"PER UN DANTE LATINO"

THE LATIN TRANSLATIONS OF THE DIVINE COMEDY IN

NINETEENTH-CENTURY ITALY

by

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Abstract

The history of the Latin translations of Dante's Divine Comedy represents a relatively unexplored branch within the field of Dante studies. Between 1416 and 1876, Latin translations of the Commedia were written and edited by seven men of differing backgrounds and professions: Churchmen, humanistic scholars and academics. The early comprehensive attempts in both prose and verse were published between 1416 and 1431, and have recently received some scholarly attention. In contrast, four out of the seven Latin editions of Dante's Commedia stem from the eras that preceded and immediately followed Italian unification and have yet to be studied. This doctoral dissertation addresses this lacuna and examines the history of the Latin translations of the Divina Commedia within nineteenth-century Italy.

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Preface

    The history of the Latin translations of Dante's Divine Comedy represents a relatively unexplored branch within the field of Dante studies. Between 1416 and 1876, Latin translations of the *Commedia* were written and edited by seven men of differing backgrounds and professions: Churchmen, humanistic scholars and academics. The early comprehensive attempts in both prose and verse were published between 1416 and 1431, and have recently received some scholarly attention. In contrast, four out of the seven Latin editions of Dante's *Commedia* stem from the eras that preceded and immediately followed Italian unification and have yet to be studied. This doctoral dissertation addresses this lacuna and examines the history of the Latin translations of the *Divina Commedia* within the nineteenth-century Italy.

    The four editions that this dissertation examines are as follows: the 1819 *Inferno di Dante, ossia la Prima Cantica della Divina Commedia*, translated in Latin hexameters by Antonio Catellacci; the 1835 *Per le cospicue nozze del nobile uomo Domenico Melilupi Marchese di Soragna colla nobile donzella Giustina Piovene* containing a fragmentary translation of Dante by Francesco Testa, and the two comprehensive translations of the *Commedia* by Gaetano Dalla Piazza (1848) and Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli (1874). While the last two translations encompass the entire text (*Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, *Paradiso*), Catellacci's edition presents a Latin translation of the first *cantica* only. The case of Francesco Testa is more peculiar: his translation covers the three *cantiche*, but is fragmentary and offered as a completion of the 1728 translation of Dante's *Commedia* left unfinished by Carlo d'Aquino.

Although markedly divergent in their Latin versification, these four translations share a common goal of making Dante's masterpiece accessible to non-Italian readers. The audience these editions were meant to reach was extremely limited: a high level of erudition was indeed required to read any of these works. They represent, however, the first literary attempt to export the cultural patrimony of the *Commedia* abroad. It is not a coincidence that such a great cultural undertaking took place during a crucial period in the development of the Italian national identity. The edition by Antonio Catellacci was published only four years after Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of Waterloo (1815), while Pasquali Marinelli's text, the last chronologically, was printed in 1874, four years after the conquest of Rome (1870).

The patriotic movement triggered by the Napoleonic wars and culminating in the Unification played a central role in the birth and spread of these Latin translations. By the time that Italian political and cultural identity was imposing itself among the rising nations of central Europe, the figure of Dante Alighieri was one of the most well-known and admired cultural ensigns. The spread of the paragone Italian poet and his most notable work among circles of foreign intellectuals was hoped to affirm Italian national culture within a period of nationalistic fervor.

Structure of the Dissertation

This doctoral thesis is divided into seven parts: an introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. The introduction offers a brief overview of the field of Dante studies in the nineteenth-century, from Vincenzo Monti's rediscovery of Dante's works at the beginning of the century to the foundation of the *Società Dantesca.* The first chapter examines the history of the Latin translations of the Comedy from the end of the fourteenth to the early fifteenth-century. These works include the fragmentary attempts by Coluccio Salutati and the comprehensive translations by Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle and Matteo Ronto. Neither the introduction nor the first chapter offer original contributions to existing scholarship. Instead, by summarizing the achievements of nineteenth-century Dante studies in Italy as well as the first humanist translations of the Comedy, they provide a solid background against which our investigation can be conducted.

The second chapter is devoted to the works of Carlo d'Aquino and Francesco Testa, published in 1728 and 1836 respectively. D'Aquino's edition represents one of the most influential translations of Dante. His work enjoyed a vast success and was employed as as literary source for subsequent translations. This edition, however, is not complete for many passages were deliberately left untranslated. Testa's Latin version of Dante's masterpiece is fragmentary and sets out to complete D'Aquino's work. Chapter three discusses the figure of Antonio Catellacci and his translation of Dante's *Inferno*. Chapters four and five are devoted to the two comprehensive translations of the *Commedia* into Latin hexameters published by Gaetano Dalla Piazza and Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli. Chapters two through five share a similar internal structure. They open with a

introduction to the author that covers both his biography and literary as well as scientific

production and are followed by an in-depth stylistic and linguistic analysis of the texts.

The investigation will focus on the translation's faithfulness to the vernacular original, the

poetical sensibility in the reinterpretation of the text and the overall mastery of Latin

language and hexameter.

The conclusion summarizes the historical importance and artistic value of these

translations. The unusual number of literary attempts – four within sixty years – their

quality and the crucial time frame in which they were published will bring the modern

Dante scholars to see in the spread of the Latin translations of Dante's *Commedia* a

cultural phenomenon which is both contemporary and complementary to concurrent

flowering of Dantean philology. The Latin translations of the Comedy and the *Società*

dantesca shared the same aim of spreading knowledge of the Florentine poet, but while

the latter addressed only an Italian speaking audience, the Latin translations made Dante

available to intellectuals throughout Europe.

Introduction

"Per un Dante latino": *A Different Perspective on the Reception of Dante's*
Commedia *in the Nineteenth-Century Italy*

The close of the feudal Middle Ages, and the opening of the modern capitalist era are marked by a colossal figure: an Italian, Dante, both the last poet of the Middle Ages and the first poet of modern times.[1]

The presence of Dante in the preface to the Italian edition of Marx and Engels' *Manifesto of the Communist Party* "is perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the political use of Dante in the nineteenth-century".[2] If we exclude the renewed interest that Dante raised in Florence and Italy between the late-fourteenth century and the end of the fifteenth, no other era of modern Italian history has manifested such a true blossoming of modern editions, commentaries and introductions to the *Commedia* as the nineteenth century.

Between the year of Foscolo's death (1827) and that of the Unification (1861), 187 editions of the *Divine Comedy* were published in Italy.[3] This enthusiastic rediscovery of the *Sommo poeta* is closely related to the socio-political milieu of the Italian peninsula of

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1 Friedrich Engels, "An den italienischen Leser. Vorwort zur italienischen Ausgabe (1893)", in *Manifests der Kommunistischen Partei* (London: Burghard, 1848), 28: "Der Ausgang des feudalen Mittelalters und der Anbruch des modernen kapitalistischen Zeitalters sind durch eine große Gestalt gekennzeichnet - durch den Italiener Dante, der zugleich der letzte Dichter des Mittelalters und der erste Dichter der Neuzeit war".The quoted English translation is by Gareth Stedman Jones and can be found in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Penguin, 2004), 81.

2 Stefano Jossa, "Politics vs. Literature: The Myth of Dante and the Italian national Identity", in *Dante in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Aida Audeh and Nick Havely (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 31.

3 See Joseph Luzzi, "Dante, Petrarch, and the National Identity", in *Dante in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 13–29. See also Giuliano Mambelli, *Gli annali delle edizioni danteshe* (Bologna: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1931).

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that time. To some extent, Dante's political role as the ensign of Italian culture recalls the function of the Florentine poet both in Salutati's *Invectivae* against Milan's expansionism and in the desperate attempt by the Florentine republic to preserve traditional, vernacular culture against a philo-Latin culture imposed by the Medici family in 1433.[4] In the late *Ottocento*, however, the politicization of Dante represented a more thorough and organic phenomenon whereby the Florentine poet was interpreted as the first Italian patriot as well as a secular icon.

1- The Divine Comedy in the Nineteenth Century: a Manifesto of Poetry, Patriotism and Uprising Against the Roman Church's Alleged Right to Exert Political Power

Within the field of Dante Studies, the *Ottocento* is primarily known for the birth of the *Società Dantesca* and for the first comprehensive editorial project of Dante's works. However, it also witnessed the employment of the *Sommo poeta* as the ensign of Italy's belated quest for political unity. Through a superficial and simplistic reading of his works, the figure of Dante was exploited for political and demagogic purposes. In this introductory chapter, I analyze the nineteenth-century understanding of Dante as both patriot and enemy of the Church. The interpretation of the poet's works as nationalistic and anti-clerical was part of a larger project for Italy's political unification. This process necessarily entailed the conquest of Rome and the removal of political power from the Church's hierarchy. In the nineteenth century, Dante's poetical works also underwent the first philologically rigorous and structured critical study. This scholarly endeavor

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4 On the political interpretation of Dante in the Renaissance, see Simon Gilson, *Dante and Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), esp. 21–96 and 97–160.

eventually culminated in the *Edizione Nazionale*. An overview on the birth of the *Filologia dantesca* and its pioneer will conclude this chapter.

According to Amedeo Quondam, the adoption of Italian literature as a distinctive aspect of the country's national identity brought about, during the nineteenth century, an identification between Italy's literary tradition and Dante himself. The *Sommo poeta*, indeed, was read and studied not only as a poet, but also as a "warrior" who wished for a unified and independent country.[5] According to modern studies, Vittorio Alfieri (1749–1803) was the first figure to celebrate the figure of Dante as a political icon. As the Italian scholar Stefano Jossa recently argued, one sonnet published in 1783 and dedicated to Dante well testifies to this politicization of the Florentine poet; this poem, indeed, combines praise for Dante's poetic talents (*Uom, che a primiera eterna gloria aspiri*) with a metaphorical exhortation for a strong, perhaps even military, action against the invaders (*Va, tuona, vinci: e, se fra' pie' ti vedi/ Costor, senza mirar, sovr'essi passa*).[6]

Six years before the events of the French Revolution, Alfieri saw in Dante the ensign of Italy's cultural identity and a prophet of its unification. His subtle and yet veiled allusion to the political role of the Florentine poet was retrieved and made more explicit more than thirty years later by Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837). Leopardi's *Sopra il monumento di Dante che si preparava in Firenze* (1818) paid a heartfelt tribute to the poet before devolving into an enraged outburst against Italy's political decay: *O glorioso spirto/ Dimmi: d'Italia tua morto è l'amore?/ Di': quella fiamma che t'accese, è spenta?*[7] Dante is here recalled in passing for his alleged patriotism (*quella fiamma che t'accese*),

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5   Amedeo Quondam, *Petrarca, l'italiano dimenticato* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2004), 83–227. This chapter of the book is also quoted in Stefano Jossa, "Politics vs. Literature", 37.

6   Vittorio Alfieri, *Opere*, IX (*Rime*), ed. Francesco Maggini (Asti: Centro Nazionale di Studi Alfieriani, 1954).

7   Giacomo Leopardi, "Sopra il Monumento di Dante che si preparava in Firenze", 180–182, in Amedeo Quondam, *Risorgimento a memoria. Le poesie degli Italiani* (Roma: Donzelli, 2011), 178.

which Leopardi believed should reawaken the same feeling in contemporary Italians after the Napoleonic Wars.

Alfieri's and Leopardi's hopes for a politically-oriented reading of Dante were combined in the literary works of the politician and patriot Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872). While Mazzini's political interpretation of Dante was already evident in his 1837 *Sull'amor patrio di Dante*, an 1844 article published in the *Foreign Quarterly Review* was explicit in his interpretation of Dante as the *first* patriot in Italian history:[8]

> *It must be said and insisted upon, that this idea of national greatness is the leading thought in all that Dante did or wrote. – Never man loved his country with a more exalted or fervent love; never had man such projects of magnificent and exalted destinies for her. All who consider Dante as a Guelph or a Ghibeline grovel at the base of the monument which he desired to raise to Italy. We are not here required to give an opinion upon the degree of feasibility of Dante's ideas, the future must decide this point. What we have to do, is to show what Dante aimed at; in order that those who desire to come to a just estimate of his life,may have sufficient*

8 Giuseppe Mazzini, "Dell'amor patrio di Dante", in *Scritti editi ed inediti*, II (Imola: Cooperativa Editrice Galeati, 1897), 151–152 and 169–170: "(...) Pure da qualche tempo diversi libri, che vennero a luce, senza risuscitare la disputa, mossero alcune querele conto l'amor patrio dell'Alighieri; e a queste querele fece eco un letterato italiano, il quale in una sua lettera , che inseri? in uno degli ultimi numeri della Antologia, accusollo d'intollerante, e ostinata fierezza, e d'ira eccessiva contro Fiorenza. Perloche? stimiamo bene d'opporre alcune nostre considerazioni a questa rinascente opinione: che se non ci verra? fatto di dir cose nuove, ci conforteremo pur col pensiero, che le voci di un italiano, quali esse siano, non andranno del tutto perdute presso la presente generazione, ove ragionino di cose, che toccan dappresso l'onor nazionale. (...) O Italiani! Studiate Dante; non su'commenti, non sulle glosse; ma nella storia del secolo, in ch'egli visse, nella sua vita, e nelle sue opere. Ma badate! V'ha piu? che il verso nel suo poema; e per questo non vi fidate ai grammatici, e agli interpreti: essi sono come la gente, che dissecca cadaveri; voi vedete le ossa, i muscoli, le vene che formavano il corpo; ma dov'e? la scintilla, che l'animo?? Ricordatevi, che Socrate disse il migliore interprete d'Omero essere l'ingegno piu? altamente spirato dalle muse. Avete voi un'anima di fuoco? Avete mai provato il sublime fremito, che destano l'antiche memorie? Avete mai abbracciate le tombe de' pochi grandi, che spesero per la patria vita, e intelletto? Avete voi versata mai una lacrima sulla bella contrada, che gli odi, i partiti, le dissensioni, e la prepotenza straniera ridussero al nulla? Se tali siete, studiate Dante; da quelle pagine profondamente energiche, succhiate quello sdegno magnanimo, onde l'esule illustre nudriva l'anima; che? l'ira contro i vizi e le corruttele e? virtu?. Apprendete da lui, come si serva alla terra nati?a, finche? l'oprare non e? vietato; come si viva nella sciagura. La forza delle cose molto ci ha tolto; ma nessuno puo? torci i nostri grandi; ne? l'invidia, ne? l'indifferenza della servitu? pote? struggerne i nomi, ed i monumenti; ed ora stanno come quelle colonne, che s'affacciano al pellegrino nelle mute solitudini dell'Egitto, e gli additano, che in que' luoghi fu possente citta?. Circondiamo d'affetto figliale la loro memoria. Ogni fronda del lauro immortale, che i secoli posarono su' loro sepolcri, e? pegno di gloria per noi; ne? potete appressare a quella corona una mano sacrilega, che non facciate piaga profonda nell'onore della terra, che vi die? vita. O Italiani! Non obliate giammai, che il primo passo a produrre uomini grandi sta nello onorare i gia? spenti."

grounds to judge him.[9]

The Napoleonic Wars awakened a marked patriotism and search for national icons among the European states. In Italy, Mazzini was a fundamental contributor to the appropriation of Dante Alighieri as the first national patriot, one who defended the independence of his city from political authorities. Among the fourteenth-century enemies who threatened the city of Florence, the Church represented the most concrete and tangible. In fact, in his 1838 *Vita di Dante*, Cesare Balbo described Dante as "the most Italian among the Italians," chiefly because of his invectives against the Church and of its alleged right to exert political power.[10]

The resentment of nineteenth-century Italian patriots against the Church was, in part, the result of the complicated web of political alliances governing the peninsula. Until the second half of the century, the Habsburgs occupied vast areas of the Northeast, while the Kingdom of the two Sicilies ruled over Naples and the South, and central Italy was firmly in the hands of the Church. The Church represented one of the staunchest opponents to the unification of the country, and the Italian *Risorgimento* is characterized by a marked anti-clericalism aimed at the secularization of the Papal territories.

Despite Dante's well-documented historical affiliation with the Guelph party, in his 1807 *Dei Sepolcri*, Foscolo addressed him as "*ghibellin* fuggiasco."[11] This epithet demonstrates the anti-clericalism with which Dante's works were read and studied.[12] Early

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9 Giuseppe Mazzini, "Opere minori di Dante Alighieri", in *The Foreign Quarterly Review* XXXIII, (1844), 1–30. Quoted by Stefano Jossa, in "Politics vs. Literature", 37.

10 *Inf.*, XIX, 115–117: "*Ahi, Costantin, di quanto mal fu matre/ non la tua conversion, ma quella dote/ che da te prese il primo ricco patre!*". On Balbo's political interpretation of Dante, see Cesare Balbo, *Vita di Dante* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1853), 155. Balbo's contribution is analyzed at length in Beatrice Arduini, "Reading Dante in Nineteenth Century Italy", in *Dante in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 70–88.

11 For a thorough history of the Guelphs and Ghibellines factions see John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1200–1575* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

12 Stefano Jossa, "Politics vs. Literature", 41: "(...) Dante the fighter, the wariror, the national hero was used and perceived as a lay or secular icon. No longer was he the Catholic, the White Guelph who had

nineteenth-century attempts to employ Dante as a tool against the Church's political power became much more frequent and systematic between the 1830s and 1860s, thanks to the work of Gustavo Modena and Tommaso Salvini. Unlike Alfieri, Foscolo and Leopardi, Modena and Salvini were not men-of-letters. They were men of theater and actors.[13] The modern performances and public readings of Dante's *Commedia* by Albertazzi, Bene, Sermonti and Benigni find an illustrious antecedent in Modena's *Dantate*.[14]

During his eight years of political exile, Modena performed Dante's *Commedia* both in Marseilles and London. In the English capital, Modena was praised by Mazzini for his passionate and politically-oriented interpretation of the poem.[15] Modena's was not a bare reading of the original text, but rather a commented interpretation of it: "In his *dantate*, he personified Dante the poet: pondering, improvising, correcting, sounding out the poem."[16] This performance of Dante's *Commedia* made Modena one of the most popular and esteemed actors of his time. Collodi even defined his reading of the poem the most effective: "Fra i mille e mille commenti che esistono della *Divina Commedia* il più vero di tutti, il più efficace di tutti, è incontestabilmente Gustavo Modena"[17].

The heir to Modena's masterful acting was Tommaso Salvini (1829–1915), whose fame as actor is bound to a famous episode of political performance. Florence, the capital of the newly-founded Kingdom of Italy, was the center of the celebrations for Dante's

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written a theological poem, but the enemy of Pope Boniface VIII, the fighter for his own independence and freedom against the constrictions of the Church's political pretensions, the Dante to be interpreted as national icon".

13 On Modena, see Terenzio Grandi, *Gustavo Modena: attore patriota (1803–1861)*, (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi Editori, 1968). On Salvini, see Giulio Piccini, *Vita aneddotica di Tommaso Salvini* (Florence: Bemporad, 1908).

14 See Michael Caesar and Nick Hevely, "Politics and Performance: Gustavo Modena's *dantate*,", in *Dante in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 111–137.

15 See Mazzini's letter in Terenzio Grandi, *Gustavo Modena*, 39–63.

16 Michael Caesar and Nick Hevely, "Politics and Performance", 125.

17 Carlo Collodi (C. Lorenzini), *Divagazioni critico-umoristiche*, (Florence: Bompard, 1892), 103.

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600th birthday.[18] Among the many celebrations, one left an enduring impression on Italian patriots of the time. On 16 May 1865 Tommaso Salvini performed excerpts from Dante's *Divina Commedia* before the king and his court in the Teatro Pagliano (the modern Teatro Verdi). According to Salvini's *Aneddoti*, as soon as the actor reached lines 100–102 of *Inf.*, I, where the Roman church is metaphorically portrayed with a she wolf (*Molti son li animali a cui s'ammoglia/ e più saranno ancora, infin che'l veltro/ verrà, che la farà morir con doglia*), Salvini interrupted his reading, stared at the king and raised his finger at him without speaking.

The audience immediately grasped the allusion to the political state of Italy, a unified country deprived of its ancient capital, Rome. The Papal Curia's avarice needed to be extirpated by the king and the newly-established political power (the *Veltro*, according to Salvini's interpretation).[19] In Salvini's *Aneddoti*, the enthusiasm in the theater forced king Vittorio Emanuele II to stand up, show appreciation for Salvini's veiled allusion and thank the rapturously applauding audience. Other accounts of the same episode recount that the king adopted a more cautious attitude and refrained from publicly endorsing

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18 On the 1865 celebrations of Dante's sixth centenary, see Anne O'Connor, *Florence: City and Memory in the Nineteenth Century* (Florence: Città di Vita, 2008) and Mahnaz Yousefzadeh, *The City and the Nation in Italian Unification: The National Festivals of Dante Alighieri* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

19 Tommaso Salvini, *Aneddoti ed impresisoni dell'artista Tommaso Salvini* (Milan: Dumolard, 1895), 223–224: "(...) Il teatro Pagliano presentava un aspetto imponente! Il Re Vittorio Emanuele, il Senato, gli ambasciatori, i ministri, i deputati, l'aristocrazia, la magistratura, l'armata, il foro, le arti, l'industria, il commercio, tutte le caste infine della società? erano rappresentate, e quel vastissimo locale fu incapace a contenere l'immensa folla, che si addensava inutilmente alle porte del teatro per poter godere dello spettacolo. Come illustratore del primo canto fui naturalmente il primo a presentarmi sulla scena. Un applauso di simpatia accolse la mia entrata. Quando venne il punto nel quale il Divino Poeta simboleggia nella Lupa la Curia Romana e prende a dire: "Molti son gli animali a cui s'ammoglia E piu? saranno ancora, infin che'l Veltro verra?, che la fara? morir di doglia!" Guardai fissamente il Re e restai qualche secondo senza parlare. L'uditorio comprese simultaneamente l'allusione e un uragano d'applausi eruppe che non aveva piu? fine. Credo che Vittorio Emanuele in quel momento avrebbe desiderato trovarsi a caccia anzi che in teatro. Il pubblico seguitava ad applaudire, a gridare « Viva il Re! Viva l'Italia! » e S. M. non capiva o non voleva capire l'allusione che promosse quell'entusiasmo e resto? esitante parecchio tempo, finche gli fu forza alzarsi e ringraziare piu? volte il pubblico: in quel momento credevo che dalla violenza degli applausi dovesse crollarmi sulla testa il teatro.".

Salvini's implied accusations.[20]

The theatrical performances of Modena and Salvini exerted a remarkable influence throughout the nineteenth century, and they gave the modern reader a clear, political interpretation of Dante's *Comedy*. Both the patriotic interpretation of Dante (Alfieri, Leopardi, Mazzini and Balbo) and the portrayal of the poet as secular icon (Foscolo, Modena and Salvini) lacked a philological reading of the original text. Both these readings had pragmatic goals, but the field of Dante studies in the nineteenth century also witnessed the birth of the first philological study of the poet's *corpus*.

A first organic study of Dante's *Commedia* was carried out by Vincenzo Monti (1754–1828), poet laureate and official historian of the Kingdom during the Napoleonic occupation of the peninsula.[21] Both his poems, *Bassvilliana* (1793) and *Mascheroniana* (1801), paid a remarkable tribute to the *Commedia*. They are composed in hexameters and present Dante's rhyme scheme of the *terza rima*. The success of these publications contributed to a genuine rediscovery of the *Commedia* not only as a source of patriotic inspiration, but also as an unequalled poetic model:

> "In 1793 Dante made a sudden comeback throughout Italy, not as the remote and revered ancestor, but as the contemporary and living teacher for the period's new poetry and literature, and this could be put down to the canti of Monti's Bassvilliana, a poem which had come to encapsulate the anti-French and anti-Jacobin sentiments in reaction to the Terror".[22]

Monti was involved in a new edition of Dante's early works, the *Convivio* and *De*

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20 See Henry C. Barlow, *The Sixth Centenary Festivals of Dante Alighieri in Florence and Ravenna* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1866), 59. All the accounts of the episode are carefully listed and discussed in Michael Caesar and Nick Hevely, "Politics and Performance", 131–135.

21 See Carlo Dionisotti, "Varia fortuna di Dante", in *Geografia e Storia della Letteratura Italiana* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967), 205–242.

22 *Ibid.*, 208. Quoted from Antonella Braida, "Dante and the Creation of the *poeta vate*" in *Dante in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 53.

vulgari eloquentia. Although the poet soon abandoned this project due to health problems, Angelo Colombo has demonstrated the unprecedented level of philological precision that characterized Monti's approach to Dante.[23] Monti's critical work remained uncompleted, but he nonetheless contributed to a renewed close textual reading of the Florentine poet. The challenge, in nineteenth century Italy, to present a less ideological and more critical understanding of the poet's works was soon taken up by another the poet and man-of-letters, Giosuè Carducci (1835–1907). Although a strong supporter of the identification of Italy with its glorious literature, during the 1865 celebrations Carducci opposed the politicization of Dante and his works.[24] According to his views, a patriotic celebration of Dante should be avoided for there was nothing within the poet's *corpus* to support an interpretation of Dante as a patriot wishing for the unification of the peninsula.

Dante's praise of monarchy in *De Monarchia* should not be confused with a wish for national unification. In Carducci's opinion, Dante's political conception of the Italian peninsula was not that of an independent country, but rather as the hearth of a much broader Christian institution ruled by the emperor.[25] The philological approach adopted

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23 Angelo Colombo, *La Philologie dantesque à Milan et la naissance du Convito* (Lille: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2001), 446. Quoted in Antonella Braida, "Dante and the Creation", 54: "Monti shows us that he had become skilful editor of ancient literary texts: once again, his philological scholarship was more advanced than that practiced by Trivulzio; in sum, Monti's approach clearly bore a closer resemblance to the German philology that was about to conquer Europe."

24 Giosuè Carducci, *Discorsi letterari e storici* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1935), 346. Quoted in by Jossa in Stefano Jossa, "Politics vs. Literature", 35: . "Quando il Principe di Metternich disse l'Italia essere un'espressione geografica, non aveva capito l cosa; essa era un'espressione letteraria, una tradizione poetica".

25 Giosuè Carducci, *Prose di Giosuè Carducci 1859–1903*, XXII (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1963), 1155, quoted in Braida, "Dante and the Creation", 66. "(...) A ogni modo non è il caso di cercare nelle massime monarchiche monarchiche dell'Alighieri un principio di unificazione d'Italia, se non in quanto questa fosse compresa nell'unita del Cristianesimo. L'amor patrio e l'idea nazionale fiammeggiano nel sentimento che il poeta ebbe profondissimo delle glorie e delle miserie d'Italia, nel sentimento dell'Impero come istituzione romana, come diritto italico. (…) Né anche la indipendenza, fortemente affermata e ragionata dall'Alighieri, dell'Impero dalla Chiesa, la storia permette di trarre a sensi troppo moderni. (…) Il libro di monarchia è l'ultima scolastica espressione del classicismo politico medievale, e cercarvi ciò che oggi dicesi lo Stato pagano e lo Stato ateo sarebbe fare ingiuria all'Alighieri, secondo le sue idee."

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by Monti and employed by Carducci rejected this romantic and patriotic reading of Dante. Critical editions were what Italian people needed most to truly understand Dante. Carducci criticized the 1865 festivals for celebrating a poet whose works were only superficially known and mostly misinterpreted.[26] Carducci wished for a close and analytic study of the Florentine poet, but he never attempted an edition of any of his works.

The first project for a national edition of Dante's works with with an accompanying introduction, commentary and critical text was launched in the last twenty years of the century with Barbi as its most important contributor. Beatrice Arduini argues that the need for a close reading of Dante's works became pressing after the newly founded Kingdom of Italy promulgated a national curriculum of studies for its schools and universities. Dante's *Commedia* played a central role within these curricula after 1865.[27]

The rediscovery of the Florentine poet brought illustrious Italian *Dantisti* to gather with the shared goal of amending the many textual difficulties that caused modern editions of Dante's texts to diverge so markedly from one another. Although established by Carlo Lorenzini and Paolo Emiliani Giudici as a cultural committee in November 1860, the *Società Dantesca* was officially founded on 31 July 1881.[28] The main goal of

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26 Antonella Braida, "Dante and the Creation", 64.

27 See Arduini, "Reading Dante", 70–71.

28 Francesco Mazzoni, "Edizione Nazionale", in *Enciclopedia Dantesca* (Rome: Treccani, 1978): "(...) Che il compito di tale edizione toccasse alla filologia italiana (pur dopo i meritori tentativi e le approfondite esplorazioni condotte da studiosi stranieri quali Karl Witte ed Edward Moore) era nozione imposta non solo da ragioni ideali, ma da motivi oggettivamente pratici, visto che la maggior parte della tradizione manoscritta di opere dantesche è conservata in biblioteche italiane, se non addirittura fiorentine. I lavori per l'edizione critica procedettero così, in quei primi anni, alacremente; pur tra varie difficoltà, originate dalle dimensioni stesse dell'impresa, in un'epoca in cui ancora mancavano i moderni sussidi per lo studio comparato dei codici. (…) Tale attività filologica e critica, frutto del volenteroso quanto disinteressato impegno della Società e degl'insigni curatori, ottenne finalmente nel 1914 l'atteso riconoscimento ufficiale: il Parlamento, votando un'apposita legge (19 luglio 1914, n° 729), autorizzava la spesa di lire 180.000 (da corrispondersi in dieci annualità) " per il concorso dello Stato nella preparazione e pubblicazione di una edizione critica delle *Opere di Dante* iniziata dalla Società Dantesca Italiana, in occasione del sesto centenario della morte del Poeta ", e dava facoltà al Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione. " di mettere a disposizione della Società Dantesca Italiana due professori o

the *Società* was to publish a critical edition of Dante's *Opera Omnia*. The task was only completed with the publication in 1921 of *Le opere di Dante*, which included *Il Convivio*, *Rime*, *Vita Nova* and, of course, the *Divine Comedy*. This edition, sponsored by the *Società Dantesca*, commemorated the sixth centenary of Dante's death and "was intended to be the preliminary stage in the great enterprise of the *Edizione Nazionale* of Dante's works, with commentary on and and philological justification of the texts".[29]

The renowned Dante scholar, former editor of the *Bullettino della Società Dantesca* and founder of *Giornale dantesco*, Michele Barbi, served as the general editor for *Le opere di Dante*.[30] A student of Alessandro D'Ancona, Barbi "defined the the norms of modern Italian philology and the methodology of editing texts".[31] His reading of Dante rejected political and nationalistic interpretations in favor of a genuine interest in the birth and editorial developments of the texts themselves. Barbi's most eminent contribution to the field of Dante studies was the employment of Lachmann's stemmatic method in reconstructing the history of Dante's work. D'Ancona articulated the need for a systematic analysis of all the ancient manuscripts as well as the early editions of Dante's texts in his article, "Gli Studi Danteschi e il loro avvenire in Italia," published in the inaugural (1893) issue of the *Giornale dantesco*.[32]

Barbi's New Philology (*Metodo storico*) was first employed in the 1907 edition of *Vita Nuova*, where the scholar identified and carefully examined forty-one manuscripts

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funzionari da esso dipendenti " per quelle opere la cui edizione presentasse speciale difficoltà. Il Barbi e il Vandelli furono così dispensati dall'insegnamento per meglio attendere al loro lavoro editoriale".

29 Arduini, "Reading Dante", 83. *Le Opere di Dante. Testo critico della Società Dantesca Italiana*, ed. M. Barbi, E.G. Parodi, F. Pellegrini, E. Pistelli, P. Rajna, E. Rostagno and G. Vandelli (Florence: Bemporad, 1921). This monumental edition, although not complete, was revised and republished in 1960 and 2011.

30 On the life and works of Michele Barbi, see Christopher Kleinhenz, "Michele Barbi (1867–1941)", in *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline, Literature and Philology* ed. Helen Damico (New York: Routledge, 1998) 325–338.

31 Richard Lansing, *The Dante Encyclopedia* (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2010), 83.

32 Michele Barbi, "Gli Studi Danteschi e il loro avvenire in Italia," in *Giornale dantesco*, I (1893): 1–27.

with Dante's text from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This new method was later

applied to the *Convivio, Rime* and the *Divine Comedy*, all texts eventually included in the

1921 edition of *Le opere di Dante.* In his 1974 article on Barbi, Vittore Branca payed the

right tribute to the innovative approach to literary texts introduced by the Italian scholar.[33]

Barbi's critical editions of Dante's works completed the search for the most authentic

Dante, a search first wished for by Vincenzo Monti and by Carducci. While the readings

of Dante in Italy between the battle of Waterloo (1815) and the end of the century were

strongly characterized by a wish to *deploy* the Florentine poet as a patriot and a secular

icon, toward the end of the *Ottocento* what current scholarship might describe as an

authentic text was also rediscovered.

By carrying out a comparative analysis on all the extant manuscripts of the poet's

texts, Barbi's critical edition of *Le opere di Dante* represented one of the most remarkable

pinnacle achievements of nineteenth-century Italian philology. His contribution to a

critical understanding of Dante enjoyed a vast success among scholars and had lasting

repercussions on the Italian academic world. Less than a generation after the *Cattedra di*

Studi danteschi opened at the University of Florence in 1859, the Senate of the Kingdom

approved the creation of a second teaching position of *Dante studies* at the University of

Rome in 1887.[34] This academic course in the Eternal City was inaugurated with a *lectio*

magistralis by Giosuè Carducci on 8 January 1888.

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33 Vittore Branca, "Barbi, Michele (1867–1941): Barbi e la nuova filologia italiana,", in *Dizionario critico della letteratura italiana*, I (Turin: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, 1974): 199–207.
34 Wanda De Nunzio Schilardi, "Bovio-Carducci e la cattedra dantesca a Roma," in *La nuova ricerca* (Bari: University of Bari, 1990): 75–87.

Chapter One:

Early Humanist Latin Translations of Dante's Commedia

1- From Learned Divertissement to Commissioned Translation: The Cases of Coluccio Salutati and Fra' Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle.

The first thorough Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia* was made by Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle in 1416. This attempt is linked to a historic event, the *Council of Constance* (1414–1418), both ideologically and chronologically, and should not be analyzed separately from the fragmentary translations of Dante's text by Coluccio Salutati in the early fifteenth century.[35] Three modern scholars, in particular, have recently offered fundamental contributions to a thorough understanding of these figures in their relation to the *Commedia*: Stefano Baldassarri, Francesco Bausi and, most recently, Gennaro Ferrante. The following introductory notes are based on their works.[36]

Although the literary sources for Salutati's production are found primarily in classical texts, Dante Alighieri represented the modern author who by far exerted the strongest fascination over the Florentine Chancellor. His *Commedia*, so closely linked to the ancient epic tradition, made him, in Salutati's eyes, the paragone of Florentine culture and tradition against the Milanese political and territorial aggression. The last years of the

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35 Gaetano Dalla Piazza, *Dantis Alligherii Divina Comoedia hexametris Latinis reddita ab abate Dalla Piazza vicentino*, (Leipzig: Barth, 1848), XIII–XVII.

36 Stefano Ugo Baldassarri, "Coluccio dantista e traduttore", in *Umanesimo e traduzione: da Petrarca a Manetti* (Cassino: Università degli Studi di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale, 2003), 61–91. Francesco Bausi, "Coluccio traduttore", in *Medioevo e Rinascimento*, XXII (2008), 34–57. Gennaro Ferrante, "Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle", in *Censimento dei Commenti Danteschi [I Commenti di tradizione manoscritta (fino al 1480)]*, II (Roma: Salerno, 2011), 333–339. Id., "La ridestinazione del commento dantesco di Giovanni da Serravalle a Sigismondo di Lussemburgo: implicazioni testuali", *Rivista di Studi danteschi*, VIII, (Roma: Salerno, 2008), 143–167. Id., "Forme funzioni e scopi del tradurre Dante da Coluccio Salutati a Giovanni da Serravalle (con edizione delle dediche della *translatio Dantis*)", in *Annali dell'Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici*, XXV (2010), 147–182.

fourteenth century were characterized by Salutati's raising of interest in Dante's works. Indeed, according to Ronald Witt, the sudden death of Coluccio's wife in 1396 brought the Chancellor to seek and find consolation in the *Commedia* and its strong religious component.[37] Salutati's profound interest in Dante finds explicit testimony in Bruni's *Dialogi* and has been examined at length by Garin and Giuliano Tanturli.[38] It has been more difficult to account for the need that inspired the Chancellor to translate sections of the original text in Ciceronian Latin. This attempt requires a two-fold explanation; firstly, avocational translations of sections of Dante's text were particularly helpful in refining the humanists' linguistic Latin skills as is evident in Marco Marulo's early attempts at the same project.[39] Secondly, the Latin translation of the *Commedia* is also grounded in a pressing need, felt by the early humanists, to linguistically *ennoble* the literary status of Dante's masterpiece by placing it next to the Latin compositions of antiquity. A Latin translation of Dante's poem was, indeed, all that was needed to fully legitimize the greatness of the Florentine poet in a century primarily focused on the rediscovery of ancient literatures.

Salutati's fame as a passionate reader and expert scholar of Dante must have quickly spread beyond the city's boundaries. Benvenuto da Imola, one of the earliest and most influential commentators of Dante's *Commedia*, explicitly asked the Florentine

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37 Ronald G. Witt, *Hercules at the Crossroads. The life, Works and Thought of Coluccio Salutati* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1983), 314–315: "He had always had a deep respect for the poet's work (…).Until 1396, however, there was little indication that Dante's writings had much effect on Salutati's thinking .(...) Nevertheless, in the days of Piera's illness and immediately thereafter, Dante's thought took on a vital significance for him as he attempted to find solace in the pages of the *Divina Commedia*".

38 See Giuliano Tanturli, "Il disprezzo per Dante dal Petrarca al Bruni", in *Rinascimento*, II, 25 (1985), 199–219. See also Eugenio Garin, "Dante nel Rinascimento", in *Rinascimento*, II, 7, (1967), 3–28.

39 See Carlo Dionisotti, "Marco Marulo", in *Miscellanea di scritti di bibliografia ed erudizione in memoria di Luigi Ferrari*, ed. A. Saitta, (Florence: Olschki, 1952), 233–242. See also Clelia Maria Piastra, "Nota sulle versioni latine della Divina Commedia", in *Aevum*, XXX, 3, (1956), 267–271.

Chancellor to review and comment on his work before publishing it.[40] In his reply to

Benvenuto, Salutati does not hide a certain disappointment with the poor rhetorical

refinement with which Dante's text had been rendered and commented. Benvenuto's

Latin, in Salutati's eyes, did not correspond to the sophistication of the original text, and

the Chancellor's letter encourages him to drastically increase his level of linguistic style.[41]

Salutati's expertise as a scholar of Dante is also evident in another letter that was sent to

Niccolò da Tudareno and is discussed at length by Baldassarri. If this letter presents a

request, on the Chancellor's part, for a philologically reliable edition of Dante's

Commedia, it soon turns into a profound and sincere eulogy for Dante as a Florentine

poet, whose linguistic merits, although in vernacular, are favorably compared to the Latin

monumenta.[42]

There is one literary work, however, that stands out in Salutati's production in its

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40 On Benvenuto da Imola see Louis Rossi, "Dante and the poetic tradition in the commentary of Benvenuto da Imola", in *Italica*, XXXII, (1955), 215–223. On the relationship between Benvenuto and Salutati, see Coluccio Salutati, *De fato e fortuna*, ed. Concetta Bianca (Florence: Olschki, 1985), 7–76.

41 "*Summe itaque placet* [commentum tuum]*, nec cunctandum reor quin illud opus possis emittere, si tamen ea quae nimis pedestri sermone prosequeris ad aures, ut arbitror, communis domini nostri, quem illius libri dedicatione dignaris, accomodato, altiori parumper stilo curabis attollere. […] aptanda sunt verba rebus et secundum diversitatem materiae debemus sermones et dictamine variare. Quis enim tot divinarum et humanarum rerum dignitatem, tantam nobilium historiarum seriem, tot subtilissimus sensus, tam inauditas tamque digestas explanationes in illa stili tenuitate legendo sine indignatione percurret?*" From the letter sent to Benvenuto da Imola (28 June, 1383) which can be found in Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario*, ed.Francesco Novati, II, (Rome: Istituto Storico, 1896), 76–80. Quoted by Stefano Ugo Baldassarri, "Coluccio dantista e traduttore", 74.

42 Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario*, III, 371–373: "*Est mihi cura, vir insignis, frater optime, amice carissime, quod possim habere correctum opus divinissimun Dantis nosti, quo, crede mihi, nullem hactenus poema vel altius stilo vel elegantius inventione vel maioris ponderis, cum ad res aut ad verba veneris vel tractatum. Ubi quidem stili triplicis rationem et differentiam perfectius habemus atque liquidius? Ubi repies tot et tanta connexa dictionis serie venustius atque subtilius? Ubi res graviores verbis convenientioribus invenire poteris explicatas? Denique, crede mihi, dulcissime Nicolae, nihil altius, nihil ornatius, nihil expolitius nihilique scientia profundius illis tribus canticis possumus demonstrare?*" This abstract from Salutati's letter is quoted by Stefano Ugo Baldassarri, "Coluccio dantista e traduttore", 76. Baldassarri also finds unusual such a commendatory tone in Salutati's *Epistolary* and compares it to the one employed by the Chancellor for Petrarch's death (letter sent to Roberto Guidi, now in Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario*, I, 176–187): "Nel 1399, richiedendo a Niccolò da Tuderano, segretario dei signori di Ravenna, un esemplare quanto piu corretto possibile della *Commedia*, il cancelliere trasforma la sua lettera in un panegirico del poeta fiorentino, paragonabile, non a caso, solo all'elogio da lui composto in morte del Petrarca venticinque anni prima". See Stefano Ugo Baldassarri, *Coluccio dantista e traduttore*, 75.

presentation of Dante as a poetical, moral and philosophical authority: *De fato et fortuna*.[43] In this text, in order to support his theory of the divine nature of human fate, Salutati quotes and translates into Latin hexameters three abstracts from Dante's *Commedia*. The sections of the texts that Salutati quotes are *Purg.*, XVI, 70–72, *Inf.*, VII, 73–96 and *Purg.*, XVI, 58–83.[44] Although the Chancellor aimed to employ Dante's authority to restate the divine nature of human destiny, the translation of the second abstract (*Inf.*, VII, 73–96) brings Salutati to briefly hint at the criteria he followed while translating Dante's text. In his own words, Salutati's translation is by no means intended as a replacement of the original; it should rather be read face to face with Dante's text because the poet's mastery simply cannot be rendered in a different language.[45]

Salutati never attempted a complete translation of the *Commedia*; but his learned *divertissement* represents the first, although fragmentary, attempt to render Dante's masterpiece in Latin hexameters. Of course, the language of the treatise (*De fato et fortuna*), as well as that of the entire production of the Chancellor, is Latin, and a quotation from Dante *had* to be translated in this language, it could not be presented in

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43 Although still difficult to ascertain with certainty, Salutati's *De fato et fortuna* is most likely to be ascribed to the years 1396–1397. At this regard, see Ronald G. Witt, *Herules at the Crossroads*, 315–330.

44 Both Salutati's and Dante's texts are discussed at length in Coluccio Salutati, *De fato e fortuna*, 18–19. The three abstracts in the original version and in the Latin translation by Salutati can also be found in Baldassarri's contribution, where the Italian scholar provides a detailed analysis of Salutati's *modus latine vertendi*. See Stefano Ugo Baldassarri, "Coluccio dantista e traduttore", 78–86.

45 Coluccio Salutati, *De fato e fortuna*, 192–193: "(...) *haec de fortuna Dantes noster; quae quidem pauca de vulgaribus endecasyllabis, quibus excultissimo florentinorum idiomate, quod solum et ultra cunctas mundi linguas rhythmicis cantibus cum elegantia dulcedineque respondet, divinum suum illud poema composuit, ego versibus heroicis, inferiore tamen stilo longeque a dantei dictaminis maiestate remoto, transtuli temerarie quidem, sed fideliter in latinum, de quorum quidem ruditate nullus velit stilum et cultum, dulcedinem et tanti vatis incomparabilemque facundiam existimare. Nam cum sicut difficillimum sit latinitatis elegantiam in vulgare quoppiam transferendo servare, sic etiam et e contra vulgare quamvis mediocriter cultum numquam vertatur in latinum servando parem ornatum, quidnam contingere debet mihi, depresso infimoque dicendi genere summa inaccessibiliaque temptanti? Cum autem verba suavitatemque nequiverim aemulari, conatus sum tamen non mutare sententiam, quam relinquo, post quam illam praestare suavitatem et verba non potui, nostra legentibus speculandam*". This text is also quoted by Baldassarri in Stefano Ugo Baldassarri, "Coluccio dantista e traduttore", 83.

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the vernacular. These Latin translations represent an evident attempt to ennoble the fame of Florence's utmost poetical glory with the language of classical tradition, an attempt that would soon inspire more comprehensive and thorough translations both in prose and verse.[46]

Among the students in Benvenuto's classes on Dante was a Franciscan monk who, between 1394 and 1397, held the position of theologian in Florence's Santa Croce as well as the professorship of theology at the city's *Studium*: Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle. Bertoldi took part at the Council of Constance, and at the request of the foreign prelates who gathered in the city, he translated and commented on the entire *Commedia* in Latin, with the explicit aim of making Dante's text accessible to non-Italian speakers. On the basis of Ferrante's studies, Bertoldi completed his translation between January and May 1416, a feat of incredible productivity made necessary because this translation was commissioned by two English monks, Robert Halam and Nicolaus of Bubwith, as well as the Cardinal of Florence's Santa Maria Nuova, Amedeo di Salluzzo.[47] While translating Dante, Bertoldi also drafted a rich Latin commentary on the *Commedia*; both the translation and the commentary are in prose, and this certainly reduced the time of drafting. By 16 January 1417, even the commentary was completed and ready for publication.[48]

The speed with which Bertoldi concluded his translation is a recurrent theme in the preface to the work (*Excusent me igitur mandata vestra et brevitas temporis*). According to Bertoldi, he did not have time enough to draft a more accurate and

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46 Stefano Ugo Baldassarri, "Coluccio dantista e traduttore", 8: "La traduzione salutatiana si proponeva appunto questo obiettivo: elevare lo stato di Dante malgrado la stesura in volgare del suo principale poema"
47 Gennaro Ferrante, "Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle", 225.
48 *Ibid.*, 225.

rhetorically refined translation, a task which he claims would have taken at least two years. He explains his decision to translate into prose rather than poetry to this same constraint.[49] Bertoldi's translation and commentary is extant in two manuscripts; the *Capponi 1* located in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana and the *ms. P.V.1* now housed in the Biblioteca Arcivescovile of Eger. This second manuscript presents a different dedicatee, the future emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg, who was both supporter and organizer of the Council of Constance.[50] The Latin employed by Bertoldi is rough and unrefined with little in common with the rhetorical abilities shown by his contemporary, Salutati. Bertoldi's Latin is completely lacking in the renovated classicism that so deeply pervaded the poetic production of the fifteenth century; his text represents a bare Latin paraphrase that sacrifices any pretensions of artistic value in favor of an extreme faithfulness to Dante's text.[51] It seems, indeed, unquestionable that the translator's ultimate goal was merely to provide a faithful translation of the *Commedia* to the men of Church gathered in Constance, scholars of high cultural stature, but completely unfamiliar with the Italian vernaculars.

Although imposing, the priest's literary attempt is unlikely to have enjoyed a vast success. The very limited number of manuscripts and editions of Bertoldi's remaining testifies to a limited circulation of his translation among cultural circles. Nevertheless, Gennaro Ferrante and Massimo Zaggia argue that this work might have circulated among

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49 "(...) *ubi ad minus requirerentur duo anni ad transferendum dictum librum decenter*". This text is quoted by Gennaro Ferrante in "Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle", 229.

50 On the change of dedication from the three prelates to Sigismund, see Gennaro Ferrante, "La ridestinazione del commento dantesco" and Id., "Il commento dantesco di Giovanni da Serravalle e l'ascendente benvenutiano: tra compilatio "d'autore" e riproduzione inerziale", in *Filologia dei testi d'autore. Atti del Convegno (Rome, 2007)*, ed. Simona Brambilla and Maurizio Fiorilla (Florence: Cesati, 2009), 47–72.

51 "un latino anche più grosso di quanto si sarebbe potuto immaginare in un intellettuale di inizio Quattrocento" as Saverio Bellomo defines Bertoldi's prose. Bellomo's comment is quoted from Gennaro Ferrante, "Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle", 229.

monastic orders, in particular in Franciscan institutions through the figure of Francesco da Pistoia (*Franciscus Pistoriensis*). Ferrante and Zaggia posit that it was Bertoldi's text that likely reached Matteo Ronto and served as a prose model from which the Olivetan monk drafted his own, poetic translation of the *Divine Comedy.*[52]

In his commentary on Dante, Bertoldi explicitly acknowledges the influence of Benvenuto's work, a commentary to which he boasts a rigorous faithfulness: *magister Benvenutus de Ymola, qui bene scripsit super isto auctore, a quo magistro Benvenuto ego audivi primo istum auctorem et ab eo didici.*[53] Benvenuto's commentary, the only complete manuscript of which is *Laurentianus Ashburnhamianus 839*, emerges so clearly from Bertoldi's work that both Ferrante and Carlo Paolazzi argue that while he was at Constance, the monk might have had direct access to Benvenuto's commentary.[54] Although fascinating, this hypothesis remains unproven. What is clear, however, is the thread that connects Giovanni Bertoldi to Benvenuto and Benvenuto to Salutati.

Benvenuto's commentary is harshly criticized by Salutati, but it nonetheless brought the Florentine Councilor to address linguistic issues relevant to his Latin exegesis of Dante's text. For the first time, an explicit link was drawn between the *Commedia* and

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52 See Gennaro Ferrante, "Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle", 229 and the already quoted Massimo Zaggia, *Il "Prologus" della versione dantesca di Matteo Ronto*, 211. A limited circulation of Bertoldi's work is still testified by Ferrante, who quotes another manuscript – *ms. 1074* from the Biblioteca Trivulziana in Milan – a text datable to the late XV century which presents an interlinear Latin translation probably drafted on Bertoldi's work: "Un'ulteriore testimonianza della diffusione della Translatio è data dal ms. 1074 della Biblioteca Trivulziana di Milano, risalente alla fine del sec. XV e che contiene la Commedia con una traduzione interlineare latina in modulo minore, il cui modello, riconoscibile dalle scelte lessicali e dalla costruzione sintattica, pare essere proprio la Translatio serravalliana". See Gennaro Ferrante, "Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle", 230.
53 Quoted from Ferrante in "Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle", 230.
54 "La costante fedeltà delle glosse serravalliane alla redazione ferrarese induce a credere che il vescovo, mentre approntava il commento al concilio di Costanza, ne avesse davanti una copia redatta in una lezione sicuramente piú corretta di quella di Ash". See Gennaro Ferrante, "Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle", 230. The same hypothesis was earlier made by Paolazzi in Carlo Paolazzi, "Giovanni da Serravalle espositore della "Commedia" e Benvenuto da Imola: (con nuovi accertamenti sul *Laurenziano Ashb. 839*)", in *Giornata di Studi Malatestiani a San Marino. Atti del Convegno* (Rimini: Ghigi, 1990), 36.

the need for a Latin linguistic refinement. By criticizing Benvenuto, Salutati's wished for a more *Ciceronian* Latin paraphrasing of the text, and with his poetic, yet fragmentary attempt, the Chancellor stressed the importance of a linguistically appropriate Latin translation of Dante for cultural circles.

Salutati's intuition found a fertile breeding ground in Bertoldi, whose pioneering and comprehensive translation of the *Commedia* is not only drafted on Benvenuto's work, but also acknowledges the centrality of his *Commentarium* as an exegetical tool. Despite its wide desemination, the importance of Benvenuto da Imola within the early history of Latin translations of Dante's *Commedia* waned after Bertoldi's edition. By the time the search for *Ciceronian* Latin reached its peak, the lack of linguistic refinement in Benvenuto's work strongly contributed to its marginalization. As a consequence, Benvenuto's *Commentarium* seems not to have inspired the second comprehensive translation of Dante's masterpiece. This monumental translation was authored by a friar, Matteo Ronto, but it still shares with Benvenuto's work the use of a rather rustic, unrefined and rough Latin language.

