

Aspects of Animal Imagery in Petrarch's  
*Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*



Nicolò Morelli  
Pembroke College

This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
August 2018

## **Aspects of Animal Imagery in Petrarch's *Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta***

This dissertation examines the role of animal imagery in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Rvf*) as a means of elucidating his poetics in conversation with his predecessors. To achieve this aim, the present study compares and contrasts Petrarch's poetry with that of the poets quoted in *Rvf* 70, namely Arnaut Daniel, Guido Cavalcanti, Dante Alighieri and Cino da Pistoia. My research sheds light on the way in which Petrarch draws on and diverges from his precursors as he establishes his poetic language. The comparison between Petrarch and one or more of his predecessors poses three areas of enquiry central to my research: Petrarch's reuse of traditional animal images, such as those in troubadour poetry; the question of allegory in the *Rvf*; and the language and communication strategies which characterise Petrarch's poetic exchanges.

Chapter 1 introduces a theoretical framework, based on the sources in Petrarch's possession, which discusses and reviews the implications, in medieval culture, of the notion of animality in relation to and in the representation of human passions. Chapter 2 considers Petrarch's potential engagement with the repertoire of animal imagery in the tradition of Occitan poetry. It examines the set of zoological images of bestiary derivation that Petrarch shares with the troubadours, specifically focusing on Petrarch's debt to Arnaut Daniel. Chapter 3 explores the role of allegory in Petrarch's animal imagery as compared with Dante's poetry. Chapter 4 considers how the employment of animal images varies between the poems without apparent correspondents and those with specific recipients. The first part of the chapter is concerned with the lyrics of Guido Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia, while the second part analyses animal vocabulary in the *Rvf* and in the poetic exchanges that Petrarch left uncollected as *estravaganti*.

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution. This dissertation does not exceed the prescribed limit of 80,000 words.

Nicolò Morelli  
Pembroke College

To my parents



Et meditata manu componit verba trementi.  
Dextra tenet ferrum, vacuum tenet altera ceram.  
Incipit et dubitat, scribit damnatque tabellas,  
et notat et delet, mutat culpatque probatque  
inque vicem sumptas ponit positasque resumit.  
Quid velit ignorat; quicquid factura videtur,  
displicet. In vultu est audacia mixta pudori.  
(Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IX. 521–27)



# *Contents*

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	IX
INTRODUCTION	1
1.     PETRARCH’S RECEPTION OF ANIMAL IMAGERY	10
Introduction	10
1.    Classical Philosophical and Encyclopaedic Works	12
2.    Latin Poetry	24
3.    The Biblical and Patristic Tradition	31
4.    Hunting in the Middle Ages: Meanings and Implications	40
Conclusion	47
2.     PETRARCH AND THE TROUBADOURS	48
Introduction	48
1.    Observations about Petrarch’s Reception of Troubadour Poetry	50
2.    Petrarch, the Troubadours, and Animal Images of Bestiary Derivation	55
3.    Petrarch, Arnaut Daniel, and the <i>Adynaton</i> of the Chasing Ox	69
Conclusion	79
3.     PETRARCH AND DANTE	80
Introduction	80
1.    Dante’s Bear: A Bestial Poetic Voice	86
2.    Petrarch’s Stag and Hind in <i>Rvf</i> 23 and 190	90
Conclusion	120
4.     PETRARCH, CAVALCANTI AND CINO DA PISTOIA	121
Introduction	121
1.    Guido Cavalcanti’s and Cino da Pistoia’s <i>Rime</i>	122
2.    Petrarch’s <i>Fragmenta</i> and his Correspondences in the <i>Estravaganti</i>	136
Conclusion	159
CONCLUSION	161
<i>Bibliography</i>	165





## *Acknowledgements*

Writing a doctoral thesis is a long process, which benefits from the crucial support and encouragement of teachers, friends and family members. I am profoundly grateful to all my interlocutors and I regret that I can only name a few of them.

I wish to thank, first and foremost, my supervisor at the University of Cambridge, Heather Webb, for her patient guidance, enthusiastic commitment, as well as her intellectual and human generosity. Her inspiring mentorship has contributed to my work more than anything else and has shown me what it means to be a scholar. I am also deeply indebted to my examiners, Abigail Brundin and Simon Gilson, for their attentive reading and invaluable feedback during my viva voce examination, as well as during the progress interview at the end of my probationary year. I am likewise grateful to Giuseppe Ledda for his insightful comments and expert advice during the final stages of my writing.

A number of people have helped me academically and personally since I first arrived in Cambridge. In addition to Heather and Abigail, I would like to express my gratitude to the other Italianists in the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages, who gave me the opportunity to be part of a vibrant and stimulating community: Pierpaolo Antonello, Ambrogio Camozzi Pistoja, Claudia Domenici, Robert Gordon, Helena Sanson and the ‘honorary Italianist’ Keith Sykes have done much more for my morale and academic growth than I could say in these brief acknowledgements. The completion of this work would have been much more difficult without the friends who have shared part of their path with me: Charlie Barranu, Daniele Pio Buena, Chiara Capulli, Sara Delmedico, Manuela Di Franco, Ollie Finnegan, Kim Groothuis, Helena Phillips-Robins, Manuel Piña Dreyer, Maria Teresa Rachetta and Eleonora Serra have, in different ways, made my time in Cambridge particularly enriching and enjoyable. I am sincerely grateful to Alessandra Diazi, who was the first person I met in the Fens and, although she is no longer in Cambridge, continues to be a dear friend of endless conversations and healthy laughter. I also wish to thank Kath Powlesland, not only for her precious friendship but also for having helped me resolve all my grammatical doubts and obsessions. Vicki Sunter, in addition, proved to have tireless and painstaking proofreading eyes on the warmest days of July.

Finally, a special mention is due to my family. I am truly thankful to my brother Gian Maria, for reminding me how important it is to keep fighting, as much with the pain of boxing as with the fatigue of writing. Above all, I owe my greatest and heartfelt gratitude to my parents, Maurizio and Stefania, for their unconditional support and for encouraging me to pursue my interests. My journey from the Giovanni Pascoli primary school to Pembroke College would not have been possible without them: in this case, as Dante would say in the ‘lingua che chiami mamma o babbo’, the debt I incurred to them ‘significar *per verba* | non si poria’.

My research has been generously funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (under grant number 1503145), the School of Arts and Humanities, and Pembroke College, University of Cambridge.

## Introduction

This thesis examines animal imagery in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Rvf*), or *Canzoniere*, as a means of elucidating its poetics as engaged in covert conversation with the earlier vernacular poetic tradition. Animal images and animal imagery, in this study, are defined as any references to animals other than humans, irrespective of the rhetorical category in which each occurrence falls, and the set of meanings which they evoke.

Scholars have shown that zoological imagery plays a key role in the interpretation of medieval Italian literary texts. Since the publication of the pioneering book by Richard T. Holbrook, *Dante and the Animal Kingdom*, in 1902, a rich body of literature has been devoted to animal references in Dante's *Commedia*.<sup>1</sup> More recently, we owe a renewed interest in and contribution to this topic to Giuseppe Ledda. In his studies, Ledda particularly explores the deployment of animal similes in the *Commedia*, with special attention given to the bestiary tradition, observing that in many cases animal-centric rhetorical devices serve to structure the narrative and the development of certain motifs throughout the poem.<sup>2</sup> Antonio Montinaro, in turn, investigates animal lore in the lyric poetry

---

<sup>1</sup> See Richard T. Holbrook, *Dante and the Animal Kingdom* (New York: The Columbia University Press, 1902). For later studies, see Francesca Baraldi, 'Il simbolismo dell'aquila nella *Commedia* dantesca', *I castelli di Yale: quaderni di filosofia*, 9 (2007–2008), 85–101; Sonia M. Barillari, 'L'animalità come segno del demoniaco nell'*Inferno* dantesco', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 174 (1997), 98–119; Annamaria Carrega, 'Immagini intessute di scrittura: aquile dantesche', *L'immagine riflessa*, n.s., 7.2 (1998), 285–301; Elisa Curti, 'Un esempio di bestiario dantesco: la cicogna o dell'amor materno', *Studi danteschi*, 67 (2002), 129–60; Guglielmo Gorni, "'Gru" di Dante: lettura di *Purgatorio* XXVI', *Rassegna europea di letteratura italiana*, 2 (1994), 11–34; Teresa Gualtieri, 'Dante's Crane and the Pilgrimage of Poetic Inspiration', *Rivista di studi italiani*, 13 (1995), 1–13; Lucia Lazzerini, 'L'"allodetta" e il suo archetipo: la rielaborazione di temi mistici nella lirica trobadorica e nello Stil novo', in *Sotto il segno di Dante: scritti in onore di Francesco Mazzoni*, ed. by Leonella Cogliervina and Domenico De Robertis (Florence: Le Lettere, 1998), pp. 165–88; Nicolò Maldina, 'Api e vespe nella *Commedia*: osservazioni sul bestiario dantesco', *L'Alighieri*, 29 (2007), 121–42; Giovanna Neri, 'Il bestiario contemplativo di Dante', *Intersezioni*, 10 (1990), 15–33; Lino Pertile, 'Il nodo di Bonagiunta, le penne di Dante e il Dolce Stil Novo', *Lettere italiane*, 46.1 (1994), 44–75; Luciano Rossi, 'Il "nodo" di Bonagiunta e le "pennne" degli stilnovisti: ancora sul XXIV del *Purgatorio*', in *Fictio Poetica: studi italiani e iberici in onore di Georges Güntert*, ed. by Katharina Maier-Troxler and Costantino Maeder (Florence: Cesati, 1998), pp. 27–52; Lawrence V. Ryan, "'Stornei", "Gru", "Colombe": The Bird Images in *Inferno* V', *Dante Studies*, 94 (1976), 25–45; Richard A. Shoaf, 'Dante's "Colombi" and the Figuralism of Hope in the *Divine Comedy*', *Dante Studies*, 93 (1975), 27–59.

<sup>2</sup> See Giuseppe Ledda, 'Animali nel *Paradiso*', in *La poesia della natura nella 'Divina Commedia': atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Ravenna, 10 novembre 2007*, ed. by Giuseppe Ledda (Ravenna: Centro dantesco dei Frati minori conventuali, 2009), pp. 93–135; "'Uno bellissimo paone": immagini animali tra Dante e Boccaccio', in *Boccaccio e i suoi lettori*:

of the Sicilian School. He provides a comprehensive survey of the occurrences of zoological imagery found within the vast corpus of texts of Sicilian and Siculo-Sicilian poets, along with an analysis of their sources.<sup>3</sup> Finally, Valeria Mouchet explores the meanings and narrative function of animal images in the genre of medieval prose tales, such as the *Novellino*, Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Franco Sacchetti's *Trecentonovelle*.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast to other important works of medieval Italian literature, the relationship between animal imagery and the poetics of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* has not attracted significant scholarly attention. Opinions about the rarefied and stylised language of Petrarch's lyrics may have led scholars to consider animal imagery an unproductive research topic. When examining the scholarly works which indirectly or directly deal with animal imagery in Petrarch, it becomes clear that there is a substantial research gap to be filled.

Some of the existing scholarship has only addressed related and tangential subjects. For example, Claudia Berra and Silvia Finazzi, in their studies, investigate the wider question of the deployment of specific rhetorical techniques, simile and metaphor respectively, in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*.<sup>5</sup> While both offer an in-depth analysis of these two figures of speech in the *Canzoniere*, neither specifically considers the role of animal imagery in Petrarch's poetics, treating it instead as just one of the various semantic fields of similes and metaphors.

---

*una lunga ricezione*, ed. by Gian Mario Anselmi and others (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2013), pp. 405–17; 'Un bestiario metaletterario nell'*Inferno* dantesco', *Studi danteschi*, 78 (2013), 119–53; 'A Bestiary of Desire', in *Desire in Dante and the Middle Ages*, ed. by Manuele Gragnolati and others (Oxford: Legenda, 2012), pp. 58–70; 'La *Commedia* e il bestiario dell'aldilà: osservazioni sugli animali nel *Purgatorio*', in *La fabbrica della 'Commedia': atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Ravenna, 14–16 settembre 2006*, ed. by Alfredo Cottignoli and others (Ravenna: Longo, 2008), pp. 139–59; 'Per lo studio del bestiario dantesco', *Bollettino dantesco per il settimo centenario*, 1 (2012), 87–102; 'Per un bestiario dantesco della cecità e della visione: vedere "non altrimenti che per pelle talpe" (*Purg.* XVII. 1–3)', in *Da Dante a Montale: studi di filologia e critica letteraria in onore di Emilio Pasquini*, ed. by Gian Mario Anselmi and others (Bologna: Gedit, 2005), pp. 77–97; 'Per un bestiario di Malebolge', in *Dante e il mondo animale*, ed. by Giuseppe Crimi and Luca Marozzi (Rome: Carocci, 2013), pp. 92–113.

<sup>3</sup> See Antonio Montinaro, 'Il "bestiario d'amore" della Scuola poetica siciliana: anticipazioni da un glossario del lessico animale (con analisi delle fonti)', *Medioevo letterario d'Italia*, 10 (2013), 9–30, whose corpus of text is based on *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, ed. by Roberto Antonelli, Costanzo Di Girolamo and Rosario Coluccia, 3 vols (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> See Valeria Mouchet, *Gli animali tra racconto e novella: repertorio ipertestuale delle occorrenze zoonime nella narrativa volgare due-trecentesca* (Fregene: Spolia, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> See Claudia Berra, *La similitudine nei 'Rerum vulgarium fragmenta'* (Lucca: Fazzi, 1992); Silvia Finazzi, *Fusca claritas: la metafora nei 'Rerum vulgarium fragmenta' di Francesco Petrarca* (Rome: Aracne, 2012).

There are, however, some important studies which focus on individual Petrarchan zoomorphic images and provide valuable foundations for further investigations. Barbara Spaggiari explores the classical echoes that resonate in the *adynaton* of the chasing ox in *Rvf* 212 and *Rvf* 239, tracing the potential roots of such images back to the Homeric poems.<sup>6</sup> Stefano Carrai, in turn, engages in a profound investigation into the sources which could have inspired the statement written on the hind's neck in sonnet 190, 'Nessun mi tocchi' (*Rvf*, 190. 9), challenging the idea that it originates from Solinus.<sup>7</sup> Neither of them, however, deals with the meanings of these images in the context of the wider macrotext of Petrarch's collection and in relation to the use of animal lore in his poetry.

Francesco Zambon, by contrast, does adopt a macrotextual perspective. In a broader study of the myth of the phoenix in Occitan, Old French and medieval Italian poetry, he also touches upon Petrarch's poems. By focusing particularly on the interplay between *Rvf* 135 and *Rvf* 323, he suggests that this creature conveys meta-poetic functions: as the phoenix is reborn from its ashes after being burnt, so Laura is revived in Petrarch's poetry after her death; at the same time, the phoenix's regeneration allegorises the path of the lyric voice, who is revived in his poetry after burning for love.<sup>8</sup> While Zambon takes the narrative of the macrotext into account, his study is only concerned with a specific animal image and a small number of poems. In addition, as is the case with the other scholarly works about this topic in Petrarch, he does not address the relationship between animal imagery and the broader poetics of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*.

The topic of animal imagery for a medieval poet such as Petrarch is potentially vast and carries some risks. A fully comprehensive survey of animal images, for instance, might touch upon a large number of individual occurrences

---

<sup>6</sup> See Barbara Spaggiari, 'Cacciare la lepre col bue', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, 3rd ser., 12.4 (1982), 1333–409.

<sup>7</sup> See Stefano Carrai, 'Il sonetto "Una candida cerva" del Petrarca', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 3 (1985), 233–51. For earlier studies see also Maria Luisa Doglio, 'Il sonetto CXC', in *Lectura Petrarce*, ed. by Gianfranco Folena, Alberto Limentani and Paolo Sambin, 18 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1982–1999), V (1985), pp. 249–70; Enrico Proto, 'Il sonetto "Una candida cerva" di Francesco Petrarca', *Rassegna critica di letteratura italiana*, 28 (1923), 129–40; Bartolo T. Sozzi, 'Per il sonetto "Una candida cerva"', *Studi petrarcheschi*, 8 (1976), 213–17.

<sup>8</sup> See Francesco Zambon, 'Il mito della fenice nella poesia romanza del medioevo', in his *L'alfabeto simbolico degli animali* (Rome: Carocci, 2001), pp. 213–41 (first publ. in *Atrium*, 1.2 (1999), 61–72 and *Atrium*, 1.3 (1999), 5–24). Here Zambon expands on his previous study 'Sulla fenice del Petrarca', in *Miscellanea di studi in onore di Vittore Branca per il suo settantesimo compleanno*, ed. by Armando Balduino and others, 5 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1983), I: *Dal Medioevo al Petrarca*, pp. 411–25.

without offering the opportunity to explore any single one of them in depth. The present study thus adopts a focused approach rather than aiming for an exhaustive account, and investigates how Petrarch deals with animal lore specifically within the poetic construction and framework of the *Canzoniere*. Here, the deployment of zoological images, I will argue, is part of a complex figurative fabric which owes much to its poetic tradition but is also reworked and re-semanticised in accordance with Petrarch's own poetics. I will shed light on the way in which Petrarch draws on and detaches from his precursors as he establishes his poetic language.

My investigation into animal imagery and Petrarch's poetics explores key zoological figures in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and discusses them in light of the wider fabric of textual relationships in the collection. Drawing on Zambon's study of the phoenix, I adopt the view of the *Canzoniere* as a macrotext. Petrarch worked on the overall structure of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* for some 20 years between the first redaction (1356–1358) and the last (1374), adding and moving poems according to a plan of patterns and motifs.<sup>9</sup> This approach does not mean that we must think of the collection as a narrative in verse, provided with a logical and coherent plot. It suggests, rather, that the collection presents a network of internal recalls and connections based on narrative, rhetorical, and thematic links.

For example, I will examine images of bestiary derivation such as the moth (*Rvf* 19 and 141), the salamander (*Rvf* 207) and the phoenix (*Rvf* 135, 185 and 321): these creatures share the topic of the fire of love and, in the narrative of the collection, constitute what I term the 'bestiario igneo'. In addition, I will discuss the interplay between the stag in *Rvf* 23 and the hind in *Rvf* 190, and the relationship of these animals with other poems such as sonnets 191–193.

Within the rich tradition of medieval poetry that precedes Petrarch, I will base my study on the poet's own selection of his precursors in his *canzone* 'Lasso

---

<sup>9</sup> On macrotextual narrativity in Petrarch's *Rvf*, see Thomas E. Peterson, *Petrarch's 'Fragmenta': The Narrative and Theological Unity of 'Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta'* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), pp. 3–25; Marco Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima: storia e racconto nel 'Canzoniere' di Petrarca*, 2nd edn (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2004), pp. 9–11. Teodolinda Barolini has argued that 'while in part 1 encounters with narrativity occur in isolated instances, in part 2 such encounters are an intimate component of the textual fabric'. See Teodolinda Barolini, 'The Making of a Lyric Sequence: Time and Narrative in Petrarch's *Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*', *Modern Language Notes*, 104.1 (1989), 1–38 (pp. 29–30).

me, ch'i' non so in qual parte pieghi' (*Rvf*, 70). The *canzone* is conceived as a *versus cum auctoritate*, a poetic form probably invented by Walter of Châtillon and quite common in medieval Latin poetry, but rare in the Italian vernacular, which comprises stanzas each concluding with a quotation from previous texts.<sup>10</sup> Here, Petrarch quotes the incipits by a poet whom he wrongly identified as Arnaut Daniel (*Rvf*, 70. 10), by Guido Cavalcanti (*Rvf*, 70. 20), by Dante (*Rvf*, 70. 30), by Cino da Pistoia (*Rvf*, 70. 40), and finally that of his own *canzone* 23 (*Rvf*, 70. 50):

Lasso me, ch'i' non so in qual parte pieghi  
 la speme, ch'è tradita omai più volte:  
 che se non è chi con pietà m'ascolte,  
 perché sparger al ciel sì spessi preghi?  
 Ma s'egli aven ch'anchor non mi si nieghi  
 finir anzi 'l mio fine  
 queste voci meschine,  
 non gravi al mio signor perch'io il ripreghi  
 di dir libero un dì tra l'erba e i fiori:  
*Drez et rayson es qu'ieu ciant e-m demori.*

Ragion è ben ch'alcuna volta io canti,  
 però ch'ò sospirato sì gran tempo  
 che mai non incomincio assai per tempo  
 per adequar col riso i dolor' tanti.  
 Et s'io potesse far ch'agli occhi santi  
 porgesse alcun dilecto  
 qualche dolce mio detto,  
 o me beato sopra gli altri amanti!  
 Ma più, quand'io dirò senza mentire:  
*Donna mi priegha, per ch'io voglio dire.*

Vaghi pensier' che così passo passo  
 scorto m'avete a ragionar tant'alto,  
 vedete che madonna à 'l cor di smalto,  
 sì forte, ch'io per me dentro nol passo.  
 Ella non degna di mirar sì basso  
 che di nostre parole  
 curi, ché 'l ciel non vòle  
 al qual pur contrastando i' son già lasso:  
 onde, come nel cor m'induro e 'naspro,  
*così nel mio parlar voglio esser aspro.*

Che parlo? o dove sono? et chi m'inganna,  
 altri ch'io stesso e 'l desiar soverchio?  
 Già s'i' trascorro il ciel di cerchio in cerchio,  
 nessun pianeta a pianger mi condanna.  
 Se mortal velo il mio veder appanna,  
 che colpa è de le stelle,

<sup>10</sup> For further details, see István Frank, 'La chanson "Lasso me" de Pétrarque et ses prédécesseurs', *Annales du Midi*, 66 (1954), 259–68. See also Sarah Kay, *Parrots and Nightingales: Troubadour Quotations and the Development of European Poetry* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2013), p. 131.

o de le cose belle?  
 Meco si sta chi di et notte m'affanna,  
 poi che del suo piacer mi fe' gir grave  
*la dolce vista e 'l bel guardo soave.*  
 Tutte le cose di che 'l mondo è adorno  
 uscîr buone de man del mastro eterno;  
 ma me, che così adentro non discerno,  
 abbaglia il bel che mi si mostra intorno;  
 et s'al vero splendor già mai ritorno,  
 l'occhio non pò star fermo,  
 così l'à fatto infermo  
 pur la sua propria colpa, et non quel giorno  
 ch'i' volsi inver' l'angelica beltade  
*nel dolce tempo de la prima etade.*

(Rvf, 70)<sup>11</sup>

Each verse quoted can be read as referring to a specific stage, in terms of love experience and poetry, which the subject acknowledges having lived and then abandoned to start a new phase.<sup>12</sup> The poetic persona first mentions the earlier *auctoritates* that previously inspired his writing and gave voice to his love, then establishes himself as the latest *auctoritas*, he who has inherited, overcome and renewed his predecessors' legacy. In so doing, the *canzone* encapsulates a reflection on the relationship between Petrarch's love poetry and that of his predecessors. As Olivia Holmes has pointed out, the sequence of quotations in *canzone* 70 testifies to the 'poets in whose contexts [Petrarch] wants his vernacular poetry to be read.'<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Marco Santagata, 2nd edn (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2005), pp. 347–57 (pp. 347–48). The italics are Santagata's. Petrarch quotes the Arnaldian poem in the form as it appears in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Français 12473. However, the correct incipit of the *chanço* is 'Razo e dreyt ay si·m chant e·m demori'. According to Maurizio Perugi, the song's real author is Guilhem de Murs. Pietro G. Beltrami, in turn, ascribes the poem to Guilhem de Saint Gregori. See respectively Maurizio Perugi, *Trovatori a Valchiusa: un frammento della cultura provenzale del Petrarca* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1985), pp. 192–229; Pietro G. Beltrami, 'Appunti su "Razo e dreyt ay si·m chant e·m demori"', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 5 (1987), 9–39. See also Stefano Asperti and Carlo Pulsoni, 'Jean de Nostredame e la canzone "Razo e dreyt ay si·m chant e·m demori"', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 7 (1989), 165–72.

<sup>12</sup> The interpretation of the types of love encapsulated in *Rvf* 70 is problematic. Marco Santagata has emphasised that the *canzone* narrates the passage from 'una concezione sensuale a una visione spiritualeggiante dell'amore'. By contrast, Marco Praloran has suggested that the type of love in this *canzone* is not spiritual but based on 'una interpretazione raggelante e mortale dello stilnovismo, radicalmente straniata e ancora concentrata sull'impossibilità [...] di immergersi in una visione assoluta e pura, priva di implicazioni sensuali'. See respectively Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, pp. 225–36 (p. 228); Marco Praloran, 'La canzone delle citazioni (*Rvf* 70)', in *La citazione: atti del XXXI convegno interuniversitario, Bressanone, 11–13 luglio 2003*, ed. by Gianfelice Peron (Padua: Esedra, 2009), pp. 183–96 (p. 196).

<sup>13</sup> Olivia Holmes, 'Petrarch and the Vernacular Lyric Past', in *The Cambridge Companion to Petrarch*, ed. by Albert Russell Ascoli and Unn Falkeid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,



My area of enquiry is concerned with the poets to whom the texts cited in *Rvf* 70 belong. In each case, the relationship between Petrarch and one or more of his precursors can be illuminated by some aspects of animal imagery and, in turn, the poetics of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. The verse of the pseudo-Arnaut invites us to explore Petrarch's potential engagement with past vernacular traditions such as that of the troubadours. The line from Dante allows us to address the question of allegory in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. Cavalcanti's and Cino da Pistoia's verses constitute a basis for exploring the language and communication strategies which characterise Petrarch's poetic exchanges.

In my analysis of individual animal images, I will rely on three types of sources, which provide insight into various areas of medieval culture. The first type includes works from the classical world, such as Pliny's *Naturalis historia* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The second type comprises works belonging to the Christian tradition. I have considered and examined the Bible and its patristic exegesis, the compendia of animal lore contained in the *Physiologus B-Is*, as well as hagiographical writings such as Iacopo da Varazze's *Legenda aurea*. Finally, the third type are medieval treatises and encyclopaedias, such as Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, Andreas Capellanus's *De amore*, Frederick II's *De arte venandi cum avibus*, William of Auvergne's *De universo creaturarum* and Brunetto Latini's *Tresor*. These varied sources will play a crucial role in elucidating the meanings of individual animal images in medieval culture, and thus in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, as against the poems of his precursors which I analyse in my case studies.

The argument of this study is developed over four chapters. The first chapter does not directly deal with Petrarch's poetics and his precursors, but presents a theoretical framework which explores and discusses the implications of the notion of animality in relation to and in the representation of human identity. My investigation is based on the texts which were certainly available to and valued by Petrarch, or which were without doubt highly influential in the Middle Ages. I observe that the overlap between the concept of humanity and that of animality may be associated with the notions of vice and sin. At the same time, I note that

---

2015), pp. 154–66 (p. 161). See also Marco Santagata, *Per moderne carte: la biblioteca volgare di Petrarca* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990), p. 330.

the notion of animality does not always have negative implications. In the Christian tradition, before original sin, animals were completely separate from and subordinate to the ontological condition of mankind and played a positive function as conveyors of natural knowledge. What emerges from this opening outline will serve to address the relationship between animals and passions in my later discussions.

The second chapter considers how Petrarch redeploys and reworks traditional animal lore such as that found in the tradition of Occitan poetry. It examines the set of zoological images of bestiary derivation which Petrarch also shares with the troubadours, such as the moth in *Rvf* 19 and 141, the salamander in *Rvf* 207 and the phoenix in *Rvf* 135, 185 and 321. Subsequently, it specifically focuses on Petrarch's debt to Arnaut Daniel with respect to the images of the chasing ox in *Rvf* 212 and 239. Through the examination of traditional animal references, this chapter shows how Petrarch recasts and re-semanticises examples from the past in light of the poetic project of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. Petrarch, I argue, pursues the mechanism which he calls *mellificatio* — that is, a complex reworking of images belonging to a repertoire already in use.

The third chapter seeks to readdress and clarify the commonplace which has resulted from the opposition, in Gianfranco Contini's criticism, between Dante's allegorism and Petrarch's symbolism. I observe that in the Middle Ages, there is no distinction between allegory and symbol, but rather between the *allegoria in factis* and the *allegoria in verbis*. It is true that the Dante of the *Commedia* and the Petrarch of the *Canzoniere* deploy different figurative approaches, in accordance with the different genres of their works. With respect to their lyric production, however, the two poets display similar procedures, based on the mechanism of the allegory *in verbis*. To support my argument, I will examine three case studies. The first part of the chapter discusses the meanings associated with Dante's bear (*Rime*, 43). The second part investigates the figures of the stag (*Rvf*, 23) and the hind (*Rvf*, 190) in Petrarch. I show that these three images constitute allegories *in verbis*, and as such deliver hidden meanings which are crucial to the understanding of the texts.

The fourth chapter considers how the employment of animal images varies between the poems without apparent correspondents on the one hand and those

with specific recipients on the other. The first part is concerned with the lyrics of Guido Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia. In their poems without specific correspondents, the two *stilnovisti* adopt only a small number of animal references, shifting to the semantic field of interiority. Their poems of correspondence, by contrast, show a greater use of animal images, which seeks to meet the expectations of their interlocutors. The second part of the chapter compares and contrasts animal language in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and in the poetic exchanges which he left uncollected as *estravaganti*. I observe that Petrarch does not reject animal images from his collection, but reworks them according to the narrative and the poetic norms of the *Canzoniere*. In his poetic exchanges, as is the case with Cavalcanti and Cino, he adopts a shared code of communication, which aligns the sender and the receiver. In contrast to his precursors, what allows the poet to redeploy and refresh animal images here, I argue, is the collection itself. Its macrotextual architecture permits Petrarch to pursue a *mellificatio* and include animal images without the risk of sounding outdated.

## Chapter 1

# Petrarch's Reception of Animal Imagery

### Introduction

In the political poem, 'Quel ch'è nostra natura in sé più degno' (*Rime estravaganti*, 21), which was composed to celebrate Azzo da Correggio's conquest of Parma, Petrarch touches upon human superiority over other animals:

Quel ch'è nostra natura in sé più degno  
di qua dal ben per cui l'umana essenza  
da gli animali in parte si distingue,  
cioè l'intellettiva conoscenza,  
mi pare un bello, un valoroso sdegno  
quando gran fiamma di malizia estingue.

(*Rime estravaganti*, 21. 1–6)<sup>1</sup>

If the intellectual faculty only partly distinguishes humans from other animals, what does the overlap between mankind and lower creatures involve? This chapter investigates the role and implications of medieval discussions of the notion of animality for the representation of human identity and the human passions in Petrarch. There is, of course, a general problem with research of this kind: any historical reconstruction of the materials and sources available to a writer is necessarily conjectural to a certain extent. In the case of Petrarch, however, this problem is partly resolved. Indeed, we not only know the titles of a good number of the books he owned, but in many cases we still have the extant manuscripts.

Petrarch is the earliest Italian author to have left us detailed information about what he read. Pierre de Nolhac, the pioneer of modern investigations into Petrarch's library, has identified thirty-eight extant manuscripts as part of his collection and has postulated that by the end of his life the poet could have owned some two hundred volumes. Alongside these rough estimates, to date scholars have identified around ninety extant manuscripts that the poet read and sometimes

---

<sup>1</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Trionfi*, *Rime estravaganti*, *Codice degli abbozzi*, ed. by Vinicio Pacca and Laura Paolino, introduction by Marco Santagata (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1996), pp. 739–54 (p. 739).

even glossed.<sup>2</sup> In addition, we also know the canon of texts that the poet considered particularly important to his own education and cultural universe, the ‘*libri mei peculiare*s’, which Petrarch himself listed between 1332 and 1335 in what is now MS Latin 2201 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. In most cases, the items in the list coincide with surviving manuscripts in Petrarch’s library; when they do not, every title still makes a pivotal contribution to our understanding of the works which were most important to the poet.<sup>3</sup>

I will hence base my survey on the sources available to Petrarch as material texts in his library or as part of the list of the ‘*libri mei peculiare*s’.<sup>4</sup> The theoretical framework which I present in this chapter is divided into four parts. The first part considers the boundaries and the overlap between animals and humans in classical and late-ancient philosophical works and encyclopaedias, such as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Pliny the Elder, and Boethius. The second part focuses on the use of the notion of animality in association with human behaviour in classical poetry, such as in Vergil’s *Aeneid* and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. The third part discusses the relationship between animality and humanity in the Christian tradition, such as in the exegesis of Genesis and in Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*. The fourth part does not deal with specific texts that we know to have been in Petrarch’s possession, but outlines the imagery associated with hunting in the Middle Ages, which plays a major role in this exploration of the overlap between animality and humanity.

---

<sup>2</sup> By Petrarch’s library I mean the set of manuscripts which belonged to the poet. See Pierre de Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l’humanisme*, rev. edn, 2 vols (Paris: Champion, 1907), I, pp. 87–122 (pp. 112–16). On the extant manuscripts which are ascribed to Petrarch’s library, see Michele Feo, ‘La biblioteca’, in *Petrarca nel tempo: tradizioni, lettori e immagini delle opere: catalogo della mostra, Arezzo, Sottoc chiesa di San Francesco, 22 novembre 2003–27 gennaio 2004*, ed. by Michele Feo (Pontedera: Bandecchi & Vivaldi, 2003), pp. 457–96; Francisco Rico, ‘La biblioteca di Petrarca’, in *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, ed. by Sergio Luzzatto and Gabriele Pedullà, 3 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 2010–2012), I: *Dalle origini al Rinascimento*, pp. 229–34. See also Frank La Brasca, *La bibliothèque de Pétrarque* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> The definition of the ‘*libri mei peculiare*s’ as a canon is provided by, among others, Michele Feo: ‘L’interpretazione dello scritto è stata controversa. Ma oggi siamo certi che esso, più che un catalogo, sia un “canone”, ossia il promemoria di quali fossero a quella data i pochi autori con i quali il proprietario era affiatato, che erano il suo nutrimento spirituale e dai quali poteva concedersi occasionali e esplorative sortite verso altri campi.’ See Feo, ‘La biblioteca’, p. 458.

<sup>4</sup> I refer to the list of texts given in Feo, ‘La biblioteca’, pp. 457–96; Rico, ‘La biblioteca di Petrarca’, pp. 229–34.

## 1. Classical Philosophical and Encyclopaedic Works

### 1.1. Plato's *Timaeus* and *Phaedo*

Plato's thought was central in Petrarch's life, as we see for instance in his polemical treatise *De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*. Composed and revised between 1367 and 1369, the poet made it public on 13 January 1371 by sending a copy to its dedicatee, Donato Albanzani. Its immediate target is the attention of four men, never mentioned by name, linked to the Venetian Aristotelian environment.<sup>5</sup> Here, Petrarch argues for the superiority of Plato over Aristotle in the field of metaphysics:

At si queritur uter sit laudatior, incuntanter expediam inter hos referre, quantum ego arbitror, quod inter duos, quorum alterum principes proceresque, alterum uniuersa plebs laudet. A maioribus Plato, Aristotiles laudatur a pluribus. [...] Eo enim ambo naturalibus atque humanis in rebus peruenerunt, quo mortali ingenio ac studio perueniri potest. In diuinis altius ascendit Plato ac platonici, quamquam neuter peruenire potuerit quo tendebat [...], de quo nullus Cristianorum et in primis Augustini librorum fidelis lector hesitauerit; quod nec Greci, quamuis hodie literarum nescii, dissimulant, maiorum per uestigia Platonem diuinum, Aristotilem demonium nuncupantes.

(*De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*, IV. 119–20)<sup>6</sup>

In these illuminating lines, Petrarch affirms that Plato is praised by princes and nobles, while Aristotle is praised by plebians. The former is appreciated by the best, the latter by the masses. Both philosophers, he says, have explored the secrets of the natural and human sciences as thoroughly as a mortal mind can. Although

---

<sup>5</sup> Petrarch's addressees have been identified by Oskar Kristeller as Leonardo Dandolo, a member of the military elite and son of the doge Andrea Dandolo; Zaccaria Contarini, a descendant of a distinguished family that had produced a doge, and himself a senator; Guido da Bagnolo, a nobleman from Reggio Emilia, who had studied medicine, probably in Bologna; Tommaso Talenti, a Venetian citizen of Florentine origin and a prosperous silk merchant whose will in 1347 endowed a chair of logic and philosophy in Venice. See Oskar Kristeller, 'Petrarch's Averroists: A Note on the History of Aristotelianism in Venice, Padua and Bologna', in his *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters*, 4 vols (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1956–1996), II, pp. 209–16 (first publ. in *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 14 (1952), 59–65). See also William J. Kennedy, 'The Economy of Invective and a Man in the Middle (*De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*)', in *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works*, ed. by Victoria Kirkham and Armando Maggi (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 263–73; Bruno Nardi, 'Letteratura e cultura veneziana del Quattrocento: la scuola di Rialto e l'umanesimo veneziano', in his *Saggi sulla cultura veneta del Quattro e del Cinquecento*, ed. by Paolo Mazzantini (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1971), pp. 3–98.

<sup>6</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Invectives*, ed. and trans. by David Marsh (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 326.

neither of them could achieve the goal they sought, only Plato and the Platonists have ascended higher in their investigation of divine mysteries, as no Christian, and especially no faithful reader of Augustine's works, has ever doubted. For this reason, Petrarch observes, even the modern Greeks, despite their ignorance, call Plato divine and Aristotle semi-divine, following the teaching of their ancestors. Plato's preeminence over Aristotle is also stated in the *Triumphus*, where the poet writes that the former, among ancient philosophers, 'andò più presso al segno' (*Triumphus fame*, III. 5).<sup>7</sup> As far as we know from extant manuscripts, Petrarch owned two works by Plato in Latin translation, namely the *Timaieus* and the *Phaedo*. These texts constitute important sources with regard to the relationship between humanity and animality.<sup>8</sup>

Plato's *Timaieus*, defined — because of its importance — as the Bible of Platonism, provides a substantial description of the order of living beings.<sup>9</sup> Petrarch had access to the *Timaieus* through the Latin translation and doctrinal commentary by Calcidius, in what is now MS Latin 6280 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.<sup>10</sup> Although it only covers part of the Platonic dialogue (*Timaieus*, 17a–53c), Calcidius's version was the most important channel for the medieval reception of the dialogue in non-Greek Europe.<sup>11</sup>

In the *Timaieus*, Plato presents an elaborate account of the formation of the universe. His classification of living entities is based on the place in the created world which each species inhabits:

<sup>7</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi, Rime estravaganti, Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 431–71 (pp. 433–34).

<sup>8</sup> See Feo, 'La biblioteca', p. 486; Rico, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', pp. 232–33. Petrarch also had Greek manuscripts containing some of Plato's works, such as Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS I 98 inf.; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Grec 1807. See de Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme*, II, p. 133; Clemens Zintzen, 'Il platonismo di Petrarca', in *Il Petrarca latino e le origini dell'umanesimo: atti del convegno internazionale, Firenze, 19–22 maggio 1991*, ed. by Michele Feo and others, 2 vols (= *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 9–10 (1992–1993)), I, pp. 93–113 (p. 97).

<sup>9</sup> The definition is from Heinrich Dörrie, 'Le renouveau du platonisme à l'époque de Cicéron', *Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, 24 (1974), 13–29 (p. 23).

<sup>10</sup> It is likely that Petrarch also knew a partial translation by Cicero (*Timaieus*, 27d–47d, with some passages omitted). However, the poet considered Cicero's version as a treatise written by the Latin Orator and based on Plato's doctrine, rather than a mere translation of the original. See Sebastiano Gentile, 'Le postille di Petrarca al *Timeo* latino', in *Il Petrarca latino e le origini dell'umanesimo*, ed. by Feo and others, I, pp. 129–39 (p. 138).

<sup>11</sup> See Anna Somfai, 'The Eleventh-Century Shift in the Reception of Plato's *Timaieus* and Calcidius's *Commentary*', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 65 (2002), 1–21 (p. 1). On the importance of Calcidius's *Timaieus*, see also Béatrice Bakhouché, 'Introduction générale', in Calcidius, *Commentaire au 'Timée' de Platon*, ed. by Béatrice Bakhouché, 2 vols (Paris: Vrin, 2011), I, pp. 7–128.

Deus in hoc opere suo sensili diuersa animalium genera statuit esse debere constituitque quattuor, primum caeleste plenum diuinitatis, aliud deinde praepes aeriugum, tertium aquae liquoribus accomodatum, quantum quod terrena soliditas sustineret.

(*Timaeus*, 39e–40a)<sup>12</sup>

In the creation of the world, Plato writes, God established four species of beings: first, heavenly creatures, who are provided with divine essence; second, beings living in the air; third, the watery species; and fourth, the creatures who live on land. The use of the expression ‘animalium genera’ might be misleading at first sight, but it renders the Greek concept of ‘zôia’, which encompasses gods, humans and other animals. The meanings associated with this term and its Latin equivalent clearly express the notion that all creatures belong to the same category of living beings.<sup>13</sup>

As Francis Wolff has observed, the absence of any classification separating humans and other animals in the *Timaeus* is consistent with the philosopher’s idea of cosmic justice and thus also with the notion of metempsychosis, that is to say, the transmigration of the soul to other bodies according to what one has deserved:

Ni par le haut ni par le bas, [...] le règne de l’animal n’est clairement délimité. Il n’y a pas d’animal dans le *Timée*. Certes, entre les plantes et les hommes, il y a des espèces que nous qualifierions d’animales mais la progression d’une espèce d’animés à l’autre est graduelle et cette gradation est nécessaire à la justice cosmique: rendant commensurables entre elles toutes les conditions de vie des espèces sur une échelle unique et étalonnée, elle rend par là possible une métempsychose *juste*, c’est-à-dire proportionnée à la valeur de la vie antérieure que l’on a menée. Mais, en même temps, cette gradation exclut qu’il soit possible d’homogénéiser les animaux en un genre unique lié par une détermination commune et opposée par exemple à celle des hommes.<sup>14</sup>

Humans and other creatures — Francis Wolff notes — are not categories apart, but belong to the same class of living beings, with a gradual progression between one species and another. This overlap facilitates the mechanism of metempsychosis and makes cosmic justice possible.

<sup>12</sup> *Plato Latinus*, ed. Raymond Klibansky and others, 4 vols (London: Warburg Institute; Leiden: Brill, 1940–1962), IV: *Timaeus: A Calcidio Translatio Commentarioque Instructa*, ed. by Jan H. Waszink, pp. 32–33.

<sup>13</sup> For details on the Greek concept of ‘zôia’ see Francis Wolff, ‘L’Animal et le dieu: deux modèles pour l’homme: remarques pouvant servir à comprendre l’invention de l’animal’, in *L’Animal dans l’Antiquité*, ed. by Gilbert Romeyer Dherbey, Barbara Cassin and Jean-Louis Labarrière (Paris: Vrin, 1997), pp. 157–80 (p. 158).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 160. Italics original.



The way metempsychosis works is explained in the *Phaedo*. Petrarch owned a Latin translation of the *Phaedo* created by Henricus Aristippus in 1156 in what is now MS Latin 6567 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Here the character of Socrates, through a series of rhetorical questions, explains that the soul of those humans that have not employed their intellect but have pursued their instincts will find a new body in animals:

Quemadmodum gastrimargiis et contumeliis atque potacionibus cum meditatione inhiantes et non reveritos in *asinorum genera* et talium bestiarum merito ingredi; an non putas? [...] Iniusticias et tyrannides atque rapinas pre ceteris veneratos in *luporum* et *asturconum* atque *milvorum genera*; vel quomodo aliter dicimus tales esse? [...] In *deorum genus* nonne philosophanti et omnimode puro migranti minime fas est meare alii quam disciplinarum amatori? Immo ea propter [...] recte philosophantes abstinere ab eis que secundum corpus sunt concupiscenciis omnibus.

(*Phaedo*, 81e–82c)<sup>15</sup>

As Plato writes, those who have indulged in bodily pleasures, such as gluttony, wantonness, and drunkenness, and have made no effort to avoid them, will pass into asses and animals of that sort; those who have chosen injustice, tyranny, and violence will pass into wolves, or into hawks and kites. In contrast, only those who have lived wisely will be permitted to join the gods in their afterlife: this is why those who dedicate their lives to philosophy abstain from all fleshly pleasures.

The manuscript of Plato's *Phaedo* owned by Petrarch shows the poet's interest in the question of metempsychosis. While Petrarch did not annotate the passage above, he signals — through a *manicula* — a sentence which summarises the mechanism concerning the destiny of the soul according to one's merits: 'anima que sincere et modeste vitam transegit et comites atque duces deos sortita habitavit sibi unicuique locum congruentem' (*Phaedo*, 108c).<sup>16</sup>

Platonic thought is particularly relevant to my survey of the boundaries and overlaps between animals and humans. Indeed, by defining the process of transmigration of the human soul, it highlights the link between passions and

<sup>15</sup> *Plato Latinus*, II: *Platonis Phaedo: Interprete Henrico Aristippo*, ed. by Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, pp. 39–40. Italics mine.

<sup>16</sup> Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, 'Il *Fedone* latino con note autografe del Petrarca (Parigi, Bibl. Naz., Cod. lat. 6567 A)', *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei: Rendiconti: Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, 8th ser., 4.1–2 (1949), 107–13 (pp. 111–12).

animality, and between intellect and the highest expression of human selfhood, which contributes to our explanation of the use of animal images in love poetry.

## 1.2. Aristotle's *Ethica Nicomachea*

The overlap between mankind and animals is also explored in Aristotle's *Ethica Nicomachea*, which relates human vice to animality. Petrarch had access to a Latin version of Aristotle's work in what is now MS Latin 6458 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. In addition, the poet also acknowledges the importance of the *Ethica* by including it in the list of the 'libri mei peculiare'.<sup>17</sup> Aristotle's treatise was available to Petrarch in the Latin translation by Robert Grosseteste, along with a compilation of commentaries by Aspasius, Michael of Ephesus, Eustratius of Nicea, and two anonymous scholiasts.<sup>18</sup>

The *Ethica Nicomachea* is built on the idea that human excellence must reside in a specifically human feature, an 'opus aliquod', which distinguishes mankind from other beings (*Ethica Nicomachea*, I. 9. 1097b. 32).<sup>19</sup> One important component of this argument is expressed in terms of distinctions between the three faculties of the soul — respectively, reason, perception, and nutrition — whose hierarchical order is such that the possession of each faculty implies the possession of those below it.<sup>20</sup> All living beings share the nutritive faculty; animals other than mankind have the perceptual and the nutritive faculties; finally, humans have both of the former but are also provided with reason. If the nutritive faculty is common to all creatures and the perceptual faculty is common to mankind and other

<sup>17</sup> See Feo, 'La biblioteca', p. 486; Rico, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', pp. 233–34.

<sup>18</sup> The compilation of the Greek commentaries which Grosseteste translated was probably completed in Constantinople, not long before the translation itself, that is, at the end of the twelfth or start of the thirteenth century. Eustratius of Nicea provides the commentary on Book I and VI, which dates to the transition from the eleventh to the twelfth century; an anonymous scholiast from the third century comments on Books II, III, IV, and V; Michael of Ephesus provides a second commentary on Book V, as well as one on Books IX and X, which date to the first half of the eleventh century; a further anonymous scholiast comments on Book VII, whose glosses are probably later than Eustratius's commentary; finally, Aspasius, master of the Peripatetic school of Athens at the beginning of the second century of our era, comments on Book VIII. See Paul F. Mercken, 'Introduction', in *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (†1253)*, ed. by Paul F. Mercken, 3 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1973; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1991), I: *Eustratius on Book I and the Anonymous Scholia on Books II, III, and IV*, pp. 1–135 (p. 3).

<sup>19</sup> *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, I, p. 109.

<sup>20</sup> On the faculties of the soul, see also Aristotle, *De anima*, II. 2; II. 3; II. 4; III. 10.

animals, then what sets humans apart from other species, offering them the potential to live a better life, is to be found in the activities and actions of the soul which imply a rational principle: ‘animae operationem et actum cum ratione’ (*Ethica Nicomachea*, I. 9. 1098a. 13).<sup>21</sup>

As a result of the hierarchical order of the soul, however, humans are not pure reason but also possess within their soul all the lower faculties as well. Eustratius himself in his commentary underlines this point when he writes that ‘Homo quidem enim animal est rationale mortale, animal autem vivens’, that is, man is a living being, but also an animal provided with reason (*Eustratius in Ethicam Nicomacheam*, I. 1. 17).<sup>22</sup> In other words, mankind partakes in animality by virtue of perception and differs from other creatures by means of rationality.

What is explicitly compared to animality in Aristotle’s *Ethics* is the vice of intemperance. The philosopher defines vice as an extreme of either excess or deficiency with respect to a mean determined by correct reasoning, which he calls virtue: ‘medietas est virtus’ (*Ethica Nicomachea*, II. 6. 1107a. 7).<sup>23</sup> In this regard, intemperance constitutes an extreme of excess associated with bodily pleasures, and less frequently pains. Because of its connection with the perceptual faculty, this particular vice likens human beings to animals:

Communissimus autem sensuum tactus, secundum quem intemperantia. Et videbitur utique iuste exprobrabilis esse, quoniam non secundum quod homines sumus existit, sed secundum quod animalia. Talibus utique gaudere et maxime diligere bestiale.

(*Ethica Nicomachea*, III. 12. 1118b. 1–5)<sup>24</sup>

Aristotle explains that intemperance is associated with the sense which all animals share, namely touch. It seems right that intemperance should be a matter of reproach, because it arises in us not as humans but as animals. Enjoying activities associated with intemperance, he writes, is above all brutish. The anonymous scholiast who comments on this passage in the version available to Petrarch makes

---

<sup>21</sup> *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, I p. 116. See also David Bostock, *Aristotle’s Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 7–21; James G. Lennox, ‘Aristotle on the Biological Roots of Virtue: The Natural History of Natural Virtue’, in *Biology and the Foundation of Ethics*, ed. by Jane Maienschein and Michael Ruse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 10–31 (p. 10).

<sup>22</sup> *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, I, p. 17.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 218.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 296.

a clear association between the Aristotelian theory of the souls in *De anima* and vice: ‘Sensus videlicet qui et primus animalibus, ut in libro *De anima* ostenditur. Et propter hoc et *bestiale* intemperantia’ (*Anonymus in Ethicam Nicomacheam*, III. 13. 90–92).<sup>25</sup>

Later Aristotle will observe that the moral notions of temperance and intemperance cannot be applied to animals other than man, unless one speaks ‘secundum metaphoram’, as the existence of virtues and vices depends on the balance between reason and senses, which is present only in humans (*Ethica Nicomachea*, VII. 7. 1149a. 21–25).<sup>26</sup> In other words, we can speak of good and bad behaviours insofar as the presence of reason enables rational choices while the perceptual faculty may lead an individual to follow the urges of the senses. This means that the moral concepts of good and bad are relevant to mankind but not to those without the faculty of reason.

As we will see in the next sections of this chapter, the association between animality and appetite will play an important role in the doctrinal works by Cicero and Boethius, but also in the poetry of Vergil and Ovid; the Christian and patristic tradition, moreover, will also provide allegorical interpretations of animality as a sign of sin.

### 1.3. Cicero’s Philosophical Works

In his aforementioned treatise against the Venetian Aristotelians, Petrarch writes that he read various books by poets and philosophers, but above all the works of Cicero (*De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*, 272–74). As Martin McLaughlin has observed, Petrarch ‘amassed or [...] read the greatest number of works by Cicero compared to anyone of his time or from preceding “medieval” centuries’.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, p. 298. Italics original.

<sup>26</sup> *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, III: *The Anonymous Commentator on Book VII, Aspasius on Book VIII, and Michael of Ephesus on Book IX and X*, p. 41.

<sup>27</sup> Martin McLaughlin, ‘Petrarch and Cicero: Adulation and Critical Distance’, in *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Cicero*, ed. by William H. F. Altman (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 19–38 (p. 19). For details on Petrarch and Cicero, see Giuseppe Billanovich, ‘Petrarca e Cicerone’, in his *Petrarca e il primo umanesimo* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1996), pp. 97–116 (first publ. in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, ed. by Anselmo Maria Albareda, 6 vols (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1946), IV: *Letteratura classica e umanistica*, pp. 88–106); Michele Feo, ‘Petrarca e Cicerone’, in *Cicerone nella tradizione europea: dalla tarda antichità al Settecento: atti del VI Symposium Ciceronianum Arpinas, Arpino 6 maggio 2005*, ed. by Emanuele

It is not surprising, then, to see Cicero's works appear at the top of the 'libri mei peculiare'. Among Petrarch's favourite works by the Latin orator, three address the question of the boundaries, overlap or opposition between humanity and animality, namely *De officiis*, *De divinatione*, and *De natura deorum*: Petrarch could read the first of these in the antigraph of the current MS Palatinus Latinus 1820 of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, and the other two in the antigraph of what is now MS 9116 of the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid.<sup>28</sup>

In the first book of *De officiis*, Cicero introduces the question of the superiority of mankind over cattle and other beasts:

[Pecudes et relinquae beluae] nihil sentiunt nisi voluptatem ad eamque feruntur omni impetu, hominis autem mens discendo alitur et cogitando [...]. Quin etiam, si quis est paulo ad voluptates propensior, [...] quamvis voluptate capiatur, occultat et dissimulat appetitum voluptatis propter verecundiam. Ex quo intellegitur corporis voluptatem non satis esse dignam hominis praestantia.

