi" as the name for Wilkins' "third" form is self-explanatory; it is also called "Correggio" because it is identified with a collection sent to Azzo da Correggio.) Wilkins based much of his hypothetical description of the hypothetical Pre-Chigi form on sonnet 145; as I wrote in 1989, "the Pre-Chigi form is a hypothesis whose shape is based in great part on the out-of-order poem 145".[29] Reflecting the over-investment in dating and chronology that is the occupational hazard of Petrarch studies, the break with chronology of sonnet 145 served Wilkins, to whom it never occurred that chronology could be deliberately subverted, as the platform on which to erect the scaffolding of the Pre-Chigi form. It is worth reconstructing Wilkins' arguments, since they are emblematic of his procedure and illuminate the distortion caused by a reception that has not attended to the unfolding of his arguments but only to his final conclusions.

Reasoning on the basis of the three principles of construction for the Chigi form proposed by Phelps—general chronological order, variety of form, and variety of content—and noting that there is less variety of form and content in part 1 after sonnet 145 (i.e., there are longer

[27] Compare its straightforward "diciotto anni" to "sospir trilustre" in poem 145. The 20-year anniversary poems are numbers 212 ("venti anni") and 221 ("vigesimo anno").

[28] *Signor mio caro* draws attention to itself in other ways besides: it is the only anniversary poem to allude to a double devotion, celebrating not only 18 years of love for Laura but also 15 years of friendship with Cardinal Giovanni Colonna; it is the first anniversary poem in part 2, and is separated from the canzone that initiates part 2, *I' vo pensando*, only by one intervening sonnet.

[29] Barolini 1989 [2006], 204.

stretches of sonnets not interspersed with canzoni, ballate, sestine, or madrigals, and longer stretches of love poems not interspersed with political and moral poems), Wilkins extrapolates a Pre-Chigi form that ended before sonnet 145. He argues that the break with chronology demonstrated by poem 145, combined with the long stretches of love sonnets unrelieved either metrically or thematically that follow it, indicate that the section of part 1 following poem 145, a section Wilkins dubs the "Chigi addendum", was added by Petrarch later and at a time when he was working less carefully: "It is then clear that the last poems in Part I show a notable disregard of the three principles which governed the arrangement of poems in the preceding portion of Part I".[30] This part of Wilkins' argument, while based on premises that one might not accept, warrants at least being taken into consideration: the unbroken stretches of love sonnets in the latter section of part 1 *do* pose a critical problem, although it is certainly possible that the use of repetition is deliberate and not just a sign of poetic indifference. I argue that the rupture of chronology in poem 145 is deliberate, as is the subsequent repetition: "With regard to poem 145, one could deduce from the lack of variety in form and content following it that it serves to announce a set of poems devoted to repetition, indeed to a formal dramatization of its key verse, 'sarò qual fui, vivrò com'io son visso'. In other words, the chronology-breaking 145 heralds chronological rupture writ large, in the form of a more marked lack of chronicity or temporal flow than has previously been encountered".[31]

Wilkins then turns to choosing the poem that served as conclusion to the section of part 1 that was allegedly composed with greater care than the "Chigi addendum", the poem that served (following his logic) as conclusion to the "Pre-Chigi form of the *Canzoniere*":

> Just where did Part I of the Pre-Chigi form of the *Canzoniere* end? The question could hardly be answered with certainty unless some fortunate chance should reveal either a MS preserving that earlier form, or a MS of the Chigi form revealing paleographically such a clear story of the process of addition as that revealed by *3195*. The question may be answered, nevertheless, with a considerable degree of assurance.
>
> It will be remembered that No. 145 is the first datable poem which breaks the chronological order; that a series of twenty-five sonnets begins with No. 150; and that a series of thirty love poems begins with No. 145. It seems probable, for the chronological reason indicated, that No. 145

[30] Wilkins 1951a, 96.
[31] Barolini 1989 (2006), 205.

> belongs to the Chigi addendum rather than to Part I of the Pre-Chigi form. The two preceding poems (Nos. 143 and 144) are both undatable, are both sonnets, and both deal with love, although neither is a love poem pure and simple. Neither has any specific character of finality: neither could well have been chosen to close a carefully ordered first part. But the next preceding poem (No. 142) is the *sestina* beginning *A la dolce ombra de le belle frondi*, which is an elaborate reminiscent poem of love and religion. It would have made a dignified and appropriate ending to Part I and it would have served admirably to close a Part I which was in the intent of the author to have been followed by a Part II beginning with *I' vo pensando*.
>
> I conclude, therefore, that it is probable that Part I of the Pre-Chigi form of the *Canzoniere* ended with No. 142.[32]

In setting out to answer the question "where did Part I of the Pre-Chigi form of the *Canzoniere* end?", Wilkins begins with a paragraph of disclaimers; as he indicates, the question cannot "be answered with certainty". We could add that we lack the material evidence necessary to answer it, for no one has ever seen a Pre-Chigi form. But, as in all good stories, that which is lovingly imagined can be made to seem real if it is named, and already in posing his question, Wilkins gives his imagined form a name. It is the "Pre-Chigi form" even before we reach the disclaimers, which tell us that we would be able to ascertain the ending of the Pre-Chigi's part 1 with certainty only if one of the following two hypotheticals were to become realities: 1) if a manuscript containing the Pre-Chigi form were to be found, or 2) if a different manuscript of the (extant) Chigi form were to be found, one that, like Vaticano Latino 3195, reveals the traces of its predecessors. Since the philological Fairy Queen has granted neither of these two wishes, neither Wilkins nor anyone else can answer the question he has posed at all, let alone "with certainty". And yet, the paragraph concludes: "The question may be answered, nevertheless, with a considerable degree of assurance".

At this point, Wilkins turns to the *pars costruens* of his argument. The foundation of his argument is the out-of-order anniversary poem 145. As we saw, Wilkins argues that *Rvf* 145, by breaking chronological order, ushers in the "notable disregard" that he believes is shown by the latter poems of part 1 of the Chigi form for the text's presumed original principles of construction (general chronological order, variety of form,

[32] The citation is from chapter 6 of *The Making of the "Canzoniere"*, titled "The Pre-Chigi Form of the *Canzoniere*" (1951a, 97).

and variety of content). The break with chronology effected by sonnet 145 and the lack of metrical and thematic variety in the section of the Chigi form that follow it (part 1 of the Chigi form contains 174 poems) together conspire to indicate, to Wilkins at least, that poem 145 initiates a part of the text that was less carefully constructed than the part that precedes it. Therefore, because Wilkins believes that the earlier forms were more carefully arranged than the Chigi form, it "seems probable" that "No. 145 belongs to the Chigi addendum rather than to Part I of the Pre-Chigi form".

Wilkins' argument continues: if sonnet 145 does not belong to part 1 of the allegedly well-ordered Pre-Chigi form but to a later, less carefully composed "Chigi addendum", then the ending of the Pre-Chigi's part 1 will be found in the section that precedes sonnet 145. So Wilkins scrolls backward from *Rvf* 145 looking for a poem that possesses the right characteristics "to close a carefully ordered first part" of an alleged more carefully ordered Pre-Chigi form. He discards sonnets 144 and 143 because neither "has any specific character of finality". He finds what he is looking for in *Rvf* 142, *A la dolce ombra de le belle frondi*, a sestina which declares the need to convert from Laura to God. This is the very poem with which Vellutello had ended *his* part 1 of the *Fragmenta*! I mention this fascinating coincidence not to suggest that Wilkins appropriated from Vellutello, but to indicate the commonality caused by their shared obsession with chronology and narrativity: sestina 142 conforms to the narrative of achieved conversion that has been imposed onto the *Fragmenta* by its readers. Of *A la dolce ombra*, Wilkins writes that it "would have made a dignified and appropriate ending to Part I" of a Pre-Chigi form: "I conclude, therefore, that it is probable that Part I of the Pre-Chigi form of the *Canzoniere* ended with No. 142".

So there we have it: poem 142, *A la dolce ombra*, possesses a "character of finality" which "would have made a dignified and appropriate ending to Part I". On the basis of this argument, a purely subjective and interpretive argument regarding a poem's "character"—an argument that is not erected on a material or philological foundation and for which Wilkins makes no philological claim—on this basis, then, it is commonly taken for granted that the sestina that is now *Rvf* 142 was the last poem of part 1 of the Pre-Chigi form. By the same token, the existence of the Pre-Chigi form is also taken for granted.

In 1978 the philologist Guglielmo Gorni published an essay, "Metamorfosi e redenzione in Petrarca: il senso della forma Correggio del *Canzoniere*", in which he analyzes the poem which he takes as the undisputed end of part 1 of the conjectured collection, namely *Rvf* 142, in

order to arrive at "the sense of the Correggio form" (Correggio, we recall, is an alternate name for Pre-Chigi). Similar attention has been paid to *Rvf* 292, *Gli occhi di ch'io parlai sì caldamente*, which Wilkins had dubbed the probable last poem of the Pre-Chigi/Correggio form by the same procedure: it too "has a specific character of finality, and would in itself be excellently adapted to close a carefully ordered collection".[33] While critical energy has been expended on poems 142 and 292 as appropriate endings to the two parts of a collection whose existence can only be conjectured on the grounds of critical interpretation rather than philological evidence, no one, to my knowledge, has examined from this perspective the two poems that actually serve as endings to the two parts of the existent Chigi collection: *Passa la nave mia*, now *Rvf* 189, and *Mentre che 'l cor*, now *Rvf* 304.

The misrepresentation of Wilkins' findings by scholars who fail to signal their readers that they are treating as facts what are correctly labeled hypotheses has created a vast confusion over the last fifty years, which we are just beginning to address. In a recent essay, Del Puppo and Storey have begun to update and correct Wilkins' findings with contemporary technologies that allow them to more precisely evaluate actual materials such as, for instance, the inks that Petrarch used.[34] In comparison to the revision of Wilkins practiced by real philologists like Del Puppo and Storey, my concern is less technical and more metacritical, even, let us say, "existential": we need to keep separate what exists from what does not. As a literary critic, and not a philologist, I cannot evaluate the materials and the documents in the way of a philologist, but I can transmit the philological findings with the maximum transparency, I can make the effort to keep separate and properly labeled that which is philologically verifiable and that which is not, and I can indicate where my interpretation rests on philologically verifiable data and where it does not. With respect to the nine forms that Wilkins advocates for the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, and for which he invents official credibility-enhancing names, it is absolutely essential to state often and clearly that only two forms exist: the form copied by Boccaccio in the codex preserved as Chigiano L V 176, and the form copied by Petrarch and Malpagini in the codex preserved as Vaticano Latino 3195.

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[33] Wilkins 1951a, 104.
[34] See Del Puppo and Storey 2003.

At the crossroads where philology and interpretation meet, we have seen interpretation trump philology, and in the case of the nine forms of the *Canzoniere* we have seen interpretation disseminated as philological doctrine. In conclusion, and with the thought that we may be tracking a metacritical constant that goes beyond Petrarch studies, let us consider some other cases in the history of interpreting medieval Italian texts where the roles of philology and interpretation have been dangerously confused. The study of Dante boasts many examples of apparently philological debates that are not in fact philological at all, but rather debates in which hermeneutics is masked as philology.

Luigi Pietrobono's thesis of the *rifacimento* or rewriting of the end of the *Vita Nuova* is a prime example of an issue discussed as though philological while actually possessing no philological foundation. Pietrobono invented a non-existent, prior version of the *Vita Nuova*, whose ending with a triumphant *donna gentile* was, according to this thesis, later rewritten by Dante as the ending we now possess. The result was that scholars spent time and energy defending the "current" ending of the *Vita Nuova*, even though we possess no other ending and to our knowledge no other ending has ever existed. The corrective role of the material philologist in the sense of an "existential philologist"—one who gives more respect to what actually exists and is materially extant than to what a critic invents out of whole cloth—was in this instance played first by Michele Barbi and later (and to my mind definitively) by Mario Marti, in "Vita e morte della presunta doppia redazione della *Vita Nuova*".[35] However, the interpretive seductions of this kind of critical invention once launched are hard to resist, and Pietrobono's *rifacimento* hypothesis was revived by Maria Corti. Corti's own status as a philologist gave Pietrobono's invention new currency and, alas, apparent legitimacy.

Along the same lines, Michele Barbi's creation of chapter divisions for the *Vita Nuova* that are not attested in the manuscripts has generated a debate that has veered between philology and hermeneutics with little attempt at clarity. Barbi's chapter divisions have now been altered by Guglielmo Gorni in his edition, but with less transparency regarding the manuscripts and more appeal to numerology than one

[35] The thesis was given life by Luigi Pietrobono (1915), picked up by Bruno Nardi (1942), laid to rest by Mario Marti (1965), and then resuscitated by Maria Corti (1983).

would like. The use of a numerological argument has no place in a debate that is supposedly held on philological ground, especially when the editor repeatedly puts on the mantle of authority as philologist. Not that an interpretive argument is *per se* unacceptable; philologists are allowed and indeed required to engage in interpretation, as I said earlier vis-à-vis Wilkins. The problem arises when the philologist does not make clear which part of his argument is based on material evidence and which part is based on interpretation. This problem is magnified when a philologist (Gorni) quarrels with a preceding philologist (Barbi) on philological grounds, but with insufficient transparency regarding the material evidence.[36]

Entirely interpretive but pretending to be philological was the speculation as to which of Dante's lyrics were intended by Dante for the never written—truly non-existent—books of the *Convivio*, a guessing game played by scholars with little or no transparency as to the fact that they were engaging in nothing more than conjecture. The result was the use of reified labels attached to certain canzoni indicating their destination for such and such book of the *Convivio*. Thus, *Doglia mi reca* was routinely referred to as "la canzone della liberalità", indicating its presumed destination for the presumed book of the *Convivio* that would have dealt with the virtue of liberality: "finalmente la canzone della liberalità si converte nella canzone dell'avarizia".[37] As Kenelm Foster and Patrick Boyde write in their commentary to *Daglia mi reca*: "From *Con.* l.viii.18 we know that Dante intended in the fifteenth and last section of that work (which in fact he never wrote) to discuss the virtue of liberality, and it is commonly and plausibly assumed that the discussion would have taken the form of a commentary on the present canzone, *Doglia mi reca*. Only indirectly, however, is this poem about liberality; directly it is mainly an onslaught on the vice opposed to it, avarice".[38] The label "canzone della liberalità", then, is a kind of shorthand for Dante scholars which has less to do with glossing the poem in question than with building imaginary symmetries between Dante's existing lyrics and non-existent sections of the *Convivio*. It is dismaying to find these baseless formulae thoughtlessly relayed to new generations of readers: Piero Cudini's paperback edition of 1979 simply repeats Contini's

[36] For a philologist's critique of Gorni's edition, see Trovato 2000.
[37] Contini 1965 [1946], 182.
[38] Foster and Boyde 1967, 2: 295.

formulation, informing us that *Doglia mi reca* "Si svolge, da canzone della liberalità, a canzone dell'avarizia".[39] These labels are altogether speculative but foisted on the innocent reader as though factual.

Of course, for pure ideology parading as philology, there is little in our field more egregious than the discussion regarding those of Dante's lyrics that he left out of the *Vita Nuova*, called by philologists the *estravaganti*, "the wandering outsiders", as though that were a philologically neutral term. The issues around Dante's lyrics are too complex to be rehearsed here, and I will invoke them just sufficiently to situate De Robertis' edition of Dante's *rime* (2002) along the axes of philology and hermeneutics. Perhaps in response to a philological history that has been capable of extravagantly (if I may be permitted the play on words) unphilological gestures, De Robertis actually goes too far in the other direction: rather than over-dignifying his own interpretations and then hiding his interpretive moves under the protective veil of philology, as in the cases cited above, De Robertis over-dignifies philology, which he rigidly construes—and hence misconstrues—as an enterprise that precludes all interpretation.

Ironically, the reason for the failure of the De Robertis edition of Dante's lyrics is that the editor, a great philologist, declines a task that is fundamental to an editor's work: he declines to engage in interpretation. In the specific case of an edition of Dante's lyrics, De Robertis' unwillingness to interpret takes the form of his refusing to put the poems in any order other than that suggested by the already reconstructed order of medieval repertories. De Robertis' refusal is explicitly grounded in the for him inviolable boundary between interpretation and philology, a boundary which he believes a philologist cannot cross: "E per contro, ogni razionalizzazione storica analoga a quella proposta dal Barbi, oltre alle possibili (e ormai ampiamente registrate, e attuate) controdeduzioni, include sempre una componente d'interpretazione che nulla ha a che fare con quella di cui la critica testuale non può mai fare a meno".[40] But philologists and editors must and do cross this boundary all the time; the key is for them to be self-aware and transparent to others as they do so. Indeed, ultimately there is no boundary, for philology itself is a

[39] Cudini 1979, 246.

[40] See Barolini 2004 [2006] for a reconstruction of De Robertis' argument with ample citation; this citation is from De Robertis 2002, 2: 1155.

branch of hermeneutics: conducted in a manner intended to maximize verifiability, but nonetheless rooted in interpretation.

Since Dante did not order his poems, Dante's editor must. I mean this quite literally: in order to be printed in a book, the poems must be placed in an order that is by definition not Dante's, since Dante left us no order for his lyrics other than that which he creates for selected poems in the *Vita Nuova* and *Convivio*. But if Dante did not leave us an order, he nonetheless wrote in an order, in the larger sense that he wrote his poems within time, over the course of a certain period of his life. As I have argued elsewhere, it is incumbent upon the editor of Dante's *rime* to use his or her expertise and *iudicium* on behalf of the reader to construct an edition that will attempt to indicate *grosso modo* the historical order in which the poems were written—and thus to construct an arc of Dante's thought. This is an act of interpretation that we have a right to expect from an editor. Certainly we should expect more than reliance upon the artificial constructions of medieval anthologies. In his edition De Robertis simply defers to earlier editors of the *rime*, beginning with Boccaccio, as though the fact that their interpretive decisions were made long ago somehow makes them less interpretive and more "philological". Boccaccio's ordering of Dante's *rime* has historical value, and it has hermeneutic value (illuminating Boccaccio's views, however, not Dante's), but it is does not have more specifically philological value than an ordering proposed by a modern editor who has studied, as De Robertis has, the extensive *recensio* of the *rime*'s manuscript tradition and thus stands in a good position to propose what Contini calls a "cronologia ideale".[41] As a result of his abdication of interpretation, De Robertis gives us an edition of Dante's *rime* that tells us more about the Trecento reception of Dante than it does about Dante.

The work of interpretation, which for me personally is the goal of the whole enterprise, is work that in any case not even an editor can foreswear. Important as it is not to allow interpretation to trump philology, it is equally important to engage in philologically informed interpretation. A lush interpretive growth is one of the tributes that culture pays to textual greatness. The desire to rid texts of the wrong interpretive framework, to cut back the cultural undergrowth when it obscures the truth, cannot be allowed to mutate into the suggestion that

[41] Contini 1965, 67.

the text is better off with no interpretive framework at all. All great texts bear, and solicit, interpretation. In the case of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* he tells us as much, when he writes "transcripsi in ordine" next to a canceled poem in his draft notebook, for the *ordo* into which the poem has been transcribed is nothing less than an interpretive framework, one that we all in our different ways—philologists and interpreters alike—seek to discover.

CHAPTER TWO

INFATICABILE MAESTRO: ERNEST HATCH WILKINS AND THE MANUSCRIPTS OF PETRARCH'S *CANZONIERE*[1]

Germaine Warkentin

In memoriam: Giuseppe Billanovich

It is a curious aspect of Petrarch studies that though Renaissance readers acknowledged—almost to the point of fetishism—Petrarch as among the greatest of lyric poets, few Renaissance readers had access to a copy of the *Canzoniere*[2] resembling the chaste edition of Gianfranco Contini that we know today.[3] Petrarch's collection of sonnets, canzoni, madrigals and ballate often circulated in manuscripts with unreliable texts and varying arrangements of the poems, and in the many printed versions following the *editio princeps* (Venice 1470) the famous lyrics might be re-organized

[1] I am grateful to H. Wayne Storey for his advice during the completion of this article, which is on a subject I first was led to by conversations with Aldo Bernardo. Dennis Dutschke helped locate the Doheny manuscript of the *Canzoniere* and *Trionfi*. The late Father Leonard Boyle, O.P., gave invaluable assistance during my visits to the Vatican Library. More recently Thomas Izbicki provided an essential note. The staffs of libraries and archives at Amherst College, Binghamton University, Harvard University, Oberlin College and the University of Chicago answered my questions patiently, and I thank them for permission to quote from unpublished material in their collections. Funding from the Senate Research Committee of Victoria University in the University of Toronto supported my research in Rome, Binghamton and Oberlin. An early version of this paper was presented in 2000 at the Renaissance Society of America's meeting in Florence. The dedication honors Giuseppe Billanovich, who died shortly before that conference. His exemplary scholarship and his great kindness to a novice visiting the Newberry Library in 1979 are warmly remembered.

[2] Editorial and scholarly traditions have not concurred on what to call Petrarch's collection. *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* is the philologically correct title (shortened in scholarly reference to *Rvf* or *Fragmenta*), but *Canzoniere* is in common use and I employ it here because Wilkins did. The term *Rime sparse*, suggested by Chiorboli (1924), also has its devotees. In many Renaissance editions, for example Vellutello (1525) and Rovillio (1558), the often combined texts of Petrarch's vernacular works, the *Fragmenta* and the *Triumphi*, with commentary, biography and other readerly aids, was sometimes simply known as *Il Petrarca*.

[3] Contini 1949. For an overview of the editions and editorial criteria utilized by Contini, see Belloni 2004, 100 (especially n. 110); Fenzi 1998, 456–59; and Storey *infra*.

to suit the editor (Vellutello's often reissued 1525 edition divides them into three parts according to their content), or surrounded on the page itself by a thorny hedge of commentary. The Aldine edition of 1501 is an early exception, with its clean octavo page displaying a text—so Aldo Manuzio maintained in the colophon—"tolto con sommissima diligenza dallo scritto di mano medesima del Poeta, havuto da M. Piero Bembo".[4] But despite the elegant example it afforded, over the next four hundred years the texts of the *Canzoniere* continued to be viewed as among the most unstable in the history of vernacular philology.

Gino Belloni has most recently reviewed and signally added to what we know of the passage of Petrarch's autograph poetic manuscripts from his heirs, through the hands of Pietro Bembo and Fulvio Orsini, and thence in 1600 to the Vatican.[5] We know them today as, first, Vaticano Latino 3196, twenty paper leaves of draft copies, or *abbozzi*, produced in a span of over more than thirty years, of which fifteen and a half leaves contain texts of *Canzoniere* poems. The second is Vaticano Latino 3195, the parchment codex of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Rvf*) that Petrarch's favorite scribe Giovanni Malpaghini began to copy late in 1366, and on which the aging poet himself continued to labor for nearly a decade more. But it was not until 1886 that Arthur Pakscher and Pierre De Nolhac independently confirmed Vat. Lat. 3195 as the poet's own manuscript.[6] Once convinced of the authority of Vat. Lat. 3195, scholars of the succeeding century began to reconstruct—sometimes using philological techniques descended from Petrarch's own, sometimes tangled in the complex web of Petrarch's poetic and personal biography—the way in which these "fragments in the language of ordinary life" evolved as a manuscript and as a poetic achievement.[7] Their interpretations have tended to envision every previous redaction of the *Canzoniere*, documented or hypothesized, as a prospective version of Vat. Lat. 3195, moving with teleological purpose towards the

[4] Bembo 1501, signature z iii^{v}. The role of codex Vat. Lat. 3195 in the Aldine Petrarch of 1501, muddied by Aldo's contentions, is still open to question. For the most recent scholarship, see Belloni 2004, 93–94n73, and the essay by Storey in this volume.

[5] The history of the codex in Belloni 2004 supersedes Romanò 1955, vii–x.

[6] See Pakscher 1886 and Nolhac 1886. Aldo Manuzio (Bembo 1501) ascribed a codex used by Bembo for the 1501 edition to Petrarch's hand. Many scholars believe this codex to be Vatican Latino 3195.

[7] Even after 1886, editors (Mestica 1896; Carducci and Ferrari 1899) disagreed about the division of the poems *in vita* and *in morte di Madonna Laura*. See the essay by Barolini in this volume. For the editing of the *Canzoniere* in modern times see Belloni 2004, 95–101.

Canzoniere's 366 poems as they are arranged in what Domenico De Robertis termed the "'forma' definitiva del libro".[8]

When considering Petrarch's manuscripts, however, it is wise to keep in mind the introductory letter of the *Familiares*, written about 1350, in which the poet tells his friend Ludwig van Kempen ("Socrates") of "the great number of writings of different kinds that lie scattered and neglected throughout my house". He relates that he had "searched in squalid containers lying in hidden places and pulled out dusty writings half destroyed by decay", and depicts himself as "beset and encircled by confused heaps of letters and formless piles of paper" (*Fam*. I 1). Scholars in the developing field of book history, led in Petrarch's case by Armando Petrucci and more recently by Furio Brugnolo and H. Wayne Storey[9] have introduced us to the significance of the cultural material represented by an author's existence amidst his papers and in his study, an important issue for Petrarch considering the frequency with which he depicted himself as a writer at his desk. In 2003, Dario Del Puppo and H. Wayne Storey produced a major critique of one of the most influential studies of Petrarch's manuscripts, Ernest Hatch Wilkins' *The Making of the "Canzoniere" and Other Petrarchan Studies* (1951). They also sketched the program a modern codicologist would engage in to re-assess the complex history of Petrarch's *nachlass* and its interpretation, a program now carried out by Gino Belloni and Stefano Zamponi.[10] In this essay however I want to look backward, brushing the dust off Wilkins' own work to examine the way his fiercely systematic approach to the manuscripts established, over three generations, the terms within which we have studied those confused heaps and formless piles. Wilkins' approach to the *Canzoniere* deserves examination on its own merits, not only for the insight it yields into an optimistic phase in the history of American textual scholarship but because of the wariness it cautions us to maintain as we enter—with a similar optimism—the digital age.

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Ernest Hatch Wilkins (1880–1966) was president of Oberlin College in Ohio, professor at Chicago and Harvard, president in 1946 of the Modern Language Association of America and from 1957–1960 of the Medieval Academy of America. Besides publishing on Dante and

[8] De Robertis 1985, 45.
[9] Brugnolo 1991 and 2004; Petrucci 1967; Storey 1993; Storey 2004a.
[10] Del Puppo and Storey 2003; see also Belloni 2004 and Zamponi 2004.

many other educational and social topics, Wilkins undertook historically important work cataloguing Petrarch's letters and piecing together the poet's biography.[11] In addition, between the 1920s and the 1950s—over a period as long as the making of the *Canzoniere* itself—he produced a painstaking analysis of reports on the ink, annotations, and text of Petrarch's manuscripts, and with it a complete interpretation of the stages of the work's creation. Since the publication of *The Making of the "Canzoniere" and Other Studies* in 1951, it has haunted almost every later study of the *Canzoniere*'s organization in Italian or English that takes any account of the work's manuscripts.[12]

Wilkins wrote with the firm intent of asserting the coherence of Petrarch's collection as a purposive project culminating in Vat. Lat. 3195. The *Canzoniere* in his view "is not a collection made towards the end of [Petrarch's] life in a single editorial effort, nor is it a more gradual accumulation of poems; it is a selective and ordered collection, the fashioning of which, begun in his youth, continued to the day of his death".[13] Wilkins argued first that the sheets of Vat. Lat. 3196, the "codice degli abbozzi", comprised four reference collections covering almost the entire period of Petrarch's creative life; and second that Vat. Lat. 3195, the parchment codex, was the product of no less than nine different stages in Petrarch's attempt to achieve a perfected arrangement of his poems. Wilkins' work thus can be seen as an early essay in the more recently-developed field of genetic criticism, the study of an author's creative processes through the analysis of his or her changes at manuscript and (for the writers of later centuries) proof stages, an analysis particularly invited in Petrarch's case by the frequent allusions in his poems to his dual role as poet and scribe.

American *italianisti* have known informally for several decades that Wilkins never actually saw the two manuscripts of which he wrote with such authority.[14] Indeed, as far as can be ascertained, he never travelled to Europe after 1903, at least a decade before the first indications of his interest in Petrarch. Ernest Hatch Wilkins was a man of

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[11] See Wilkins 1951b; Wilkins 1956; and Wilkins 1960.

[12] The scholarly literature dependent on and influenced by Wilkins is summarized by Belloni 2004, 74–75nn3 and 4. For the limitations of his scientific method, see Del Puppo and Storey 2003, 296–303; Zamponi 2004, 25–30.

[13] Wilkins 1951a, 145.

[14] See Del Puppo and Storey 2003, 296. Belloni (2004, 100) and Storey (2004b, 389; and his essay in this volume); note that Gianfranco Contini had not consulted the manuscript either.

unblemished integrity and distinguished scholarly achievement, and no deception was involved in his work on the *Canzoniere*. Nevertheless a modern codicologist, knowing he had not inspected the manuscripts in person, could not accept his conclusions without a complete review of the physical evidence, a project undertaken in the *Commentario* of 2004 by Stefano Zamponi.[15] In her courteous but dismissive account of Wilkins' "magistrale lavoro filologico", Patrizia Rafti surmises that the solutions he proposed for Vat. Lat. 3196 probably resulted from his having worked with reproductions, drawing some technical assistance from work by Mario Pelaez.[16] Wilkins did better than that, as we shall see. And though Rafti's criticism is fully justified, there is much to be learned about the way textual cultures are established and maintained from examining the personal, intellectual and social contexts in which he worked.

As late as the 1960s the historian J.H. Plumb commented on how hard it is for us today to realize "the inadequacy of the factual material that was at the command of an historian a hundred or even fifty years ago. Scarcely any archives were open to him; most repositories of records were unsorted and uncatalogued; almost every generalization about a man or an event or an historical process was three-quarters guesswork, if not more".[17] In Wilkins' generation many North American scholars did not—indeed could not—travel as widely as they have since done in order to consult primary sources; often they worked entirely from printed materials. Nevertheless the arrival in the United States of refugee scholars from Europe in the 1930s began the transformation in scholarly practice that would lead to the post-war legacy of figures such as Paul Oskar Kristeller and Hans Baron. Beginning in 1946 a new generation of scholars funded by veterans' education grants began to go abroad regularly and in increasing numbers.[18]

In his application for admission to the Graduate School of Harvard University, dated 6 October 1905, Wilkins stated that he had spent summers in Italy in 1898, 1900, and 1903, and had studied in Spain

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[15] See the detailed physical account of the manuscript in Zamponi 2004, especially 13–22.

[16] Rafti 1995, 200n6. See also Pelaez 1910.

[17] See Plumb's introduction in Boxer 1965, xv.

[18] Pinkney 1981. Pinkney, a distinguished historian of France, was a recently graduated Oberlin student of Wilkins' friend Frederick B. Artz when he first traveled abroad in 1936.

in the summer of 1902.[19] In a 1947 biographical sketch, he described the choice he had to make among the fields of classical archaeology that had been the subject of his Amherst MA (1903), the history of art that also drew him, and Romance philology, which he eventually chose for his Harvard doctorate on Boccaccio in 1910.[20] Interestingly, before settling on Harvard, Wilkins spent 1904–1905 at The Johns Hopkins University, a school strongly influenced by Leopold von Ranke's "scientific history", with its emphasis on objective historical interpretation based on a philological approach to documents.[21] In 1947 he recalled how much he owed to his teacher there, J.E. Shaw: "It was he who initiated me into the techniques of scholarship; and from him I learned never to fear the quantitative or the internal difficulties of any scholarly task that is itself worthwhile".[22] His choice of the word "quantitative" is significant because he seems to have known little of the issues surrounding critical editing that consumed the philologists of the time.[23] Wilkins returned to Harvard for his Ph.D. because he wanted to work with C.H. Grandgent. After his doctorate, which led to a first appointment at Harvard (1910–1912), he spent a busy decade and a half at Chicago (1912–1927) as teacher and then dean. In 1927 he took up the presidency of Oberlin, where he served until his retirement in 1946. He later taught briefly at Harvard, but his subsequent letters show how glad he was to be in command of his own time; as he wrote to an Oberlin friend, "I have had to coin a word to indicate the contentment of my present state—'emeritude'".[24]

Thus by the mid-1930s, when he was publishing regularly on Dante and Petrarch, Wilkins had become a hard-working administrator attempting to turn a small college with a historic reputation into a national institution, all the while facing the daunting problems posed first by the Depression and then by World War II.[25] His appointment books from the period of his presidency at Oberlin indicate that he took one long

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[19] Harvard University Archives, UAV 161.201.10 (Courtesy of the Harvard University Archives).

[20] Wilkins 1947.

[21] On Ranke and Johns Hopkins, see Iggers 1962.

[22] Wilkins 1947, 12.

[23] For this editorial debate, see Timpanaro 2005.

[24] Oberlin, Ohio: Oberlin College Archives, Wilkins Papers, (hereafter Oberlin, Wilkins Papers); Correspondence, Box 49 (EHW to Donald M. Love, 24 January 1950). See also his letters to Love of 24 December 1949 and 21 January 1951.

[25] Bongiorno 1967 [1966], 10.

holiday a year, usually in the mountains of New Hampshire, and along with his later correspondence show that he firmly resisted invitations to travel outside the United States.[26] The Vatican Library preserves no call slips from Wilkins requesting the two manuscripts, though it has ample records of the research of other Petrarch scholars, particularly on Vat. Lat. 3196.[27] Like Petrarch, Wilkins fostered a kind of ideal biography of himself: late in life he would tell his last students at Harvard that only once had he been to Italy; one trip, he told Aldo Bernardo, was more than enough for a scholar who didn't want to waste time.[28] And Wilkins didn't waste time. Though his beloved subject was "peregrinus ubique", everywhere a wanderer,[29] after a period of post-retirement teaching at Harvard he stayed resolutely at his birthplace in Newton Centre, Massachusetts, and turned out books, at least nine of them on Petrarch alone, until his death from Parkinson's disease in 1966.

Despite the repute that his work was to attain in Italy, Wilkins' failure to visit the sources in person puzzled the Italians. In 1932 Arnaldo Foresti wrote to him cordially, lamenting the distance between them and indicating his hope that Wilkins would travel to Italy.[30] And in 1937 Nino Quarta sent a long, acerbic letter in English recounting his conflicts with Carlo Calcaterra and Vittorio Cian over the publication of his own analysis of the composition of the *Canzoniere*, which he eventually printed privately. His letter reflects the bitter passions with which Italian scholars then and now debate issues surrounding Petrarch's vernacular poems. Quarta had clearly read Wilkins' early publications very closely and he observed sarcastically, "I could not help smiling on seeing your laborious efforts to ascertain what can be seen at a glance looking on

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[26] Oberlin, Wilkins Papers, Boxes 106 and 106A (Diaries and Appointment Books 1927–46). These diaries contain no record of Wilkins traveling abroad during that period, and among the many letters exchanged with Oberlin associates I have found no correspondence emanating from Europe, either then or during his subsequent retirement in Massachusetts. See for example the letters he exchanged regularly with W.F. Bohn (Box 11) and Donald M. Love (Box 49).

[27] Vatican Library file of call slips, consulted December 1992.

[28] Aldo Bernardo, personal communication, 2 September 1999.

[29] Wilkins 1948 (reprinted in Wilkins 1951a, 1–8), citing Petrarch's *Epistolae metricae* III 19, v. 16.

[30] Binghamton, NY: Binghamton University, Glenn G. Bartle Library, Department of Special Collections, Ernest Hatch Wilkins Papers (Hereafter Binghamton, Wilkins Papers): Box 4, folder of miscellaneous material labelled (by EHW) "Nothing in this file is of any value except to me", Arnaldo Foresti to Wilkins, 29 August, 1932. For a moving portrait of the isolated Foresti and his relationship with Wilkins, the busy public man, see Billanovich 1977.

the manuscript. You have come to Italy three or four times. Why do you not come once more?".[31]

Though Wilkins' first scholarly work had been on Boccaccio and Dante, early in his career at Chicago he published two short articles on Petrarchan poems[32] and in the 1920s he directed Ruth Shepard Phelps' doctoral dissertation *The Earlier and Later Forms of Petrarch's "Canzoniere"*. In thanking Wilkins in her preface, dated January 1925, Phelps stated that the thesis came about "by his initial suggestion of a subject which had earlier attracted himself".[33] In his later work Wilkins always generously acknowledged Phelps' contribution, but by October 1925 he was writing independently to B.L. Ullman in Rome, asking for information about the color of the ink in Vat. Lat. 3195.[34] Between 1926 and 1932 he published four of the studies which later, much revised, would form important chapters in *The Making of the "Canzoniere"*.

Behind Wilkins' letter to Ullman was his life-long confidence in the authority of photographic and anecdotal evidence as the foundation for empirical generalizations. In his presidential address to the MLA in 1946, he proudly drew attention to the growing manuscript collections of American libraries: "The manuscripts are scattered, to be sure; but when direct personal examination is not possible they can usually be photographed or microfilmed, or examined by the friendly eyes of a colleague".[35] In the preface to *The Making of the "Canzoniere"* he would write, "I wish very much that those who read these chapters might have the reproductions of those two manuscripts at hand as they read. In that case many statements that might otherwise seem to be dry assertions will come to convincing life; and in that case my pages will have a much better chance to convey to my readers the sense I so desire them to have: the sense of close and understanding companionship with the great artist through the many years in which he was so intimately

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[31] Binghamton, Wilkins Papers, Box 3, folder "Petrarch: Miscellaneous,": Quarta to Wilkins, 18 April 1937.

[32] Wilkins 1915; and Wilkins 1917.

[33] Phelps 1925, vii.

[34] Binghamton, Wilkins Papers, Box 3, folder "On the Transcription of VL 3195": Wilkins to B.L. Ullman, 21 October, 1925.

[35] Wilkins 1946, 1320. An offprint from *PMLA*, revised for publication with the quoted passage excised, exists in Wilkins' papers at Binghamton (Box 4); the piece appears never to have been republished. Wilkins' view was typical of the time; for example in 1950 the critic Northrop Frye wrote in his diary: "The invention of microfilm makes all the talk about having to go here for this & there for that a lot of hypocritical nonsense" (Denham 2001, 274 [28 February 1950]).

concerned with the making of the *Canzoniere*".[36] In pursuit of his theories about Vat. Lat. 3195 he carefully inspected every manuscript of Petrarch's works he could visit—at least nearby—in the USA,[37] but for manuscripts he could not reach he relied on reports from such fellow-scholars as B.L. Ullman and Augusto Campana in Rome and Robert V. Merrill in California.

The long list of questions Wilkins sent to Merrill in 1946 about the Estelle Doheny manuscript of the *Canzoniere* and *Trionfi* (now the property of the Swiss antiquarian Heribert Tenschert) relates strictly to evidence about the order of Petrarch's poems: "Fortunately", he told Merrill, "I am *not* interested in textual variants".[38] Apart from some inquiries about script and illuminations and "any other features of the manuscript worthy of attention" he asked no questions about substrate, hair/skin or felt-side/mould-side correlations,[39] gatherings, mise en page, binding or most of the other physical features a codicologist of today would insist on investigating, nor about the conditions in which the manuscript might have been produced. In reporting his results in *The Making of the "Canzoniere"*, Wilkins conscientiously noted when he was working with photographic copies and indicated the divergent sources of his information on ink color, for example in the two tables on Petrarch's own transcription in Vat. Lat. 3195.[40] But this conscientiousness also extended to his reports of results, the severe logic of which was renowned. In an issue of *Italica* in Wilkins' honour, Rudolph Altrocchi would write of his "minutely exhaustive, scientific, and almost mathematically ordered studies on Petrarch".[41]

Nino Quarta had already complained to Wilkins about his technique: "Allow me to say here that your system of indicating poems by means

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[36] Wilkins 1951a, ix. Wilkins' annotated copy of Porena 1941, a facsimile of Vat. Lat. 3196, is owned today by the Petrarch scholar Dennis Dutschke. Wilkins also used one of the 1890s heliotypes.

[37] In the end, Wilkins (1951a, 205) was able to report that he had seen 29 of the 31 manuscripts known to him.

[38] Binghamton, Wilkins Papers, Box 3: Wilkins to Robert V. Merrill, 16 November 1946.

[39] The skin side and hair side of parchment are self-explanatory. In hand papermaking, the lower or mould side of a sheet (which touches the paper mould) shows the striations of the mould's wires; the upper side is smooth, an effect retained when the contents of the mould are tipped out to drain on a piece of felt. Thus if the outer side of a bifolium is mould, the inner side has to be felt. This feature is relevant to the case of cc. 15 and 16 of Vat. Lat. 3196, of which more below.

[40] Wilkins 1951a, 108–11.

[41] Altrocchi 1946.

of numbers, though it is convenient, saves a great deal of space and gives your literary works the appearance of mathematical works, renders them very difficult to read and study".[42] Nevertheless it was by such methods that this apparently gentle and collegial man produced the rigorous tables and lists over which Petrarch scholars have pored for fifty years. On these tables he based his contention that whatever the stages through which the poet's compilation of his collection passed, Petrarch had before him from a very early stage the objective of a completed work in a specific, perfected order towards which the "four reference collections" of Vat. Lat. 3196 led, and which the final codex, Vat. Lat. 3195, would have represented.

Nevertheless Quarta, despite his obsession with the identity of Laura, had astute questions for Wilkins about the layout and binding of Vat. Lat. 3195, and particularly Petrarch's circulation of late poems in unbound sheets. Quarta concluded his 1937 letter with a parting jab: "If the poet wanted just 366 poems in his book, what was the use of another whole duernion at the end of the first part for the last four sonnets? Half a sheet sufficed. I do not think that you or Madame Morand [Ruth S. Phelps] ever cared to reply anything to that foolish criticism". However barbed these criticisms, they point to the central questions that modern codicologists, book historians, and genetic critics pursue about the relationship between a poet's text and his deployment of the materials upon which it is actually written. The copies of his own pamphlets that Quarta dispatched to Oberlin still exist. Wilkins clearly went over Quarta's 1937 article with pen in hand, but the pamphlet of 1938—inscribed in Quarta's bold hand "All'illustre mio adversario Prof. Ernest H. Wilkins" and strongly critical of both Phelps and Wilkins—is annotated only sparely.[43] When the time came to republish his own articles, scrupulously revising his earlier results, Wilkins clearly did

[42] Binghamton, Wilkins Papers, Box 3, folder "Petrarch: Miscellaneous": Quarta to Wilkins, 18 April, 1937. Quarta is referring here and elsewhere in his letter to Wilkins' essay "The Dates of Transcription of *3195*" (Wilkins 1929).

[43] Wilkins read closely and annotated in detail Quarta's *Sull'ordinamento delle ultime rime in morte di Laura e di alcuni altre parti del canzoniere petrarchescho* (Quarta 1937). The second pamphlet, in which Wilkins made almost no marks, is *Di alcuni nuovi studi sull'ordinamento del Canzoniere petrarchescho* (Quarta 1938). In this second work, Quarta disagrees strongly with Wilkins, but is also full of rage against the Italian academics who have refused to publish his work. Wilkins' copies of Quarta 1937 and Quarta 1938 were donated by Aldo Bernardo to the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, Victoria University in the University of Toronto.

not accept much that Quarta had said in correspondence or in print, though he cited him courteously where he could.[44]

Nino Quarta was right, nevertheless, about how arduous it is to follow Wilkins's writings on the organization of Petrarch's lyrics; if the American scholar was rigorously systematic, he expected an equal attention to system on the part of his readers. After the brief physical description he gives of Vat. Lat. 3195 and 3196 in *The Making of the "Canzoniere"*, even the attentive reader becomes lost in the maze of numbers he uses to refer to single poems, the various "collections" he identifies and the press-marks of manuscripts. Furthermore, Wilkins mingles with this rigorously laid-out mass of detail what are often subjective judgments about why Petrarch left certain spaces empty in the paper drafts of Vat. Lat. 3196, probable chronologies for the inscription of undated poems and the "poetic merit" he occasionally invokes as a standard for inclusion of a given poem. Information about ink, though scrupulously recorded, is anecdotal or reported from secondary sources, and can only reflect the subjective response of the scholar who originally communicated it.[45] A modern codicologist would use scientific analysis to support such judgments or, at the least, internationally accepted color scales for description. Nor does Wilkins give much attention to paleographical data, beyond impressionistic information about the size and compactness of the script.

The daunting mass of his tables and reports is perhaps the reason why Wilkins' work has only recently received the detailed critical assessment that he himself—given the careful revision he gave his earlier articles on the basis of fresh information—would very likely have wished. In an influential article Francisco Rico convincingly revised Wilkins' dating of Petrarch's opening sonnet from before 1348 to late 1349, and hence the division of the *Canzoniere* into two parts from Wilkins' "in or before 1347" to 1349–1350.[46] Guglielmo Gorni has carried forward discussion of the so called "Correggio form", though in an article of 1989 Teodolinda Barolini sharply questioned the material evidence for thinking such a form had ever existed. In a long and generous review

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[44] For example, on the vexed question of the inserted duernion, see Wilkins 1951a 75–76, 124, 127, 183–89. More recently, Storey (2004a, 146–47; and 2006a) and Zamponi (2004, 32–38) address additional material issues, such as ruling and the newly discovered catchword erased on c. 52*v*.

[45] See, for example, Table II of Wilkins 1951a, 108–11.

[46] Rico 1976. For Wilkins' datings see Wilkins 1951a, 150–53.

of Margo Santagata's 1996 edition, Enrico Fenzi probed the weaknesses of recent scholarship.[47] The more recent work of Belloni, Brugnolo, Rafti, Storey, and Zamponi has already been mentioned. Nevertheless, for students of Petrarch in general Wilkins' basic schema is still in place; even Brugnolo terms it "fondamentale", and in their editions of 1996 both Santagata and Ugo Dotti assent to its outlines, though perhaps—as Santagata puts his own view—"distaccandosene [...] in alcuni punti non secondari".[48]

Storey, however, distanced us more sharply yet, by pointing out that Vat. Lat. 3195 was probably unbound at the point of the poet's death. "For the inheritor of his autograph manuscripts", he wrote in 1993, "the *Fragmenta* was a book in ten pieces of eight quaternions and two duernions".[49] To imagine Vat. Lat. 3195 in this way produces a salutary shock in those who would canonize the *Canzoniere* solely as *work* or *text*, overlooking the conditions of its physical origin at the desk of a poet who was essentially his own publisher. In his early work on Petrarch's handwriting, the distinguished paleographer Armando Petrucci had cited with confidence Wilkins' work on the manuscripts of the *Canzoniere*[50] but by 1984 he would write, in a different context, "we have learned to assess textual processes in relationship with the operations of writing and the material editorial conditions that are at their base, [...] studying the participation of the author in the work of writing his or her own text and analyzing when and how such participation changed over time would constitute a notable contribution both to better understanding the processes by which such complex texts are produced and to the criticism of those texts".[51] The techniques of codicologists and historians of the book today attempt just such a program; as Quarta anticipated in 1937, scholars like Brugnolo, Storey, and Zamponi are revising previous accounts of the layout and binding of Vat. Lat. 3195 and the supplemental folios Petrarch promised to Pandolfo Malatesta in 1373.[52] Del Puppo and Storey's account of the relationship of Morgan 502 to Vat. Lat. 3195[53] alone shows how uncritical were Wilkins' theories about the avatars of Vat. Lat. 3195—theories central to his analysis

[47] See Gorni 1978; Barolini 1989, 18; Fenzi 1998.
[48] Brugnolo 1989, 288; Santagata 1996, clxxxvi; and Dotti 1996, xiv–xxiv.
[49] Storey 1993, 396.
[50] Petrucci 1967, 79n4, citing in this case Wilkins 1961.
[51] Petrucci 1995, 145.
[52] See particularly Storey 2004a, 152n53.
[53] Del Puppo and Storey 2003, 303–5.

of the so-called prior forms, such as Malatesta and Quiriniano—that went into the making of the *Canzoniere*.

The making of a lyric collection was not only a textual project in the poet's mind, it also existed as a practical problem, requiring an exact number of pieces of folded parchment with poems carefully arranged upon them and involving a series of specific technical decisions on the poet's part. Furthermore, one of the most important practical aspects of the daily life of any medieval author such as Petrarch was the preparation of his texts, once completed, for circulation. As well as refining his handwriting and even changing his customary script in mid-life,[54] Petrarch would have routinely purchased paper and parchment and mixed ink. He copied assiduously himself, supervised those who copied for him, searched for binders[55] and, as Brugnolo, Petrucci, and Storey have demonstrated, designed his own elegant mise en page for Vat. Lat. 3195.[56] A process of defamiliarization that recognizes these cultural and material factors has become essential because of the way Wilkins' legacy has governed discussion of the texts of the *Canzoniere* even among those who have begun to question his account of the manuscripts. In the interest of further defamiliarization and to illustrate advances in our understanding of the material construction of Petrarch's artifacts, I would propose to consider briefly a topic to which little attention has been given, the way paper is folded in Vat. Lat. 3196. Such an approach is, of course, entirely independent of perhaps more important paleographical considerations, but it casts its own light on the way the materiality of the manuscript pages subverts at least one of Wilkins' theories.

Wilkins' conclusion about Vat. Lat. 3196 was that Petrarch's custom was to put together "reference collections", a term he uses with the clear intention of conveying compositional purposiveness. He held that the extant drafts give evidence of four such collections, which he outlines as follows:

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[54] Petrucci 1967, 29–30, 42–43, and *passim*.

[55] Wilkins (1961) gives frequent references to Petrarch copying and searching for competent assistance. For his search for a good binder, see the unrevised version of Petrarch's letter of 1373 to Pandolfo Malatesta, *Varia* 9 (Fracassetti 1859–1863, 3: 323).

[56] Brugnolo 1991; Petrucci 1967, 79–80; Storey 1993, 201–433; Storey 2004a.

Collection	Wilkins' dating	Leaves included	Wilkins, *Making*
I	1336–1337	7/8, 9/10, 16, 11*r*	pp. 146–50
II	early 1359	5*r*	pp. 158–59
III	1359–1360	3*r*–*v*, 4*r*–*v*	pp. 158–59
IV	1366–1368	1*r*–*v* and top of 2*r*	pp. 163–65

In medieval and early modern times a necessary beginning to many acts of writing was the preliminary folding of folio sheets to create a bifolium which contains two chartae that could be used on the front (recto) and the back (verso). Wilkins gave a careful account of the folding of paper in Vat. Lat. 3196 according to the reports of his sources; he used not only Porena's modern facsimile of 1941, but also Ernesto Monaci's heliotype facsimiles of 1890 and 1895.[57] For example, whereas Quarta held that Petrarch's custom was to gather two bifolia to constitute a four-leaf quire for further work, Wilkins was able to point out that this could not be true at least of chartae 5/6, where the script at the top right corner of c. 5*v* carries over slightly to c. 6*r*, indicating that Petrarch was using a simple bifolium.[58]

Had Wilkins been able to examine the manuscripts themselves, he would probably have noted evidence of other foldings.[59] Of the original bifolia, four and a half show no further folding. However, two show that they were once also folded in half horizontally, and two and a half have also been folded in quarters. The foldings—after the initial folding of a sheet to create a bifolium—are as follows:

[57] Wilkins 1951a, 84, 86. In 1890 Ernesto Monaci edited a heliotype facsimile in separate sheets (Fascicles 5–6). The 1895 edition, *Il manoscritto vaticano latino 3196 autografo di Francesco Petrarca riprodotto in eliotipia a cura della Biblioteca Vaticana* was a bound version executed from the same plates. It is this 1895 edition that Wilkins used. See Wilkins 1951a, xiv, which also records that he used Porena's 1941 facsimile (see herein my note 36), Appel 1891, and Pelaez 1910, who utilizes Monaci 1890 for his own transcription.

[58] Wilkins 1951a, 86, who cites Quarta 1902, 54. This detail concerning this bifolium (cc. 5–6), later destroyed and to which we will return below, is visible only in the Monaci 1890 facsimile.

[59] Close physical examination of the watermarks, as well as chain and wire lines, in Vat. Lat. 3196 shows that though time and subsequent conservation has destroyed most of the evidence of conjunct leaves, all of them, except for cc. 15/16, were indeed once-folded sheets of two chartae, or leaves, each. Felt- and mould-side correlations have been checked for every leaf, as well as compared with the record of watermarks described by Pelaez (1910, 164).

No further fold	1/2, 5/[6], 7/8, 9/10, 16, 19/20
Further half fold	3/4, 13/14
Further quarter fold	11/12, 15, 17/18

Correlating Wilkins' hypothetical reference collections with the evidence of subsequent foldings, it becomes apparent that: A) in his first reference collection all the leaves have no further fold, except for c. 11, which, with its conjugate leaf 12, has been folded in quarters and thus must have a separate history from the other leaves; B) with respect to his second and third collections, cc. 3/4 have a half fold, whereas c. 5 shows no evidence of any further fold, thus these leaves too must have separate histories, as Wilkins in fact argued on other grounds;[60] C) cc. 15 and 16 bear the same watermark, which is implausible, since a folio sheet's watermark appeared in the center of one half of the sheet, and therefore on only one of the chartae, or leaves, created in the making of a bifolium.[61] Moreover, the felt-side and mould-side correlations of the two leaves disagree, making contiguity impossible. Finally, c. 15 was once folded in quarters but c. 16 was not. Thus, not only were 15 and 16 never conjunct, but they too have separate histories; D) reference collection IV (c. 1 and the upper part of c. 2*r*) exhibits no additional fold. But as Wilkins reports, and as can be seen in Porena's 1941 facsimile, the neat copying of poems on cc. 1*r*–*v* and 2*r* gives way on c. 2*v* to disorganized sketches and drafts. The effect this bifolium conveys is not that of a purposeful reference collection but rather a fair copy of the sort routinely made by any writer, one which—with re-use—has simply moved from "bella copia" to a service copy; both Storey and Zamponi in fact argue that this was what eventually happened with Vat. Lat. 3195.[62] Taken by itself such a change conveys no clearer purpose than that of a writer's desire for a clean working copy. And it need not be taken by itself, because cc. 13/14 (not included in Wilkins' hypothesized collections) has the same miscellaneous character, and it is folded again in half like the folio that contains cc. 3/4.

[60] Wilkins 1951a, 159.

[61] Stevenson (1951–1952, 57–91 and 235) explains in detail the way in which watermarks and their occasional companions, the countermarks, appear on an unfolded sheet.

[62] Storey 1993, 360–96 and Zamponi 2004, 56–57.

These conclusions are reinforced by the unusual character of cc. 5/6, to which we now turn. As they exist today, cc. 5 and 6 are not conjunct. Charta 6 consists of a single leaf framing within it a smaller fragment containing verses from *Rvf* 73 (*Poi che per mio destino*), and on its verso the fragment of the *littera familiaris* XVI 6. The fragment in the frame is actually a *cedula*, a type of small slip sometimes found tucked into medieval manuscripts and containing some additional afterthought pertaining to the text.[63] This *cedula*, which is unique among the Petrarch papers in the Vatican, was framed in c. 6 during or before the sheets underwent their first binding in the sixteenth century, for in Ubaldini's edition of 1642 the verse on c. 6*r* already appears in sequence after the material on c. 5*v*. The heliotype facsimiles of Monaci 1890 and 1895 clearly show c. 6 attached to c. 5, and with characters in Petrarch's hand straying across the gutter to c. 6*r*. However, c. 5 was one of the three leaves stolen in 1894, later recovered, and then restored to their place when the manuscript was restored in 1905. Porena's facsimile (1941) gives a brief account of the theft,[64] but does not point out what is evident from a close examination of the manuscript: Petrarch's small oblong is now framed in a separate leaf of early twentieth-century conservator's paper. As the 1890 and 1895 heliotypes confirm, however, the *cedula* was once framed in a blank leaf of Petrarch's own paper, the second leaf of the bifolium of which c. 5 is the first.

The heliotypes thus testify not only to a sixteenth-century act of conservation, but supply a fragment of information about the "confused heaps of paper" of which Petrarch complains in the first letter of the *Familares* (I 1). For it seems that as well as drafting and revising on folded sheets of paper, not all of which he filled completely (as the original blank leaf of c. 6 shows), Petrarch at his desk was like other medieval and early modern writers: he tucked bits of paper into his manuscripts with afterthoughts. The *cedula* in question is more likely to have been originally associated with c. 15*v*, which contains a version of the letter now known as *Familiaris* XVI 6, of which the *cedula* preserves some lines on its verso. Charta 15, it will be recalled, is one of those leaves which were once folded in quarters. Thus if Wilkins intended the words "reference collection" to indicate systematic ordering on the part

[63] On Petrarch's actual use of the word *cedula*, see Mann 1974, 219, as well as the Renaissance usage of *cedula* in Rizzo 1973, 305.

[64] Porena 1941, 16.

of the poet, the evidence of the papers themselves suggests something much more casual, and the accumulation of such details should make us uneasy about any strictly "mathematical" account of Petrarch's habits of revision. It is, of course, possible that the bifolia in question were separated, folded, and refolded during the time between Petrarch's death and the sixteenth-century rebinding, but the randomness of the re-foldings would suggest this is improbable. What they remind us of, rather, is the picture of Petrarch rummaging through his dusty study and confused papers in the first letter of the *Familiares*.

Yet with that picture in mind, what are we to make of the fact that the poet stated later in life that he habitually kept his writings in chronological order? In a letter of about 1369–1372 to his friend Philippe de Cabassoles, who had requested copies of some old verses, Petrarch complained:

> it was difficult to find them among my other writings, still more to find them in my memory [...] eventually, by means of the datings that I habitually use in filing them away, with toil and dust I found them, and they now come to you as they were, half mangled and dirty, nor am I changing anything in them although I could change much, so that you may see not what I am but what I was, and so with a certain delight you may recall the first essays of our youth.[65]

In both passages, Petrarch claims that his papers are in disorder—hidden away, half destroyed by decay, even in his youth piled up in mounds. But in the later letter he says he can find them "by means of the datings which I habitually use in filing them away". The modern translator's word is "filing"; Petrarch's Latin phrasing is "iuditia temporum, quibus in talibus uti soleo", that is, "according to the verdict of their dates, as I customarily do with such things". We ought not to underrate the documentary value of Petrarch's early depiction of his papers as "dusty writings half destroyed by decay", though a number of those still extant contain dates. Perhaps more significant here, however, is that both his earlier and later accounts of his personal archive reflect Petrarch's assimilation of his persona as scribe to his life-long exploitation of the poetic *topos* of fleeting time, advancing age, and the decay of all things temporal, a *topos* that gripped him as fiercely as did that

[65] *Seniles* XV 15; trans. in Bernardo, Levin, and Bernardo 1992, 597. For the Latin text, see Petrarca 1581, 945 (Letter XVI 17).

of the laurel, whether woman or tree.[66] As the power of this great *topos* reminds us, to focus on the material analysis of the manuscripts is not to privilege yet again the empirical over the interpretative, but rather to bring together two approaches that have the capacity to illuminate each other vividly.

A first step in moving beyond Wilkins' work is to set aside, as based on cultural and technical assumptions no longer of use, his two fundamental conclusions: first that the sheets of Vat. Lat. 3196, the *codice degli abbozzi*, comprised four reference collections covering almost the entire period of Petrarch's creative life; and second, that Vat. Lat. 3195—the parchment codex—was the product of no less than nine different stages in Petrarch's attempt to achieve a perfected arrangement of his poems. Is the concept of a "reference collection"—self-evident to a mid-twentieth century scholar of systematic habits—borne out by the extant physical evidence available at the beginning of the twenty-first, and which may reveal more interesting genetic information? And what about the critical closure effected when we assume that Vat. Lat. 3195 must have had a single, purposeful literary design? The documentable versions of the *Canzoniere*—even if we were to accept Wilkins' argument that there were no less than nine—would suggest that if Petrarch had a single purpose in mind, he pursued over three decades a more than ordinarily experimental approach to that act of definition.

As a working hypothesis, this apparent interest in experiment is open both to new findings about the physical evidence of the manuscripts and to a fresh critical appreciation of Petrarch's fascination with metamorphosis of all kinds. It is open also to a reassessment of Rico's argument that the "libro" could not come into existence without the psychological and intellectual crisis of 1350.[67] Giuseppe Billanovich's contention that Petrarch had been contemplating a book of lyrics as early as his 1325 annotation in a copy of Horace now in the Morgan Library,[68] whether we agree or not, keeps before us the option of asking whether the critical point in the conception of the *Canzoniere* was not the vision of a particular woman, or even the recognition of the power of a particular theme, but the poet's discovery of *the very possibility of the book itself*. For any author, this is a potent moment when what had seemed scattered

[66] See especially Barolini 1989.
[67] Rico 1976, 131–37.
[68] See Billanovich 1985.

possibilities suddenly takes shape as a coherent project, one subject to revision, to restructuring, to dismantling, and refashioning, but a *libro* nonetheless. In the textual culture of the Trecento, Petrarch was not alone in compiling a book of lyrics, but as Furio Brugnolo shows, he has been the most influential,[69] not least because of the intense irony with which he dilates this scribal moment to encompass both the scattered fragments and the desire to gather them up. In Petrarch's case there is no severing the man at his desk from the poet who wrote of Love first loosing his tongue and then "mille volte indarno a l'opra volse / ingegno, tempo, penne, carte e 'nchiostri" (*Rvf* 309.7–8).

Petrarch was ambiguous on the subject of his habits at his desk; either he was untidy in youth and tidier in old age, or else that is how in his poems and letters he chose to represent what we might call his "scribal persona". Those who knew Wilkins testify that he himself was a model of stability and order. In a memorial essay, a colleague described him as "moving with measured steps about the campus; seated, collected and attentive, behind a clear desk in his bare office".[70] Perhaps it is not surprising that this orderly man in the end fashioned a Petrarch in his own mould.

* * *

Habent sua fata libelli. Despite its technical limitations *The Making of the "Canzoniere" and Other Petrarchan Studies*, with its emphasis on empirical certitude, provided a useful counterbalance to the marriage between literary interpretation and biographical speculation which had characterized study of the *Canzoniere* for centuries. Wilkins' intensely empirical procedures had the paradoxical effect of signaling to scholars of the middle of the twentieth century the possibility of a new approach to Petrarch, one divested of earlier biographical obsessions and more critically detached than had previously been achieved. In taking this "empirical turn" he was in some respects a member of the same intellectual generation as the bibliographer Fredson Bowers, whose own severe methodology has also been re-examined in recent years. However,

[69] See Brugnolo 1989.

[70] Bongiorno [1966] 1967, 5. This austerity may have had its price; Wilkins became ill in January 1935 (letter from Mildred McAfee, 4 January 1935). Donald Love wrote to him in hospital in Miami, Florida, February 26. Neither letter mentions what is wrong. Wilkins' appointment books are almost empty until September of that year (Oberlin College Archives, Correspondence, box 49).

if we must set aside the scholar's conclusions about the manuscripts of the *Canzoniere*, we can at least pay the man the tribute of historical understanding. As an academic during the dirty thirties and war-torn forties, Wilkins provided an exemplary instance of scholarly leadership to his colleagues both nationally and at Oberlin.[71] His modesty, detachment, and generosity were also prized by Italian scholars who knew him only for his studies of Petrarch. In a 1956 review of *Studies in the Life and Work of Petrarch*, Guido Martellotti hailed the "informazione ricchissima delle questioni precedentemente trattate; una generosa disposizione a non rifiutare aprioristicamente alcuna delle soluzioni proposte, ma anche la ferma volontà di giungere a una qualche certezza attraverso il vaglio critico di esse; il desiderio costante di chiarire a sé e agli altri", concluding that "sono queste le doti che tutti conoscono e amano nel simpatico e infaticabile maestro e che fanno, anche di questo libro, un prezioso strumento di lavoro".[72] Indeed, despite his intimidatingly orderly habits, Wilkins appears to have been a genial spirit with a lively imagination. A retired college president who must have been a veteran of a thousand faculty wrangles, in old age he could, without apparent irony, send his love to the Oberlin Board of Trustees.[73] A charming early article, "An Hour in the Renaissance", follows individuals famous and unknown across the world as they went about their work at 3:00 pm on 11 March 1521: painting frescoes, solving diplomatic crises, worrying about that German friar in Wittenberg. He framed his Medieval Academy presidential address (1958) in the form of a noble but intimate letter to Petrarch, a response invited, he told his listeners, by the "tibi" of Petrarch's own "Letter to Posterity".[74]

Wilkins' Italian colleagues ensured that posterity would not forget him. In celebration of his eightieth birthday in 1960, they proposed that he be made an honorary citizen of Arquà, the village in the Eugeanean hills where Petrarch spent his last years. The letter they circulated paid

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[71] Wilkins' lengthy list of publications includes numerous articles and pamphlets focussing on educational issues and questions of public concern, such as *The College and Society; Proposals for Changes in the American Plan of Higher Education* (Wilkins 1932), *Students Against War; Two Addresses* (1936), and *Living in Crisis* (1937).