2- *Matteo Ronto and the First Comprehensive Translation into Latin Hexameters*

Although his Latin translation was preceded by the works of Coluccio Salutati and

Giovanni Bertoldi, the Italian monk, Matteo Ronto, was the first to translate the

Commedia into Latin hexameters.[55] We know very little about Matteo Ronto. According

to Mauro Tagliabue, he was the son of a Venetian nobleman born in Crete between 1370

and 1380.[56] Bartolomeo Casciotti's epitaph provides the date of his death at the Olivetan

monastery of Siena on 14 October 1442.[57] His name appears in the 1408 register of the

Comunità olivetana di Sant'Elena in Venice among the *iniziati* to the order.[58] Ronto's

name is also found in the archives of Pistoia's Benedictine nunnery, where the monk

resided from 1427 to 1431. It was during his stay in the Tuscan city that Matteo Ronto

completed his Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia.*

  The hypothesis that this translation was entirely completed in Pistoia is not only

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55 Modern bibliography has recently studied the figure of Ronto at greater length; the most fundamental
  contributions on the Olivetan monk are the following: Otto Grillnberger, "Matteo Ronto", in *Studien
  und Mittheilungen aus dem Benedectiner und dem Cistercienser-orden*, II, (1891), 17–28. Giovanni
  Battista Pighi, "Una traduzione latina inedita dell'Inferno di Dante", in *Aevum*, VI, (1932) 276–284.
  Giuseppe Rotondi, "Scritti inediti di Matteo Ronto", in *Rendiconti di letteratura e scienze morali e
  storiche del Regio Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e di Lettere*, LXXIII, 2, (1939), 416–426. Clelia Maria
  Piastra, "Nota sulle versioni latine della Divina Commedia", in *Aevum*, XXX, (1956), 267–271.
  Gennaro Ferrante, "Matteo Ronto", in *Censimento dei Commenti Danteschi [I Commenti di tradizione
  manoscritta (fino al 1480)]*, II, (Rome: Salerno, 2011), 224–240. See also Dalla Piazza's critical
  judgment on Matteo Ronto' s work in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni storici sulla traduzione in
  esametri Latini della Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri eseguita dall'abate don Gaetano Dalla
  Piazza susseguiti dalla vita del Dalla Piazza*, (Venice: Visentini, 1882), 56.
56 Mauro Tagliabue, "Matteo Ronto tra studi recenti e nuove prospettive di ricerca", in *Medioevo e latinità
  in memoria di Ezio Franceschini*, ed. A. Ambrosioni, M. Ferrari, C. Leonardi, C. C. Picasso, M.
  Regoliosi, P. Zaerbi (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1993), 455–78. Greece as Ronto's birthplace is also
  testified by the as testified by the *Prologus* to his translation of Dante's *Commedia*: "*Grecia sed fratrem
  me peperit Ronto Matheum/ [...] Veneti fuere parentes*" Quoted by Zaggia (Massimo Zaggia, "Il
  "Prologus" della versione dantesca di Matteo Ronto", in *Studi Danteschi*, LXV, (2000), 203–221.
57 *Fundite iam lacrimas, in fletum vertite cantus/ Musae, nam vester miles ad astra redit (...) Ronte, vale
  et nostros e coelo respice luctus/ Carmine pro moestis uberiore roga. Obiit autem Matheus Rontus
  monachus pridie idus octobris 1442*. The original text of Casciotti's epitaph (Cod. Marc. Lat. XIV 218 f.
  43) can be read in Remigio Sabbadini, *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese*, (Venice: Bottega d'Erasmo,
  1919), 282.
58 *Liber professorum*, 56v. This document is still preserved in Venice at the nunnery of Sant'Elena.

supported by the authoritative contributions by Tagliabue, but also by Ronto's own claims in the prologue to the translation.[59] Ezio Franceschini, however, suggests an alternate time of publication and pushes back the date of the translation of roughly thirty years (1381–383).[60] This early dating, however, is unlikely. The first case of Ronto's name in an official document dates to 1408, when the young novice signs himself *Rontho Mateus*.[61] In 1408, Ronto had not yet been inducted, and his signature at the end of his translation testifies to his ordainment as friar (*frater Rontho Mateus*).

Although neglected by Ezio Franceschini, the translator's signature is an important piece of evidence that demonstrates how the Latin versification of Dante's work could not have been completed before 1408.[62] Furthermore, in the *Apostropha ad urbem Pistoriensem*, a short aside that concludes the translation, Ronto expresses his gratitude towards *Franciscus Pistoriensis* (about whom we have no other knowledge) for his help. Both Zaggia and Ferrante believe that *Franciscus* might have provided Ronto with a copy of Giovanni Serravalle's translation of the *Commedia*, a text that enjoyed a remarkable circulation among Tuscan clergymen in the early fourteenth century. It is, therefore, not unlikely that Serravalle's work influenced Ronto's translation. If this is indeed the case, Ronto's work must necessarily have occurred after 1416.

These observations combined with the explicit reference that Ronto makes to the city of Pistoia, where the scholar had resided for four years, makes a dating of the Latin translation to between 1427 and 1431 more convincing.[63] The friar's literary production is

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59 *"Prologus fratris Mathei Ronto de Venetiis Ordinis Sancti Benedicti Montis Oliveti super libro Dantis per ipsum in metro latino redactum et in civitate Pi- storii merito compilatum"*. Text quoted from Ferrante, in, "Matteo Ronto", 333.
60 Ezio Franceschini, "Dante e il Primo Umanesimo: la versione latina della "Commedia" di Matteo Ronto (+1442)", in *Medioevo e Rinascimento veneto*, (Padua: Antenore, 1979), 323.
61 *Liber professorum*, 56v.
62 *Apostropha ad urbem Pistoriensem*, 32–33.
63 The stay of friar Ronto at the Benedictine nunnery of Pistoia is testified in the *Familiarum Tabulae*, II,

exclusively in Latin and spans many genres from historiography to poetry, from

hagiography to a treatise on Latin morphology and orthography.[64] The work on Dante,

however, is that for which he is most well-known today.[65] This translation is preserved in

seven manuscripts, and *ms. 103* of the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma represents the most

important among them because it includes annotations and marginal notes probably either

made by a co-worker or by the translator himself.[66] The translation into Latin hexameters

is complete and preceded by a twenty-two line preface that provides important

information on the final goal of the translation itself. According to Ronto, the ultimate

aim of his work was exclusively that of rendering Dante's *Commedia* available and

enjoyable to non-Italian speakers.[67] The preface, however, also shows a rather self

confident approach to Dante's text. In his translation, Ronto presents himself as inspired

151r, 153r, 156r, 159r. On the dating of Ronto's translation see also the convincing work by Zaggia in: Massimo Zaggia, "Sulla datazione della versione dantesca di Matteo Ronto: l' *Apostropha ad urbem Pistoriensem*"in *Studi offerti a Gianfranco Contini dagli allievi pisani*, (Florence: Le Lettere, 1984), 197–215.

64 The updated list of Ronto's poetical compositions includes: *Magiyrologium fratris Mathei Ronto iocosum*, preserved in the ms. Parmense Palatino 103 (cc. 403r–403v), *Translatio in metrum hymni Ave Maris stella*, *Hymnus in honorem gloriosi Apostoli sancti Pauli*, *Hymnus de viduis sanctis* [these last three texts have been edited by Rotondi in Giuseppe Rotondi, "Scritti inediti di Matteo Ronto", in *Rendiconti del Reale Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere*, LXXIII, (Milan: Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere, 1939), 416–426] *Vita Alexandri Pape V*, published in Giuseppe Rocchi, *Miscellanei di varia letteratura*, IV, (Lucca: Bottini, 1744), 257–274.

65 Remigio Sabbadini, *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese*, 282: "L'opera per cui va precipuamente famoso il Ronto è la traduzione in esametri latini della Commedia di Dante".

66 Ezio Franceschini, "Dante e il Primo Umanesimo: la versione latina della *Commedia* di Matteo Ronto", 325–326: "*Incipit prologus fratris mathei ronto de Venetiis ordinis sancti Benedicti Montis Oliveti super libro Dantis per ipsum in metro latino redactum et in civitate Pistorii merito compilatum.* Orbene, il nome scritto è, in realtà "rompto" ma sotto l'ultima gamba della *m* e sotto la *p* si vedono i due caratteristici punti di espunzione del correttore coevo che, dunque, voleva che il nome fosse scritto correttamente RONTO: e chi poteva essere se non l'autore. Parrà un'inezia, ma che si ripete nellospazio sufficiente a dire che il codice fu rivisto, corretto (…) e postillato dal Ronto: ché anche le postille sono di una stessa mano coeva e scritte con lo stesso inchiostro del testo". The manuscripts presenting Ronto's *Translatio Dantis* are the following: A 411 (Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio in Bologna) Ashburnham 1070 (Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence) Redi 8 (Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence) Magliabechiano II IV 82 (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence) Braidense, AG IX 2 (Biblioteca Nazionale in Milan) YL2 (Bibliothèque of Sainte-Geneviève in Paris) Palatini di Lucca 103 (Biblioteca Platina of Parma).

67 *Nobile Dantis opus, celebri virtute micantis/ leniter in metrum studui transferre latinum. Illud ut Ytaliae non solum gentibus altum/ funderet eloquium jocundi thematis, ymno/ maxime christicolis aliis vescentibus evo.* From the *Praefatio* to the translation, lines 1–5. This text can be found in Ezio Franceschini, "Dante e il Primo Umanesimo: la versione latina della *Commedia* di Matteo Ronto", 326.

by a philanthropic love for mankind to undertake such a demanding translation (*non renui, peramans hominum qui consto sub astris*). The translator appears not only to be aware of his linguistic mastery, but also emphasizes the need for a thorough poetic translation of the *Commedia*; otherwise, Dante's greatness could not be appreciated by its readers. Indeed, Ronto goes so far as to place his name immediately next to Dante's, thereby creating a rather inappropriate parallelism between author and translator: *Clara satis genuit vatem Florentia Dantem/ Grecia sed fratrem peperit me Ronto Matheum*.[68] Despite the translator's sense of self importance, his text did not enjoy the success Ronto hoped for. By the time the translation was barely drafted, Niccolò Niccoli had demonstrated his extreme classicism, as testified in Bruni's *Dialogi*, and harshly condemned the linguistic roughness of Ronto's translation. Niccoli's denial of non-classical Latin is so vehement, in fact, that the name of the translator is not even mentioned, but the explicit reference to him as a man of Church (*monachum*) and to his translation as "in verses" (*metrum latinum*), makes it clear that Ronto was the target of his outrage.[69] Toward the end of the fourteenth century, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, expresses words of admiration for the friar's poetical talent, but he also explicitly accuses his Latin of being unrefined and inelegant.[70] Harsh judgements of Ronto's translation are also expressed by Girolamo Tiraboschi, Niccolo Barozzi and Karl Witte, all of which are carefully listed by Ezio Franceschini.[71] A complete edition of Ronto's translation has not

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68 *Praefatio*, 11–12.

69 (...) *inter plerasque infrugiles nugas indecere equidem eum monachum Dantis opus de rithmis maternis in metrum latinum transferre.* Quoted in Martin Davies, "An emperor without clothes? Niccolò Niccoli under attack", in *Italia Medievale e Umanistica*, XXX (1987), 141–142.

70 *In hoc coenobio consenuit Matheus Venetus, cognomento Ronto, cui tantum promptum fuit edere carmen ut illud Ovidii non immerito illi conveniret "quidquid conabar dicere, versus erat". Mensura tamen et carmine fuit non eleganti. Dantis poema e vulgari sermone non latinum vertit et heroico versu conscripsit, quamvis parum tersum.* Enea Silvio Piccolomini, *Commentarii*, X, 484. Quoted by Franceschini in Ezio Franceschini, "Dante e il Primo Umanesimo: la versione latina della *Commedia* di Matteo Ronto", 329.

71 Ezio Franceschini, "Dante e il Primo Umanesimo: la versione latina della *Commedia* di Matteo Ronto",

been attempted yet. Carlo Chirico, the only modern scholar who tried to revaluate the friar's authority as a scholar, has been harshly criticized and covered only the first cantica (*Inferno*).[72]

As a man of Church steep in scholastic culture, Matteo Ronto is immune to the humanistic renovation and provides a Latin translation that is still anchored in medieval culture and its pedantic Latin versifications. Aside from the stylistic value of his work, Ronto's translation does not conform to rigorous linguistic criteria, and his versification prescinds any philological principle. Through a marked rhetorical tone, the translator himself asks the reader to *comply* with his own poetical talent which leads him to translate Dante literally, metaphorically, or both, depending on his extemporaneous inspiration.[73] If this liberty in translating represents a central aspect of Ronto's literary production, as his *Volgarizzamento* would attest, it also causes the translation to lose consistency and faithfulness to the original text.[74] A comprehensive study of the figure of

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329.

72 Carlo Chirico, *Matteo Ronto, la "Commedia" in esametri*, I, (Salerno: EdiSud, 1984), 15–16: "(...) non gli dispiacciono le allitterazioni a getto continuo, l'uso di qualche preziosismo (uno fra tutti, l'uso di *fragrum* sostantivo in *Par.* XVII, 7 non registrato in lingua latina e coniato dal Ronto sul verbo "fragro-as", ad indicare quasi l'odore, il profumo del desiderio: un'arditezza d'immagine non priva di sensibilità poetica; e cfr. anche l'immediatezza espressiva, sempre *ivi* 9, dell'endiadi *formaque figura* per rendere il dantesco *stampa*), e la buona sintassi. Siamo quasi sempre lontani dalla *incompta et inepta traslatione* della quale programmaticamente non si preoccupa Giovanni da Serravalle. Ronto certamente non sempre vi riesce, ma sempre ricerca la fluidità e la felicita del discorso poetico. E se il tono diventa spesso scolorito, ciò accade sovente più per eccesso di ricercatezza che per trasandatezza. Ricercatezza testimoniata da una terminologia ricca di grecismi (*eucharidis* per *gratia*; *phisim* per *naturam*; *pseudolus* per *fallax*), che non si spiegano soltanto con la sua nascita in terra greca, ma appunto con la programmatica aspirazione, non sempre realizzata, ad uno stile e ad un lessico attentamente selezionati, se non addirittura aristocratici. Il suo latino non è quello degli umanisti, nel senso che non è quello di Cicerone resuscitato dai grammatici: ma quello era il latino con cui meno sarebbe stato possibile parlare alla gente e perciò tradurre creativamente un'opera come quella di Dante, per sua natura destinata a vaste categorie di lettori. Umanistica è invece la sua velleità di correggere quello che gli umanisti ritenevano imperdonabile errore di Dante: aver scritto in volgare l'opera sua maggiore".

73 *Praefactio*, 16–22. *Nunc ego verba sequar, nunc sensum vatis, utrumque/ nunc quoque faxo libens que nostra capedo rependet./ Non ego cesuras potero vitare per ullos/ editione modos in tanta cadere versus/ lege sub arguta quoniam me musa cohercet./ Ergo meis fidibus non more canentibus acta/ divia sub solito digneris parcere lector.*

74 "Questi infrascritti sette salmi Penitenziali choll'aiutorio del Ns. S. Iddio sono traslati e chomposti in parlare volgare da Frate Matteo Ronto, il quale in molti di quelli lui seguita le sentenzie, el modo del grecho. E ciascuno traslatore, se lui sia peritissimo huomo, non dee trasferire la literatura sempre di

Matteo Ronto remains to be written, and modern scholars tend to disregard his importance as Latin translator of Dante's *Commedia* whithin a century that saw a true blossoming of vulgar editions and commentaries of Dante's masterpiece.[75]

Ronto's translation has the merit of being in hexameters, not a trivial hurdle, but his language defines him as a scholar still profoundly embedded in medieval culture. Furthermore, Ronto loses even that aspect of dutiful humility toward Dante's *Commedia* that pervades Bertoldi's text. The translator is fully aware of the innovation of his project, and a misplaced haughty pride is found throughout his work. Third scholar to attempt a Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia*, Ronto seems to have inherited neither the search for an elegant versification (Salutati) nor the need for accuracy and faithfulness (Bertoldi). Indeed, his inconsistent approach to Dante makes the text unreliable.

Ronto's work came back into the national limelight in the early eighteenth century. The revival of this early translation was not due to Ronto's artistic merits, but rather because of the 1728 translation by Carlo d'Aquino and a renewed interest in the poetic renderings of the *Commedia* that the success of this latter edition triggered.[76]

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parola in parola, però che quello, ch'è buono per grammaticha, a suo modo non suona buono, n'è bene trasferello a quel modo per volgare. Sicché, se lo trasferitore è peritissimo huomo, dee trasferire le cose della lettera sì fattamente per volgare, ch'elle suonin belle all'orecchio e all'intelletto delle persone non offendendo le sentenzie dell'autore, e questo chotal modo si dee tenere in tutte le traslazioni sempre, perocché Orazio sommo Poeta ne lo amaestra chosì et nella sua Poetica chosì dicendo"*Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus*". *Item* nota che in questi Salmi Penitenziali sottoscritti son di molto scuri passi, i quali non possono essere ben veduti, né chognosciuti, se non da huomini di profonda scienza". Quoted from Ezio Franceschini, "Dante e il Primo Umanesimo: la versione latina della "Commedia" di Matteo Ronto", 327. The *Volgarizzamento dei sette salmi penitenziali* is the only text that Ronto composed in Vulgar and not in Latin. It is still preserved in the cod. Fiorentino Riccardiano 1338 (ff. 63r- 67v) and was published in 1759 by Mehus: Livio Mehus, *Ambrosii Traversarii latinae epistolae*, I, CLXXV, (Florence: Cesareo, 1759).

75 Ezio Franceschini, "Dante e il Primo Umanesimo: la versione latina della "Commedia" di Matteo Ronto", 325: "Sul Ronto la bibliografia si fa sempre più fitta; ma in momenti in cui del passato tutto si cerca e si scruta, anche i mediocri- che potrebbero benissimo essere lasciati in pace senza che la grande e vera repubblica delle lettere avesse a soffrirne- acquistano valore. (…) Dunque un uomo, fra i mediocri, notevole".

76 Carlo d' Aquino, *Della "Commedia" di Dante Alighiei trasportata in verso eroico Latino da Carlo D'Aquino coll'aggiunta del testo Italiano e di brevi annotazioni*, (Naples: Mosca, 1728).

Chapter Two:

Carlo d'Aquino and Francesco Testa

1- The Latin Translation of Dante's Commedia *in the Eighteenth Century: The Life and Works of Padre Carlo D'Aquino*

Heir to a noble family, Carlo d'Aquino was born in Naples in 1654. He was the son of Bartolomeo of Caramanico and Barbara Stampa, marquess of Soncino.[77] By the age of fifteen, Carlo had taken vows and become a Jesuit at the *Collegio Romano*, where he was first introduced to the reading of the Holy Scriptures and enthusiastically began a deep study of the Latin language and its literature.[78] His success in classical studies helped him obtain a position teaching Latin and classical rhetoric at the *Collegio* of Macerata from 1676 to 1684, after which he was asked to return to Rome. Among his students in Macerata was a young Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni, who actively contributed to the foundation of the *Accademia dell'Arcadia* (1690). D'Aquino himself later became a member of this academy and adopted the pseudonym *Alcone Sirio*.[79]

After eight years of teaching in Macerata, D'Aquino returned to the *Collegio* in Rome and continued to teach rhetoric from 1684 to 1702. A profound sympathy with the Roman clergy, forged on a strong religious faith as well as on a common passion for classical studies, allowed D'Aquino to be promoted *Scriptor* at the *Collegio*. In the Eternal City, Carlo d'Aquino spent over thirty years teaching the Latin language and its

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77 Antonio Lombardi, *Storia della Letteratura Italiana del secolo XVIII scritta da Antonio Lombardi, primo bibliotecario di Sua Altezza Reale il Duca di Modena. Socio e segretario della società italiana delle scienze*, VI (Venice: Tipografia Camerale, 1832), 149–150.

78 There is no evidence indicating that D'Aquino's knowledge of Ancient Greek.

79 The pseudonym *Alcone Sirio* can still be found in Carlo d'Aquino, *L'Anacreonte ricantato del Padre Carlo d'Aquino della Compagin di Gesu, traspostato in verso italiano da Alcone Sirio pastore arcade*, (Rome: Antonio de' Rossi, 1726). On D'Aquino's contribution to the foundation of the *Accademia,* see Cesare Federico Goffis, *Aquino, Carlo d'*, in "Enciclopedia Dantesca,", 1970.

literature until he passed away in 1737, at the age of eighty-three.[80]

D'Aquino's literary production is extensive and includes many different genres;
historiography (*Octauii Pantagathi vita* and *Vita Angeli Colotii episcopi Nucerini*),
rhetoric (*Oratio in funere Eleonorae Austriacae Poloniae reginae*), and even
contemporary historical accounts of war against the Ottomans and their definitive defeat
at Vienna in 1683 (*De Veradini expugnatione carmen*, *Fragmenta historica de bello
hungarico*)[81]. D'Aquino also engaged in exclusively linguistic debates: he edited both a
military lexicon and a compendium of architectural terminology (*Lexicon militare* and
Vocabularium architecturae aedificatoriae).[82] D'Aquino's mastery of Latin is, perhaps,
best demonstrated in the three books of *Carmina* published in Rome between 1701 and
1703. These compositions are markedly heterogeneous and span the full gamut of genres,
from epigrams to elegiac odes. The religiosity of their content preludes his monumental
Elogia Sanctorum, published in 1730 in Rome.[83] D'Aquino's entire corpus is exclusively
written in Latin, and his remarkable familiarity with this language allowed the author to
easily switch from a prosaic style (*Lexicon militare* and *Vocabularium architecturae
aedificatoriae*) to an elegantly Virgilian hexameter (*Carmina*)*.* All of the aforementioned
works are original writings and not revisions of existing texts. If we exclude the works
published in first two decades of the eighteenth century, no poetic or historiographical

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80 See Alberto Asor-Rosa, *Aquino, Carlo d'*, in "Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani", III, 1961.
81 Carlo d'Aquino, *Octauii Pantagathi vita and Vita Angeli Colotii episcopi Nucerini*, (Rome: Varesii, 1673). Carlo d'Aquino, *Oratio in funere Eleonorae Austriacae Poloniae reginae Lotharingiae Barrique Ducis habita A.P. Carolo de Aquino Societatis Jesu*, (Rome: De Rubei, 1698). Carlo d'Aquino, *De Veradini expugnatione carmen aucthore Carolo de Aquino*, (Rome: De Rubei, 1693). Carlo d'Aquino, *Fragmenta historica de bello hungarico aucthore Carolo de Aquino Societatis Jesu*, (Rome: Mainardi, 1726).
82 Carlo d'Aquino, *Lexici Militari authore Carolo de Aquino Societatis Jesu*, (Rome: De Rubei, 1724). Carlo d'Aquino, *Vocabularium architecturae aedificatoriae aucthore Carolo de Aquino Societatis Jesu*, (Rome: De Rubei, 1734).
83 Carlo d'Aquino, *Elogia sanctorum quæ ab Ecclesia Romana divini officii lectionibus recitantur, epigrammatis reddita a Carolo de Aquino Societatis Jesu*, (Rome: Rochi Bernabò, 1730).

work by D'Aquino seems especially influenced by literary sources.

The period spanning from 1707 to 1728 seems, on the contrary, marked by a lack of creative inspiration. The two major works authored by D'Aquino in this period consist of two deliberately fragmentary translations into Latin hexameters of Dante's *Divina Commedia*.[84] Carlo d'Aquino presents himself as the only Italian scholar to attempt such a demanding endeavor since Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravale and Matteo Ronto. No else would take on the task until the early eighteenth century. Although incomplete and strongly influenced by a veiled form of bigotry that deeply affected his Latin rendering, D'Aquino's translation of Dante played an important role in the future work by Catellacci, Dalla Piazza and Pasquali Marinelli.

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84 Alberto Asor-Rosa, *Aquino, Carlo d'*, in "Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani", III, 1961: "Nel quadro vasto e farraginoso di questa produzione retorico-umanistica di stampo nettamente gesuitico, va ricondotta anche, per essere spiegata e ridimensionata, la devozione del padre D'Aquino verso Dante. Fin dal primo accostamento alle versioni latine di Dante, che egli attuò con costanza e impegno addirittura eccezionali, il lettore non riesce a liberarsi dall'impressione che al fondamento di quest'opera strabiliante di erudizione e di sapere classico ci sia una pressoché totale incomprensione dei testo studiato e, tradotto, o, per meglio dire, una non sempre intenzionale ma certo chiarissima volontà di correzione e di rifacimento. In altri termini, proprio in questo lavoro così devoto e paziente del D'Aquino noi possiamo constatare come il rispetto del gran nome di Dante sia, nel particolarissimo ambito della cultura del primo Settecento, un fatto assai più formale che sostanziale, al punto che gli stessi suoi più strenui cultori, nel momento stesso in cui applicano concretamente al testo la loro venerazione, ne svelano anche i limiti profondi e la debolezza di fondo."

2- D'Aquino's First Encounter With the **Divina Commedia***: the 1707 LatinTranslation of Dante's* **Similitudini**

The first evidence of Carlo d'Aquino's interest in Dante's *Commedia* is from the very beginning of the eighteenth century and resulted in his 1707 Latin fragmentary translation of the Italian text.[85] This edition is a *unicum* among the Latin translations both in prose and verses of the Comedy. It does not encompass the entire text, but only the similitudes, those which D'Aquino saw as most representative of the author's poetic genius. Three reasons brought the translator to focus on this rhetorical element of the original translation. According to D'Aquino, Dante's similitudes are employed throughout the text, offer an unprecedented descriptive variety, and feature a remarkable degree of linguistic elaboration that is difficult to find elsewhere in the text.[86]

Dante's verse is described as a sumptuous poetical artifact, the majesty of which is simply unreachable. In his praise of Dante, D'Aquino confesses to the reader his initial difficulty in tackling such a demanding text. This narrative strategy on the part of the

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85 Carlo d'Aquino, *Le Similitudini della Commedia di Dante Alighieri Trasportate Verso per Verso in Lingua Latina da Carlo d'Aquino della Compagni di Gesù*, (Rome: Torre del Grillo, 1707).

86 Carlo d'Aquino, *Le Similitudini della Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, 3–5: "Dirò solamente, che le similitudini, ond'è sparsa quello'Opera, sono senza fallo, l'ornamento più splendido e ammirabile della medesima; e ciò per tre potentissime e altrettanto vere ragioni. Primieramente si scorge in esse una verita affatto singolare, imperocché non si traggono solamente da alcuni corpi della natura, che sogliono parimenti servire a quelle, che chiamiamo Imprese d'Armi, e d'Amore; ma sono, con indicibil variamento tratte dalle Favole, dalle Storie Sacre, e profane, antiche, e moderne, esterne e nostrali, dalla Geografia e Topografia, dalle Scienze, dall'Arti, così liberali come meccaniche: ma più che altronde, dalle più intime considerazioni, affetti, e moti dell'animo umano, e da ogni più minuto costume del nostro vivere sensitivo, ragionevole, e civile. Vi si ammira inoltre una somma proprietà ed evidenza: parendo che ivi più tosto si parli agli occhi che alle orecchie; e che in esse Dante adempi le parti di Dipintore, anzi che di Poeta. Con tal vigore e energia si ricavano da' più nascosti seni d'ogni umana affezione, e con espressioni sì adatte e vive, si coloriscono, che per avventura in tutta la Poesia non vi ha esempio di più felice imitazione. Per ultimo la loro abbondanza e numero è tale, che ardisco dire non esservi opera di poesia, in qualsivoglia genere e lingua, che da questa di gran lunga superata non sia. Io qui non ho annoverato quelle che non si estendono oltre a due o tre parole; e piuttosto detti proverbiali, o paremie, che similitudini debbono chiamarsi; come sono, a cagion d'esempio, *Veloce come Aquila, Vago come un Prato, Puro come Cristallo*, e altre di simil fatta."

translator creates a tone that appears frank and sincere. D'Aquino explicitly acknowledges that, at the time of the translation, his Latin skills were neither deep nor robust enough to translate the Italian text. He also admits that his rigorous faithfulness to Dante's original text is not only a moral obligation, but also a subtle *escamotage* to elegantly hide his lack of linguistic and rhetorical resources.

According to D'Aquino's introductory remarks, a strict dependency on the original text allowed the translator to sacrifice an elegant versification in favor of a faithful rendering of Dante's: *o sono uscito, o mi sono lusingato d'uscir di servitù, col più strettamente servire*. The translator's preface presents a good degree of incoherence. If indeed, faithfulness to Dante was the ultimate aim of D'Aquino's work, that would be due to the final aim of the translation itself, namely, that of rendering Dante's most admirable phrasings – the similitudes – accessible to non-Italian readers. This does not seem to be the case. Unlike later Latin translators of the *Commedia*, D'Aquino is not explicit about reasons that brought him to translate Dante. The lack of any casual links between the original text and his translation of the similitudes encourages a careful reader to interpret D'Aquino's work nothing as a rhetorical exercise brought on by a poorly hidden, narcissistic fleetingness.[87]

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87 Carlo d'Aquino, *Le Similitudini della Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, 8–10: "Basti aver accennato soltanto del Dante per incidenza della mia Traduzione. A questa confesso essermi condotto dapprima con qualche increscimento e molestia. Non già perché lodevolissime non abbia sempre stimato le fatiche ti tanti e così eruditi Scrittori, che trasportando da un linguaggio in un altro l'Opere de' primi eccellenti Maestri, hanno così altamente contribuito alla gloria di quelli e al bisogno della posterità; ma perché a così fatti studi mi è sempre mancato ogni conforto, così dall'uso come dal genio. Nè senza gran pena e noia averei terminato simil lavoro se non avessi al peso di questo giogo servile ritrovato opportuno alleviamento; ma odi, o Lettore, di quanto strana foggia egli sia. Ho pensato di vieppiù allacciarmi e restringermi coll'obbligo di riportare nell'idioma Latino, verso per verso, l'accennato numero di comparazioni, o similitudini, secondando proporzionatamente il testo in tutti i suoi troncamenti e trasporti, per modo che in ogni mio verso latino ne' più mi dilunghi ne' più mi accorci oltra i limiti, misure e contorni di ogni verso Italiano. Da così stretta legge non stimo essermi dipartito, se non forse in due o tre luoghi, ne' quali ho giudicato disimpegnarmi da cotal legamento, per non mancare di chiarezza e fedeltà nell'esposizione della sentenza. Quest'aggiunta di tanta maggiore obbliganza e strettezza, siccome nata da vaghezza del proprio arbitrio, non impostami dalla necessità della materia, mi ha nello stender quest'opera alleggerito di peso e, se non tolto, per buona parte

Even the alleged faithfulness with which D'Aquino approached his translation leaves the reader, frankly, quite dumbfounded. The translator boasts a rigorous adherence to the original text, not as a deliberate choice, but rather as a necessity since a poetic reinterpretation would have been more demanding, if not out of his reach. Even this rigorous approach to the text, however, is soon abandoned on the grounds that a transliteration of the original text would turn Dante's masterpiece into a pedantic narrative. Since many of the linguistic features of the original text would simply lose their poignancy if not properly adapted to a different vocabulary and metrical scanning, the translator prioritizes a line-by-line over a word-by-word rendering. The end result is a translation where the accent is placed on the action's consequences instead of on its cause, on the result instead of on its premise: *L'istessa cosa si spiega da esso per la cagione, e da me per l'effetto.*[88]

A clear example of D'Aquino's approach is found in similitude number seven, which corresponds to *Inf.*, III, 112–114. The original text reads as follows: *Come d'autunno si levan le foglie/ l'una appresso de l'altra, fin che 'l ramo/ vede a la terra tutte le sue spoglie.* In his translation, D'Aquino closely adheres to the first original line, but then augments the poetical image of a branch watching its leaves lying on the ground (*'l ramo vede a la terra tutte le sue spoglie*) with a likewise poetical image of "the soil being covered with the branch's leaves, its previous reason of pride": *Quales sponte*

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alleggerito il tedio della traduzione. Così o sono uscito, o mi sono lusingato d'uscir di servitù, col più strettamente servire: parendomi qui ancora poter aver alcun luogo ciò che ad altro intendimento scrisse l'Istorico: omnia serviliter propter dominationem"

88 Carlo d'Aquino, *Le Similitudini*, 11–12: "Io dissi d'obbligarmi a riportare in latino il testo del Dante, verso per verso, non già parola per parola, che questa sarebbe non già leggerezza fanciullesca, se non anzi una follia da mentecatto. Aggiungo d'essermi io ben legato a render sempre il sentimento del Poeta, ma non già a seguirlo nelle sue espressioni, figure e colori, i quali si sono da me variati con piena libertà siccome ho giudicato più convenirsi alla natura, e alle proprie divise della lingua e del verso latino. (…) L'istessa cosa si spiega da esso [Dante] per la cagione, e da me per l'effetto."

cadunt autumni tempore frondes/ occultantque solum, donec male fertilis arbor/ spectet humi stratos, tumuit quibus ante, capillos. The original text does not describe the ground as covered with leaves (*humi stratos* […] *capillos*), but the imagery related to that offered by Dante (*'l ramo vede a la terra tutte le sue spoglie*). This link of causality between the original and the translation is the only poetical liberty that D'Aquino asks the reader to acknowledge and forgive. He argues that it produces a more appropriate Latin versification and is better-suited to a readership not learned in Italian.[89]

Another important aspect of his translation is described at length by D'Aquino in the introduction to the 1707 Latin edition of Dante's *Similitudini* – his use of hexameter. To D'Aquino's words, the hexameter is the metrical form shared by the vast majority of literary genres used by Dante in drafting his *Commedia*. From satires to epics, the dactylic line of six feet is not only the most frequently used meter in Latin literature, but also the form to which D'Aquino himself and his intended readers were most accustomed (*più gradito al palato del volgo*).[90]

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89 Carlo d'Aquino, *Le Similitudini*, 12–13: "Or assai frequente sarà l'incontrarsi per quest'opera in somiglianti maniere di rivestire e colorire diversamente dal toscano le istesse forme. Nè da me ciò si è fatto al sol riguardo di seguire, come accennai di sopra, la proprietà, ma ancora per sostenere la dignità del Latino idioma. Per la qual cosa, potendo sovente con minor fatica ritener l'espressioni e le parole Toscane con le proporzionali latine, mi son appostatamente dilungato da quelle; parendomi ben giusto batter l'istesso sentiero, ma non già seguire ad ogni tratto, e premere con piè servile l'istesse orme del tradotto Poeta."

90 Carlo d'Aquino, *Le Similitudini*, 15–16: "Potrai qui richiedermi; da qual necessità costretto, io abbia tra tanti metri scelto ed abbracciato l'Eroico? Perché non valermi piuttosto de' Jambici Senari, i quali oltre l'essere a meraviglia acconci per le materie proprie dello stile medio e infimo, sono appunto quel metro che è usato e richiesto dalla Comica Poesia? Io, da che intrapresi quella fatica, ben vidi tal opposizione; e salda, e di giusto peso la riputai. Potrei ad essa rispondere, che la presente opera del Dante, come che Satira Comica o Commedia Satirica da molti sia giudicata, pur non v'è mancato che all'idea e forma di Poema Epico, o Eroico la sollevasse. Potrei soggiungere, convenirsi a quest'Opera il verso Eroico siccome proprio della Satira. E finalmente, quando ancora non si avesse a dubitare, ch'ella Commedia fosse, potrei ricoprirmi e sostenermi con lo scudi di quelli che un tal verso hanno usato nelle Commedie. Ma per vero dire, niuna di queste risposte a me soddisfa pienamente. Dirò adunque aver scelto un tal metro, per esser più noto all'uso e più gradito al palato del volgo; al quale, siccome a quel degl'infermi, n'è si deve tutto concedere n'è si può tutto negare. Per l'istesso riguardo mi son servito dell'esametro obbligato alla locuzion poetica, non del più libero, e che sciolto rassembra, anzi è Prosaico favellare, usato già da Orazio ne' suoi sermoni: avvegna che questo io reputassi più atto per ispiegare alcune minute proprietà della mentovata Commedia."

D'Aquino concludes the introductory notes to his translations of the similitudes (*L'Autore della traduzione a chi legge*) with an important reference to the original text. Given the vast number of *Commedia* editions available by the early eighteenth-century, D'Aquino informs his readers of his chosen critical edition in order to help them conduct a close reading and comparison of specific passages of the text itself: the 1595 Florentine edition entitled *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri, Nobile Fiorentino, ridotta a miglio lezione dagli Accademici della Crusca* and edited by Domenico Manzani.

D'Aquino's translation did more than help circulate the *Commedia* among non-Italian readers and inserting his name *de iure* among the Latin translators of Dante's masterpiece. The 1707 translation of the similitudes foreshadowed a process that would have led within a few years to the completion of a refined and comprehensive Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia.* Such a process was relatively quick, and found in the reception of the *Similitudini* and in the warm welcome to this publication, its very triggering cause.

3- Carlo d'Aquino's 1728 Comprehensive Translation of Dante's **Divina Commedia**
into Latin Hexameters

Almost twenty years after the publication of the *Similitudini*, D'Aquino completed

a thorough and comprehensive Latin translation of Dante's masterpiece. The text was

published in 1728 at the expenses of Felice Mosca in Naples.[91] Although this Latin

edition of the Comedy declares itself as a natural continuation of the *Similitudini*, the

author demonstrates a different attitude toward this work. The later translation is no

longer conceived as a rhetorical exercise. Unlike the *Similitudini*, the Latin *Comoedia*

includes a clear statement of purpose: it aims at rendering Dante's text fully available,

readable and appreciable to non-Italian speaking scholars.

The translator explicitly describes the literary production of the Three Crowns of

Tuscan poetry (Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio) as presenting a degree of continuity with

the antiquity that brought the themes, devices and forms of Graeco-Roman culture to

modern Europe.[92] Dante doubtlessly represents the author who like no other managed to

incarnate ancient culture, to reshape it according to modern tastes and to hand it down to

posterity. In the early eighteenth century, the only translations of the *Comedy* available to

non-Italian speakers were the two, fifteenth-century Latin editions written by Bertoldi and

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91 Carlo d'Aquino, *Della Commedia di Dante Alighieri trasportata in Verso Eroico Latino da Carlo d'Aquino della Compagnia di Gesù*, (Naples: felice Mosca, 1728).
92 Carlo d'Aquino, *Della Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, 4–5: "Tuttavia né dall'accennata ragione, né dal proprio genio, a così fatti studi poco inclinato e disposto, ho permesso d'essere disconfortato e distolto dall'imprendere la Traduzione della Divina Commedia del Divino Poeta Dante Alighieri, avendo volto il pensiero al giovamento da potersene trarre da' Poeti Latini, dimostrando loro ampie e ricche miniere di nuovi Idoli e fantasie, come semi valorosi e possenti a valersene per nuovi germogli di loro invenzione. Imperocché siccome altri ben avventurati Nocchieri, collo scoprimento di nove Province e Regni nell'Indie d'Occidente, hanno mostrato quanto mancasse da palesarsi nel nuovo Mondo abitato dal Colombo, al Vespucci, al Magaglianes; non altrimenti i Poeti Toscani con discoperte novelle e copiose han reso chiaro, che le fonti dell'ingegnose invenzioni non furono esauste e vote da' Poeti Greci e Latini, e che ad essi non pervennero difettose e manchevoli. La qual verità dal Poeta Dante, con tanta maggior luce si manifesta, quanto esso di tali ritrovamenti sopra ogni altro fornito a gran dovizia si discopre."

Ronto. No one had yet attempted to combine Bertoldi's philological attention to the original text with Ronto's choice of the hexameter to reflect Dante's variety of poetical styles.

One aspect, however, distinguishes the *Similitudini* from the *Comoedia*. In his preface, D'Aquino informs his readership that the overwhelming complexity of the original text brought him to adopt a less faithful translation for the Comedy than that employed for the similitudes. Whereas the *Similitudini* presents a strict, line-by-line translation, the *Comoedia* is shaped by a freer linguistic approach that prioritizes the original content over the form, the poetical pathos over the metrical structure and linguistic richness of the text (*sentimento per sentimento*).[93]

The reasons for D'Aquino's choice of the *verso eroico* (hexameter) are two-fold. Firstly, the Latin hexameter can be used to reflect the great variety of literary genres (comedy, tragedy, satire, epic) that Dante used a literary sources for his *Commedia*. Secondly, the nobility of the hexameter precludes the use of vulgar expressions and low, realistic and trivial vocabulary. Because of the many insulting expressions in the *Commedia*, D'Aquino warns the reader to be prepared for even a few significant alterations to the original text.[94] These flagged changes for linguistic and metrical reasons

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93 Carlo d'Aquino, *Della Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, 8: "Finalmente, per li medesimi riguardi del metro, e della chiarezza maggiore, mi è convenuto, non così di rado, trasportare e capovolgere il Testo; per la qual cosa non si meravigli il Lettore, né s'arresti ove la Traduzione non s'incontri ad un tratto con l'Originale, ricordevole che io qui non traduco verso per verso, come nelle Similitudini già pubblicate, ma sentimento per sentimento. È stato mio intendimento in questo lavoro rintracciare accuratamente, e colla maggior proprietà e chiarezza a me possibile riportare nel Verso Latino i sentimenti del Poeta Toscano. Ma non intesi giammai di seguitarmi a seguirlo nelle sue espressioni; essendosi le figure, ed i colori del dire per me varianti con piena libertà, come ho giudicato convenirsi alle proprie divise dell'Eroico Latino."

94 Carlo d'Aquino, *Della Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, 8–10: "(...) Per la qual cosa, potendo soventemente rassembrare i modi, le parole, e, per così dire, gli atteggiamenti Toscani co'Latini proporzionati, mi sono appostatamente dilungato da essi; parendomi ben giusto battere l'istesso sentiero, ma non già seguire ad ogni tratto e premere servilmente l'istesse orme del Poeta tradotto. Che, se ciò è stato lecito agli altri Traduttori, attenentesi ai loro Originali con ispezie di Poesia e metro corrispondente, con maggior diritto è da concedersi ad una traduzione disusata, che è trasportamento di Commedia e Satira a Eroico componimento. E perché la nobiltà del suddetto verso Eroico non ammette parecchie voci popolari e

are barely noticeable if compared to another, deliberate modification of Dante's text also mentioned in the preface. D'Aquino refrained from translating into Latin any of the invectives against places and people.[95] The poet's original accusations are not only frequent throughout the *Commedia*, but also shape that unique and profusely eloquent tone that is so characteristic of the first two *canticas*. Depriving a translation of Dante's venomous tirades robs it of its most meaningful features.

Given Carlo d'Aquino's skill and erudition, he was certainly aware that this decision significantly affected his translation as a whole, but the precepts imposed by his Jesuit vows prevailed over those required of scholarship. D'Aquino justifies his choice by claiming that a reader profoundly inspired by the Christian message of reciprocal love and forgiveness cannot accept Dante's harsh accusations. They are in a too sharp a contrast with Holy Scripture, and if the greatness of the *Commedia* needs to be made available in the universal language of culture, these hateful remarks need to be removed from the body of the text.

It is therefore clear that D'Aquino's fame as a Dante scholar – hard-earned and deserved after the publication of the *Similitudini* – was less important than piety and compliance with the tenets of his order. In his translation, the spaces left empty by the

dimesse, che ben si convengono al carattere Comico e Satirico, è stato necessario in simili luoghi variare le forme del dire, il che siccome sarà forse succeduto col vantaggio di qualche ingrandimento, così averà diminuito la forza dell'Evidenza. Ed è certamente tale Evidenza il maggior pregio di questa Commedia, nella quale il Poeta o descriva o discorra o racconti, tutto quasi agli occhi con vivi colori si rappresenta; per modo che se tante e così svariate narrazioni di supplici e di viaggi avessero a ritrarsi in tele, non avrebbe che aggiungere ad essi ogni valente Dipintore."

95 Carlo d'Aquino, *Della Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, 12: "Non può negarsi, che il Poeta trascorre talvolta a diminuire la fama altrui con invettive aspre e pungenti. Ciò che ho giudicato potersi recare a giusta offesa, particolarmente di illustri Comuni e sacri Personaggi d'eccelso grado, ho io qui lasciato in bianco e punteggiatine i versi a misura del Testo, non convenendo a ben costumato, nonché Religioso Scrittore, propagare coll'Idioma Latino la notizia di tali rimproveri a Nazioni Straniere. Nè pertanto sono stato soverchiamente restio ed ansioso nel secondare colla traduzione le realtà di altre particolari persone, con riportarne ancora i nomi, non dubitando che debba prendersi a buon grado dai Posteri, che oltre lo spazio di quattro secoli addietro, si leggano mentovate le loro famiglie; nulla per altro rilevando, che tali antenati siano dal Poeta Dante condannati al caldo o al gelo del suo Inferno fantastico e capriccioso."

original invectives are always marked by ellipsis points. The fragmentary nature of the translation is emphasized even further by the text's lay-out. The facing original presents the whole, original text without any cuts. The deliberate exclusion of so many sections of the original text raised a good degree of perplexity within the intellectual circles closest to D'Aquino. It took over a century for another scholar, Francesco Testa of Vicenza, to put his hands on D'Aquino's translation and complete an unabridged, Latin hexameter translation. After D'Aquino's passing, Francesco Testa, an illustrious scholar from Vicenza, undertook the translation of all the abstracts ignored by D'Aquino and published his work in 1835, presenting it as a mere conclusion of D'Aquino's *Comoedia*.[96]

D'Aquino's omission of Dante's invectives did not adversely affect the circulation and reception of his work. An early testament to his *Comoedia*'s readership can be found in Saverio Bettinelli's *Dissertazione accademica sopra Dante*, where a fleeting reference to D'Aquino's work betrays a hint of badly hidden admiration.[97] In Bettinelli's essay, the name of the translator is but a brief mention in a footnote (*P. d'Aquino*), but it implies (*come sapete*) an early spread of the translation among scholars in the very beginning of the nineteenth-century.

There is further evidence of a quick diffusion of the text in a comment by the German scholar Karol Witte and later followed by Tommaseo's praise: "*Il verso del Padre d'Aquino è, nel suo genere, bello.*"[98] In his introduction to Dalla Pizza's translation

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96 Francesco Testa, *Terze rime della Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri omesse nella traduzione Latina di Carlo d'Aquino, ed ora voltate esse pure in esametri siccome I due episodi della Francesca da Rimini e del Conte Ugolino. Per le cospicue nozze del nobile uomo Domenico Melilupi marchese di Soragna colla nobile donzella Giustina Piovene contessa Porto Godi Pigafetta*, (Padua: Minerva, 1835).
97 Saverio Bettinelli, *Opere edite e inedite in prosa ed in versi dell'abate Saverio Bettinelli. Seconda edizione riveduta, ampliata e corretta dal'Autore*, XXII, (Venice: Adolfo Cesare, 1800), 196: "(...) essendovi stato, come sapete, persino un tale che con mirabile ardire tradusse in latini versi esametri tutto il lungo poema."
98 Niccolò Tommaseo, "Dante e i suoi traduttori", in *Rivista Contemporanea*, IV, (1855), 459.

of Dante's *Commedia*, Witte draws a quick history of the Latin translations of the text. Whereas his discussion of Bertoldi and Ronto is cursory, the German scholar considers at greater length the socio-cultural milieu that brought D'Aquino to undertake his completed task. He describes D'Aquino's as elegant and refined, although he also emphasizes the deliberate exclusion of several sections of the original text and how this somewhat compromises the work.[99]

D'Aquino's translation became the benchmark for the later attempts of translating Dante's *Commedia* into Latin hexameters. Catellacci, Dalla Piazza and Pasquali Marinelli all saw in D'Aquino's *Comoedia* a source of inspiration, a preceding linguistic experiment that needed to be improved to accomplish its genuinely practical aim. If, indeed, D'Aquino's attempt was meant to spread the knowledge of the poet, in the nineteenth-century, the claims for independence that started to arise both in Germany and Italy following Napoleon's defeat, brought the question of "national culture" to importance. Making Italy's greatest poem available in Latin, the language of culture par excellence, was but one way of asserting the primacy of Italian cultural among the European intellectual class.

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99 Gaetano Dalla Piazza, *Dantis Alligherii Divina Comoedia hexametris Latinis reddita ab abate Dalla Piazza vicentino. Praefatus est et vitam Piazzae adiecit Carolus Witte antecessor halensis.* (Leipzig: Barth, 1848), XII–XVIII: "*Non defuerunt, igitur, qui inde ab ipso Dantis saeculo usque ad nostros dies sacrum summi poetae carmen Latinitate donare molirentur. Horum conatuum una Caroli Aquinati versio integram complectitur Comoediam typisque exscripta est (Neapol. 1728), cui operis, etsi fidei, non tamen elegantiae laudem denegaverunt utriusque linguae periti. (…) In quorum numero non infimum certe locum CAROLO AQUINATI tribuendum esse censemus, licet, Latinam quum faceret Divinam Comoediam, aemulationi elegantiarum Nasonis plus aequo dederit.*"

4- Linguistic remarks on D'Aquino's Comprehensive Translation

     4.1- Towards an Autonomous Work: Rhetorical Embellishment and

     Trivialization

Two features characterize D'Aquino's 1728 Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia*: an undeniable poetical sensibility and a marked propensity for a free interpretation of the text over a rigorous, more faithful translation. In contrast with Catellacci, Dalla Piazza and Marinelli, Carlo d'Aquino deliberately loosens the bond with the original, and presents a rhetorically elaborated text, a sophisticated yet less faithful Latin translation of Dante's masterpiece that had previously been attempted.

A first example that demonstrates D'Aquino's embellishments, even to the detriment of an alleged faithfulness to the original, can be found in *Inferno*'s first canto. The meeting with Virgil takes place in line 67, where the Latin poet presents himself both in his present condition of a soul (*Non omo, omo già fui*), and as the poet who sang of Aeneas and his deeds (*Poeta fui*).[100] The first presentation of Virgil might have been, in a rather banal way, rendered as follows: *non homo, homo fui iam*. Such a translation would have replicated the original chiasmus and, if inserted in D'Aquino's line, fit the Latin hexameter: *Ille refert: non homo, homo fui etiam tunc.* On the contrary, in his translation D'Aquino provides a rendering that does not do justice to the richness of the original text. Instead, he offers a highly elaborated versification that abandons the original's concision and loses the initial obscurity of Virgil's words: *Ille refert: Olim mortali stirpe creatus/ Nunc levis umbra vagor.*[101]

100*Inf.*, I, 67, 73.
101*Canticus I, Cantus I*, 67–68.

The Latin poet's artistic merits are beautifully mentioned by Dante in two single lexemes: *Poeta fui.* Both its terseness and its position at the beginning of the line give this passage a remarkable emphasis. It is almost as if Virgil's long lasting silence (*per lungo silenzio parea fioco*) had prevented his speech from being fluent. This is even a rare case in the text where the original syntagm could have been left untranslated because *poeta fui* translates directly in Latin what *poeta fui* means in Italian without, moreover, altering the text's original concision nor its syntax. What D'Aquino provides is, instead, a rhetorical elaboration of a deliberately terse text. His translated verse (*Castalios adii fontes*) not only implies a figurative use of *adire* with the meaning of "frequenting, haunting," but also portrays the poetical inspiration by means of a metaphorical image of the springs of Castalia, the oracular cave at Delphi.

It is quite clear when reading D'Aquino's text that the translator expected a learned readership, highly educated and able to appreciate the constant references to the classical world. If indeed, traces of poetical sensibility can be detected in the elegant polyptoton of *lacrimae* in *Inf.*, III, 22 and in the anaphoric repetition of *bis* in *Inf.*, X, 48–51, what most deeply characterizes D'Aquino's work is his tendency to alter Dante's original, both in its form and content. This reinterpretation was aimed at making his translation a completely autonomous and independent work.

In spite of what he explicitly states in the preface, D'Aquino does not expect his elite audience to keep an eye on Dante's while reading his text. His edition presents the original *Commedia* with the Latin facing translation, but a lack line-numbering in the Italian text suggests that the translator did not expect the reader to actually follow along in both texts simultaneously. A comparative reading emphasizes the extensive deletion of

passages that D'Aquino found offensive, disrespectful and not worth translating. This decision has deeply affected the translation as a whole, and it forced D'Aquino to abandon one of the *Commedia*'s most remarkable aspects: its constantly change narrative tone and linguistic register. D'Aquino's Latin is always highly sophisticated and the constantly pompous tone leaves no room for vulgar nor lewd expressions. The complete eschewing of Dante's linguistic variety results in an undeniable rhetorical impoverishment. D'Aquino was aware of the concrete risks and adopted a baroque and redundant Latin versification instead of a more close and faithful translation of Dante's to address the effects of his abridgment.