(*De officiis*, I. 30. 105–06)<sup>29</sup>

Cicero claims that animals are only concerned with sensual pleasure and are led to seek carnal enjoyment by their instincts. The human mind, however, should be nurtured by study and meditation. The negative impact of these instincts is also evident from the fact that shame leads those inclined towards sensual pleasures to hide their appetites. The conclusion is that excessive bodily pleasures are unworthy of human excellence, but are appropriate for other animals, as they are not bestowed with reason. In this way, Cicero likens those who follow their appetites to beasts, as there are 'homines non re sed nomine', that is, men not in nature but only in name (*De officiis*, I. 30. 105).<sup>30</sup> As I will observe later, the connection between animals and instincts in opposition to the rationality of

---

Narducci (Florence: Le Monnier, 2006), pp. 17–50; de Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme*, I, pp. 213–68.

<sup>28</sup> See Feo, 'La biblioteca', pp. 461, 471; Rico, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', pp. 432–34. As we read in Rico's list, among the 'libri mei peculiare' we find no fewer than fourteen works by Cicero or ascribed to him. In particular, we find the generic indication of Cicero's *Orationes*, four works concerned with rhetoric (*De inventione*, *De oratore*, the apocryphal *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *Invectivae*), and nine concerned with philosophy (*Somnium Scipionis*, *De officiis*, *Tuscolanae disputationes*, *Laelius de amicitia*, *Cato Maior de senectute*, *De divinatione*, *Hortensius*, *De natura deorum*, *Paradoxa stoicorum*).

<sup>29</sup> Cicero, *De Officiis*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by Walter Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1913; repr. 1968), pp. 106–08.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 106.

humans will be interpreted allegorically, from a Christian perspective, in Augustine of Hippo's thought.

The reasons for the overlap between humans and animals are explained later in the same work, where the author discusses the hierarchical order of things in the universe:

Quae ergo ad vitam hominum tuendam pertinent, partim sunt inanima, ut aurum, argentum, ut ea, quae gignuntur e terra, ut alia generis eiusdem, partim animalia, quae habent suos impetus et rerum appetitus. Eorum autem alia rationis expertia sunt, alia ratione utentia; expertes rationis equi, boves, reliquae pecudes [...]; ratione autem utentium duo genera ponunt, deorum unum, alterum hominum.  
(*De officiis*, II. 3. 11)<sup>31</sup>

Of the things that are essential to human life, Cicero explains, some are inanimate, such as gold, silver, and the fruits of the earth, while some are animate and have their own peculiar appetites. Along the same lines as the platonic view of 'animalia' in the Latin *Timaeus*, animals, humans and gods belong to the same class of living beings, all characterised by their power of perception.<sup>32</sup> What distinguishes humans and superior beings from other animals is the rational faculty. At the same time, humans and other animals are also earthly, bodily creatures, while gods are not. While the rational faculty aligns humans and gods, the body creates an association between mankind and other animals. In this intermediate position, humans oscillate between the superior condition of the gods and the inferior condition of other animals. As Cicero writes in *De divinatione*, through the character of his brother Quintus, a spokesman for the Stoic beliefs about divination, the portion of the human soul which is associated with thinking and reasoning is most powerful when it is most distant from the body: 'quae autem pars animi rationis atque intellegentiae sit particeps, eam tum maxime vigere, cum plurimum absit a corpore' (*De divinatione*, I. 32. 70).<sup>33</sup> The more a human being is able to detach his reason from his body, the closer he gets to the gods. Likewise, the more he keeps his reason attached to his body, the closer he gets to animals.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, p. 178.

<sup>32</sup> See Silvana Rocca, *Animali (e uomini) in Cicerone ('De nat. deor.' 2. 121–161)* (Genoa: Compagnia dei Librai, 2003), pp. 31–32.

<sup>33</sup> Cicero, *De Senectute, De Amicitia, De Divinatione*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by William A. Falconer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1923; repr. 1971), p. 300.

<sup>34</sup> See Rocca, *Animali (e uomini) in Cicerone*, pp. 32–33.

The distinctive function of reason is also expressed in *De natura deorum*. The second book of this treatise is taken up with a section on zoology. Here Cicero, through the voice of Lucilius Balbus, another spokesman for the Stoics, states that the world has been created for those animate creatures which are also provided with reason, that is to say, gods and humans, because the rational power is superior to anything else: ‘ratio est enim quae praestet omnibus’ (*De natura deorum*, II. 53. 133).<sup>35</sup> According to Balbus, human superiority over other animals is evident from human posture and speech. The providence of nature has raised humans from the ground to stand upright, so that they are able to look at the sky and gain a knowledge of the gods. Humans, Balbus maintains, do not live simply as inhabitants of the earth but as spectators of the supernatural and the heavenly, the contemplation of which is impossible for other animals: ‘Sunt enim ex terra homines non ut incolae atque habitatores sed quasi spectatores superarum rerum atque caelestium, quarum spectaculum ad nullum aliud genus animantium pertinet’ (*De natura deorum*, II. 56. 140).<sup>36</sup> With these observations, which will be taken up again in the Christian tradition, Cicero establishes a relationship between reason, posture and the contemplation of the gods. In contrast, other animals, which lack reason, are not meant to gain a knowledge of the gods and thus do not usually stand upright.

A further product of reason that distinguishes mankind from other animals is the ‘eloquendi vis’, the power of speech (*De natura deorum*, II. 59. 148).<sup>37</sup> The rationality intrinsic to human speech permits mankind to accomplish two goals. First, speech allows mankind to have mastery over desires and anger: ‘hac cupiditates iracundiasque restringimus’ (*De natura deorum*, II. 59. 148).<sup>38</sup> Second, speech has gathered humans in the bonds of justice, law and civil order, and has broken them free from a wild and animal life: ‘haec nos iuris legum urbium societate devinxit, haec a vita inmani et fera segregavit’ (*De natura deorum*, II. 59. 148).<sup>39</sup> As we will see later, the loss of speech will play a crucial

---

<sup>35</sup> Cicero, *De Natura Deorum, Academica*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by Harris Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1933; repr. 1967), p. 250.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 256–58.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 266.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*.

role in signaling the transformation of humans into animals in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

#### 1.4. Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*

In addition to the doctrinal treatises mentioned above, an important encyclopaedic source was available in Petrarch's library, namely the *Naturalis historia* by Pliny the Elder, which Petrarch would have been able to read in what is now MS Latin 6802 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.<sup>40</sup> While Book VII is specifically devoted to mankind, it does not offer a global survey of the average human being but rather 'a tale of the unexpected', an account of 'human records'.<sup>41</sup> Material on the human genus as a whole is instead included from Book VIII to Book XI, dedicated to a detailed account of other animals. In other words, the description of the average human is found as part of the treatment of other animals, suggesting a kinship between the two.

In Book XI, which is mostly dedicated to insects, Pliny observes that one of the main differences between humans and other animals is their use of the voice:

Vox in homine magnam voltus habet partem: adgnosimus ea prius quam cernamus non aliter quam oculis [...]. Hinc illa tot gentium totque linguarum toto orbe diversitas, [...], sed ante omnia explanatio animi *quae nos distinguit a feris*.  
(*Naturalis historia*, XI. 112. 271)<sup>42</sup>

Pliny observes that for humans the voice constitutes a major part of the external aspect: we recognise people by their voices before we see them, just as we recognise them with our eyes. While Pliny employs the term 'vox', it is evident that he does not simply refer to the sounds made by humans. The voice does not only serve to distinguish between all people and all languages across the world; it first and foremost represents the faculty of expressing our thoughts, which

<sup>40</sup> See Feo, 'La biblioteca', p. 486; Rico, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', p. 233.

<sup>41</sup> Mary Beagon, *The Elder Pliny on the Human Animal: 'Natural History', Book 7* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p. 41. See also Thorsten Fögen, 'Animal Communication', in *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life*, ed. by Gordon Lindsay Campbell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 216–32 (p. 223).

<sup>42</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by Harris Rackham, rev. edn, 10 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1949; repr. 1967), III, p. 602. Italics mine.



distinguishes us from beasts. Along the lines of Cicero's *De natura deorum*, speech is recognised as a peculiarity of mankind, which has its roots in reasoning and thinking.<sup>43</sup>

### 1.5. Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*

Although we do not have the original manuscript of Boethius's dialogue in Petrarch's library, his *De consolatione Philosophiae* appears among the 'libri mei peculiare'.<sup>44</sup> Here Boethius draws on the traditional view of Aristotelian origin that reason, the distinguishing feature of mankind, is a source of virtue, whereas instinct, the side of the character that we share with animals, is a source of vice.

At the very beginning of the dialogue, the spokesman for Boethius acknowledges that man is a 'rationale animal atque mortale', according to the tradition that conceives of humans as animals provided with reason (*De consolatione Philosophiae*, I. 6. 36–37).<sup>45</sup> Later Lady Philosophy states that those affected by vices cannot be considered humans, but rather beasts, and likens specific vices to specific animals:

Avaritia fervet alienarum opum violentus ereptor? *Lupi* similem dixeris. Ferox atque iniquus linguam litigiis exercet? *Cani* comparabis. Insidiator occultus subripuisse fraudibus gaudet? *Vulpeculis* exaequetur. Irae intemperans fremit? *Leonis* animum gestare credatur. [...] Ita fit ut qui probitate deserta homo esse desierit, cum in divinam condicionem transire non possit, *vertatur in bestiam*.  
(*De consolatione Philosophiae*, IV. 3. 56–69)<sup>46</sup>

Those who commit violence and robbery are compared with wolves. Fierce and pugnacious people are associated with dogs. Those who try to cheat others are associated with foxes. People who are not able to restrain their rage are likened to lions. Thus, as Lady Philosophy summarises, a human who leaves goodness aside ceases to be a man, and since he cannot change his condition for that of a god, he turns into a beast. The association between beasts and vicious humans is also

<sup>43</sup> See Mary Beagon, *Roman Nature: The Thought of Pliny the Elder* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 124–58 (p. 134); Fögen, 'Animal Communication', pp. 223–25.

<sup>44</sup> See Rico, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', p. 234, Feo, 'La biblioteca', p. 494.

<sup>45</sup> Boethius, *The Theological Tractates, the Consolation of Philosophy*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by Hugh F. Stewart, Edward K. Rand and Stanley J. Tester, new edn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1973), p. 168.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 334. Italics mine.

reiterated by Lady Philosophy's interlocutor. He observes that those who have pursued vices, although they preserve the form of a human body, are transformed into beasts in the features of their mind: 'Fateor [...] nec iniuria dici video vitiosos, tametsi humani corporis speciem servant, in beluas tamen animorum qualitate mutari' (*De consolatione Philosophiae*, IV. 4. 1–3).<sup>47</sup>

## 2. Latin Poetry

### 2.1. Vergil's *Aeneid*

Within Petrarch's library, the earliest work of poetry to illustrate the link between reason and senses through the notion of animality is Vergil's *Aeneid*. Not only was this work one of the most important pieces of classical literature in the Middle Ages, but it also played a central role in Petrarch's education. Petrarch received a luxurious volume containing Vergil's *Aeneid*, *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, provided with Servius's commentary, from his father Petracco between 1325 and 1326. Petrarch's manuscript survives in what is today called the codex Ambrosianus, the MS A 79 of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan. Vergil's works also figure among the 'libri mei peculiare'.<sup>48</sup>

Here I will discuss four main references to animality and human instincts in Vergil's *Aeneid*. The first relates to the association between Venus, the goddess of love, and the hunt (*Aeneid*, I); the second and the third concern the love affair between Aeneas and Dido (*Aeneid*, IV); and the fourth is found in the short rewriting of the story of Circe (*Aeneid*, VII).

In Book I, Vergil introduces the literary topic which associates love and the hunt.<sup>49</sup> Aeneas is travelling through the Tyrian forests, when his mother Venus, who has disguised herself as a huntress, suddenly appears to him with a bow slung from her shoulders:

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem, p. 338.

<sup>48</sup> See Feo, 'La biblioteca', p. 471; Rico, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', pp. 232, 234. For details on MS A 79, see Giuseppe Billanovich, 'Il Virgilio del giovane Petrarca', in *Lectures médiévales de Virgile: actes du colloque organisé par l'École française de Rome (Rome, 25–28 octobre 1982)*, ed. by Jean-Yves Tilliette and others (Rome: École française de Rome, 1985), pp. 49–64.

<sup>49</sup> For further details, see Roger Dunkle, 'The Hunter and Hunting in the *Aeneid*', *Ramus*, 2.2 (1973), 127–42; Viola G. Stephens, 'Like a Wolf on the Fold: Animal Imagery in Vergil', *Illinois Classical Studies*, 15.1 (1990), 107–30 (pp. 112–13).

Namque umeris de more habilem suspenderat *arcum*  
*venatrix* dederatque comam diffundere ventis.

(*Aeneid*, I. 318–19)<sup>50</sup>

As Roger Dunkle has observed, as ‘Venus is not chaste, she is not [...] a huntress in the usual sense’, but ‘can only be considered a huntress when she pursues human prey in her capacity as a goddess of love’.<sup>51</sup> This depiction of Venus also inspires Petrarch’s sonnet ‘Sì mi fan risentire a l’aura sparsi’ (*Rime estravaganti*, 11), in which the lyric persona imagines himself being chased by the beloved:

Or veggio lei di novi atti adornarsi,  
 cinger *l’arco* e ’l turcasso e farsi al varco  
 e sagittarmi; or vo d’amor sì carico  
 che ’l dolce peso non porria stimarsi.

Poi mi ricordo di *Venus iddea*,  
*qual Virgilio* descrisse ’n sua figura,  
 e parmi Laura in quell’atto vedere.

(*Rime estravaganti*, 11. 5–11)<sup>52</sup>

The poem establishes an explicit parallel between Laura and the image of Venus as a huntress. With Vergil’s words in mind, the poet likens the lady to the goddess. In doing so, he portrays the lady as one who pursues human prey for love. The Vergilian association between love and hunting can also be found in the *Seniles*, where Petrarch observes that Venus is as skilled as a huntress and chases the souls of unfortunates: ‘Habitum demum venatricis, quia venatur miserorum animas; arcum habet et comam ventis effusam ut et feriat et delectet’ (*Seniles*, IV. 5. 16).<sup>53</sup>

I will discuss the range of meanings connected with hunting in the last part of this chapter. Suffice it to say here that hunting is closely associated with amorous appetites. The hunter pursues an object of desire; likewise, the object of desire takes control of and drives the hunter’s actions. The same is true of sensual

<sup>50</sup> Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid, Appendix Vergiliana*, ed. by Jeffrey Henderson and others, trans. by Henry R. Fairclough, rev. edn, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999–2000), I, p. 284. Italics mine.

<sup>51</sup> Dunkle, ‘The Hunter and Hunting in the *Aeneid*’, p. 130.

<sup>52</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi, Rime estravaganti, Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 694–97 (p. 694). Italics mine.

<sup>53</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Rerum senilium*, ed. by Elvira Nota and Ugo Dotti, trans. by Frédérique Castelli, François Fabre and Antoine de Rosny, 5 vols (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2002), II, pp. 73–103 (p. 81). On this point, see also Paolino’s commentary in Petrarca, *Trionfi, Rime estravaganti, Codice degli abbozzi*, p. 696.

love: the lover pursues the beloved but is also victim of his attraction for the latter.<sup>54</sup>

The association between the hunter and the hunted as a means of illustrating love as pursuit is narrated in Book IV, which recounts the affair between Aeneas and Dido. The Queen of Carthage seeks the Trojan hero's love, but is depicted, with her wound, as a hunted beast:

Uritur infelix Dido totaque vagatur  
urbe *furens*, qualis *coniecta cerva sagitta*,  
quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit  
pastor agens telis liquitque volatile ferrum  
nescius; illa fuga silvas saltusque peragrat.

(*Aeneid*, IV. 68–72)<sup>55</sup>

The unhappy Dido burns for love and wanders 'furens' through the city, in a fury of madness, as a hind struck by an arrow which a shepherd hunting with darts in the Cretan woods has pierced from afar. In other words, Dido passes from hunter to victim of the hunted. In his codex Ambrosianus, Petrarch highlights the link between irrationality and love with an annotation relating to Servius's commentary: 'Furor. Amor' (fol. 103<sup>v</sup>).<sup>56</sup>

The culmination of this mutual hunt occurs in the narration of Aeneas and Dido's carnal union. While the two are out hunting, Juno causes a torrential storm and the pair seek shelter in a cave, where they are sexually united (*Aeneid*, IV. 117–68). The animal nature of this union is made clear in Dido's own words before she commits suicide:

non licuit thalami expertem *sine crimine* vitam  
degere, *more ferae*, talis nec tangere curas.

(*Aeneid*, IV. 550–51)<sup>57</sup>

In her bitter self-reproach, she regrets that she was not permitted to spend her life out of wedlock without crime, in the manner of a wild beast. Dido recognises that

<sup>54</sup> See Stephens, 'Like a Wolf on the Fold', pp. 112–13.

<sup>55</sup> Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid, Appendix Vergiliana*, I, p. 426. Italics mine.

<sup>56</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Le postille del Virgilio ambrosiano*, ed. by Marco Baglio, Antonietta Nebuloni Testa and Marco Petoletti, 2 vols (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 2006), II, pp. 609–974 (p. 732).

<sup>57</sup> Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid, Appendix Vergiliana*, I, p. 458. Italics mine.

her love affair with Aeneas, outside marriage, was born of passions that brought the two lovers down to the level of animals.<sup>58</sup>

The last reference to animality in Vergil's *Aeneid* is found at the beginning of Book VII, where the poet tells the story of Circe, who symbolises wild appetites, and the humans which she had disguised as animals before Aeneas's ship approached. The scene portrays both the animal disposition of the humans and the bestial character of the goddess:

Hinc exaudiri *gemitus* iraeque leonum  
vincla recusantum et sera sub nocte rudentum,  
*saetigerique* sues atque in praeseptibus ursi  
*saevire* ac formae magnorum *ululare* luporum,  
quos hominum ex facie dea saeva potentibus herbis  
induerat Circe in vultus ac terga ferarum.

(*Aeneid*, VII. 15–20)<sup>59</sup>

From the shores of Caieta — Vergil recounts — one could hear the angry growls of lions trying to free themselves from their bonds, bristly boars and caged bears raging, huge wolves howling. These were the people whom Circe had disguised as beasts, depriving them of their human aspect with potent herbs. In his commentary on this passage in Petrarch's *Aeneid*, Servius notes the association between animality and vice, and explains that Circe was a notorious prostitute who transformed men into beasts in order to satisfy her lust: 'clarissima meretrix fuit et nihil est sole clarius; haec libidine sua et blandimentis homines in ferinam uitam ab humana deducebat ut libidini et uoluptatibus operam darent'.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> On this interpretation, see Charles Segal, 'Dido's Hesitation in *Aeneid* 4', in *Why Vergil: A Collection of Interpretations*, ed. by Stephanie Quinn (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci: 2000), pp. 90–100 (pp. 96–97). See also Marbury B. Ogle, 'On a Passage in Vergil, *Aeneid*, IV. 550–551', *American Philological Association*, 56 (1925), 26–36 (pp. 34–36); Stephens, 'Like a Wolf on the Fold', pp. 115–16.

<sup>59</sup> Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid, Appendix Vergiliana*, II, p. 2. Italics mine.

<sup>60</sup> Servio, *Commentario al libro VII dell' 'Eneide' di Virgilio: con le aggiunte del cosiddetto Servio Danielino*, ed. by Giuseppe Ramires (Bologna: Pàtron Editore, 2003), p. 8. On the view of Circe as a prostitute, see, for example, Maurizio Bettini and Cristiana Franco, *Il mito di Circe: immagini e racconti dalla Grecia a oggi* (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), pp. 90–120, 246–51; David Brumble, *Classical Myths and Legends in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: A Dictionary of Allegorical Meanings* (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998), pp. 73–75; Judith Yarnall, *Transformations of Circe: The History of an Enchantress* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 98.

If vicious appetites are associated with the savage nature of Circe, the same is also true of her victims. Immediately after the description of the disguised humans and their bestial cries, we read:

Quae ne monstra *pīi* paterentur talia Troes  
delati in portus neu litora dira subirent,  
Neptunus ventis implevit vela secundis,  
atque fugam dedit et praeter vada fervida vexit.  
(*Aeneid*, VII. 21–24)<sup>61</sup>

To prevent the pious people of Troy from landing on the accursed shores and suffering such monstrous fates, Neptune has filled their sails with favourable winds, giving them the chance to escape. In order to distinguish between Aeneas's crew and those humans whom Circe had transformed into animals, Vergil writes that the former will not undergo the goddess's enchantment because they are '*pīi*', implying that the latter are not. This distinction, I note, is made explicit by Servius's commentary, which explains that '*ergo impīi qui pertulerant*'.<sup>62</sup> As Viola G. Stephens observes, 'Vergil makes Circe and her actions symbols of the forces that reduce men to brute behaviour' because of their passions.<sup>63</sup>

The eroticism connected with animality in the story of Circe becomes even more evident when we learn that she, '*capta cupidine*', turned the worthy Picus into a woodpecker (*Aeneid*, IV. 189–91). The animal transformation allows the lustful Circe to downgrade her object of desire to her own bestial condition.<sup>64</sup> Picus's metamorphosis must have caught Petrarch's attention: he marked the left-hand side of Vergil's text, in his codex Ambrosianus, with an annotation saying '*Allegoria Pici*' (fol. 152<sup>r</sup>).<sup>65</sup>

## 2.2. Ovid's *Metamorphoses*

A further work of great importance in Latin poetry for reading the meanings of relationships between the human and the animal is Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Not

<sup>61</sup> Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid, Appendix Vergiliana*, II, p. 4. Italics mine.

<sup>62</sup> Servio, *Commentario al libro VII dell' 'Eneide' di Virgilio*, p. 8. See also Nicholas Horsfall, *Virgil, 'Aeneid 7': A Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 60.

<sup>63</sup> Stephens, 'Like a Wolf on the Fold', p. 111.

<sup>64</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>65</sup> Petrarcha, *Le postille del Virgilio ambrosiano*, II, p. 869.

only did Petrarch have a copy of Ovid's masterpiece in the current MS Harley 3754 of the British Library, but he also included the book in the list of the 'libri mei peculiare'.<sup>66</sup> The role of this work in Petrarch's cultural universe is well-known. For instance, as we will see later, the poem 'Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade' (*Rvf*, 23) illustrates the effects that the lady has on the subject through a series of Ovidian images and transformations.<sup>67</sup> Around 1340, moreover, Petrarch, who had already built a reputation as a specialist in classical mythology, offered his advice to Pierre de Bersuire on the composition of the *Ovidius moralizatus*, that is, the last book of the *Reductorium morale*. In the prologue of his work, Bersuire himself acknowledges the central role of Petrarch, as an exceptional poet and expert in every field of moral philosophy, as well as historical and literary subjects: 'necesse habui consulere venerabilem virum magistrum Franciscum de Petraco, poetam utique et oratorem egregium et in omni morali philosophia nec non in omni historica et poetica disciplina peritum' (*Reductorium morale*, XV. 1).<sup>68</sup>

While tales illustrating the passage from the human to the animal shape are present in Vergil's *Aeneid* — as in the story of Circe — they occupy a minor position in the broader account of Aeneas's *res gestae*. By contrast, Ovid's work employs the notion of transformation as the very subject of his verses: human bodies are changed into a variety of creatures, such as animals, as well as plants, trees and even divinities. For the purpose of my survey here, I shall focus on the transformations into animals, observing that Ovid's metamorphic model is linked to the notion of metempsychosis.

Ovid's narratives of transformations into animals relate either a punishment inflicted on a human by the gods or a means of salvation from external dangers when the animal body becomes a safer place for the human persona. As Ingvild S. Gilhus observes, whether the animal form is an instrument of rescue or a means of punishment, 'the animal shape is never an improvement on the human

<sup>66</sup> See Feo, 'La biblioteca', p. 494; Rico, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', pp. 233–34.

<sup>67</sup> For the text, see Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 96–123.

<sup>68</sup> Petrus Berchorius, *Reductorium Morale, Liber XV: Ovidius Moralizatus, Cap. I: De Formis Figurisque Deorum*, ed. by Joseph Engels (Utrecht: Instituut voor Latijn der Rijksuniversiteit, 1966), p. 3. See also Annalisa Cipollone, 'Ovidio nel Petrarca volgare', *Per leggere: i generi della lettura*, 16 (2009), 157–74; Luca Marcozzi, *La biblioteca di Febo: mitologia e allegoria in Petrarca* (Florence: Cesati, 2002), pp. 139–52 (pp. 139–41).

condition' but rather a downgrading.<sup>69</sup> The acquired form usually provides a shape for the characteristics which typify the person who has been turned into an animal. The metamorphosis is thus a process through which some features of a being or their personal experiences are rendered visible and manifest. The idea that one's selfhood is incorporated into new bodies recalls the notion of metempsychosis introduced by Plato in his *Phaedo*.<sup>70</sup> As we will see later in Chapter 3, in the case of Dante's bear and Petrarch's stag, the association of the poetic persona with animals reveals a downgraded condition, which displays the bestial side of the lover.

An interesting example of metamorphosis is found in the story of the hunter Actaeon (*Metamorphoses*, III. 138–255). Having accidentally seen Diana in the nude, Actaeon is turned into a stag and mercilessly torn to pieces by his own dogs. In these lines, Ovid describes the hunter's transformation, including the loss of the faculty of speech:

quas habuit sic *hausit aquas* vultumque virilem  
 perfudit spargensque comas ultricibus undis  
 addidit haec cladis praenuntia verba futurae:  
 'nunc tibi me posito visam velamine narres,  
 sit poteris narrare, licet!' nec plura minata  
 dat sparso capiti vivacis cornua cervi,  
 dat spatium collo summasque cacuminat aures  
 cum pedibusque manus, cum longis brachia mutat  
 cruribus et velat maculoso vellere corpus;  
 additus et pavor est: fugit Autonoeius heros  
 et se tam celerem cursu miratur in ipso.  
 Ut vero vultus et cornua vidit in unda,  
 'me miserum!' *dicturus erat: vox nulla secuta est!*  
(*Metamorphoses*, III. 189–201)<sup>71</sup>

Diana scoops up some water and throws it into the man's face, causing antlers to sprout from his head, his neck to elongate, his ears to become more pointed, and his body to be covered with a spotted mantle. When Actaeon sees his own image

---

<sup>69</sup> Ingvild S. Gilhus, *Animals, Gods and Humans: Changing Attitudes to Animals in Greek, Roman and Early Christian Ideas* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 79.

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem, pp. 86–90. See also Joseph B. Solodow, *The World of Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), p. 197; Chiara Thumiger, 'Metamorphosis: Human in Animals', in *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life*, ed. by Campbell, pp. 384–413.

<sup>71</sup> Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ed. by George P. Goold and others, trans. by Frank J. Miller, 3rd edn, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1977; repr. 1984), I, pp. 136–38. Italics mine.



reflected in a pool, he tries to speak but realises that he can do nothing but groan. The hunter's shift from human to animal shape is further emphasised by the loss of language, one of the most important distinguishing features of mankind.

The tale of Actaeon is one of the Ovidian sources that Petrarch uses in *canzone* 23. Along the lines of the Latin model, the poetic persona, after seeing his beloved in a pool, is sprinkled with water and turned into a stag escaping his dogs (*Rvf*, 23. 156–60). I will return to Petrarch's Actaeon story in Chapter 3. For now, however, some preliminary observations are useful. First, the episode takes place during a hunting scene, a setting which is often associated with the sexual sphere. Second, while Actaeon is a hunter, Diana is the goddess of hunting and a huntress herself. Both of them, in their mutual relationship, embody the roles of the pursuer and the pursued. The hunter violates the goddess's body with his sight. To punish him, in turn, Diana transforms the hunter into a hunted creature. Hunter and hunted are aligned in a reciprocal pursuit.

Medieval readings of the Actaeon story were certainly different from the classical interpretation. For example, in the *Ovidius moralizatus*, Pierre de Bersuire offers two opposing interpretations of Diana. On the one hand, the goddess allegorises the 'beatam Virginem'. On the other, Diana is described as one who strikes her victims with the arrows of lust: 'Diana [...] archum et sagittas dicitur tenere, pro eo quod ista solet fatuos per rapinam pungere et per temptationem et libidinem sagittare' (*Reductorium morale*, XV. 1).<sup>72</sup> These two contrasting meanings are consistent with the figure of Laura in *canzone* 23. The beloved is a pure and chaste woman who experiences shame upon her lover's intrusion. At the same time, she is also the merciless source of his desire and suffering.

### 3. The Biblical and Patristic Tradition

#### 3.1. Genesis

A key source of knowledge concerning the relationship between mankind and animals is found in the Bible. Although Petrarch's manuscript of the entire Bible

---

<sup>72</sup> Petrus Berchorius, *Reductorium Morale, Liber XV*, p. 29.

is not available to us, we cannot ignore the pervasive role that Scripture had on medieval culture. Alongside the crucial importance of the Bible in any aspect of medieval life, Petrarch had a profound knowledge of Scripture, as his life and his works reveal. In the autumn of 1330 the poet received his first ecclesiastic appointment in the papal court of Avignon, when he entered the service of Cardinal Giovanni Colonna as ‘capellanus continuus commensalis’, that is, household chaplain, remaining an active member of the Cardinal’s staff until 1337, and occasionally until 1347.<sup>73</sup> In addition to his commitment to the Church, Petrarch’s works are rich in Scriptural and patristic references, in both his Latin and vernacular works.<sup>74</sup> His familiarity with the Bible is made explicit in the second part of *De viris illustribus*, composed between 1351 and 1353, which starts with the story of the first man, Adam, ‘ille generis nostri publicus pater’, the father of our genus (*De viris illustribus*, II. 1. 1).<sup>75</sup>

At the very beginning of the Bible, in the first chapter of Genesis, Scripture states that man was created in God’s image and was hierarchically positioned above other animals:

et creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam [...] masculum et feminam [...] et ait crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram et subicite eam et dominamini piscibus maris et volatilibus caeli et universis animantibus quae moventur super terram.

(Genesis 1. 27–28)<sup>76</sup>

According to this passage, mankind and other animals are conceived of as belonging to different worlds. Man is a superior creature likened to God; animals are creatures under man’s domination. The superior position of man over animals is stated again in the second chapter of the book, where man’s life in Eden is described. Here Adam is said to serve as a keeper of the earthly Paradise: ‘tulit ergo Dominus Deus hominem et posuit eum in paradiso voluptatis ut operaretur et

<sup>73</sup> For details on Petrarch’s ecclesiastic career, see Ernest H. Wilkins, *Studies in the Life and Works of Petrarch* (Cambridge, MA: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1955), pp. 3–32 (pp. 5–6).

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, Giovanna Pozzi, ‘Petrarca, i Padri e soprattutto la Bibbia’, *Studi petrarcheschi*, 6 (1989), 125–69.

<sup>75</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *De viris illustribus*, ed. by Silvano Ferrone and others, 3 vols (Florence: Le Lettere, 2003), II, p. 32. For further details on *De viris illustribus*, see Silvano Ferrone, ‘Introduzione’, in Petrarca, *De viris illustribus*, I, pp. VII–XIV.

<sup>76</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. by Robertus Weber and others, 2 vols (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1969), I, p. 5.

custodiret illum' (Genesis 2. 15).<sup>77</sup> In this prominent role, God also gave Adam the power to impose a name on all the animals:

Dominus Deus de humo cunctis animantibus terrae et universis volatilibus caeli adduxit ea ad Adam ut videret quid *vocaret* ea omne enim quod vocavit Adam animae viventis ipsum est nomen eius appellavitque Adam nominibus suis cuncta animantia et universa volatilia caeli et omnes bestias terrae.

(Genesis 2. 19–20)<sup>78</sup>

God, Genesis recounts, brought all the animals to Adam to see what he would call them: whatever the first man called each of them would be its name. Along the lines of the original Hebraic text, the Latin verb 'vocare' used in the *Vulgata* expresses the double meaning of gathering the animals and imposing a name upon them. As Pierre-Olivier Dittmar observes, this verb reveals Adam's mastery over other animals.<sup>79</sup>

As we read, for example, in Augustine's *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, what allows Adam to perform the act of naming is the distinguishing feature of his character, that is to say, his intellect and, through it, his faculty of speech.<sup>80</sup> According to Augustine, human mastery over other creatures is associated with intellect, which man has and other animals do not: 'animalia caetera subjecta sunt homini, non propter corpus, sed propter intellectum, quem nos habemus, et illa non habent' (*De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, I. 17. 28).<sup>81</sup> Augustine also explains that the act of naming is made possible by reason itself, as only this faculty is able

---

<sup>77</sup> Ibidem, p. 6.

<sup>78</sup> Ibidem. Italics mine.

<sup>79</sup> On the meanings of 'vocare' in Latin and in the Hebraic text, see Xénia Muratova, 'Adam donne leurs noms aux animaux: l'iconographie de la scène dans l'art du Moyen Âge et ses traits particuliers dans les manuscrits des bestiaires enluminés du XII<sup>e</sup> et du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., 18.2 (1977), 367–94 (p. 369). On Adam's mastery over animals in Eden, see Pierre-Olivier Dittmar, 'Le seigneur des animaux entre "pecus" et "bestia": les animalités paradisiaques des années 1300', in *Adam, le premier homme*, ed. by Agostino Paravicini Bagliani (Florence: SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2012), pp. 219–54 (pp. 220–31).

<sup>80</sup> Augustine's thought was highly influential in Petrarch's cultural universe. Although *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* was not part of Petrarch's library, Augustine's commentary was widely circulated in the Middle Ages and was also present in the library of the papal court in Avignon, where Petrarch lived and worked. In 1330, for example, Pope John XXII asked a friar, Jean de Béziers, to copy 'les œuvres complètes de saint Augustin' for the papal library in Avignon. See Maurice Faucon, *La librairie des papes d'Avignon: sa formation, sa composition, ses catalogues (1316–1420), d'après les registres de comptes et d'inventaires des archives vaticanes*, 2 vols (Paris: Thorin, 1885–1887), I, pp. 34–35. See also Michael M. Gorman, 'The Manuscript Tradition of Augustine's *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*', *Revue des études augustinienes*, 47 (2001), 303–11.

<sup>81</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XXXIV. 186.

to distinguish and classify other animals by name: ‘distinguere et nominatim ea discernere, nonnisi ratio potest, quae de ipsis iudicat’ (*De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, II. 11. 16).<sup>82</sup>

By virtue of intellect, as an emanation and reflection of God’s superiority, the relationship between mankind and other animals represents a microcosm of the macrocosmic relationship between God and all creation: as God is the lord of all the universe, so Adam is placed in a position of supremacy in Eden, a sort of ‘second créateur, capable au moins de repérer et d’avaliser l’ordre du monde’.<sup>83</sup>

The relationship between mankind and other animals in Eden is also discussed by Thomas Aquinas. He observes that in the state of innocence humans and other animate creatures cohabited peacefully, without bodily struggles: ‘Homines in statu innocentiae non indigebant animalibus ad necessitatem corporalem [...], quia lignis Paradisi vescebantur [...]. Indigebant tamen eis ad experimentalem cognitionem sumendam de naturis eorum’ (*Summa theologiae*, I. 96).<sup>84</sup> In Eden, in other words, humans did not require animals to satisfy the needs and urges of their body but to derive experiential knowledge of their nature.

In *De doctrina Christiana*, Augustine proposes a theory of semiotics which distinguishes between ‘signa naturalia’ and ‘signa data’: the former convey meanings without any intention to signify, while the latter are created intentionally (*De doctrina Christiana*, II. 1–4).<sup>85</sup> If we use Augustine’s semiotics to interpret Aquinas’s observation, animals constitute ‘signa naturalia’, while the name which Adam associates with them are ‘signa data’. As we will see later, this view is consistent with the use of animals as signs, such as in the tradition of bestiaries and in Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*. I will argue that the same mechanism also applies to the tale of Saint Eustace and in Petrarch’s sonnet 190, in which a hind is deployed as *figura Christi*.

---

<sup>82</sup> Ibidem, XXXIV. 205.

<sup>83</sup> Dittmar, ‘Le seigneur des animaux entre “pecus” et “bestia”’, p. 221.

<sup>84</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, ed. by Pietro Caramello, 4 vols (Turin: Marietti, 1963), I, p. 470.

<sup>85</sup> *De doctrina Christiana* figures among the expenses ‘pro scriptura et libris’ for the papal library in 1317. See Faucon, *La librairie des papes d’Avignon*, II, p. 25. On Augustine’s semiotics, see Umberto Eco, ‘Sul latrato del cane (e altre archeologie zoosemiotiche)’, in his *Dall’albero al labirinto: studi storici sul segno e l’interpretazione* (Milan: Bompiani, 2007), pp. 159–202 (pp. 180–81); Peter King, ‘Augustine on Language’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. by David V. Meconi and Eleanore Stump, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 292–310 (pp. 293–300).

While human beings had full mastery over all the animals in the state of innocence, after the fall the relations between humans and other animate creatures changed and were thrown into turmoil. In medieval interpretations, mankind's loss of dominance is held to mirror the loss of full rational control of the senses. Since the original sin, therefore, the external relationship between humans and animals has reflected the new internal balance of power, in mankind, between the rational faculty and the instinctive forces of the soul. In this way, the difficulties faced by humans in achieving full control over other animals parallel the struggle between reason and senses.<sup>86</sup>

In *De civitate Dei*, Augustine notes that if man had observed God's instructions, he would have been spiritual even in flesh. However, in his post-lapsarian state, he became carnal in the mind as well. His punishment for disobedience to God is disobedience on the part of his own instincts and other animals, which were supposed to be under his full control in the state of innocence: 'Denique, ut breviter dicatur, in illius peccati poena quid inobedientiae nisi inobedientia retributa est?' (*De civitate Dei*, XIV. 15).<sup>87</sup>

According to Augustine, the biblical remark concerning man's mastery over animals not only has a literal meaning but also carries allegorical implications. The relationship of dominance between humans and animals in Eden is associated with the kind of control which human intellect should ideally have over the senses in the earthly life:

Recte tamen intelligitur etiam spiritualiter, ut omnes affectiones et motus animi, quos habemus istis animalibus similes, subditos haberemus, et eorum dominaremur per temperantiam et modestiam. Cum enim non reguntur isti motus, erumpunt et pergunt in foedissimas consuetudines, et per diversas perniciosasque delectationes nos rapiunt, et faciunt similes omni generi bestiarum. Cum autem reguntur et subjiciuntur, omnino mansuescunt et nobiscum concorditer vivunt.

(*De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, I. 20. 31)<sup>88</sup>

As Augustine writes, we should suppress all the affections and emotions of our soul, which are similar to certain animals, and have mastery over them through

---

<sup>86</sup> See Gianluca Briguglia, *L'animale politico* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2015), p. 32; Dittmar, 'Le seigneur des animaux entre "pecus" et "bestia"', 238–47; Paolo Falzone, 'Dante e la nozione aristotelica di bestialità', in *Dante e il mondo animale*, ed. by Crimi and Marozzi, pp. 62–78.

<sup>87</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XLI. 423.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, XXXIV. 188.

temperance and modesty. If we do not overcome these emotions, they burst forth and turn into the foulest habits, carrying us off with all sorts of destructive pleasures and making us like every kind of beast. On the contrary, when we suppress these emotions, they become tame and live in harmony with us. In other words, in his secular life, man reaches his essence when he dominates his passions, rather as he was able to do in Eden with both his instincts and other animals; when he does not, he becomes like an indomitable beast, which is pure instinct and cannot be controlled by humans. Augustine draws a double parallel which recalls Aristotle's vision in the *Ethics*, on the one hand between reason and human rectitude, and on the other hand between vice and animals.

When Augustine discusses the ability of intellect to overcome instinct, he mentions animals in general terms; by contrast, when focusing on the prevalence of instinct, he speaks specifically of beasts. In order to understand the reasons for this distinction, we should rely on what he writes in *De Genesi ad litteram*.<sup>89</sup> Here Augustine distinguishes between tame animals, 'pecora', and wild animals, 'bestiae': the former are provided with weak instincts and, therefore, can be brought 'in usu hominum' (*De Genesi ad litteram*, III. 11. 16); the latter, which have strong instincts, not only do not serve humans but also have a violent disposition, as they attack other creatures 'ore aut etiam unguibus', that is, with fearsome mouths and claws (*De Genesi ad litteram*, III. 11. 17).<sup>90</sup> The opposition between the notions of 'pecus' and 'bestia' is consistent with the two types of animals mentioned in the passage above, which allegorises the relationship that may occur between human intellect and instinct in the secular life: while the use of the term 'bestia' refers explicitly to wild dangerous animals, the generic reference to submissive animals implicitly recalls the creatures which elsewhere Augustine labels as 'pecora'. Thus, in allegorical terms, the 'bestiae' are clearly associated with those humans whose instinct prevails over their intellect; the 'pecora' are associated with those humans whose intellect maintains a form of control over their instinct. The former are driven by a more sinful disposition, while the latter tend to commit minor sins. As we will see later, such as in the examples of Dante's bear and, to a lesser extent, Petrarch's stag, lyric poets often

---

<sup>89</sup> *De Genesi ad litteram* figures among the expenses 'pro scriptura et libris' for the papal library in 1317. See Faucon, *La librairie des papes d'Avignon*, II, p. 25.

<sup>90</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XXXIV. 286.

make use of images of wild animals, those which escape human control, to illustrate the poetic persona's sensual desire.

The connection between the notion of animality and the fall is also found in Petrarch's narration of the story of Adam in *De viris illustribus*. In Genesis, Adam's and Eve's disobedience results from their desire, induced by the serpent, to understand the difference between 'bonum et malum' (Genesis 3. 1–7).<sup>91</sup> However, as Jo Ann Cavallo observes in her account, Petrarch neglects any allusion to the desire for knowledge, and blames the fall on the senses, depicting the first man as one who follows the urges of the 'throat' and prefers the murmur of a woman to God's instructions: 'aversus a Deo gule obsequitur iussisque celestibus femineum murmur preferit' (*De viris illustribus*, II. 1. 2).<sup>92</sup> The mention of the throat seems to refer to the natural appetite of gluttony, while the reference to the feminine murmur seems to allude to Eve's words as an act of seduction.<sup>93</sup> In both cases the sin is associated with the faculty of the soul which, in Aristotelian terms, humans share with other animals.

I would like to examine the function of the 'murmur' in greater detail, suggesting that it contributes to further emphasising the role of animal instincts in Adam's and Eve's actions. First, the expression 'femineum murmur' is antithetical to 'iussis celestibus'. Petrarch thereby establishes a stark contrast between the murmuring voice of the woman and the orders of God, which is ultimately an opposition between temptations and rectitude, instincts and reason. Second, the term 'murmur' seems to allude to an indistinct sound, as an animal might make, rather than speech. If speech is a product of the rational mind and thus a distinguishing feature of mankind, the 'murmur' seems to associate Eve, who has produced it, and Adam, who has responded to it, with animals. Both have neglected the value of reason for the attractiveness of the senses.

---

<sup>91</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, I, p. 7.

<sup>92</sup> Petrarch, *De viris illustribus*, II, p. 32.

<sup>93</sup> See Jo Ann Cavallo, 'Croce e delizia: la donna "sotto" la penna di Petrarca', in *L'attualità del Petrarca*, ed. by Silvano Vicenti (Rome: Rai-Eri; Armando, 2004), pp. 49–67 (p. 62). I would also like to thank Prof. Francesca Southerden, who raised this point in her talk entitled 'Two Adams: On Dante and Petrarch's Views of Language in the Beginning' (unpublished lecture, Faculty of English, University of Cambridge, 11 October 2017).

Aside from humans' mastery over other creatures, Augustine observes in his commentary on Genesis that posture constitutes a further major difference between mankind and other animals, along the same lines as Cicero:

Quanquam et in ipso corpore habeat quamdam proprietatem quae hoc indicet, quod erecta statura factus est, ut hoc ipso admoneretur non sibi terrena esse sectanda, velut pecora, quorum voluptas omnis ex terra est, unde in alvum cuncta prona atque prostrata sunt. Congruit ergo et corpus ejus animae rationali, non secundum lineamenta figurasque membrorum, sed potius secundum id quod in coelum erectum est, ad intuenda quae in corpore ipsius mundi superna sunt: sicut anima rationalis in ea debet erigi, quae in spiritualibus natura maxime excellunt, ut quae sursum sunt sapiat, non quae super terram.

(*De Genesi ad litteram*, VI. 12. 22)<sup>94</sup>

While other animals bend over with their bellies close to the soil, humans stand erect. The different postures of animals and mankind are associated with the opposition between instincts and intellect. Animals derive their pleasures from the earth, that is, from bodily goods; humans, instead, are supposed to look toward heaven so as to seek God, rather than look at the earth. The faculty of intellect, which is the result of the creation of human beings in the image of God, is what allows mankind to stand erect. Passions and instincts are what cause the prone position of animals.<sup>95</sup> As we will see in Chapter 3, in medieval imagery the erect position of the bear has contributed to the conception of this animal as a relative of men.

### 3.2. Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* and the Tradition of Bestiaries

A crucial tool for the transmission and reception of animal lore is found in the *Etymologiae* by Isidore of Seville. As Ernst R. Curtius has pointed out, this work 'may be called the basic book of the entire Middle Ages' in that it 'established the canonical stock of knowledge for eight centuries' and 'molded their thought

---

<sup>94</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XXXIV. 348.

<sup>95</sup> A similar position is also expressed in *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*: 'Omnium enim animalium corpora [...] inclinata sunt ad terram, et non sunt erecta sicut hominis corpus. Quo significatur, etiam animum nostrum in superna sua, id est in aeterna spiritualia, erectum esse debere. Ita intelligitur per animum maxime, attestante etiam erecta corporis forma, homo factus ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei' (*De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, I. 17. 28). Cited from *Patrologia Latina*, XXXIV. 186–87.



categories'.<sup>96</sup> Petrarch himself owned a copy of the *Etymologiae* in what is now MS Latin 7595 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The book is also mentioned among the 'libri mei peculiare'.<sup>97</sup> Giuseppe Billanovich explains how Petrarch came to receive Isidore's work: between 1325 and 1326 'Petracco, recatosi a quel tempo a Parigi, [...] vi acquistò per il suo Francesco l'enciclopedia che allora pareva migliore'.<sup>98</sup>

The part of the *Etymologiae* dedicated to the animal world is Book XII, also known as *De animalibus*.<sup>99</sup> Isidore begins by observing that Adam assigned a name to each animal according to the position in nature that it holds: 'Omnibus animantibus Adam primum vocabula indidit, appellans unicuique nomen ex praesenti institutione iuxta condicionem naturae cui serviret' (*Etymologiae*, XII. 1. 1).<sup>100</sup> The association between words and things, *verba et res*, which informs Adam's act of naming is at the basis of Isidore's encyclopaedia. Here Petrarch had the opportunity to read a detailed list of animals, in which each name is supposed to reveal the intrinsic characteristics of the creature associated with the name itself.<sup>101</sup>

Much of the animal lore in Isidore's *Etymologiae* also contributed to the medieval bestiary tradition of the *Physiologus*.<sup>102</sup> Written by an anonymous Greek author in the second century after Christ, probably in Alexandria, the *Physiologus* is a compilation of material gathered mostly from classical writings, the Bible and Christian exegetes, along with Near Eastern folktales and fables. It combines the naturalistic or pseudo-naturalistic description of real and mythological animals

---

<sup>96</sup> Ernst R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by Willars R. Trask, 7th edn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 496–97. For a global study of Isidore's *Etymologiae*, see John Henderson, *The Medieval World of Isidore of Seville: Truth from Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Bernard Ribémont, *Les origines des encyclopédies médiévales: d'Isidore de Séville aux Carolingiens* (Paris: Champion, 2001), pp. 39–191.

<sup>97</sup> See Feo, 'La biblioteca', p. 486; Rico, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', pp. 232, 234.

<sup>98</sup> Giuseppe Billanovich, 'Il Virgilio del giovane Petrarca', p. 58. Petrarch himself documents the purchase of the book with an autographical annotation: 'Emptus mihi a patre Parisius, tempore pueritiae mee, post furto perditus et recuperatus, 1347°'. See de Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme*, II, pp. 209–10, from which I cite.

<sup>99</sup> For further details on Book XII, see Robert M. Grant, *Early Christians and Animals* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 112–22.

<sup>100</sup> Isidorus Hispalensis Episcopus, *Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. by Wallace M. Lindsay, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), II, unpaginated.

<sup>101</sup> See Henderson, *The Medieval World of Isidore of Seville*, p. 24; Ribémont, *Les origines des encyclopédies médiévales*, pp. 58–70, 150–53.

<sup>102</sup> For the definition of 'bestiary', see Willene B. Clark, *A Medieval Book of Beasts: The Second-Family Bestiary: Commentary, Art, Text and Translation* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), p. 10.

with their allegorical interpretations, explaining the animal's features in the light of Christian doctrine. The *Physiologus* and medieval bestiaries based on it perceive the world as a set of symbols that deliver spiritual or moral teachings.<sup>103</sup>

One of the various Latin redactions of the *Physiologus*, the text known as 'version B', had been reworked by the twelfth century with excerpts from Book XII, *De animalibus*, of Isidore's *Etymologiae*, creating the *Physiologus B-Is*. This version was one of the most popular during the late Middle Ages and was particularly influential in the development of vernacular renderings. Even though there are no traces of bestiaries in Petrarch's library, these texts constitute valuable compendia of commonly known animal lore. Given its widespread circulation, I will therefore refer to the *Physiologus B-Is* in this thesis whenever bestiary lore is relevant to my investigations.<sup>104</sup>

#### 4. Hunting in the Middle Ages: Meanings and Implications

In my outline here, the practice of hunting has emerged as a source of images particularly suited to the illustration of erotic desire. In Vergil's *Aeneid*, the goddess of love, Venus, is associated with a huntress; Dido, in love with Aeneas,

---

<sup>103</sup> For further details on the tradition of the *Physiologus*, see Clark, *A Medieval Book of Beasts*, pp. 5–33; Frans N. M. Diekstra, 'The *Physiologus*: The Bestiaries and Medieval Animal Lore', *Neophilologus*, 69 (1985), 142–55; Ilya Dines, 'Latin Bestiaries', in *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain*, ed. by Siân Echard and others, 4 vols (Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell, 2017), II, pp. 278–81; Florence McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962); Giovanni Orlandi, 'La tradizione del *Physiologus* e i prodromi del bestiaro latino', in *L'uomo di fronte al mondo animale nell'alto medioevo: 7–13 aprile 1983*, ed. by Raoul Manselli and others, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 31, 2 vols (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 1985), II, pp. 1057–106. On the relationship between animals and transcendental meanings in bestiaries, see Ron Baxter, 'Learning from Nature: Lessons in Virtues and Vices in the *Physiologus* and Bestiaries', in *Virtues and Vices: The Personifications in the Index of Christian Art*, ed. by Colum Hourihane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 29–41; Tullio Gregory, 'Lo spazio come geografia del sacro nell'Occidente altomedievale', in his *'Speculum naturale': percorsi del pensiero medievale* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2007), pp. 197–221 (pp. 197–99) (first publ. in *Uomo e spazio nell'alto medioevo: 4–8 aprile 2002*, ed. by Ovidio Capitani and others, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 50, 2 vols (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 2003), I, pp. 27–60).

<sup>104</sup> The *Physiologus* was translated into Latin by the fourth or fifth century. The *B-Is* version of the *Physiologus* was employed as the basis for the development of vernacular bestiaries in Old French, such as the *Bestiaire* by Philippe de Thaün, written between 1121 and 1135, the *Bestiaire divin* by Guillaume le Clerc and the *Bestiaire* by Pierre de Beauvais, which were both composed during the first half of the thirteenth century. On the Latin translation and on vernacular renderings, see respectively Dines, 'Latin Bestiaries'; Luigina Morini, 'Introduzione', in *Bestiari medievali*, ed. by Luigina Morini (Turin: Einaudi, 1996), pp. VII–XXII (p. XVIII).

is likened to a hind pierced by an arrow; the carnal union between the queen and the hero occurs during a hunting trip. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the hunter Actaeon is transformed into a stag as a punishment for having seen the goddess of hunting, Diana, in the nude. As Marcelle Thiébaux has pointed out, the connection between hunting and sexual desire is a traditional one and occurs as a literary image at least as early as Plato's *Sophist*. Here, human affairs are described in terms of a great pursuit: all men prey upon each other in different ways and love emerges as one category of the hunt (*Sophist*, 222d).<sup>105</sup> In this section I discuss the association between hunting and desire. First, I will shed light on the hunt as a practice related to appetites and on the implications carried by images of hunting in lyric poetry. Second, I will concentrate on the negative Christian view of the hunt as a product of the senses and on the emergence of anti-models of hunting, in which sensual desires are replaced with the desires of the spirit.

#### 4.1. Appetition and the Hunt

As Paolo Galloni has observed, hunting constitutes 'una pratica intrinsecamente problematica e traumatica, potenzialmente in grado di aprire una breccia nelle barriere concettuali [...] e riportare a consapevolezza che c'è dell'umano negli animali e dell'animale nell'uomo'.<sup>106</sup> Whether for pleasure or for survival, the hunt is indeed triggered by the senses. Because of its connection with the appetites, hunting is intrinsically associated with the notion of animality: humans and other animals perform hunting as part of the same realm of living creatures, those which partake in the faculty of perception. The human-animal relationship established by hunting is part of the natural mechanism of predation in which an animal preys on another creature, pursuing and trying to affirm its domination over an object of desire.<sup>107</sup> Hunting also displays and celebrates the medieval aristocracy's most

---

<sup>105</sup> For a global discussion of the love chase in literature, see Marcelle Thiébaux, *The Stag of Love: The Chase in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1974), pp. 89–143.