[72] Martellotti 1956, 246.

[73] Oberlin, Wilkins Papers, Correspondence, Box 49. Wilkins to Donald Love, 26 February 1960.

[74] Still a delightful reading for beginning students, Wilkins' "An Hour in the Renaissance" was first published in 1923 and revised for inclusion in Wilkins 1959; see also "We Answer a Letter" (Wilkins 1958).

tribute to Wilkins' "disinteressato fervore, l'acutezza che penetra e non si esibisce, la precisione del discorso critico che allumina e non abbaglia, la lunga fatica dissimulata, la sicura validità dei risultati". Among those who signed it were Giuseppe Billanovich, Umberto Bosco, Gianfranco Contini, Berthold Ullman, and Roberto Weiss. On 19 June 1960 Wilkins was honored in a ceremony at Arquà. About 200 people attended, and the event was broadcast on Italian and Swiss radio and TV.[75] "Erano presenti", it was reported, "numerosi studiosi, e specialmente petrarchisti, italiani e stranieri".[76] Wilkins, however, was not there to accept his laurels; he had asked B.L. Ullman to represent him in Italy, because by now he was unable to travel anywhere at all.

[75] Oberlin, Wilkins Papers, Box 2. Undated clipping ca. 1960 from a Chapel Hill newspaper (Ullman taught at North Carolina).

[76] Martellotti 1960, 220.

CHAPTER THREE

DOUBTING PETRARCA'S LAST WORDS: ERASURE IN MS VATICANO LATINO 3195

H. Wayne Storey

In the summer of 2004, immersed in the last stages of my work on Petrarca's partial holograph, MS Vat. Lat. 3195, for the Antenore facsimile project, I stumbled onto Nicholas Basbanes' *Splendor of Letters* in hopes of finding some light reading to counter the hours spent checking and rechecking every charta of Petrarca's manuscript under ultraviolet light. In the first ten pages of Basbanes' chapter that revisits Judge Lewis A. Kaplan's philologically enlightened sentencing of Daniel Spiegelman, convicted of filching manuscripts from the rare book room of Columbia University's Butler Library, I came instead face-to-face with the essential question that my own methodology has for some years attempted to answer on a case-by-case basis: "does the first 'container' [of a work] have relevance in and of itself, or is it the information it conveys—and the information alone—that must be safeguarded above all else?".[1] Basbanes' revisiting of this important case of cultural priorities and, on a deeper level, the replacement of originals with copies, even expensive facsimile copies, began to haunt me. Indeed there are copies (even facsimiles) of almost all the materials that Spiegelman stole from Columbia, some of which were never recovered, so we still have their contents. Nevertheless Judge Kaplan imposed a stiffer sentence than requested either by the defense or the prosecution because of the stolen manuscripts' status as "primary containers".

The particular challenge of Basbanes' query to Petrarchan studies is well illuminated by one of the late Leonard Boyle's stories, one that I actually heard directly from the wiry Irish Prefect of the Vatican Library and that was subsequently recounted also by Basbanes.[2] One of the greatest forces behind the opening of the Vatican Library's treasures to

[1] Basbanes 2003, 10. For Basbanes' discussion, see pp. 10–13.
[2] Basbanes 2003, 13.

younger scholars, Boyle was fond of remembering his correction of an essential reading simply by consulting the inside margins of a manuscript that had escaped the eye of the photographer who prepared the microfilm utilized for a faulty critical edition. Boyle's point bares painful repetition in light of the fact that few reproductions of written artifacts are prepared from unbound manuscripts: reproductions sometimes miss vital information in and on the text. And if this seems easily enough corrected by the scholarly rule that all materials should be consulted directly and firsthand if you intend to publish on them, consider the extraordinary case of one of the critical milestones of Petrarchan scholarship, Wilkins' *Making of the "Canzoniere"*, which was—as the American scholar notes in print and in unpublished letters—prepared without Wilkins' direct examination of MS Vaticano Latino 3195.[3] In fact, Vatican records, which tell us exactly how many times, for example, Ettore Modigliani—the Vatican librarian who prepared the manuscript's diplomatic edition[4]—consulted the codex, reveal that Wilkins never visited the principal object of his famous study. In a recent article, Dario Del Puppo and I examined a few fundamental inaccuracies in Wilkins' methods and conclusions, including the instability of inks, the unreliability of photographic reproductions for dating manuscript materials, and Wilkins' propensity for creating Petrarchan system where, alas, the manuscript actually reveals little.[5] When we add this to the fact that Wilkins based his research almost exclusively on the ordering of poems rather than on variants in crucial manuscripts in a potential stemma codicum with witnesses as diverse as MSS Casanatense 912, Laurenziano Segniano 1, and the of-late much discussed Laurenziano XLI 15, it becomes clear that Wilkins' conjectures of nine phases or redactions of Petrarca's *Fragmenta*—already questioned by scholars as different as Teodolinda Barolini, Giuseppe Frasso, Stefano Zamponi,

[3] Wilkins 1951a. See Del Puppo and Storey 2003.

[4] Modigliani 1904. All references to Modigliani's diplomatic edition reflect the manuscript's original number of the charta. A separate pagination appears in Modigliani's edition in brackets in the upper left-hand margin, while the number of the charta is found in the upper right, but—as in the codex—on the *recto* only. I was able to verify even Modigliani's frequent consultation of the codex thanks to Paolo Vian, of the Vatican Library, whom I wish to thank publicly for his assistance.

[5] Del Puppo and Storey 2003.

and Germaine Warkentin—should be open to discussion, material verification, and correction if not, in some cases, elimination.[6]

Certainly for Wilkins, critics and philologists of our own day, and even fourteenth- and fifteenth-century collectors of Petrarca's works, one of the more powerful mystiques of Petrarca's figure as a cultural icon and a writer is what I call the cult of the autograph (holograph) as practiced by those who base a good portion of their adoration for and critical trust in those copies of works penned by Petrarca himself. In one of his collection of letters, the *Familiares*, Petrarca complains about the practice of his epistles being waylaid so that admirers can have copies made of his missives or, even worse, simply filch them.[7] The sixteenth-century Petrarchist Ludovico Beccadelli was extraordinarily proud of his autograph copies of Petrarca's correspondence with Moggio de' Moggi (today preserved in the Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana in exactly the same form in which Beccadelli collected them).[8] Late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century manuscripts of the poet's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, such as Laurenziano Segniano 1, occasionally bore initial rubrics indicating that the copy was made from the version in the poet's own hand ("*Scripto ipsa manu decti Poete*").[9] Again in the sixteenth century, a debate raged over the authenticity of the order in which the poems of Petrarca's *Canzoniere* were arranged by Pietro Bembo in his 1501 Aldine edition. Much of Alessandro Vellutello's later rationale for changing the order of the poems in his numerous editions of the *Canzoniere* (among the most important those of 1525, 1528, 1538, and 1550) rested upon a) his discrediting Aldo Manuzio's statement that Bembo had followed the definitive copy of the work in the poet's own hand, and b) his trust in Petrarca's description of the disorder of his papers and manuscripts in the first letter of the *Familiares*. Vellutello is explicit in his criticism first of Bembo in 1525 and then in 1528 of Aldo alone for having misrepresented the state of Petrarca's manuscripts, noting

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[6] In addition to Barolini (in this volume but also 1989), Frasso 1997, Zamponi 2004 (especially 29–30), Warkentin (in this volume), and Del Puppo and Storey 2003, see also Strada 1998–99 and Belloni 2004, 4n4.

[7] See, for example, *Familiares* XX 6 (Rossi 1933–1942, 4: 24).

[8] See Frasso 1983. The Moggio de' Moggi letters with Petrarca's autographs in paper, contained in MS Laurenziano LIII 35, are reproduced and described in the facsimile edition edited by Petrucci (1968).

[9] See Storey 2004a, 149 and Belloni 2004, 89. The rubric, partially erased, is found on c. 1*r* of MS Laurenziano Segniano 1. See the similar scribal declaration ("scriptum manu propria domini F. P.") on c. 148*r* of Beinecke M706 in Figure 8 of Del Puppo's essay (*infra*).

that the only authentic copy would be a collection of loosely organized sheets of parchment.[10] Ironically, in his statements Vellutello cites the very codex, then in the possession of Santasofia family of Padova, that Bembo apparently consulted and that turned out to be the autograph copy of Petrarca's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, an attribution made by Bembo himself but then strangely mistrusted until its reconfirmation by Nolhac in the late nineteenth century.[11]

Today the cult of the autograph copy is hardly different: the search for traces of manuscripts in Petrarca's own hand is an ongoing academic quest for the holy grail. There is certainly good reason for such research. Petrarca declared often that writing was his all-absorbing form of expression. For him, writing was all: he read constantly, even on horseback, and devoted countless hours to penning and supervising official copies of his works as well as those of others. Moreover, and this is a point we should keep in mind throughout our discussion, he was a particularly avid corrector of his own manuscripts and a meticulous glossator of codices that came into his hands. Consequently, discovering and understanding the *minutiae* of Petrarca's constant writing, erasing, and rewriting allows us to follow the intellectual and material development, for example, of early Italian Humanism. However, the inherent and practical problems of this research in the case of Petrarca's autographs, especially in the case of what appears to be his last copy of his *Fragmenta* (Vat. Lat. 3195), pose the fundamental questions: what constitutes a "final" or last copy of his work? And do last copies represent definitive versions for an author profoundly dedicated to continuing experimentation with his works?

The implications of this veneration of the holograph and the treatment of erasure in Vat. Lat. 3195 have been profound and never truly confronted by philologists in the editions of the *Fragmenta*. Aside from the purely fifteenth-century presentation of Petrarca's graphological

[10] Essential in this debate are the economic concerns of printers and the City of Venice's legal and economic regulations regarding all aspects of printing, and thus editing, in the Serenissima (see especially Plebani 2005). For a review of relevant bibliography, see Belloni 1992, 58–95.

[11] Bembo describes the volume as "coperto di cuoio bianco" and, we should note carefully, "non havea titolo veruno, che egli dimostrasse essere stato del Petrarcha. Vero è che 'l cuoio era rovescio, et parea molto vecchio […] Era stato il libro per tanto tempo assai ben tenuto et leggevasi agevolmente" (cited from Zamponi 2004, 40, who transcribes the letter from Gualtiero Scoto 1551 edition). On the history of the codex, see Nolhac 1886 and Belloni 2004.

forms for genres as different as the sonnet and the canzone, not to mention the extraordinary difference in the mise en page between his sestina and his canzone (two genres linked prosodically by Petrarca enough to be mixed together in his final count of "canzoni" on c. *72v* of Vat. Lat. 3195),[12] numerous silent interventions have accompanied editions of the *Fragmenta* in anything other than transparent corrections of Malpaghini's and Petrarca's "errors", "oversights", and by now occasionally illegible transcriptions, not to mention the interventions of later hands in the manuscript.[13] As we will see, there are cases in which the holograph can no longer give us a reliable reading of the text, forcing us to turn to other, authoritative—but not authorial—copies of the *Fragmenta*, sometimes with surprising results.[14] In the next few pages I will consider the rather complex problem of authorial copies and take note of details microscopic and at times seemingly evanescent, nevertheless my point is actually a simple one: given Petrarca's penchant for erasing and revising his revisions and the material state of his work at the time of his death, April 19, 1374, the final copy of his *Fragmenta*, which we still have, does not always necessarily represent either his final wishes nor his plans for the final version of the work. In all of our discussions of this manuscript and its importance for Italian and European literature, we should never forget that it never was a bound book during Petrarca's lifetime. For Petrarca, at the time of his death, the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* was a collection of ten unbound fascicles or, more accurately, 36 bifolia, without the formal closures typical of medieval manuscripts, still open to additions, erasures, and further lyrical and organizational experimentation.[15]

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[12] "*38.cum duabus que sunt in papiro*" ("38, with two [canzoni] that are in paper") refers to the nine sestinas and the 27 canzoni that have already been transcribed in the loose quires of MS Vat. Lat. 3195. The two that are "in papiro" were probably *Quando il soave mio fido conforto* and *Quel'antico mio dolce empio signore*, which still had not yet been inserted into quires on the two bifolia that today constitute cc. 67–70 in Vat. Lat. 3195. See Storey 2004a, 161.

[13] See Storey 2004b.

[14] Such a procedure throws proponents of traditional textual editing into something of a methodological fit when a holograph is involved. But the transparency in such applications is preferable to textual conjectures never explained or even mentioned in the critical apparatus.

[15] See Zamponi's paleographical description (2004, 38–44) of the codex before its late fourteenth-century preparation for binding, when additional elements were added, including the heretofore unobserved catchword on c. 52*v* (Storey 2004b, 391), which was erased—along with other items—from the mostly blank two bifolia that

One editorial note before we begin. There are many extraordinary manuscripts of Petrarca's *Fragmenta* in the Vatican Library, some of them important for the uniqueness of their contents, some of them for the mastery of the book arts they reveal. MS Vat. Lat. 3195 does not necessarily fall into either of these camps. It is an elegant but very plain, virtually unadorned manuscript with little interest, say, for collectors of pretty books. Consequently when Antenore and the Vatican Library agreed to spend a lot of money on the process of unbinding the manuscript, rephotographing it in color, rebinding it, and commissioning new paleographic, historical, and codicological essays about the manuscript and its diplomatic edition of 1904, the determining factor was clearly the codex's status as one of Petrarca's most well-known autographs. Vattasso's 1905 phototypical edition in black and white had proved serviceable to scholars, but the option of a more exact reproduction in color seemed a worthy contribution, especially since some features of the manuscript's organizational structures can only be evaluated fully with color images.[16] This process also gave us the opportunity to study carefully the manuscript in its unbound and original state as ten loose gatherings, a total of 36 bifolia. At one point in the project, consideration was given to the option of producing a virtual restoration of the entire manuscript since a good number of its chartae are severely damaged and some parts practically illegible without the aid of ultraviolet light. Consequently 18 chartae underwent the process of a virtual restoration, were printed in color, and collected in a folder ("Pagine con recupero digitale della scrittura") along with Furio Brugnolo's exemplary eight-page "Presentazione" which introduces the entire facsimile edition.[17] Unfortunately, these restorations were never checked by any of the editors of volume 2, the *Commentario*, for textual errors. The results of the restoration proved to be seriously flawed. There are so many textual errors and false readings in the 18 chartae bundled with the facsimile, that I had only enough space in my own essay in the *Commentario* to present a list of the *types* of errors.[18]

When we compare Latino 3195 to other manuscripts of the *Fragmenta*, one of the first things we notice is what to the untrained eye might seem

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are today cc. 49–52. The internal bifolium, cc. 50–51 of this insert, is entirely blank except for ruling.

[16] Vattasso 1905.

[17] Belloni, Brugnolo, Storey, and Zamponi 2004 [2003], vol. 1.

[18] See Storey 2004a, 135–36n13.

to be the work of a rather poor scribe indeed. For a manuscript that is constructed on an extraordinarily articulated system of mise en page, it contains a very large number of erasures, corrections, revisions, and addenda that are not implemented to correct or maintain the layout, or mise en page, of the codex. By comparison, Boccaccio's personal copy of the *Decameron*—Hamilton 90 of the Staatsbibliotek in Berlin, in which we find the author still deciding between lexical options in the 1370s—strikes us, perhaps ironically, as the work of a far more cautious and accurate scribe.

As we have known for some years, erasure is, along with forms of postponement, *selectio*, and linearization, one of what I have called Petrarca's principal tools for organizing and reordering the *Fragmenta*.[19] However it immediately presents us with a theoretical and a pragmatic dilemma: how to measure and represent, especially in our editions designed to reconstruct the material features of Petrarca's poetics, an essential aspect that was designed to disappear in subsequent copies? Ideally, even in our best reproductions and editions, erasure is a problematic presence. As many know, Petrarca uses it skillfully on c. 26*r*, changing the rubricated "D" of the erased *Donna mi vene spesso ne la mente* into the "O" of *Or vedi amor che giovenetta donna* (*Rvf* 121), where the disappearance of the "D" is the singular goal of the erasure and correction.[20] While historians of the evolution of position 121 from *Donna* to *Or vedi amor* might find the erasure essential information, Petrarca's attempt to recycle the rubricated "D" and maintain the limited textual space in the shift from ballata to madrigal is clearly determined by the nature of the codicological register and his attempt to maintain the quality of a "fair copy". In fact, materials and scribal register both play significant roles in the levels of "transparency" of Petrarca's erasure. The material of Petrarca's so-called draft manuscript, Vat. Lat. 3196, a paper manuscript, permitted only cancellation, or strike-throughs with the pen, of the word or letters to be eliminated since use of a pen-knife to scrape away the unwanted text would have destroyed the writing surface. On the other hand, the parchment surface of Latino 3195, originally intended as a fair copy, reveals few examples of the multiple correctional styles typical in Petrarca's day, of which the

[19] Storey 1993, 360–77.

[20] See Storey 1993, 366–77; all photographic reproductions of the details discussed in this essay can be found in Belloni, Brugnolo, Storey, and Zamponi 2004, vol. 1, or—where color reproduction is not a factor—in Vattasso 1905.

most common were underscoring by repetition of the *punctus* under the text to be expunged and strikethroughs.[21] Instead, Vat. Lat. 3195 tends almost exclusively toward erasure by scraping to remove errors, rejected versions, and *ripensamenti*. Moreover, the hair side of parchment provided an additional benefit: since it had to undergo a much more aggressive scraping in its preparation as a clean writing surface, erasures on the hair side were—and still are—more difficult to trace, that is they become even more transparent. Finally, we must ask ourselves to what degree erasure in any of its forms disturbed the eye of the medieval reader, perhaps more used to a greater economy in the use of writing space and to texts that we would today think of as anything other than "clean copies". There is, in addition, another cultural and methodological matrix that we must apply, borrowed from one of Malcolm Parkes' observations on medieval punctuation: the application of what we could call certain systems of "copy production" depended, like punctuation, more on the requirements of the reader for whom the copy was prepared than on strict—even standardized—properties for some sort of "general reader".[22] Thus when we address what will be for this study the essential interpretative key, that is the register of the copy itself, and the subsequent shift in MS Vat. Lat. 3195 from fair copy to "service repertory", we must consider also the inherent changes in the work's material trajectory, once directed toward a now unknown patron or reader and then—as a service copy—toward Petrarca himself as the user of his own transcription.

With these factors in mind, it should not surprise us that those sections of MS Vat. Lat. 3195 executed by Malpaghini as fair copy demonstrate a much lower occurrence of erasure. Corrections of skipped text, such as the «no(n)» inserted with a caret above the line in the last verse of *Io sentia dentr' al cor* on c. 10*v* ("Et poi morro. sio <non> credo al desio"), or the very common but not unproblematic conversion of an "l" into "i" by erasing the ascender of the "l" but without adding the *coma*, that is dotting the "i", also on c. 10*v* (verse 10 of *L'oro et le perle*: "onde*i* si tacque"), as well as the marginal insertion of skipped text on c. 11*r* (verse 39 of *Ne la stagion che 'l ciel rapido inchina*: "ma tu allor <piu>

[21] While medieval systems of erasure depended heavily upon the corrector or, even more individually, on the author intervening in his own works to make corrections, Suarez Gonzalez 1995 organizes some general principles and techniques found in several medieval Latin codices. However, see also Troncarelli 1985 and Troncarelli 1993.

[22] Parkes 1978, 139.

minforme") represent the kind of "transparent" erasure and correction typical of Malpaghini's extraordinarily clean fair copy.[23] Less "transparent" in Malpaghini's transcriptions are those corrections that do not resort to erasure but to the "conversion" often of "i" to "e" with a pen stroke or by over-writing.[24] In almost all these instances, editors have opted to correct the text in silence. Those more radical interventions in Malpaghini's transcription, such as Petrarca's own substitution over erasure of *Donna mi vene spesso* with *Or vedi amor*, or the awkward erasure and insertion of "*si sbi*gottisce" in verse 5 of *S'amor novo consiglio* on c. 57*r* alert us not only to the poet's dynamic alteration of the macrotext but also to subsequent, post-Petrarchan modifications. The disturbing truth about Vat. Lat. 3195 is that all that is on the parchment and in the text does not necessarily belong to the hand of Petrarca or Malpaghini. These interventions in the text constitute a subsequent cultural erasure to which I shall return in a few pages.

When we examine Petrarca's revisions of Malpaghini's fair copy text we face a new category of erasure and correction, effected by the poet himself but still controlled by the overall register of the "fair copy". By this I mean that Petrarca's revision corresponds to criteria that will tend to integrate the addendum into the principal *ductus*, or handwriting style, of the codex, attempting to imitate Malpaghini's hand so as not highlight the change. For while corrections might not have caused great consternation in the medieval reader, medieval manuscripts themselves tell us that dramatic shifts from one hand to another, and from script to script, alerted the reader to significant changes in genre or to a work copied perhaps by a workshop as a master, but not a fair, copy.[25]

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[23] Texts are presented in their diplomatic form using standard conventions for interlinear and marginal insertions (< >) and extended abbreviations (within parentheses), and erasures with strikethroughs in square brackets ([~~ivi~~]). Over-writes over erasures are in bold and underscored for clarification. I should point out that uncorrected errors are still present in Malpaghini's sections: the dual occurrence of "tanti parte", the unattested "avagli" of *Perché la vita è breve*, v. 21 (c. 15*v*), and the erroneous conversion by erasure of "iscolpirlo" into "iscolpirio" in v. 66 of *Ne la stagion* on c. 11*v*. For more examples and more detailed explanations, see Belloni 2004 and Storey 2004b.

[24] Many examples of this over-writing are described in Modigliani 1904.

[25] There are numerous examples in medieval codices of differences in script that signal, for example, the distinction between text and gloss. The latter example, of a workshop copy to serve as an exemplar for subsequent copies, might well be the case of one of the earliest extant witnesses of Dante's *Convivio*, MS Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale II iii 47 (formerly Magliabechiano Cl. VI 142, originally from the Strozzi Library), the topic of a dissertation at Indiana University by Beatrice Arduini.

In the third bifolium of Quaternion VII, on c. 58, Petrarca elects to revise the last verse of the sonnet *I' ò pien di sospir'*. In his 1904 diplomatic edition, Modigliani notes that Petrarca separates "qua(n)to" from the preceding word by inserting two vertical separation lines, or *segni di divisione*, and that between "pena" and "acerba" there remains a significant gap partially filled by a dash: "Che no(n) sappian | *qua(n)to e mia pena* | —) acerba". In fact, as I have been able to verify in many other instances of Petrarca's erasures in this codex, the two initial "separation lines" were not intended to separate at all but to delimit—as a form of *pro memoria*—the beginning of the text to be erased, in the same way that the conclusion of the erasure was also marked off by ")". While the script of the revision carries telltale aspects of Petrarca's hand (the flourish on the "e", the ligature of the "ia" of "mia" [compared to Malpaghini's "ia" in "sappian" in the same verse]), Petrarca abandons his normally more compact script to imitate Malpaghini's hand. While we have no way of confirming whether it is Petrarca's or some one else's penknife that scrapes away the previous words, the technique of marking the erasure—whether as *pro memoria* or as a mechanical aid to a corrector—is curious, especially in its consistency throughout the manuscript.[26] These erasure markers and the concluding dash, a common scribal addition in a different ink to fill the blank space, carry no punctuational value; indeed the initial erasure guides should have been erased as were the concluding markers. Their editorial transparency is guaranteed.

When Petrarca takes over as the primary scribe of his own text, beginning in Quaternions V and VIII, today cc. 33–40 and 61–66 / 71–72, and before their partial rubrication, the project is still being constructed as a fair copy. Radically deep erasures, such as the elimination of sonnet 194 and the insertion of *Laura gentil che rasserena i poggi* on c. 39*r* clearly preceded, for example, the complete erasure of *Donna mi vene* on c. 26*r*. We recall that Petrarca recycled the "D" after the fascicle's return from the rubricator, while the guide letter "l" for the rubricated "L" of "Laura" demonstrates the fixity of the new sonnet 194 *before* the quire's departure for the Milanese workshop where the still unbound fascicles were illuminated. We should note, however, that

[26] Once Petrarca takes over the task of acting as his own scribe in this codex, it is difficult to imagine that he would have involved an additional corrector. But we have to keep open the possibility that he did not execute the erasures himself.

the compromised writing surface of the erasure makes not only writing but additional erasure—in which Petrarca nevertheless engages on other occasions—realistic threats to the integrity and clarity of the fair copy. Thus in the case of verse 9 of *Laura gentil* ("Nel qual *pruovo* dolceççe ta(n)te et tali" [c. 39*r*, FIGURE 1]), Petrarca resorts not only to erasure upon erasure, but also to strikethroughs and interlinear addition in a different ink to clarify his text, marking off first the second erasure—where we now find "prouo"—with slender hatch marks that were probably meant to be erased. In 1904, without the advantage of ultraviolet light, Ettore Modigliani read *prevo* for *provo* in the verse.[27] Under high magnification and ultraviolet light we can now trace Petrarca's microscopic steps: "prouo" is rewritten on top of a second erasure, indicated by two strokes of the pen that seem to be commas in a darker brown ink, under the line, in front of the "p" and after the second "o" (the second erasure is confirmed by the ascender of the "d" of "dolceççe" that is missing). After this first intervention, with a different pen and a reddish ink, Petrarca strikes a line through the "r" and the upper and lower curve of the "o" in "pro" (to the naked eye this "o" looks like one of Petrarca's "e"s, thus Modigliani's misreading). He then adds a pen stroke above the line to separate "qual" from "pro" and another stroke in front of "dolceççe", and traces over the "uo" of "prouo" and in the interlinear space above the line indicates the addendum "\uo". All this is to say that the correct reading is probably "provo", as we find in other, very reliable manuscripts of the late fourteenth century (such as Morgan M. 502, or Laurenziano XLI 17).[28]

In other cases, revising over erasure additionally affects the "fair copy" values of his text, as we find some instances in which the poet-copyist literally angled his transcription up out of the area of the scraped parchment. The specific case of c. 48*r*, in which Petrarca angles up the end of verse 2 of *O dolci sguardi* (*Rvf* 253 ["Or fia mai il di chio vi riveggia et oda"]) to keep the text on cleaner parchment possibly suggests that sonnet 257, *In quel bel viso*, was actually transcribed on the *verso* of the thinner parchment of c. 48 before sonnet 253 (*O dolci sguardi*). Indeed it is the bleed-through of the ink of the first verse of *In quel bel viso* (*Rvf* 257) that Petrarca is trying to avoid in his transcription of verses

[27] Modigliani 1904, *ad loc*.

[28] Belloni 2004, 104 presents "prevo" in his Tavola 2, which documents "alcune mende sfuggite alla revisione del Petrarca" (103 n128). See, however, Belloni 2004, 104 n135, which retracts the error that originates with Modigliani 1904, *ad loc*.

2 and 4 of sonnet 253, *O dolci sguardi*.[29] In other cases Petrarca revises over erasures to maintain a more orderly presentation.[30]

For our purposes here, Petrarca's attention to the clarification of erasure and correction presumes the necessity of comunicating these textual details to another reader. And while it is difficult to tell exactly where after *Rvf* 199 (*O bella man* [c. 39*v*]) and 321 (*È questo 'l nido* [c. 62*v*]) Petrarca abandons the idea of maintaining these fascicles (Quaternions V [cc. 33–40] and VIII [perhaps originally only cc. 61–62/ 71–72[31] and then cc. 61–66/71–72]) as a fair copy and renders them into a service copy, certainly the multiple erasures and revisions that compromise the writing material of *Dolci ire, dolci sdegni* (*Rvf* 205) on c. 40*r*, still in Quaternion V, as well as the abandonment of the small capital, or *maiuscoletto*, as the first letter after the initial letter of every first verse—typical of verse transcription in fair copy—in the two addenda in binion form (c. 49*r* and cc. 67–70) and in some of the last bifolia of the last quaternion (VIII), signal the definitive shift in register of the quires that Petrarca is preparing.

As the register of the quires changes from "fair" to "service", so does the care with which the poet-copyist transcribes, erases, and revises, not just in those sections prepared now as service copy, but often also in those places where he reopens the text of the fair copy poems to add revisions, such as in *Geri, quando talor meco s'adira* (*Rvf* 179). Curiously, while maintaining his traditionally intricate transcriptional systems that integrate layout of the charta, and even groups of chartae, with textual signficance, Petrarca now allows himself greater latitude in form and care. While on c. 44*r* we find Petrarca's typically cautious transcriptional style with the telltale intercolumnar margin between verses, on c. 45*r*,

[29] However, as we recall, transcriptional procedures usually required the planned layout of a codex before the execution of the copy, making it possible to copy later poems in a preestablished order in advance of earlier entries.

[30] See diverse problems of transcriptional treatment of verses in relation to the rulings in c. 47*r*[3]: *Laura che 'l uerde lauro*, c. 47*v*[3] *Solea lontana in so(n)no*, v. 2, and 48*v*[3] *Viue fauille uscian*, v. 6.

[31] See Zamponi 2004, 32–43. Zamponi's estimate (p. 32), that Petrarca and Malpaghini originally planned a manuscript that would have consisted of 52 chartae, or 26 bifolia, to which 10 bifolia would have been added over the course of the transcription of the *Fragmenta* from the early autumn of 1368 to April 1374, is based on six quaternions (I–V [cc. 1–40; or 20 bifolia], VII [cc. 53–60, 4 bifolia]) and a binion (cc. 61–62/71–72 [2 bifolia]). According to Zamponi (2004, 33), the chartae numbered today 63–66 (2 bifolia) were added by the poet-copyist soon after he took over Malpaghini's scribal duties on the codex.

we encounter an unusual range of Petrarca's scribal variations: the careful corrections of the "i" in "lysippo" (verse 3) and of «Lira cieco» (verse 7), all in the same ink with which he transcribes the entire sonnet *Vincitore Alexandro* (*Rvf* 232), and, immediately after, the revision of the last two verses of *Qual ventura mi fu* (*Rvf* 233) in the same light ink with which he revises also verse 12 of *Lasso, Amor mi trasporta* (*Rvf* 235).

On the same bifolium, c. 44*v*, Petrarca's doubts seem to invade the transcription of the text. In most modern editions, verse 5 of *Amor co la man dextra* (*Rvf* 228) begins "Vomer di pena", which looks very different from what we see in Petrarca's manuscript (FIGURE 2). Modigliani explains that the "mer" of "Vomer" has been retraced in another ink, and only seems to be "Voncer".[32] But under ultraviolet light and high magnification there is no trace of an "m", but rather the "nc" of "Voncer". The same hand—Petrarca's or a later hand—then adds a *titulus* above the "e" of "pena" (thus "penna") and then strikes through it to create "pena". The reading in the early manuscript tradition was usually "Vomer di penna" (Laurenziano XLI 17, c. 43*v*; Morgan M. 502, c. 40*r*; Aldine 1501, c. 88*v*) with one extraordinary exception: Bartolomeo Valdezoco's 1472 edition, produced in Padova, reads: "Voncer di penna.con sospir del fianco".[33] Contini's consequently conjectural "Vomer di pena", repeated by numerous editors, follows Modigliani's error rather than righting the problem created by the erasures in the original manuscript.[34]

By c. 47*r* Petrarca has thoroughly abandoned the criteria of a fair copy, a process of which we have seen evidence throughout Quaternion VI (cc. 41–48), and as early as c. 41, especially in his decision to return to fill in simple, small initials of the first verses of poems from c. 39*v*[3] (*Non pur quell'una bella ignuda mano* [*Rvf* 200]) to c. 49*r*[4] (*Arbor*

[32] Modigliani 1904, 104.

[33] Belloni 2001, c. 95/LXXXVII*v*; on Valdezoco's apparent connections to the Santasofia family, which then had in its possession Petrarca's holograph (what would become MS Vat. Lat. 3195), and the printer's claims that his edition is taken from the original, see Belloni 2001, xxxvii, and 2004, 90 n65 ("Saldamente fuori discussione la discendenza del Valdezoco dal 3195"). Evidence such as that in Valdezoco's transcription of *Amor co la man dextra* suggests perhaps that the printer's claims were not wholly "commercial hype".

[34] Contini 1949 and 1964. Cf. Fenzi 1993, 328; Dotti 1996, 2: 622; and Santagata 1996, 944. Only Bettarini (2005, 2:1054) discusses the *lectio* of "pena" in Vat. Lat. 3195. Deeming the metaphor of the "pen" (rather than "pain") inappropriate here, Bettarini cites Modigliani's conjecture on what she accepts as Petrarca's second thoughts (and hand) in the elimination of the *titulus* over the "n" of "pena" (p. 1056).

victoriosa triumphale [*Rvf* 263]), all transcribed and—often—elaborated by Petrarca after the quires' return from the illuminator in Milan in 1368.[35] The transcriptions of four sonnets on c. 47*r* (FIGURE 3) reveal the results of Petrarca's extensive erasure, reordering, and revision of an area from which he has taken *Or vedi Amor* (now *Rvf* 121 but previously located at position 246) and significantly rewritten *Due rose fresche* (*Rvf* 245). Notably, his revision of verse 3 of *Due rose fresche*, built on the first version's original four syllables, invades the intercolumn between the verses. But Petrarca does not break the left-hand justification of the even-numbered verses to align the beginning of verse 4 ("Tra") with the second column. Instead he draws a separation line between the end of verse 3 and the beginning of verse 4 and then fills the awkwardly empty space with dashes.[36]

By the time we reach the end of the last Quaternion (VIII; cc. 61–66/71–72), Petrarca's copy has become more of a work space than a transcription. The text of *De! porgi mano a l'affannato ingegno* on c. 71*r* presents us with two stages of erasure and corrections (FIGURE 4). We can still distinguish between the erasure and revision in lighter ink with a thicker-tipped quill in verse 7's "Se vertu, se bel*ta non ebbe* eguale" and the revision in darker ink over erasure in verse 11's "Tutto fu i(n) lei /di che *noi morte a* priui", an interlinear addendum (verse 5's "chel" in the small light ink of the revision in verse 7), and two marginal addenda, the first signaled by a small cross before verse 4, referring to a by now only partially legible revision vertically placed along the gutter and only visible when the manuscript is unbound, and the second—of course—the number "*19*" in the external margin in a series of numbers Petrarca added to reorder the last 31 poems of the *Fragmenta*.[37] The presence of sometimes multiple erasures around these numbers suggests, in some cases, that Petrarca experimented with other reorderings. The example of *De! porgi mano* on c. 71*r* stands in stark contrast to the nature of the poet-copyist's transcriptions in the binion, or the final two bifolia (cc. 67–70) that he prepares separately and inserts into the last quire (VIII). The poems of these two bifolia

[35] The transcriptional break between two sonnets (*Rvf* 199 and 200) obviously linked by the synecdoche of the "bella mano" is noteworthy.

[36] See Storey 1993, 361–72 for an examination of the interpretative ramifications of Petrarca's use of erasure and rewriting in these poems.

[37] For a discussion of this process or reordering, its implications, and relevant bibliography, see Storey 1993, 380–88.

are copied in Petrarca's most elegant hand and contain few erasures. Even the relatively complicated canzone *Quel'antiquo mio dolce empio signore* (*Rvf* 356 [renumbered as 360], cc. 69*v*–70*r*) reveals only minor and always integrated erasures and corrections, resorting only twice to interlinear addenda to correct small skips. Nevertheless, the inserted bifolia were not designed as part of a fair copy: they contain no guide letters for initials, no small caps as second letters, only crude paragraph markers and the marginal numbers for integrating them into the last poems of the song book. Rather these bifolia function as a material model for the insert that Petrarca describes in his letter to Pandolfo Malatesta, *Varia* IX.[38] We see this insertion somewhat in scribal action in Laurenziano XLI 17: a unit of poems materially compacted into two bifolia that scribes could then integrate into incomplete copies of the *Fragmenta* the poet had already had prepared and sent to friends such as Pandolfo.[39]

As I have noted elsewhere, at this stage in the production of his quires, Petrarca relies upon a layer of editorial signs and devices that communicates first of all with other medieval copyists, if not strictly with his own comprehension of the project.[40] Petrarca the copyist has become the "ideal reader" of the codex, certainly of its sometimes unique systems of graphetics, including the entirely blank bifolium (cc. 50–51) in the first insert before *I' vo pensando* (c. 53) or the unusual layout of *Quel'antiquo mio dolce empio signore* (*Rvf* 356 [renumbered as 360]).

The erasure of Petrarca does not, alas, end there. As Modigliani intuited in 1904, and as I have been able to confirm, even in additional cases, not all that is erased, revised, and corrected on the chartae of Petrarca's holograph belongs to Petrarca or to Malpaghini.[41] My examination of the codex under ultraviolet light reveals that subsequent hands intervened more often than we might care to imagine, erasing a catchword (or a *richiamo*), adding another, erasing readings, retracing others with varying degrees of accuracy, and changing altogether a few readings.[42] I will limit myself to one example that contains a particularly revealing erasure and a relatively minor reading that carries a

[38] Fracassetti 1859–1863, 5: *ad loc*.
[39] See Storey and Capelli 2006.
[40] Storey 2004a, 138–43.
[41] In addition to Malpaghini 1904, see Zamponi 2004, 38–45. We should note that the caution imposed by librarians today around ancient codices was not always observed by previous owners and readers of medieval manuscripts.
[42] See Storey 2004b, 388–92.

big theoretical punch in modern editions of the *Fragmenta*. On c. 37*r*[2] (Figure 5) Petrarca inserts in a short-lyric space left open by Malpaghini his reply to Geri Gianfigliazzi, the sonnet *Geri, quando talor meco s'adira* (*Rvf* 179).[43] This is a noteworthy addition since we have an earlier copy in Petrarca's own hand of the same poem (Vat. Lat. 3196, c. 8*v*[2]), showing some changes in *lectiones*. The problematic reading seems to begin when in 1904 Modigliani confirms that at the beginning of verse 9 he reads an "E" written over the remnants of a partially erased "S". Modigliani's subsequent conjecture is priceless: "Petrarca wanted to change 'Se cio' into 'Eccio', but left intact (perhaps willingly thanks to the similarity between the letters 'e' and 'c') the 'e' in 'Se' and then *forgot* to join together the second and third letters [e–c] with a dash" (my italics).[44] Modigliani goes on to tell us that "uolto" and "Che" (in verses 10 e 11) are added by the same hand over erasures.[45]

But the true story is slightly different. The ink and the hand that produce "uolto", that is Petrarca's, is different from the hand that transcribes the "E" and "Che". In fact, the "E", the "C", and the "h" are not Petrarca's handwriting; the right-ascending flourish typical of the finish of Petrarca's "e", to the right of "Che", appears only outside the space of the erasure. Moreover, rather amazingly, every manuscript and edition I have examined before Modigliani and Contini, have the same reading: "Se cio" and not "Eecio" or a conjecturally corrected "Eccio".[46] So what really happened? Has there been a conspiracy to impose this tortured and unusual syntactic reading on Petrarca ("E·cciò" = "Se ciò")? The materials (and not Wilkinsian conjecture) tell us that in 1472, almost one hundred years after Petrarca's death, the manuscript probably still read "Se cio". And when Bembo consulted it for his 1501 edition, based in truth on two other manuscripts from

[43] Given that this sonnet was rubricated with a blue initial "G", we can presume that Petrarca inserted the poem in his own hand before the quires' departure for the Milanese illuminator, who executes the miniatures in 1369 (see Zamponi 2004, 32 and Avril 1990).

[44] "Il Petrarca volle mutare un 'Se cio' in 'Eccio', ma lasciò intatta (forse volutamente, per la somiglianza della 'e' con la 'c') la 'e' di 'Se' e dimenticò di congiungere la seconda e la terza lettera con un tratto d'unione" (Modigliani 1904, *ad loc*.).

[45] Modigliani 1904, *ad loc*.

[46] This includes codices from the early MSS Vat. Lat. 3196, Laurenziano XLI 15, Laurenziano XLI 17, and Laurenziano Segniano 1 to Valdezoco's 1472 edition, Bembo's 1501 Aldine edition and later *descripti* (see also Beinecke MS 706, whose readings seem to come from a 1393 Veronese exemplar, described and discussed in Dario Del Puppo's essay in this volume).

which Bembo prepares his copy-text, Vatino Latino 3197, the common reading that Bembo preferred was "Se cio". After Bembo's acquisition of the manuscript and its subsequent transfer to the Vatican Library, it was mostly forgotten until the late nineteenth century. But an analysis of the ink and the hand under ultraviolet light suggest that the change occurred sometime in the late fifteenth century, when a reader, possibly trying to improve the clarity of the letters (something that happens throughout the manuscript), erased the "Che" (but not the final flourish of Petrarca's "e") and accidently erased the lower portion of the "S" of "Se". In his best late medieval hand, the reader replaces the "Che", but makes an "E" out of the remnants of Petrarca's "S". Curiously, Contini—who, as I have demonstrated, consulted Modigliani rather than the original manuscript—does not explain the unusual syntactic form, but glosses its meaning with the original "se cio".[47]

Just as Petrarca's erasures and later interventions are often microscopic, so too might we presume the effect to be of ignoring them. Not so. The implications of vital but missing editorial operations range from the micro- to the macroscopic, in terms of our understanding of Petrarca's text. Let us begin by remembering two distinct moments in the textual editing of Italian literary works. The first is Michele Barbi's reminder in the late nineteenth century (1897) that Italians should rededicate their energies to the editing of the works of Dante.[48] It was, of course, a nationalist call to reinvigorate editorial rigor when the tenets of Lachmannian stemmatics were in crisis in Italy. The second is Guglielmo Gorni's recent concern about the acceptance and the integration of the sometimes challenging results of De Robertis's new critical edition of Dante's *Rime* in future editions and critical work both abroad—that is beyond the borders of Italy—and among those who look upon philology as a world unto itself.[49] Of course, De Robertis's edition performs a vital philological function by stimulating debate about its editorial decisions; and it is precisely from abroad that some of the most ardent debate has

[47] Cf. Fenzi 1993, 308 ("E ·cciò non fusse"); Dotti 1996, 2: 512 ("E ·cciò non fusse"); Santagata 1996, 790 ("E ·cciò non fusse").

[48] Barbi 1893. Though Barbi's essay originally appeared in 1893, it is today much more accessible in the first series of his collected studies of problems in Dantean criticism (Barbi 1934).

[49] Gorni 2002, 597: "E se, per le difficoltà che comporta, non rischi di essere mal recepito, specie all'estero e presso chi guarda alla filologia come un mondo a sé".

taken place,[50] reminding us that perhaps Gorni's fears are misplaced: in the case, for example, of Italian editions of Petrarca's *Fragmenta*, conjecture has for years held sway over philological observation. Our microscopic example of Contini's conjecture based on Modigliani's conjecture and misinterpretation, both of which have intervened in the codex, demonstrates that Modigliani's 1904 diplomatic edition of Petrarca's *Fragmenta* contributed to a national editorial tradition of a *vulgata*, if not a virtual *textus receptus*.

I pause for a moment on Bettarini's discussion of the incipit of verse 5 of *Geri, quando talor meco s'adira* in her *Introduzione* (2005, 1:xxxiv), in which she explains her emendation ("Et ciò non fusse") to Contini (1964: "E·cciò non fusse"), following Santagata (2004 and not 1996). I quote the note in its entirety:

> CLXXIX 9, *E·cciò non fusse*] *Et ciò non fusse*—in questo luogo Petrarca di sua mano corregge la precedente lezione *Se cio*, già attestata negli scartafacci, talché nel manoscritto in questo punto autografo si legge *Ee cio no(n)*; Contini adotta il suggerimento di Modigliani: "La *E* iniziale, di cui la parte superiore è formata di ciò che resta di una *S* rasa inferiormente, è con inchiostro piú scuro su rasura. Il P. volle mutare *Se cio* in *Eccio*, ma lasciò intatta (forse volutamente per la somiglianza della e con la *c*) la *e* di *Se* e dimenticò di congiugnere la seconda e la terza lettera con un tratto d'unione". Per la rarità nel Libro del raddoppiamento fonosintattico, è piú probabile che l'autore abbia omesso di correggere *Ee* cosí ottenuto in *Et* (suggerimento di Livio Petrucci già adottato da Santagata) o di eradere la seconda *e*.

Within Bettarini's note there is a web of information built upon authority after authority (Contini, Modigliani, Petrucci, Santagata) to arrive at a new, conjectured reading worthy of Wilkins ("è piú probabile che"):[51] "Et ciò", rather than "Se ciò". Yet the only information that is the product of a direct examination of the materials are: a) the attestation of *Geri, quando talor meco s'adira* in Vat. Lat. 3196 (the "scartafacci") and b) Modigliani's description of the initial "E", in a darker ink, whose lower loop is actually what remains of an erased "S". All the rest, from Modigliani to Santagata, is conjecture: "P[etrarca] *wanted* to change", "[Petrarca] *forgot* to connect the second and third letters", "it is *more*

[50] See Barolini 2004. It is worth noting that the American scholar Teodolinda Barolini adopts De Robertis's edition of the *Rime* (2002)—for the text, but not for the order—for her own forthcoming commentary to Dante's *Rime* (Rizzoli).

[51] See Del Puppo and Storey's (2003) analyses of probability in Wilkins' method.

probable that [Petrarca] *omitted* correcting 'Ee', thus 'Et', [...] *or erasing* the second 'e'" (my emphasis). Unfortunately, we cannot identify as Petrarca's the hand that erases and rewrites the "E", and later the "Che", let alone imagine what Petrarca would have forgotten, or wanted but did not execute. In 1996, following Contini, Santagata read: "E·cciò", which means that Bettarini consulted Santagata's revised edition of 2004 ("Et ciò"), the year in which corrections of Modigliani's readings were offered—probably too late for consultation—in Belloni, Brugnolo, Storey, and Zamponi 2004.[52] We need not rely here necessarily on the phonosyntactic tendencies of the *Fragmenta*, particularly problematic for internal variations often standardized in modern editions, to determine the reliable reading of the beginning of verse 9. Though tampered with by later hands, the legitimate *lectio* is the one we find in MS Vat. Lat. 3196, "under the erasure" of verse 9 in MS Vat. Lat. 3195, and throughout the traditions of the manuscript and early printed editions of the *Fragmenta*: "Se ciò".

The distinction between "Et ciò"/"Se ciò", and certainly my cautious focus on the original's erasure, will mean little to general readers of Petrarca's *Canzoniere* and perhaps even to some scholars who simply want a reliable text of the *Fragmenta* with which to work. The distinction will not change our reading of the work, but it does speak volumes about the difference between the production of a commentary and textual editing, especially within the context of the national traditions of literary icons such as the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. We might pose the following question: Is philological method based on the paleographic and codicological observation of the witnesses a fundamental part of editing canonical works in a national tradition?

Iudicium is, of course, one of the most important tools at the philologist's and the editor's disposal, but the tool is earned among the manuscript witnesses, direct contact with the witnesses. Received critical tradition, even in its most innovative moments of conjecture and theory, still needs to be tested against the material facts of the witnesses. The troubling part of the partial erasure of the "S" of "Se cio" is not that we cannot easily retrieve it as the legitimate reading. We now have the tools to be able to see better what, for example, Modigliani could not see at all in 1904. Rather, the risk is in the burial of that reading under layers of conjectures that become more authoritative than the primary

[52] See Storey 2004b, especially the "Minimalia".

documents, not to mention the cautious studies, we still have at our disposal. MS Vat. Lat. 3195 is one of the most unique "worksites" in the history of western literature, a rich source of information about the creative process. That it has distantly spawned new creative processes, critical and artistic, should not surprise us. However, that critical process should not necessarily guide us in editing its results. I cannot prove or disprove what Petrarca wanted or forgot to do, nor—to be crystilline on this point—is this kind of conjecture methodologically sound enough to enter a diplomatic or a critical edition. There are times in a text when we have to dig deep below the erasure to discover uncertainty itself and then, perhaps uncomfortably, report it to readers who will eventually have the tools to read it better.

The macroscopic implications of that partially-erased "S" are more disturbing. Because of the same editorial method, we still read the *Fragmenta* in its essentially fifteenth- if not sixteenth-century editorial format, mostly because Petrarca's systematic mise en page for the five genres was deemed overly complicated by medieval copyists of the early fifteenth century, causing no small amount of confusion for scribes even as attentive as the amanuesis of Laurenziano Segniano 1.[53] Modern readers have, of course, grown up on editorial presentations of the *Fragmenta* that we could divide into two categories with ancient origins: a) Bembo's uncluttered format for text after text without intervening commentary, or b) Vellutello's commentary edition in which the critic's prose seems to consume the page, often isolating individual strophes of canzoni from its poetic context.[54] Nevertheless, Petrarca's visual

[53] For the treatment of the mise en page of Petrarca's *Fragmenta* by copyists from Boccaccio (Vat., Chigiano L V 176), the scribes of codices such as Riccardiano 1088, Morgan M. 502, Laurenziano Segniano 1, and Laurenziano XLI 17, to Petrarca and Malpaghini (and relevant bibliography), see Brugnolo 2004 and Storey 2004a and 2006b. The copyist of MS Laurenziano Segniano 1 is so rigorous in his application of the mise en page that he fails to change it to accommodate Petrarca's layout for the sestina, transcribing them in a horizontal, two-verse-per-line format.

[54] What Gorni describes as the "visual" and interpretative problem of the relationship between critical prose and poetry in the case of De Robertis 2002 ("Vedere le poesie di Dante continuamente interrotte da prose pratiche di giustificazione [...] è faticoso e sconsolante" [2002, 597]) can be applied to most modern commentary editions of Petrarca's *Fragmenta*. Few are those editions which opt even for Bembo's model of textual presentation. The tradition dates back at least to the 1507 Peranzone edition, in which the mise en page of the verses of the individual poems and stanzas of canzoni of the *Fragmenta* (either one verse or two verses per line) is literally dictated by the spacing of Francesco Filelfo's, Girolamo Squarciafico's, and Antonio da Tempo's commentaries which surround the poetry. See also Peranzone 1503, published in Venice by Albertino da Lissona Vercellese.

poetics is very real in a "functionality" that is locked into Vat. Lat. 3195 and repeated in a number of late fourteenth-and early fifteenth-century manuscripts, such as Morgan M. 502, Laurenziano XLI 10, and even—surprisingly—Laurenziano Segniano 1. Early Renaissance editorial practice erased that entire system of Petrarchan poetics, an erasure editors continue to ignore today.

There are levels of erasure in Vat. Lat. 3195 that are so microscopic that today it seems impossible that we will ever be able to trace their origins, for example erasures both by penknife and expunction points under individual letters to correct prosody. Many of these instances were identified by Modigliani and additional cases located in the recent *Commentario* of 2004.[55] We know that Petrarca reviewed his texts for the soundness of his hendecasyllables and *settenari*. But the continuing presence of hyper-syllabic verses in the codex along with additional inks used to register possibly later corrections of Petrarca's prosody recommend caution in accepting all punctuation that appears in the codex.[56] It is also clear in the codex that some syntactic punctuation has been partially erased (by Malpaghini? Petrarca?) or has been damaged over the years.[57] Some erasures have proved to be faulty in terms of a reliable *lectio*, as in the case raised by Belloni of "iscolpirio" in *Rvf* 50, verse 66 (*Ne la stagion che 'l rapido inchina*, c. 11*v*),[58] while others, such as the paragraph markers of *Rvf* 63 (*Volgendo gli occhi*, c. 14*r*) or—still more important—Petrarca's possible but inconsistent distinction of the first tercet of his sonnets, remain a matter of controversy.[59] To make matters perhaps worse or perhaps better, later fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century manuscripts still preserve what sometimes seem to be authorially-scanctioned punctuation (syntactic, prosodic, and editorial)

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[55] With the aid of ultraviolet light Storey (2004b) distinguishes virtually transparent erasures, especially on the hair side of the parchment where erasures were for Modigliani 1904—and still are—more difficult to trace.

[56] See Belloni 2004, 102–3 (Tavola 1) for a list of the remaining hyper-syllabic verses.

[57] We should keep in mind that there are three categories of punctuation in the codex: a) syntactic, for marking syntactic pauses, b) prosodic, for marking—above, below, and within the verses, and in the margins—prosodic features including issues of scansion and voicing (see, for example, Capovilla 1989 for a partial description of just one aspect of this kind of punctuation), and c) editorial, for marking scribal solutions (including indications for erasure, Petrarca's marginal numbers for reordering *Rvf* 337–366, and line-fillers). Often two or three of these levels of punctuation converge. Cf. Storey 2004a, 138–52.

[58] Belloni 2004, 103.

[59] See Belloni 2004, 103, and Storey 2004a, 140 and 158–59.

now missing, altered, or unclear in MS Vat. Lat. 3195. Going against the rules of authorial editions, my own diplomatic-interpretative edition of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, still in preparation, turns in some cases to these codices for their solutions to editorial problems that simply cannot be solved solely with the data supplied by the holograph.[60]

When we return to Basbanes' question about "first containers" (do they have relevance in and of themselves or are they the information they contain?), we see that the case of Petrarca's autograph of the *Fragmenta* almost embodies the question itself, leading us to wonder if this unique work can exist outside its container so highly structured by the mise en page and the other microscopic mechanisms that hold it together. But of course it can and does exist in additional fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century copies that attempt to replicate to varying degrees of imperfection—logically from, as we have seen, the imperfect copy that is the author's own service copy—those structures, systems, and unique features that define the *Fragmenta*. Thus Basbanes' question certainly holds. However, we should always keep in mind that, as in other medieval manuscripts, the diverse strata of interventions in Petrarca's unbound copy of his *Fragmenta* (by Petrarca, Malpaghini and subsequent hands) reveal texts that do not necessarily represent Petrarca's definitive or even perhaps his final product—despite our wanting the autograph to be the final word. That most important shift from fair to service copy, as well as that ruled but unused bifolium (cc. 50–51), should suggest to us a caution in our assessments of "definitive interpretative structures", "likely histories", and "conjectures based on probability" for this work, whose original poetic document clearly tells us that when Petrarca went to bed the night before his death, between July 18 and the morning of July 19, 1374, it was still under construction: open to revision, open to reordering, open to erasure.

[60] In fact, the editing of the *Fragmenta* demonstrates the methodological deficiencies of the practice of limiting "edizioni d'autore", editions based on authorial copies, to autograph materials. In a still unpublished essay of 2005 presented at the biennial conference of the Society for Textual Scholarship in New York ("Bridging Methods"), I proposed a merging of methodological criteria to be able to restore readings damaged or suspiciously altered in holographs.

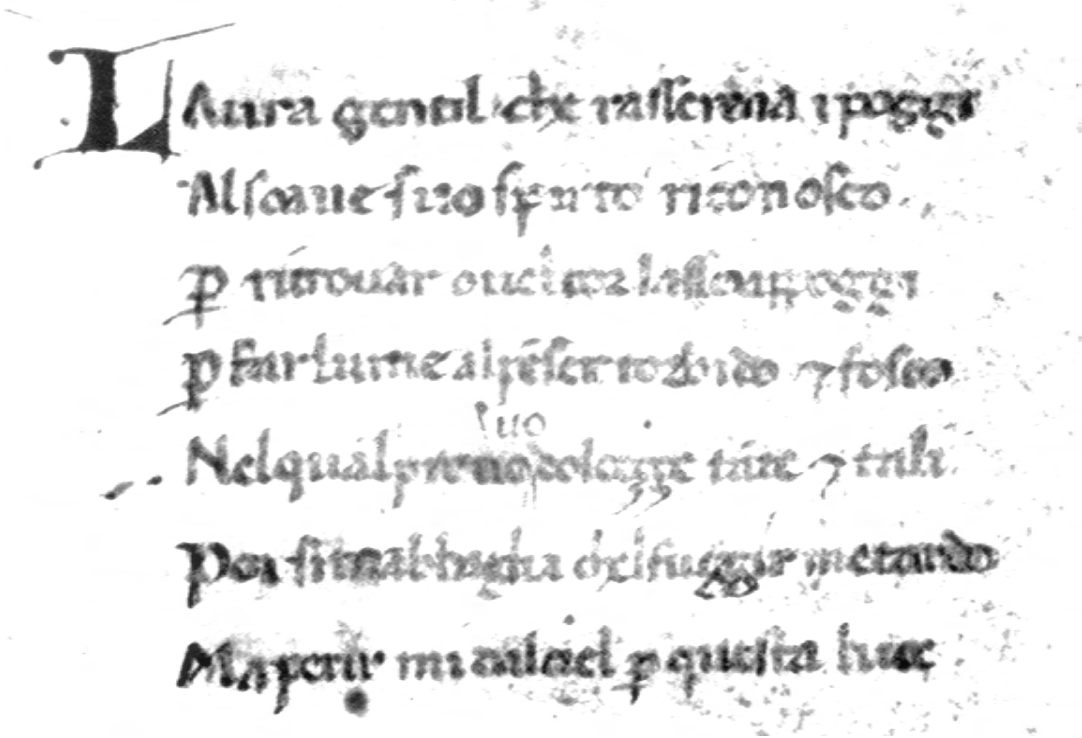

FIGURE 1: Vatican Library, Latino 3195, c. 39*r* (first of four sonnets, detail of vv. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 [over erasure]). Reprinted by kind permission of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

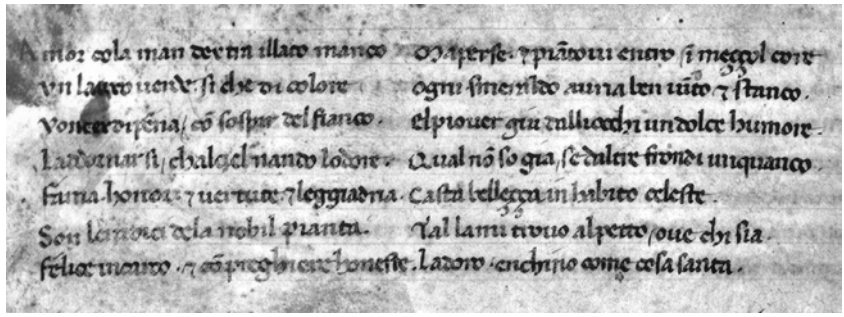

FIGURE 2: Vatican Library, Latino 3195, c. 44*v* (sonnet one of four). Reprinted by kind permission of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

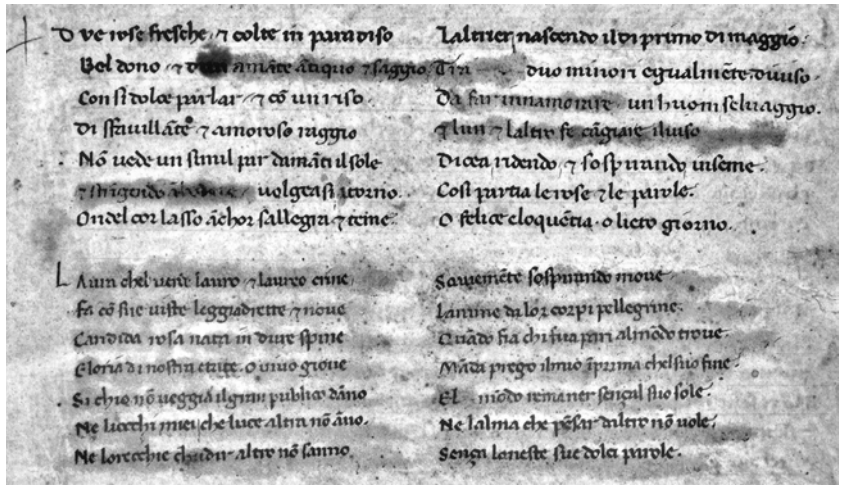

FIGURE 3: Vatican Library, Latino 3195, c. 47*r* (second and third sonnets of four). Reprinted by kind permission of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

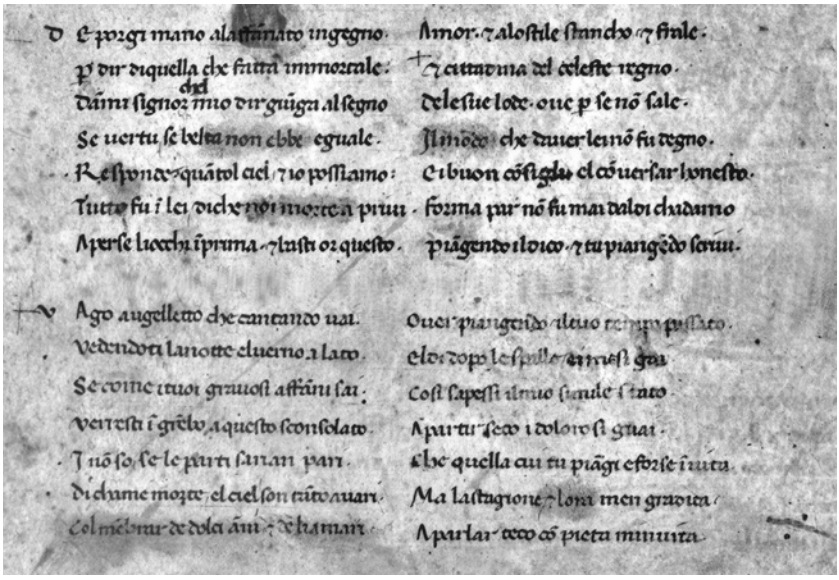

FIGURE 4: Vatican Library, Latino 3195, c. 71*r* (third and fourth sonnets of four). Reprinted by kind permission of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

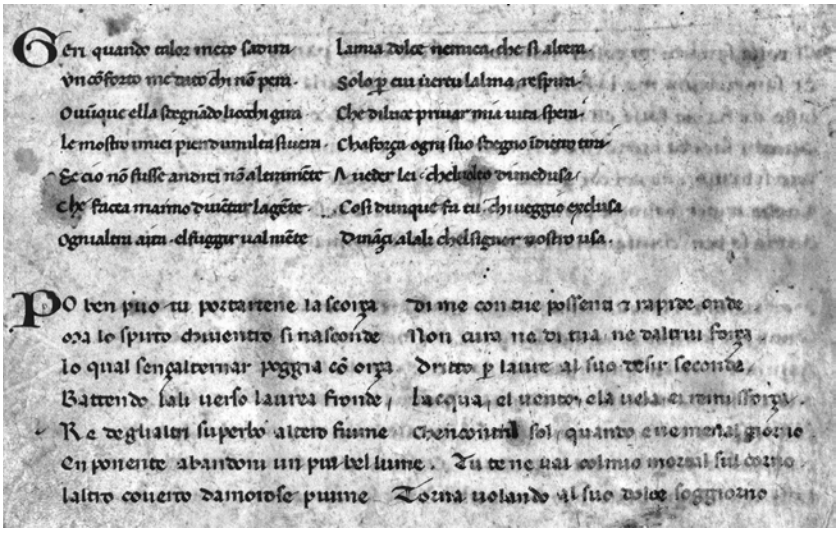

FIGURE 5: Vatican Library, Latino 3195, c. 37*r* (second [Petrarca] and third [Malpaghini] sonnets of four). Reprinted by kind permission of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

CHAPTER FOUR

SHAPING INTERPRETATION: SCRIBAL PRACTICES AND BOOK FORMATS IN THREE 'DESCRIPTI' MANUSCRIPTS OF PETRARCA'S VERNACULAR POEMS

Dario Del Puppo

This paper is seemingly at the margins of studies about Francesco Petrarca's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Fragmenta* [*Rvf*]) because it is not a study of his partial holograph manuscript, Vaticano Latino 3195,[1] nor of the complete autograph of the *abbozzi* or draft poems contained in manuscript Vaticano Latino 3196. It is also not a literary critical interpretation about his lyrics, although it inevitably takes into consideration the authorial sources as well as the views held by readers in the period shortly after the poet's death. This paper, instead, deals with a neglected dimension of Petrarca's critical *fortuna* or legacy, the creative transmission of his texts. It is also a reflection on the interrelation between texts (be they literary or non-literary) and the material documents that contain them.[2]

As my title suggests I wish to discuss three different manuscripts of his verse from the Quattrocento. All three are preserved in the Beinecke manuscript and rare book collection at Yale University: MS Marston 99, which contains the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and part of his *Triumphi*; MS 222 (a composite manuscript) containing an anthology in which

[1] There are many reputable and historically important editions of Petrarca's *Canzoniere*. The most recent is the groundbreaking facsimile edition of Gino Belloni, Furio Brugnolo, H. Wayne Storey, and Stefano Zamponi, *Francesco Petrarca, "Rerum vulgarium fragmenta": Facsimile del codice autografo Vaticano Latino 3195* (vol. 1 = 2003) and the comprehensive *Commentario* (vol. 2 = Belloni, Brugnolo, Storey, and Zamponi 2004) that considers the philological, codicological, and paleographical evidence.

[2] In this paper, I use many terms, especially adjectives, that readers are likely to find problematic. Words like "reliable", "unreliable", "authentic", and "important" are subjectively loaded and my intention is not to pass them off as objective descriptors. Like other contemporary critics, I too harbor skepticism about the philological method and the difficulties in establishing texts that are accurate to an original. My use of traditional vocabulary does however reflect the belief that literary scholars must test the limits of what is historically accurate and possible.

there are two of Petrarca's canzoni; and, finally, MS 706, which contains a section of his poem the *Africa*, the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, and the *Triumphi*.[3] Why these manuscripts? In terms of content, script, and codicological features, they are sufficiently different from one another and, therefore, represent different typologies of manuscripts containing his vernacular poems.