For D'Aquino, the choice of a pompous tone was doubly effective: it not only added to the rhetorical value of his work, but also implemented the length of the translation, thereby making the discrepancy with the original less eye-catching. There are many examples of unnecessarily elaborated translations of the original throughout the *Comoedia*, of which I will discuss a few notable examples at greater length. The soul of Sordello, unlike other souls whom the two pilgrims meet in *Purgatorio*, is not struck by the presence in Purgatory of a doomed soul –Virgil – nor by that of a human pilgrim – Dante. An unstoppable stream of fraternal affection between the three is released by the pronunciation of the name of Virgil's and Sordello's shared home, Mantua. In the original text, *Mantua* is an anacoluton. It is only briefly quoted with no syntactical link to the rest of the sentence. Here, Dante brilliantly renders a sudden and unexpected intervention by Sordello who, in the original poem, prevents Virgil from completing his assertion: *e 'l dolce duca incominciava/ "Mantüa ...", e l'ombra, tutta in sé romita/ surse ver' lui del loco ove pria stava/ dicendo: "O Mantoano, io son Sordello/ de la tua terra!"; e l'un*

l'altro abbracciava.[102]

The vehemence with which Sordello interrupts Virgil is not replicated in the translation. Instead, D'Aquino expands Virgil's utterance from the original *Mantua* into a full hexameter: *Ortus ad undas/ marmoreas lambit qua Mincius*.[103] Aside from the linguistic refinement of the passage, where the city of Mantua is described as gently sodden by the marmoreal waves of the river Mincio, this passage lacks the original's poignancy. Sordello's next line no longer seems to interrupt Virgil, but rather inserts itself in the frame of a cordial conversation (*ocius ille/ exsilit his dictis*).[104]

Canto XXI of *Purgatorio* presents two examples of excessively elaborated translation aimed at increasing the artistic value of D'Aquino's work. This canto describes the pilgrims' first meeting with the Latin poet, Statius, who is astonished by the presence of a human being in the afterworld. In order to explain to Statius the divine nature of Dante's journey, Virgil points out the letter "P" marked on Dante's body. The seven *P*s had been inscribed on the pilgrim's forehead by the Angel at the end of canto IX as an explicit reference to his seven capital sins (*Peccati capitali*, 112–114). The Angel's act of inscribing the *P*s with the tip of his sword is briefly recalled in canto XXI: *E 'l dottor mio: "Se tu riguardi a' segni/ che questi porta e che l'angel profila,/ ben vedrai che coi buon convien ch'e' regni*.[105] This reference is deliberately brief in order to not diminish the suspense that pervades the entire canto and culminated in the unveiling of Virgil's identity and Statius' honoring the immortal greatness of the epic poet.

In contrast, D'Aquino's hint toward the angel (*l'angel*) features such a degree of refinement that it might be called a thorough description: *Incisam quam fronte gerit*

102*Purg.*, VI, 71–75.
103*Purg.*, VI, 71–72.
104*Purg.*, VI, 72–73.
105*Purg.*, XXI, 22–24.

custodis acuto/ Aligeri gladio.[106] The inscription of the *P*s is "made by the sharpened sward of the winged guardian." Although the content of the original text remains, this description weighs it down and distracts the reader's attention from the meeting between Statius and the three pilgrims. This verse also testifies to D'Aquino's attempt to make up for the incompleteness of his translation with a display of erudition that can be counterproductive in that it prevents him from adhering to Dante's text.

This same tendency finds another example later on in that same canto, where Statius presents himself to Dante and Virgil. In compliance with the rhetorical precepts so dear to Dante, the Latin poet introduces himself by subordinating his mortal name to the fame he achieved as a poet. A brief mention of his name (*Stazio*) is indeed followed by a longer reference to his two literary works, *Thebaid* and *Achilleid*: "*Stazio la gente ancor di là mi noma/ cantai di Tebe, e poi del grande Achille/ ma caddi in via con la seconda soma.*"[107] Although aimed at pinpointing his fame as an epic poet, Statius' presentation cannot be described as a panegyric eulogy. No rhetorical literary devices are employed, and the entire passage is condensed to less than two hexameters. Statius' concision serves a purpose in that it emphasizes inspirational role played by the *Aeneid* for both his literary works. In fact, while not even two hexameters are devoted to Statius, nine lines recounted the poet's deep admiration for Virgil, and his epic poem, the *Aeneid*, "a mother to me, and a poetic nurse."[108]

Once again, D'Aquino's translation shows his intent to enrich the rhetorical value

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106*Purg.*, XXI, 22–23.

107*Purg.*, XXI, 91–93.

108See *Purg.*, XXI, 94–102: *Al mio ardor fuor seme le faville/ che mi scaldar, de la divina fiamma/ onde sono allumati più di mille;/ de l'Eneïda dico, la qual mamma/ fummi, e fummi nutrice, poetando/ sanz'essa non fermai peso di dramma./ E per esser vivuto di là quando/ visse Virgilio, assentirei un sole/ più che non deggio al mio uscir di bando.*

of his translation. It also testifies to an evident misunderstanding of the overall structure of the canto. The rhetorical relevance given to Statius's presentation turns out to be decontextualized and out of proportion. D'Aquino renders the introduction of the Latin poet as follows: *Fraternas acies, impacatumque furorem/ Oedipodionidum cecini, Scyroque latentem/ Peliden, sed me tota deducere Troia/ Parca ferox iuvenem vetuit.*[109] In his translation, the original title, *Thebaid*, is elegantly paraphrased as the poetical account of the war moved by the unstoppable anger between Polyneices and Eteocles, the two sons of Oedipus. The reference to the *Achilleid* is even more sophisticated. The translator alludes to the episode in which Tethys, Achilles' mother, disguises him as a girl on the isle of Scyros to prevent his departure for Troy.

D'Aquino succeeds in showcasing his remarkable poetical sensibility as well as his supreme mastery over the Latin hexameter, but by embellishing a secondary and minor passage, he drastically reduces the significance of the central ones. Whereas Statius' presentation occupies four hexameters, the following encomiastic praise of Virgil's *Aeneid* embraces six lines and pivots on verse 97 (*Illa mihi validas divina Poemata vires/ addiderunt*). This rendering does not reflect the original's disproportion between Statius' pride and his admiration for Virgil. The elevation of poetic tone results in an overall flattening of the entire passage, because Dante's original malleability is not reflected.

The previous example shows the translator's inclination for baroque, elaborated and often pedantic paraphrases of the *Commedia* that aim to enrich the sophistication of the text. The main risk in such a highly elaborated translation is that of altering the original text to a point that it becomes trivialized. There are remarkable examples of trivialization in *Inf.*, XIII, where the original *e li 'nfiammati infiammar sì Augusto* is

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[109]*Purg.*, XXI, 90–93.

rendered without a polyptoton as *Credulus igne pari Caesar mox arsit*. Likewise, in *Inf.*,

XV, where Brunetto's concise and amazed *Qual maraviglia* is translated as a rhetorical

question (*Tune Erebi novus hospes ades?*).[110]

The figure of Count Ugolino in canto XXXIII of *Inferno* presents some of the

most memorable and poignant passages of the entire poem. As soon as the doomed soul is

caught in the act of gnawing Ruggeri's head, he agrees to share his tragic story with the

two pilgrims: *Tu dei saper ch'i' fui conte Ugolino/ e questi è l'arcivescovo Ruggeri/ or ti

dirò perché i son tal vicino.*[111] In the original text, Dante devotes one line to describe each

doomed soul and gives a remarkable example of rhetorical mastery with the adjective

vicino. The meaning of this term ("close, next to") is wryly euphemistic. Ugolino is not

simply close to Ruggeri, he is portrayed as using his teeth to chew on Ruggeri's head. In

D'Aquino's translation, the *terzina* is rendered as follows: *Pervenit si forte tuas Ugolinus

ad aures/ Me veteri eductae tulerunt ex Elide Pisae/ Associet gelidis cur me Ruggerius

undis/ Hic tibi si paulum fas est subsitere, disces.*[112]

The translator not only adds an entire hexameter to cast light on Ugolino's origins

(*Me veteri eductae tulerunt ex Elide Pisae*), but also abandons the incisiveness of Dante's

line (*or ti dirò perché i son tal vicino*) in a faint paraphrase. Here, the pilgrim is saddened

by his understanding of "why Ruggeri is *bound* to me [Ugolino] in the gelid waters." The

rhetorical richness of the original gets lost once more in a translation overburdened by

additional details.

110*Inf.*, XIII, 68. *Inf.*, XV, 24.
111*Inf.*, XXXIII, 13–15.
112*Inf.*, XXXIII, 12–15.

4.2- Passages Excluded From D'Aquino's Translation

In combination with its deliberately baroque and sumptuous style, another

characteristic of D'Aquino's 1728 Latin versification of Dante's *Commedia* stands out:

the exclusion of passages deemed excessively vulgar and offensive toward people and

places. D'Aquino himself explains, in the preface to the translation, the reasons that

brought him to make such an invasive choice. It would be inappropriate – he asserts – for

a man of faith to perpetuate the offensive accusations against foreign cities and people

made by Dante centuries earlier.[113] The decision to *purify* Dante's text might comply with

the religious precepts and Jesuit vows, but it also deprives the *Commedia* of its stylistic

richness, its impressive expressivity. It ultimately flattens the narration. This deliberate

omission of passages affects the ease with which a reader can directly compare the two

texts because the number of lines markedly varies between them. The abridged sections

are substantial and, I believe, much of D'Aquino's embellishment with rhetorical artifices

is intended to reduce the length disparity between the two texts.

The translator's preface suggests that D'Aquino's main concern was with offending

the sensibility of the nineteenth-century descendents of those vilified in the *Commedia*. I

will now list all the passages that D'Aquino's text left untranslated. A thorough

investigation of all these instances will show how the translator's main concern was to

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113Carlo d'Aquino, *Della Commedia di Dante Alighieri*, 12: "Non può negarsi, che il Poeta trascorre
    talvolta a diminuire la fama altrui con invettive aspre e pungenti. Ciò che ho giudicato potersi recare a
    giusta offesa, particolarmente di illustri Comuni e sacri Personaggi d'eccelso grado, ho io qui lasciato in
    bianco e punteggiatine i versi a misura del Testo, non convenendo a ben costumato, nonché Religioso
    Scrittore, propagare coll'Idioma Latino la notizia di tali rimproveri a Nazioni Straniere. Nè pertanto sono
    stato soverchiamente restio ed ansioso nel secondare colla traduzione le realtà di altre particolari
    persone, con riportarne ancora i nomi, non dubitando che debba prendersi a buon grado dai Posteri, che
    oltre lo spazio di quattro secoli addietro, si leggano mentovate le loro famiglie; nulla per altro rilevando,
    che tali antenati siano dal Poeta Dante condannati al caldo o al gelo del suo Inferno fantastico e
    capriccioso."

censor invectives against the Church, its corruption and modern deviations.

1) Ciacco's invective against the city of Florence (*Inf.*, VI, 49–50): *Ed elli a me: "La tua città, ch'è piena/ d'invidia sì che già trabocca il sacco.*

2) Allusion to modern religious orders (*Inf.*, VII, 46–48): *Questi fuor cherci, che non han coperchio/ piloso al capo, e papi e cardinali,/ in cui usa avarizia il suo soperchio.*

3) Explicit reference to Pope Anastasius IV (*Inf.*, XI, 8–9): *Anastasio papa guardo, lo qual trasse Fotin de la via dritta.*

4) The figure of Venedico Caccianemico and his invective against the city of Bologna (*Inf.*, XVIII, 55–57): *"O tu che l'occhio a terra gette,(...) rècati a mente il nostro avaro seno".*

5) Accusation against Pope Boniface VIII (*Inf.*, XIX, 52–57): *"Se' tu già costì ritto/ se' tu già costì ritto, Bonifazio? (...) la bella donna, e poi di farne strazio?"*

6) The account of Nicholas III's Papacy narrated by the Pope himself (*Inf.* XIX, 69–120): *sappi ch'i' fui vestito del gran manto (...) forte spingava con ambo le piote.*

7) Invective against the city of Lucca (*Inf.*, XXI, 40–42): *"a quella terra, che n'è ben fornita/ ogn'uom v'è barattier, fuor che Bonturo/ del no, per li denar, vi si fa ita".*

8) Invective against the city of Pistoia (*Inf.*, XXV, 10–12): *Ahi Pistoia, Pistoia, ché non stanzi/ d'incenerarti sì che più non duri/ poi che 'n mal fare il seme tuo avanzi?*

9) Invective against Pope Boniface VIII (*Inf.*, XXVII, 70–72): *se non fosse il gran prete, a cui mal prenda!/ che mi rimise ne le prime colpe;/ e come e quare, voglio che m'intenda.*

10) Invective against the city of Siena (*Inf.*, XXIX, 121–123): *"Or fu già mai/ gente sì*

vana come la sanese?/ Certo non la francesca sì d'assai!"

11) Invective against the city of Pisa (*Inf.*, XXXIII, 79): *Ahi Pisa, vituperio de le genti*

12) Invective against the people of Genoa (*Inf.*, XXXIII, 151–153): *Ahi Genovesi, uomini diversi/ d'ogne costume e pien d'ogne magagna,/ perché non siete voi del mondo spersi?*

13) Accusations against the Church (*Purg.*, XVI, 97–114): *Le leggi son, ma chi pon mano ad esse? (…) ch'ogn'erba si conosce per lo seme.*

14) Accusations against the Church (*Purg.*, XVI, 127–129): *Dì oggimai che la Chiesa di Roma,/ per confondere in sé due reggimenti,/ cade nel fango, e sé brutta e la soma*

15) Accusation against the Capetian dynasty (*Purg.*, XX, 43–45): *Io fui radice de la mala pianta/ che la terra cristiana tutta aduggia,/ sì che buon frutto rado se ne schianta*

16) Veiled accusation against Pope Martin IV (*Purg.*, XXIV, 23–24): *e purga per digiuno/ l'anguille di Bolsena e la vernaccia*

17) Forese's prevision of Corso Donati's death (*Purg.*, XXIV, 82–90): *"Or va", diss'el; "che quei che più n' ha colpa (…) ciò che 'l mio dir più dichiarar non puote*

18) Invective against the avariciousness within the Church (*Par.*, IX, 127–142): *La tua città, che di colui è pianta/ tosto libere fien de l'avoltero*

19) Corruption within the Dominican order (*Par.*, XI, 124–132): *Ma 'l suo pecuglio di nova vivanda/ che le cappe fornisce poco panno.*

20) Accusation against Pope John XXII (*Par.*, XVIII, 130–142): *Or voglion quinci e quindi chi rincalzi/ né io lo 'ntesi, sì mi vinse il tuono*

21) Invective against the corruption within the Church (*Par.*, XXI, 127–135): *Venne Cefàs e venne il gran vasello/ oh pazïenza che tanto sostieni!*

22) Invective against the corruption within the Church (*Par.*, XXII, 73–96): *Ma, per*

salirla, mo nessun diparte/ mirabile a veder che qui 'l soccorso

23) Invective against the deviations of modern Church (*Par.*, XXVII, 22–27): *Quelli*

ch'usurpa in terra il luogo mio, (...) *che cadde di qua sù, là giù si placa*

According to D'Aquino's introductory notes, all the textual emendations were

aimed at limiting Dante's polemical verve against people and places both Italian and

foreign, that were meaningless and anachronistic in the eighteenth-century. Out of the

twenty-three instances I have identified, only seven bear explicit accusations against cities

(Florence, Bologna, Lucca, Pistoia, Siena and Genoa), and none are against foreigner

nations (*nazioni straniere*) as D'Aquino would lead a reader to expect. Vilification

against single individuals is frequently replicated in his Latin version. Indeed, only twice

does D'Aquino refrain from translating explicit references to specific people: the

invective against the Capetian dynasty (*Purg.*, XX, 43–45) and Forese's prediction of

Corso Donati's death (*Purg.*, XXIV, 82–90).

The vast majority of the passages D'Aquino omits are addressed to figures or

institutions, be they political or private, contemporary or historical, Italian or foreign.

What really matters to the translator is whether they are a lay or Christian. Fourteen of the

passages left out refer directly to people and events associated with the Catholic church:

two accusations against specific religious orders, six invectives against Popes and six

invectives against corruption within the clergy. Such a discrepancy between D'Aquino's

alleged moral intent in omitting Dante's accusations against medieval figures and his

evident attempt to *redeem* the institution of the Church imposes a further question: what

was the ultimate aim of his translation of Dante's *Commedia*? Carlo d'Aquino was

churchman, and as such, his main concern was that of preserving the auroral purity of faith from which the Christian creed takes its roots. He prioritized his interests as clergyman over his philological faithfulness as a man of letters.

D'Aquino's translation differentiates itself from Matteo Ronto's work. The Jesuit's poetical sensibility combined with a robust mastery over the Latin hexameter far outshines Ronto's attempt. Yet, D'Aquino's praiseworthy efforts at rendering Dante available to a learned audience are threatened by his willingness to purge passages disfavorable to ecclesiastical hierarchies, the members of which also constituted the vast majority of the translation's potential readership.

By the beginning of the nineteenth-century, D'Aquino's translation was recognized as the most authoritative, well-known and esteemed Latin translation of Dante among intellectual circles. It was an amended translation, deprived of much of its original pungency and more aligned to Christian precepts. If it took ninety years for a scholar, Antonio Catellacci, to put his hands on a new and more faithful translation of the *Commedia*, it took more than a century for another man of letters, Francesco Testa, to retrieve D'Aquino's translation and to complete it, by translating the omitted passages into Latin.

5- The 1835 Revision of D'Aquino's Poetical Work and the Complementary Translations by Francesco Testa

In 1835 the marriage of the marquess Domenico Melilupi to Countess Giustina Piovene was celebrated in Parma. This event was significant in contemporary Italian aristocratic circles of the time, because it joined together two of the most illustrious, ancient and noble Italian houses (Melilupi and Piovene). It also resulted in a fierce competition among artists hoping to pay their tribute at the wedding.[114] Along with Gaetano Dalla Piazza's translation of Pindar's ninth Pythian ode into Italian, the nuptials between Domenico Melilupi and Giustina Piovene also afforded Francesco Testa an opportunity to publish, *in honorem nuptiarum*, his fragmentary Latin translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia*.[115]

Testa's literary endeavor did not intend to provide a selection of textual abstracts aimed at celebrating the marriage; it rather sought to complete what D'Aquino left unfinished. By integrating D'Aquino's translation of Dante's text with those passages he deliberately choose to censure, Testa aimed at compiling the first comprehensive Latin translation of the *Commedia* into Latin hexameters since Matteo Ronto's fifteenth-century

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114On the Meli-Lupi family (after 1729 quoted as Melilupi), see Michele Basile Crispo, *L'Ordine Costantiniano di San Giorgio. Storia, stemmi e cavalieri*, (Parma: Albertelli, 2002). Pompeo Litta, *Famiglie celebri d'Italia. Lupi Marchesi di Soragna*, (Turin: Giusti, 1835). See also, Pompeo Litta, *Famiglie celebri d'Italia. Meli di Cremona indi Marchesi Meli Lupi*, (Turin: Giusti, 1835). On the Piovene family, see Francesco Schröeder, *Repertorio genealogico delle famiglie confermate nobili e dei titolati nobili esistenti nelle Provincie Venete*, II, (Venice: Alvisopoli, 1830), 141–143. See also John Temple-Leader, *Libro dei nobili veneti ora per la prima volta messo in luce*, (Florence: Berbèra, 1866), 68.

115Gaetano Dalla Piazza, *Per il cospicuo faustissimo matrimonio del nobile uomo Domenico Melilupi marchese di Soragna colla nobile donzella Giustina Piovene conte Porto Godi Pigafetta*, (Padua: Tipi del Seminario, 1835). Francesco Testa, *Per le cospicue nozze del nobile uomo Domenico Melilupi Marchese di Soragna colla nobile donzella Giustina Piovene contessa Godi Pigafetta*, (Padua: Minerva, 1835).

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edition (1427–1431).[116] The figure of Francesco Testa lies in obscurity. He flourished in

the twenties of the nineteenth-century and was a poet and a superb latinist, but the records

about this scholar tell us remarkably little.[117]

It is likely that he studied with Carlo Bologna, an illustrious classicist and abbot at

Vicenza, whose mastery of ancient languages, according to Andrea Capparrozzo, was of

utmost importance for Testa while drafting his Latin translations.[118] Throughout the years,

Testa seems to never have abandoned his home-town of Vicenza, and his literary

production indicates an enduring and solid bond with a local noble family, the Piovenes.

Three out of the fifty-six literary compositions ascribed to Testa, constitute fragmentary

translations of Dante's *Comedy*. All three publications are dedicated to a member of the

Piovene 's family upon their marriage (Giustina, Alessandro and Lugrezia).[119]

116"Viene a Parma novella Sposa, e degnissima del Nobile Uomo Domenico Melilupi Marchese di
Soragna, la Nobile Donzella Giustina Piovene Contessa Porto Godi Pigafetta, la cui Famiglia è tra le
principali della Città nostra, dove ha sempre meritato e goduto l'amore ed il rispetto d'ogni classe di
persone. Ed io in particolare con eguali sentimenti alla medesima attaccato, e con benevolenza
corrisposto, trovomi in dovere a questa lieta occasione di darne, secondo l'usanza, qualche pubblico
contrassegno. Ma poiché mi conosco inabile a celebrare degnamente le virtù e le doti degli egregi Sposi,
l'antichità, i meriti ed il lustro d'ambo le Famiglie, e la intera eguaglianza di si' cospicuo Maritaggio, ho
pensato invece di giovarmi d'altra maniera dalla odierna consuetudine adoperata; cioè a dire, di produrre
colla stampa o qualche raro opuscolo, o qualche novella composizione di estraneo argomento,
nobilitando così la pubblicazione colla circostanza medesima. Fermo nel mio proposito, e perché mi
stavano innanzi a questi giorni le Terzine della Divina Commedia da me tradotte in versi esametri, le
quali furono omesse nella traduzione latina di tutto il Poema fatta da Carlo d'Aquino, e stampata in
Napoli l'anno 1738, ho deliberato che questa mia fatica, qualunque essa sia, adempiere debba all'offizio
per me contemplato. E in tale divisamento tanto più valsero, a confermarmi le gentili parole di valore e
di speranza, colle quali, signor Cavaliere, voleste accogliere il manoscritto di questi miei tentativi,
veduti pure a mezzo vostro, e graziosamente giudicati dall'Ab. Colombo. A Voi dunque li raccomando
ora che ardisco di renderli pubblici colla stampa unitamente agli Episodi della Francesca da Rimini e del
Conte Ugolino; e voglio confidare che, sotto gli auspici vostri, saranno compatiti nella luminosa
occasione per la quali gli espongo". The prologue to the translation bears a date (3 May, 1835), a city of
composition (Vicenza) and addresses Angelo Pezzana as the dedicatee of the translation. On the figure
of Pezzana and his importance as head of the *Regia Bilbioteca di Parma*, see the entry *Angelo Pezzana*
in Roberto Lasagni, *Dizionario biografico dei Parmigiani*, (Parma: Gaetano Schenone, 1999).

117In his contribution on Gaetano Dalla Piazza, Tullio Motterle provides Testa's dates of birth and death
(1761–1846), but does not quote his sources. See Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano dalla Piazza
traduttore di Dante*, (Sandrigo: Egida, 1993), 13. The only scholar one to provide a biographical sketch
as well as a thorough account ofn his poetical production is Rumor in Sebastiano Rumor, *Gli scrittori
vicentini dei secoli decimottavo e decimonono*, III, (Venice: Tipogrfia Emiliana, 1908), 177–183.

118Andrea Capparrozzo, "Bibliografia dantesca vicentina", in *Dante e Vicenza*, *XIV maggio 1865*, (Vicenza:
Accademia Olimpica, 1865), 109.

119Francesco Testa, *Per le cospicue nozze del nobile uomo Domenico Melilupi Marchese di Soragna colla*

The tone and topic of the majority of his literary production provides an

intellectual profile of Francesco Testa as a courtier strongly bound to his homeland and

devoted to a literary genre that one might call epithalamic. His poetic compositions are

dedicated not only to members of the Piovene family, but also to a remarkable number of

illustrious noble families of the time, including Porto-Barbaran, Trissino, Lupini and

Braghetta.[120] The occasion for their dedications is, again, a wedding.

In his 1835 supplementary edition of Dante's text, Testa identifies, lists and

translates all twenty-three passages that D'Aquino left untranslated. This edition is even

further enriched by translations of two additional passages from the *Divine Comedy*,

passages that D'Aquino did translate, but that Testa nonetheless retranslated and included

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nobile donzella Giustina Piovene contessa Godi Pigafetta, (Padua: Minerva, 1835). Francesco Testa, *Per le nobilissime nozze del conte Alessandro Piovene Porto Godi Pigafetta colla contessa Lavinia Franceschinis*, (Padua Minerva, 1836). Francesco Testa, *Per le nobilissime nozze del conte Patrizio Magawly colla contessa Lugrezia Piovene*, (Padua: Minerva, 1838).

120 This is the list of the epithalamic compositions that Francesco Testa edited between 1792 and 1841: *Componimenti poetici in occasione delle nozze dell'eccellenze loro Leonardo Donà e Chiara Tron*, Venice, 1792. *In occasione del matrimonio Montecuccoli e Franco. Cantico fidentiano*, Vicenza, 1803. *Poesie per le nozze Trissino e Porto*, Vicenza, 1805. *Componimenti poetici nelle faustissime nozze Milan e Porto, offerti da G. A. Savi*, Vicenza, 1816. *In occasione del matrimonio del Sig. Giovanni Maria Lupini di Bergamo colla Signora Teresa Calvi di Vicenza. Cantico fidentiano*, Vicenza, 1818. *Per le solenni nuptiae del Sig. Joanni Eugerio di Ceneta con la Sig. Justina Savi di Vicenza. Anacreontica fidentiana*, Vicenza, 1818. *Per il faustissimo matrimonio del Signor Andrea Braghetta colla Nob. Sig. Contessa Beatrice di Thiene. Sonetti quattro dedicati allo sposo da Carlin Zanotti pittore*, Vicenza, 1818. *Per il matrimonio Franco e Muttoni*, Vicenza, 1821. *Per le auspicatissime nuptiae in Roboreto del Sig. Jo. Baptista Tacchi colla Signora Aloysia Colle. Cantico fidentiano*, Vicenza, 1821. *Per il faustissimo matrimonio del Nob. Sig. Lodovico Folco colla nobil donna Matilde Priuli Zambelli, sonetti VIII*, Vicenza, 1822. *Per le solenni nuptiae Massari et Naliati. Cantico fidentiano di Casto Frescante Ticinveno*, Vicenza, 1823. *In faustissimas nuptias ter nobilium Herculis ex comitibus de Thiene vicetini et Helenae Vailetti Marchesi bergomatis. Elegia a presbytero Aloysio Mendini sponsis sponsorumque parentibus dicata*, Vicenza, 1825. *Alla Sig. Marietta Tecchio che si marita col Signor Giuseppe Zilio. Epistola di Casto Frescante*, Padua, 1828. *Nelle faustissime nozze del Nob. Sig. Conte Giuseppe Porto colla Nob. Sig. Contessa Lucrezia Porto-Barbaran. Fiori presentati dai parenti alla sposa*, Padua, 1830. *Per le faustissime nozze del N. U. Conte Giulio Scrofa e della N. D. Contessa Cecilia Porto-Barbaran*, Padua, 1832. *Per le nozze Negri-Stecchini. Traduzione di una lettera latina di Angelo Gabrieli stampata l'anno 1502, descrittiva le feste date in Venezia e nello Stato Veneto ad Anna Principessa di Francia che passava in detto anno a sposare Ladislao Re d'Ungheria*, Padua, 1837. *In nuptii Henrici Capra et Theresiae Gonzato. Epigramma*, Padua, 1839. *Pro faustissimis nuptiis Gonzato-Baretta March. Vincentio Gonzato epistolium*, Vicenza, 1841. *Per le faustissime nuptie Donà-Negri. Epistola fidentiana*, Padua, 1841. This list does not include the three aforementioned translations dedicated to member of the Piovene family. For a thorough account of Testa's poetical production, see Sebastiano Rumor, *Gli scrittori vicentini*, 177–183.

in order to embellish his literary wedding present. The two abstracts that Testa rendered

in Latin hexameters are both episodes taken from *Inferno*, that of Francesca da Rimini

(*Inf.*, V, 70–142) and of Count Ugolino (*Inf.*, XXXIII, 1–90). These two texts are the

longest translations in the 1835 edition, and they prove to be extremely helpful in

understanding Testa's methodology.

His translation, indeed, proves markedly different from the one by D'Aquino's. It

prioritizes a faithful adherence to the text over a mere display of rhetorical ability.[121] In so

doing, Testa perfectly frames himself within a century that in Italy was primarily aimed at

spreading Dante's text. Dalla Piazza, Pasquali-Marinelli and the late eighteenth-century

translators of Dante's masterpiece drew heavily on Testa's critical and analytical study of

the *Commedia*.

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[121] Pierfranco Blesio, "Brani della Divina Commedia, omessi nella traduzione latina di Carlo d'Aquino, voltati in esametri dal Socio d'onore Francesco Testa di Vicenza", in *Commentari dell'Ateneo di Brescia per l'Anno Accademico 1835* (Brescia, Tipi dell'Ateneo,1836) 128–130: "Di poesia latina si ebbero ancora voltati in begli esametri i brani del poema di Dante, cui per abbaglio o per qualche suo buon perché, omise di tradurre Carlo d'Aquino. Il nostro socio vicentino dottor Francesco Testa ne fu cortese di questa lettura; e se mal non giudichiamo, se mai questi frammenti venissero mano mano inseriti nelle lacune lasciate dal dottor D'Aquino, parrebbero le cose migliori, per fedeltà e bontà di stile, di tutta la versione dantesca. Per più strettamente venire ai paragoni e vincere la prova col vecchio volgarizzatore, pose anco in verso i due luoghi famosi, tradotti anco dal D'Aquino: la Francesca d'Arimino, e i patimenti e il supplizio di Ugolino; e facendo stima di questi sperimenti, nei quali si permise al nostro socio di allargarsi in più distesi voli e scaldarsi all'affetto del suo originale, si può comprendere quanto saria riuscita per ogni parte commendevole da lui la traduzione intiera di Dante, o qualche altro più lungo e manco infranto lavoro. Ma che pro al progredimento delle nostre lettere venne mai dalla pazienza e perizia nel latino di tanti valenti italiani? Nessuno per nostro giudizio: anzi fu danno gravissimo all'avanzamento, gravità e pulimento della nostra favella; la quale, più ch'ella è adoperata e provata in più maniere da valenti ingegni, si augmenta e prende tutti i caratteri di bontà, di varietà, di copia, di originalità, di gentilezza, di forza coll'usarne da tutti e per tutto. (..) Nè vogliamo con queste considerazioni saper mal grado o movere sconforto nell'egregio Testa per la bene spesa fatica, la quale anco varrà ai forestieri per meglio capire gli ardui e più chiusi concetti della lingua dantesca, ben più difficile all'intelligenza de' non italiani che non è l'universale de' latini".

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5.1- Linguistic Remarks on Testa's Supplemental Translation

Francesco Testa sought to complete the work begun by D'Aquino in 1728. In the intervening decades, stylistic conventions and tastes changed and promoted a different attitude toward the original text. Whereas D'Aquino aimed at providing a translation where linguistic faithfulness is abandoned in favor of an artistic reinterpretation of the text, Testa's hexameters reflect both the syntax and vocabulary of the original. Unlike D'Aquino, Testa sought not to provide an original Latin poem grounded in Dante's original or strongly inspired by it. He rather aimed for a mere, faithful translation with the goal of increasing the *Commedia*'s readability without minimally altering its stylistic and rhetorical features. This philological approach is doubtlessly what most characterizes Testa's work. Although not always impeccable, Testa uses his vast experience as classicist in order to make Dante's masterpiece more accessible.

No passage is left untranslated, and even the most subtle aspects of the text are faithfully replicated. The fragmentary nature of Testa's work impedes a comprehensive investigation of all his textual integrations. The following notes are based on a close analysis of his two most consistent translations: the episodes of Francesca (*Inf.*, V, 70–142) and of Count Ugolino (*Inf.*, XXXIII, 1–90).

***5.1.1- A Faithful And Rhetorically Refined Translation of Dante's* Commedia**

While an explicit attempt to strictly adhere to Dante's text is the aspect that most strikingly differentiates D'Aquino's work from Testa's, the latter's ability not to turn the Comedy into a pedantic Latin paraphrase merits the most attention. In fact, a marked poetical sensibility is evident throughout Testa's translations, and is particularly testified in the episode of Paolo and Francesca. In *Inf.*, V, 70, Dante describes himself as overcome by pity and dazed by the sight of the two doomed lovers: *pietà mi giunse, e fui quasi smarrito.*

Interrupted by the enjambement, Testa's rendering of this passage is both poetic and faithful. It diverges from the original only in the second half of the hendecasyllable, where the syntax of the syntagm *e fui quasi smarrito* is slightly altered: *Me pietas miserans, externatumque reliquit/ paene animus.*[122] It would be interesting to compare D'Aquino's text to Testa's, but by looking at his 1728 edition, a reader would easily note that not only the aforementioned line 70, but three entire *terzine* (lines 70–78) are left untranslated in the Jesuit's text. The brief chat between Dante and Virgil are left out and the narration resumes at line 80, with Dante's question to Paolo and Francesca (*"O anime affannate/ venite a noi parlar, s'altri nol niega!"*).

D'Aquino's decision to neglect such a substantial passage is difficult to account for, for it contains no explicit invectives nor accusations against people, places or institutions. Moreover, in lines 77–78, Virgil encourages Dante to beg the two doomed souls by the love that leads them. These two lines (*e tu allor li priega/ per quello amor che i mena, ed ei verranno*) represent the poetical manifesto of the entire fifth canto; the

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122*Inf.*, V, 70–71.

same passionate love which brought the two to burst in the Hell's eternal flames also brings Francesca to recall her love story with Paolo, from its beginning to the tragic end. While this passage is not translated by D'Aquino, Testa acknowledges its centrality by providing a translation rhetorically embellished by an hyperbaton: *Tunc tute rogato/ coram adstent, illum per, quo ducuntur, amorem:/ advenient.*[123]

Later on in the same canto, Francesca addresses Dante directly as he takes pity on the doomed's sad misfortune: *se fosse amico il re de l'universo/ noi pregheremmo lui de la tua pace/ poi c' hai pietà del nostro mal perverso.*[124] Although line 93 represents a causal clause and is introduced by the preposition *poiché* (because), Testa translates the passage as follows: *Si nobis facilis magni Rex orbis adesset/ laeta precaremur tibi: nostro quippe dolori/ ipse dolens tantorum animo miserere malorum.*[125] The choice of rendering the original syntagm *poi c' hai pietà* with the imperative *miserere* markedly alters the pleading tone employed by Dante. This modification is likely for metrical reasons, as a more extended paraphrase would have affected the hexameter.

Testa's alteration of the text, however, does not strike the reader as an arbitrary reinterpretation of Dante's text. Not only is the meaning of the verbal form *miserere* implied in the original *poi c' hai pietà*, but also the imperative mood recalls a famous passage of *Inf.*, I (Dante's first meeting with Virgil: *"Miserere di me", gridai a lui/ "qual che tu sii, od ombra od omo certo!"*) creating a linguistic reference that a passionate reader of Dante would easily recognize.[126] Furthermore, Francesca's passages feature one of the best known sections of the entire poem: the personification of love (*Amor*) as a

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123*Inf.*, V, 76–78.
124*Inf.*, V, 91–93.
125*Inf.*, V, 91–93.
126*Inf.*, I, 65–66.

third protagonist within the history of their love story. [127] In lines 100–108 the word *Amor* covers a central rhetorical function, and it is repeated three times always at the beginning of the line: *Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende (...) Amor, ch'a nullo amato amar perdona/ mi prese del costui piacer sì forte (...) Amor condusse noi ad una morte.*

In his translation, a number of obstacles prevent Testa from replicating the anaphora used by Dante. Nonetheless, the translator manages to maintain the level of rhetorical elaboration in the original. Testa translates lines 100, 104 and 107 as follows: *una ut cesset. Amor, tenero qui in corde repente (…) me necis urit. Amor, qui amatum cogit amare (…) me nunc linquat. Amor nos funus adegit ad unum.* In his Latin rendering, the word *Amor* always occupies the same central position within the line: third short syllable of the second dactyl and first long syllable of the third. As a consequence, the metrical accent of the word diverges from the tonic (*ámor*), but also coincides with the Italian metrical scanning and echoes the accentuation of Dante's original text (*amòr*). Lines 100–108 pivot on the repetition of the word *Amor*, and although not anaphoric, it testifies to Testa's commitment to the original text.

Whereas Carlo d'Aquino's mastery of Latin language remains unmatched even at the beginning of the nineteenth-century, his rendering of this passage of *Inferno* V shows, once more, no mere wish to replicate Dante's rhetorical elaboration. Instead, the translator provides a pedantic versification where only the original content is kept. The pitiful tone of Francesca's speech, as well as linguistic features such as the anaphora of *Amor*, are deliberately neglected.[128] Although relatively short, the two most extensive passages that

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127*Inf.*, V, 100–108: *Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende/ prese costui de la bella persona/ che mi fu tolta; e 'l modo ancor m'offende./ Amor, ch'a nullo amato amar perdona/ mi prese del costui piacer sì forte/ che, come vedi, ancor non m'abbandona./ Amor condusse noi ad una morte./ Caina attende chi a vita ci spense"/ Queste parole da lor ci fuor porte.*

128D'Aquino translation of *Inf.*, V, 100–108 reads as follows: *flagrantem/ hunc rapuit poenae socium mea forma, cruenti/ forma, eheu! Meminisse dolet, mox victima ferri./ Utque suas in amore vices amor ipse*

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Testa translated into Latin hexameters give the reader a clear understanding of his overall approach to the *Commedia.*

The translator combined his poetical touch with a strict stylistic and linguistic adherence to the original. His ultimate and explicit goal was to spread Dante's work, not to create a something new. Testa's supplementary translation represents a praiseworthy literary attempt to complete D'Aquino's abridged edition. Although faithful, poetically refined and often admirable for its ability to fit Dante's text within the Latin hexameter, it does not always succeed in replicating the original.

In this regard, I have found two passages where the translation of the *Commedia* may leave the reader partly disappointed. The first instance can be found in *Inf.*, V, 85 where the original *de la schiera ov'è Dido* is banalized as *digressi ex agmine, Dido/ it quocum regina.* The second is located in *Inf.*, XXXIII, 15, where Ugolino's allusive assertion *or ti dirò perché i son tal vicino* is paraphrased in *quantumque hic laeserit inde/ disce.* In the first passage, an excessive faithfulness affected the quality of the translation. If, indeed, *Dido/ it quocum regina* perfectly adheres to the original, the choice of *it/ ire* lowers the stylistic level of the passage and might have been replaced with *est* or *residet* (*residet ubi regina*).

The second passage, by contrast, drastically alters the original text. Dante's choice of *essere vicino* (*son tal vicino*) is deliberately sarcastic. Ugolino is not simply *next* to Ruggeri, he is portrayed as gnawing at Ruggeri's skull. In his translation, Testa abandons Dante's covertly ironic tone and opts for a complete reformulation of the original assertion "Now I will tell you why I am a neighbor such as this to him" becomes a much

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reposcit/ me petit igne pari; modo quo nil segnius urit/ horrisonoque sequi socium cum turbine cogit./ Morte pari nos iunxit amor; qui stringere ferrum/ non timuit, sovet meritas sub Tartara poenas.

more banal "learn how much suffering he caused to me!". The reason for such a notable difference between the two texts is probably metrical, again. A more faithful rendering would have forced the translator to drastically reformulate lines 14–16. This remains the only passage in the text where Testa abandons Dante's original in favor of a radical poetic reinterpretation of the text.

Faithfulness to the original is, indeed, what differentiates Testa's work from D'Aquino's, and this is the aspect that I intend to emphasize in conclusion to this chapter. Nearly a century divides the 1728 edition from the 1836 revision of the original work, and the attitude of the two translators toward Dante's text changes markedly. Carlo d'Aquino aimed for an independent, moralized and partly censored Latin *Commedia* for a religious audience. This decision was likely with a conservative fringe of the Church as an intended audience who would have appreciated such deliberate alterations of the original text.

With the work of Francesco Testa, the audience – although never explicitly referred to in his preface – becomes not only more laic, but also more interested in the philological reliability of a text. With Testa, a Latin translation of Dante was neither an opportunity to showcase his mastery of the hexameter nor an occasion to compose a poem that shares, with the original, only contents and protagonists. In his Latin translation, Testa prioritizes faithfulness to the original and avoids any reinterpretation of the text unless made necessary by metrical reasons.

To this extent, Testa's attempt perfectly frames itself within the context of a century where the rediscovery of classical studies brought about a renewed interest in philology. His translation of Dante, although only fragmentary, is philologically reliable

and replicates Dante's *Commedia* both in terms of content and linguistic style. D'Aquino's edition, with the complementary work of translation published by Testa in 1836, played a central role within the history of Latin translations of the *Commedia*. They were not only admired, but also used as sources by Gaetano Dalla Piazza for his 1848 edition of the text.

Chapter Three: Antonio Catellacci

Section One: Life and Works

1- From the Professorship of Medicine to the Latin Translation of Dante's Inferno.

Biographical sketch of Antonio Catellacci

Despite its relative chronological proximity, the knowledge we have of Antonio Catellacci's life and works is rather limited. The son of Pietro and Regina Catellacci, Antonio Catellacci was born in San Casciano in Val di Pesa, a little town located fifteen kilometers southwest of Florence, on 28 September 28 1753.[129] Pietro's successful career as lawyer in San Casciano provided the young pupil with a rigorous yet eclectic education.[130] Antonio attended the *Seminario Arcivescovile di Firenze*, where he studied ancient languages, both Greek and Latin, as well as mathematics and physics.[131]

Since his first years at the *Seminario*, Catellacci showed a marked interest in scientific subjects that was enhanced by a precocious inclination toward the study of human anatomy. This passion played a central role in the young man's decision to

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129 Atto Vannucci, *Biografia degli Italiani illustri nelle Scienze, Lettere ed Arti del secolo XVIII, e de' contemporanei compilata da letterati italiani di ogni provincia e pubblicata per cura del Professore Emilio De Tipaldo.* VI, (Venice: Alvisopoli, 1838), 17.

130 On the prestige of Pietro Catellacci within his home town see Giuseppe Toniolo, *In memoria di Giuseppe Catellacci*, (Florence: Gerini, 1903).

131 Atto Vannucci, *Biografia*, 18: "Reggeva allora la diocesi fiorentina l'arcivescovo Incontri, uomo eccellentissimo, ossia che si riguardi alla sua santità, e al suo singolare amore ne' poveri, ossia che si consideri la molta dottrina che lo adornava, e le belle ed efficaci maniere con cui esortava i giovani alunni agli studi. Egli voleva che quegli destinati al reggimento spirituale de' popoli, oltre allo studio delle lettere e della scienza di Dio, attendessero anche di tutto potere a quelli delle scienze fisiche, perché le reputava fondamento delle morali, e perché oltre all'essere i parroci duci e maestri delle coscienze, potessero anche sovvenire gli ignoranti di precetti, di consigli e di lumi per ciò che riguarda le più comuni necessità della vita. Quindi è che mai rimanevasi dall'adoprar tutti i mezzi che credesse opportuni a svegliare ed eccitare gli ingegni. Era largo di incoraggiamenti, di lodi, di premi: e quando scorgeva un terreno atto a produrre buon frutto, lo coltivava con singolarissimo amore. Fu per il Catellacci bella ventura trovarsi nel Seminario Fiorentino in quei tempi, perché le naturali facoltà dell'animo suo per lodi e per amorevolezze del venerando uomo presero maggiore energia, e lo portarono ad avanzare di lunga mano negli studi i suoi condiscepoli."

abandon his clerical career at the *Seminario* in favor of a study at the university in Pisa to pursue his interests in anatomy and medicine.[132] Throughout his stay in Pisa, Catellacci continued to improve his skills in classical languages, a passion that would later culminate in his translation of Dante's *Inferno*.[133]

In May 1776, Catellacci was awarded a degree in medicine from the University of Pisa, and his fame as a young, promising researcher of anatomy landed him a position as apprentice in the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova in Florence. [134] Toward the end of his fourth year as an intern at the hospital (1780–1), a violent epidemic afflicted Florence, and Catellacci's presence allowed him to drastically enhance his visibility; the spread of the infectious disease had indeed attracted many renowned physicians and scholars to the Grand Duchy's capital.

Along with Gaetano Giovannelli, Domenico Battini, and Francesco Torrigiani, Catellacci was nominated and served as a member of the commission in charge of the city's emergency management.[135] By the end of January 1781, the epidemic had waned, and the brilliant role played by the group of doctors resulted in an academic publication:

132Atto Vannucci, *Biografia*, 18: "Qui di leggeri comprese che di tutte le scienze ritrovate a salute dell'umanità è fondamento principalissimo l'anatomia, e che senza di quella ogni passo è incerto e conducente a manifesta rovina. Però stette sempre in cima ad ogni suo pensiero l'acquisto di questa scienza nella quale poi studiò tutta la vita."

133A deep study of Greek language and literature during Catellacci's stay in Pisa is, in particular, testified by the unknown author of the *Necrologia* published in the *Gazzetta di Firenze* (*Giovedi, 20 Aprile 1826*), XLIII, Florence, 1826, 5.

134See the entry "Catellacci, Antonio" by Ugo Baldini in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, XXII, (Rome: Treccani, 1979).

135For the historical and social context in which the commission's members lived and worked see Diomede Bonamici, *Intorno alla vita del Dottore Domenico Gaetano Giovannelli. Notizie raccolte dal Dottore Diomede Bonamici di Livorno*, (Rome: Tipografia delle Scienze Matematiche e Fisiche, 1867). For the figure of Domenico Battini see Emanuele Gerini, *Memorie storiche d'illustri scrittori e di uomini insigni dell'antica e moderna Lunigiana per l'abate Emanuele Gerini da Fivizzano in otto libri disposte*, II, (Massa: Frediani, 1829) 185–187. I did not find any historical accounts on the figure of Francesco Torrigiani, but important information about his life and contributions to the field of medicine can be found in Francesco Torrigiani, *Della febbre gialla. Opuscolo del Dottor Francesco Torrigiani, Professore di medicina teorico-pratica e di clinica nella Regia Università di Pisa, primo Medico dei Bagni a San Giuliano e socio della R. Accademia Pistoiese*, (Pisa: Pieraccini, 1805).

Costituzione epidemica di Firenze.[136] Although authored by Domenico Battini, the text pays remarkable tribute to Catellacci's efforts during the crisis. Thanks to this publication, the young doctor's fame rapidly spread throughout the intellectual circles of the Grand Duchy and reached Alessandro Bicchierai, an illustrious physician and a professor of Medicine at the University of Florence since 1773.[137]

It did not take long for Bicchierai to acknowledge Catellacci's professional integrity, devotion, and his promising career in the field of anatomy. As soon as a professorship in medicine became vacant in Pisa, Catellacci's *alma mater*, Bicchierai strongly recommended the young researcher to Grand Duke Leopold II. As a consequence, in 1782 Antonio Catellacci became Professor of Anatomy at the University of Pisa, a prestigious position that allowed him to travel throughout Europe for research.[138] In Pisa, Catellacci established a close friendship with George Clavering Cowper, an English nobleman, patron and art collector resident in Florence.[139] With Earl Cowper, Catellacci undertook a long journey across Italy and northern Europe, which allowed him to personally witness the ways the science of anatomy was treated and studied in foreign countries.

According to Vannucci, this first journey left an indelible trace on Catellacci.

136Domenico Battini, *Costituzione epidemica di Firenze dell'inverno MDCCLXXX–MDCCLXXXI alla Società Reale di Medicina di Parigi*, (Florence: Del Vivo, 1781).

137See Giovanni Gualberto Uccelli, *Elogio di Alessandro Bicchierai letto nella Regia Accademia Fiorentina nella pubblica adunanza del 27 Aprile 1797*, (Florence: Pagani 1798). See also Pompilio Pozzetti, *Elogio di Alessandro Bicchierai scritto dall'Accademico italiano P. D. Pompilio Pozzetti delle Scuole Pie, Bibliotecario pubblico in Modena, e Segretario della Societa Italiana delle Scienze*, (Florence: Regiae Celsitudinis, 1805).

138Atto Vannucci, *Biografia.*, 19: "A Pisa rimaneva vacante per morte del professore la cattedra di anatomia. Appena il Bicchierai ne sente la nova si reca spontaneo dal Granduca Pietro Leopoldo, e gli rappresenta il giovane Catellacci essere meritevole di tal carica sopra di ogni altro: trovarsi in lui e splendido ingegno e sommo amore per la scienza, e tutte le qualità della mente e del cuore convenienti al nobile ufficio. Il Granduca che voleva il bene delle scienze assentì di buon grado alle inchieste del Bicchierai, e nell'anno 1782 il Catellacci fu salutato professore di natomia nella pisana università".

139Brian Moloney, "The Third Earl Cowper: An English Patron of Science in Eighteen Century Florence and his correspondence with Alessandro Volta", in *Italian Studies*, XVI, (1961), 1–34.

Indeed, a written account of his travels was promptly drafted for planned publication. This project, however, was later abandoned, and in 1838 the original outline was still kept in Pisa by Catellacci's heirs.[140] While in Turin, he drew an important lesson from Carlo Allioni, one of the most illustrious Italian physicians of the time, with whom he discussed Allioni's treatise on sweating fever and learned the rudiments of botany.[141] Catellacci's travels to the United Kingdom were equally beneficial. In London, he shared ideas and notions of compared anatomy with John Hunter, the creator of a museum of pathology and anatomy *(Hunterian Museum)*.[142] While in Edinburgh, he met with William Cullen and became a staunch supporter of his theory of neurosis as a consequence of the nervous system's malfunction.[143]

Such a deep and eclectic education, steeped in different school of thoughts, resulted in twenty-five years of popular and appreciated university classes in Pisa. Aside from a rigid and systematic approach to the subject, Catellacci's classes were also particularly admired for the highly rhetorical degree of elaboration in which they were taught. The study of classical languages was indeed never abandoned by Catellacci, and ancient rhetoric became a priceless tool for the delivery of his lectures. Throughout his life, he never stopped reading both Latin and Greek epic poems as respite from the stress of work.[144]

140Atto Vannucci, *Biografia*, 19.

141Michele Francesco Buniva, *Réflexions sur tous les ouvrages publiés et inédits du docteur Charles Allioni avec notices historiques concernant sa vie et plusieurs établissements littéraires en Piémont*, (Turin: Galletti, 1810).

142Wendy Moore, "John Hunter: learning from natural experiments, 'placebos', and the state of mind of a patient in the 18th century. JLL Bulletin: Commentaries on the history of treatment evaluation', in *Journal of the Royal society of Medicine*, CII, 9, (2009), 394–396.

143John Christie, *"Historiography of chemistry in the eighteenth century: Hermann Boerhaave and William Cullen"*, in *Ambix*, XLI, 1, (1994), 4–19.

144Atto Vannucci, *Biografia.*, 20."Le sue lezioni che erano il frutto di lunghi studi, di scrupolose osservazioni e di reiterate esperienze, e dei colloqui coi più sommi nell'arte, furono plaudite da tutti quelli che traevano ad ascoltarlo, perché oltre ad avere profondità di scienza e lucido ordine, erano anche abbellite da molta copia di svariata ed opportuna erudizione, proveneinte dal lungo studio che

In 1806 and after twenty-three years of teaching, Catellacci's published his first academic work: *Corso Elementare di Notomia*, but only the first volume of the treatise, devoted to the skeletal system, was published by the author.[145] All the biographical sources agree that from 1806 to his death in 1826, Antonio Catellacci never left the city of Pisa.

During his last years, Catellacci sought to publish the many unrefined works that laid on his desk as also testified by both Vannucci and by Regolo Lippi, author of a *Tribute* to the professor for his academic merits.[146] Still, a number of texts remained unpublished after the author's death, as the second book of the *Corso Elementare di Notomia*, and a detailed analysis conducted on human cadavers, *Classata serie di storie mediche con le autossie cadaveriche modellate sulle tracce dell'immortal Morgagni*.[147]

The majority of the unpublished manuscripts left by the author were *Lauree*, public orations delivered at the department of medicine's commencement ceremonies in Pisa. Lippi stresses the rhetorical elaboration of these poetic compositions as evidence of Catellacci's strong background in classical studies. If the most eloquent tribute paid by Catellacci to his literary passion is his Latin translation of Dante's *Inferno*, we cannot but

l'autore aveva posto negli scrittori greci e latini".

145Antonio Catellacci, *Corso Elementare di Notomia del D. Antonio Catellacci, Professore di detta Scienza all'Università di Pisa. Tomo primo che contiene i Fondamenti Anatomici illustrati con dieci tavole in rame*, (Pisa: Ranieri Prosperi, 1806). Atto Vannucci, *Biografia*, 20: "In questa parte del suo lavoro descrisse con nuovo e bellissimo ordine e con moltiplicità e chiarezza le regioni del corpo umano e trattò diffusamente delle ossa. Trasse profitto dalle giornaliere esperienze sopra questo soggetto e da tutto ciò che ne era scritto nelle opere de' più famosi, e perciò l'opera sua riuscì a grande utilità degli studiosi e fu lodatissima dai professore della scienza. Lo stesso Francesco Vaccà Berlinghieri che per l'avanti usava col Catellacci meno che cortesemente, come vide il suo libro, ne concepì tale stima, che lasciò affatto il modo usato e fu con lui pieno di rispetto e di ossequio. E tutti sanno di quanto peso debba reputarsi il giudizio del Vaccà, uomo nelle scienze mediche valentissimo oltre quello che dir si possa. Reca al Catellacci grande onore anche l'aver tutti i successori nella cattedra aver anche adottato il libro, come quello che è per i giovani il più adatto che s conosca fra noi. Lasciò gran desiderio di vederlo tutto alla luce, perché dalla prima parte si faceva ragione del resto".