<sup>106</sup> Paolo Galloni, 'Cacciare l'orso nelle foreste medievali', in *L'orso: il simbolo, la tradizione, la storia*, ed. by Renzo Nelli (= *Storia e linguaggi: rivista di studi umanistici*, 3.2 (2017)), pp. 261–87 (p. 264).

<sup>107</sup> On the association between humans and other animals in the context of hunting, see also Susan Crane, *Animal Encounters: Contacts and Concepts in Medieval Britain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), pp. 110–11; Paolo Galloni, 'L'ambiguità culturale della caccia nel medioevo', *Quaderni medievali*, 27 (1989), 14–37; Paolo Galloni, *Il cervo e il lupo: caccia e*

profound convictions about itself and its place in society. In the Middle Ages, the power of nobility, the *bellatores*, was associated with martial accomplishments. Through hunting, the aristocracy could display its strength, skills and leadership.<sup>108</sup> The attempt to capture other animals, especially the wildest and most dangerous of them, allowed male hunters of the ruling classes to demonstrate their military ability — the origin of their power and its legitimacy.<sup>109</sup>

It is therefore not surprising that the semantic field of hunting is employed in medieval literature to illustrate the sensual desire of the worthy bachelor, usually of noble lineage, for his beloved. Indeed, both hunting and secular love aim to satisfy a desire of appetite and involve the pursuit of an object to be conquered.<sup>110</sup> Catherine Bates has investigated the link between the hunt and masculinity in lyric poetry. As a metaphor for the sexual chase, the hunt provides a conflicted locus for the representation of masculinity. On the one hand, hunting has long served to define a particular and culturally approved view of masculinity as heroic and goal-oriented, where success is measured by the achievement of specific objectives, that is, the capture and killing of prey. On the other hand, when it comes to lyric poetry, the hunt metaphor serves to question the masculinity of the subject. Since desire is to remain, by definition, unsatisfied, the figure of the hunter associated with the lover is deployed to illustrate a failure: in spite of all his efforts, he fails to catch what he pursues and might even end up being caught

---

*cultura nobiliare nel medioevo* (Bari: Laterza, 1993), pp. 3–64. Because of its connection with pleasures, hunting was also perceived as a pastime. For example, Thietmar of Merseburg says that the Holy Roman Emperor Henry II, after engaging in long military endeavours, ‘laborem expeditionis delinivit suavitate venationis’ (*Chronicon*, V. 38). Frederick II, in a letter to one of his officials, talks about places ‘congrua pro venationibus et solaciis nostris’ (VIII Novembris 1239). Dante himself, in the sonnet ‘Sonar braccetti e cacciatori aizzare’, defines the hunt as a ‘selvaggia diletanza’ (*Rime*, 14. 11), putting emphasis on the wild nature of hunting but also noting the pleasures associated with it. Cited respectively from Thietmarus Merseburgensis Episcopus, *Chronicon*, ed. by Robert Holtzmann, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum: Nova Series*, 9 (Berlin: Weidmannsche, 1935), p. 264; *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi*, ed. by Jean-Louis Alphonse Huillard-Bréholles, 6 vols (Paris: Plan, 1852–1860), V, p. 484; Dante Alighieri, *Opere*, ed. by Marco Santagata and others, 3 vols (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2011–), I: *Rime, Vita Nova, De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. by Claudio Giunta, Guglielmo Gorni, Mirko Tavoni, intro. by Marco Santagata, pp. 205–10.

<sup>108</sup> See Crane, *Animal Encounters*, pp. 101–11. See also Ryan R. Judkins, ‘The Game of Courtly Hunt: Chasing and Breaking Deer in Late Medieval English Literature’, *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 112.1 (2013), 70–92; Joyce E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 45; Dorothy Yamamoto, *The Boundaries of the Human in Medieval English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 101, 105–15.

<sup>109</sup> Galloni, *Il cervo e il lupo*, pp. 3–26.

<sup>110</sup> See also Alain Guerreau, ‘Les structures de base de la chasse médiévale’, in *La chasse au Moyen Âge: société, traités, symboles*, ed. by Agostino Paravicini Bagliani and Baudouin van den Abeele (SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2000), pp. 25–32.

by others. The metaphor of the hunt, Bates argues, brings to our attention a definition of masculinity that deviates from culturally approved models of mastery and power. Instead, it offers examples of alternative and counter-cultural versions of a masculine subjectivity that radically query stereotypes of gender and class.<sup>111</sup>

#### 4.2. The Anti-Hunt: A Model for the Good Christian

Although many members of the higher ranks of the clergy were keen on hunting, the official position of the Church was a critical one. Because of their longing for material goods, hunters represented not only secular power but also sinners in general. The Church's position was scripturally and exegetically motivated, and was based specifically on the reference in the Bible to two hunters, Nimrod and Esau. The former was described as a great sinner who also happened to be a hunter (Genesis 10. 8–12). The latter, a hunter himself, is not explicitly mentioned as a sinner (Genesis 10. 22–34), but is nevertheless associated with sin in the exegetical tradition. For example, the pseudo-Jerome, commenting on Psalm 90 in his *Breviarum in Psalmos*, writes:

Multi sunt venatores in isto mundo, qui animam nostram venari conantur. Denique et Nemrod ille gigas, magnus in conspectu Dei venator fuit, et Esau venator erat quoniam peccator erat: et penitus non invenimus in Scripturis sanctis, sanctum aliquem venatorem. Piscatores invenimus sanctos. [...] Vides ergo quoniam iste venator est, qui animas nostras venari cupit ad perditionem? Multos habet diabolus laqueos, et diversos habet laqueos.

(*Breviarum in Psalmos*, 90)<sup>112</sup>

According to the pseudo-Jerome, there are several hunters in the secular world who are trying to capture our soul: we find the infamous giant Nimrod, who was a mighty hunter in the sight of God, and Esau, who was a sinner because he was a hunter. Finally, he states that the relationship between hunting and sin is evident from the fact that no saintly hunter appears in Scripture. By virtue of the relationship between sin and the hunt, the hunter *par excellence* is the devil, who

---

<sup>111</sup> See Catherine Bates, *Masculinity and the Hunt: Wyatt to Spencer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 1–43. The book focuses on sixteenth-century British poetry.

<sup>112</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XXVI. 1097a–1097b.

longs to chase our souls into perdition.<sup>113</sup> The statement that Esau was a hunter because he was a sinner was also included in Canon IX of the *Decretum Gratiani*.<sup>114</sup> In addition, Odo of Cluny establishes an implicit association between God's contempt for Esau and Esau's skill as a hunter: 'Esau vero, quem Deus odio habuit, vir gnarus venandi fuit' (*Collationes*, I. 35).<sup>115</sup>

Hunting itself was viewed and presented as a battle of demoniac forces against Christian souls. Hugh of Saint Victor interpreted the hind pursued by hunters as the 'casta et munda' soul pursued by demons, claiming that 'venatores sunt daemones' (*Miscellanea*, 177).<sup>116</sup> Among the notable critics of hunting, John of Salisbury, bishop of Chartres, maintains in the chapter *De venatica* of his *Policraticus* that the hunt is likely to arouse passions. First, he states that perhaps a goddess such as Diana was chosen to preside over hunting because people did not wish to degrade their gods by making them preside over an activity characterised by self-indulgence and vice; then, as an example, he cites the illicit love of Dido and Aeneas, occasioned by a hunt (*Policraticus*, I. 4. 391a). The attitude of the Church towards hunting also had legal implications. In 1215, for example, the statutes of the fourth Lateran Council forbade hunting and hawking to all clerics.<sup>117</sup>

These examples outline the extent to which the Church condemns the relationship of predation, based on the senses, between humans and other animals, which stands in opposition to the peaceful cohabitation between all creatures in Eden, where all animals were naturally subject to humans' will. The practice of hunting is one of the consequences of the fall itself, and signals humans' loss of full control over both their senses and other animals.

The idea of a renewed friendship between humans and animals, along the lines of the Adamitic model, is found in Saint Paul. The apostle writes that the divine Revelation, reviving the Edenic state of innocence, will provide a new

---

<sup>113</sup> See Tullio Gregory, 'Discorso di chiusura', in *L'uomo di fronte al mondo animale nell'alto medioevo*, ed. by Manselli and others, II, pp. 1445–85 (p. 1455); Massimo Montanari, *L'alimentazione contadina nell'alto medioevo* (Naples: Liguori, 1979), p. 265.

<sup>114</sup> See Marcelle Thiébaux, 'The Medieval Chase', *Speculum*, 42.2 (1967), 260–74 (pp. 263–64).

<sup>115</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, CXXXIII. 541c.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibidem*, CLXXVII. 575a.

<sup>117</sup> See Thiébaux, 'The Medieval Chase', pp. 263–65; *The stag of love*, p. 46. See also Galloni, *Il cervo e il lupo*, pp. 107–17; Hannele Klemettilä, *Animals and Hunters in the Late Middle Ages: Evidence from the BnF MS fr. 616 of the 'Livres de la Chasse' by Gaston Fébus* (New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 196–97.

glorious order where all creatures will share a common destiny as children of God (Ad Romanos 8. 19–21).<sup>118</sup> This observation not only gave further credence to the idea that all creatures belong to the same community of living beings in the kingdom of God, but also offered a model for a positive relationship between humans and animals, similar to that present in the state of innocence. This attitude culminated in the hagiographic works on Francis of Assisi. As Franco Cardini has pointed out, in Bonaventure of Bagnoregio's *Legenda maior* (VIII. 11), for instance, Francis is described as a new Adam, restoring on earth the original relationship between men and all the animals, which 'ritrovano in Francesco un loro naturale fratello' and master.<sup>119</sup>

The opposition between secular hunting and the Edenic cohabitation between humans and other animals informed tales of conversion, in which the protagonist is a hunter who converts to a holy life. The image of the perfect hunter who became a perfect Christian was an important part of the hagiographic tradition. The best-known story was the legend of Saint Eustace, which spread from the 1260s thanks to Iacopo da Varazze's *Legenda aurea*:

Eustachius antea Placidus uocabatur. Hic erat magister militum Traiani imperatoris. [...] Quadam enim die cum uenationi insisteret gregem ceruorum reperit, inter quos unum ceteris speciosiore et maiorem conspexit [...]. Verum aliis militibus circa ceruos reliquos occupatis Placidus hunc toto nisu insequitur et ipsum capere nitebatur. [...] Qui cum ceruum diligenter consideraret uidit inter cornua eius formam sancte crucis supra solis claritatem fulgentem et ymaginem Ihesu Christi qui per os cerui [...] ei locutus est dicens: 'O Placide, quid me insequeris? Ego tui gratia in hoc animali tibi apparui. Ego sum Christus quem tu ignorans colis. Elemosine tue coram me ascenderunt et ob hoc ueni, ut per hunc quem uenabaris ceruum ego quoque te ipse uenarer'.

(*Legenda aurea*, CLVII)<sup>120</sup>

<sup>118</sup> See Matthew Levering, 'Aquinas on Romans 8: Predestination in Context', in *Reading Romans with St Thomas Aquinas*, ed. by Matthew Levering and Michael Dauphinais (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012), pp. 196–215 (p. 205).

<sup>119</sup> Franco Cardini, 'Francesco d'Assisi e gli animali', *Studi francescani*, 78 (1981), 7–45 (p. 38). On Saint Paul, Saint Francis of Assisi and the concept of a community of living beings on earth, see also Michel Pastoureaux, *The Bear: History of a Fallen King*, trans. by George Holoch (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 82–85.

<sup>120</sup> Iacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea: con le miniature dal codice Ambrosiano C 240 inf.*, ed. by Giovanni Paolo Maggioni and others, 2 vols (Florence: SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2007), II, pp. 1224–33 (p. 1224). See also the similar story of Saint Hubert, for example in Klemetilä, *Animals and Hunters in the Late Middle Ages*, p. 208.

Eustace, whose name before the conversion was Placidus, was a Roman general serving the emperor Trajan as a ‘magister militum’. One day, while hunting in Tivoli, he saw a vision of the Holy Cross with the image of Christ between a deer’s antlers. A voice coming from the deer’s mouth explains that through the animal that Placidus is hunting, Jesus will in turn hunt Placidus. Thanks to this vision, Placidus and his family were converted and received the sacrament of baptism from the Bishop of Rome, ‘qui eos cum magno gaudio baptizavit’ (*Legenda aurea*, CLVII).<sup>121</sup>

The contrast between the good hunter and the good Christian reveals an opposition between a life based on passions and a life centred on the precepts of God. With his vision of Christ, the hunter is diverted from the pursuit of earthly goods to the pursuit of spiritual ones.<sup>122</sup> The deer, in turn, shifts from being an object of secular desire to being a figure of Christ, who is able to promote the subject’s redemption. At the same time, the legend also presents a reversal of roles between the hunter and the hunted. Placidus was initially pursued by his appetites but, after the vision, he is instead pursued by Christ and by a desire for good. In other words, the hunter also proves to be the creature which is hunted, first by sensual desires, and then by spiritual desires.

The conversion, I argue, restores the Adamitic relationship between man and animals: the hunter becomes a saint, along the lines of the condition of mankind before the fall; the animal, in turn, serves the function of sign, conveying — as *figura Christi* — the true knowledge. In addition, I propose, the tale of Saint Eustace reverses the frustrated hunt of the lover. While the subject of lyric poetry is doomed to fail in his predatory hunting, the converted hunter is able, after his vision of Christ, to reach the object of a spiritual desire, that is to say, the truth of God. Where the lover fails, the good Christian is instead successful. In this regard, the legend of Saint Eustace offers a model of an anti-hunt, a model that, as I will argue in Chapter 3, becomes crucial for Petrarch’s depiction of a vision of a Christological hind in a sequence of sonnets.

---

<sup>121</sup> Iacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea*, p. 1224.

<sup>122</sup> See Klemettilä, *Animals and Hunters in the Late Middle Ages*, p. 208.



## Conclusion

This chapter has considered three major traditions of texts which may have informed Petrarch's understanding of the notion of animality in relation to human identity. None of the sources I have discussed conceives a clear and total division between the human and the animal in the post-lapsarian world. The overlap between the concepts of humanity and animality results from the fact that both participate in the faculty of the soul which governs the appetites. These appetites, in particular, are the origins of the nature of vice in classical theorisations and the nature of sin in Christian doctrine. In exceptional conditions, those in which mankind is somehow aligned with the divine, humans and animals form separate categories. The Bible, for example, says that in the state of innocence animals were completely separate from, subordinate to and at the service of mankind. While the overlap between mankind and lower creatures is consistent with a negative vision of animality, the Edenic model is in line with a positive view of the animal world. As we will see later, the ambiguity in the notion of the animal also emerges, for instance, in Petrarch's poems, where the deer is associated with both the lyric persona's lust (*Rvf*, 23) and Laura's chaste and beatifying presence (*Rvf*, 190). This opening chapter will serve as my theoretical framework to address the relationship established between animals and passions in Petrarch's love poetry as he recasts and reconceives the models that he finds in the works of his predecessors.

## Chapter 2

### Petrarch and the Troubadours

#### Introduction

The first stanza of *canzone* 70 quotes the incipit of a song that Petrarch wrongly attributed to Arnaut Daniel, ‘Drez et rayson es qu’ieu ciant e-m demori’.<sup>1</sup> Petrarch’s quotation of an Occitan verse raises the question of the relationship between the poet and the troubadours. Indeed, the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* present significant points of contact with Occitan poetry which help us understand how Petrarch makes use of animal imagery with reference to the previous romance tradition, starting from the troubadours, such as Folquet de Marselha, Peire Raimon, Raimbaut d’Aurenga, Peire Vidal and Arnaut Daniel.

Gianfranco Contini observed that ‘Petrarca, rispetto alla propria tradizione, nega, o almeno limita’.<sup>2</sup> In the past, this remark has often been decontextualised and has become part of the commonplace view of Petrarch as an aristocratic poet who looks upon tradition with disdain.<sup>3</sup> Through the lens of animal imagery, this chapter discusses and casts light on the presence and re-semanticisation in Petrarch’s poetry of figurative procedures, *topoi* and images which are also typical of Occitan poetry.

Existing scholarship has identified a great many troubadour allusions in Petrarch’s poetry, including in studies by, for example, Marco Santagata, Maurizio Perugi, Carlo Pulsoni, and William D. Paden.<sup>4</sup> Marco Santagata offers a thorough

<sup>1</sup> On the attribution of the Arnaldian *chanso* see the general Introduction to this study.

<sup>2</sup> Gianfranco Contini, ‘Preliminari sulla lingua del Petrarca’, in his *Varianti e altra linguistica: una raccolta di saggi (1938–1968)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1970), pp. 169–92 (p. 171) (first publ. in *Paragone*, 2 (1951), 3–26).

<sup>3</sup> On this commonplace, see Santagata, *Per moderne carte*, pp. 9–21.

<sup>4</sup> See respectively Santagata, *Per moderne carte*, pp. 157–211; Maurizio Perugi, ‘Petrarca provenzale’, *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 7 (1990), 109–81; Carlo Pulsoni, ‘Petrarca ultimo trovatore’, in *Toulouse à la croisée des cultures: actes du V<sup>e</sup> congrès international de l’Association internationale d’études occitanes, Toulouse, 19–24 août 1996*, ed. by Jacques Gourc and François Pic, 2 vols (Pau: Association internationale d’études occitanes, 1998), I, pp. 69–73; William D. Paden, ‘Petrarch as a Poet of Provence’, *Annali d’Italianistica*, 22 (2004), 19–44. For other studies, see Mario Casella, ‘Dai trovatori al Petrarca’, *Annali della cattedra petrarchesca*, 6 (1935–1936), 153–74; Paolo Cerchi, ‘I doni dell’amata: il guanto di Giraut de Borneil e di Petrarca’, in *Literature, Geschichte und Verstehen: Festschrift für Ulrich Molk zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. by

investigation of potential references to Arnaut Daniel in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and explores the possible channels of transmission through which Petrarch might have come into contact with 'Drez et rayson'. While Santagata's investigation is limited to the interaction between Petrarch and Arnaut Daniel, Perugi, Pulsoni, and Paden, in their respective works, offer a broader focus and look additionally at other Occitan poets. Perugi discusses some possible echoes of the troubadours of the Este courts — such as Rambertino Buvaletti, Sordello, and Lanfranco Cigala — in Petrarch's work. Pulsoni offers a short study of the rhymes which Petrarch and the troubadour tradition share. The first step towards a more comprehensive analysis can be found in the work of William D. Paden. His survey, however, mostly highlights the genres and related metrical structures that Petrarch may have drawn from the troubadours.

These important studies explore a number of specific issues, but do not touch upon Petrarch and the troubadours in terms of the use and the functions of animal images. Modern commentaries provide some help in this respect, and constitute crucial sources for tracing the history of earlier occurrences of an image.<sup>5</sup> The question of which manuscripts or which occasions might have provided Petrarch with access to Occitan poetry is beyond the scope of this thesis. I will focus instead on the similarities between Petrarch and his Occitan predecessors, and will consider the role that the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* played in refreshing the previous vernacular tradition with regard to animal images.

---

Hinrich Hudde, Udo Schöning and Friedrich Wolfzettel (Heidelberg: Winter, 1997), pp. 143–53; Alessio Fontana, 'La Filologia Romanza e il Problema del Rapporto Petrarca-Trovatori (premesse per una ripresa del problema secondo nuove prospettive)', in *Petrarca 1304–1374: Beiträge zu Werk und Wirkung*, ed. by Fritz Schalk (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1975), pp. 51–70; Ladislav Gáldi, 'Les origines provençales de la métrique des *canzoni* de Pétrarque', in *Actes du X<sup>e</sup> congrès international de linguistique et philologie romanes, Strasbourg 23–28 avril 1962*, ed. by Georges Straka, 2 vols (Paris: Klincksieck, 1965), II, pp. 783–90; Helga Grubitzsch-Rodewald, 'Petrarca und Arnaut Daniel: Petrarca's Imitationstechnik in der Kanzone "Verdi panni"', *Arcadia*, 7 (1972), 135–57; Holmes, 'Petrarch and the Vernacular Lyric Past'; Ronald L. Martinez, 'Italy', in *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, ed. by Frank R. P. Akehurst and Judith M. Davis (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 279–94; Giacomo Pagani, *Petrarca e la poesia trobadorica* (Rovigo: Istituto padano di arti grafiche, 1946); Luigi Peirone, 'La prospettiva occitanica del Petrarca', *Giornale italiano di filologia*, 20 (1967), 235–42; Perugi, *Trovatori a Valchiusa*; Nicola Scarano, 'Fonti provenzali e italiane della lirica petrarchesca', *Studi di filologia romanza*, 7 (1901), 250–360; Nicola Zingarelli, 'Petrarca e i trovatori', in *Provenza e Italia*, ed. by Vincenzo Crescini (Florence: Bemporad, 1930), pp. 97–139.

<sup>5</sup> The modern commentaries I refer to are those in the following editions: Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata; *Canzoniere*, ed. by Paola Vecchi Galli (Milan: BUR, 2012); *Canzoniere: Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, ed. by Rosanna Bettarini, 2 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 2005).

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part contextualises the question of the link between Petrarch and Occitan poets. After focusing on northern Italy, an area particularly familiar to Petrarch and receptive to Occitan culture, I will turn to the list of troubadours mentioned by Petrarch in the *Triumph*. Petrarch's own selection of Occitan poets will form the basis of my investigation. The second part discusses three animal references of bestiary derivation which the *Fragmenta* share with Occitan poetry, such as the moth in Folquet de Marselha, the salamander in Peire Raimon, and the phoenix in Raimbaut d'Aurenga and Peire Vidal. Given the widespread presence of these images in thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Italian poetry as well, we cannot assume an unambiguous connection here between Petrarch and the troubadours. In this case, I will explore the shared culture of reference found in both the Occitan and Italian contexts. The third part is specifically concerned with Petrarch and Arnaut Daniel. I will examine a Petrarchan image which, in medieval romance literature, is only documented in Arnaut Daniel's poetry, that is, the *adynaton* of the chasing ox. In this case, given the singularity of the image, a direct connection between the two poets is more likely.<sup>6</sup>

## 1. Observations about Petrarch's Reception of Troubadour Poetry

While we know which classical books — in Latin and even in Greek — made up Petrarch's material library, there is no evidence of Occitan *chansonniers* amongst his belongings or his 'libri mei peculiares'.<sup>7</sup> However, as *canzone* 70 explicitly shows, Petrarch considers his lyrics to be also in debt to the vernacular romance poetry originating in the Midi. First, we can assume that Petrarch would have been familiar with Occitan poetry from the circulation of troubadour *chansonniers* among the courts of northern Italy. Second, we can look at what the poet's own writings document as a canon of troubadours.

---

<sup>6</sup> In this chapter, I use the terms 'chanso' and 'chansos' to refer to the corpus of lyric songs of each of the troubadours examined. As is the case for all other poets, in quoting their texts I follow the numeration of the edition referred to. For the sake of clarity, in the case of the troubadours I also include in footnotes the standard numeration given in Alfred Pillet and Henry Carstens, *Bibliographie der Troubadours* (Halle an der Saale: Niemeyer, 1933), which I abbreviate as *BdT*.

<sup>7</sup> See Feo, 'La biblioteca', p. 496; de Nolhac, *Pétrarque et l'Humanisme*, II, p. 133; Zintzen, 'Il platonismo di Petrarca', p. 97.

### 1.1. Troubadour *Chansonniers* in Northern Italy

It has been noted that most of Petrarch's knowledge of Occitan poetry may not have been acquired in the religious environment of the papal seat in Avignon but in northern Italy.<sup>8</sup> It is worth reminding ourselves that over the course of the 1340s Petrarch began to build ever stronger links with the courts in the Po Valley, under the protection and support of varied patrons and benefactors, such as the Visconti in Milan, the Carraresi in Padua and Treviso, and the Doge of Venice.<sup>9</sup> Here Occitan poems were in great demand throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as badges of legitimacy for the new ruling classes. This resulted in the extensive circulation of troubadour lyrics and related prose material.<sup>10</sup>

For example, in the corpus of the earliest nine vellum extant *chansonniers*, dating to the second half of the thirteenth century, eight were either produced in northern Italy — principally in Padua, Treviso and Venice — or brought there shortly thereafter. More than half of the fourteen manuscripts produced in the fourteenth century were likewise made there. These data are based on surviving documents and do not necessarily prove that manuscript production was higher in Italy than in southern France.<sup>11</sup> What I wish to underline here, though, is the impact that the circulation of troubadour *chansonniers* had in the courts of the Po Valley, such as those in the Veneto.<sup>12</sup>

The importance of this area for the reception of Occitan literature is also demonstrated by the tradition of the *vidas* and *razos*, the biographical and

---

<sup>8</sup> See Santagata, *Per moderne carte*, pp. 197, 209–11.

<sup>9</sup> See Victoria Kirkham, 'Petrarch the Courtier', in *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works*, ed. by Kirkham and Maggi, pp. 141–50; Ernest H. Wilkins, *Life of Petrarch* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 81–251.

<sup>10</sup> See William Burgwinkle, 'The *chansonniers* as books', in *The Troubadours: An Introduction*, ed. by Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 246–62 (p. 247).

<sup>11</sup> See D'Arco Silvio Avalle, *La letteratura medievale in lingua d'oc nella sua tradizione manoscritta: problemi di critica testuale* (Turin: Einaudi, 1961), p. 126; Carlo Pulsoni, 'Appunti per una descrizione storico-geografica della tradizione manoscritta trobadorica', *Critica del testo*, 7.1 (2004), 357–89 (pp. 365–66).

<sup>12</sup> For the full list of the parchment *chansonniers* to which I refer, see Burgwinkle, 'The *chansonniers* as books', pp. 246, 303–05. See also Avalle, *La letteratura medievale in lingua d'oc nella sua tradizione manoscritta*, p. 44; Clovis Brunel, *Bibliographie des manuscrits littéraires en ancien provençal* (Paris: Droz, 1935); William D. Paden, 'Manuscripts', in *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, ed. by Akehurst and Davis, pp. 307–33 (p. 309); Pillet and Carstens, *Bibliographie der Troubadours*, pp. x–xliv; Martín de Riquer, *Los trovadores: historia literaria y textos*, 3 vols (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1975), I, pp. 11–19; François Zufferey, *Recherches linguistiques sur les chansonniers provençaux* (Geneva: Droz, 1987), p. 5.

explanatory prose sections accompanying the poems. The first attempt to compile a unified and coherent body of glosses comes from the troubadour Uc de Saint Circ. Originally from Quercy, around 1219 he moved to the *Marca Trevigiana*, at the court of the da Romano, where his presence is documented until 1257. Here Uc reworked the stories already in circulation among his fellow *jongleurs* in southern France, turning them into a new literary tradition of biographies and commentaries.<sup>13</sup>

As William Burgwinkle observes, these compilations, which combine lyrics and individualised prose accounts, may have served ‘as source books for Italian poets, including [...] Petrarch’.<sup>14</sup>

## 1.2. Petrarch’s Troubadours

Although there is no definite evidence of which *chansonniers* Petrarch might have read during his life, it has been generally assumed that the poet had a good knowledge of troubadour language. As Ernest H. Wilkins points out, ‘most of the children’s talk that Francesco heard outdoors in Carpentras must have been in Provençal: it is accordingly very probable that he was soon able to understand and speak that language.’<sup>15</sup> Giuseppe Billanovich, in turn, observes: ‘non si può escludere che per il poeta aretino il provenzale fosse la lingua degli affetti [...], considerato che le due donne da cui ebbe dei figli dovevano essere di quella terra.’<sup>16</sup> While Petrarch may have learnt the language of the troubadours at a relatively early age, what did he really know of their poetry? Some evidence in this regard is found in his own writings. While in *canzone* 70 Petrarch acknowledges his debt towards the poet he supposed to be Arnaut Daniel, the

---

<sup>13</sup> See Maria Luisa Meneghetti, *Il pubblico dei trovatori: ricezione e riuso dei testi lirici cortesi fino al XIV secolo* (Modena: Mucchi, 1984), pp. 238, 243–45; Elizabeth W. Poe, ‘The *Vidas* and *Razos*’, in *A Handbook of the Troubadours*, ed. by Akehurst and Davis, pp. 185–97 (pp. 188–89, 194–95). See also Giulio Bertoni, *I Trovatori d’Italia (biografie, testi, traduzioni, note): con 14 illustrazioni e 2 tavole fuori testo* (Modena: Orlandini, 1915), pp. 3–34.

<sup>14</sup> Burgwinkle, ‘The *chansonniers* as books’, p. 246. See also Olivia Holmes, *Assembling the Lyric Self: Authorship from Troubadour Song to Italian Poetry Book* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 25–46.

<sup>15</sup> Wilkins, *Life of Petrarch*, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Pulsoni, ‘Appunti per una descrizione storico-geografica della tradizione manoscritta trobadorica’, p. 384, who relates Billanovich’s remark.

importance that he ascribes to Occitan literature is expressed again in two *loci*, one textual and one paratextual.

The only explicit textual indication of Petrarch's critical response to the troubadours — and the names of those troubadours — is found in the *Triumphus cupidinis*, which is devoted to love poets. The list ranges from classical poets to the vernacular poets of the Midi and the Italian Peninsula, from Orpheus, the mythological founder of poetry, to Dante. The troubadours seem to be given a particularly important position in this list. Petrarch only mentions eight Tuscan poets, along with a brief mention of the Sicilian School, which is cited as a whole without reference to individual names. When it comes to Occitan poetry, however, he lists no fewer than fifteen troubadours in Love's train:

e poi v'era un drappello  
di portamenti e di volgari strani:  
fra tutti il primo *Arnaldo Daniello*,  
gran maestro d'amor, ch'a la sua terra  
ancor fa honor col suo dir strano e bello.  
Eranvi quei ch'Amor sì leve afferra:  
*l'un Piero e l'altro*, e *'l men famoso Arnaldo*;  
e quei che fur conquisi con più guerra:  
i' dico l'uno e l'altro *Rajmbaldo*  
che cantò pur Beatrice e Monferrato,  
e 'l vecchio *Pier d'Alvernia* con *Girardo*;  
*Folco*, que' ch'a Marsilia il nome à dato  
ed a Genova tolto, ed a l'extremo  
cangiò per miglior patria habito e stato;  
*Giaufrè Rudel*, ch'usò la vela e 'l remo  
a cercar la sua morte, e quel *Guillielmo*  
che per cantar à 'l fior de' suoi dì scemo;  
*Amerigo*, *Bernardo*, *Ugo* e *Gauselmo*,  
e molti altri ne vidi, a cui la lingua  
lancia e spada fu sempre, e targia ed elmo.  
(*Triumphus cupidinis*, 4. 38–57)<sup>17</sup>

The list opens with Arnaut in first place and ends with Uc de Saint Circ, author of the *vidas* and *razos*, and Gaucelm Faidit. Petrarch's Occitan canon includes two 'Piero', whose precise identities he does not reveal, but who could be Peire Vidal and Peire Rogier, or one of these together with Peire Raimon de Toloza; Arnaut de Marueilh; Raimbaut d'Aurenga; Raimbaut de Vaqueiras; Peire d'Alvernia;

---

<sup>17</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi*, *Rime estravaganti*, *Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 183–220 (pp. 192–96). Italics mine.

Giraut de Bornelh; Folquet de Marselha; Jaufré Rudel; Guilhelm de Cabestanh; Aimeric de Peguilhan; and Bernart de Ventadorn.<sup>18</sup> Carlo Pulsoni notes that most of these lines ‘riecheggiano [...] versi dei trovatori citati o passi delle *vidas* loro concernenti’.<sup>19</sup> Ronald L. Martinez, in turn, observes that ‘the list testifies to a wide knowledge of troubadour poetry and its reception in Italy’.<sup>20</sup> Of all the troubadours mentioned, Arnaut Daniel is very clearly the most important by some measure, referred to as ‘fra tutti il primo’ and ‘gran maestro d’amor’ (*Triumphus cupidinis*, 4. 40–41). His presence is also central in the *Fragmenta*. Here, Petrarch’s principal imitation of Arnaut consists in his nine sestinas, distributed throughout the whole *Canzoniere*, and in what may constitute a conceptual borrowing, that is, the image of the *aura*.<sup>21</sup>

The role of Arnaut Daniel in Petrarch’s work is also documented in one of Petrarch’s own genuine annotations which survive in the manuscript tradition.<sup>22</sup> If we look at one of these documents, the MS Casanatense 924 (fol. 101<sup>r</sup>), the note reads as follows:

1350 septembris 21 martis hora 3, die Mathei apostoli, propter unum quod leggi Padue in Cantilena Arnaldi Danielis. *Aman prians fafrancha cor suffers*.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The lyrics of all the poets listed here, except for those of Guilhem de Cabestanh, are found in New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M 819, a codex which belonged to one of Petrarch’s correspondents, Andrea da Mantova (*Familiars*, V. 11, 12; *Epistule Metrice*, III. 26). On this point see Giuseppe Frasso, ‘Petrarca, Andrea da Mantova e il canzoniere provenzale N’, *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, 17 (1974), 185–205.

<sup>19</sup> Carlo Pulsoni, *La tecnica compositiva nei ‘Rerum vulgarium fragmenta’: riuso metrico e lettura autoriale* (Rome: Bagatto, 1998), p. 230.

<sup>20</sup> Martinez, ‘Italy’, p. 287.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, pp. 286–88.

<sup>22</sup> I refer to the apographs containing Petrarch’s genuine variants and annotations, namely Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, MS 924; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS XLI 14; Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS 1636; London, British Library, MS Harley 3264; London, British Library, Inc. IB 25926. See Carl Appel, *Zur Entwicklung Italienischer Dichtungen Petrarca’s: Abdruck des Cod. Vat. Lat. 3196 und Mitteilungen aus den Handschriften Casanat. A III 31 und Laurenz. Plut. XLIN. 14* (Halle an der Saale: Niemeyer, 1891); Giuseppe Frasso, *Studi sui ‘Rerum vulgarium fragmenta’ e i ‘Triumphs’: volume primo: Francesco Petrarca e Ludovico Beccadelli* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1983); Francesco Petrarca, *Opere italiane: ms. Casanatense 924*, ed. by Emilio Pasquini and Paola Vecchi Galli (Modena: Panini, 2006); Francesco Petrarca, *I ‘Trionfi’ secondo il codice parmense 1636 collazionato su autografi perduti*, ed. by Flaminio Pellegrini (Cremona: Battistelli, 1897); Roberto Weiss, *Un inedito petrarchesco: la redazione sconosciuta di un capitolo del ‘Trionfo della Fama’* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1950).

<sup>23</sup> The quotation is from the interpretative edition in Carlo Pulsoni, “Propter unum quod (...) leggi in Cantilena Arnaldi Danielis”: una citazione del Petrarca volgare’, *Critica del testo*, 6.1 (2003), 337–52 (p. 338). The italics are Pulsoni’s. The apographs present some variant readings with respect to the point in which MS 924 reads *padue*: MS Harley 3264 amends *pridie* to *padue*; MS 1636 and Inc. IB 25926, in turn, have *pridie*. Folena prefers the reading *padue*, arguing that it is a *lectio difficilior*. By contrast, Maurizio Perugi writes: ‘l’abbreviazione comune, alla quale si deve far risalire questa oscillazione, dovrà riferirsi a *pridie* piuttosto che a *padue*.’ See respectively



Petrarch quotes a verse of Arnaut's song 'Amors e iois e luecs e temps' (*Chansos*, 14) as a source of inspiration for his sonnet 'Aspro core et selvaggio, et cruda voglia' (*Rvf*, 265).<sup>24</sup> It is impossible to say how Petrarch would have come to know Arnaut Daniel's poem. What matters here, though, is the evidence that Petrarch had direct contact with at least one of Arnaut's songs. While it is true that this might be the only poem of Arnaut's that Petrarch read, this hypothesis is rather unlikely. Obviously, we cannot exclude the possibility that Arnaut's song was available to Petrarch on a single sheet of paper or parchment. However, it seems more likely that Petrarch handled one or more Occitan *chansonniers*, such as those circulating in the Veneto, and would have read a compilation of poems included therein.<sup>25</sup>

In the next two sections, I will examine the animal images which Petrarch shares with the poets he mentions in the *Triumphus cupidinis*. First, I consider the animal references of bestiary derivation which Petrarch's *Fragmenta* have in common with the troubadours. Second, I will discuss a specific parallel between Petrarch and his favourite Occitan poet, Arnaut Daniel.

## 2. Petrarch, the Troubadours, and Animal Images of Bestiary Derivation

In the troubadours included by Petrarch in the *Triumphs* we find three animal images which are also present in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, namely the moth, the salamander and the phoenix. I will observe that in these cases Petrarch draws on traditional images of bestiary derivation widely in use, not only among the troubadours but also in thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Italian poetry. All these images, I note, share or recall the *topos* of fire, and form what I term the 'bestiario igneo' in Petrarch's *Fragmenta*.<sup>26</sup>

---

Gianfranco Folena, *Culture e lingue nel Veneto medievale* (Padua: Programma Editore, 1990), p. 15; Perugi, *Trovatori a Valchiusa*, p. 298, which is the source of my quotation.

<sup>24</sup> For the texts, see Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, ed. by Maurizio Perugi, new edn (Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2015), pp. 246–59; Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1069–71 (p. 1069).

<sup>25</sup> See Santagata, *Per moderne carte*, p. 197. See also Paola Allegretti, 'Appunti sul canzoniere provenzale T: la prospettiva dantesca (tra Giacomo da Lentini e Petrarca)', *La parola del testo*, 18 (2014), 13–31; Giuseppina Brunetti, 'Sul canzoniere provenzale T (Parigi, Bibl. Nat. F. fr. 15211)', *Cultura neolatina*, 50 (1990), 45–73.

<sup>26</sup> I borrow the expression 'bestiario igneo', but used in a different context, from Francesco Zambon, 'Il bestiario igneo di Giacomo da Lentini', in his *L'alfabeto simbolico degli animali*, pp. 173–86 (first publ. in *La poesia di Giacomo da Lentini: scienza e filosofia nel XIII secolo in Sicilia*

According to Alberto Vàrvaro, in his analysis of Rigaut de Berbezilh's poems, animal images of bestiary derivation within a secular discourse do not lose their link with their traditional allegorical messages. In fact, these references continue to remind us of the set of spiritual meanings which have already been established:

[Le] comparazioni bestiarie nella poesia trovatorica [...] avevano dietro di sé una tale ricchezza di significato da non poterla perdere d'un tratto. Non rinviavano la fantasia certo ad immagini zoologiche [...] senza legame col resto: erano invece richiami immediatamente intuibili ai valori più alti della civilizzazione contemporanea. [...] Non vogliamo dire che [il trovatore] intenda direttamente collegare le situazioni topiche del suo poetico discorso d'amore alle verità della Fede. Per nulla; egli sfrutta solo il rapporto che esisteva fra il racconto bestiaro e il suo 'senso' religioso e trasforma quella che era 'figura' di un mistero sacro in 'figura' di tutt'altro mistero, quello profano di Amore.<sup>27</sup>

In my discussion, I will interpret the images of the moth, the salamander and the phoenix in the light of Vàrvaro's observation. I note that Petrarch transfers traditional spiritual messages to a secular discourse, which acquires further strength by virtue of the covert relationship, whether parallel or opposing, with the past moralising meanings associated with the animal in question.

In the Scriptural tradition, the image of fire has two opposite valences, and is associated with either sin or God. For example, in the Book of Sirach, the speaker warns against kindling the coals of sinners and being consumed in their flaming fires: 'non incendas carbones peccatoris arguens eos ne incendaris flamma ignis peccatorum illorum' (Sirach 8. 13).<sup>28</sup> By contrast, on Mount Horeb, God appears to Moses as a fire burning from a bush: 'apparuitque ei Dominus in

---

*e nel Mediterraneo occidentale: atti del convegno tenutosi all'Università autonoma di Barcellona, 16–18, 23–24 ottobre 1997*, ed. by Rossend Arqués (Palermo: Centro di studi filologici e linguistici occidentali, 2000), pp. 137–48).

<sup>27</sup> Alberto Vàrvaro, 'Introduzione', in Rigaut de Berbezilh, *Liriche*, ed. by Alberto Vàrvaro (Bari: Adriatica Editrice, 1960), pp. 7–89 (pp. 64–65). On animal references in Occitan poetry, see Mercedes Brea, 'Les animaux dans les poésies amoureuses des troubadours occitans', *Revue des langues romanes*, 98.2 (1994), 403–43; Oriana Scarpati, *Retorica del trobar: le comparazioni nella lirica occitana* (Rome: Viella, 2008), pp. 94–123. See also Michel Zink, 'Le monde animal et ses représentations dans la littérature française du Moyen Âge', in *Le monde animal et ses représentations au Moyen-Âge (XI<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècles): actes du XV<sup>e</sup> congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public, Toulouse, 25–26 mai 1986*, ed. by Bernard Guillemin (Toulouse: Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 1985), pp. 47–71; Michel Zink, *Nature et poésie au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Fayard, 2006).

<sup>28</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, II, p. 1039.

flamma ignis de medio rubi' (Exodus 3. 2).<sup>29</sup> Gianluca Valenti has observed that in the writings of the Church fathers and other medieval religious figures, the image of fire is also deployed in reference to the divine love of *caritas*.<sup>30</sup> For instance, in Gregory the Great's *Homiliae in Evangelia* fire is associated with the Holy Spirit, which conveys and enacts the love of and for God:

Sed ignem Dominus in terram mittit cum afflatu sancti Spiritus corda carnalium incendit. Et terra ardet cum cor carnale in suis pravis voluptatibus frigidum, relinquit concupiscentias praesentis saeculi, et incenditur ad amorem Dei. Bene ergo in igne apparuit Spiritus, quia ab omni corde quod replet torporem frigoris excutit, et hoc in desiderium suae aeternitatis accendit.

(*Homiliae in Evangelia*, XXX. 5)<sup>31</sup>

By contrast, in lyric poetry, as Roberto Antonelli states, 'il *foco* è a priori *d'amore* o *amoroso*', and is concerned with sensual desire.<sup>32</sup> I will interpret Petrarch's 'bestiario igneo' by taking into consideration the religious valences of the symbolism of fire and the potential implications for secular poetry.

## 2.1. The Moth

The first animal image which Petrarch shares with the troubadours in the *Triumphus cupidinis* is the moth. In the poem 'Sitot me soi a tart aperceubuz' (*Chansos*, 7), Folquet de Marselha writes that this insect is so attracted to the light of fire that it gets burned:

Ab bel semblan que fals' Amors aduz  
s'atrai vas leis fols amanz e s'atura,  
co·l parpaillos c'a tan folla natura  
que·s fer el foc per la clartat que·i lutz;  
mas eu m'en part e segrai altra via,  
sos mal pagaz, qu'esters no m'en partria;  
e segrai l'aib de tot bon sufridor  
que s'irais fort si com fort s'umelia.

(*Chansos*, 7. 9–16)<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, I, p. 78.

<sup>30</sup> See Gianluca Valenti, *La liturgia del 'trobar': assimilazione e riuso di elementi del rito cristiano nelle canzoni occitane medievali* (Berlin and Boston: de Gruyter, 2014), pp. 243–49 (p. 247).

<sup>31</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, LXXVI. 1223a. Italics mine.

<sup>32</sup> The quotation is from Antonelli's commentary in *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, I: *Giacomo da Lentini*, ed. by Roberto Antonelli, p. 493. Italics original.

<sup>33</sup> *Le poesie di Folchetto di Marsiglia*, ed. by Paolo Squillaciotti (Pisa: Pacini, 1999), pp. 211–28 (p. 219). See *BdT*, 155. 21.

The lyric ego compares the foolish lover to a moth and false love to fire: as the ‘parpaillos’ approaches the light of a fire as a result of its ‘folla natura’ (*Chansos*, 7. 11), so a naive lover is attracted to false love.

The image of the moth does not have a reference in the *Physiologus B-Is* and its tradition. However, the association between desire and the dangers of fire could easily bear moralising implications, as we read in the work known as the *Bestiario moralizzato*. Composed at the beginning of the fourteenth century, it is a compilation of sixty-four sonnets which make use of animals to deliver moral teachings, as we see in the sonnet ‘Del parpalione’:

Lo parpalione corre la riviera,  
là ove vede lo claro splendore,  
e tanto va girando la lumera,  
che lo consuma lo foco e l’ardore.  
Pare ke tenga simile mainera  
la creatura a l’omo peccatore:  
colla beleça de l’ornata cera  
lo lega a terribile encendore.

(*Bestiario moralizzato*, 54. 1–8)<sup>34</sup>

This example suggests that the medieval reader or listener could identify a moral meaning in the *topos* of the moth, interpreting the light as the sensual attractions of ‘l’ornata cera’ (*Bestiario moralizzato*, 54. 7) and the insect as the sinner.

After Folquet of Marselha, the image of the moth returns again in later thirteenth-century Italian lyrics. Among the poets of the Sicilian School, for example, the moth appears in Giacomo da Lentini’s sonnet ‘Sì como ’l parpaglion ch’à tal natura’ (*Rime*, 33), in the Siculo-Tuscan poet Inghilfredi’s *canzone* ‘Greve puot’on piacere a tutta gente’ (*Rime*, 4), and in the anonymous Siculo-Tuscan sonnet ‘Lo folle ardimento m’à conquiso’ (*Rime*, 35).<sup>35</sup> In the Tuscan context, the insect also figures in Guittone d’Arezzo’s sonnet ‘Gioncell’a fonte, parpaglione a foco’ (*Rime*, 167), in Chiaro Davanzati’s ‘Il parpaglion che fere a la lumera’ (*Rime*, 29), and in the poems of two minor correspondents of Bonagiunta Orbicciani da Lucca, namely in Gonella degli’Anterminelli’s sonnet ‘Una ragion,

<sup>34</sup> *Bestiari medievali*, p. 520.

<sup>35</sup> For the texts, see respectively *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, I, pp. 507–16; *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, III: *Poeti siculo-toscani*, ed. by Rosario Coluccia, pp. 535–43, 874–77. For the full list of the occurrences of the moth in the poets of the Sicilian School, see Montinaro, ‘Il “bestiario d’amore” della Scuola poetica siciliana’, pp. 11–12.

qual eo non sac[c]io, chero' (*Rime*, 16a) and Bonodico Notaro's sonnet 'Non so ragion, ma dico per pensiero' (*Rime*, 16b).<sup>36</sup>

In Petrarch's *Canzoniere* we find two references to the imagery associated with the moth, one allusive and one explicit. A covert association between the lyric persona and the nocturnal insect is found in sonnet 'Son animali al mondo de sì altera' (*Rvf*, 19):

Son animali al mondo de sì altera  
vista che 'ncontra 'l sol pur si difende;  
altri, però che 'l gran lume gli offende,  
non escon fuor se non verso la sera;  
et altri, col *desio folle* che spera  
gioir forse nel foco, perché splende,  
provan l'altra virtù, quella che 'ncende:  
lasso, e 'l mio loco è 'n questa ultima schera.  
Ch'i' non son forte ad aspettar la luce  
di questa donna, et *non so fare schermi*  
di luoghi tenebrosi, o d'ore tarde:  
però con *gli occhi lagrimosi e 'nfermi*  
mio destino a vederla mi conduce;  
et so ben ch'i' vo dietro a quel che m'arde.

(*Rvf*, 19)<sup>37</sup>

The poetic subject likens himself to those insects which, driven by a 'desio folle' (*Rvf*, 19. 5), seek the pleasures of light but experience the burning power of fire. Just as the insect causes its own damage, the poetic persona seeks the painful image and thoughts of the lady and leads himself into suffering. As he explains in the last verse, he deliberately pursues that which burns him: 'et so ben ch'i' vo dietro a quel che m'arde' (*Rvf*, 19. 14). By associating the nature of the insect with his own behaviour, the poet underlines the connection between desire and lack of rationality which is intrinsic to the status of animality.

The image of the moth in sonnet 19 seems to be reminiscent of the metaphor of the butterfly in Dante's *Purgatorio*:

O superbi cristian, miseri lassi,  
che, *de la vista de la mente infermi*,

<sup>36</sup> For Guittone's sonnet, see *Le rime di Guittone d'Arezzo*, ed. by Francesco Egidi (Bari: Laterza, 1940), p. 231. For Chiaro's poem, see Chiaro Davanzati, *Canzoni e sonetti*, ed. by Aldo Menichetti (Turin: Einaudi, 2004), pp. 106–07. For Gonella's and Bonodico's sonnets, see Bonagiunta Orbicciani da Lucca, *Rime*, ed. by Aldo Menichetti (Florence: SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2012), pp. 243–54 (pp. 244–49).

<sup>37</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 79–81 (p. 79). Italics mine.

fidanza avete ne' retrosi passi,  
 non v'accorgete voi che noi siam vermi  
 nati a formar l'angelica farfalla,  
 che vola a la giustizia senza *schermi*?  
 (*Purgatorio*, 10. 121–26)<sup>38</sup>

Dante addresses the proud as 'de la vista de la mente infermi' (*Purgatorio*, 10. 122). Petrarch's poetic subject, in turn, has 'gli occhi lagrimosi e 'nfermi' (*Rvf*, 19. 12). What is more, the two passages share the rhyming lemmas 'infermi' and 'schermi'. These textual parallels suggest a possible opposition between Petrarch's moth and Dante's butterfly, that is, a nocturnal and a diurnal insect. The former is associated with sensual desire, the latter with the good Christian's journey to God. The speaker in Petrarch's sonnet is doomed to be burned because of his inability to 'fare schermi' before the light of seduction (*Rvf*, 19. 10). The good Christians, by contrast, are able to fly towards the light of God 'sanza schermi' (*Purgatorio*, 10. 126), once they have purged themselves of the pride that leaves them 'infermi'.

Unlike in *Rvf* 19, the reference to the moth becomes explicit in the sonnet 'Come talora al caldo tempo sòle' (*Rvf*, 141):

Come talora al caldo tempo sòle  
 semplicità farfalla al lume avezza  
 volar negli occhi altrui per sua vaghezza,  
 onde aven ch'ella more, altri si dole:  
 così sempre io corro al fatal mio sole  
 degli occhi onde mi vèn tanta dolcezza  
 che 'l fren de la ragion Amor non prezza,  
 e chi discerne è vinto da chi vòle.  
 (*Rvf*, 141. 1–8)<sup>39</sup>

As the insect flies into bright eyes and is killed, so the poetic subject runs towards the light emanating from the lady, addressed as 'fatal mio sole' (*Rvf*, 141. 5), because desires prevail over any restraining function of reason. Again, as is the case with the previous sonnet, the poet sheds light on the irrational power of desire, which conquers reason: Love values the 'fren de la ragion' so little that 'chi discerne è vinto da chi vòle' (*Rvf*, 141. 7–8).

<sup>38</sup> Dante Alighieri, *Commedia*, ed. by Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi, 3 vols (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1991–1997), II: *Purgatorio*, pp. 287–314 (pp. 310–11). Italics mine.

<sup>39</sup> Petrarcha, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 689–90 (p. 689).

## 2.2. The Salamander

A second animal image associated with the fire of love in Petrarch and the troubadours is the salamander. This reptile was traditionally believed to be able to extinguish a fire. Pliny, for instance, writes that the salamander is so cold that it puts out fire purely through touch: ‘huic tantus rigor ut ignem tactu restinguat non alio modo quam glacies’ (*Naturalis historia*, X. 86. 188).<sup>40</sup> The *Physiologus B-Is*, in turn, interprets this nature in allegorical terms, likening the salamander to those human beings that live in accordance with God’s precepts and are thus able to pass through the fire of evil without being touched by its flames: ‘Ita et omnis quicumque ex fide sua crediderit in Deo et in operibus bonis perseveraverint, transit gehennam ignis et non tangit eum flamma’ (*Physiologus B-Is*, 31).<sup>41</sup>

In his song ‘Lo dolz chan[s] qu’au[g] de la calandra’ (*Chansos*, 7), Peire Raimon de Tolosa compares his lyric persona to a salamander on the grounds of its resistance to the flames. Like the reptile, the poetic subject embraces what is supposed to burn him:

E faz si cum la salamandra,  
quar es de tant fera freidor  
que viu el foc e la chalur  
esteing si que no·ill noz nient,  
et eu per bon entendement  
estreing cho que·m degra bruser.

(*Chansos*, 7. 11–16)<sup>42</sup>

The religious meanings associated with the salamander are transferred to a secular discourse: the good Christian who passes unharmed through the flames of evil is replaced with the good lover, who enjoys burning in the fire of passion. Likewise, the evil and its flames are replaced with the beloved and the fire of passion that originates with her. However, despite these replacements, the connection with the traditional spiritual meanings is not completely lost: the image suggests a covert parallel relationship between sin and love. A medieval reader or listener could easily trace the literary and cultural echoes of the salamander image, and could

<sup>40</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, III, p. 412.

<sup>41</sup> *Bestiari medievali*, p. 72.

<sup>42</sup> *Le poesie di Peire Raimon de Tolosa (introduzione, testi, traduzioni, note)*, ed. by Alfredo Cavaliere (Florence: Olschki, 1935), pp. 45–49 (p. 46). See *BdT*, 355. 8.

interpret the verses of Peire Raimon in the light of and in opposition to what is found in the *Physiologus*. The power of the image is thus further strengthened by the contrast with its spiritual resonances.<sup>43</sup>

In the Italian lyric context, we find the figure of the salamander, for example, in Inghilfredi's poem 'Audite forte cosa' (*Rime*, 1), in Guido Guinizzelli's *canzone* 'Lo fin pregi' avanzato' (*Rime*, 4), and in Chiaro Davanzati's sonnet 'La salamandra vive ne lo foco' (*Rime*, 32).<sup>44</sup>

The same association between the salamander and the lover who enjoys the flames of passion returns in Petrarch's *canzone* 'Ben mi credea passar mio tempo omai' (*Rvf*, 207):

Di mia morte mi pasco, et vivo in fiamme:  
stranio cibo, et mirabil salamandra;  
ma miracol non è, da tal si vòle.