We are indeed very fortunate to possess the author's copy and a draft manuscript (Vat. Lat. 3196) of an important literary work and the hundreds of scribal copies that still survive from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Not only do Petrarca's manuscripts offer us insight into the author's "meanings", but together with scribal copies, they constitute a laboratory of samples for understanding the way texts circulated and the author's capillary *fortuna*. Even leaving aside prestigious copies owned by other writers and dignitaries, each "unimportant" copy (that is, unimportant for the purpose of constructing the work's *stemma codicum*) is a testament, good or bad, authoritative or unauthoritative, complete or partial, of what literate individuals interested in Petrarca's poetry thought about the *Rvf*. With manuscripts Vat. Lat. 3195 and 3196 we have all of the textual critical data we need in order to edit the *Fragmenta*. But without all of the manuscripts of his poems that were transcribed during the fifteenth century, for example, we would never truly appreciate Petrarca's legacy for Italian and European letters.

As the author and copyist of many works, Petrarca challenges readers with his pragmatics of writing and, of course, with his thematic and stylistic innovations. His publication strategies assume a profound understanding of the dynamics of literary production, circulation, and consumption and compel us to consider what we can refer to as his strategic interaction with readers. Petrarca's pessimism and ambivalence toward his own age and his contempt for inept scribes are well documented.[4] The poet's projection of his own persona into a future time and space in the famous epistle to posterity (*Seniles* XV 15), as if

[3] For descriptions of Marston 99 and MS 222, see Dutschke 1986, 178–179, 200–5, and for MS 706, see Dutschke 2004, 6–10.

[4] See *Familiares* XVIII 12 in Rossi 1933–42, 3:295–97. Witness Petrarca's attention—most notably—to the writing, transcription, and circulation of the letters that comprise the 24 books of the *Familiares* and the 18 books of the *Seniles*. The *Familiares* are translated in their entirety into English in Bernardo 1975–1985. For the *Seniles*, in spite of modern abridged versions and partial translations into Italian and English, it is worth citing the only complete Latin text of 1554 (Petrarca 1554) and its recent reprint in 1965.

his current age were unworthy or unprepared to understand his greatness, is an attempt to shape the future, in particular, how he will be remembered by future historians. The reasons for this psychological disposition are many and complex and are not purely literary. Crafting a grand narrative of the Self requires first and foremost attention to the details about how that narrative will be perpetuated and interpreted. Communication networks in the age of the handwritten book relied less on mechanization than does print culture, but codices were not any less complex. Because of the subjectivity inherent to scribal transcription, guaranteeing the integrity and authenticity of any text was a challenge. And Petrarca understood this. He was obsessed with the form in which his *Fragmenta* and other literary works circulated during his lifetime *and* even with their fate after his death.[5]

The Quattrocento descriptive codices of the *Fragmenta* and *Triumphi* reflect more the book market during that period than they do the author's transcriptional strategies. Although structurally and thematically different works, they were frequently paired together in manuscripts. The *Triumphi* deal with mythological motifs and classical culture and seems to have been a Medieval and Renaissance bestseller of sorts, and it quite possibly enhanced the reproduction of copies of the *Fragmenta*. Written in the vernacular, the *Triumphi* made classical culture accessible to non-Latinists in an age when classical art and thought were in vogue. One can imagine fifteenth-century Florentine merchants wanting their own copies of both works, especially of the *Triumphi* with all of its references to Roman pageantry and grandeur. The many illustrated copies of the work are testimony to its popularity among elite and wealthy readers. The *Triumphi*'s editorial success continued throughout the century and was encouraged by printing, although its literary critical *fortuna* after the Renaissance is more modest by comparison to the lyric poems. It is worth asking in any case whether or not the *Triumphi* was an important vehicle for the circulation of the poet's love lyrics.[6]

In alluding to manuscripts of the Quattrocento, I anachronistically adopted the word "book market", a concept we more typically associate with bestsellers, Internet outlets, and chain bookstores. Although

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[5] In Chapter 9 of his monumental study, Ernest Hatch Wilkins (1951a) describes the poet's life-long revisions of the *Fragmenta*. For an appreciation and critique of Wilkins' theses and approach, see Del Puppo and Storey 2003, which also includes bibliography about the different forms of the *Fragmenta*, and Storey 1993, and Barolini in this volume.

[6] See Del Puppo 1999 and Guerrini 1986.

a flourishing book trade had existed since the Middle Ages in major commercial centers, it was not as centralized and homogeneous a phenomenon as we might believe. There was a wide range of urban bookmaking and bookselling experiences, especially in university towns, from personal unadorned copies to deluxe manuscripts copied for elite collectors. The practice of serial book production epitomized in the *pecia* system used to reproduce legal, theological, philosophical, and scientific tracts in academic environments meant that scribes became proficient at copying technical works. As a poet who was very knowledgeable and concerned with transcription, this trend among scribes would have made Petrarca more than a little nervous because copying and formatting technical literature was different from copying and formatting poetry, in which the graphic layout of poems is itself a purveyor of textual meaning. Whatever Petrarca's own criticisms about the deficiencies of scribes, there was a brisk trade in copies of the *Fragmenta* and the *Triumphi* that were made essentially "on spec", that is according to the desires of the person commissioning the codex. Cheap paper codices of both works were available at the shops of stationers like that of Gherardo e Monte di Giovanni in 1476.[7] Yet we also know that even during the spread of printing in the second-half of the fifteenth-century, the literate frequently transcribed their own copies of texts. The *vulgo* Petrarca criticizes in his inaugural poem of the *Fragmenta*, *Voi ch'ascoltate in rime sparse il suono*, refers to his listeners and readers and also to the scribes *qua* readers who copied his poems.[8]

What is a "descriptus" manuscript?

A couple of methodological observations about descriptive manuscripts are in order before discussing specific codices of the *Fragmenta*. In her magisterial handbook on textual editing, Franca Brambilla Ageno states that "Dall'utilizzazione per la ricostruzione del testo vanno esclusi

[7] Martini (1956, 48) indicates that a modest paper copy of the *Triumphi* during the second half of the fifteenth century cost only 15 *soldi*, a trifle by comparison to books commissioned for prelates of the cathedral, Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence.

[8] "Ma ben veggio or sí come al popol tutto / favola fui gran tempo" (vv. 9–10 [Bettarini 2005, I: 5]). The negative import of "popol" in formulations such as "popolo infelice d'oriente" (*Rvf* 28, 98) and "popol senza legge" (*Rvf* 128, 43) recall Petrarca's disapproving use of "vulgo" as well ("pregiato poi dal vulgo avaro et sciocco" [*Rvf* 51, 11], "e 'l vulgo a me nemico et odioso" [*Rvf* 234, 12]).

i testimoni (*codices descripti*) che sono copia di testimoni conservati".[9] The exception, of course, is of a late copy of a work that preserves an authentic reading or that fills a textual lacuna in the original. The typical scenario is that if manuscript B contains all of the "errors" of manuscript A and an error of its own, then it can be shown that B is derivative of A and can be eliminated from the *recensio* or list of authoritative manuscripts that make up the *stemma* or genealogical tree.[10] Brambilla Ageno's objective is to state as clearly as possible guidelines for editing authorial texts. She also advises editors to use as much caution in declaring a manuscript *descriptus* as in affirming an authorial autograph. In the Lachmannian method, the aim is to produce a text that is as close to the original as possible. This mechanistic approach to editing is necessarily pragmatic and has little regard for *codices descripti*. And therein lies the problem. I have stated the sociological importance of later copies of the *Fragmenta*, as evidence of the poet's capillary *fortuna*. Scholars today are challenging basic assumptions about the textual stability of Petrarca's original. The evolving character of the poet's text should instill a healthy skepticism about scribal copies, as well.

Are late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century transcriptions of the *Fragmenta* merely "copies" or are they different versions caused by the textual instability that was probably inherent in copies of the poems that circulated, even as the poet was revising his own fair copy of the text? (As it turns out, because of Petrarca's constant revisions, his fair copy must be considered a "service" copy.) Rather than debating the merits of editorial or scribal versioning, my point is simply to state that the category of *codex descriptus* includes Brambilla Ageno's straightforward definition; but it is also a scribal original or version and, in some instances (such as in one of the codices I will discuss), it describes more than the poet's reception, whatever its value as a contributor to the *lectiones* that determine the *stemma codicum*. Lachmannian stemmatics seeks to discard "descriptive codices", whereas book historians, codicologists, and scholars of material culture pluck them from the dustbin.

The theory and practice in textual criticism has been until recently, and with good reason, to emphasize authoritative and authorial manuscripts as establishing "definitive" texts meant to construct the literary

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[9] Brambilla Ageno 1984, 94 ("The manuscripts [*codices descripti*] that are copies of other extant manuscripts must be excluded in the reconstruction of the authorial text").

[10] Brambilla Ageno 1984, 95.

canon that contributed to the creation of national culture and identity. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century philologists with nationalistic interests therefore were concerned primarily with authorship and with establishing the *Ur*-text. But there has been a gradual shift in focus among literary scholars and historians that mirrors the evolution of other disciplines in the humanities, from an emphasis on author-centered texts as the product of a single author to the transcription, circulation, and re-interpretation of texts in the complex chain of cause and effect. The process of "decentralization" (from the authorial to the received text) is indirectly the subject of this paper, as well.[11] Suffice it to say in this context that how a literary text ultimately comes down to us is as important as the original creation of the text, particularly in those instances in which the author's original is no longer extant.

Yet, I do not wish to stress the importance of studying "descriptive" copies of works at the expense of authorial manuscripts and close copies of the earliest extant manuscript of a literary text. Descriptive codices of an author's work are helpful in reconstructing the development of the understanding of the work among generations of scribes *qua* readers. A mid-to-late fifteenth-century copy of a fourteenth-century text whose readings are generally less reliable or authoritative may nevertheless have an authorial variant and, thus, help the editor to emend the authorial text. The Italian classical philologist, Giorgio Pasquali, referred to this methodological practice as "recentiores non deteriores", that is, later manuscripts can preserve authentic readings.[12] In such cases, the descriptive codex ceases to be "descriptive". Or is it? What is the status of a such a manuscript whose textual readings are helpful in reconstructing the author's original, but whose graphic and transcriptional format is different? Conversely, what is the status of a codex that is textually unreliable but accurately reproduces the layout of the text and other graphic features? We call such manuscripts scribal copies. But scribal copies of a text frequently differ widely among themselves. When scholars speak about a manuscript being a copy of another they usually invoke one aspect of the relationship,

[11] The "New Philology" has certainly promoted the shift in focus from author-centered to non-author-centered texts. There is much interesting work being done by manuscript scholars who are examining the theory and practice of editing medieval texts along the lines being proposed in this paper, i.e., examining texts and their immediate context, the documents that contain them. See, for example, the interesting case studies in Echard and Partridge 2004.

[12] Pasquali 1962 [1952].

whether or not the copy's *lectio* is more or less an accurate reproduction of its model text. It does not take into account the scribe's attitude toward the model and what a contemporary reader of the manuscript understands, both of which are conditioned by material and graphic aspects of transcription. Each scribal copy is, therefore, an "original" even when it is textually similar to the author's version. The majority of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italian poetry has come down to us in anthologies that were produced by scribes. Indeed, they are complex literary and cultural artifacts because the same manuscript may be thought to have a reliable reading of the poems of one author, but not that of another author included in the compilation.

In his paean to the manuscript book of the late Middle Ages, Ezio Ornato states that with the waning of monastic book production and of that system's limited circulation, the book that is copied, bought, and sold has both a *use* and an *exchange* value, thereby enabling scribes and readers (*qua* book owners) to fashion an interpretation of a work which is not necessarily the author's.[13] As the literacy rate rose in the late Middle Ages, so did the absolute numbers of books that circulated. By comparison to ancient and early medieval manuscripts, there is a seemingly inexhaustible supply of manuscripts from the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries. And with the advent of printing in the mid-fifteenth century those numbers increased exponentially. This widespread production and circulation of multiple copies of manuscripts and printed books promoted literature and other genres as consumer goods. From the differences between manuscript versions of a work literary historians learn much about readership and about the development of the literary canon. It is with this last consideration in mind that we now turn to interpreting the interface between text and document in three manuscripts of Petrarca's *Fragmenta*.[14]

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[13] Ornato 2000, 13.

[14] The importance of studying scribal copies that are not integral to the reconstruction of an authorial or "more authentic" text cannot be understated. Research in manuscript studies tends to focus on codices that have a philological and literary pedigree. Given the objectives of critical editing this makes sense. And although the theory and practice of editing and literary criticism have been informed by postmodern theory, the emphasis in manuscript studies is on "important" sources of a literary or historical work. Even the present paper, which makes the case for studying "descripti" as complex cultural artifacts in their own right, does so in relation to another manuscript that is more authoritative, Petrarca's partially autograph service copy. Examining a "good" or "bad" transcription in relation to its more authentic and authoritative text (such as I am doing with respect to Vat. Lat. 3195) is perhaps methodologically inevitable, that

MS Marston 99: Le Rime di Messer Francesco Petrarca

The frontispiece of the codex Marston 99 bears the unassuming title *Le Rime/di/Messer Francesco Petrarca*.[15] The book measures 215 mm × 145 mm and consists of 142 paper leaves, or chartae. The ancient, but not necessarily original, numbering is in the upper right hand corner in the same color of ink as the text, whereas the modern numbering to which we will refer is written in pencil in the lower right hand corner of each recto. There are several blank leaves toward the end of the document. The quire structure varies throughout, although the sesternian (a quire of six folded folios, or six bifolia) is the most prevalent basic unit of the book. Almost all the quires have catchwords, which are written horizontally in the middle of the bottom margin with simple pen flourishes for decoration. The light pencil rulings are functional and often barely visible. The most notable decorative feature of the manuscript is the six-line tall initial "V" of "Voi ch'ascoltate", with its pen drawing of the poet, viewed in three-quarter profile seated behind his desk (Figure 1; c. 1*v*). Surrounding the "spine" of the Lombard capital is a vine motif and, more interestingly, the bowl of the "V" is circumscribed by a dragon-like figure. There is a pretense of decorum, but certainly not of deluxe decoration, as the drawing is rapidly, but expertly executed. Throughout the manuscript there are spaces left unfilled for initials although guide letters are frequently evident. As Barbara Shailor's catalogue notes, the manuscript has been written "by multiple scribes in various scripts, ranging from *cancelleresca* to gothic bookhand".[16] The book is written primarily in a *gotica cursiva* that tends

is, it is in the nature of manuscript and historical studies because they are teleologically motivated. Nonetheless, it is one thing to study a manuscript because of its relation to a prestigious model; it is quite another to study the same manuscript because of its own status as a document about literary taste (in the case of literary manuscripts) and about transcription, reading, and circulation. Just as there has been a shift in focus from authorial to non-authorial texts and skepticism directed toward the literary canon is now the norm, there needs to be greater emphasis in manuscript studies on those texts and documents (especially of anthologies, miscellanies, and the process of anthologization in general) that have been considered genealogically unimportant.

[15] For a full description of the codex, see Shailor 1984, 191–93 (*Marston Manuscripts*), and Dutschke 1986, 178–79, 200–5, as well as Dutschke 2004, 6–10. All three manuscripts, Marston 99, MS 222, and MS 706 can be consulted as digital images at the Beinecke Library's website: http://www.library.yale.edu/beinecke.

[16] Shailor 1984, 192.

toward the *libraria*.[17] The back spine of the manuscript informs us that the book is from "circa 1400". Indeed, the language and material features strongly suggest that the book was produced in northeastern Italy in the first quarter of the Quattrocento. Watermarks are of little help, although they do not dispel the general dating.

The scribes make several changes to the ordering of the poems with respect to the modern edited versions of the *Fragmenta*.[18] The omissions and interpolations in the canzoni *Gentil mia donna, i' veggio* and *Poi che per mio destino* (*Rvf* 72 and 73 on cc. 32*r*–35*r*) are significant errors, the kind that indicate the scribe's difficulty in interpreting the text and the format of his model or, indeed, an error originating in the exemplar. The scribe suspends his transcription of *Gentil mia donna* at line 38 near the middle of 32*v* and he, or someone else (a corrector perhaps), jots "*lassa*" in the margin where the text leaves off. In FIGURE 2 we see that the scribe picks up his pen and copies on c. 32*v* verse 16, "Nel cominciar credia", a settenario that introduces the second stanza of the canzone *Poi che per mio destino*, and he continues to transcribe the poem through line 72 on c. 33*v*. He then transcribes vv. 39–78 of *Gentil mia donna* on cc. 33*v* and 34*r*, where we can then pick up our reading of vv. 6–15 of *Poi che per mio destino* and the continuation of the poem (vv. 71–93). Almost certainly, the error in the sequence of the text exists in the exemplar from which the scribe made his copy. He, or a corrector, makes note of this fact. What is perplexing about this error is that it disrupts the flow of the rhyme and meaning of the poems and yet this otherwise competent scribe either ignores his own mistake or chooses to continue his copy in this fashion.

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[17] When not attributed to other scholars, descriptions and judgments of a book's script are based on my application of Derolez's categories (2003).

[18] The order of Petrarca's poems in MS Marston 99, according to the "ancient numbering" (Petrarca's renumbering of poems 337–365 is indicated with an "r" [renumbered] in square brackets) is: 1, 3, 2, 4–23, 27, 25–26, 24 (vv. 1–13), 28–61, 66–67, 62–65, 68–71, 72 (vv. 1–37, [vv. 16–72 of no. 73 interpolated], vv. 38–78), 73 (vv. 1–15, [vv. 16–72 in no. 72], vv. 73–93), 74–79, 81, 82, 80, 83–210, 212–336, 350 [r. 348], 355 [r. 359], 337–349 [r. 350, r. 355, r. 337–r. 347], 356–360 (vv. 1–47) [r. 360–r. 364], 352 (vv. 9–14) [r. 356], 354 [r. 358], 353 [r. 357], 366. 3 chartae wanting = cc. 129, 130 131. This "ancient numbering", to which scholars such as Wilkins (1951a) and Quarta (1937) refer, does not take account of Petrarca's renumbering of the poems contained on cc. 66*v*–71*r* of Vat. Lat. 3195 and today renumbered in modern editions as 337–365. Three chartae (129, 130, and 131) are wanting according to the old numbering of the codex's leaves.

There are, in my opinion, more than three hands at work in this manuscript. And this particular scribe tends to be mindful of the textual errors he makes, making emendations in the interlinear spaces. The formatting of these two canzoni is meaningful in Petrarca's original.[19] One can only imagine the havoc it wreaked on later copies, especially with the transition to the modern formatting of the poem one verse per line. MS Marston 99 might be a scribal aberration; nevertheless it confirms the poet's fear about scribes and the pitfalls of transcription. Another glaring example highlights formatting difficulties. The Marston scribe of the sestina *A qualunque animale* (*Rvf* 22; c. 6*v*) ignores Petrarch's two column/three strophes per column format of the poem and accidentally copies v. 1, followed by v. 19 (the first verse of the fourth stanza); v. 2 followed by v. 20; and so on because he reads across the page rather than down the left-hand and, then, right-hand columns (FIGURE 3).

Philologists look for textual errors or different readings in judging the worthiness of a manuscript. Codicologists, on the other hand, examine material features. And material philologists try to make sense of the interplay between texts and their material formats. When examining an author's original, the latter scholars may elucidate a more authoritative reading by clarifying hitherto invisible variants that help to understand the genesis and development of the *lectio*. By providing information about the material context of the text we learn about the author's transcriptional *usus scribendi* and tendencies. With regards to later, non-authoritative manuscripts, the material philologist is intent on revealing the particular incarnation of a text as a circulating cultural artifact. MS Marston 99 is a "reliable" witness of the problems that beset the transcription of Petrarca's poems during the early fifteenth century.

We would be remiss, however, if we did not point out that this codex also contains subtle but "significant" variants. For example, the beginning of verse 9 of *Rvf* 179 (*Geri, quando talor meco s'adira*) reads "Se ciò non fusse", a more authoritative reading than the ones frequently preferred by modern editors, "E·cciò non fosse".[20] If manuscripts like

[19] According to Storey (1993, 283 and 286), Petrarca not only creates clusters of poems according to thematic and metrical similarities, but also according to metrical variations.

[20] See, for example, Santagata 1996, 790; Fenzi 1993, 308; and Bettarini 2005, 1:829 ("Et ciò non fusse"), but Storey in this volume.

Marston 99 do not help us directly reconstruct the original version, then such variants are nevertheless "descriptive" in a very positive sense; that is, they reveal the scribal process of reading, interpretation, and transcription of an exemplar. According to this view, all "errors" or "variants" are significant because they are textual "facts" which are weighted, but which are not rejected because of their authenticity with regard to the original. At first blush, if all manuscripts are equally worthy of careful analysis, not only would the task of generalizing from the study of different manuscripts of the same work not be possible, it seems that the philologist suspends his critical and historical judgment. Afterall, if all errors are "significant", then the category of significant/insignificant loses its meaning entirely and philology itself is methodologically undermined. But this is a narrow interpretation of the philological method. In practice we frequently make judgments based on the aims of our inquiry or according to a hypothesis. The sum of the textual and documentary "facts" inform scholars about the challenges of copying Petrarca's poems, challenges which he likely envisioned and anticipated.

There are other *loci* in Marston 99 that reveal its "noble" origins through uncertain or still problematic readings in Petrarca's service copy (Vat. Lat. 3195). For example, using ultraviolet light, one can read that the Marston scribe copies "iui" ("ivi") in verse 6 of the sonnet *Per fare una leggiadra* and follows it with a dash, probably the remnants of a "segno tironiano" ("et").[21] Another example is the Marston scribe's reading of "Quel" in verse 1 of *Que' ch'infinita providentia et arte*. Modern editors read "Que", without the "l", although the Marston's "error" reflects what Petrarca's scribe, Giovanni Malpaghini, originally transcribed and then expunged in Vat. Lat. 3195.[22]

MS 222: Boccaccio's "Filostrato" and a Trecento "Canzoniere"

Let us turn now to a *descriptus* codex of another type: MS 222 of the Beinecke Library (previously owned by the bibliophile Sir Thomas Phillipps), a composite manuscript in two parts written on paper. The first

[21] See Storey 2004b, 388 for Vat. Lat. 3195.

[22] See again Storey's examination (2004b, 388) under ultraviolet light of this erased *lectio* in Vat. Lat. 3195.

part contains Boccaccio's *Filostrato* which, according to the colophon, was copied in 1415; the second part can be dated to before 1369 and was possibly copied in Pisa. Part two contains 36 canzoni, including poems by Fazio degli Uberti; Petrarca *Amor se vuoi ch'io torni al giogo antico* (*Rvf* 270, c. 107*r* [FIGURE 4]) and *Di pensier in pensier di monte in monte* (*Rvf* 129; cc. 107*v*–108*r*); and canzoni about Fortune, poverty, and virtue; as well as one poem we could label "disperata", *Le stelle universali e i cieli rotanti* by Antonio Beccari. Besides Fazio, Petrarca, Antonio da Ferrara, other poets include Pietro de' Faitinelli (from Lucca), Ser Ciano del Borgo San Sepolcro, Manettino da Firenze, Jacopo Cecchi, and Giannozzo Sacchetti. More than half of the poems (19) in this collection are anonymous.

The editor of the interpretive edition of this Trecento anthology, Rigo Mignani, states that the Beinecke codex reflects typical themes of the period and that there is a concentration of poems dealing with Pisa and the Holy Roman Emperor, Lodovico il Bavaro.[23] Fazio's poems speak favorably of the ruler, although the *rime adespote* (i.e., those poems devoid of a rubric indicating authorship) seem to reflect the scribe's or owner's own politics. As frequently occurs when poets speak about politics, there is a predominantly rhetorical stance that does not reflect the status of contemporary political discourse. Mignani states this well: "L'importante, per i poeti, sembra essere solo la cornice, cioè i vecchi concetti di Impero e di Papato con cui, del resto, ancora operava Marsilio da Padova, anche se la sostanza era ben più lungimirante".[24]

With respect to Petrarca's canzoni, the editor notes that there are not any significant variants in the texts and that the language reflects the scribe's Pisa-Lucchese origins. However, it appears that the poems were copied from a descendant of MS Chigiano L V 176, that circulated around 1360. Considering the date of composition of *Amor se vuoi ch'io torni al giogo antico* (ca. 1351–1352), it would be convenient, as Mignani states, to believe that the codex presents copies of two poems that circulated in their pre-Chigi "forms". But the problem is that only a few manuscripts of single or small sections of Petrarca's poems contain both 270 and 129 and none of these contain poems

[23] Mignani 1974, 33.
[24] Mignani 1974, 33.

by Fazio degli Uberti. Mignani concludes: "Ma, probabilmente, tale codice già riflette un corpus post-chigiano e quindi l'ipotesi di una circolazione pre-chigiana delle due canzoni è troppo debole per essere affacciata".[25] Mignani's approach to the question of the origin of both poems is philologically valid and one hopes that further research may yield more information about the circulation of individual poems or groups of poems from the *Fragmenta*.

But why are both of Petrarca's poems copied together in this manuscript? Critics have underscored the nearly "genetic" relationship between *Rvf* 270, *Amor se vuoi*, and *Rvf* 271, the sonnet *L'ardente nodo ov'io fui d'ora in hora*,[26] so the decoupling of *Rvf* 270 and *Rvf* 271 and, instead, the pairing of *Rvf* 270 and *Rvf* 129 (*Di pensier in pensier*) is editorially intriguing. What is certain is that the evident meanings of both canzoni in Petrarca's original are transformed in their new context. In *Amor se vuoi* the poet states the impossibility of a new love in the aftermath of Laura's death and, instead, in *Di pensier in pensier*, he evokes his beloved in the natural beauty of Selvapiana that surrounds him. Both canzoni deal with his suffering and emotional pain but are thematically different from one another.

According to the actual layout and disposition of texts in Beinecke MS 222, *Rvf* 270 precedes *Rvf* 129 and both fill cc. 107*r* and 108*r*. They follow a political canzone by Fazio degli Uberti, *Tanto son uolti i ceil(i) di parte in parte*, in which the poet exhorts the emperor Lodovico, considered by his enemies the second beast of the Apocalypse, to invade Italy. The Petrarchan canzoni are followed by Antonio da Ferrara's poetic invective *Le stelle universali e i cie rotanti*. But this disposition reflects the status of the manuscript when it was misbound in the fifteenth century, possibly shortly after Part I, containing Boccaccio's *Filostrato* that was copied by Nicolò di Giovanni Cinuzi da Siena (c. 78*v*). The correct arrangement of the chartae which we can reconstruct by following the ancient Arabic numbering which appears at both the top and bottom right corners of the chartae give us the following foliation: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 1, 16, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20.[27] Petrarca's

[25] Mignani 1974, 155.
[26] See, for example, Santagata 1996, 1085.
[27] Mignani 1974, 7–8.

canzoni are on cc. 17 and 18, near the end of the manuscript before Antonio da Ferrara's text, but now following the unattributed canzone *La Verità m'alletta e dice: Pensa* (c. 99*r*). In this anonymous lyric text, Truth personified informs the poet about the mysterious workings of Fortune and how it is intended to inspire mankind to a life of virtue in keeping with Boethius. In this context, Petrarca's renunciation in *Amor se vuoi* and his longing for Laura in *Di pensier in pensier* can be read as *exempla* of his stoicism and a rekindled commitment to a life of virtue. On the other hand, there is a blank space after the anonymous poem which suggests that the scribe may have wished to insert another poem, perhaps recasting the interpretation of the preceding lyrics.

The problem with such a re-reading of this section of the Beinecke MS 222 is that Petrarca's poems are themselves complex texts that elicit different, if not competing, interpretations. Moreover, they seem to be trivialized in their new context by what is at best a didactic and mediocre poem about an old common theme, *Fortuna*. But just as politics makes for strange bedfellows, anthologization makes for even stranger associations. *Amor se vuoi* and *Di pensier in pensier* were written by Petrarca, but they no longer "belong" to him once they enter the orbit of poems that circulate and are copied by scribes into other collections. Although Mignani is right to claim that the poems in the Beinecke anthology reflect typical themes of mid-Trecento Tuscany, it is precisely the reshuffling of poems that distinguishes one anthology from the next, making it a truly unique document of Petrarca's *fortuna* while he was still actually revising and reordering his collection, the *Fragmenta*, in 1369.

There are other questions we still need to consider about this manuscript, including the sequence of the other poems in the collection. I will limit myself to a discussion of the material makeup of the codex and, in particular, of the gatherings. The poems in Part II of MS 222 were copied by one scribe who left the initials of the first lines of each poem blank. There is also sufficient space between poems for rubrics that were never executed. The script is a *gotica semi-hybrida* handsomely if rapidly written. There are light pencil rulings and there are two very rough drawings, one of a falconer with birds (c. 103*v*) and another of two human figures (c. 108*v*). As Ezio Ornato explains, the medieval book is created with the idea that it is a durable artifact to be handed down

from one generation to the next.[28] The size and weight of paper, the number of chartae that make up individual quires, and other material aspects are of great concern to scribes and book collectors. According to Mignani, "Probabilmente il manoscritto era composto di due quaderni (cc. 1–8 e 9–16 della numerazione araba), più sei carte, in fondo, cucite a parte (cc. 17–20 e altre due carte che sono state tagliate)".[29] In her catalogue of the Beinecke manuscripts, Barbara Shailor states that the structure of the original gatherings is unclear.[30] My examination of the codex possibly reveals a structure that differs from Mignani's description. Instead of two *quaderni* followed by six chartae, as he proposed, I believe that there is one quire of 16 chartae, followed by a ternion (a quire of three bifolia or six chartae).[31] In Mignani's explanation, cc. 1 and 8 and 9 and 16 are conjoined leaves. Each is one half of a bifolium, and in the case of cc. 9 and 16, the chartae were separated. When the codex was rebound, the second quire was bound before the first and c. 16 was inserted between cc. 1 and 2. Each paper leaf or folio has a watermark (similar to Briquet *Ciseaux* 3737, dated to Pisa 1345). What is important for our purposes is that cc. 1 and 8 do not have any watermarks, whereas cc. 9 and 16 each have one, meaning that they could not be conjoined leaves, because each bifolium, created from a single folio, typically only has one watermark (unless there is also a distinguishing counter-watermark which I doubt is the case in this instance). The presence and the direction of watermarks suggests that the basic unit of structure of this little collection was a book of 16 chartae, plus another much smaller quire.

Although the quaternion is a prevalent format, quires of 5, 6, 7, 8, and more leaves are not unknown. It might make sense in the case of Beinecke MS 222 because this Trecento anthology was not necessarily intended to be part of a larger compendium; it also underscores the textual unity or compactness of the collection. The drawback of a heavier and larger booklet format may have led paradoxically to the book's disintegration (instead of preservation), causing the transposition of the leaves when it was rebound. The quire containing Petrarca's

[28] Ornato 2000, 37.
[29] Mignani 1974, 8.
[30] Shailor 1984, 310.
[31] Cf. Mignani 1974, 7.

canzoni has also been irreparably damaged. It appears to be a ternion (or a gathering of three bifolia) with the last two chartae of the second half of the quire having been torn away (the stubs are still evident). Consistency of format is not a hallmark of codices with little aesthetic or stemmatic value. Ascertaining the book's basic structure, nevertheless, gives us grounds for reasonable speculation about the circulation of vernacular texts. Just as Niccolò Azzone of Siena hired Nicolò di Giovanni Cinuzi to copy Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, it is likely that the Trecento *canzoniere* was commissioned for private use and, itself, intended to be copied. This *sui generis* collection of Tuscan poets does reflect the tastes of mid-Trecento readers, but the specific texts and their sequence underscore the moralizing and political nature of this unfinished book that may have suited readers, such as the anonymous clergyman from Pisa who fills the last leaves of the manuscript with notations of his personal finances. Petrarca's poems may have been interpreted not as love poems but as moralizing *dicta* that corresponded to several of the themes expressed in the collection.

MS 706: "Canzoniere", "Trionfi", and "Africa"

An intriguing variation on the representation of "Petrarca *volgare*" is MS 706 of the *Fragmenta* and *Triumphi* that also contains an excerpt of the unfinished Latin poem, *Africa* (Book VI, vv. 885–918).[32] This paper codex of 186 chartae is written in a humanistic script with semi-gothic features by at least two scribes.[33] Besides reflecting the larger issues about

[32] The passage from the *Africa* makes for an apt introduction to the rest of the volume. The 34 lines of text are almost entirely dedicated to the dramatic last words of the dying protagonist, Magonis, during his return voyage to Carthage. The characterization of Magonis was criticized by Petrarca's contemporaries to whom he responded in a letter to Boccaccio (*Seniles* II 1). In his soliloquy, Magonis bemoans his fate and the changing fortunes of the powerful, but his lamentation is more appropriately a poignant description of the human condition: "Moriturus ad astra/scandere quaerit homo, sed mors docet omnia quo sint/nostra loco" (VI, 904–6). Magonis is likely a foil for Petrarca's own pessimism about fame and perhaps about the fate of his literary works.

[33] The codex appears to be almost entirely in the hand of one scribe, with the exception of cc. 108 and 109, which are replacement chartae written by another scribe. Although similar in script to the principal hand, the colophon (c. 186*r*) may be in yet another hand that perhaps inserted the title at c. 9*r*.

transcriptional strategies, circulation, and the re-representation of literary texts that we have discussed so far, the manuscript has paratextual features that alert us to the status of the document as a copy of a literary work but also as a historical document in its own right. Generally speaking, paratextual features are not intrinsic to the microtexts, the poems, although they are important to the overall work, or macrotext. The detailed index at the beginning of this manuscript and especially the Latin rubrics introducing the poems are not unique, of course. Although clearly scribal in origin, the index and rubric lend decorum to the volume and reflect the scribes' respect for Petrarca and for his own transcription. As with many other manuscripts of his poems, the *Fragmenta* are divided into two parts (poems when Laura was alive and poems after her death) with the second part being introduced by a painted initial and/or a rubric. MS 706 is not a sumptuously decorated codex by any means; but, similar to other mid-level books of its kind, there is a clear sense of function and decorum, and in this respect too it is in keeping with Petrarca's service copy, Vat. Lat. 3195. The rubric introducing the section of poems written *in morte di Laura* (at c. 107*r* [FIGURE 5])[34] underscores the copyist's faithfulness to the model, most notably by referring to the blank leaves in Petrarca's original manuscript (cc. 49*v*–52*v* of codex Vat. Lat. 3195): "proprio codice domini francisci annotatum est [...] & carte quatuor pretermisse vacue". The reference is uncommon with respect to other copies of the *Fragmenta*. As Petrarca's literary fame grew throughout the Renaissance, so too did the number of copies containing his vernacular works. As a result, there tended to be a wide range of textual readings, but there was also a standardization of contents and format of the poems that are the basis of a *vulgata* version, if not versions, of the *Fragmenta* during the Quattrocento.

What are we to make of the reference to the four empty chartae in the poet's partial holograph? We could assume that MS 706 is a direct copy, were it not for the fact that it contains the ballata, *Donna mi vene spesso ne la mente* (here in position 122) that Petrarca omitted from his service

[34] The Latin text reads: "Que sequuntur post mortem domine Lauree scripta sunt. Ita .N. proprio codice domini francisci annotatum est & carte quatuor pretermisse vacue" ("The following [poems] are written after the death of Lady Laura. Thus it is annotated in Master Francesco's own manuscript and he left four blank chartae").

copy.[35] The colophon on c. 186*r* reads: "Sit laus christo omnipotenti deo/Verone an(no) i(n)carnatio(n)is sue M°ccc°Lxxxxiij°" ("Praise be to Christ, omnipotent God; Verona in the year of his incarnation 1393" [FIGURE 6]). According to the Beinecke's unpublished description (in the dossier that is available upon request), the manuscript was probably copied between 1425–1440 (and not 1393) because of the type of paper and script, although the same description also includes the date of 1493 with a question mark. Dennis Dutschke states that it was probably written in the late fifteenth century and that the colophon "may indicate that ms. 706 is a copy of a previous manuscript written in 1393, or perhaps the scribe left out the 'C' which would have indicated 1493 instead of the improbable date of 1393".[36] My own examination agrees more closely with the Beinecke Library's earlier dating, from the second quarter to around the middle of the century, primarily because of script and watermarks.[37] The colophon indeed appears to be in the hand of another scribe, perhaps the same that wrote the rubric and provided the grisaille initial at the beginning of the manuscript. The scribe does not state that the manuscript was copied in Verona and in "1393", but readers are likely to assume so because colophons typically provide such publication information.

Is the colophon accurate? Why does the scribe not supply more information about the source manuscript? Or was the codex copied from another that was itself transcribed in that year and in that city? The codicological evidence and handwriting suggest a later dating as we have mentioned. Perhaps, as Dutschke suggests, the scribe mistakenly omitted the Roman numeral "C recording the date as 1393"? But the material evidence suggests otherwise. Even if the hand that wrote the colophon is not that of the principal scribe, it is in a similar style of script.

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[35] The sonnet, *Donna mi vene spesso ne la mente*, is n. 122 (c. 59*r*) because of the misnumbering of the poems in the manuscript beginning with the canzone *Rvf* 71 (the number is repeated), *Gentil madonna io veggio*. In the external margin of the first verse, in pencil, is the note: "MS Zeno 49". The same hand has occasionally inserted corrections in the margins of several poems (i.e., at cc. 17*v*, 29*v*, 90*r*, etc.), many of which emend the prosody.

[36] Dutschke 2004, 9.

[37] See the note about watermarks in the appendix of this study. In his detailed description Dutschke notes that there are two types of *Drache*, similar to ones that can be found in Piccard 1980, n° 547 (Ferrara 1456) and n° 958 (Parma 1479).

The problematic dating invites reflection about the function of rubrics and colophons as rhetorical tropes and, in particular, about their status as evidence. At their simplest, colophons are the words or statement used by authors and scribes to signal the end of a piece of text or book.[38] They are the copyist's "speech act" about his transcription and are often the only explicit statement about the text. As Albert Derolez explains, with few exceptions, colophons tended to be brief and matter-of-fact in manuscripts of the earlier Middle Ages and more detailed toward the Renaissance.[39] During the fifteenth century it was more common for scribes to sign their handiwork as a way of advertising their talent and also in order to assert their individuality, similar to other visual artists of the time. In general, the technical aspects of transcription are the means to an end and, thus, scribes tended to be self-effacing intermediaries.[40] Like authors, copyists were primarily interested in the finished product, a clean copy of a work, although it would be unfair to say that they ignored "process" (precisely what interests contemporary manuscript scholars). Professional—but also many amateur—scribes had a keen sense of decorum, if not a well-developed aesthetic sensibility in the burgeoning book market of the fifteenth century. As a rhetorical device colophons communicate information that influences interpretation about the history of the document, much in the same way that titles of works frame meaning. Even modestly produced books held a fascination beyond the words and images on the *folia*, as commercial objects and also as status symbols.

Beinecke MS 706 appears to be a faithful copy of its model, a manuscript that was itself perhaps transcribed in Verona in 1393, although it is quite similar to other fifteenth-century copies that trivialize the poet's visual poetics (by transcribing one verse per ruled line). The version of the *Fragmenta* is closest to the penultimate or Malatesta form of the *Canzoniere*, as it was called by E.H. Wilkins.[41] In this sense,

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[38] For a fuller treatment of "colophons" and other aspects of the scribe's craft, see Condello and De Gregorio 1995.

[39] Derolez 1995, 40–41.

[40] Gumbert 1995; Bozzolo and Ornato 1980, 46–48; and Gullick 1995 discuss scribes' work pace and how different kinds of texts, scripts, and materials were factors in transcription.

[41] See Wilkins 1951a, 242–46, but Del Puppo and Storey 2003, 303–5 as well on the nature and problems of the "Malatesta family".

the codex is less directly important to the history of Petrarca's partial holograph, Vat. Lat. 3195, than it is to the circulation of an earlier version, paradoxically confirming its status as a *descriptus* of an earlier version of the *Fragmenta*. In his detailed description, Dennis Dutschke notes that the texts of MS 706 (including the order of the *Fragmenta* poems, the chapters of the *Triumphi*, the excerpt from the *Africa*, and the *Nota de Laura*) and rubrics are very similar to those in a group of other codices, probably written by a Ferrarese scribe: Vatican Library, Reginense latino 1110; British Library, Harley 3442; Bodleian Library, Canonici italiani 70 and Canonici 76, Exeter College, 187; Padova, Biblioteca del Seminario, MS CIX; London, Bernard Quaritch Ltd., Catalogue 933.[42] He also points out that MS 706 is the only manuscript to contain all of the texts and the date of 1393, "indicating that it may be the closest one to the exemplar".[43]

The ordering of the final group of poems, 336–366, is remarkably similar to that of an important Trecento witness of the Malatesta form, MS Firenze, Laurenziano XLI 17. There are two noteworthy differences, however, between MS 706 and the earlier Laurentian codex. MS 706 concludes with *Vergine bella* (*Rvf* 366) and has the canzone *Quel antiquo mio dolce empio signore* in position 348, after *O tempo* and before *Fu forse un tempo*, exactly the contrary to the Florentine codex. However, we should keep in mind that the order of Laurenziano XLI 17 reflects an initial copy of poems sent by Petrarca in which the scribe had already indicated that *Vergine bella* would be the last poem and to which many of the poems of the inserted bifolia of Vat. Lat. 3195 (cc. 67–70) were then added and renumbered. The copyist even adds the note next to *Vergine bella*: "in fine libru(m) pon" ("put this at the end of the book" [Laur. XLI 17, c. 64*r*]).[44] Secondly, unlike the Laurenziano manuscript, Beinecke MS 706 reverses the order of the sonnets, *I' vo piangendo* and *Tennemi amor*, which in Petrarca's holograph are respectively n. 361 (r. 365) and n. 360 (r. 364).

In comparison to the poet's service copy, Vat. Lat. 3195, MS 706 contains variant readings of poems and, as we said, the ballata *Donna*

[42] Dutschke 2004, 9.
[43] Dutschke 2004, 10.
[44] See Storey and Capelli 2006, especially for the use of scribal systems for reordering poems.

mi vien spesso nella mente (c. 59*r*).[45] For example, the sonnet *Amor co la man dextra* (c. 97*r*), whose incipit is rendered *Amor con sua man dextra* in

[45] The following list is a collation of *minimalia*, that is, a comparison of orthographic, linguistic, and lexemic similarities and differences between Petrarca's partial holograph and Beinecke MS 706. I have used the problematic *loci* in Vat. Lat. 3195 and in Modigliani 1904 as indicated by Storey 2004b. The numbers of the chartae below are those of MS 706. An abbreviated incipit of each poem is in italics. Letters and words in bold highlight the textual *locus*.

9*v*, *Per fare una legiadra sua vendetta*, v. 6: "per far **ivi & ne luochi** suo difese", comment in the margin in pencil: "gli occhi" and underlined "luochi". See MS because at "ivi" and "&" there is a mark/or remnant of a letter.

10*r*, *Quel che infinita providential & arte* (v.1).

13*v*, *Sono animali almondo de si altera*, v. 13: "Mio destin avederl**a** mi conduce". The "a" is darker as if the scribe had a doubt about his model. The problem is with the "mi" of "mi conduce" (see Storey 2004b, 388).

14*v*, *A qualunque animale*, v. 11: "fia(m)megiar".

20*r*, *O aspectata in ciel beata & bella*, v. 66: "**&** la eloquentia **suo** (with "a" in the interlinear above the "o" of "suo ").

25*v*, *Si è debole*, **v. 65: "ne glumani"**.

30*v*, *Ne la stagion*, v. 66: "per iscolpirlo imaginando" (the "corrected readings", as in several early codices [Laur. Segni 2, Vaticano Chigiano L V 176, Morgan M 502, Laur. XLI 17, Ricc. 1088] against "iscolpirio" [Laur. XLI, 10; cf. Belloni 2004, 81]).

37*v*, *Ben sapea io*, v. 7: "**la sopra** lacqu**a**".

42*r*, *Poi che per mio destino*, v. 14: "**de le** parole" (but the "d" is not so clearly written as to be definitive, as if, instead, the scribe hesitated between "d" and the ampersand (= "et"). Moreover, the end of the verse "de le parole" seems to have been integrated by the scribe because the spacing between verses is especially tight.

46*v*, *Io amai sempre*, v. 8: "minnamora" without any indication that an "n" is to be expunged. However, in v. 1: "amo" was originally written perhaps as "amai" or "amor", but the last letter is crossed out and two dots indicating cancellation were written below it.

51*v*, *Mai non vo' più cantar*, v. 1: "Mai non vo piu cantar comio sole**(v)**a". The scribe inserts "v" in the interlinear for reasons of prosody.

52*v*, *Mai non vo' più cantar*, v. 61: "sagg**i**e".

56*r*, *Rimansi adietro*, v. 14: "an**co**r".

69*v*, *Qual più diversa*, v. 56: "/& nocte obscura & loro/". The two back slashes likely serve to draw attention to the scribe or discerning reader to the possibility of a variant. The second "et" should read "è" and is a misreading of Malpaghini's (Storey 2004b, 389) that is ambiguous in the early codices of the *Canzoniere*.

80*v*, *Fera stella*: "El colpo e/di sae**tt**a & no(n) di s**pe**do", v.11.

82*r*, *Gerri quando talor*: "**Se cio** non fosse andrei non **altramente**", v. 9. **Se cio**, instead of "Eccio" as in the poet's holograph. See Storey's comment (2004b, 389) concerning the poet's erasure and revision and Modigliani's interpretation. The second "a" of **altramente** has been inserted in the interlinear over an "i". Note also the gemination of the "r" in "Gerri" in MS 706.

85*v*, *L'aura gentil*, v. 9: "Nel qual provo dolceze tante & tal**i**". The "i" of "tali" has been rewritten. The scribe originally wrote "e", perhaps influenced by the "e" of "traduce", the last word of the following line (v. 10) in his model. The problem of the interpretation of "provo" posed by Modigliani (1904) is solved by Storey (2004b, 389).

MS 706, has a significant variant in the fifth verse similar to the reading in at least two other early codices. Minimal graphic differences are frequently telltale signs of a manuscript's origin or, in some cases, they document conscious and unconscious decisions about linguistic features and pragmatics of writing. For example, c. 130*r* reads "belleza", instead of "bellezza" or "belleççа", similar to the unique form of "belleça" in this section of Vat. Lat. 3195. The single sibilant in place of the double "z" or "s" is a feature of north Italian phonology and, in a couple of instances, of Giovanni Malpaghini's adherence to a unique Petrarchan form. And similar to the late Trecento codex Beinecke Marston 99,

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88*v*, *Dolci ire*, v. 7: "col dolce honor ch(e)adamar quella hai p(re)so". This poem has several interesting erasures and revisions. The first is in v. 1 where the "gn" of "sdegni" has been rewritten. The second is a rewrite over an erasure in v. 4, which reads: "or di dolce **ira / or pien** di dolci faci". Note "ira" instead of "ora" and that "or pien" has been written over other words. The "o" of "or" ("or pien") is not clearly an "o", reflecting the scribe's uncertainty about the *lectio*. The latter part of the verse is problematic in the poet's holograph (Storey 2004b, 390).

92*v*, *Beato in sogno*, v. 12: "Così v**i**nti anni **ho** grave & lungho affan(n)o". "Vinti" for "venti" and, more importantly, "ho", which Petrarca inserted in the interlinear above "anni" and "grave" but then expunged (Storey 2004b, 390). In MS 706 "ho" is clearly and confidently written, as if it were clear in the scribe's model.

95*r*, *Vnde tolse Amor*, v. 13: "Di que begliocchi **/ondio/ ho** guerra & pace". The back slashes around "ondio" draw attention to this section of text, which is not entirely unproblematic if one examines Petrarch's holograph (Storey 2004b, 390).

97*r*, *Amor con sua man dextra*, v. 5: "Vomer di **penne** con sospir del fianco" is undoubtedly the *lectio*, similar to other early codices, like Morgan M. 502 and Laurenziano XLI 17, with the exception of the trivialization of the plural "penne" for the singular "penna".

99*v*, *Non ha tanti animali*, v. 15: "ci**t**adin" (erroneously "ciitadino" in Petrarca's manuscript, but the second "i" is "crossed" to correct in "t").

100*r*, *Là ver' l'aurora*, vv. 1, 23, 27: All of the occurrences of "Laura" with the minuscule "l".

104*v*, *Io pur ascolto*, v. 5: The *lectio* is clearly "Nocque".

122*r*, *Anima bella*, v. 6: "**che** mi fece" and not "che(n)" with the *titulus* as in Petrarca's holograph.

130*r*, *Hor hai fatto lextremo*, v. 3: "**belleza**" and "**belleça**" as in Petrarca's manuscript.

137*r*, *De porgi mano*, vv. 1–11: v. 4, "del" in MS 706 (as in Petrarca's copy); v. 5, "Signor ~~mio~~ chel mio", with the first occurrence of "mio" expunged; v. 7 "**i(n)** vertu & **belta non** ebbe uguale"; v. 11, "morte noi ha" instead of "noi morte ha".

137*v*, *O tempo o cielo volubel*, v. 9: "& e".

140*r*, **Quell'antico** mio dolce empio Signore, v. 144: "& **ei**".

145*r*, *Morte ha spento*, v. 4: "**Fatti**" instead of "Spenti", but "Spenti" does not appear in the poet's hand in the poet's original; rather, a later hand adds "Spenti" over an erasure (Storey 2004b, 391).

discussed above, MS 706 has the reading "Se ciò" at the beginning of verse 9 of *Geri, talor meco s'adira*.

As we have already seen in MS Marston 99, the layout of Petrarca's poems challenges the interpretive skills of some scribes. To a lesser degree this is also the case in MS 706, in the sixth stanza of the canzone, *Tacer non posso, et temo non adopre* (*Rvf* 325, c. 129*v* [FIGURE 7]). The scribe copies the stanza's ninth verse (v. 84 of the poem), "con le palme & co i pie fresca & superba", on the last line of c. 129*v* in the line/space for the tenth verse (v. 100) of the seventh stanza that begins "Poi crescendo in tempo & in virtute". Perhaps he simply overlooked verse 84 when he glanced back to read the next line in his model manuscript, a common error of misreading. After copying v. 99 (the ninth of the seventh stanza) he noticed a discrepancy in the line count and realized the mistake. Any misstep could be caused by the difficulty of copying from a manuscript that has a horizontal layout of the canzoni ("a mo' di prosa") or Petrarca's two-verses per ruled line formatting of *Tacer non posso*.

More importantly, MS 706 also has Petrarca's obituary of Laura (c. 148 [FIGURES 8 and 9]) that he recorded in his personal copy of Virgil's works now in the Ambrosiana Library of Milan.[46] The fact that the poet did not include the Laura note in Vat. Lat. 3195 and the fact that MS 706 displays it prominently at the appropriate point in the *Fragmenta*, signaling the beginning of the second part of the work (poems written after Laura's death) suggests the scribe's desire to underscore the biographical context for part two. And he might have obtained this information from a manuscript that pre-dates Vat. Lat. 3195 that was probably copied during Petrarca's life or around the time of his death in 1374.

Although not authorial in origin, MS 706 has many reliable readings of the *Fragmenta* and epitomizes the burgeoning production and circulation of Petrarca's poems during the early Quattrocento. It appears to be a facsimile of sorts, rather than purely a philologically reliable copy, underscoring the importance of textual *and* material authenticity

[46] The early fourteenth-century codex Milano, Ambrosiano, Sala del Prefetto 10/27 contains the works of Virgil (*Aeneid, Georgics, Bucolics*), Statius' *Achilleid*, several odes of Horace, and Aelius Donatus' *Ars maior*. Its frontispiece was illustrated by Simone Martini. Stolen in 1326, the codex was returned to Petrarca in 1338. As one of his dearest manuscripts, he wrote Laura's obituary on the flyleaf. See the facsimile edition Galbiati and Ratti 1930.

for mid-fifteenth-century readers. For some, at least, simply having an accurate version of Petrarca's vernacular poetry was not enough. Manuscript copies of the Quattro- and the Cinquecento document the growing trend of the cult of canonic authors, like Petrarca, and, given particularly the level of production of MS 706, provide evidence of the development of an antiquarian sensibility among others besides elite owners of codices. MS 706 is not a match for deluxe illuminated codices, replete with monumental lettering and lavish imagery. It is unpretentiously antiquarian because it preserves historical information about Petrarca's texts that shapes readers' interpretation of his vernacular *oeuvre*. Petrarca himself excluded this information from his holograph service copy; in this way, the scribe evidences his biographical reading of part II of the *Fragmenta*.

Although *descripti* codices might not always be useful for purposes of the work's *stemma*, we have also seen how later copies—as different as they are from one another—can inform our understanding of the way Petrarca's poems were circulated and interpreted. As sensitive as he was about the transmission of his own texts, Petrarca must have envisioned the entropy that occurs in all communications. What he may not have foreseen is the resourcefulness of scribes in producing good, if not perfectly reliable, texts for subsequent generations of readers. In this regard the scribes of MS 706 stake a claim, paradoxically, to textual authenticity and resist the entropy and contamination that the poet thought inevitable in manuscript culture.

APPENDIX

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT WATERMARKS, QUIRES, AND PAPER IN BEINECKE MS 706

There are at least *three* distinct types of "Basilic" (Dragon), similar to Briquet 2630 (1384), 2666 (1442) but not at all identical. In his description of the codex, Dennis Dutschke writes that the watermarks are similar to the *Drache* in Piccard 1980, nn. 547 and 958.[47]

The three types of Basilic, or *Drache*, confirm the general area of provenance of the codex, northeastern Italy. Giorgio Montecchi discusses how this particular "signum" (as watermarks were known then) was prevalent in the "area mediopadana" (middle Po river valley).[48] Briquet also confirms that the Dragon watermark appears frequently in manuscripts of Verona, Ferrara, Bologna, and other cities of the region.[49] As is well documented, watermarks were carefully regulated by law because they distinguished the quality of paper and/or the papermaker. According to Montecchi, mythological, wild, and domesticated animals, crosses, balances, etc. were all common marks because of their metaphorical and symbolic value to the medieval artisan.[50]

The Dragon quality paper is maintained throughout MS 706, whether or not it came from the same mill in order to maintain consistency of appearance and ease of writing. The paper is of fine, but not of the highest, quality and each sheet before folding and cutting would have been at least double the 183 × 124 mm (approximately 7 × 5 inches) dimensions before trimming. Watermarks were usually centered in the middle of one half of the wire mould, so that when folded in half lengthwise and then folded again horizontally, the watermark appears in the middle of conjoined leaves, right in the fold, with one half of the mark appearing on one charta and the other half on the conjoined charta, hence the distinction between "head" and "tail" in the list below. When cut, a typical sheet would form two bifolia. Therefore,

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[47] Dutschke 2004; Piccard 1980.
[48] Montecchi 1997, 136–40, especially 139.
[49] Briquet 1966, 1:192.
[50] Montecchi 1997, 139.

one bifolium would have a watermark and the other would not. In larger formats, one entire folio folded lengthwise formed a bifolium, so that the watermark would appear in the middle of one of the chartae and not in the fold. This is not the case, however, of our diminuitive codex. Because of the odd number (5) bifolia that are needed to make up a quinternion, therefore, it is reasonable to assume, that not every charta would have a part or trace of a watermark. This would explain why some quires have three watermarks and others fewer or only one. All of this is to say that our scribe availed himself of a ream of mixed paper, that is, having different watermarks but of similar quality.

In conclusion, watermarks are useful, but not entirely reliable, devices for dating and locating the origin of paper because they are notoriously distinctive from one another, frequently as the result of being used and consumed when the mould is dipped multiple times into the vat, distorting the watermark itself. In publishing the images and in listing the sequence of marks, other scholars may be able to date and locate more precisely the papers used in MS 706 because there are no identical watermarks in any of the published albums.

In my examination I have tried to distinguish the mould side of the watermark by indicating whether it is the recto or verso of the charta.

Quire 1: cc. 1–8. Contains the alphabetical index of the *Fragmenta*. Two bifolia, folded together in quarto to form 8 chartae because watermark appears on cc. 1*r* (head)–8*v* (tail), 2*r* (head)–7*v* (tail). The Type 1 Basilic (60 × 40 mm) is split by the center chain line, with 6–7 mm on extremes to attendant chain lines. The watermark is "split" on conjoined leaves and appears therefore in the middle of the fold (making it difficult to measure exactly and to discern certain details). Dry point ruling *in quarto* (when the leaves were laid out), 31–32 ruled lines for the index.

Quire 2: cc. 9–18. Type 2 Basilic straddles cc. 13*r* (head)–14*v* (tail), center of quire. Type 2 (67 × 48 mm) is characterized by a big chest and a triangular tail. Unadorned catchword/phrase, "Si che saltro", on the inner edge of text, downward, from last ruled line of writing.

Quire 3: cc. 19–28. Type 2 Basilic, cc. 19*r* (head)–28*v* (tail), Type 3 Basilic 23*v* (tail)–24*r* (head). Type 3 measures approx. 65 × 54 mm and is characterized by a disproportionate head

(to body) that is shaped almost like that of a bear or a dog, having a rectangular tail that is smaller than Type 2, and with three dorsal "feathers/spines" on the back, with the one closest to the tail being quite small. Catchword: "Se mai foco" with part of "o" cut away, here and elsewhere in the MS, because edges were trimmed in rebinding.

QUIRE 4: cc. 29–38. Type 2 Basilic: cc. 30*r* (head)–37*v* (tail), 31*v* (head)–36*r* (tail), 32*v* (head)–35*r* (tail), 33*r* (head)–34*v* (tail). The watermarks all face in the same direction. Catchword: "quando agliar" (that is, "ardenti", cut-off by trimming).

QUIRE 5: cc. 39–48. Type 1 Basilic: cc. 41*v* (tail)–46*r* (head), 43*r* (head)–44*v* (tail). Catchword: "quando giu" (that is "giugne" partially trimmed).

QUIRE 6: cc. 49–58. Type 3 cc. 49*r* (head)–58*v* (tail); Type 1 cc. 50*r* (head)–57*v* (tail); Type 3 cc. 51*r* (head)–56*v* (tail), 52*r* (head)–55*v* (tail); Type 1 53*r* (head)–54*v* (tail). Catchword: "cio me fa la" (for "cio mi fa lambra" [sic]).

QUIRE 7: cc. 59–68. Type 3 Basilic cc. 60*v* (tail)–67*r* (head); Type 2 cc. 61*v* (tail)–66*r* (head). Catchword: "piu mi rasemb" (for "rasembia").

QUIRE 8: cc. 69–78. Type 1 Basilic 70*r* (head)–77*v* (tail), 71*r* (head)–76*v* (tail). Catchword: "Quand Am" (for "Amor", trimmed).

QUIRE 9: cc. 79–88. Type 2 Basilic 79*v* (tail)–88*r* (head); Type 1 81*r* (head)–86*v* (tail); Type 2 83*r* (head)–84*v* (tail). Catchword: "Dritto amorte(e)". A tear affecting the text in the middle of cc. 85–87 toward the inner margin has been repaired and the text was re-written by another hand.

QUIRE 10: cc. 89–98. Type 1 Basilic 89*r* (head)–98*v* (tail); Type 2 Basilic 91*v* (tail)–96*r* (head); Type 1 93*v* (tail)–94*r* (head). Catchword: "Amore io".

QUIRE 11: cc. 99–108. Type 1 Basilic throughout quire: 99*v* (tail); 100*v* (tail)–107*r* (head); 101*v* (tail)–106*r* (head); 102*v* (tail)–105*r* (head). No catchword and watermark on 108*v* because this charta and the following (109) fell out and were replaced by a bifolium without a mark. Also there is a worm hole in the margin half way up the cc. (that does not affect the text).

QUIRE 12: cc. 109–118. Type 3 Basilic 113*v* (head)–114*r* (tail). Catchword: "Gliocchi di chi(o)".

Quire 13: cc. 119–128. Type 3 Basilic 119*v* (head)–128*r* (tail), 120*v* (head)–127*r* (tail). Catchword: "Standosi ad".

Quire 14: cc. 129–138. Type 2 129*r* (head)–138*v* (tail), 130*r* (head)–137*v* (tail). Catchword: "Le parole e i".

Quire 15: cc. 139–148. Type 3 139*r* (head)–148*r* (tail). No catchword because Petrarca's note about Laura's death is contained on the recto and verso of c. 148.

Quire 16: cc. 149–158. Type 2 153*v* (head)–154*r* (tail). Catchword: "Fratel neg(li)".

Quire 17: cc. 159–168. Type 2 159*r* (tail)–168*v* (head), 160*r* (tail)–167*v* (head); Type 3 161*v* (head)–166*r* (tail); Catchword: "& pargli l".

Quire 18: cc. 169–178. Type 1 170*r* (head)–177*v* (tail), 173*r* (head)–174*v* (tail). Catchword: "che feci".

Quire 19: cc. 179–186. The quinternion is lacking the last two chartae that would have been numbered 187 and 188. Type 2 179*v* (tail); Type 1 180*v* (tail) and 181*v* (tail)–186*r* (head).

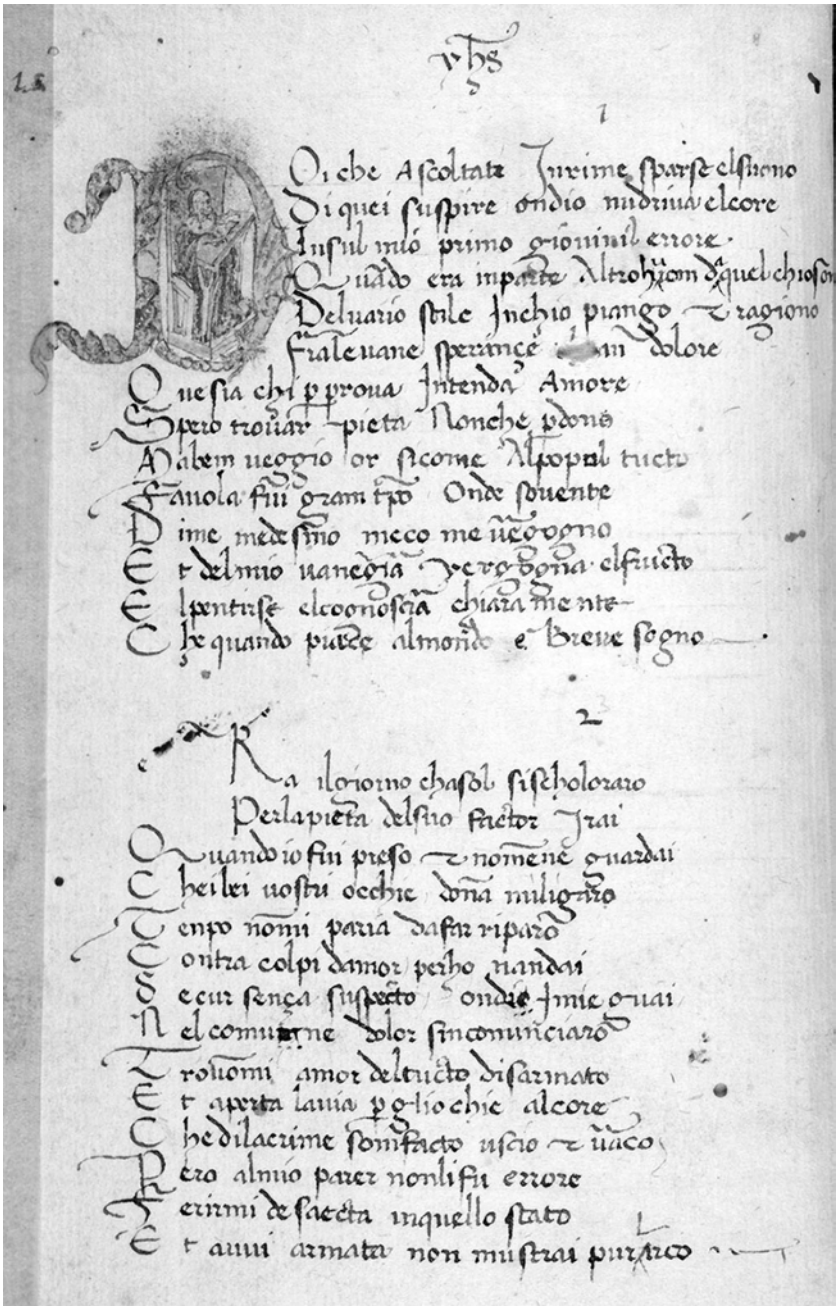

FIGURE 1: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS Marston 99, c. 1*v*. Reprinted by kind permission of the Beinecke Library.