146See Regolo Lippi, *Tributo ai meriti del fu Prof. Catellacci reso dal collega Regolo Lippi e dedicato all'illustr. e rever. Signor Giuseppe Grazzini canonico proposto della metropolitana e commissario de' due II. e RR. Ospedali di S. M. Nuova, e Bonifazio*, (Florence: Ciardetti, 1827).

147Atto Vannucci, *Biografia*, 20 and Regolo Lippi, *Tributo*, 17–18.

deplore the recent loss of his early poetic compositions in Latin that were – according to
Vannucci and Lippi – still extant among his drafts in Pisa in the 1920s.[148] The *Corso*
Elementare, *Classata* and *Lauree* were also never published and their traces completely
disappeared in the following centuries. They were not listed among the patrimony
inherited by the Catellacci family at the beginning of the twentieth-century.[149] Therefore,
the little we know about Antonio Catellacci's production is drawn mostly from his early
bibliographers, Atto Vannucci e Regolo Lippi.

One dramatic event deeply affected Catellacci's last years: the sudden death of a
son. None of the sources refers either to his name nor the cause of his death, but they all
agree that the loss hastened Antonio's psycho-physical decay and led to his death on 7
April 1826.[150] Catellacci died from an aggressive form of ulcer that quickly degenerated
into a melena. Given the professor's continued exposure to dead bodies, a rigorous inquiry
and autopsy followed Catellacci's demise.[151] The 1827 edition *Istoria funebre della*
malattia del Dottore Antonio Catellacci gathers the scientific results of this study and
confirms the natural causes of the disease as the sudden degeneration of Catellacci's
health conditions and an enduring neglect of its symptoms.[152]

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148 Atto Vannucci, *Biografia*, 18 and Regolo Lippi, *Tributo*, 8.
149 Giuseppe Toniolo, *In memoria di Giuseppe Catellacci*, (Florence: Pellas 1903).
150 Regolo Lippi, *Tributo*, 20: "Tutte le facoltà della mente conservò insieme con le fisiche finché l'animo
   esacerbato non venne per la morte del figlio" .
151 Regolo Lippi, *Tributo*, 20.
152 Giacomo Barzellotti, *Istoria funebre della malattia del dottore Antonio Catellacci scritta dal prof.*
   Giacomo Barzellotti e letta in prolusione delle lezioni di medicina pratica per l'anno scolastico 1826–
   1827, (Florence: Ciardetti, 1838): "(...) A questo grado l'erpete pervenuta, richiamò le serie attenzioni
   del nostro Professore; e qualche compenso dietetico, qualche mite rimedio, qualche bagno domestico
   adoprava, e non senza un qualche vantaggio. Forse che una perseveranza in tal sistema di vita
   profilattico-curativa, se fosse stato deciso a mantenerla, lo avrebbe almen preservato da quel morbo che
   ne venne da poi, e che resisté ad ogni rimedio. Ma l'uomo medico, bisogna ben confessarlo, men severo
   custode della propria che dell'altrui salute, men sollecito di curare i propri guai che non l'altrui, e men
   credulo sull'avventura per l'efficacia di quei rimedi che altrui suggerisce; più confidente nelle forze della
   natura, lascia i propri mali nascenti nell'incuranza, e questi nel silenzio ingigantiscono, ruinano eppoi
   distruggono la propria salute e vita". A vivid description of Catellacci's disease can also be found in
   Giacomo Barzellotti, "Osservazioni medico-pratiche e anatomico-patologiche intorno il Melena", in
   Nuovo Giornale de' Letterati, XCVII, (1838), 45–61.

2- Translating Dante's Inferno: Birth and Development of Poetic Passion

Ode 49 of the 1823 edition of Giovanni Fantoni's *Poesie* is addressed to Anna Maria Berte and provides a remarkable testimony to Catellacci's professional reputation in the last years of his life:

> *E Catellacci che sovente fura*
> *gli egri di morte all'orgogliosa furia.*[153]

What was less known, then as now, was the passionate classicist hidden behind the famous physician. Since early childhood and his studies at the *Seminario di Firenze*, ancient languages always exerted a strong attraction for Catellacci. Paradoxical as it may seem, this passion for the classical world reached its fulfillment only at a later stage in Catellacci's career and in a rather unconventional form, which the Latin translation of Dante's masterpiece undoubtedly is.

The author's *Preface* to *Inferno* enlightens many aspects of the text, including its origin and development. Catellacci tells his readers that his work was inspired by the announcement of a public competition for the erection of a monument to the poet in Santa Croce square.[154] The translation of the first *cantica* was completed in thirteen months, from February 1817 to 29 March 1818 and was the outcome of his intellectual leisure, his restoring distraction from daily strain.[155]

153Giovanni Fantoni, *Poesie di Giovanni Fantoni Toscano, fra gli Arcadi Labindo* (Pisa: Nuova Tipografia, 1800), 51.

154Is the same *manifesto* which has also brought Leopardi to compose the canzone *Sopra il Monumento di Dante* (1818).

155See Antonio Catellacci, *L'Inferno di Dante, ossia la Prima Cantica della Divina Commedia tradotto e*

Although Catellacci explicitly acknowledges the usefulness of Alessandro

Vellutello's commentary, his Latin translation is based on the original Italian text as

presented by Pompeo Venturi in his 1732 edition.[156] According to the *Preface*,

Catellacci's reasons for undertaking such a demanding task were two-fold. He sought not

only to celebrate the poet by making his masterpiece available to non-Italian speakers, but

also to actively contribute to a better explanation of a text the meaning of which was often

obscure and difficult to grasp.[157] In the preface, Dante is said to have a succinct writing

style that more closely resembles Demosthenes' concision than Cicero's verbose

eloquence. When combined with the employment of an often arcane vocabulary (*parole

omai antiquate*), this characteristic of the text contributes to problems of comprehension

which are testified by the early spread of exegetical works such as introductions, essays

and commentaries.[158]

From Pietro di Dante to Jacopo della Lana, from Boccaccio to Benvenuto da

Imola, the *Commedia* has often been paraphrased, explained and clarified, and even the

early Latin translations of the text were aimed at helping a reader better understand the

text. Catellacci was aware of not only both Matteo Ronto's and Giovanni da Serravalle's

schiarito a senso preciso di frase in versi eroici latini corrispondenti dal Dottore Antonio Catellacci, pubblico Professore di Natomia e di Fisiologia nella I. e R. Università di Pisa, (Pisa: Prosperi, 1819), 21–22.

156 Dante Alighieri, *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri con la nuova Esposizione di Alessandro Vellutello*, (Venice: Marcolini, 1544). Dante Alighieri, *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri col commento del P. Pompeo Venturi*, (Lucca: Nistri, 1732).

157 Antonio Catellacci, *L'Inferno di Dante*, 11:   "In nome del Poeta fiorentino, autore della Divina Commedia, la cui prima cantica, ossia l'Inferno, ho tentato di tradurre a senso preciso di frase, e di schiarire in versi eroici latini corrispondenti a quelli delle terzine di Dante, ad oggetto di facilitarne, con questo mezzo dilettevole ed a mio credere il più idoneo, l'intelligenza, e di estenderla ai letterati di tutto il mondo, specialmente Cristiano, che amino conoscere i pregi della lingua e della poesia Italiana, è sì grande e di sì alto livello che onora l'Italia moderna, come quello di Virgilio onorò già l'antica, e quello di Omero la Grecia, prima madre delle lettere, delle arti e delle scienze".

158 Antonio Catellacci, *L'Inferno di Dante*, 14: "Tutto questo effetto sentimentale si prova naturalmente dal lettore di Dante quando però egli non incontri, come sovente accade, difficoltà e quasi acciampi nella facile e retta intelligenza del testo, il quale oltre le notate caratteristiche , una ne presenta, quasi sua particolare, che consiste nell'esprimere spesso dei sentimenti alquanto reconditi, sì per le parole omai antiquate, e per le mutazioni che ha subite la lingua dopo i tempi in cui scrisse l'Autore".

Latin translations of the text, but also of Carlo d'Aquino's work.[159] In his 1728 edition, the Jesuit priest published an incomplete translation of the *Commedia*, wherein he deliberately censored all of the Dante's invectives against people, places and institutions (*una elegante traduzione, per timore mutila, in verso eroico latino*).[160] The sections of the text that were left untranslated by d'Aquino were retrieved, translated and published by Francesco Testa in 1835, twenty-six years after Catellacci's publication of the *Inferno.*

In 1819, the last comprehensive translation was published by Matteo Ronto (1427/ 1431). There is reason to believe that Catellacci aimed to provide the first organic translation of the *Commedia* into Latin after the Renaissance. Although there are no drafts of the remaining two *cantiche* among those literary documents Catellacci left upon his death, there is evidence that Catellacci planned a broader project that included both *Purgatory* and *Paradise.* My conjecture, indeed, is that the exegetical yet popularizing goal of his *Inferno* – clearly stated in the *Preface* – implies that a complete translation of Dante's text might have been planned by Catellacci, but was brusquely interrupted by his death only few years after the publication of the *Inferno.*[161] This project, however, was not originally meant to be poetic.

According to the *Preface*, the Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia* was originally planned as prose, but the author's solid familiarity with hexameter – harkening back to his early studies at the *Seminario* – proved more suitable.[162] The noble goal of

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159 Antonio Catellacci, *L'Inferno di Dante*, 9–10.
160 Antonio Catellacci, *L'Inferno di Dante*, 18.
161 We have, indeed, to bear in mind that his duty as University Professor hindered a continuous and devoted commitment on Catellacci's part to the Latin translation.
162 Antonio Catellacci, *L'Inferno di Dante*, 20–21: "Questo alvor, tentato in prosa, oltreché pedestre ed inameno, fu trovato più malagevole di quello che mi immaginava; e continuando a stare alla parola, mi riusciva più difficile il tradurre che stando alla frase; e questa mi accadeva di trovare più facilmente corrispondente in verso che in prosa. Memore perciò de' primi miei giovanili studi, ed esercitato ne' versi mnemonici latini, tentai di fare una versione metrica latina, quasi commentario perpetuo del testo di Dante, che a questo corrispondesse senso per senso, parola per parola".

Catellacci's translation was immediately acknowledged by his contemporaries. Vincenzo Poggioli's review praised Catellacci for undertaking such a difficult task for the benefit reading public and the wider circulation of Dante's text.[163] The wide diffusion of Dante's masterpiece among scholars was also the aim of Bertoldi and Ronto's translations, but Catellacci's text goes beyond mere accessibility. Indeed, there is a marked desire to draw connections between the Latin and Italian poetic productions. A glorious Italian literature is presented as the natural continuation of the Latin and is contextualized within a time frame that crosses centuries and involves continuous artistic improvement. Catellacci is unequivocal when he asserts that Virgil's poetry, the pinnacle of Roman literary culture, is overtaken by the *Divina Commedia* which combines the artistic heritage of antiquity with Dante's inventive mastery.[164] As such, a Latin translation of Dante's text strengthens the joint between past and future and projects Italian literary culture into a harsh contest between national literatures and national identities. This irreversible process of nationalization is firmly rooted in the context of the Napoleonic Wars.

In the age of the political restoration that followed the Congress of Vienna (1815), Catellacci sought to counterbalance Italy's political feebleness with an awareness that a marked cultural Italian identity already existed with deep roots in classical Latinity and hope for glory in the centuries to come.

163Vincenzo Poggioli, "L'Inferno di Dante, ossia la prima cantica della Divina Commedia tradotto dal Dottore Antonio Catellacci", in *Effemeridi letterarie di Roma*, I, (1820), 9–18: "Loderemo, pria d'ogni altra cosa, la buona volontà del traduttore di facilitare con questo mezzo l'intelligenza di Dante specialmente all'estero, poiché siam certi che il duro volgo, cui disseta la Vistola o la foce del Danubio, o la fonte del Reno, avvezzo a parlare cogl'italiani un latino plateale e bastardo saprà, grazie al Catellacci, un che del Divino Poeta, che fin'ora le orecchie neppure gli penetrava".

164Antonio Catellacci, *L'Inferno di Dante*, 12: "Il nostro Dante è pure il primo, che sorge ad un tratto sublime della tenebrosa ignoranza della decaduta Italia, che perduto avea coll'impero del mondo alla fine ancora il decoro della sua avita lingua, già trasformata in un'altra, e che valendosi per suo esempio, e per sua norma soltanto, della brevità filosofica e dello stile di Virgilio, e non già della lingua di lui, superò di gran lunga il suo gran maestro che però rispettò sempre con pietosa e filiale riconoscenza".

1- Faithfulness to the Original Text

One characteristic of Catellacci's translation stands out: a constant, almost obsessive attempt to faithfully replicate Dante's original text. Catellacci's edition of *Inferno* includes a facing translation that forces the reader to look at Dante's vernacular text because it alone provides a thorough numbering of lines. This aspect not only slows down a compared reading of the original and the translation, but also presupposes a rigorous faithfulness of the translation to the original. Indeed, even the number of lines is respected. A strict adherence to Dante is evident from the very beginning of his translation, where the syntagm *e quanto a dir qual era* presents both an adverb (*quanto*) and an pronoun (*qual*).[165]

The Latin language offers an array of different solutions for translating this passage without necessarily rendering the alternation *quanto/ qual* (*quam durum fari*, *quam grave dictu*, *quam grave referre*), yet Catellacci adheres to the original text and prioritizes Dante's syntax over a more idiomatic Latin construction: *et quam, qualis erat, mihi nunc est discere durum.* This faithfulness to the original is both lexical and syntactical and evident in many passages throughout the text: from the systematic translation of all of Dante's interjections and adversative conjunctions to the rendering of the figures of speech.[166] Frequently, Catellacci's modifies his translation by adding

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165 *Inf.*, I, 4.

166 As in *Inf.*, I, 8 and 13 where the adversative *ma* is translated with *ast*, and in *Inf.*, XVI, 118, where the interjection *Ahi quanto cauti gli uomini esser denno* is rendered as follows: *Oh quantum est, hominum sint pectora cauta, necesse*; As in the case of the hendiadys in *Inf.*, I, 78 where *principio e cagion* is

material not present in the *Commedia.* A clear example of this tendency can be found in *Inf.*, I, 88–90, where Dante employs an hendiadys (*ch'ella mi fa tremar le vene e i polsi*) which Catellacci keeps in his translation (*hac mihi vena omnis tremit atque arteria visa*).

By presenting the same figure of speech employed by Dante, Catellacci is forced to expand the original invocation *famoso saggio* into a broadened description, *o sapiens super aethera notus*, in order to create a full hexameter in line 89. In *Inf.*, XX, both the image of Dante crying in line 25 (*Certo io piangea*) and the following harsh reproach by Virgil in line 27 (*Ancor se' tu de li altri sciocchi*) are rendered with remarkable faithfulness: *Certe ego plorabam*, *tu ne quoque in numero stultorum es dignus haberi.* Deviations occur only when the metrical scanning is at risk, as happens in line 31 of the same canto, where Virgil draws the pilgrim's attention to the figure of Amphiaraus: *Drizza la testa, drizza, e vedi a cui/ s'aperse a li occhi d'i Teban la terra.* The triple imperative (*Drizza la testa, drizza e vedi*) is replicated in the Latin translation, but requires the addition of a fourth verbal form (*tolle caput*) to fulfill the hexameter. Therefore, Catellacci's translation of the passage reads as follows: *derige, tolle caput, modo derige, et aspice tellus/ quem Thebanorum ante oculos adaperta voravit.*[167]

If metrical requirements were the only reason for this insertion, Catellacci's translation raises more than one perplexity. By removing *tolle caput* from the passage, line 31 would become a pentameter (*derige, modo derige, et aspice tellus*) lacking the direct object required by the transitive verb *derigere.* Catellacci could have solved this hurdle by inserting the word *caput*, a disyllabic noun present in Dante's original text (*la testa*). In fact, without the pleonastic verb *tolle*, line 33 would have been not only

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translated with *causa principiumque* as well as line 83, where the original *vagliami'l lungo studio e'l grande amore* is rendered with *longum prosit studium mihi, magnus amorque.*
167*Inf.*, XX, 31–32.

complete, but also more faithful to Dante's text, with three verbal forms instead of four:

derige caput, modo derige, et aspice tellus.

In contrast, when a repeated verb causes metrical problems, Catellacci faithfully

translates it into Latin. An example of this tendency can be found in *Inf.*, XXI, 105, where

the devil Malacoda dissuades Scarmiglione from tormenting the two pilgrims with his

hook: *Posa, posa, Scarmiglione!* The imperative form *posa* is rendered in Latin by the

verb *dissuade*, which is repeated twice, as in the original text. The verb *dissuadere*, with

its meaning of "refraining from," has a complete meaning only if followed by a second

verb, and Catellacci completes the phrase with *ne ferias* ("refrain from harming"). The

insertion of *ne ferias* alters Dante's original syntax, which also refrains from stating the

object of verb *pone,* but does not complete the hexameter. This brings Catellacci to

substitute the vocative "Scarmiglione" with a more convoluted paraphrase. As a

consequence, the reference to the devil bears an etymological explanation of its name.

Instead of a hypothetical vocative *Scarmiglione* (from *Scarmiglio-onis*), Catellacci

defines the demon as the one with "disheveled hair": *desine, desine, ne ferias incompte*

capillos.[168]

The same faithfulness toward Dante's original text is also apparent in *Inf.*, XXII,

40, where the doomed souls of the fifth circle are described as asking another devil,

Rubicante, to tear apart Ciampolo's skin: *O Rubicante, fa che tu li metti/ li unghioni a*

dosso, sì che tu lo scuoi! The peremptory tone of the assertion is not rendered with a

single imperative, but rather with a combination of an imperative form followed by a

exhortative subjunctive: *fa che tu li metti.* In his Latin translation, Catellacci refrains from

employing a more straightforward imperative (*inicie*) and instead replicates the same

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168*Inf.*, XXI, 105.

formula as the original text (*fa che*). The result echoes Dante's text, although the enjambement reduces part of its incisiveness: *O Rubicans magnos dorso fac illius ungues/ inicias*.[169]

One last example of linguistic faithfulness worth noting is found in *Inf.*, XXXIII, the penultimate canto of the first *cantica*. In lines 4–6, Count Ugolino presents himself to the two pilgrims and narrates the story which eventually led him to damnation: *Poi cominciò: "tu vuo' ch'io rinovelli/ disperato dolor che 'l cor mi preme/ già pur pensando, pria ch'io ne favelli.*" Catellacci translates this passage as follows: *Inde incoepit; aves me nunc renovare dolorem/ atrocem, qui oppressa gravat praecordia, vel cum/ mente ipsum recolo, et referant mea verba priusquam.* Line 4 presents a remarkable degree of faithfulness to the original text. The translator not only maintains the original syntax of the passage (*Poi cominciò – Inde incoepit*; *tu vuo' ch'io rinovelli/ disperato dolor – aves me nunc renovare dolorem/ atrocem*), but also echoes Dante's lexicon by employing related vocabulary (*rinnovelli – renovare*; *disperato dolor – dolorem atrocem*). Even t the enjambement in line 4 replicates Dante's rhetorical device.

Catellacci's strict adherence to Dante's *Inferno* is one of the most praiseworthy characteristics of his translation. Far from weighing the text down, his efforts reflect the author's intention of making Dante's masterpiece available to non-Italian readers. His somewhat pedantic dependency on the syntax and vocabulary of the original text, however, also brought Catellacci to face a number of hurdles that partly compromise the translation's intelligibility and its artistic value.

169An alternative solution would have prevented the enjambement. If, instead of the verb *inicias*, we had the less effective *ponas*, the line would read *O Rubicans dorso fac illius ungues ponas*. This translation would both reflect the original content and meet the metrical requirements of the Latin hexameter.

Despite his apparent mastery of Latin, forged on a rigorous study of ancient writers, Catellacci's cultural background is not that of a classicist. This unique background as well as his continuous attempt to echo Dante's syntax and lexicon, has a considerable impact on his rendering of the *Inferno*. The first example of a certain clumsiness in translating the original text can be found in *Inf.*, I, 1 where Dante's text (*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita*) is elegantly rendered as *Sub medium vitae cursum.* This simple translation would leave the hexameter metrically incomplete, and Catellacci is forced to insert a syntagm (*quam vivimus*) that is not present in the original text. The addition not only weighs down the passage, but also fails to contribute a better understanding of the passage: *Sub medium vitae cursum, quam vivimus, atra*.[170]

The same canto also portrays the three beasts that Virgil and Dante meet in the dark wood: a leopard, a lion and a she-wolf. In the poet's description, the she-wolf is described as a contrast between her leanness and her intense craving: *Ed una lupa, che di tutte brame/ sembiava carca ne la sua magrezza.*[171] In his translation, Catellacci addresses this apparent contradiction. While the beast's thinness (*magrezza*) is rendered by the redundant, yet fitting ablative *macie suprema*, her unstoppable anger is translated with a rather clumsy metaphor of a *gurgling stomach.* In Catellacci's translation, the beast is "led by the rumbling sound of its stomach"; a description that alters neither the meaning of the passage nor its metrical scanning, but does not mirror the allusiveness of Dante's original text: *et mihi, se immittens in me, lupa visa deinceps/ concita latratu stomachi,*

170*Inf.*, I, 1.
171*Inf.*, I, 49–50.

macieque suprema.[172]

A similar instance of questionable translation can be found later on in the same canto. In *Inf.*, I, 56, Dante describes his mood as that of one who is eager to gain, but after the appearance of the three beasts, he weeps and is afflicted in his thoughts as the she-wolf drives him away from the hill: *E qual è quei che volontieri acquista/ e giugne 'l tempo che perder lo face/ che 'n tutti suoi pensier piange e s'attrista/ tal mi fece la bestia sanza pace/ che, venendomi 'ncontro, a poco a poco/ mi ripigneva là dove 'l sol tace.*[173] If we look at Catellacci's translation, we see that lines 55–56 are rendered as follows: *qualis qui ex animo lucrum facit, huncque deinceps/ iacturam ut faciat tempus compellit iniquum.* The conjunction *ut* replaces the relative pronoun *che*. The Latin text renders line 56, "and finally the evil time *brings him to lose*," as a consecutive subordinate clause. *Iacturam ut faciat tempus compellit iniquum* can be literally translated as follows: "the evil time *makes him incur in a loss.*" Dante's text does not posit causal link between the subject (*'l tempo*) and the predicate *perder lo face.* These two elements are jointed together by the lexeme *che*, which can also introduce the second element of a consecutive sentence (*così* [...] *che*). In Dante's passage, however, the *che* is a simple relative pronoun. It seems quite clear that Catellacci misinterpreted the relative pronoun and translated it as the second part of a consecutive sentence. This misinterpretation resulted in a translation that does not reflect Dante's text. The original meaning of the passage is more straightforward and includes a relative rather than a consecutive: *'l tempo che perder lo face/* "the time when he loses".

The beginning of *Inf.* V presents another, similar example of flawed translation

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172*Inf.*, I, 49–50.
173*Inf.*, I, 55–60.

probably born both of a lack of familiarity with written Latin and the zealous desire to strictly adhere to Dante's text. In lines 16–20, Minos reproaches Dante harshly: *"O tu che vieni al doloroso ospizio"/ disse Minòs a me quando mi vide/ lasciando l'atto di cotanto offizio/ "guarda com'entri e di cui tu ti fide/ non t'inganni l'ampiezza de l'intrare!"* Lines 16 and 19–20 present Minos' utterance, which pivots on line 19 (*guarda com'entri e di cui tu ti fide*). Catellacci translates this line as *Conspice qui ingrederis, quin cui te credere fidis*. In the Latin translation, the original lines 16 and 19–20 are combined together, and this helps the readability of the entire passage. It keeps Minos' speech in a continuous block instead of fragmenting the speech as in Dante's original.

What causes more trouble is Catellacci's choice of *quin*; a lexeme that not only has no equivalent in the original text, but also markedly changes the tone of the passage. Its meaning, "in particular" or "especially," draws the reader's attention to Virgil, Dante's guide. This line can be translated as follows: "Oh you, who came here, pay attention on the way you entered this place and *particularly* in whom you trust." This emphasis on Virgil has no basis in Dante's original text and leaves the reader quite dumbfounded. Were this slight adaptation for metrical requirements, it could more easily have been solved by replacing the adverb *quin* with the enclitic conjunction *que*, thereby completing the hexameter and minimally altering the original content (*Conspice qui ingrederis que cui te credere fidis*).

I believe, however, that a lack of familiarity with written Latin better explains Catellacci choice as well as a number of other, lesser inaccuracies such as the enjambements in lines 22–23 and the translation of the original *Stavvi Minòs orribilmente, e ringhia* with *Horribilis visu Minos, qui vincit ob iram/ hic sedet.*[174] Minos'

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[174]*Inf.*, V, 4–5.

unstoppable anger is only implied in Dante's text. It is likely that Catellacci referred to it (*ob iram*) only to properly complete the hexameter, but again, there were alternatives. Had the translator rephrased the line and used the same verb as Dante (*ringhiare*), he would have provided a more faithful translation that still satisfied the metre: *Horribilis Minos, qui ringitur acriter visu.*

Catellacci's lack of familiarity with written Latin had a strong impact on his translation and is found throughout his *Inferno.* Among the many examples that this text offers, I have selected two instances to demonstrate. The first in *Inf.*, X, where in lines 40–42, the soul of Farinata is depicted as contemptuous and disdainful when asking Dante to reveal the identity of his ancestors: *Com'io al piè de la sua tomba fui/ guardommi un poco, e poi, quasi sdegnoso/ mi dimandò: "Chi fuor li maggior tui?"* The entire *terzina* pivots on the adjective *sdegnoso*. Farinata's almost impudent pride and scornful attitude towards his political opponents deeply characterizes the fictitious representation of the noble Ghibelline. In Catellacci's translation, this adjective is rendered with *stomachosus*, and the entire passage is translated as follows: *Atque ut ego ad tumulum perveni cominus imum/ respexit me paulisper, stomachosus et inde/ ipse mihi dixit: quibus es maioribus usus?* Given the context in which it is employed, the adjective *stomachosus* seems quite inappropriate. It does not echo the semantic value of the original adjective. If *Sdegnoso*, in fact, also defines a choleric attitude, it mainly refers to the haughty pride of the damned soul who does not hesitate to claim his dues for having saved the city of Florence from destruction.[175] The Latin *stomachosus*, however, means *exclusively* "wrathful, irritable" and drastically reduces the moral implications in the original text. The idiomatic nature of

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175 *"Ma fu' io solo, là dove sofferto/ fu per ciascun di tòrre via Fiorenza/ colui che la difesi a viso aperto"* *Inf.*, X, 91–93.

this adjective lends it an informal and colloquial register that is in strong contrast to Dante's lexicon in this passage.[176]

The second example is found in *Inf.* XX, the only canto in the entire *Commedia* with proper *incipit* independent from the context in which it is set: *Di nova pena mi conven far versi/ e dar matera al ventesimo canto/ de la prima canzon, ch'è d'i sommersi.* The doomed souls of the *Inferno* are metaphorically described as "submerged people" (*sommersi*). Catellacci adopts the term *mersos.* The attempt to maintain Dante's lexicon (*sommersi/ mersos*) brings the translator to employ a verb – which in the original text is *è* – in the metrical form of a disyllabic iamb. In his translation, Catellacci opts for *pandit*: *Nunc opus est aliis de poenis pangere versus/ principis et cantus partem supplere vicenam/ materia pandit qui mersos Tartaro in imo.*[177] *Pandere* is a transitive verb meaning to "unfold" or "spread out." It only vaguely echoes Dante's text. In the original passage, the literal meaning of lines 2–3 is the following: "I must give matter for the twentieth canto of the first cantica which *belongs* to the damned." Dante's use of verb *essere* (*ch'è*) is here clearly metaphorical since the *Inferno* does not "belong" to the tormented souls. This verb can be translated into English as "contains, is home to" as well as "treats of" the tormented souls. Catellacci's interpretation is, therefore, quite difficult to explain. The verb *pandere* is frequently employed in its reflexive form, but a reformulation of the sentence with the syntagm *se pandit ad mersos* would result in a hypermetrical line. The meaning of "showing" or "displaying" might also be conveyed by verb *aperire*, and *aperire* would meet the metrical requirements: *materia aperit qui mersos Tartaro in imo.* The most appropriate solution to imply the meaning of the main

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[176]Furthermore, the adjective *stomachosus* seems to be uncommon in classical texts, and only be found in the following instances: Hor., *Ep.*, 1, 15, 12; Cic., *De Or.*, 2, 69, 279; Cic., *Brut.*, 67, 236; Cic., *Fam.*, 3, 11, 25; Sen., *Ira*, 1, 4, 2.

[177]*Inf.*, XX, 1–3.

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verb would have been to present the same construction with the plural genitive, as the Italian poet does in the original text: *materia qui mersorum Tartaro in imo.* Both these corrections would have been acceptable and would have meant a more intelligible word choice without compromising the hexameter.

Catellacci's effort to undertake a translation as demanding as Dante's *Commedia*, is certainly praiseworthy, but his lack of familiarity with translations into Latin results in a number of instances where the overall understanding of the text could be at risk without a direct access to Dante's *Commedia*. This aspect becomes even more central when the translation not only causes interpretative perplexities but also leads to evident misunderstandings of the original text.

3- Misinterpretations of the Text

While frightened by the leopard, the pilgrim Dante finds comfort and encouragement in the early sun that casts light on the dark wood and its inhabitants: *Temp'era dal principio del mattino/ e 'l sol montava 'n sù con quelle stelle/ ch'eran con lui quando l'amor divino/ mosse di prima quelle cose belle/ sì ch'a bene sperar m'era cagione/ di quella fiera a la gaetta pelle/ l'ora del tempo e la dolce stagione.*[178] The light of early morning, brings Dante to describe himself as confident enough to overcome the spotted beast: *sì ch'a bene sperar* (...) *di quella fiera a la gaetta pelle.* The leopard is described as the creature with a bright pelt (*a la gaetta pelle*), although a more correct wording would have been *da la gaetta pelle* for *da* is the appropriate preposition to specify a description and is translated into English by the preposition *with* (the creature

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178*Inf.*, I, 37–43

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with the spotted coat). Dante's choice of *a* is a metrical consideration for the consonant *d*

would have prohibited the contraction between the final vowel of *fiera* and the

preposition *a*, and this would have resulted in a hypermetric line with twelve syllables (*di*

quella fiera da la gaetta pelle) instead of eleven (*di quella fiera a la gaetta pelle*).

The original text from which Catellacci made his translation is an edition and

commentary by Pompeo Venturi in 1732, and this text does not include a preposition

between the noun *fiera* and the article *la*. The text reads as follows: *di quella fiera la*

gaetta pelle. Although this line is metrically impeccable, it raises interpretive difficulties

because without prepositions the syntagm *la gaetta pelle* becomes the subject of the entire

assertion, along with *l'ora del tempo e la dolce stagione*. As a consequence, the

translation of the passage would drastically change from an illogical "*the spotted coat*, the

hour of the day, and the sweet season gave me fair hopes of that creature," to "the hour of

the day and the sweet season gave me fair hopes of that creature *with the spotted coat*."[179]

In spite of the problems with Venturi's passage, Catellacci faithfully adheres to the

eighteenth-century edition and provides a translation that diverges significantly from

Dante's original: *Ut bene sperandi praesens me causa moveret/ illa ferae pellis laeto*

variata colore/ temporis hora, simul tempestas suavis et anni. Catellacci's misleading

translation demonstrates a lack of rigorous re-reading and correction of the text. A

revision of this passage would likely have brought Catellacci to question his Italian text

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179Pompeo Venuri's interpretation of the passage is not shared by any of modern interpreters of Dante's
  Commedia, and can be easily criticized for the contradiction to which it leaves. The beast's spotted coat
  constitutes a description of the animal that by no means could help encourage Dante, as the raising sun
  and the springy season do. Quite the reverse, the same description (*di pel macolato era coverta*) appears
  already in line 33, where–according to Dante–the sun's light has not cheered up the pilgrim yet, and
  deepens the reader into a dimension of fear and terror as it echoes the pilgrim fright when he first saw
  the beast. Given how the description of the leopard is employed by Dante, the specification of its coat as
  spotted contributes to a better visualization of the beast itself, but cannot constitute a reason for the
  pilgrim to restore confidence. As such, the syntagm *la gaetta pelle* has to refer to a description of the
  leopard and should not be taken as a subject of the assertion (*l'ora del tempo e la dolce stagione*).

and consult other editions of Dante's *Commedia.* Such a correction, moreover, could quite easily have been accomplished by rephrasing line 42 only.[180]

One last example of a misunderstanding of the original text can also be found in *Inf.*, I. In line 106, Virgil concludes his monologue by forecasting the intervention of a divine greyhound (*feltro*) who will bring Italy to salvation: *Di quella umile Italia fia salute/ per cui morì la vergine Cammilla/ Eurialo e Turno e Niso di ferute.*[181] Line 106 employs a verbal form – *fia* – that is a future tense from the ancient infinitive "fiere," a transliteration of the classical Latin "fieri." Catellacci erroneously translates this verbal form with a exhortative subjunctive instead of a future: *illius Italiae sit spesque salusque iacentis.* This mistake, however, cannot be blamed on Venturi's edition which does indeed include *fia* and not *sia*. The translation of *fia* as *sit*, markedly changes Virgil's original tone and changes his words from a resolute statement ("he *will* be the salvation of Italy") into a wish ("*may* he be the salvation of Italy"). The verbal form *sit* could easily been replaced with the future tense *erit* (*illius Italiae erit spesque salusque iacentis*), but the isography between the verbs *fia* and *sia* makes the reader hypothesize a case of misspelling. Unconsciously, Catellacci might indeed have trivialized the disused *fia* in the frequently employed *sia*; a verbal form that alters the original tense (from future to subjunctive), but keeps its original meaning. This observation is merely speculative, but it is supported by the fact that *sia* translates the Latin *sit*, and this reinforces the hypothesis of a banal misspelling of Dante's original text.

180A translation of the line in *fugendi ex fera variata colore pelle* would have, for instance, both met metrical requirements and offered the correct syntactical structure of the original sentence.
181*Inf.*, I, 106–108.

4- Linguistic Refinement: Dante's Inferno as a Work-in-Progress

Although Catellacci's strict adherence to Dante and his lack of familiarity with written Latin affects his rendering of the original text, his translation of the *Inferno* also presents a distinct poetical sensibility. There is, indeed, a marked improvement in artistic refinement from canto one to canto thirty-four, and the more the translator invested himself into the elaborated weaving of Dante's text, the more the translation became sophisticated, refined and enriched with rhetorical devices.

The first nine cantos of the *Inferno* share one common characteristic: a pedantic adherence, both linguistic and syntactic, to the original text. The reader has to wait until the tenth canto to see a hint of Catellacci's personal touch on his translation. In lines 127–129 of *Inf.*, X, Virgil's intervention concludes the episode of Farinata. He invites the pilgrim to remember the doomed's words as Dante continues his journey throughout the afterworld: *"La mente tua conservi quel ch'udito/ hai contra te", mi comandò quel saggio/ "e ora attendi qui", e drizzò 'l dito.* Catellacci's text translates the *terzina* faithfully, but if we look at the rendering of lines 127–128 (*mente tua memori haec nunc exhaudita reconde/ sic inimica tibi; hoc sapiens mihi iussit amicus*), we find an embellishment in his Latin translation. Catellacci creates a contrast between the threat of Farinata's premonitions and the reassuring presence of "wise" Virgil (*quel saggio*). In his rendering, the translator uses the same adjective as Dante (*sapiens*), but metrical constraints force the completion of the line with a short syllable and a final spondee. To this end, Catellacci employs a second adjective, *amicus,* both redundant in terms of content and missing in the original text. This insertion, however, also creates a strong

contrast with the adjective *inimica* in the same line and a chiastic structure (*sic inimica tibi; hoc sapiens mihi iussit amicus*) where the opposition between Farinata's baleful premonition and Virgil's encouraging words is emphasized.

Apparently, it took Catellacci quite some time to get his bearings while translating into Latin. From the second half of the *Inferno* onwards, examples of linguistic refinement occur more and more frequently and improve the overall quality of his translation. This inverted tendency is evident in two instances in canto XV. In lines 49–54, when Dante's meets Brunetto, the doomed soul asks the pilgrim about the reason for the journey in the afterworld. In his answer, Dante hints at his youth when he found himself lost in the dark wood: *avanti che l'età mia fosse piena.*[182] Given the faithfulness to the original text that has so deeply permeated the previous cantos, a reader would expect a word-for-word translation. On the contrary, Catellacci presents a more convoluted phrasing whereby the pilgrim's age described as "not yet having reached the beginning of mature adulthood" (*priusquam/ aetas haec mea principium scandisset adultae*).[183]

In the same canto, Brunetto condemns the Florentine people and invites Dante to purge himself of his faults. In lines 61–63, the pilgrim's fellow citizens are described as ungrateful and malignant as well as having an aspect of rudeness due to their rural origins (*che discese di Fiesole ab antico*). The Florentine people are said to have "something of the mountain and of the rock," (*Ma quello ingrato popolo maligno ... e tiene ancor del monte e del macigno*). Line 63 is particularly difficult to translate into Latin because a literal rendering (*habet adhuc quid montis saxique agresti*) would result in metrical

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182*Inf.*, XV, 51.
183*Inf.*, XV, 51–52.

problems and markedly weighed down the text. Instead, Catellacci rephrases the entire passage and abandons Dante's original syntax and lexicon in favor of a more poetical rendering. He describes the Florentine people as hardhearted with rude emotions: *et montana gerit quoque nunc et saxea corda*.[184]

Catellacci's poetic sensibility is also clear in *Inf.*, XIX, where the incipit of the original text (*O Simon mago, o miseri seguaci*) is altered to include an elegant polyptoton (*O Simon Mage, Simonem miserique secuti*) that echoes the original assonance of consonant *s*. Furthermore, in line 69, the original's imperative form *sappi* is augmented and paraphrased into *Scire detur tibi*.[185] A similar example of polyptoton can also be found in lines 69–71 of canto XXII, where the laceration of Ciampolo di Navarra's body is translated with a remarkable poetic sensibility. In the original text, the demon Libicocco is described while grappling Ciampolo's arm with his prong: *E Libicocco "Troppo avem sofferto"/ disse; e preseli 'l braccio col runciglio/ sì che, stracciando, ne portò un lacerto*.[186] In his Latin translation, Catellacci combines lines 71–72 (*disse; e preseli 'l braccio col runciglio/ sì che, stracciando, ne portò un lacerto*) into one, single hexameter that not only faithfully reflects the original content, but also presents a double polyptoton (*arripit/ arrepti*, *laceratque/ lacertum*) skillfully framed in a chiastic structure: *bracchium et arripit, arrepti laceratque lacertum*.[187]

Catellacci's linguistic refinement evolves throughout the text and seems to reach its peak in *Inf.*, XXVI, a canto that testifies to a more mature familiarity with Latin versification as well as to an excessive attempt to ennoble his translation. If, indeed, the homoarcton of lines 80–81 (*s'io meritai di voi mentre ch'io vissi/ s'io meritai di voi assai*

184*Inf.*, XV, 63.
185*Inf.*, XIX, 69.
186*Inf.*, XXII, 69–71.
187*Inf.*, XXII, 70.

o poco) is beautifully respected (*si quid de vobis merui dum vita manebat/ si quidquam merui multumve parumve peregi*), the pilgrim's irrepressible desire to meet with the two doomed souls imprisoned in the fire is translated with an excessive refinement. In the original text, Dante's pressing request is hyperbolic: "I beg you greatly Master, so that my prayers may be a thousand" (*maestro, assai ten priego/ e ripriego, che 'l priego vaglia mille*).[188] If we look at Catellacci's translation, we see that his rendering goes far beyond the limits imposed by the hexameter: *Te precor, atque precor rursus, prexque una sit instar/ millanae.* The syntagm *instar millanae* finds no equivalent in the original text. Indeed, it even causes the line to exceed the hexameter and creates an enjambement. It is likely that Catellacci employed this rather convoluted phrasing in order to refine his translation. The syntagm *instar millanae* might indeed have been replaced with the adverb *milies*, and such a rendering would have completed the line (*Te precor, atque precor rursus, prexque una sit milies*) and kept its original content.

Catellacci's choice seems due to his need to embellish and rhetorically enrich his translation, but if in this particular instance his excess of refinement weighs the text down with a enjambement, it also seems clear that throughout the translation Catellacci acquired an ever-increasing familiarity with Latin versification as well as a more marked poetic sensibility.

188*Inf.*, XXVI, 65–66.

Chapter Four: Gaetano Dalla Piazza

Section One: Life and Work

1- From Schio to Leipzig: the Tormented Birth of a Translation

Tra i risultati più cospicui e insieme meno noti della tradizione classicistica vicentina nella prima metà del sec. XIX è da annoverare senza dubbio la versione Latina integrale della "Divina Commedia" di Dante, compiuta dall'ab. Gaetano dalla Piazza[189].

Gaetano Dalla Piazza's *Divina Comoedia hexametris Latinis reddita* represents one of the most admirable and, at the same, time lesser-known literary productions of the nineteenth-century's *Scuola Vicentina*.[190] Indeed, its relatively unknown author did not even manage to see his masterpiece published before his death, in 1844, as the manuscript was published only four years later in Leipzig by the German scholar Karl Witte.[191] In his contribution, Tullio Motterle rightly emphasizes two of the most remarkable merits of Dalla Piazza's translation of Dante: firstly, his rendering of the *Commedia* is comprehensive of the entire text and secondly, although it was still a manuscript by the time of its author's death, it was given the honor of being published by Karl Witte along

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189 Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano dalla Piazza traduttore di Dante*, (Sandrigo: Egida, 1993), 7.

190 The expression *Scuola Vicentina* refers to the remarkable flourishing of critical studies on Dante's poem and translations in and from Latin of episodes of the Commedia that have arose in the area of Vicenza in the nineteenth-century: Luigi Dalla Vecchia, *La morte del Conte Ugolino. Versione in versi esametri Latini*, (Venice: Melchiorre Fontana, 1864). Luigi Dalla Vecchia, *In obitum Dantis Allegherii. Epicedion. Appendix: Francisca Ariminensis, Ugolini mors, Matelda, Latinis carminibus redditae auctore eodem* (Vicenza: Staider, 1865). Sebastiano Rumor, *Il culto di Dante a Vicenza*, (Vicenza: Tipografia Vicentina, 1921). Giacomo Zanella, "La poetica nella Divina Commedia", in *Scritti vaii*, (Florence: Barbèra,1877), 1–47. Andrea Capparozzo, "Bibliografia dantesca vicentina", in *Dante e Vicenza*, *XIV maggio 1865*, (Vicenza: Accademia Olimpica, 1865). For a more accurate bibliography, see Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano dalla Piazza*, 14–17, from which these bibliographical references are drawn.

191 Gaetano Dalla Piazza, *Dantis Alligherii Divina Comoedia hexametris Latinis reddita ab abate Dalla Piazza vicentino. Praefatus est et vitam Piazzae adiecit Carolus Witte antecessor halensis.* (Leipzig: Barth, 1848).

with other illustrious scholars in Leipzig in 1848.[192] As of today, Dalla Piazza remains a

mostly unknown man of letters; the most authoritative sources from which we can draw

information about his life and works are Karl Witte's biography, the commendable work

by a nephew of Dalla Piazza, Agostino Manfrin Provedi, and the already mentioned work

by Tullio Motterle.[193]

Gaetano Dalla Piazza was born in Valdagno, in the province of Vicenza, on 31

July, 1768. Despite the modest status of his family, he managed to attend seminary in

Padua where he was first introduced to classical and philological studies by one of the

most renowned classicists at the time in north Italy: Valentino Chilesotti.[194] In 1789 Dalla

Piazza combined theological studies with the *studia humanitatis* and attended seminary in

Vicenza where he became priest in 1792. After a brief period as teacher of theology and

Italian literature at the same seminary (1795–1798) Dalla Piazza returned to Schio, a town

at twelve kilometers from his home little village Valdagno, where his family ran a fabric

manufacture and the young Gaetano was asked to help the business.

Because of the deaths of his father and brother in 1810 Dalla Piazza found himself

alone in running his family business, he kept working in the company for ten years, but in

1820 he finally sold the fabric factory and went back to Vicenza, where he gave all of his

192Only a translation of the first five cantos of the *Purgatorio* was published when Dalla Piazza was still alive, in 1844: *Quinque capitula ex Purgatorio Dantis Latinitate donata a Cajetano Dalla Piazza*, (Vicenza: Longo, 1844).

193Karl Witte, *Cajetani Dalla Piazza vita*, a Latin text that introduces the Latin translation of the *Commedia*, in *Dantis Alligherii*, 46–48. Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni storici sulla traduzione in esametri Latini della Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri eseguita dall'abate don Gaetano Dalla Piazza susseguiti dalla vita del Dalla Piazza*, (Venice: Visentini, 1882). But see also Giuseppe Gianesini, "Gaetano Dalla Piazza", in *Leogra*, (1880), 103–106. Domenico Maddalena, Giovanni Maria Corradi, Angelo Dal Salvo, *Glorie scledensi*, (Vicenza: San Giuseppe, 1902), 32–34. Alessandro Dalla Ca', *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, (Schio: Pasubio, 1935). Giovanni Mantese, *Memorie storiche della Chiesa vicentina*, V (1700–1866), (1982), 805–806. For a more thorough bibliography see Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano dalla Piazza*, 24, from which this bibliographical notes are drawn.

194Illustrious scholar of the early nineteenth century Italy, Valentino Chilesotti was particularly known for his studies on ancient rhetorics, one of which have enjoyed a durable success and are likely to have served as textbook on which the still young Dalla Piazza exerted his promising skills: Valentino Chilesotti, *Sopra l'eloquenza di alcuni padri greci e latini*, (Bassano: Roberti, 1851).

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possessions to charity and devoted himself to his old passion: the study of classics.[195] As a

pure intellectual amusement, in Vicenza Dalla Piazza undertook his first translation of an

ancient text: the *Odes* of Pindar from ancient Greek into modern Italian, but his

acquittance with scholars such as Francesco Testa and Leonardo Trissino brought him to

conceive a even more ambitious project: the Latin translation of Dante' *Divina*

Commedia.[196] Although already attempted by D'Aquino in 1728, a Latin comprehensive

translation of the *Commedia* was not only more demanding than that of Pindar's *Odes*, it

was also much more expensive to publish. Dalla Piazza's worries about his financial

constrains became even more pressing after the passing of Leonardo Trissino who offered

economic support for this publication, and brought Dalla Piazza to seek the help of

Alessandro Trissino, *Cavaliere di Malta* and brother of Leonardo. As testified by the

original dedication of the work that Provedi found among the translator's drafts,[197] Dalla

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195Domenico Maddalena-Giovanni Maria Corradi-Angelo Dal Salvo, *Glorie scledensi*, 32: "(...) educando la gioventù scledense con interesse ed amore, tanto che per lunghi anni durò grata la memoria del maestro Piazza".

196Gaetano Dalla Piazza, *Le odi di Pindaro*, I, *L'Olimpiche*, (Padua: Tipi del Seminario, 1836). The *Pizie* and *Nemea* I, where published singularly between 1833 and 1838. As seen in the first chapter of this work, Francesco Testa imposed himself as a refined classicist when completed and published the Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia* made by Carlo d'Aquino, in 1835. Heir of a noble and ancient family, the Count Leonardo Trissino owes his fame mostly to his friendship with Giacomo Leopardi who dedicated to him the *Canzone ad Angelo Mai* (1820). In this regard, see Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 9: "Il vicentino abate Don Gaetano Dalla Piazza, in età di oltre sessanta anni, ad incitamento del dott. Francesco Testa di Vicenza, tradusse in esametri latini uno dei primi Canti della Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri, in occasione di un matrimonio. Allettato dall'esito e stimolato dal dott. Testa, diede mano alla versione di altri Canti, collo intendimento di tradurre per intiero quelli dell'Inferno. Ma l'amore ch'egli pose in quel lavoro, lo trasse ad estenderlo alle altre Cantiche, e finì col voltare in esametri Latini tutto quel poema".

197Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 9: "A quale altra persona dovrò intitolare questo mio lungo lavoro latino, onde ho voltata in esametri la Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri, se non a Voi nobilissimo, egregio Conte Cavaliere, e per sangue e per cristiane cavalleresche virtù, degno fratello e ritratto fedele del tanto da me stimato ed amato fu co. Leonardo, a cui già lo aveva consacrato nel mio pensiero, ignaro del colpo cui la morte si preparava a mietere le mie speranze?" On the collaboration with Alessandro Trissino, see the letter sent to Provedi on 25 June, 1844, in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 50. "(...) domani manderò al Trissino la dedica con un esemplare dei cinque canti da inoltrare a suo cugino conte Emilii di Verona, il quale mi farà conoscere in quelle parti (…) poi staremo a vedere se si compierà il numero." Regarding the expenses related to the publication of the *Comoedia*, see also the letter sent on 10 April, 1844 in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 48–49.: "(…) mi esortano a pubblicare il mio lavoro, ch'io son pronto a darlo alla luce, quando trovo un numero di buoni associati solventi che mi basti a pagare la spesa."

Piazza had large hopes for working with Alessandro, whose interest in the edition, nonetheless, never materialized into a concrete economical offer, leaving therefore the issue of the publication unsolved.

The anguish of not having his work published tormented Dalla Piazza in his last months and the dramatic lack of publishers brought him to give to Agostino Manfrin Provedi the manuscript of his Latin translation of the *Commedia*, as a part of his will. Here, he asked his nephew to publish the text as it was in the manuscript side by side with the original version. The facing translation into Latin indeed represented, to the translator's mind, the best way to check the translation's linguistic accuracy and to provide a faithful service to non Italian speakers eager to read Dante.[198] By the time of Dalla Piazza's death, Provedi owned the only two extant manuscript translations of the *Commedia.* Moved by a deep desire to realize his uncle's wishes, he personally took care of their bindings. Provedi also enriched these manuscripts with biographical sketches (*Cenni storici*), the addition of *Cajetani Dalla Piazza Vita* written in Latin by Karl Witte, translated into Italian by Giuseppe Rossi and revised by Provedi (*Rettifica e Appendice*),[199] the original *Prefazione* written in Italian by Dalla Piazza, a selection from the epistolary exchange between himself and the translator, as well as six excerpts *(tratti)* from the *Comoedia.*[200]

198Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 11: "(...) sommo studio aveva posto per la fedeltà della Traduzione, e desiderava vivamente che tale fedeltà apparisse a colpo d'occhio al lettore".

199Provedi acknowledges that the *Cajetani Dalla Piazza vita* represents a thorough and accurate piece of work, and his *Rettifica* consists in just one amendment of Witte's text: Gaetano Dalla Piazza was born in Valdagno, and not in Schio, as stated by Witte: "come lo prova l'attestato del 30 Giugno 1881 rilasciato dal Cappellano di Valdagno Don Gennaro Gennari, legalizzato da quel sindaco in data 1 Luglio anno suddetto, che venne unito all'Autografo della Versione Dantesca del Dalla Piazza depositato presso la Biblioteca Bertoliana comunale di Vicenza". Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 25.

200Provedi selected six abstracts from Dalla Piazza's translation: the excerpts refer to the description of *Francesca di Rimini* (*Inf.*, V), *Conte Ugolino* (*Inf.*, XXXIII), *Manfredi* (*Purg.*, II), *Sordello* (*Purg.*, VI), *Cacciaguida* (*Par.*, XV and XVII). In doing so, Provedi fulfills his uncle's wish by juxtaposing the Latin translation to the original text provided in the 1837 Le Monnier edition.

The two manuscripts, rebound and made ready for publication, were, however, not

identical. While the original *Prefazione* to the translation by Dalla Piazza is part of the

first manuscript kept in Vicenza at the Biblioteca Bertoliana,[201] the second manuscript

was also handwritten by the translator, but it presents a copy of the *Prefazione* drafted by

Provedi instead of by Dalla Piazza and inserted in the work for the sake of completeness

and clarity. Also, the second manuscript is still kept in Vicenza but in a different library,

the one that belongs to the *Accademia Olimpica*. The one presented by Provedi in the two

rebound manuscripts should have been the kind of edition that Dalla Piazza wanted for

his work: a Latin text preceded by an introduction and with the original text facing the

Latin translation. Indeed, the 1844 publication of the first five cantos of *Purgatorio* – the

only abstract of the text Dalla Piazza managed to publish while he was in life – presented

the bare Latin translation with no original text, and left the translator completely

unsatisfied.[202]

However, the strong encouragement that Dalla Piazza received from the students

of the *Seminario*, brought him to publish the first five cantos of *Purgatorio*, and it is

thanks to one of the copies of this partial translation of Dante's masterpiece that Dalla

Piazza caught the attention and thereafter the admiration of Karl Witte. Right after the

translator's death, Witte contacted Provedi and already in 1846 a copy of *Comoedia* was

sent to Leipzig.[203] In 1848, the first edition of Dalla Piazza's work came to life in an

elegant, German edition at the expense of the printmaker William Barth. In this edition,

the actual translation of Dante's Comedy was preceded by a dedication of the volume to

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201 This is the manuscript ms. 2785, Vicenza, Biblioteca Civica Bertoliana.
202 See the letter sent to Provedi on April 10th 1844, in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 49.
203 Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 12: "(...) prof. Carlo Witte di Halle il quale rimase siffattamente colpito da quel lavoro da desiderare informazioni da parte dell'autore, se vivo, o degli eredi suoi, se defunto, per conoscere in ispecie chi ne possedesse l'autografo, giacché aveva divisato di curarne la pubblicazione mediante la stampa".