(*Rvf*, 207. 40–02)<sup>45</sup>

As the reptile is immune to the fire of evil, so the subject of the poem burns but at the same time also lives on the flames of passion. While the troubadour Peire Raimon used the image of the salamander to emphasise the poetic subject's invulnerability, the lyric persona in Petrarch's poem acknowledges the negative consequences of his unrequited love. He describes the paradoxical condition of deriving nourishment from suffering and death.

### 2.3. The Phoenix

The most important animal reference which features in the troubadours and in Petrarch's *Canzoniere* is the phoenix. Its key role in the *Fragmenta* was also

---

<sup>43</sup> Similarly, in Peire de Cols's poem 'Si co·l soleilhs per sa nobla clardat' (*BdT*, 337), the fire which burns the subject is such that the further he detaches himself from it, the worse he feels; instead, like a salamander, he enjoys the fire and takes nourishment from it. For the text, see Rigaut de Berbezilh, *Liriche*, pp. 245–52 (p. 248), which attributes the poem to Peire de Cols d'Aorlac.

<sup>44</sup> For the texts, see respectively *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, III, pp. 495–504; Guido Guinizzelli, *Rime*, ed. by Luciano Rossi (Turin: Einaudi, 2002), pp. 23–29; Chiaro Davanzati, *Canzoni e sonetti*, pp. 112–13. Aside from the love-lyric genre, the salamander is also found, for example, in Cecco d'Ascoli's didactic poem *Acerba* (*Capitolo* 7). See *Bestiari medievali*, p. 585. For the full list of the occurrences of the salamander in the poets of the Sicilian School, see Montinaro, 'Il "bestiario d'amore" della Scuola poetica siciliana', p. 11.

<sup>45</sup> Petrarch, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 886–97 (p. 887).



underlined by Gianfranco Contini, who talked about Petrarch's 'sindrome linguistica della fenice'.<sup>46</sup>

The imagery associated with this bird has its roots in a well-established tradition that describes it as dying and being reborn again and again. Pliny the Elder writes that the phoenix is an exceptional bird, 'unum in toto orbe', famous for its extraordinary character (*Naturalis historia*, X. 2. 3).<sup>47</sup> *The Physiologus B-Is* interprets its endless cycle of burning and rebirth as a figure of Christ's passion:

Est aliut volatile quod dicitur phenix. Huius figuram gerit Dominus noster Iesus Christus [...]. De hac dicit Physiologus quia, expletis quingentis annis vite sue, intrat in lignis Libani et replet utrasque alas diversis aromatibus. Et quibusdam indiciis significatur sacerdoti civitatis Eliopolis [...]. Cum autem hoc significatum fuerit sacerdoti, ingreditur et implet aram de lignis sarmentorum. Cum advenerit volatile, [...] statim videns factam struem sarmentorum super aram, ascendit, et circumvolens se de aromatibus, ignem ipse sibi incendit et seipsum urit. [...] Rursum tercia die veniens sacerdos, invenit eam iam in statu suo integram atque factam avem fenicem. [...] Ergo [...] personam accipit Salvatoris nostri.

(*Physiologus B-Is*, 9)<sup>48</sup>

The *Physiologus* explains that every five hundred years the phoenix enters the forest of Lebanon, where it alerts the priest of the city of Heliopolis (the city of the sun). Once the priest has been alerted, he goes to an altar and heaps it with brushwood. When the bird arrives, it mounts the altar, ignites a fire and is consumed by the flames, leaving only ash behind. On the third day after the burning, the priest finds a grown phoenix, completely renewed. On the grounds of its sacrifice and its revival three days later, the phoenix is held to be an allegory of the Saviour.

Amongst the Occitan poets mentioned in Petrarch's *Triumphus cupidinis*, the image of the phoenix is found in Raimbaut d'Aurenga and Peire Vidal, who employ it as a symbol of the annihilation and rebirth of the lyric persona through the fire of love. In Raimbaut d'Aurenga's poem 'Après mon vers vueilh sempr'ordre' (*Chansos*, 4), the poet promises that, as the phoenix never dies, so will he be forever devoted to his lady:

<sup>46</sup> Gianfranco Contini, 'Saggio d'un commento alle correzioni del Petrarca volgare', in his *Varianti e altra linguistica*, pp. 5–31 (p. 24) (first publ. Florence: Sansoni, 1943).

<sup>47</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, III, p. 292.

<sup>48</sup> *Bestiari medievali*, pp. 24–26.

Plus qe ja fenis fenics  
non er q'ieu non si'amics.

(*Chansos*, 4. 64–65)<sup>49</sup>

In the poem 'Pus ubert ai mon ric thesaur' (*Chansos*, 35), Peire Vidal wishes he were a phoenix, alluding in this case to his destruction and rebirth through love:

Amiga, tant vos sui amics,  
q'az autras paresc enemics,  
e vuelh esser en vos Fenics;  
qu'autra jamais non amarai  
et en vos m'amor fenirai.

(*Chansos*, 35. 90–94)<sup>50</sup>

Both the poets employ the pseudo-etymological pun based on the association between the noun 'fenics' and the verb 'fenir' to show that their experience, like that of the phoenix, is simultaneously an end and a beginning. The medieval reader or listener could not help but associate the subject in Raimbaut d'Aurenga's and Peire Vidal's poems with Christ's passion and rebirth in the name of supreme love. As the rhyme between the terms 'fenics' and 'amics' reveals, however, Christ is replaced with the lover.<sup>51</sup>

In the Italian lyric context, the phoenix constitutes a recurrent *topos*. It is found, for example, in Giacomo da Lentini's sonnet 'Sì como 'l parpaglion' (*Rime*, 33) and in Inghilfredi's *canzone* 'Audite forte cosa che m'avene' (*Rime*, 1).<sup>52</sup> In addition, as we will see in Chapter 4, the phoenix also figures in Cino da Pistoia's sonnets of correspondence 'Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice' (*Rime*, 127a) and 'Anzi ch'Amore ne la mente guidi' (*Rime*, 134b).<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *The Life and Works of the Troubadour Raimbaut d'Orange*, ed. by Walter T. Pattison (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1952), pp. 78–83 (p. 80). See *BdT*, 389. 10.

<sup>50</sup> Peire Vidal, *Poesie*, ed. by D'Arco Silvio Avalle, 2 vols (Milan and Naples: Ricciardi, 1960), II, pp. 283–301 (p. 301). See *BdT*, 364. 38.

<sup>51</sup> See Amelia E. Van Vleck, *Memory and Re-Creation in Troubadour Lyric* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), p. 193.

<sup>52</sup> For the texts, see respectively *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, I, pp. 507–16; *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, III, pp. 495–504. For the full list of the occurrences of the phoenix in the poets of the Sicilian School, see Montinaro, 'Il "bestiario d'amore" della Scuola poetica siciliana', p. 12.

<sup>53</sup> For Cino's sonnets, see *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, ed. by Donato Pirovano (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2012), pp. 587–89, 611–12. Aside from the love-lyric genre, the phoenix also appears in Guittone d'Arezzo's *canzone morale* 'Vergogna ho, lasso, ed ho me stesso ad ira' (*Rime*, 26), in Dante's *Commedia* (*Inferno*, 24. 106–11), and in Cecco d'Ascoli *Acerba* (*Capitolo* 2). See respectively *Le rime di Guittone d'Arezzo*, pp. 61–65; Dante, *Commedia*, I: *Inferno*, pp. 701–28 (pp. 719–20); *Bestiari medievali*, pp. 581–82.

In Petrarch's *Canzoniere* the imagery of the phoenix plays a key role, in association with either the lover or the beloved.<sup>54</sup> The first reference occurs in the *canzone* 'Qual più diversa et nova' (*Rvf*, 135):

Là onde il dì vèn fore,  
vola un augel che sol senza consorte  
di volontaria morte  
rinasce, et tutto a viver si rinova.  
Così sol si ritrova  
lo mio voler, et così in su la cima  
de' suoi alti pensieri *al sol si volve*,  
et così si risolve,  
et così torna al suo stato di prima:  
arde, et more, et riprende i nervi suoi,  
et vive poi con la fenice a prova.

(*Rvf*, 135. 5–15)<sup>55</sup>

In these verses, Petrarch associates the poetic subject with the phoenix and the lady with the sun. This image is reminiscent of the tales in the *Physiologus B-Is*, in which the bird goes and burns itself in Heliopolis, the city of the sun. Unlike the two Occitan examples — which only make use of the symbolism of the phoenix's life cycle — Petrarch makes the role of burning explicit. As the phoenix burns and is born again in fire, so the lover dies and is revived because of and thanks to the lady. The central element of the stanza is the fire of love. By likening his beloved to the sun, Petrarch describes her as a source of fire. By likening the lover to the phoenix, the poet illustrates his endless burning and rebirth: love is pain and restoration at the same time. The image of the phoenix and the sun echoes the passion of Christ and illustrates the distance between the parable of the poetic persona and that of Christ. First, the sun is a symbol of God and, as we have seen, fire constitutes an allegory for love as *caritas*. Second, the phoenix allegorises Jesus's martyrdom. While the phoenix-Christ burns in *caritas*, the poetic subject dies and is revived because of his love for a woman. He loves an earthly creature in the same way as one is supposed to experience the supreme form of love for God.

<sup>54</sup> For the meta-poetic meanings of the phoenix in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, see Zambon, 'Il mito della fenice nella poesia romanza del medioevo'; Zambon, 'Sulla fenice del Petrarca'.

<sup>55</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 659–71 (p. 659). Italics mine.

The association of the lady with the sun could be misleading; it may be tempting to relate this image to the view of the lady as a beatifying presence. However, although the *canzone* does not describe the woman as a cruel entity, the poem is not centered on a spiritualisation of the experience of love, as is the case elsewhere, but is concerned with the pain of an unrequited sensual love.<sup>56</sup> Suffice it to note that the second stanza of the *canzone* associates the beloved with a catoblepas, a legendary creature from Ethiopia:

Ne l'extremo occidente  
una fera è soave et queta tanto  
che nulla più, ma pianto  
et doglia et morte dentro agli occhi porta:  
molto convene accorta  
esser qual vista mai ver' lei si giri;  
pur che gli occhi non miri,  
l'altro puossi veder securamente.  
Ma io incauto, dolente,  
corro sempre al mio male, et so ben quanto  
n'ò sofferto, et n'aspetto; ma l'engordo  
voler ch'è cieco et sordo  
sì mi trasporta, che 'l bel viso santo  
et gli occhi vaghi fien cagion ch'io pèra,  
di questa fera angelica innocente.

(Rvf, 135. 31–45)<sup>57</sup>

According to Pliny, whoever sees the eyes of the catoblepas dies immediately: 'omnibus qui oculos eius videre confestim expirantibus' (*Naturalis historia*, VIII. 32).<sup>58</sup> Despite the danger that the beast poses, the poet acknowledges that the catoblepas 'una fera è soave et queta tanto' (Rvf, 135. 32). It does not kill deliberately: anyone who looks at its eyes is responsible for his own destruction. Likewise, the subject does not blame his beloved for his pain, holding himself solely responsible. His 'engordo | voler' (Rvf, 135. 41–42) to see the 'bel viso santo' of the lady (Rvf, 135. 43) will be the cause of his death. Just as the person who looks at the catoblepas dies because of his own lack of caution, so the phoenix burns because it gets too close to the sun. In both cases, the subject is the cause of the suffering.

<sup>56</sup> I will discuss the positive and negative views of the lady in Chapter 3 (part 2).

<sup>57</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, p. 660.

<sup>58</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, III, p. 56.

While the image of the phoenix in *Rvf* 135 illustrates the condition of the subject, sonnets 185 and 321 make use of the image of the bird in association with the lady, with an increasing emphasis on her celestial traits. Petrarch thus accentuates the innocence of the lady with regard to his own suffering.

The sonnet ‘Questa fenice de l’aurata piuma’ (*Rvf*, 185) sheds light on the uniqueness of the lady as a celestial creature:

Questa fenice de l’aurata piuma  
al suo bel collo, candido, gentile,  
forma senz’arte un sì caro monile,  
ch’ogni cor addolcisce, e ’l mio consuma:  
    forma un diadema natural ch’alluma  
l’aere d’intorno; e ’l tacito focile  
d’Amor tragge indi un liquido sottile  
foco che m’arde a la più algente bruma.  
    Purpurea vesta d’un ceruleo lembo  
sparso di rose i belli homeri vela:  
novo habito, et bellezza unica et sola.  
    Fama ne l’odorato et ricco grembo  
d’arabi monti lei ripone et cela,  
che per lo nostro ciel sì altera vola.

(*Rvf*, 185)<sup>59</sup>

Commentaries observe that the image of the phoenix could be linked to the previous sonnet in the *Canzoniere*, ‘Amor, Natura, et la bella alma humile’ (*Rvf*, 184), in which Laura is described as so ill that her life is in danger. Nature keeps her alive with such a weak thread that there is barely enough strength to sustain her: ‘Natura tèn costei d’un sì gentile | laccio, che nullo sforzo è che sostegna’ (*Rvf*, 184. 5–6).<sup>60</sup> In this way, the image of the bird in sonnet 185 may allude to the lady’s illness and recovery, in the fashion of a phoenix dying and being reborn. In addition, the verses of sonnet 185 seem to offer a parallel between the lady and Christ. She wears ‘un diadema natural ch’alluma | l’aere d’intorno’ (*Rvf*, 185. 5–6), which recalls a halo, and ‘per lo nostro ciel sì altera vola’ (*Rvf*, 185. 14), in the style of a heavenly creature. However, while the phoenix-Christ emphasises the role of the Saviour who redeems humanity, the phoenix-lady fuels the subject’s

<sup>59</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 814–16 (p. 814).

<sup>60</sup> Ibidem, pp. 812–13 (p. 812). On the possible connection between *Rvf* 184 and *Rvf* 185, see, for example, the commentaries in Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, p. 814; *Canzoniere*, ed. by Vecchi Galli, pp. 675–76; *Canzoniere*, ed. by Bettarini, I, p. 848.

sensual love. The former saves mankind, the latter kindles a fire in the lover which burns him ‘a la più algente bruma’ (*Rvf*, 185. 8).<sup>61</sup>

The topic of the lady as a celestial phoenix in opposition to the fire of love which burns the subject returns with greater intensity in the sonnet ‘È questo ’l nido in che la mia fenice’ (*Rvf*, 321):

È questo ’l nido in che la mia fenice  
mise l’aurate et le purpuree penne,  
che sotto le sue ali il mio cor tenne,  
et parole et sospiri ancho ne elice?  
O del dolce mio mal prima radice,  
ov’è il bel viso onde quel lume venne  
che vivo et lieto ardendo mi mantenne?  
Sol’ eri in terra; or se’ nel ciel felice.  
Et m’ài lasciato qui misero et solo,  
talché pien di duol sempre al loco torno  
che per te consecrato honoro et còlo;  
veggendo a’ colli oscura notte intorno  
onde prendesti al ciel l’ultimo volo,  
et dove li occhi tuoi solean far giorno.

(*Rvf*, 321)<sup>62</sup>

Here, Petrarch uses the image of the phoenix to further develop the association between the lady and Christ in their eternal rebirth. Laura left her earthly life and was revived ‘nel ciel felice’ (*Rvf*, 321. 8). While Christ has redeemed humanity, Laura’s death and revival in heaven has not freed the subject from his suffering: he remains ‘misero et solo’ and ‘pien di duol’ (*Rvf*, 321. 9–10). These verses are reminiscent of the *congedo* of *canzone* 270:

Morte m’à sciolto, Amor, d’ogni tua legge:  
quella che fu mia donna al ciel è gita,  
lasciando *trista et libera mia vita*.

(*Rvf*, 270. 106–08)<sup>63</sup>

As I will observe in Chapter 4, the lady’s death has broken the chain of sensual love, the physical instantiation being no longer possible, but has not prevented the subject from remaining fixated on the beloved. She is addressed as ‘del dolce mio

<sup>61</sup> The same emphasis on the lady’s exceptional character, likened to a phoenix, is found in *Rvf* 210.

<sup>62</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1235–37 (p. 1235).

<sup>63</sup> Ibidem, pp. 1094–106 (p. 1097). Italics mine.

mal prima radice' (*Rvf*, 321. 5). Unlike Christ, then, the phoenix-lady, with her sacrifice, has not brought about any form of liberation.

Towards the end of the *Canzoniere*, the lyric ego looks back over his love for the dead lady and revisits his previous allusions to the fire of love. The subject observes that the lady's sight, as a 'lume', kept him aflame 'vivo et lieto ardendo' (*Rvf*, 321. 6–7). The image constitutes the last component of what I have termed the 'bestiario igneo'. The references to the light of the beloved's eyes and to the subject's inflamed state recall the images of the moth in *Rvf* 19 and 141 and the salamander in *Rvf* 207, but also the phoenix in *Rvf* 135. While in those poems the subject blames himself for his dangerous and painful desire, now that the lady is dead, he nostalgically recalls the time of sensual attraction, when he joyfully burned through desire.

\*\*\*

The *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* share with the troubadours — but also with Italian lyric poets — some important animal references which derive from the bestiary tradition. When transferred into lyric poetry, these images implicitly integrate elements of their original spiritual meanings into a discourse on secular love. This does not mean that poets such as Folquet de Marselha, Peire Raimon, Raimbaut d'Aurenga, Peire Vidal, and Petrarch intend to provide a moralising message. Their verses remain anchored in the dimension of secular love. However, the use of bestiary images reinforces the lyric narrative by virtue of the covert dialectics between the conduct of the good Christian and the sensual experience of the lover. It is worth noting that all these images are reworked and reshaped in complex ways. In the cases of the moth in *Rvf* 19 and the phoenix in *Rvf* 135, Petrarch does not even mention the animal in question by name, but only alludes to its nature.

### **3. Petrarch, Arnaut Daniel, and the *Adynaton* of the Chasing Ox**

Arnaut Daniel's poetry is rich in vivid images belonging to the semantic field of the natural world, as is common in Occitan poetry. Animal images serve either to

delineate a stylised framework in which to set the lyric scene — mostly in the first *coblas* — or to build the tropes for the narrative.<sup>64</sup>

Birds, mentioned in generic terms such as ‘auzel’ and ‘auzelho’, are the most cited category, recurring nine times throughout Arnaut Daniel’s *oeuvre*.<sup>65</sup> Like other references to nature, such as flowers and fruits, they do not figure as tropes but are employed as part of a spring *locus amoenus* which inspires the poetic persona to *trobar*.<sup>66</sup> For instance, in the introductory stanza of the poem ‘Chanson do·l mot son plan e prim’ (*Chansos*, 2), the lyric persona sets the creation of his song in a spring-like scene:

Chanson do·l mot son plan e prim  
fas mas era botono·l vim,  
e·l ausor sim  
son de color  
de manta flor,  
e verdeia la fuoilla,  
e·ill chant e·ill braill  
sona a l’ombraill  
dels ausels per la brueilla.

(*Chansos*, 2. 1–9)<sup>67</sup>

The subject emphasises the inspiring power of colourful flowers, green leaves and singing birds, which are heard throughout the grove. Elsewhere, birds are not simply elements of the lyric setting but are mentioned for the purpose of comparing their song with the poetic persona’s words of love, as in the first stanza of the poem ‘Doutz braitz e crits’ (*Chansos*, 12):

Doutz braitz e crits  
e chans e sos e voutas  
aug dels *auzelhs* qu’en lur lati fan prec  
quecs ab sa par, atressi cum nos fam

<sup>64</sup> In Arnaut Daniel’s *chansos* I have identified eight types of animals recurring twenty times. We find birds, mentioned in generic terms (*Chansos*, 2. 9; 5. 4; 8. 4; 9. 7; 11. 5, 24; 12. 3; 12. 35’; 13. 3); the ox and the hare (*Chansos*, 10. 44; 14. 4; 16. 7); the horse (*Chansos*, 17. 35); the dove and the cuckoo (*Chansos*, 4. 34); the frog (*Chansos*, 5. 4); and the snake (*Chansos*, 12. 15).

<sup>65</sup> The lemma ‘auzel’, also in the variant spelling ‘ausel’ and ‘aucel’, is found in *Chansos*, 2. 9; 5. 4; 8. 4; 9. 7; 11. 5, 24; 12. 3; 13. 3. The lemma ‘auzelho’ is in *Chansos*, 12. 35’. See Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, p. 358.

<sup>66</sup> For instance, flowers, trees and fruits evoke spring and its ability to inspire the poet (*Chansos*, 2. 1–18; 5. 1–7; 8. 1–9; 12. 1–8). However, elsewhere natural images belonging to the semantic field of seasons do not illustrate their effect on the lyric persona but serve to emphasise the opposition between a wintry landscape and the poetic subject, who remains alive only thanks to love (*Chansos*, 3. 1–16; 11. 1–8).

<sup>67</sup> Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, pp. 25–39 (p. 29). See *BdT*, 29. 6.



ab las amigas en cui entendem;  
e doncas eu, qu'en la gensor entendi,  
dei far chanso que sia de tal obra  
que no-i aia mot fals ni rima estrampa.

(*Chansos*, 12. 1–8)<sup>68</sup>

As birds sing in homage to their beloveds, so the poetic ego should devote words of love to his lady. In Chapter 4, we will see that the image of birds singing ‘en lur lati’ (*Chansos*, 12. 3) will return in Guido Cavalcanti’s ‘Fresca rosa novella’ (*Rime*, 1).

One of the most famous animal images in Arnaut Daniel’s poems is the hyperbole of the ox and the hare in the song ‘Ab gai so coinde <e> leri’ (*Chansos*, 10):

Ges per maltrag qu'en soferi  
de ben amar no·m destoli;  
si tot me te endesert,  
per leis faz lo so e·l rima:  
pieg tragtz aman c'om que laura,  
c'anc non amet plus d'un uou  
cel de Moncli n'Odierna.

*Eu sui Arnauz qu'amas l'aura  
e cas la leure ab lo boeu  
e nadi contra suberna.*

(*Chansos*, 10. 36–45)<sup>69</sup>

The last stanza offers examples of *adynata* or *impossibilia* which illustrate the poetic subject’s trials in love: for him, obtaining his beloved’s favour is an endeavour as challenging as gathering up the breeze, catching a swift hare with a slow ox or swimming against the current.<sup>70</sup> These images serve to exalt Arnaut’s role both as a poet and as a lover. In fact, not only does the poet’s suffering not prevent him from either loving, ‘ben amar’, or composing the melody and rhymes, ‘lo so e·l rima’ (*Chansos*, 10. 37–39), but it also leads him to attempt the impossible in his trials in love, both in his actions and in his verses. A similar

<sup>68</sup> Ibidem, pp. 189–211 (p. 196). See *BdT*, 29. 8. Italics mine.

<sup>69</sup> Ibidem, pp. 139–58 (p. 147). See *BdT*, 29. 10. Italics mine.

<sup>70</sup> In classical rhetoric, such as in Quintilian’s treatise, hyperbole is included among the tropes (*Institutio Oratoria*, VIII. 6). Heinrich Lausberg, in turn, states that *adynaton* is a specific type of hyperbole. See Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, ed. and trans. by Donald A. Russell, 5 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), III, pp. 425–69 (pp. 465–69); Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der Literarischen Rhetorik: Eine Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft* (Munich: Hueber, 1960), pp. 299–300, 454.

image appears in *chanso* ‘Amors e iois e luecs e temps’, where the lyric subject remembers a past time in which he attempted to hunt a hare with an ox, for the *joi d’amour* (*Chansos*, 14. 4). As we have seen, this poem is what Petrarch calls the ‘Cantilena Arnaldi Danielis’ in the annotation of MS Casanatense 924 (fol. 101<sup>r</sup>). The hyperbolic meaning of the *adynaton* is even clearer in the poem ‘Ans que sim reston de·ls brancas’, where the speaker claims that his ox is speedier than the hare (*Chansos*, 16. 7).<sup>71</sup>

The image of the hare and the ox has no precedents in romance literature, but is first documented in Plutarch’s *On Tranquillity of Mind*. Later, it also appears in the Middle Latin *Dialogus Salomonis et Marcolfi*, in which we read: “‘Diem hodie et diem cras’”, dicit bos qui leporem sequitur’ (*Dialogus*, 140b).<sup>72</sup> It is the Arnaut model, however, that has important echoes in Petrarch, who uses this *adynaton* twice.<sup>73</sup> The first use occurs in the sonnet ‘Beato in sogno et di languir contento’ (*Rvf*, 212), where it follows two other Arnautian *adynata*, namely the gathering of the breeze and the swimming against the current:

Beato in sogno et di languir contento,  
d’abbracciar l’ombre et *seguir l’aura estiva*,  
*nuoto per mar che non à fondo o riva*,  
solco onde, e ’n rena fondo, et scrivo in vento;  
e ’l sol vagheggio, sì ch’elli à già spento  
col suo splendor la mia virtù visiva,  
*et una cerva errante et fugitiva*  
*caccio con un bue zoppo e ’nfermo et lento*.  
Cieco et stanco ad ogni altro ch’al mio danno  
il qual dì et notte palpitando cerco,  
sol Amor et madonna, et Morte, chiamo.  
Così venti anni, grave et lungo affanno,  
pur lagrime et sospiri et dolor merco:  
in tale stella presi l’ésca et l’amo.

(*Rvf*, 212)<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> For the texts, see Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, pp. 246–59, 276–94. See *BdT*, 29. 1 and *BdT*, 29. 3.

<sup>72</sup> See Spaggiari, ‘Cacciare la lepre col bue’, pp. 1335–36. The verse of the *Dialogus* is in *Thesaurus Proverbiorum Medii Aevii: Lexicon der Sprichwörter des romanish-germanischen Mittelalters*, ed. by Samuel Singer and others, 14 vols (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1995), VIII, p. 242.

<sup>73</sup> See, for example, Holmes, ‘Petrarch and the Vernacular Lyric Past’, pp. 155–57.

<sup>74</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 910–13 (p. 910). Italics mine.

The second use appears in the *sestina* 'Là ver' l'aurora, che sì dolce l'aura' (*Rvf*, 239), that is to say, in a metrical structure of Arnautian origin.<sup>75</sup> As in Arnaut's work, the first stanza of Petrarch's poem establishes a comparison between the spring scene and the lyric persona's poetic inspiration. However, any trials in love are doomed to fail, as the lady is adamant in her coldhearted attitude. The image of the ox follows six verses in which the lyric subject expresses his over-optimistic belief in the power of poetry:

Nulla al mondo è che non possano i versi:  
et li aspidi incantar sanno in lor note,  
nonché 'l gielo adornar di novi fiori.

Ridon or per le piagge herbette et fiori:  
esser non pò che quella angelica alma  
non senta il suon de l'amorose note.  
Se nostra ria fortuna è di più forza,  
lagrimando et cantando i nostri versi  
*et col bue zoppo andrem cacciando l'aura.*

(*Rvf*, 239. 28–36)<sup>76</sup>

Petrarch's images display some slight differences with respect to Arnaut Daniel's *adynaton*. In sonnet 212, he changes the target of the chase, replacing the hare with a hind. In *sestina* 239, he replaces the hare with the evanescent breeze. Moreover, in both cases Petrarch further emphasises the slowness of the ox by referring to it as lame, echoing, as Barbara Spaggiari has suggested, the Homeric archetype of the lame Hephaestus catching the powerful Ares.<sup>77</sup> In Petrarch's poems, the *impossibilium* of the chasing ox illustrates the poetic ego's fruitless endeavours in obtaining the love of Laura, who is symbolised by a swift hind (*Rvf*, 212. 7) and by the evanescent breeze (*Rvf*, 239. 36). In addition, as I shall propose in the following paragraphs, the *adynaton* in both poems also conveys meta-poetic meanings.

<sup>75</sup> See Pietro G. Beltrami, *La metrica italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991), pp. 228–30. The earliest example of *canzone sestina* is a poem by Arnaut Daniel, 'Lo ferm voler qu'el cor m'intra' (*Chansos*, 18). However, as Pietro Beltrami observes, Petrarch's *sestine* are also influenced by Dante: in Dante's only *sestina*, 'Al poco giorno e al gran cerchio d'ombra' (*Rime*, 41), he replaced Arnaut's heptasyllables and decasyllables with *endecasillabi*, as Petrarch himself does. For Arnaut's and Dante's poems, see Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, pp. 329–45; Dante, *Opere*, I, pp. 476–84.

<sup>76</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 986–90 (pp. 986–87). Italics mine.

<sup>77</sup> See Spaggiari, 'Cacciare la lepre col bue', pp. 1383–403. The story of the lame Hephaestus who catches the powerful Ares is in Homer, *Odyssey*, VIII. 266–366.

### 3.1. The *Adynaton* of the Chasing Ox in *Rvf* 212

The image of the ‘cerva errante et fugitiva’ in the sonnet ‘Beato in sogno et di languir contento’ (*Rvf*, 212. 7) serves as a symbol of the inviolable chastity of the beloved, in line with the positive meaning associated with the hind in the Christian tradition.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, it also encapsulates a reflection on the relationship between love and poetry, which is consistent with the reference to writing at the beginning of the sonnet, where the subject describes his frustration with the paradox ‘scrivo in vento’ (*Rvf*, 212. 4). In order to better understand this point, let us consider the adjective ‘errante’, which qualifies the hind (*Rvf*, 212. 7). The *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini* defines it as something or somebody changeable, ‘che si muove continuamente senza una direzione e un obiettivo determinati’, but also, with moral connotations, ‘che devia’, ‘che si trova in uno stato di confusione emotiva, di smarrimento’, ‘che non valuta correttamente la realtà o una sua manifestazione, che si comporta in un modo non conforme ad una norma condivisa’.<sup>79</sup> I argue that this adjective can be associated with Petrarch’s poetry in two respects: first, it alludes to the varied nature of his lyrics, which reflect the disharmonious experience of love on the part of the subject; second, it evokes the idea of a moral and spiritual error related to love, which is at the heart of his poems and which the collection itself recounts. My argument is supported by two observations.

The first indication of this association can be found in Petrarch’s proemial sonnet, ‘Voi ch’ascoltate in rime sparse il suono’ (*Rvf*, 1), where the lyric voice establishes a link between his ‘primo giovanile errore’ (*Rvf*, 1. 3) and the ‘vario stile’ (*Rvf*, 1. 5).<sup>80</sup> This connection suggests not only that the poetic persona’s youthful error led him to compose fragmentary poems in a varied style, but also that it provided the lyrics themselves, and the songbook in which they are collected, with their subject. It could be no coincidence that both sonnets 1 and 212 present the same polar opposition between hope and pain. The former relates

<sup>78</sup> On the hind in the Bible and in Scriptural exegesis, see Maria Pia Ciccarese, *Animali simbolici: alle origini del bestiario cristiano*, 2 vols (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 2002), I, pp. 331–34. I will discuss the imagery associated with the hind in Chapter 3.

<sup>79</sup> *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini*, ed. by Lino Leonardi and others <<http://tlio.ovi.cnr.it/>> [accessed 26 May 2018].

<sup>80</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 5–12 (p. 5).

the ‘vario stile’ (*Rvf*, 1. 5) to the oscillation between ‘le vane speranze e ’l van dolore’ (*Rvf*, 1. 6). The latter, correspondingly, describes the poetic subject as being split between the illusionary state of being ‘Beato in sogno et di languir contento’ (*Rvf*, 212. 1) in his impossible trials, and that of being ‘Cieco et stanco ad ogni altro ch’al [suo] danno’ (*Rvf*, 212. 9). The varied style mirrors the lyric ego’s fluctuation between euphoric and dysphoric moods. This condition is the consequence of his youthful error. The etymological link between the noun ‘errore’ (*Rvf*, 1. 3) and the adjective ‘errante’ (*Rvf*, 212. 7) suggests that the image of the hind may, through its association with the beloved, serve to emphasise the link between Petrarch’s error and his lyrics.

While fragmentation is the result of the condition in which the lyric persona found himself earlier in his life, it is worth reminding ourselves that the collection as a whole aims to offer a critical account of his error and of the individual poems that sprang from it. At the end of the *Secretum*, Petrarch’s alter ego Francis, having conducted a three-day-long dialogue with Augustine, commits himself to collecting the scattered fragments of his soul and practising self-vigilance: ‘Adero michi ipse quantum potero, et sparsa anime fragmenta recolligam, moraborque mecum sedulo’ (*Secretum*, III. 214).<sup>81</sup> The moral resolution to gather the ‘sparsa anime fragmenta’ results, on a literary level, in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*.<sup>82</sup>

The second indication of the association between the adjective ‘errante’ and Petrarch’s poetry can be found in the sonnet ‘Parrà forse ad alcun che ’n lodar quella’ (*Rvf*, 247), where the poet writes that praising an earthly creature such as Laura may lead to his style being considered ‘errante’ (*Rvf*, 247. 2).<sup>83</sup> Here, the lyric persona again addresses the relationship between his experience of love and his poetry, in terms of style and subject. The use of this same adjective as in sonnet 212 suggests again that the image of the hind may allude to the interplay between Petrarch’s experience of love and his poetry.

In brief, I propose that the image of the hind in sonnet 212 denotes what Petrarch’s experience of love has yielded: the ‘cerva errante’ (*Rvf*, 212. 7) symbolises the ‘vario stile’ of the poet’s lyrics (*Rvf*, 1. 5); at the same time, it illustrates the secular type of poetry derived from the lyric persona’s ‘errore’ (*Rvf*,

<sup>81</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Secretum*, ed. by Enrico Fenzi, 10th edn (Milan: Mursia, 2015), p. 282.

<sup>82</sup> See Santagata, *I frammenti dell’anima*, pp. 41–75.

<sup>83</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1010–12 (p. 1010).

1. 3). Therefore, the *adynaton* of the ox chasing the hind has a double meaning: first, it represents the poet's fruitless endeavours to reach his beloved; second, on a meta-poetic level, it is emblematic of the impact of Petrarch's experience of love on his lyrics.

### 3.2. The *Adynaton* of the Chasing Ox in *Rvf* 239

The phrase 'l'aura' in *sestina* 'Là ver' l'aurora' (*Rvf*, 239) constitutes a play on words that alludes again to both the beloved and Petrarch's poetry. Before proceeding, let us consider again the verses related to this play on words in the *sestina*:

Nulla al mondo è che non possano i versi:  
et li aspidi incantar sanno in lor note,  
nonché 'l gielo adornar di novi fiori.  
Ridon or per le piagge herbe et fiori:  
esser non pò che quella angelica alma  
non senta il suon de l'amorose note.  
Se nostra ria fortuna è di più forza,  
lagrimando et cantando i nostri versi  
et col bue zoppo andrem cacciando l'aura.

(*Rvf*, 239. 28–36)<sup>84</sup>

The expression 'l'aura' is directly related to the lady herself, on the basis of a phonic — and in medieval manuscripts, also graphic — equivalence between the Italian word for the breeze, preceded by its article, and the name of the beloved, Laura. At the same time, the phrase is also related to the Italian name for the laurel, *lauro*, which is a symbol of poetry in Petrarch.<sup>85</sup> A direct association between the expression 'l'aura' and poetry is found in *sestina* 239. In the third stanza, the speaker complains that his beloved is as resistant to his verses 'com'aspr'alpe a

<sup>84</sup> Ibidem, pp. 986–90 (pp. 986–87). Italics mine.

<sup>85</sup> On Petrarch's laurel, see Gianfranco Contini, 'Préhistoire de l'aura de Pétrarque', in his *Varianti e altra linguistica*, pp. 193–99 (first publ. in *Actes et mémoires du premier congrès international de langue et littérature du Midi de la France* (Avignon: Palais du Roure, 1957), pp. 113–18); John Freccero, 'The Fig Tree and the Laurel: Petrarch's Poetics', *Diacritics*, 5.1 (1975), 34–40; Cesare Segre, 'Les isotopies de Laure', in *Exigences et perspectives de la sémiotique: recueil d'hommages pour Algirdas Julien Greimas*, ed. by Herman Parret and Hans-George Ruprecht, 2 vols (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins, 1985), II, pp. 811–26; Barbara Spaggiari, 'Il tema "west-östlicher" dell'aura', *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., 26 (1985), 185–290; Sara Sturm-Maddox, *Petrarch's Laurels* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992). For a literature review of the relationship between the name of the beloved and the laurel, see Unn Falkeid, 'Petrarch's Laura and the Critics', *Modern Language Notes*, 127.1 (2012), 64–71.

l'aura | dolce': the breeze 'ben move frondi et fiori, | ma nulla pò se 'ncontra maggior forza' (*Rvf*, 239. 16–18).<sup>86</sup>

To unveil the meta-poetic meaning of the *adynaton* in *Rvf* 239, we should look at what the poet writes in the fifth and sixth stanzas of the *sestina*. Here, the lyric ego, in an outburst of optimism, appeals to the universal power of poetry, claiming even that poems 'li aspidi incantar sanno in lor note' (*Rvf*, 239. 29). The bestiary tradition conceives of the asp as a creature insensitive to enchanters: '[aspis] obturat aures suas et non audit vocem incantantium' (*Physiologus B-Is*, 27).<sup>87</sup> By applying this general belief to his personal story, he affirms that his beloved's 'angelica alma' cannot remain insensitive to 'il suon de l'amorose note' (*Rvf*, 239. 32–33). Within a few verses, the poetic subject establishes an association between the asp and Laura, emphasising this relationship further through the repetition of the term 'note' in reference to both the snake and the lady: as poetry can charm an asp, so it may win over Laura's resistance too. However, after his optimistic words, the lyric persona recognises the limits of his own art (*Rvf*, 239. 34–35), which may not be as omnipotent as he hoped, and describes his likely failure through the *adynaton* of the 'bue zoppo' that chases 'l'aura' (*Rvf*, 239. 36). In fact, that his verses are bound to fail has already been foreshadowed by the image of the 'aspr'alpe a l'aura' (*Rvf*, 239. 16).

Why does Petrarch first express and then seem to abandon, in the course of only a few verses, his faith in poetry? While he states that poetry has a generalised power, the secular character of his own 'amorose note' (*Rvf*, 239. 33) is inadequate in the face of Laura's 'angelica alma' (*Rvf*, 239. 32). In this way, Petrarch again underlines the chastity of Laura, who remains as insensitive to any temptations as an asp. The same concept is also encapsulated in sonnet 247, where the poetic subject acknowledges that 'Lingua mortale al suo stato divino | giunger non pote' (*Rvf*, 247. 12–13).<sup>88</sup> The sudden change occurring in *sestina* 239 recalls the nature of the 'vario stile' and the split of the subject 'fra le vane speranze e 'l van dolore' (*Rvf*, 1. 5–6). This fluctuation is reflected in the antithesis between weeping and non-weeping that characterises both *Rvf* 1 and *Rvf* 239. In the proemial sonnet we read the expression 'piango et ragiono' (*Rvf*, 1. 5); in the

<sup>86</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, p. 986.

<sup>87</sup> *Bestiari medievali*, pp. 64–66 (p. 64).

<sup>88</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1010–12 (p. 1010).

*sestina* we find the verbs ‘lagrimando et cantando’ (*Rvf*, 239. 35), which precede the image of the ox.

\*\*\*

In summary, the image of the chasing ox conveys meta-poetic meanings in both sonnet 212 and *sestina* 239. In *Rvf* 212, the lyric persona emphasises his failure as a lover and acknowledges that his love for Laura led him into error, as a man and as a poet. However, his unsatisfied desire and that which is wrong on a moral level prove to be productive on a poetic level. Frustration and error are the factors that create and inform his poetry. In *sestina* 239, Petrarch illustrates the impossibility of reaching both his angelic beloved and a type of poetry adequate for this purpose, declaring his impotence as a lover and poet. Again, as in sonnet 212, those elements that the lyric voice mentions as limits on a spiritual level turn out to be the same elements that inform his poetic art.

The use of the same image of the chasing ox reveals the different attitudes of Arnaut Daniel and Petrarch towards the trials of love and poetry in relation to their beloveds’ resistance. With regard to their actions, while Arnaut’s suffering does not prevent him from attempting impossible endeavours, the ‘sorda et rigida alma’ of Laura (*Rvf*, 239. 38) causes Petrarch to experience a state of frustration, in which the poetic persona claims to have been unable to find anything other than ‘grave et lungo affanno’ (*Rvf*, 212. 12). In his poetry, Arnaut Daniel describes himself as someone who does not give up, and celebrates the power of his own poems; Petrarch, in spite of his hope that poetry can achieve anything, acknowledges the limits of his verses informed by secular love, which have fallen into error and risk failing in their efforts to secure the attention of his angelic beloved. However, it is this sense of failure and error that produces Petrarch’s poetry. The lyric voice’s unrequited love represents the generative nucleus of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, as it provides the poet with both the subject of his lyrics and the motivation for collecting them in his masterpiece.



## Conclusion

This chapter has shed light on the profile of a poet, Petrarch, who looks back at the past. As we have seen in reference to the images of the moth, the salamander and the phoenix, the poet relies on *topoi* and figurative procedures of bestiary derivation, which are also found in the works of the troubadours, as well as in the thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Italian context. In other words, Petrarch draws on and refreshes a repertoire that was already in use not only in poetry but also in didactic works, if we take into account the tradition of the Latin *Physiologus* and its vernacular renderings. In contrast, with regard to the *adynata* of the chasing ox, Petrarch adopts and reworks Arnaut's model. In both cases, but in different ways, he builds on and recasts an existing reservoir of images.

This attitude towards tradition is in keeping with the principle of *mellificatio*, which Petrarch advocates in the *Familiaries*.<sup>89</sup> In a letter to Thomas Messanensis, he suggests that poets should work like bees, which do not keep flowers in their original form but produce wax and honey from them: 'apes in inventionibus imitandas, quae flores, non quales acceperint, referunt, sed ceras ac mella mirifica quadam permixtione conficiunt' (*Familiaries*, I. 8. 2).<sup>90</sup> The same principle is further developed and clarified in a letter to Giovanni Boccaccio. First, Petrarch claims that a text should relate to the previous tradition just as a son resembles his father: what is similar is elusive, because the resemblance is to be felt and evoked rather than openly expressed. Subsequently, he reprises the image of the bees, recommending that writers blend flowers into a oneness that is unlike them all, and is better: 'ut scribamus scilicet sicut apes mellificant, non servatis floribus sed in favos versis, ut ex multis et variis unum fiat, idque aliud et melius' (*Familiaries*, XXIII. 19. 11–13).<sup>91</sup>

As we will see in greater detail in Chapter 4, this *mellificatio* also emerges with other traditional animal images, such as those of bird-trapping, which are remoulded in accordance with the editorial project of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*.

<sup>89</sup> In his discussion of the *mellificatio*, Petrarch explicitly refers to Seneca, who makes use of a similar image of bees in the *Epistulae ad Lucilium*, LXXXIV. 3, 5–7.

<sup>90</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Le Familiari*, ed. by Vittorio Rossi and Umberto Bosco, 4 vols (Florence: Sansoni, 1933–1942), I, pp. 39–44 (p. 39).

<sup>91</sup> Petrarca, *Le Familiari*, IV, pp. 203–07 (p. 206).

## Chapter 3

### Petrarch and Dante

#### Introduction

The third stanza of ‘Lasso me’ ends with the incipit of Dante’s *canzone* ‘Così nel mio parlar vogli’esser aspro’ (*Rime*, 43).<sup>1</sup> Along with the list of Italian lyric poets in the *Triumphs* (*Triumphus cupidinis*, IV. 28–38), this verse constitutes the only direct reference to Dante in Petrarch’s vernacular writings. If, as Theodore Cachey has argued, Petrarch was ‘assertively engaged in consolidating his own position as a vernacular poet vis-à-vis Dante’, then animal imagery may offer one way of exploring Petrarch’s supposedly self-consciously contrastive positioning.<sup>2</sup>

It is very clear that studies have sought out ways of establishing contrasts between Dante and Petrarch, including in their use of images. Gianfranco Contini, in an article which has strongly influenced successive Dante and Petrarch studies, distinguishes between Dante’s allegorism and Petrarch’s emblematicism:

Come lo Stil Novo, Petrarca si esercita nella fenomenologia amorosa, fa dell’autobiografismo trascendentale, accentuando con rilievo meramente formale i dati biografici sinceri o fittizi: nessuno stilnovista, neppure Cavalcanti e Cino, s’era però impegnato in una carriera poetica esauriente, come pure, dei predecessori, Guittone; e di Dante va ripetuto che aveva attraversato lo Stil Novo per giungere a un *metodo allegorico* che rappresentasse plasticamente i dati dell’Io e costringesse all’unità le esperienze dibattute fra eros e intelletto? *Petrarca non è più allegorico, è emblematico*.<sup>3</sup>

This short remark has given rise to a long-standing commonplace, which has influenced and directly shaped later criticism. According to Contini, while Dante’s imagery is based on an allegorical approach, Petrarch’s poetry is founded on emblems. But what is the difference between allegories and emblems? A few lines

---

<sup>1</sup> I cite Dante’s incipit not in the form in which it appears in *Rvf* 70 but from Dante, *Opere*, I, pp. 495–512 (p. 495).

<sup>2</sup> Theodore J. Cachey, Jr, ‘Between Petrarch and Dante: Prolegomenon to a Critical Discourse’, in *Petrarch and Dante: Anti-Dantism, Metaphysics, Tradition*, ed. by Zygmunt G. Barański and Theodore J. Cachey, Jr (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), pp. 3–49 (p. 12).

<sup>3</sup> Contini, ‘Preliminari sulla lingua del Petrarca’, p. 189. Italics mine.

later, Contini explains what he means by emblematicism. He claims that in the verse ‘et garrir Progne et pianger Philomena’ (*Rvf*, 310. 3), the two nouns ‘equivalgono a sostantivi generali’ and not to the proper names of the mythical characters. In this regard, Contini observes, ‘codesta portata dei sostantivi dichiara meglio d’ogn’altra cosa la possibilità dei bisticci sull’aura e il lauro e dimostra il valore emblematico e simbolico, non allegorico, al quale si accennava più sopra’.<sup>4</sup> What interests us here is not Petrarch’s use of the names of Progne and Philomena, but Contini’s use of ‘emblem’ and ‘symbol’ as synonyms, in opposition to the term ‘allegory’.

Angus Fletcher observes that the distinction between allegory and symbol is an ‘unhappy controversy’, which would not have existed in the Middle Ages, beginning instead with Goethe.<sup>5</sup> In his collection of aphorisms, Goethe maintains that ‘there is a great difference whether a poet is looking for the particular that goes with the general, or sees the general in the particular’. The first procedure ‘gives rise to allegory, where the particular only counts as an example’. The second, which is concerned with symbols, ‘expresses something particular without any thought of the general, and without indicating it’ (*Maxims*, V. 2. 279).<sup>6</sup> In the Middle Ages, however, the created world is understood as part of a divine architecture, in which each element finds its ultimate significance within God’s project.

Based on the lack of any theoretical difference between allegory and symbol in the medieval world, Luca Marcozzi directly challenges Contini’s remark, observing that ‘la distinzione tra allegorico e simbolico (o emblematico, che è, a ben vedere lo stesso concetto espresso in forma *difficilior*), rimonta ad un’epoca troppo recente per poter essere applicata con profitto a Petrarca’.<sup>7</sup> As we saw in Chapter 1, for example, Petrarch himself glosses the Vergilian story of

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, pp. 180–81. Ezio Raimondi has proposed a distinction between ‘realismo metafisico’ in Dante and ‘emblematismo realistico’ in Petrarch. See Ezio Raimondi, *Le metamorfosi della parola: da Dante a Montale* (Milan: Bruno Mondadori, 2004), p. 226.

<sup>5</sup> Angus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1964), p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, ed. by Peter Hutchinson, trans. by Elisabeth Stopp (London: Penguin, 1998), pp. 33–34. See also Umberto Eco, ‘L’Epistola XIII, l’allegorismo medievale, il simbolismo moderno’, in his *Sugli specchi e altri saggi* (Milan: Bompiani, 1985), pp. 215–41 (pp. 235–241) (first publ. in *Carte semiotiche*, 0 (1984), 13–31).

<sup>7</sup> Marcozzi, *La biblioteca di Febo*, pp. 15–18 (pp. 16–17). Italics original.

Picus (*Aeneid*, IV. 189–91) as ‘Allegoria Pici’.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, Contini does not discuss the different types of allegory, and compares and contrasts Dante and Petrarch without taking into consideration the different genres of their respective literary output. It is hence worth clarifying the different types of allegory in the Middle Ages and exploring how these apply to Dante’s and Petrarch’s poetics.

The definition of allegory in the Middle Ages is a complex matter which has been thoroughly investigated by Jean Pépin, Armand Strubel and Henri de Lubac. The term itself indicates a twofold function.<sup>9</sup>

In classical and medieval theorisations of figures of speech, allegory is a rhetorical mechanism which delivers a meaning or a set of meanings other than the literal. Quintilian observes that allegory ‘aut aliud verbis, aliud sensu ostendit, aut etiam interim contrarium’, that is to say, it presents one thing by its words and a different or even contrary thing by its sense, adding that the main type generally consists of ‘continuatis traslationibus’, a succession of metaphors (*Institutio oratoria*, VIII. 6. 44).<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Augustine claims that ‘allegoria dicitur, cum aliquid aliud videtur sonare in verbis, et aliud in intellectu significare’ (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*, CIII. 1. 13);<sup>11</sup> Isidore of Seville writes that ‘allegoria est alieniloquium’ according to which ‘aliud enim sonat, et aliud intellegitur’ (*Etymologiae*, I. 37. 22);<sup>12</sup> and the grammarian Donatus explains that allegory ‘aliud significatur quam dicitur’ (*Ars maior*, III. 68r. 1).<sup>13</sup> From this perspective, any figurative procedure which conveys covert meanings beyond the literal interpretation falls into the category of allegory.

<sup>8</sup> Petrarca, *Le postille del Virgilio ambrosiano*, II, p. 869.

<sup>9</sup> See Jean Pépin, *La tradition de l’allégorie: de Philon d’Alexandrie a Dante* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1987); Armand Strubel, “‘Allegoria in factis’ et ‘allegoria in verbis’”, *Poétique: revue de théorie et d’analyse littéraires*, 23 (1975), 342–57; Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: les quatre sens de l’Écriture*, 3 vols (Paris: Aubier, 1959). See also Johan Chydenius, ‘La théorie du symbolisme médiéval’, *Poétique: revue de théorie et d’analyse littéraires*, 23 (1975), 322–41; Francesco Zambon, ‘Allegoria in verbis: per una distinzione tra simbolo e allegoria’, in his *Romanzo e allegoria nel medioevo* (Trento: La Finestra Editrice, 2000), pp. 3–34 (pp. 3–9) (first publ. in *Simbolo, metafora, allegoria: atti del IV convegno italo-tedesco, Bressanone 1976*, ed. by Daniela Goldin (= *Quaderni del Circolo filologico-linguistico padovano*, 11 (1980)), pp. 75–106).

<sup>10</sup> Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, III, pp. 451–57 (p. 451).

<sup>11</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XXXVII. 1347.

<sup>12</sup> Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiarum*, I, unpaginated.

<sup>13</sup> Donatus, *In Artem Maiorem*, ed. by Ludovicus Holtz (Turnhout: Brepols, 1977), p. 246. See also the volume *Dante e le forme dell’allegoresi*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone (Ravenna: Longo, 1987), in particular Maria Corti, ‘Il modello analogico nel pensiero medievale e dantesco’, pp. 11–20; Gian Carlo Alessio, ‘L’allegoria nei trattati di grammatica e retorica’, pp. 21–41.

However, besides this general rhetorical definition, allegory was specifically conceived of as a hermeneutical method for interpreting Scripture. Saint Paul was the first to apply an allegorical approach to the Bible: he states that Sarah and Hagar, the two women who gave birth to Abraham's sons (Genesis 16–21) are to be interpreted 'per allegoriam' as the two covenants between God and humans (Ad Galatas 4. 24).<sup>14</sup> Following Saint Paul's observation, the Church Fathers started proposing a distinction — which became increasingly marked and well-defined over time — between the notions of *allegoria in verbis* and *allegoria in factis*. The former reprises the general rhetorical definition of allegory as a figure of thought: it consists of a fictional image that delivers hidden meanings. The latter is founded on real events or characters and constitutes a prefiguration of other real facts.

Amongst Latin exegetes, a distinction of this sort features as early as Augustine's writings, although he does not explicitly discuss the difference between the two categories.<sup>15</sup> In *De Trinitate*, Augustine recalls Saint Paul's remark about Abraham, and writes that his sons, who are real characters, allegorise the two testaments not *in verbis* but *in factis*: 'ubi allegoriam nominavit Apostolus, non in verbis eam reperit, sed in facto' (*De Trinitate*, XV. 9. 15).<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere Augustine talks about 'allegoriam facti et allegoriam sermonis' (*De vera religione*, L. 99), that is to say, an allegory of history and facts, and an allegory of speech.<sup>17</sup> The distinction is also documented in the Venerable Bede: 'Notandum sane quod allegoria aliquando factis, aliquando verbis tantummodo fit' (*De schematibus et tropis*, II. 12).<sup>18</sup> Armand Strubel observes that in this respect the *allegoria in verbis* is based on a 'ressemblance contingente, résultat de l'imagination humaine', while the *allegoria in factis* is based on a 'similitude essentielle, voulue par Dieu'.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, II, p. 1806. On Saint Paul and allegory, see de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale*, II, pp. 493–94.