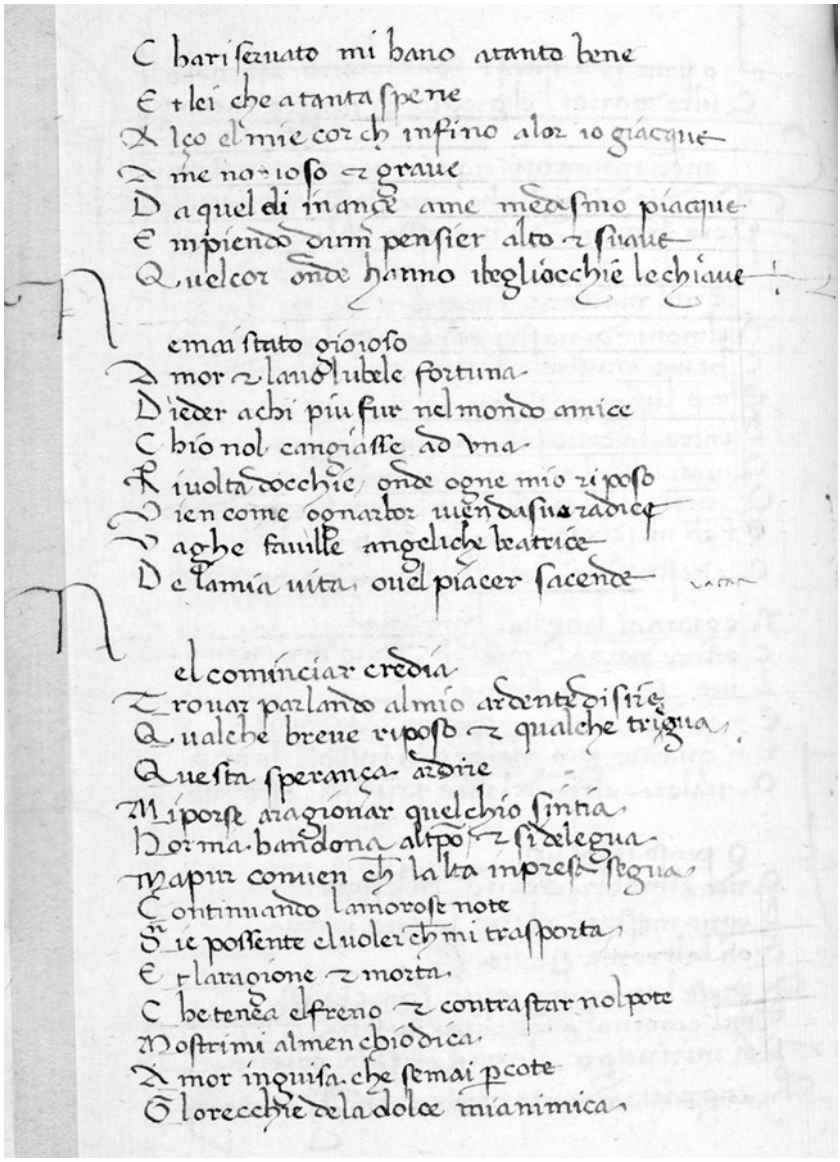

FIGURE 2: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS Marston 99, c. 32*v*. Reprinted by kind permission of the Beinecke Library.

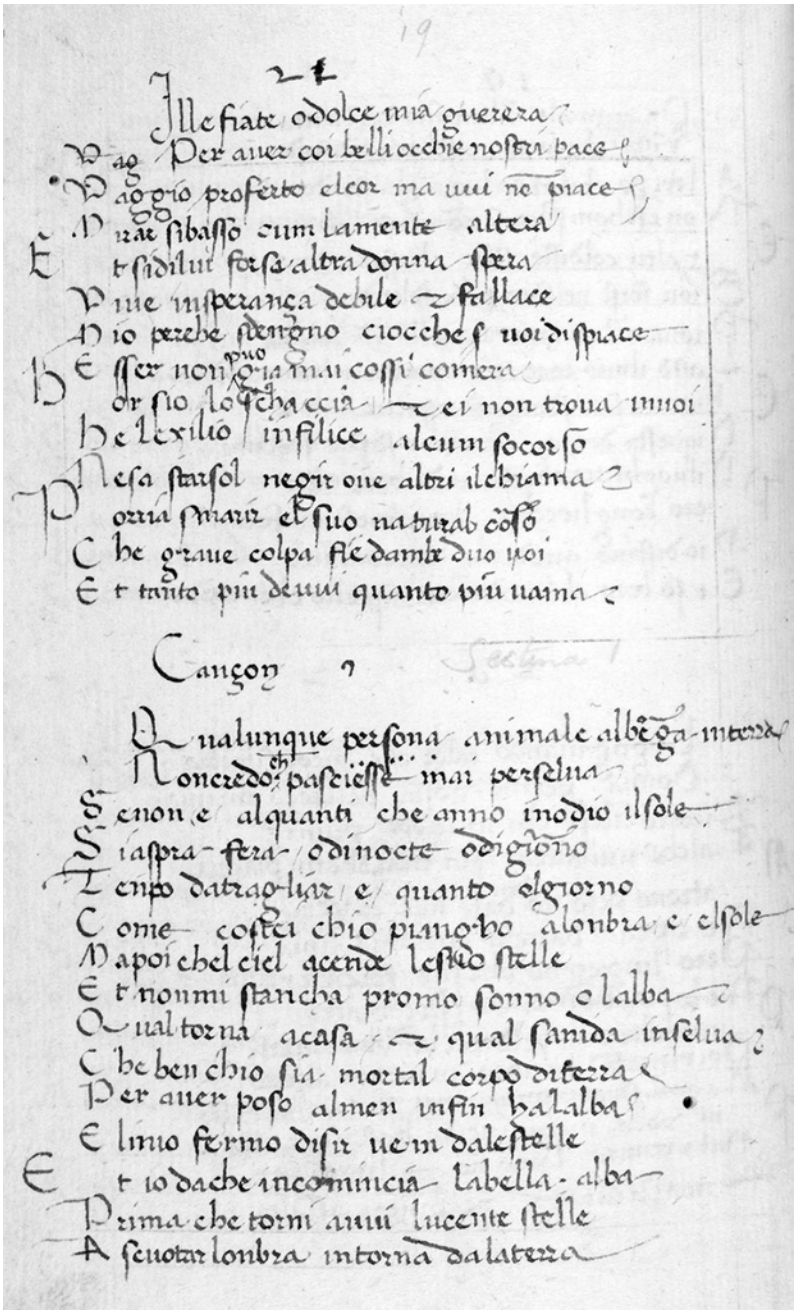

FIGURE 3: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS Marston 99, c. 6*v*. Reprinted by kind permission of the Beinecke Library.

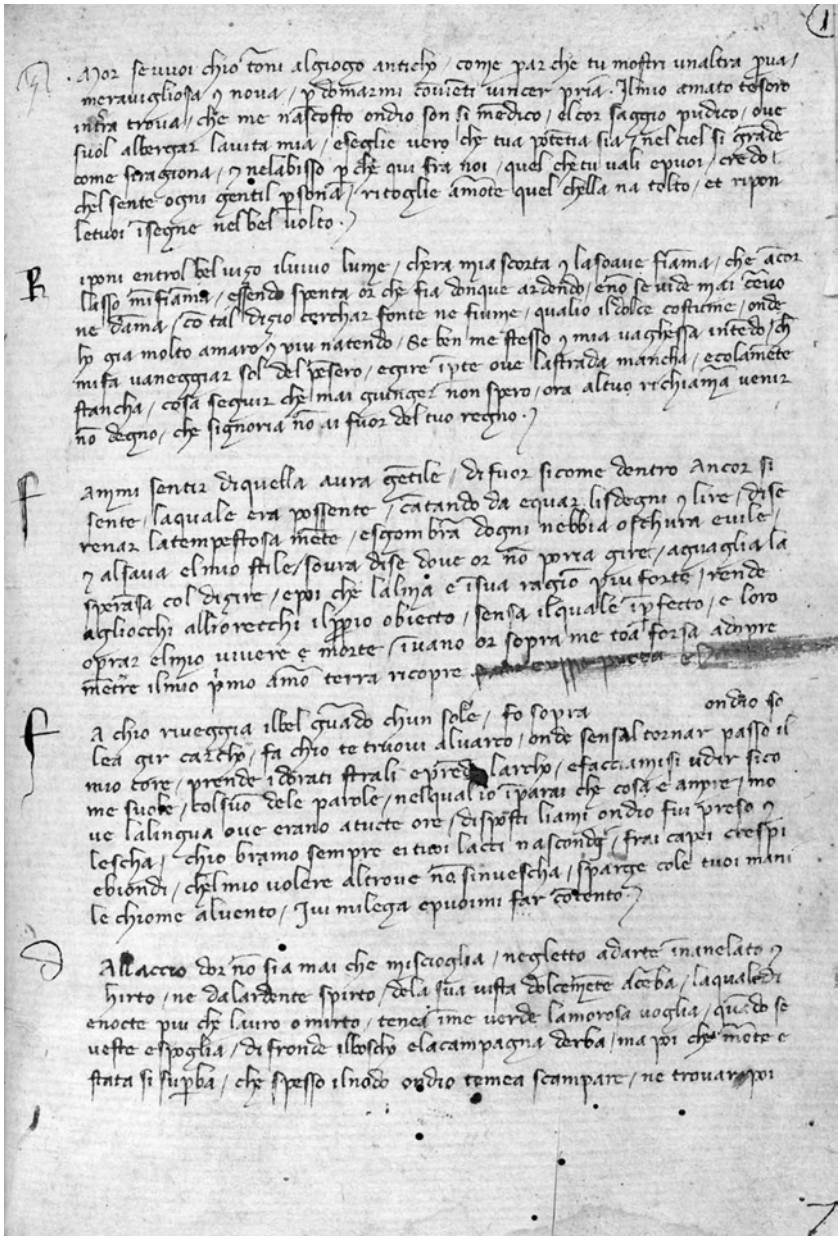

FIGURE 4: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS 222, c. 107*r*. Reprinted by kind permission of the Beinecke Library.

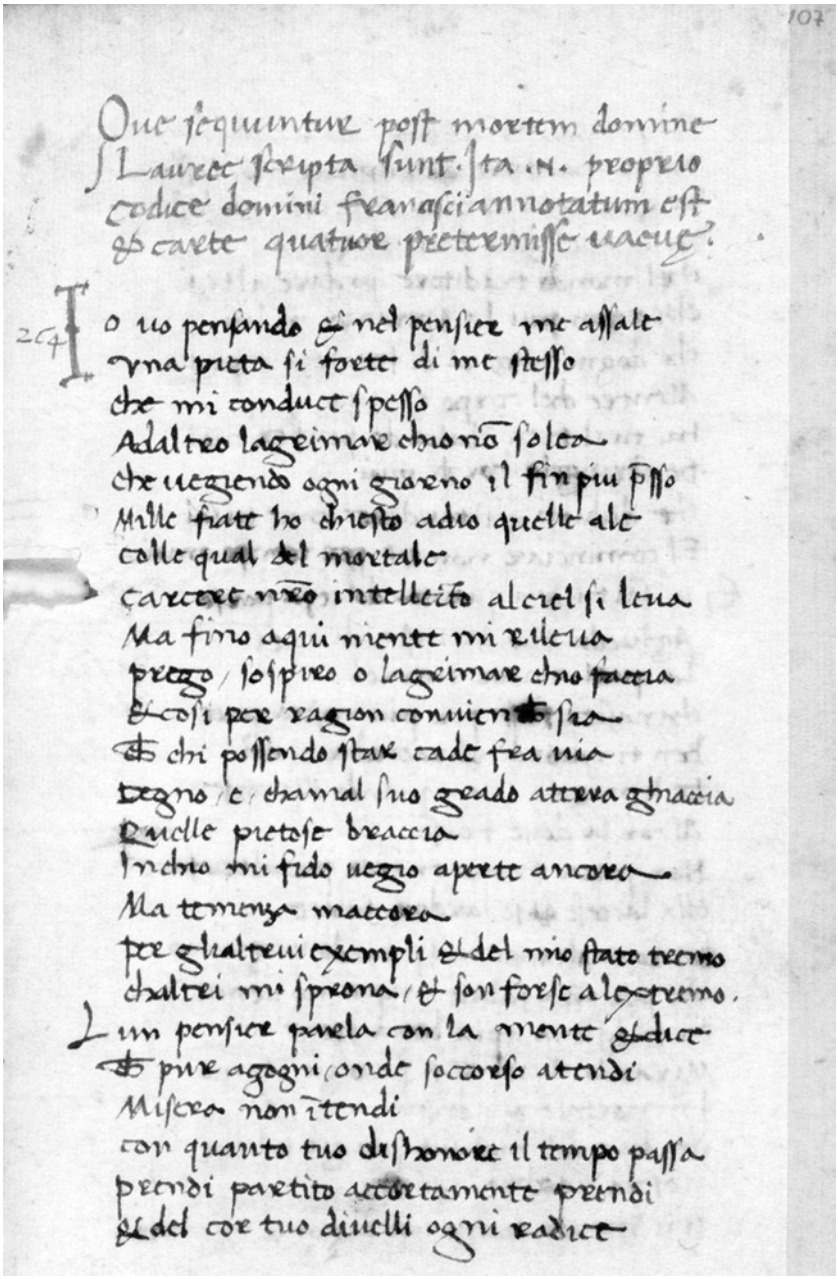

FIGURE 5: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS 706, c. 107*r*. Reprinted by kind permission of the Beinecke Library.

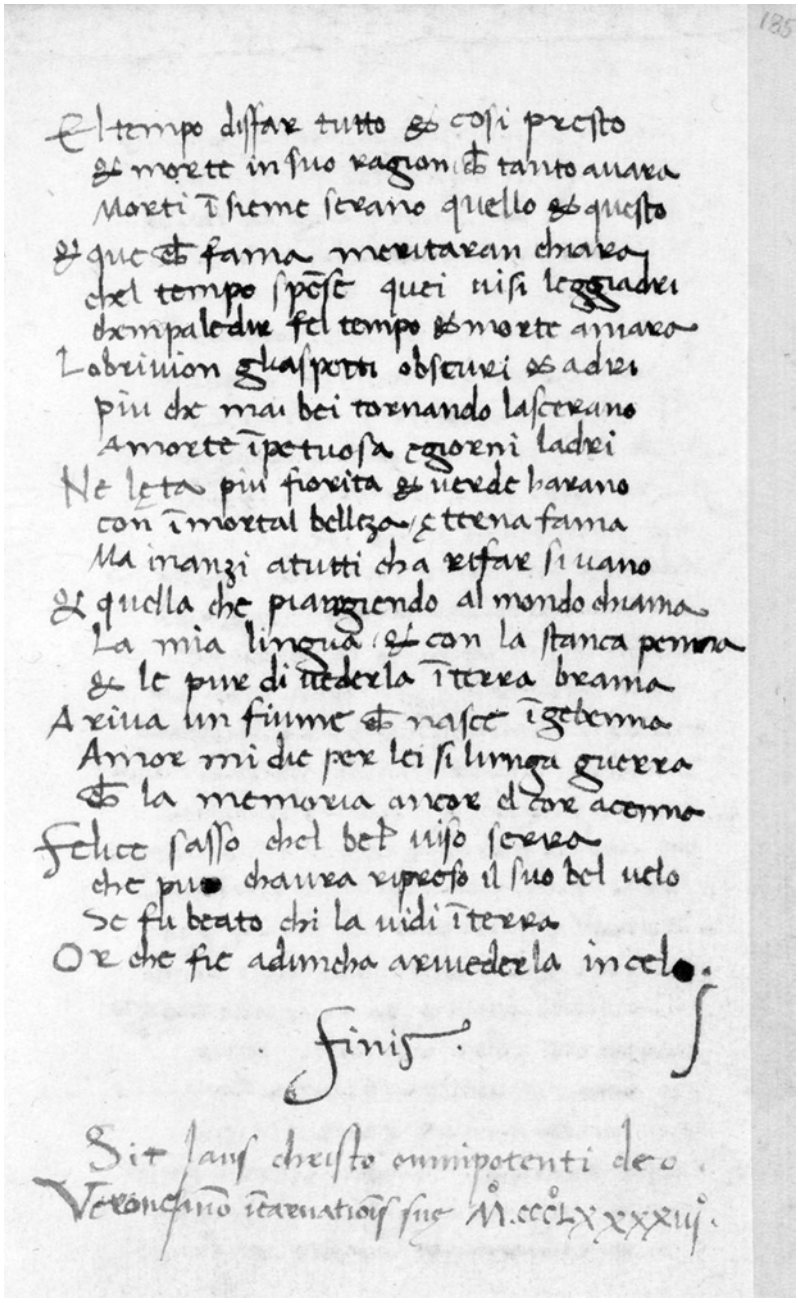

FIGURE 6: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS 706, c. 186*r*. Reprinted by kind permission of the Beinecke Library.

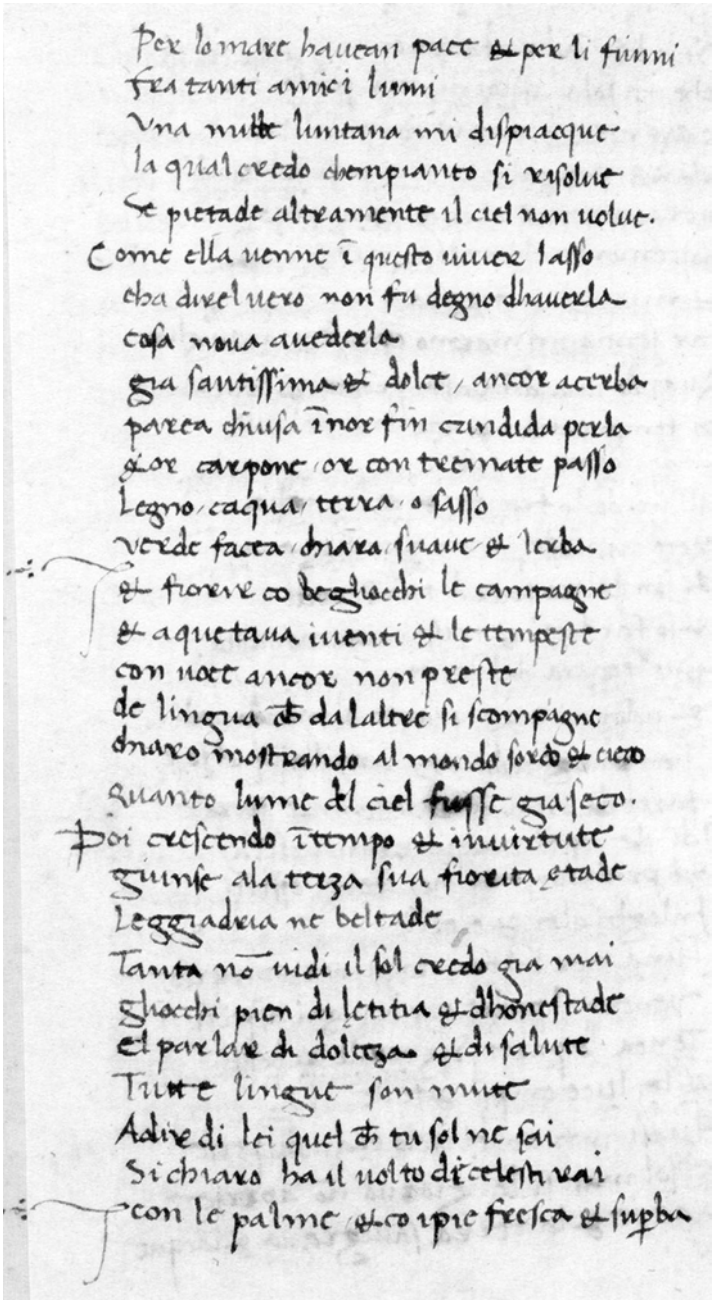

FIGURE 7: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS 706, c. 129*v*. Reprinted by kind permission of the Beinecke Library.

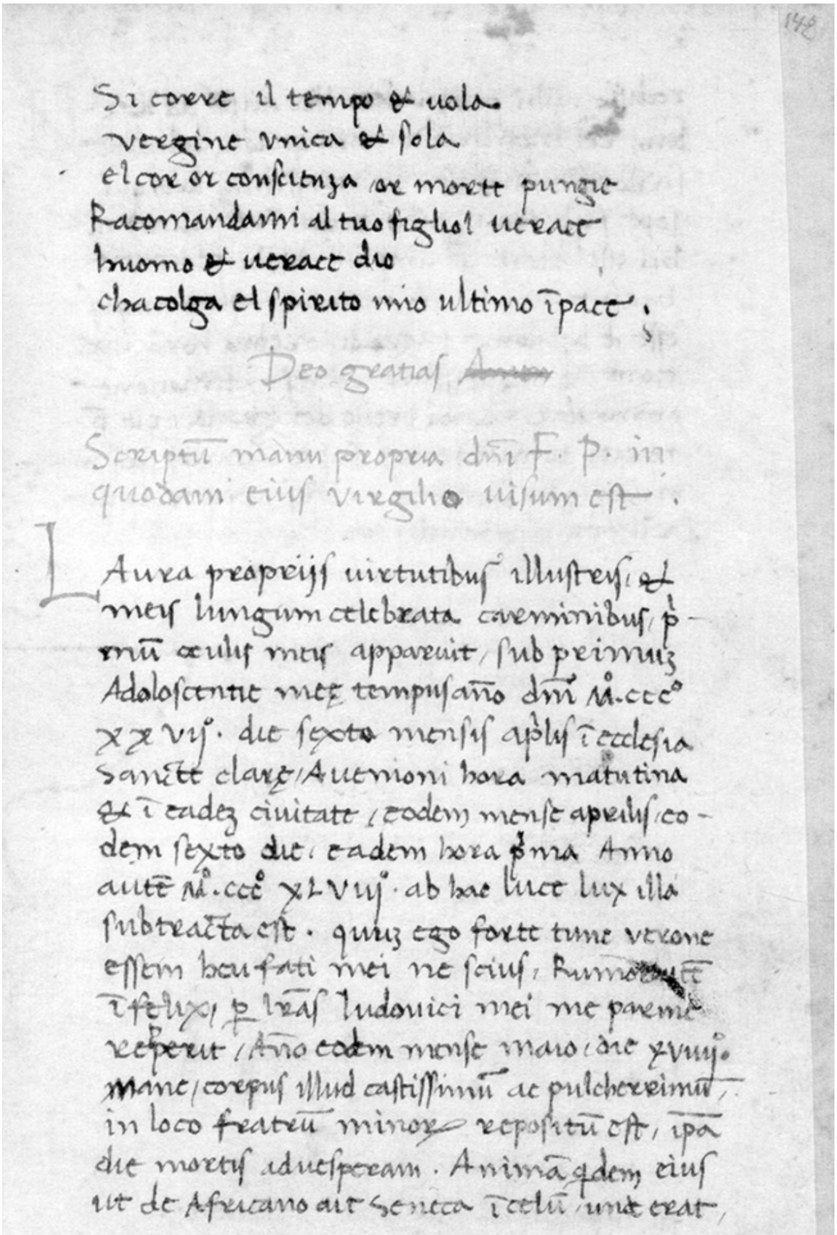
Si corere il tempo et uola
vergine unica et sola
el cor or consciença or morte punge
Racomandami al tuo figliol verace
huomo et verace dio
chacolga el spirito mio ultimo in pace.
Deo gratias ~~Amen~~
Scriptum manu propria domini F. P. in
quodam eius virgilio visum est.
Laura propriis virtutibus illustris et
meis longum celebrata carminibus, primum
oculis meis apparuit sub primum
Adolescentie mee tempus anno domini M.ccc
xxvii. die sexto mensis aprilis in ecclesia
sancte clare Avenioni hora matutina
et in eadem civitate eodem mense aprilis eo-
dem sexto die eadem hora prima Anno
autem M.ccc xlviii. ab hac luce lux illa
subtracta est. quum ego forte tunc verone
essem heu fati mei nescius. Rumor autem
infelix per litteras ludovici mei me parme
reperit Anno eodem mense maio die xviiii.
mane, corpus illud castissimum ac pulcherrimum
in loco fratrum minorum repositum est, ipsa
die mortis ad vesperam. Anima quidem eius
ut de Africano ait Seneca in celum unde erat,

FIGURE 8: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS 706, c. 148*r*.
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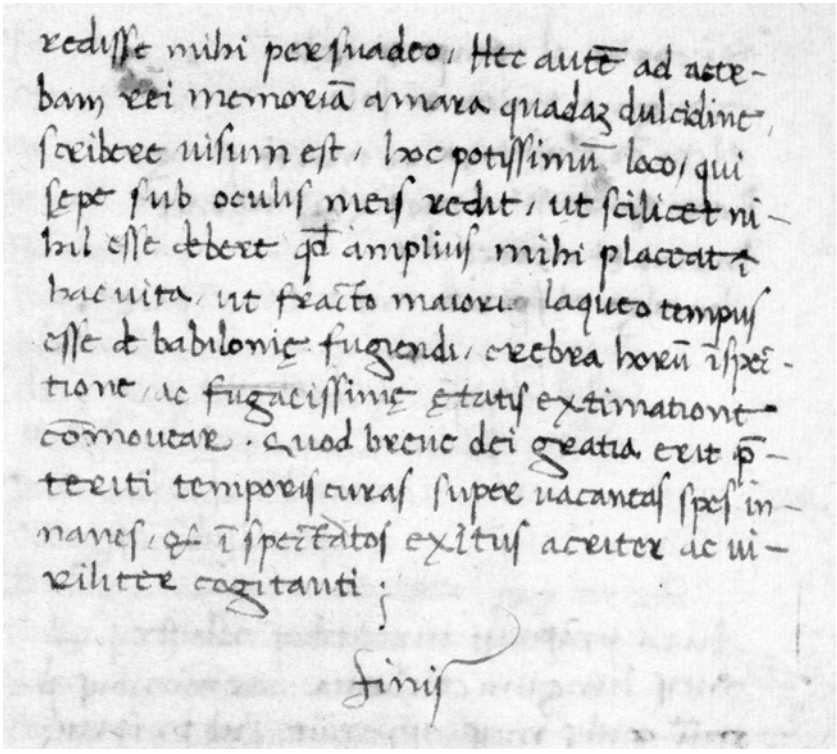

FIGURE 9: New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS 706, c. 148*v*. Reprinted by kind permission of the Beinecke Library.

CHAPTER FIVE

PETRARCH READING BOCCACCIO: REVISITING THE GENESIS OF THE *TRIUMPHI*

Martin Eisner

What are the origins of Petrarch's *Triumphi*? The question posed in this manner admits of certain ambiguities. What can it mean to search for the origins of a work of art? Martin Heidegger addresses the question from an aesthetic perspective in one of his more influential essays and, after attempts to avoid the figure of the artist altogether, has to concede that one must examine "the activity of the artist in order to arrive at the origin of the work of art".[1] How can we access an artist's process of conceptualization? What materials are available to us? The world may have been created in six days, but the gestation period of a work of art, in which the artist faces the daunting task of *creatio ex nihilo*, lasts considerably longer. It is the product of long considered ideas, slowly accumulated observations, and sudden insights. It would be foolish to hope to perceive all of the elements that went into a work's construction, or hope to reduce "the complexity of the *Trionfi*'s inspiration",[2] but it is worth attempting to discover the most decisive moment in its creation and the most decisive model of its literary form.

The philological apparatus of a work can furnish us with certain clues to this process, but the textual situation of Petrarch's *Triumphi* is anything but certain. There is debate about which Triumphi constitute the final version and what their proper order should be, in addition to a high number of variants that further complicate the work's textual stability.[3] The date of composition, furthermore, remains problematic and open

[1] Heidegger 1971, 58.

[2] Baranski 1990, 75.

[3] Pasquini 1975 takes issue with the ordering of Appel 1901, which follows the vulgate of the poem that circulated following Petrarch's death. While the vulgate version does have the advantage of presenting the work as it came to be known and interpreted, the possibility that Petrarch's final version was different from the vulgate may be confirmed by Zenone Zenoni's use of the first terzina of *Triumphus Mortis* II as the *principio* of the poem as a whole. On Zenone Zenoni, see Feo 1979, 30–36.

to various interpretations. It is no wonder that Emilio Pasquini has spent over thirty years preparing a new critical edition. While these materials may be an impediment to the establishment of a critical edition, they also present the critic with a wide array of opportunities to interrogate the work at various moments of its coming into being. The philological confusion that confronts the textual critic is a mine of possibilities for the critic who wants to investigate the work's genesis.

Exploring these philological materials, this essay revisits a hypothesis first proposed by Vittore Branca and Giuseppe Billanovich, which sees Boccaccio's *Amorosa visione* as the decisive mediating text in Petrarch's conceptualization of the *Triumphi*. Scholars have proposed other works, both literary and visual, that may have influenced Petrarch's poem, but according to this hypothesis there is no work that has contributed more to the inspiration of the unique literary form of the triumph.[4] The reconstruction outlined by Branca and Billanovich needs to be revised in some significant ways, but the general pattern of circulation described by Branca whereby Boccaccio's *Amorosa visione* influenced Petrarch's *Triumphi*, which in their turn prompted Boccaccio to revise his poem, remains persuasive. Although Branca felt confident asserting this model as "certain" in *Boccaccio medievale*, recent editors of the *Triumphi* have been less convinced of Boccaccio's role.[5]

In the introduction to his edition of the *Triumphi*, for example, Marco Ariani relegates the issue to a brief footnote, preferring instead to emphasize Petrarch's relations to Dante's poem.[6] Marco Santagata, on the other hand, addresses the question in his introduction to Vinicio

[4] On possible visual influences, see Ciccuto 1988 and 1991b. Calcaterra (1942, 145–208) argues for the importance of the *Roman de la Rose* in the origins of the *Triumphi*.

[5] Branca 1986, 315: "Ma quella circolazione è certa: come l'*Amorosa visione* suggerì il disegno e lo sviluppo dei *Trionfi*, così l'intervento—a diversi livelli—del Petrarca, il suo interesse per il poemetto ne sollecitò prepotentemente la ripresa e la nuova redazione da parte dell'autore. E se l'idea, la struttura, la tradizione stessa dei *trionfi* ha come iniziatore il Boccaccio, forse mai quella sua afosa ed infelice prova, in cinquanta canti in terza rima, avrebbe avuto la forza di avviare e di imporre e di far sviluppare largamente alla letteratura del Rinascimento un 'genere' di così caratteristico gusto tardogotico". In the same essay, Branca proposes the connections between *Rvf* 323.6–11 and *Decameron* V 8.15 as another example of Boccaccian influence on Petrarch. On Boccaccio's importance as a transmitter of genres to the Renaissance, see Orvieto 1978.

[6] Ariani (1988, 10n12; 45–52) explores other possible sources, but not Boccaccio's poem. Ariani (1999, 291) also briefly compares the works in terms of the experience of the narrators, but the distinction drawn seems too schematic and fails to give enough credit to the variety of narrative techniques adopted by Boccaccio in the poem.

Pacca's edition, but only in order to demolish it: "Totale è stato il crollo del rapporto *Triumphi-Amorosa visione* [. . .] [g]li studi hanno infatti dimostrato che la presunta seconda redazione non è opera di Boccaccio, ma è un rifacimento di uno spregiudicato editore cinquecentesco, Girolamo Claricio".[7] Emilio Pasquini similarly urges that the importance of the Boccaccian poem be disregarded: "Senza lo spartiacque di Laura morta non si comprende la genesi dei *Triumphi*; ed è questo un ulteriore e definitivo avallo (se ce ne fosse ancora bisogno) contro ogni possibile dipendenza di Petrarca dal *Roman de la Rose*, peggio ancora dalla cosiddetta seconda redazione dell'*Amorosa visione*".[8]

When the question of the relationship between the *Amorosa visione* and the *Triumphi* is addressed, editors of Petrarch's work confront only Billanovich's reconstruction of events in which Petrarch would have read the second redaction of the *Amorosa visione*. Pasquini's remarks clearly refer only to Billanovich's reconstruction, while the studies that Santagata cites to support his declaration that "[t]otale è stato il crollo del rapporto *Triumphi-Amorosa visione*" likewise only argue against Boccaccio's authorship of a second redaction.[9] Billanovich's elegant story, which both editors question, proposes that after meeting with Petrarch in March of 1351, Boccaccio revised his *Amorosa visione* (which he had composed between 1342 and early 1343) and sent it to Petrarch, probably through Forese Donati, who visited Petrarch in Avignon in October of the same year. Billanovich suggested that this copy of the second redaction that Boccaccio sent to Petrarch was the edition from which Girolamo Claricio's *editio princeps* derived its text.[10] This reconstruction already seemed "ingegnosissima", in its elegant integration of a wide range of materials, but also "un po' romanzesca" to Gianfranco Contini, who makes his observations in the very same issue of the *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* in which Billanovich set forth one of the most complete versions of his hypothesis.[11] Contini's main objection to Billanovich's thesis anticipates those of Pasquini and Santagata, since he also finds it unlikely that Petrarch would have been inspired by this second redaction.

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[7] Santagata 1996b, xxix.

[8] Pasquini 1999, 17.

[9] Santagata 1996b cites Raimondi 1948a and Pernicone 1946. Finotti 1997 notes the limited relevance of these works cited to the larger question they are marshaled to support.

[10] Billanovich 1946b and 1947.

[11] Contini 1946, 99n1.

These once and future editors of the *Triumphi* appear to reject the possible influence of the *Amorosa visione* out of the conviction that the second version is not authentic, but Billanovich's reconstruction is not the only possibility. Might Petrarch have known the first redaction of the *Amorosa visione*? Critics have largely ignored this possibility. One reason for this omission might be that scholars have preferred to examine the *Triumphi* in light of Petrarch's direct reading of the *Commedia*, an approach that had not seemed licit in light of Petrarch's claim not to have read Dante until 1359 in *Familiaris* XXI 15. Once scholars had established that the echoes of Dante's poem were too numerous to support Petrarch's claim, critics welcomed the opportunity to observe the manner in which Petrarch's "anxiety of influence" expressed itself in his poem.[12] Having established that Petrarch read the *Commedia* before 1359, Boccaccio's work no longer seemed necessary as Petrarch's point of reference when he conceived his terza rima dream vision. Nonetheless, even if one accepts that Petrarch did read Dante directly, the significant ties adduced by earlier critics between the *Triumphi* and the *Amorosa visione* remain.

By addressing only Billanovich's thesis or ignoring the Boccaccian poem altogether in favor of the complex relationship between Dante and Petrarch, these editors overlook the possibility that Petrarch might have known the first redaction of Boccaccio's poem. Vittore Branca's exploration of the relations between the two works lists over fifty connections between them, of which only three depend upon the second redaction.[13] Moreover, a recent study by Francesco Colussi has reconsidered the whole question of the second redaction of the *Amorosa visione*. In the course of arguing for the second redaction's authenticity (which he takes to be, for the most part, genuine, although marked by various editorial interventions of Claricio), he supports the thesis that Petrarch read the *Amorosa visione* in its first version before writing the *Triumphi*.[14] Leaving the whole question of the second redaction of the *Amorosa visione* to the side, is there any evidence, in addition to the textual echoes adduced by Branca, that Petrarch read this first version of the *Amorosa visione*?

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[12] The key text is Trovato 1979, but see the reservations of Santagata 1990, 79–91.

[13] Branca 1941.

[14] Colussi 1998.

Convincing proof that Petrarch read the *Amorosa visione* during his preparation of the *Triumphi* can be found in the margins of Vat. Lat. 3196, the collection of some of Petrarch's worksheets.[15] It is one of the earliest documents of its kind, an extraordinary witness to authorial decisions, which, as Cesare Segre writes, "ci dà l'occasion impareggiabile di seguire le prime fasi della composizione di molti testi".[16] The importance of this collection was recognized immediately by Petrarch's followers and it was widely used from the Cinquecento on as an important document to help understand Petrarch's style.[17] The early variants and forms of Latino 3196, studied by Contini to examine Petrarch's notion of "correction" in his poetics,[18] also provide markers of Petrarch's reading. A work's coming-into-being depends not only upon a poet's evolving expressive precision, but also on his relations with other poets and other texts. Variants provide access to both of these histories. As Contini notes, "una direttiva, e non un confine, descrivono le correzioni degli autori".[19] These variants capture the shift in a work's conceptualization and often date the moment of its redirection.

Rather than address the *Triumphi* themselves as they are found in Vat. Lat. 3196, I will focus on Petrarch's copy of *Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade* (*Rvf* 23). The draft of the canzone provides chronological information about composition, transcription, and revision that we can coordinate with the development of the *Triumphi*. In the lower margin of c. 11*v* of Vat. Lat. 3196, Petrarch notes that *Nel dolce tempo* "est de primis inventionibus nostris",[20] which Ruth Phelps, followed by E.H. Wilkins, dates to 1333–1334.[21] While Petrarch composed the poem quite early, he continued to work on it for quite a while and transcribed it into Vat. Lat. 3196 in two stages. The first 89 verses of the canzone were transcribed on c. 11*r* sometime between 1336–1337 and the early 1340s.[22] Petrarch then copied the rest of the poem on the verso of

[15] See Paolino 2000.
[16] Segre 1999, 7.
[17] Belloni 1992.
[18] Segre 1999.
[19] Contini 1970, 5.
[20] For the annotations in the *codice degli abbozzi* and the expansions of Petrarch's abbreviations I have used Paolino 2000 and Romanò 1955.
[21] Phelps 1925, 36. For a full analysis of the various dates proposed for *Nel dolce tempo*, see Dutschke 1977, 10–31.
[22] The early dating is supported by Wilkins 1955, 83–92, and Petrucci 1967, 29–30, while the later period is advocated by Rafti 1995, 210–13, on the basis of paleographic evidence.

c. 11 on 3 April 3 1350, before transcribing it "in ordine post multos et multos annos" on 10 November 1356.[23] As its long gestation period attests, this canzone "delle metamorfosi", as it is sometimes known, was one that Petrarch prized. It has the privilege of being not only the first and longest canzone in his lyric collection, but also the only one of his own poems that Petrarch cites in his "canzone delle citazioni" (*Lasso me, ch'i' non so in qual parte pieghi* [*Rvf* 70]).

The early date of composition of *Rvf* 23 proposed by Phelps concords well with the evidence of its circulation outlined by Santagata.[24] A solid *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the whole poem is Ventura Monachi's sonnet *Come Attheon si fe' subito servo*, which imitates the final stanza of Petrarch's canzone. Since Monachi died in 1348, the whole of Petrarch's canzone must have been circulating before then, that is well before the date of its transcription in Vat. Lat. 3196.[25] More compelling and precise evidence, according to Santagata, is provided by Boccaccio's *Caccia di Diana*, which must have been composed before 1334 and, in its parody of the final stanza of Petrarch's poem, is probably the earliest witness to that poem's early circulation.[26]

The connections between the *Caccia* and Petrarch's canzone begin in their opening lines,[27] both of which describe with significant syntactic and lexical similarities the conventional scene of a poet suffering in spring. The entire plot of the *Caccia*, moreover, may be read as a parodic reversal of the final strophe of *Nel dolce tempo*, which describes

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[23] Petrucci 1967, 112.

[24] Santagata 1990, 219–22.

[25] Santagata 1996, 100.

[26] On the date of the *Caccia*, see Branca 1964–1992, 1: 3.

[27] Boccaccio's engagement with Petrarch's poem is evident by comparing their openings. Petrarch's poem begins:

> Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade,
> che nascer vide et ancor quasi in herba
> la fiera voglia che per mio mal crebbe,
> perché cantando il duol si disacerba

Boccaccio begins his work with obvious echoes of the Petrarchan canzone:

> Nel tempo adorno che l'erbette nove
> rivestono ogni prato e l'aere chiaro
> ride per la dolcezza che 'l ciel move,
> sol pensando mi stava che riparo
> potessi fare ai colpi che forando
> mi gian d'amor il cuor con duolo amaro.

In imitation of the convention, both works contrast the season's rebirth to the poet's suffering. Citations of canzone 23 (*Nel dolce tempo*) are from Pacca and Paolino 1996, 836; the verses from Boccaccio's *Caccia di Diana* are from Branca 1964–1992, 1: 15.

the metamorphosis of Acteon.[28] Indeed, Boccaccio's narrator seems to have jumped out of Petrarch's stanza, since Petrarch's adaptation of the Ovidian story not only eliminates Diana's companions and attributes Acteon's sight of her to intention rather than to accident, but also changes the end of the story:[29]

> Vero dirò, forse e' parrà mençogna,
> Ch'i' sentì' trarmj de l'usata ymago,
> Et in un cervo solitario et vago
> Di selva in selva ratto mi transformo:
> Et de' miei proprij can' fuggo lo stormo.[30]

Contrary to all precedents, Acteon-Petrarch will not be killed by his own dogs.[31] Petrarch's version omits the death and ends the story with an unresolved pursuit, reinforced by the use of the present tense both for the metamorphosis ("mi transformo") and the flight itself ("et de' miei proprij can' fuggo lo stormo").

Petrarch's version of the Acteon story provides the necessary background information for the strange state of Boccaccio's protagonist in the *Caccia*, who begins the poem as a stag and then changes back to a man after Venus' intervention.[32] The suspended flight imposed on Petrarch's Acteon by Laura's Diana is thus parodically resolved by the transformation of Boccaccio's stag-protagonist back to his original human state at the behest of Venus. The basic premise of Boccaccio's confusing "first fiction" makes a good deal more sense if it is read as

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[28] Franco Fido (1979, 150) notes "If [the *Caccia*] is ironic at all, the irony seems directed against the myths it overturns, of Diana and Acteon, of Circe, of Apuleius' Lucius, not to mention the exquisite Ovidian remake by Petrarch in *Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade*". Muscetta (1972, 23) underscores Boccaccio's treatment of the myth of Circe and the Ovidian nature of Petrarch's *Rvf* 23: "la metamorfosi finale a cui fa assistere il poemetto boccacciano è tutta nuova; e nelle tracce del suo 'mescolato' è possibile riconoscere l'intento da una parte di rovesciare il mito di Circe, dall'altra di capovolgere la situazione ovidiana cantata dal Petrarca nel suo poemetto lirico *Nel dolce tempo della prima etade*, dove il poeta si autopuniva come novello Atteone". Cf. Illiano 1984, 319.

[29] For a detailed comparison of the Ovidian and Petrarchan accounts, see Dutschke 1977, 200–9. Both Rivero (1979, 106) and Sturm-Maddox (1985, 24) note that Petrarch alters the expected ending.

[30] Paolino 2000.

[31] A survey of the various versions of the Acteon myth in Forbes-Irving (1990, 80) observes that "in every account it [Acteon's metamorphosis] is immediately followed by Acteon's death".

[32] In reviewing Boccaccio's various uses of Acteon, Branca (1996) remains silent on Petrarch's mediation of the myth for the *Caccia*.

a parody of Petrarch's poem,[33] and its dependence on a Petrarchan model to generate meaning provides excellent evidence of the early circulation of this lyric during Petrarch's lifetime.[34]

While the connections between the *Caccia* and Petrarch's canzone do suggest the early circulation of Petrarch's poem, another piece of evidence adduced by Santagata to support his argument proposes a more complex and dynamic relationship between the two works than Santagata allows. Santagata places particular emphasis on the echoes between the *Caccia*'s climactic scene and verse 81 of the canzone ("Ella parlava sì turbata in vista").[35] In his commentary to verse 81, Santagata writes: "soprattutto colpisce la vicinanza con Boccaccio, *Caccia di Diana* XVI 46–48 '*Udito* questo, la donna piacente/si dirizzò *turbata nello aspetto*,/*dicendo*: "E' non sarà così niente'" (il discorso è rivolto a Diana, implicita protagonista dell'ultima trasformazione petrarchesca: si osservi inoltre che nel cap. XVIII avviene la trasformazione inversa del narratore, 'di cervio mutato in creatura/umana' vv. 11–12)".[36] As Santagata notes, the common elements of the angered goddess Diana and imminent metamorphosis establish a clear relationship between these two parts of their respective texts. Santagata interprets the relationship of influence as one that originates in Petrarch and is received by Boccaccio, but the evidence of the textual history of *Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade* found in Vat. Lat. 3196 suggests that, in this instance, it is more likely that Petrarch was influenced by Boccaccio's work.

The problem with Santagata's argument is quite simply that verse 81 of Petrarch's canzone did not read "Ella parlava sì turbata in vista" until well after Boccaccio composed the *Caccia*, as the evidence of Vat. Lat. 3196 demonstrates. In the partial transcription of *Nel dolce tempo* found on c. 11*r*, which has been dated between 1336 and the early 1340s, the verse reads "Ella parlava sì che là ov'io era/tremar mi facea dentro a quella petra", a phrase that has no significant connection to Boccaccio's *Caccia*. Nor is it likely that Petrarch would have oscillated between the two versions, since the description of Diana as "sì turbata

[33] For a recent summary of various interpretations of Boccaccio's poem, see Cassell and Kirkham 1991, 3–95.

[34] I take the phrase from the title of Wilkins 1948, which does not consider the possible importance of Boccaccio's *Caccia*.

[35] Santagata 1996a, 100: "i riscontri con la *Caccia di Diana* di Boccaccio (e in particolare quelli addotti al v. 81), se non sono casuali, proverebbero che la canzone circolava già nei primi anni Trenta".

[36] Santagata 1996a, 112. The emphases are his.

in vista" is clearly a superior characterization of the scene. The revision "drammatizza una situazione lirica che rischiava di incepparsi in una pacifica tautologia (*là ov'io era—dentro a quella petra*)".[37] When Petrarch transcribed the rest of the canzone on the verso of the same charta on 3 April 1350, that reading remained unchanged; and when he returned to the charta on 28 April of the next year, the verse was still not revised. The same annotation that dates his revisiting of c. 11*r* in 1351, however, makes it clear that he is planning to revise the canzone, since he calls it "nondum correcta". The first evidence of Petrarch's revision is in the transcription of the poem in Vat. Lat. 3195, which, thanks to Petrarch's annotation to the working copy on c. 11*r* of Vat. Lat. 3196, can be dated to 10 November 1356, over twenty years after Boccaccio wrote the *Caccia*. At the time he was composing the *Caccia*, then, Boccaccio could not have read this verse of *Nel dolce tempo* because it did not exist. Furthermore, this variant suggests a more dynamic relationship between the two works, whereby Boccaccio was inspired by Petrarch's canzone for the particular Acteon-like protagonist of his *Caccia* while Petrarch, in his turn, found a solution to a weak part of his beloved poem in the climactic moment of Boccaccio's work.

Santagata is an attentive reader of Boccaccio's influence on Petrarch, but in this instance his desire to marshal further evidence of the canzone's early circulation leads him to neglect the canzone's own complex history, which would have proposed a very different, and perhaps surprising, sequence of events.[38] The continued consultation and integration of these philological materials into our readings can help to alter and disturb our received ideas. Petrarch's influence on Boccaccio has been a commonplace of criticism from the time of Boccaccio's own characterizations of their relationship in his writings, but this variant shows a more interesting and fluid relationship at play.[39] The history of this single verse not only provides evidence for a general methodological corrective, but can also serve as witness to the

[37] Romanò 1955, 173.

[38] Such an oversight is particularly surprising, given Santagata's sensitivity to Petrarch's borrowings from Boccaccio (see, for example, Santagata 1990, 246–70), but it also shows the importance of continuing to use these philological materials for all the information they can provide.

[39] For Boccaccio's portrayal of their relationship, see his *Epistola* XIX 27, where he calls Petrarch "vir inclitus […] preceptor meus" in Branca 1964–1992, 5.1: 666, or *De casibus virorum illustrium* III xiv 6 where he is "preceptor inclitus meus Franciscus Petrarca" in Branca 1964–1992, 9: 264.

larger issue of Boccaccio's role in the genesis of Petrarch's *Triumphi*. If Petrarch could borrow from Boccaccio's *Caccia*, might he not have taken inspiration from the *Amorosa visione* for his *Triumphi*? The dating of this variant itself can be coordinated with the chronology of the *Triumphi* to provide valuable evidence for Boccaccio's possible role in shaping Petrarch's work.

Before addressing the *Triumphi*, however, we must ask a more basic question: how might Petrarch have come into contact with Boccaccio's *Caccia di Diana* between April 1351 and November 1356? The poem did not have a very wide circulation, to judge by its limited transmission history, which includes only six extant manuscript witnesses.[40] It is most likely that Petrarch would have received the poem from Boccaccio directly. It is unlikely, however, that Boccaccio would have sent the *Caccia di Diana* alone, because, in its manuscript transmission, the *Caccia* is almost always grouped with Boccaccio's other works in terza rima: the terza rima-ballata hybrid, *Contento quasi ne' pensier d'amore*, and the *Amorosa visione*. It is a collection that Branca attributes to Boccaccio or to one of his admirers.[41] Indeed, of the eight manuscripts for which we have any evidence only two miscellanies contain the *Caccia* without the *Amorosa visione*.[42]

The basic elements of Billanovich's narrative (with the first version in place of the second) seem confirmed by this analysis, which also concords with the chronology proposed by Petrarch critics for the genesis of the *Triumphi*. When Petrarch met Boccaccio in Padova in March of 1351, he was most likely already at work on compositions in terza rima that would eventually become part of the *Triumphi*.[43] This so-called "nucleo primitivo" consisted of what are now *Triumphus mortis* II and *Triumphus famae* Ia. While Petrarch had begun to explore the possibilities of terza rima before meeting Boccaccio, it is significant that these works lack what Pacca calls the "apparato triunfale" that is

[40] Two codices containing the *Caccia* were catalogued but are now lost. For the history of the *Caccia*'s transmission and the lost exemplars, see Branca 1958, 156–65.

[41] Branca 1958, 126. Nardelli 1988, 508 qualifies this claim, proposing that this trilogy was provisional, an example of what she calls a "fluid" codex organized "in un ordine logico, ma non fisso", which can nonetheless be attributed to Boccaccio. Fluid or not, the fact remains that the collection circulated in this stable form and was read and copied as such by its earliest readers.

[42] These manuscripts, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale II ix 125 and Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana 1059, are described in Branca 1958, 149–51.

[43] Pacca 1996, 303–8.

characteristic of the poem's other chapters, beginning with *Triumphus cupidinis* I.[44] One can speculate that, having just begun to write in terza rima, Petrarch would have been fortunate to meet Boccaccio, who was a great experimenter in the form. Dante may have invented it for a singular work, but Boccaccio explored its range of possibilities.

Boccaccio's interest in terza rima can be seen in the variety of ways in which he uses the meter in four early works. The *Caccia* appears to be the first work written in terza rima that is not directly tied to the exegesis of the *Commedia*.[45] It is also the last work Boccaccio would write solely in terza rima; he explores different ways of using the form in subsequent works. In the *Comedia delle ninfe fiorentine*, for example, he deploys terza rima not for its usual narrative abilities, but as the meter for the lyric interludes in that work's prosimetric structure. In *Contento quasi*, he joins it to a ballata. In his most technically daring effort, the initial letters of each terzina of the *Amorosa visione* spell out an acrostic that Boccaccio forms into three sonnets. One can imagine that Boccaccio would have shared these various experiments with Petrarch and it seems likely that, after their meeting in Padova, which Billanovich calls "una delle vicende fondamentali della storia della letteratura italiana, della cultura e della vita spirituale europea nell'appassionante Trecento",[46] Boccaccio would have sent Petrarch a collection of his terza rima poems.

This collection would have contained the *Amorosa visione* in its first, not second, version with the *Caccia di Diana* and *Contento quasi*, just as the majority of the manuscript tradition transmits them to us. At the same time, Billanovich suggests, Boccaccio would also have sent a copy of the *Commedia* that is now Vat. Lat. 3199 and all these codices would have been brought to Petrarch in the care of Forese Donati in October of that year.[47] This chronology accords with the dates established for the development of the first of the properly "triumphal" *Triumphi*,

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[44] Pacca 1996, 308.

[45] The earliest works in terza rima are summaries of Dante's poem, sometimes called *capitoli*, which Boccaccio, too, would compose later in life for his copies of the *Commedia*. On the verse summaries, see Ahern 2003, 9. The earliest examples are those of Jacopo Alighieri. Following Boccaccio's *Caccia* and *Amorosa visione*, several works like Fazio degli Uberti's *Dittamondo* and a variety of poems by Antonio Pucci explore the range of the poetic form Dante invented for his *Commedia*.

[46] Billanovich 1946a, 2.

[47] This conjectured delivery of materials to Petrarch is still open to debate; see Pier Giorgio Ricci 1985, 286–96.

Triumphus cupidinis I, for which Pacca gives April 1352 as the *terminus post quem*.[48] This revised version of Billanovich's hypothesis, then, fits with both the dates established for the relation between *Nel dolce tempo* and the *Caccia di Diana* and those established for the *Triumphi*. According to this hypothesis, Petrarch received Boccaccio's poems at a decisive moment in his explorations of terza rima, and, it seems safe to propose, his reading of the *Amorosa visione* (in concert with a reading, or perhaps rereading, of the *Commedia*) led him to reconceptualize his poem in terza rima. Without the *Amorosa visione*, indeed, the *Triumphi* in the sense that we know them today would not warrant such a title.

Branca has outlined the similarities in the poems' moral structure and narrative design, and lists over fifty correspondences between them in terms of narrative moments and groupings of people. There is no need to repeat those examples here.[49] The vital point is that Boccaccio's *Amorosa visione* provided Petrarch with techniques of representation, which Petrarch calls a "lunga pictura" (*Tr. cup.* 4.165),[50] and a strategy of organization, which arranges these visions into a series.[51] Boccaccio's poem provided Petrarch both with a model for a long, encyclopedic poem in the vernacular, which Petrarch would modify and transform into the triumph form. The recent attention to the possible influence of a direct reading of Dante's *Commedia*, moreoever, need not be disregarded. The *Amorosa visione* does not substitute for the influence of the *Commedia*. It shows a way of negotiating that influence which Petrarch tried so explicitly to avoid.

Further evidence reinforces the connections between the *Amorosa visione* and the *Triumphi*, suggesting that Petrarch was thinking of *Nel dolce tempo* at the moment he composed the *Triumphus cupidinis* I. Several

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[48] Pacca 1996, 46. Although Calcaterra (1942) and Ariani (1988) propose the early 1340s, Pasquini (1999, 17) argues that the poem is really unthinkable until Laura's death in 1348. Feo (1979) and Rico (1974) support the 1350s. Feo (2003, 171) observes that the proposed dates "oscillano fra il 1350–51 (Branca), il 1351–52 (Billanovich), il 1352–53 (G. Melodia e C. Appel) e il 1357 (Carducci). Chi scrive [Feo] propende cautelativamente per il 1351–53".

[49] Branca 1941.

[50] Carlo Vecce 1999, 311: "Quali potevano essere i modelli della lunga pittura di Petrarca? Sul piano letterario non si può non rinviare alla 'lunghissima pittura' dell'*Amorosa visione* del Boccaccio, testo che probabilmente giunse in tempo (ad Avignone nel 1351, insieme al codice della *Commedia*, l'attuale Vaticano Latino 3199) ad impressionare Petrarca all'inizio della composizione dei *Trionfi*".

[51] Branca 1986, 307 emphasizes that the Boccaccian triumphs constitute an organized series.

manuscripts contain variant readings and authorial annotations copied from now lost early drafts of the poem. Three of these manuscripts[52] present a variant reading of *Triumphus cupidinis* I.10 ("ivi, in quell'ora, sovra l'erba, un poco") accompanied by the annotation "attende nel dolce tempo", which—Pacca suggests—refers to *Rvf* 23.111 ("gittaimi stancho sovra l'erba un giorno"). The final version of the poem would eliminate this memory of *Nel dolce tempo* by revising the line to read "Ivi, fra l'erbe, già del pianger fioco".

This note suggests that Petrarch had the canzone *Nel dolce tempo* in mind when he wrote the first of the "triumphal" Triumphs, and contributes to an understanding of the *Triumphus cupidinis I* as, in some ways, a rewriting of the Acteon scene in the final stanza of *Nel dolce tempo*. Following a series of periphrases establishing its time and place, the actual vision begins:

> Ivi, fra l'erbe, già del pianger fioco,
> vinto dal sonno, vidi una gran luce,
> e dentro assai dolor con breve gioco.
> Vidi un victorïoso e sommo duce,
> pur com'un di color che 'n Campidoglio
> triumphal carro a gran gloria conduce.
> I', che gioir di tal vista non soglio
> per lo secol noioso in ch'i' mi trovo,
> vòto d'ogni valor, pien d'ogn'orgoglio,
> l'abito in vista sì leggiadro e novo
> mirai, alzando gli occhi gravi e stanchi,
> ch'altro diletto che 'nparar non provo:
> quattro destrier, vie più che neve bianchi,
> sovr'un carro di foco un garzon crudo
> con arco in man e con saette a' fianchi;
> nulla temea, però non maglia o scudo,
> ma sugli omeri avea sol due grand'ali
> di color mille, tutto l'altro ignudo.[53]

As in the final stanza of *Nel dolce tempo*, the poet sees a naked god and stares. In the canzone, the result is metamorphoses and flight, but here the vision provokes no such fear. Petrarch's revisitation of *Nel dolce tempo* in this first chapter of his *Triumphi* (which he seems to recall

[52] See Pacca 1996, 5–7. The two codices and one incunabulum which contain the variant *lectio* are: Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, 924; London, British Library, Harley 3264; and Portilia 1473 (copy in the British Library in London: Inc. IB 25926).

[53] *Triumphus cupidinis* I.10–27. I quote from Pacca 1996, 54–56, who follows Appel 1901 for the text of this passage.

syntactically in verses 16–21) may be attributed to internal reasons, particularly since Petrarch regards the canzone as the expression of his youthful *innamoramento*, but these lines also express a significant irony at the heart of the project of the *Triumphi*.[54]

Petrarch represents the scene as the viewing of an antique event to which he is unaccustomed: "gioir di tal vista non soglio/per lo secol noioso in ch'io mi trovo".[55] And yet, Petrarch chooses to express this antique event in the newest of poetic forms, the vernacular dream vision in terza rima, whose formal poetic structure ultimately derives from Dante's *Commedia* but whose representational strategies and architecture as a series of triumphs owe its inspiration to Boccaccio's *Amorosa visione*. It is an unexpected event: Petrarch chooses to recount his vision of antiquity in the new vernacular literary form.

Petrarch has left very little information about his vernacular reading, so it is not surprising that we have no external record that Petrarch received Boccaccio's poems. Boccaccio's solicitation of information about the *Triumphi* from Petrarch's family after the poet's death suggests that the work was a topic of conversation between them, but provides little substantive evidence.[56] In any case, the vernacular texts of others do not seem to stimulate in Petrarch that same desire for intimacy that can be found in his letters to Cicero, nor do they excite the hope for inspiration that compels him to stare at the Greek letters of his copy of Homer, despite his inability to read them. Petrarch constantly dramatizes his encounters with classical texts, perhaps most famously in the account of his ascent of Mt. Ventoux (*Fam.* IV 1) in which he explicitly imitates and inserts himself into the tradition of conversion reading (or listening) that occurs in Augustine's *Confessions* and the Life of St. Anthony.

Of Petrarch's vernacular readings, we possess no such dramatic accounts. Such disregard may be a pose on Petrarch's part, or an element of what one might call his "self-fashioning", but, regardless of the reasons, his attitude towards vernacular texts is remarkably consistent. With the exception of his assertion that one can achieve more in the vernacular since it needs cultivation (*Sen.* V 2), Petrarch generally

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[54] Both Ariani 1988 and Pacca 1996 note the connection between *Triumphus cupidinis* I.16–21 and *Rvf* 23.152–53, the former of which clearly expands on the rhetorical device of delay or suspense suggested in the latter.

[55] Petrarch expresses similar sentiments in his *Epistola metrica* III 33, 1–6.

[56] See *Epistola* XX in Branca 1964–1992, 5.1: 674–89.

considers vernacular works as the products of youth intended for the multitude, as he writes in his letter to Boccaccio on Dante (*Fam.* XXI 15), in which he refuses even to mention Dante's name.[57] Likewise, when he acknowledges Boccaccio's gift of the *Decameron*, it is only as a preface to his Latin translation in *Seniles* XVII 1–4 of its famous final novella about Griselda (*Decameron* X 10). Despite his official claims of disengagement, however, in which he does not read the *Commedia* and reads only the beginning and end of the *Decameron*,[58] the worksheets of Vat. Lat. 3196, and the reordering of the final poems in Vat. Lat. 3195 testify to the extent of Petrarch's continuous labor on his vernacular productions.[59]

Boccaccio's deep engagement with the contemporary cultural climate, by contrast, is not only manifested in his extensive literary and scribal production, but also thematized in those works themselves. The vision proper of the *Amorosa visione*, for example, begins by paying homage to Giotto's superhuman representational abilities, and proceeds to crown Dante with the laurel he never received in his lifetime.[60] Petrarch was far less open to recording his vernacular debts, but his long friendship and correspondence with Boccaccio suggest that in Boccaccio Petrarch had found an interlocutor who could respond in person. The scene Boccaccio describes of them working side by side during his stay in Padova may be an idealized vision of their relationship, but it does seem borne out by the connections between their poems in terza rima.[61] Interest in Petrarch's complex relationship with Dante should leave aside neither Boccaccio's central role in mediating Petrarch's encounter with Dante, nor his independent influence on his friend.[62] The preference to read

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[57] For the Latin text of the *Familiares*, see Rossi 1997. English translations can be found in Bernardo 1975–1985. For the *Seniles*, see Fracassetti 1869–1870 for the Latin text and Bernardo, Levin, and Bernardo 1992 for English version.

[58] Even as Petrarch claims to have read only the beginning and end of the *Decameron*, his assertion that he has heard it attacked may be a memory of the Introduction to Day IV.

[59] For a reading of Petrarch's reordering of the last poems of the collection, see Santagata 1992, 333–43.

[60] *Amorosa visione* IV 10–18 and V 70–88 in Branca 1964–1992, 3: 34 and 38–39, respectively.

[61] Cf. Boccaccio's *Epistola* X 5: "Tu sacris vacabas studiis, ego compositionum tuarum avidus ex illis scribens summebam copiam" (Branca 1964–1992, 5.1: 574).

[62] The study of Dante's place in the *Triumphi* needs to be supplemented by a consideration of Boccaccio's poem. See in this instance Giunta 1993, 426–28, who, while addressing the "memoria di Dante nei *Trionfi*", presents further evidence of Petrarch's debts to Boccaccio's poem.

the *Triumphi* in light of the *Commedia* alone needs to be supplemented by a reconsideration of the *Amorosa visione*. The current critical interest in reception, particularly given the editorial and interpretative fortuna of the *Triumphi*, is understandable, but it has left the issue of the work's conception unresolved. It is difficult philological terrain, but an analysis of Petrarch's datable variants confirms the hypothesis that Petrarch's reading of Boccaccio redirected the development of Petrarch's own terza rima poems into the triumphal model for which it is still known today.

CHAPTER SIX

"IL SUON CHE DI DOLCEZZA I SENSI LEGA" GRAMMATICA ED EUFONIA NEI *RERUM VULGARIUM FRAGMENTA*

Furio Brugnolo

"Petrarca bewegt sich träumerisch in einem Labyrinth
wohlklingender Lieblingsworte und -gedanken,
die er immer neu wendet und bereichert.
[…] Es ist eine Art Spielen auf der Sprache wie
auf einem Musikinstrument. Und daraus
ergibt sich ein ganz eigenartiges,
traumhaft-unwirkliches Verhältnis zur Sprache,
das den Reiz von Petrarcas Kunst ausmacht. […]
Sein Dichten ist ein träumerisches Kreisen
in einer süssen und wehmütigen Stimmung,
die durch seine Lieblingsgedanken und insbesondere
durch den Klang seiner Lieblingsverse immer
neu gespeist wird, und die sich in seinen Gedichten
nach geheimnisvollen, zugleich klanglichen und
gedanklichen Assoziationen niederschlägt, nach
einem Gesetz, das wir nur vergleichsweise mit
dem Namen des Musikalischen bezeichnen können"
(Gmelin 1932, 144; 173)

1

La lingua poetica petrarchesca è caratterizzata, come è noto, da una ricca polimorfia grammaticale, soprattutto nel settore della flessione verbale. Per menzionare solo alcuni casi: la seconda persona singolare dei verbi della prima classe può uscire sia in *-i* (*abbracci, ascolti*) che in *-e* (*consume, distempre*); *fa* alterna con *face, pò* (*può*) con *pote* (*puote*), *ponno* con *possono*; troviamo il tipo *facea* accanto a *faceva* (ma anche *fea*), il tipo *morì* accanto a *morìo*; e ricordiamo ancora le varie forme della terza persona

plurale dei perfetti (il tipo *andaro* accanto ad *andaron*—mai *andarono*—, *udiro* e *udiron*, il tipo *ebben* accanto a *ebber, furo, fur* e *furono* per il verbo *essere*, ecc.), quelle del condizionale (*farei, farebbe* ma ovviamente anche *faria*, e poi *farebbeno* accanto a *farebbero* ecc.), quelle del congiuntivo imperfetto (*andassen* vs *andasser*), e così via.[1] Questa varietà di forme diventerà poi uno dei tratti tipici della lingua poetica italiana "classica":[2] ne costituisce anzi, caso forse più unico che raro nelle letterature occidentali, la straordinaria ricchezza.