Prince Johannes,[204] by a rich *Praefatio*, where Witte compares nine translations of the episode of Paolo and Francesca in *Inf.* V,[205] and lastly by a *Life of Dalla Piazza* written by Witte in Latin.[206] Nonetheless, the 1848 German edition does not present the original Italian version alongside the Latin translation, as requested by Dalla Piazza himself.

The time for a new publication seemed propitious in 1865. By that point, Dalla Piazza's death had occurred twenty one years earlier, but the sixth centenary of Dante's birth brought Provedi to propose with renewed enthusiasm a new edition of the *Comoedia* in the editorial form so much desired by its author, with his *Prefazione* and the facing Italian text. [207] The Accademia Olimpica finally accepted the project, with the aim of publishing, side by side with it, Dante's original text of a precious fourteenth-century manuscript bestowed to the Bertoliana by Giuseppe Riva in 1854.[208] Provedi's wish to republish the *Comoedia* was also strongly supported by a senator of the newly born Regno d'Italia, Girolamo Costantini, as testified by a letter exchange between the two.[209] What slowed down and then ultimately stopped the new publication is still unclear,

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204Saxony's future sovereign and passionate reader of Dante.

205Witte quotes from nine translations of *Inf.* V: the episode of Paolo e Francesca is presented in the Latin version of Matteo Ronto, in an anonymous Latin text published by Quirico Viviani [Quirico Viviani, "Frammenti in versi esametri Latini dell'Inferno di Dante tratti dal Codice Fontanini", in *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri giusta la lezione del codice bartoliniano*, I, (Udine: Mattiuzzi, 1823), 301–330], in the same episode translated into Latin by Carlo d'Aquino, Cosimo di Scarperia, Antonio Castellaccio and Francesco Testa, but also in a spanish translation published by Fidelis Birett and two XVI century french versions: one *ex codice Hohendorfiano Vindobonensi No. 43, 10201*, the second *ex codice Universitatis Taurinensis* (Karl Witte, *Praefatio*, 13–15).

206Karl Witte, "Cajetani Dalla Piazza vita", in *Dantis Alligherii*, 42–48.

207Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 14.

208The fourteenth-century manuscript with Dante's text is the *m.s 138 (2.8.9).*

209Letter sent on 27 June, 1864, in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 14: "Scrupolosamente ligio alla mia parola mi gode l'animo parteciparti, che ho veduto or ora l'ab. Caparozzo, il quale poco prima fu in seduta col Consiglio dell'Accademia Olimpica per l'effetto della stampa dell'Opera di Dante, ed avrebbero formulato questo progetto: di stampare l'Opera con lusso, ponendo di fronte alla traduzione latina il famoso Codice Dantesco, che esiste nella nostra Biblioteca, aggiungendo le varianti di un altro Codice qui posseduto dalla Nob. Famiglia Coleoni. Il Caparozzo mi disse che l'Opera in questo modo riuscirebbe di molto interesse bibliografico. La spesa, che risulta grossa, sarebbe sostenuta dalle azioni di 2 o 3 marenghi. Rossi (*Alessandro Rossi, Senator of the Kingdom of Italy*) scrisse di prenderne già 10. Martedì prossimo poi vi sarà seduta definitiva , per non perdere ulterior tempo, ma il più é fatto, come mi dice l'amico mio".

although financial issues (*soverchia spesa*) might have played a central role in the affair, as the new edition turned out to be much more expensive than estimated.[210]

In his *Cenni storici* (1882) Provedi published thirty-one letters sent to him by Dalla Piazza: these letters span a period of eleven years and have a fundamental importance for our understanding of the birth and the development of Dalla Piazza's poetic translation of Dante's Commedia.[211] On 12 November, 1833, the abbot enthusiastically declares his work on Pindar concluded and hints at a Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia* which he intended to work on. By the time of the letter, nonetheless, such a translation had already begun, since, as Dalla Piazza states, ten cantos were already translated into Latin by mid-November 1833.[212]

This is the first hint to the Latin translation of the *Commedia* that we can find in the letters; it is therefore fair to suppose that Dalla Piazza began working on it in the year 1833 or by the end of 1832.[213] Moreover, in the letter sent to Manfrin Provedi on 17 August, 1836, Dalla Piazza explicitly states that the *Inferno* was almost done: "(...) *Delle cinque parti dell'Inferno io ne tradussi quattro, ed in Novembre sarà terminato il lavoro.*" On the basis of these letters, it is likely that the translation of the *Purgatorio* was concluded by the beginning of the year 1840 and the Latin version of the entire *Commedia* was completed no later than 1842.[214] In spite of such a rapid pace of translation, Dalla Piazza had undoubtedly to face a number of hurdles while drafting his

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210Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 15.
2111833–1844, the last one is dated 9 July, less than five months before Dalla Piazza's death, which occurred on 1 November, 1844.
212Letter sent from Dalla Piazza to Provedi on 12 November, 1833, in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 35: "Ora che ho terminato il lavoro ove voltai il greco Poeta in idioma Italiano, ho cominciato a voltare in latino Dante Italiano. I primi dieci canti dell'Inferno or sono da me ridotti latini in versi esametri, e v'é chi gli apprezza e per la facilità con cui ritraggono fedelmente i concetti di quell'oscuro poeta, e per la purezza della lingua, e per la elegante armonia dei versi".
213Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, 23.
214As Motterle supposes, see Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, 31–32.

translation; yet the only letter I have found where he vents his frustration, does not hint at the complexity of the text, but rather acknowledges how necessary, yet time consuming it was to transcribe Dante' s original text by the side of his translation.[215]

As previously mentioned, the anxiety of not finding a proper publisher tormented the last years of Dalla Piazza's life. Such apprehension was already considerable in 1832 as one letter shows;[216] however, it became much more pressing in 1844 when the tempting conditions for publication (*condizioni bellissime*) proposed by the Seminary of Padua were rejected by Dalla Piazza, still in search for a private editor.[217] A second, yet even more compelling anguish that constantly afflicted the abbot in his last years was the fear that his translation might not be accurate and faithful enough. The anxiety emerges clearly in a letter sent by Dalla Piazza to his nephew on 2 December, 1842, where Dalla Piazza seems to be eager to find inexorable judges (*giudici inesorabili*) able to help him improve his translation.[218] The abbot Carlo Bologna, one of the most illustrious book reviewers of the time and *gran maestro dei Latinisti vicentini*,[219] offered to review the entire translation, deeply gratifying Dalla Piazza.[220] Bologna's intervention turned out to

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215Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 38: "(…) noioso e lungo lavoro di copiare Dante in fronte alla mia versione". See also the letter sent on 30 May and the one sent on 24 April, 1837.

216Letter sent to Provedi on 2 April, 1832, in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 38: "(...) se non trovo trecento associati di credito almeno e buoni pagatori, non si vedrà stampata la mia versione".

217Letter sent to Provedi on 13 June, 1844, in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 50: "(...) Ma io voglio farla stampare (*the Latin translation of Dante's Comedy*) per mio conto, e spero di trovar duecento associati i quali mi basterebbero per far stampare 400 copie".

218Letter sent to Provedi on 2 December, 1842, in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 46: "(...) Ecco il canto chiesto dal Professor Filippi: glielo invio volentieri, a patto che lo scorra con occhio severo, e tutte le mende che vi trovasse, sia in materia di lingua, sia rapporto all'intelligenza dell'autore, cui amo di essere aderente e tradur qual'é e qual deve essere inteso, sia rapporto alla versificazione, le noti, e me le indichi, come pure le mende che avesse trovato negli altri Canti. Amo essere avvertito con libertà, e ringrazio chi meco la fa da giudice inesorabile, ora che ho tempo di correggere".

219Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, 30. Carlo Bologna was also author of the remarkable book *De linguae Latinae utilitate*, published in 1843, in Padua.

220Letter sent to Provedi on 13 May, 1837, in Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 39: "Bologna promise di legger tutto e vedere se mi fosse sfuggito qualche abbaglio di lingua, o qualche espressione che non sia da autori del secolo d'oro. Questo letterato passa pel primo scrittore latino de' nostri tempi, ed io lo reputo tale. Dopo questo esame posso stare tranquillo in punto di stile chiaro e di purità di lingua".

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be of outmost importance for the success of Dalla Piazza's translation and helped the text
spark the admiration not only of the German scholars, who were going to publish it in
1848, but also of the intellectuals and literary journals contemporary to Dalla Piazza.

2- Reception of the Divina Comoedia and Critical Reactions to Dalla Piazza's Translation

"*Vestit illa nova (…) est interpretatio, versibus hexametris Latinis ab Abbate dalla Piazza, qui Professor Vicentiae obiit, diligentissime confecta, ita ut vix ac ne vix quidem durius quoddam de novo hoc conatu iudicium ab ullo aequo peritoque harum rerum arbitro exspectari liceat.*"[221]

This is the way William Barth introduces Dalla Piazza' s work in his dedication to the
Prince of Saxony in the 1848 edition. Karl Witte's analysis of the *Comoedia* is, on the
contrary, much more deep, critical and allows the scholar to emphasize two crucial
aspects of translation.[222] Witte begins his *Praefatio* by quoting a passage from the
Convivio,[223] where Dante strongly asserts the impossibility of a translator in rendering a
poetic text into a different language: *nulla cosa per legame musaico*[224] *armonizzata si può
della sua loquela in altra trasmutare senza rompere tutta sua dolcezza ed armonia.* To
Witte's mind, Dalla Piazza's translation presented a text that has lost much of its original
pleasantness.

Without a doubt, a translation of Dante's masterpiece into any language, would

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221*Dantis Alligherii*, 5.
222See Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, 39.
223*Convivio* I, 7, in *Dantis Alligherii*, 7.
224In his edition, Witte abandons the *lectio tradita* "musaico" in favor of "musico".

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represent an operation of titanic proportions, *una fatica erculea.*[225] Nonetheless, Witte

notes, a translation of the *Commedia* into Latin is much easier than into any other

language, given the strong closeness to the Italian language and the use of Latin texts as

models for Dante's masterpiece.[226] Moreover, Witte states, Latin is the language originally

destined to be used for the text and Dante's Italian verses clearly recalls syntactical

structures that are typical of classical Latin.[227] Such a preface would seem, at first glance,

to be aimed at criticizing if not discrediting Dalla Piazza's work. Toward the end of it,

however, after the long list of translators that chronologically preceded Dalla Piazza and

rendered the episode of Paolo and Francesca into Latin, Witte solemnly affirms that Dalla

Piazza's *Comoedia* represents a "work laudable for its directness and faithfulness to the

original, the outcome of a remarkable endeavor whose excellence was never reached

before."[228]

In the last section of the *Praefatio* to the 1848 edition,[229] the editor William Barth

underlines how hard it is for classical Latin vocabulary to describe the Christian vision of

the world and of the afterlife.[230] But if Paganism has deeply imbued the Latin language,

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225As Giuseppe Maria called it. See the letter sent by Dalla Piazza to Provedi on 10 April, 1844. In Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 49.

226"*Et, si accuratius inspexerimus, carmen divinum Latinitate donare minus desperatam rem fortasse dicemus, quam, quas complures moliti sunt, conversiones in linguam vernaculam*" in *Dantis Alligherii*, 7. Passage already quoted by Motterle in Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, 39.

227In this regard, the German scholar quotes Boccaccio's *Commentary on the Divine Comedy*, on the basis of which Dante wrote the text in the vernacular "immaginando in vano le croste del pane porsi alla bocca di coloro che ancora il latte suggono, e in istile atto a'moderni sensi ricominciò la sua opera e proseguilla in vulgare". Nonetheless, in a footnote, Witte also quotes Bruni's much more plausible reason that brought Dante to pick the vernacular: "Chi mi dimandasse per qual ragione Dante piuttosto elesse scrivere in vulgare che in latino e letterato stile, risponderei quello che é la verità, cioè che Dante conosceva se medesimo molto più atto a questo stile vulgare in rima che a quello latino e letterato. E certo molte cose sono dette da lui leggiadramente in questa rima vulgare che ne' avrebbe saputo ne' avrebbe potuto dire in lingua latina e in versi eroici". *Dantis Alligherii*, 11.

228*Dantis Alligherii*, 26: "*Hos complurium saeculorum conatus inter se conferens, lector, ipse intelleges, Piazzae conversionem non infelicibus ausis utramque consectatam esse laudem, tam fidei quam casti sermonis, nec a superioribus saeculis nostro palmam praereptam esse iudicabis*".

229*Dantis Alligherii*, 36–45.

230*Dantis Alligherii*, 36: "*Aliud profecto est, lectores vel auditores secum abripere in omnipotentis Olympi domum et introducere in Coelicolarum, quos graeci et Romani colebant, coetum, quam expandere*

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this poses a problem that each and every Latin translator of the *Commedia* had to deal with; to Barth's mind, what really distinguishes the translation made by Dalla Piazza is the effortlessness with which the abbot from Vicenza fits the metaphysical and transcendent, yet Christian, vision of Dante into classical Latin.[231] Dalla Piazza undertook an enormous endeavor which was, nonetheless, within his reach given his strong background in classics; *neque (…) onus suscepit, quod humeri ferre recusarent.*[232]

In conclusion of this introductory section, I believe it is worth quoting two more critical reactions to Dalla Piazza's work made by his contemporaries. The first review of the translation was by Giuseppe Arcangeli and was published in the journal *Lo Statuto* in 1849.[233] Arcangeli, who hides his name behind his initials *G. A.*, commends Dalla Piazza's work and draws an interesting comparison between the abbot from Vicenza and Torquato Tasso. While Tasso limited himself to a simple *translation* of passages from Virgil's poems and a re-proposition of Virgilian images and settings in the *Gerusalemme liberata*, Dalla Piazza presents an actual translation that does not quote Virgil, but is nonetheless imbued with a Virgilian poetic style. Dalla Piazza's translation presupposes a precise and thorough study of classical Latin, from Virgil to Ovid and Lucretius, that brought a supreme elegance to the Latin versification. Arcangeli concludes his article by presenting Dalla Piazza as one of the most illustrious Italian philologists, even if not professional, who strongly reinforced the Italian field of Classical philology making it a valid opponent

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oculis animisque Empyrei Paradisique Christiani mysteria, qualia libri non sine afflatu divino scripti perhibent, et perlustrare ingentes Angelorum, Prophetarum, Apostolorum, Martyrum, Sanctorum et Beatorum ordines".

231 Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, 40: "(...) Lo ha attratto questa versione Latina, egli dice, perché il traduttore vicentino si e' introdotto con sicurezza e con esito felice nel soprannaturale dantesco, sconosciuto agli antichi romani e perciò anche alla loro lingua. L'uso del Latino e' piu' facile a chi deve descrivere la mitologia classica e Giove e Venere. L'affare si complica quando ci si accosta al mistero ineffabile del Dio della Bibbia e alla storia cristiana recente, post-classica".

232 *Dantis Alligherii*, 38. In the quoted passage, Barth quotes Horace (*Ars Poetica*, 39–40).

233 Giuseppe Arcangeli, "Dantis Alligherii Divina Comoedia hexametris Latinis reddita ab abate Dalla Piazza vicentino", in *Lo Statuto*, XIII, 6 (1849), *Appendice letteraria*.

to Germany's predominance in the field.[234]

The classicism of Dalla Piazza's Latin is particularly emphasized in the second article that I intend to mention: that of Luigi Gaiter, published in the journal *Il Propugnatore* in 1882.[235] Gaiter recognizes Dalla Piazza's linguistic dependence on Virgil but he also stresses the constant presence, in the translation, of numerous Latin authors, such as Horace, Statius and Lucan, who served as alternative, yet present, poetic models.[236] In order to reinforce his thesis that Virgil was not the only linguistic model for Dalla Piazza, Gaiter quotes two passages that testify to the influence exerted on Dalla Piazza by other classical authors. The first is the episode of Count Ugolino (*Inf.*, XXXIII), where line 37 (*Quando fui desto innanzi la dimane*) is rendered as follows: *Cum evigilans totus, nondum iubare orto* (*Inferna*, XXXIII, 33). Luigi Gaiter brilliantly observes that the adjective *totus* might recalled Horace's *Ibam forte via sacra* where, in line 2, the Latin poet states *totus in illis*, and the language as employed in the entire ode is echoed in Dalla Piazza's translation.[237] Gaiter makes another remarkable note: in *Purg.* VI, 130–132, Sordello gives vent to his anger against Florentine people: *Molti rifiutan lo comune incarco/ ma il popol tuo sollecito risponde/ sanza chiamare, e grida: "I' mi sobbarco!"* The aforementioned passage is translated into Latin as follows: *Pondera permulti detrectant publica, at ista/ plebs tua respondet, nullis suadentibus: Ecce/ me...me... adsum clamans; humeris onus ipse subibo* (*Inferna*, VI, 130–132). Gaiter finds in the

234Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, 43.

235Luigi Gaiter, "La Divina Commedia tradotta in esametri Latini dall'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza vicentino", *Il Propugnatore. Studi filologici, storici e bibliografici*, XV, (1882), 268–273.

236"Il posto d'onore è di Virgilio, riverito dall'Allighieri quale suo autore e maestro; ma quando gli torni bene, giovasi anche d'Ovidio,col quale Dante si applaude per aver lottato corpo a corpo nelle metamorfosi del canto XXV dell'Inferno: non trascura Orazio non che Lucano e Stazio, dall'Allighieri studiati ed imitati, sì che mostrava compiacenza di essere sesto tra cotanto senno (Inf. IV)". Luigi Gaiter, "La Divina Commedia", 272.

237*Sermones*, I, IX.

sentence *me...me adsum clamans* a clear echo of Nisus and his desperate attempt to save

Euryalus, in *Aen.*, IX: *me, me adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum.*[238]

I believe, however, that the influence exerted by Virgil on Dalla Piazza is still

more noteworthy than that of any other author; Dalla Piazza constantly had Virgil in his

mind while translating Dante and if, on one hand, he often paraphrases the Latin

expressions present in the *Commedia*, on the other, he often times quotes Virgilian

expressions even if decontextualized from the original passage bing translated. A

remarkable example of such a tendency can be found in *Inferna*, I, 121 where the

Virgilian expression *terque quaterque beati* is deployed by Dalla Piazza to render the

original text *felice colui cu'ivi elegge*.[239]

3- Italian **Prefazione W***ritten by Gaetano Dalla Piazza and Aimed at Introducing his Latin Translation of the Comedy*

I believe that a direct, unmediated reading of Dalla Piazza's original preface

represents a fundamental step for us to thoroughly understand how, to the translator's

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[238]*Aeneid*, IX, 427. "(…) Tutti rammentano il *totus* di Orazio nella satira *Ibam forte via sacra*. Pensava, non sapeva egli a sé medesimo rendere conto, quali capestrerie, ed era *totus in illis*. In quel *totus in illis* é una buona lezione di psicologia. Chi avrebbe pensato di rivederlo. Chi avrebbe pensato di rivederlo ed ammirarlo in una traduzione latina dell'episodio dantesco del conte Ugolino? (…) Quello stupendo *me...me...adsum qui feci* di Virgilio nell'episodio di Eurialo e Niso, dove l'amico libero per salvare l'amico prigioniero in pericolo della vita, prorompe in quelle sconnesse parole, dove la sublimità del concetto patetico finì franca dalle pastoie della pedestre grammatica, la quale voleva si recitasse *ego ego adsum qui feci*, e fu sì mirabilmente, e con dispetto dei pedanti emulato dal Tasso nell'episodio di Clorinda e Tancredi col verso sgrammaticato; *Amico, hai vinto, io ti perdona*; chi avrebbe pensato di rivederlo ed ammirarlo nel dantesco episodio di Sordello? (…). Mi é grato qui confessare, di avere ad uno ad uno riscontrati i terzetti di questi sei brani sublimi della *Divina Commedia* (those quoted by Manfrin Provedi in his contribution, see note 36) cogli esametri del Dalla Piazza, e di avere ad ora ad ora in modo affatto contrario a quello di cui ragionava Orazio, cordialmente esclamato: *pulchre! Bene! Recte!* Non dubito, che nel giudizio non siano per essere meco al tutto concordi, quelli che amor vero professano per la classica nostra letteratura". The example is already quoted in Tullio Motterle, *L'abate Gaetano Dalla Piazza*, 43–44, but the original text can be found in *Il Propugnatore,* XV,(1882), 268–273.

[239]*Inf.*, I, 129.

mind, the Latin text of the *Commedia* would have looked like. In this paragraph I present

the original text of the preface to the *Comoedia hexametris Latinis reddita* written in

Italian by Dalla Piazza, as it was published by Provedi in his contribution of 1882[240].

Io non credo che siavi mai stato classico autore Toscano il quale abbia avuti tanti contraddittori e tanti ammiratori, quanti Dante Alighieri nella sua divina commedia. Quasi tutti i pedanti che tennero del secolo decimo quinto, gli si avventarono contro. Il Bembo, il Casa, il Tomitano, il Castrovilla, il Mazzone, il Bulgarini, e nel fine del secolo decimo ottavo il Bettinelli, parte di quali lodarono a cielo il Petrarca ed il Boccaccio, e questi proposero per esemplari del bello alla studiosa gioventù, e di Dante si tacquero, parte il vituperarono e gli si dichiararono accaniti nemici, perché non lo intendevano, com'ebbe a dire, dileggiandolo, al Cariero il dottissimo Sperone Speroni che, contro lutti, il difende: "le locuzioni di Dante" egli dice nel suo discorso secondo sopra Dante, "le locuzioni di Dante sono Toscanissime sempre mai, più di quale altro mai scrivesse Toscano: li vocaboli non sempre mai; perché la lingua, non usata a significare così alti concetti, com'era il suo, non gli aveva ancora formati; esso li prende or dal Latino or dall'altre Provincie d'Italia, onde si può dire che imiti Omero, il quale non volse scrivere il suo poema in lingua Attica, ma in una lingua che fosse Greca". Indi più sotto soggiunge: "E come potea Dante usar vocaboli sempre Toscani, se la Toscana non gli avea, e se ello nell'opera della Volgare eloquenza dice chiaro, che la lingua, e lo stile, quale é il suo, non può esser puro Toscano? E di qua viene che Dante é il più metaforico poeta, che mai scrivesse, ricorrendo a traslati dove mancava de' propri, o togliendoli dal Latino o dal Francese". Fin qui lo Speroni. Or chi dicesse che il nostro poeta, veduta la povertà della lingua materna, che allora era nell'infanzia, come alli tempi d'Ennio la lingua Latina, che perciò da Ovidio fu detto ingenio maximus arte rudis, *abbia pensato di scrivere in verso eroico Latino il suo più bel poema, siccome anche fece da prima, non andrebbe per avventura lungi dal vero, e se il medesimo avesse usate od imitate le auree frasi ed il verseggiare a maraviglia tornito del suo maestro Virgilio, da cui dice aver preso lo bello stile che gli ha fatto onore, avrebbe risparmiata a' suoi studiosi lettori la fatica e la noia di squadernare la Crusca per intendere il significato di vocaboli non Toscani, ma presi or dal contado, or dai Lombardi, or dai Provenzali, or dai Latini, ormai caduti in disuso, e di consultare gl'interpreti intorno ai traslati, come Aleppe, Roffia, Paroffia, al invoglia e cent'altri; cose tutte che distraggono la mente dall'idea principale, dividono l'attenzione, sicché le bellezze in gran parte passano inosservate, e spesso fan venir meno la voglia d'andare avanti. Per verità pochi sono che abbiano la pazienza di leggere un canto intero del Paradiso, il quale é sì ricco d'immagini e di profonda dottrina, e tutto ciò avviene per le cause accennate di sopra, e perché qui più che altrove manca il lenocinio dei versi armoniosi, delle dolci rime leggiadre, le quali più che ogni altra cosa adescar sogliono gli orecchi e le menti, ove sempre si vide verificata quella sentenza di Lucrezio, che il poeta, se vuole poter instruire, deve sopra tutto studiar l'arte di piacere coll'eleganza dei versi, la qual cosa rischiara opportunamente con quella similitudine che il Tasso ha tradotta ed applicata al suo poema:*

240Agostino Manfrin Provedi, *Cenni*, 53–60.

Così all'egro fanciul porgiamo aspersi
di soave licor gli orli del vaso.
Succhi amari ingannato intanto ei beve
e dall'inganno suo vita riceve.

Ma il nostro poeta, pieno la mente ed il petto del Latino barbaro cui fin dall'infanzia bevette, e di cui risuonavano e cattedre e pergami e scuole, onde apprese tutte le scienze, di cui divenne conoscitore profondo per tempo, s'accorse di non potere in quel modo farlo tale che fosse degno di poter vivere, e per sua buona fortuna e della nostra Italia, rigenerollo Toscano. Il padre d'Aquino, mal sofferendo che un autore sì grande restar dovesse rinchiuso entro gli angusti confini di quell'umile terra dove il sì suona, s'accinse alla magnanima impresa di far partecipi di quel pane angelico, che quel poeta dispensa, tutti i popoli d'ogne favella, con una versione che fosse comune a tutti i letterati del mondo. Per verità, quale altra può mai corrispondere alla gravità ed alla grandieloquenza di Dante, quanto la lingua Latina, la quale fu degna di un popolo dominatore del mondo che recò tanta gloria alla pastorale cicuta, ed all'epica tromba di Virgilio, alla lira ed ai sali di Orazio, allo stile sublime di Lucrezio, anch'egli filosofo e poeta benché assai diverso dal nostro; che adornò il socco di Plauto e di Terenzio, l'epistole famigliari d'Ovidio, tant'é valente e versatile per ogni genere di scrivere; lingua la quale, quantunque sia morta coi bei dì dell'Impero Romano, viene ancora apprezzata e studiata da tutti coloro che amano le lettere e le scienze sublimi della morale e della teologia. E ben poteva quel dotto padre riuscire assai meglio, che il fraticello veneziano Matteo Ronto, di cui esiste una versione Latina in esametri, che mai non vide la pubblica luce, ma riman chiusa entro i cancelli degli antiquarii dall'anno 1446 fino ai dì nostri, se si fosse studiato d'esser fedel traduttore, e non avesse piuttosto voluto farla da autore, correggendo, omettendo, mutilando, alterando concetti, maniere e figure cosicché il suo lavoro sembra piuttosto un impasto novello dei concetti, non però tutti, né intatti, della Divina Commedia, che una versione. Io non ho mai veduta veruna delle versioni della Divina Commedia che sono uscite in lingua Francese, Tedesca, Inglese e di queste né intendo né posso parlare, ma quello ch'io so per esperienza egli é questo, che di tante traduzioni che ho lette d'autori Greci e Latini, nessuna é piaciuta, perché molti di questi volgarizzamenti son troppo rozzi ed inesatti, o per la trascuranza di chi vi si applica senza spendere quello studio e fatica che si richiedeva, o per l'imperizia di chi prostituisce la penna al guadagno, senza curarsi del proprio onore, o per la mania di voler dispor liberamente dell'opera come di cosa sua, o per mancanza di genio. Che se le frasi dantesche riescono oscure anche agli stessi Italiani, e se v'ha tantissimi passi ove fa d'uopo consultare i maestri di lingua e gl'interpreti, i quali talvolta o saltano il fosso e ci danno risposte ambigue, che ci lasciano più incerti di prima, non saprei con qual ragione supporre, che chi apprese soltanto da libri di autori più recenti la nostra lingua a lui straniera possa dare tale traduzione, dalla quale apparisca, presso chi non può intendere il testo, quanto sia giusto il giudizio dei dotti, i quali innalzarono questa Commedia sino a chiamarla divina per eccellenza. Non é già ch'io qui voglia pretendere una interpretazione letterale e servile, la quale riuscirebbe cosa stucchevole, ma tale che pennelleggi i concetti con quei colori, proporzioni, e maniere, e figure, ed affetti, onde uscirono dalla penna che li creò, sicché la copia né più né meno esprimesse, che

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l'originale medesimo, e lo stil camminasse come lo stil del poeta medesimo, or grave, or terribile, or grande sublime; or piacevole, dolce, e talor basso e rimesso, ed anche talvolta scurrile, del qual difetto sembra che Dante si compiacesse, preferendo la fedele verità dei caratteri alla decenza. Insomma vorrei che pingesse, ritraesse e copiasse quant'ha di pregevole, nonché le piccole macchie delle quali i più grand'uomini, colpa di nostra imperfetta natura, non vanno esenti. E che cosa infatti sono le mende del poema di Dante in confronto di tante bellezze? Né al traduttore s'aspetta il farsi giudice e riformatore di un'opera, ch'egli reputa degna d'esser subbietto dei suoi lavori, ma qual pittor ritrattista adombrar deve meglio che può quel che trova, vede ed intende, Spinto da tali considerazioni, volli occuparmi di questo lavoro. E benché sapessi per esperienza che ogni idioma ha il suo genio particolare, e certi modi suoi propri, che trasportati in un altro perdono assai, e molti di questi ha l'Italiano, come può scorgersi in molte frasi della Divina Commedia, i quali, per quanto si vogliano usare tradotti in Latino, più non tengono della natia venustà e forza, conclusi non pertanto poter convincermi, che anche la lingua Romana ha i suoi propri, e n'abbonda a dovizia assai più d'ogne altra, tranne la Greca, la qual cosa nessun negherà se non é del tutto ignorante; e se in alcuni luoghi le converrà rimanere al di sotto, in molti altri assai potrà menar vanto di essere superiore da compensare qualche piccolo danno con molta usura. Tale speranza mi condusse al temine della lunga opera, e bench'io veggia che natural mia dote a me non vale da poter colpir questo segno ch'io pur vorrei, spero però di non aver tirato sì dalle lunghe, che quest'abbozzo non possa essere d'incitamento a qualche ingegno per gioventù fervido e più fornito di cognizioni e di genio, che il mio non é, a tentare d'avvicinarsi vie maggiormente, e tanto sforzarsi colla fatica e colla pazienza perseverante, che tutto vince, finché vegga compita l'impresa di far comune a tutte le nazioni l'angelico pane di cui fu Dante sì largo all'Italia, la qual cosa desidero ardentemente, a maggior gloria della nostra nazione, e pel bene comune degli studiosi delle lettere di queste, i quali troppo mal consigliati sarebbero se dai moderni scrittori stranieri sperassero apprendere il bello stile, le opere dei quali, a chi mal conosce l'arte e la critica, e segue il grido volgar della moda, la quale vuol dominare anche qui, piaceran tanto tempo quanto dura il riscaldo delle fantasie, per poi cader nell'oblio, come avvenne di alcune poesie, non però così difettose, come quelle ai dì nostri, le quali sul fine del secol passato eran sì care, ed or se le mangian le tignuole. Né inutile ai dì nostri sarebbe questo lavoro qualor vi si apponesse il testo Italiano di fronte, perché, posti i due testi in confronto, si darebbero lume scambievolmente a diradare le oscurità ed aiuterebbero ad uscir di molti difficili luoghi, senza bisogno di ricorrere di tratto in tratto agl'interpreti. Or che ho mostrato le cause le quali m'indussero ed animarono ad entrare in sì vasto campo, ragione é bene che avverta il lettore, che quando intrapresi questo lavoro, ho sempre fedelmente seguita la lezione della Crusca, e solo allorquando io mi trovava quasi giunto alla fine del Purgatorio, ebbi la sorte di conoscere l'edizione fiorentina fatta di pubblica ragione l'anno 1837, tipografi Felice Le Monnier e Compagni, la quale ha per titolo: "La Divina Commedia ridotta a miglior lezione coll'aiuto dei vari testi a penna" ed il tomo secondo che ha per titolo: "Avvertimenti sul testo della Divina Commedia" restai così persuaso delle varianti in quella accennate e giustificate, ch'io mi affrettai a riformare tutta la mia versione, e presi il partito di collocare a fronte di questa quest'ultimo testo novellamente stampato, ed uniformarmi a questo solo in tutto e per tutto, poste in non cale tutte l'altre varianti. Ma giova anche

avvertire che assunsi l'incarico di traduttore, non ebbi però la presunzione di farla da interprete. Perciò, laddove io m'imbatteva in qualche luogo oscuro (e di questi ve ne sono moltissimi) consultai sempre gli espositori, ed a quella opinione diedi la preferenza che pareva la migliore, ed a seconda di questa regolai la mia traduzione, la quale perciò si vuole che sia più chiara dell'originale Italiano. Ma perché le opinioni degli uomini sono libere, se ad alcuno paresse che nella scelta io mi fossi ingannato, per me son contento che a quella s'attenga che più gli piace e lasci la mia, bastandomi ch'egli, tra le altre interpretazioni che vengono date a quello o a quell'altro passo, si trovi anche l'autore di quella che da me fu abbracciata, e prego che viva felice.

Section Two: Linguistic Analysis of the Divina Comoedia

1- Categories of Fillers and Figures of Speech

1.1- Linguistic Fillers Employed by Dalla Piazza

Dalla Piazza's translation presents a number of remarkable elements that seldom

alter the original text, yet, often tend to explain it to render the *Commedia* linguistically

more approachable. In his versification one of the elements that is commonly encountered

is the translator's tendency to fulfill his Latin hexameters with words and verb phrases

that make the translation diverge slightly from the original text. While reading Dalla

Piazza's work I have found four categories of "fillers": the first, and most commonly

used, consists in a fulfillment of a line by means of an interpolation that neither alters the

general meaning nor adds any detail, but only completes the metrical structure of the

hexameter. A clear example of this tendency is the addiction of *luco nigro*[241] an

apposition to the conceit of *loca nigra*, that effectively translates Dante's *selva oscura*.[242]

The same pressing need to fulfill metrical requirements is also testified by the semantic

extension of a given term. Indeed, quite often, a single word is paraphrased into a group

of two lexemes: *aspectus mortis*[243] represents a more lyrical resolution of Dante's *morte*[244]

since the more straightforward *mors* would have left the line metrically incomplete.[245] On

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241 *Inferna,* I, 2.
242 *Inf.* I, 2.
243 *Inferna.* I, 7.
244 *Inf.*, I, 7.
245 The same metrical reason brings Dalla Piazza to alter the Latin construction *Nacqui sub Julio*, into
Caesare sub Phrygio (*Ibidem*, 63). As I will later demonstrate, one of the many difficulties Dalla Piazza
had to deal with was the search of an adequate correspondence, in Latin, for a given term in vulgar.
However, what is noteworthy in the aforementioned passage is the deliberate abandon of the Latin
locution in favor of another Latin expression that emphasizes Cesar's relatively secondary or less
important triumphs: I believe indeed that Caesar is here remembered in the name of his victories in the
Bellum Alexandrinum (48–47 b. C.)

line 87 of *Inferna* I, Dalla Piazza translates Dante's *per la qual tu gride* adding *supplice voce*, an interpolation that is certainly not necessary but is not invasive in the context either.

The same tendency of emphasizing concepts expressed in the original is shown in line 28 of canto two, where the meaning of Dante's *via di salvazione* is extended with *in mediis curarum undis*. The path that leads to salvation is here portrayed as passing through a metaphorical sea of anguishes, an image likely conceived but not expressed by Dante; yet, Dalla Piazza's intervention does not alter the original text.

The same poetical ability to extend Dante's hendecasyllable to fit the structure of an hexameter is shown in *Inferna* II, 69: *coram rege meo, cum sit data copia, de te*. In the original text – *quando sarò dinanzi al segnor mio* – the temporal adverb *quando*, is, indeed, rendered in the more redundant subordinate clause *cum sit data copia*. In *Inferna* II, 126, Virgil is said to promise to Dante something that soon will turn out to be a good for his future (*e'l mio parlar tanto ben ti promette*, 126), Dalla Piazza translates this sentence into a Virgilian Latin underlining, however, Virgil's sincerity (*veridico ore*). The entrance of the city of Dis, and its *scritte di colore oscuro*, represents one of the most remarkable passages of the entire poem, and this is how Dalla Piazza translates lines 14–15 of the original text: *Hic ait, est opus ancipitis genus omne timoris/ subiecisse pedibus.* The translation is accurate and faithful except for the insertion of the locution (*est opus*) *subiecisse pedibus* (all of your fears have to lie below your feet).[246] In *Inf.* VII, 70, Virgil vents his anger against Dante and all of the other *creature sciocche*, wondering how deep their ignorance is (*quanta ignoranza é quella che v'offende*). Once again, the Latin

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[246]Moreover, it is worth noticing that Virgil is often called *dux*, even when Dante does not call him so (*Inferna*, IV, 17- *Inf.*, IV, 18).

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version is elegant and refined, nonetheless, Dalla Piazza employs a dittology (*premit laeditque*) to better render the detrimental action of the *inscitia* over human beings.[247]

In *Purgatorio*, the figure of Cato is presented by Dante as remarkably honorable (*un vecchio solo/ degno di tanta reverenza in vista/ che piu' non dee a padre alcun figliuolo*);[248] in order to fulfill the hexameter, Dalla Piazza emphasizes Cato's loneliness in approaching the two pilgrims by enlarging the meaning of the original *solo* into *nullo comitante ministro.*[249] Moreover, the same tendency to clarify a passage through expanding it into a more syntactically complex sentence can be traced later on in the same canto, where Virgil's hint to the souls of the Purgatory *che purgan sé sotto la tua balia*[250] is skilfully rendered in (*illos animarum coetus*) *a quibus abluitur macularum funditus omnis.*[251]

More complex to explain is Dalla Piazza's rendering of Manfredi's presentation as the grandson of the Queen Costanza. The original hendecasyllable is plain and straightforward: *nepote di Costanza imperadrice*,[252] however it is rendered into a more convoluted and obscure sentence: (*Manfredius, addit*) *Induperatrix quem Costantia fassa nepotem est.*[253] "The one whom Queen Costanza declared to be her grandson". There is no reason for Dalla Piazza to emphasize that Costanza "declared" (*fassa*) her relationship with Manfredi; it seems likely that the metrical requirements brought Dalla Piazza to

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247Dittology is a device frequently used by Dalla Piazza. Another example is in *Inferna*, VIII, 19: Virgil is described as *dominusque comesque*, while in the original he is portrayed as *lo mio segnore* (*Inf.* VIII, 20). Fillers are sometimes totally uninfluential to the meaning being conveyed (as, for instance, in *Inferna*, VIII, 26, where the doomeds' ship is described as *pandam*, bent). Sometimes they also slow down the fluency of the hexameter (*Inferna*, IX, 68, where the adverb *sic* is repeated twice to meet metrical needs), and in other cases they weigh down the original text (as in *Inferna*, IX, 67: the verb *agitque* almost trivializes the scene of a shepherd and his sheep driven away by the wind).
248*Purg.* I, 31–33.
249*Purgatorium*, I, 29.
250*Purg.* I, 66.
251*Purg.*, I, 64–65.
252*Purg.* III, 113.
253*Purgatorium*, III, 103.

expand a less convoluted rendering of the line: as a result, Dalla Piazza's translation occupies an entire hendecasyllable just like Dante's *nepote di Costanza imperadrice* occupies an hexameter.

What astonishes in Dalla Piazza's translation is that his fulfillments, often due to metrical reasons, are always extremely appropriate and not invasive. In *Purg.* IV, 16, Federico Novello is presented while praying *con le mani sporte*, as Dante says.[254] In order to adhere to Dante's incisiveness, Dalla Piazza condenses the brief hint to Federico into a single, intense hendecasyllable (*attollens palmas Fridricus utrasque Novellus*) where the addition of a single word (*utrasque*) makes the aforementioned line flow and, at the same time, faithfully reflect the original text. However, *Purgatorio* VI has to be taken into account for another passage that well shows the high quality of Dalla Piazza's work. In line 61 Dante presents the soul of Sordello by defining it as *anima lombarda.* Dalla Piazza solemnly renders the first epithet of the soul rightly emphasizing its being Italian but abandoning the synecdoche of *lombarda*: *O anima, italico sata sanguine.*[255] This translation not only shows a remarkable faithfulness to the original text, it also shows a deep mastery of Latin language and a profound poetic sensibility.

Moreover, in the same canto, Dante throws one of the most renowned invectives of the entire poems. Indeed, in line 97, the poet vents his anger against *Alberto tedesco* accusing him of having neglected and abandoned Italy, *giardin de lo'mperio*, by saying: *O Alberto tedesco ch'abbandoni/ costei ch'é fatta indomita e selvaggia.*[256] The only verb used by Dante is *abbandoni*, but if we look at Dalla Piazza's translation, we see that metrical reasons brought the translator to add a verb. The verb *neglegis* could have

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254*Quivi pregava con le mani sporte. Purg.* VI, 16.
255*Purg.* VI, 61.
256*Purg. Vi,* 97.

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sufficed to render the content of the passage, however, the addition of a pleonastic verb (*relinquis*) makes the hexameter metrically complete without affecting the intellegibility of the passage.[257]

Most often, indeed, fillers are only aimed at fitting the original hendecasyllable into the latin hexameter, as in *Purgatorium*, XXI, where in line 59 Dalla Piazza translates the original *e tal grido seconda*[258] in *mugitumque istum clamoremque ipsa secundat*.[259] The original meaning of the passage is brilliantly rendered as *tal grido* is translated with *mugitum* while the redundant *clamoremque* only fulfills the hexameter. Furthermore, in line 34 of *Purgatorium* XXII, Dante describes Statius' prodigality by juxtaposing it to the vice of avariciousness: *Or sappi ch'avarizia fu partita/ troppo da me.*[260] The word *avarizia* is not translated by Dalla Piazza, it is paraphrased into an entire relative sentence that defines avariciousness without ever naming it: *qui congerere aurum/ hortatur furor.*[261]

In *Par.*, X, 52 the figure of Beatrice is portrayed as yelling at the pilgrim: *Ringrazia/ ringrazia il Sol de li angeli*. In order to emphasize the devotion that each and every Christian believer owes to God, Dante ends up line 51 and begins the following with the same imperative verbal form (*ringrazia*). If we had found a similar rhetorically constructed assertion in Dalla Piazza's translation, we would have seen in it a filler. It is now, instead, very interesting to look at the Latin rendering of the passage, where Dalla Piazza refrains from repeating the verb as Dante does, but through a carefully selected lexicon he skilfully renders the concept of continuity in praying. The passage can be

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257(…) *hanc lentus qui negligis atque relinquis. Purgatorium*, VI, 95.
258*Purg.*, XXI, 60.
259*Purgatorium*, XXI, 59.
260*Purg.*, XXII, 34–35.
261*Purgatorium*, XXII, 32–33.

translated in English as follows: "do not stop thanking the sun of the crowd of angels":

Ne cessa solvere Soli/ agminis angelici grates.[262]

1.2 Translation of Figures of Speech as Used by Dante

A second category of fillers is represented by the frequent figures of speech crafted by Dalla Piazza. Since Dante's original text is, by itself, replete with rhetorical devices, I have subdivided these figures into two subcategories: figures of speech used by Dante and rendered in Latin with the same figure of speech, and figures of speech not present in the original, but used by Dalla Piazza in order to ennoble his work of translation. In the first ten cantos of the first *cantica*, there are only two examples of figures of speech that are apparently neglected and find no equivalent in the Latin hexameter: in *Inf.*, IV, 65–66 the hissing consonant *s* is strongly emphasized in the original text (*la selva, dico, di spiriti spessi*) but is not present in the same measure in the Latin version which is, still, elegant and refined.[263] Something similar happens later on, in canto VIII, where the litotes (*non senza prima far grande aggirata*, 76) is replaced with a redundant use of *recursus*, that populates the line without adding anything to the content.[264]

Despite these two exceptions, Dalla Piazza constantly strives to reflect the impressive variety of figures of speech used by Dante, and he certainly succeeds in doing so. Line 4 of canto I presents a strong alliteration of the consonant *s* (*qualis erat silva ista, carens cultu aspera, densa*) that renders the hill sublimely enclosed in the line 5:

262*Paradisus*, X, 49–50.
263*et silvam ingredimur, silvam tot milibus, inquam/ umbris confertam*, *Inferna*, IV, 64–65.
264*circuitu cum longo, cumque recursu. Inferna*, VIII, 76.

esta selva selvaggia e aspra e forte.[265] A similar circumstance occurs in *Inf.*, IX, 105, where a new alliteration is clearly emphasized in *sicuri appresso le parole sante*: Dalla Piazza not only notes such a rhetorical use of the sibilant *s*, but also gives a translation in which the phonetic symbolism is almost exasperated.[266] All of the examples of synesthesia in Dante are faithfully maintained in the Latin translation: the second circle in canto V is described as *loco d'ogne luce muto,*[267] and Dalla Piazza almost transliterates the line into the Latin *stant omni a lumine mutae/ (…) valles.*[268]

In Dante, the rhetorical repetition of the word *amor* (*Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende/ Amor, ch'a nullo amato amar perdona/ Amor condusse noi ad un morte, Inf.*, V, 100, 103, 106) is rendered in *Amor tenero ilicet haerens cordi/ Amor, qui nulli parcit amato igne carere/ Amor nos funus duxit ad unum* (*Inferna*, V, 96, 99, 102). The repetition of the word is faithful, although it is not an anaphora: in fact, in Dalla Piazza's translation, this word does not occur at the beginning of the line but in the middle of it, specifically on the last short syllable of the third dactyl of line 96, and on the same syllable of the second dactyl of line 99 and of line 102.

The hyperbaton of *Inf.* VI, 42 pronounced by the figure of Ciacco (*tu fosti, prima ch'io disfatto, fatto*) is skillfully rendered in a translation that respects the original syntactical structure (*Tibi vita, priusquam/ me mors destrueret, superas fuit edita in oras, Inferna*, VI, 38–39) but also enriches Dante's image with the anaphora of *me*[269] and with a poetical paraphrase of the concept of birth (*vita superas fuit edita in oras*) encompassed in the sentence *tu fosti (…) fatto*. Moreover, in *Inferna* XIII Dalla Piazza begins lines 3, 4,

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265*Inf.* I, 5.
266*Nos, simulac sanctas emisit pectore voces*, *Inferna*, IX, 96.
267*Inf.*, V, 28.
268*Inferna*, V, 25–26.
269Verses 38, 39.

5, 6 with the anaphoric repetition of *non* (*Non frondes virides, non rami laeves, non pomi stabant, Non ita habent rigidas stirpes*) faithfully presenting the same rhetorical device employed by Dante in lines 4, 5, 6, 7 of the same canto (*Non fronda, non rami schietti, non pomi v'eran, Non han sì aspri sterpi*). In *Purg.*, IV, 86–87 Dante describes the height of the mountain of Purgatory: *ché 'l poggio sale/ più che salir non possono li occhi miei.* The aforementioned passage is rendered into Latin as follows: *namque altus ad astra/ mons scanditplus quam mea lumina scandere possint.*[270] As we can see, the polyptoton *sale-salire* is skillfully translated with *scandit-scandere*. A similar example of polyptoton can also be found in *Purg.*, XXI, where Dante shows, once more, his outstanding mastery of rhetorical devices. Line 32 he presents a new form of polyptoton, based on the stem of verb *mostrare*: *Ond'io fui tratto fuor de l'ampia gola/ d'inferno per mostrarli, e moserrolli/ oltre*. Dalla Piazza beautifully translates the figure of speech by repeating the same verb, *mostrare*, twice: *Huc veni, iussus monstrare, quod ipse paratus/ illi monstrabo.*[271]

Interestingly enough, in *Par.*, I, Dante presents an anaphoric repetition of the pronoun *questi* in lines 115, 116, 117,[272] if we look at the Latin translation, we see that this anaphora is almost entirely rendered: Dalla Piazza, indeed, translates the original *questi* with *hic*. This pronoun, nonetheless, occurs only twice, at the beginning of line 106 and 107.[273] Also, in *Par.*, VI Justinian presents himself to Beatrice and Dante: through a linguistic *variatio* in the chiastic structure of the sentence, the Emperor's soul pronounces his name: *Cesare fu e son Giustiniano* (line 10). This assertion covers a fundamental

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[270]*Purgatorium*, IV, 82–83.
[271]*Purgatorium*, XXI, 31–32.
[272]*Questi ne porta il foco inver'la luna/ questi ne' cor mortali é permotore/ questi la terra in sé stringe e aduna. Par.*, I, 115–117.
[273]*Hic ignem fert ad lunam, mortalia corda/ hic icit motu, hic terram cogitque premitque. Paradisum*, I, 106–107.

function within the canto: the polyptoton of verb *essere* (*fui-sono*) emphatically states the transience of human goods and their decay with corporal death. Such a discrepancy between past and present, between honors bestowed in lifetime and humility in front of God in the afterlife is skillfully rendered by Dalla Piazza. He sticks to the original text in the first part of the sentence (*Caesar et ipse fui*, line 10) but then emphasizes that his name, Justinian, does not evoke the authority of the imperial title (*Caesar*) anymore.[274]

1.3 Figures of Speech Created by Dalla Piazza

So far, I have analyzed Dalla Piazza's renderings of figures of speech used by Dante. It is now time to look at the figures of speech deliberately added by the translator. In his commendable work Dalla Piazza shows a marked propensity for alliteration and assonance: the first *cantica*, in particular, presents a remarkable number of examples.[275] The translation of canto II also shows a tendency to resolve Dante's expressions into more convoluted and elaborated sentences as in, for instance, line 134 (*te cortese ch'ubbidisti tosto*) which is translated with a litotes: *qui haud indocilis parere fuisti*[276] similarly, *Il ben dell'intelletto*, in the same canto,[277] is translated into an hendiadys: *animae et cordis summa est amissa voluptas*.[278]

The one used in *Inferna*, III, 16 is just the first of a rather rich number of dittologies and hendiadys used by the translator. A remarkable example of this strategy

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274*Caesar et ipse fui, quem nomine Justinianum/ dicunt*. *Paradisus*, VI, 10–11.
275Canto II: *dixi, o dux* line 9, *abiens abstitit* line 37, *suave sonans* line 53, canto VI: *sed dic, si scire est potestas*, 56, canto IX: *ostia/ hostes*, 112–113, canto X: *visa (…) vestra videre*, 84, *verti vestigia vatem*, 107.
276*Inferna*, III, 125.
277*Inf.* III, 18.
278*Inferna*, III, 16.

can be found in *Inferna*, IV, 130. In the aforementioned passage, Dante describes

Aristotle as the most prominent among the philosophers,[279] but in Dalla Piazza's

translation the original text is paraphrased into a description aimed at portraying Aristotle

as the one who *nourished and fed* philosophers.[280] Such an image is rendered into Latin

with the hendiadys *imbuit edocuitque*. A different, yet, noteworthy, tendency that

characterizes Dalla Piazza's work, is represented by the frequent addition of anaphoras to

the original text: I have found three examples that exemplify this tendency. The first one

is in *Inferna*, IV, 131–132, where the repetition of *hunc* at the beginning of both of the

lines, rather than being invasive, helps the reader focus attention on Aristotle, the

character being described in the passage.

    A similar case is identifiable in *Inferna*, IX, 25–26, with the anaphoric repetition

of the adverb *maxime* that finds no equivalence in the original text.[281] In *Inferna*, III, 84,

moreover, Dalla Piazza enriches his work with an authentic masterpiece of rhetorical

language: he translates literally *per altra via, per altri porti* but, by omitting the

translation of the preposition *per* (unnecessary in Latin), he creates a chiastic sentence

(*ire vias alias, alios tibi quaerere portus*) which is lacking in the original.[282] There is an

interesting case of rhetorical devices used in canto V, 19, where Minos warns Dante about

the second circle and about Virgil himself (*guarda com'entri e di cui tu ti fide*). If we look

at the translation, we see that Dalla Piazza renders the entire line with *quali/ fretus ope*

huc venias, therefore, translating *di cui tu ti fide* with *quali fretus ope*.[283] In Dalla Piazza's

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279*'l maestro di color che sanno/ seder tra filosofica famiglia*, *Inf.*, IV, 131–132.
280*qui cunctos maximus auctor/ imbuit edocuitque sophos*, *Inferna*, IV, 129–130.
281*Inferna*, X, 40–41 as well as the repetition of the adverb *bis* that renders the quick exchange between Dante and Farinata.
282Moreover, a skillful use of a double negation (*nec non id moneo te. Inferna*, IV, 61) prevents his translation from leaving a line metrically incomplete and does not change the meaning of the original text (*E vo' che sappi. Inf.* IV, 62)
283*Inferna*, V, 17–18.

work, it seems as if *ops* (*means*, but also *authority*) stands for Virgil, representing, in other words, the *sommo poeta* as the poetical authority par excellence. This is the only time Virgil is referred to through the figure of the antonomasia.