<sup>15</sup> As Jean Pépin has shown, a division between allegory *in verbis* and *in factis* was also present before Augustine, in the writings of some of the Greek Church Fathers, such as Justin Martyr (*Dialogus cum Tryphone Iudaeo*, 90. 2. 2), Melito of Sardis (*Peri Pascha*, 35. 236–43) and Origen (*De Principiis*, 4. 2–9). See Pépin, *La tradition de l'allégorie*, pp. 240–44.

<sup>16</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XLII. 1069.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, XXXIV. 166.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, XC. 184d–185a.

<sup>19</sup> Strubel, "Allegoria in factis" et "allegoria in verbis", p. 351. On the figural interpretation of the Bible, see, for example, Jean Daniélou, *Les figures du Christ dans l'Ancien Testament* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1950).

As Zygmunt G. Barański notes, the medieval semiotic system saw an opposition between the book of mankind, that is, human speech, and the two books of God, the Bible and the created world. On the one hand, the book of mankind, as a product of our mind, operates ‘sul piano della semantica del linguaggio artistico’. On the other hand, the two books of God, as emanations of divine will in creation, operate ‘sul piano della semantica del reale’. The former could only employ figures of speech, and thus allegories *in verbis*, which were limited to two senses: literal and allegorical. The created world and the supposedly real facts of the Bible, however, were to be interpreted in the light of allegory *in factis*, which delivered four senses: the literal — concerned with historical events or characters — plus the allegorical, moral and anagogical meanings.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, the book of mankind was in many cases not detached from the two books of God. For example, the use of natural images as allegories *in verbis* reflects or is in some way connected with the functions and meanings of the same images as allegories *in factis*.

The Bible presents both procedures: as a piece of writing designed to be read by human beings, it makes use of rhetorical images which constitute allegories *in verbis*; as a record of facts which are supposed to be real and which symbolise other historical facts, it makes use of allegories *in factis*. In Robert Hollander’s terms, ‘the words of men are only vocables; the Word of God is a vocable but has the peculiarity of being also a thing, of having actual historical existence.’<sup>21</sup> Along the same lines as the Bible, Dante’s *Commedia* offers examples of allegory *in factis* and allegory *in verbis* by virtue of its status as a ‘poema sacro | al quale ha posto mano e cielo e terra’ (*Paradiso*, 25. 1–2). Barański observes that allegory *in factis* is found in those parts of the poem which directly describe the journey; in contrast, the employment of metaphors, similes and other types of images ‘appartengono chiaramente al campo retorico-letterario

---

<sup>20</sup> See Zygmunt G. Barański, *Dante e i segni: saggi per una storia intellettuale di Dante Alighieri* (Naples: Liguori, 2000), pp. 103–26 (pp. 114–15).

<sup>21</sup> Robert Hollander, *Allegory in Dante’s ‘Commedia’* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 21–22. As Umberto Eco has pointed out, ‘talora nelle Scritture si designa Cristo attraverso la figura di un capro: non è allegoria *in factis*, è allegoria *in verbis*’. See Eco, ‘L’Epistola XIII, l’allegorismo medievale, il simbolismo moderno’, p. 231.

dell'*allegoria in verbis*', in accordance, I would add, with the broad definition of *alium dicere*.<sup>22</sup>

Returning to Contini, the distinction he draws is certainly accurate if it is meant to illustrate the distance between the allegories *in factis* in the *Commedia* and the type of allegory used in the *Fragmenta*. However, this distance is also the result of the different genres to which these two works belong. I propose that a comparison of the *Fragmenta* with Dante's lyric production would instead demonstrate that the two poets in fact take a similar approach to the use of allegories.

Animal symbolism is a crucial testing ground for investigating whether and how Dante's and Petrarch's imagery varies. Through three case studies — the bear in Dante's *Rime*, and the images of the stag and the hind in Petrarch's *Fragmenta* — I will show how these two poets present what is ultimately a rather similar attitude towards the function of allegory in their lyric production. I will suggest that Dante's lyric poems and Petrarch's *Fragmenta* are jointly characterised by the traits of allegory *in verbis*, meant as a rhetorical procedure designed to *alium dicere*.

---

<sup>22</sup> Barański, *Dante e i segni*, pp. 103–26 (p. 125). On Dante, see also the fundamental study by Erich Auerbach, "Figura", in his *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, ed. and trans. by Ralph Manheim, new edn (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 11–71 (first publ. in *Archivum Romanicum*, 22 (1938), 436–89). Other important studies include Peter Armour, *The Door of Purgatory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 119–40; Bruno Basile and Ezio Raimondi, 'Commedia', in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco and others, 6 vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1976), II, pp. 79–118 (pp. 94–99); Lucia Battaglia Ricci, *Dante e la tradizione letteraria medievale: una proposta per la 'Commedia'* (Pisa: Giardini, 1983), pp. 65–110; Alan C. Charity, *Events and their Afterlife: The Dialectics of Christian Typology in the Bible and Dante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), pp. 165–256; Johan Chydenius, *The Typological Problem in Dante: A Study in the History of Medieval Ideas* (Helsingfors: Societas Scientifica Fennica, 1958); Pompeo Giannantonio, *Dante e l'allegorismo* (Florence: Olschki, 1969); Bruno Nardi, 'Sull'interpretazione allegorica e sulla struttura della *Commedia* di Dante', in his *Saggi e note di critica dantesca* (Milan and Naples: Ricciardi, 1966), pp. 110–65; John A. Scott, 'Dante's Allegory', *Romance Philology*, 26 (1973), 558–91; John A. Scott, 'Dante's Allegory of the Theologians', in *The Shared Horizon: Melbourne Essays in Italian Language and Literature in Memory of Colin McCormick*, ed. by Tom O'Neill (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1990), pp. 27–40; Charles S. Singleton, *Dante's 'Commedia': Elements of Structure* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

## 1. Dante's Bear: A Bestial Poetic Voice

The *canzone* 'Così nel mio parlar vogli'esser aspro' (*Rime*, 43) is one of the most famous and iconic of Dante's lyrics. Here, the poet likens his lyric persona to a playful bear:

S'io avesse le belle trecce prese  
che son fatte per me scudiscio e ferza,  
pigliandole anzi terza  
con esse passerei vespero e squille;  
e non sarei pietoso né cortese,  
*anzi farei com'orso quando scherza*;  
e s'Amor me ne sferza,  
io mi vendicherei di più di mille.

(*Rime*, 43. 66–73)<sup>23</sup>

Investigating the hidden meanings of the simile allows us to observe that the image falls into the category of allegory *in verbis*.<sup>24</sup> I suggest that Dante's bear represents the animal lustful side of the poetic persona and, as such, illustrates what he understands as the indomitable instinctive element of his character. It could be noted that similes and allegories constitute different figures of speech; however, this study adopts a definition of allegory *in verbis* that encompasses a variety of rhetorical mechanisms conveying further meanings, irrespective of their form and specific rhetorical category.<sup>25</sup>

*Canzone* 43 is part of the cycle of the *rime petrose*.<sup>26</sup> In this set of poems, the lyric ego describes himself as suffering as a result of his fruitless fixation on a lustful appetite that cannot be satisfied, as the beloved is 'più dura che pietra' (*Rime*, 40. 12).<sup>27</sup> The comparison between the poetic subject and the bear in the poem is consistent with the sensual type of love that we find in the *petrose*. Exploring the erotic valence of the simile first requires us to consider the verb 'scherzare' in the sentence 'anzi farei com'orso quando scherza' (*Rime*, 43. 71).

<sup>23</sup> Dante, *Opere*, I, pp. 496–97. Italics mine.

<sup>24</sup> As part of the book of mankind, the image of the bear in Dante's lyric constitutes an allegory *in verbis*. However, as a natural image, the simile is also related to and derives its meaning from the function of the bear as an allegory *in factis* in the two books of God.

<sup>25</sup> On the inclusion of the simile in the category of allegory *in verbis*, see also Barański, *Dante e i segni*, p. 125.

<sup>26</sup> The definition of *rime petrose* was first proposed by Vittorio Imbriani, *Studi danteschi* (Florence: Sansoni, 1891), pp. 425–528.

<sup>27</sup> See also Heather Webb, 'Dante's Stone Cold Rhymes', *Dante Studies*, 121 (2003), 148–68.



Among its other meanings, the *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini* defines ‘scherzare’ as ‘intrattenersi in giochi amorosi’.<sup>28</sup> This verb, thus, suggests that Dante could have intended to convey sensual connotations through the image of the bear: the animal is not playful in innocent terms, but is playful in a carnal way. In this respect, the simile emphasises the lyric voice’s bestial erotic appetite for his resistant beloved.

Why does Dante choose such an original image which, to my knowledge, has no antecedents? As Michel Pastoureau observes, in the Middle Ages the bear was seen as a double of man. Like men, indeed, bears can stand erect, sit, lie on their side or stomach, run, swim, use their hands to grab objects, and even dance. However, the most important link between men and bears involved the sexual sphere. According to medieval encyclopaedias, the bear had a great sexual desire and copulated in the human manner, that is to say, face to face. In addition, some medieval traditions held that the male bear could also experience abnormal sexual attraction to young women, abducting and having bestial intercourse with them.<sup>29</sup>

For instance, in the *Tresor* Brunetto Latini writes of the bear that ‘sa nature est qu’il eschaufe sa luxure et [ils] gissent ensemble come les homes font avec les femes’ (*Tresor*, I. 199. 2).<sup>30</sup> In this way, he first associates bears with lust, then establishes a parallel between the sexual habits of bears and those of humans. This shows that bears could easily serve as an allegory of human lust. In addition, one of the most important scholars of the thirteenth century, William of Auvergne, Bishop of Paris between 1226 and 1249, reports what he claims is a well-known exemplary story in his *De universo creaturarum*:

De feminibus autem quorundam animalium qui cum humano femine convenienter se applicent ad generationem, uno exemplo notissimo faciam te scire. Scito igitur, quia in provincia Saxoniae ursus quidam rapuit uxorem cujusdam militis, et detulit in speluncam, in qua inhabitabat, ibique habuit eam diebus multis, et annis, genuitque ibidem filios ex ea.

(*De universo creaturarum*, III. 25)<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini* <<http://tlio.oiv.cnr.it>> [accessed 18 June 2018]. See also Giunta’s commentary in Dante, *Opere*, I, p. 510.

<sup>29</sup> See the anthropological study by Pastoureau, *The Bear*, pp. 60–134. See also Corinne Beck, ‘Approches du traitement de l’animal chez les encyclopédistes du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: l’exemple de l’ours’, in *L’encyclopedismo medievale*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone (Ravenna: Longo, 1994), pp. 163–78; Ronald L. Martinez, ‘Dante’s Bear: A Note on “Cosi nel mio parlar”’, *Dante Studies*, 111 (1993), 213–22.

<sup>30</sup> Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, ed. by Pietro G. Beltrami and others (Turin: Einaudi, 2007), p. 324.

<sup>31</sup> Guilielmus Alvernus, *Opera Omnia*, 2 vols (Paris: Pralard, 1674), I, p. 1071.

In his account, a bear kidnapped a soldier's wife in the province of Saxony, took her into the cavern where it lived, possessed her for many days and even years, and produced children from her.

The animal's sexual habits and appetite for women also provided inspiration for medieval games and rituals — performed at carnival time or at winter and summer solstices — in which men disguised themselves as bears. Pastoureau notes that these games and rituals were neither neutral nor innocent, but in fact always strongly transgressive: playing the bear meant not only 'disguising oneself as a bear'; it also involved 'manifesting uncontrolled sexual desire and [...] pouncing on women or girls, carrying them away from prying eyes, and raping them, or indulging in shared but prohibited pleasure with them'.<sup>32</sup>

The prohibition of this practice by the clergy provides further confirmation of both its popularity and its negative implications. Throughout the Middle Ages, priests and monks repeatedly stated that nobody should play the bear, as this ritual was contrary to all Christian values — but they were rarely obeyed.<sup>33</sup> For example, in a capitulary of year 852, Hincmar, Archbishop of Reims, instructs the bishops of his province not to tolerate vile games with bears under any circumstances, and defines this practice as devilish: 'Ut nullus presbyterorum [...] turpia joca cum urso [...] ante se facere permittat, [...] quia hoc diabolicum est, et a sacris canonibus prohibitum' (*Capitula synodica*, I. 714. 14).<sup>34</sup>

The dramatisation of the poetic persona's desire in Dante's *canzone* recalls the medieval imagery related to the bear in two ways. First, the sexuality of bears is particularly well suited to illustrating the poetic subject's lust and violence. Second, the practice of disguising oneself as a bear and simulating its sexual behaviour could have provided Dante — and his readers — with an easily recognisable model for the simile, which would have contributed to further reducing the distance between the lyric persona and the animality of the bear. The bear allows the poet to portray a scene in which erotic desire downgrades a human to a beast. The relationship between the bear-like lover and the resistant woman assumes the traits of rape and bestiality in the poetic subject's imagination. This violent attitude is described as a consequence of the beloved's stony heart, which

<sup>32</sup> Pastoureau, *The Bear*, pp. 82–85 (p. 84).

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem, pp. 82–85, 113–34.

<sup>34</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, CXXV. 776b–776c.

has driven the poetic persona into a state of frustration and suffering. The poem, indeed, like the other *petrose*, describes an anti-courtly situation founded on the opposition between the resistance of the lady and the desire of the poetic persona. While in courtly love the lover remains true and loyal to his beloved in spite of her resistance, here the frustrated desire of the lyric speaker turns into a need for revenge: the more the lady resists the poetic persona, the more his vengeful nature increases in the form of an abnormal and violent lustful appetite. The animal dimension of the lyric discourse is also confirmed by the use of the verb ‘latrare’, which indicates the sound that dogs make, in reference to the subject’s erotic desire: ‘Oïmè, ché non latra | per me, com’io per lei, nel caldo borro?’ (*Rime*, 43. 59–60).<sup>35</sup>

The meanings of the bear in Dante’s *canzone* lead us to explore the link between the notion of lust and that of animality for Christian morality. As I observed in Chapter 1, Augustine relates the notions of ‘bestia’ and ‘pecus’ to a lesser or greater ability to dominate the instincts, and consequently to a more or less sinful disposition. In this light, Dante’s bear presents the victory of the animal side of the lyric persona over his human side: as mankind is not able to dominate wild beasts such as bears, so the poetic persona’s sensual instincts are beyond the control of reason and result in uncontrolled lust. If we broaden the scope to include Dante’s *Commedia*, one of the most interesting references to the notion of ‘bestia’ in association with lust is found in *Purgatorio* 26, where Guido Guinizzelli expresses a sense of repentance for his earthly life:

Nostro peccato fu ermafrodito;  
ma perché non servammo umana legge,  
seguendo come bestie l’appetito,  
in obbrobrio di noi, per noi si legge,  
quando partinci, il nome di colei  
che s’imbestiò ne le ’mbestiate schegge.  
(*Purgatorio*, 26. 82–87)<sup>36</sup>

The speaker associates himself and the other lustful people who have followed their appetites with beasts, and refers to the mythological Pasiphae — who entered

---

<sup>35</sup> Dante, *Opere*, I, p. 496.

<sup>36</sup> Dante, *Commedia*, II, pp. 767–90 (pp. 777–78).

a wooden cow to copulate with a bull — as their ancestor.<sup>37</sup> The tercets in *Purgatorio* seem to recall the scene in ‘Così nel mio parlar vogli’esser aspro’ (*Rime*, 43). In the *canzone*, not only does the lyric voice undergo a process of bestialisation, but the subject depicts his desire in terms of bestial intercourse.<sup>38</sup>

Unlike the treatment of lust in the *Commedia*, the bear-like speaker in Dante’s *canzone* does not seem to be concerned with any moral judgement. It would certainly have been easy for medieval audiences to associate the simile of the bear, with all its implications and resonances, with sinful conduct. Dante, however, does not condemn the poetic persona’s appetite within the diegesis of the poem: he limits himself to portraying a bestial desire that ends in frustration and a desire for revenge. In Dante’s *oeuvre* the explicit moral condemnation of lust will be carried out in the eternal perspective of the *Commedia*, where individual earthly behaviour will find ultimate meaning in the light of God’s judgement.

In brief, the image of the bear evokes and conveys hidden meanings. The set of allusions which are associated with the simile is dependent on medieval beliefs about the resemblance and kinship between humans and bears, as well as on the Christian view which connects wild beasts with sin. In this regard, the image in the *canzone* constitutes an example of allegory *in verbis*.

## 2. Petrarch’s Stag and Hind in *Rvf* 23 and 190

I will now turn to the images of the stag and the hind in Petrarch’s *canzone* ‘Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade’ (*Rvf*, 23) and in the sonnet ‘Una candida cerva

---

<sup>37</sup> The verses ‘non servammo umana legge, | seguendo come bestie l’appetito’ (*Purgatorio*, 26. 83–84), seem to associate the notions of lust and animality with love poetry. As we saw in Chapter 1, Cicero states that speech has gathered humans in the bonds of justice and law, and broken them free from a wild and animal life (*De natura deorum*, II. 59. 148). Guinizzelli’s remark, I would suggest, echoes Cicero’s theory: love poets have misused the faculty of speech; as a result, they have become detached from human law and downgraded themselves to a bestial condition. The possible correlation between lust, animality and love poetry is also suggested by the equivocal rhyme between ‘umana legge’ and ‘si legge’ (*Purgatorio*, 26. 83, 85). The verb is ambiguous. It certainly indicates, first and foremost, the act of the souls repeating the name of Pasiphae. At the same time, it could also provide a sophisticated allusion to what may be read in the love poetry of those who have shared Guido’s condition.

<sup>38</sup> While the poetic subject in Dante’s *canzone* likens himself to a bear and imagines a scene which alludes to bestial intercourse, in Greek mythology Pasiphae had Daedalus build a wooden cow, within which she was able to satisfy her desire and actually copulate with a bull.

sopra l'erba' (*Rvf*, 190).<sup>39</sup> These two animal images, I argue, constitute two examples of allegory *in verbis* which interconnect with each other and serve as illustrations of the different attitudes that the poetic persona has towards the beloved. My argument focuses first and foremost on the contrasting meanings associated with the deer. Classical sources consider the stag to be characterised by a strong sexual desire. Scriptural sources instead describe the deer, irrespective of gender, as a symbol of the good Christian and of Christ himself. As I will discuss in the following paragraphs, Petrarch's stag and hind recall these two natures respectively: the stag recalls the imagery of lust of classical derivation; the hind recalls the purity of the Christian tradition. Starting from this stark antithesis, I will observe that the stag in *canzone* 23 illustrates the poetic persona's erotic desire for Laura; the image of the hind in sonnet 190, by contrast, is associated with a spiritual type of love, which is described through the imagery of the Christian redemption and *visio Dei*.

Critics have proposed the labels 'Laura Medusa' and 'Laura beatrice' to identify the two different attitudes of the subject towards the beloved throughout the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. 'Laura Medusa' is a target of sensual desire, which does not find satisfaction but is perpetually frustrated; 'Laura beatrice', instead, is a beloved who inspires a chaste and spiritual experience of love. The former is depicted as an indifferent and even fierce, cruel woman; the latter as a source of beatitude.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> For the texts, see Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 96–123, 832–36.

<sup>40</sup> The notion of 'Laura beatrice' could be misleading, especially in light of the function and meanings associated with Dante's Beatrice, in this case with an initial capital. Franco Suitner clarifies: 'Quando si parla di "donna beatrice", bisogna osservare che vi è un significato più ristretto e più "tecnico" dell'espressione, che è sostanzialmente quello stilnovistico celebrato da Dante nella sua forma più complessa e impegnativa. Ma è possibile intendere la "donna beatrice" anche in senso più generalmente "terrestre" e umano [...]. La "donna beatrice" non è tanto o non è principalmente la "scala al cielo", lo strumento di salvezza, non è neanche solamente colei che nobilita, è anche e soprattutto colei che promette la felicità, la donna nel cui pensiero l'anima trova una sua dimensione e una sua speranza di appagamento. In Petrarca entrambi questi aspetti della "donna beatrice" sono presenti con forza'. See Franco Suitner, 'Le rime del Petrarca e l'idea della donna "beatrice": convenzioni letterarie e realtà psicologica', in *Beatrice nell'opera di Dante e nella memoria europea: 1290–1990*, ed. by Maria Picchio Simonelli (Florence: Cadmo, 1994), pp. 261–78 (p. 265). For further details on the opposition between 'Laura Medusa' and 'Laura beatrice', see also Kenelm Foster, 'Beatrice or Medusa', in *Italian Studies Presented to E. R. Vincent on his Retirement from the Chair of Italian at Cambridge*, ed. by Charles P. Brand, Kenelm Foster and Umberto Limentani (Cambridge: Heffer, 1962), pp. 41–56; Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, pp. 209–25, 231–32.

I will highlight how the opposing imageries of the deer in poems 23 and 190 mark the opposition between a 'Laura Medusa' and a 'Laura beatrice'. I will observe that the conceptual interplay between these two animals emerges on the level of allegory *in verbis*.

## 2.1. The Stag in *Canzone* 23

The *canzone* 'Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade' (*Rvf*, 23) constitutes a manifesto of Petrarch's youthful poetics, that which revolves around the figure of 'Laura Medusa'. As Petrarch himself documents in the *Codice degli abbozzi*, the poem 'est de primis inventionibus nostris' (fol. 11<sup>v</sup>). Composed between 1327 and 1336–1337, the text was revised and polished up to 1356, when Petrarch transcribed it 'in ordine post multos et multos annos, quibusdam mutatis' (fol. 11<sup>r</sup>).<sup>41</sup> Also known as the *canzone delle metamorfosi*, the poem describes the effect of erotic desire on the subject, who undergoes a sequence of transformations into animate and inanimate entities along the lines of some of the stories in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Petrarch thus illustrates the subjection of the lyric ego to the cruel lady and the frustration of his love, that is, the condition from which his poetry originated.<sup>42</sup>

Before we proceed, let us consider briefly the content of the poem. In the *canzone*, the poetic persona loses his human self and is transformed in turn into a laurel (*Rvf*, 23. 30–49), a swan (*Rvf*, 23. 50–71), a stone (*Rvf*, 23. 72–89), a fountain (*Rvf*, 23. 90–120), hard flint (*Rvf*, 23. 121–40), a stag (*Rvf*, 23. 141–60), and again into the original laurel (*Rvf*, 23. 167–69).<sup>43</sup> These metamorphoses respectively rework the Ovidian tales of Daphne, Phaeton and Cygnus, Battus, Byblis, Echo, and Actaeon. The metamorphosis into a stag will form the main part of my investigation here:

---

<sup>41</sup> Petrarca, *Triumphs, Rime estravaganti, Codice degli Abbozzi*, p. 842. However, there is no definite evidence for the hypothesis that Petrarch composed the poem between 1327 and 1336–1337. For further details on the composition of the poem, see Armando Petrucci, *La scrittura di Francesco Petrarca* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1967), p. 29; Santagata, *Per moderne carte*, pp. 273–325 (pp. 273–74); Ernest H. Wilkins, *The Making of the 'Canzoniere' and other Petrarchan Studies* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1951), pp. 87–91.

<sup>42</sup> See Peterson, *Petrarch's 'Fragmenta'*, pp. 49–50. For details on the transformations, see Loredana Chines, 'Di selva in selva ratto mi trasformo': *identità e metamorfosi della parola petrarchesca* (Rome: Carocci, 2010), pp. 43–54; Santagata, *Per moderne carte*, pp. 273–325.

<sup>43</sup> For the text, see Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 96–123 (pp. 96–100).

I' segui' tanto avanti il mio desire  
 ch'un di cacciando sì com'io solea  
 mi mossi; e quella fera bella et cruda  
 in una fonte ignuda  
 si stava, quando 'l sol più forte ardea.  
 Io, perché d'altra vista non m'appago,  
 stetti a mirarla: ond'ella ebbe vergogna;  
 et per farne vendetta, o per celarse,  
 l'acqua nel viso co le man' mi sparse.  
 Vero dirò (forse e' parrà menzogna)  
 ch'i' senti' trarmi de la propria imago,  
 et in un cervo solitario et vago  
 di selva in selva ratto mi trasformo:  
 et anchor de' miei can' fuggo lo stormo.

(*Rvf*, 23. 147–60)<sup>44</sup>

In order to punish the outrageous observer or to hide herself, the beloved throws water into the subject's face. The poetic persona, then, is entirely changed from his human image and transformed into a stag. The parallel between Actaeon and the poetic ego is overt, as is that between Diana and Laura. As the hunter sees the virgin goddess of the hunt in the nude while she is bathing, so does the poetic persona with his beloved. Like Actaeon, the speaker is transformed into a stag, the male equivalent of the hind, the animal sacred to Diana and which is elsewhere associated with Laura herself (*Rvf*, 190).<sup>45</sup>

In spite of the similarities between the two versions, numerous examples demonstrate that Ovid's and Petrarch's narratives are significantly different with respect to the responsibility of the hunter.<sup>46</sup> In Ovid, the narrator emphasises that what happened to Actaeon was no more than an unintentional error, and that there is no crime in bad luck: 'at bene si quaeras, Fortunae crimen in illo, | non scelus invenies; quod enim scelus error habebat?' (*Metamorphoses*, III. 141–42).<sup>47</sup> Petrarch's poetic subject, instead, followed his 'desire' so far (*Rvf*, 23. 147) that one day, while hunting, he discovered the beloved. In both versions, the intrusion is visual. However, Actaeon accidentally and inevitably saw Diana while he was

<sup>44</sup> Ibidem, p. 100.

<sup>45</sup> The Ovidian story of Actaeon also returns in *Rvf* 52. For the interpretation of the poem in the light of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, see Giuseppe Mazzotta, *The Worlds of Petrarch* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), pp. 58–79. See also the readings by Leonard Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 206–15; Gur Zak, *Petrarch's Humanism and the Care of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 63–71.

<sup>46</sup> On the differences between the two versions, see Dennis J. Dutschke, *Francesco Petrarca: Canzone XXIII from First to Final Version* (Ravenna: Longo, 1977), pp. 186–209 (pp. 203–09).

<sup>47</sup> Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I, p. 134.

wandering: ‘per nemus ignotum non certis passibus errans | pervenit in locum: sic illum fata ferebant’ (*Metamorphoses*, III. 175–76).<sup>48</sup> Petrarch’s subject, by contrast, intentionally pursued Laura and committed the further transgression of staying to stare at her: ‘Io, perché d’altra vista non m’appago, | stetti a mirarla’ (*Rvf*, 23. 152–53). In addition, while the Ovidian stag was killed by the hunter’s dogs, the Petrarchan stag continues to flee and is endlessly chased by the subject’s own hounds, which allegorise — it has been noted — his haunting passions.<sup>49</sup>

The imagery associated with the Actaeon story, reworked in *Rvf* 23, allows Petrarch to emphasise the Medusean relationship between the subject’s sensual appetite and the lady’s refusals.

First, the transformation into a stag vividly illustrates the role of the senses in the poetic persona and suggests a connection between carnal appetite and insanity. My observation is based on what Petrarch could read in Pliny’s *Naturalis historia*. Pliny highlights the strong sexual desire which characterises the stag, and observes that ‘mares relictis rabie libidinis saeviant’ and ‘soluti desiderio libidinis avidae petunt pabula’ (*Naturalis historia*, VIII. 50. 112–13).<sup>50</sup> According to Pliny, the deserted stag rages in a fury of desire and seeks pasture only after ridding himself of lust. If we read Petrarch’s *canzone* with reference to Pliny’s observation, we understand that the image of the stag does not solely illustrate the emergence of the poetic persona’s animal side; it also emphasises the sexual desire of the subject and the condition of insanity resulting from the lady’s rejections. The metamorphosis is the consequence of the sensually unsatisfied relationship between the lover and the beloved. Correspondingly, the stag which runs away ‘solitario et vago’ (*Rvf*, 23. 158) gives shape to the subject’s frustration.

Second — as we saw in Chapter 1 — the link between hunting and sexual desire is a traditional one. The reference to a hunter in the poem emphasises the carnal appetite of the poetic persona and equates the beloved with his animal prey. The reference to Diana restates the purity of Laura, but at the same time allows the poet to depict the lady as a ‘fera bella et cruda’ (*Rvf*, 23. 149), an object of desire as fierce and cruel as a beast. This twofold valence associated with Laura is

---

<sup>48</sup> Ibidem, p. 136.

<sup>49</sup> On the dogs as an allegory for passions, see Dutschke, *Francesco Petrarca: Canzone XXIII*, p. 200.

<sup>50</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, III, p. 80.



consistent with the opposing interpretations of Diana in Pierre de Bersuire's *Ovidius moralizatus*, where the goddess features not only as an allegory of the Virgin Mary but also as one who shoots the arrows of lust.<sup>51</sup> In this type of hunting context, the transformation involves a reversal of roles between the lover and the beloved and destabilises the notion of masculinity traditionally associated with the good huntsman: the poetic persona passes from hunter to hunted; the lady passes from object of pursuit to punisher.<sup>52</sup> The lover becomes victim of his own desire.

Third, water plays a crucial role in the transformation of the subject. The use of the verb 'sparse' in the *canzone* (*Rvf*, 23. 155) both recalls and reverses the religious valence of the Latin term 'aspargere', a verb associated with the rite of aspersion. In the Latin liturgy, during this rite the priest sprinkled ('adsparsit') penitents with holy water, purifying them along the same lines as the baptismal sacrament; the congregation, in turn, sang the Psalm verse 'asparges me hysopo et mundabor lavabis me et super nivem dealbabor' (Psalmi 50. 9).<sup>53</sup> The imagery drawn from the aspersion rite also informs Dante's purification in the Earthly Paradise through his immersion in the waters of Lethe (*Purgatorio*, 31. 94–105).<sup>54</sup> While in Petrarch's *canzone* water signals a mutation, it triggers not a regeneration but rather a degeneration of the poetic persona, who shifts from a human condition to an animal one. In this case, then, the poet does not conceive of water as a positive means of rebirth, but as a means of removing the subject's human aspect and allowing his bestial nature to emerge.

Finally, Petrarch's verses recount the consequences of a deliberate offence associated with sight.<sup>55</sup> The role of sight in raising and fostering sexual desire was typical of medieval courtly love. In *De amore*, Andreas Capellanus describes love as an innate suffering which derives from the sight of and uncontrolled thinking

---

<sup>51</sup> See Chapter 1 (part 2).

<sup>52</sup> On the hunt in lyric poetry, see the general Introduction (part 4). For further details, see Bates, *Masculinity and the Hunt*, pp. 1–43 (pp. 32–36).

<sup>53</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, I, pp. 831–32 (p. 832).

<sup>54</sup> The relationship between the aspersion rite in the Middle Ages and Dante's *Purgatorio* 31 has been thoroughly explored by Helena C. Phillips-Robins, 'Liturgical Song in Dante's *Commedia*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2016), pp. 112–20. The opposition between the verb 'sparse' in Petrarch and the Psalm verse in Dante has also been noted by Peter Kuon, "'Sol una nocte'" ed altre "delire imprese": Petrarca narratore in *Rvf* 21–30', in *Il 'Canzoniere': lettura micro e macrotestuale*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone (Ravenna: Longo, 2007), pp. 73–95 (pp. 83–84).

<sup>55</sup> See Chines, 'Di selva in selva ratto mi trasformo', p. 47.

about the shape of the other sex, and the aim of which is the bodily possession of the object of desire:

Amor est passio quaedam innata procedens *ex visione et immoderata cogitatione formae alterius sexus*, ob quam aliquis super omnia cupit alterius potiri amplexibus et omnia de utriusque voluntate in ipsius amplexu amoris praecepta compleri.

(*De amore*, III. 1)<sup>56</sup>

In other words, sight initiates the lover's immoderate fixation on the beloved, and thus triggers his suffering. The transformation in Petrarch's verses, I argue, renders visible the poetic persona's immoderate thoughts. The lover's fixation on the beloved's aspect is so intense that it impacts not only on his thoughts but also on his appearance. Andreas Capellanus uses the term 'forma' in his treatise; Petrarch refers to his own 'imago', namely his appearance, when he discusses his metamorphosis: 'Vero dirò [...] | ch'i' senti' trarmi de la propria imago' (*Rvf*, 23. 156–57). I propose that Petrarch's thinking about the 'forma' of the other sex is what shapes his own 'imago', illustrating 'in qual guisa | l'amante ne l'amato si transforme' (*Triumphus cupidinis*, III. 161–62).<sup>57</sup> His aspect is moulded upon that of the lady. The lover acquires the image of the woman, or rather, the appearance of the animal associated with her. The lyric ego's transformation into a deer is not a sign of the satisfaction of his desire, but its opposite: it is the consequence of his failure and frustrated fixation. This transformative process recalls the association between Laura and Medusa found elsewhere in the *Canzoniere*. For example, in the sonnets 'Geri, quando talor meco d'adira' (*Rvf*, 179) and 'L'aura celeste che 'n quel verde lauro' (*Rvf*, 197), Petrarch likens the lady to the Gorgon. Here the poetic persona claims to have been petrified into 'marmo' (*Rvf*, 179. 11) and 'selce' (*Rvf*, 197. 6).<sup>58</sup> As the petrifying face of Laura-Medusa is able to turn the poetic subject into stone, so the cruel Laura-Diana of *canzone* 23 is able to transform the lover into a stag. In both cases, the transformation gives shape to the poetic persona's unrequited desire.

---

<sup>56</sup> Andreas Capellanus, *On Love*, ed. and trans. by Patrick G. Walsh (London: Duckworth, 1982), p. 32. Italics mine.

<sup>57</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi, Rime estravaganti, Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 135–77 (p. 168).

<sup>58</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 798–800, 855–58. See also *Rvf* 51, 131 and 366.

The scene in the *canzone*, with its references to sensual desire, stands in opposition to any form of spiritualised love. The poetic persona and the beloved are associated with a pagan hunter and a pagan goddess, each characterised by an animal predatory attitude towards the other. In the poem, water has no purifying function, but rather triggers the poetic persona's animalisation. Moreover, sight is not associated with the notion of Christian contemplation, but is conceived as a mere bodily mechanism which affects the observer's passion.

As I will show in the following, the image of the hind in *Rvf* 190 relates to the figure of the deer in *Rvf* 23 and to the youthful conception of love which is depicted through the Actaeon myth. In sonnet 190, Petrarch replaces the lustful stag with a Christological pure hind. The unsuccessful pagan hunt of Actaeon is changed into a Christian anti-hunt, such as that of Saint Eustace. The pagan goddess Diana is replaced with an image, that of the hind, which is associated with Christ. The poetic persona's appetites are cleansed, through water, by a purification which is reminiscent of that in Dante's Eden. The sacrilegious vision of the lady in *Rvf* 23 is transformed into a beatific vision. Unsatisfied sensual love is replaced by a spiritual view of the beloved. All these shifts could be read in terms of the broad interplay between the figure of 'Laura Medusa' and that of 'Laura beatrice'.

## 2.2. The Hind in Sonnet 190

The most important reference to the hind in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* can be found in the sonnet 'Una candida cerva sopra l'erba' (*Rvf*, 190):

Una candida cerva sopra l'erba  
verde m'apparve, con duo corna d'oro,  
fra due riviere, all'ombra d'un alloro,  
levando 'l sole a la stagione acerba.

Era sua vista sì dolce superba,  
ch'i' lasciai per seguirla ogni lavoro:  
come l'avaro che 'n cercar tesoro  
con diletto l'affanno disacerba.

'Nessun mi tocchi – al bel collo d'intorno  
scritto avea di diamanti et di topazi –:  
libera farmi al mio Cesare parve'.

Et era 'l sol già volto al mezzo giorno,  
gli occhi miei stanchi di mirar, non sazi,

quand'io caddi ne l'acqua, et ella sparve.

(Rvf, 190)<sup>59</sup>

The poem depicts a hunting scene and offers a rich and complex fabric of symbols. Let us briefly outline the traditional interpretation of the text. Commentators explain the poem as an ecstatic vision in which the hunter-lover seeks to reach the immaculate hind-beloved between two rivers. The episode recounted in the sonnet ends when the poetic persona falls into the water.<sup>60</sup>

According to recent commentaries, the condition of purity that characterises the animal — and thus the beloved — is evident from the symbolic elements included in the sonnet. The hind's fur is white, a colour associated with virtue. The statement 'Nessun mi tocchi', 'libera farmi al mio Cesare parve' (Rvf, 190. 9, 11) relates to the hunt and indicates the release of the hind from a game reserve, that is to say, from the chains of earthly love. 'Cesare', thus, is glossed as referring to God, who made the hind immune to temptations. The diamonds and topaz in which the statement is written are considered a further sign of virtue, on the basis of the traditional belief that these two minerals were an antidote to lust.<sup>61</sup> Turning to the references to water in the sonnet, the two rivers are glossed as the Rhone and the Durance, thereby possibly indicating Avignon as the location.<sup>62</sup> Maria Luisa Doglio interprets the poetic persona's fall into water as his awakening after an ecstatic vision, the 'passaggio, inevitabile, dalla contemplazione alla realtà fisica'.<sup>63</sup> Stefano Carrai, in turn, drawing on Ernesta Caldarini, writes: 'L'infortunio simboleggia [...] la défaillance dell'amante, è "la conseguenza e il

<sup>59</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 832–36 (p. 832).

<sup>60</sup> I base my outline here on Carrai, 'Il sonetto "Una candida cerva" del Petrarca', whose interpretation informs later commentaries, such as those in the following editions: Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 832–39; *Canzoniere*, ed. by Vecchi Galli, pp. 685–87; *Canzoniere*, ed. by Bettarini, II, pp. 874–80. See also Doglio, 'Il sonetto CXC'; Proto, 'Il sonetto "Una candida cerva" di Francesco Petrarca'; Sozzi, 'Per il sonetto "Una candida cerva"'.  
<sup>61</sup> Carrai traces the imagery associated with diamonds and topaz back to Pierre de Bersuire, *Reductorium morale*, X. 40 and XI. 125; Matteo Selvatico, *Pandectarum medicinae liber*, CCCCXC; Albert the Great, *De mineralibus*, II. 2; Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, XVI. 13; Pliny, *Naturalis historia*, XXXII. 15. See Carrai, 'Il sonetto "Una candida cerva" del Petrarca', p. 239.

<sup>62</sup> Carrai and Santagata identify the rivers as the Rhone and the Durance. By contrast, Paola Vecchi Galli and Rosanna Bettarini associate the rivers with the Sorgue and the Durance. See respectively Carrai, 'Il sonetto "Una candida cerva" del Petrarca', p. 235; the commentaries in Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, p. 826; *Canzoniere*, ed. by Vecchi Galli, p. 686; *Canzoniere*, ed. by Bettarini, II, p. 876.

<sup>63</sup> Doglio, 'Il sonetto CXC', p. 269.

segnale del negativo abdicare della coscienza nel rapimento estatico” cui egli va soggetto’.<sup>64</sup>

Critics, however, have not thoroughly investigated the imagery of redemption that the hind — as a Christological figure — may evoke, nor its relationship with the *visio Dei* in *Rvf* 191, 192 and 193. In this respect, Thomas E. Peterson has recently observed:

The allegorical vision of poem 190 concerns a theological question of great moment in Petrarch’s day, dealt with more directly in poems 191 to 193. This is the question of the beatific vision of God in the afterlife, which also related to debates over whether the sensory image of things impressed on the eye could convey a state of blessedness among persons still living. [...] Petrarch was not concerned about the doctrine per se but sought to translate the ecclesial question about beatific visions into an experiential question about the happiness gained by gazing on the beloved.<sup>65</sup>

Although Peterson briefly mentions the beatific vision in poems 191–193, he does not further explore what role, if any, the figure of the hind plays in instilling a state of happiness in the poetic persona, nor how the animal relates to the content of the three poems that follow.

I suggest here that the hind serves to associate the beloved with the good Christian and with Christ the Redeemer, emphasising the lady’s role as ‘Laura beatrice’ and leading the subject to the beatific vision of the beloved in *Rvf* 191–193. My argument here is based on three points. First, the meanings connected with the hind in bestiaries and in the patristic tradition: as we will see, the hind in the sonnet recalls the traditional imagery allegorising the virtues of both the faithful and Christ himself, who fight against evil. Second, the symbolism of water depicts a purgatorial cleansing of sins and guilt. Third, the statement ‘Nessun mi tocchi’ (*Rvf*, 190. 9) echoes the scriptural ‘noli me tangere’ (Iohannem 20. 17), which Jesus, after his Resurrection, says to the penitent sinner Mary Magdalene. All these elements revolve around and are tied together in the sonnet through the imagery of redemption. In the following subsections, I shall outline these three points, before proposing my own interpretation of the sonnet and its relationship

---

<sup>64</sup> Carrai, ‘Il sonetto “Una candida cerva” del Petrarca’, p. 237. See also Ernesta Caldarini, ‘Da Lancillotto al Petrarca’, *Lettere italiane*, 27 (1975), 373–80.

<sup>65</sup> Peterson, *Petrarch’s ‘Fragmenta’*, p. 145.

with the beatific vision in the three poems that follow, namely sonnets 191, 192 and 193.

### *The Symbolism of the Deer in the Christian Tradition*

The words of the *Physiologus B-Is* are a useful first step in investigating the imagery associated with the hind in the sonnet:

Item in psalmo quadregesimo primo: 'Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.' Physiologus dicit quoniam, ubi agnoverit cervus serpentem esse, implet os suum aqua et effundit in foramine et cum quodam sp[i]ramine oris sui attrahit serpentem foras, et conculcans cum pedibus suis interficit eum. Ita et Dominus noster Iesus Christus, videns inimicum diabolum in omni generis humani natione inhabitantem, habens in semetipso divine sapientie fontem, cuius non potest antiquus draco sufferre sermones. [...] Montes apostolos dicit et prophetas, cervos homines fideles qui per apostolos et prophetas et sacerdotes perveniunt ad agnitionem Christi.

(*Physiologus B-Is*, 30)<sup>66</sup>

Here, the deer is associated with both the faithful and Christ, and in both cases the association involves water. First, the *Physiologus*, quoting Psalm 41, explains that the animal, in its desire for water, represents the soul of the good Christian longing for salvation. Second, the text recalls the traditional rivalry between the deer and the snake, interpreting this as a symbol of the antagonism between Christ and evil: as the deer kills the snake through water, so Christ fights evil by means of the fount of divine wisdom that resides in him.<sup>67</sup>

Christian exegetes have emphasised all these features associated with the deer, mixing together the imagery of water in Psalm 41 and the traditional rivalry between the deer and the snake.<sup>68</sup> Augustine's commentary on Psalm 41 underlines the relationship between the deer and the rite of baptism:

'Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, sic desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.' Et quidem non male intelligitur vox esse eorum qui, cum sint

<sup>66</sup> *Bestiari medievali*, pp. 70–72.

<sup>67</sup> The antagonism between the deer and the serpent was traditional. For example, Pliny the Elder claims that the deer 'vestigant cavernas nariumque spiritu extrahunt renitentes' (*Naturalis historia*, VIII. 50. 118). Isidore of Seville, in turn, goes further and highlights the deer's immunity against the serpent's poison: when they sense themselves burdened with infirmity, the deer are restored to health by eating the serpents, 'superata perniciie veneni eorum' (*Etymologiae*, XII. 1. 18). Cited from Pliny, *Natural History*, III, p. 84; Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiarum*, II, unpaginated.

<sup>68</sup> See Ciccarese, *Animali simbolici*, I, p. 316.

*catechumeni, ad gratiam sancti lavacri festinant.* Unde et solemniter cantatur hic psalmus, ut ita desiderent fontem remissionis peccatorum, quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum. [...] Ipse enim *fons et lumen est* [...]. Si et fons est, et lumen est; merito et intellectus est, quia et satiat animam avidam sciendi; et omnis qui intelligit, luce quadam non corporali, [...] sed interiore illustratur. [...] Apud Deum est fons vitae et insiccabilis fons: in illius luce lumen inobscurabile. Lumen hoc desidera, quemdam fontem, quoddam lumen quale non norunt oculi tui [...]. Audi quid *aliud est in cervo*. *Serpentes necat*, et post serpentium interemptionem majori siti inardescit, peremptis serpentibus ad fontes acrius currit. Serpentes vitia tua sunt.

(*Enarrationes in Psalmos*, XLI. 1–3)<sup>69</sup>

Based on the deer's thirst and its rivalry with the snake, Augustine associates the animal with the catechumens who wish to purify themselves through the power of holy water. Water is what provides and instills the light of God. In this way, the deer is a figure of the soul seeking goodness, but also a symbol of Christ in his fight against evil. Water represents both God and the baptismal font, which provides humans with enlightenment and cleanses them of sin. The imagery of purification connected to the deer and water also recalls the notion of redemption.

I propose that the hind in sonnet 190 can be read in the light of a Christological interpretation. It allegorises the purity of the beloved, as commentaries observe, but this purity is that of Christ the Redeemer and — following his example — that of the good Christian. The two rivers in the sonnet, then, may relate to the imagery of the hind and represent holy water as a source of goodness.<sup>70</sup>

References to redemption also emerge from the references to hunting in Petrarch's verses. The religious historian Mircea Eliade observes that in Eurasian folklore pursuing 'a cervid leads to a radical change in the hunter's situation or in his mode of being', which entails passing from the profane to the sacred.<sup>71</sup> Sergio Cicada, in turn, notes that in classical literature golden antlers constitute a

<sup>69</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XXXVI. 464–65. Italics mine.

<sup>70</sup> See also the observations, based on different sources, by Giovanni Barberi Squarotti, *Selvaggia diletta: la caccia nella letteratura italiana dalle origini a Marino* (Venice: Marsilio, 2000), pp. 213–33; Mia Cocco, 'Il sonetto CXC del Petrarca o la poetica dello specchio', in *Forma e parola: studi in memoria di Fredi Chiappelli*, ed. by Dennis J. Dutschke and others (Rome: Bulzoni, 1992), pp. 81–108 (pp. 96–98).

<sup>71</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Zalmoxis: The Vanishing God*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 162.

distinguishing feature of supernatural deer.<sup>72</sup> Eliade's and Cicada's observations are consistent with the Christological function of the hind in the sonnet. First, not only do the 'duo corna d'oro' (*Rvf*, 190. 2) raise the hind to a sacral dimension, but the presence of male traits such as antlers on a female deer may serve to foreground the extraordinary character of the animal. Second, the chase signals a mutation in the poetic persona, as one would expect from an encounter with a redemptive entity.

These two points bring to mind the hagiographical episode of Saint Eustace. First, like Eustace, the poetic persona sees a deer while he is hunting. Second, in both the saintly legend and Petrarch's poem, the deer is associated with Christ and with a message of redemption. Third, if the antlers constitute a supernatural element in the poem, the same is also true in the case of Saint Eustace, who sees the cross between the deer's antlers. Petrarch's depiction of the hind with antlers could therefore be a signal deliberately included by the poet in order to recall that legend. Finally, as in Saint Eustace's conversion, the poet also makes use of the symbolism of baptism.<sup>73</sup>

Petrarch's verses, with their allusion to the episode of Saint Eustace, offer the image of an anti-hunt. The subject of the sonnet not only reverses the figure of the hunter who longs for material goods, but also rectifies the failed hunt of the lover: while the poetic persona of *canzone* 23 is condemned to a frustrated desire, in sonnet 190 he seems to find redemption in the vision of the hind.

### *The 'due riviere' as Petrarch's Eden*

Water constitutes an important element in the sonnet, featuring at the beginning and at the end of the poem. First, the lyric persona sees the hind 'fra due riviere' (*Rvf*, 190. 3), in a space that is separate from the poetic persona's position. Second, the subject falls 'ne l'acqua' (*Rvf*, 190. 14). We have touched upon the traditional interpretations of the river and the fall. An alternative reading is also possible.

---

<sup>72</sup> See Sergio Cicada, 'La leggenda medievale del Cervo bianco e le origini della "matière de Bretagne"', *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei: Memorie: Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filosofiche*, 8th ser., 12 (1965–1966), 3–120.

<sup>73</sup> On the legend of Saint Eustace, see Chapter 1 (part 4).



I would like to focus briefly on the function of water as a boundary between different states, through a process of death and rebirth.<sup>74</sup> Water constitutes a passage from this life to the afterlife, or through different stages of the afterlife. This is explicit in classical mythology, in which all mortals must cross rivers before entering the Underworld: the river Styx and the river Acheron separate the world of earthly life from Hades, as Petrarch could read respectively in the Ovidian episode of Orpheus and Eurydice (*Metamorphoses*, X) and in the Vergilian account of Aeneas's descent to the Underworld (*Aeneid*, VI). In Dante's *Commedia*, the river Acheron marks the boundary between the Ante-Hell and Hell (*Inferno*, 3). Ulysses tries to transcend human limits by embarking on a voyage by sea (*Inferno*, 26). The mountain of Purgatory, in turn, is separated from the earth by water (*Purgatorio*, 2). Eden's water comes from two rivers in turn: on their path to purification, the souls first have to cross the Lethe and then the Eunoè (*Purgatorio*, 28–33). In all these examples water forms a boundary between separate worlds. Water is also associated with a change of state in a human's lifetime, whereby it serves as a means of purification that confers a rebirth on a symbolic level, marking the shift from an old life to a new one. Indeed, Mircea Eliade observes that in water everything is dissolved and regenerated: what is immersed in it dies and rises again 'able to receive a new revelation and begin a new [...] life'.<sup>75</sup>

In Christianity, the idea of water as an instrument of purification and regeneration informs the sacrament of baptism. In this rite, the link between immersion and regeneration relates to Christ's Passion: as Christ dies and rises again, redeeming humans from sin, so the good Christian 'dies symbolically with immersion, and is reborn, purified renewed'.<sup>76</sup> In this regard, Saint Paul writes: 'an ignoratis quia quicumque baptizati sumus in Christo Iesu in morte ipsius baptizati sumus' (Ad Romanos 6. 3).<sup>77</sup> Thomas Aquinas relates baptism to Christ's Passion even more clearly, stating that the former is a representation of the latter:

---

<sup>74</sup> For further details, see Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. by Rosemary Sheed (London: Sheed and Ward, 1958), pp. 188–215.

<sup>75</sup> Ibidem, p. 194.

<sup>76</sup> Ibidem, pp. 196–97. See also Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, trans. by Philip Mairet (London: Harvill, 1961), p. 151.

<sup>77</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, II, p. 1756.

‘baptismus aquae efficaciam habet a passione Christi, inquantum *eam sacramentaliter rapraesentat*’ (*Super sententias*, IV. 4. 3. 3).<sup>78</sup>

The symbolism of water and the imagery of the hind in sonnet 190 are woven together and converge to convey an idea of rebirth promoted by the beloved. Water separates the poetic persona’s old life from his new life, along the same lines as the imagery of baptism, which represents Christ’s Passion. The hind itself, in turn, allegorises both the good Christian — who has been baptised and who lives according to God’s word — and Christ, the Redeemer.<sup>79</sup>

The redemptive imagery of the hind and the two rivers in the sonnet recall Dante’s Eden.<sup>80</sup> In *Purgatorio* 28 Dante describes the last stages of his purifying voyage as follows:

ed ecco più andar mi tolse un rio,  
che ’nver’ sinistra con sue picciole onde  
piegava l’erba che ’n sua ripa uscìo.

[...]

Coi piè ristretti e *con li occhi passai*  
*di là dal fiumicello*, per mirare  
la gran variazion d’i freschi mai;  
e là *m’apparve*, sì com’elli appare  
subitamente cosa che disvia  
per meraviglia tutto altro pensare,  
una donna soletta che si gia  
e cantando e scegliendo fior da fiore  
ond’ era pinta tutta la sua via.

(*Purgatorio*, 28. 25–27, 34–42)<sup>81</sup>

In this passage, Dante recounts his arrival in the Earthly Paradise. The first of the rivers in Eden, the Lethe, temporarily prevents the pilgrim from pursuing his journey but does not impede him from staring at a lady, Matelda, across the water.

There are a great many parallels between sonnet 190 and Dante’s description of Eden in *Purgatorio* 28. To begin with, both texts introduce the appearance of the hind and that of Matelda with the phrase ‘m’apparve’ (*Rvf*, 190.

<sup>78</sup> Tommaso d’Aquino, *Commento alle Sentenze di Pietro Lombardo*, ed. by Roberto Coggi, 10 vols (Bologna: Studio domenicano, 1999), VII, p. 346. Italics mine.

<sup>79</sup> On the role of water in Petrarch, see also Sara Sturm-Maddox, ‘Eaux troublés: la navigation de l’âme dans les *Rimes sparse* de Petrarque’, in *L’eau au Moyen Âge*, ed. by Jean Subrenat and others (Aix-en-Provence: CUERMA, 1985), pp. 335–47, which is mostly concerned with the topic of navigation.

<sup>80</sup> See also Cocco, ‘Il sonetto CXC del Petrarca’, pp. 99–102.

<sup>81</sup> Dante, *Commedia*, II, pp. 827–46 (pp. 830–32). Italics mine.

2 and *Purgatorio*, 28. 37). Both the lover and the pilgrim also stand on the near side of the river and look at a female presence on the far side. At the same time, like the hind, Matelda stands between two rivers: even though Dante does not explicitly mention her position, we clearly understand from the text that she stands beyond the first river, the Lethe, and thus before the second river, the Eunoè.<sup>82</sup> Finally, both figures are characterised by the same notion of love: the hind is free from the chains of secular love, as expressed in the verse ‘libera farmi al mio Cesare parve’ (*Rvf*, 190. 11); likewise, Matelda is kindled by a pure and divine love, as suggested by the pilgrim’s words: ‘bella donna, che a’ raggi d’amore | ti scaldi’ (*Purgatorio*, 28. 43–44).<sup>83</sup>

I propose that Petrarch’s river, like Dante’s, marks a regeneration. The pilgrim is submerged in the Lethe by Matelda (*Purgatorio*, 31. 94–96); likewise, the lover falls into the water at the end of Petrarch’s sonnet. Correspondingly, the two female characters, with their purity, promote the subject’s rebirth through the purifying water of the river, and perform the rite of baptism.<sup>84</sup> I am aware that the fall remains problematic. The poetic persona’s contact with water does not occur as a deliberate choice, but rather as the passive consequence of the vision of the hind. As I will observe later, the fall is a prelude to the *visio Dei* in the three sonnets that follow. At the same time, it leaves a veil of ambiguity and foreshadows a vague sense of failure.