L'opzione petrarchesca per l'una o per l'altra di queste forme è generalmente motivata da esigenze metriche, di rima ovviamente o di ritmo, quando non sia direttamente condizionata dal contesto fonico immediatamente successivo. Per esempio: il passato remoto del tipo *andaro, furo* è ammesso—beninteso, oltre che in posizione di rima—solo davanti a vocale (davanti a consonante c'è invece sempre la forma apocopata: *andar, fur*); davanti a consonante sono usati solo *andaron, furon* (mentre *andarono, furono* non compaiono mai); a loro volta *face* e *pote* possono essere usati (a parte la solita posizione di rima) solo davanti a vocale o parola iniziante per vocale, *fa* e *pò* solo davanti a consonante.[3] La distribuzione (che per esempio in Dante non è così rigida, soprattutto per *face* e *puote*) è assimilabile a quella delle forme apocopate (*cantar, amor*) di contro alle forme piene (*cantare, amore*), che risponde a regole ben precise.[4] Citerò infine anche il caso dell'enclisi pronominale 'libera', cioè indipendente dalla legge di Tobler-Mussafia ("ma scampar non *potienmi* ale né piume", "poi ch'Amor *femmi* un cittadin de' boschi", "ché spesso nel suo volto veder *parme*", ecc.).

Se per molte opzioni, come l'ultima citata, il condizionamento delle "ragioni metriche" è evidente, meno ovvie appaiono le motivazioni che determinano altre scelte, in sé adiafore. Perché per esempio una volta *ebber(o)* e una volta *ebben(o)* (sia come forme del verbo *essere* che come desinenze del condizionale)? Perché *ardavamo* è preferito ad *ardevamo*? Cosa determina l'alternanza tra *avendo* e *abbiendo, uscì* e *uscìo*? E così via.

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[1] Per una completa documentazione, cfr. Vitale 1996, 178–217.

[2] Cfr. Serianni 2001.

[3] Con le uniche eccezioni, motivate, di *Rvf* 2.14: "del quale oggi vorrebbe, et non *pò*, aitarme" (per via del fortissimo inciso che determina dialefe), e di *Rvf* 195.12: "Esser *pò* in prima ogni impossibil cosa" (per ragioni metriche, ovviamente, ma anche per via del gioco con *imPOssibil*). Tutti gli esempi dei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Rvf*) sono citati dall'edizione di Santagata 1996.

[4] Cfr. Brugnolo 2003.

È questa la problematica che intendo qui affrontare, agevolato in ciò da un'ottima base di partenza: la monografia di Maurizio Vitale, da un lato,[5] e, dall'altro (e soprattutto), un saggio famoso—e che nulla ha perso, a oltre cinquant'anni di distanza dalla prima pubblicazione, della sua importanza—di Giovanni Nencioni, "Un caso di polimorfia della lingua letteraria dal sec. XII al XVI".[6] Fondamentalmente non c'è nulla nel presente intervento che non sia stato già intuito da Nencioni. Il mio è dunque poco più che un approfondimento: e, se mi è consentito, un omaggio ai 93 anni del grande maestro fiorentino non meno che ai 700 di Petrarca.

2

Nel saggio citato, Nencioni osserva che molte delle scelte petrarchesche all'interno della polimorfia verbale tipica della lingua poetica delle origini possono essere ricondotte ad "esigenze eufoniche", in relazione con l'"intrinseca armonia" (la definizione è di Contini)[7] del "sistema" petrarchesco; e cita per esempio casi come i seguenti, tutti relativi alle forme di terza persona plurale del congiuntivo imperfetto. A *Rvf* 214.18 (autografo nel Vat. Lat. 3195) Petrarca usa *rendesser*:

> mi *rendesser* un dì la mente sciolta;

viceversa a *Rvf* 239 (pure autografo) e a *Rvf* 135 (idiografo) preferisce l'uscita *-en(o)*: *addolcissen* (e non *addolcisser*, teoricamente altrettanto possibile) e *temprassen* (e non *temprasser*):

> i miei sospiri ch'*addolcissen* Laura (*Rvf* 239.8)
> se nol *temprassen* dolorosi stridi (*Rvf* 135.83).

Nencioni fa notare per i primi due casi che ciò che determina l'opzione del poeta è "la necessità di dissimilare *n* da *r*";[8] e si veda infatti l'esito che i due versi avrebbero avuto con le forme concorrenti:

> * mi r***EN***dess***EN uN*** dì la m***EN***te sciolta
> * i miei sospi***R***i, ch'addolcisse***R*** Lau***R***a.

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[5] Cfr. Vitale 1996.

[6] Nencioni 1989 [1953]; originariamente il saggio aveva il sovratitolo *Fra grammatica e retorica*.

[7] Cfr. Contini 1970 [1943], 16.

[8] Nencioni 1989 [1953], 48.

Una necessità di dissimilazione così evidente—soggiunge Nencioni—"che non occorre uscire dall'ambito del verso e neppure, direi, dal nesso combinatorio delle due successive parole implicate",[9] cioè *mente* e *Laura*.

Anche per il terzo caso (*Rvf* 135.83) Nencioni rileva come sia "il pullulare degli *r*" a imporre la "dissimilazione", anche "per attenuare, sul piano melodico, la violenza semantica della tessera *dolorosi stridi*".[10] L'osservazione è esatta, come mostra l'evidenziazione grafica che segue (che mette in luce, fra l'altro, come il correlato fonico della "violenza semantica" di *dolorosi stridi*, la filiera *-OR-I-RI-*, sia già anticipato dall'iniziale "m*ORIR* p*ORI*a *RI*dendo"):

mia vita che m***ORIR*** p***ORI***a ***RI***dendo,
del *g****RA***n piac***ER*** ch'io ***PRE***ndo,
se nol tem***PRA***ssen dol***OR***os***I*** st***RI***di.

Ma si può andar oltre, e rilevare anche un'altra rete fonica, quella per cui la scelta del morfema *-en* è motivata dal fatto che in esso trova per così dire conclusione la quadruplice iterazione di *-e-* + nasale in ciò che precede:

mia vita che morir poria rid***EN***do,
del gr*an* piacer ch'io pr***EN***do,
s***E N***ol t***EN***prass***EN*** dolorosi stridi;

dove, come si vede, la sequenza *temprassen dolorosi* (al posto di un eventuale ***temprasser dolorosi*) è precisamente quella che consente a Petrarca non solo di ribadire il segmento / *EN* / ma anche di riecheggiare integralmente *prendo* nel verso seguente:

… … … … … … …ch'io ***PRENDO***
… … (tem)***PR***(ass)***EN DO***(lorosi) …

Si vedono qui convergere entrambi i 'principi' eufonici individuati da Nencioni, che riconduce le strategie petrarchesche nell'orchestrazione del verso a due tendenze opposte e complementari: 1) quella che punta a "variare e attenuare" (cioè a dissimilare, evitando la ripetizione di suoni o gruppi fonici uguali o equivalenti), e 2) quella che invece induce a "ripetere e insistere". Citiamo per intero: "altre volte la cura di variare e

[9] Nencioni 1989 [1953], 48.
[10] Nencioni 1989 [1953], 49.

attenuare cede a quella di ripetere e insistere: o al fine di instaurare un richiamo tra due parole spazialmente distanti mediante un parallelismo fonetico, come in CCCXIX 1–2 'I dì miei, più leggier che nessun cervo, / Fuggir come ombra e non *vider* più bene' (l'uscita in *r* collega *fuggir* a *vider*); o di ottenere un massimo di sonorità, come nel mirabilmente canoro 'ch'*andassen* sempre lei sola cantando' di CLXXXVII".[11]

Le seguenti visualizzazioni grafiche, estese agli interi contesti, permettono di incrementare e precisare ulteriormente le osservazioni di Nencioni:

> I dì miei, più leggi***ER***' che nesun c***ER***vo
> fugg***IR*** come ombra, et non vid***ER*** più bene
> ch'un batt***ER*** d'occhio, et poche ho***RE*** s***ER***ene,
> c'ama***RE*** et dolci ne la mente s***ER***vo.
> (*Rvf* 319.1–4)

Qui non c'è solo il parallelismo fonetico tra *fuggir* e *vider*, ma tutta la disseminazione del segmento */ER/* (o, con inversione speculare, */RE/*); si evita così un eventuale

> * … … …et ***N***o***N*** vid***EN*** più b***EN****e*,

con una proliferazione di nasali (posti anche i precedenti "nes*UN* … c*OM*e *OM*bra") giudicata in questo caso eccessiva ed improponibile. Il contrario di quel che avviene nell'esempio successivo, *Rvf* 187.11:

> ch'***AN***das***SEN SEM***pre lei sola c***AN***t***AN***do,

dove la forma *andasser* avrebbe meno felicemente coinvolto l'immediatamente contiguo *sempre*:

> * ch'andas***SER SE***(mp)***R****E* lei sola cantando;

laddove è proprio la calibrata sequenza distribuitiva (tra primo emistichio e clausola) *-AN-SEN-SEN-AN-AN-* che determina il tono "mirabilmente canoro"—e in effetti davvero memorabile—del verso (su cui torneremo più avanti).

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[11] Nencioni 1989 [1953], 49. Lo studioso non menziona la sua edizione di riferimento del *Canzoniere*. La nostra è ovviamente, qui come altrove, Petrarca 1996.

3

Non mi risulta che il suggerimento di Nencioni sia stato ripreso e approfondito sistematicamente, malgrado gli spunti e le novità offerte da studi come quelli di Maria Picchio Simonelli e soprattutto dalle acutissime analisi di Giorgio Orelli:[12] studi che però non affrontano, neppure marginalmente, il problema delle opzioni morfologiche di volta in volta attuate da Petrarca e delle loro eventuali motivazioni contestuali.

Ma proprio alla luce di quegli approcci (e in particolare di quelli di Orelli, che ci ha dato la descrizione finora più completa dell'organizzazione sonora dei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*), si può andar oltre le notazioni di Nencioni, e tentare di dare delle risposte ai quesiti posti dallo studioso. A cominciare proprio dai casi di fronte ai quali lo stesso Nencioni dichiarava di arrendersi.

Egli confessa per esempio, a proposito di *Rvf* 186.1:

> Se Virgilio et Homero *avessin* visto,

e di *Rvf* 60.11:

> gli *avessir* data, et per costei la perde,

che l'*avessin* del primo e ancor più l'*avessir* del secondo—autografo, e confermato dal codice degli abbozzi, Vat. Lat. 3196[13]—"non mi rivelano, per quanto interrogati, il loro segreto".[14]

È da notare che queste sono le uniche due forme attestate nei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* per la terza persona plurale dell'imperfetto congiuntivo di *avere; avesser(o)* non compare mai, anche se, beninteso, il morfema *-esser(o)* ha più d'un'occorrenza nel *Canzoniere* (*mutasser Rvf* 142.18, *rendesser Rvf* 214.18). Perché *avesser(o)* comunque venga evitato in entrambi i casi in questione lo si capisce dall'evidenziazione grafica che segue, a cominciare da *Rvf* 186.1:

> ***SE VIR***gI**li*O** (et Homero) a ***VESSIN VIS***t***O***.

Qui non è questione di ritorni di suoni nasali, ma di armonizzazione vocalica. Il poeta tende cioè a instaurare un perfetto equilibrio vocalico

[12] Cfr. Picchio Simonelli 1975 e 1978, Orelli 1990.
[13] Paolino 2000, 222.
[14] Nencioni 1989 [1953], 50. Per le due forme, dei popolarismi tosco-fiorentini (ma la seconda è un *hàpax*), cfr. Vitale 1996, 212.

tra le prime quattro sillabe e le ultime quattro del verso, sulla base della sequenza *-E-I-I-O* (o quanto meno *-E-I-I-*):

*s**E**-v**I**r-g**Ì** …(**O**)* […] *v**E**s-s**I**n-v**Ì** …(**O**).*

Questo dell'armonizzazione o gradazione vocalica del verso—e comunque della distribuzione simmetrica dei fonemi vocalici del verso—è un principio assolutamente fondamentale della poetica petrarchesca, che meriterebbe di essere indagato a fondo; ed è esso che spiega, credo—per toccare subito un altro caso di opzione morfologica inconsueta—, la scelta della forma metaplastica *soffra* per *soffre* a *Rvf* 205.4:[15]

alma, non ti lagnar, ma *soffra* et taci;

un verso in cui il timbro */a/* è predominante (con tre *a* toniche in particolare, a inizio, metà e fine: *alma, lagnar, taci*), anche se non esclusivo, posta la */o/* tonica di *soffra* anticipata da quella atona di *non* (il gusto della ripetizione in Petrarca è sempre, come è noto, attenuato da quello per la variazione).[16] Anche qui tuttavia la segmentazione interna ci dà una equilibrata distribuzione: **/ *A**lm**A* *n**O**n* *t**I*** /** nella prime quattro sillabe, **/** *s**O**ffr**A* et t**A**c**I*** **/** nelle ultime quattro (con *et* assorbito in sinalefe), dunque ***/A-A-O-I/*** e **/ *O-A-A-I*** **/** (due *-A-*, una *-O-*, una *-I-*). Al centro del verso resta isolata una sequenza di sole *a*: *l**A**gn**A**r m**A***:[17]

Alm***A*** n***O***n t***I*** l***A***gn***A***r m***A*** s***O***ffr***A*** et *t**A***c***I***

Non è tutto, però, perché va considerato anche il contesto:

Dolci ire, dolci sdegni et dolci paci,
dolce mal, dolce affanno et dolce peso
dolce p*ARlAR*e, et dolcemente inteso,
or di dolce ò*RA*, or pien di dolci faci:

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[15] Cfr. Vitale 1996, 179.

[16] È piuttosto "la ripetizione d'uno stesso vocabolo che Petrarca evita (quando però, al solito, non abbia intenzione di sottolinearlo); e anzitutto a contatto prossimo" (Contini 1970 [1943], 14). E con "vocaboli" si intendano anche le parole "grammaticali", come nel caso—esempio eloquente—di *Rvf* 362.1–3: "Volo con l'ali de' pensieri al cielo / sì spesse volte che quasi un di *loro* / esser mi par ch'àn ivi il *suo* [e non "lor"!] thesoro".

[17] L'architettura timbrica può anche essere espressa così: */ A-A-O-I-A /* (prime cinque sillabe)—*/ A-O-A-A-I /* (ultime cinque sillabe); al centro, con forte rilievo ritmico, la *-A-* tonica di *lagnar*. Questo *pattern* spiega tra l'altro anche la rinuncia a un ipotetico ***alma, non ti lagnar: sòffera et taci* (*soffra* è il succedaneo di *sòffera*).

alma, non ti lagn*AR*, ma soff*RA* et taci,
et temp*RA* il dolce am*AR*o, che n'à offeso,
col dolce honor che d'am*AR* quella ài preso
a cui io dissi: Tu sola mi piaci.
(*Rvf* 205.1–8)

Motivo fonico conduttore delle quartine, e in particolare dei vv. 3–7, è infatti la ricorrenza del segmento */RA/* e del suo riflesso speculare */AR/* (un'iterazione che da un lato fa da contrappunto a quella semantico-lessicale di *dolce*, dall'altro contribuisce a generare le paronomasie *or-òra-or* di 4 e *amaro-amar* di 6–7):

3 p***AR***l***AR***e
4 o***RA***
5 lagn***AR*** … soff***RA***
6 temp***RA*** … am***AR***o
7 am***AR***.

A giustificare l'insistenza su questa particolare partitura (in cui possono essere integrate l'affine ricorrenza di *a+l* , con *MAL* 2 ripreso, quasi anagrammaticamente, da *ALMA* 5, da cui la successiva filiera *MA* 5, *aMAro* 6, *aMAr* 7), faccio rilevare che nelle terzine del sonetto il nesso */ RA-AR /* non compare più, tranne che nell'ultimo verso ("ella più t*AR*di…"): che si configura dunque come un'ultima eco, debole e a distanza, di questi sparsi rintocchi.

Per tornare a *Rvf* 186.1 ("Se Virgilio et Homero avessin visto"), va comunque notato che viene evitato non solo *avesser*, ma anche un possibile (come nel sonetto 60) *avessir*: che anzi ci si attenderebbe come eventuale ripresa della *-IR-* iniziale di *Virgilio*. Evidentemente agisce qui l'altro criterio più sopra accennato, quello della dissimilazione. La *discretio* petrarchesca rifugge dal rincalzare la già corposa triplice allitterazione di */v/* con un'ulteriore ripercussione fonica (ottenuta per di più attraverso l'impiego di una forma del tutto inconsueta):

* Se ***VIR***gilio et Homero a***V***ess***IR VI***sto
VIR V---IR VI

L'*avessin visto* di *Rvf* 186.1 fa il paio con l'*andassen sempre* di *Rvf* 187.11 (cfr. sopra). Anche qui, come già notato, usando *andassen* e non *andasser*, Petrarca evita la faticosa replicazione di nessi con */r/* (*-SER SEmpRE*), puntando invece su una più liquida iterazione di nessi di vocale+nasale: ben cinque ("*AN*dass*EN* s*EM*pre […] c*AN*t*AN*do"), cui s'aggiungano le allitterazioni consonantiche a base */k/* e */s/*, con *c'anda-* e *canta-* a

inizio e fine (in realtà *ch'andassen* e *cantando*, agli estremi del verso, sono in rapporto quasi paronomastico):

CH'ANdA(sse)***n*** sempre lei sola ***CANtAn***(do).

Il tutto serve a mettere in rilievo assoluto, per contrappunto fonico, il *sempre lei sola* al centro del verso o, meglio ancora, l'emblematico *lei sola*, da cui sono escluse nasali e vibranti.

Si noti, a complemento di quanto già detto, anche la struttura fonica del verso che immediatamente precede (*Rvf* 187.10):

e del past***OR*** ch'***AN***c***OR*** M***AN***tova hon***OR***a,

dove la triplice iterazione di *-or* evidentemente inibiva un'ulteriore ripresa del nesso vocale+vibrante (*-er*) nel v. 11, in cui viceversa si propaga omofonicamente la doppia *an* di "anchor Mantova".

4

L'altro caso di fronte al quale Nencioni si dichiarava impotente, per via di *avessir*, è quello del sonetto 60. Ma qui è da considerare l'intera terzina (vv. 9–11):

Che porà dir chi per amor sospira,
s'altra speranza le mie rime nove
gli *avessir* data, et per costei la perde?

in cui è facile rilevare le "fila" (il termine è di Orelli) su cui si regge l'elaborata partitura fonica:

Che ***PORA*** d***IR*** chi ***PER A***mor sos***PIRA***,
s'altra s***PERA***nza le mie ***RI***me nove
gli aves***IR*** data, et ***PER*** costei la ***PER***de?

L'intarsio è di un manierismo sublime, e non mi ci soffermo ulteriormente. Noto solo che con un eventuale *avesser* nel terzo verso si sarebbe persa la regolare alternanza *IR-ER* che caratterizza i primi due (*dir—per—sospira—speranza*):

… d***IR***… p***ER***… sosp***IR***a
… sp***ER***anza… … …
… aves***IR***… p***ER***… p***ER***de,

e si sarebbe determinata invece una triplice ripetizione di /ER/ nel terzo verso stesso: **avessER—pER—pERde*.

Trova qui eloquente spiegazione (basti il primo dei tre versi, di evidenza quasi ecolalica: / *PORÀ—PERA—PIRA* /) anche un altro *hàpax* della morfologia verbale petrarchesca:[18] *porà*, al posto di un pure possibile **potrà* (che è infatti la forma che ricorre in questa sede nel codice degli abbozzi [Vat. Lat. 3196]).[19] Vitale sottolinea che tale forma assimilata ricorre nel codice Vat. Lat. 3195 "per mano del copista",[20] confrontandola col *potrete* di *Rvf* 71.54: "e potrete pensar qual dentro fammi" (dove, aggiungo, l'uso della forma non assimilata[21] potrebbe essere stato indotto dal successivo incontro di dentale sorda + *r* proposto da *dentro*).

Si noti che la sequenza /*p*/ + voc. + /*r*/ non compare mai nelle quartine del sonetto 60, tranne che nel v. 8 ("che *PAR*lan sempre de' lor tristi danni"): il quale dunque prefigura la complessa strumentazione della prima terzina, ne è per così dire l'avvisaglia (la seconda contempla solo *PRI-* al v. 13, che non a caso riecheggia specularmente *-IR*, che rintocca per l'ultima volta in *ira* 13):

> L'arbor gentil che forte amai molt'anni,
> mentre i bei rami non m'ebber a sdegno
> fiorir faceva il mio debile ingegno
> e la sua ombra, et crescer negli affanni.
>
> Poi che, securo me di tali inganni,
> fece di dolce sé spietato legno,
> i' rivolsi i pensier' tutti ad un segno,
> che *PAR*lan sempre de' lor tristi danni.
>
> Che *POR*à dir chi *PER* amor sos*PIR*a,
> s'altra s*PER*anza le mie rime nove
> gli avessir data, et per costei la *PER*de?
> Né poeta ne colga mai, né Giove
> la privilegi, et al Sol venga in ira,
> tal che si secchi ogni sua foglia verde.

[18] Se si prescinde dal *porà* che conclude, nel Vat. Lat. 3196, l'abbozzo del *Triumphus Eternitatis*, v. 145: "che porà esser a vederla in cielo?" (che diventerà "or che fia dunque a rivederla in cielo?").

[19] Cfr. Paolino 2000, 222.

[20] Vitale 1996, 202; cfr. anche Vitale 1992 [1988], 31, che parla di "sostituzione di una forma corrente con un gallicismo di tradizione siciliana, siculo-toscana, stilnovistica e dantesca".

[21] Altrove Petrarca usa sempre *porìa, poresti, porrebbe*, ecc.

Quanto rilevato esclude decisamente che il passaggio dal *potrà* dell'abbozzo autografo al *porà* della trascrizione idiografa definitiva si debba a trascuratezza o inavvertenza del copista Giovanni Malpaghini (eventualmente influenzato, come, probabilmente, nel caso del noto *adolcisse* "addolcisce" di *Rvf* 105.58, dalle sue abitudini settentrionali). Al contrario abbiamo qui una delle prove più eloquenti di quanto stiamo tentando di dimostrare: che in queste scelte morfologiche è sempre l'orecchio del poeta—perennemente alla ricerca di equilibri, corrispondenze e sottili gradazioni foniche—a decidere.

5

Vediamo qualche altro esempio relativo al settore più produttivo in questo senso, quello delle forme concorrenti per le terze persone plurali di imperfetto congiuntivo, passato remoto indicativo e condizionale. Si prenda quella che Nencioni chiama la "curiosa" alternanza, nel condizionale, tra la desinenza *-ieno* (che ricorre una sola volta) e l'assai più frequente *-ìano*. È il caso di *Rvf* 37.81–82:

> Le trecce d'or che *devrien* fare il sole
> d'invidia molta ir pieno,

di contro a *Rvf* 294.7:

> *devrian* de la pietà romper un sasso.

Nel primo caso agisce evidentemente il richiamo a distanza, quasi una reciproca attrazione, tra "dev*RIEN*" e "i*R* p*IEN*o", quindi il principio della "ripetizione e insistenza". Ma è presente anche l'altro e complementare principio della dissimilazione, giacché un eventuale ******devrian* si sarebbe legato—in una sorta di parziale paragramma—al successivo *invidia:* ***DeVrIAN***—***iNViDIA*** (la parola *invidia* è formata da fonemi/grafemi tutti già contenuti in *devrian*). Non è detto che la scelta di *devrièn* (questa l'accentazione, almeno nella sequenza prosodica) sia in questo contesto la più efficace, beninteso; e il *Canzoniere*, come ha mostrato Orelli, è pieno di rimescolamenti del tipo *devrian*—*invidia*.[22] Tuttavia può aver agito anche qui un certo equilibrio nella distribuzione vocalica: sia il primo (*/ l****E*** *tr****E****cc****E*** *d'****O****r /*) che il secondo emistichio (*/ ch****E***

[22] Orelli 1990.

*d**E**vri**E**n fare il s**O**le /*) si aprono con tre *e* consecutive e si chiudono su una *o* tonica.

Al principio della dissimilazione si dovrà ricondurre anche l'opzione *devrian* di *Rvf* 294.7, che permette di evitare, in aggiunta all'indugio vocalico su *-e-a* (*dE lA piEtÀ*), il doppio rintocco del dittongo *-iè-* (**devrIEn de la pIEtà*).

Soffermiamoci ora sul passato remoto. Qui interessa l'alternanza fra il tipo *ebber*, *vider* e il tipo *ebben*, *viden.* Siano i vv. 9–11 del sonetto 318:

> Quel vivo lauro ove solean far nido
> li alti penseri, e i miei sospiri ardenti,
> che de' bei rami mai non *mossen* fronda.

Agisce qui di nuovo il criterio della dissimilazione: il contesto, direbbe Nencioni, "pullula" di vibranti (*lau**R**o, fa**R**, pense**R**i, sospi**R**i, a**R**denti, **R**ami, f**R**onda*). Da ciò la ricerca di variazione tramite la nasale di *mossen* (che evita la ripetizione a contatto immediato di vocale + */r/*: ***mossER fROnda***); cfr. il già citato *Rvf* 187.11, dove Petrarca evita ***andassER sEmpRE***, a favore di *andassen sempre*: come se la vicinanza con un gruppo, per intenderci, di *muta cum liquida* inibisse l'uso di una vibrante immediatamente prima di tale gruppo; ed è in definitiva la consueta raffinatissima concertazione di vibranti e di nasali che tanta parte ha nella "musicalità" petrarchesca:

> ***** *non moss**ER FRO**nda* vs *n**ON** moss**EN** fr**ON**da*
> ***** *andass**ER** sem**PRE*** vs ***aN**das**SEN SEM**pre*

Da cui si vede come il principio costruttivo della dissimilazione non sia in realtà mai disgiunto da quello complementare dell'insistenza: insistenza, in questo caso, sulla ripetizione di vocale + cons. nasale (o viceversa): *nON mossEN frONda*, figura già anticipata quanto meno da *pENseri* e *ardENti* del verso precedente. In realtà tutta la terzina è giocata sulla calibrata alternanza di nasali e di vibranti.

Il contrario avviene a *Rvf* 60.1–4 (il sonetto è stato citato più sopra), dove *ebber* rafforza invece la già notevole disseminazione di vibranti:

> L'***aR**bo**R*** gentil che fo***R**te amai molt'anni
> ment***Re*** i be***i Ra**mi non m'ebb**eR a*** sdegno
> fiorir faceva il mio debile ingegno
> a la sua ombra, et crescer negli affanni.

Qui, al v. 2, Petrarca vuole evitare anche la rimodulazione delle componenti foniche del primo emistichio (*MENtrE i BEi*) nel secondo

(**M'EBBeN*: quasi un anagramma composto, forse rigettato perché troppo ravvicinato; senza dire che *dEBile*, nel verso dopo, ribadisce *-EB-*), preferendo insistere semmai sulla reciproca attrazione dei nessi di vocale + *-RA-* : "be*I RAm*i" // "*m*'ebb*ER A*". Del resto già Orelli osservava che il sintagma *bei rami*, che compare ben cinque volte nel *Canzoniere*, è sempre accompagnato da "lessemi solidali" quali *erbe*, *arbor*, *ombra*: nel nostro caso "*bei rami* è quasi interamente rimescolato in *ombra* [del v. 4], non per nulla nella stessa sede ritmica, ma prima si stringe in modo assai inatteso a *m'ebber*, e questo posso chiamarlo anch'io un 'preciso metodo' (Contini)".[23] Conclusione che è impossibile non condividere e non estendere ai casi che stiamo esaminando.

Uno di questi è quello, già ricordato, di *Rvf* 319.2, cui si può aggiungere *Rvf* 77.1–2:

> P***ER*** m***iRaR*** Policleto a p***Ro***va fiso
> con gli ***a***lt***Ri*** ch'ebb***ER*** fama di quell'***aR***te,

dove la fitta ragnatela di nessi con vibrante—che sarebbe assai più debole se al posto di *ebber* ci fosse il pur possibile *ebben*—cospira a far emergere da questo sfondo così omogeneo le tre parole-chiave, del tutto prive di vibranti, "Policleto", "fiso" e "fama" (le due ultime allitteranti).

Indubbiamente le possibilità offerte, nella strutturazione fonica del verso, dalle combinazioni in nasale o, viceversa, in vibrante, sono quelle che più sollecitano la sensibilità compositiva di Petrarca, come mostrano i due esempi che seguono, dove la scelta di *mutasser* e *rendesser*, anziché *mutassen* e *rendessen*, obbedisce di nuovo al secondo dei principi enunciati, quello della ripetizione/intensificazione:

> né già mai ***RiTRo***vai ***TRon***co né f***Ron***di
> tanto hono***Ra***te dal sup***ER***no lume
> che non *mutass****ER*** qualitate a tempo.
> P***ER***ò più f***ER***mo ogn*o****R*** …
> (*Rvf* 142.16–19)

> Et ò c***ER***co poi 'l mondo a p***aR***te a p***aR***te,
> se v***ERs***i o pet***RE*** o suco d'***ER***be nove
> mi *rendess****ER*** un dì la mente sciolta.
> (*Rvf* 214.16–18)

[23] Orelli 1990, 120.

Si noti che in entrambi i casi al congiuntivo in *-er(o)* fa seguito, a breve distanza, una parola che presenta una sequenza—tonica, oltretutto—di *-e-* più nasale (*tempo, mente*).

6

Passo ad altre forme e categorie verbali, limitandomi alle oscillazioni più inconsuete.

Per il gerundio di *avere* Petrarca usa normalmente *avendo*, ed è interessante che per lo più la forma lo induca a replicare la labiodentale (e il suo eventuale contesto fonico). Così a *Rvf* 288.3:

o***VE n***acque colei ch'a***VEn***do in mano,

oppure a *Rvf* 300.13 (a rincalzo dei flussi omofonici *-endo* :: *-ento* e *-ita* :: *-ia*):

ch'***aV***endo spento in lei l***a V***ita mia

A *Rvf* 365.3 l'allitterazione di *v* + vocale (e anzi, vocale + *v* + vocale) sarebbe stata, con *avendo,* triplice:

*senza l**e*****VA***rmi **a *VO***lo, **a*****VE***nd'io l'ale,

con un'intensificazione eccessiva, tenuto conto—oltre che dell' ***I' vo*** con cui inizia il sonetto (***I' vo piangendo i miei passati tempi***)—anche dell'altra contestuale ripercussione fono-semantica, a cornice:

(senz)***A LE***(varmi) […] (*avend'io) l'***ALE***.

Un po' troppo anche per Petrarca (e lo notava lo stesso Vitale, osservando che "una sequenza di labiodentali sonore avrebbe prodotto un suono poco gradevole").[24] Ecco perché, una volta tanto (e si noti che qui la trascrizione è autografa), Petrarca introduce la rara forma *abbiendo*, che consente di attutire l'effetto della pur forte allitterazione *levarmi a volo*, e anche di mettere in rilievo, quasi iconicamente, attraverso la bilabiale rafforzata (e non la più rilassata labiodentale), lo sforzo e la

[24] Diversa la situazione di *Rvf* 62.6–8, dove la triplice allitterazione di *v* (e anzi di *a* + *v*) che ha al suo centro *avendo* è diluita in tre versi successivi: "ad altr*A V*ita et a più belle imprese,/ sì ch'*AV*endo le reti indarno tese, / il mio duro *ADV*ersario se ne scorni"; cfr. anche *Rvf* 288.3: "o*VE* nacque colei ch'a*VE*ndo in mano", e *Rvf* 300.13: "ch'*AV*endo spento in lei l*A V*ita mia".

fatica di quel levarsi da terra destinato al fallimento (che si traduce anche in uno sforzo di lettura):

> senza levarmi a volo, *abbiend'*io l'ale.

In questo caso il corrispettivo semantico della scelta fonomorfologica è lampante.

Al sonetto 314.10 compare l'unica occorrenza nei *Fragmenta* di una prima persona plurale dell'imperfetto indicativo. Il verbo è della II classe, ma la vocale tematica è *-a-*, *ardavamo*:

> Come *ardavamo* in quel punto ch'i' vidi
> gli occhi i quai non devea riveder mai.

Anche se non ci sono termini di confronto, ci si può chiedere il perché della scelta di questo morfema, di tradizione fiorentina dell'uso vivo, parlato: quanto di più lontano, istituzionalmente parlando, ci possa essere dalla lingua di Petrarca, una lingua—cito di nuovo da Nencioni—che diviene in lui "una fatto trascendentale e quindi arbitrario; sì che trascendentale, e quindi arbitraria, è anche la sua fiorentinità".[25] L'esame del contesto ci dà forse la risposta, giacché in un distico fitto di allitterazioni a base *d-v* o *v-d* (*ardavamo*, *vidi*, *devea*, *riveder*), e quindi già abbastanza marcato fonicamente, si trattava di evitare un'ulteriore sottolineatura acustica: quella di */DEV/* riflesso nel suo inverso */VED/*:

> *Come ar***DEV**amo in quel punto ch'i' vidi
> gli occhi i quai non ***DEV***ea ri***VED***er mai.

Il risultato complessivo—inglobando anche *vidi*—è invece */ DAVA—VIDI—DEVE—VEDE /*, in accordo, per quanto riguarda le ricorrenze vocaliche, col principio della replicazione nella variazione, insistendo ognuno dei quattro segmenti su una sola vocale ripetuta due volte (*-a-*, *-i-*, *-e-*):

> Come ar***DAVA***mo in quel punto ch'i' ***VIDI***
> gli occhi i quai non ***DEVE***a ri***VEDE***r mai.

Un altro caso isolato è il *lassarà* 'lascerà' di *Rvf* 28.36. Qui non interessa tanto la forma con sibilante, ben frequente nel *Canzoniere* (anche se minoritaria rispetto al tipo toscano con *-sc-*) quanto il mantenimento della vocale tematica *-a-*, estranea al fiorentino (e infatti Petrarca ha per

[25] Nencioni 1989 [1953], 46.

il resto sempre il tipo *canterò, amerai* ecc.). Anche in questo caso Vitale sottolinea, quasi a giustificazione, che la forma è di mano di Malpaghini. Tuttavia non escluderei che pure qui si tratti di una consapevole scelta d'autore, motivata dal contesto fonico del verso:

con ***ARA***gon lass***ARÁ*** vòta Hispagna,

una figura ciclica tutt'altro che rara in Petrarca (basti pensare al caso, ancora più intenso e risentito, di "*SOlo e penSOSO*").

Potrei continuare con ulteriori esempi, ed esaminare anche polimorfie di altro tipo. Spiegare per esempio perché a *Rvf* 303.9:

o vaghi habitator' de' verdi boschi

Petrarca usa la forma non marcata *habitator* e a *Rvf* 214.33 quella marcata *habitador*:

m'àn fatto habitador d'ombroso bosco;

o perché a *Rvf* 207.84 la forma è *veleno*, mentre a *Rvf* 152.8 è, in analogo contesto, *veneno*. Nel primo caso (*Rvf* 214.33) la visualizzazione grafica dei contrappunti e dei richiami fonici è già di per sé eloquente, giacché permette di evidenziare il rifiuto, grazie alla sonora di *habitador*, di una triplice ripetizione di *-t-* + vocale (rincalzata dalla banale ripercussione di *-ATTO* in *-ATO*):

*****m'àn f***ATTO*** habi***TATO***r d'ombroso bosco,

a tutto vantaggio della raffinata concatenzione, certo fonosimbolica, che ha al suo centro "d'ombroso": "habita***DOR D'O***(mb)***R***oso" e "d'om***B***(r)***OSO BOS***(c)***O***".

Quanto al secondo caso, basti dire che la scelta di *veneno* a *Rvf* 152.8 si deve, più che all'ovvio—ma non immotivato—gioco paronomastico con *(e) vene*:

per quel ch'io sento al cor gir fra l***E VENE***
dolc***E VENE***no…,

alla decisione di non indulgere, una volta tanto, all'anagrammatismo (il forse troppo scoperto *LEVEN[e]* :: *VELEN[o]*);[26] mentre il suo rigetto a *Rvf* 207.84:

[26] Per altri, più raffinati casi di anagramma in Petrarca, cfr. Orelli 1990, 4–5, 10, e 29.

…… et anchor non me 'n pento
che di dolce *veleno* il cor trabocchi

è imposto dalla necessità di evitare—in un contesto di per sé già ricco di nessi di vocale + *n* ("*AN*cor n*ON*")—addirittura una quadruplice iterazione del nesso *-EN-*:

*…… et ***AN***chor n***ON*** m***E'N*** p***EN***to
che di dolce v***ENEN***o il cor trabocchi.

7

Dopo un rigoglio persino eccessivo di studi sulle strutture foniche e fonoritmiche in poesia, sull'autonomia del significante poetico, su anagrammi e paragrammi ecc., è sopravvenuta negli ultimi anni una certa sazietà, se non insofferenza, da parte di studiosi e lettori riguardo a questo tipo di approccio alla testualità poetica. Gli eccessi sono sicuramente perniciosi, e tuttavia da questo tipo di analisi non si può assolutamente prescindere, a maggior ragione nel caso di Petrarca, la cui straordinaria attenzione ai valori fonici del dettato poetico è stata ormai dimostrata da innumerevoli studi, ed è comunque colta istintivamente anche dal più ingenuo dei lettori (bisognerà arrivare a Mallarmé e Valéry per ritrovare qualcosa del genere). Del resto, per chi ha messo in diretta correlazione, in un momento di effusione poetologica che non ha quasi uguali nel Medioevo ("Quotiens sillabas contorsimus, quotiens verba transtulimus, denique non fecimus ut amor ille, quem si extinguere non erat, at saltem tegi verecundia iubebat, plausibiliter caneretur"),[27] il lavoro sui "materiali" (*sillabas, verba*) con la loro attualizzazione a livello semantico ed estetico ("plausibiliter caneretur"), tutto ciò non è affatto sorprendente.

Se lo scopo della presente indagine fosse stato però solo quello di confermare, alla luce di nuovi esempi, quale supremo artista della parola sia stato l'autore del *Canzoniere* e quanto l'organizzazione della

[27] *Familiares* X 3, 21 (Rossi 1997 [1942], 291). Ma andrebbero anche citate le varie postille del codice degli abbozzi (Vat. Lat. 3196: cfr. Paolino 2000) in cui si manifesta chiaramente la "consapevole attenzione [di Petrarca] ai nessi ritmici" o la sua "attenzione al diagramma sonoro che governa un sonetto": "*hoc placet quia sonantior*", "*alias has rithmos in cantilenis nostri crebro nimis*", "*propter sonum principii et finis, et quia sonantior erant in medio, rauciora in principio et fine, quod est contra rethoricam*" (cfr. Segre 1999, 8–9, da cui le citazioni).

materia fonica dei suoi versi sia parte integrante e anzi fondamentale del messaggio da essi veicolato, forse i benefici, per usare una metafora economica, non sarebbero all'altezza dei costi profusi (fermo restando che qualsiasi analisi fonica del *Canzoniere* è sempre altamente remunerativa in sé, anche quando appaia fine a se stessa).[28] La questione era un'altra: non si trattava infatti soltanto di individuare e descrivere quella tale organizzazione sul solo asse sintagmatico del testo poetico (per metterla poi eventualmente in rapporto—con i rischi e le arbitrarietà che tutto ciò comporta—"con la definizione che di quel testo la critica tradizionale o di tipo psicologico ha in precedenza fornito"),[29] ma di mostrare quanto essa sia stata determinante per le stesse opzioni esercitate dal poeta sull'asse della selezione; si trattava insomma di rendere ragione non solo dei dati *in presentia* ma anche di quelli *in absentia*, cioè delle scelte effettivamente compiute e, insieme, di quelle scartate: procedimento ovvio e di indiscutibile efficacia nel caso di varianti redazionali conservate ma che, in assenza di quelle, riposa solo su astratte virtualità e su catene di ipotesi non dimostrabili e non verificabili. L'unica prospettiva che si poteva scegliere per questa interrogazione del testo petrarchesco era dunque quella strettamente e genuinamente grammaticale, morfologica: l'unica che, entro certi limiti, ci consente di lavorare sulle alternative reali del sistema, rigorosamente 'numerabili', anzi limitate—per lo più dicotomiche—, previste dalla norma linguistica e contemporaneamente condivise dalla competenza dell'autore e da quella del suo pubblico.

Siamo prossimi, come si diceva, alla critica delle varianti: con la differenza—forse un vantaggio, sul piano dell'oggettività e della "materialità" del testo—che le presunzioni interpretative, i valori semantici aggiunti e le potenzialità comunicative entrano in campo solo in un momento successivo.

Porterò, a ulteriore esemplificazione del metodo, il passo in cui Petrarca, nella canzone 23, sostituisce *mirarmi, e riconobbe et vide* del v. 133 (tale la lezione del codice degli abbozzi, Vat. Lat. 3196) con *mirarme, et*

[28] Per Petrarca vale al massimo grado l'assioma jakobsoniano che "les sons de la poésie agissent nécessairement avec plus d'autonomie, en sorte que leur liens à la sémantique poétique ne se laissent pas réduire au rôle qu'un usage banal du langage leur fait jouer au sein des unités conventionelles. En poésie, les sons du langage manifestent spontanément et immédiatement leur propre fonction sémantique" (Jakobson-Waugh 1980 [1979], 270).

[29] Contini 1998 [1974], 129.

ricognovve et vide. Qui, come a *Rvf* 60.9, la variante grammaticale virtuale è contemporaneamente una variante redazionale attestata:

> Poi che madonna da pietà commossa
> *degnò mirarme, et ricognovve et vide* < *degnò mirarmi, e riconobbe et vide*
> gir di pari la pena col peccato,
> benigna mi redusse al primo stato.

Dire che qui agisce, nel passaggio dalla forma volgare (*riconobbe*) a quella semicolta (*ricognovve*), la "regola dell'intensificazione" (più sopra variamente esemplificata), in quanto l'uscita latineggiante consente, a maggior ragione se teniamo conto della pronuncia rafforzata in fonosintassi / *evvide* /, la forte gradazione a contatto immediato,[30] /-*OVVE EVVI*-/, è tanto vero e scontato quanto ancora insufficiente.[31] Si tratta infatti anche di evitare, a fronte di un fitto rincorrersi di allitterazioni a base /p/ (*Poi, Pietà, Pari, Pena, Peccato, Primo*), un ulteriore fonema bilabiale (sonoro: *riconoBBe*). Ma la sostituzione morfematica non va disgiunta da altre strategie: la nasale alveolare di *riconobbe* cede il passo alla palatale di *ricognovve* per amalgamarsi a *degnò* e a *benigna* e determinare così l'unica concentrazione di nasali palatali in un passo particolarmente ricco viceversa di bilabiali e alveolari: *MadoNNa, coMMossa, MirarMe, peNa, beNigna, Mi, priMo*. Si noti anzi che l'intera stanza non presenta altre palatali che queste tre.

Ma è soprattutto decisivo notare come, mentre nella prima versione le relazioni foniche sono (a parte i tratti già indicati) piuttosto *verticali* (per esempio la sillaba iniziale di *BEnigna* [*Rvf* 23.135] riprende la finale di *riconobBE*, v. 133, così come la sequenza /CO/ + nasale si dispone dal v. 132 al v. 133: *COMmossa* > *riCONobbe*), nella seconda i rapporti siano invece—sul modello del v. 134, caratterizzato dalla triplice allitterazione di /p/—piuttosto *orizzontali*: quindi *deGNÒ* e *ricoGNOvve* e il già evidenziato /-*oVVE EVVi*-/. Rientra in questo mutamento di strategia anche la sostituzione dell'enclitica al v. 133, da *-mi* a *-me*, che consente di far terminare con la stessa vocale, *-e*, tutti i membri ritmici del verso, rappresentati da tre verbi: *mirarmE* [...] *ricognovvE* [...] *vidE*, esattamente come il verso che precede fa finire i membri ritmici (due

[30] La giuntura *vedere* + *(ri)conoscere* compare spesso nel *Canzoniere* (cfr. *Rvf* 23.75–76; *Rvf* 110.5–6; *Rvf* 123.4–6), ma solo in questo passo i due verbi sono a immediato contatto.

[31] Qualcosa del genere spiega viceversa la scelta di *conobbe* a *Rvf* 338.12: "Non la con*OBBE* il mondo mentre l'*EBBE*".

sostantivi e un participio) costantemente in *-a*: *madonnA* […] *pietÀ* […] *commossA*. Questa elegante distribuzione parallela si oppone a quella, più variata, del distico successivo.

Non so se qui, come in tutti gli altri casi esaminati, la categoria cui far riferimento sia quella di eufonia, o musicalità o armonia. Si tratta sempre di approssimazioni terminologiche a qualcosa che non è certo definibile *a priori* ma solo sulla base di esempi concreti, come quelli che ho tentato qui di fornire. Non è detto che essi siano i più adatti a rendere conto della "imperscrutabile e di volta in volta diversa sensibilità fonico-musicale e ritmica"[32] con cui Petrarca "compone il suo mondo".[33] Certo è che la tensione tra i due assi del linguaggio, l'asse della selezione e quello della combinazione, su cui si fonda la funzione poetica[34] non potrebbe riuscirne meglio esemplificata e caratterizzata. Che questa tensione agisca e sia avvertibile fin nelle fibre più intime e, per così dire, riparate del linguaggio poetico (morfemi, desinenze, ecc.) conferma che è solo a partire dalla *grammatica della lingua*, in senso proprio—operativo prima che concettuale—, che si può arrivare alla *grammatica della poesia*.[35] Petrarca ne è la dimostrazione massima.

[32] Vitale 1996, 91.

[33] Così Contini 1970 [1943], 13, che così continua, con parole che sembrano adattarsi mirabilmente al nostro assunto: "come se gli fosse stato assegnato un totale fisso di materiali, e il suo lavoro si riduca a un *optimum* di collocazione".

[34] Cfr. Jakobson 1966 [1960], 191–92.

[35] Cfr. Jakobson 1985 [1961].

CHAPTER SEVEN

PETRARCA FRA LE ARTI: TESTI E IMMAGINI

Marcello Ciccuto

Si delinea con Francesco Petrarca una figura storica in familiarità costante con artisti (pittori e scultori e miniatori il più delle volte in sintonia coi più specifici gusti del poeta orientati a ideali di chiarezza e sobrietà), tale da avere certo riscontro informativo nella messe di rilievi, indicazioni, ricordi sparsi nelle sue opere: come quando accoglie nel *De remediis utriusque fortunae* molti pronunciamenti sulle arti e proposizioni rilevantissime sul piano dell'estetica,[1] scrivendo ora dei *Dioscuri* di Montecavallo, ora di Apelle e di Fidia (per i *Dioscuri* basterà quindi il richiamo alla lettera a Giovanni Colonna, del 1337 oltreché ad *Africa* 8, 907–10, mentre è con una lettura ragionata della lettera a Guido Sette, del 1342–1343, che si ricava importante documentazione circa la posizione petrarchesca nei confronti degli artefici dell'Antichità);[2] o come quando in qualcun'altra delle lettere più impegnate su questo versante descrive l'effigie romanica di sant'Ambrogio a Milano (*Fam.* XVI 11, 12: "quam illi viro simillimam fama fert")[3] e si intrattiene sulla *legenda* AUREA ROMA presente sulla bolla di Carlo IV,[4] ripescandola

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[1] Si possono vedere intanto i cenni, peraltro parziali, contenuti nel saggio di Donato 2003, 434–436.

[2] In particolare, come è noto, Petrarca si riferisce in esplicito ai Dioscuri di Montecavallo nelle due importanti occasioni cui si accenna nel testo: nella *familiaris* VI 2, 13 a Giovanni Colonna (Dotti 2002–2004, 2: 251), poco dopo il primo viaggio a Roma del 1337 ("Hoc Praxitelis Phidieque extans in lapide tot iam seculis de ingenio et arte certamen"), e nell'*Africa* 8, 907–10 ("Quirinalem superato vertice montem/transierant, nudoque duos astare gigantes/corpore conspiciunt—en quot certamina fame! -/ Praxitelis opus Phidieque insigne supremi"). Entrambi i luoghi sono stati oggetto di studi specifici e anche accurati, come risulta per il primo da Bettini 1984, 28–29 e da Accame Lanzillotta 1993, 234–35; per il secondo specialmente da Martellotti e Trompeo 1943, 254–64.

[3] Giusta il *titulus* che la dice "tracta […] ab imagine vivi / Ambrosii": cfr. Bertelli 1995, 374.

[4] Vedi allora anche la referenza collocata in *Seniles* 6, 8, e il luogo discusso in Bettini 1984, 20–21. Dall'imperatore Petrarca ricevette in dono anche una coppa aurea, come ricorda in *Familiares* XXXIII, 8: "cratera pretiosissimus, quem michi auro solidum atque asperum signis […] non meae quidem sed tuae sortis munus eximius destinasti

anche per un verso dell'*Africa* 6, 883 (*Fam*. XXI 2, 8). Di riferimenti a competenze d'arte sono comunque ricchi molti documenti, a voler scrutare ad esempio all'interno di più opere e di più postille legate al gusto e, appunto, alla specifica competenza "all'antica" di Petrarca in materia numismatica,[5] o anche alla sensibilità del poeta, all'attrazione sua per quell'aspetto dell'*ars sumptuaria* che lo spinge ad ammirare le vesti lussuose e raffinate del suo tempo (come è del caso esplicito di *Fam.* XIII 8 e, ancora, di *Fam.* I 5, a Giovanni Colonna), sino al momento in cui si è potuto pensare al possibile calco suo di alcune iscrizioni della Porta di Capua per i versi coniati nel 1341 e destinati a una delle porte civiche della città di Parma.[6] Sono invero una legione i pensieri petrarcheschi sull'arte, gli artisti e gli artefici—così dell'antichità come dei tempi moderni—, le opere individuate e persino a tutt'oggi riconoscibili in qualche manufatto giunto sino a noi. Tuttavia resta comunque e sempre difficile afferrare a pieno il senso complessivo di questo gusto artistico di Petrarca, pur disponendo di "indicatori" assai eloquenti in fatto di inclinazioni e idee di cultura figurativa che non dovremo più legare, allo stato attuale delle conoscenze, a una mentalità di gotica, attardata e insomma superficiale inclinazione.

Perché se si vuole far un po' di chiaro in materia, e capire quali furono i contatti effettivi del poeta, si vede bene che si tratta di spostare subito e concretamente l'attenzione su quel che rappresentarono la biblioteca e lo specifico *amor librorum* petrarcheschi, in una con predilezioni individuate proprio nel campo dell'arte e un percorso che dalle esperienze oculari, di semplice sensibilità percettiva, sale al culmine della sfera conoscitiva

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[…] vasculum insigne materia, insigne artificis ingenio, sed super omnia ore cesareo consecratum a tuis in meos translatum usus".

[5] Si tratta in questo caso di una autentica messe di ricordi e citazioni, specialmente annidati tra le postille autografe e il corpo delle opere latine: dalle monete col l'effigie dell'imperatore Vespasiano di cui è scritto in *Rerum memorandarum libri* II 73, 6, alla citazione della moneta che permise al poeta di correggere il nome di Drusilla in quello di Giulia a margine della vita di Caligola—come ricorda Billanovich 1960, 50 sul codice dell'*Historia Augusta*; dalle monete scambiate con l'imperatore Carlo IV (*Fam.* XIX 2 e 13) a quella donatagli da Luigi Marsili che ci rivela una postilla al codice petrarchesco di Suetonio, per arrivare ad altre indicazioni su due monete di Faustina Maior e Faustina Minor, ancora dal codice dell'*Historia Augusta* (cfr. Nolhac 1892, 64) o alla moneta di Claudio riprodotta su un margine del codice Parigino lat. 8082, c. 4*v*, in veste di ritratto del poeta Claudiano, come segnalato a suo tempo da Chiovenda 1933, 58.

[6] Basterebbe confrontare il testo petrarchesco di "Imperiosa situ victrici condita dextra […] Me videat securus amans hostisque tremiscat" (Petrarca 1951, 848) con quello "capuano": "Cesaris imperio regni custodia fio […] intrent securi qui querunt vivere puri / Infidus excludi timeat vel carcere trudi", come fa Donato 2003, 434n34.

e della sapienza che, sole, consentono il piacere della memoria e della vita culturalmente atteggiata all'insegnamento antico:

> At nobilis inque altum nitentis animi est, multas terras et multorum mores hominum vidisse atque observasse memoriter; verissimumque est quod apud Apuleium legisti: "non immerito" enim, inquit, "prisce poetice divinus auctor apud Graios, summe prudentie virum monstrare cupiens multarum civitatum obitu et variorum populorum cognitu summas adeptum virtutes cecinit". Quod poeta noster imitatus, suum Eneam scis quot urbibus atque litoribus circumducit […] nec intelligis quam gratum spectaculum illi fuerit futurumque sit oculis cernere que cogitatione previderit; quod Hadrianum principem facere solitum accepimus […] Et quanto, putas, alacrior quantoque rerum experientior redibit, quanto non solum ceteris sed etiam semet ipso sublimior, qui tam multa oculis viderit.[7]

La stessa idea del possesso librario andrà interpretata da subito nella chiave dell'esito di una ricerca e di un competente desiderio da parte dell'intellettuale, fattosi *ardens explorator* soggetto di quella *pulcra indago* capace di offrire, a scia di pur *inexplebilis cupiditas*, una ineguagliabile dolcezza interiore:

> Libros quos querimus illic non esse non miror. Nam et ego, dum id tibi imponerem, temptabam potius quam sperabam. Sed iuvabat experiri an, quod interdum accidit, spem successus excederet. Inquisitionem quidem hanc librorum quamvis sepe irritam, omittere nescio: tam dulce est sperare quod cupias. Habebimus vero quos poterimus neque pulcre indagini fedus torpor obstiterit; reliquos patienter optabimus, atque ita progrediemur his contenti quos nobis nostra sors tribuit, legendique impetum ac discendi ardorem mortalitatis recordatione solabimur.[8]

Nella prospettiva che punta ad evitare lo sterile attaccamento ai beni materiali—gli accenti più convinti sono come è noto interni alla *familiaris*

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[7] È il luogo, notissimo, di *Familiares* IX 13, doppiato a distanza dalla convinzione circa la possibilità di recupero nel ricordo di ogni situazione improntata a questo stesso piacere (cfr. *Itinerarium ad sepulcrum Domini*, § 7: "Ibis ergo sine me et multa conspiciens quorum tibi, dum vixeris, memoria voluptatem renovet"). Del resto sarà poi il testo della *senilis* IX 2 a Francesco Bruni, a testimoniarci l'esigenza petrarchesca di neutralizzare proprio la *cupiditas videndi* in nome di una superiore coerenza tra vita e letteratura: "in peregrinationibus vitam duxi […] Iam de ingenio ac doctrina facilis coniectura est, profecto enim plus aliquid ambiendo vidit, quam visurus domi fueram, et experientie, rerumque notitie, non nichil est additum, sed detractum literis. Quot enim studio putas dies hi, discursus abstulerint […] Que iactura haud quaquam levis est, brevitatem, fugamque temporis extimanti. Et nisi hic metus tenuisset, frenassetque impetum, ut erat adolescenti animus, et casuum imrovidus et videndi avidus issem ad extremos hominum Seres, atque Indos, ultimaque terrarum Taprobanem adiissem […]".

[8] *Seniles* III 19.

XXIII 8, associabili a quel che viene dalla *Varia* 48, a Cola di Rienzo, in merito al commercio di antichità praticato dalle 'nobili' famiglie romane[9]—il tutto agostiniano Petrarca si impegna a superare di slancio quella *muta voluptas* in nome di un intimo, quasi amicale godimento;[10] additando dunque come privilegiate quelle immagini pur materiali che sappiano insinuarsi nell'animo del riguardante con una forza analoga (*abditi aculei*) a quella delle parole:

> de me autem, quid mereantur in solitudine quedam voces familiares ac note […] quam preterea delectet vel aliorum vel mea nonnumquam scripta revolvere: quantumve ex ea lectione exhonerari me sentiam gravissimis acerbissimisque molestiis, non facile dicturum me speraverim […] Quod nunquam profecto consequerer, nisi verba ipsa salutaria demulcerent aures, et me ad sepius relegendum vi quadam insite dulcedinis excitantia sensim illaberentur atque abditis aculeis interiora transfigerent,[11]

[9] Il testo è il seguente: "laceratas reipublice reliquias carptim in speluncis et infandis latrocinii sui penetralibus congesserunt […] post impie spoliato Dei templa, occupatas arces, opes publicas […] in pontes, in menia atque immeritos lapides desevirent. Denique post vi vel senio collapsa palatia […] post diruptos arcus triunphales […] de ipsius vetustatis aut proprie impietatis fragminibus vilem questum turpi mercimonio captare non puduit […] de vestris marmoreis columnis, de liminibus templorum […] de imaginibus sepulcrorum […] ut reliquas sileam, desidiosa Neapolis adornatur" (Dotti 1978b, 900–2).

[10] La *familiaris* IX 9, all'amico Socrate, sottolinea esattamente questo ideale collettivo (lontano dunque dall'usufrutto superficiale di un oggetto d'arte) che pare di cogliere anche nel ringraziamento a Carlo IV per il dono di una coppa d'oro (*Fam.* XXIII 8: "ego illo quidem non tam utar hoc comuni usu, quam libabo, dicerem ad aras, si nobis qui veteribus mos esset: nunc vero, mensis lautioribus rarum ad spectaculum adhibito, dies festos exornabo; habebo illum in delitiis, ostendam mirantibus amicis et gaudentibus […] gemino semper tali munere glorabor" [Dotti 2006, 5: 194]): vd. appunto "Quantula autem sunt que videntur maxima, quibus vulgus inhiat, aurum argentum monilia anuli armille signa toreumata, vasa corinthia, fulgentes gemme, rotundissime margarite, marmor niveum, sculptum ebur, picte tabule, vive ac spirantes statue, radiantes purpure ceteraque id genus, fex ac purgamenta terrarum vel fuliginosorum decus artificum. Amicus singulare quoddam et inextimabile bonum est, quod non ferant venti, non urant pruine, non frangant procelle, sed ut purum aurum flamme probent persecutionum ac laborum; bonum quod non superficietenus delectet ut plurima, sed in ipsum animum dulcedine sua penetret et quodammodo nostri pars fiat". Il referente agostiniano andremo a cogliere sui margini della copia petrarchesca delle *Enarrationes in psalmos*, dove il poeta annota la consapevolezza in merito alla più profonda conoscenza attivata dalla scrittura rispetto alla scrittura, desumendo la citazione dal *Tractatus in Iohannem* XXIV 2 (secondo Bettini si tratta di un'eco reperibile anche nella *familiaris* XXIII 19, 8, secondo cui la moderna *luxurians littera* "longe oculos mulcens, prope autem afficiens ac fatigans, quasi ad aliud quam ad legendum sit inventa").

[11] Dotti 2002–2004, 1: 103–5 (*Fam.* I 9) .

rinviando cioè a una verità di alto spessore simbolico che, sebbene prodotto di un artificio, ha in sé connotati costruttivi a livello etico:[12] dunque anche nel contesto di quelle *artes* che vengono dal poeta interpretate e viste come forme di un *decus* inteso ad apprezzare la cosa in sé e non il suo valore venale, esclusivamente materiale; la *substantia* in qualsiasi frangente, contro l'arbitrio del giudizio di valore (sono i casi, citatissimi, delle pietre preziose di cui tanto scrive Petrarca).[13] È esattamente all'interno di questo processo—che qui non possiamo che abbozzare in termini assai generali—che sono diventate leggendarie le notizie sulla passione libraria esclusiva di Petrarca: a partire dalla dichiarazione generale della lettera *familiaris* III 18 (a Giovanni dell'Incisa), secondo la quale appunto "una inexplebilis cupiditas me tenet: libris satiari nequeo. Et habeo plures forte quam oportet; sed sicut in ceteris rebus, sic et in libris accidit: querendi successus avaritie calcar est";[14] per passare se vogliamo ai ricordi distesi in un'altra lettera, del

[12] Il valore positivo della costruzione artificiosa, per Petrarca, è enunciato a chiare lettere in *De remediis* I 22: "omne quod turpe est, quo artificiosius, eo fit turpius: honestatis ornamentum ars, inhonestatis est cumulus", purché insomma si tratti di un *usus* onesto nella sostanza. Si ricorderà d'altronde che nello stesso *De remediis* (I 41, 11–13) le statue sono prodotti dell'artificio, al pari dell'eloquenza di *Familiares* XVIII 8, 2, o della scrittura medesima di *Seniles* V 5.

[13] Basterebbe ricordare allora *De remediis* I 37, luogo centrale al pregio per le gemme che sono in grado di segnalare l'altezza morale di un governante, ben al di là del limitato valore venale. Ma frequenti in molte opere sono le esibizioni petrarchesche di competenza terminologica riguardo alle gemme: sarà il capitolo 38 del primo libro ancora del *De remediis* a ribadire la condanna finale dell'aspetto materiale delle medesime ("nusquam rarior est veritas neque enim alicubi vel experiendi minor copia vel maior licentia mentiendi vel mendacii fructus uberior vel impudentia liberior vel consuetudo frequentior"), in nome di un'esaltazione tutta aristotelica della "sostanza" della pietra ("quis non videt, quenam scilicet ambitio et quanta sit cecitas non rei formam ac substantiam sed nudum nomen tanta mercede captantium?" [Carraud 2002, 1: 196]), sola a poter contrastare il *furor hominum* per il possesso: ché "neque vasa Corinthia neque aurea meliorem faciunt neque Samia peiorem neque omnino de qualitate rerum, sed ex morbo animi hec vestra cupiditas orta est, seu ipsa potius morbus est animi" (Carraud 2002, 1: 200; I 39).

[14] "Ho un desiderio sfrenato, non riesco a saziarmi di libri; ne posseggo molti più di quanti servirebbero ma accade così per i libri come per tutte le altre cose: se le ottieni, hai desiderio di possederne ancora di più"; sulla via della posizione, ancora del *De remediis*, intesa contro il puro accumulo dei beni materiali e l'apprezzamento dei soli ornamenti (Carraud 2002, 1: 216; I 43, *De librorum copia*: "Nam ut quidam discipline, sic alii voluptati et iactantie libros querunt. Sunt qui hac parte suppellectilis exornent thalamos que animis exornandis inventa est neque aliter his utantur quam Corinthiis vasis aut tabulis pictis ac statuis ceterisque de quibus proxime disputatum est. Sunt qui obtentu librorum avaritie inserviant, pessimi omnium non librorum vera pretia, sed quasi mercium extimantes: pestis mala sed recens et que nuper divitum studiis obrepisse videatur, que unum concupiscentie instrumentum atque una ars accesserit"),

gruppo delle *Seniles* (XVI 1, a Luca da Penne), dove Petrarca torna col pensiero a quando, bambino, mentre i coetanei leggevano Prospero ed Esopo, si dilettava dei libri di Cicerone "senza capirci niente, affascinato com'era dalla bellezza delle parole", tornando altresì a dire di dolorose perdite librarie che lo avevano tormentato nel tempo.[15] Analogamente, in mezzo a testimonianze del genere, il poeta ci informa con indicazioni e ricordi precisi circa la presenza o la mancanza di qualche opera nel suo scrittoio (e sulle illustri assenze andrebbe avviato un discorso troppo ampio per queste poche note);[16] sui *desiderata* e le acquisizioni scalate nel tempo o quant'altro ancora perteneva alla formazione della sua biblioteca (di straordinario rilievo a riguardo gli "elenchi" di libri, ben noti agli studiosi).[17] Questo per dire che solo scavando tra gli scaffali della biblioteca petrarchesca saremo in grado di capire qualche cosa sulle idee del poeta in fatto d'arte, e valutare quanto il suo atteggiamento verso i libri faccia tutt'uno e con la sua competenza di cultura

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diremmo da collezionismo librario avignonese a norma della *familiaris* anti-pontificale (VI 1): "Animadverti olim tale aliquid in principibus dominisque terrarum, qui omni studio libros querunt petunt rapiunt mercantur, non literarum amore quas ignorant, sed avaritia inducti, nec animi sed thalami querentes ornatum, nec scientiam sed nomen, neque librorum sententias sed pretia cogitantes […] dicent enim sobolem se ac posteros cogitare […] ingens bibliotheca congeritur" (Dotti 2002–2004, 2: 239).