Among the figures of speech used in order to ennoble his translation, I have also found an example of accusative of the inner object (*brevem quam ludant haec bona ludum*, *Inferna*, VII, 57), a remarkable example of hypallage (*stolidus Florentinae furor umbrae*, *Inferna*, VIII, 61) and a play on words in lines 62–63 of *Inferna*, X, where the assonance in the pair of verbs *haud mutare/ nec motare* skillfully renders Farinata's statuary immobility. The very beginning of *Inf.*, XIII, presents a remarkable use of a figure of speech: line 3 of the canto, indeed, describes a new *bosco*, that recalls the features of the *selva oscura*: *un bosco/ che da nessun sentiero era segnato*. As we can see, the line is characterized by a strong hiss of the consonant *s*. In his translation, Dalla Piazza does not only render the strong presence of the consonant, he also presents a remarkable example of phonosymbolism where consonants *s*, *r* and *f* skilfully render the gloomy atmosphere of abandon and decay that transpires from the original passage.

As seen so far, in his translation Dalla Piazza is not always able to render into Latin the same figures of speech used by Dante. However, even when a rhetorical device is not translated, Dalla Piazza always provides an accurate paraphrase of the passage. An eloquent example of Dalla Piazza's ability to paraphrase the original text can be found in *Inf.*, XIII, where the "undulation of the thought" in Dante's words (*Cred'io ch'ei credette ch'io credesse*, line 25) cannot be translated into Latin. Dalla Piazza gives a paraphrase of the aforementioned line that loses much of the original incisiveness, yet presents a flowing elegant Latin versification: *Credo ego, Minciadem tum me venisse putasse/*

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mentis in hunc sensum, ut tot rerer fundere voces/ gentem.[284] Moreover, in *Purg.*, II,

Virgil explains to the *turba*, a crowd of dead souls, his ignorance of Purgatory's

topography. Line 62 (*Voi credete/ forse che siamo esperti d'esto loco*) is characterized by

a strong hiss of the consonant *s*. We can be sure that this rhetorical device has not escaped

the always vigilant ear of Dalla Piazza. It seems, however, that the translator was unable

to render the strong presence of the sibilant. The employment of the double negation in

the Latin version – a linguistic device which is absent in the original text- seems aimed

precisely at "making up" the missed rendering of the previous figure of speech.[285]

Also, in the same canto, Dante makes an explicit reference to *Inf.*, I; in fact, in

Purg., II, 65, Virgil describes Dante's journey through Hell as *via che fu sì aspra e forte*

(line 5). Dalla Piazza's translation of *Purg.*, II, 63–64 does not echo his rendering of *Inf.*,

I, 5. It is certainly unlikely that Dalla Piazza has not noticed this reference: I am, on the

contrary, much more inclined to see in his rendering of *Purg.*, II, 63–64 a deliberate

choice not to quote *Inf.*, I. A choice imposed by the fact that a quotation from the first

canto of the *Commedia* would have made line 64 of *Purg.*, II much more banal and

prosaic.[286]

In *Purgatorium*, IV, Dalla Piazza presents an example of polyptoton which is not

present in the original text. In lines 91–92, Virgil explains to Dante that the climb of the

mountain does not cause any pain, it rather delights and gives pleasure to those who climb

it.[287] If we look at Dalla Piazza's translation, we see that his rendering of line 95, *quivi di*

284*Inferna*, XIII, 24–26.

285*Nos hunc haud nescire*, line 61.

286Dalla Piazza could have quoted *Inf.*, I, as Dante does, however, his rendering of the passage would have
been as follows: *Aspera, densa via nos talis tantaque fregit*. Although being metrically correct, this line
would have lost much of the meaningfulness of the actual translation by Dalla Piazza: *Asperitasque viae
nos talis tantaque fregit*. *Asperitas viae*, indeed, stylistically outdoes *Aspera, densa via*.

287*Però, quand'ella ti parrà soave/ tanto, che su andar ti fia leggero/ com'a seconda giù andar per nave/
allor sarai al fin d'esto sentero/ quivi di riposar l'affanno aspetta. Purgatorium*, IV, 91–94.

riposar l'affanno aspetta, presents a polyptoton which is missing in the original text: *et securae dabitur dare membra quieti*. It is also remarkable the employment of metonymy in *Purgatorium*, VI, 75, where *orba magistro/ pinus* beautifully translates the original *nave senza nocchier* (*Purg.*, VI, 77), as well as the double negation of *non ipse recusem* (*Purgatorium*, XXI, 99) while the original text was rhetorically less constructed (*assentirei un sole*, *Purg.*, XXI, 101).

In Virgil's heart melting farewell, the Latin poet reassures Dante by telling him that he is now safe, away from the dangers of Hell and ready to reach the peak of the mountain following his own *piacere* (pleasure) as guidance (*Purg.*, XXVII, 130–132). Line 132 (*fuor se' de l'erte vie, fuor se' de l'arte*) presents a remarkable example of paranomasia between *erte* and *arte.* In the Latin version this figure of speech is not rendered with the same figure, but rather with a chiasma which is completely missing in the original text: *ardua vicisti, vicisti obscura viarum.*[288] Later on, in canto XXX, Dante finally realizes that Virgil, *dolcissimo patre*, has just abandoned him. Lines 49–51 are filled with deep compassion toward the Latin poet who is emphatically named three times, once per line (*Ma Virgilio n'avea lasciati scemi/ di sé, Virgilio dolcissimo patre/ Virgilio a cui per mia salute die'mi*). This rhetorical repetition of Virgil's name is completely absent in Dalla Piazza's translation, where the poet is invoked by name only once: *At se Virgilius nobis subduxerat.*[289]

Paradisus, XXIV presents, in line 35, an example of double negation (*haud tentare recusa*) not employed by Dante in the original text (*tenta costui*, *Par.*, XXIV, 37). But this canto also shows, once again, Dalla Piazza's mastery of rhetorical devices as well

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288*Purgatorium*, XVIII, 131.
289*Purgatorium*, XXX, 42.

as his deep poetical sensibility. Two *terzine,* indeed, present an anaphoric repetition of the same letter at the beginning of each line: *sic*, *sit*, *sic* (lines 15–17) and *felici, ferret, fudit* (lines 21–23). Such an example of anaphora must be due to the author's will to ennoble his translation as it is completely missing in Dante's original text.

2- Linguistic Accuracy and Faithfulness to the Original Text

I have, so far, analyzed fillers and figures of speech used by Dalla Piazza in his translation of Dante's *Commedia.* In doing so, I have pinpointed some of the linguistic characteristics that differentiate Dalla Piazza's work from the original. I will now consider some of the most striking examples of linguistic accuracy that made the work of the translator so faithful to the original text. In *Inferna*, I, 50, Dante describes the she-wolf with a famous oxymoron: *che di tutte brame/ sembiava carca nella sua magrezza*,[290] and Dalla Piazza brilliantly keeps, in his translation, the same figure of speech: (*mihi visa*) *ire gravata, suis quamquam vix ossibus haerens.*[291] In *Inferna*, II, 130, Dalla Piazza translates the three epithets that conclude the canto (*tu duca, tu segnore e tu maestro*) to enrich the text with an alliteration of the consonant *d*, which is not present in Dante.[292] Such an intervention on the text is rather uncommon but still justified by the need of adorning the translation. Much more often, the Latin versification reflects faithfully the lexicon used by Dante, as in *Inferna*, II, 131, where *silvestria et alta petivi* perfectly renders *intrai per lo cammino alto e silvestro*,[293] or in *Inferna*, III, 77, where the description *canus/ crine*

290*Inf.* I, 50–51.
291*Inferna*, I, 44.
292*tu dux, tu dominus, tu doctor, Inferna*, III, 130.
293*Inf.* II, 142.

senex introduces the figure of Charon, described as *un vecchio, bianco per antico pelo.*[294]

In *Inferna*, III, 113, Dalla Piazza seems to waive his extreme faithfulness to Dante's text. In the original version, Virgil is called *maestro cortese*, while in the Latin version he is referred to as *ductor comisque magister*: it seems as if Dalla Piazza poetically re-interpreted Virgil's appellation, but it is easy to note that the three adjectives used by Dalla Piazza had already been used by Dante in describing Virgil in *Inf.*, II, 139.[295] What indeed seems to be a poetical interpretation is rather a quote from a previous passage.[296] Dante' s *Commedia* presents, in many instances, a word-for-word translation of classical Latin texts: Virgil, Ovid, Lucan and Horace in particular. One of the most renowned re-appropriations of passages drawn from ancient texts is certainly in *Inf.*, IV, where line 30 (*le turbe, ch'eran molte e grandi/ d'infanti e di femmine e di viri*) not only recalls, but translates *Aeneid*, VI, 306–307 (*matres atque uiri defunctaque corpora uita/ magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae*). Despite the authority of the Latin model, in his translation Dalla Piazza remains uninfluenced by Virgil and provides a translation that is strictly faithful to Dante: (*turba*) *quae multa et nomine clara/ infantumque aderat matronarumque virumque.*[297] Such faithfulness to the original text not only brings Dalla Piazza to privilege Dante over Virgil and the ancient Latin sources, but also brings the translator to add nuances to the translation that are present in the original but that are certainly not necessary for a thorough understanding of the passage.

An eloquent example of Dalla Piazza's strict faithfulness to Dante can also be found in *Inferna*, IV, 104–105, where Dante's description of a little river surrounding a

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294*Inf.*, III, 83.
295*tu duca, tu segnore e tu maestro.*
296*Inf.*, II, 139 - *Inferna*, III, 130.
297*Inferna*, IV, 26–27.

castle (*difeso intorno d'un bel fiumicello*)[298]could have been rendered with the last four

dactyls of line 104 (*Hunc ambit pellucidus amnis*). However, line 105 begins with three

more dactyls (*accessu prohibens*) that don't supply further information (their meaning is

already implied in the previous line) but paraphrase and explain the meaning of the

adjective *difeso*. Generally, however, Dalla Piazza adheres to Dante even with regard to

vocabulary and word choice: the description of Cerberus (*Sanguinei huic oculi, stat

barba huic uncta, colore/ foeda atro, venter latus*)[299] echoes the one made by Dante (*Li

occhi ha vermigli, la barba unta e atra*)[300] and the first intervention of Farinata not only

translates but almost transliterates the original text.[301]

  We find not infrequent attempts, in Dalla Piazza's rendering, to adopt syntactical

structures that are typical of the Latin language instead of the Italian. Dante's assertion

essaminava del cammin la mente (*Purg.*, III, 56) presents an hyperbaton between the verb

(*essaminava*) and the direct object (*la mente*). Dalla Piazza abandons the syntactical

structure of the original in favor of a Latin construction with an indirect interrogative

sentence and the principal verb at the end of the hexameter: *dum mentem ille suam, quae

sit via eunda, rogabat* (*Purgatorium*, III, 50). A similar instance of the influence exerted

by the Latin syntax on Dalla Piazza's versification can also be found in *Purgatorium*,

XXI, 23–24 (*hunc arcessura videbis/ regna parata bonis*) where the future participle

arcessura makes the translation slightly diverge from the original (*ben vedrai che coi

buon convien ch'e' regni*, *Purg.*, XXI, 24) but keeps its linguistic incisiveness.

298*Inf.*, IV, 108.
299*Inferna*, VI, 16–17.
300*Inf.*, VI, 16–17.
301*Inferna*, X, 18–22: *O Thusce, igniferam qui praeterlaberis urbem/ vivus adhuc ita honesta loquens, tibi sistere gressum/ hic placeat: tua nam te prodidit ipsa loquela/ illa gente satum, quam patria nobilis edit/ cui fortasse fui nimium nimiumque molestus. Inf.*, X, 22–27: *O Tosco che per la città del foco/ vivo ten vai così parlando onesto/ piacciati di restare in questo loco./ La tua loquela ti fa manifesto/ di quella nobil patria natio/ a la qual forse fui troppo molesto.*

In *Purgatorium*, XXII, the repetition of the syntagm *per te*[302] is skillfully rendered with *Te propter* (line 67), and it is also worth noticing that Dalla Piazza repeats the construction twice, as Dante does. However, due to metrical reasons, he inverts the words order: *Te propter cecini, vates, te propter eundem/ sum Christum amplexus*[303] and paraphrases the adjective *Cristiano* with a much more convoluted sentence: *sum Christum amplexus.*[304] Particularly interesting is the way in which Dalla Piazza renders Dante's quotation from the Gospel of John in *Purg.*, XXX, 19. If we look at Dante's Latin quotation (*Benedictus qui venis*) we see that Dalla Piazza does not alter, but just fragments it to meet the metrical requirements of line 17 and 18: *"Benedictus" voce fremebant/ "Qui venis!"* However, looking back at the original text by Saint John, it is possible to note that it presents an invocation in the third person singular, not in the second: *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.*[305] We have, with this example, a clear demonstration of Dalla Piazza's faithfulness to Dante's text rather than to his sources: Dante's variation of *qui venit* into *qui venis* is indeed kept by Dalla Piazza who sticks to this text instead to the original one.

In conclusion to this paragraph, I would like to quote a passage from Canto VI of *Paradisus* with its remarkable example of combination of linguistic faithfulness and poetical sensibility. In line 48 of *Par.*, VI, Justinian lists ancient Roman families (*i Deci e' Fabi*) whose fame, he says, he is willing to honor: *ebber la fama che volentier mirro.* Verb *mirrare* sounds antiquated to a nineteenth-century reader, as it stems its original meaning from the oriental tradition of greasing dead bodies to preserve them.[306] Dalla

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302 *Per te poeta fui, per te Cristiano*, *Purg.*, XXII, 73.
303 *Purgatorium*, XXII, 67–68.
304 "Embracing Christ and his religion, as the only one to be followed".
305*John*, 12–13
306See Dante Alighieri, *Commedia.* Ed. Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi, III, (Milan: Zanichelli, 1997), 167.

Piazza translates the verb in its original etymological meaning, explicitly recalling the ancient tradition and therefore contributing to a thorough understanding of the verb and its nuances. In his translation, indeed, the verb *mirrare* is paraphrased and translated with the syntagm "sprinkle with myrrh": *Decii Fabiique decora/ fulserunt fama, quam mirra aspergo libenter*.[307]

3- The "Divine" in Dalla Piazza

There is another aspect that evokes particular interest in Dalla Piazza's translation: his method of addressing God and the Dante's concept of divine. The *Inferno*, as well as the entire *Commedia*, is replete with constant references to God, and Dalla Piazza, as a priest himself, strictly complies with the Commandments and constantly refrains from calling God by name. Sometimes this predisposition does not entail major changes in his translation, many other times it forces him to adapt the original – but always, only minimally altering the content. The name of Christ appears only once in the translation of the first *Cantica* (*quod foedere Christi/ relligio sanxit*)[308] while the numerous textual instances in which Christ and God are named in Dante's text, become paraphrased in Dalla Piazza. The first clue of Dalla Piazza's way of translating lines whose content deals with the *divine*, can be found in *Inferna*, I, 13, where the original *guardai in alto*, is translated into *ad Superos attollens lumina*.

If the aforementioned reference to God is rather metaphorical and implicit, this tendency becomes explicit in *Inferna*, III, where *Dio*[309] is referred to with the epithet of

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307*Paradisus*, VI, 50–51.
308*Inferna*, IV, 36.
309*Inf.*, III, 39.

summo tonante. *Inferno* III is characterized by a marked pagan view of the *divine* and of

the afterlife: *summo tonante* is the way in which God is addressed, but also the concept of

Heavens (*caccianli i cieli per non esser men belli*)[310] is rendered with the word *Olympus*

(*Has deiecit Olympus*)[311] and the concept of *Hell* (*ne' lo profondo inferno li riceve*)[312] is

translated with *Orci claustra.*[313] In the first ten cantos of Dante's *Commedia*, the name of

God appears a remarkable number of times and it is always paraphrased in Dalla Piazza's

translation, with the only exception of canto IV. God, indeed, is often referred to as "the

avenger",[314] *aeternus tonans*,[315] *terrae coelique potens*[316] but is also named with the

synecdoche *superna mens*[317] or referred to with the allegory *sincera voluntas.*[318]

The same Christian deference to the divine sphere can also be clearly detected in

Purgatorium, where Dalla Piazza translates the original *Goder pareva 'l ciel di lor*

fiammelle[319] with *Ipse videbatur gaudens hilarescere Olympus,*[320] but also in canto III,

where Dante calls the Virgin Mary by name: *mestier non era parturir Maria* (line 39). In

his Latin translation, Dalla Piazza not only prevents from calling the Virgin Mary by

name, but he also emphasizes her virginal purity: *Virginis intactae haud eguissent*

tempora partu (*Purgatorium*, III, 36). There is, however, a remarkable tendency that is

worth analyzing in this context. While reading Dalla Piazza's translation, we have the

feeling as if his attitude toward divinity in a broad – yet still Christian – sense somewhat

changes in the *Purgatorium* and becomes completely different in the *Paradisus*. For

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310*Inf.*, III, 40.
311*Inferna*, III, 36.
312*Inferna*, III, 41.
313*Inferna*, III, 38.
314*premens ultor. Inferna*, III, 118 and *iustus ultor*. VII, 17.
315*Inferna*, VI, 100.
316*Inferna*, V, 33.
317*Inferna*, IX, 86.
318*Inferna*, IV, 46.
319 *Purg.*, I, 25.
320 *Purgatorium*, I, 24.

obvious reasons in the last two *Cantiche*, the name of God, Christ, Virgin Mary and the Holy Trinity appear in a constantly increasing number of times, and Dalla Piazza is forced to call them by name rather than paraphrase them. As a result, in the second part of *Purgatorium*, the name of God is pronounced.

The first instance of this inversion tendency can be detected in *Purg.*, XXI, 13, where Statius, in his first appearance in the poem, addresses the two pilgrims by saying: *O fratri miei, Dio vi dea pace*. If we look at Dalla Piazza's translation, we witness two important elements: the first one is a reformulation of the original's syntactical structure, but the second is the appearance of God's name in the Latin text: *sic vos, dante Deo, faciat pax alma beatos* (*Purgatorium*, XXI, 13). The inversion tendency in addressing the divine directly and not through periphrases is not abrupt, but slow and gradual: either in *Purgatorium*, XXI and *Paradisus*, I, it is still possible to find hints at the Christian divine sphere where earthily heaven is rendered with *Olympus*.[321] Nonetheless, this change in Dalla Piazza's attitude toward divine is strong and growing to the point in which the name of Christ appears in the Latin translation even when the original text does not present it. I have found one textual occurrences that testifies to this. In *Purgatorium*, XXII, 68, Dalla Piazza translates the original *Per te poeta fui, per te Cristiano* (*Purg.*, XXII, 73) with a poetical interpretation of Christianity as the act of "embracing Christ" therefore quoting the name of Christ even if the original text does not present it: *te propter eundem/ sum Christum amplexus.*

4- Dalla Piazza's Mastery of Latin Language at the Service of the Textual Explanation

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321 *Purg.*, XXI, 44 translated in *Purgatorium*, XXI, 43 and *Par.*, I, 142 translated in *Paradisus*, I, 127.

Along with an almost obstinate faithfulness to Dante, one of the most outstanding characteristics of Dalla Piazza's versification is, without a doubt, his impeccable mastery over the Latin language and over the hendecasyllable. In *Inferna* III, line 16 (*queis animae et cordis summa est amissa voluptas*) translates the relative sentence *c'hanno perduto il ben de l'intelletto.*[322] Dalla Piazza introduces the sentences with a relative pronoun in the case of dative plural; *quibus*, however, would have created metrical problems within the sentence. Therefore, the translator uses a simple device that shows a remarkable competence in the language: the syncopated form *queis*. The same linguistic mastery is also testified by the frequent use of the Latin defective verb *infit*, a verb not often recurring in classical Latin, as well as other verbs used in an acceptation usually conveyed by other verbs.[323] The Latin translation is elegant and the hexameters are always pleasingly flowing, as in the case of *Inferna*, VI, 72–73 where, in the original text, Dante says: *Ancor vo' che mi 'nsegni/ e che di più parlar mi facci dono.*[324] This is the way in which Dalla Piazza renders these two hendecasyllables: *id quoque me doceas, cupio, et ne discere aventi/ ulteriora neges.* In this passage, Dalla Piazza is less faithful than usual to Dante's vocabulary. Nonetheless, the structure of the sentence with verbs at the end of it, the use of a predicative participle (*aventi*) in accordance with the implied *mihi*, and the presence of a double negation (*ne-neges*) are clear clues of a total control over the Latin language.

The mastery over Latin language is always combined with the analytic understanding of Dante's text: in *Inf.*, X, 55–57, Cavalcante looks at Dante willing to know whether or not his son Guido was with Dante in his peregrination in the afterworld:

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[322]*Inf.*, III, 18.
[323]I personally find particularly eloquent the use of verb *decernere* with the meaning of *fighting* in *Inferna*, V, 63.
[324]*Inf.*, VI, 77–78.

dintorno mi guardo', come talento/ avesse di veder s'altri era meco. The question implicit

in Cavalcante's restless curiosity is made rhetorical by Cavalcante's explicit question *mio*

figlio ov'é? E perché non é teco?[325] By the time of the second question, it was already

clear to Cavalcante that Guido was not with Dante. In his translation, Dalla Piazza

conveys Cavalcante's anxiety (*come talento/ avesse di veder*) with an interrogative

indirect sentence: *ut qui noscere averet/ num quis venisset mecum.*[326] What is worth

analyzing here, is the use of the interrogative preposition *num*: the indirect interrogative

sentence could have been introduced by the preposition *ne*, and this would not have

affected the metrical structure of the line. *Num*, however, perfectly renders the rhetorical

nature of this question and implies a negative answer; in fact, Cavalcante's expectation to

meet his son Guido is quickly disregarded.

A translation, by definition, should only convey the inner significance of a text

from one language to another, trying to keep, in so far as possible, the linguistic

peculiarities of the original. While reading Dalla Piazza, though, we have the feeling as if

the translator, from time to time, intervened on the text by giving a translation that, de

facto, shows his interpretation of a particularly convoluted passage instead of merely

rendering the passage itself in Latin. Such interventions are not infrequent in the *Divina*

Comoedia hexametris Latinis reddita, and occur in concomitance with lines that, even

nowadays, raise philological questions, as well as in sentences made hard to understand

by a convoluted syntactical construction.

A particular interpretation is, indeed, the one that Dalla Piazza proposes in

translating Dante's astonishment in meeting with Virgil for the first time. *Mi si fu offerto/*

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[325]*Inf.*, X, 60.
[326]*Inferna*, X, 46–47.

chi per lungo tempo parea fioco is the way in which Dante describes the first appearance

of his guide; Virgil, therefore, *parea fioco per lungo tempo*.[327] This description has drawn

scholars' attention ever since Piero di Dante on, and even in modern times it is hard to

overcome the ambiguity entailed in Dante's assertion *per lungo tempo*. One among the

most authoritative interpretations (Castelvetro) sees in Virgil a figure that, by the time

Dante looks at him, has already been silently in the *selva* for a long time (*lungo tempo*),

while a second interpretation glances to the fact that, by the time of the narration, Virgil

had already passed away since thirteen centuries. The syntagm *lungo tempo* might

therefore refer to this (Sapegno). In his translation, Dalla Piazza seems clearly inclined to

accept the second interpretation: by establishing a fictitious dialogue with a reader, the

translator presents Virgil as an impotent figure, "whose poetical strength, you could

argue, have been cancelled out by a long silence" (*cui longa silentia vocis/ quas habuit*

quondam, vires fregisse putasses).[328]

In *Inf.*, IV, 25–45 Dante describes the limbo on the other side of the Acheron and

the doomed people that reside in this – first – circle of *Hell*, are characterized by a

particular punishment that afflicts them. Different from all of the other souls whom Dante

will meet throughout his journey, the damned people of Limbo don't have to expiate

guilts due to their depraved *ego*, they rather have to expiate not having been baptized.

Quivi, secondo che per ascoltare,/ non avea pianto mai che di sospiri/ che l'aura etterna

facevan tremare;/ ciò avvenia di duol sanza martiri,/ ch'avean le turbe, ch'eran molte e

grandi,/ d'infanti e di femine e di viri.[329] Dante's description is deliberately convoluted,

allusive and makes the reader delve into a gloomy atmosphere that preludes the meeting

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327*Inf.*, I, 62–63.
328*Inferna*, I, 57.
329*Inf.*, IV, 25–30.

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with the four poets (lines 64–105). Looking at Dalla Piazza's translation of the passage we have the clear feeling that the translator attempted to simplify the syntax and tried to render the text more straightforward. The oxymoron of line 28, *ciò avvenia di duol sanza martiri*, undoubtedly needs further explanation to render better such a beautiful poetical image: Dalla Piazza, indeed, paraphrases the verse into the more complex sentence which, however, presents a marked alliteration of consonant *c*: *Hoc cura ciet cruciatibus expers/ cordi haerens turbae*.[330] In this Latin translation Dalla Piazza provides a more logical construction of the sentence by adding a subject (*cura expers cruciatibus*) by changing the verb (from *avvenia* to provoke/ *ciet*) and by adding a direct object (*hoc*). Moreover, the mass of doomed people, *le turbe*, in Dante's verse, are described as *molte e grandi*, and their only guilt is the fact that they have not been baptized (*Per tai difetti, non per altro rio,/ semo perduti*).[331] By understanding the metaphorical use of *grandi*, Dalla Piazza brilliantly renders the adjective with (*turba*) *nomine clara* and limits the semantic value of *tai difetti* by translating it with an hypallages (*Has propter maculas*).[332]

In canto V, Dante and Virgil climb down to the second circle, a circle – Dante says – that is smaller than the first one, but that also represents the scene of much harsher punishments bringing the doomed souls to yelp like animals. Dante condenses this description into a single hendecasyllable: *e tanto dolor, che punge a guaio*.[333] Aside from the undeniable difficulty of rendering the original line into Latin, in his translation Dalla Piazza is also clearly moved by the necessity to explain all of the nuances entailed in the verb phrase *che punge a guaio*. As a result, his translation loses part of the original effectiveness, but provides a syntactical structure that is easier to follow than the original:

330*Inferna*, IV, 25–26.
331*Inf.*, IV, 40.
332*Inferna*, IV, 38.
333*Inf.*, V, 3.

atque doloris/ plus tanto, afflictas animas cogentis acute/ more canum ingemere.[334]

I would like to conclude this paragraph with one last note that shows – I believe – better than anyone else, Dalla Piazza's thorough knowledge of Latin through a systematic and analytical study of the ancient authors. In *Purg.*, XXII, while describing the figure of Statius, Dante quotes the emperor Domitian and his persecution of the Christian people: *quando Domizian li perseguette* (line 83). In Dalla Piazza's translation, the name of the emperor is not provided, as it would have altered the scan of the line. Domitian is rather referred to as the "bald-headed Nero" (*calvo insectante Nerone),* an epithet that well testifies to Dalla Piazza's familiarity with Latin sources, as it was often used by ancient writers to underline Domitian's early baldness.[335]

5- *Philological Problems*

A question that takes on great importance and has yet to be analyzed, is the one regarding philological issues. As is well known, Dante's comedy has not survived in the linguistic *facies* that the poet gave to it: we have no autograph of the text, and critical editions present a number of different interpretations that markedly change the meaning of the text

334*Inferna*, V, 2–4. A certain predilection that Dalla Piazza has for verbs used in their rather metaphorical and obscure meaning is also detectable from the employment of the archaism *mage* instead of *magis* in *Purgatorio*, I, 54 and the use of the adjective *devotus* (line 62) employed in its unusual meaning of "doomed, damned." The adjective, past participle of verb *devoveo*, is frequently used in the meaning of "devoted", "zealously attached" while the same form meaning "execrable", "doomed", is much less frequently encountered. See Hor., *Carm.*3.4.27, Ov., *Ep.*9.153, Quint., *Decl.*9.5. The employment of *devotus* with the meaning of "condemned" also shows an explicit attempt, on Dalla Piazza's part, to ennoble his translation, an attempt which is also testified by the translation of the word *Imperatrice* in *Induperatrix*. In *Purgatorium*, III, the original *Costanza imperadrice* (line 113) is translated in *Induperatrix* (and not *Imperatrix*) *Constantia*. If we look at the verse in its entirety (line 103 in the Latin translation), we see that the word *Imperatrix* would not have altered the metrical structure of the hendecasyllable. Nonetheless, Dalla Piazza deliberately chooses a word that is much less frequently employed and much more sophisticated, as it is not even present in the 1997 edition of the Oxford Latin Dictionary, while the word *Induperator* is registered even though presented as an archaic synonym of *Imperator.* See Enn., *Ann.* 83, Lucr. 4.967, 5.1227.

335See Tac. *Hist.* 40, Juv. *Sat.* 4, 38 and Svet. *Dom.* 18.

itself. Given such a problem, it is interesting to see how Dalla Piazza dealt with it and which linguistic interpretations he chose for his Latin translation. It goes without saying that what determined his translator choice was not only a precise philological conviction but also a pressing need to adapt a given *lectio* to the metrical and linguistic demands of his versification.

In *Inf.*, I, 101, Virgil announces the arrival of a savior *veltro*, one of the greatest enigmas of the poem. What is noteworthy here is not the historical-biblical interpretation of what in Dalla Piazza is literally translated into *canis*, but rather an exegesis of Dante's description of the *veltro* with particular regard to line 102: *e sua nazion sarà tra feltro e feltro*. The meaning of *feltro e feltro*, the place of origin of the savior, is still obscure. One of the most authoritative interpretations (Bambaglioli, Ottimo and Boccaccio) sees in the passage a reference to humility: *feltro*, indeed, means "poor fabric" which could represent a synecdoche for priest, man of Church. A second, suggestive, interpretation has induced editors to print *feltro* with the capital "f" (*Feltro*) and to interpret the passage as a geographical indication of the territory included between Feltre and Montefeltro (Barbera). In this case, the allusion would constitute an explicit reference to Cangrande della Scala' s domain. Dalla Piazza seems to accept the second interpretation. He not only translates *tra feltro e feltro* with *Feltria* (*Idem intra fines, quos utraque signat/ Feltria, nascetur*)[336] but also corroborates his identification of the verb phrase *ille erit salus* with Cangrande by adding a description which is typical of an earthly sovereign and which is not present in the original text: *populum et ditione tenebit.*[337] Moreover, the *feltro*, in Vergil's words "will send the she-wolf (metaphor of avariciousness) back to hell, where it

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336*Inferna*, I, 97–98.
337*Inferna*, I, 98.

was released by envy".[338] The quoted text presents a philological issue: it is, indeed, unclear as to the grammatical function of *prima*, which can work either as an adverb ("previously") or as an adjective (the "first", the "original" envy).[339] Dalla Piazza solves the question by interpreting *prima* as an adverb, which fits well in the hexameter of line 111: *unde prius dir haec infesta trahente/ invidia evulsa est.*[340]

Also, in *Purg.*, XXII, 40–41, Dante faithfully translates a passage from the third book of the *Aeneid*: *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis/ auri sacra fames!* (lines 56–57) into *Perché non reggi tu, o sacra fame/ dell'oro, l'appetito de' mortali?* Aside from the obscure meaning of the passage,[341] it is interesting to look at the translation made by Dalla Piazza. In his Latin versification, Dalla Piazza substitutes *vi potitur* (first dactyl and first long syllable of the second dactyl of line 56) with *clamasti* (spondee and first long syllable of first dactyl in line 36). By doing so, he literally nestles the original quotation in the exact position in which it is set in the original text. Also, a similar case can be detected later on. In *Purg.*, XXII, 70–72, Dante translates the famous beginning of Virgil's *fourth Eclogue*: *Secol si rinnova/ torna giustizia e primo tempo umano/ e progenie scende da ciel nova*. Dante's translation faithfully adheres to the Virgilian text: *magnus ab integro saeclorum nascitur ordo/ iam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna/ iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.*(*Ecl.*, IV, 5–7) If we look at the Latin version, we see that, diversely from the previous quotation, Dalla Piazza is now forced to produce little modifications to the original text to fit it into his versification. Dalla Piazza begins line 64 by quoting Virgil: *Magnus ab integro* but then adds a relative sentence (*cum dixti*)

338*fin che l'avrà rimessa ne lo 'nferno/ là onde 'nvidia prima dipartilla. Inf*., I, 110–111.
339See Dante Alighieri, *La Divina Commedia*, I, Ed. Natalino Sapegno, (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1955), 15.
340*Inferna*, I, 3–4.
341For the debated question on the original meaning of the sentence, see Dante Alighieri, *Commedia.* Ed. Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi, II, (Milan: Zanichelli, 1997), 664.

with the syncopated form *dixti* instead of *dixisti* and rephrases the original text into

nascitur ordo/ saeclorum without, therefore, altering the meaning of the Virgilian text.

Moreover, metrical requirements bring him to neglect the first verb *redit* and to use the

plural *redeunt* for both the subjects *virgo* and *Saturnia regna.* These minimal expedients

allow Dalla Piazza to quote in full line 7 of the *Eclogue*. In the end, his translation of the

passage keeps in full the beauty of the original text: *"Magnus ab integro", cum dixti,*

"nascitur ordo/ saeclorum, redeunt virgo et Saturnia regna/ Iam nova progenies coelo

demittitur alto.[342]

6- Difficulties in Translation

While reading Dalla Piazza's translation, I have noticed that in some – rare –

cases, the translator encounters difficulties in rendering the original text. It seems as if the

requirements of Latin syntax, demands of versification into hexameters and the ever-

pressing need to adopt a lexicon that recalls Dante, brought Dalla Piazza to render few

passages in a rather convoluted and obscure Latin translation. Toward the middle of

Inferno III Virgil, with a harsh reproach, silences Charon and persuades him to convoy

the two poets to the other bank of the Acheron.[343] In describing Charon's reaction, Dante

skillfully shifts the subject, from Charon, to his cheeks: *Quinci fuor quete le lanose gote/*

al nocchier de la livida palude,/ che 'ntorno a li ochhi avea di fiamme rote.[344] Now, if we

look at Dalla Piazza's translation, we not only note that the subject does not change, but

we also note that lines 90–91 present a text that does not reflect the original. Line 99 *che*

342 *Purgatorium*, XXII, 64–66.

343 *E 'l duca lui: "Caron, non ti crucciare:/ vuolsi così colà dove si puote/ ciò che si vuole, e più non dimandare".Inf.*, III, 94–96.

344 *Inf.*, III, 97–99.

'ntorno a li occhi avea di fiamme rote is beautifully rendered into *cui circumfusis ardebant lumina flammis.* What causes perplexity here is the rendering of the syntactical structure of lines 97–98. In Dalla Piazza, indeed, the subject of the entire sentence remains Charon, *navita* in the Latin translation, who "orders his jaws to calm down": *Lanosas liventis navita stagni,/ talibus auditis, iussit requiescere malas.*[345] The adjective *lanosus* clearly recalls the original *lanoso,* nonetheless, the scene of Charon "giving orders" to his mouth, rendered with the synecdoche of "wooly jaws", makes the original image somewhat awkward and inelegant.

Canto VIII of the *Inferna* presents two emblematic passages in which Dalla Piazza finds himself in difficulty while translating Dante's text; the first one occurs in line 71. By the middle of canto VIII, Dante describes the first appearance of the towers of Dis (*Maestro, già le sue meschite/ là entro certe ne la valle cerno*) the *meschite*, as Dante calls them, are *vermiglie come se di foco uscite/ fossero.*[346] The buildings of Dis are rendered into Latin with the synecdoche (a figure of speech very dear to Dalla Piazza) *altaque tecta*, but such "high roofs" seem "to send a brightening light". This is, I believe, the sense to give to the expression *lucem et velut ignea mittunt.*[347] *Ignea* could be a neuter plural accusative that, as a substantivized adjective, would stand for *ignes*. However, the closeness of the word *lucem*, and the fact that *ignes* would not have altered the metrical structure of line 71, brings me to see a grammatical issue in the passage: the word, indeed, in place of *ignea* should have been *igneam*. *Igneam* follows *lucem* in gender and number, and well translates Dante's *come se di foco uscite/ fossero*, but creates problems from the perspective of the metrical scanning in the fifth dactyl.[348] This is one of the very

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345*Inferna*, III, 89–90.
346*Inf.*, VIII, 72–73.
347*Inferna*, IX, 71.
348*Inf.,* VIII, 72–73.

few grammatical issues that can be found throughout the translation. Dalla Piazza was

aware of this minor mistakes and wanted to fix them before publication, but the

manuscript he handed down to Provedi as part of his will, was still unrefined and as such

his translation was published in 1848.

Toward the end of the same canto, the devils prevent Dante and Vergil from

entering the city of Dis and right after Dante' s famous hint to the reader (*Pensa, lettor, se

io mi sconfortai*) the poet addresses Virgil with a sublime example of *captatio

benevolentiae*: *O caro duca mio, che più di sette/ volte m'hai sicurtà renduto e tratto/

d'alto periglio.*[349] Dante therein describes Virgil as "the one who saved him more than

seven times", but Dalla Piazza's rendering of the line causes a few perplexities. The only

existing edition of Dalla Piazza's work (Leipzig, 1848) presents the following text: *O

mihi dux carissime, dixi,/ plus vice septena mihi reddite sponsor.*[350] What causes troubles

in the Latin text is the verb phrase *mihi reddite sponsor*: the verb *reddere* means "to give

back" and, as a transitive verb, takes a direct object. In the aforementioned passage the

lack of any accusative renders the vocative difficult to explain: I am more inclined to see

in *reddite* a misspelling of the similar form *redite*. *Redeo* means "to come back" and,

diversely from *reddo*, is an intransitive verb; *mihi redite sponsor* not only makes the

sense of the sentence much more understandable, but also faithfully respects the original

text.

One last grammar issue can be found in canto X of the *Inferna*. In his penultimate

intervention, Farinata explains to Dante the doomed people's ability to forecast the future:

"Noi veggiam, come quei c'ha mala luce,/ le cose", disse, "che ne son lontano;/ cotanto

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349*Inf.*, VIII, 97–99.
350*Inferna*, VIII, 93–94.

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ancor ne splende il sommo duce.[351] Dalla Piazza's translation, once again, beautifully

adheres to the original text: *Nos, laesi lumine ad instar,/ quae procul a nobis distant,*

ventura tuemur.[352] The adverbial locution *ad instar* beautifully translates Dante's adverb

come: however, such a Latin construction takes the genitive, a grammatical case that, in

the aforementioned context, would stand for the original *quei*. In Dalla Piazza's version

ad instar is followed by an ablative, *lumine*, which is preceded by an adjective in genitive

case, *laesi*. My opinion is that Dalla Piazza provides here a construction *ad sensum*: I

believe that the grammatically correct syntax would have been *laesi luminis ad instar*,

however, such an adverbial locution would make line 86 metrically unacceptable. By

replacing *luminis* with *lumine* Dalla Piazza saves the meaning of the verse but provides a

grammatical construction that is not impeccable.

7- A Case of Apparent Divergence

There is one apparent divergence between the original text and the Latin

translation made by Dalla Piazza. I deliberately call it an apparent divergence because, if

we look at the original text and at the most authoritative exegetical approaches that have

been proposed throughout centuries, we easily realize that this variation is due to a deep

understanding of Dante's text. In *Inf.*, II, 60, Vergil describes Beatrice's intercession for

Dante: in the brief dialogue between her and the Latin poet, Beatrice addresses Dante

l'amico mio, e non de la ventura. The quoted text is only apparently straightforward to

interpret: the real meaning of *amico* and *ventura* is still a matter of discussion among

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351*Inf.*, X, 100–102.
352*Inferna*, X, 86–87.

scholars. If we look at Dalla Piazza's work, though, we find a translation that captures our attention: *quem mihi iunxit amor, mea non fortuna.*[353]

Dalla Piazza translates *amico* with "lover": however, as previously anticipated, I believe this is not the case of a misunderstanding, but on the opposite, shows a deep comprehension of the original text. It seems as if Dalla Piazza, following the *lectio* proposed by the 1837 Le Monnier edition, had anticipated one of the most influential philological contribution on the passage. Mario Casella, in his article published in 1943, bases his reading of Dante's text on a passage from Abelard's third book of *Commentaria in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos.*[354] In this work, the twelfth-century philosopher provides a redefinition of devotion to God as a non-self-interested love which he calls "friendship" (*amicitia*) and defines "friend" (*amicus*) "the one who loved me with a pure and disinterested love".[355]

It seems to me as if Dalla Piazza's rendering of "amico" with "lover" (quem mihi iunxit amor) does not represent a poetic license taken by the translator. I believe, on the contrary, that Dalla Piazza might have had Abelard's commentary well in mind while drawing this passage. The interpretation of friendship as love stems its roots in the Scholastic philosophy, and as such it was also known to Dante. Dalla Piazza's linguistic choice is justifiable for a double reason, if indeed Beatrice's reference to Dante can find an explanation in the pilgrim's love for her, I believe that Abelard's definition of pure love as friendship, might lay behind Dalla Piazza's translation of the passage, as it well defines the relationship between the mortal sinner and a beatified soul.

353*Inferna*, II, 57.

354Mario Casella, "L'amico mio e non della ventura", in *Studi Danteschi*, XXVII, (1943), 117–134.

355Peter Abelard, *Commentaria in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, ed. Buytaert, III, (Turnholt: Brepols, 1969), 202–204. See also Emilio Pasquini, "amico", in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, I, 206 and Antonino Pagliaro, *Commento incompiuto all'Inferno di Dante. Canti I–XXVI*, (Rome: Facoltà Scienze Formazione, 1999), 39–40.

Chapter Five: Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli

Section One: Life and Works

1- From Camerano to Rome and From Rome to Camerano: Biographical Sketches of a Modern Latinist

As son of Vito Pasquali and Maddalena Marinelli, Giuseppe Pasquali was baptized with his paternal surname. His father Vito Giuseppe Vincenzo was born in Montelupone (Macerata) on 15 June, 1765,[356] while his mother Maddalena was born in Camerano on 18 January, 1766.[357] Apparently, Giuseppe was tied and sentimentally closer to his mother and his maternal relatives than to his father, as testified by the addition of the surname "Marinelli",[358] and by the drafting of the mother's genealogy.[359] On 20 April, 1793, Giuseppe Pasquali was born in Camerano, a little town not far away from Ancona.[360] The poet defines the year 1793, that of his birth, sinister and reckless (*nimium tristis*) as the year that witnessed the execution of Louis XVI (21 January) unleashing a season of ruin and decay that still endures at his own time.[361]

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356 See the manuscript *Renatorum 1742–80*, II, 260 at the *Archivio Parrocchiale di Montelupone*. See also Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, insigne poeta cameranese del XIX secolo, in *Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli. Atti del Convegno del 24 aprile 1993* Ed. Massimo Morroni, (Camerano: Comune di Camerano, 2014), 33.

357 See the manuscript *Liber Baptizatorum ab Anno 1761 ad Annum 1796* (on date 20 January, 1766) at the *Archivio Parrocchiale Camerano*.

358 Which first appears in a letter bearing date 18 August 1818, now kept, with the rest of Pasquali's epistolary, in the *Archivio comunale Camerano*. It is not unlikely that the prestige reached by the uncle whithin the hometown of Camerano might have brought Pasquali to use the only maternal surname. See Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 33.

359 See *Carmina inedita*, *Auctoris Genealogia*, 1–6.

360 *Carmina inedita*, *Auctoris Genealogia*, 5. The same date of birth is also testified by the baptism certificate (*Battesimi 1761–1796*) at the *Archivio Parrocchiale Camerano*. Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 33: "Anno Domini Millesimo septingentesimo nonagesimo tertio die vigesima prima Aprilis Rev. D: Franciscus Marinelli Parocus Auximi ex licentia baptizavit infantem die 20 hora 9 natum ex Vito fil: q: Hyeronimi Angelini Physicus at Anna M: fil: Joannis Alexandrelli ex hac cura".

361 *Carmina inedita*, I, 21–28: "*A* mille et septigentis cum tertius annus/ post novies denos ingrederetur

For his early schooling, it is likely that Pasquali has attended only the *Scuola di Grammatica*, under the guidance of don Giuseppe Maria Ottaviani, his future teacher at the *Seminario*, although Morroni hypothesizes that Giuseppe Scarafoni, first historian of Camerano, may have taught Pasquali as well.[362] In spite of the little we know about his early education, a number of sources testify to Pasquali's attendance of the *Seminario di Ancona,* where he moved and lived for five years after the invitation made by his uncle Francesco Saverio Marinelli.[363] During his time at the *Seminario*, Pasquali was first introduced to the study of classics and the cultural environment of Ancona has doubtlessly contributed sparking a deep passion in ancient languages as well as in Italian literature.[364]

Later on, in 1810, Pasquali also attended the *Seminario di Osimo* and the rhetoric courses taught by Piero Quatrini – illustrious man of letters from Osimo – while his mentor in philosophical studies was the conventual friar padre Nardi.[365] His brilliant success as a scholar brought Pasquali to leave the *Seminario* after one year and in 1811 the poet appears to be already enrolled at the *Accademia dei Risorgenti,*[366] prestigious cultural institution founded in 1760 by cardinal Stefano Bellini with the aim of recreating

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iter:/ annus proh! Nimium tristis, quo victa furore/ cervicem regi Gallica gens secuit./ Ex quo per terras omnes teterrima clades/ irruit, ac furias ponere nescit adhuc./ Hei mihi quot scelera et rerum discrimina, vidi!/ Quantaque ni moriar, forte videnda manenti" Quoted in Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 19–20.

362Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 20, note 9.

363See Pietro Gianuizzi, "Elogio funebre di Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, insigne poeta latinista, scritto e pronunciato dall' Avv.o Pietro Gianuizzi nella Chiesa priorale di Camerano il 10 Luglio 1876", in Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, Ed. Massimo Morroni, (Camerano: Cassa Rurale e Artigiana, 1991), 202–222. *Marinelli da Camerano per Alessandro Massaria Sacerdote Maestro*, (Camerano: Giorgetti, 1893), 9. Serafino Patrignani, *Della vita e degli scritti di Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli di Camerano d'Ancona. Brevi memorie storiche*, (Ancona: Buon Pastore, 1893), 8. Michele Maroni, *18 Settembre 1904. In memoria di G. Pasquali-Marinelli e di Enrico Jacomini*, (Camerano: Giorgetti, 1905), 7.

364Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 20: "L'ambiente culturale del Seminario risentiva dell'impronta di alcuni umanisti, che gli trasfusero l'amore per le lettere italiane, latine e greche".

365Ibid., 20.

366An epistle sent to Francesco Saverio Marinelli on 9 January, 1872 testifies to this: "Io non sono ascritto che all'Accademia dei Risorgenti nel Collegio di Osimo, nella quale mi posero quando era ivi alunno".

the ancient *Accademia dei Sorgenti*.[367]

Pasquali' studies in the Humanities spanned a period of four years (1810–1814) and were followed by one year of Theology which in 1816 concluded his schooling at Osimo.[368] Between 1816 and 1818 Pasquali also attended the University of Macerata were, on 19 August, 1818, he was awarded a degree in civil and canon Law (*in utroque iure*)[369]. According to Alessandro Massarìa, during his stay in Macerata, Pasquali composed his first Latin poem in three books centered on the figure of Saint Theodora, later given as a present to Bartolomeo Pacca.[370] Although not preserved, this first Latin poem already testifies to a marked poetical sensibility along with a rigorous mastery over Latin hexameter, as witnessed by the letter sent by Pacca to Pasquali, where the illustrious cardinal congratulates the young poet on his natural vocation towards classical languages: "ameni Studi cui dalla natura si vede inclinato".[371]

None of the professional careers related to his studies turned out to be suitable for

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367 On the foundation of the *Accademia dei Risorgenti* see Marcantonio Talleoni, *Istoria dell'antichissima città di Osimo*, II, (Osimo: Quercetti, 1807), 161. On its renovation, lead by cardinal Giovanni Soglia in 1843, see the opening speech read by Professor Montanari in Giuseppe Ignazio Montanari, *Sull'officio della poesia nel secolo XIX. Discorso letto dal Professore Giuseppe Ignazio Montanari nell'Accademia de' Risorgenti di Osimo il giorno 19 Settembre 1843*, (Loreto: Rossi, 1844). In 1925, the *Accademia* changed its name in *Nuova Accademia dei Risorgenti*, but this did not help save it from a slow decay that brought it to the closure in the late twenties of the XX century. See Carlo Grillantini, *Storia di Osimo, Vetus Auximon*, II, (Pinerolo: Cottolengo, 1957), 876–877.

368 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 194: "Dall'insegnamento del conventuale P. Nardi apprese lodevolmente la logica, la metafisica, l'etica, la matematica. Successivamente si dedicò alla teologia morale, ma trascorso il primo anno si avvide di non essere chiamato al servizio sacerdotale ed abbandonò l'abito religioso".

369 Alessandro Massarìa, *Vita di Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli*, 15. Pietro Gianuizzi refers that Pasquali's defense took place on 20 August: "Il 20 agosto 1817 conseguì a pieni voti la laurea e, per di più, rispondendo alle domande in eleganti esametri latini, come testimonia in un suo attestato il suo professore, l'Avv. Nicola Piccinini Giannelli". Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 194.

370 Pacca's function of Papal emissary in Germany and Portugal is testified in his *Memorie storiche di Monsignor Bartolomeo Pacca, ora cardinale di S. Chiesa, sul di lui soggiorno in Germania dall'anno MDCCLXXXVI all'anno MDCCXCIV in qualità di Nunzio Apostolico al tratto del Reno dimorante in Colonia. Con un'appendice su i nunzi.* (Modena: Vincenzi, 1836). Pasquali's *Notizie per l'anno MDCCCXXV* – now in the *Fondo "Pasquale Marinelli"* at the *Biblioteca Comunale di Camerano* – are dedicated to Bartolomeo Pacca.

371 The letter is datet July 16th 1817.

Pasquali to undertake as his submissive and peaceable disposition prevented him from becoming a lawyer while his delicate state of health dissuaded him from exerting the job of teacher. He was then appointed member of the apostolic secretariat in Rome ("Archivista e minutante dei Brevi presso la Segreteria del Camerlengato di S. Romana Chiesa")[372] where he worked for twelve years. Both Morroni and Gianuzzi agree that Pasquali's meticulous precision in carrying out this job engendered him a marked enmity among his colleagues and hastened his departure from Rome, a decision imposed also by the muggy climate of the city and its harmful effects on his health.[373] After his departure from the eternal city, Pasquali opted for Camerano as his stable residence. Not even the prestigious job positions he had been offered – a professorship at both the *Seminario* di Ascoli and the *Collegio Campana* in Osimo – brought him to abandon his natal town.

In Camerano, Pasquali was first appointed director of the council schools becoming a member of the city council, but his political commitment brought him to become elected *Priore* (mayor) in 1842. This prestigious position was kept until 1860, when the battle of Castelfidardo (18 September) decreed the military occupation of Marche and Umbria and their annexation to the newly born Kingdom of Italy. During his time as mayor of the city, Pasquali distinguished himself for the number of public works he undertook throughout his tenure; namely, he provided the first system of public street lighting in town and significantly increased its livability by strengthening the road

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372Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 195. All of the literary sources on Pasquali testify to his move to Rome: Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 7. ⌐Alessandro Massarìa,*Vita di Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli*, 17. Serafino Patrignani, *Della vita*, 14. Michele Maroni, *18 Settembre 1904*, 8.

373Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 195. Pasquali's stay in Rome was characterized not only by a tough relation with his colleagues at the secretariat, but also by a marked hostility towards the Roman numerous poetical academies which he never attended, as testified in a letter dated 16 February, 1874: "nei dodici anni che ho dimorato in Roma, non solo non ho avuto amicizia ma neppur conoscenza, con alcuno di quei tanti Arcadi e Tiberini". This letter is quoted by Morroni in "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 33.

network.[374]

By the time the poet left Rome (1830),[375] his first literary work was published. The *Institutiones iuris civilis a Josepho Paschalio Marinellio versibus expositae* consists in a Latin versification of Justinian's *Corpus Iuris Civilis* (533 p. C.).[376] This first edition of the *Institutiones* presents in its incipit Pasquali's poetic manifesto: *Fuit haec sapientia quondam (...) oppida moliri, leges incidere ligno/ Sic honor et nomen diuinis uatibus atque/ carminibus uenit.*[377] As a tribute to his interests and legal studies, the *Institutiones* refrain from drawing any explicit references to contemporary events nor political figures, they only list rules and regulations as present in the original text.[378] The *Institutiones* were published again, in a new editorial format in 1835,[379] however, diversely from the 1828 edition, they were now published in Ancona and the work's size was substantially increased, as it featured four books instead of one.

This extension was primarily due to Pasquali's wish to make his political

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374 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 196: "Durante i diciotto anni del suo Priorato realizzò un'innumerevole quantità di opere pubbliche, senza nello stesso tempo gravare sulle finanze dei cameranesi, con gabelle e balzelli; faceva anzi in modo che i lavori pubblici venissero realizzati nei mesi invernali, quando la disoccupazione era più elevata, per sollevare le famiglie più bisognose. In concreto, realizzò la pubblica illuminazione nelle pubbliche vie, migliorò le condizioni delle strade facendone costruire anche delle nuove, come quelle che collegano Camerano con Osimo e le varie contrade tra di loro; nel centro urbano fece costruire un marciapiede provvedendo anche ad una maggiore pulizia delle vie e delle case; fece costruire il ponte sul fiume Aspio per facilitare le comunicazioni con i paesi vicini".