If, as critics have suggested, the ‘due riviere’ (*Rvf*. 190. 3) refer to the Rhone and Durance, the meaning of the sonnet presents a marked contrast with Petrarch’s negative view of Avignon. The link between Avignon and the Edenic setting of poem 190 is suggested by the imagery of the Tigris and Euphrates. In the Scriptural tradition, these rivers had a twofold valence. On the one hand, they

---

<sup>82</sup> Matelda herself explains that: ‘Da questa parte con virtù discende | che toglie altrui memoria del peccato; | da l’altra d’ogne ben fatto la rende. | Quinci Letè; così da l’altro lato | Eunoè si chiama’ (*Purgatorio*, 28. 127–31). The two rivers are situated one after the other. This is clarified further in *Purgatorio* 33, where Dante explains that the Lethe and Eunoè, like the Tigris and Euphrates, depart from the same source: ‘Dinanzi ad esse Eufràtès e Tigri | veder mi parve uscir d’una fontana, | e, quasi amici, dipartirsi pigri’ (*Purgatorio*, 33. 112–14). Cited from Dante, *Commedia*, II, pp. 843, 977.

<sup>83</sup> Dante, *Commedia*, II, pp. 832–33. In her commentary on the text, Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi observes: ‘Essa è innamorata, e la natura dell’amore non è specificata né qui né più oltre [...]. È amore senza determinazione, quindi quello assoluto e divino e insieme quello proprio dell’uomo, che quando è puro, come qui nella condizione primigenia del paradiso terrestre, non si distingue da quello.’ Italics original.

<sup>84</sup> On the symbolism of baptism in *Purgatorio* 31, see Chiavacci Leonardi’s commentary in Dante, *Commedia*, II, p. 921.

are two of the watercourses in Eden (Genesis 2. 10–14). On the other hand, they also provide water to Babylon, the Mesopotamian city where the Jews were held captive (Psalm 136). I propose that the ‘due riviere’ (*Rvf.* 190. 3) serve to establish an opposition between the content of the sonnet and Petrarch’s view of Avignon as a new Babylon. While Avignon is a place of corruption and lust, *Rvf* 190 depicts a place of salvation and spiritual love.

In Petrarch’s works, Avignon is associated with Babylon in order to emphasise the sin with which the former is characterised.<sup>85</sup> In the *Canzoniere*, Avignon is defined as ‘empia Babilonia’, ‘madre d’errori’ (*Rvf.* 114. 1, 3), ‘nido di tradimenti’, a place in which ‘Luxuria fa l’ultima prova’ (*Rvf.* 136. 5, 8), ‘avara’ (*Rvf.* 137. 1), ‘Fontana di dolore, albergo d’ira, | scola d’errori et templo d’eresia’, and ‘fucina d’inganni’ (*Rvf.* 138. 1–2, 5).<sup>86</sup> A clear connection between Avignon and Babylon, based on the negative view of the Tigris and Euphrates, emerges from what Petrarch writes in the *Sine nomine* letters. In Letter IX, he defines himself as ‘ierosolimitanus exul inter et super flumina Babilonis’ (*Sine nomine*, IX. 10), that is, in exile from Jerusalem, between and on the two rivers of Babylon.<sup>87</sup> In the letter that follows, the poet clarifies his earlier cryptic words, and explains that Avignon constitutes a new Babylon, a place which is not lacking in cupidity and lust, but ‘remedia, sed amor’ (*Sine nomine*, X. 10), that is, mutual aid and pure love.<sup>88</sup> In so doing, he likens Avignon to Babylon, both watered by two rivers and both characterised by moral corruption.

---

<sup>85</sup> For further details about Petrarch and Avignon, see Alex Cannegieter, ‘From Babylon to Eternity: Appropriation of the Babylon-Motif in Christian Homiletical Constructions’, in *From Babylon to Eternity: The Exile Remembered and Constructed in Text and Tradition*, ed. by Bob Becking and others (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 72–102; Unn Falkeid, *The Avignon Papacy Contested: An Intellectual History from Dante to Catherine of Siena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), pp. 95–120; Claudio Giggio, ‘Forme dell’invettiva in Petrarca’, in *Lectura Petrarce*, ed. by Folena, Limentani and Sambin, XVII (1997), pp. 375–92; Ronald L. Martinez, ‘The Book without a Name: Petrarch’s Open Secret (*Liber sine nomine*)’, in *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works*, ed. by Kirkham and Maggi, pp. 291–99; Emilio Pasquini, ‘Il mito polemico di Avignone nei poeti italiani del Trecento’, in *Aspetti culturali della società italiana nel periodo del papato avignonese: 15–18 ottobre 1978*, ed. by Ovidio Capitani and others (Todi: Accademia Tudertina, 1981), pp. 257–309; Michelangelo Picone, ‘Avignone come tema letterario: Dante e Petrarca’, *L’Alighieri*, n.s., 43.2 (2002), 5–22; Santagata, *I frammenti dell’anima*, pp. 165–69; Franco Suitner, ‘L’invettiva antiavignone del Petrarca e la poesia infamante medievale’, *Studi petrarcheschi*, n.s., 2 (1985), 201–10.

<sup>86</sup> Petrarch, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 532–34, 672–75, 676–78, 679–82.

<sup>87</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Liber sine nomine*, ed. by Giovanni Cascio (Florence: Le Lettere, 2015), pp. 96–99 (p. 98).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 100–03 (p. 102).

The expression ‘super flumina Babilonis’ which Petrarch employs at the end of *Sine nomine* IX is a quotation of the first verse of Psalm 136. The Psalm expresses the yearnings of the Jewish people in exile following the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem. In Petrarch’s letter, the reference to the Psalm was part of a polemic discourse against the Avignon Papacy: as the people of Israel were in Babylon, in exile from the holy land of Jerusalem, so the papal seat is in exile from the holy site of Rome. However, in the Middle Ages the topic of the Jewish exile was also interpreted figurally.<sup>89</sup> The exile of the chosen people was held to be a figure of the exile of the soul on earth. The end of the exile, in turn, was interpreted as the redemption of humanity. The path back from Babylon to Jerusalem was read as the soul’s passage from a state of sin to a state of blessedness.<sup>90</sup>

The figural meaning of the Psalm is also explained in Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, which Petrarch recalls in *Sine nomine* X. Here Augustine, after reading the Psalm as an allegory of human captivity, clarifies the contrast between Jerusalem and Babylon:

Duas civitates [...] currere per ista volumina saeculorum usque in finem, audistis et nostis; unam cui finis est pax aeterna, et vocatur Jerusalem; alteram cui gaudium est pax temporalis, et vocatur Babylonia. Interpretationes etiam nominum, si non fallor, tenetis: Jerusalem interpretari, *Visionem pacis*; Babyloniā, *Confusionem*.

(*Enarrationes in Psalmos*, CXXXVI. 1)<sup>91</sup>

Augustine explains that while Jerusalem aims to promote eternal peace, Babylon promotes temporary pleasures; the former is seen as a figure of celestial beatitude, the latter as a figure of the temptations of earthly life. The opposition between the two cities is also evident from the meanings of their names, which according to Augustine’s etymology are ‘vision of a state of peace’ and ‘confusion’, respectively.

Augustine’s interpretation of Babylon and Jerusalem seems to be consistent with the parable of Petrarch’s life from carnal to spiritual love. The ‘due

---

<sup>89</sup> See Auerbach, “‘Figura’”.

<sup>90</sup> See, for example, Giuseppe Ledda, ‘Immagini di pellegrinaggio e di esilio nella *Commedia* di Dante’, *Annali di Ferrara online*, 1 (2012), 295–308 (p. 297).

<sup>91</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XXXVII. 1761. Italics mine.

riviere' (*Rvf*, 190. 3) and the 'flumina Babilonis' (*Sine nomine*, IX. 10) constitute two sides of the same coin. Petrarch, I propose, establishes an antithetical association between the *locus amoenus* in the sonnet and the evil *locus horridus* of Avignon: the former depicts a redemptive vision, leading to salvation; the latter is a theatre for the confusion associated with temporary pleasures; the former recalls Eden, the latter constitutes a *civitas diaboli*. This opposition appears to be associated with the dichotomy between sensual love and spiritual love, perdition and salvation. In this way, the poetic persona may be reconsidering the notion of sensual love which had informed the early phase of his enamourment in Avignon.

As Petrarch writes in his codex Ambrosianus, he first met Laura on the 6th April 1327, in the church of Saint Claire in Avignon: 'Laurea [...] primum oculis meis apparuit sub primum adolescentie mee tempus anno Domini M<sup>o</sup>III<sup>c</sup>XXVII die VI<sup>o</sup> mensis Aprilis in ecclesia sancte Clare Avinione hora matutina' (fol. 1<sup>v</sup>).<sup>92</sup> In the narrative of the *Canzoniere*, particularly in the sonnets 'Era il giorno ch'al sol si scoloraro' (*Rvf*, 3) and 'Padre del ciel, dopo i perduti giorni' (*Rvf*, 62), he relates that the first encounter with the lady took place on a Good Friday; like the annotation in his codex Ambrosianus, the sonnet 'Voglia mi sprona, Amor mi guida et scorge', also gives the date, 'il dì sesto d'aprile' 1327, for their first encounter (*Rvf*, 211. 13).<sup>93</sup> In this way, the day associated with Christ's Passion is turned into the day of the poetic persona's perdition.<sup>94</sup> In sonnet 190, I suggest, the images of the hind and the rivers illustrate the poetic persona's attitude towards the beloved in terms of a redemption. Petrarch thus detaches from the view of the lady as a cause of error and instead ascribes to her a positive role, along the lines of that of Christ.

*'Nessun mi tocchi'*

While the hind and water recall Christ's Passion, the statement 'Nessun mi tocchi' (*Rvf*, 190. 9) overtly echoes Jesus's Resurrection, playing a crucial role in identifying the imagery of salvation used in the sonnet.

<sup>92</sup> Petrarca, *Le postille del Virgilio ambrosiano*, I, pp. 190–92 (p. 190).

<sup>93</sup> For the texts, see Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 17–21, 317–20, 906–09.

<sup>94</sup> However, it has been noted that in 1327 Good Friday fell on 10th April. For a discussion of this problem, see Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, pp. 125–26.

Stefano Carrai provides a comprehensive investigation of this verse. He challenges the interpretation according to which this line, along with the verse ‘libera farmi al mio Cesare parve’ (*Rvf*, 190. 11), derives from Solinus and proposes that Petrarch may have relied on a different, possibly oral, source. In particular, Carrai observes that the motto ‘Noli me tangere, Caesaris sum’, which is traditionally indicated as part of the Solinus intertext, is not documented before Petrarch, but could have originated in the fifteenth century, ‘desumendolo dal testo petrarchesco e traducendo in latino i versi del sonetto mediante il ricorso a brani evangelici notissimi’, namely ‘noli me tangere’ (Iohannem 20. 17) and ‘redde ergo quae sunt Caesaris Caesari et quae sunt Dei Deo’ (Mattheum 22. 21).<sup>95</sup> While Carrai acknowledges the parallel between the Petrarchan verse and the verse in the Gospel of John, he does not offer a thorough investigation of this relationship; nor, indeed, do later commentaries.<sup>96</sup> I argue that this link contributes to the depiction of the Christological image of the hind, and thus of Laura herself. In other words, this connection could serve to reinforce the message of redemption that the sonnet conveys.

In order to better understand this point, it is worth recalling the gospel narrative in which the statement is found. The Gospel of John recounts Christ’s Resurrection. Coming to Jesus’s tomb, Mary Magdalene saw that the stone of the tomb itself had been taken away from the sepulchre:

Maria autem stabat ad monumentum foris plorans dum ergo fleret inclinavit se et prospexit in monumentum et vidit duos angelos in albis sedentes unum ad caput et unum ad pedes ubi positum fuerat corpus Iesu Dicunt ei illi mulier quid ploras dicit eis quia tulerunt Dominum meum et nescio ubi posuerunt eum haec cum dixisset conversa est retrorsum et videt Iesum stantem et non sciebat quia Iesus est dicit ei Iesus mulier quid ploras quem quaeris illa existimans quia hortulanus esset dicit ei domine si tu sustulisti eum dicito mihi ubi posuisti eum et ego eum tollam dicit ei Iesus Maria conversa illa dicit ei rabboni quod dicitur magister dicit ei Iesus *noli me tangere nondum enim ascendi ad Patrem meum vade autem ad fratres meos et dic eis ascendo ad Patrem meum et Patrem vestrum et Deum meum et Deum vestrum* venit Maria Magdalene adnuntians discipulis quia vidi Dominum.

(Iohannem 20. 11–18)<sup>97</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Carrai, ‘Il sonetto “Una candida cerva” del Petrarca’, p. 248. The gospel quotations are from *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, II, pp. 1560, 1695.

<sup>96</sup> A first step in this direction is taken by Cocco, ‘Il sonetto CXC del Petrarca’, p. 97.

<sup>97</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, II, p. 1695. Italics mine.

I would like to highlight two points in the passage above. First, when Mary Magdalene tries to approach Jesus, he warns her by saying ‘*noli me tangere nondum enim ascendi ad Patrem meum*’, that is to say, ‘do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father’. As can be seen from these words, Christ’s warning recalls the statement in sonnet 190 ‘*Nessun mi tocchi*’. While it is true that there is no evidence proving a conscious relationship between the sonnet and the Gospel of John, it is very unlikely that Petrarch did not have those scriptural echoes in mind when composing his poem. Second, Mary Magdalene is the first witness of Christ’s Resurrection, that is to say, his manifestation as God. The Gospel recounts that she went and announced to the disciples her vision of God.

Who was Mary Magdalene? Two distinct characters in the Gospel of Luke have been confused under this name: Mary of Magda, from whom Christ expelled seven demons, a sign of either massive moral or physical evil (Lucam 8. 1–3), and an anonymous prostitute (Lucam 7. 36–50). Although Mary of Magda and the prostitute are two different figures, Gregory the Great in his *Homiliae in Evangelia* inaugurated a long-lasting tradition according to which they were the same person:

Maria Magdalene, quae fuerat in civitate peccatrix, amando veritatem, lavit lacrymis maculas criminis: et vox Veritatis impletur, qua dicitur: *Dimissa sunt ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum*. Quae enim prius frigida peccando remanserat, postmodum amando fortiter ardebat.

(*Homiliae in Evangelia*, XXV. 1)<sup>98</sup>

Mary Magdalene thus becomes the penitent prostitute who has not only converted to Christ’s teaching, but also testifies to his Resurrection, the act through which Jesus reveals himself as God and makes salvation possible despite the atonement for original sin.

I argue that alongside the traditional association between the deer and Christ, the statement ‘*Nessun mi tocchi*’ also emphasises the role of the hind-Christ as a redeemer. Likewise, the poetic persona who observes the hind recalls Mary Magdalene in the gospel tale of Christ’s Resurrection, that is to say, the penitent sinner, who has the privilege of seeing God and who benefits from this

---

<sup>98</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, LXXVI. 1189b. Italics original. For an overall investigation of the figure of Mary Magdalene and how this was interpreted in the Middle Ages, see Jacques Dalarun, ‘Regards de Clercs’, in *Histoire des femmes en Occident*, ed. by Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, 5 vols (Paris: Plon, 1992), II: *Le Moyen Âge*, ed. by Christiane Klapish-Zuber, pp. 31–54 (pp. 45–50).



encounter. It is possible, then, that the imagery in the sonnet also performs a meta-poetic function: as Mary Magdalene was the first to see and announce her vision of God, so the poetic subject contemplates and recounts, through his poem, the manifestation of the lady in Christological fashion.

The reversal of roles between the masculine and the feminine again challenges the view of masculinity associated with the good huntsman.<sup>99</sup> The hunter, who desires earthly goods, is replaced with a repentant sinner, who longs for spiritual goods: the former was the embodiment of masculinity; the latter is likened to a feminine figure such as that of Mary Magdalene.

Petrarch was in fact particularly familiar with the cult of Mary Magdalene. The *Vita apostolica beatae Mariae Magdalenae*, an eleventh-century hagiographical text possibly written in Burgundy, tells us that when the early wave of Christian persecution began, Mary Magdalene and a cohort of Christ's disciples were expelled from Palestine. They were thrust into a boat and cast adrift at sea. By good fortune, they were washed ashore in Provence. After years spent preaching, Mary Magdalene retired to a holy cave near Marseilles, today known as the *Sainte Baume*, where she lived out the rest of her life in ascetic contemplation.<sup>100</sup>

As Petrarch documents in a letter to Philippe de Cabasoles (*Seniles*, XV. 15), in 1336 Cardinal Giovanni Colonna asked the poet to accompany an unspecified person on a visit to the cave of Mary Magdalene. During the visit, Petrarch composed a poem in Latin hexameters dedicated to the saint. The poem, which addresses Mary Magdalene as 'Dulcis amica Dei' (*Seniles*, XV. 15. 6), opens by invoking the saint's aid.<sup>101</sup>

Why does Petrarch ask for help from Mary Magdalene? As a penitent sinner of carnal commerce, she was particularly attractive, in terms of devotion, to those guilty of sexual misdemeanours.<sup>102</sup> Petrarch's cult of Mary Magdalene further suggests the parallel between himself and the saint in the sonnet. This

<sup>99</sup> See Bates, *Masculinity and the Hunt*, pp. 1–43 (pp. 32–36).

<sup>100</sup> See Katherine L. Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalene: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 35–46, 52–54.

<sup>101</sup> Petrarca, *Rerum senilium*, IV, pp. 422–27. For details on this episode, see also the appendix in Petrarca, *Rerum senilium*, IV, pp. 616–17; Wilkins, *Life of Petrarch*, p. 18.

<sup>102</sup> See Thomas J. Heffernan, 'Mary Magdalene', in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. by Robert E. Bjork, 4 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), III, pp. 1096–97.

brings us back to Avignon and to that Good Friday when the poetic persona's desire for the lady triggered his perdition. With a shared reference to Easter, the rebirth narrated in sonnet 190 is antithetical to the perdition recounted in sonnet 3.

*The Hind as a Deification of Laura*

By virtue of its Christological meaning of redemption, I propose, the hind in *Rvf* 190 introduces the beatific vision of the beloved which is narrated in *Rvf* 191, 192 and 193. Besides their shared theme, the link between *Rvf* 191–193 is also documented by the *mise en page* in the *Codice degli abbozzi*, in which the three sonnets form a triptych (fols 1<sup>v</sup>–2<sup>r</sup>).<sup>103</sup> In his analysis of the *sestina* ‘Giovene donna sotto un verde lauro’ (*Rvf*, 30), Robert M. Durling helps us shed light on the possible narrative unity which connects *Rvf* 190 with *Rvf* 191–193 through the imagery of the contemplative vision. Durling highlights the association between the branches of the laurel under which the lady stands and the arms of the cross in the *sestina*; furthermore, he draws attention to a tradition, found for example in Bede's exegesis of *Apocalypse* (*Explanatio Apocalypsis*, III. 21), which connects the ‘topacii’ (*Rvf*, 30. 37) with the beatific vision.<sup>104</sup> Read in this light, the laurel which shadows the Christological hind in sonnet 190 could be associated with the cross, reinforcing the references in the poem to Christ's Passion and Resurrection; the presence of topaz on the hind's neck, in turn, plays a crucial role in foreshadowing the contemplative experience which takes place in the next three sonnets.

In sonnet 191 the poetic persona states that he derives as much beatitude from gazing at his beloved as the blessed do from looking at God. The poet draws a parallel between God and the beloved, but also between himself and the blessed:

*Si come eterna vita è veder Dio,  
né più si brama, né bramar più lice,  
così me, donna, il voi veder, felice  
fa in questo breve et fraile viver mio.  
Né voi stessa com'or bella vid'io*

<sup>103</sup> See Stefano Carrai, ‘I primi testi autografi del Vaticano 3195 (*Rvf* 190–200)’, in *Il ‘Canzoniere’: lettura micro e macrotestuale*, ed. by Picone, pp. 433–48 (pp. 435–37).

<sup>104</sup> See Robert M. Durling, ‘Petrarch's “Giovene donna sotto un verde lauro”’, *Modern Language Notes*, 86.1 (1971), 1–20.

già mai, se vero al cor l'occhio ridice:  
 dolce del mio penser *hora beatrice*,  
 che vince ogni alta speme, ogni desio.  
 Et se non fusse il suo fuggir sì ratto,  
 più non demanderei: che s'alcun vive  
 sol d'odore, et tal fama fede acquista,  
 alcun d'acqua o di foco, e 'l gusto e 'l tatto  
 acquetan cose d'ogni dolzor prive,  
 i' perché non de la vostra alma vista?

(*Rvf*, 191)<sup>105</sup>

The sonnet is centred on the question of the beatific vision of the lady, an experience which is defined 'hora beatrice' (*Rvf*, 191. 7), that is, a moment of beatitude. Maria Cecilia Bertolani has thoroughly investigated the theological question of the *visio Dei* in reference to Petrarch's works. In her discussion of the sonnet, she observes that the vision is concerned with an earthly dimension and portrays the lady as a source of beatitude in this life:

Il parallelo tra la visione di Dio del beato in patria e la felicità terrena del poeta in via prodotta dalla visione di Laura sembra riportare a un tema ampiamente discusso soprattutto nel XIII secolo, ossia quello averroista della felicità mentale già esperibile in terra. [...] Come la visione di Dio è la beatitudine della vita eterna, così la visione di Laura è la felicità in terra. [...] Con questo parallelismo, [...] il poeta potrebbe alludere alla possibilità, contemplata dall'averroismo, di una visione di Dio in terra da parte del filosofo, il cui equivalente lirico è la visione di Laura concessa al poeta.<sup>106</sup>

In other words, the poet raises the beloved to the status of God and replaces carnal desire with an ecstatic contemplation. The sonnet presents a clear link with the previous poem. The first link is in the notion of swiftness: the beloved's 'fuggir sì ratto' (*Rvf*, 191. 9) may allude to the disappearance of the hind, which 'sparve' suddenly (*Rvf*, 190. 14). Secondly, both sonnets share the motif of sight: in poem 190 the poetic persona's eyes are 'stanchi di mirar, non sazi' (*Rvf*, 190. 13); in poem 191 the subject, like the blessed contemplating God, is 'felice' and wonders

<sup>105</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 837–39 (p. 837). Italics mine.

<sup>106</sup> Maria Cecilia Bertolani, *Petrarca e la visione dell'eterno* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005), pp. 187–91 (pp. 188–89). See also Maria Cecilia Bertolani, 'La visione beatifica: una disputa avignonese (*Fam.* II. 12)', in *Motivi e forme delle Familiari di Francesco Petrarca: Gargnano del Garda, 2–5 ottobre 2002*, ed. by Claudia Berra and Paola Vecchi Galli (Milan: Cisalpino, 2003), pp. 611–37 (pp. 632–37). For a more general treatment of the religious dispute, see Maria Grazia Blasio, 'Il dibattito religioso tra Due e Trecento', in *Petrarca, l'umanesimo e la civiltà europea: atti del convegno internazionale, Firenze, 5–10 dicembre 2004*, ed. by Donatella Coppini and Michele Feo, 2 vols (= *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 15–18 (2005–2008)), I, pp. 231–59.

whether he may live on the beloved's 'alma vista' (*Rvf*, 191. 3, 14). In both cases, the vision from which the lover derives satisfaction is a temporary event in the earthly 'breve et fraile viver' of the subject (*Rvf*, 191. 4).

The notion of *satietas* which characterises the poetic persona's vision of the beloved recalls Augustine's reading of the deer and water in Psalm 41 as an allegory of baptism and of the subsequent acquisition of the light of God: 'Ipse enim fons et lumen est [...]. Si et fons est, et lumen est; merito et intellectus est, quia et *satiat animam avidam sciendi*' (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*, XLI. 2).<sup>107</sup> The use of the same verb, 'saziare' and 'satiare', in Petrarch and in Augustine again reinforces the link between sonnet 190, along with the three poems which follow, and the imagery of redemption. In *Rvf* 190 the observer's eyes are tired but not yet satiated. In *Rvf* 191, instead, he will be fully satisfied with contemplation: as in eternal life 'né più si brama, né bramar più lice' (*Rvf*, 191. 2), so the view of her 'vince ogni alta speme, ogni desio' (*Rvf*, 191. 8), or, as Augustine would say, satiates the soul eager for knowledge.

The beatific vision of the beloved continues in the following two poems. Sonnet 192 is built on the polyptoton of the verb 'vedere' and recounts the process of glorification that the subject undergoes by seeing the lady:

Stiamo, Amor, a veder la gloria nostra,  
cose sopra natura altere et nove:  
*vedi* ben quanta in lei dolcezza piove,  
*vedi lume* che 'l cielo in terra mostra.

(*Rvf*, 192. 1–4)<sup>108</sup>

The poet emphasises the divine status of the lady by associating her with 'cose sopra natura altere et nove' (*Rvf*, 192. 2). The 'lume' of the lady recalls the light which Augustine associates with water, and thus with the rite of baptism. Sonnet 193, in turn, after describing the beatitude coming from the beloved, further develops the symbolism of Eden and purification concerned with water which was foreshadowed in sonnet 190:

Pasco la mente d'un sì nobil cibo,  
ch'ambrosia et nectar non invidio a Giove,

<sup>107</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, XXXVI. 465. Italics mine.

<sup>108</sup> Petrarcha, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 840–42 (p. 840). Italics mine.

ché, sol mirando, oblio ne l'alma piove  
d'ogni altro dolce, et *Lethe al fondo bibo*.

(*Rvf*, 193. 1–4)<sup>109</sup>

By contemplating the lady, the poetic persona drinks the water of the Lethe, the river of oblivion. The sonnet has links to poem 190, in which the imagery of water and that of the hind serve to depict the Christological status of the beloved. While in sonnet 190 the poetic persona falls into the water after gazing at the hind, here the subject reaches the status of beatitude that such contemplation has allowed and achieves purification from past desires by means of water.

Some of the elements shared between *Rvf* 190 and *Rvf* 193 are also found in the *Triumphus pudicitie*:

Ell'avea in dosso, il dì, *candida gonna*,  
lo scudo in man che mal vide *Medusa*.  
D'un bel diaspro er'ivi una colonna,  
a la qual d'una in mezzo *Lethe* infusa  
catena di *diamante* e di *topatio*,  
che s'usò fra le donne, oggi non s'usa,  
legarlo vidi e farne quello stratio.

(*Triumphus pudicitie*, 118–24)<sup>110</sup>

The *Triumph* narrates the victory of the chastity of Laura over the power of passions. The beloved wore a white gown, which recalls the white coat of the hind. She held the same shield that the virgin Athena had lent to Perseus to fight Medusa, and captured Love with a chain, immersed in the Lethe, of diamonds and topazes, the same stones found on the hind's neck. Over the course of seven verses, Petrarch offers a positive portrait of the chaste beloved, while making use of the same symbolic elements which in *Rvf* 190–193 are scattered between the first and the last sonnet. In both cases, the figure of Laura is antithetical to the representation of the Medusean lady.

Returning to the lyric sequence in the *Fragmenta*, the view of the beloved as a beatific presence constitutes only one of the poetic persona's diverse and fluctuating attitudes towards the lady. In the *Secretum*, Augustine condemns precisely this view:

<sup>109</sup> Ibidem, pp. 843–44 (p. 843). Italics mine.

<sup>110</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi*, *Rime estravaganti*, *Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 227–65 (p. 248). Italics mine.

AUGUSTINUS Ab amore celestium elongavit animum et a Creatore ad creaturam desiderium inclinavit. [...]

FRANCISCUS Noli, queso, precipitare sententiam: Deum profecto ut amarem, illius amor prestitit.

AUGUSTINUS At pervertit ordinem. [...] Quia cum creatum omne Creatoris amore diligendum sit, tu contra, creature captus illecebris, Creatorem non qua decuit amasti, sed miratus artificem fuisti quasi nichil ex omnibus formosius creasset, cum tamen ultima pulcritudinum sit forma corporea. (*Secretum*, III. 146–48)<sup>111</sup>

Augustine affirms that the beloved has detached Francis's mind from the love of heavenly things and has led his heart to love the creature more than the Creator. Francis, in turn, observes that his love for her has led him to love God. Augustine's reply is stern. His interlocutor has inverted the true order. He has not loved God as he should have, but has only admired God as the creator of the lady. In this regard, the image of the hind seems to take the form of an idol, since the poetic persona worships it instead of God.<sup>112</sup>

Augustine's teaching returns in *canzone* 'I' vo pensando' (Rvf, 264), which forms the start of the second part of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*:

ché mortal cosa amar con tanta fede  
quanta a Dio sol per debito convensi,  
più si disdice a chi più pregio brama.

(Rvf, 264. 99–101)<sup>113</sup>

The poetic persona acknowledges that it is wrong to love a mortal creature with the sort of devotion which should be reserved for God. However, as the subject confesses in the *congedo*, he longs for better conduct but keeps pursuing the bad:

ché co la morte a lato  
cerco del viver mio novo consiglio,  
et veggio 'l meglio, et al peggior m'appiglio.

(Rvf, 264. 134–36)<sup>114</sup>

The poetic persona recognises what the path toward salvation requires, but he is still attached to the thought of the lady. The link between Rvf 190 and Rvf 264 is

<sup>111</sup> Petrarca, *Secretum*, p. 216.

<sup>112</sup> I adopt the technical definition of 'idol' which Durling associates with the beloved in his reading of Rvf 30. See Durling, 'Petrarch's "Giovane donna sotto un verde lauro"', p. 15.

<sup>113</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1051–68 (pp. 1053–54).

<sup>114</sup> Ibidem, pp. 1051–68 (pp. 1054–55).

not apparent, especially in the last redaction of the *Canzoniere*. However, the two poems were in fact closely related in the redaction known as the ‘Giovanni form’, that is, the part of MS Vaticano Latino 3195 which Giovanni Malpaghini transcribed between October 1366 and April 1367. When Malpaghini concluded his task, the two poems were situated at the end and at the beginning, respectively, of two contiguous sets of texts. As Domenico De Robertis has observed, the conclusion of Malpaghini’s work ‘corrisponde a una scansione organica, a una distribuzione che in qualche modo dà già carattere al lavoro’.<sup>115</sup> The juxtaposition of *Rvf* 190 and *Rvf* 264, with no other lyrics in between, suggests a possible interplay and coherence between the two poems: the sonnet narrates the benefits of spiritual love, while the *canzone* acknowledges its limits, in accordance with Augustine’s words in the *Secretum*. In this light, the fall into water in *Rvf* 190 could indicate the subject’s recognition of the illusory benefits of spiritual love. However, in the Vatican redaction of the *Canzoniere*, *Rvf* 190 is followed by the triptych of *Rvf* 191–193. In this context, the fall seems to engage with the imagery of baptism, redemption and the *visio Dei* which emerges in the entire lyric sequence. At the same time, it continues to evoke a sense of insufficiency and illusion, as if to denounce a lapse.

In the last poem of the *Fragmenta*, the *canzone* ‘Vergine bella, che, di sol vestita’ (*Rvf*, 366), the subject abandons himself to a prayer, which revisits and reconsiders the different notions of love that have populated the *Canzoniere*.<sup>116</sup> The addressee and honoree of the *canzone* is the Virgin Mary, portrayed and praised here as unique among women. In this way, the figure of Laura as the *madonna* of the lover is eclipsed by the figure of Mary, the only and truest Madonna of all Christians. In the poem, the speaker expresses his regret for his erroneous youthful desire for the Medusean lady, who is explicitly identified with the Gorgon, in opposition to the merciful Mother of God: ‘Medusa et l’error mio

---

<sup>115</sup> Domenico De Robertis, ‘Contiguità e selezione nella costruzione del *Canzoniere* petrarchesco’, in his *Memoriale petrarchesco* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1997), pp. 65–86 (p. 72) (first publ. in *Studi di filologia italiana*, 43 (1985), 45–66). On the structure and problems of the ‘Giovanni form’, see also Santagata, *I frammenti dell’anima*, pp. 257–60; Sabrina Stroppa, ‘La conclusione della prima parte della “forma di Giovanni”: il trittico *Rvf* 188–190 nello specchio di 163–165’, *Per leggere: i generi della lettura*, 22.1 (2012), 7–22.

<sup>116</sup> For the text, see Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1413–32.

m'àn fatto un sasso' (*Rvf*, 366. 111).<sup>117</sup> However, more importantly, the poetic persona asks for Mary's aid in the name of her son's Passion:

Vergine gloriosa,  
 donna del Re che nostri lacci à sciolti  
 et fatto 'l mondo libero et felice,  
 ne le cui *sante piaghe*  
 prego ch'appaghe il cor, *vera beatrice*.  
 (*Rvf*, 366. 48–52)<sup>118</sup>

The subject recalls the scriptural context of the crucifixion, which also characterises sonnet 190, invoking the redemptive role of Christ's 'sante piaghe' (*Rvf*, 366. 51) and the beatific attitude of Mary, addressed as 'vera beatrice' (*Rvf*, 366. 52), the true giver of beatitude. The poetic persona abandons the portraiture of the beloved as a Christological figure and turns to Mary, the true mediatrix and intercessor of Christ's grace. The happiness that Jesus has offered to the world, which is 'libero et felice' (*Rvf*, 366. 50) thanks to the Redeemer, contrasts with the individual and temporary enjoyment of the subject during the ecstatic vision of the beloved, which has made the observer 'felice' in his 'breve et fraile' earthly life (*Rvf*, 191. 3, 4). The role of Mary as a mediatrix is clearly expressed in the last lines of the *canzone*, where the poetic persona calls for the Mother of Christ's aid in finding pardon and peace in her son:

Raccomandami al tuo Figliuol, verace  
 homo et verace Dio,  
 ch'accolga 'l mïo spirto ultimo in pace.  
 (*Rvf*, 366. 135–37)<sup>119</sup>

In the *canzone* Petrarch not only emphasises the association between sensual love and perdition, but also amends the belief that spiritual love for the lady could lead the subject to God.

---

<sup>117</sup> Ibidem, p. 1416.

<sup>118</sup> Ibidem, p. 1414. Italics mine.

<sup>119</sup> Ibidem, p. 1417.



\*\*\*

The images of the stag and of the hind establish a thematic link between *canzone* 23 and sonnet 190. Through the multiple elements revolving around the figure of the deer in these two poems, Petrarch compares and contrasts two notions of love, namely the sensual desire of his youth in Avignon which typifies the *canzone*, and the later spiritual love for the lady which characterises the sonnet. Petrarch thus marks the opposition between the figure of ‘Laura Medusa’ and that of ‘Laura beatrice’. Firstly, the stag and the hind evoke two opposed imageries: the former recalls a classical tradition which associates the deer with lust; the latter, instead, presents the image of the deer as a symbol of Christological purity and even redemption. Secondly, both poems depict a hunting scene. However, in *canzone* 23 the reference to Actaeon’s hunt serves to portray the subject’s sensual appetite, while in sonnet 190 the allusion to the legend of Saint Eustace describes a redemptive anti-hunt. The hunting scene in both poems leads to the third point, that is to say, the status of the beloved. The *canzone* and the sonnet associate the lady with figures belonging at once to both the animal and the divine realms. In poem 23 the beloved is likened to a divine entity; in poem 190, instead, she is associated with an animal. However, the goddess in the *canzone* participates in animality — as protector of hunting — and presents the traits of a wild and cruel animal. By contrast, the hind in the sonnet recalls the divine figure of Christ. Behind her divine appearance, the beloved in the *canzone* reveals an animal status, while the lady in the sonnet, behind her animal shape, conveys Christological meanings. In addition, the opposition between sensual and spiritual love also emerges in reference to water. In the *canzone* water does not serve as a means of purification, but reveals the animal nature of the subject. In the sonnet, instead, water contributes to the poetic persona’s path to salvation and allows his purification from past sins. Finally, in the *canzone* sight triggers the subject’s bodily desire for the beloved; in the sonnet, however, it allows the redemptive vision of the hind, which in turn introduces the subsequent *visio* in poems 191–193.

The contrasts centred on the notions of ‘Laura Medusa’ and ‘Laura beatrice’ which inform *canzone* 23 and sonnet 190 return in the final poem of the

*Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, canzone 366. Here the poetic persona addresses the Virgin Mary and reviews his previous attitudes towards the beloved, whether those attitudes were informed by carnal or by spiritual love.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I have compared and contrasted three paradigmatic animal images, one in Dante's *Rime* and two in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. Through this comparison, I have re-examined and clarified the opposition proposed by Gianfranco Contini between Dante's allegorism and Petrarch's emblematicism. Petrarch's *Canzoniere* does not adopt allegory *in factis*, which characterises Dante's *Commedia*. However, these two works belong to different and distant poetic genres, which are by no means comparable. Allegory *in factis* is peculiar to the interpretation of facts and events recounted in the Bible and — along the lines of Scripture — in Dante's sacred poem. This approach can hardly be applied to lyric poetry, which presents the features of allegory *in verbis* in the works of both Dante and Petrarch. As I have shown, Dante's bear and Petrarch's stag and hind convey, under the veil of the letter, multiple layers of further hidden meanings. The bear signals the indomitable force of the poetic persona's instincts and recalls the association between wild beasts and wild passions. The stag and the hind illustrate the Petrarchan opposition between, respectively, a condition of sensual love and a temporary condition of spiritual enjoyment. These images do not perform a solely decorative function, but deliver a fabric of echoes and allusions which are key to the comprehension of the text.

## Chapter 4

### Petrarch, Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia

#### Introduction

The second and fourth stanzas of ‘Lasso me’ (*Rvf*, 70) end respectively with the incipit of Guido Cavalcanti’s *canzone* ‘Donna me prega’ (*Rime*, 27) and with the incipit of Cino da Pistoia’s *canzone* ‘La dolce vista e ’l bel guardo soave’ (*Rime*, 111).<sup>1</sup> Although the poetic legacies of Guido Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia are treated separately in *canzone* 70 and serve to illustrate the different attitudes of the poetic ego towards the beloved and the poetic representations of those attitudes, an examination of their lyrics raises the same question: how does the use of animal references differ between those lyrics that have no apparent recipients (which I will refer to as ‘ordinary’ texts) and the poems of correspondence?

The definition of poems of correspondence remains problematic. Some scholars only apply this label to the *tenzoni* which are built on a dialogic exchange between the two parties. Some also consider poems of correspondence those texts which do not form part of *tenzoni* but are nevertheless addressed to friends, patrons and other poets. Finally, other scholars further extend the definition of poems of correspondence to those texts which are meant for a collective audience, such as the ‘fedeli d’Amore’ in Dante’s sonnet ‘A ciascun’alma presa e gentil core’ (*Vita nova*, 1. 20–23).<sup>2</sup>

Each of these definitions, however, has its limitations. The first, for example, neglects those poems which were meant to be part of an exchange but which, for some reason, have left no evidence of a dialogue, either because one of the parties involved did not reply or because one or more texts have not survived. The second definition also includes those poems which mention an interlocutor

<sup>1</sup> I cite the incipit of Cavalcanti’s and Cino da Pistoia’s poems not from *Rvf* 70 but respectively from Guido Cavalcanti, *Rime*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Giorgio Inglese (Rome: Carocci, 2011), pp. 147–61 (p. 151); *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. 551–55 (p. 551).

<sup>2</sup> For the text, see Dante, *Opere*, I, pp. 816–20. For a broader treatment of poetic correspondences in late medieval Italian literature, see Claudio Giunta, ‘Introduzione’, in Dante, *Opere*, I, pp. 5–57 (pp. 5–13); Claudio Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario: saggio sulla poesia italiana del Medioevo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002), pp. 86–90, 96–166, 167–266.

for merely rhetorical reasons. The third includes those poems in which the lyric voice speaks to generic, and sometimes idealised, addressees. In order to overcome these problems, I use the expression ‘poems of correspondence’ to mean texts which are addressed to specific recipients and which revolve around occasional and ephemeral topics. As Claudio Giunta states, ‘le rime di corrispondenza sono testi d’occasione la cui “durata”, di solito, non va oltre il momento dello scambio.’<sup>3</sup>

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part offers a survey of animal images in Cavalcanti’s and Cino’s poems of correspondence, and compares these images to those in poems with no apparent specific recipient. The second part compares Petrarch’s authorial collection of lyrics, the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, with the poems of correspondence which he left aside as *estravaganti*. I will observe that when they correspond with specific addressees, Cavalcanti, Cino, and Petrarch depart from the poetic norms which typify their ordinary lyrics and adjust their language — including animal imagery — to a more conventional register.

## 1. Guido Cavalcanti’s and Cino da Pistoia’s *Rime*

Both Cavalcanti’s and Cino da Pistoia’s poetics are built, to different extents, on the interiorisation of the love experience. The lyrical discourse is mostly based on the poetics of vision and imagination. The subject captures the image of the beloved through the eyes, interiorises it and creates the woman’s *phantasma*.<sup>4</sup> In this regard, Giorgio Agamben observes:

---

<sup>3</sup> Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, p. 88. In this chapter, I use the terms ‘occasionality’ and ‘occasional’ to describe an important aspect associated with the composition of correspondence poems. In this regard, Ruth Connolly observes: ‘Occasionality is a mode of literary communication that develops from writing in manuscript for small groups of readers. As an umbrella term, it “identifies poetry as a response to, and the product of, a specific [...] moment” and its poems as the shared property of a coterie environment.’ The meanings of occasional poems — Connolly observes — are anchored to the situation in which and the audience for whom they were written. The occasion for writing forges ‘a generic register for this poetry which is [...] sociable and reflective of the shared geographies [...] and identities of both the poet and his or her audience’. See Ruth Connolly, ‘Print, Miscellaneity and the Reader in Robert Herrick’s *Hesperides*’, in *Readings on Audience and Textual Materiality*, ed. by Graham Allen, Carrie Griffin and Mary O’Connell (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), pp. 23–36 (p. 25), who quotes Marie-Louise Coolahan, “‘We Live by Chance, and Slip into Events’: Occasionality and the Manuscript Verse of Katherine Philips’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Iris an dá chultúr*, 18 (2003), 9–23 (p. 12).

<sup>4</sup> For details on the heart and on the interiorisation of the effects of love in Cavalcanti’s and Cino da Pistoia’s poetry, see respectively Antonio Gagliardi, *Guido Cavalcanti: poesia e filosofia* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2001), pp. 7–157; Antonio Gagliardi, *Cino da Pistoia: le*

It is not possible [...] to understand the amorous ceremonial that [...] the poets of the ‘dolce stil novo’ [...] left as a legacy to modern Western poetry unless notice is taken that since its origins this ceremonial presented itself as a phantasmatic process. Not an external body, but an internal image, that is, the phantasm impressed on the phantastic spirits by the gaze, is the origin and the object of falling in love.<sup>5</sup>

In the poetry of Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia, this process results in the adoption of the semantic fields of physiology and psychology.<sup>6</sup>

Cino da Pistoia explains the implications of the poetics of interiorisation in a *tenzone* with Onesto da Bologna. Although this is Cino’s correspondence, the observations which we read in it are also true for Cavalcanti. As Domenico De Robertis has observed, the *tenzone* revolves around a more general opposition between two poetic languages: ‘Onesto attacca a fondo, nella persona di Cino, lo schieramento stilnovistico (tutto un atteggiamento, un gusto, un linguaggio); portando il suo contributo a quell’eterna querelle *des anciens et des modernes* che nella *Commedia* troverà la sua finale ricapitolazione’.<sup>7</sup>

In the sonnet “‘Mente’ e ‘umile’ e più di mille sporte’ (*Rime*, 133a), Onesto accuses Cino and his ‘maniera’ (*Rime*, 133a. 13) of overusing abstract images, such as those relating to the mind and the spirits:

‘Mente’ ed ‘umile’ e più di mille sporte  
piene di ‘spirti’ e ‘l vostro andar sognando  
mi fan considerar che, d’altra sorte,

---

*poetiche dell’anima* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2004), pp. 7–20. On Cavalcanti in particular, see Roberto Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta: uno studio sul lessico lirico* (Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2008), p. 42.

<sup>5</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*, trans. by Ronald L. Martinez (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> I do not use the terms ‘physiology’ and ‘psychology’ in their modern scientific sense, but rather to broadly refer to the activities of the body and the mind, and the mutual relationships of their functions, in medieval Italian poetry. For a broader treatment of the imagery of the heart and the mind in medieval Italian poetry, see Paolo Borsa, ‘L’immagine nel cuore e l’immagine nella mente: dal Notaro alla *Vita nuova* attraverso i due Guidi’, in *Les deux Guidi: Guinizzelli et Cavalcanti: mourir d’aimer et autres ruptures*, ed. by Marina Gagliano, Philippe Guérin and Raffaella Zanni (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2016), pp. 75–92; Heather Webb, *The Medieval Heart* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 50–95.

<sup>7</sup> Domenico De Robertis, ‘Cino e i poeti bolognesi’, *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 128 (1951), 273–312 (p. 279). On the *tenzone* between Onesto and Cino, see also Sandro Orlando, ‘Dall’ossequio nei confronti di Guittone all’“intenerimento stilnovista”: i casi di Onesto da Bologna e di Guido Orlandi’, in *Guittone d’Arezzo nel settimo centenario della morte: atti del convegno internazionale di Arezzo, 22–24 aprile 1994*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone (Florence: Cesati, 1995), pp. 295–306. I borrow the definition of ‘stilnovismo’ as a *koinè* from Emilio Pasquini, ‘Il *Dolce stil novo*’, in *Storia della letteratura italiana*, ed. by Enrico Malato, 14 vols (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1995), I: *Dalle origini a Dante*, pp. 649–721. See also Pirovano, ‘Introduzione’, in *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. VII–XXXVI (pp. XXXIII–XXXV).

non si po' trar ragion di voi rimando.

Non so chi 'l vi fa fare, o vita o morte,  
ché, per lo *vostro andar filosofando*,  
avete stanco qualunqu'è 'l più forte  
ch'ode *vostro bel dire imaginando*.

Ancor pare a ciascuno molto grave  
vostro parlare in terzo con altrui,  
e 'n quarto ragionando con voi stessi;  
ver' quel de l'uomo ogni pondo è soave:  
cangiar dunque *maniera* fa per voi;  
se non ch'i' porrò dir: 'Ben sète dessi!'

(*Rime*, 133a)<sup>8</sup>

Onesto criticises not only the imagery of the 'mente' and the 'mille sporte | piene di "spirti"' (*Rime*, 133a. 1–2), but also 'vostro andar sognando' (*Rime*, 133a. 2), 'lo vostro andar filosofando' (*Rime*, 133a. 6), 'vostro bel dire imaginando' (*Rime*, 133a. 8) and so forth. The allocutive 'vostro' is ambivalent and could be either a deferential form with a singular meaning or a plural form referring to a group of people. In the former case, Onesto's criticism only relates to Cino, while in the latter, it attacks a larger *koinè* of poets. In response to Onesto's reprimand, Cino offers a declaration of his poetics in the sonnet 'Amor che vien per le più dolci porte' (*Rime*, 133b):

Amor che vien per le più dolci porte,  
sì chiuso che nol vede omo passando,  
riposa ne la mente e là tien corte,  
come vuol, de la vita giudicando.

Molte pene a lo cor per lui son porte,  
fa tormentar li spiriti affannando,  
e l'anima non osa dicer 'tort'è',  
ch'ha paura di lui soggetta stando.

Questo così distringe Amor che l'ave  
in signoria; però ne contiam nui  
ch'elli sente alta doglia e colpi spessi;  
*e senza essempro di fera o di nave*,  
*parliam sovente*, non sappiendo a cui,  
a guisa di dolenti a morir messi.

(*Rime*, 133b)<sup>9</sup>

Just as Onesto uses the adjective 'vostro', Cino replies in the first person plural, perpetuating the same ambivalence between the individual and a *koinè* which we

<sup>8</sup> *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. 607–08. Italics mine.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 608–10. Italics mine.

saw in Onesto's words. The poet explains that his poetics is based on an interiorised experience, as love resides in the mind and affects the heart and the spirits. He and perhaps the other poets who share the same language do not usually adopt 'esempio di fera o di nave' (*Rime*, 133b, 12), that is, images based on the semantic fields of the animal world or sailing. With the expression 'non sappiendo a cui' (*Rime*, 133b, 13), Cino seems to limit his considerations to the poems without correspondents, in which the lyrical discourse is elaborated in general terms and not tailored to specific addressees.

Despite the phantasmatic process, we do find some animal references in Cavalcanti's and Cino's poems, with a greater concentration in their poems of correspondence. Numerical evidence will help us to better understand how the presence of animal images varies in the poems with and without correspondents. In Cavalcanti's *Rime*, there are five animal references in a corpus of thirty-six lyrics without correspondents, and three animal images in a set of fifteen poems of correspondence. If we consider the total number of verses which form each of these sets of poems, the proportions are clearer: one occurrence every one hundred and fifty-eight verses in the ordinary poems, and one occurrence every seventy verses in the poems of correspondence.<sup>10</sup> In Cino da Pistoia's work, there are ten animal references in a corpus of one hundred and thirty ordinary poems and thirteen animal images in the set of thirty-five poems of correspondence. Taking into account the number of verses, as we did with Cavalcanti's work, we find one occurrence every two hundred and sixteen verses in the ordinary poems, and one occurrence every forty-one verses in the poems of correspondence.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> In Cavalcanti's lyrics without correspondents, we find birds (*Rime*, 1. 10; 3. 3; 46. 13, 16) and a lamb (*Rime*, 46. 5). In the lyrics of correspondence, we find a unicorn (*Rime*, 49a. 6); a lion (*Rime*, 52. 4); a dragon (*Rime*, 52. 5).

<sup>11</sup> In the lyrics without correspondents, Cino mentions wasps (*Rime*, 25. 7); a generic wild beast (*Rime*, 52. 14; 53. 14); generic birds (*Rime*, 62. 13; 75. 4; 90. 15); the she-blackbird (*Rime*, 78. 1; 78. 10); the fly (*Rime*, 165. 16); the monkey (*Rime*, 165. 20). In the poems with correspondents Cino mentions the dog (*Rime*, 122. 1); the phoenix (*Rime*, 127a. 8; 134b. 3); a generic wild beast (*Rime*, 133b. 12); the pig (*Rime*, 136b. 10); the dove (*Rime*, 144a. 8); the falcon's rope (*Rime*, 144a. 14; 150b. 13); the falcon (*Rime*, 145. 7; 150b. 13); the eagle (*Rime*, 145. 7); the frog (*Rime*, 136b. 8; 144a. 2).

### 1.1. Animal Images in Guido Cavalcanti's *Rime*

Among Cavalcanti's poems without correspondents, animal images appear in those texts which are linked to the troubadour tradition, namely the ballad 'Fresca rosa novella' (*Rime*, 1), the sonnet 'Biltà di donna e di saccente core' (*Rime*, 3) and the ballad 'In un boschetto trova' pasturella' (*Rime*, 46).<sup>12</sup> In spite of the general shift towards interiorised imagery, here animal images serve as part of the depiction of the external scene, according to what the conventions of their respective Occitan models prescribe.

In the poem 'Fresca rosa novella' (*Rime*, 1), the only animal reference is to the conventional 'augelli' (*Rime*, 1. 10), which the poetic persona invites to sing:

Lo vostro pregio fino  
in gio' si rinovelli  
da grandi e da zitelli  
per ciascuno cammino;  
e canti ne gli augelli  
ciascuno in suo latino  
da sera e da matino  
su li verdi arbuscelli.

(*Rime*, 1. 6–13)<sup>13</sup>

The image of birds singing is borrowed from the troubadours and reprises, in Occitan fashion, the traditional association between love and the natural *locus amoenus*. Guilhem IX, in the poem 'Ab la dolchor del temps novel', writes that 'li aucel chanton, | chascus en lor lati' (*Chansos*, 10. 2–3).<sup>14</sup> As we saw in Chapter 2, in Arnaut Daniel's poem 'Doutz braitz e critz' the lyric persona hears the 'auzelhs qu'en lur lati fan precs' (*Chansos*, 12. 3).<sup>15</sup> The other two texts that contain animal references are likewise linked to the troubadour tradition, namely the sonnet 'Biltà di donna e di saccente core' (*Rime*, 3) and the ballad 'In un boschetto trova' pasturella' (*Rime*, 46): the former draws on the Occitan *plazer*, the latter on the

<sup>12</sup> On the link between these poems and the Occitan tradition, see Rea's commentary in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, pp. 43–48, 52–55, 242–45.

<sup>13</sup> Cavalcanti, *Rime*, pp. 43–48 (p. 45).

<sup>14</sup> Guglielmo IX, *Poesie*, ed. by Nicolò Pasero (Modena: STEM, 1973), pp. 241–66 (p. 250). See *BdT*, 183. 1. On the connection between Cavalcanti's poem and that of Guilhem IX, see Rea's commentary in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, p. 45.

<sup>15</sup> Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, pp. 189–211 (p. 196). See *BdT*, 29. 8.