[15] Noto che nel corpo della stessa lettera, assieme al rammarico per la perdita di un *De gloria* ciceroniano "perdutogli" dal vecchio maestro Convenevole da Prato, Petrarca ricorda il rogo di libri che il padre avrebbe allestito a Montpellier—il poeta aveva 13 anni—per impedire al giovane, che doveva restare versato allo studio delle leggi, di dedicarsi troppo alla lettura di Cicerone e dei poeti. Al pianto disperato di Francesco, il padre decide *in extremis* di salvare dalla distruzione due volumi, che risultarono essere una probabile opera retorica ciceroniana "strumento utile allo studio delle leggi", appunto, e un esemplare di Virgilio che sarebbe servito almeno "come consolatore della vita". Ma questa lettera è ricchissima di tracce relative a vari altri testi passati per le mani di Petrarca.

[16] Centrato ad esempio sulla storia circa l'assenza dalla biblioteca petrarchesca di un esemplare dei *Saturnalia* di Macrobio, il cui testo è peraltro presente in abbondanza sui margini del *Virgilio Ambrosiano*. Opera macrobiana dalla quale poi Petrarca ricava come è risaputo gran parte delle conoscenze (dunque indirette) del testo del *De rerum natura* lucreziano. Ma altre fila andrebbero annodate, per questa ricerca, attorno alle storie che riguardano le epistole ciceroniane *ad Atticum*, Valerio Massimo, Properzio, i cosiddetti geografi minori.

[17] Si tratta ovviamente della "lista" contenuta nell'amato codice di Cassiodoro-Agostino, oggi parigino, la cui titolatura—"*libri mei peculiares ad reliquos n(on) tra(n)sfuga sed explorator tra(n)sire soleo*"—è stata oggetto di più interpretazioni, talvolta anche assai divergenti. A questa forma di citazione abbastanza vistosa dall'epistolario senecano dovremo agganciare altresì l'analoga referenza della *familiaris* XXII 12, circa il fatto che "ci sono libri che ho letto, ma anche libri invece che amo e che sono diventati carne a sangue, libri nei quali ho difficoltà a distinguere ciò che è mio da quello che è di questi autori. Libri che ho letto di corsa, Ennio, Plauto, Marziano Capella e Apuleio".

figurativa, e con reali coinvolgimenti del poeta stesso in fatti d'arte, non ultime le effettive frequentazioni di artisti in veste di amico e/o di committente.

Vien bene pensare allora alla soscrizione vergata da Petrarca su un foglietto aggiunto al suo *Virgilio* (oggi MS *Ambrosiano*, Sala del Prefetto 10/27), "liber hic furto mihi subreptus fuerat anno Domini 1326 in kalendis Novembris ac deinde restitutus anno 1338 die 27 Aprilis, apud Avinionem", assieme a tutto quel che conviene cogliere entro il tessuto visivo dell'*Allegoria virgiliana* deposta da Simone Martini sul frontespizio di quel codice superbo già a livello testuale;[18] vien bene pensare altresì a quanto il poeta scrive in chiusura di un altro amatissimo codice, l'illustrato *Tito Livio* (oggi MS Parigino lat. 5690), quando riesce a ottenerlo definitivamente nel 1351 dopo averlo a lungo consultato e desiderato.[19] E considerando che siamo di fronte a codici illustrati ed esteticamente assai rilevanti, è su questa via che riusciremo ad avere già una prima, provvisoria idea di come libri e figure e rispettive loro storie intrecciate siano uno dei nuclei fondamentali del vivere di Petrarca a ridosso delle arti del suo tempo. Vedremo, in conclusione del nostro discorso, che Petrarca finirà per assolvere le immagini almeno quando esse si pongano a *ingenii simulacra* o *animi effigies*:

> Nichilominus te animo comitabor et, quoniam ita vis, his etiam comitabor scriptis […] imaginem flagitasti, qua utcunque tuam absentiam solareris, non hanc vultus imaginem, cuius in dies mutatio multa fit, sed stabiliorem effigiem animi ingeniique mei que, quantulacunque est, profecto pars mei optima est. Hic tibi ergo non amici domicilium corpus hoc […] sed amicum ipsum internis spectare luminibus licebit,[20]

per quanto sia compito superiore della parola sempre poter estendere l'*ingenii ornamentum*—come ancora testimoniano altre pagine, notissime pur esse, dell'*Itinerarium*.[21] Il proposito di fondo restando quello

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[18] Le principali coordinate interpretative riguardanti questo fondamentale episodio della biografia culturale petrarchesca si possono ricavare da Ciccuto 1991a, 79–110.

[19] In inchiostro blu, a c. 367: "*emptus Avignone 1351, diu tamen ante possessus*".

[20] *Itinerarium ad sepulcrum Domini*, § 7. Per gli *ingenii simulacra* vd. allora *Familiares* I 1: "Adversus hanc proterviam latebris saltem tuis horridula hec atque improvide nobis elapsa defendito. Illam vero non Phidie Minervam, ut ait Cicero, sed qualemcumque animi mei effigiem atque ingenii simulacrum multo michi studio dedolatum, si unquam supremam illi manum imposuero, cum ad te venerit, secure qualibet in arce constituito" (Dotti 2002–2004, 1: 31).

[21] Cito dall'edizione di Lo Monaco 1990, § 9: "Poscis ergo, vir optime, quoniam me non potes, comites has habere literulas, in quibus que oculis ipse tuis mox videbis ex me, qui ea certe necdum vidi omnia, nec unquam forte visurus sum, audire expectis:

di conseguire una parità significante tra i due codici, il letterario e l'iconico, la necessità di trovare un'utile coerenza come nel caso, di forte evidenza argomentativa, dell'utilizzo di una fonte iconografica d'origine monetale ai fini della trattazione di un antico etimo o della conferma di un brano storico,[22] o anche viceversa, dell'importanza di alcune *legendae* numismatiche ai fini dell'interpretazione di complicati soggetti iconografici.

Anche a non voler insistere sull'importanza di Giotto all'interno della biografia culturale dell'umanista—più e più volte additata dalla critica—sale alla mente all'istante il ricordo della *Madonna* di mano del maestro mugellese ("tabula sive icona beate Virginis Marie, operis Iotti pictoris egregii") che Petrarca volle legare per testamento al signore padovano Francesco da Carrara; restando peraltro in ombra ben più vasto quadro di "cose viste" e memorie figurative giottesche, appunto, che si rincorrono nell'universo di Petrarca dai tempi del soggiorno napoletano (con la possibile conoscenza del ciclo della *Gloria mondana* affrescato proprio da Giotto per Roberto d'Angiò) risalendo via via agli analoghi cicli di Milano e di Padova le cui reliquie giottesche, oltreché in luoghi esatti dell'opera petrarchesca, riceveranno eco nientemeno che nel frontespizio figurato da Altichiero per due codici (tardi) del *De viris illustribus*, oggi MSS Parigini lat. 6069 F e 6069 I. Certo ad eccezione di Giotto, e come vedremo di Simone Martini, finiscono per assommare a poche unità gli artisti contemporanei degnati di una menzione esplicita da Petrarca, *magister Benedictus* da Como, l'orafo Enrico Capra, la parte del leone scoprendosi giocata, nella registrazione in carte, dai famosi *antiqui*, Fidia, Policleto, Apelle su su fino al mitico Pigmalione.[23]

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mirum dictu, nisi quia passim multa que non vidimus scimus, multa que vidimus ignoramus […] Certius te visurum speras que calamus meus hinc quam que oculus tibi tuus inde mostraverit".

[22] È il caso nel quale l'umanista viene a confermare l'interpretazione di Elio Sparziano secondo cui *Cesar* avrebbe radice nell'etimo dei Mauri *cesai*, "elefante", che si trovava inciso sulle monete di età cesariana (cfr. Feo 1988, 57). Ma anche in *Rerum memorandarum libri* II 73, 6, Petrarca arriva a sostenere la congruenza tra l'immagine di Vespasiano e quanto veniva dal testo di Suetonio riguardo all'aspetto "nitentis et impellentis" dell'imperatore ("nitenti enim atque impellenti simillimam faciem habuisse eum et scriptores rerum tradunt et imago vultus sui que vulgo adhuc aureis vel argenteis eneisque numismatibus insculpta reperitur, indicat" [Billanovich 1943, 95]).

[23] Un'ampia ricostruzione di questo complesso quanto decisivo nucleo di vicende legate alla competenza figurativa di Petrarca si può leggere in Ciccuto 1991a. Nella fattispecie l'insieme degli elementi giotteschi, costantemente legati nell'universo petrarchesco al tema e al dibattito sulla Fama terrena, accompagna proprio l'importanza del passaggio della riflessione del poeta da estetica a etica, nei termini rilevati sia all'interno

La natura sostanzialmente a-critica del giudizio petrarchesco riesce d'altronde a mostrarsi specialmente in luoghi simili a questi, di scoperto riflesso dell'antico, dove emerge l'utilizzo di un lessico convenzionale, ispirato agli usurati *topoi* classicheggianti in materia di "pensieri sull'arte", quale appunto è dato vedere *ad abundantiam* nel corpo della più volte ricordata epistola a Guido Sette (*Fam.* V 17): ciò che ci fa intendere quanto solo nel caso in cui scatti il requisito dell'autopsia da parte dello scrittore, fuori cioè dai recinti dell'uniformante visione retorica del problema, viene a precisarsi una più esatta competenza estetica—e relative dichiarazioni—da parte petrarchesca.[24] Qui varrebbe intrattenersi sull'iper-tradizionale confronto tra immagini vive e immagini mute entro

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della *familiaris* XVIII 8, sia nel capitolo *De forma corporis eximia* del *De remediis* (sul bello come forma esteriore del buono), sia infine a proposito dell'utile esempio di *decus* che il restauro di "superficie" dei monumenti antichi può offrire alla quotidiana esistenza dei cittadini (così ad esempio nella *senilis* XIV 1: "Illud preterea ad amorem civium promerendum efficax, si rector populi non istius modo, sed beneficus sit in suos […] Hoc in genere est templorum refectio et publicorum edificiorum […] Est autem talis patria quidem tua et nobilitate civium et fertilitate locorum et vetustate venerabilis […] hec urbs, inquam, talis, tot preclara fulgoribus, te spectante nec obstante cum possis, ceu rus horridum ineptumque, porcorum gregibus deformatur […] Fedum spectaculum, tristis sonus […] Frivola ista fortasse dicet aliquis; ego nec frivola nec spernenda contendo. Restituenda maiestas sua est urbi nobili et antique, non in magnis tantummodo, nec in his solum que ad intimum rei publice statum sed que ad exteriorem quoque pertinet ornatum, ut oculi etiam partem suam de communi felicitate percipiant, et cives mutata civitatis facie glorientur et gaudeant […] Nam illa in viscerationibus ac ludis circensibus et ferarum peregrinarum exhibitione luxuria ad nichil utili, delectationem solam ac libidinem oculorum habens brevem nec honestam quidem nec honestis dignam oculis, quamvis insano pessimoque rerum iudici vulgo grata, repudianda tamen est penitus" [Nota 2002–2006, 4: 259–77]). Sul confronto tra artisti antichi e moderni nonché sulla frequentazione petrarchesca di alcuni artisti contemporanei vd. ancora Donato 2003.

[24] Nella *senilis* I 6 anche il discorso sul ritratto del poeta viene subito convogliato all'interno del tradizionale confronto con i pittori dell'antichità ("Multos quidem ille vir [Pandolfo Malatesta] per annos, antequam me videret, loquaci tantum fama excitus, pictorem non exiguo conductum, nec paucorum dierum spatio, misit ad locum, qui ea me tempestate incolam habebat, ut is sibi in tabellis exoptatam ignoti hominis faciem reportaret […] et mutata annis esset effigies mea, alterum adhibuit, unum quidem ex paucissimis nostri evi pictoribus [Gasparo Scuaro de' Broaspini?] adhibiturus Zeuxim aut Prothogenem aut Parrhasium aut Apellem, si nostro seculo dati essent. Sed omnis etas contenta suis ingeniis sit oportet. Misit ergo quem potuit: magnum prorsus artificem ut res sunt. Qui, cum ad me venisset, dissimulato proposito, meque lectioni intento, ille suo iure assidens—erat enim michi familiarissimu—nescio quid furtim stilo ageret. Intellexi fraudem amicissimam passusque sum nolens ut ex professo me pingeret, quod nec tamen omni artis ope quivit efficere. Sic michi, sic aliis visum erat […] Eam tamen ipsam imaginem tantus ille dux secum tulit interque delicias habuit, ob hoc unum quod meo saltem nomine facta esset" [Nota 2002–2006, 1: 81–83]), pur salvando le esigenze appunto dell'autopsia, che tornano nel breve ma denso cenno di *Familiares* V 17: "ceterum et hos vidi et, de quibus fortasse alius plura dicendi locus

il quale è presa molta parte pure della discussione del poeta riguardo all'apprezzamento delle opere d'arte.[25] Saremo in ogni caso costretti ad ammettere che buona parte dell'ammirazione petrarchesca per le arti "di immagine" viene invariabilmente dal suo aggirarsi all'interno della visione classica e anticheggiante della questione, di origine libraria appunto; incardinata prima che altrove al tema ecfrastico del *movimento*[26] che, a ben guardare, contiene uno dei nuclei principali della riflessione di Petrarca sulle immagini: vale a dire quello interno all'idea dell'artificio capace di vincere la brutalità della materia[27] e che, facendo trasparire l'intima interiorità del soggetto ritrattato, fa spuntare quell'*aër* grazie

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dabitur, opera singulorum ab auctoribus suis multum differentia longeque distantia" [Dotti 2002–2004, 2: 207].

[25] Alla quadriga veneziana di San Marco Petrarca adatta il *topos* antico dell'"immagine viva" (nella lettera a Pietro da Moggio, *Seniles* IV 1: "Iam dux ipse cum immenso procerum comitatu frontem templi supra vestibulum occuparat, unde marmoreo e suggestu essent cuncta sub pedibus; locus est ubi quattuor illi enei et aurati equi stant, antiqui operis ac preclari, quisquis ille fuit, artificis, ex alto pene vivi adhinnientes ac pedibus obestrepentes" [Nota 2002–2006, 2: 47]), pronto a tornare in parecchi altri luoghi suoi, dai *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* 171.11 e 129.51, al *De otio religioso* II: "Ostendentur vobis exigua sepulcra exornata ingeniis artificum, forte etiam gemmis auroque micantia, ut est ambitiosa non modo vita hominum, sed mors. Vivent in pario lapide imagines defunctorum secundum illud principis poete: 'Vivos ducent de marmore vultus'; sed ipsi, queso, ubi sunt?", da *Eneide* VI 848. Per la tradizione di questo importante elemento dell'antico pensiero ecfrastico vd. almeno i cenni abbondantemente sparsi nel volume di Pfisterer 2002. Lo stesso topos dell'immagine muta—in Petrarca di ascendenza ciceroniana—sfonda sul versante dell'impressione vitale non appena entra in gioco l'autopsia (in questo caso l'illusione di movimento riconosciuta per il Regisole pavese, sul quale vd. *Seniles* V 1 [Nota 2002–2006, 2: 119]).

[26] La vivace gestualità riconosciuta all'interno della "Grotta Napoletana" spinge Petrarca a rilevare in altre occasioni ancora l'importanza del fattore-movimento ai fini della ricreazione o vitalizzazione dell'*artificium* (*Fam.* V 4: "vidi non cryptam modo, que Neapolitana dicitur, cuius ad Lucilium scribens meminit Anneus Seneca, sed passim perforatos montes atque suspensos testudinibus marmoreis eximio candore fulgentibus, et insculptas imagines, quis latex cui corporis parti faveat, manu apposita designantes. In stuporem me non magis facies locorum, quam labor artificum coegit. Iam minus miror romana menia, romanas arces, romana palatia, quando tam procul a patria—quamvis excellentibus viris ubique sit patria—romanorum ducum similis cura protenditur, quibus ultra centesimum lapidem esse quasi suburbane fuerant hiberne delitie" (Dotti 2002–2004, 2: 149); mentre il poeta si riserva di esaltare l'ammirazione dell'uomo di cultura verso un'opera artistica 'spirante vita' (*De remediis*, cap. *De tabulis pictis* riguardo al "magna maxime capiuntur ingenia") rispetto all'immagine dell'uomo privo di intelletto 'agente' che Petrarca non esita a paragonare a una statua inerte (*Seniles* II 1: "His enim philosophantur in scolis, his in tribunalibus iudicant sine iustitia aut delectu […] Sic grassantibus adhibe literatum hominem: muti fiunt et, palladia quasi Gorgon accesserit, durantur in silicem […]" [Nota 2002–2006, 1: 147]).

[27] Quanto al principio dell'"artificio vincente materia" cfr. almeno *Rerum memorandarum libri* III 53, 3, o *De remediis* I 37 a proposito del trofeo di Cneo Pompeo.

a cui è consentito intuire "artisticamente", attraverso i segni artistici dunque, ciò che va al di là delle apparenze.[28]

Insomma di fatto non è dato intendere a pieno di che cosa si nutrì *veramente* la cultura visiva di Petrarca se non trasferiamo ogni possibile attenzione alla storia della sua biblioteca, in altri termini alla certezza circa l'avere il poeta tradotto ogni sua cognizione, estetica e non, nella parola letteraria, quasi istintivamente riferendo alla *testualità* una portata comunicativa esclusiva, superiore a qualsiasi altra, e alla quale le figure, le immagini le più diverse possono portare solo un incremento di potenza espressiva.[29] A dire dunque e persino che, se le immagini

[28] Sulla resa efficace in verosimiglianza della "vitalità" del ritrattato si usa citare il celebrato luogo di *Familiares* XVI 11: "Habito interim in extremo urbis ad occiduam plagam secus Ambrosii basilicam. Saluberrima domus est, levum ad ecclesie latus, que ante se plumbeum templi pinaculum geminasque turres in ingressu, retro autem menia urbis et frondentes late agros atque Alpes prospicit nivosas estate iam exacta. Iocundissimum tamen ex omnibus spectaculum dixerim quod aram, quam non ut de Africano loquens Seneca, 'sepulcrum tanti viri fuisse suspicor', sed scio, imaginemque eius summis parietibus extantem, quam illi viro simillimam fama fert, sepe venerabundus in saxo pene vivam spirantemque suspicio. Id michi non leve precium adventus; dici enim non potests quanta frontis auctoritas, quanta maiestas supercilii, quanta tranquillitas oculorum; vox sola defuerit vivum ut cernas Ambrosium" (Dotti 2006, 5: 93). Ma il concetto relativo alla capacità dell'arte di rivelare l'interiorità della persona raffigurata emerge specialmente dal testo della *familiaris* XXIII 19, in gran parte dedicato a una riflessione sulla funzione rappresentativa dell'arte: "[…] curandum imitatori ut quod scribit simile non idem sit, eamque similitudinem talem esse oportere, non qualis est imaginis ad eum cuius imago est, que quo similior eo maior laus artificis, sed qualis filii ad patrem. In quibus cum magna sepe diversitas sit membrorum, umbra quedam et quem pictores nostri aerem vocant, qui in vultu inque oculis maxime cernitur, similitudinem illam facit, que statim viso filio, patris in memoriam nos reducat, cum tamen si res ad mensuram redeat, omnia sint diversa; sed est ibi nescio quid occultum quod hanc habeat vim. Sic et nobis providendum ut cum simile aliquid sit, multa sint dissimilia, et id ipsum simile lateat ne deprehendi possit nisi tacita mentis indagine, ut intelligi simile queat potiusquam dici. Utendum igitur ingenio alieno utendumque coloribus, abstinendum verbis; illa enim similitudo latet, hec eminet; illa poetas facit, hec simias". L'*umbra occulta* che sta dietro le apparenze visibili, con tutto il suo portato di virtuosi valori interni (l'*habitus virtutum*), solo la parola sarà in grado di restituire, vincendo secondo Petrarca sulle immagini che il più delle volte "prophane autem et si interdum moveant atque erigant ad virtutem, dum tepentes animi rerum nobilium memoria recalescunt, amande tamen aut colende equo amplius non sunt" (Carraud 2002, 1: 208; I 41).

[29] Si tiene invariabilmente per ferma da parte petrarchesca la consapevolezza di una superiore valenza della *parola* in tal ordine di fattori rispetto all'*immagine*, riuscendo la prima a rilevare in modo più complesso dell'altra l'*habitus* interiore dell'eroe o del personaggio: come attesta appunto e del resto la *familiaris* VI 4: "[…] corporum nempe liniamenta statuis forsan expressius continentur, rerum vero gestarum morumque notitia atque habitus animorum haud dubie plenius atque perfectius verbis quam incudibus exprimuntur; nec improprie michi videor dicturus statuas corporum imagines, exempla virtutum" (Dotti 2002–2004, 2: 291).

passate sotto i suoi occhi dovevano valere qualcosa, ciò era perché esse venivano finalizzate alle parole e ai libri che le contenevano: sono i libri che "medullitus delectant, colloquuntur, consulunt",[30] laddove agostinianamente "aurum, argentum, gemme, purpurea vestis, marmorea domus, cultus ager, picte tabule, phaleratus sonipes, ceteraque id genus",[31] il mondo tutto della figurazione altro non essendo che oggetto di "muta […] et superficiaria voluptas"—come appunto risulta dalla *familiaris* III 18, 2–3. E a forza di ricercare il senso della cultura figurativa di Petrarca *dentro i suoi libri* potremo almeno in parte sbloccare l'*impasse* relativa al suo ruolo di incerta *connoisseurship*: riconoscendo cioè in lui prevalentemente un'attenzione da provetto calligrafo e da letterato bibliofilo, non da critico d'arte; in altri termini, da intellettuale meno interessato agli effetti decorativi ed estetizzanti della scrittura e appassionato invece alla pienezza sostanziale, appunto, comunicativa delle parole pur nel gradimento delle loro molte implicazioni estetiche.[32] Resta vero che a monte di tutto questo sta una posizione intellettuale petrarchesca nutrita da elementi di natura largamente agostiniana come anche da radicali isidoriani da tempo riconosciuti.[33] Da essa le distanze verranno prese, eppure con molti *distinguo*, solo quando all'altezza dei capitoli centrali del *De remediis* viene introdotto dallo scrittore un concetto di *usus* ora piegato all'originale concepimento della personale passione libraria:[34] nel senso che è grazie all'*usus* e ai suoi effetti, come dirli,

[30] La natura del rapporto petrarchesco con i propri oggetti si ha del resto in chiaro da *Epistulae metricae* I 6, vv. 178–220.

[31] *Familiares* III 18, 2 (Dotti 2002–2004, 1: 315) e cfr. Bettini 1984, 14–16.

[32] L'apprezzamento petrarchesco per l'aspetto esteriore di codici e manoscritti viene da luoghi molteplici, tra i quali possiamo segnalare la lode alla calligrafia del Nelli consegnata alla *familiaris* XX 6, o per converso il cruccio espresso a Boccaccio (cui va in altra occasione epistolare l'avviso circa la *litera luxurians* che *oculos mulcet*) per la cattiva trascrizione del *De vita solitaria*, in *Seniles* V 1.

[33] Di una possibilità di appercezione della bellezza attraverso la sola forma esteriore è argomento (agostiniano) come è noto nel III libro del *Secretum* ("A. 'Quia cum creatum omne Creatoris amore diligendum sit, tu contra, creature captus illecebris, Creatorem non qua decuit amasti, sed miratus artifices fuisti, quasi nichil ex omnibus formosius creasset, cum tamen ultima pulcritudinum sit forma corporea'; F. 'me […] illius non magis corpus amasse quam animam'; A. 'si idem animus, in squalido et nodoso corpore habitaret, similiter placuisset?'; F. 'Non audeo quidem id dicere; neque enim animus cerni potest, nec imago corporis talem spopondisset; at si oculis appareret, amare profecto pulcritudinem animi deforme licet habentis habitaculum'; A. 'Verborum queris adminicula; si enim nonnisi quod oculis apparet amare potes, corpus igitur amasti'" [Dotti 1993a, 134]), argomento presto ricondotto dallo stesso Agostino al tema centrale della *concupiscentia oculorum*, sul quale si può vedere Ciccuto 1991a, 83–88.

[34] Cfr. *Familiares* XX 4, o anche *Seniles* II 2.

di "contemporaneizzazione" che persino il libro "bello" (ad esempio ornato di figure), l'oggetto insomma e il suo possesso riscattano il loro scarso valore materiale, giovando al progresso del saggio con l'ispirargli doti di misura e di onesto utilizzo della ricchezza, tali peraltro da contrapporsi, e esattamente, a un *amor fallax* per le medesime.[35] Siano dunque i libri "ingenii presidium", e non "thalami ornamentum" (*Fam.* III 18, 10), "neque aliter […] quam Corinthiis vasis aut tabulis pictis ac statuis" (*De remediis* I 43).

Ecco perciò Petrarca insofferente verso ogni eccesso ornamentale,[36] senza che questo tuttavia escluda il suo personale apprezzamento per codici lussuosi, come quello donatogli da Boccaccio nel 1355 e contenente le agostiniane *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (Parigino lat. 1989), o addirittura per le forme delle lettere greche nell'*Omero* donatogli da Nicola Sigero.[37] Bibliofilo non indifferente al fatto d'arte, allora Petrarca ci verrà incontro anche per via della rutilante, splendida miniatura eseguita a frontespizio del *Virgilio Ambrosiano* da Simone Martini: opera questa mirabile, tale da documentarci un caso di collaborazione effettiva tra letterato e artista, sullo sfondo intanto di un grande alveo di cultura classica che viene evocato anche dai distici di pugno del poeta vergati

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[35] Circa la necessità di un uso 'produttivo' della ricchezza o agiatezza—col corollario del rigetto della condizione di povertà—si dovrà rinviare il lettore ancora sia alla più volte citata *senilis* a Francesco Bruni, sia al II del *De vita solitaria*, sia infine alla riflessione riguardo alla ricchezza autentica rappresentata dall'*usus* poetico, esposta da Petrarca al fratello Gerardo (*Fam.* X 4) nei termini seguenti: "Laudare dapem fictilibus appositam, eandem in auro fastidire, aut dementis aut ypocrite est. Avari est aurum sitire non posse pati pusilli animi est; non fit auro melior cibus certe, nec deterior. Profecto autem sicut aurum sic carmen in suo genere nobilius non nego, quanto scilicet rectiora sunt que ad regulam fiunt, quam que temere. Non quod ideo carmen expetendum censeam; ne spernendum quidem" (Dotti 2002–2004, 3: 285). Nella *senilis* V 1 a Giovanni Boccaccio, poi, il poeta tornerà a dire della necessità da parte degli intellettuali di esercitare il personale giudizio estetico al di fuori dei condizionamenti delle passioni individuali ("Credo nisi me amor fallit auctoris, quo iudicio rerum es, cuncta inter modernorum opera, hoc augustissimum iudicasses […]" [Nota 2002–2006, 2: 119]).

[36] Per questo si vedano i rilievi di Donato 2001, 195.

[37] Nella *familiaris* XVIII 2, l'opera in greco è ridotta a oggetto di rammaricata eppur ammirata contemplazione da parte dell'umanista, ignorante della lingua del *princeps poetarum*: "il tuo Omero è muto per me, o per meglio dire sono io sordo di fronte a lui. Tuttavia godo già solo nel contemplarlo e spesso abbracciandolo, e sospirando, dico 'O uomo grande, come desidererei udire la tua voce!'". Eppure altri fattori 'sensibili' entrano in gioco, la *sonoritas*, la *dulcedo verborum*, gli effetti di concretezza percettiva di cui il poeta scrive nelle *seniles* XIV 1 e XVI 1: elementi tutti che riconducono comunque a un contesto di 'sensibile gradimento' pronto a scattare per Petrarca ogniqualvolta si ponga l'esigenza di ordinare le pulsioni sensibili acclivi alle arti entro i parametri della moderazione tipica dell'antico saggio. Per le note petrarchesche in merito al grande codice agostiniano inviato a Milano da Boccaccio vd. ancora Donato 2001, 194–95.

sullo stesso foglio;[38] e quindi tale da portare sotto gli occhi del lettore un pulviscolo di citazioni da tradizioni figurative, antiche e contemporanee, che il pittore, eseguendo la miniatura ad Avignone pare dietro suggerimenti indicativi del poeta, mise a disposizione del committente per l'amato codice, tra echi vistosissimi della miniatura francese, dei più antichi codici dell'opera virgiliana o delle *Bibbie* prodotte negli scrittoi di Tours.[39] Simone ne riebbe una patente di dignità assoluta proprio in quanto artista, là dove Petrarca, nel terzo distico vergato nel *bas-de-page* del frontespizio, addita un'equivalenza fra il pittore e il più grande poeta dell'Antichità,[40] e sinanche nei sonetti 77 e 78 dei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* che proprio l'artista senese hanno—assieme al fantasma di Laura—come protagonista, e dove si fa strada il richiamo decisivo a un *processo cognitivo* comune a tutte le arti e le discipline, strumento unico altresì a disposizione dell'artista che intenda travalicare i confini materiali e "bassi" del proprio operare. Conta l'impegno intellettuale che sta dietro qualsivoglia apparenza, sia essa veicolata da parola o da immagine. A voler continuare poi per via cronologica una parca rassegna di "circostanze d'arte" petrarchesche sarà giocoforza sacrificare quantità a dir poco enorme di episodi. Corre obbligo però avvisare almeno l'importanza del soggiorno milanese del poeta, protrattosi come è noto per otto anni, dal 1353 al 1361, in corrispondenza col momento felice di riunificazione da parte di Petrarca dei due tronconi della sua biblioteca, quello "transalpino" di Valchiusa e l'altro "italico" di Parma. Non è possibile trascurare questo periodo perché esso rappresentò un notevole momento di elaborazione delle tensioni culturali vive nella complessa personalità del poeta, che in veste di committente più o meno diretto fece illustrare alcuni suoi codici importanti quali l'*Iliade* latinizzata da Leonzio Pilato (codice Parigino lat. 7880 / I), la raccolta dell'*Historia Augusta* oggi Parigino lat. 5816 fatto copiare da Guglielmo da Pastrengo a Verona, o l'*Historia Alexandri Magni* di Curzio Rufo, codice Parigino lat. 5720 e altri testi ancora,[41] impegnando una

[38] Per una interpretazione globale e specifica dei molteplici contenuti culturali presenti alla collaborazione non soltanto grafica bensì specialmente ideativa da parte di Petrarca nella realizzazione della miniatura vd. Ciccuto 1991a.

[39] Anche il contesto avignonese, ricchissimo di intersezioni al tempo del soggiorno di Petrarca e di Simone Martini, è da me evocato in relazione a questo episodio nel saggio già ricordato Ciccuto 1991a.

[40] Donato 2001, 198.

[41] La vicenda è stata magnificamente ricostruita da Avril 1990, 7–16.

bottega miniatoria oggi riconosciuta molto attiva nella produzione di testi illustrati per prestigiose committenze lombarde.[42]

Poi nel tempo arrivano sul suo scrittoio immagini da vari luoghi dell'Europa còlta: non solo il già ricordato codice donatogli da Boccaccio, che risale al secolo XI e del quale Petrarca ammira "libri decor et vetustioris litere maiestas et omnis sobrius [...] ornatus",[43] ma anche la romanicissima *Expositio in Psalmos* di Odo Astensis (MS lat. 2508 della Bibliothèque nationale de France), o la raccolta pure antica di *Epistulae* di san Gerolamo (MS Edili 3 della Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana di Firenze). Già l'acquisizione, nel 1350, di un codice dugentesco della *Naturalis Historia* di Plinio (Parigi, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. lat. 6802) aveva portato Petrarca a contatto con una miriade di notizie sulle arti dell'antichità;[44] e forse fu poi l'amico Boccaccio a tracciare sui margini di quel codice alcuni disegni rimasti famosi, quasi emblematici anche per la competenza grafica, in materia di figure insomma, rivelate in quella speciale occasione da entrambi gli scrittori.[45] Sarà infine lo stesso circuito di notizie di desunzione libraria a spingere Petrarca verso la ricerca di una fantomatica storia romana scritta da Plinio, circa la quale ha avuto informazione dalle pagine della pseudo-suetoniana *Vita Plinii*.

Nel 1351, sappiamo ancora da una postilla di mano del poeta, Petrarca diventa finalmente proprietario di un'altra opera per lui ambitissima: l'insieme delle *Deche* I, III e IV di Tito Livio nella forma di quel codice oggi parigino (Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 5690) che Petrarca aveva più volte consultato nel corso della sua vita grazie alla benevolenza della famiglia romana dei Colonna. Si trattava di un insieme composito: balza subito agli occhi la doppia "campagna"

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[42] Donato 2003, 437.

[43] *Familiares* XVIII 3, 5 e 9 (Dotti 2006, 5: 241).

[44] Donato 2003, 440–42. Una lettura attenta di alcuni di questi luoghi è anche in Bettini 1984, 44–50. Sarà ancora l'enciclopedia pliniana, nel luogo in cui viene ricordata l'amabilità del pittore Apelle (c. 256v), a far scrivere a Petrarca di analoga virtù riconoscibile nell'amico artista Simone ("hec [comitas] fuit et Symoni nostro senensi nuper iocundissima"); e a spingerlo subito dopo, a proposito di immagini di morenti dipinte da Apelle, a ricordarne una contemporanea—un crocifisso?—"qualem nos hic unam habemus preclarissimi artificis", sì da far sospettare la critica che il poeta fosse in possesso anche di una tavola di devozione privata eventualmente assimilabile al piccolo *Crocifisso* martiniano eseguito ad Avignone, oggi conservato al Fogg Art Museum di Cambridge (Massachusetts).

[45] La partecipazione di Boccaccio a questo peraltro rapido intervento grafico è contestualizzata in Ciccuto 1998, 141–60.

illustrativa che portò all'attuale configurazione del codice, con chiave di volta centrata sulla c. 169 a segnalare non solo due differenti stagioni artistiche, ma anche e specialmente due culture, operanti all'ombra della famiglia Colonna e poi di Petrarca, bilicate tra vecchio e nuovo secolo. Perché è un fatto che il codice sia composto di due unità, di cui la prima vede l'intervento illustrativo di un artista che, se non è lo stesso al lavoro sul celebre Messale della Cattedrale di Salerno o sulla *Bibbia* I. B. 22 della Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, è pittore che ha senz'altro competenze di cultura figurativa centro-italica, quelle cifre stilistiche umbre e romane che ampia circolazione ebbero nel regno angioino, dove pare che assai precocemente quella porzione di codice sia stata eseguita, circa gli anni Novanta del tredicesimo secolo.[46]

Si ipotizza che detta sezione sia entrata nell'orbita della famiglia Colonna—dopo commissione prestigiosa da parte di un alto dignitario al servizio degli Anjou di Napoli—al tempo che Landolfo colonnese si era posto in caccia di antichi manoscritti, sia a Roma nel corso del suo prolungato pendolarismo, sia appunto ad Avignone, dove sappiamo che si impegnò, oltreché su vari testi classici, attorno alla IV Decade liviana da lui stesso recuperata in un manoscritto proveniente da Chartres.[47] Da quel momento in avanti è dato immaginare che qualche autorevole rappresentante di quella famiglia romana abbia inteso disporre di un "Livio" completo non solo dal punto di vista testuale, ma anche sul versante della dotazione figurata (vista fra l'altro la sensibilità in materia dimostrata in parecchie altre circostanze "librarie" dagli stessi colonnesi, Landolfo e Giovanni in particolare, più e più volte presi nelle vicende di committenza e acquisto di manoscritti illustrati). Si procedette perciò alla decorazione delle decadi III e IV (cc. 169–365*v*) da poco trascritte allo scopo di associarle alla reliquia pre-esistente e appunto già figurata. Qualcuno dei Colonna ricorse ad artisti, almeno tre, che non possono non essere d'area romana, in forza soprattutto degli aggiornamenti da essi esibiti in linea col rinnovamento cavalliniano in pittura. Si tratta

[46] Vd. dunque in proposito l'ampia ricostruzione di Ciccuto 1991a, 111 sg., e quanto risulta in specifico sui fondamenti del saggio di Bologna 1974, 67.

[47] Oltre al saggio di Tesnière 1999, 37–41, giocano un ruolo innovativo nella lettura di tutte queste vicende le relazioni, da me svolte in collaborazione con Giuliana Crevatin ai convegni petrarcheschi di Perugia e di Tours (*"Reliquiarum servator": il Livio Parigino 5690*) il cui testo è in corso di stampa nei relativi Atti. Qui si trovano sparse alcune notizie di massima, ricavate da un ampio studio del codice liviano dei Colonna e di Petrarca, che farà da introduzione e commentario a un'edizione in fac-simile del medesimo, in corso di realizzazione per le cure mie, di Giuliana Crevatin ed Enrico Fenzi.

di un insieme di elementi e tendenze—taglio narrativo più consistente, varietà libera della gamma cromatica, scalatura dei piani della rappresentazione ecc.—che sarebbe impensabile ambientare ad Avignone, come pure è stato suggerito, dove lo stile imposto dal pervasivo e mirabile Maestro del Codice di San Giorgio aveva pressoché finito per dominare il lavoro di tutti gli *scriptoria* miniatorii là attivi nel giro degli anni Venti del Trecento.[48]

È dunque sulla base di queste premesse che risulta necessario immaginare come Francesco Petrarca, che scrive "*emptus Avignone 1351 diu tamen ante possessus*" in alto alla carta 367, abbia avuto più occasioni di incontro col nostro codice "viaggiante" assai prima di quella data: codice che avrà seguìto sì gli spostamenti dei Colonna, specie dopo la morte di Landolfo a Roma nel 1331, ma che fu oggetto di dotta consultazione e annotazione da parte del poeta presso le dimore prima avignonesi e quindi romane dei suoi *patrons*, in compagnia dello stesso Giovanni (che pure con altri lo annotò) e a un passo dalle memorie della storia repubblicana dell'Urbe.

Anche grazie alle carte di un codice come questo, decisivo dal punto di vista testuale per la conoscenza del "padre della storia", vennero alla cultura visiva di Petrarca non poche sollecitazioni. A convincerci vieppiù del fatto che l'arte europea del suo tempo venne a nutrire l'intelletto petrarchesco sempre e in ogni occasione attraverso il culto delle lettere, in una prospettiva rigorosamente umanistica che sul modello degli antichi non rinunciava a una concezione unitaria e ampia delle arti, autentiche "sorelle d'un parto nate", che collaboravano a una formazione culturale dell'individuo a tutto tondo, senza preclusioni né esclusioni.

[48] Cfr. Ciccuto 2001–2002, 88.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GOOD-BYE, BOLOGNA: JOHANNES ANDREAE AND *FAMILIARES* IV 15 AND 16

John Ahern

In two closely associated letters Petrarch accused an unnamed antagonist ("famoso quodam viro") of citing ancient writers in misleading ways and of knowing little about those same writers. This attack against a leading Trecento intellectual, Johannes Andreae—for that was his name—often receives cursory reading because we accept Petrarch's tendentious portrait of Johannes at face value.[1] Indeed, the figure and writings of Johannes Andreae are little known except to historians of canon law and even they are hampered by the lack of any modern editions of his many important works. A definitive list of his *quaestiones* and *consilia* has yet to be drawn up. These two letters are of interest because in them Petrarch belatedly, vis-à-vis the essentially chronological narrative of the *Familiares*, recounts and defends his controversial, life-changing decision in April 1326 to abandon the seven-year course of civil law in Bologna just as he was completing it. After a quick look at the content of these letters, I will examine them within the framework of the careful, idealized autobiographical narrative implicit in *Familiares* I–IV and then relate that narrative and those letters to the figure of Johannes against the background of Bologna.

In these two letters Petrarch begins by addressing a man thirty years his senior with filial respect: "Tu pater; non te michi, sed me tibi morem gerere dignum est [...]" ([*Fam*. IV 15, 1] "You are the father; it is not right for you to yield to me, but for me to yield to you [...]"),[2] but soon modulates into derision: "Vix te aliquid ignorare posse arbitror; siquid autem vero adversum tibi excidit, aut minus providisse ut, quod de eodem ait idem, lusisse te suspicior" ([*Fam*. IV 15, 2] "I think there is

[1] See Sabbadini 1914, 2: 156–62, who provided the first analysis of these epistles.

[2] Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 188. Throughout this essay I cite Petrarch's *Familiares* (*Fam*) from the four volumes of Rossi 1933–1942, noting for each letter the line numbers established by Rossi. All translations are my own.

scarcely anything that you cannot know. However, if something contrary to the truth slipped out of you, I think that either you were not paying attention or were joking as he [Macrobius] says of him [Aristotle]"). What annoys him are the various kinds of unacknowledged citation in which he says he has caught Johannes out:

> Animadverti enim te in scriptis tuis, omni studio ut appareas niti; hinc ill discursus per ignota volumina, ut ex singulis aliquid decerpens rebus tuis interseras. Plaudunt tibi discipuli et omniscium vocant, innumerabilium auctorum nominibus attoniti, quasi omnium, quorum titulos tenes, et notitiam sis adeptus; docti autem perfacile discernunt quid cuiusque proprium, quid alienum sit, et rursus quid mutuum, quid precarium, quid furtivum, quid e medio haustum, quid a pretereunte delibatum.
>
> (*Fam*. IV 15, 16)

> (I have noticed that in your writings you struggle eagerly to stand out, which is why you run through volumes which you do not know in order to pluck something from each to insert in your own writings. Students applaud you and call you all-knowing, astonished by the countless names of authors, as if you were an expert on the content of all those book titles which you own, but learned men discern quite easily what belongs to each person and what is someone else's, and what is borrowed back, what was a hand-out, what was ripped off, what was drunk up directly, what was plucked while passing by.)

> Memoriam ostentare puerilis est gloria; viro, ut ait Seneca, captare flosculos turpe est, quippe quem fructu deceat gaudere, non floribus. Tu vero in hac etatis parte venerabilis et in tua professione clarissimus, imo, ut non semper pugnam sed interdum ungam, solus sine exemplo nostri temporis earum, quibus es deditus, literarum princeps, nescio quid iuvenili animo, dimissis finibus tuis, in alienis pratis otiosus et vagus, inclinata iam die, interlegendis flosculis tempus teris. Placet ignota tentare, ubi sepe viam non inveniens aut vageris aut corruas; placet illorum sequi vestigia, qui scientiam quasi mercimonium aliquod ante fores explicant, cum interim vacua domus sit. Certum tutum est ad id potius niti, ut sis aliquid plus quam videaris; operosa semper et periculosa est iactantia.
>
> (*Fam*. IV 15, 17–18)

> (Showing off one's memory is a boyish glory; for a man, as Seneca says, it is unseemly to pick flowers, since he should in fact take joy in the fruits not the flowers. You are venerated in this part of the age and so famous in your profession, indeed—to soothe you rather than always to be fighting—you are the sole, peerless prince in our time of the literature to which you are dedicated; for some childish reason, setting aside your limits, you went idly and vagrantly into strange meadows as day was declining, you wasted your time plucking little flowers here and there. You like to try out unknown places where, often failing to find a path,

> you either get lost or fall down. You like to follow in the steps of those who display their knowledge like merchandise in the market place while their houses are empty. It is certainly a safe course for you to strive to be something more than you seem. Boasting always requires a lot of work and is dangerous.)

The closing to this letter seems disingenuous. "Vale, et ignosce, oro, si lesus es. XVI Kal. Septembris" ("Farewell, and I beg you to ignore this if you are offended. 17 August".) How could Johannes not be offended?

Petrarch charges Johannes with reading solely in order to find citations to insert in his works as a display of erudition. Presumably Petrarch had been looking at Johannes' work and had been struck by the "innumerabilium auctorum nominibus [...] quasi omnium quorum titulos tenes" ("the names of countless authors [...] almost all of whose titles you own"). In this reference to Johannnes' library, especially in the adverb "quasi", one catches a hint of envy. We might even hypothesize that Petrarch envies not only Johannes' library, but also his large audience and enormous reputation, for envy of other writers bedeviled Petrarch, who insistently and unpersuasively denied envy of Dante.[3]

In the second letter, redacted again for the *Familiares*, Petrarch expresses disingenuous surprise at Johannes' immediate and irked response that apparently came in a letter which has not survived: "Sic est ut putabam; libertas ira peperit, veritas odium, admonitio fastidium" ([*Fam*. IV 16, 1] "It is just as I thought. Free speaking begets anger, truth begets hatred, warnings beget irritation"). Petrarch goes on sarcastically:

> [...] efficere studes ut iniuste monuisse videar, quod ingenio tuo nichil impervium sit, nichil aliud dixerim nisi quod bene tibi est si hanc de rebus tuis opinionem habes. O te tuo qualicunque iudicio felicem! o utinam hanc me artem et docere possis et doceas, qua talia ipse michi di me noverim conflare iudicia! Nescio enim an melius sit interdum de errore gaudere, quam semper de veritate dolere. (*Fam*. IV 16, 12)
>
> ([...] you are eager to prove that I seem to admonish unjustly because nothing withstands your judgment. I can only say that it is good for you that you hold this opinion about what you say. How happy you are in whatever judgments you make! Oh if only you could and would teach me this art by which I might know how to bring together such judgments of

[3] See, for example, *Familiares* XXI 15.

my own about myself. For I don't know whether it might not be better to rejoice in error rather than suffer for the truth.)

Petrarch ends his second letter to Johannes by defending himself against the accusation made in his correspondent's reply to the first letter, according to which Petrarch had "deserted" the University.

Ad id vero quod me velut iurate militie desertorem arguis, quoniam cum maxime florere inciperem, studium iuris Bononiamque dimiserim, expedita responsio est, quamvis tibi et civitatem illam et studium singulariter illustranti, minime, ut arbitror, placitura. Quoniam itaque satis exagitavi, id totum silebo quo factum meum tueri soleo; fuit enim hec michi questio sepe cum multis, precipueque cum Oldrado Laudensi iurisconsulto nostra etate clarissimo. Hoc unum est quod salva concordia dici potest: nichil enim contra naturam bene fit; solitudinis amatorem illa me genuit, non fori. Denique, sic habeto; me aut nichil unquam provide fecisse—quod magis puto—aut, si quicquam hoc in primis, non audio dicere sapienter, sed feliciter factum est: et quod Bononiam vidi et quod non inhesi. Vale. (*Fam*. IV 13–14)

(Regarding your charge that I am like the deserter of sworn military service, since I abandoned the study of law and Bologna when I had begun to flower to the highest degree, the answer is quick and will be, I think, only minimally pleasing to someone like you who renders especially illustrious both that city and that Studium. And so since I have done enough criticizing, I shall say nothing at all about the way in which I usually defend myself. I have discussed this often with many people, especially Oldradus da Lodi, a most famous jurist of our time. Preserving harmony, this one thing can be said: nothing against nature can be well done; she made me a lover of solitude, not of court rooms. Finally know this: either I never did anything prudently—which I rather think—or, if I ever did so, this was among the first such things that I have done that was done, I dare not say wisely, but happily: I saw Bologna and I did not cleave to it. Farewell. August 31)

Both of Petrarch's letters may well be fictional constructs composed ca. 1351 which Johannes himself never actually saw, having died of the plague in July 1348. If so, they resemble Petrarch's letters to his school mate Tommaso Caloiro which also deal with his years in Bologna and which are also recognized as written *post mortem*.[4] In any case, rather than addressing his crucial decision to abandon Bologna in 1326 in its natural chronological position in *Familiares* Book I, Petrarch has postponed

[4] For the dating of the collection of the *Familiares* as well as individual letters, see Billanovich 1947, Wilkins 1951a, 368–377, and Dotti 1987 and 2006.

it to Book IV, where he addresses events of the 1340s. Nevertheless, because the same attitudes towards legal study and individual professors expressed in the letters to Caloiro in Book I recur in the letters of the 1340s and 1350s, there is good reason to believe that many of the letters of *Familiares* I–IV were assembled and in some cases composed at the same time, the early 1350s.

Except for the *Familiares*' opening letter, which was written after the plague in 1348, the sixty-seven letters which precede the two letters to Johannes, *Familiares* IV 15 and 16, recount two decades of friendship, travels, reading, and writing, beginning with his departure from Bologna in April 1326 and culminating in his coronation as a poet by King Robert of Sicily in April 1341 (*Fam*. IV 2–6). Against the trajectory of his own success Petrarch sets the lives and premature deaths of two friends from student days in Bologna: Tommaso Caloiro died in Messina in late summer 1341, and Giacomo Colonna a few weeks later in Rome. Petrarch addresses nine letters (*Fam*. I 2; I 7–12; and III 1 and 2) to Caloiro, who in his *Triumphus cupidinis* IV 58–64 occupies a place second only to Beatrice, and another three letters to Colonna (*Fam*. I 6; II 9; IV 6). The letters to Colonna are usually considered actual letters, rather than letters written after the fact.[5] Petrarch also wrote two consolatory letters on Caloiro's death (*Fam*. IV 10 and 11) and two on Colonna's (*Fam*. IV 10 and11).[6] Letters related to these two friends from student days and letters referring to his coronation (*Fam*. IV 2–6) account for not quite half of the letters in *Familiares* Books I–IV and together form a single, self-conscious autobiographical design. His consolatory letter to Pellegrino Caloiro identifies Tommaso Caloiro as his alter ego:

> Una etas erat, idem animus, summa studioroum paritas, incredibililis identitas voluntatum; unum eramus, uno calle gradiemur, unum terminum petebamus; unus labor, una spes, una erat intentio: unus utinam finis esset! (*Fam*. IV 10, 2)
>
> (Our ages were the same, as were our minds, we read exactly the same things, shared an unbelievable identity of ambition. We were one, we walked the same path, we sought the same goal; our work, our hopes, our intentions were one. If only our end had been the same!)

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[5] Wilkins 1951a, Billanovich 1947.

[6] Petrarch's many consolatory letters imitate Cicero's *Ad Atticum* whose fourth book was entirely dedicated to such letters.

His friend's death proves how fleeting all achievement is, but also drives Petrarch to compose a substantial volume ("iusto volume" [*Fam*. IV 10, 3])—clearly the *Familiares* themselves, a volume not unlike the massive copy he made of their model, Cicero's *Letters to Atticus* which he discovered and copied in Verona in 1343. *Familiares* I contains *in nuce* the autobiographical narrative of *Familares* Books I–IV. In this opening book Petrarch focuses on Scipio Africanus, the central character of his epic *Africa* (actually conceived long after his Bologna days, in 1333), promising to "restore him to his proper place" ("Africanum ipsum, quem ex hac acie segregare in commune restituam" [*Fam*. I 2, 26–27]). In *Familiares* I he also invokes the only living person capable of valid judgments on living writers, King Robert, who twenty years later will crown him in 1341 for that very poem.[7]

Petrarch places the two letters to Johannes Andreae immediately after the coronation letters and the four consolatory letters, because only after establishing the narrative of his personal success is he in a position strong enough to address his apparently irresponsible decision to abandon Bologna. His coronation corroborates that decision. Clearly the uncrowned and as yet unvindicated Petrarch would have found it difficult to address so august an elder as Johannes Andreae so scathingly. Thus, even if we assume that he did in fact send him these two letters (or something very like them) some time in early summer 1343, one can not help suspecting that out of deference, if not fear, he waited until Johannes' death to make them public. And if this is what actually happened, even so he made a kind of amends to Johannes' memory by later including three mild, occasional letters (*Fam*. V 7–9) in which in contrast to *Familiares* IV 15 and 16, he names Johannes as their addressee.

When young Caloiro complained to Petrarch ca. 1326 that their elders paid no attention to their *scripta*, we assume he means the poetry which he, Caloiro, composed in Bologna in the mid 1320s, none of which has survived aside from a sonnet attributed to Caloiro along with Petrarch's reply *Il mio disire ha sì ferma radice*.[8] Petrarch observes that their professors were incapable of analyzing (*examinare*) vernacular texts.

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[7] See *Fam*. I, 2, 9 (Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 16).

[8] Lo Parco's fanciful article (1920) remains the point of departure for study of this shadowy figure. For Petrarch in Bologna, see Calcaterra 1949.

> Vides ne tu hos scolasticos, genus hominum vigiliis ac ieiunio squallidum? Crede mihi: nichil ad lucubrandum durius, nichil mollius ad iudicandum. Cum multa laborissime legerint, nichil examinant; et quid in re sit, dedignantur inquirere, cum hominem ipsum nosse videantur. (*Fam*. I 2, 5)
>
> (Don't you see these academics, a race of men made squallid by long nights and little food? Believe me: no one works harder by lamp light, no one is weaker in judgment. Though they read many things quite laboriously, they analyze nothing and although they seem to know the man himself, they disdain to seek out the substance.)

These purple-clad exegetes ("istos purpuratos") sought and found popular acclaim as wise men (*Fam*. I 2, 6). He calls them "nostri causidici" (*Fam*. I 2, 17), "our lawyers", and says that they "spend every minute of their lives in altercations and dialectic quibbling and are always stirred up over trifling empty little disputes" ("et altercationibus et cavillationibus dyalecticis totum vite tempus expendunt seque inanibus semper quaestiunculis exagitant" [*Fam*. I 2, 18]). The *altercationes, cavillationes* and *quaestiunculae* refer to the public disputes of the dominant law faculty as well as those of professors of logic, a significant minority in the city since the 1270s. Later in life Petrarch was still expressing scorn for both groups. In 1351 in a recently received copy of Quintilian (MS Paris Lat. 7720), Petrarch wrote next to a passage critical of long-winded lawyers (*Institutiones* V 13, 31) these words: "Petre de Cernitis, audi"—"Listen to this, Pietro de' Cerniti!" Even after thirty years his old professor's pompous afternoon lectures on the *Volumen* still echoed in his memory.[9] His description of ponderously dull instructors recalls the words of one of them, Jacopo di Belviso, an eminent jurist who lectured during Petrarch's student days. Some time after Petrarch left Bologna, Jacopo dedicated his *Lectura Authenticorum* (1327–1333) to three of Petrarch's friends in Bologna, the brothers Giacomo and Agapito Colonna and their cousin Niccolò Capoccio.

A *quaestio* survives which mentions Giacomo and Niccolò as *doctores legum* in Bologna in 1326 and also refers to both Pietro Cerniti and

[9] Accame Lanzillotta 1988, 69 provides the text of Petrarch's annotations; see also Nolhac 1907, 2: 93n2. For Pietro de' Cerniti, see also Lo Parco 1908 and Lupinetti 1995.

Johannes Andreae.[10] Belviso's self-important preface transports us into the environment which Petrarch so loathed:

> Cum ego Iacobus de Belviso, iuris civilis professor, civis bononiensis, corpus meum vigiliis nocturnis multisque laboribus macerassem longissimo tempore et quasi ad summam prostratus debilitatem productus essem, legendo dubia nodosque legalis sapientiae indiscussos, in glosis ordinariis tactos et non decisos, consuetudinesque usus feudorum quotidiane declarando, solutiones et eorum decisiones sufficientes componendo, lecturam ordinando, questiones dubias annectendo et decidendo, et pacem et quietem more veteranorum necessariam michi appeterem, ad preces et multam instantiam venerabilium et nobilium Iacobi et Agapiti fratrum filiorum magnifici et potentis viri domini Stephani de Columna Romanorum proconsolis, nec non venerabilis ac nobilis viri Nicolai Capoc[ii] de Roma consobrini eorum, in Bononiensi Studio tunc residentium, qui eorum humilitate et gratia meum honorare auditorium voluerunt dum hunc relegerem librum quem decies legeram in Bononiensi Studio, quique domini Iacobus et Nicolaus sub me privatim in legibus honorifice receperunt, qui vita commendabili, morum honestate, nobilitate prosapie virtutibusque splendore resplendent: eorum humilibus supplicationibus ipsorumque nutibus et voluntatibus semper complacere paratus, ad huius libri lecturam componendam condescendi, ad communem etiam omnium utiltatem respiciens. (Iacopo di Belviso, *Lectura Authenticorum*)[11]
>
> (Although I, Jacopo di Belviso, professor of civil law, a citizen of Bologna, had worn out my body in many late night sessions and labors for a very long time and was almost brought prostate to the final weakness through my reading of doubtful passages and unstudied knotty points of legal wisdom which are touched upon but not resolved in the ordinary gloss and through my daily explications of the conventions and practices of inheritable property and through the devising of sufficient solutions and decisions regarding this, and through my ordering of lectures, adding and linking doubtful questions, and although, as veterans do, I sought the peace and quiet necessary for me, nevertheless at the entreaties and great insistence of the venerable and noble Giacomo and Agapito, brothers and sons of the magnificent and powerful man, lord Stefano of Colonna, governor of the Romans, and also of the venerable and noble man, Niccolò Capocci, their cousin, all residing at that time at the Studium of Bologna and who out of their humility and grace wanted to honor my lecture hall as I was reading again this book, which I used to read quite often in the Bolognese Studium, so much so that Giacomo

[10] See Maffei 1979.
[11] The text is from Maffei 1979, 84–85.

> and Niccolò privately under my direction received with honor the degree in laws, they who shine out in splendor for commendable living, honesty of morals, greatness of knowledge, nobility of lineage and virtues: and I, always prepared to give in to their humble entreaties, their nods of encouragement, and their desires, I agreed to compose the *lectura* of this book with a view towards the common utility of one and all.)

It is not unlikely that Petrarch and his friends heard Belviso utter similar words and afterwards mocked them in private.[12] Petrarch may even have read this very preface in Avignon where it undoubtedly circulated in the 1330s. In fact, the opening lines of this preface seem to be echoed in these words of Petrarch which we have just cited:

> hos scolasticos, genus hominum vigiliis ac ieiunio squallidum. Crede mihi: nichil ad lucubrandum durius, nichil mollius ad iudicandum. Cum multa laborissime legerint, nichil examinant […]. (*Fam*. I 2, 5)
>
> (these academics, a race of men made squallid by long nights and little food. Believe me: no one works harder by lamp light, no one is weaker in making judgments. Though they read many things quite laboriously, they analyze nothing.)

And when Belviso says that "as veterans do, I sought the peace and quiet necessary for me" ("et pacem et quietem more veteranorum necessariam michi appeterem"), we easily detect a military metaphor applied to legal study similar to Johannes's accusation that Petrarch had "deserted" Bologna.

In two other early epistles to Caloiro, *Familiares* I 8 and 9, Petrarch attributed to Caloiro his own persistent worry that reading of past writers might impede rather than nourish creative work. Plagiarism, allusion, quotation with and without attribution, imitation overt and covert, formed for him a single insidious continuum. Later he will say that in his Bologna days the fear of unwitting imitation led him never to own a copy of Dante's *Commedia* "lest I might become an unwilling and unconscious imitator since that age is an impressionable one that

[12] It is unlikely that Belviso's book was among Petrarch's own legal texts, which he appears to have gotten rid of soon after leaving Bologna. However, this *Lectura* might well have been among Agapito Colonna's law books which he left at some point with Petrarch, their unwilling custodian who pointedly observes that he much preferred other kinds of books; see *Seniles* XVI, 1 [1370–1373] in Petrarca 1554.

admires everything" ("ut est etas illa flexibilis et miratrix omnium, vel invitus ac nesciens imitator evaderem" [*Fam.* XXI 15, 11]).[13]

> Quid agendum tibi sit, consulis in eo statu in quo fere omnis scribentium turba est, quando et sua cuique non sufficient et uti pudet alienis et interim a scribendo cessare non sinit ipsa rerum dulcedo insitaque mortalium animis glorie cupiditas. (*Fam.* I 8, 1)
>
> (You ask me what is to be done in that state in which almost the whole crowd of writers finds itself, when what is theirs is insufficient and they are ashamed to use what belongs to others, and the sweetness itself of writing and the inborn desire for glory do not allow one to stop.)

Characteristically, he finds the answer to these problems in his reading of past writers. His reply paraphrases a well known passage in Seneca (4BC–65AD), a writer well known and often anthologized in the early Trecento.

> de hac re non amplius quam unicum consilium est; quod si fortassis inefficax experimento deprehenderis, Seneca culpabis [...] cujus summa est: apes in inventionibus imitandas, que flores, non quales acceperint, referunt, sed ceras ac mella mirifica quadam permixtione conficiunt. (*Fam.* I 8, 2)
>
> (in this matter I cannot give you more than a single piece of advice which, if you find it ineffectual after trying it, you must blame Seneca [...] bees are to be imitated in their creativity, they bring back not what they have taken from the flowers but wax and honey which they produce by means of an astonishing mixture.)

Then, rather slyly, Petrarch invokes Macrobius (fl. 430) who appropriated Seneca's thought and some of his actual words without proper attribution.

> Eius autem non sensum modo, sed verba Macrobius in *Saturnalibus* posuit; ut michi quidem uno eodemque tempore quod legendo simula ac scribendo probaverat, rebus ipsis improbare videretur; non enim flores apud Senecam lectos in favos vertere studuit, sed integros et quales in alienis ramis invenerat, protulit. (*Fam.* I 8, 3)
>
> (Macrobius, however, placed not only the sense but the words themselves in his *Saturnalia*, so that to me at the same time that he seemed to demonstrate this in his reading and writing, by his own deeds he seemed to

[13] Trovato 1979 and others have demonstrated the extent of conscious and unconscious imitation in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. For *Familiares* XXI 15, see Pasquini 2003.

deny this, for he did not desire to turn the flowers culled (or read) in Seneca into honeycombs, but brought them forth whole and exactly as they were found on their stems.)

Over nine centuries after Macrobius stole Seneca's thought and words in *Ad Lucilium* 84, sharp-eyed Petrarch caught him red-handed.[14] Few contemporary learned men possessed copies of both Seneca and Macrobius, and even those few seem not to have noticed Macrobius' plagiarisim. By unmasking Macrobius, Petrarch enacts two key points in his response to Caloiro: first, the Senecan injunction that writers must transform reading into something new, and second, the policy that citations must be properly attributed. In so doing, he portrays himself as a dauntingly learned young reader whose purview is all literature.[15] Thus, he is speaking of himself when he says to Johannes: "docti autem perfacile discernunt quid cuiusque proprium, quid alienum sit, et rursus quid mutuum, quid precarium, quid furtivum, quid e medio haustum, quid a pretereunte delibatum" ([*Fam*. IV 15, 16] "but the learned discern quite easily what belongs to each person and what is someone else's, and what is borrowed back, what was a hand-out, what was ripped off, what was drunk up directly, what was plucked while passing by"). Macrobius brazenly stole a key passage which touched on Petrarch's anxieties about his relation to earlier writers and the problems of imitation, witting and unwitting, the uses of citation, plagiarism. Petrarch caught an ancient writer out in the very crime he warned about, and to which he felt drawn.

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[14] The relevant passage in Seneca is: "De illis non satis constat utrum sucum ex floribus ducunt qui protinus mel sit, an quae collegerunt *in hunc saporem mixtura quadam et proprietate spiritus sui mutent*" ([*Epistulae Morales*, XI, 84, 4, my italics; in Reynolds 1965a, 285] "About them [i.e., bees] it is not clear whether they extract juice from the flowers which immediately becomes honey or if they change what they have collected *into this tasty substance through some kind of mixture and the quality of their breath*"). Here is Macrobius's text with Seneca's words in italics: "Apes enim quodammodo debemus imitari, quae vagantur et flores carpunt, deinde quicqid attulere disponunt ac per favos dividunt, et sucum varium *in unum saporem mixtura quadam et proprietate spiritus sui mutant.* Nos quoque quicquid diversa lectione quaesivimus committemus stilo, ut in ordinem eodem digerente coalescat" ([*Saturnalia* I, 5–6, my italics; in Willis 1963, 2] "We should somehow imitate the bees, who as they wander about gather flowers, then divide and distribute among the combs what they have gathered and change the various nectars *into a tasty substance through some kind of mixture and the quality of their breath.* We also shall commit to the stylus whatever we have obtained through diverse reading so that its digestion it comes together coherently").

[15] See even Petrarch's citational system in the canzone *Lasso me, ch'i' non so in qual parte pieghi* (*Rvf* 70) analyzed in Storey 1993, 295–96.

Petrarch, like Seneca before him (*Ad Lucilium* 2 and 45) and others long after him, believed that he lived in an age of too many books, and consequently many books went unread or were poorly read.[16] Like Seneca he favored deep and repeated reading of just a few of all available texts. In a dialogue between Joy and Reason in *De remediis utriusque fortune*, Petrarch has Joy repeat many times "Librorum magna copia est" ("There is a great abundance of books"). Reason responds by listing the negative side: bad scribes make worse copies, people acquire books but do not read them.[17] Others also thought there were too many books. His confidante, Oldradus da Ponte, the senior Italian jurist in Avignon with whom he discussed the deserter charge (*Fam*. IV 16, 13), dedicated a *quaestio* to the topic of whether it is possible to have too many books: "an experiat habere multos libros".[18] In what was perceived as an unprecedented availability of manuscripts, a legal scholar like Johannes who operated within the entire tradition of Roman and Church law, and an idiosyncratic moralist like Petrarch who worked within the Classical and Christian traditions, needed to cite examples, to provide excerpts with and without cross references, as the situation required, and to assess constantly issues of attribution and imitation. Subsequent scholars have praised both, and justly so, for their fine sense of traditions and texts.[19] To better grasp the nature of Petrarch's accusations against Johannes we need to take a close look at this great but now largely forgotten figure.