375 Pasquali's genuine desire to return to his home town is also testified by *Carmina inedita*, I, 6: "*Qui me Romulea voluit discedere ab urbe/ Ac vitam pago ducere in exiguo*"

376 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Institutiones iuris civilis a Josepho Paschalio Marinellio versibus expositae*, (Rome, 1828).

377 Horace, *Ars poetica*, 396–401.

378 Among the many juridical works that constitute Pasquali's library in Camerano, the following are worth quoting: Antonio Perez, *Antonii Perezii Jus Civilis, in Academia Lovaniensi Juris Civilis Antecessoris, Institutiones Imperiales, Erotematibus Dinstinctae, atque ex ipsis principiis regulisque juris, passim insertis, explicatae*, (Venice: Witte, 1741). Sebastian Brant, *Titulorum Omnium Juris tam civilis quam canonici expositiones, Sebastiano Brant, I.V. Doctore celeberrimo auctore.* (Venice: Veyrat 1564). Tommaso Tomasetti, *Flores legum cum suis exeptionibus, et declarationibus ex variis legibus, glossis, et doctoribus collectis, ab admodum reverend. D. Thoma de Thomasettis*, (Venice: Banezio, 1703). For a more thorough bibliography, see Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 35, from which these notes are drawn.

379 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Institutiones iuris civilis a Josepho Paschalio Marinellio versibus expositae*, (Ancona: Officina Sartoriana) 1835.

viewpoint explicit, as it happens while he analyzes the crime of lèse-majesté.[380] Two

events of recent history are, indeed, recalled as explanatory examples of *crimen lesae*

maiestatis: the French Revolution and the 1831 riots in the Pontifical state, but what

began in Paris in the summer of 1789 represented to the poet's eyes the act of rebellion

par excellence:

> *Vidimus (horret adhuc, tantosque revolvere casus*
> *Mens refugit perculsa malis), immane furentem*
> *vidimus hanc pestem Gallorum involvere fines*
> *caedibus, horrandaque plagas vastare ruina.*
> *Vidimus (heu facinus, quod nulla aboleverit aetas!)*
> *cui pius in populos animus, cui pectore virtus*
> *plurima, criminibus cooperti more latronis*
> *Augustum Regis caput abtruncare securi*
> *dum tremeret tellus sacro madefacta cruore*
> *ac sol, obscura nuptus ferrugine vultus*
> *indociles properaret equos immergere ponto*
> *pontus et ipse fretis fremeret.*[381]

What clearly emerges from Pasquali's words is a strong condemnation against any

attempts to undermine the ruling power. The poet seems to be wishing for a theocratic

hierarchy where the Pope supervises a peaceful subjugation of the people to the king, and

the election of Gregory XVI (1831) gives Pasquali the chance to express his wish for the

new Pope to become a joining link between rulers and people, as his function will be that

of connector between parties in the name of a peaceful coexistence.[382]

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380 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Institutiones*, IV, 880.

381 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Institutiones*, IV, 851–862. This text is partially quoted by Morroni in "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinell", 35.

382 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Institutiones*, IV, 887: "(may the Pope's preyers) *reges ac populos aeterno foedere iungant/ incipiatque novus saeclis venientibus ordo*". In respect to Pasquali's religiosity it is also worth quoting a passage from *Carte sparse (autografi e non)*, n.29 at the *Archivio G. Pasquali Marinelli* (*Cassa rurale e artigiana "S. Giuseppe"* in Camerano): "non sarò mai per mancare a quella fedelissima sudditanza verso la S. Sede in cui mi hanno educato i miei piissimi genitori (...) e che ha gettate in me sì profonde radici che io benedico sempre l'Altissimo d'avermi fatto nascere suddito Pontificio". The *Institutiones* enjoyed a remarkable success within Marches' intellectual class both for the faithfulness to the original text and for Pasquali's admirable mastery of Latin language: "Di quest'opera conosciamo soltanto giudizi favorevoli e pieni di meraviglia per come abbia potuto trasferire in eleganti e poetici esametri, simili a quelli di Lucrezio, "una materia didascalica tanto ardua e spinosa" (Bedetti) in cui "la gravità della giurisprudenza è congiunta alla dolcezza della poesia" (Vapulli)" In Giuseppe Pasquali

Despite the strong influence exerted by Christian inspiration on the *Institutiones Iuris Civilis*, Pasquali also pays a greater tribute to his religiosity by translating in Latin hexameters many books of the *Bible*.[383] Massimo Morroni, the only scholar who had the merit of restoring Pasquali's importance within the Italian cultural milieu of the early nineteenth-century, subdivides the poet's religious translations in two subcategories: the first one – datable between 1841 and 1857 – includes *Job et Moysis cantica* (1841), *Prophetae I* (1856) and *Prophetae II* (1857).[384] The *Liber Psalmorum* and *Messias* belong to a later stage of Pasquali's poetical production as being composed respectively in 1864 and 1866 and being preceded by *De Sacramentis*, a not-laic yet original work that interrupts the translations of religious texts that characterizes the years 1841–1866.[385]

Although the early biographers agree that a deep and steady religious faith must have lied at the origin of such a demanding commitment,[386] Morroni, following Giuseppe Morici's take on the issue,[387] argues that Pasquali's marked religiosity was balanced if not

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Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 199. See also Morici's praise as noticed by Moroni in "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 24: "*opus edidit, cui titulus Institutiones iuris civilis: in quo mirum quanta facilitate quantaque elegantia, quamvis in re tam arida et poeticis ornamentis minime accomodata, materiem exornavit, ita ut nonnullae operis partes etiam iuris imperitos magna cum voluptate detinere possint*".

[383] The text Pasquali based his work on was the *Vulgata Clementina* published in Rome at the Vatican apostolic typography in 1592.

[384] *Prophetae II* includes the Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel) while *Prophetae I* includes the Old Testament book by the Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi).

[385] Moreover, in 1846 the *Book of Job* is republished in *Job Apocalypsis et Moysis Cantica a Josepho Paschalio Marinellio versibus expressa*, (Ancona: Cherubini,1846). The differences between these two editions are brilliantly summarized by Morroni in "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 24: "Le differenze tra le due versioni del Giobbe non risiedono solamente nell'aumento di complessivi 17 versi, passando dalla prima alla seconda, ma anche in numerose limature, di maggiore o minore entità, che l'autore apportò, segno del suo costante interessamento al proprio lavoro. Non trascurabile si pose la collaborazione di Luigi Barili, il quale, tra il 1843 ed il 1845, inviò al Nostro una fitta rete di osservazioni e controsservazioni".

[386] Pietro Gianuizzi, "Elogio funebre di Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 14, and Serafino Patrignani, *Della vita*, 57.

[387] *Cum autem ab hoc Judaeorum scribendi genere, splendore atque audacia exultante, illa veterum graecorum latinorumque poëtarum castitas penitus abhorreat, fieri non potuit quin noster latini sermonis ac poëseos nitorem obumbraret.* See Giuseppe Morici, *De Josepho Paschalio Marinellio Brevis Commentatio*, 6. This important document is kept in manuscript form at the "Istituto Marchigiano di Scienza, Arti e Lettere di Ancona" (n. 45).

surpassed by his love for Latin language, a passion well testified by his later translation of the laic Homeric poems and the *Commedia*.[388] However, Pasquali's religious translation enjoyed a remarkable success and help the poet refine his Latin hexameter in view of major undertakings as the three poems.[389]

In February 1857 a mournful event strengthens Pasquali's spirituality: the death of his wife – Elena Picozzi, married on 30 April, 1834 –[390] brings the poet to restate his religious faithfulness, as the tragedy is echoed in his elegiac apology of Christian sacraments, *De Sacramentis*, published in the same year.[391] The name of Elena is made explicit in lines 657–670 of the aforementioned text, where Moroni has also found in Aeneas' search for Creusa after the sack of Troy (*Aeneid*, II, 767–770) a clear literary source for Pasquali's sorrowful description.[392] The year 1860 is crucial for the poet, as

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388 Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 25: "Secondo i primi biografi, fu l'amore per la religione ad indurre il Pasquali a tradurre i libri biblici. Senza dubbio esso costituì una componente importante, ma solamente una componente. Bisogna infatti tener conto del tipo misto di produzione letteraria pasqualiana, sacra, ma anche profana, e, alla luce di ciò, tener presente sia l'educazione umanistica assorbita dal Nostro, sia appunto l'entità delle maggiori traduzioni (Iliade, Odissea e Divina Commedia). Tutto ciò considerando, sembra di poter dedurre che l'amore della religione si accompagnò parimenti in lui all'amore per il verso latino".

389 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 199: "Diede quindi mano alla traduzione de vari libri della Bibbia: il *Giobbe*, l'*Apocalisse*, le *Cantiche di Mosé*, che furono pubblicati nel 1846. Anche in queste opere il Pasquali profuse tutta la sua arte poetica e unanimi furono gli elogi, poiché il nostro era "riuscito non solo elegantissimo traduttore, ma commentatore profondo, chiaro e fedelissimo" (Ab. Ricci) Quindi fu la volta della versione dei *Profeti*, che apparve nel 1856, per la quale D. Marino Marinelli parlò di "dotte ed eleganti fatiche".

390 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 195.

391 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De Sacramentis*, (Recanati: Morici e Badaloni, 1857). Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 199–200: "L'anno successivo (1857) pubblicò il poemetto *De Sacramentis* dedicato al Card. A. B. Antonucci, vescovo di Ancona, e ritenuto il suo miglior lavoro. In esso, attraverso la solennità dei riti e i misteri divini, viene posta in rilievo l'importanza e la fecondità dei sacramenti. Il Prof. Mattè, forse un po' iperbolicamente, espresse in proposito il seguente giudizio: "io anteporrei il *De Sacramentis* alla *Georgica* di Virgilio".

392 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli,*De Sacramentis*, 657–670: "*Et tu, cara, mihi vivis, penitusque medullis/ fixa haeres, Helene, quamvis et prona senectae/ et mihi rapta seni: te te mens saucia luctu/ nocte dieque vocat; te per loca nota, per aedem/ perque vias, quacumque feram vestigia, quaero,/ ingeminans Helene Helene: loca cuncta resultant./ Esto mei, dilecta, memor; memor, optima conjux,/ esto mei, cujus tantus, dum vita manebat/ te devinxit amor; quem tot tantisque fovebas/ assiduis curis. Ora, dulcique precare/ voce Deum, ut luctum, quo me tuus angit acerbus/ interitus, relevet... Quid dixi? Tristis amaror/ saeviat usque magis, donec coelestia tecum/ regna adeam, aeternumque Deo et tibi jungar in* aevum". Massimo Morroni draws our attention to the likely literary source of the mournful lamentation, *Aen.*, II, 767–770: *Ausus quin etiam voces iactare per umbram/ implevi clamore vias, maestusque Creusam/ nequiquam ingeminans iterumque iterumque vocavi.* See Massimo Morroni,

military and political events brought him to resign from the position of *Priore* in the city council of Camerano. In fact, on 18 September, 1860 the Papal state's troops were beaten by the Italian royal army at Castelfidardo in the province of Ancona. As a political consequence to the defeat, the Papal state was now reduced to the modern region of Lazio and the inevitable countdown to the conquest of Rome (1870) was finally triggered.

Although deeply involved with the previous regime, Pasquali was offered to keep the position of mayor by Enrico Morozzo Della Rocca – future Minister of War of the first Italian parliament. However, his marked ideological rigidity prevented him from accepting, but it did not impede him from maintaining the position of municipal councilor with the explicit intent of contributing, with his past experience, to the administration of his town.[393] The papal troops' defeat of 1860 also inspired Pasquali to compose a new work: *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, in two books.[394]

Rather than being an analytical account of what happened in the battlefield, *De pugna* conveys Pasquali's act of loyalty to the Papal state and the description of the battle itself takes on the tone of an apologetic defense of a legitimate state brutally attacked by an invader (the Italian army) rather than that of a narrative poem of a major event seen through the eyes of a contemporary. The work is dedicated to Pius IX and explicitly claims the Pope's right to exert political power: *Ne fallax iterum terras invaderet error/ aethere quem lapsus Christus disperserat orbe/ Pontificem hic summum statuit, qui sancta per omnes/ iura ministraret populos, ritusque loquendi/ atque hominum regeret*

"Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 25.

[393] Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 197: "Mantenne fino al luglio 1863 la carica di consigliere comunale, ma ciò non significa che assunse un atteggiamento polemico nei confronti dei suoi successori, bensì fu costantemente prodigo di consigli e di suggerimenti, che, data la sua esperienza, gli venivano richiesti".

[394] The manuscript lied unpublished for over a century but can now be read in the already mentioned Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, Ed. Massimo Morroni, (Camerano: Cassa Rurale e Artigiana, 1991).

mores.[395]

The fact that Pasquali did not manage to have his work published during his lifetime has deeply affected the spread of the poem itself which indeed remained relegated to a selected group of close friends. However, the connotation of political partiality that so deeply permeates this poetical work does not prevent a reader from seeing its sublime classicism – from the general epic content to the invocation of the Muses –[396] employed for the first time in an original work and in such a preponderant measure.

The last period of religious inspiration features the versification of the *Liber Psalmorum* in Latin hexameters (1864)[397] and the composition of a new poem, *Messias*, with a new dedication to Pius IX (1866).[398] The need for a new narrative of Christ's life and deeds became, to the poet's eyes, almost morally necessary after the 1863 publication of Joseph Ernest Renan's *Life of Jesus*,[399] a text in which the French author questions the divine nature of the Redeemer. The quarrel against Renan is testified since the early biographers,[400] but it is also made explicit by Pasquali himself at the very beginning of the poem, where, indeed, the poet speaks of "modern heretical times".[401] Although strongly

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395Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 10–14.

396See the introduction to the text by Massimo Coltrinari in Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 9–15.

397Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Liber Psalmorum a Josepho Paschalio Marinello versibus expositus: cum argumentis et notis,* (Ancona: Officina Aurelj, 1864).

398Giuseppe Pasquale Marinelli, *Messias,* (Ancona: Baluffi,1866).

399Joseph-Ernest Renan, *Vie de Jésus,* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1863). The text became also available in the 1864 Italian translation: Giuseppe Ghiringhello, *La vita di Gesù. Romanzo di Ernesto Renan preso ad esame da Giuseppe Ghiringhello, Professore di S. Scrittura e di Lingua Ebraica nella R. Università, socio della R. Accademia delle Scienze di Torino,* (Turin: Marietti, 1864).

400"imperocché egli imprese a scrivere questo poema per isbugiardare l'empio Renan. Ciò si apprende dai versi che gli servono di prefazione; ma io l'appresi dalla bocca sua ogni ragione per cui volle scriverlo così". Alessandro Massarìa, *Vita di Giuseppe Pasquali*, 33.

401"*Tempore, quo divina tibi natura negatur, / Et tua figmentis gloria deteritur; / Haec te, Christe, Deum testantia, carmina fudi*". Moreover, the reference to Renan is made explicit in a note to line one "*Quo Ernestus Renan impium de Christi vita libellum edidit*". Giuseppe Pasquale Marinelli, *Messias*, 1–3. This text has already been quoted by Morroni in "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 37–38.

influenced by contemporary works,[402] the *Messias*, represents the first and isolated

original literary work by Pasquali,[403] as the poet soon after turned back to his old passion

for Latin versification of existing texts.

Nonetheless, if the Latin hendecasyllable has always exerted a strong attraction

for Pasquali, a remarkable shift in his poetical production is perceivable around the mid

sixties of the century, a period in which the poet began working only on the translation of

not religious works. According to Pasquali,[404] a muse appeared in a vision encouraging

him to undertake both the translations of the Iliad and the Odyssey, as both the existing

Latin versions of the Greek poems lack linguistic elegance: *saepe inconcinne resonant.*[405]

A fierce disdain against the previous translators seems to lie at the origin of Pasquali's

new translations of the Homeric poems, but if Zamagna's translation of the Odyssey is

simply found inappropriate, the poet vents his anger against Kunić even in the Iliad's

Prolusio: Nam, quo Cunichii nonnumquam Musa renidet/ hoc mea perpetuo splenderet

praedita cultu./ Atque utinam, quem/ Cunichius desiderat ipse/ ille ego sim vates, qui vim

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402 Namely, Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock's *Der Messias*, published in 1773 in Berlin. This text became available in Italian thank to the 1839 translation by Zigno in *Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, Il Messia. Trasportato dal tedesco in verso italiano da Giacomo Zigno*, (Vicenza: Silvestri, 1782).

403 Ubaldo Pizzani, *Un poema sacro di grande suggestione: la Messiade di Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli*, in "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 130."il poema del Pasquali si differenzia da altre sue precedenti esperienze nel campo delle Scritture per il fatto di non essere una mera parafrasi di uno dei Vangeli, bensì un'opera autonoma sulla vita e sulla missione del Cristo che parte, ovviamente, dai testi sacri, ma che si articola secondo uno schema espositivo suo proprio e non senza l'aggiunta di nuovi episodi",

404 See *Carmina inedita, De Iliadis et Odysseae versione*, 16. The Latin versions of the poems Pasquali had at hand were the *Iliad* by Rajmund Kunić [*Homeri Ilias Latinis versibus expressa a Raymundo Cunichio Ragusino professore eloquentiae et linguae graecae in collegio Romano ad amplissimum virum Balthassarem Odescalchium*, (Rome: Zempel, 1776)] and the Odyssey by Bernardo Zamagna [*Homeri Odissea Latinis versibus expressa a Bernardo Zamagna. Ratio operis lectori ab interprete reddita*, (Siena: Battara, 1777)].

405 Actually, Morroni has found in a letter dated October 4th, 1848 the first reference to the Latin translation of the Iliad, and this would push the beginning of such a literary gestation back to the last months of the year 1848. In this regard, see Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 27. Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 200: "Non si era ancora spenta l'eco degli elogi seguiti alla diffusone del *Messias* che già il Pasquali aveva ripreso in mano la traduzione della *Iliade* e dell'*Odissea* di Omero, lavoro iniziato da anni e che ora intendeva portare definitivamente a termine operando un meticoloso *labor limae*. Queste videro la luce, una di seguito all'altra, negli anni 1869–70 e, ritenuta "di sapore veramente virgiliano" (G. Marini), furono giudicate degne del primo premio all'Esposizione Provinciale di Ancona del 1872".

transfuderit omnem/ Iliadis, magnique tubam exaequarit Homeri.[406]

The translations were published in 1869 and 1870 (*Homeri Ilias latinis versibus reddita auctore Josepho Paschalio-Marinellio*, Ancona, 1869 and *Homeri Odyssea latinis versibus reddita auctore Josepho Paschalio-Marinellio*, Ancona, 1870) and are both described at length in twenty Latin *Carmina* which were finally published by Morroni in 1993.[407] Despite the two translations from Greek into Latin, there is no evidence to support a strong knowledge of ancient Greek on Pasquali's part; on the contrary, Pasquali's unfamiliarity with this language is testified by Morici,[408] but also by the fact that no text in the original Greek language can be found in the library that belongs to the poet (and that today bears his name: *Fondo Pasquali Marinelli*).[409]

The Latin translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia* constitutes Pasquali's last poetical commitment; this endeavor lasted four years (1871–1874) and was finally published in 1874 in Ancona.[410] It seems clear that the original project to translate the *Commedia* in Latin hexameters stems back to an earlier stage in Pasquali's life, as the poet himself very vaguely affirms in *carmen* CXL,[411] but it was brusquely taken back into consideration as the translator received the Latin version of Dante's poem by Carlo

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[406]Homer, *Homeri Ilias latinis versibus reddita auctore Josepho Paschalio-Marinellio*, Ancona, 1869, 86–90. The text is drawn from *Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, ibid.*, 28.

[407]*Carmina inedita*, from *De Iliadis et Odysseae versione* (CXVII) to *De Odysseae versione* (CXXXVI). These *carmina* can now be found in Massimo Morroni, *Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli. Le età di un poeta. Biographia literaria*, (Ancona: Baluffi, 1993).

[408]Who explicitly remarks the very basic training in Greek language that Pasquali received. Giuseppe Morici, *De Josepho Paschalio Marinellio*, 6.

[409]The Homeric poems' editions that belonged to Pasquali are the translations by Kunić, Zamagna, but also the Italian translation by Monti [*Iliade di Omero. Traduzione del Cav. Vincenzo Monti. Terza edizione ricorretta dal traduttore colla giunta degli argomenti di G.A.M.*, (Milan: Classici Italiani, 1820)] and Cesarotti [*Iliade ridotta in verso italiano dall'Ab. Melchiorre Cesarotti*, (Turin: Penada, 1816)].

[410]Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli,*Dantis Aligherii Divina Comoedia latinis versibus, auctore Josepho Pascalio Marinellio*, (Ancona: Bauffi, 1874).

[411]This *carmen* is dated 1874 and recounts the suggestion made many years before by a friend of Pasquali about the need for a poetical Latin version of Dante' *Commedia*. Since the brief poem also states that such suggestion was made when Pasquali's friend was a student, it is not unlikely that the first idea of a Latin *Comoedia* might have been conceived between the mid fifties and mid sixties of the century. See also Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 29–30.

d'Aquino as a gift from Pietro Gianuizzi.[412]

If D'Aquino's translation is said to be unable to render Dante's greatness,[413] there is another Latin translation that, to the poet's mind, needs to be corrected and improved, that of Gaetano Dalla Piazza. Although aprioristically defined unworthy of being published, Dalla Piazza's work is actually highly appreciated by Pasquali once he analyzes it, but it is still found to be inadequate to be compared to the original.[414] Dalla Piazza's version is not condemned, on the contrary, it is used as a model by Pasquali, as suggested by Gianuizzi,[415] while the Italian texts employed by the poet for his translation are a reprint of Venturi's edition (1732) and the one edited and commented by Benassuti in 1869.[416] Pasquali's translation was published in 1874 in Ancona, but it was already concluded by December 1873, after about twenty six months of work and linguistic revision.[417]

On the basis of Morroni's studies it seems as if, after the publication, Pasquali felt the need of a new updated edition of his *Comoedia*, an edition aimed at emending the

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412 Carlo d'Aquino, *Della Commedia di Dante Alighieri trasportata in Verso Latino eroico Cantica I.a, II.a e III.a coll'aggiunta del Testo Italiano e di brevi Annotazioni*, (Neaples: Mosca, 1728).

413 "L'Aquinate non rende mai nella sua schiettezza e semplicità il concetto dantesco (schiettezza e semplicità che sono i primi pregi di tanto autore); ma, o lascia, o diminuisce, o ingrandisce smisuratamente (ch'è il primaio vezzo di lui)". From the letter sent to Gianuizzi on 14 April, 1872.

414 "di buona latinità, ma parmi debole e fredda". From the letter sent to Gianuizzi on 16 May, 1872.

415 From the letter sent by Pietro Gianuizzi on 25 May, 1872. This text is drawn from Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 42–43. "Allora io le manderò subito la versione del Della Piazza, tenendo la quale sott'occhio, nel ricopiare che Ella farà la sua, potrà introdurre in essa tutti quei miglioramenti che da quella le verranno suggeriti. (...) Con ciò io non intendo che la sua versione si trovi al di sotto di quella del citato scrittore, che anzi essa mi pare, come altra volta le ho detto, migliore d'assai; ma è purtroppo vero che nessun umano lavoro potendo riuscire totalmente perfetto, anche da lavori inferiori di merito si può raccogliere sempre del buono per condurre alla migliore possibile eccellenza ciò che è già per se stesso nobilissimo. Il Della Piazza ha delle pecche ma ha pure delle grandi bellezze specialmente in fatto di lingua che ordinariamente è assai pura e sente del gusto degli ottimi poeti latini secondo che Ella mi faceva giustamente osservare. E però particolarmente per questo lato le può essere utile".

416 *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri col commento del P. Pompeo Venturi. Nuova edizione, a miglior lezione ridotta, ed arricchita d'inedite postille del Dottor Giovanni Lami e di P. J. Fraticelli*, (Florence: Carli, 1813). Luigi Benassuti, *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri col commento cattolico*, (Verona: Civelli, 1869).

417 See Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 30.

Latin translation and at enriching it with the facing Italian text.[418] Sadly, though, Pasquali did not manage to attempt a new edition; the publication of a new *Comoedia,* along with other barely drafted compositions were frustrated by his death, on 9 July, 1875, at the age of eighty two. The first and significantly thorough comment on his *Comoedia* was made in 1893, by Giuseppe Morici. In his *Commentatio,* Morici combines Pasquali astonishing ease in Latin versification (*plerique loci, in quibus reddendi latini sermonis ingenium satis aptum interpreti occurrat, multa elegantia multaque facilitate a Marinellio versi sunt*) with his constant anguish of not being able to complete his work (*hoc unum metuens, ne imminens leti vis extremum sibi laborem intercideret*) but also with a subtle critique, as Pasquali's excessive linguistic adherence to Dante's text often lessens the translation's intelligibility.[419]

De pugna ad Castrumficardum was not the only text left unpublished by Pasquali at the time of his death (1875), a new translation dating back to the second half of the nineteenth-century, was found among his drafts, and published in 1893 in Pesaro: *Ex Hugonis Fosculi De Sepulcris carmine.*[420] The first publication of the text occurred eighteen years after Pasquali's death and was set within the celebration for the first centenary of Foscolo's birth (1793). The poem consists in a faithful translation of the 295

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418 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli,*De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 200–201: "Alla veneranda età di 78 anni, dimostrando un'instancabile costanza e un indefesso amore per la poesia, iniziò ed in otto mesi completò l'ultima sua fatica: la versione della *Divina Commedia* di Dante in esametri latini, che fu pubblicata nel 1874. Di essa, D. Marino Marinelli soleva affermare che "in molti tratti non la cede all'autore". Insoddisfatto di questa impresa, sia pure ardua, sul finire dei suoi giorni il Pasquali tentò di apportarvi delle modifiche per farne una seconda edizione col testo a fronte, ma con suo grande disappunto le forze gli vennero definitivamente meno e fu costretto ad abbandonare il lavoro".

419 Giuseppe Morici, *De Josepho Paschalio*, 7: "*Non autem negaveris saepe verborum et sententiarum aciem vividioresque imagines, quibus summus ille poeta primus usus est, nostrum dum nimium perspicuitati studet, verbis e medio desumptis vulgatioribusque sententiis obtundere. Interdum etiam cum arctius duci haereat et ne gressum quidem ab illius vestigiis arceri patiatur, serpit humi aut perspicuitatem omnino amittit*".

420 Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Ex Hugonis Fosculi De sepulcris carmine et Jacobi Victorellii Cantiunculis*, (Pesaro: Typis Fridericianis, 1893).

original Italian hendecasyllables into 255 elegant Latin hexameters and is likely to be based on the 1856 Florentine edition of *Dei Sepolcri*, as the limited run of the text's first edition (1807) might not have reached the town of Camerano.[421]

What really astonishes in the translation of Foscolo's masterpiece is rather an apparent shift in political views, as brilliantly noticed by Nicolella.[422] In lines 152–154 it is said that the only source for Italian pride lies in the church of Santa Croce in Florence (*uno templo*) as the Alps, natural boundaries of the country, are not well defended: *uno gloria templo/ quod tibi collecta est itala, eheu unica forsan,/ ex quo non bene defensae a nostratibus Alpes.* The substantivized adjective *nostrates* alludes to the northern Italians, and this is the first time for Pasquali to refer to the Kingdom of Italy by calling the Italians *compatriots.* Indeed, if this allusion brings the translation of Foscolo's *Dei Sepolcri* to be set long after 1860, it also testifies to a marked shift in Pasquali's political belonging, as, after the Unification of Italy, his pro-Papal position has somewhat dimmed and finds no more testimony in his poetical production .[423]

2- Pasquali Marinelli's poetic manifesto as contained in Pietro Gianuizzi's Elogio funebre *(1878)*

On 10 July, 1876, on the occasion of the first anniversary of Pasquli's death, Pietro

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[421]Raffaello Nicolella, *Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, Hugonis Fosculi De Sepulcris*, in Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 183–202: "Ugo Foscolo compone il suo "Dei Sepolcri" fra il luglio e il settembre 1806. L'opuscolo fu stampato a Brescia l'anno successivo. Difficilmente Giuseppe Pasquali conobbe questa edizione del 1807, anche perchè la tiratura tipografica fu piuttosto limitata. È più probabile invece che abbia letto l'edizione uscita a Firenze nel 1856 per i tipi di Felice Le Monnier".
[422]See his analysis in Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 183–202.
[423]*Ibid.*, 195–196: "*nostrates*: i compatrioti. Parola nuova nel lessico e nelle idee di Giuseppe Pasquali, che finora non aveva mai accennato ad una patria italiana. L'ostinato papalino, che esaltava lo Stato pontificio nel *De pugna ad Castrumficardum* sembra accedere all'idea di un'Italia unita, difesa da tutti gli Italiani. Per tale motivo la composizione di questa versione latina deve essere datata a molti anni dopo il 1860".

Gianuizzi wrote and publicly read the *Elogio funebre di Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli Cameranese insigne poeta e latinista.* This precious document, which has been only recently published, constitutes an important contribution to a thorough understanding of Pasquali as it testifies to the vibrant admiration by which the poet was surrounded at the time of his death. It also casts light on the poetic intent that brought Pasquali to translate texts as the *Commedia* into Latin.[424] I have here presented an eloquent abstract from the *Elogio funebre* as published in 1991.

> *L'intensissimo affetto di che amò Egli la patria, dimostrollo assai luminosamente nel modo che alla sua natura si conveniva. Egli bramava la grandezza d'Italia; Egli la voleva non serva, ma signora d'ogni altra nazione, signora non odiata, ma amata. Voleva che più non si contrastasse all'Italia il primato in ogni virtù: però pose ogni opera a renderla da tutte genti ammirata pel senno civile, pel gusto del bello, per l'osservanza del bene. A ciò dimostrarvi m'è d'uopo, ed è oggimai tempo che io pigli a discorrervi de' suoi lavori letterarii, sui quali con inaudita costanza spese tante veglie, tante cure, e tanti sudori. S'egli avesse scritto nella nostra lingua volgare, non avrebbe potuto ottenere di leggieri, quel suo nobilissimo scopo. Quindi eccolo affaticarsi sugli Scrittori del Alzio ad apprendere quell'antico linguaggio d'Italia che Roma sin dai tempi della prima grandezza avea saputo imporre al mondo da Lei soggiogato e messo sulla via della civiltà: quell'antico linguaggio che anche nelle più lontane regioni tuttor si comprende da quanti danno opera a divenir uomini di scienze e di ben fondata letteratura. Con questa lingua potea il Pasquali far conoscere la nobiltà nostra a tutti gli uomini più colti della sua, come delle straniere nazioni: e questa scelse come più adatta a raggiungere sicuramente la meta. Altri moderni idiomi si presentavano coi quali avrebbe potuto pur parlare al mondo; ma questi non eran d'Italia. Lo scrittore Italiano per esaltare la sua nazione presso le altre non aveva bisogno di straniere favelle, aveva quella degli avi suoi, e sol d'essa gli era conveniente servirsi, e perché questa come ogni altra giunge più grata all'orecchio e meglio penetra il cuore e l'intelletto se poeticamente armonizzata, ecco il Pasquali prendersi a compagni indivisibili Lucrezio, Virgilio, e quell'altissima schiera di Vati che il vanto della Poesia contrastarono alla Grecia, e per immedesimarsi direi quasi con essi parte dalle loro opere porsi a memoria e parte copiarne come veggiamo aver fatto del Lucreziano Poema che trascrisse dal primo fin circa la metà del quinto libro, come delle satire tutte di Persio, ed un del Settano, come di molti versi d'una tragedia di Seneca che pare esistono fra i suoi manoscritti. (…)*
> *Incominciavasi a distenebrare la cupa e lunghissima notte della medioevale barbarie, allor quando da questa benedetta terra d'Italia spuntò quel Sole immenso che co' suoi purissimi raggi ricondusse nelle umane intelligenze la pienezza del giorno. Ognuno di voi*

424Pietro Gianuizzi, "Elogio funebre di Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, insigne poeta latinista, scritto e pronunciato dall' Avv.o Pietro Gianuizzi nella Chiesa priorale di Camerano il 10 Luglio 1876", in Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *De pugna ad Castrumficardum*, 202–222.

o Signori s'avvede che io voglio intendere di Dante Alighieri miracolo di Sapienza, poeta che sovra tutti gli antichi come aquila vola e volerà fin che il mondo lontana. Pensò Dante di scrivere nel sermon prisco d'Italia il suo capolavoro, quella Commedia che tutti han chiamato Divina; ma se con lui era risorta anche più splendida l'antica sapienza, non così l'antica lingua d'Italia erasi riforbita dalla scoria barbarica. Di che addatosi con dolore il Divino Poeta che la da lui voluta adoperare non era più quella di Lucrezio di Catullo di Terenzio di Flacco e di Virgilio, dovette contentarsi nel suo immortale poema, anziché parlare al mondo coll'imbarbarita favella, parlare solo all'Italia col volgare nascente che egli portò al grado di lingua fra tutte le moderne la più gentile. Ciò che l'Alighieri dapprima tentò ma non poté eseguire per le condizioni testé accennate, di parlare cioè ad ogni nazione colle sue Cantiche, le eseguirono più tardi altri Italiani, de' quali due, il D'Aquino e il Dalla Piazza le tradussero latinamente e per intiero le pubblicarono. Della versione del primo il Pasquali non avea veduto, come Egli mi disse, se non qualche brano, trovandosi alunno nel collegio di Osimo; né dell'impressione avutane si ricordava; di quella dell'altro ignorava pure l'esistenza.

Saputomi possessore della versione del D'Aquino volle vederla; ma lettone appena alcun tratto, gli parve che per soverchio parafrasare non rendesse come si dovea l'originale e quindi fosse d'uopo formarne un'altra dove anche gli stranieri potessero trovare tutto intiero e per così dire maniato il nostro altissimo Vate: che nelle traduzioni fatte ne' loro idiomi nol troveranno giammai per l'indole diversa dal nostro, il quale per legittima vena dal Romano discende. Né siavi chi sospetti che io per qui esaltare il Patriottismo del Pasquali dia per sicuro cio che punto non era nel suo intendimento, imperocché come suggello alla verità di quanto son venuto asserendo ripeterò un distico da lui premesso alla su Divina Commedia:

> "Non tantum Italiae, toti nos scribimus orbi,
> est vatis tanti tot decora alta sciat"[425]

Quest'ultimo fra i più grandi è per avventura il massimo de' capolavori che il Pasquali condusse a compimento e gli abbreviò forse di qualche tempo la vita. Il 25 ottobre 1871 essendo in età di 78 anni e si mesi, si diè con tanta foga a quest'erculea fatica che il 7 Gennaio 1872 avea già compiuta la versione dell'Inferno; nel 20 Marzo successivo quella del Purgatorio, alla metà di giugno l'intero poema. Fu allora soltanto che gli diedi a conoscere il Dalla Piazza. Se non che è da notare che, dopo il Marzo ci si trattenne non poco nel ricopiare in parte la prima cantica come ho dalle sue lettere; e però il vero tempo impiegato nel tradurre può ritenersi con verità non maggiore di giorni dugento. Tanto il desiderio di mostrare grande agli stranieri la patria sua riscaldava quel santo petto anche negli anni più gelidi della vecchiezza!

According to Gianuizzi, Pasquali completed his translation of Dante's *Commedia*

in a remarkably short space of time; started off on 25 October, 1871, on 7 January the

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[425]While transcribing the poetic preface to the *Comoedia*, Pietro Gianuizzi made a mistake, as the second line begins with *ut* instead of *est*. See Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Dantis Aligherii Divina Comoedia*, 18.

Inferno was ready, on 20 March, *Purgatorio* was completed and so was the entire *Comoedia* by mid June. Once the work was finished and the text was ready to be published, rather than prefacing it with a conventional preliminary introduction, Pasquali precedes the translation with twelve elegiac distichs where the ultimate goal of the work itself is fully explained.[426] In the poetical prologue to the translation, two rhetorical questions are made by the poet who identifies himself with the reader: the first one addresses the potential uselessness of a new Latin translation of Dante, as other attempts were already made by D'Aquino and Dalla Piazza (*Hoc tamen et Dalla Piazza, et Pater ante Ab. Aquino/ tentarunt: crambem tertius hanc recoquis?*). The second one emphasizes the anachronism of such an endeavor (*Advena es in terris?/ Mores ac tempora nescis? /Fastidit latios Itala terra sonos*).

However, while Pasquali does not answer the first question – as a strong intellectual rivalry is likely to have played a predominant role in the case – he makes explicit the real purpose of his translation, which consists in rendering Dante's masterpiece readable and enjoyable by the intellectual class not learned in Italian: *Non autem una est gens Itala terris,/ quae Dantem novit* (...) *non tantum Italiae, toti nos scribimus orbi/ ut Vatis tanti tot decora alta sciat*. Latin, as the language of the *Commedia* does not have to be taken as a symptom of an anachronistic cosmopolitical

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426Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli, *Dantis Aligherii Divina Comoedia*, 1–24: "*In numeros Dantis Comoedia versa Latinos!/ Oh lepidum, dices, lector amice, caput!/ Tunc id vis facere a quo Dantes ipse recessit/ qui prius est latiis versibus orsus opus?/ Hoc tamen et Dalla Piazza, et Pater ante Ab. Aquino/ tentarunt: crambem tertius hanc recoquis?/ Advena es in terris?/ Mores ac tempora nescis?/ Fastidit latios Itala terra sonos./ Vera mones. Nostrae si tanta insania genti,/ ut quod magna sibi est gloria, despiciat,/ huic male sit. Non autem una est gens Itala terris,/ quae Dantem novit: clarus ubique cluet,/ quotquot et insignes doctrina in gentibus adsunt,/ eloquii est latii maxima cura Viris/ Italice scripsit Dantes, ut tempore iniquo/ flagitia ac mores carperet Italiae/ non tantum Italiae, toti nos scribimus orbi/ ut Vatis tanti tot decora alta sciat;/ et, quod lingua nequit gentilis tradere, tradat/ doctorum sermo quae sibi nomen habet./ At te, quisquis es Italica de gente creatus,/ aeternae laudis si tibi fervet amor,/ ne latii eloquii pigeat, decus unde fatetur/ duxisse as vires magnus Aligherius*".

utopia.[427] Rather, Pasquali aims to serve the community by rendering the masterpiece available to non-Italian intellectuals with a new faithful Latin versification and therefore linking Dante's text with the glorious Latin language. What, indeed, differentiates this *Comoedia* from the translations of D'Aquino and Dalla Piazza, is that Pasquali deliberately aims at encompassing Dante's masterpiece in the ancient epic tradition. His 1874 Comoedia presents an inner structure that clearly reveals the inspiration exerted by classical epic poetry; the original division into *cantiche* is abandoned in favor of an unprecedented organization of the text in twelve Virgilian books that still keep the authentic subdivision in *canti*, always marked with their respective Roman numerals.[428]

Section Two: Linguistic Analysis of the Divina Comoedia
1- Pasquli's Translation and its Faithfulness to Dante's Text

1.1 Linguistic Faithfulness

Faithfulness to the original text is, without a doubt, one of the most striking qualities of Pasquali's reinterpretation. Clear examples of the translator's philological attitude toward the *Commedia* can be found in the very first canto of *Inferno*, where both the consecutive sentences in line 5 (*Tant'è amara che poco è più morte*) and line 30 (*sì*

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427 As Guido Arbizzoni asserts in his article: *"Toti nos scribimus orbi": l'utopia cosmopolitica del latino e la traduzione della Divina Commedia*, in Massimo Morroni, "Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 203–216.
428 Massimo Morroni, 'Giuseppe Pasquali Marinelli", 212: "Già il *montaggio* (nuovo rispetto ai predecessori) che si dà a tutto testo per fargli assumere fin dall'esterno parvenza classica, virgiliana, è segnale assai esplicito: l'intera *Commedia* nella veste latina dov'e suddivisa in 12 libri (il che comporta la scomparsa della divisione in cantiche) all'interno dei quali rimane soltanto, con scarsissimo rilievo topografico, l'indicazione con numero romano dell'inizio dei canti".

che 'l piè fermo sempre era 'l più basso) are beautifully rendered in Latin with the same

syntactical structure: *tale erat, ut mortis paulo sit peior imago*[429] and *firmus ut inferior*

semper pes esset eundo.[430] The incipit of line 28 not only adheres to Dante, but also

transliterates it: the original *Temp'era* (line 37) is rendered with *Tempus erat* (line 28)

which clearly shows the influence exerted by Virgil on Dante's drafting of the passage for

the same expression can be found in *Aen.*, II.[431] Likewise, the renowned introduction of

the spotted coat leopard (*quella fiera a la gaetta pelle*, line 42) is translated with such a

linguistic precision that it demonstrates Pasquali's aim of conveying Dante's contents, as

presented in the *Commedia*, as well as his linguistic variety: *formosaque pellis/ illa ferae*

(lines 32- 33).

      Throughout the entire translation, Pasquali's linguistic adherence to Dante never

waivers; on the contrary, it often assumes the characteristics of an obsessive priority for

Pasquali: canto two of *Inferno* offers the most clear evidence of this phenomenon. If

traces of this attitude can be found already in line 126, where Dante's *via di salvazione*[432]

is translated as *semita prima salutis*, it becomes even more apparent in lines 167–168

(*Per quam progenies hominum supereminet omne/ contentum coelo*) which faithfully

translate the original *sola per cui/ l'umana spezie eccede ogne contento.*[433] In general,

however, Pasquali's hexameters accurately convey both the content and the linguistic

richness of the original text; an eloquent example is found in lines 218–220 of Pasquali's

first book, where Dante's anaphoric repetition of *per me* (*Per me si va ne la città dolente/*

per me si va ne l'etterno dolore/ per me si va tra la perduta gente. Inf., III, 1–3) cannot be

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429 I, 1, 5.
430 I, 1, 23.
431 *Tempus erat quo prima quies mortalibus aegris. Aen.* II, 268.
432 *Inf.*, II, 30.
433 *Inf.*, II, 76–77.

rendered in Latin due to metrical reasons. Pasquali, nonetheless, presents an anaphora (*hac*) that although diverging linguistically from the original, emphasizes the uniqueness of the Gate of Hell: *Hac iter, aeternus quam possidet horror, in urbe/ hac iter est luctus in lamentabile regnum/ hac iter in gentem cui nulla est spes salutis.*

The same Gate, is presented as unique, central but also eternal, as Dante flaunts his rhetorical mastery in describing it: *Dinanzi a me non fuor cose create/ se non etterne, e io etterno duro.*[434] Aside from the polyptoton (*etterne-etterno*) these two lines also present a chiastic structure barely drafted in line 8; Pasquali finds the rhetorical elaboration of the passage peculiar and strives to mark it out even more by emphasizing the chiasmus in his Latin rendition: *Primus Amor fecit: non me sunt ante creatae/ ni res aeternae: aeterna in saecula duro.*[435]

Inferno V presents even more examples of Pasquali's strict faithfulness to the original text, particularly toward the end of the canto, where Dante employs, through Francesca's words, a pregnant polyptoton to poetically describe the power of love: *a nullo amato amar perdona.*[436] Both the rhetorical elaboration of the line and the hexameter are indeed fully respected in I, 5, 534–535[437] with the rendering as *cum tibi sit nostri radicem noscere amoris*[438] which translates the similitude of *Inf.*, 5, 124–125.[439] Pasquali shows a remarkable ear for Dante's linguistic refinement and skilfully shapes his hexameters accordingly. A clear example of this tendency lies in *Inf.*, VI, 55–57, which presents an emphatic repetition of *simil* (*E io anima trista non son sola/ ché tutte queste a simil pena stanno/ per simil colpa*) and which Pasquali renders in the Latin translation by echoing

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434 *Inf.*, III, 7–8.
435 I, 3, 223–224.
436 *Inf.*, V, 103.
437 *Cum sit amatus, amare/ parcit.*
438 I, 5, 552.
439 "Ma s'a conoscer la prima radice/ del nostro amor"

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the use of *idem*, although altered to fit different linguistic genders: *poena eadem/ crimen propter idem.*[440]

The very last line of Pasquali's poetic Latin translation of Dante's *Commedia*, serves as a manifesto for the linguistic faithfulness to the original text. The poet comprises in one single hendecasyllable the idea of *love* as the engine of the world; a conceit that permeates the entire *Commedia* and becomes explicit at the end of it: *l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.*[441] The last line of Pasquali's translation presents the same concision and expressive richness as employed in Dante: *is volvebat Amor, qui Solem torquet et astra.*[442] Pasquali seals his *Divina Comoedia* with the same linguistic and stylistic faithfulness that has shaped the entire text.

1.2 Syntactical Faithfulness

Generally, even the syntactical structure of the original is kept in the Latin translation; the emphatic *ma fu' io solo* pronounced by Farinata to reaffirm his merits for the rescue of the city of Florence in canto I,[443] is replicated by *unus at ipse fui*, a laconic yet strongly adversative assertion, as the Latin conjunction *at* perfectly replaces the Italian *ma.*[444] Even when the same rhetorical devices used in the original cannot be

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440 I, 6, 612–613.
441 *Par.*, XXXIII, 145.
442 XII, 33, 1004.
443 *Inf.*, X, 91.
444 II, 10, 71. A similar syntactical faithfulness can also be found in II, 13, 314–316, where the anaphoric repetition of *non* (*Non viror hic frondes, sed enim color induit ater/ non leves rami, at nodoso cortice torti/ non at in his poma, at virgulta infecta veneno*) recalls the gloomy atmosphere with which Dante preludes to the episode of Pier delle Vigne at the beginning of canto thirteen: *Non fronda verde, ma di color fosco/ non rami schietti, ma nodosi e 'nvolti/ non pomi v'eran, ma stecchi con tòsco.* The famous threefold polyptoton employed by Dante to describe the oscillating chain of thoughts that brings Virgil to introduce the wood of suicides (*Cred'io ch'ei credette ch'io credesse. Inf.*, XIII, 25) presents a prohibitive syntactical structure; yet, Pasquali translates it by waiving the triple polyptoton, but enriching the line with a semi-chiastic construction: *credere sum vatem ratus, has me credere voces* (II, 13, 332).

employed in the Latin translation, a clear attempt on Pasquali's part to rhetorically embellish his translation is easy to see; a representative example of this tendency is to be found in *Inf.*, XIII, 67–68. Dante uses derivatives of verb *infiammare* in a visual climax aimed at describing the unstoppable spread of envy in the Hohenstaufen's court: *infiammò contra me li animi tutti/ e li 'nfiammati infiammar sì Augusto/ che' lieti onor tornaro in tristi lutti*. Again, the Latin language and metrical requirements prevent Pasquali from repeating the threefold polyptoton in Dante's text, but the translator conserves the idea of flaming resentment by employing the verb *incendo* both in line 365 and 366: *communis mors ac maxima clades/ aularum cunctorum animos incendit; et illi/ regem sic incenderunt.*[445]

Another clear example is the translation of Dante's first meeting with Brunetto's soul at the beginning of *Inf.* XVI. Although deeply disfigured, the souls of sinners of sodomy are still identifiable. The pilgrim manages to recognize his former teacher: *sì che' l viso abbrusciato non difese/ la conoscenza sua al mio 'ntelletto.*[446] The syntactical structure of line 26 is convoluted and pivots on *viso abbrusciato*, as the subject of the close. By switching from explicit (*la conoscenza sua al mio 'ntelletto*) to implicit (*quin nossem*) the second part of the assertion, Pasquali sticks to the original text as closely as possible and is able to adopt the same syntax: *nec tristis imago / quin nossem impedit.*[447]

In *Purgatorio*, VI, the city of Florence is brought into the discussion fairly late on for the target of the tirade is primarily Italy and its state of complete negligence. Still, Dante recalls the political instability of his city of origin by forecasting a tragical future: *S'io dico 'l ver, l'effetto nol nasconde*[448] Although hypothetical, Dante's tone is markedly

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445 II, 13, 364–366.
446 *Inf.*, XV, 26–27.
447 II, 15, 558.
448 *Purg.*, VI, 138.

ironic – and as such is perceived by Pasquali, who emphasizes the rhetorical aspect of the assertion by translating it with a direct hypothetical question presupposing an affirmative answer: *Nonne tua his dictis resondent omnia facta?*[449]

When syntax plays a stressed rhetorical role within the narration, Pasquali is especially accurate. His re-imagining of the brief chat between Dante and Statius in *Purgatorio* XXI brings Virgil to look at Dante to prevent him from revealing the Latin poet's real identity: *Volser Virgilio a me queste parole/ con viso che, tacendo, disse 'Taci'*[450] In Dante's text what makes Virgil look at Dante is not Statius as the subject of the entire line is *queste parole*, and as such the sentence is rendered in Latin, where the syntax strictly adheres to Dante's text: *Haec me Virgilio dederunt tali ore tueri/ quod dicit, nil fando, sile.*[451]

Also of note is the way Pasquali renders Beatrix's harsh reproach to Dante. In *Purgatorio* XXX, the pilgrim is asked not to vent his embarrassment by bursting into tears. The reproof is repeated twice and occupies an entire hendecasyllable: *non pianger anco, non pianger ancora.*[452] Pasquali translates the verbal infinitive *non pianger* by augmenting it of a verbal form (*parce edere fletum*) but still conserves the repetition as it is presented in the original text: *Fletum edere Dantes / parce ob Virgilii abscessum, fletum eder parce*.[453] The same *Purgatorio* XXX also presents features of marked religiosity, and especially so at the very beginning of the canto, where Dante quotes Solomon's *Canticum Canticorum*: *Veni, sponsa, de Libano.*[454] Although short, the quotation occupies almost entirely the hendecasyllable, and helps the reader deepen into a

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449 V, 6, 642.
450 *Purg.*, XXI, 103–104.
451 VII, 21, 525–526.
452 *Purg.*, XXX, 56.
453 VII, 30, 604–605.
454 *Purg.*, XXX, 11.

dimension of hieratic sacrality as the holy procession approaches Dante. In the Latin translation Solomon's *Canticum* is split, quoted twice and expanded with the addition of an adjective – *pulcherrima*: "*De Libano, ter dulce canens, pulcherrima, dixit / Sponsa veni; atque alii clamabant, uniter omnes/ Sponsa veni*."[455] The repetition of the original syntagm *Sponsa veni* is doubtlessly due to metrical reasons, nonetheless, it creates an anaphora (lines 571–572) and faithfully adheres to Solomon's *Canticum* as the original liturgic text presents the aforementioned syntagm repeated twice.[456] Also, what appears to be a mere fulfillment (*pulcherrima*) finds an explanation in Solomon's text, where Sion's daughters address *Sponsa* – probable metaphor for the Christian Church – as *pulcherrima mulierum*.[457]

The narrative tone is rendered even more sublime at the beginning of the third *Cantica*, when the pilgrim witnesses the splendor of the celestial spheres. Overwhelmed by surroundings of ineffable purity, the poet strives to describe the indescribable: *Nel ciel che più de la sua luce prende/ fu' io, e vidi cose che ridire/ né sa né può chi di là sù discende*.[458] The pilgrim's inability to express what he sees is due to his human senses' inadequacy to face God, and Dante emphasizes this element with a strong repetition: *né sa né può*. The assonance of consonant *n* is noted by Pasquali and appropriately rendered in his translation not as a simply negation, but rather in the form of composed verbs: *ac talia vidi / quae nequit ac nescit, quisquis redit inde, referre.*[459]

1.3- Figures of Speech

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455 VII, 30, 570–572.
456 *veni de Libano sponsa ueni de Libano ueni. Canticum Canticorum*, IV, 8.
457 *Canticum Canticorum*, V, 7.
458 *Par.*, I, 4–6.
459 IX, 1, 5.

Throughout his translation, Pasquali shows a remarkable ear for the figures of speech as employed in Dante's original text. The emphatic repetition in line 32 of Inferno II (*Io non Enea, io non Paulo sono/ me degno a ciò né io né altri 'l crede*) is echoed in lines 129–130 (*Non ego sum Paulus, non et Retheius heros/ non ego me tanto, aut alter dignatur honore*) where the original double repetition is actually augmented to a triple repetition that also includes the anaphora of non in line 130. At times, it becomes hard to distinguish between the translator' s linguistic faithfulness and his poetical sensibility, as happens in I, 2, 152 where the verbal polyptoton (*tendit adhuc, totumque vigens, se tendet in aevum*) translates the same figure of speech employed by Dante in Inf., II, 59–60 (*la fama ancor nel mondo dura/ e durerà quanto 'l mondo lontana*).