*pastourelle*.<sup>16</sup> The sonnet ‘Biltà di donna’ lists a set of pleasant elements to which the lyric voice compares and contrasts the beloved’s beauty:

Biltà di donna e di saccente core  
e cavalieri armati che sien genti;  
cantar d’augelli e ragionar d’amore;  
adorni legni ’n mar forte correnti;  
    aire serena quand’ apar l’albore  
e bianca neve scender senza venti;  
rivera d’aigua e prato d’ogni fiore;  
oro, argento, azzuro ’n ornamenti:  
    ciò passa la beltate e la piagenza  
de la mia donna e ’l su’ gentil coraggio,  
sì che rasembra vile a chi ciò guarda.

(*Rime*, 3. 1–11)<sup>17</sup>

Among the natural elements which do not surpass the beauty of his lady, the speaker also includes the ‘cantar d’augelli’ (*Rime*, 3. 3). The ballad ‘In un boschetto trova’ pasturella’, in turn, describes the lyric persona’s encounter with a young shepherdess:

In un boschetto trova’ pasturella  
più che la stella — bella, al mi’ parere.

Cavelli avea biondetti e ricciutelli,  
e gli occhi pien’ d’amor, cera rosata;  
con sua verghetta pasturav’agnelli,  
e, scalza, di rugiada era bagnata;  
cantava come fosse ’namorata:  
er’ adornata — di tutto piacere.

(*Rime*, 46. 1–8)<sup>18</sup>

Here we find a reference to ‘agnelli’ as part of the *descriptio puellae*, in accordance with the conventions of the genre (*Rime*, 46. 5).<sup>19</sup> This poem differs from the other two in one crucial respect: while ‘Fresca rosa novella’ (*Rime*, 1) and ‘Biltà di donna’ (*Rime*, 3) belong to what Dante would term the *poesia della loda*, the

<sup>16</sup> See Rea’s introductions to both poems in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, pp. 52, 242.

<sup>17</sup> Cavalcanti, *Rime*, pp. 52–55 (pp. 52–53).

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, pp. 242–45 (p. 243).

<sup>19</sup> See Luciano Formisano, ‘Cavalcanti e la pastorella’, *Critica del testo*, 4.1 (2001), 245–62 (p. 252). See also Michelangelo Picone, *‘Vita nuova’ e tradizione romanza* (Padua: Liviana, 1979), pp. 87–98.

*pastourelle* is a subgenre of love poetry and revolves around a knight's seduction of a young shepherdess.<sup>20</sup>

Let us now consider Cavalcanti's poems of correspondence. Besides the few conventional references to animals in the poems discussed earlier, other zoological images are found in the set of lyrics with apparent addressees, specifically in the sonnets 'La bella dove amor si mostra' (*Rime*, 49a) and 'Novelle ti so dire, odi, Nerone' (*Rime*, 52). Here animal images are not employed to describe the lyric setting or the beloved, but are used as tropes to be read antiphrastically. In the sonnet 'La bella donna dove amor si mostra' (*Rime*, 49a), addressed to Guido Orlandi, Cavalcanti mentions a unicorn:

La bella donna dove Amor si mostra  
 ch'è tanto di valor pieno ed adorno,  
 tragge lo cor della persona vostra:  
 e' prende vita in far co' llei soggiorno,  
 per c'ha sì dolce guardia la sua chiostra,  
 ch'el sente invidia ciascun lunicorno,  
 e la virtù de l'alma ha fera giostra:  
 vizio pos' dir no i fa crudel ritorno;  
 ch'ell'è per certo di sì gran valenza,  
 che già non manca i llei cosa da bene,  
 ma' che Natura la creò mortale;  
 poi mostra che 'n ciò mise provedenza  
 ch'al vostro intendimento si convene  
 far, per conoscer, quel ch'a lu' sia tale.

(*Rime*, 49a)<sup>21</sup>

Employing hyperbole, Cavalcanti writes that the lover's heart is so close to the beloved, a closeness that serves to protect her 'chiostra' (*Rime*, 49a. 5), that even a unicorn would envy the lover. The reference to the 'lunicorno' (*Rime*, 49a. 6) recalls traditional bestiary lore. It was supposed that hunters could only catch the unicorn with the help of a virgin, as her presence was believed to make the animal fall asleep on her body: '[venatores] puellam virginem ducunt in illum locum ubi moratur et dimittunt eam in silvam solam; at ille [unicornis], visa virgine, complectitur eam et dormiens in gremio eius comprehenditur ab exploratoribus

<sup>20</sup> On the *pastourelle*, see, for example, Elena Lombardi, *The Wings of the Dove: Love and Desire in Dante and Medieval Culture* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen's University Press, 2012), p. 201.

<sup>21</sup> Cavalcanti, *Rime*, pp. 257–59.

eius' (*Physiologus B-Is*, 16).<sup>22</sup> The image of the unicorn ironically contrasts with the last two stanzas. While in the bestiary description we find a unicorn, which falls asleep, and a virgin, in the second part of the sonnet Cavalcanti raises the suspicion that both Orlandi and the lady, as mortal creatures, aim to satisfy their carnal urges.<sup>23</sup>

Among Cavalcanti's poems of correspondence, two other animal images appear in the sonnet 'Novelle ti so dir, odi, Nerone' (*Rime*, 52):

Novelle ti so dire, odi, Nerone:  
che' Bondelmonti trieman di paura,  
e tutt' i Fiorentin' no li assicura,  
udendo dir che tu ha' *cuor di leone*:  
    *e' più trieman di te che d'un dragone*,  
veggendo la tua faccia, ch'è sì dura  
che no la riterria ponte né mura,  
se non la tomba del re Pharaone.  
Deh, con' tu fai grandissimo peccato:  
sì alto sangue voler discacciare,  
che tutti vanno via senza ritegno!  
Ma ben è ver che ti largar lo pegno  
sì che potrai l'anima salvare:  
sì fosti paziente del mercato!

(*Rime*, 52)<sup>24</sup>

The metaphor 'cuor di leone' (*Rime*, 52. 4) and the hyperbole 'e' più trieman di te che d'un dragone' (*Rime*, 52. 5) serve to depict Nerone Cavalcanti, a relative of the poet, ironically as a brave man who intimidates the rival family of the Bondelmonti. The meaning of these two tropes is much clearer to a modern reader than that of the unicorn, but can be better understood if we turn to Isidore's *Etymologiae*. Isidore explains that the lion is the king of all beasts and that its strength resides in its chest: 'Leo autem Graece, Latine rex interpretatur, eo quod

<sup>22</sup> *Bestiari medievali*, pp. 38–40. In addition to the *Physiologus B-Is*, other references to the virgin and the unicorn are also found in Philippe de Thaün's *Bestiaire*, 393–460; in Gervaise's *Bestiaire*, 239–80; in Richart de Fornival's *Bestiaire d'Amours*; in the *Libro della natura degli animali*, XX; in the *Bestiario moralizzato*, IV. See *Bestiari medievali*, pp. 134–36, 304–06, 388–91, 447–48, 494–95.

<sup>23</sup> The image of the virgin and the unicorn is also found in Stefano Protonotaro's *canzone* 'Assai mi placheria' (*Rime*, 2. 35–9) and in the anonymous Siculo-Tuscan sonnet 'Lo parpaglion, guardando a la lumera' (*Rime*, 59. 5–6). For the texts, see *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, II: *Poeti alla corte di Federico II*, ed. by Costanzo Di Girolamo, pp. 338–50 (p. 340); *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, III, pp. 947–51 (p. 948). On the occurrences of the image of the unicorn in the poets of the Sicilian School, see Montinaro, 'Il "bestiario d'amore" della Scuola poetica siciliana', p. 12.

<sup>24</sup> Cavalcanti, *Rime*, pp. 276–77. Italics mine.

princeps sit omnium bestiarum. [...] Virtus eorum in pectore' (*Etymologiae*, XII. 2. 3–4).<sup>25</sup> In addition, Isidore writes that the dragon is not only the largest snake but is also the largest living being on earth: 'Draco maior cunctorum serpentium, sive omnium animantium super terram' (*Etymologiae*, XII. 4. 4).<sup>26</sup> The qualities that Guido ascribes to Nerone, however, are in contrast with the content of the last strophe, in which the poet seems to accuse his interlocutor of vile behaviour. This reference to vile behaviour is somewhat unclear. The verse 'Ma ben è ver che ti largar lo pegno' (*Rime*, 52. 12) may suggest that here the poet is criticising Nerone for compromising himself with the Bondelmonti in order to obtain forgiveness for his debts.<sup>27</sup>

In summary, in the poems without correspondents, only a few conventional animal references appear, and only in those texts based on Occitan models, where they are used as elements of the natural setting. In the poems of correspondence, instead, animal images serve as tropes in accordance with a register that we can define as comic-realistic.<sup>28</sup>

## 1.2. Animal Images in Cino da Pistoia's *Rime*

As is the case with Guido Cavalcanti, Cino da Pistoia's use of animal vocabulary and images changes between his ordinary poems and the poems of correspondence. Let us begin our survey with the ordinary poems. In the sonnet 'Disio pur di vederla, e s'eo m'appresso' (*Rime*, 25), Cino associates his sighs of love with stinging wasps:

Disio pur di vederla, e s'eo m'appresso,  
 <i>sbigottito converrà ch'eo *incespi*:  
 così mi fere la sua luce adesso  
 e 'l bel color de' biondi capei *crespi*.  
 E ciò ch'eo celo converrà che s'espî  
 per lo sospiro che del core ho messo,  
 dolente lasso, ché sî come *vespi*

<sup>25</sup> Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiarum*, II, unpaginated.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>27</sup> See Pirovano's and Contini's commentaries respectively in *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. 223–24 and *Poeti del Duecento*, ed. by Gianfranco Contini, 2 vols (Milan: Ricciardi, 1960), II, p. 567.

<sup>28</sup> For further details on the comic-realistic genre, see Paolo Orvieto and Lucia Brestolini, *La poesia comico-realistica: dalle origini al Cinquecento* (Rome: Carocci, 2000), pp. 13–44.

mi pungon li sospir' cotanto spesso.

(*Rime*, 25. 1–8)<sup>29</sup>

The image of wasps, which illustrates the painful effects of love on the poetic persona, will inspire Petrarch's sonnet 'Aura che quelle chiome bionde e cresse' (*Rvf*, 227), as the similar rhyming words show:

Aura che quelle chiome bionde et *crespe*  
cercondi et movi, et se' mossa da loro,  
soavemente, et spargi quel dolce oro,  
et poi 'l raccogli, e 'n bei nodi il rincrespe,  
tu stai nelli occhi ond' amorose *vespe*  
mi pungon sì, che 'nfin qua il sento et ploro,  
et vacillando cerco il mio thesoro  
come animal che spesso adombre e '*ncespe*.

(*Rvf*, 227. 1–8)<sup>30</sup>

In both poems, the reference to wasps, along with the rhymes in *espi* and *espe*, contributes to a harsh register.<sup>31</sup> It is no coincidence that the same insect also appears in Cino's satiric *canzone* 'Deh, quando rivedrò 'l dolce paese' (*Rime*, 165), which constitutes a harsh invective against the city of Naples:

O sommo vate, quanto mal facesti  
(non t'era me' morire  
a Piettola, colà dove nascesti?),  
quando la *mosca*, per l'altre fuggire,  
in tal loco ponesti  
ove ogni *vespa* deveria venire  
a punger que' che su ne' tocchi stanno  
come *simie* in iscranno — senza lingua  
la qual distingue — pregio o ben alcuno.

(*Rime*, 165. 13–21)<sup>32</sup>

Here the poet, recalling a legend popular in the Middle Ages, blames Vergil for placing a bronze fly on one of the city gates. Cino complains that the fly is

<sup>29</sup> *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. 403–04. Italics mine.

<sup>30</sup> Petrarcha, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 952–54 (p. 952). Italics mine.

<sup>31</sup> On the relationship between Cino's and Petrarch's sonnets and the harsh register which characterises both poems, see Franco Suitner, *Petrarca e la tradizione stilnovistica* (Florence: Olschki, 1977), pp. 130–32.

<sup>32</sup> *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. 691–92. Italics mine.

deterring wasps from invading Naples and stinging the nobles, who are perched on thrones like monkeys.<sup>33</sup>

Alongside the unusual harsh reference to wasps in sonnet 25, some conventional images of birds are also found in Cino's ordinary poems. For instance, in the sonnet 'Se conceduto mi fosse da Giove' (*Rime*, 62) the speaker wishes he were Jupiter and could transform himself into a bird singing in homage to his beloved:

Ma s'i' potesse far come quel dio,  
'sta donna muterei in bella faggia,  
e vi farei un'el'bera d'intorno;  
ed un ch'i' taccio, per simil desio,  
muterei in *uccel* ched onni giorno  
cantereb' su l'el'bera selvaggia.

(*Rime*, 62. 9–14)<sup>34</sup>

In the sonnet 'Omè! ch'io sono all'amoroso nodo' (*Rime*, 75), the poetic persona compares his attraction to the beloved to a bird captured with mistletoe:

Omè! ch'io sono all'amoroso nodo  
legato con due belle trecce bionde,  
e strettamente ritenuto, *a modo*  
*d'uccel ch'è preso al vischio fra le fronde.*

(*Rime*, 75. 1–4)<sup>35</sup>

As we will see in the second part of this chapter, the image of birds and mistletoe belongs to the semantic field of bird-trapping, which constitutes a rich source of *topoi* in medieval Italian poetry.

Compared to the set of lyrics without specific interlocutors, the poems of correspondence present a higher concentration of animal images. Examples are even found in two poems addressed to Onesto da Bologna. In the sonnet 'Anzi ch'Amore ne la mente guidi' (*Rime*, 134b), the poet warns his correspondent against the dangers associated with love, emphasising that his interlocutor is not a phoenix:

<sup>33</sup> For further details on the legend, see Arturo Graf, *Roma nella memoria e nelle immaginazioni del Medio Evo: con un'appendice sulla leggenda di Gog e Magog* (Turin: Chiantore, 1923), pp. 520–66.

<sup>34</sup> *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. 471–72. Italics mine.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 491–92 (p. 491). Italics mine.

Anzi ch'Amore ne la mente guidi  
 donna, ch'è poi del core ucciditrice,  
 conviensi dire a l'om: '*Non sè fenice*;  
 guârti d'Amor che non pianga, s'tu ridi  
     quando udirai gridare "Uccidi, uccidi";  
 ché poi consiglia van chi 'l contradice.  
 Però si leva tardi chi mi dice  
 ch'Amor non serva e che 'n lui non mi fidi.  
(Rime, 134b. 1–8)<sup>36</sup>

The reference to the phoenix, which also appears in the sonnet addressed to Dante 'Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice' (Rime, 127a. 8), serves to illustrate the differences between the mythical bird and the lover, who may not survive the pains of an unrequited love.<sup>37</sup> As we saw in Chapter 2, the image of the phoenix is commonplace in medieval Italian literature, from the troubadours to Petrarch himself. However, while Cino restricts his references to the phoenix to his poems of correspondence, Petrarch includes the bird in his *Fragmenta*, where it appears as a central allegory for the lover and the beloved themselves. In the sonnet 'Io son colui che spesso m'inginocchio' (Rime, 136b), Cino, using harsh terms, associates Onesto da Bologna with 'l'animale che si lorda', that is, a pig:

In figura vi parlo, ed in semblante  
 siete dell'animale che si lorda:  
 ben è talvolta far l'orecchia sorda;  
     e non crediate che 'l tambur mi storda,  
 ché sì credeste a chi li amici scorda;  
 chi mostra 'l vero intendo, e so' gli amante.  
(Rime, 136b. 9–14)<sup>38</sup>

A similar harsh register returns in the sonnet addressed to Gherarduccio Garisendi 'Come li saggi di Neron crudele' (Rime, 144a), which presents a set of three animal images:

Come li saggi di Neron crudele  
 ingravidar lo fecer d'una *rana*,  
 così ha fatto Amor per vista vana  
 la mente tua, onde tu ardi e gele.  
     Falso, che ne la bocca porti 'l mèle  
 e dentro tòsco, onde 'l tuo amor non grana,  
 or come vuoi fa' l'andatura piana

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem, pp. 611–12. Italics mine.

<sup>37</sup> Ibidem, pp. 587–89.

<sup>38</sup> Ibidem, pp. 617–19 (pp. 618–19).

per prender la *colomba senza fele*:  
 quella per cui lo spirito d'amore  
 in me discende da lo suo pianeto  
 quand' è con atto di bel guardo lieto.  
 Però, dovunque i' vo, le lasso 'l core,  
 cui raccomando «a»l suo dolce' e discreto:  
*non temo d'uom ch'a amar vada col geto.*

(*Rime*, 144a)<sup>39</sup>

First, Cino compares his friend's enamourment with what is narrated in the medieval legend of Nero and the frog: as the emperor was cheated by his physicians and led to believe that he had conceived a 'rana' (*Rime*, 144a. 2), so Gherarduccio was misled by false love.<sup>40</sup> Second, the poet contrasts the cunning nature of his correspondent to the gentle character of the beloved, who is associated with a 'colomba senza fele' (*Rime*, 144a. 8). Finally, Cino uses a technical term from falconry, 'geto' (*Rime*, 144a. 14), which indicates the leather rope used for tying a falcon to the perch. The reference to the 'geto' is not completely clear and could be interpreted in different ways. According to Donato Pirovano, Cino does not fear those, like Gherarduccio, who conceive of love as a predatory activity, as if they were hunters trying to chase a tame dove with a falcon. At the same time, I propose, it is possible that Cino is declaring his superiority over anyone unable to love spontaneously, as if they were falcons held by a 'geto'.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Ibidem, pp. 635–36. Italics mine.

<sup>40</sup> According to a medieval legend also recounted by Iacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea*, LXXXIV, the Roman Emperor Nero wanted to experience the pain of labour. His physicians gave him a potion containing a tadpole. When the frog was fully grown, Nero gave birth to it through his mouth. See Pirovano's commentary in *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. 635–36.

<sup>41</sup> My interpretation reveals a possible parallel with the Bonagiunta episode in Dante's *Commedia*. Here, as Lino Pertile has argued, 'il nodo | che 'l Notaro e Guittone' and Bonagiunta 'ritenne | di qua dal dolce stil novo' could be the knot of the 'geto' which serves to hold the falcon (*Purgatorio*, 24. 55–57). If my reading and Pertile's are both valid, Cino and Dante thus employ the same falconry image of the knot to illustrate the constraints which impede their interlocutors — either real or part of the fictional discourse — from succeeding. In addition, I note, unlike those who are tied to a perch, both Cino and Dante pride themselves on being directly inspired by love. Cino claims: 'lo spirito d'amore | in me discende da lo suo pianeto', that is, Venus (*Rime*, 144a. 9–10). Dante, in turn, writes: 'quando | Amor mi spira, noto, e a quel modo | ch'e' ditta dentro vo significando' (*Purgatorio*, 24. 52–54). It is worth emphasising, however, that while Cino's sonnet seems to be concerned only with a love discourse and not with its meta-poetic implications, Dante's verses also discuss the relationships between love and poetry. I cite the *Purgatorio* passage from Dante, *Commedia*, II, pp. 710–11. For Pertile's interpretation of Bonagiunta's episode in the *Commedia*, see Pertile, 'Il nodo di Bonagiunta, le penne di Dante e il Dolce Stil Novo'.



The vocabulary of falconry is also found in two more poems. One example is found in the sonnet ‘Meuccio, i’ feci una vista d’amante’ (*Rime*, 145), which is addressed to Meuccio dei Tolomei of Siena:

Meuccio, i’ feci una vista d’amante  
ad un fante — ch’è piacente in cera,  
e ’ncontente lo suo cor, ched era  
come di cera — si fece diamante.  
Ed ancor più, che ’n ogni su’ semblante  
passa avanti — d’orgoglio ogn’altra fera:  
aguila o falcone o cosa altera  
a sua maniera — non è simigliante.

(*Rime*, 145. 1–8)<sup>42</sup>

Here the poet hyperbolically claims that his beloved is haughtier than ‘aguila o falcone’ (*Rime*, 145. 7), birds commonly considered haughty and regal (*Rime*, 145. 7). A second example can be found in the sonnet addressed to Binduccio Binduccio of Florence ‘Solo per ritenir vostra amistia’ (*Rime*, 150b), in which the poet explicitly mentions a falcon and its rope:

Ma l’omo saggio, quando falla, nota  
che grande ausel si tien fermo per geto  
e grave corpo per ingegno nòta.

(*Rime*, 150b. 12–14)<sup>43</sup>

The image of the ‘geto’ holding a ‘grande ausel’ (*Rime*, 150b. 13) illustrates the distinguishing feature of a wise man, who should be able to control the natural forces of his instincts. At the same time, the image is ambiguous: it seems to convey an obscene meaning, whereby the bird is associated with the lover’s sexual organ. The instincts to be moderated are thus represented through the metonymy of a phallus.

To summarise, the poems without specific recipients present a more intense poetics of interiorisation. By contrast, in the poems addressed to individual correspondents, Cino includes more references to animals and specifically to falconry. In some cases, animal images contribute to a comic-realistic register, such as in the polemical sonnets ‘Io son colui che spesso m’inginocchio’ (*Rime*,

<sup>42</sup> *Poeti del Dolce stil novo*, pp. 638–40 (pp. 638–39).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 653–54 (p. 654).

136b) and ‘Come li saggi di Neron crudele’ (*Rime*, 144a), and perhaps in ‘Solo per ritenir vostra amistia’ (*Rime*, 150b). In other cases, animals are used to offer advice on love by means of bestiary lore, such as in the sonnets ‘Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice’ (*Rime*, 127a), ‘Anzi ch’Amore ne la mente guidi’ (*Rime*, 134b) and ‘Meuccio, i’ feci una vista d’amante’ (*Rime*, 145).

\*\*\*

Some further observations are useful at this point. My outline shows that in their ordinary lyrics Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia use fewer animal references in favour of an imagery built on the poetics of interiority. But why are there more animal images in the poems of correspondence? I suggest that in this set of texts the poets are adjusting their own poetic language based on that of their addressees. In other words, in their ordinary lyrics, Cavalcanti and Cino develop their poetics of interiorisation, perhaps also in dialogue with other poets who speak the same language of the ‘interior’ within the stilnovistic *koinè*; by contrast, in the poems of correspondence, they adopt a conventional code of communication which the addressee can easily understand, indicating external references with clearly identifiable and codified meanings. The *tenzone* between Onesto da Bologna and Cino is exemplary in this respect. Although Cino advocates avoiding animal images, his poetic correspondences display a rich use of zoological references. The way in which Cavalcanti’s and Cino’s attitudes towards animal imagery varies between their ordinary lyrics and their poems of correspondence invites us to examine, in the second part of this chapter, Petrarch’s *Fragmenta* and his occasional poetic exchanges that were never compiled into a collection.

## **2. Petrarch’s *Fragmenta* and his Correspondences in the *Estravaganti***

Unlike the poems by Cavalcanti and Cino, which do not survive in authorial collections, Petrarch’s texts are available to us in two categories: the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, which the poet himself compiled as an authorised songbook of his own lyrics, and the *estravaganti*, that is to say, the material he rejected from

the collection.<sup>44</sup> The former filter out or dilute and conceal, within the collection, the traces of occasionality. The latter offer us insights into Petrarch's correspondence and reveal a more varied author, one who is more concerned with engaging in literary conversations than with expressing the introspection of the lyric voice.<sup>45</sup>

In a letter dated 4 January 1373 and accompanying the redaction of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* offered to Pandolfo Malatesta, Petrarch discusses the process of inclusion and exclusion that he adopted in the creation of his book:

Sunt apud me huius generis vulgarium adhuc multa in vetustissimis cedulis, et sic senio exesis ut vix legi queant. E quibus, si quando unus aut alter dies otiosus affulserit, nunc unum nunc aliud elicere soleo pro quodam quasi diverticulo laborum, sed perraro; ideoque mandaveram quod utriusque partis in fine bona spatia linquerentur, ut, si quando tale aliquid accidisset, esset ibi locus horum capax.

(*Seniles*, XIII. 11. 33–35, γ)<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> For an overview of Petrarch's uncollected poems, see *Estravaganti, disperse, apocrifi petrarcheschi: Gargnano del Garda (25–27 settembre 2006)*, ed. by Claudia Berra and Paola Vecchi Galli (Milan: Cisalpino, 2007); Justin Steinberg, 'Petrarch's Damned Poetry and the Poetics of Exclusion (*Rime disperse*)', in *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works*, ed. by Kirkham and Maggi, pp. 85–100. See also Annarosa Cavedon, 'Due nuovi codici della tradizione "veneta" delle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 157 (1980), 252–81; Annarosa Cavedon, 'Intorno alle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca', *Revue des études italiennes*, 29 (1983), 86–108; Annarosa Cavedon, 'Note su alcune "disperse"', in *Le lingue del Petrarca*, ed. by Antonio Daniele (Udine: Forum, 2005), pp. 81–108; Annarosa Cavedon, 'La tradizione "veneta" delle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca', *Studi petrarcheschi*, 8 (1976), 1–73; Maria Cristina Fabbi, 'Le "disperse" del manoscritto Casanatense 924', *Studi petrarcheschi*, 5 (1987), 313–23; Enrico Fenzi, 'Per una "dispersa" attribuibile a Petrarca: la frottola "Di ridere ò gran voglia"', *Filologia e critica*, 23 (1998), 169–205; Laura Paolino, 'In margine all'edizione delle "disperse"', *Schifanoia*, 15–16 (1995), 47–51; Emilio Pasquini, *Le botteghe della poesia: studi sul Tre-Quattrocento italiano* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991), pp. 115–98; Paolo Trovato, 'Sull'attribuzione di "Di ridere ò gran voglia" (*Disperse*, CCXIII), con una nuova edizione del testo', in *Lectura Petrarce*, ed. by Folena, Limentani and Sambin, XVIII (1998), pp. 371–423; Paola Vecchi Galli, 'Alle origini di una maniera: le "rime disperse" di Francesco Petrarca', in *Petrarca, l'Italia, l'Europa: sulla varia fortuna di Petrarca: atti del convegno di studi, Bari, 20–22 maggio 2015*, ed. by Elisa Tinelli (Bari: Edizioni di Pagina, 2016), pp. 92–105; Paola Vecchi Galli, 'Per una stilistica delle "disperse"', in *Le lingue del Petrarca*, ed. by Daniele, pp. 108–27; Paola Vecchi Galli, 'Le rime disperse', in *Petrarca nel tempo*, ed. by Feo, pp. 160–69.

<sup>45</sup> The *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* also contain some poems which were originally meant for specific readers, for example Orso dell'Anguillara (*Rvf*, 27; 38; 68; 98); Petrarch's brother Gherardo (*Rvf*, 91); Pandolfo Malatesta (*Rvf*, 104); and Antonio Beccari da Ferrara (*Rvf*, 120). These poems, however, depart from their original occasional nature to varying extents, and acquire new meanings within the architecture of the *Canzoniere*. In other words, their meaning is valid regardless of the occasional circumstances of their composition.

<sup>46</sup> Michele Feo, "'In vetustissimis cedulis": il testo del postscriptum della *Senile* XIII. 11 γ e la "forma Malatesta" dei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*', in *Verso il Centenario: atti del seminario di Bologna, 24–25 settembre 2001*, ed. by Loredana Chines and Paola Vecchi Galli (= *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 11 (2001)), pp. 119–48 (p. 148).

As Petrarch himself reveals, no more than a year and a half before his death the book of poems was still a work in progress: a great number of lyrics were scattered on slips of paper and the poet was uncertain as to what to include in and exclude from his compilation. The remnants of this large personal archive of scattered poems constitute what we currently term the *estravaganti*.<sup>47</sup>

Investigating animal imagery in Petrarch's uncollected poems poses a major research problem, namely, the ambiguous canonical status of these works. First and foremost, the tradition preserves poems of certain Petrarchan authorship, such as the texts that the poet himself copied in his *Codice degli abbozzi* and the lyrics that survive in membrane A and B of the MS Casanatense 924, a fifteenth-century deluxe copy of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and *Triumph*i in which a sixteenth-century humanist, possibly Lodovico Castelvetro, added original notes and rhymes transcribed from a no longer extant Petrarchan autograph.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, countless poems — primarily sonnets, but also *canzoni*, ballads and even *frottole* — are attributed to Petrarch in a large number of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts, and many of these attributions are suspect or even clearly incorrect.<sup>49</sup>

In this vast corpus of texts, which brings together possible original and apocryphal poems, how do we identify what is Petrarch's and what is not? Angelo Solerti's edition of the *Rime disperse di Francesco Petrarca o a lui attribuite*, first published in 1909, collects two hundred and fourteen possible poems.<sup>50</sup> As the title itself reveals, Solerti carried out an all-inclusive edition, which gathered the poems of certain and uncertain authorship. While the Solerti edition has the merit of

<sup>47</sup> See Steinberg, 'Petrarch's Damned Poetry and the Poetics of Exclusion', p. 86.

<sup>48</sup> On the MS Casanatense, see Appel, *Zur Entwicklung Italienischer Dichtungen Petrarca's*, pp. 126–61; Petrarca, *Opere italiane: ms Casanatense 924*. On Lodovico Castelvetro and the MS Casanatense, see Andrea Barbieri, 'La mano di Castelvetro sul Petrarca Casanatense', *Studi e problemi di critica testuale*, 83 (2011), 63–76.

<sup>49</sup> Among the compilations of uncertain authorship, we also find an important set of uncollected poems, known as the 'raccolta veneta'. According to Annarosa Cavedon, this anthology originated in a collection of some forty sonnets put together in the Veneto perhaps by one of Petrarch's most important correspondents, Antonio Beccari da Ferrara and his circle, during the last few years of Petrarch's life. It is possible that the 'raccolta veneta' contains some texts by Petrarch, along with a number of poems by imitators. See Cavedon, 'Due nuovi codici della tradizione "veneta" delle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca'; Cavedon, 'Intorno alle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca'; Cavedon, 'La tradizione "veneta" delle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca'.

<sup>50</sup> See *Rime disperse di Francesco Petrarca o a lui attribuite: per la prima volta raccolte*, ed. by Angelo Solerti (Florence: Sansoni, 1909; repr., with an introduction by Vittore Branca and an afterword by Paola Vecchi Galli, Florence: Le Lettere, 1997).

illustrating the omnipresence of Petrarch in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italy, it offers only a transcription of those poems that the manuscripts — more or less authentically — attribute to Petrarch. It is therefore not surprising that a number of texts which are presented as authentic have later proved to be apocryphal.<sup>51</sup> Laura Paolino, instead, has limited her canon to the poems in the *Codice degli abbozzi* and most of those in the Casanatense 924, along with a small selection of other poems which ‘la tradizione manoscritta attribuisce a Petrarca con maggior sicurezza’, publishing only twenty-one *estravaganti* of recognised Petrarchan authorship. While it is true that Petrarch’s uncollected poems must amount to many more than twenty-one, Paolino’s edition has the benefit of offering a more cautious and philologically established canon of texts.<sup>52</sup>

Given the difficulties involved in identifying Petrarch’s poems among apocryphal verses with any certainty, I will hence base my discussion here on the selection of texts in the Paolino edition.<sup>53</sup>

The following subsections examine how the employment of animal imagery varies, in terms of register and communication strategies, between Petrarch’s *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and the *estravaganti*. First, I will offer an overview of the different principles that govern the two sets of poems. I will then

---

<sup>51</sup> I refer, for example, to the poems ‘Tu sei ’l grande Ascolan che ’l mondo allumi’ (*Rime disperse*, 24); ‘Perché l’eterno moto sopra ditto’ (*Rime disperse*, 25); ‘Sì come de la madre di Fetonte’ (*Rime disperse*, 27); ‘Aman la madre e ’l padre il caro figlio’ (*Rime disperse*, 28); ‘Io so sì traviato dal sentiero’ (*Rime disperse*, 33); ‘Poi che a la nave mia l’empio nocchiero’ (*Rime disperse*, 34); ‘A faticosa via stanco corriero’ (*Rime disperse*, 35); ‘Di finir questi assalti mi dispero’ (*Rime disperse*, 36); ‘Il mio disire ha sì ferma radice’ (*Rime disperse*, 37); ‘O mar tranquillo, o fiume, o rivo o stagno’ (*Rime disperse*, 38); ‘Io ho, molti anni già, piangendo aggiunte’ (*Rime disperse*, 39); ‘Non creda essere alcuno in alto stato’ (*Rime disperse*, 40).

<sup>52</sup> See Petrarca, *Trionfi, Rime estravaganti, Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 627–754 (pp. 630–31). Of the texts in the Casanatense 924, Paolino excludes the following poems that appear in Solerti’s edition: ‘L’oro, le perle e i bei fioretti e l’erba’ (*Rime disperse*, 12); ‘In cielo, in aria, in terra, in fuoco e in mare’ (*Rime disperse*, 13); ‘O pruove oneste, legiadrette e sole’ (*Rime disperse*, 14).

<sup>53</sup> Between these two contrasting approaches is Joseph A. Barber’s edition. He published seventy uncollected poems, that is to say, all the certain texts in Petrarch’s autographs and apographs along with a selection of other poems ‘that may be attributed to the poet with reasonable certainty’. Barber, however, does not offer any philological explanations of the criteria which he adopted in the edition and includes poems which later studies have attributed to imitators. Paola Vecchi Galli’s solution is a more prudent compromise. In her forthcoming edition, she intends to present two groups of poems: those of certain authorship — which are already found in the Paolino edition — and sixteen poems which seem very likely to be ‘attribuibili’. See respectively Joseph A. Barber, ‘Introduction’, in Francesco Petrarca, *Rime Disperse*, ed. and trans. by Joseph A. Barber (New York and London: Garland, 1991), pp. XIII–XLIX (p. XLVIII); Paola Vecchi Galli, ‘Voci della dispersione’, in *Estravaganti, disperse, apocrifi petrarcheschi*, ed. by Berra and Vecchi Galli, pp. 1–24 (pp. 23–24).

compare and contrast the *Fragmenta* and the *estravaganti* through the lens of the imagery of bird-trapping.

## 2.1. Petrarch's Vernacular Poems: Between Innovations and Conventions

In a later version of the letter sent to Pandolfo Malatesta on 4 January 1373, revised for its inclusion in the *Seniles*, Petrarch adds the following revealing comment about the reception of his vernacular poems: 'Invitus, fateor, hac etate vulgari iuveniles ineptias cerno, quas omnibus [...] ignotas velim. Omnia iam in vulgus diffusa sunt legunturque libentius quam que serio, postmodum, validioribus annis scripsi' (*Seniles*, XIII. 11. 4).<sup>54</sup> In other words, he regrets that his earlier poems, the youthful trifles which have circulated among the multitude, are being read more willingly than those which he later wrote in earnest. This remark seems to be related to the dichotomy between the uncollected and collected lyrics, such as those that Petrarch is about to send to Pandolfo Malatesta. At this late date, it is unlikely that Petrarch associates any poems other than those in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, in their various forms and redactions, with the age of wisdom. The genesis of the *Canzoniere* can in fact be situated between the death of Laura (1348) and the completion of its earliest documented redaction, known as the 'Correggio form' (1356–1358), that is to say, relatively late in Petrarch's literary career.<sup>55</sup> Justin Steinberg observes that in this period the poet conceives of the collection as an antithesis to the piecemeal dissemination of his scattered poems. His aim was not just to counter an unregulated and varied circulation of his texts, but also to create his own public persona, that of a man able to critically reflect on his own 'iuveniles ineptias'.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Petrarca, *Rerum senilium*, IV, pp. 174–80 (p. 177).

<sup>55</sup> Marco Santagata observes: 'È opportuno distinguere fra il Canzoniere vero e proprio e le raccolte che lo precedono. Sino alla morte di Laura (1348) possiamo, in effetti, parlare solo di sillogi di rime: è soltanto dopo la morte dell'amata che Petrarca concepisce l'idea di un canzoniere-romanzo, cioè del libro che diventerà i *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*.' The earliest reference to the transcription 'in ordine' of texts dates from 28 November 1349, when the poet annotates in the MS Vaticano Latino 3196, with reference to the first redaction of what is now Rvf 268: 'Transcripta non in ordine, sed in alia papiro. 1349 novembris 28, ma[ne]' (fol. 13'). For the two quotations above, see respectively Marco Santagata, 'Introduzione', in Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. XVII–CCXVI (p. CCV); Petrarca, *Trionfi, Rime estravaganti, Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 853–59 (p. 859).

<sup>56</sup> See Justin Steinberg, 'Dante Estravagante, Petrarca Disperso, and the Spectre of the Other Woman', in *Petrarch and Dante*, ed. by Barański and Cachey, pp. 263–89 (pp. 264–69); Steinberg,

Why, according to Petrarch, were his uncollected lyrics more popular than his later collected poems? To respond to this question, we need to examine the differences between the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and the *estravaganti*. While the *Fragmenta* derive from a meditated process of selection and macrotextual compilation, the *estravaganti* were never subject to the same systematic rules and strategies.

The selection process that forms the basis of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* led to substantial stylistic differences between the collected and uncollected poems. Marco Santagata observes that in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, Petrarch rejected anything that could be associated with spoken language, and retrieved, filtered and renewed the repertoire of late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century poetry:

La riforma di Petrarca consiste nell'introdurre entro l'universo senza regole della rimeria coeva la disciplina, l'ordine, la pulizia formale [...]. La soluzione a cui perviene [...] passa attraverso una serie di esclusioni che a noi [...] sembrano piuttosto dei sacrifici. Esclusioni [...], soprattutto, di una lingua che ecceda i confini della letterarietà: la nuova lirica comporta l'invenzione di una lingua poetica specializzata, [...] del tutto separata dall'accidentalità e dalla mutevolezza, non solo del parlato, ma della stessa lingua letteraria coeva.<sup>57</sup>

If the origins of the *Canzoniere* are selective in nature, only the poems with specific features could be approved and included in the compilation. In many cases, it is indeed the absence of those features that has motivated the exclusion of some material. An examination of Petrarch's uncollected poems suggests that one of the reasons for their exclusion might reside in their overdetermined context. Among the *estravaganti*, indeed, we find a surprisingly large number of poems which were composed for specific occasions and addressees. In the Paolino edition

---

'Petrarch's Damned Poetry and the Poetics of Exclusion', pp. 87–88. See also Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, pp. 41–57.

<sup>57</sup> Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, pp. 34–35. Maurizio Vitale similarly observes: 'Chi legga, ed osservi dal punto di vista stilistico-linguistico, i *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* [...] si avvede con immediatezza di trovarsi in presenza [...] di una poesia del tutto differente e sorprendentemente nuova. Quella poesia certo riprende in sostanza, con inevitabile selezione, innovazione e arricchimento, i dati della tradizione poetica precedente, ma li compone, secondo una più esigente e rigorosa consapevolezza d'arte, in un assetto formale di eccezionale musicalità e di mirabile e preziosa configurazione.' See Maurizio Vitale, *La lingua del 'Canzoniere' ('Rerum vulgarium fragmenta') di Francesco Petrarca* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1996), p. 3.

poems of this sort account for no fewer than eighteen of the twenty-one texts.<sup>58</sup> As Steinberg notes, the *estravaganti* display a Petrarch who is surprisingly involved in the social, ‘contingent and ephemeral functions of poetry that typify the northern courts of fourteenth-century Italy’.<sup>59</sup> The employment of animal images in the *Canzoniere* and in the *estravaganti*, I propose, responds to different poetics. In the *Fragmenta* we read poems which respect the stylistic framework of a specific editorial project; in the *estravaganti*, instead, we find a less curated style, which to a certain extent harmonises with the poetic language used by the recipients.

Moreover, unlike the compilation of the *Canzoniere*, the *estravaganti* were never woven together. In terms of textual relationships, this means that each poem in the *Fragmenta* is part of a wider project, built on a network of echoes which are internal to the collection; the *estravaganti*, instead, are not concerned with any macrotextual architectures but only present external links with the lyrics of Petrarch’s correspondents. The internal or external connections of a poem with other texts also have interpretative implications. Like the tesserae of a mosaic, an image in the *Fragmenta* is situated in and engages with the context of the collection and is to be read in the light of a macrotextual perspective; the piecemeal circulation of the *estravaganti*, on the contrary, means that an image in the uncollected poems is to be interpreted on the basis of the interplay between the sender and the addressee and their shared poetic code. I propose that the different communication strategies which emerge from the *Canzoniere* and the *estravaganti* also apply to animal imagery. As seen briefly in the previous chapters, the animal images in the *Fragmenta* are reworked within the narrative fabric of the collection. In the uncollected poems of correspondence, instead, an image is supposed to convey clear meanings within the confines of a text or, at most, within a poetic exchange.

---

<sup>58</sup> We find thirteen sonnets of correspondence with contemporary poets and minor writers, such as Jacopo da Imola, Sunnuccio del Bene, Antonio Beccari da Ferrara, Pietro Dietisalvi, and the count Ricciardo da Bagno, as well as an anonymous correspondent (*Rime estravaganti*, 1; 2; 3a; 6; 7; 10; 11; 12; 13a; 14a; 15; 16a; 17a); three ballads expressly composed to fulfill the request of the musician Confortino (*Rime estravaganti*, 5; 8; 9); two poems possibly written in homage to military lords to praise their achievements (*Rime estravaganti*, 20; 21).

<sup>59</sup> Steinberg, ‘Petrarch’s Damned Poetry and the Poetics of Exclusion’, p. 90.



In order to show how the use of animal imagery differs between the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and the *estravaganti*, I will specifically explore the language of bird-trapping. This repertory of images is particularly relevant to my investigation as it constitutes the only semantic field of animal derivation shared by the two sets of Petrarchan poems.

The use of bird-trapping images to illustrate a human constraint is commonplace. The biblical Book of Psalms, for instance, compares the human soul which has escaped from threat or danger to a bird released from a fowler's snare: 'anima nostra quasi avis erepta est de laqueo venantium laqueus contritus est et nos liberati sumus' (Psalmi 123. 7).<sup>60</sup> In the Book of Proverbs we read the verse 'frustra autem iacitur rete ante oculos pennatorum' (Proverbia 1. 17), that is to say, a net is spread before the eyes of a mature bird in vain.<sup>61</sup> In secular poetry, images of bird-trapping serve to illustrate the erotic ties of love. Luciano Rossi observes that this semantic field depicts 'l'indissolubile legame che avvince l'amante alla passione sensuale', and constitutes a recurrent *topos* in Italian thirteenth- and fourteenth-century literature, from the poets of the Sicilian School to Petrarch himself.<sup>62</sup> For example, in the *canzone* 'Amor fa come 'l fino ucellatore' (*Rime*, 23), an unknown Sicilian poet likens Love to a bird-trapper:

Amor fa come 'l fino ucellatore,  
che gl'auselli sguarderi  
si mostra più ingegnieri d'invescare.  
Ben ò veduto giocando da fore  
li selvaggi sparveri  
prendere, e far maneri diventare;  
e quel che più si rende, più rinfresca,  
qual più involve, più invescà.

(*Rime*, 23. 1–8)<sup>63</sup>

The author here recovers the meanings associated with the scriptural verse in the Book of Proverbs to illustrate the cunning character of Love. If, according to the Bible, an experienced bird can rarely be caught, any attempt to capture it requires extraordinary skill on the part of the fowler. Drawing on this line of reasoning, the poet claims that Love proves to be as astute as the fowler who traps experienced

---

<sup>60</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, I, p. 933.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*, II, p. 958.

<sup>62</sup> Rossi, 'Il "nodo" di Bonagiunta e le "penne" degli stilnovisti', p. 44.

<sup>63</sup> *I poeti della scuola siciliana*, II, p. 980. Italics mine.

birds. Dante's *Commedia* contains a clear link to the biblical antecedent of the Book of Proverbs. In *Purgatorio* 31 Beatrice accuses Dante of having betrayed her for an unidentified 'pargoletta':

Ben ti dovevi, per lo primo strale  
de le cose fallaci, levar suso  
di retro a me che non era più tale.

Non ti dovea gravar le penne in giuso,  
ad aspettar più colpo, o pargoletta  
o altra novità con sì breve uso.

*Novo augelletto due o tre aspetta;  
ma dinanzi da li occhi d'i pennuti  
rete si spiega indarno o si saetta.*

(*Purgatorio*, 31. 55–63)<sup>64</sup>

In these verses, the lady blames Dante for giving in to temptation and not behaving like an experienced bird faced with a snare, that is to say, like a wise and wary man. Not only does Dante recall the message in the Book of Proverbs, but offers a faithful translation of the scriptural model. A direct translation from the Bible may recall the oral performances of vernacular preaching, which is documented in the Italian manuscript tradition from the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>65</sup>

The relationship with biblical antecedents in the examples above conveys more or less evident moral meanings. While the Sicilian poet's verses express a condition of pleasure, the scriptural resonance invests the image of bird-trapping with an implicit allusion to the concept of sin: even though love is described as an enjoyment of the flesh, the medieval reader could not fail to notice that from a Christian point of view it is also a constraint of the soul. Dante's tercet, instead, makes the association with sin explicit: through Beatrice's words, the poet admits that he did not manage to avoid improper conduct.

Images and vocabulary linked to bird-trapping are widespread in Petrarch's vernacular poems too. The *Fragmenta* and the *estravaganti*, indeed, are rich in lemmas such as 'nodo', 'laccio', 'ésca', 'rete', 'amo', and 'legare', adopted to illustrate the ties of love.<sup>66</sup> A particularly useful case study in this regard is found

<sup>64</sup> Dante, *Commedia*, II, pp. 915–16. Italics mine.

<sup>65</sup> For further details on medieval preaching, see Carlo Delcorno, '*Quasi quidam cantus*': *studi sulla predicazione medievale*, ed. by Giovanni Baffetti and others (Florence: Olschki, 2009), pp. 3–84 (p. 27).

<sup>66</sup> The lemma 'nodo' appears in *Rvf*, 25. 4; 71. 51; 73.79; 90. 2; 175. 2, 14; 196. 12; 197. 7; 198. 10; 214. 20; 227. 4; 256. 10; 264. 83; 268. 65; 270. 70, 93; 271. 1, 13; 283. 4; 296. 14; 305. 1; 307.

in *canzone* 270 and sonnet 271 on the one hand, and in the *estravagante* ‘Quella che ’l giovenil meo core avinse’ (*Rime estravaganti*, 1) on the other. These three poems share images and vocabulary belonging to the language of bird-trapping in reference to Love. In these poems Petrarch describes Love catching its victims by means of snares and ties, that is to say, the traps employed to capture birds and other small animals.<sup>67</sup>

Although the three poems share the same semantic field, the use of the images of bird-trapping is quite different. I shall argue that in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* images of bird-trapping serve to structure a sustained *transumptio* throughout the poem, that is to say, an extended figurative system of tropes built on a coherent semantic field.<sup>68</sup> In the *estravaganti*, instead, the repertoire of bird-trapping invests an image with a proverbial structure. I propose that the opposition between the *transumptio* in the *Fragmenta* and the verse written in the style of a proverb in the *estravagante* is consistent with the stylistic features of the collected and uncollected poems which I discussed earlier: the *transumptio* is based on the use of a more sophisticated figurative system within the narrative of the *Canzoniere*; the proverbial verse, in turn, presents a mimetic adhesion to everyday speech which is rarely allowed in the *Canzoniere*, but which is in line with the occasional character of the poem and with its nature as a correspondence text.

---

3; 330. 13; 359. 56; 361. 12. The lemma ‘laccio’ is found in *Rvf*, 6. 3; 28. 13; 55. 15; 59. 4; 69. 3; 96. 4; 106. 5; 134. 6; 184. 6; 196. 13; 197. 9; 200. 5; 214. 10, 25; 263. 7; 270. 56, 61; 271. 6; 296. 7; 360. 51; 366. 49. The lemma ‘rete’ is in *Rvf*, 105. 47; 181. 1, 12; 239. 37. The lemma ‘esca’ is in *Rvf*, 90. 7; 175. 5; 181. 5; 212. 14; 270. 55; 271. 7. The lemma ‘amo’, hook, appears in *Rvf*, 270. 55. The lemma ‘legare’, in connection with images of bird-trapping, is in *Rvf*, 270. 60, 92, 94, 98.

<sup>67</sup> On the link between the three poems, see Rosanna Bettarini, ‘Voltando pagina (Petrarca, *Rvf* CCLXX–CCLXXI)’, *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 5 (1987), 225–45 (p. 239); Steinberg, ‘Dante *Estravagante*, Petrarca *Disperso*, and the Spectre of the Other Woman’, pp. 271–77.

<sup>68</sup> On the definition of *transumptio* Francesco Tateo writes: ‘Termine diffuso nella retorica medievale per indicare genericamente quello schema che nella retorica classica è denominato *translatio* [...], ossia l’espressione metaforica, ma che tuttavia viene riferito prevalentemente a quel tipo più ampio e complesso di metafora che supera la trasposizione semantica del singolo vocabolo. [...] Nella *Vita nuova* come nelle *Rime* la *transumptio* è [...] in relazione con alcune consuete personificazioni, tipica quella di Amore, accompagnata da un corredo di metafore ora più, ora meno complesso. Una *transumptio* particolarmente protratta, che sviluppa l’analogia fra rapporto amoroso e scontro d’armi, è quella di *Rime* CIII 7 ss. (“non esce di faretra | saetta che già mai la colga ignuda: | ed ella ancide e non val ch’om si chiuda”, ecc.).’ See Francesco Tateo, ‘Transumptio’, in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, ed. by Bosco and others, V, pp. 690–92. See also Lausberg, *Handbuch der Literarischen Rhetorik*, pp. 204–05, 295, 535–36.

## 2.2. *Rvf* 270 and 271

*Rvf* 270 and 271 rework the traditional language of bird-trapping in accordance with the macrotextual narrative of the collection. Here Petrarch does not include individual tropes such as the simile in the anonymous Sicilian *canzone*, nor does he give an explicit translation of a scriptural verse as in the case of Dante's tercet. Instead, he employs terms from the semantic field of bird-trapping throughout the entire poem in order to build a long and sophisticated *transumptio*.

I shall begin my outline with *Rvf* 270. In the poem, which is situated at the beginning of the second part of the *Canzoniere*, the subject reflects on his past desire and recognises that the lady's death has destroyed any possibility of him falling in love again. With a series of *adynata*, the poetic persona claims that the only way for Love to capture him once more would be to revive the dead beloved, her beauty, and thus all the traps which Love had employed in the past to fuel the subject's fire of passion.

While images of bird-trapping characterise the whole poem, the concentration of this type of vocabulary is particularly high in the fourth and fifth stanzas of the *canzone*:

movi la lingua, ov'erano a tutt'ore  
disposti gli ami ov'io fui preso, et l'*ésca*  
ch'i' bramo sempre; e i tuoi *lacci* nascondi  
fra i capei crespi et biondi,  
ché 'l mio volere altrove non s'*invesca*;  
spargi co le tue man' le chiome al vento,  
ivi mi *lega*, et puo' mi far contento.

Dal *laccio* d'òr non sia mai chi me scioglia,  
negletto ad arte, e 'nnanellato et hirtò,  
né de l'ardente spirto  
de la sua vista dolcemente acerba,  
la qual dì et notte più che lauro o mirto  
teneva in me verde l'amorosa voglia,  
quando si veste et si spoglia  
di fronde il bosco, et la campagna d'erba.  
Ma poi che Morte è stata sì superba  
che spezzò il *nodo* ond'io temea scampare,  
né trovar pôi, quantunque gira il mondo,  
di che ordisci 'l secondo,  
che giova, Amor, tuoi ingegni ritentare?  
Passata è la stagion, perduto ài l'arme,

di ch'io tremava: ormai che puoi tu farne?  
(*Rvf*, 270. 54–75)<sup>69</sup>

According to the *transumptio*, Love is associated with the bird-trapper, the beloved with baits and traps, and the lover with a captured bird. This kind of imagery is consistent with the sensual love recounted in the poem. First, the *canzone* presents recurrent references to the semantic field of fire, which illustrates the subject's carnal 'desire' (*Rvf*, 270. 39):

Riponi entro 'l bel viso il vivo lume  
ch'era mia scorta, et la soave fiamma  
ch'anchor, lasso, m'infiamma  
essendo spenta: or che fea dunque ardendo?  
(*Rvf*, 270. 16–19)<sup>70</sup>

Second, the poet writes that the 'vista dolcemente acerba' of the lady (*Rvf*, 270. 64) stimulated his 'amorosa voglia' (*Rvf*, 270. 66). Finally, the poetic persona compares his desire to that of a deer for water:

E' non si vide mai cervo né damma  
con tal desio cercar fonte né fiume,  
qual io il dolce costume.  
(*Rvf*, 270. 20–22)<sup>71</sup>

In the previous chapter I discussed the image of the thirsty deer in the Bible and in the later tradition as an allegory for Christ's and for the good Christian's desire for good. This imagery, as we have seen, informs the meaning of sonnet 190. In *canzone* 270 the poet reverses the traditional association between the deer and water in order to illustrate not his desire for good but his sensual desire for the beloved. All these three points recall the topics of the *canzone* 'Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade' (*Rvf*, 23), which constitutes the manifesto of the subject's youthful erotic appetite.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1094–1106 (pp. 1095–96). Italics mine.

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem, p. 1094.

<sup>71</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>72</sup> Other references to sensual love are 'ardente spirto' (*Rvf*, 270. 63); the hapax 'amorosa voglia' (*Rvf*, 270. 66); 'accese | saette' (*Rvf*, 270. 76–77); 'invisibil foco' (*Rvf*, 270. 77). Examples of references to the beloved's exterior appearance are 'bel volto' (*Rvf*, 270. 15); 'bel viso' (*Rvf*, 270. 16); 'il bel guardo' (*Rvf*, 270. 46); 'i capei crespi et biondi' (*Rvf*, 270. 57); 'le chiome al vento' (*Rvf*, 270. 59); 'la vista dolcemente acerba' (*Rvf*, 270. 64).