Before leaving Avignon for Bologna in the fall of 1320, Petrarch may have heard something about Johannes, the single most important contemporary church lawyer, from Oldradus, members of the redoubtable Colonna clan, and others at the papal court, as well as from fellow

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[16] Blair 2003 focuses usefully on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but also cites Vincent of Beauvais in his *Speculum Majus*, ca. 1255, referring to the contemporary abundance of texts a century before Petrarch.

[17] For the Latin, see Ceccarelli and Lelli 1997 (the general editor Stoppelli notes, however, that the text is "provvisorio approntato"). I cite the translation of *De remediis utriusque fortune* I 43 (1353–1363) from Rawski 1991. The dialogue in Book I 43 was apparently conceived of by 1353, and mostly completed by 1363.

[18] See "De regulis Iuris," section LXXXIIII ("An experiat habere multos libros?") in Oldradus da Ponte 1478, 148: xx. In this *quaestio*, Oldradus—like Petrarch—also cites Seneca 33, 7: "Turpe est seni aut prospicienti senectutem ex comentario sapere". Despite the thirty-year age difference, the two shared Avignon, law school in Bologna, links to the Colonna, and wide-ranging classical and patristic interests. For a portrait of Oldradus as a highly independent and resourceful legal expert, see Montagu 1994.

[19] See Kuttner 1963, xiii. Additional information about Johannes may be gleaned from Gillmann 1924, Rossi 1957, and Fedele 1974.

students in Bologna, like Guido Sette and Mainardo Accursio. But even if he knew nothing of Johannes before arriving in Bologna, the man himself would have made a powerful impression on him during the six years he spent in the city, and not only as a professor of canon law. Locally Johannes played a prominent role. He drafted the new legislation of 1317 which shifted power away from students towards the city. The failed abduction of Johannes' niece led students and faculty to withdraw from Bologna during Petrarch's first spring in the city. When Petrarch borrowed two hundred *lire* in December 1324 from an important bookseller, his guarantor was Tommaso Formaglini—a law professor whose nephew would shortly marry Johannes' daughter Novella.[20] Also in 1324 Petrarch would have noticed that Johannes had as houseguest his old classmate, Cino da Pistoia, Dante's friend and fellow poet, and eminent jurist. This was exactly the period when Petrarch and Caloiro were reading the vernacular poetry of Dante, Cino, and others.[21] As a student of Roman or civil law, Petrarch would not have attended Johannes' lectures, but his friends from Avignon, Giacomo and Agapito Colonna, who did attend were also on close personal terms with Johannes, and would have repeated his *obiter dicta*: his love of leeks, both raw and cooked with pork, his odd doggerel Latin verse with word play on "Novella", a word that denoted his wife, daughter and his *magnum opus*.[22]

Shortly after Petrarch left Bologna for Avignon in April 1326, Pope John XXII sent to Johannes in Bologna a public letter of thanks for his support of the papacy. Shortly thereafter the pope decided to transfer the papacy from Avignon to Bologna and sent his legate, Cardinal Bertrando del Poggetto, to the city. When the cardinal announced the pope's plans to the city, Johannes stood at his side on the balcony. The cardinal entrusted the drafting of new statutes to Petrarch's teachers, Pietro de' Cerniti and Tommaso Formaglini.[23] He awarded political and economic privileges to Johannes, and sent him at the head of a Bolognese embassy to Avignon. On his return Johannes was kidnapped

[20] Billanovich 1981, 58–59.

[21] Suitner 1977, Boggs 1979, and Santagata 1990 in different ways all treat Petrarch's early reading of poetry in the vernacular.

[22] Kuttner 1963, ix–x and xiii.

[23] Staunchly anti-imperial, Bertrando, as part of his anti-imperial program, burned Dante's *Monarchia* on the piazza in 1328.

near Pavia, wounded, and released after paying a large ransom for which the city reimbursed him.

A Tuscan born ca. 1271 in the Mugello, Johannes took degrees in civil and canon law in Bologna in the late 1290s and quickly launched his dazzling career. In 1298 Boniface VIII published his first work, a commentary on the *Liber Sextus* (itself a collection of church law since Gregory IX), which established Johannes' reputation as a leading authority on canon law. In 1317 John XXII (1316–1334) published his *Clementines* (1322); this collection was also immediately accepted as *glossa ordinaria* (much as Accursius's glosses on civil law had been in the Duecento). Between 1338 and 1346 he worked on his *Novella Commentaria*, a series of works in which he assembled and organized quantities of legal thought from predecessors and contemporaries. In the 1330s and 1340s he produced a non-legal work, *Hieronymianus*, a treatise on the life, works, and cult of St. Jerome. His final work consisted of *Adnotationes* on the encyclopedic work, *Speculum Justiciale* (ca. 1271), of another Bologna-trained jurist and churchman, William Durand. Johannes' constant revisions and additions to his published works produced multiple redactions of individual works whose textual tradition are by and large unstudied.

Johannes operated in a far broader frame of reference than the narrowly legal one of contemporary jurists. He knew Latin literature relatively well, being among the few aware that there were two Plinies.[24] A glance at his adopted son's library (to which many of his father's volumes must have devolved), suggests the parameters of his textual world: three volumes of Cicero containing twenty-three works, but no epistles; all three major works by Virgil in a single volume (not unlike Petrarch's similar but grander "Ambrosian Virgil" [MS Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Sala del Prefetto 10/27]); all of Horace, Seneca, Juvenal, Sallust, Lucan, Terence, the *Ilias Latina*, Valerius Maximus, the *Epistles* of Pliny the Younger, Macrobius, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Quintilian, and some vernacular literary texts. The bulk of the holdings are legal and theological texts, both areas of less interest to Petrarch.[25]

Johannes stands at the end of a long, intensely creative period in the Studium or University of Bologna which began around 1220. The

[24] For Johannes' knowledge of Roman literature, see Sabbadini 1914, 1: 1257–62, and Reynolds 1974.

[25] Cocchetti 1978. For Petrarch's library, see Sabbadini 1906, Ullman 1923, and Billanovich 1960, 1975b.

development of the "*pecia* system" and *littera nova* facilitated the production of large numbers of mainly legal texts in which massive amounts of contemporary gloss and commentary were added to older legal texts.[26] The city had a vivid sense of its innovations. One professor in the early Duecento, Azzo, spoke of the "altered genius of mankind".[27] Around 1260 Odofredo attributed the city's uniqueness not to men but to the arrival of Roman legal texts from Ravenna, as if the texts themselves had generated the city's new ways of producing texts.[28] Stationers, copyists, rubricators, illuminators, parchment sellers, and book binders filled the city as nowhere else. The city carefully regulated the *pecia* system and scrupulously recorded contracts for the production and sale of books. The number of copies produced appears to have reached its high point around 1260–1280.[29] The relation of gloss to text reached new levels of precision and elegance towards the end of the thirteenth century. The system produced mainly standard legal text books such as those that Petrarch would have seen in the hands of students on the city's unique and impressive funeral monuments of professors, like that of Mondino dei Liuzzi and Liuzzo dei Liuzzi (1317) in the Church of Saints Vitale and Agricola. There we see seated students listening to a professor lecturing *ex cattedra* on the very text which lies open before them in individual copies and which, to varying degrees, they follow.[30] Aside from great legal scholars, like Accursius, Durandus, and Johannes, who produced large new encylopedic works, authors as such had no access to this system. Petrarch, who from his teens knew how to buy and commission copies of texts like those of Virgil, Servius, Horace, Isidore of Seville, etc., would have seen that powerful as Bolognese textual production was, it offered little to a reader and writer with his interests.

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[26] The "*pecia* system" organized the copying of medieval texts by standardized and authorized "pieces", or parts, of a work that were rented often to student-copyists.

[27] The law professor Odofredo commented during a lecture in mid-thirteenth-century Bologna that Azzo, three or four decades before, had distinguished two ages, the old one and the new one. The care with which texts were now written indicated that "the genius of mankind had altered" (Tamassia [1894] 1967, 380).

[28] Arnaldi 1994.

[29] Considerable scholarship has examined various aspects of book production in medieval Bologna, but no single comprehensive study yet exists. Orlandelli 1959 remains indispensable. Ornato 2000 provides a stimulating overview, especially of the Duecento. The articles of Devoti 1994 and Devoti and Tristano 1998 are illuminating. For legal texts, the essays in Colli 2002 are indispensable.

[30] Grandi 1982.

Johannes' complex hypertexts no longer resembled the standard legal *textus cum apparatu* of the previous century. For him the place of "reading" now included private study space. In the *Mercuriales* (1326), composed while Petrarch was studying in Bologna, he observed: "Haec lectura novelle non in scholiis legenda est, sed studenda" ("This reading of the *Novella* is not to be read in the schools, but to be studied").[31] By "studying" he means reading in private. He organized the format of his own works so that "quod quaeritur, facilius invenitur" ("what is sought might more easily be found"). In his *Novella Commentaria* he laid out the text of the *Decretales* with three kinds of glosses along with three other kinds of glosses on the *glossa ordinaria*, as well as his own new glosses on both, employing different paragraph signs to distinguish the different kinds of texts.[32] In effect, Johannes mastered a huge, unwieldy tradition, putting it into forms that would later move easily into print formats and so become standard works of consultation up until the seventeenth century and even beyond. In scope, content, and format no subsequent canon lawyer equaled Johannes' achievement, and his contemporaries recognized his stature. A recently recovered illumination to his *Novella in* "*Decretalium Gregorii IX*", dated ca. 1330–1334, portrays him composing that same work in his bookless study and then presenting it to Cardinal Del Poggetto; Jerome occupies the large letter "I" in the left margin.[33] In the 1350s, the illuminator Nicolò da Bologna executed four other illuminations portraying Johannes.[34] Johannes himself apparently oversaw the opening illumination of the manuscript of his *Hieronymianus*, prepared under his supervision in Bologna ca. 1346, in which he appears in a large initial letter and also in the principal scene in which Jerome stands over a notable "copia librorum".[35] Johannes also oversaw the two images of himself, one *in cattedra* and another in eternal repose, which appear on his magnificent

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[31] Condorelli (1992, 128 and 140) cites from Johannes' *In Titulum de Regulis Iuris Novella Commentaria, vulgo Mercuriales* in the facsimile edition Giovanni d'Andrea [1581] 1966.

[32] Kuttner 1963, xi–xii.

[33] This bifolium which came to light around 2002 is MS 4134 in the Museo Civico Medievale, Bologna. It is reproduced in Medica 2005, 130–31, along with Silvia Battistini's indispensable note.

[34] Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England, Ms. 331. See Gibbs 1990, 249, and L'Engle and Gibbs 2001, 226–229; Vatican Library, Lat. 145, Lat. 2534, and Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS B42.

[35] Bologna, Collegio di Spagna MS 273 may be consulted on line in the Progetto Irnerio: www.cirsfid.unibo.it/irnerio.

tomb now in the Museo Civico Medievale in Bologna. The epitaph he wrote there is his succinct self-definition:

> Hic iacet Andree notissimus orbe Iohannes
> primo qui sexti clementis atque novellas
> Ieronimi laudes speculique iura peregit
> Raby doctorum lux censor normaque morum
> Occubuit fato predire pestis in anno
> M.ºCCC.º XLVIII die VII iulii.[36]
>
> (Here lies world famous Johannes Andreae
> who first executed the *Novella Sexti clementinae*,
> the praises of Jerome, the laws of the *Speculum*,
> *rabbi*, light of *doctores*, censor and norm of manners,
> he succumbed to the fate of the terrifying plague
> in the year 1348 on July 7.)

But perhaps the most telling witness to his immense reputation at his death and immediately thereafter is provided by Petrarch's friend Boccaccio, who ca. 1350–1356, in a list of fifteen major Italian intellectuals of the first half of the Trecento which lay unpublished for centuries, placed Johannes third, after Dante and Albertino Mussato and just before Cino da Pistoia and Petrarch himself.[37]

An example of the kind of questionable citation of which Petrarch accused Johannes (*Fam.* IV, 15, 16) may be afforded by the colophon to Johannes' master work, *Novella Commentaria*, completed by 1338 and easily available in Avignon and elsewhere.

> Ad oram veniens dicam cum Valerio I.iiii. c. 1. quod "magno labore multoque tempore hoc doctrine opus complexus sum". Addam tamen cum Hieronimo, ad Paulinum, vii ubi de Esdra loquitur, "Excessi modum epistolae, nec tamen implevi quod volui". Cum enim secundum Hieronimum ad Marcellinum, "librorum multitudine et silentio sed fortius securitate et otio studiosi dictantes indigeant".[38]
>
> (As I come to shore, I shall say with Valerius Maximus I.iiii. c. 1 that "with great labor and much time I embraced this work of instruction". I shall add with Jerome to Paulinus vii where he speaks of Ezra "I went beyond the mode of the epistle and still did not accomplish what I wanted". For indeed according to Jerome to Marcellinus, "dictating

[36] Grandi 1982.

[37] The list appears in Boccaccio's Zibaldone Magliabechiano, c. 232*v* (Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Banco Rari 50) as a sort of gloss on Paolo da Venezia's *Chronicle*, and is reproduced in Gilbert 1999, 147. See also Savinio 1998.

[38] I follow the edition of the text in Pennington 1988, 330.

scholars need a multitude of books and silence and, even more, safety and leisure time".)

He frequently cites Valerius Maximus (a well known writer, rarely if ever cited in legal works) throughout the *Novella*.[39] Here he cites him in such a way as to make it seem that Valerius is speaking of himself and that he, Johannes, and Valerius share something as writers. The citation, in fact, refers not to Valerius himself but to the philosopher and mathematician Archytas (460–370 BCE) who, after much effort, mastered Pythagoreanism. To know this, one must consult Valerius's *Factorum et dictorum memorabilium.* If the ever alert Petrarch read Johannes' colophon and checked this citation in his own well-thumbed copy of Valerius (whom he cites extensively throughout the *Familiares* and whom he imitates in the *Rerum memorandarum libri*), he would have immediately seen the deceptiveness of Johannes citation.[40] Under scrutiny this purely cosmetic citation reveals no real link between Johannes and his model.

Johannes twice cites Jerome with comparable imprecision. In the first citation, from Jerome's Epistle 53 to Paulinus (par. vii; 395–96), Johannes identifies himself with Jerome the writer: "excessi modum Epistolae nec tamen implevi quod volui" ("I went beyond the mode of the epistle and still did not accomplish out what I wanted").[41] Here again the comparison to an illustrious predecessor is more apparent than real. Jerome wrote a letter that turned into a long biblical treatise; Johannes wrote a treatise that ended up being longer than he had intended. Jerome switched genres, Johannes did not. Moreover, Johannes has abridged and slightly altered Jerome's text the better to incorporate it, rendering Jerome's "cernis me Scriptuarum amore raptum excessisse modum Epistolae et tamen non implesse quod volui"[42] as "Excessi modum epistolae, nec tamen implevi quod volui".

The second citation, which is from Jerome's Epistle 126 to Marcellinus (ca. 411), offers an excuse for taking so long to complete his work: "librorum multitudine et silentio sed fortius securitate et otio studiosi dictantes indigeant" ("dictating scholars need both a multitude

[39] Kuttner 1963, xiii.

[40] Johannes had made his own anthology of Valerius, *Summaria Valerii Maximi per libros et capitula.* Petrarch certainly knew the passage from Valerius since he invokes Archytas at some length in *Contra Medicum* ca. 1352–55, but with no reference to Valerius.

[41] Martianay 1887.

[42] Martianay 1887, col. 548.

of books and silence and, even more, [they need] safety and leisure time"). Johannes' citation of Jerome's text differs from the text in the *Patrologia Latina* (Martianay 1887) which reads: "Quod si, iuxta inclytum oratorem, *silent inter arma leges* (Cicero, *Pro Milone*), quanto magis studia scriptuarum? Quae et librorum multitudine, et silentio, ac librariorum sedulitate, quodque propium est, sicuritate et otio dictantium indigent" ("But if, according to the renowned orator, 'laws keep silence during war' [Cicero, *Pro Milone* 4, 10], how much more so does the study of the Scriptures? For it requires a multitude of books and silence and the diligence of copyists, whatever is suitable, and safety and leisure time for those who dictate").[43] It seems more probable that the difference stems from the manuscript of Jerome's Epistles which Johannes was using than from a case of erroneous citation. Here again, it is the differences between the two that strike us. Jerome had a small library, Johannes had quite a large one. Jerome's Palestine was subject to barbarian invasion, Johannes enjoyed power and fame in a relatively safer city (aside from his kidnapping).

Johannes certainly knew many of Jerome's epistles; the volume of thirty epistles in Calderini's library was probably his.[44] His citations in his colophon (unlike the citations in the body of his legal works) are ornamental rather than structural, meant to increase his authority with the reader rather than to deepen or expand his argument. He does not himself personally engage the texts on which he draws, nor does he expect the reader to recognize much less consult those texts. He does not read searching for key ethical *sententiae* to write down and recall later, an activity that Petrarch described in the *De viris illustratibus* and *Secretum* II.[45] He appears to engage in something like the fast, one-time-only reading which Petrarch describes to Boccaccio (*Fam*. XXII 2, 11), but not the slow, careful, repeated reading in which one so internalizes the words of authors that the reader later runs the risk of unwittingly employing them as his own. Johannes read not for the self but for the larger community in its ongoing enterprise of self-regulation through law, unlike Petrarch who wrote for solitaries like himself who have strong moral and literary preoccupations. In *Familiares* IV 15 and 16,

[43] Martianay 1887, col. 1086.
[44] Cocchetti 1978, 984–5.
[45] On Petrarch's way of reading, see Kahn 1985 and Stock 2001, especially 71–85.

Petrarch criticizes not the innumerable legal citations within Johannes' legal works, but his ornamental literary citations.

Petrarch could not have been insensible to so strong a personality with whom he shared so many interests: classical and patristic writers, love of books, a deep sense of the past, and a sensitivity to philological questions such as dating and genre. He would also have been attracted by Johannes' fame, wealth, privileged position with the papacy, large library, and his ability as an author to exploit the Bolognese system of textual production even in its decline. Petrarch's abrupt decision to leave Bologna and the study of law ended any possibility of collaboration between the two. The accusation of being a military deserter was probably first leveled in Bologna, and perhaps by Johannes himself; it quickly reached Avignon and continued to haunt Petrarch for years. In *Familiares* XX 4, 3 (ca. 1355–1359) Petrarch defended himself against it once again. Johannes apparently repeated it in his letters to Petrarch in the summer of 1343. It seems significant that in 1326, the year of that fateful decision, Johannes legally adopted another young student of law, who took his adoptive father's name in part, Johannes Andreae Calderini (died 1365), and eventually succeeded to his teaching position and library. The paternal language which Petrarch employs in these two letters suggests that at some point in Bologna his relations with Johannes had been close. A not unreasonable hypothesis would be that Johannes had attempted to take the extraordinary boy under his wing and groom him as his successor. Perhaps Johannes, himself a poet of sorts, was among the obtuse professors to whom Petrarch and Caloiro had shown their own vernacular poetry. In any case, if such an invitation had been issued, Petrarch turned it down flat. He never doubted that he had made the right decision. Johannes' great works exhausted the possibilities of a slowly atrophying system of textual production. The line of great creative jurist scholars ended with him. The future lay with Petrarch's kinds of reading and writing, although it hardly looked that way when he walked away from Bologna in 1326.

CHAPTER NINE

FAMILIARIUM RERUM LIBER: TRADIZIONE MATERIALE E AUTOBIOGRAFIA[1]

Roberta Antognini

ut ex multis et variis unus fiat (*Fam*. XXIII 19, 13)

Opera di ampio respiro, la maggiore, infatti, delle sue raccolte epistolari, il *Familiarium rerum liber* tiene occupato Petrarca per ventun anni,[2] dal maggio del 1345, anno in cui scopre le lettere di Cicerone, alla fine del 1366 quando Giovanni Malpaghini ne conclude la trascrizione.[3] Nella redazione definitiva, il *liber* consiste di ventiquattro libri divisi in un numero variabile di lettere (da un massimo di ventidue del terzo libro a un minimo di sei del decimo libro), per un totale di trecentocinquanta lettere, reali o fittizie, scritte a più di cento diversi corrispondenti,[4] in un arco di tempo che va dal 1326 della seconda lettera al 1366 della lettera 19 del ventitreesimo libro con cui Petrarca annuncia all'amico Boccaccio la conclusione del progetto.[5] Risulta invece del 1361 l'ultima lettera, che chiude la raccolta come era iniziata, cioè nel nome dell'amico Ludvig van Kempen, il suo "Socrate", con cui Petrarca condivide molti anni al servizio dei Colonna ad Avignone. Il 1361 è anche l'anno della morte

[1] Questo intervento anticipa alcune riflessioni che fanno parte di un ampio studio sull'autobiografia delle *Familiares* a cui sto lavorando.

[2] Entrambe le date sono registrate nelle *Familiares*, rispettivamente in XXIV 3, 1 e in XXIII 19, 7. Vale la pena notare che ventuno sono anche gli anni di Laura. Le date comprese fra l'incontro ad Avignone del 1326 e la morte del 1348 sono analogamente registrate sul foglio di guardia del Virgilio ambrosiano (Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Sala del Prefetto 10/27).

[3] Per il racconto dettagliato delle fasi di composizione delle *Familiares*, vd. Billanovich 1947, 3–24.

[4] I destinatari delle *Familiares* sono 93, a cui si aggiungono i nove autori delle "Antiquis illustrioribus". Andrebbero inoltre considerati anche i ventidue destinatari anonimi (non considero indirizzate anonimamente le due lettere al figlio Giovanni—XVII 2 e XXII 7—e due delle cinque lettere a Giovanni d'Andrea, il cui nome non appare in rubrica, le IV 15 e IV 16), discusse nel saggio di Ahern in questo volume.

[5] La prima lettera, che è del 1350, ha funzione di prefazione.

dell'amico e della partenza di Petrarca da Milano a causa della peste, partenza che sarebbe poi divenuta definitiva.

Petrarca fa la sua più grande scoperta umanistica a Verona nel 1345. Nella biblioteca capitolare scopre l'epistolario di Cicerone e trascrive di sua mano le epistole *Ad Atticum*, *Ad Brutum*, *Ad Quintum fratrem* e la lettera apocrifa ad Ottaviano.[6] Nell'imminenza della scoperta scrive la prima lettera e la indirizza a Cicerone stesso; sarà la prima di quelle lettere agli antichi (le "Antiquis illustrioribus"), con cui si concluderà la raccolta:

> Franciscus Ciceroni suo salutem. Epystolas tuas diu multumque perquisitas atque ubi minime rebar inventas, avidissime perlegi.[7]
>
> (Francesco saluta il suo Cicerone. Trovate, dopo molte e lunghe ricerche, le tue lettere là dove meno credevo, le ho lette avidamente.)

Dunque, benché Petrarca conosca già le lettere *Ad Lucilium* di Seneca, è la scoperta delle lettere di Cicerone a suggerirgli l'idea di raccogliere le sue in un'opera unitaria.[8] Dalla fusione dei due modelli dichiarati

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[6] Gli epistolari di Cicerone erano già noti benché nessuno prima di lui se ne fosse curato (Billanovich 1947, 4; Carrara 1948, 68). Era stato Guglielmo da Pastrengo, nella primavera di quell'anno, ad avergli fatto conoscere la "splendida coppia […] delle lettere *Ad Atticum* di Cicerone e dei carmi del veronese Catullo" (Billanovich 1988, 109). Per il codice ciceroniano copiato da Petrarca, vd. Pasquali 1962 [1952], 87–89; Sabbadini 1971, 54–56 e 73–76. Purtroppo la trascrizione di Petrarca è andata perduta (per un famoso errore nell'identificazione del codice, vd. Petrucci 1967, 103).

[7] *Familiares* XXIV 3, 1. Petrarca ricorda la scoperta dell'epistolario di Cicerone non solo in questa, ma anche in una familiare cronologicamente posteriore, cioè la *familiaris* XXI 10 del 15 ottobre 1359 (16): "Est michi volumen epystolarum eius ingens, quod ipse olim manu propria, quia exemplar scriptoribus impervium erat, scripsi, adversa tunc valitudine" ("Io posseggo un grosso volume delle sue epistole che, essendo l'esemplare difficile ai copisti, copiai di mia mano, mentre ero malato"). La malattia a cui Petrarca si riferisce risale a una caduta da cavallo in cui si era ferito gravemente alla gamba sinistra (caduta descritta in *Fam*. V 10 del 25 febbraio 1345). Nella *familiaris* XXI 10 Petrarca racconta inoltre di essersi già ferito a quella stessa gamba con il codice delle lettere di Cicerone (vd. anche *Dispersa* 46 [*Var.* 25] e 69 [*Misc*. 8]; segnaliamo una volta per sempre che le citazioni delle *Disperse* vengono dall'edizione di Pancheri 1994, seguendo la nuova numerazione suggerita dal curatore). La scoperta delle epistole di Cicerone diventa così un tema autobiografico che ritorna più volte nella raccolta: nei libri V, XXI, e XXIV. Sul profondo legame anche "fisico", che unisce Petrarca a Cicerone, si legga il commento di Leo Spitzer (1955, 122–25). Per il testo delle *Familiares*, cito sempre dall'Edizione nazionale (Rossi 1933–1942); la traduzione in italiano è quella di Ugo Dotti per i primi undici libri (Dotti 1974), e di Enrico Bianchi per i restanti (Bianchi 1975).

[8] Come ben osserva Francisco Rico (2003, 5): "In senso strettamente genetico, la più antica delle *Familiari* è la prima lettera a Cicerone (XXIV 3), ma la silloge vera e propria nasce quando l'inizio della seconda (XXIV 4) stabilisce una sequenza: 'Si

degli epistolari di Seneca e di Cicerone, con quello, non dichiarato, delle *Confessioni* di Agostino prende forma un'autobiografia raccontata attraverso una sequenza di lettere. Non sembrano esserci dubbi sulle intenzioni di Petrarca, chiarite subito in inizio di raccolta e poi nuovamente ribadite, e con maggiore precisione, in conclusione:

> "Et quid" inquam, "prohibet, velut e specula fessum longo itinere viatorem, *in terga respicere et gradatim adolescentie tue curas metientem recognoscere*?"[9]
>
> (Che cosa ti impedisce, come da un'altura un viaggiatore stanco per il lungo cammino, di riguardare indietro e di ripercorrere, misurandole ad una ad una, le pene della tua giovinezza?)
>
> Hic sane non rerum sed *temporum ratione* habui; preter has enim ultimas veteribus inscriptas illustribus […] ac preter primam, que dictata serius prevenit comites et locum prefationis obtinuit, cetera pene omnia quo inciderant *scripta sunt ordine*. Ita enim et *progressus mei seriem*, si ea forte cura fuerit, *viteque cursum* lector intelliget.[10]
>
> (Ho disposto il mio lavoro secondo l'ordine dei tempi, non secondo la materia; fuorché queste ultime lettere dirette agli illustri antichi […] e la prima, che scritta più tardi precede le compagne e tien luogo di prefazione, quasi tutte le altre si seguono cronologicamente. Così il lettore, se vorrà, potrà conoscere i miei progressi e il corso della mia vita.)

Ciononostante non sembra che in molti abbiano prestato sufficiente attenzione. Vuoi per la lunghezza e la complessità del progetto (che

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te superior offendit epystola'". Possiamo sicuramente aggiungere che nelle *Ad Atticum* stesse Petrarca trova un esplicito suggerimento alla raccolta. Infatti, in una delle ultime lettere (XVI 2[5], 5), scrive Cicerone: "Mearum epistularum nulla est collatio; sed habet Tiro instar septuaginta; et quidem sunt a te quaedam sumendae. Eas ego oportet perspiciam, corrigam. Tum denique edentur" ("Non esiste ancora una raccolta delle mie lettere: Tirone ne conserva una settantina; per altre potresti pensarci tu. Ma bisognerà rivederle, correggerle: solo allora potranno essere pubblicate" [testo latino e traduzione in Vitali 1960]). In vista della futura raccolta delle *Familiares*, questo monito suona particolarmente suggestivo e aggiunge un altro tassello alla storia. Possiamo solo immaginare l'effetto di queste parole su Petrarca, se poco dopo averle lette egli scrive subito a Cicerone rimproverandogli quella debolezza di carattere che, pensiamo noi, avrebbe così bene potuto nascondere se solo avesse avuto il tempo—povero Cicerone—di "rivedere e correggere" le sue lettere.

[9] *Familiares* I 1, 4 (corsivo mio). Il verbo *metior* (misurare) è lo stesso che usa Agostino nelle *Confessioni* quando si chiede in che modo misuriamo il tempo. Il tempo, dice Agostino, può essere percepito e misurato al suo passare ("sed pretereuntia *metimur* tempora, cum sentiendo *metimur*" [corsivo mio]), perché una volta che è passato, non c'è più e non può essere più misurato (*Conf.* XI 16, 21 e 18, 27 [Augustinus 1965]). È la memoria (che cos'è la memoria se non "in terga respicere"?) che fa in modo che sia possibile misurare il tempo passato, rendendolo presente (*Conf.* XI 18, 23).

[10] *Familiares* XXIV 13, 4–5 (corsivo mio).

infatti è stato necessario dividere in due, iniziando la nuova raccolta delle *Seniles*), vuoi per la peculiarità stessa del mezzo piuttosto singolare che Petrarca ha scelto per raccontarsi, cioè una sequenza di lettere, la storia della lettura delle *Familiares* è una storia difficile e complessa quanto l'opera stessa.

È noto che le epistole di Petrarca rappresentano la maggiore (se non unica) fonte dei suoi biografi. Come scrive Wilkins nella prefazione alla *Vita*, la grandezza di Petrarca consiste anche nel fatto che è il primo di cui conosciamo la vita con tale profondità e ricchezza di particolari ("He is remarkable also […] for the fact that we know far more about his experience in life that we know about the experiences of any human being who had lived before his time"),[11] il primo a raccontarsi in modo così completo e articolato attraverso le pagine di molte delle sue opere. Un primato di cui egli è certo consapevole se in una lettera a Boccaccio rivendica con fierezza, riferendosi forse alla *Posteritati* (ma possiamo includere le *Familiares* senza timore di sbagliare), il fatto di aver tentato un'impresa assolutamente nuova: "Quod ante me, ut arbitror, fecit nemo".[12]

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[11] Wilkins 1961, v. Nella prefazione di *Vita u obra de Petrarca*, Francisco Rico promette una seconda e terza parte, con la seconda dedicata agli epistolari, "estructurádose en torno a las *Familiares*" (1974, xvii). Proprio dall'inizio, Rico cita la frase di Wilkins aggiungendovi una postilla all'edizione inglese in cui Wilkins dichiara appunto che le opere di Petrarca sono la maggiore fonte per la sua *Vita* ("Our knowledge of the life of Petrarch is derived mainly from his own letters, of which nearly six hundred are extant, and from his other writings"). La frase serve a Rico per commentare che "si la fuente primaria para la biografia son los escritos petrarquescos, ¿qué llegaremos a conocer con una discreta firmeza? ¿La vida o bien la obra de Petrarca? *Dichtung oder Wahrheit*?" (1974, xiii). Al gioco di parole sul titolo dell'autobiografia di Goethe, Rico fa seguire delle osservazioni di Jean Starobinski, Georges Gusdorf, James Olny, e altri. Si tratta di studiosi che si sono tutti confrontati con il genere dell'autobiografia, una spia importante dell'impostazione "autobiografica" di Rico, che infatti definirà più avanti le *Familiares* una "autobiografía en fragmentos" (1974, 476). Rico non ha ancora pubblicato la seconda parte dedicata agli epistolari, ma si è recentemente occupato della *Posteritati* (Rico 2003). Se si includono *Epystole, Sine Nomine* e *Disperse*, si raggiunge il ragguardevole numero di seicentotrentasette lettere: trecentocinquanta *Familiares*, centoventotto *Seniles*, diciannove epistole *Sine nomine*, settantasei *Disperse*, sessantasei *Epystole*.

[12] Così scrive Petrarca a Boccaccio nella *Dispersa* 46 (*Var*. 25), una frase che la critica ha generalmente ricondotto alla *Posteritati*, benché recentemente la questione sia stata rivisitata (cfr. Rico 2003, 3 ss; ed anche Daniela Goldin Folena 2003, 54 ss). Quasi con le stesse parole l'*incipit* del testo considerato da molti l'iniziatore dell'autobiografia moderna, le *Confessioni* di Rousseau: "Je forme une entreprise qui n'eut jamais d'exemple".

Su questo fondamentale aspetto dell'opera di Petrarca, la bibliografia critica è ancora piuttosto lacunosa.[13] Apparentemente trascurando la nozione che alla base dell'atto di raccogliere le lettere c'è da parte di Petrarca la precisa intenzione di scrivere un'opera unitaria, sicuramente diversa dalla semplice somma delle singole lettere, la critica petrarchesca ha avuto nei confronti dell'autobiografia delle *Familiares*—quella che più ci interessa delle due raccolte maggiori—lo stesso atteggiamento che ha avuto nei confronti dell'intero testo, considerando cioè soprattutto alcune lettere, quelle considerate "più belle", come la famosa *familiaris* IV 1, il racconto dell'ascensione al Monte Ventoso, oppure, appunto, quelle più "autobiografiche".[14] È questo un atteggiamento che si riflette nella storia editoriale moderna della raccolta, anch'essa ancora piuttosto lacunosa, tanto che vale la pena di fare una breve digressione fuor di nota.

Tra il 1933 e il 1942 l'immensa fatica filologica nel "pelago oscuro dei manoscritti e delle stampe dell'epistolario petrarchesco" di Vittorio Rossi,[15] durata più di vent'anni, sfocia nei quattro volumi dell'Edizione nazionale.[16] Circa novant'anni prima (1859–1863), Giuseppe Fracassetti aveva dato alle stampe la prima edizione "intera, ordinata e leggibile"

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[13] Oltre a *Memoria e scrittura. L'autobiografia da Dante a Cellini* di Marziano Guglielminetti (1977), fondamentale per impostare il discorso sull'autobiografia in Petrarca è la prima parte ("I paraggi del libro") del volume di Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, il quale ritiene che "i modelli culturali sui quali Petrarca appoggiò la sua esigenza di ordine (sostanzialmente […] stoicismo e […] agostinismo) avevano un denominatore comune nell'autobiografia" (1992, 9). Si vedano anche il già ricordato articolo di Rico 2003, oltre a quelli di Bernardo 1986 e Scaglione 1984 e 1989. Suggestioni "autobiografiche" affiorano anche in molti degli interventi di un recente convegno dedicato alle *Familiares*, i cui atti sono raccolti nel volume *Motivi e forme delle Familiari* (Berra 2003).

[14] Esemplare in tal senso è la pubblicazione di una scelta di epistole in cui prevale il contenuto autobiografico a cura di Enrico Carrara (1928). Si tratta delle seguenti lettere: *Posteritati; Familiares* II 9, IV 7, V 4, V 10, XIII 8, XVI 11, XXI 11; *Seniles* X 2 e XVII 2. Una scelta antologica di *Familiares, Seniles, Variae* e *Sine nomine* è per esempio l'edizione della Utet del 1978 a cura di Ugo Dotti (1978b). La tendenza ad antologizzare le epistole di Petrarca non pare ancora tramontata. L'ultima antologia in ordine di tempo è quella recentissima a cura di Loredana Chines (2004), che con il titolo di *Lettere dell'inquietitudine* raccoglie una scelta di *Familiari, Senili, Epystole* e *Disperse*.

[15] Rossi 1930a, 95.

[16] Rossi 1933–1942. Delle opere latine di Petrarca, solamente l'*Africa*, i *Rerum memorandarum libri* e il *De viris illustribus* (ma è uscito solamente un volume) hanno avuto questa fortuna. Di alcune, come il *De remediis utriusque fortune* e il *Senilium rerum liber*, manca ancora un'edizione moderna e bisogna a tutt'oggi far riferimento a edizioni a stampa del Cinquecento. È dell'anno scorso la pubblicazione del primo volume delle *Res seniles* (Libri I–IV), con testo italiano a fronte, parte del progetto della Commissione per l'Edizione Nazionale delle opere, per cui vedi *infra* n22 (Rizzo 2006).

delle *Familiares*.[17] Quanto alla traduzione in italiano (perché non sono in molti a poter leggere il latino "tutto d'un fiato" come fa Giorgio Pasquali quando esce il primo volume dell'edizione nazionale!),[18] la storia editoriale delle *Familiares* è una storia particolarmente complessa. A tutt'oggi, oltre a quella, gloriosa ma ormai invecchiata, di Fracassetti del 1863–1867, esiste un'unica traduzione integrale in italiano, a cura di Enrico Bianchi, pubblicata nel 1975 per i tipi della Sansoni, e ormai introvabile.[19] Tra il 1970 e il 1974 esce presso l'editore Argalìa di Urbino una traduzione dei primi undici libri, a cura di Ugo Dotti. Qualche anno più tardi, Dotti ricomincia la traduzione (arricchita, rispetto alla precedente, di nuove e copiose note) per l'Archivio Guido Izzi, una piccola casa editrice di Roma, progetto ambizioso e interrotto nel 1994 con il terzo libro.[20] L'iniziativa si completa nel 2002 con un'altra traduzione a cura di Dotti, questa volta per i tipi dell'editore toscano Mauro Baroni. Per ora è uscito un solo volume contenente i primi otto libri, senza testo a fronte latino e privo di note, con un commento introduttivo anteposto ad ogni libro.[21] Non dobbiamo perciò meravigliarci troppo se molte delle opere di Petrarca e in particolare gli epistolari che sono, insieme alle rime volgari, le sue opere maggiori, "per tanta parte restano ancora sottratte all'uso dei lettori attuali", come scrive Giuseppe Billanovich nel 1975.[22] E considerata la storia

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[17] Calcaterra 1942, 391. Calcaterra fa anche un breve e interessante riassunto della storia editoriale delle *Familiares* precedente l'Edizione nazionale. Del metodo seguito da Fracassetti nel preparare l'edizione delle *Familiares* scrive estesamente Rossi 1930a, 94 ss. E vedi anche Rossi 1933–1942, 1: cliii–clv.

[18] Pasquali 1994, 371.

[19] Se per le *Seniles* bisogna ancora affidarsi all'edizione di Basilea del 1554 (vedi *infra* nota 16), non stupisce che l'unica traduzione completa esistente in italiano sia ancora quella del 1869–1870 di Fracassetti. Il progettato secondo volume della Sansoni, che doveva contenere anche le *Seniles*, non è mai stato pubblicato. Ma come per le *Familiares*, esiste una traduzione in inglese di Aldo S. Bernardo (1975–1985 e 1992), benché priva del testo a fronte in latino. Lo stesso Bernardo ha curato anche per l'editrice Antenore di Padova le Concordanze delle *Familiares* in due volumi (1994). Di entrambe le raccolte esiste, sempre a cura di Ugo Dotti, una traduzione in francese, con testo latino e commento. Il quinto volume delle *Familiares* (Livres XVI–XIX) è uscito nel 2005 (Dotti 2002–2005).

[20] Dotti 1993–1994. La *Repubblica* del 28 settembre 1996 riporta la notizia di una causa in corso fra Dotti e Izzi. Secondo il quotidiano, Dotti si sarebbe accordato con l'Adelphi. Non mi risulta che l'accordo abbia poi avuto alcun seguito. Stessa sorte sembrano aver subito le *Seniles*, di cui Izzi ha pubblicato, a cura di Dotti, solamente il primo libro (1993).

[21] Vd. Dotti 2000.

[22] Billanovich 1975, 273. Auguriamoci che la Commissione per l'Edizione Nazionale delle opere di Francesco Petrarca mantenga la promessa, fatta in occasione del settecentenario, che "ogni opera latina dovrà essere tradotta in italiano" (http://www.

editoriale, non ci deve neppure sorprendere che quest'opera sia stata letta soprattutto in antologie, privandola così dell'irrinunciabile qualità propria di una raccolta, per cui le singole lettere acquistano un nuovo e diverso significato proprio a causa della posizione che occupano al suo interno.[23] Infatti, solamente una lettura che rispetti l'ordine con cui sono disposte le lettere è in grado di cogliere fino in fondo la complessa dialettica che si crea fra i frammenti epistolari e il tutto rappresentato dalla raccolta unitaria. In questa prospettiva nessuno dei due poli va privilegiato perché "the genius of the genre lies precisely in its balancing of both".[24]

La problematicità di un simile testo indubbiamente va rintracciata nella riluttanza a parlare di autobiografia "in senso programmatico e cosciente" per il Medioevo.[25] La questione è particolarmente delicata soprattutto per le *Familiares*: appartenendo le lettere contemporaneamente anche al genere letterario dell'epistolografia, è necessario interrogarsi non solo sulla nascita del genere autobiografico, ma anche sulla sua definizione.[26] Ma se in linea generale si può concordare che un'autentica tradizione letteraria dell'autobiografia si sia instaurata solo a partire dalla fine del Settecento, sulla scia delle *Confessioni* di Rousseau, opinione difesa e codificata da Philippe Lejeune nel *Pacte autobiographique*,[27] ciò non esclude che prima di tale data l'autobiografia

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franciscus.unifi.it/Commissione/TuttoPetrarca.htm). La situazione editoriale degli epistolari si riflette anche sulla critica. Sono a conoscenza di due sole monografie dedicate esclusivamente alle lettere di Petrarca (e nessuna alle sole *Familiares*): Kraus 1901 e Guarnieri 1979 (quest'ultima, con una ancora utile bibliografia). Più interessante è la tesi di dottorato mai pubblicata di Aldo S. Bernardo, "Artistic Procedures Followed by Petrarch in Making the Collection of the *Familiares*" (1949). Molte delle osservazioni ivi contenute sono poi confluite in due articoli (1958 e 1960). Ugo Dotti si è intensamente occupato delle *Familiares*, limitandosi però alla struttura dell'ottavo libro e dei primi sei (1973a, 1973b e 1978a). Grazie al settecentario della nascita di Petrarca, sono stati di recente pubblicati gli Atti del già ricordato convegno dedicato esclusivamente alle *Familiares* (Berra 2003).

[23] Per l'antologizzazione delle lettere di Petrarca, vd. *infra* n14.

[24] Barolini 1989, 3. L'osservazione, che si riferisce ai *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, vale certamente anche per le *Familiares*. La necessità di "reimpostare il problema del *Canzoniere* nella sua diacronia" è sollecitata anche da Santagata 1989, 158 (cit. in Barolini 1989, 3).

[25] L'espressione è di Scaglione 1984, 208.

[26] Oltre che da quello menzionato, le epistole delle *Familiares* sarebbero caratterizzate anche da un altro doppio legame, come acutamente nota Wayne Storey (2003), che scrive di una "tesa compresenza di due generi letterari". Esse, infatti, appartengono insieme alla "forma-epistolario" e al "genere-lettera" (2003, 506, 501–5).

[27] Lejeune 1975, 13–14. Quello di Lejeune è uno dei primi fondamentali studi dedicati alla definizione moderna del genere; per Rousseau come iniziatore dell'autobiografia, cfr. anche May 1979, 20; Nicoletti 1989, 21.

sia esistita. Il problema può essere variamente risolto, ammettendo una sorta di preistoria del genere come fa Lejeune,[28] oppure adottando la definizione di "autobiografia classica" per la tradizione che trae origine da Rousseau,[29] oppure ancora ispirandosi a Georges Misch, studioso tedesco dell'inizio del secolo, grande pioniere degli studi sull'autobiografia, il quale definisce quello autobiografico come un genere *chameleon-like* (camaleontico) negandogli la possibilità di fissarsi stabilmente sia in termini cronologici che morfologici.[30] Un'ulteriore soluzione sarebbe quella di lasciare aperta la questione senza prendere una posizione definitiva, come fa, per esempio, Marziano Guglielminetti (ed è questo, mi pare, l'atteggiamento dominante), l'unico, peraltro, ad aver affrontato estesamente il problema dell'autobiografia in Petrarca.[31]

È chiaro però che dal modo in cui ci si pone di fronte alla questione dipende la definizione formale del genere, i cui contorni saranno tanto più sfumati quanto più indietro si risale nel tempo, quando l'autobiografia non possedeva ancora una vera e propria tradizione letteraria e gli scrittori, nel dare il proprio ritratto di sé, sceglievano una forma non ancora codificata come "autobiografia classica". Se Agostino sembra essere il "patron saint of autobiographers",[32] in accordo con la concezione che il Cristianesimo sia stato l'elemento determinante nella formazione del genere, c'è però anche chi come Misch ne individua l'inizio nelle iscrizioni tombali dell'antico Egitto, oppure ancora chi riconosce in Petrarca il primo autobiografo.[33] Del resto, negare che si

[28] Lejeune 1975, 313–20.

[29] Pizzorusso 1986, 185.

[30] Misch 1973, 7–8. Il termine compare nell'Introduzione all'edizione inglese dei primi due volumi dell'imponente opera che Misch dedica alla storia del genere, *Geschichte der Autobiographie* (per la recensione, vd. Jung 1986).

[31] Guglielminetti 1977, vii–xx.

[32] Pike 1976, 337. Per le *Confessioni*, testo archetipo dell'autobiografia, vedi il bello e ancora fondamentale studio di Georges Gusdorf (1980, 29), scritto con lessico tutto agostiniano, ma anche Pascal 1959, 114; Guglielminetti 1977, xi; Spengemann 1980, xiv; Starobinski 1961, 90. Pierre Courcelle (1963, 119) ritiene invece che la prima autobiografia cristiana sia la narrazione della conversione di san Paolo contenuta negli Atti degli Apostoli. Ritenere Agostino (o Paolo) l'iniziatore del genere significa rispondere implicitamente in modo affermativo alla domanda con cui Paul Zumthor intitola uno dei capitoli del suo saggio del 1975: "Autobiographie au Moyen Age?". Curioso come uno stesso testo serva per arrivare a conclusioni opposte: se, infatti, Lejeune (1975, 315) lo utilizza per convalidare la tesi che non si possa parlare di autobiografia per il Medioevo, Guglielminetti avverte "che è bene leggere non presupponendo una sola risposta al titolo" (1977, xiii).

[33] Zimmermann 1971, 127.

possa parlare d'individualità nel Medioevo e dunque di autobiografia, significherebbe affermare che in quell'epoca non ci fosse individualità.[34] Negare a Petrarca un'individualità? Credo che vada accolto l'invito di William Spengemann, quando propone di giudicare l'autobiografia storicamente, e cioè di capire quali condizioni spingano gli autobiografi a scrivere di sé in modi diversi.[35] Nel Medioevo la scrittura epistolare rappresenta certamente la forma più adatta al racconto di sé, il genere che meglio risponde alle aspettative dei lettori, o per usare la famosa definizione di Robert Jauss, al loro "orizzonte d'attesa".[36] Benché la tradizione medievale annoveri esempi di epistolari (basti ricordare il carteggio Abelardo-Eloisa, che Petrarca conosce bene) e, tra gli esempi classici, Cicerone e Seneca offrano a Petrarca un modello (ma l'epistolario di Cicerone non è una raccolta organica, e quello di Seneca non contiene se non minime allusioni personali), l'atto di raccogliere lettere per raccontare la storia della propria vita è senza precedenti.[37] Ordinando le lettere indipendenti in un macrotesto, Petrarca scopre il modo di rappresentare agostiniamente la dialettica fra frammentazione e raccolta. Il recupero della memoria, messo in atto attraverso la raccolta delle lettere in un unico luogo, rappresenta il tentativo di porre rimedio al senso di disgregazione con cui si aprono le *Familiares*, causato dal dolore per la perdita degli amici e delle antiche speranze ("spes nostre veteres cum amicis sepulte sunt" [*Fam.* I 1, 1]) e rappresentato dai frammenti individuali.

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[34] Così, polemicamente, Georges Gusdorf si oppone a Philippe Lejeune in una discussione che segue agli articoli pubblicati su un numero monografico della *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France* dedicato all'autobiografia: "Au Moyen Age il n'y a pas d'individualité, donc il n'y a pas d'autobiographie [...]. Qui peut se permettre de dire qu'il n'y avait pas d'individualité au Moyen Age?" (1975, 931).

[35] "We must understand the conditions that have led different autobiographers at different times to write about themselves in different ways" (Spengemann 1980, xiii). Lejeune stesso aveva parlato per l'autobiografia di contratto "historiquement variable" (1975, 45).

[36] Jauss 1989 [1972], 222. L'espressione è tradotta dal tedesco *Erwartungshorizont* (Jauss 1977, 330).

[37] Nei manoscritti le lettere si presentano molto spesso sotto forma di raccolte (Leclerc 1946, 67). Petrarca conosce sicuramente i nove libri delle lettere che Sidonio Apollinare (quinto secolo) ha scritto sull'esempio di Plinio, ma li scarta subito "con trascurato disprezzo" (Billanovich 1947, 5); conosce inoltre l'*Historia calamitatum mearum* di Abelardo, "uno dei pochi libri del Medioevo letti con interesse" (Gerosa 1966, 97n46), sul quale manoscritto fa molte annotazioni, non solo di commento al testo, ma anche autobiografiche (Guglielminetti 1977, 123–25). Sul codice Parigino latino 2923 posseduto da Petrarca e che contiene il carteggio Abelardo-Eloisa, vd. Goldin Folena 2003, 263–64n5. Per l'epistolario di Pietro di Blois, Goldin Folena 1988, 52–53.

Volutamente fonte di se stesso, Petrarca fa dell'autobiografia il filo conduttore non solo delle raccolte epistolari, in prosa e in versi, ma anche delle rime volgari, le opere che, in opposizione alle "maiora" (*Fam.* I 1, 7), nella dedicatoria ha definito *nuge* (*Fam.* I 1, 18) e che finiscono invece per diventare le sue opere più importanti. In aggiunta all'andamento autobiografico delle *nuge* e del *Secretum*, la cui impostazione dialogica, nello scambio tra Agostino e Francesco, riflette un conflitto personale, inserti autobiografici importanti sono presenti—per esempio—anche nel *De vita solitaria* e nel *De ignorantia*.[38] Documenti straordinari sono inoltre le postille presenti in alcuni dei codici posseduti da Petrarca,[39] primo fra tutti il Virgilio ambrosiano, in cui l'illustre fruitore inserisce alcune glosse a ricordo di persone che gli sono venute a mancare; così facendo, egli scandisce anche le tappe della sua vita che reputa degne di menzione. Questa pratica autobiografica fa del Virgilio ambrosiano non solo il simbolo e monumento della volontà di Petrarca di raccontarsi, bensì lo rende autentico protagonista "materiale" dell'autobiografia. Il codice ambrosiano è infatti vittima di uno dei più famosi furti della storia della letteratura, i cui particolari ci sono raccontati dallo stesso Petrarca in un'annotazione sul foglio di guardia: "Liber hic furto michi subreptus fuerat anno Domini M°III^{c} XXVI° in Kalendis Novembris ac deinde restitutus anno M°III^{c} XXXVIII° die XVII Aprilis apud Avinionem" ("Questo libro mi era stato rubato il primo novembre del 1326 e mi fu poi restituito il diciassette aprile del 1338 presso Avignone").[40] Di questo furto e successivo ritrovamento nelle *Familiares* non si parla, ma ricordando in una senile molto tarda, la XVI 1 del 27 aprile 1374, un episodio avvenuto molti anni prima, Petrarca ci racconta di due libri fra i molti che il padre, che pure ce li ha buttati, salva poi dal fuoco, mosso a compassione dai lamenti del figlio. Quei due libri sono un Cicerone e un Virgilio. Poco importa che non si tratti dello stesso Virgilio:[41] quel codice subito ci viene in mente. Inoltre, al lettore appassionato e curioso ("cupidus lector", così è definito il lettore delle *Familiares* [I 1, 31]) non può sfuggire il fatto

[38] Martellotti 1955, 557–65; Fenzi 1999, 207–13.

[39] Con felice espressione Guglielminetti, ispirandosi al titolo di un racconto di Dostoevskij, definisce le postille, "memorie del sottosuolo" (1977, 125).

[40] La nota sul foglio di guardia è in Billanovich 1985, 34. Per il Virgilio ambrosiano, cfr. Petrucci 1967, 39–42.

[41] "Quel Virgilio era diverso dal codice ambrosiano che non ha nessuna traccia di bruciatura" (Sabbadini, 1906, 372; la citazione è in Foresti 1977 [1928], 35n6).

che le *Familiares* stesse si aprano con il fuoco che risparmia casualmente alcune lettere.[42]

Grande e geniale promotore di se stesso, Petrarca costruisce la sua autobiografia attraverso frammenti che diventano significativi perché compresi nell'unitarietà della vita che raccontano, benché la particolare natura dell'opera stessa, costituita per sequenza di lettere, crei senz'altro il pericolo di una lettura frammentaria, preoccupazione del resto presente all'autore fin dall'inizio del progetto. Nella dedicatoria a Socrate, Petrarca accenna due volte al fatto che delle lettere esista una versione altra da quella che verrà inserita nella progettata raccolta: la prima volta nel contesto delle correzioni necessarie per l'inclusione delle lettere,[43] la seconda, per spiegare a Socrate come la successione delle lettere (l'"epystolarum ordo" [*Fam*. I 1, 38]) avrebbe mostrato la fragilità e la lamentosità delle lettere più mature, in contrasto rispetto al coraggio e all'energia di quelle giovanili:

> […] admone [amicos] ut siquid horum *apud eos substiterit*, quamprimum abiciant, nequa in eis rerum aut verborum *mutatione* turbentur.[44]
>
> (Pregali [gli amici] che se qualcuna di queste lettere è rimasta presso di loro, la distruggano immediatamente, perché non abbiano ad aversela a male di qualche cambiamento nel linguaggio e nella sostanza.)
>
> […] fuit animus vel *mutare ordinem* vel *subtrahere* tibi penitus ista que damno! Neutro circumveniri posse visus eras, qui et flebilium *exempla* et omnium cum consule diem *tenes*.[45]
>
> (Io avevo anche pensato o di mutar l'ordine oppure di sottrarti del tutto queste lettere che condanno, ma mi parvero entrambi mezzi inutili perché gli originali delle mie lettere lamentose li hai tu, e tutti datati.)

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[42] *Familiares* I 1, 10. L'evento miracoloso della nascita dal fuoco diventerà un segno distintivo anche di autobiografie più tarde. Pensiamo solo a Cellini, il quale dichiara l'originalità della sua impresa tramite il racconto di un aneddoto riguardante il fuoco. Proprio all'inizio della *Vita*, il bambino Cellini scorge una salamandra nel fuoco del camino di casa, un evento così raro da essere quasi considerato impossibile e perciò premonitore di un destino eccezionale.

[43] *Familiares* I 1, 31 (in Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 9): "Novissime, cum multis annis edita et ad diversas mundi plagas ire iussa unum in tempus locumque convenissent, facile deformitas uniti corporis apparuit, que per membra tegebatur […]" ("Ma raccolte ora in un sol tempo e luogo cose scritte nel corso di molti anni e spedite in diverse parti della terra, si è facilmente rivelata la disarmonia del corpo riunito, che non appariva nelle parti staccate").

[44] *Familiares* I 1, 30, corsivo mio (Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 9).

[45] *Familiares* I 1, 39, corsivo mio (Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 12).

Questi due passi sono particolarmente interessanti per due ragioni: innanzitutto manifestano l'apertura di Petrarca alla possibilità di correggere le lettere—ma anche di cambiarne la posizione, o di eliminarne alcune del tutto—in vista della selezione, e in secondo luogo mostrano l'abitudine di Petrarca di tenerne sempre copia. Che le lettere vengano modificate e corrette in vista della pubblicazione è pratica comune dell'epoca, con il risultato che, anche una volta raccolte, di esse continua a circolare non solo la versione originale ma anche alcune copie, redatte dai destinatari stessi.[46] Nel *Familiarium rerum liber*, Petrarca menziona varie volte quest'abitudine di conservare copie delle proprie lettere e la passione degli amici di collezionarle e quindi ricopiarle. Basti ricordare qui, per la sua importanza rispetto alla dinamica della raccolta, l'episodio della lettera perduta a cui sono dedicate ben tre epistole del quinto libro (lettere 16–18). Si tratta di una lettera originariamente indirizzata a Guido Sette che Petrarca consegna ad amici perché la trascrivano. Lo zelo di questi, che temono che non se ne conservi una copia ("illius etiam periret exemplum" [*Fam*. V 16, 1]) e la conseguente confusione risultano nella sparizione della lettera originale.[47] Le epistole vengono intercettate non solo da amici e ammiratori, ma anche da "literatores frivolos et inanes" (*Fam*. XVIII 5, 7), che poi le copiano. Se pur approvate dal mittente (come vedremo nel caso di Benintendi, Boccaccio e Socrate), queste trascrizioni danno comunque origine, tutte, ad una ricezione materiale ovviamente distinta da quella delle

[46] Pasquali 1962, 451–60. Tra gli esempi riportati da Pasquali, troviamo quello di Cicerone che in una delle ultime *Ad Atticum* scrive di una possibile raccolta delle sue lettere (vd. *infra* n8).

[47] Il dolore per la perdita della lettera è tale che Petrarca ne celebra addirittura l'anniversario ("nunc memorans anniversarium diem ago" [*Fam*. V 18, 10]), secondo una strategia molto simile a quella delle poesie d'anniversario nel *Canzoniere*, strategia di cui fa ampio uso anche nelle *Familiares*. Petrarca si rimprovera la propria debolezza per aver provato un dolore così forte perché "neque enim magne indolis argumentum est, ex literis gloriam sperare" (*Fam*. V 17, 1). Poiché la raccolta delle *Familiares* nasce dal desiderio di salvare il proprio passato attraverso il recupero delle lettere che ne sono la testimonianza, il racconto della lettera smarrita rappresenta una meditazione metatestuale particolarmente importante. Nella dedicatoria a Socrate, paragonando il lavoro inglorioso della selezione e correzione delle lettere a quello più glorioso delle "opera maiora" (*Fam*. I 1, 7), Petrarca aveva fatto uso dello stesso *topos* di modestia. Che Petrarca risolva in modo positivo il conflitto rappresentato dalla legittimità o meno di aspettarsi gloria dalle sue epistole, è implicito nel fatto stesso che egli abbia intrapreso comunque quel lavoro inglorioso. Il tema delle lettere smarrite perché variamente intercettate verrà ripreso nel diciottesimo libro (che tratta dell'impegno umanistico, anche materiale, di Petrarca), nelle epistole 7, 7 e 15, 4, e ancora nel diciannovesimo libro (2, 6).

epistole nella forma in cui sono state incluse nella raccolta. Non ci dimentichiamo, inoltre, che una delle maggiori rivendicazioni di novità da parte di Petrarca nella dedicatoria è quella dell'alto numero dei suoi interlocutori rispetto agli epistolari di Seneca, Cicerone e Epicuro, i cui corrispondenti erano uno, due, o al massimo tre.[48] Il grande numero di corrispondenti, una vera e propria folla incontrata e conosciuta durante i suoi "ulixeos errores" (*Fam*. I 1, 21), come Petrarca ama definire la sua vita, contribuisce non solo alla frammentazione testuale ma anche certamente a quella materiale.

La doppia natura di questo testo, che ne permette una lettura al tempo stesso frammentaria e unitaria, si rispecchia così anche nella tradizione manoscritta, con codici che ci tramandano l'opera definitiva ordinata da Petrarca, e codici che ci riportano, per così dire, l'opera frammentaria, cioè alcuni libri, o alcune lettere, o un'unica lettera (e un certo numero di lettere nella doppia versione originale e definitiva). Alcune lettere hanno maggiore fortuna di altre, come la *familiaris* XI 5 del 6 aprile 1351 che Petrarca indirizza al governo fiorentino per declinare l'offerta di una cattedra nello Studio, o la *familiaris* VIII 1 dell'8 settembre 1348 (o 1349) indirizzata a Stefano Colonna il vecchio, o la *familiaris* X 1 del 24 febbraio 1351 a Carlo IV, o ancora la *familiaris* XII 2 del 20 febbraio 1352, la lettera più attestata dalla tradizione manoscritta, indirizzata a Niccolò Acciaiuoli, gran siniscalco del regno di Napoli, in cui Petrarca delinea un ritratto del principe ideale che diverrà poi comune nei trattati.[49] Diffusione separata hanno anche le "Antiquis illustrioribus" e da sole si trovano anche le due lettere a Cicerone.[50]

Esistono numerosi codici delle *Familiares*. Dalla concordia dei manoscritti deriva la convinzione di Vittorio Rossi, curatore dell'edizione nazionale, di un'unica tradizione manoscritta, un unico archetipo, cioè la *trascriptio in ordine* su cui "Petrarca veniva lavorando e apprestando per la divulgazione il suo epistolario, e che doveva presentare modificazioni del

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[48] Vd. *Familiares* I 1, 20: "Epycurus, philosophus vulgo infamis sed maiorum iudicio magnus, epystolas suas duobus aut tribus inscripsit: Ydomeneo, Polieno et Metrodoro, totidem pene suas Cicero: Bruto, Athico et Ciceronibus suis, fratri scilicet ac filio; Seneca perpaucas preterquam Lucilio suo scribit".

[49] Feo 1991, 143; alle pp. 146–47 è pubblicato il biglietto di accompagnamento ("l'anima della lettera") che Petrarca aggiunge alla *familiaris* XII 2. Grande fortuna ha anche il volgarizzamento della lettera (151).

[50] Rossi 1933–1942, 1: xc–xci. Esiste però un solo codice conosciuto che contiene l'intera serie delle lettere agli antichi, il Laurenziano XC inf. 17 (Feo 1991, 131–33).

testo incerte o facili a generare incertezze di lettura".[51] Rossi distingue tre diverse redazioni delle lettere:[52] quella originale o comunque quella più vicina all'originale (il testo γ), cioè la lettera nella forma effettivamente inviata ai destinatari e conservata poi in raccolte miscellanee messe insieme da questi stessi o da ammiratori; una redazione intermedia (testo β) rappresentata dalla raccolta incompiuta che comprende i primi otto libri (e si interrompe a metà della lettera 9; nella versione definitiva le lettere dell'ottavo libro saranno dieci), e che Petrarca fa allestire nel 1356 per Benintendi Ravagnani, cancelliere della repubblica di Venezia e suo grande ammiratore, che già l'anno prima aveva ottenuto di copiare alcune lettere;[53] in ultimo la terza redazione, quella definitiva (α), che presenta la forma assunta dalle lettere dopo l'ultima revisione. Non è questo l'unico caso in cui Petrarca permette la divulgazione di una parte delle *Familiares*. Quando Boccaccio va per la prima volta a trovarlo a Padova nella primavera del 1351, Petrarca gli concede di copiare, oltre ad alcune epistole metriche, almeno sei delle lettere agli antichi che ha scritto: le *Familiares* XXIV 3–4 (a Cicerone), la XXIV 5 (a Seneca), la XXIV 6 (a Varrone), la XXIV 8 (a Livio) e la XXIV 10 (a Virgilio). Boccaccio ha l'opportunità di copiare anche le X 1, X 3 (le due prime epistole al fratello Gherardo), e X 4 (a Carlo IV) e forse anche la XI 8 ad Andrea Dandolo.[54] Due anni dopo, nella primavera

[51] Rossi 1933–1942, 1: cx; cxlxiii.

[52] Rossi 1933–1942, 1: xiii.

[53] Nel maggio del 1355, Petrarca permette a Benintendi Ravagnani di copiare alcune delle lettere agli antichi e gli promette una copia della raccolta, promessa che mantiene solo l'anno dopo, nella primavera del 1356. La trascrizione (che si arresta al §12 dell'epistola 9 dell'ottavo libro) comprende anche nove lettere agli antichi (l'ultima è il carme a Virgilio, quello a Orazio viene aggiunto solamente nel 1366 [Billanovich 1947, 40n2]). La *familiaris* XIX 11 del 1356 a Benintendi allude alla richiesta da parte del cancelliere di avere copia della raccolta fino ad allora allestita (7): "De scriptis familiaribus […] partem postulare dignatus sis". A Benintendi sono indirizzate anche le *Disperse* 41 [*Var*. 10], dell'estate del 1357, 58 [*Var*. 43] dell'estate del 1362, e 61 del 1364 (la cosiddetta Lettera d'Orville, scoperta da Nicholas Mann nel 1974). Oltre alla trascrizione dei primi otto libri delle *Familiares*, Benintendi si fa dare una copia anche del *Bucolicum carmen* (Mann 1976, 117 e passim). Per la redazione di Benintendi Ravagnani, vd. Billanovich 1947, 11–16; Storey 2003, 502–3.