Also, in lines 92–93 of the same canto two, Dante employs again a rhetorically elaborated sentence: *la vostra miseria non mi tange/ né fiamma d'esto incendio non m'assale*. While line 93 presents an image that is not metaphorical but real, as the depiction of Hell frequently includes burning flames, the previous line shows a new synesthesia by portraying the state of damnation touching Beatrix. In the Latin translation, Pasquali solves this figure of speech by stating Beatrix's immunity first (*Luctibus ac poenis ut sim non pervia vestris*, line 178) and by employing the same image of fire that Dante uses, but instead describes the actual state of doomed souls as burning in the Hell's flames: *nec me flamma vorat aut ulla incendia tangunt* (line 179).[460]

460More examples of the translator's linguistic adherence are also to be found toward the end of *Inferno* and at the very beginning of *Purgatorio*, where Pasquali clearly prioritizes a strict rendering of Dante's original linguistic richness over a mere versification of the *Commedia.* Systematic repetition of the same lexeme altered in its morphosyntactic functions is certainly among the figures of speech Dante employs the most, but also represents a rhetorical feature which is very hard and demanding to be rendered in Latin. The translation of such polyptota indisputably shows how deep and solid was Pasquali's familiarity with the hendecasyllable. The sudden appearance of Satan, in canto thirty-four, leaves Dante dismayed; in order to properly portray Lo 'mperador del doloroso regno, the poet employs the image of a giant: *e più con un*

Among the many rhetorical devices present throughout the *Commedia*, Pasquali

seems to pay a particular attention to Dante's employment of polyptota. This is clearly

demonstrated in *Paradiso* VI, where the description of the imperial eagle's flight alludes

to the Roman conquest of Jerusalem. Dante's repetition of term *vendetta* (*Or qui t'ammira

in ciò ch'io ti replìco/ poscia con Tito a far vendetta corse/ de la vendetta del peccato

antico*)[461] is skilfully echoed by the repetition of the adjective *ultrix*: *deinde Titum ultrices

pertraxit sumere poenas / expensae ultricis poenae pro crimine primo.*[462]

Even more eloquent is the way Pasquali renders in Latin the image of Dante

partaking in the mystery of faith's revelation as he penetrates the divine light with his

visual faculty in *Paradiso* XXXIII. Dante's invocation is addressed to divine brightness

and pivots on a strong self-referentiality: *O luce etterna che sola in te sidi/ sola t'intendi,

e da te intelletta/ intendente te ami e arridi.*[463] The polyptoton of verb *intendere* is

strongly emphasized in Dante's hendecasyllables, and this triple repetition is rendered in

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gigante io mi convegno/ che i giganti non fan con le sue braccia (*Inf.*, XXXIV, 30–31). What strikes in
Pasquali's translation is not only the way Dante's polyptoton is faithfully rendered, but also a marked
poetical sensibility featuring a chiastic structure enriched with a skilful repetition of verb *aequo*: *exaequor
magis ipse giganti/ quam bracchia illius se mole gigantibus aequent* (IV, 34, 833–834). Even more
fascinating is what happens in *Purgatorio* XXI, where, in line 32, Dante is brought by metrical reasons to
combine a verbal future tense with an atonic pronoun, creating the neologism *mosterrolli*. Moreover, the
passage presents a polyptoton, as the same verb – *mostrare* – is repeated in the same line: *Ond'io fui tratto
fuor de l'ampia gola/ d'inferno per mostrarli, e mosterrolli/ oltre, quanto 'l potrà menar mia scola.* If, on
one hand, the neologism finds no place whithin the Latin translation, Pasquali brilliantly succeeds in
rendering the convoluted passage by framing line 474 with a repetition of verb *ostendere*, and by translating
the future tense with the addition of *pergam*, an insertion that perfectly fits whithin the hexameter:
ostendam, quantumque sciam haec ostendere pergam (VII, 21, 474).The same canto also presents a rare
case of threefold polyptoton: the earthquake that shakes the mountain of Purgatory deeply disconcerts the
pilgrim Dante; the description of an unattended trembling, as perceived on Earth, permeates lines 55–58
and verb *tremare* recurs three times: *Trema forse più giù poco o assai/ ma per vento che 'n terra si
nasconda/ non so come, qua sù non tremò mai./Tremaci quando alcuna anima monda/ sentesi* (*Purg.*, XXI,
55–59). The Latin versification sticks to the original to the point that all verbal tenses are respected. The
only, although apparent, hurdle consists in the form *tremaci* as presenting a combination of the verb with
locative *ci*; and it becomes easily solved by the addition of the adverb *hic: inferius fortasse fremit multumve
parumve;/ at ventum ob terra inclusum (cur nescio) numquam/ hic tremuit. Tremit hic, macula cum Spiritus
omni/ exutus, sese movet* (VII, 21, 489–491).
461 *Par.*, VI, 94–95.
462 IX, 6, 608–610.
463 *Par.*, XXXIII, 124–126.

the Latin translation too. Pasquali even manages to include it in a single hexameter, thereby increasing the strong rhetorical effect of the original text: *a te perciperis; perceptaque percipiensque/ te laetaris amans!*[464]

2- Modifications Due to the Adaptation of the Hendecasyllable to Latin Hexameter

The vast majority of interventions made by Pasquali on Dante's *Commedia* are attributable to metrical requirements. While reading his *Comoedia*, a reader has the clear impression that the Latin transposition of the original array of linguistic and stylistic registers represented a much less arduous hurdle for the translator to overcome than the adaptation to the new metrical structure. If, indeed, a superb mastery over Latin language ensured Pasquali a scrupulous and tasteful translation, the Latin hexameter – as much as the hendecasyllable – imposes a rigid structure that may affect the overall rendering of the *Commedia*. Nonetheless, the translator beautifully manages to shape rigorous Latin hexameters only minimally altering the original text. Examples of alterations of Dante's text due to metrical reasons are easily detectable throughout the text. I am now only going to list the major and most relevant instances.

2.1- Examples of Condensation

Frequently, Pasquali's natural skill at rendering Dante's text combines with a remarkable ability to summarize the Italian *terzine* in fewer Latin hexameters without, however, neglecting any of the linguistic and rhetorical devices employed by the

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464 XII, 33, 986–988.

Florentine poet. A first example is to be found in *Inferno* I. Here Dante's inability to explain how he entered the gloomy woods is condensed into a single line: *Io non so ben ridir com'i' v'intrai*.[465] In order to keep the same conciseness, Pasquali modifies Dante's original expression, "I cannot well say," with "I did not understand how I entered it."[466] A similar case occurs later on in the same canto, where in lines 25–27 Dante describes his emotive tension before the appearance of the three beats: *così l'animo mio, ch'ancor fuggiva/ si volse a retro a rimirar lo passo/ che non lasciò già mai persona viva.* The poet's description of his soul as *on the lam* because of its fear is rendered by the rhetorical device of a double negation. Line 18 in the Latin text lacked a final trochee and is completed by the the adverbial *nondum*: *mea sic mens territa, nondum/ quae fugere abstiterat.*[467]

Also, toward the end of *Inferno* I, Virgil presents himself as a guide for the pilgrim throughout his allegorical journey: *Ond'io per lo tuo me' penso e discerno/ che tu mi segui.*[468] Dante's text presents an example of hendiadys (*penso e discerno*) as well as the apocope of *me'* instead of *meglio*; both these linguistic qualities are ignored. Instead, the Latin text reduces the original text in order to frame it within line 86: *quare age, nil melius reputo, quam me inde sequare*. It is also worth quoting one example from canto two of *Inferno*. In lines 82–84, Virgil expresses his astonishment as Beatrix descends to the lower Hell: *Ma dimmi la cagion che non ti guardi/ de lo scender qua giuso in questo centro/ de l'ampio loco ove tornar tu ardi.* The content, which is conveyed by Dante with a full *terzina*, is translated into two single, yet still deeply meaningful Latin hexameters: *Pande autem causam, cur ex regionibus altis/ quo remeare cupis, non huc descendere*

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465 *Inf.*, I, 10.
466 I, 1, 8: *Io non so ben ridir* is reduced to *haud novi*: *quomodo in hoc subii, haud novi.*
467 I, 1, 18–19.
468 *Inf.*, I, 1, 112–114.

abhorres. Although summarized, Dante's original content is presented in its entirety, while the skilful Latin versification ensures the poetical fluency of the entire passage.[469]

When Pasquali is forced to add modifications, they are minimal and often the result of metrical constraints. In the second canto of *Inferno* the Apostle Paul is describe by Dante as *lo Vas d'elezione* – a direct quotation from the *Acts of the Apostles*.[470] The Latin origin of the expression provides Pasquali with a rendering doubtlessly faithful to Dante's text, however, metrical requirements prevent the translator from employing it. As a consequence, Pasquali opts for a more concise choice aimed at addressing the Apostle's city of origin, by referring to him as *Tharsensis*.[471]

Concision is clearly taken by Pasquali as one of the most peculiar characteristics of Dante's writing, and one very faithfully rendered in his Latin translation. In *Inf.*, III, 51 Virgil deliberately employs an outspoken and laconic assertion that hides a scornful disdain toward sinners of slothful (*guarda e passa*). The word choice here is extremely meaningful as Dante employs a verb – *guardare* – that entails no emotional involvement on the part of the watcher, but rather a superficial, descriptive listing of sinners. The two imperatives are perceived as distinctive, and as such are brilliantly rendered in the translation, where *circumspice*, "take a quick look around", beautifully echoes the contempt implied in Virgil's words.[472]

Pasquali's poetic sensibility is always aimed at a clear and rigorous Latin rendering of the *Commedia*, and it does not refrain from simplifying the *terzine*'s syntactical structure when the clarity of the text is at risk. In *Inferno*, X, 16–18 Virgil forestalls Dante's question by asserting: *Però a la dimanda che mi faci/ quinc'entro*

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469 I, 2, 172–173.
470 *Vas electionis*, Act. Ap. 9, 15.
471 I, 2, 125.
472 *Circumspice et ito* I, 3, 260.

satisfatto sarà tosto/ e al disio ancor che tu mi taci. Pasquali manages to summarize these

three lines into one hexameter and three dactyls by means of a skilful syntactical

inversion of the original text, as *Desio* is made the subject of Dante's passage: *quod*

poscis, quamque ore sileis, expleta cupido/ mox hic intus eris.[473]

Likewise, in *Inferno* XIII, Dante's poetical farewell to Brunetto Latini portrays the

former *maestro* in markedly apologetic terms: *parve di coloro/ che corrono a Verona il*

drappo verde/ per la campagna; e parve di costoro/ quelli che vince, non colui che

perde.[474] The final hendecasyllable (*quelli che vince, non colui che perde*) seems to be

aimed at paying tribute to Brunetto for both his rhetorical mastery and the emotional bond

that joins him to Dante. In the Latin translation, line 124 is modified to fit to one

hexameter and is therefore reduced to a bare outline of what it originally was in Dante, as

the abandonment of the second part (*non colui che perde*) deprives the hexameter of

much of its expressivity: *qui prior optatam potuit contingere metam.*[475]

Inferno XXVI offers many remarkable demonstrations of the translator's linguistic

skills. Through a style typical of the *captatio benevolentiae*, in Dante's original Italian,

Virgil presents himself to the double flame imprisoning Ulysses and Diomedes by

recalling his own merits as the poet who told their own story in *Aeneid*: "*s'io meritai di*

voi mentre ch'io vissi/ s'io meritai di voi assai o poco/ quando nel mondo li alti versi

scrissi."[476] The first part of the assertion (*s'io meritai di voi*) is emphatically repeated

twice in order to capture the attention of the *schivi Greci.* There is no metrical need for

Dante to repeat the phrase, if not that of emphasizing the flattering tone employed by

Vergil. Pasquali simplifies the entire passage. He does not translate line 80 and elegantly

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473 II, 10, 12–13.
474 *Inf.*, XV, 121–124.
475 II, 15, 635.
476 *Inf.*, XXVI, 80–82.

paraphrases the synesthesia of *alti versi* (*carmina* [...] *totum vulgata per orbem*). These rather substantial changes nevertheless still echo the rhetorical tone of the original text: "*si quid de vobis merui multumne parumne/ carmina cum scripsi totum vulgata per orbem.*"[477] Furthermore, Dante condemns as a "*folle volo*" Ulysses' desire to explore the world as well as human beings' virtues and evils at the cost of abandoning his land and family[478] What becomes *folle* in Pasquali's translation is not the journey itself, but rather the seamen who undertake it. The translator does not replicate Dante's hypallage (*folle volo*), but still manages to highlight the Greeks' folly resulting in Ulysses' eternal damnation: "*atque iter ingredimur stulti.*"[479]

According to both modern and ancient commentators, the first meeting of the two pilgrims with Statius in *Purgatorio* XXI is one of the most touching moments of the entire poem. At the end of the canto, Statius expresses his deep admiration for Virgil, and describes the *Aeneid* as a source of inspiration for his poetical works. As Dante reveals his guide's identity, Statius falls on his knees to embrace Virgil's feet, but Virgil stops him: *Frate/ non far, ché tu se' ombra e ombra vedi.*[480] Line 132 is rhetorically elaborated, as it presents a chiasmus (*tu se' ombra e ombra vedi*) where the repetition of *ombra* also constitutes a linguistic polyptoton. Metrical reasons bring Pasquali to compress the original passage to the point that Virgil's invocation *frate* is not translated, and the contracted form *faxis* substitutes the distracted equivalent *feceris*. However, the linguistic refinement of the original is still echoed in the alliteration *umbra utrique*: *ne talia faxis/*

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477 III, 26, 849–850.
478 *Inf.*, XXVI, 125.
479 III, 26, 883. The same description of the mountain as it appears to the Greek hero (*parvemi alta tanto/ quanto veduta non avea alcuna*) is significantly shortened and reduced to the minimum, avoiding what in Dante seams to be Ulysses' personal statement (*parvemi*).
480 *Purg.*, XXI, 131–132.

umbra utrique sumus.[481]

I would like to conclude this paragraph with two examples of slight alterations of the original text that can be found in the *Paradiso*, where, in spite of the massive presence of religious subject, Pasquali's Latin rendering of the *Commedia* is markedly faithful and examples of both condensation and extension are much less frequent. In canto III, the soul of Piccarda presents herself to Dante and Beatrix, but the two elements that make her speech highly elaborated are abandoned in the Latin translation. While describing the reason that brought her to partially neglect her vows to God, Piccarda employs an hendecasyllable (*li nostri voti, e vòti in alcun canto*) where the assonance *voti/ vòti* constitutes a paranomasia that finds no equivalent in the Latin language and cannot be rendered in the translation.[482] Pasquali indeed rephrases the line and prioritizes a clear understanding of the passage over a strict faithfulness to Dante's rhetorical elaborateness: *quod voti abstitimus cunctas absolvere partes.*[483]

No instance of condensation so far, still, in the same speech Piccarda also addresses her persecutors as *Uomini poi, a mal più ch'a bene usi.*[484] The invocation is significant both for Piccarda's tone which is deliberately not accusative, as the soul's blessed condition prevents her from feeling grudge, but also for the length of the invocation itself. In Pasquali's translation, it is condensed and drastically reduced to a bare *impia gens.*[485] There are no reasons to believe that linguistic hurdles prevented Pasquali from rendering line 106 in its entirety, I rather believe that a more faithful translation of it would have deeply affected the versification of the following lines, as

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481 VII, 21, 547–548.
482*Par.*, III, 57.
483IX, 3, 263.
484 *Par.*, III, 106.
485 IX, 3, 303.

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Pasquali joins the content of line 106 (*Uomini poi, a mal più ch'a bene usi*) with that of line 107 (*fuor mi rapiron de la dolce chiostra*) in one single hexameter: *empia gens dulci eripuit me deinde recessu*. Instead of reformulating two hexameters, Pasquali combines Piccarda's accusation into a single one, presenting a translation that refrains from fulfilling the lines with material not employed in the original text, but that also partly loses the nuances of Dante's text.[486]

2.2- Examples of Expansion

The same predilection for clarity that inspirits the entire translation of the *Commedia* often brings the translator to explain, at greater length, the original text. As for the case of linguistic condensation, these poetical liberties are often minimal and necessary because of metrical requirements. After begging Virgil to help the pilgrim, Beatrice presents herself to the poet: *I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare/ vegno del loco ove tornar disio/amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare.*[487] Line 71 (*vegno del loco ove tornar disio*) is particularly significant, as it declares Beatrice's beatitude and frames it into a remarkable chiastic structure. Pasquali perceives the centrality of the passage, and strives to render its rhetorical complexity by adopting the same devices as Dante. Metrical requirements, however, force him to integrate new elements into the text (*delapsa*),

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486Also of note is the poem's last canto, *Paradiso* XXXIII, which begins with St. Bernard's prayer to the virgin Mary asking her to intercede for Dante in the sight of God: "*perché tu ogne nube li disleghi/ di sua mortalità co' prieghi tuoi/ sì che 'l sommo piacer li si dispieghi.*" (*Par.*, XXXIII, 31–33) St. Bernard's speech is articulated in a final clause (*perché tu ogne nube li disleghi*) followed by a consecutive one (*sì che 'l sommo piacer li si dispieghi*). Pasquali translates the two subordinate clauses by two imperative verbal forms addressed to the virgin Mary; The translator maintains the content of Dante's text and adjusts it to metrical requirements. The original's lines 31–33 are combined into a single hexameter: *pelle tuis precibus, mortalem discute nubem.* (XII, 33, 912)
487 *Inf.*, I, 2, 70–72.

thereby fragmenting the original sentence into two hexameters. Nevertheless, Dante's original chiastic structure of line 71 is still maintained in Pasquali's translation, as the two verbal forms *advenio/ exopto* frame Beatrice's intervention: *advenio delapsa loco, ad quem deinde reverti/ toto animo exopto.*[488]

In the original narration, Beatrice is asked by Lucia to intercede for Dante and asks for Virgil's intervention; Lucia's words pivot on two rhetorical questions found in lines 106–108: *Non odi tu la pieta del suo pianto/ non vedi tu la morte che 'l combatte/ su la fiumana ove 'l mar non ha vanto?* The two questions occupy an entire *terzina* and present an anaphoric repetition of the negation *non.* In order not to lose the text's original incisiveness and to frame it whithin the Latin hexameter, Pasquali modifies the text by adding a third question (*Non ades auxilio*). Likewise, line 191 adheres to Dante's text as it does not present fulfillers, but modifies the original *non* into a *nonne*, giving the query the form of a rhetorical question implying an affirmative answer, but failing in replicating the original anaphora (*Non odi, non vedi*) : *Non ades auxilio? Pietas tibi nulla gementis?/ Nonne vides mortis luctantem in flumine vasto/ quo minor oceanus?*[489]

We also find a similar emphatic expansion in Pasquali's *Comoedia* in the description of Caron in *Inferno* II. The ferryman of Hades is portrayed with white hair and fiery burning eyes, *bianco per antico pelo*, as he approaches the doomed souls and threatens Dante.[490] In his translation, Pasquali separates the visual description of Caron's white hair from that of his old age, thereby extending and deepening Dante's portrayal: *senex canusque capillis / atque aetate gravis.*[491] The best example in *Inferno* of this tactic of Pasquali's, however, can be found in the third canto, which ends with a description of

488 I, 2, 161–162.
489 I, 2, 190–192.
490 *Inf.*, III, 83.
491 I, 3, 282–283.

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an earthquake that not only causes the pilgrim to faint, but also makes him shiver at its very remembrance: "*la buia campagna/ tremò sì forte, che de lo spavento/ la mente di sudore ancor mi bagna.*"[492] Pasquali's translation of this passage slightly alters both the lexicon and the syntax, but fully adheres to the original content. The translator faithfully reflects Dante's shift in verbal tenses (*tremò / bagna*) as well as the consecutive nature of the second sentence (*sì forte che*), but adopts a logical structure to better fit his linguistic and metrical needs. The subject of the Latin version is no more *la mente*, but rather *sudore* (*sudor*) which also serves a metonymy of fear. *Sudor* is *paralyzing* the poet, he feels his limbs frozen as he recalls the earthquake: *sic tremuit terra, ut memori mihi territa sudor/ membra riget.*[493].

At the beginning of *Inferno*, III, Limbo is portrayed with gloomy shades and the pilgrim is immediately struck by sounds of sinners' shouts and sorrowful lamentations: "*Quivi sospiri, pianti e alti guai / risonavan per l'aere sanza stelle.*"[494] The powerful image of a dark, starless sky is preponderantly rendered in Latin. It is, indeed, repeated twice to combine linguistic expressivity and poetical fluency: "*sonabant / aera per vacuum stellis, ac luminis orbum*".[495] The peak, indeed, of Pasquali's poetical elaboration is reached soon after in a passage of the *Commedia* that describes Limbo. Here, Dante uses the same *aere* not only to invoke the dreary and dismal, but also the eternal: *aura senza tempo tinta.*[496] Line 29 is powerfully expressive and enriched by the alliteration *tempo / tinta*, as well as an elegant hyperbaton between *aura* and the same adjective

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492 *Inf.*, III, 130–132.
493 I, 3, 320–321. The fourth canto of *Inferno* too presents an example of poetically expanded translation, as the original *per conoscer lo loco dov'io fossi*, is augmented to include a redundant repetition of the same question that helps the translator complete the hexameter: *ut quibus ipse locis, et qua ragione tenerer/ aspiciam* (I, 3, 327–328).
494 *Inf.*, III, 22–23.
495 I, 3, 235–236.
496 *Inf.*, I, 3, 29.

(*tinta*). These rhetorical devices are echoed in the Latin translation which also employs a skilful anastrophe between *tetrum* and *aera*: *per tetrum aevoque carentem / aera.*[497]

The same metrical requirements also bring the translator to expand and fragment Dante's first question about the sinners of slothful, in the same *Inferno* III. In line 33 indeed, the pilgrim asks Virgil about the identity of the first group of sinners they meet after passing through the vestibule: *che gent'è che par nel duol sì vinta?* One single question is again split in two to adapt to metrical requirements, as the original question is rendered with two complete hexameters: *Ipse, horrore gravis: quisnam mihi perculit aures/ Luctificus gemitus? Dixi: quae causa Magister? Quae tantum gens triste dolens? Ac ille reponit.*[498] The syntax itself, not rarely, appears to be at the service of prosody, as it happens in the description of Dante's awakening, at the beginning of *Inferno* IV. In the original text, the pilgrim is said to be waken up by a heavy thunder-clap: *Ruppemi l'alto sonno ne la testa/ un greve truono, sì ch'io mi riscossi/ come persona ch'è per forza desta.*[499] The entire passage is modified to fulfill two hexameters, as Pasquali paraphrases *greve truono* with *horrisono tonitrus murmure*, refrains form translating the consecutive adverb *sì* and reformulates the similitude *come persona ch'è per forza desta* by employing a litotes (*non excitus ultro*): *Horrisono abrupit tonitrus mihi murmure somnum/ quo simul excussus, quasi vir non excitus ultro/ erigor.*[500]

A similar case of modification can also be found later on in *Inferno* IV where, in lines 17–18, Dante misinterprets Virgil's sudden paleness as a manifestation of fright: *Come verrò, se tu paventi/ che suoli al mio dubbiare esser conforto.* In order to keep the original anastrophe between subject and verb of line 18 (*che suoli al mio dubbiare esser*

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497 I, 3, 240.
498 I, 3, 243–245.
499 *Inf.*, IV, 1–3.
500 I, 4, 1–2.

conforto) Pasquali enhances the sentence's grammar components and translates the noun phrase *esser conforto* with an hendiadys (*vires animumque*) making his hexameter pleasantly flowing and metrically complete: *qui vires animumque mihi praebere solebas.*[501]

Also, in the same canto, Dante describes the throngs of unbaptized souls crowding Hell's first circle, for which the poet's words betray a deep admiration as their souls are introduced in solemn and imposing terms: *le turbe, ch'eran molte e grandi/ d'infanti e di femmine e di viri.*[502] As well known, the sixth book of *Aeneid* represents one of the most relevant literary sources for Dante's depiction of the afterworld, and the aforementioned two lines are specifically drawn from a passage of *Aeneid* VI, where Virgil states: *matres atque viri defunctaque corpora vita/ magnanimum heroum, pueri innuptaeque puellae.*[503] Despite the influence exerted by the Virgilian model, Pasquali's rendering seems by no means influenced by the original Latin passage, as metrical reasons bring him to adhere to Dante's text. However, the translation of the passage slightly diverges from the Italian one as the nouns' order is altered and the word *femmine* is replaced with *senes*: *turba frequens aderat, puerique virique senesque.*[504]

A considerable hurdle in the translation of the *Inferno,* is surely represented by the episode of Pier della Vigna in canto thirteen. Della Vigna's devotion to the Emperor had caused such envy among the imperial courtiers that the doomed soul committed the unforgivable act of suicide: "*fede portai al glorioso offizio/ tanto ch'i' ne perde' li sonni e' polsi.*"[505] In order to underscore both the long hours spent on and stress caused by della

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501 I, 4, 337.
502 *Inf.*, 4, 29–30.
503 *Aen.*, VI, 306–307.
504 I, 4, 345.
505 *Inf.*, XIII, 62–63.

Vigna's role as Chancellor, Dante employs the nominal syntagm *li sonni e' polsi,* another

example of metonymy. Pasquali, in order to retain the rhetorical device in his translation,

is forced to add an explanation for clarity's sake which significantly extends the original

text and deprives it of its original concision: "*usque adeo fidus sum munere functus, ut*

omnes/ contererem vires, ac noctes absque sopore/ pertraherem."[506]

Furthermore, in the episode of Count Ugolino, the doomed soul vents a harsh

invective against his destiny as he receives his punishment. In response to his sons and

nephews dying of hunger one after the other, he exclaims: *Ohi dura terra, perché non t'*

apristi?[507] The bluntness of Ugolino's speech is faithfully recreated in Pasquali's

interpretation of the passage, with the minor change of an additional lexeme *mihi*: *Cur*

mihi, crudelis tellus, non ima dehisti?[508] Far from being invasive nor misleading, the

insertion of *mihi* improves the readability of the Latin text. It clearly identifies the

speaking subject (Ugolino) as the object of the damnation he himself wished for, but also

adds two syllables to create a full hexameter.

In conclusion to this paragraph, two last notes have to be made on Pasquali's

rendering of the *Paradiso.* In a context of ineffable purity, Dante discerns the form of

Christ as he is overwhelmed by the dazzling flash of three concentric circles,

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506 II, 13, 361–363. The same canto presents a similar example of highly elaborated rhetorical expression. In lines 102–103, Pier della Vigna's doomed soul explains to Dante and Virgil the macabre scene of the Harpies as being nourished by the bush's branches: *l'Arpie, pascendo poi de le sue foglie/ fanno dolore, e al dolor fenestra.* Line 103 presents a remarkable degree of elaboration, as it features a metaphorical portrayal of the bushes' bleeding (*fenestra al dolor*) and a polyptoton of the word *dolore* beautifully framed into a chiastic structure. In his Latin translation, Pasquali is unable to render both such a poetical richness and to adhere to the original's concision, however, traces of an attempted rhetorical elaboration can be still found in the epiphora that concludes lines 391–392: *Harpyae carpunt frondes; morsuque dolorem/ efficiunt; plagaque viam dant esse dolori* (II, 13, 391, 392). Often minimal and negligible, modifications are only aimed at a more idiomatic rendering of the text in Latin; the impersonal construction *dove tornar li lece* (*Inf.*, XIII, 54) although employing a present tense, implies the future return of Dante to the terrestrial world, and as such can well be translated with a future tense: *terris, in quas exinde redebit* (II, 13, 353).
507 *Inf.*, XXXIII, 66.
508 IV, 33, 739.

metaphorical image for the Christian trinity. The divine light captures Dante's eyesight; this process of attraction exerted by the circles over the pilgrim is described as imposed by necessity since human essence naturally finds its fulfillment within the divine: *A quella luce cotal si diventa/ che volgersi da lei per altro aspetto/ è impossibil che mai si consenta/ però che 'l ben, ch'è del volere obietto/ tutto s'accoglie in lei, e fuor di quella/ è defettivo ciò ch'è lì perfetto.*[509] The last line of this abstract fully summarizes the divine nature of God: *fuor di quella/ è defettivo ciò ch'è lì perfetto*, and Pasquali manages to render Dante's incisiveness by employing a double negation to enrich the text of the same elaboration it has in the original: *nec quidquam est alibi vitiis ac sordibus expers.*[510]

The ultimate ineffability of the Christian mystery of faith is finally made explicit by Dante in line 142, as the clause *A l'alta fantasia qui mancò possa* explains the poet's inability to describe what he witnessed. In his translation, Pasquali augments the original text by including a reference to Dante himself (*me*), by enriching the image of lofty fantasy with the alliteration (*vivida virtus*) and by presenting the same subject with an hypallage, as the fantasy's vivid virtue is said to have abandoned the poet: *Phantasiae me deseruit vivida virtus.*

2.3- Misunderstandings and Philological Problems

Line 133 in book one of Pasquali's translation offers a few interpretative perplexities. In the original text, Dante modestly expresses the fear of undertaking a transcendental journey previously taken only by Aeneas and the Apostle Paul. He invites

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509 *Par.*, XXXIII, 100–105.
510 XII, 33, 971.

Virgil to empathize with his own condition of human being: *Se' savio; intendi me' ch'i'* *non ragiono.*[511] The original text presents two imperative verbal forms (*se'* / *intendi*), but while the first one is translated in the Latin text (*es*), *intendi* is rendered with an indicative present tense (*vides*). This change deeply alters Dante's passage. Usually changes such as this can easily be explained by metrical concerns, but we should note that the imperative form of the verb *videre* (*vide*) would not have affected the metrical scansion of line 133. Although the context clearly reveals the imperative tone as being adopted by Dante, both the verbal form *se'* and *intendi* can be grammatically taken as present indicative forms of their respective verbs (*essere* and *intendere*). It is, therefore, not unlikely that Pasquali's rendering of the passage was compromised by a misunderstanding of Dante's text, as the translator erroneously took the original verbal forms as present and this made his translation significantly diverge from the original text: *es sapiens, ac plura vides, quam verba revelent.*[512]

Also, in lines 91–93 of *Paradiso* XVIII, Dante quotes a passage from the *Bible*: *DILIGITE IUSTITIAM', primai/ fur verbo e nome di tutto 'l dipinto/ 'QUI IUDICATIS TERRAM', fur sezzai.*[513] Although the quotation is already in Latin, the translator does not simply copy it in his translation: the only divergence between the original text (*qui iudicatis terram*) and Pasquali's interpretation (*qui dirigitis terram*) consists in the modification of the verbal form, from *iudicatis* to *dirigitis*, and this is a modification that leaves the reader quite dumbfounded. The original biblical text does not alter the metrical scan of the line. If, indeed, we look at the Latin translation of the passage (*"Deligite" est omnis primi sententia picti/ "iustitiam: qui dirigitis terram", inde secundi*)[514] we see that

511 *Inf.*, II, 36.
512 I, 2, 133.
513 *Book of Wisdom*, I, 1.
514 XI, 18, 176–177.

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line 177 would scan either with the form *iudicatis* or *dirigitis* being both constituted of a

dactyl (*iudica/ dirigi*) and the first syllable of a spondee (*tis-ter*).

Paquali's rigorous approach to Dante's text should have prevented him from

making textual alterations that the translator himself would not have hesitated to

reprimand. So what is the reason that brought the translator to alter the biblical text?

Although conjectural, as there is no concrete evidence to support this thesis, I believe that

the explanation for this has to be found in a deliberate aim on the translator's part to avoid

a cacophonic homeoarcton between *iustitiam* and *iudicatis*. The homeoarcton is avoided

in Dante's original text, where one line separates these two words, but in Pasquali's

translation *iustitiam* and *iudicatis* happen to be one after the other. There is no reason to

aprioristically exclude that the proximity of the verbal form *deligitis* might have

contributed to the corruption of the original *iudicatis* in *dirigitis*. I still believe, however,

that Pasquali's knowledge of both the *Commedia* and the *Bible* was too deep to allow such

a banal misquotation. A deliberate, on the contrary, goal to improve the rhetorical

elaboration of the translation might have well brought Pasquali to slightly modify the

original text.

3- Explanation Beyond Translation. Exegesis of Dante's Commedia

Dante's language often appears convoluted, arcane and deliberately obscure.

Pasquali is profoundly aware of the hurdles in reading a text so deeply imbued with a

highly elaborated rhetorical style, but he also acknowledges that such complexity is an

essential component of the *Commedia*'s greatness. Given that Pasquali's goal is to make

Dante's masterpiece available to the European intellectual class not acquainted with Italian language but well learned in Latin, a marked tendency to explain Dante's text is traceable whithin his Latin translation.

The first instance of this aspect can be found in *Inferno* II, where Virgil describes his status as a soul in Limbo before being summoned to Dante's aid by Beatrice. The original text emphasizes the state of Limbo as being intermediary between salvation and the edge of Hell: *Io era tra color che son sospesi*.[515] Interestingly enough, the description of Virgil as *suspended soul* is expanded by Pasquali to include a concise yet explanatory paraphrasing. The adjective *sospeso* is indeed explained in greater details when Virgil presents himself as residing in between the sky and Hades: *Locus, inter utrumque/ et Celum atque Erebum, cum aliis me immunis habebat*.[516]

In *Inferno* III, Dante is introduced to the slothful sinners by Virgil who defines them as miserable souls rejected by Hell and driven out by Heaven. After the guide's intervention, Dante recognizes many of them, and he describes the sinners as "the wretched crew detestable to God and to his enemies: "*Incontanente intesi e certo fui/ che questa era la setta d'i cattivi/ a Dio spiacenti e a' nemici sui*".[517] The poet addresses the slothful as *la setta d'i cattivi*, a depiction presenting an euphemistic description of the sinners; in order to help the readability of the passage, Pasquali paraphrases *setta d'i cattivi* by specifying the nature of the sin itself. The slothful are indeed explicitly called *inertes*: *Adverti, certusque simul sum factus, inertum/ quod secta haec esset*.[518] Moreover, while listing the souls saved from Limbo, Virgil briefly hints at the biblical figure of Rachel as one of the shades to be blessed by the Savior's intervention in Hades: *Trasseci*

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515 *Inf.*, II, 52.
516 I, 1, 145–146.
517 *Inf.*, III, 61–63.
518 I, 3, 267–268.

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l'ombra del primo parente/ d'Abèl suo figlio e quella di Noè/di Moïsè legista e ubidente/ Abraàm patrïarca e Davìd re/ Israèl con lo padre e co' suoi nati/ e con Rachele, per cui tanto fé.[519] Rachel is only referred to by Jacob's (*Israèl*) perseverance in asking for her hand.[520] Virgil's statement – *Rachele, per cui tanto fé* – is doubtlessly elusive, as only a direct acquaintance with the *Book of Genesis* would help understand it thoroughly; Pasquali feels, therefore, the need to explain this reference by expanding Dante's passage into an entire hexameter: *Israel cum patre ac natis, et coniuge pulcra/ quam sibi ut adseret, tantos tulit ille labores.*[521]

The description of the biblical patriarchs and their rescue from Limbo preludes to the introduction of the doomed souls confined within the first circle: *Non lasciavam l'andar perch'ei dicessi/ ma passavam la selva tuttavia/ la selva, dico, di spiriti spessi.*[522] The dark wood is here portrayed with a marked rhetorical elaboration; line 66 includes a strong alliteration of sibilant consonant (*selva spiriti spessi*), a form of epanalepsis, as the lexemes *la selva* are repeated twice, and an oxymoron is employed to describe souls as *thick*. While Dante's description implies a metaphorical interpretation of physical thickness as moral integrity and honorability of the souls, in Pasquali's text, what is described as *thick* is the wood, not the souls (*densam silvam*). If his rendering refrains from presenting the original oxymoron, it also explains the passage by emphasizing the multitude of shades crowding the wood in place of threes: *Per densam ferimus gressum, non arboris inquam/ spirituum at silvam.*[523]

The same intent of explicating the original text can also be traced in *Inferno* IV,

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519 *Inf.*, IV, 55–60.
520 *Gen.* 24–26.
521 I, 4, 369–370.
522*Inf.*, IV, 64–66.
523I, 4, 375–376.

where Dante praises the ancient feminine virtues as embodied by the Roman heroines Lucretia, Julia, Marcia and Cornelia (*Lucrezia, Iulia, Marzïa e Corniglia*).[524] In order to more easily identify the women's identity, Pasquali beautifully integrates a thorough description that recalls Cornelia as Publius Cornelius Scipio's daughter, Julia as Pompey's wife, Marcia as Marcus Porcius Cato's wife while Lucretia is mentioned for her brave suicide: *tum Scipiadae Cornelia proles/ Julia tum Magni coniux, uxorque Catonis/ Martia, seque fero fodiens Lucretia ferro*.[525]

As the pilgrim awakens after Francesca's words brought him to faint, he founds himself and Virgil surrounded by new torments and new tormented souls (*novi tormenti e novi tormentati/ mi veggio intorno*). The first presence to reveal itself is not a penitent, but rather the fierce, triple-throated monster Cerberus while barking over the doomed souls. While the first description of the beast is explicative and drawn from the sixth book of *Aeneid*,[526] in lines 32–33 it is depicted as deafeningly snarling over the gluttonous: *lo demonio Cerbero, che 'ntrona l'anime sì, ch'esser vorrebber sorde.* The expressiveness of verb *intronare* vanishes in the Latin text, as Pasquali refrains from finding a suitable equivalent. In his translation, linguistic refinement is dependent on a clear and thorough explanation of the text itself and the description of Cerberus' action is prioritized over the more immediate rhetorical effectiveness: *demonii, qui adeo assiduis latratibus illos/ obtundit manes, ut vellent aure carere.*[527]

In *Purgatorio* II, the crowd of souls ferried by an angel sing the incipit of *Psalm 113* as the ship approaches the Purgatory's shore; to deepen the reader into a dimension of

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[524]*Inf.*, IV, 128.
[525]I, 4, 423–425.
[526]*Cerbero, fiera crudele e diversa/ con tre gole caninamente latra/ sovra la gente che quivi è sommersa. Inf.*, VI, 13–15. Dante's linguistic model for his description of Cerberus is to be found in *Aen.*, VI, 417–418: *Cerberus haec ingens latratu regna trifauci/ personat adverso recubans immanis in antro.*
[527]I, VI, 592–593.

religious sacredness, the beginning of the psalm is not translated from the original Latin text: *'In exitu Isrël de Aegypto'/ cantavan tutti insieme ad una voce/ con quanto di quel salmo è poscia scripto.*[528] Faithful to his intention of explaining passages of the *Commedia* that might be difficult to interpret, Pasquali helps the reader by introducing the hymn as one recounting the story of Abraham's descendants and their exodus from Egypt: *Ac multae intus erant Animae, una voce canentes/ hymnum Iessaei regis, memorantis ab oris/ Abramidum Phariis abitum.*[529] Such a translation is not only faithful to the original text, but also denotes a deep poetical sensibility, as Jewish people (*Isrël*) is rendered with the patronymic *Abramides*, while *Aegyptus* is translated with the synecdoche *ora Pharia.*[530]

The explanatory function of Pasquali's translation can also be found in *Purgatorio* VI, where Dante's invective against the Florentine people adopts a markedly ironic tone: *Fiorenza mia, ben puoi esser contenta/ di questa digression che non ti tocca/ mercé del popol tuo che sì argomenta.*[531] In order better to explain the meaning of *argomentare* in its intransitive form, Pasquali paraphrases line 189 with a subordinate clause that still reflects the rhetorical irony employed by Dante: *non his nam tangeris ipsa/ cum tam recta tuos teneat sententia cives.*[532] The invective against Florence reaches its peak when

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[528]*Purg.*, II, 46–48.
[529]V, 2, 141–143.
[530]Also of note is the Latin rendering of *Purgatorio* III, the canto in which Dante meets with Manfred of Sicily, the last bulwark of the Ghibelline power in Italy before its definitive twilight. As well known, the king's shade explains to Dante the events of the battle of Benevento and his death due to two mortal wounds: *Poscia ch'io ebbi rotta la persona/ di due punte mortali, io mi rendei/ piangendo, a quei che volontier perdona* (*Purg.*, III, 118–120). Manfred also briefly alludes to the removal of his remains from Benevento, where they were buried under the guardianship of a heavy mole of stones: *l'ossa del corpo mio sarieno ancora/ in co del ponte presso a Benevento/ sotto la guardia de la grave mora* (127–129). Given the elusiveness of the original *la grave mora*, Pasquali translates the passage but also specifies the function of *mora* as that of a burial made of stones: *Beneventum propter, humata/ principium post pontis, adhuc mea membra iacerent/ saxorum sub mole gravi, queis tecta fuere* (V, 3, 309–311).
[531]*Purg.*, VI, 127–129.
[532]V, 6, 633–634.

Dante draws a comparison between the Tuscan city, Athens and Sparta, the two birthplaces of law and jurisdiction in Antiquity: *Atene e Lacedemona, che fenno/ l'antiche leggi e furon sì civili/ fecero al viver bene un picciol cenno/ verso di te.*[533] Dante's allusion to the groundbreaking work by Solon and Lycurgus is made even more explicit in Pasquali's translation, where the two lawmakers are directly mentioned: *Cecropidis iura Solon, qui iura Lycurgus/ Spartanis antiqua dedit, iuvere parumper/ si tibi respicitur.*[534]

    As previously mentioned, the meeting with Statius represents one of the most touching episodes of the entire *Commedia*; in *Purgatorio* XXI, the Latin poet presents himself by recalling his poetical works: *Stazio la gente ancor di là mi noma/ cantai di Tebe, e poi del grande Achille/ ma caddi in via con la seconda soma.*[535] The *Achilleid*'s state of incompleteness is made explicit through an elegant metaphor (*ma caddi in via con la seconda soma*) which does not find place within Pasquali's rendering, as the translator abandons the original's rhetorical elaboration in favor of a more thorough explanation of the line itself. Both the main works by Statius are indeed mentioned and the *Achilleid* is said to be incomplete because of the author's death: *fraternaque bella/ Thebarum cecini, Peleique ex sanguine Achillem/ ast onus haud potui vivens explere secundum.*[536]

    Also of note is the way Pasquali renders the allusive description of the imperial

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533*Purg.*, VI, 139–142.
534V, 6, 643–645.
535*Purg.*, XXI, 91–93.
536VII, 21, 516–518. Also, *Purgatorio* XXX features the pilgrim's meeting with Beatrice, an encounter Dante has long yearned for that still turns out to be distressing, as Beatrice's harsh reproach moves Dante to regretful tears: *lo gel che m'era intorno al cor ristretto/ spirito e acqua fessi, e con angoscia/ de la bocca e de li occhi uscì del petto* (*Purg.*, XXX, 97–99).The pilgrim is portrayed as crying through a sophisticated metonymy (*de la bocca e de li occhi uscì del petto*) but such a poetic device becomes again paraphrased in the translation as the Latin rendering is clearly aimed at a better understanding of the passage: *in fletum ac gemitus oculis prorupit et ore* (VIII, 30, 641).

eagle's flight through history in *Paradiso* VI. This canto begins with an extremely

significant *terzina*, as Constantine's decision to move the capital to Byzantium, brings the

political center of the Empire and its glorious past from west to the east, against the

direction originally followed by Aeneas on his way back from Troy: *Poscia che*

Costantin l'aquila volse/ contr' al corso del ciel, ch'ella seguio/ dietro a l'antico che

Lavina tolse.[537] This aspect of the eagle's *innatural* course is emphasized by Pasquali,

who maintains the comparison with Aeneas' journey, as Dante does, but also makes the

east the eagle's explicit final destination as imposed by Constantine: *Postquam Aquilam*

Constantiades direxit ad Ortum/ coeli adversus iter, ductore quod ante secuta/ dardanio

fuerat.[538]

In conclusion to this analysis of Pasquali's exegesis of Dante's most obscure

passages, it is worth examining his Latin translation of two remarkable neologisms as

employed by Dante in the *Commedia.* Both the neologisms appear in the *Paradiso* and

attempt to describe a vision that transcends perceivable reality and describes, what would

otherwise be unutterable. The verbal form *trasumanar* constitutes one of the most

representative adaptations of spoken language to the Christian doctrinal vision, as

presented in the *Paradiso*. Dante himself emphasizes its untranslatability,[539] as it

enshrines the exceptional singularity of the pilgrim's presence among blessed souls.

Unable to render this neologism, Pasquali paraphrases the verb *trasumanar*, yet keeps the

verb's significance by emphasizing its etymological meaning of "going beyond human

nature": *Naturam exuere humanam per verba notari/ voce potest nulla.*[540]

The second neologism appears in *Paradiso* XXXIII, towards the end of the poem's

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537*Par.*, VI, 1–3.
538IX, 6, 534.
539*Trasumanar significar per verba/ non si poria. Par.*, I, 70–71.
540IX, 1, 55–56.

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last canto. Here, Dante offers one last attempt to describe the ineffable mystery of the

Trinity, as three concentric circles, the image of which he managed to perceive: *Ne la*

profonda e chiara sussistenza/ de l'alto lume parvermi tre giri/ di tre colori e d'una

contenenza.[541] In the pilgrim's attempt to realize how the human image fits the circle,[542]

Dante employs a new neologism: *indovarsi.* Faithful to his aim of explaining the text,

Pasquali paraphrases the verb, and contributes to a better understanding of the entire

passage by describing the pilgrim as unable to understand how can the man's image fit the

circle: *mecum perquirens quomodo imago/ congrueret circlo, atque aptari posset in*

illo.[543]

4- Pasquali's Exegetical Notes on the Text

Unlike both Catellacci and Dalla Piazza, Pasquali Marinelli enriches his

translation with explanatory notes. Although infrequent, his notes aim at improving the

text's readability by acquainting the reader with the themes, protagonists and scenarios

depicted in the *Commedia.* Pasquali's notes fall into three categories; those aimed at

describing characters, those that explain obscure passages, and those that paraphrase the

lexicon employed to translate Dante's text. Among the countless figures Dante refers to in

his poem, Pasquali introduces many of them with a brief preamble on their life and work,

such is the case for Farinata, Sordello and Peter Lombard.[544]. Also, Pasquali employs his

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541*Par.*, XXXIII, 115–117.
542*veder voleva come si convenne/ l'imago al cerchio e come vi s'indova. Par.*, XXXIII, 137–138.
543XII, 33, 996–997.
544Farinata (II, 1): *Farinata, ex nobili Ubertorum familia, Ghibellinorum Florentiae caput; qui Guelforum exercitum, in quo et Dantis maior erat, in Monteaperto, iuxta Arbiam flumen, vicit ac fudit; cumque hac Ghibellini victoria elati de delenda Florentia consulerent, his firmissime obstitit.* Sordello (V, 26): *Sordellus ex Viscomitibus Mantuae, poeta ac literatus, de quo scribit Beneventus e Foro Cornelii: "nobilis et prudens, miles et curialis".* Peter Lombard (X, 14): *Petrus Lombarus, alias Magister*

notes to cast light on particularly obscure passages, the Latin translation of which may not be enough to be easily understandable for non-Italian readers. A first example of this tactic can be found in II, 422–428, where Dante's original text reads: *I' fui de la città che nel Batista/ mutò 'l primo padrone* (…) *Io fei gibetto a me de le mie case.*[545] In his translation, Pasquali explains the reference to John the Baptist, but also expresses his uncertainty about the Florentine unknown's identity: *Florentia patronum suum, qui erat Mars, belli Deus, in S. Joannem Bapt. Mutavit; cuius Martis pars supererat in ponte Arni. Quis esset hic Florentinus, nescitur: nonnulli putant Roccum de Mozzis, alii Lottum ex Anglis: uterque enim domi laqueo se suspendit, postquam ad incitas venit.*[546] Likewise, in *Purgatorio* I, where Dante does not describe the Kingdom of Purgatory as a mountain, and Pasquali – who faithfullt sticks to the original text – does not hint at its morphology either. This piece of information is instead provided in the footnotes, where Dante's prefiguration of the Purgatory is explicitly said to recall the shape of a mountain: *In terrestri enim Paradiso, Dantes Purgatorii montem imaginatur.*[547]

In compliance with his aim of contributing to the *Commedia*'s spread among intellectuals in Europe and beyond, Pasquali also employs his notes to clarify some of the linguistic choices he made while translating Dante's text. In the *Inferno*, avaricious and prodigal sinners are punished together in canto VII, where they are described as striking each other while rolling weights by pushing them with their chests. They also cry insults at each other: *Percotëansi 'ncontro; e poscia pur lì/ si rivolgea ciascun, voltando*

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sententiarum. Initio operis ait, se hoc dare Ecclesiae in modum ac similitudinem oblationis, quam fecit paupercula in gazophilacio, ut narrat S. Lucas. Among the very many figures which appear in the Commedia, see also *Saladinus* (I, 6), *Bonifacius* (III, 1), *Ugulinus* (IV, 34), *Manfredus* (V, 11), *Guidus Cavalcans* (VI, 8), *Folcus* (X, 8), *Albertus Magnus* (X, 12), *Patrus Damianus* (X, 27).

[545]*Inf.*, XIII, 143–151.
[546]II, 13.
[547]V, 1.

a retro/ gridando: "Perché tieni?" e "Perché burli?".[548] The mocking irony of Dante's expression *Perché tieni? Perché burli?* is faithfully translated with *Cur ipse tenes? Cur ipse profundis?*[549] However, in order to adequately emphasize the originally dialectal nature of the verb *burlare*, Pasquali explains its linguistic meaningfulness in a note: *"Profundis?" (Dantes "burli") id est "getti via", ex voce lombarda "burlare", quae significat "rotolare."*.[550]

One last final example will help understand the explanatory function of the notes as employed by Pasquali. In *Inferno* XIV Dante asks Virgil about two rivers of the afterworld, Phlegethon and Lethe: *Maestro, ove si trova/ Flegetonta e Letè?*[551] Virgil's answer explicitly alludes to the Greek origin of the word *Flegetonta* (*bollor de l'acqua rossa*), and Pasquali translates the explanation with *rubor ipse fluenti*.[552] Faithful to his exegetical approach to the *Commedia*, Pasquali further clarifies the etymology of the river's name in a note, where the meaning of the noun Phlegethon is finally made explicit:*"Phlegeton" enim idem est ac "ardor" et "incendium".*[553]

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[548]*Inf.*, VII, 28–30.
[549]I, 690.
[550]I, 15.
[551]*Inf.*, XIV, 130–131.
[552]II, 530.
[553]II, 15.

Conclusion

This dissertation contributes to the field of Dante studies by casting light on an uncharted chapter of the modern *Dantistica*: the Latin translations of Dante's *Commedia* in nineteenth-century Italy. Four translations of Dante's poem into Latin hexameters were published between 1819 and 1874. These editions were not the result of mere erudite leisure, nor intellectual narcissism, for they aimed at spreading Dante's around the time of the Italian unification. The translations by Catellacci, Testa, Dalla Piazza and Pasquali Marinelli explicitly state the need to make the Divine Comedy available outside the Italian peninsula. The language most suitable to pursue such an ambitious goal in nineteenth-century Europe was Latin, the language of learned culture *par excellence*.

No earlier period of Italian history saw such increasing interest in Latin versifications of Dante's work. The other extant translations of the Comedy were penned between the fourteenth-century (Bertoldi, Ronto) and the early eighteenth-century (D'Aquino). These earlier attempts, share very little with the nineteenth-century translations besides the ultimate goal of increasing the readability of the original text. The rediscovery of texts from classical antiquity lead European continental countries – Germany *in primis* – to a renewed study of ancient literatures. Among the literary disciplines to benefit most from this renaissance of classical studies was philology, a subject that, thanks to the German scholar Karl Lachmann and his school, enjoyed vast success within the academic world.

The nineteenth-century philological approach to literary texts is demonstrated by the analysis of Latin translations of Dante's *Commedia* provided in this dissertation. The

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early translations of the poem, from Salutati to Ronto, show a remarkable attention to the Latin versification. Faithfulness to the Italian original becomes a secondary, if not marginal, concern of the authors. Although extremely refined, D'Aquino's translation markedly departs from the source text. Indeed, his 1728 edition is the least faithful translation of the Divine Comedy examined here. The original passages that were left out of D'Aquino's abridged text were later translated by Testa and published in1836. Testa's integrations give us a clear sense of the different approaches to a literary text that developed between the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries.

Testa's 1835 edition focuses on linguistic and stylistic faithfulness to Dante. Although it lacks D'Aquino's mastery of Latin hexameter, Testa's translation provides a more useful and effective service to his non-Italian readership. His critical approach was shared with Catellacci in 1818, and it would later be inherited by Dalla Piazza and Marinelli. Unlike Testa's and Catellacci's contributions, the editions by Dalla Piazza (1848) and Marinelli (1874) are comprehensive; nonetheless, dependence on the original text never falters.

Along with the inclusion of Dante's works in the scholastic curricula developed for the newly founded Kingdom of Italy and the philological study of Dante within the *Società dantesca*, nineteenth-century Italy also witnessed the spread of Latin translations of Dante's Divine Comedy. This phenomenon deeply characterized the entire century and accompanied a growing wish for a firm sense of political and cultural Italian-ness from the end of Napoleonic wars (1815) to the Unification (1861). If the birth of such national institutions as the *Società*, which were devoted to critical study of Dante's *corpus*, outshone the spread of Latin translations within the Italian borders, the latter made Dante

accessible to the intellectual classes outside of Italy.

The works by Catellacci, Testa, Dalla Piazza and Pasquali Marinelli played a central role in the circulation of the Divine Comedy throughout Europe. By translating the original text into Latin, they are harbingers of modern editions with facing-page translations and allowed the text of the *Commedia* to circulate, for the first time, outside of the land *dove 'l sì suona*.[554]

554*Inf.*, XXXIII, 80.

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