[54] Per la descrizione di questa prima trascrizione autorizzata delle *Familiares*, vd. Billanovich 1947, 8, 104–33. In un'epistola (IX) a Petrarca del 18 luglio 1353, Boccaccio ricorda con grande passione quell'esperienza importante (Ricci 1965, 1101–3): "Tu sacris vacabas studiis: ego compositionum tuarum avidus ex illis scribens summebam copiam" ("Tu davi opera a' sacri studi, io cupido de' tuoi componimenti me ne facevo copie"). Petrarca non parla della visita di Boccaccio, ma accenna alla passione di questi per i suoi scritti nella seconda lettera dell'undicesimo libro (cfr. anche *Fam*. XXI 15, 27). L'undicesimo libro riporta altre due lettere a Boccaccio, la XI 1 (la prima di tutta la

del 1353, Petrarca concede ancora ad un amico—probabilmente al "suo" Socrate—di trascrivere i primi tre libri e l'inizio del quarto.[55]

Dal momento che anche l'allestimento materiale dell'opera è parte dell'autobiografia, come nel caso del Virgilio ambrosiano, Petrarca stesso ha cura d'informarci della sua abitudine di fare due copie delle lettere che scrive: una *trasmissiva*, che spedisce, e una *transcriptio in ordine*, che archivia. Ad esempio scriverà al già menzionato amico Guido Sette di aver perduto una lettera, a lui indirizzata, che aveva dato da ricopiare.[56] Sulla *transcriptio in ordine* Petrarca poi lavora, cioè corregge, postilla, aggiunge, toglie per ricavarne il testo definitivo per la trascrizione.

Per ciascuna delle tre redazioni proposte da Rossi esiste un distinto gruppo di codici: quelli che contengono tutta o in parte la raccolta definitiva (la redazione α: ventinove codici esaminati da Rossi stesso), quelli che contengono i primi otto libri, che hanno una tradizione manoscritta separata (la redazione β: cinque codici), e le raccolte miscellanee, allestite da amici o da ammiratori, in cui sono presenti le versioni originarie (o più vicine alle originarie) delle lettere (la redazione γ, di cui ci sono rimaste relativamente poche lettere, circa settanta su trecentocinquanta, a cui vanno aggiunti i sei originali pervenutici delle "Antiquis illustrioribus").[57] La più importante di queste raccolte miscel-

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raccolta) e la XI 6. Dei dieci destinatari dell'undicesimo libro, quattro sono "fiorentini": si tratta infatti del libro che contiene il rifiuto di Petrarca all'invito a ritornare a Firenze (*Fam*. XI 5). Infine, tutte le lettere di questo libro, tranne quella del 1350 (*Fam*. XI 1), appartengono al 1351. Per la visita di Boccaccio a Padova, cfr. Dotti 1987, 231–36; Albanese 2003, 65–69.

[55] Una copia di questa trascrizione si trova nel codice parigino della Bibliothèque Nationale, latino 8569 (Billanovich 1947, 9–11).

[56] *Familiares* V 16, 1–2: "Epystolam sub tuo nomine descriptam perdidi […] dumque omnium consensu uni scribenda traditur, ille eam omnium cum dolore vel amisit vel amisisse simulavit" ("La lettera che, a te indirizzata, avevo dato da ricopiare, l'ho perduta […] ed essendo stata consegnata ad uno solo da ricopiare, costui, nel rincrescimento generale, o la perse o finse di averla perduta"); vd. anche la *familiaris* XVIII 7, 8, in cui, riferendosi ad alcune lettere spedite a Francesco Nelli, il quale mai le ricevette, Petrarca scrive: "Epystolarum illarum quasdam iterum ad te mitto […]" ("Ti mando di nuovo alcune di quelle lettere"); la *familiaris* IV 15, 13 a Giovanni d'Andrea: "Ego epystolam tuam ad te sub fida custodia remitto et hanc illi alligatam mitto, cuius exemplum apud me manebit" ("Ti rimando quindi la tua lettera da un messaggero fidato, ed allegata questa che sto scrivendo, della quale trattengo copia"); la *senilis* X 2 a Guido Sette: "Apud me autem exemplum epystole extat" ("Lettera ch'io non so s'io mandassi e della quale non ho più copia"). La traduzione in italiano di questa epistola si trova in Martellotti 1976, 99.

[57] Rossi 1933–1942, 1: xvii–xli [= A]; xli–xlv [= B]; xlvii–xcii [= D,E,F]. Il numero delle redazioni γ varia da un massimo di settantanove ad un minimo di settantatré, a seconda se si calcolano nove originali o quattro per l'ottavo libro (in cui le lettere

lanee è il Laurenziano LIII 35, codice che Rossi chiama la "raccolta di Moggio", l'unica raccolta di destinatario che ci sia pervenuta nella sua forma originaria e che contiene, insieme a lettere di altri, lettere autografe, in prosa e in versi, di Petrarca.[58] La sola di queste ad essere inclusa nelle *Familiares* è la XIX 5, proprio a Moggio dei Moggi. Questa è l'unica familiare che ci sia pervenuta autografa, insieme all'abbozzo della XVI 6 (fino al § 21) contenuto nel Vaticano latino 3196, il cosiddetto "codice degli abbozzi".[59] Purtroppo, a differenza del *Canzoniere*, il codice della trascrizione definitiva (o presunta definitiva) delle *Familiares* è andato perduto. Ci è rimasto però un codice che rappresenta una versione intermedia della raccolta fra quella originaria e quella definitiva. Si tratta del codice Marciano latino XIII 70, l'"archetipo abbandonato" descritto da Rossi, scritto fra il 1363 e il 1364, di mano di Gasparo Scuaro de' Broaspini sotto la diretta sorveglianza di Petrarca; il manoscritto presenta postille e correzioni autografe e contiene sessantotto epistole, di cui alcune saranno escluse dalla raccolta finale.[60] Le sessantotto epistole sono ordinate senza distinzione di libri, ma corrispondono più o meno ai quattro libri XX–XXIII della raccolta definitiva che ne comprenderà invece sessantacinque (quindici delle epistole del codice Marciano [latino XIII 70] vengono sostituite con altre dodici).[61] La presenza in questo codice di alcune lettere che verranno poi incluse nelle *Seniles* dimostra che Petrarca si dedica prima ad un solo progetto

2–5 e 7–9 formavano una sola lettera nella redazione originale). Inoltre della lettera IV 10, solo l'epitaffio ci è pervenuto nella redazione originale. Per le redazioni γ, vd. Rossi 1933–1942, 1: ciii–cix.

[58] Per l'edizione fotografica e la trascrizione delle lettere, vd. Petrucci 1968.

[59] I due codici sono descritti in Rossi 1933–1942, 1: xlviii–l. Vd. anche l'introduzione alla raccolta delle *Lettere disperse* a cura di Alessandro Pancheri (1994, xxin25 e xxiii). Per il codice degli abbozzi, il codice cartaceo che raccoglie in una ventina di fogli i materiali autografi di Petrarca, vd. la recente edizione a cura di Laura Paolino (2000). Benché Paolino (2000, 112–14) descriva le carte 6*r* e 15*v*, su cui è trascritta la lettera, il testo della *familiaris* XVI 6 è escluso; vd. invece Rossi 1933–1942, 3: 215–19, che lo riporta.

[60] Rossi 1930b, 175–93; cfr. anche Rossi 1933–1942, 1: xlvi–xlvii [= C]. Rossi presuppone un archetipo anteriore al Marciano, che chiama "archetipo del 1359", che si arresterebbe al diciannovesimo libro e includerebbe (come ventesimo) le "Antiquis illustrioribus". Nel Marciano manca la *familiaris* XXIII 19 in cui Petrarca annuncia a Boccaccio la fine della raccolta, la famosa trecentocinquantesima lettera, sostituita dalla *Dispersa* 56 [*Var.* 58] attribuita al 1363–1364 e indirizzata a Gaspare Scuaro de' Broaspini, analoga per contenuto (Rossi 1930b, 179 e 180–83). Per il codice Marciano latino XIII 70, cfr. anche Petrucci 1967, 75–77; Pancheri 1994, xx–xxii.

[61] Rossi 1930b, 185.

(come conferma nella dedicatoria) e che solo in un secondo momento decide di dividere in due la raccolta.[62]

I materiali autografi pervenutici costituiscono pertanto una fonte preziosa di informazioni sul modo in cui Petrarca lavora.[63] L'abbozzo della lettera *familiaris* XVI 6 (scritta da Valchiusa e indirizzata a Niccolò dei Vetuli, vescovo di Viterbo) nel codice Vaticano Latino 3196, è datato venerdì 15 febbraio 1353 ed è accompagnato dalla postilla:

> tra*n*scripta in ordine et iterum in tra*n*smissiva die proximo sero, multis mutatis et *cetera*.[64]
>
> (trascritta in ordine e contemporaneamente nella lettera spedita il giorno successivo, dopo aver fatto molti cambiamenti)

La formula *transcripta in ordine*, usata nella raccolta delle *Familiares*, compare per la prima volta in una postilla che riguarda un abbozzo preliminare della canzone 268, a c. 13*r*, nel codice Vaticano Latino 3196:

> Tra*n*scrip*t*a no*n* in ord*ine*. s*ed* i*n* alia papir*o* .1349. noue*m*br*is* .28. ma[ne][65]

L'espressione serve a indicare che la lettera e la poesia sono state collocate in una raccolta, e testimonia di un analogo metodo di lavoro per i *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* e per il *Familiarium rerum liber*.[66] La già citata "raccolta di Moggio", che appartiene alla redazione γ, riporta anche alcuni cambiamenti formali avvenuti fra la *trasmissiva* e la *trascriptio in ordine*. Nella *trasmissiva* la data è concepita secondo l'uso medievale e così anche l'indirizzo, che è al dativo; è inoltre presente la firma, *F.* o

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[62] Si tratta delle *Seniles* I 5–7 (1362–63), II 1 (1363), VI 6–8 (1358–59), X 3 (1362). Per la divisione della raccolta in *Familiares* e *Seniles*, vd. *Familiares* XXIII 19 e XXIV 13.

[63] Sul metodo di lavoro di Petrarca, vd. Santagata 1992, 121–22. Cfr. però Zamponi 2004, 30–32.

[64] Le abbreviazioni sono sciolte in corsivo. Inoltre si legge: "1353, ven*er* is. 15 februarii, circa solis occasum, digresso ante vesperos Ludovico mag*istro*" ("venerdì 15 febbraio 1353, verso l'ora del tramonto, dopo una visita di Ludwig [van Kempen] prima di sera"). Il testo di entrambe le postille in Paolino 2000, 112 e 114 (con interpunzione moderna). Vedi anche Rossi 1933–1942, 1: xlix e nota alla medesima epistola in Rossi 1933–1942, 3: 215; cfr. Rossi 1930a, 135.

[65] Il testo della postilla si riporta in Paolino 2000, 262 (le abbreviazioni sono sciolte qui in corsivo anziché fra parentesi). Si noti come l'*incipit* della canzone 268 (*Che debb'io far? che mi consigli, Amore?*) sia quasi identico all'*incipit* della prima lettera delle *Familiares*, la cui redazione β porta la data del 13 gennaio 1350, solo un mese e mezzo dopo quella del sonetto: "Quid vero nunc agimus frater?".

[66] Barolini 1989, 5n11.

Franciscus vester, in quanto al destinatario ci si rivolge usando il "voi".[67] Nella *transcriptio in ordine* Petrarca adotta per l'indirizzo l'uso ciceroniano con *ad* e l'accusativo (norma osservata per tutte le lettere delle *Familiares*, ad eccezione di *Familiares* I 2–3, le uniche con indirizzo al dativo),[68] toglie inoltre l'indicazione dell'anno dalla data, che è scritta secondo il calendario romano (a volte sopprime la data del tutto, tranne nelle "Antiquis illustrioribus"), all'uso del "voi" sostituisce, primo e unico, il "tu" classico[69] e fa sparire infine la firma e qualche volta anche il nome del destinatario. Lavora poi sulla lingua per "elevare lo stile ed allontanarlo dal *sermo familiaris*", per renderlo conforme il più possibile all'uso classico.[70] Il passaggio dalla *transmissiva* alla *transcriptio in ordine* richiede ancora l'aggiunta delle rubriche, ovviamente assenti nelle *transmissive*,[71] ma soprattutto lo scarto di ciò che è di troppo, l'annessione di quello che è stato precedentemente omesso, in qualche caso la divisione di un'epistola in più lettere,[72] e in altri ancora che lettere vengano addirittura inventate *tout court*. Questo processo di passaggio testimonia dunque di un lavoro di anni, assiduo e rigoroso, che comporta non solo correzioni, ma anche vere e proprie riscritture, come avviene nel caso del *Canzoniere*. Come scrive Pasquali, "non c'è operazione chirurgica, per quanto audace e violenta, ch'egli non abbia osata".[73] Senza dubbio l'"operazione chirurgica" che dà più filo da torcere alla critica è la presenza assai numerosa, nella raccolta, delle lettere fittizie.

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[67] Rossi 1933–1942, 1: xlix–l; Pasquali 1994, 363. Ricordiamo che l'unica epistola accolta nelle *Familiares* contenuta nella raccolta di Moggio è la XIX 5, autografa.

[68] Come nota Billanovich, "gli sembrò di dover prestare a ogni lettera, quasi a isolarla, l'intitolazione che in quegli epistolari classici era usata per i vari volumi (*Ad Atticum*, *Ad Quintum fratrem*, *Ad Marcum Brutum*, *Ad Lucilium*) estendendo la formula (*ad* e accusativo) colla quale per logica analogia con quei modelli aveva già inteso di distinguere il solo proemio ('Ad Socratem suum')" (1947, 45). Possiamo aggiungere che proprio nel momento in cui le lettere acquistano un certo significato dato loro dall'ordine stabilito per la raccolta, l'autore stesso sente quasi il bisogno di mettere in evidenza nuovamente la natura individuale di ogni lettera. Cfr. Storey 2003, sul passaggio dalla lettera singola al *liber*.

[69] Ricci 1976, 128. A proposito dell'uso del "tu", vd. *Familiares* XXIII 14, 2; *Seniles* XV 1; *Disperse* 28 [*Var*. 32].

[70] Rizzo 1988, 44 e 54. L'analisi di Rizzo si basa su una serie di confronti fra le redazioni γ, β e α, che testimoniano l'eliminazione di forme, vocaboli e costrutti estranei al latino classico nella redazione finale. Sul metodo di correzione del Petrarca latino, vedi anche Raimondi 1948b, 125–33.

[71] Per le rubriche, vd. Rossi 1933–1942, 1: clxiii.

[72] Clamoroso è l'esempio dell'ottavo libro in cui da due lettere originali Petrarca ricava due serie di lettere (2–5 a Luca Cristiani e 7–9 a Socrate). Per questa serie di lettere vd. Bernardo 1958 e Fenzi 2003a (in particolare, 579–83).

[73] Pasquali 1965, 438.

La questione è complicata dal fatto che, se si escludono le "Antiquis illustrioribus", la cui invenzione è fuor di dubbio, nessuna delle lettere della raccolta—fittizie o reali che siano—riporti l'anno di redazione, e che di relativamente poche esista ancora la redazione γ, cioè la *transmissiva*, che ne permette spesso la datazione.[74] Il numero di lettere fittizie accertate è particolarmente alto nei primi libri perché queste fanno riferimento agli anni in cui ancora non esiste chiaramente il progetto della raccolta.[75] Infatti solo a partire dal 1349–1350 (la dedicatoria, che possediamo anche nella redazione β, porta la data del 13 gennaio 1350), cioè più o meno all'altezza dell'ottavo libro, le lettere possono essere scritte già pensando alla loro inclusione nel "liber".[76] Benché la questione abbia assai impegnato la critica, osservata nell'ottica della raccolta si rivela come un falso problema. Privilegiando infatti una prospettiva unitaria rispetto a quella frammentaria tradizionale e considerando la raccolta come funzionale all'intento programmatico di raccontare la storia della propria vita e non come semplice ordinamento delle lettere fine a se stesso, diventa più facile capire il motivo per cui alcune di esse siano "inventate", sia che si tratti di quelle relative al passato, sia che siano invece quelle che Petrarca va man mano scrivendo. Potrebbero addirittura risultare inventate tutte, o quasi, le lettere indirizzate anonimamente (l'ultima delle quali si trova nel ventitreesimo libro) e ancora potrebbero essere fittizie (o mai spedite) molte delle lettere prive dell'indicazione di giorno e mese, che incontriamo in ogni parte del *liber*.

La critica ha variamente sostenuto che i cambiamenti intercorsi fra versione originale e redazione definitiva delle epistole, quegli spostamenti e quelle soppressioni, aggiunte, divisioni, intesi tutti a mettere "in pari la lettera col tempo del riassetto", al contrario "scombussolano la storia", ponendo al lettore insolubili interrogativi.[77] A me pare, invece, che proprio questi cambiamenti trasformino le lettere in altrettanti capitoli dell'autobiografia petrarchesca. Se si nega alle *Familiares* la

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[74] Per un riassunto delle diverse datazioni proposte, cfr. le note all'edizione di Bianchi 1975.

[75] Secondo Billanovich (1947, 48–50), per esempio, sarebbero inventate tutte le lettere del primo libro, eccettuata la dedicatoria a Socrate e forse la I 6, di cui si ritrova un'eco nella *senilis* II 5. Wilkins invece ritiene possibilmente autentiche anche le *Familiares* I 4–6 (1951a, 314).

[76] D'altra parte non c'è nessun originale nemmeno delle lettere dei libri XIII e XIV, le cui lettere sono quasi tutte attribuibili al 1352, posteriori quindi al 1349–1350.

[77] Rossi 1932, 61.

qualità di documento di "vita empirica" e di storia "di vita materiale"[78] e per rintracciare quella ci si limita ad attingere alla versione primitiva delle epistole, si finisce per privilegiare una tradizione frammentaria del testo di Petrarca e si nega all'opera il significato profondamente innovativo di un'autobiografia raccontata per mezzo di una sequenza di lettere. Ma la stessa riserva nei riguardi della loro affidabilità non ammette forse implicitamente la possibilità che le *Familiares*—viste nella loro prospettiva "raccolta"—rispondano a un'intenzione documentaria della propria vita da parte del loro autore? Per quale motivo, altrimenti, si contesterebbe a Petrarca la mancanza di sincerità? Mario Martelli, nell'Introduzione all'edizione Sansoni delle *Opere*, fa riferimento alla versione dei fatti fornita da Petrarca riguardo alle ragioni del suo ritorno ad Avignone nel 1351 e si chiede: "Si dovrà credere al racconto del Petrarca?". Martelli attribuisce la sua oscillante sincerità al "bisogno di sottrarre sé a se stesso, di nascondere non meno ai propri occhi che a quelli altrui la realtà della sua persona", al "divorzio fra l'uomo e il personaggio Petrarca", e ancora "al dissidio profondo fra l'uomo reale e l'uomo ideale".[79]

Credo che questo tipo di approccio alla questione riveli almeno in parte una tendenza poco produttiva della critica nei confronti delle *Familiares*.[80] Forse non si tratta infatti di decidere se credere o no a quello che l'autore scrive di sé, quanto piuttosto di considerare e accettare la dichiarazione d'intenti presente nella prefazione dell'opera, e di accogliere il "patto autobiografico", per usare l'espressione di Lejeune, che stabilisce con i suoi lettori.[81] In questa ottica fa parte

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[78] Rossi 1932, 56 e 67.

[79] Martelli 1975, xxiv; xl–li.

[80] Tra le accuse d'insincerità rivolte a Petrarca, quella di Pasquali è forse fra le più pungenti: "La raccolta delle lettere del Petrarca contiene lettere fabbricate a freddo nel momento della trascrizione definitiva dell'epistolario! Il Petrarca, per letteratura, ha falsificato se stesso" (1962, 464). Recentemente Daniela Goldin Folena definisce le *Familiares* come l'"autobiografia dell'autore", ma con riserva, dichiarando che "è indubbiamente difficile vedere nelle lettere del Petrarca un repertorio […] di dati reali sulla sua vita o uno specchio immediato e affidabile della sua personalità" (1988, 62; 54n5). A tal punto è ancora incerto il giudizio critico sull'autobiografia.

[81] Leggendo le due biografie più recenti di Petrarca, quella di Wilkins e quella di Dotti, quasi interamente basate sugli scritti di Petrarca, sembra proprio che in molti gli abbiano creduto. Come scrive argutamente Giuseppe Velli: "L'elemento sia pur nobilmente *fictional* che ha costantemente condizionato l'avvicinamento a una personalità così sfuggente come quella del cantore di Laura" è "ancora, bisogna riconoscere, largamente presente nella *Vita* pur tanto pregevole dell'*amicus transatlanticus* di Francesco, Ernest H. Wilkins" (1987, 38).

delle regole del gioco che Petrarca ci proponga un ritratto di sé idealizzato. Il problema della verità è di ogni narrazione di sé, e si pone non solo per le *Familiares*, ma per qualunque autobiografia in quanto storia a cui l'autobiografo impone la propria interpretazione, costruita attraverso la selezione di certi fatti, che vengono disposti in previsione di un certo effetto. In quanto opera letteraria, anche un'autobiografia è in certa misura un'opera di finzione. Come scriveva già Calcaterra difendendo Petrarca dall'accusa di falsità e reticenza per aver escluso dal suo epistolario alcune lettere: "Quale artista è obbligato a dare ai posteri tutto ciò che scrive?".[82]

Il progetto delle *Familiares* nasce dall'atto di rileggere vecchie lettere e dal desiderio di riandare con il pensiero al tempo passato. La redazione β della dedicatoria è scritta a Padova ed è datata 13 gennaio 1350. Gli anni fra il 1348 e il 1351 sono anni cruciali nella vita di Petrarca: il 1348 è l'anno della peste, della morte di molti amici, è l'anno della morte di Laura e della rottura del rapporto con il cardinale Colonna (che muore nello stesso anno). È l'epoca dell'impresa di Cola di Rienzo e della susseguente crisi con i Colonna, e quindi della ricerca di una nuova collocazione (ricordiamo che nel 1353, Petrarca si trasferisce definitivamente a Milano, alla corte dei Visconti). Dal punto di vista del testo dell'epistolario, il 1348 è il punto d'osservazione da cui ha origine il disegno delle *Familiares*,[83] e funziona da fulcro che riassume in sé non solo la spiegazione del passato (quando gli amici e le antiche speranze sopravvivevano ancora) ma anche quella del presente (gli amici e le speranze svaniscono); questo snodo centrale, dal momento che la memoria della perdita è quella che permetterà di superare il dolore, illumina anche il futuro.[84] Questa dialettica agostiniana fra

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[82] Calcaterra 1942, 400–2.

[83] Roy Pascal definisce l'autobiografia come una "review of a life from a particular moment in time" (1960, 3). L'individuazione di questo particolare momento è quello che permetterebbe all'artista di dare forma al proprio passato, quindi di interpretarlo (5). Pascal chiama questa prospettiva temporale, *standpoint* (9), cioè il punto d'osservazione in cui si pone lo scrittore per giudicare la propria vita. È grazie alla scelta di uno *standpoint* che lo scrittore riesce a selezionare fra i vari avvenimenti della sua vita, quelli che contribuiscono a darle un senso: "it is his present position which enables him to see his life as something of a unity, something that may be reduced to order" (9).

[84] Le *Familiares* coprono un periodo che va dal 1326 della lettera I 2 al 1366 della lettera XXIII 19; dunque il 1348 si trova più o meno a metà, funzionando da spartiacque fra il coraggio della giovinezza, e la forza d'animo della vecchiaia (*Fam*. I 1, 38–44). Il 1348 è lo *standpoint*, il punto di osservazione che permette di superare la forma diaristica di un testo costruito per serie di presenti. Anche quando il testo rag-

passato, presente e futuro, non solo in prospettiva temporale ma anche testuale, completa il progetto di Petrarca. Iniziata frammentariamente, ma poi raccolta e scritta in forma di libro, quest'opera, diversa da tutte le altre, finirà solamente quando avrà fine anche la vita del suo autore:

> […] scribendi enim michi vivendique unus, ut auguror, finis erit. Sed cum cetera suos fines aut habeant aut sperent, huius operis, quod *sparsim* sub primum adolescentie tempus inceptum iam etate provectior *recolligo* et *in libri formam redigo*, nullum finem […].[85]
>
> (Questo mi auguro: di finire insieme di scrivere e di vivere. Ma mentre tutte le opere hanno o sperano d'avere i loro limiti, questa che ho cominciato nella prima giovinezza, frammentariamente, e che ora, in età già avanzata, vado raccogliendo e redigendo in forma di libro, non potrà averne.)

L'atto di *colligere sparsa* è un atto agostiniano. Nella dedicatoria, Agostino non viene nominato, ma la lettura delle *Confessioni* è suggerita sia dal riferimento al ruolo della memoria sia dall'uso di un lessico agostiniano.[86] Il progetto stesso di fare ordine nelle carte *nullo ordine versanti* perché diventino l'*ordo epystolarum* dell'opera finita è agostiniano. All'inizio del secondo libro delle *Confessioni*, rivolgendosi a Dio, Agostino riprende il racconto ricordando il tempo difficile della sua adolescenza:

> *Recordari volo* transactas foeditates meas et carnales corruptiones animae meae; non quod eas amem, sed ut amem te, Deus meus […] et *colligens* me a *dispersione*, in quae frustatim discissus sum, dum ab uno te aversus in multa evanui.[87]
>
> (Voglio ricordare il mio sudicio passato e le devastazioni della carne nella mia anima non perché le ami, ma perché ti ami, Dio mio […] per ricompormi dopo il dissipamento ove mi lacerai a brano a brano, quando separandomi da te, dall'unità svanii nel molteplice.)

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giungerà il 1348 (circa all'altezza dell'ottavo libro, ad un terzo esatto della raccolta che corrisponde, fra l'altro, allo stadio β della raccolta), cioè il punto cruciale dell'incontro fra l'io narrato e l'io narrante (che normalmente dovrebbe coincidere con la fine della storia) i continui rimandi a quel periodo lungo tutto l'arco delle *Familiares* fanno in modo che l'impostazione retrospettiva non venga mai meno.

[85] *Familiares* I 1, 44–45 (corsivo mio).

[86] Vd. *infra* n9.

[87] *Confessiones* II 1, 1 (corsivo mio) in Augustinus 1965 (traduzione in italiano di C. Carena).

Come Agostino, anche Petrarca trova nella memoria il principio organizzatore per trasformare i frammenti in occasione autobiografica. I frammenti, accuratamente selezionati e corretti ("quod sparsim […] recolligo" [*Fam*. I 1, 45]) diventano tappe del percorso di un'opera unitaria e altrettante tappe del percorso autobiografico unicamente all'interno dell'ordine scandito attraverso trecentocinquanta lettere divise in ventiquattro libri e destinate a più di cento destinatari diversi. Dal momento che la storia delle *Familiares* si sviluppa attraverso la successione e l'interazione delle lettere, quella dei destinatari, dei luoghi, delle date che possono essere presenti o meno (scelte che non sono mai casuali, ma rappresentano lo sfruttamento ottimale di ogni qualità spaziale e temporale che il mezzo mette a disposizione), solo una lettura diacronica permette di cogliere il senso della storia anche nelle lettere il cui contenuto non sia dichiaratamente o prevalentemente autobiografico. Nella prospettiva della raccolta non ha infatti senso rovistare fra le *Familiares* per trovare, ora in una lettera ora in un'altra, inserti autobiografici. Anche se è innegabile che alcune lettere sono più "autobiografiche" di altre, le *Familiares* sono tutte autobiografiche, nel senso profondo di una resa fedele della frammentarietà, della precarietà dell'esistenza. La diacronia permette di osservare la complessa configurazione temporale creata dalla successione delle lettere, basata su continui ritorni, rimandi da una lettera all'altra, *flashback* degli eventi più importanti della vita di Petrarca che, recuperando frammenti di lettere passate, rende quel passato sempre presente.

Ma se per Agostino il *colligere sparsa*, l'atto di "raccogliere" i ricordi frammentari attraverso il racconto del proprio trascorso, è soprattutto il mezzo per ricongiungersi a Dio, per quanto legato alla scrittura, per Petrarca, privato del suo significato teologico, questo atto diventa il progetto delle *Familiares*. I frammenti (cioè le lettere, ma anche le poesie dei *Fragmenta*), che Petrarca andrà raccogliendo a partire del 1349/1350 per includerli in quello che diventerà un libro, non cessano mai di essere frammenti; se al caos della vita, al dramma umano della dispersione, Petrarca oppone l'ordine della scrittura e la "pace" della raccolta, pure rimane il paradosso di una storia raccontata attraverso continui inizi e conclusioni che rendono la pace impossibile.[88] Neppure

[88] Si tratta della stessa tensione temporale che contraddistingue la "storia" dei *Fragmenta* (Barolini 1989, 6).

organizzati in un libro i frammenti cessano di esercitare la lora influenenza individuale, perché un libro che si costruisce per aggiunte continue di lettere è veramente un libro destinato a non finire mai, se non con la morte dell'autore.[89] Organizzando la narrazione con una serie di presenti è possibile sia rendere il passaggio del tempo—perché esiste una progressione che si attua man mano che le lettere si succedono, che rappresenta (secondo la celebre triplice definizione del tempo di Agostino nell'undicesimo libro delle *Confessioni*)[90] il presente del passato (le lettere passate), il presente del presente (le lettere nel momento in cui vengono scritte o lette) e il presente del futuro (le lettere future incluse nel testo)—sia abolirlo, perché le lettere, prese singolarmente, mancano della dimensione temporale e rappresentano perciò una sorta di eterno presente. In un primo momento, Petrarca non solo pensa di bruciare le lettere (cioè il passato), ma scrive che le antiche speranze sono morte insieme agli amici (quindi è il futuro stesso ad essere morto).[91] Non esistendo più né passato né futuro, non resta che collezionare il presente (del passato e del futuro), di cui le lettere sono la testimonianza.

Non c'è dubbio che l'aspetto più formidabile degli epistolari di Petrarca, ma in particolare delle *Familiares* in quanto opera licenziata dall'autore,[92] è quello di usare dei materiali che vivevano già una vita propria, e che in virtù della loro inclusione nel *liber* ne vengono ad acquistare una nuova. Ogni lettera ha, per così dire, due vite, una pubblica (la redazione γ), e una privata (la redazione α). C'è poi una terza vita (la redazione β) che ne testimonia la costruzione per aggiunte

[89] Alla fine della dedicatoria, accomiatandosi da Socrate, Petrarca chiama la sua opera "diversicoloribus liciis texta" (*Fam*. I 1, 48), usando il plurale. Quest'opera al plurale è la sola che possa per il momento dedicare a Socrate. Forse, nel futuro, quando raggiungerà quella pace sempre desiderata e mai raggiunta, potrà dedicargliene un'altra più nobile e uniforme, "nobiliorem et certe uniformem telam" (*Fam*. I 1, 48). Petrarca riserva la forma singolare di *tela* a un'opera che non scriverà mai, così come non completerà la *Posteritati*. La ragione, a posteriori, sarà sicuramente che la storia della sua vita Petrarca l'aveva già scritta con le *Familiares*, l'opera al plurale. Così dice Aldo Foresti: "Ripensando che ben poco potea dire che nelle lettere non fosse già stato detto qua e là, risparmiò l'inutile fatica" (1977 [1928], 523–24). Cfr. Goldin Folena 1988, 54.

[90] *Confessiones* XI 20, 26 (Augustinus 1965).

[91] *Familiares* I 1, 4 e 1.

[92] Secondo Billanovich (1947, 41–42n1), le *Familiares* sono state diffuse solamente dopo la morte di Petrarca, opinione condivisa anche da Pancheri (1994, xvii). Michele Feo la pensa diversamente: secondo lui le *Familiares* circolano già nel 1366 (1979, 41n3). Della stessa opinione è anche Marco Santagata (1992, 50–51), secondo cui le *Familiares*, le *Epystole* e i *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* sono state pubblicate in vita.

progressive. La straordinaria complessità di quest'opera è dovuta non solo agli eventi interni al testo (numero e cronologia delle lettere, divisione in libri, numero e ordine dei destinatari, delle date, dei luoghi), ma anche a quelli esterni rappresentati da una ricchissima tradizione materiale di lettere destinate a moltiplicarsi fin dal loro apparire, nella loro parallela dimensione di entità singola e di entità raccolta.

CHAPTER TEN

PETRARCHAN HERMENEUTICS AND THE REDISCOVERY OF INTIMACY

Kathy Eden

In the pages that follow, I want to suggest that Petrarch addresses head-on the challenges to understanding, and most acutely to understanding the past, that contemporary philosophers like Hans-Georg Gadamer pose as *the* hermeneutical problem. What is more, Petrarch addresses this challenge with instruments ready to hand from the two traditions that since antiquity have informed the field of hermeneutics, namely ethics and rhetoric: ethics, because the act of understanding is like any other action, in a tradition of moral philosophy that goes back to Aristotle, colored by the character or *ēthos* of the understander; and rhetoric, because, as I have tried to show in some detail in an earlier project, the principles of literary reception, theoretically understood, derive from principles of literary production—a derivation that stands to reason if, as Gadamer and others have argued, interpretation reverses composition.[1] In Petrarch's case, the authorizing interpretive principle is intimacy. Petrarch calls it *familiaritas*; and it is this *familiaritas*, as I hope to show, that does the kind of hard work in the labor of understanding how we understand, especially how we understand the past, and even more specifically how we understand the writings of the past, that *caritas*, far better known in hermeneutic circles, does for Augustine.[2] Whereas the Augustinian hermeneutical principle is for the most part both derived from and deployed in the service of understanding scripture, however, Petrarchan *familiaritas* is most at home in the letter—the so-called "familiar letter"—whose special significance has not escaped contemporary philosophical hermeneutics. "Just as the recipient of a letter understands the news that it contains", Gadamer observes:

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[1] See Eden 1997, 4, quoting Gadamer 1976, 25, that "the rhetorical and hermeneutical aspects of human linguisticality completely interpenetrate each other".

[2] For Petrarch as devoted reader of Augustine, see Nolhac 1965 [1892], 2: 193–95; Quillen 1998.

> and first sees things with the eyes of the person who wrote the letter—i.e., considers what he writes as true, and is not trying to understand the writer's peculiar opinion as such—so also do we understand traditionary texts on the basis of expectations of meaning drawn from our own prior relation to the subject matter.[3]

Setting a paradigm for readers of all kinds of texts, letter-readers, Gadamer claims, rely on their own pre-understanding to enable meaning.[4]

Long before Gadamer, Petrarch appreciates fully the paradigmatic nature of the familiar letter for writing as well as reading more generally. But his appreciation, like Gadamer's, derives in turn from traditional texts that shape his own expectations. In Petrarch's case, these texts are not exclusively, but they are most dramatically, Cicero's *Letters to Atticus*, which Petrarch serendipitously discovers at the Cathedral of Verona in 1345—a discovery that inspires the project of his greatest letter collection, the *Familiares*, which inspires in turn the humanist fashion for letter-collecting.[5]

Petrarch's hermeneutics of intimacy, in other words, belongs to a complex, longstanding and influential tradition that features Cicero but does not begin with him. For Cicero himself both practices and preaches throughout his letters a rhetoric of intimacy that looks back in turn to, among others, Aristotle, especially Aristotle's ethical and rhetorical writings. In the remainder of this essay, then, I want to sketch what I think is a plausible if partial genealogy of a Petrarchan hermeneutics born from the familiar letter and grounded in the concept

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[3] Gadamer 1989, 294.

[4] Gadamer (1989, 163) also recognizes the hermeneutical value of familiarity: "The written word and what partakes of it—literature—is the intelligibility of mind transferred to the most alien medium. Nothing is so purely the trace of the mind as writing, but nothing is so dependent on the understanding mind either. In deciphering and interpreting it, a miracle takes place: the transformation of something alien and dead into total contemporaneity and familiarity. This is like nothing else that comes down to us from the past".

[5] On Petrarch's discovery, see *Familiares* XXIV 3; Bernardo 1975–1985, 1: xxii; Pfeiffer 1976, 9–11; Wilkins 1955, 170–81; Wilkins 1961, 51–52. On Renaissance letter-collecting, see Clough 1976, who offers a conflicting account of the influence of the *Familiares* (38): "Moreover the first printed edition of Petrarch's letters did not appear until 1492, which further underlines the insignificant part his actual letter collections played in stimulating those of the humanists. This, of course, is not to deny that his idea of editing his own letters was widely known and seen by the humanists as confirming the rightness of their editing their own letters". Constable, on the other hand, denies altogether the impact of Petrarch's discovery, calling it "an event of personal rather than general significance" (1976, 39).

of intimacy, itself grounded in Aristotelian and Ciceronian rhetorical and ethical theory.[6]

Like Gadamerian hermeneutics, as I have already noted, Petrarchan hermeneutics is text-based. Understanding, that is, is most readily understood in the context of understanding written texts. Arguably the first defender of writing, Aristotle characterizes it—that is, writing—in a way that the later tradition, including Cicero, will identify more specifically with letter-writing. For "writing avoids the necessity of silence", Aristotle claims in the third book of his *Rhetoric*, "if one wishes to communicate to others [who are not present], which is the condition of those who do not know how to write".[7]

On the Aristotelian account, writing was invented to overcome distance. Written style, which Aristotle calls *graphikē*, differs from spoken style, which he calls *agnoistikē* in that each is designed to accommodate a different kind of audience.[8] Again the key factor is distance. Whereas the writer can count on the reader's ability to peruse the written communication up close and thereby appreciate its detail, the speaker—especially the agonistic speaker before an assembly or jury—can count on the opposite: namely that his listeners, whose ears are less acute than the reader's eye, will be at some physical remove from the spoken discourse and so miss an argument made too precisely with the help of too much detail.[9] An advocate before a single judge, on the other hand, may successfully use more detail, "for what pertains to the subject (*to oikeion tou pragmatos*) and what is irrelevant is [sic] more easily observed [...]".[10]

Aristotle's distinction between written and oral style will prove decisive for the epistolary tradition that Petrarch inherits. For with this distinction Aristotle dissociates writing from forensic and deliberative oratory and thus from the adversarial relations they foster, identifying it instead with the third kind of oratory treated in his *Rhetoric*, namely epideictic oratory. Like the letter in later theory, epideictic oratory is identified

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[6] On Petrarchan intimacy as a theoretical practice, see Struever 1992, 3–34.

[7] Kennedy 1991, 255 (3.12.1). See also Cope 1973 [1877], 3: 145, and Baños 2005, 81–89.

[8] *Rhetoric* 3.12.2 (Kennedy 1991).

[9] *Rhetoric* 3.12.5 (Kennedy 1991).

[10] Kennedy 1991, 256. On the philosophical assumptions behind the stylistic distinction, see Trimpi 1983, 83–163.

in turn not only with more benign feelings but with greater structural and thematic freedom as well as detail.[11]

While taking the trouble to distinguish written from spoken style, Aristotle boldly refuses to subdivide the topic any further, except to call in both cases for appropriateness, what he most often calls *to prepon*, and what the later tradition, with Cicero's imprimatur, will call *decorum*, but what he sometimes calls, as we see in the previous quotation, *to oikeion*, from the Greek word for "home", the *oikos*, the place of greatest belonging and intimacy.[12] In the case of the previous quotation, it is the subject matter, or *pragma*, which is characterized as *oikeion*; elsewhere in the *Rhetoric* it is language (3.2.6), the best metaphors (3.11.5) and the style most conducive to producing the *ēthos*, or character, that audiences find persuasive (3.7.4, 3.7.7). *To oikēion*, in other words, is the quality of close relatedness characteristic of the most excellent discourse, whether written or spoken.

Indispensable to rhetorical excellence, the quality of being *oikeion*, what the Greeks sometimes call *oikēiotes* and what I am calling "intimacy" in the sense of close relatedness, is no less an ethical excellence or virtue. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle categorizes it as a subdivision of *philia*—the affectionate feeling often translated as friendship that orators are advised to elicit from their audiences. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where friendship receives much fuller treatment, Aristotle similarly couples *oikeiotēs* with *philia* but extends it beyond the innermost circle of one's actual *oikeioi*, or intimates, the particular people who belong to one's household, to the broader family of man. "And in our travels", Aristotle observes with regard for a relatedness or intimacy that overcomes distance, "we can see how every human being is akin (*oikeion*) and beloved (*philon*) to a human being".[13]

Without offering an explicit theory of letter-writing, then, Aristotle does offer a theory of written or *graphic* style that will speak to the concerns of the letter-writer. This style is designed for non-adversarial exchange, generates good will, is responsive to distance, calls for detail and allows for thematic variety and structural flexibility. Alongside *to*

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[11] *Rhetoric* 3.14.1 (Kennedy 1991).

[12] On *to prepon*, or decorum, see Lausberg 1960, 507–10; Trimpi 1978; Trimpi 1983, 83–163.

[13] *Rhetoric* (8.1.3) in Irwin 1999, 119. For Petrarch's familiarity with the works of Aristotle, including the *Nicomachean Ethics*, see Nolhac 1965 [1892], 2: 147–52; Ullman 1923.

prepon, or appropriateness, *to oikeion*, that is "close relatedness", is its chief stylistic virtue—one that applies not only to the subject matter and the language but also to the character of the writer.

A composite of ethical and rhetorical principles, Aristotelian *oikeiotēs* provides a philosophical pedigree for Ciceronian *familiaritas*. Indeed the Latin *familia*, family or household, roughly corresponds to the Greek *oikos*. Here as elsewhere, in other words, the Roman orator transplants some piece of Greek intellectual life to Roman soil. In the *De officiis*, for instance, a book that both informed Petrarch's thinking as much as any other and bears no few traces of Aristotle, Cicero identifies *familiaritas* as the strongest and most meaningful bond between good men, an ethical and social bond unmistakably aligned with a rhetorical agenda.[14] For the discourse appropriate to this special social relation is *sermo*, which—Cicero complains—has yet to be adequately theorized.[15] In recognition of this lack, Cicero establishes in the *De officiis* 1.134–36 a few rules of engagement, including the distinction between playful and serious conversation and the procedures for offering mild correction. In laying down these few rules, he simultaneously sets the standard for the letter, which suffers in his day—as current students of rhetoric have noticed—from similar theoretical neglect.[16] In contrast to Aristotle, then, who—as we have seen—enforces the strictest separation between a written, *graphic* style and a spoken, *agonistic* one, Cicero identifies at least one kind of writing with at least one kind of speaking.

Whereas a letter has nothing in common, Cicero insists, with forensic or deliberative oratory—speaking in court or at a public assembly—it shares nearly everything with *sermo*.[17] In the letters themselves rather than in his rhetorical manuals or philosophical treatises, Cicero characterizes epistolary writing as *plebeius sermo*[18] and *familiaris sermo*.[19] Like

[14] For Cicero's notion of this bond among good men, see his *De officiis* 1.55 (Winterbottom 1994). For Petrarch's familiarity with the work of Cicero, including the *De officiis*, see Nolhac 1965 [1892], 1: 213–68; Sabbadini 1914, 115–21; Ullman 1923; Wilkins 1961, 15.

[15] *De officiis* 1.132.

[16] On this neglect, see Malherbe 1988, 3; Murphy 1974, 194–95; Baños 2005, 37–39.

[17] See *Ad familiares* 9.21.1 (Williams 1927–1929); cf. *Ad Herennium* 3.23–25 (Achard 1989).

[18] *Ad familiares* 9.21.1.

[19] *Ad Atticum* 1.9.1 (Shackleton Bailey 1999 [all subsequent references are to this edition]).

conversation, moreover, there are two kinds of letter:[20] playful (*familiare et iocosum*) and serious (*severum et grave*).[21] In fact, the principal difference between the written and oral forms concerns distance, also a key component, as we have seen, in Aristotle's rhetorical theory. Whereas Aristotle characterized writing more generally as the instrument for overcoming loss associated with distance, Cicero, in contrast, reserves this characterization more pointedly for letter-writing. "Letter-writing was invented", he suggests, "just in order that we might inform those at a distance if there were anything which it was important for them or for ourselves that they should know".[22] If loss of information over space occasions the letter's invention, however, it is rather loss of feeling, especially loss of the feeling of closeness or intimacy itself, that accounts for the letter's development.

On several occasions, Cicero confesses to his most intimate correspondent Atticus that he writes daily not because he has anything new to report but rather because he feels the need to communicate his feelings.[23] Sometimes he even repeats information he knows that Atticus will have already heard elsewhere, just so that his dearest friend will understand how he, Cicero, experiences events:

> I am sure you are dying to know what's afoot here, and also to know it from me—not that news of what goes on in full public view is any more reliable from my pen than when it comes to you from the letters or reports of others, but I should like you to see from a letter of my own how I react to developments, and my attitude of mind and general state of being at the present time.[24]

Cicero captures the essence of this kind of writing with the phrase *scribere familiariter*;[25] and he reserves it for his friends—not for his political

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[20] *Ad familiares* 2.4.1.

[21] Baños (2005, 58–60), in contrast, identifies the letter characterized as *severum et grave* not with the familiar but with the official letter first theorized by Julius Victor.

[22] *Ad familiares* 2.4.1 (Williams 1927–1929, 100): "Epistularum genera multa esse non ignoras, sed unum illud certissimum, cuius causa inventa res ipsa est, ut certiores faceremus absentes, si quid esset, quod eos scire aut nostra aut ipsorum interesset".

[23] *Ad Atticum* 7.15.1; 9.10.1.

[24] *Ad Atticum* 4.3.1 (Shackleton Bailey 1965–1970, 2: 74–76): "Avere te certo scio cum scire quid hic agatur tum ea a me scire, non quo certiora sint ea quae in oculis omnium geruntur si a me scribuntur quam cum ab aliis aut scribuntur tibi aut nuntiantur, sed velim perspicias ex meis litteris quo animo ea feram quae geruntur et qui sit hoc tempore aut mentis meae sensus aut omnino vitae status".

[25] *Ad Atticum* 9.4.1.

friends, however, but for his "real" friends, the ones he truly considers *familiares*:

> My brilliant, worldly friendships [*amicitiae*] may make a fine show in public, but in the home they are barren things. My house is crammed of a morning, I go down to the Forum surrounded by droves of friends, but in all the multitude I cannot find one with whom I can pass an unguarded joke [*iocari libere*] or fetch a private sigh [*suspirare familiariter*]. That is why I am writing and longing for you, why I now fairly summon you home. There are many things to worry and vex me, but once I have you here to listen I feel I can pour them all away in a single walk and talk [*sermone*].[26]

Unlike Aristotle, then, who, as we have seen, couples friendship and intimacy—what is *philon* with what is *oikeion*—Cicero decouples them, identifying *familiaritas* or intimacy rather than *amicitia* with the letter-writing that replaces conversation. Both letter and conversation foster the unguarded joke, the shared secret and free and easy exchange. Indeed, sometimes the jokes are so unguarded and the secrets so damaging that Cicero worries about what he calls "our familiar chat" [*familiaris sermo*]—namely the contents of his letters to Atticus—"get[ting] into strangers' hands".[27]

Further erasing the distinction between spoken and written discourse in an effort to bridge the spatial divide that hinders intimacy, Cicero writes his "familiar chat" with all the spontaneity and even the abruptness of casual talk. "Brother, brother, brother", begins a letter to Quintus:

> Were you really afraid that some fit of anger prompted me to send my men to you without a letter? Or that I did not want to see you? I be angry with *you*? *Could* I be angry with you?[28]

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[26] *Ad Atticum* 1.18.1 (Shackleton Bailey 1965–1970, 1: 172): "nam illae ambitiosae nostrae fucosaeque amicitiae sunt in quodam splendore forensi, fructum domesticum non habent. itaque cum bene completa domus est tempore matutino, cum ad forum stipati gregibus amicorum descendimus, reperire ex magna turba neminem possumus quocum aut iocari libere aut suspirare familiariter possimus. qua re te exspectamus, te desideramus, te iam etiam arcessimus. multa sunt enim quae me sollicitant anguntque, quae mihi videor auris nactus tuas unius ambulationis sermone exhaurire posse". Cf. Konstan 1997, 122–48.

[27] *Ad Atticum* 1.9.1 (Shackleton Bailey 1965–1970, 1: 114): "nolebam illum nostrum familiarem sermonem in alienas manus devenire". On the similarities and dissimilarities between Aristotelian and Ciceronian friendship, see Konstan 1977.

[28] *Ad Quintum fratrem* 1.3.1; Williams 1989 [1972], 458: "Mi frater, mi frater, mi frater, tune id veritus es, ne ego iracundia aliqua adductus pueros ad te sine litteris miserim?

To similar effect, Cicero weaves into a letter to Atticus a conversation with his friend Curio, who wonders if Cicero has heard the latest news:

> I said no. "Publius", he says, "is standing for Tribune". "No, really". "Yes, and as Caesar's deadly enemy, and means to undo everything they've done". "What about Caesar?". "Says he had nothing to do with proposing Publius' adoption".[29]

Comfortably incorporating the give and take of everyday talk, this particular letter converts the usual complementarity between these two intimate forms of communication—*epistola* and *sermo*—into a competition. For Cicero claims that at the exact moment of his chance meeting with Curio, he received letters from Atticus detailing the same news, only doing so far more effectively:

> What nonsense that is about the living voice! I got an infinitely better idea from your letter [*ex tuis litteris*] than from his talk [*ex illius sermone*] of what is going on [...].[30]

Here as elsewhere, then, epistolary writing communicates more clearly and in richer detail, *planius* and *uberius* in Cicero's Latin,[31] than conversation or *sermo*. So effectively does one of Cicero's correspondents communicate that Cicero is moved spontaneously to express his affection for the letter-writer by kissing his letter,[32] thereby demonstrating how the written can surpass the spoken form in conveying the immediacy and urgency of close feeling, even provoking a strongly felt response.

On these very grounds, in fact, Ciceronian epistolary writing differs from the purer philosophical *sermo* of the rhetorical manuals. Whereas Cicero cautions the plain stylist against the repetition of words that simulates strong emotion,[33] in his letters, as we have seen, he actually deploys this strategy in an effort to communicate feeling. For feeling,

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Aut etiam ne te videre noluerim? Ego tibi irascerer? tibi ego possem irasci?". Cf. *Ad Atticum* 9.2a,7.11.

[29] *Ad Atticum* 2.12.2 (Shackleton Bailey 1965–1970, 1: 224–26): "ego negare. 'Publius' inquit 'tribunatum pl. petit'. 'quid ais?' 'et inimicissimus quidem Caesaris, et ut omnia' inquit 'ista rescindat'. 'quid Caesar?' inquam. 'negat se quicquam de illius adoptione tulisse'".

[30] *Ad Atticum* 2.12.2 (Shackleton Bailey 1965–1970, 1:226: "ubi sunt qui aiunt zōsēs phōnēs? quanto magis vidi ex tuis litteris quam ex illius sermone quid ageretur [...]".

[31] *Ad familiares* 3.11.2.

[32] *Ad familiares* 3.11.2.

[33] *Orator* 85 (Hendrickson and Hubbell 1939).

and sometimes even strong feeling, is essential to the intimacy that defines the Ciceronian familiar letter.

With his famous discovery of the manuscript of Cicero's letters, Petrarch discovers the intimate Cicero, unavailable to most of his predecessors. This Cicero is one who, to Petrarch's surprise, talks on a variety of topics, complains about many things, and wavers in his decisions: "Audivi multa te dicentem, multa deplorantem, multa variantem [...]".[34] With this discovery, Petrarch also discovers Cicero's rhetorical strategies for communicating his innermost feelings. Discovering Cicero's letters, in other words, Petrarch discovers Cicero's rhetoric of intimacy; and it is this rhetoric that, informing Petrarch's writing in his own letter collection, also informs Petrarch's hermeneutics.

The opening letter clearly sets intimacy, *familiaritas*, at the center of the literary agenda of the entire collection, establishing it as the subject matter, the stylistic program and even the title:

> [...] I must confess that I shall for the most part follow the example of Cicero more than that of Seneca in these letters. As you know, Seneca collected in his letters all the morality that he had interspersed in almost all his books; Cicero restricted his philosophical concerns to his books and included in his letters accounts of the highly personal [*familiaria*], unusual and varied goings-on of his time [...]. Therefore you will find many things in these letters written in a friendly style [*familiariter*] to a number of friends [*ad amicos*] including yourself [...]. In fact I did almost nothing more than to speak about my state of mind or any other matter of interest which I thought my friends would like to know. In this I agreed with what Cicero says in his first letter to his brother, that the true characteristic of an epistle is to make the recipient more informed about those things that he does not know. This I might add was also the source of my title [...] I decided to call the collection *Familiarium rerum liber.*[35]

Whereas an earlier choice for the title announced the collection's epistolarity—*Epistolarum mearum ad diversos liber*—this one announces its

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[34] *Familiares* XXIV 3, 1 (Rossi 1933–1942, 4: 225).

[35] *Familiares* I 1, 32–34; trans. Bernardo 1975, 1: 10–11; Latin text in Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 10–11: "quanquam in his epystolis magna ex parte Ciceronis potius quam Senece morem sequar. Seneca enim, quicquid moralitatis in omnibus fere libris suis erat, in epystolis congessit; Cicero autem philosophica in libris agit, familiaria et res novas ac varios illius seculi rumores in epystolis includit. [...] Multa igitur hic familiariter ad amicos, inter quos et ad te ipsum [...]. Nichil quasi aliud egi nisi ut animi mei status, vel siquid aliud nossem, notum fieret amicis; probabatur enim michi quod prima ad fratrem epystola Cicero idem ait, esse 'epystole proprium, ut is ad quem scribitur de his rebus quas ignorat certior fiat'. Atque ea michi tituli fuit occasio; [...] ut *Familiarium Rerum Liber* diceretur". On this letter see, Wolff 2002.

intimacy;[36] and it identifies this intimacy with Cicero, whom Petrarch follows in deploying the letter not only to communicate information but also, more urgently, to communicate his "state of mind".

Petrarch also follows Cicero—often if not always—in trying to invest his letter-writing with the spontaneity and immediacy of direct communication, sometimes even invoking Cicero as the authority for writing "whatever comes into your head".[37] For the Petrarchan letter, like the Ciceronian, is a conversation—what Petrarch frequently calls a *colloquium*—a conversation across space; and as such it uses these rhetorical strategies to overcome the distance that threatens to eclipse our deepest feelings. So Petrarch acknowledges to one of his dearest friends in the Colonna family that "distance between places separates us from the conversations [here *conversatio*] of friends" but enjoins him:

> to remember not how far you may be from someone (although how can anything be distant in this terribly tight space of which we men scarcely inhabit a tiny part?), but rather how far it is in your power through reflection to be present with absent ones. Here, therefore, is one way in which you can continually see us together: show yourself repeatedly by the frequent interchange of letters.[38]

And in the final letter of the entire collection, which Petrarch recalls beginning in his youth and finishing in old age, he insists that his *colloquia* with friends will continue even after his death. "[H]ow could I possibly remain silent with them while still alive", he asks, "if I plan to speak to them with my cold lips from the grave?".[39]

This question raised by the elder Petrarch at the end of the *Familiares* orients us to the central problem addressed by the younger man at the time he discovers the manuscript in Verona: can the Ciceronian letter,

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[36] On the original title of the collection, see Bernardo 1975–1985, 1: xxiii; Billanovich 1947, 46–47; Rossi 1933–1942, 1: xi. On its evolving organization, see Billanovich 1947, 3–55; Bernardo 1975–1985, 1: xxiv; Bernardo 1975–1985, 2: xviii; Storey 2002.

[37] For this advice, see, for instance, *Familiares* I 5 and XII 10; *Ad Atticum* 1.12.4, 14.7.2 and Goldin Folena 1998.

[38] *Familiares* II 6; trans. Bernardo 1975–1985, 1: 89–91; Latin text in Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 84: "Memento potius, queso, non quam longe sis corpore—quamvis, quid longinquum videri potest in hac puncti unius brevitate, cuius nos homines vix integram particulam incolimus?—sed esse in tua potestate, ut animo et cogitationibus presens sis. Hoc igitur uno quo potes modo, nos iugiter aspice; literarum identidem frequenti commercio te ipsum nobis ostende, et vale".

[39] *Familiares* XXIV 13; trans. Bernardo 1975–1985, 3: 351; text in Rossi 1933–1942, 4: 264: "aut quenam dies me spirantem inter eos tacitum efficiet, cum quibus ore gelido sepultusque loqui cogito?".

designed as an instrument for overcoming spatial distance, speak to the losses occasioned by temporal distance as well? In response to this question, Petrarch literally addresses his first two letters after his discovery to Cicero himself, foregrounding the absence of one who occupies not only another space but, even more poignantly, another time.[40]

In spite of this temporal dislocation, these letters openly and boldly proclaim Petrarch's *familiaritas* with his correspondent—a *familiaritas* that leads him to expect the privileges of friendship as Cicero himself developed them in his treatise on friendship, the *De amicitia*.[41] Chief among these expectations is reciprocity. "Now it is your turn, wherever you are", Petrarch summons Cicero, "to harken not to advice but to a lament inspired by true love from one of your descendants who dearly cherishes your name, a lament addressed to you not without tears".[42] Also among them is the right to offer mild correction. "I hope that my previous letter did not offend you" begins Petrarch's second letter to Cicero, after the first has detailed the Roman's shortcomings as a source of shame and distress.[43] And finally, the intimacy between friends encourages Petrarch not only to reveal his own states of mind but to presume to understand those of his correspondent. Indeed Petrarch claims to understand Cicero as though he had lived with him, an understanding rooted in a profound comprehension of his mind in his books.[44] In keeping with this understanding, Petrarch justifies writing to Cicero in the first letter of the *Familiares* "as if he were a friend living in my time with an intimacy [*familiaritate*] that I consider proper because of my deep and immediate acquaintance with his thought".[45]

This deep acquaintance allows Petrarch in turn to make presumptions about how Cicero understood what he read. Regarding the competition between Homer and Virgil, Petrarch tells Cicero, "Doubtless you

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[40] On Petrarch's correspondence with the ancients, including its dates, see Billanovich 1947, 28–30; Bernardo 1975–1985, xxii–xxiii; Bernardo 1975–1985, 2: xviii. For time as the central concern of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, see Barolini 1989.

[41] For Petrarch's familiarity with this Ciceronian text, see Ullman 1923.

[42] *Familiares* XXIV 3; trans. Bernardo 1975–1985, 3: 317; text in Rossi 1933–1942, 4: 226: "Unum hoc vicissim a vera caritate profectum non iam consilium sed lamentum audi, ubicunque es, quod unus posterorum, tui nominis amantissimus, non sine lacrimis fundit". For the same expectation of reciprocity from Seneca, see *Familiares* XXIV 5.

[43] *Familiares* XXIV 4; trans. Bernardo 1975–1985, 3: 319; text in Rossi 1933–1942, 4: 227: "Si te superior offendit epystola […]".

[44] See *Familiares* XXIV 4.

[45] Bernardo 1975–1985, 1: 12; Latin text in Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 12–13: "[…] tanquam coetaneo amico, familiaritate que michi cum illius ingenio est […]".

would have ordered the *Iliad* to yield to the *Aeneid*".[46] If friends hold all things in common, these two friends, separated in time and space, share their literary judgments. They also share other friends, many of whom Petrarch admits first meeting through the Roman's generous introductions:

> Cicero's *Academicus* made Marcus Varro dear and attractive to me; and the name of Ennius I heard in his books on *Offices*; from a reading of the *Tusculan Disputations* I first felt my love for Terence; from the book *On Old Age* I became acquainted with the *Origins* of Cato and the *Economics* of Xenophon and I learned that the same book was translated by Cicero in his same *Offices*.[47]

No less than the letter, Petrarch insists in his letters, these other writings engage us in conversation: "they speak with us [*colloquuntur*], advise us and join us together with a certain living and penetrating *familiaritas*".[48]

The standard Cicero had set for writing letters, then, Petrarch upholds for reading them; and not only for reading them but for reading any text that we would hope to understand. In a famous letter to Boccaccio,[49] Petrarch claims just such an intimate understanding of Virgil, Horace, and Livy as well as Cicero. In *Familiares* XXII 10, he counts Virgil and Cicero among his *familiares*. And this kind of understanding is a requirement not only for those who would read the ancients but even for those who would read Petrarch:

> I wish my reader, whoever he may be, to consider me alone, and not his daughter's marriage or a night with a lady friend, not the wiles of his

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[46] *Familiares* XXIV 4; trans. Bernardo 1975–1985, 3: 320; text in Rossi 1933–1942, 4: 229: "atque ut *Eneydi* cederet *Ylias* iussurum fuisse non dubito".

[47] *Familiares* III 18; trans. Bernardo 1975–1985, 1: 157; text in Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 139: "Ac ne res egeat exemplo, Marcum michi Varronem carum et amabilem Ciceronis *Achademicus* fecit; Ennii nomen in *Officiorum* libris audivi; primum Terrentii amorem ex *Tusculanarum questionum* lectione concepi; Catonis *Origines* et Xenophontis *Economicum* ex libro *De senectute* cognovi, eundemque a Cicerone translatum in eisdem officialibus libris edidici". On the holding of friends in common, in *Familiares* IX 9 Petrarch writes to his Socrates: "I am not a friend unless I share with you my most precious possessions; nothing is more precious than a friend; therefore I am not a friend unless I share a friend. This is an old saying: 'Everything is held in common among friends'" (Bernardo 1975–1985, 2: 27 [text in Rossi 1933–1942, 2: 238]). On this proverb and its long tradition, see Eden 2001.

[48] *Familiares* III 18; trans. Bernardo 1975–1985, 1: 157; text in Rossi 1933–1942, 1: 139: "libri medullitus delectant, colloquuntur, consulunt et viva quadam nobis atque arguta familiaritate iunguntur […]".

[49] *Familiares* XXII 2.

> enemy, not his security or his home, not his land or his money. Even as he reads me, I want him to be with me; if he is pressed by affairs, let him defer his reading. When he decides to read what I write, he must lay aside the burden of his affairs and the anxieties of his home life in order to direct his attention to what is before his eyes. If these conditions do not please him let him stay away from my useless writings. I refuse to have him simultaneously carry on his business and study; I refuse to allow him to learn without labor what I wrote with labor.[50]

The understanding reader, according to Petrarch, must attend with his whole concentration. He must give to his reading the same undivided attention that one gives to the correspondence of a sorely missed friend, a correspondence that offers the best and only hope of mitigating the loss that comes with distance. The effort that directs interpretation, moreover, must correspond to the effort involved in composition. Hermeneutical reception, Gadamer reminds us, reverses rhetorical production. The intimacy that informs the writing of letters must equally inform their reading. In Cicero's rhetoric of intimacy, Petrarch discovers a hermeneutics.

Like Gadamer, but long before him, Petrarch appreciates that reading letters represents an intensification of the activity of reading generally. He also appreciates how the spatial distance featured in the tradition of epistolary writing he inherits from Aristotle and Cicero, among others, sets in high relief his own more pressing temporal distance from the very sources of that tradition. For Gadamer, however, the distance between reader and writer is not the problem but the solution—not something that must be overcome, but the productive condition enabling understanding:

> Time is no longer primarily a gulf to be bridged because it separates; it is actually the supportive ground of the course of events in which the present is rooted. Hence temporal distance is not something that must be overcome. This was, rather, the naïve assumption of historicism, namely that we must transpose ourselves into the spirit of the age, think with its ideas and its thoughts, not with our own, and thus advance toward

[50] *Familiares* XIII 5; trans. Bernardo 1975–1985, 2: 191; text in Rossi 1933–1942, 3: 71: "Volo ego ut lector meus, quisquis sit, me unum, non filie nuptias non amice noctem non hostis insidias non vadimonium non domum aut agrum aut thesaurum suum cogitet, et saltem dum legit, volo mecum sit. Si negotiis urgetur, lectionem differat; ubi ad legendum accesserit, negotiorum pondus et curam rei familiaris abiciat, inque ea que sub oculis sunt, animum intendat. Si conditio non placet, inutilibus scriptis abstineat; nolo ego pariter negotietur et studeat, nolo sine ullo labore percipiat que sine labore non scripsi".

> historical objectivity. In fact the important thing is to recognize temporal distance as a positive and productive condition enabling understanding. It is not a yawning abyss but is filled with the continuity of custom and tradition, in the light of which everything handed down presents itself to us.[51]

Petrarch, I suspect, would disagree. A naïve historicist in Gadamer's terms, Petrarch aspires, when reading Cicero, to "transpose [himself] into the spirit of the age, think with its ideas and its thoughts, and not with [his] own". That is what it means to Petrarch to understand Cicero. Furthermore, Petrarch would very likely take exception to Gadamer's narrative of continuity. For, as Mommsen and others have argued, Petrarch characterized the dark age separating him from his beloved antiquity as a "yawning abyss" filled with misunderstanding.[52] The hermeneutic challenge for the Renaissance humanist, then, is to understand a distant past first by acknowledging this distance and then by discovering ways to overcome it. The Ciceronian letter with its rhetoric and ethics of intimacy, I am suggesting, offered Petrarch one of these ways.

[51] Gadamer 1989, 297.
[52] Mommsen 1942.

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