The figurative system of bird-trapping continues in the seventh stanza:

Gli animi ch'al tuo regno il cielo inchina  
*legghi* ora in uno et ora in altro modo;  
 ma me sol ad un *nodo*  
*legar* potèi, ché 'l ciel di più non volse.  
*Quel'uno è rotto; e 'n libertà non godo*  
 ma piango et grido: 'Ahi *nobil pellegrina*,  
 qual sententia divina  
 me *legò* inanzi, et te prima disciolse?  
 Dio, che sì tosto al mondo ti ritolse,  
 ne mostrò tanta et sì alta virtute  
 solo per infiammar nostro desio'.

(Rvf, 270. 91–101)<sup>73</sup>

Besides the key lemmas 'nodo' (Rvf, 270. 93) and 'legare' (Rvf, 270. 92, 94, 98), the expression 'Quel'uno è rotto; e 'n libertà non godo' (Rvf, 270. 95) contains a reference to the verse in the Book of Psalms 'laqueus contritus est et nos liberati sumus' (Psalmi 123. 7).<sup>74</sup> However, unlike the image in the Psalm, the lyric ego does not enjoy his freedom: while the souls in the biblical verse have been released and are now free, the poetic persona continues experiencing a condition of suffering and pain. The lady's death has indeed freed the subject from bodily attraction, which is no longer possible, but has not offered any peace of mind. The subject's pain is encapsulated in the expression 'piango et grido' (Rvf, 270. 96). Some light may be shed on the meaning of these verses by the sonnet 'Tennemi Amor anni ventuno ardendo' (Rvf, 364). As is explained here, the subject's experience of love — in all its varied forms — lasted ten more years after the lady's death:

Tennemi Amor *anni ventuno ardendo*,  
 lieto nel foco, et nel duol pien di speme;  
 poi che madonna e 'l mio cor seco in seme  
 saliro al ciel, *dieci altri anni piangendo*.  
 Omai son stanco, et mia vita reprendo  
 di tanto error, che di vertute il seme  
 à quasi spento, et le mie parti extreme,  
 alto Dio, a Te devotamente rendo,  
 pentito et tristo de' miei sì spesi anni,  
 che spender si deveano in miglior uso:

<sup>73</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1096–97. Italics mine.

<sup>74</sup> *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, I, p. 933. On the connection between Petrarch's line and the verse in the Book of Psalms, see Bettarini's commentary in Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Bettarini, II, pp. 1217–34 (p. 1233).

in cercar pace et in fuggir affanni.  
 Signor che 'n questo carcer m'ài rinchiuso,  
 tràmene, salvo da li eterni danni,  
 ch'i' conosco 'l mio fallo, et non lo scuso.

(Rvf, 364)<sup>75</sup>

The timeline presented in the sonnet closely recalls what Petrarch writes in *canzone* 270. Love held the subject, 'ardendo, | lieto nel foco' (Rvf, 364. 1–2), for twenty-one years, that is, from the first encounter with the beloved in 1327 until her death in 1348. The lover, then, remained fixated on the thought of the lady for ten more years, 'piangendo' (Rvf, 364. 4).<sup>76</sup> The verbs 'ardendo' and 'piangendo', which depict two phases of the poetic persona's experience of love, one before the beloved's death and one after, echo the vocabulary found in *canzone* 270. Here the poet outlines the same contrast between the period of carnal desire during the lady's life, described through the traditional images of fire such as 'fiamma', 'infiamma' and 'ardendo' (Rvf, 270. 17, 18, 19), and the period of desperation, introduced by the verbs 'piango et grido' (Rvf, 270. 96).

What is relevant to my investigation is the way in which Petrarch makes use of the verse from the Psalm. The poet does not overtly recall the biblical passage but makes an allusion to it. In the light of sonnet 364, the reader is challenged to identify a reworked source and to recognise its meaning in accordance with the story narrated throughout the *Canzoniere*. A similar implicit reference to a biblical model occurs in sonnet 271:

*L'ardente nodo ov'io fui d'ora in hora,  
 contando, anni ventuno interi preso,  
 Morte disciolse, né già mai tal peso  
 provai, né credo ch'uom di dolor mora.*

*Non volendomi Amor perdere anchora,  
 ebbe un altro lacciul fra l'erba teso,  
 et di nova éscia un altro foco acceso,  
 tal ch'a gran pena indi scampato fôra.*

*Et se non fosse experientia molta  
 de' primi affanni, i' sarei preso et arso,  
 tanto più quanto son men verde legno.*

*Morte m'à liberato un'altra volta,  
 et rotto 'l nodo, e 'l foco à spento et sparso:*

<sup>75</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1406–08 (p. 1406). Italics mine.

<sup>76</sup> On this point, see also Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, pp. 209–42.

contra la qual non val forza né 'ngegno.

(Rvf, 271)<sup>77</sup>

Much as in the previous poem, the poet elaborates the sustained trope of love as a bird-trapper, with the usual employment of the lemmas 'nodo', 'ésca' and 'laccio'. Again, the subject claims that only death has freed him from the ties of sensual love. The verses 'Et se non fosse experientia molta | de' primi affanni, i' sarei preso et arso' (Rvf, 271. 9–10), moreover, recall the teaching of the Book of Proverbs, which is concerned with the wisdom of the experienced bird. This resonance is confirmed by the verb 'preso' (Rvf, 271. 10), that is to say, caught in the snare. Here the poet underlines how the experience of his love for Laura has allowed him to escape the snare of temptations. Again, the reference to the biblical source is implicit: Petrarch adopts the moral of the biblical Proverb, but excludes any explicit reference to the source. However, the scriptural model, with its opposition between 'experientia molta' (Rvf, 271. 9) and 'primi affanni' (Rvf, 271. 10) makes sense within the two poles of the poet's early infatuation and later experience of love.

Let us return to *canzone* 270. The *transumptio*, I suggest, is further developed with the *senhal* 'nobil pellegrina' (Rvf, 270. 96). In current commentaries, the image is interpreted as a reference to Laura's death, which reprises the topic of the pilgrimage of the soul through earthly life. In addition, as Rosanna Bettarini observes, the *senhal* may also recall the *falco peregrinus*, which, once released from its ties, is free to fly away.<sup>78</sup> While Bettarini highlights the association between the lady and the falcon, she does not explore the meaning of this image in relation to the vocabulary of bird-trapping which informs the poem. Drawing on Bettarini's observation, I propose that the image of the lady as a 'nobil pellegrina' (Rvf, 270. 96) is consistent with the entire figurative architecture of the *canzone*. I will focus on the dual status of the falcon as an object and as a means of hunting in the practice of falconry. I will argue that as a target of hunters, the image of the falcon contributes to illustrating the lady's purity in

<sup>77</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, p. 1107–09 (p. 1107). Italics mine.

<sup>78</sup> See the commentary in Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Bettarini, II, pp. 1217–34 (p. 1233). See also the commentaries in Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1094–106 (p. 1105); *Canzoniere*, ed. by Vecchi Galli, pp. 926–33 (p. 932).



the context of the strophe; as an instrument of hunting, instead, the image signals the lover's ongoing fixation on the beloved.

By addressing the lady as a 'nobil pellegrina' whom God 'disciolse' (*Rvf*, 270. 96–98), the poet underlines the virtue of the lady: the noun 'pellegrina' portrays the beloved as a potential victim of bird-trapping; the adjective 'nobil' and the verb 'disciolse', in turn, suggest her incorruptible character. According to Emperor Frederick II, who wrote the seminal treatise on falconry in the Middle Ages, in order to train falcons, they are first caught 'cum retibus, laqueis aut aliis instrumentis et artificiis', that is to say, by means of snares, ties and other tools employed in bird-trapping (*De arte venandi cum avibus*, II. 45).<sup>79</sup> However, unlike the lover, the lady is not caught by any traps. The difference between the lover and the beloved is made clear in the verses 'qual sententia divina | me legò inanzi, et te prima disciolse?' (*Rvf*, 270. 97–98): while the former is still held by the chains of his body, the latter has been released and made free by virtue of a divine verdict. The verb 'disciolse' appears to be ambivalent. On the one hand, as glossed by commentators, it refers to the lady's death, which has allowed her to reach heaven. On the other hand, I suggest, it might also indicate the liberation of the lady from carnal ties during her earthly life. The condition of purity which characterises the beloved is confirmed by the 'tanta et sì alta virtute' (*Rvf*, 270. 100) which God showed in and through her during her life. In this regard, the figure of the lady-falcon is close to that of the lady-hind in sonnet 190, which the Lord released from a game reserve, that is, from the chains of love. In both cases, the purity of the beloved is illustrated through the image of an animal which God has freed from the status of an object of the hunt.

At the same time, a falcon was also employed by the falconer for the purpose of hunting. The association between the beloved and the falcon confirms the poetic persona's status as the prey of the hunter. However, while the previous stanzas depict the subject as the victim of snares, ties and knots, the seventh strophe introduces the imagery of falconry and presents the poetic persona as a target of the 'nobil pellegrina' (*Rvf*, 270. 96). I propose that the shift from the

---

<sup>79</sup> Federico II di Svevia, *De arte venandi cum avibus: edizione e traduzione italiana del ms. lat. 717 della Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna collazionato con il ms. Pal. lat. 1071 della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, ed. and trans. by Anna Laura Trombetti Budriesi (Bari: Laterza, 2009), pp. 332–34 (p. 332).

semantic field of bird-trapping to that of falconry signals the passage, in the subject's view, from the memories of sensual attraction during the lady's life to the emphasis on her virtue after her death. While Love tried to capture the poetic persona by means of the beloved's appearance, God — according to the narrative — displayed in her such a sublime virtue 'solo per infiammar nostro desio' (*Rvf*, 270. 101). The association between Love and the bird-trapper is replaced with an association between God and the falconer; small traps are replaced with a noble falcon; correspondingly, the beauty of the beloved is replaced with her virtue; finally, erotic desire is replaced with a desire to reach her in heaven through the imitation of her virtues. While in the previous stanzas Petrarch nostalgically recalls his earlier sensual enamourment in his speech to Love, in the seventh stanza he praises the virtues of the lady as an incentive for his own good conduct. In other words, his desire for salvation is triggered by the beloved's example and by the desire to reach her.

The celebration of Laura's virtues as a source of good in *canzone* 270 seems to form part of those attitudes which the poetic persona goes on to condemn, in retrospect, in sonnet 364. First, as we read, it was only the external event of her death that has freed the subject from the ties of sensual love, and not an act of his own will. Second, the poetic persona's desperation has caused his fixation on the figure of the beloved. Third, even though the focus here is on God and the beloved's virtues, rather than on Love and her appearance, the attitude of the poetic persona is ambiguous, as his desire for salvation seems to depend on his desire for the lady: suffice it to note that here again Petrarch uses those words associated with the semantic field of eroticism, such as 'inflammar' and 'desio' (*Rvf*, 270. 101), which also portray his infatuation in the first five stanzas of the poem. As Santagata observes, at this stage of the collection the reader acknowledges that 'gli spunti penitenziali e l'esame di coscienza della *canzone* 264 non abbiano avuto sviluppi', because the word of the moralist 'è sopraffatta dal sospiro dell'innamorato, legato più che mai alle sue catene'.<sup>80</sup>

If, as I have argued, Petrarch's *canzone* is built on the opposition between the imagery of bird-trapping and that of falconry, what is the meaning of such a dichotomy? In order to answer this question, we need to consider the implications

---

<sup>80</sup> Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, pp. 236–42 (pp. 239, 241).

of the techniques employed in medieval hunting and their relationship with the social status of the hunter. In particular, I will focus on the hierarchical contrast between bird-trapping and falconry as status symbols for the lower classes and the aristocracy. Peasants and other *laboratores*, who hunted for subsistence, and thus for bodily needs, employed tools and forms of capture which were not considered heroic, such as snares, ties and sticks. In contrast, the chase performed by the aristocracy — which was supposed to be a demonstration of power, physical strength and the ability of the mind — entailed the use of either weapons of war, such as swords and daggers, or falcons.<sup>81</sup> The practice of falconry in particular also involved specific intellectual proficiency on the part of the falconer, who had to train and impose his mastery over the instinct of a predator through a slow and difficult process of partial taming.<sup>82</sup> Falconry was thus considered a technique capable of exhibiting the finest rational skills of mankind — those abilities which differentiate human beings from other animals and make men and women closer to God — to a greater extent than other types of hunting.<sup>83</sup> Despite its higher status, however, falconry was still a form of hunting and presented all the ambiguous and problematic features associated with an activity which reveals the overlap between animality and humanity.

I propose that these contrasting meanings associated with bird-trapping and falconry illuminate the narrative of the *canzone*. The former relates to bodily needs; the latter illustrates the attempt to sublimate the lover's attitude towards the beloved: the lover is still fixated on the beloved, but he aims to reach her in heaven. In both cases the imagery of hunting, whether associated with bird-trapping or falconry, sheds light on the subject's enslavement to the lady. The condition of long-lasting bondage to Laura is confirmed by the sonnet 'I' vo piangendo i miei passati tempi' (*Rvf*, 365):

I' vo piangendo i miei passati tempi  
i quai posi in amar cosa mortale,  
senza levarmi a volo, abbiend'io l'ale,

<sup>81</sup> See Anna Laura Trombetti Budriesi, 'Introduzione', in Federico II, *De Arte venandi cum avibus*, pp. IX–CXLVII (p. IX). See also Bates, *Masculinity and the Hunt*, p. 38; Galloni, *Il cervo e il lupo*, pp. 10–13.

<sup>82</sup> See Daniela Boccassini, *Il volo della mente: falconeria e sofia nel mondo mediterraneo: Islam, Federico II, Dante* (Ravenna: Longo, 2003), pp. 167–222, 335–440; Galloni, *Il cervo e il lupo*, pp. 95–100 (pp. 96–97).

<sup>83</sup> On this point, see Chapter 1 (part 4).

per dar forse di me non bassi esempi.

(*Rvf*, 365. 1–4)<sup>84</sup>

The sonnet follows poem 364, in which the poetic persona regrets his thirty-one years of fixation on the lady, and precedes *canzone* 366, in which the subject expresses his repentance in the form of a prayer to Mary. It is therefore highly probable that this sonnet, like the two poems on either side of it, revisits and considers in retrospect the topics disseminated throughout the collection. Here, the poetic persona claims that his love for a mortal creature in the past prevented him from reaching the truths of God, like a bird that cannot fly. The association between the subject and a bird unable to fly is consistent with my proposed interpretation of *canzone* 270. In the light of his thirty-one years of enslavement, what impeded the subject's flight is to be found in both his sensual desire and his desperate fixation on the beloved even after her death. Not only did the snares, ties and knots of sensual love prevent the poetic persona from attaining his desire for good, but the same is true in the case of the falcon, the symbol of his desire for virtue not *per se* but solely for the purpose of reaching his beloved in the afterlife.

In brief, in *canzone* 270 and in sonnet 271 the poet offers a *transumptio* built on the imagery of bird-trapping to illustrate the power of love over the poetic persona. The language of bird-trapping is not employed in the form of conventional similes and comparisons, nor as an explicit reference to the biblical source. In the *Canzoniere*, I suggest, explicit comparisons between Love and a bird-trapper or between a lover and a captured bird would have sounded outdated. A faithful translation of the Scriptures, in turn, might have recalled popular contexts, such as vernacular preaching. Instead, Petrarch employs allusions to biblical passages, which constitute a more sophisticated figurative system to be read in the light of a macrotextual narrative.

This *modus operandi* reflects, to a large extent, a broader pattern in the *Canzoniere*. In Chapter 2, with reference to traditional animal images, I observed that Petrarch pursues a *mellificatio*. This practice also applies to the semantic field of bird-trapping, not only in *Rvf*270 and *Rvf*271, but in most other instances found in the *Fragmenta*.<sup>85</sup> The *mellificatio*, indeed, contributes to the creation of

<sup>84</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 1409–12 (p. 1409).

<sup>85</sup> I refer to the images of bird-trapping which I list in note 66.

Petrarch's particular style, which aims to detach itself from orality and from the language of contemporary poetry.

The collection, however, also includes a few instances of animal images which remind us of spoken language. Let us consider the *canzone frottolata* 'Mai non vo' più cantar com'io soleva' (*Rvf*, 105):

Forse ch'ogni uom che legge non s'intende:  
et la rete tal tende che non piglia,  
et chi troppo assotiglia si scavezza.

(*Rvf*, 105. 46–48)<sup>86</sup>

The genre of the poem is an exception within the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, and its stylistic features are not representative of the prevailing norms and traits of the collection.<sup>87</sup> As Santagata notes, 'la tessitura metrica a rime al mezzo, [...] l'accumulo di sentenze, di proverbi e di allusioni [...] avvicinano questa *canzone* al genere "basso" della frottola.'<sup>88</sup>

### 2.3. The *Estravagante*

One use of bird-trapping language which is similar to that in *Rvf* 105 occurs in the *estravagante* 'Quella che 'l giovenil meo core avinse' (*Rime estravaganti*, 1). In the *Codice degli abbozzi* the poem is labelled as a 'Responsio ad Iacobum de Imola' (fol. 4<sup>v</sup>).<sup>89</sup> This annotation tells us that the sonnet formed part of a correspondence and constitutes Petrarch's reply to a text by Jacopo de' Garatori da Imola which has since been lost.<sup>90</sup> The sonnet is thus an interesting case study

<sup>86</sup> Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 489–504 (p. 490).

<sup>87</sup> On the prevailing stylistic features of the collection, Maurizio Vitale observes: 'La varietà [...] dei *Rvf* non comporta una altrettanta varietà di tono, [...] che resta invece sostanzialmente il medesimo, proprio del *genus dicendi* piano, temperato e armonioso. [...] Il tenore stilistico-linguistico dominante appare sempre di sostanziale e lucida *medietà*, insofferente dei dati crudamente realistici e avverso alle connotazioni troppo vistose.' See Maurizio Vitale, *Il canone cruscante degli 'Auctores' e la lingua del 'Canzoniere' del Petrarca* (Florence: Presso l'Accademia, 1996), p. 13. Italics original. See also Vitale, *La lingua del 'Canzoniere'*, pp. 522–26, 529–33.

<sup>88</sup> The quotation is from Santagata's commentary in Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, p. 491.

<sup>89</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi*, *Rime estravaganti*, *Codice degli abbozzi*, p. 805.

<sup>90</sup> Ibidem, pp. 649–50. On Jacopo de' Garatori da Imola see Salomone Morpurgo, 'Rime inedite di Giovanni Quirini e Antonio da Tempo', *Archivio Storico per Trieste, l'Istria e il Trentino*, 1 (1881–1882), 152–53.

for investigating how the conventions in use in *Trecento* poetic correspondences differ from the style of the *Canzoniere*:

Quella che 'l giovenil meo core avinse  
nel primo tempo ch'io conobbi amore,  
del suo leggiadro albergo escendo fore,  
con mio dolor *d'un bel nodo mi scinse*.

Né poi nova bellezza l'alma strinse,  
né mai luce sentì che fesse ardore,  
se non co la memoria del valore  
che per dolci durezza la sospinse.

Ben volse quei che co' begli occhi aprilla  
con altra chiave riprovar suo ingegno;  
*ma nova rete vecchio augel non prende*.

Et pur fui in dubbio fra Caribdi et Scilla  
et passai le Sirene in sordo legno,  
over come huom ch'ascolta et nulla intende.

(*Rime estravaganti*, 1)<sup>91</sup>

The sonnet recounts the poetic persona's resistance in the face of new temptations of Love. Here Petrarch once more employs the vocabulary of bird-trapping, as the words 'd'un bel nodo mi scinse' reveal (*Rime estravaganti*, 1. 4). However, the most interesting occurrence can be found in the verse 'ma nova rete vecchio augel non prende' (*Rime estravaganti*, 1. 11). After his past experience, the poet has acquired a wary attitude towards the tricks of Love, and associates himself with an old bird able to escape a snare. The verse reprises the teaching of the Book of Proverbs, just as we saw in Dante's *Purgatorio* 31 and in Petrarch's own sonnet 271.<sup>92</sup> In the *estravagante*, however, Petrarch provides neither a translation of nor an allusion to the scriptural verse. Instead, he adopts the message of the Book of Proverbs to offer a proverb of his own.

Like a proverb, the verse is built on a pounding pattern and on an image drawn from common knowledge, both of which are designed to promote a universal truth. A proverb, indeed, is characterised by three main features: a symmetrical structure, figurative language, and a teaching derived from the

<sup>91</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi*, *Rime estravaganti*, *Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 649–53 (p. 649). Italics mine.

<sup>92</sup> The link between Petrarch's verse and Dante's tercet in *Purgatorio* situates the two poets at opposite poles. Indeed, as Justin Steinberg observes, 'Petrarch's old bird appears to be in direct opposition to Dante's fully-fledged one.' On the one hand, according to Beatrice's words, Dante failed to observe the lesson from the Biblical proverb when he succumbed to temptations after his beloved's death; on the other hand, Petrarch emphasises his resistance to the lure of the other woman. See Steinberg, 'Dante *Estravagante*, Petrarca *Disperso*, and the Spectre of Other Woman', pp. 275–77.

‘esperienza del popolo’.<sup>93</sup> Petrarch’s verse presents all three of these characteristics. A symmetrical pattern is found on the metrical, syntactic and semantic level: the hendecasyllable carries a stress on every other syllable, namely on the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and obviously tenth syllables; in addition, the hendecasyllable is built in parallel, because the phrases ‘nova rete’ and ‘vecchio augel’ (*Rime estravaganti*, 1. 11) are each formed by a bisyllabic adjective and a bisyllabic noun; at the same time, the verse presents a semantic antithesis between the adjectives ‘nova’ and ‘vecchio’ and between the nouns ‘rete’ and ‘augel’. The figurative language, in turn, relies on the use of bird-trapping images to illustrate the discourse of love. The teaching of the verse is self-evident and is based on the assumption that a wise man should not fall victim to erotic temptations.

I argue that this verse sets the *estravagante* apart from the prevailing stylistic framework of the *Canzoniere*. Indeed, its proverbial form gives the poem a folkloric character, which establishes an association between the text itself and spoken language. In this way, the sonnet contravenes the principles which inform the *Canzoniere*, that is, the exclusion of genres, topics and language which violate the borders of literary style and adhere to the features of spoken language. At the same time, when engaging in correspondence, the poet could not embark on cryptic allusions, such as those built on macrotextual relationships, but needed to use images that could be easily and immediately understood. It is worth noting that the response in a poetic exchange is never entirely free in terms of its style, because the respondent has to conform to the poetic code established by the initiator of the correspondence. The use of animal images could therefore be dependent on a choice made by the initiator of the exchange, who might have included a similar image in his sonnet, or could be the result of Petrarch’s own choice. In any case, I argue, the animal reference is employed because of a shared, mutually understood code.

The conventional use of animal images in poetic exchanges also emerges with other animals. One example is found in the sonnet ‘Quella che gli animal’ del mondo atterra’ (*Rime estravaganti*, 7). According to the *Codice degli abbozzi*, the

---

<sup>93</sup> For a broader discussion of the features of proverbs, see Maurizio Del Ninno, ‘Proverbi’, in *Enciclopedia Einaudi*, ed. by Ruggiero Romano and others, 16 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 1977–1984), XI, pp. 385–400 (p. 389). See also Elisabetta Soletti, ‘Proverbi’, in *Enciclopedia dell’Italiano*, ed. by Raffaele Simone, 2 vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2010–2011), II, p. 1183.

sonnet constitutes Petrarch's second response to a 'domino materiam dante et iubente' (fol. 16<sup>v</sup>), an unknown correspondent who has set the topic of the exchange and has requested a reply.<sup>94</sup> Here the poet associates death with a basilisk:

Quella che gli animal' del mondo atterra  
et nel primo principio gli rimena,  
percosse il cavalier del qual è piena  
ogni contrada che 'l mar cinge et serra.

Ma questo è un *basilisco* che diserra  
gli occhi feroci a porger morte et pena,  
tal che già mai né lancia né catena  
porian far salvo chi con lui s'afferra.

Un sol remedio à il suo sguardo nocivo:  
*di specchi armarsi*, a ciò ch'egli sfaville  
et torne quasi a la fontana il rivo;  
mirando sé, conven che si destille  
quella sua rabbia: al modo ch'io ne scrivo  
fia assicurata questa et l'altre ville.

(*Rime estravaganti*, 7)<sup>95</sup>

Pliny writes that the basilisk shares the same deadly power as the catoblepas: 'Eadem et basilisci serpentis est vis' (*Naturalis historia*, VIII. 33).<sup>96</sup> Isidore observes that it also kills humans if it looks at them: 'et hominem vel si aspiciat interimit' (*Etymologiae*, XII. 5. 6).<sup>97</sup> While in the *Canzoniere* Petrarch reworks and models each image in terms of a *mellificatio*, here, by contrast, he dwells on a detailed description of the nature of the basilisk, which is reminiscent of the tone of an encyclopaedic entry.

It must be noted that not all the animal images in the *estravaganti* are so explicitly associated with a conventional code such as those in sonnets 1 and 7. For example, the verse 'Io fu' già agnel de l'amorosa mandra' (*Rime estravaganti*, 16a. 9), in a poem addressed to Antonio Beccari, parallels the neutral and colourless tone of the verses 'Felice agnello a la penosa mandra | mi giacqui un tempo' (*Rvf*, 207. 43–44) in the *Canzoniere*.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, it remains true that

<sup>94</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi*, *Rime estravaganti*, *Codice degli abbozzi*, p. 870.

<sup>95</sup> Ibidem, 679–81 (p. 679). Italics mine.

<sup>96</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, III, p. 56.

<sup>97</sup> Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiarum*, II, unpaginated.

<sup>98</sup> Petrarca, *Trionfi*, *Rime estravaganti*, *Codice degli abbozzi*, pp. 719–22 (p. 719); Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, p. 887.



conventional language of this type constitutes a peculiarity of Petrarch's uncollected poems as compared to the norms which govern the collection.

\*\*\*

To summarise, the use of images associated with bird-trapping in the *Canzoniere* differs from that in the *estravagante*. On the one hand, in *Rvf* 270 and 271 Petrarch refreshes the language of bird-trapping by omitting conventional tropes and adopting an elaborate *transumptio*. Similarly, the poet avoids any direct link with the biblical model, but reworks and adapts his sources according to the wider narrative of the macrotext. This approach reflects the prevailing features of the use of animal imagery in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. On the other hand, the language of the *estravagante* is in line with its nature as an uncollected and occasional poem. The inclusion of a verse written in proverbial style anchors the poem in the popular and folkloric tradition, making its register incompatible with the curated style of the *Canzoniere*. In addition, as the poem is addressed to a specific reader, Petrarch had to employ a common language and needed to achieve his argument within the measure of a sonnet. The proverb fulfils both these purposes. The same conventional tone also appears in the example of the basilisk.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I have observed that Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia tend to avoid animal images in their ordinary lyrics, while making greater use of zoological references in their poems of correspondence. By contrast, Petrarch does not reject animal references, either in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* or in the poetic exchange in the *estravaganti*. In their poems of correspondence, Cavalcanti, Cino, and Petrarch display a similarly conventional and less sophisticated use of animal images. The differences between the former two and the latter emerge in non-occasional lyrics. Besides the choices determined by poetics, one of the reasons for the differences between Petrarch's *Fragmenta* and the ordinary lyrics of his two predecessors lies in the collection itself. To our knowledge, Cavalcanti and Cino never organised their lyrics into an authorial songbook; what we read of

Petrarch's work, however, is the result of careful selection and macrotextual compilation. This allowed the poet to retrieve and re-semanticise the repertoire of animal imagery, such as that of bird-trapping, but also that of bestiaries, within the architecture of his collection. In other words, it is the nature of the *Canzoniere* itself that permits a sophisticated and refreshed reworking of images which might otherwise have sounded like part of an outdated and overused figurative repertoire.

## Conclusion

With the last stanza of *canzone* 70, which ends by quoting Petrarch's own poem, 'Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade' (*Rvf* 23), we approach the conclusion of this study. Animal imagery provides a valuable resource for the reappraisal of Petrarch's poetics and its interplay with the previous vernacular tradition. The present investigation has sought to elucidate how Petrarch's poetry differentiates itself from that of his precursors.

In the Middle Ages, people lived in daily contact with domestic and wild animals. Forests loomed over settlements and towns teemed with all kinds of creatures. In addition, medieval discussion about human selfhood reveals the problematic boundaries between mankind and animals. Petrarch's library, which was one of the wealthiest private book collections of his time, contains numerous sources that address the earthly overlap between the notion of human and animal, and its relationship with instincts and passions. At the same time, we have seen that the separation of mankind from animality, and thus of reason from appetites, constitutes an exceptional condition, in which the greatest expression of human excellence emerges. This ambivalent view offers a possible theoretical justification for the contrasting meanings which are often associated with the same animal, and helps to explain why, for example, the deer in Petrarch's work serves to illustrate both the lover's lust in *Rvf* 23 and the beloved's beatifying effects in *Rvf* 190.

Petrarch in fact makes significant use of animal images in his vernacular lyrics to illustrate the lyric ego's love for Laura. In the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, for example, there are important animal figures that are also found in the tradition of the troubadours. Some of these images, such as the moth (*Rvf* 19 and 141), salamander (*Rvf* 207) and phoenix (*Rvf* 135, 185 and 321), have their roots in bestiary lore, and thus evoke didactic and popular contexts. Others, instead, such as that of the chasing ox (*Rvf* 212 and 239), reveal an explicit and direct connection between Petrarch and Arnaut Daniel. In both cases, the poet reworks images already in use through a process of reinvention likened to the manner in which bees produce honey, the *mellificatio*. In retrieving and recrafting traditional images, Petrarch adopts the medieval figurative system of allegory in

*verbis*. However, refreshed and recast in the narrative of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, each animal image conveys further covert meanings: their multiple layers of significance are not the result of a completely arbitrary invention on Petrarch's part, but derive their strength from a framework of shared knowledge.

Although Petrarch reuses and reworks traditional images and allegorical meanings that are part of common knowledge, the language of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* is not conventional, in contrast to the register of the poetic exchanges in the *estravaganti*. While in the *Canzoniere* each image engages with a macrotextual fabric of recalls and echoes internal to the collection, the correspondences in the *estravaganti* enter into dialogue with the texts of other poets, and thus with their language. In his songbook, Petrarch reworked animal images according to the norms and narrative of his new editorial project. In his uncollected lyrics, instead, the poet had to adopt a shared code of communication to bring his writing into line with his recipients' expectations.

This study has not provided a comprehensive and exhaustive investigation of animal imagery, but has rather sought to examine Petrarch's poetics in terms of a negotiation between his own originality and his debt to the past. What emerges is that animal imagery had a fluctuating reputation in medieval Italian poetry. A number of animal images of bestiary derivation in troubadour poetry are also found in the lyrics of the Sicilian School and in thirteenth-century poets such as Guido Guinizzelli, Guittone d'Arezzo and Chiaro Davanzati. The Dante of the *petrose*, we have seen, also uses vivid animal images such as that of the bear (*Rime*, 43). The poetic language of Guido Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia, instead, detaches from earlier traditions and rejects all images that might sound outdated and overused, including animal references. After the precedents of the troubadours and the earlier poets in the Italian *Duecento*, the stilnovistic poetry of Guido and Cino opts for the language of interiority. Five decades after Cavalcanti's death, and twenty years after Cino's, Petrarch shows that he does not undervalue animal images within his *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. He belonged to a generation which was distant enough from Occitan, Sicilian and other thirteenth-century predecessors that he does not seem to feel the need to reject and challenge their poetic choices in order to mark the originality of his own contribution. At the same

time, while recovering traditional animal images, Petrarch refreshed, reinvented and re-semanticised them within the diegesis of his songbook.

Investigating Petrarch's poetics *sub specie animalium*, through the tools of animal imagery, may have seemed counterintuitive. Petrarch's reputation as an aristocratic poet could lead to the assumption that his poetry is too stylised and select to contain revealing animal images. Instead, however, not only has this study confirmed the central role of zoological images in medieval literature, but it has also shed light on their importance in illuminating Petrarch's engagement with his literary context.

The conversation that Petrarch seeks to establish with previous vernacular poetry raises important questions, which require further investigation. For instance, what is the function of the Occitan reminiscences in the construction and early reception of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*? What is the interplay of these echoes and the audience's expectations? Existing scholarship has identified troubadour allusions in Petrarch's poetry, but has not explored the motivations for their use.<sup>1</sup> A possible answer to these research questions, I would suggest, is that in his collection Petrarch elaborates on troubadour genres, images and forms in order to meet the expectations of his courtly audience, especially in the courts of northern Italy. Indeed, not only was the Po Valley an area particularly receptive to Occitan culture and familiar to Petrarch, but it was here that the poet found his early audience, whose members were to some extent attempting to set themselves up as heirs of the past feudal world and its culture.<sup>2</sup>

A full investigation of these issues would require three phases of enquiry. First, the interactions between the cultural environment of the courts with which Petrarch enters into contact and the circulation of troubadour *chansonniers* would need to be mapped. Second, it would be necessary to address the ways in which

---

<sup>1</sup> I refer to the body of literature about troubadour references in Petrarch's poetry which I mention in Chapter 2.

<sup>2</sup> This area of enquiry also engages with historical studies of court environments, such as those in the volume *Courts and Courtly Cultures in Early Modern Italy and Europe: Models and Languages*, ed. by Simone Albonico and Serena Romano (Rome: Viella, 2016). Marisa Galvez's monograph *Songbook: How Lyrics became Poetry in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), in turn, serves as a basis for exploring the relationship between the compilation of Petrarch's own songbook and the circulation of troubadour *chansonniers* in northern Italy. In addition, Sylvia Huot, *The Romance of the Rose and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) offers helpful methodological models for investigating the reception of medieval texts through manuscript evidence.

Petrarch's audience engages with courtly culture and with the legacy of the troubadours. Subsequently, one would need to investigate the media through which his poetry was transmitted to his audience and how the process of transmission relates to courtly culture. A valuable line of research in this regard would be the exploration of the earliest production and circulation of Petrarchan anthologies — for example the 'raccolta veneta' — and the manuscripts of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, as well as the function of court musicians, such as Confortino, asking for poems to be performed.<sup>3</sup>

While this study has examined *how* Petrarch converses with the vernacular lyric past, an important question remains *why* he negotiates his poetic choices, in terms of literary communication, with the cultural substratum available to his audience. The *mellificatio* of traditional allegories in the narrative of the collection, for example, seems to respond to Petrarch's need to get in tune with his audience. It will thus be crucial to explore how the tastes of those who were familiar with troubadour *chansonniers* may have influenced the making of Petrarch's own *Canzoniere*.

---

<sup>3</sup> On the 'raccolta veneta', see Chapter 4 (note 49). On Confortino, see Chapter 4 (note 58).

## *Bibliography*

### **Primary Sources**

- Andreas Capellanus, *On Love*, ed. and trans. by Patrick G. Walsh (London: Duckworth, 1982)
- Antonelli, Roberto, Costanzo Di Girolamo and Rosario Coluccia, eds, *I poeti della Scuola siciliana*, 3 vols (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2008)
- Appel, Carl, ed., *Zur Entwicklung Italienischer Dichtungen Petrarca's: Abdruck des Cod. Vat. Lat. 3196 und Mitteilungen aus den Handschriften Casanat. A III 31 und Laurenz. Plut. XLI N. 14* (Halle an der Saale: Niemeyer, 1891)
- Arnaut Daniel, *Canzoni*, ed. by Maurizio Perugi, new edn (Florence: SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2015)
- Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. by Robertus Weber and others, 2 vols (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1969)
- Boethius, *The Theological Tractates, the Consolation of Philosophy*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by Hugh F. Stewart, Edward K. Rand and Stanley J. Tester, new edn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1973)
- Bonagiunta Orbicciani da Lucca, *Rime*, ed. by Aldo Menichetti (Florence: SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2012)
- Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, ed. by Pietro G. Beltrami and others (Turin: Einaudi, 2007)
- Cavalcanti, Guido, *Rime*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Giorgio Inglese (Rome: Carocci, 2011)
- Chiaro Davanzati, *Canzoni e sonetti*, ed. by Aldo Menichetti (Turin: Einaudi, 2004)
- Cicero, *De Natura Deorum, Academica*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by Harris Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1933; repr. 1967)
- , *De Officiis*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by Walter Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1913; repr. 1968)
- , *De Senectute, De Amicitia, De Divinatione*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by William A. Falconer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1923; repr. 1971)

- Contini, Gianfranco, ed., *Poeti del Duecento*, 2 vols (Milan: Ricciardi, 1960)
- Dante Alighieri, *Commedia*, ed. by Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi, 3 vols (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1991–1997)
- , *Opere*, ed. by Marco Santagata and others, 3 vols (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2011–)
- Donatus, *In Artem Maiorem*, ed. by Ludovicus Holz (Turnhout: Brepols, 1977)
- Federico II di Svevia, *De arte venandi cum avibus: edizione e traduzione italiana del ms. lat. 717 della Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna collazionato con il ms. Pal. lat. 1071 della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, ed. and trans. by Anna Laura Trombetti Budriesi (Bari: Laterza, 2009)
- Folquet de Marselha, *Le poesie di Folchetto di Marsiglia*, ed. by Paolo Squillaciotti (Pisa: Pacini, 1999)
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, *Maxims and Reflections*, ed. by Peter Hutchinson, trans. by Elisabeth Stopp (London: Penguin, 1998)
- Guglielmo IX, *Poesie*, ed. by Nicolò Pasero (Modena: STEM, 1973)
- Guilielmus Alvernus, *Opera Omnia*, 2 vols (Paris: Pralard, 1674)
- Guinizzelli, Guido, *Rime*, ed. by Luciano Rossi (Turin: Einaudi, 2002)
- Guittone d'Arezzo, *Le rime di Guittone d'Arezzo*, ed. by Francesco Egidi (Bari: Laterza, 1940)
- Huillard-Bréholles, Jean-Louis Alphonse, ed., *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi*, 6 vols (Paris: Plan, 1852–1860)
- Iacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea: con le miniature dal codice Ambrosiano C 240 inf.*, ed. by Giovanni Paolo Maggioni and others, 2 vols (Florence: SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2007)
- Isidorus Hispalensis Episcopus, *Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. by Wallace M. Lindsay, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911)
- Klibansky, Raymond, and others, eds, *Plato Latinus*, 4 vols (London: Warburg Institute; Leiden: Brill, 1940–1962)
- Mercken, Paul F., ed., *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (†1253)*, 3 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1973; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1991)
- Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina* (Paris: Garnier, 1840–1845)
- Morini, Luigina, ed., *Bestiari medievali* (Turin: Einaudi, 1996)



- Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ed. by George P. Goold and others, trans. by Frank J. Miller, 3rd edn, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1977; repr. 1984)
- Peire Raimon de Tolosa, *Le poesie di Peire Raimon de Tolosa (introduzione, testi, traduzioni, note)*, ed. by Alfredo Cavaliere (Florence: Olschki, 1935)
- Peire Vidal, *Poesie*, ed. by D'Arco Silvio Avalle, 2 vols (Milan and Naples: Ricciardi, 1960)
- Petrarca, Francesco, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Marco Santagata, 2nd edn (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2005)
- , *Canzoniere*, ed. by Paola Vecchi Galli (Milan: BUR, 2012)
- , *Canzoniere: Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, ed. by Rosanna Bettarini, 2 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 2005)
- , *De viris illustribus*, ed. by Silvano Ferrone and others, 3 vols (Florence: Le Lettere, 2003)
- , *Le Familiari*, ed. by Vittorio Rossi and Umberto Bosco, 4 vols (Florence: Sansoni, 1933–1942)
- , *Invectives*, ed. and trans. by David Marsh (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003)
- , *Liber sine nomine*, ed. by Giovanni Cascio (Florence: Le Lettere, 2015)
- , *Opere italiane: ms. Casanatense 924*, ed. by Emilio Pasquini and Paola Vecchi Galli (Modena: Panini, 2006)
- , *Le postille del Virgilio ambrosiano*, ed. by Marco Baglio, Antonietta Nebuloni Testa and Marco Petoletti, 2 vols (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 2006)
- , *Rerum senilium*, ed. by Elvira Nota and Ugo Dotti, trans. by Frédérique Castelli, François Fabre and Antoine de Rosny, 5 vols (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2002)
- , *Rime Disperse*, ed. and trans. by Joseph A. Barber (New York and London: Garland, 1991)
- , *Rime disperse di Francesco Petrarca o a lui attribuite: per la prima volta raccolte*, ed. by Angelo Solerti (Florence: Sansoni, 1909; repr., with an introduction by Vittore Branca and an afterword by Paola Vecchi Galli, Florence: Le Lettere, 1997)
- , *Secretum*, ed. by Enrico Fenzi, 10th edn (Milan: Mursia, 2015)
- , *Trionfi, Rime estravaganti, Codice degli abbozzi*, ed. by Vinicio Pacca and Laura Paolino, introduction by Marco Santagata (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1996)

- , *I 'Trionfi' secondo il codice parmense 1636 collazionato su autografi perduti*, ed. by Flaminio Pellegrini (Cremona: Battistelli, 1897)
- Petrus Berchorius, *Reductorium Morale, Liber XV: Ovidius Moralizatus, Cap. I: De Formis Figurisque Deorum*, ed. by Joseph Engels (Utrecht: Instituut voor Laat Latijn der Rijksuniversiteit, 1966)
- Pirovano, Donato, ed., *Poeti del Dolce stil novo* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2012)
- Pliny, *Natural History*, ed. by Eric H. Warmington and others, trans. by Harris Rackham, rev. edn, 10 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1949; repr. 1967)
- Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, ed. and trans. by Donald A. Russell, 5 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001)
- Raimbaut d'Aurenga, *The Life and Works of the Troubadour Raimbaut d'Orange*, ed. by Walter T. Pattison (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1952)
- Rigaut de Berbezilh, *Liriche*, ed. by Alberto Vàrvaro (Bari: Adriatica Editrice, 1960)
- Servio, *Commentario al libro VII dell' 'Eneide' di Virgilio: con le aggiunte del cosiddetto Servio Danielino*, ed. by Giuseppe Ramires (Bologna: Pàtron Editore, 2003)
- Thietmarus Merseburgensis Episcopus, *Chronicon*, ed. by Robert Holtzmann, Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum: Nova Series, 9 (Berlin: Weidmannsche, 1935)
- Thomas Aquinas, *Commento alle Sentenze di Pietro Lombardo*, ed. by Roberto Coggi, 10 vols (Bologna: Studio domenicano, 1999)
- , *Summa theologiae*, ed. by Pietro Caramello, 4 vols (Turin: Marietti, 1963)
- Virgil, *Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid, Appendix Vergiliana*, ed. by Jeffrey Henderson and others, trans. by Henry R. Fairclough, rev. edn, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999–2000)

## Secondary Sources

- Agamben, Giorgio, *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*, trans. by Ronald L. Martinez (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993)
- Albonico, Simone, and Serena Romano, eds, *Courts and Courtly Cultures in Early Modern Italy and Europe: Models and Languages* (Rome: Viella, 2016)

- Alessio, Gian Carlo, 'L'allegoria nei trattati di grammatica e retorica', in Michelangelo Picone, ed., *Dante e le forme dell'allegoresi* (Ravenna: Longo, 1987), pp. 21–41
- Allegretti, Paola, 'Appunti sul canzoniere provenzale T: la prospettiva dantesca (tra Giacomo da Lentini e Petrarca)', *La parola del testo*, 18 (2014), 13–31
- Armour, Peter, *The Door of Purgatory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983)
- Asperti, Stefano, and Carlo Pulsoni, 'Jean de Nostredame e la canzone "Razo e dreyt ay si·m chant e·m demori"', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 7 (1989), 165–72
- Auerbach, Erich, "'Figura'", in his *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, ed. and trans. by Ralph Manheim, new edn (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 11–71 (first publ. in *Archivium Romanicum*, 22 (1938), 436–89)
- Avalle, D'Arco Silvio, *La letteratura medievale in lingua d'oc nella sua tradizione manoscritta: problemi di critica testuale* (Turin: Einaudi, 1961)
- Bakhouché, Béatrice, 'Introduction générale', in Calcidius, *Commentaire au 'Timée' de Platon*, ed. by Béatrice Bakhouché, 2 vols (Paris: Vrin, 2011), I, pp. 7–128
- Baraldi, Francesca, 'Il simbolismo dell'aquila nella *Commedia* dantesca', *I castelli di Yale: quaderni di filosofia*, 9 (2007–2008), 85–101
- Barański, Zygmunt G., *Dante e i segni: saggi per una storia intellettuale di Dante Alighieri* (Naples: Liguori, 2000)
- Barber, Joseph A., 'Introduction', in Francesco Petrararch, *Rime Disperse*, ed. and trans. by Joseph A. Barber (New York and London: Garland, 1991), pp. XIII–XLIX
- Barberi Squarotti, Giovanni, *Selvaggia diletta: la caccia nella letteratura italiana dalle origini a Marino* (Venice: Marsilio, 2000)
- Barbieri, Andrea, 'La mano di Castelvetro sul Petrarca Casanatense', *Studi e problemi di critica testuale*, 83 (2011), 63–76
- Barillari, Sonia M., 'L'animalità come segno del demoniaco nell'*Inferno* dantesco', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 174 (1997), 98–119
- Barkan, Leonard, *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986)
- Barolini, Teodolinda, 'The Making of a Lyric Sequence: Time and Narrative in Petrarch's *Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*', *Modern Language Notes*, 104.1 (1989), 1–38

- Basile, Bruno, and Ezio Raimondi, 'Commedia', in Umberto Bosco and others, eds, *Enciclopedia dantesca*, 6 vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1976), II, pp. 79–118
- Bates, Catherine, *Masculinity and the Hunt: Wyatt to Spencer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- Battaglia Ricci, Lucia, *Dante e la tradizione letteraria medievale: una proposta per la 'Commedia'* (Pisa: Giardini, 1983)
- Baxter, Ron, 'Learning from Nature: Lessons in Virtues and Vices in the *Physiologus* and Bestiaries', in Colum Hourihane, ed., *Virtues and Vices: The Personifications in the Index of Christian Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 29–41
- Beagon, Mary, *The Elder Pliny on the Human Animal: 'Natural History', Book 7* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005)
- , *Roman Nature: The Thought of Pliny the Elder* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992)
- Beck, Corinne, 'Approches du traitement de l'animal chez les encyclopédistes du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: l'exemple de l'ours', in Michelangelo Picone, ed., *L'enciclopedia medievale* (Ravenna: Longo, 1994), pp. 163–78
- Beltrami, Pietro G., 'Appunti su "Razo e dreyt ay si·m chant e·m demori"', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 5 (1987), 9–39
- , *La metrica italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991)
- Berra, Claudia, *La similitudine nei 'Rerum vulgarium fragmenta'* (Lucca: Fazzi, 1992)
- , and Paola Vecchi Galli, eds, *Estravaganti, disperse, apocrifi petrarcheschi: Gargnano del Garda (25–27 settembre 2006)* (Milan: Cisalpino, 2007)
- Bertolani, Maria Cecilia, *Petrarca e la visione dell'eterno* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005)
- , 'La visione beatifica: una disputa avignonese (*Fam.* II. 12)', in Claudia Berra and Paola Vecchi Galli, eds, *Motivi e forme delle Familiari di Francesco Petrarca: Gargnano del Garda, 2–5 ottobre 2002* (Milan: Cisalpino, 2003), pp. 611–37
- Bertoni, Giulio, *I Trovatori d'Italia (biografie, testi, traduzioni, note): con 14 illustrazioni e 2 tavole fuori testo* (Modena: Orlandini, 1915)
- Bettarini, Rosanna, 'Voltando pagina (Petrarca, *Rvf* CCLXX–CCLXXI)', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 5 (1987), 225–45
- Bettini, Maurizio, and Cristiana Franco, *Il mito di Circe: immagini e racconti dalla Grecia a oggi* (Turin: Einaudi, 2010)

- Billanovich, Giuseppe, 'Petrarca e Cicerone', in his *Petrarca e il primo umanesimo* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1996), pp. 97–116 (first publ. in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, ed. by Anselmo Maria Albareda, 6 vols (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1946), IV: *Letteratura classica e umanistica*, pp. 88–106)
- , 'Il Virgilio del giovane Petrarca', in Jean-Yves Tilliette and others, eds, *Lectures médiévales de Virgile: actes du colloque organisé par l'École française de Rome (Rome, 25–28 octobre 1982)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1985), pp. 49–64
- Blasio, Maria Grazia, 'Il dibattito religioso tra Due e Trecento', in Donatella Coppini and Michele Feo, eds, *Petrarca, l'umanesimo e la civiltà europea: atti del convegno internazionale, Firenze, 5–10 dicembre 2004*, 2 vols (= *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 15–18 (2005–2008)), I, pp. 231–59
- Boccassini, Daniela, *Il volo della mente: falconeria e sofia nel mondo mediterraneo: Islam, Federico II, Dante* (Ravenna: Longo, 2003)
- Borsa, Paolo, 'L'immagine nel cuore e l'immagine nella mente: dal Notaro alla *Vita nuova* attraverso i due Guidi', in Marina Gagliano, Philippe Guérin and Raffaella Zanni, eds, *Les deux Guidi: Guinizzelli et Cavalcanti: mourir d'aimer et autres ruptures* (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2016), pp. 75–92
- Bostock, David, *Aristotle's Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)
- Brea, Mercedes, 'Les animaux dans les poésies amoureuses des troubadours occitans', *Revue des langues romanes*, 98.2 (1994), 403–43
- Briguglia, Gianluca, *L'animale politico* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2015)
- Brumble, David, *Classical Myths and Legends in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: A Dictionary of Allegorical Meanings* (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998)
- Brunel, Clovis, *Bibliographie des manuscrits littéraires en ancien provençal* (Paris: Droz, 1935)
- Brunetti, Giuseppina, 'Sul canzoniere provenzale T (Parigi, Bibl. Nat. F. fr. 15211)', *Cultura neolatina*, 50 (1990), 45–73
- Burgwinkle, William, 'The *chansonnières* as books', in Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay, eds, *The Troubadours: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 246–62
- Cachey, Theodore J., Jr, 'Between Petrarch and Dante: Prolegomenon to a Critical Discourse', in Zygmunt G. Barański and Theodore J. Cachey, Jr, eds, *Petrarch and Dante: Anti-Dantism, Metaphysics, Tradition* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), pp. 3–49

- Caldarini, Ernesta, 'Da Lancillotto al Petrarca', *Lettere italiane*, 27 (1975), 373–80
- Cannegieter, Alex, 'From Babylon to Eternity: Appropriation of the Babylon-Motif in Christian Homiletical Constructions', in Bob Becking and others, eds, *From Babylon to Eternity: The Exile Remembered and Constructed in Text and Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 72–102
- Cardini, Franco, 'Francesco d'Assisi e gli animali', *Studi francescani*, 78 (1981), 7–45
- Carrai, Stefano, 'I primi testi autografi del Vaticano 3195 (Rvf 190–200)', in Michelangelo Picone, ed., *Il 'Canzoniere': lettura micro e macrotestuale* (Ravenna: Longo, 2007), pp. 433–48
- , 'Il sonetto "Una candida cerva" del Petrarca', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 3 (1985), 233–51
- Carrega, Annamaria, 'Immagini intessute di scrittura: aquile dantesche', *L'immagine riflessa*, n.s., 7.2 (1998), 285–301
- Casella, Mario, 'Dai trovatori al Petrarca', *Annali della cattedra petrarchesca*, 6 (1935–1936), 153–74
- Cavallo, Jo Ann, 'Croce e delizia: la donna "sotto" la penna di Petrarca', in Silvano Vicenti, ed., *L'attualità del Petrarca* (Rome: Rai-Eri; Armando, 2004), pp. 49–67
- Cavedon, Annarosa, 'Due nuovi codici della tradizione "veneta" delle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 157 (1980), 252–81
- , 'Intorno alle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca', *Revue des études italiennes*, 29 (1983), 86–108
- , 'Note su alcune "disperse"', in Antonio Daniele, ed., *Le lingue del Petrarca* (Udine: Forum, 2005), pp. 81–108
- , 'La tradizione "veneta" delle "rime estravaganti" del Petrarca', *Studi petrarcheschi*, 8 (1976), 1–73
- Cerchi, Paolo, 'I doni dell'amata: il guanto di Giraut de Borneil e di Petrarca', in Hinrich Hudde, Udo Schöning and Friedrich Wolfzettel, eds, *Literature, Geschichte und Verstehen: Festschrift für Ulrich Mölk zum 60. Geburtstag* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1997), pp. 143–53
- Charity, Alan C., *Events and their Afterlife: The Dialectics of Christian Typology in the Bible and Dante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966)
- Chines, Loredana, *'Di selva in selva ratto mi trasformo': identità e metamorfosi della parola petrarchesca* (Rome: Carocci, 2010)

- Chydenius, Johan, 'La théorie du symbolisme médiéval', *Poétique: revue de théorie et d'analyse littéraires*, 23 (1975), 322–41
- , *The Typological Problem in Dante: A Study in the History of Medieval Ideas* (Helsingfors: Societas Scientifica Fennica, 1958)
- Cicada, Sergio, 'La leggenda medievale del Cervo bianco e le origini della "matière de Bretagne"', *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei: Memorie: Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filosofiche*, 8th ser., 12 (1965–1966), 3–120
- Ciccarese, Maria Pia, *Animali simbolici: alle origini del bestiario cristiano*, 2 vols (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 2002)
- Cipollone, Annalisa, 'Ovidio nel Petrarca volgare', *Per leggere: i generi della lettura*, 16 (2009), 157–74
- Clark, Willene B., *A Medieval Book of Beasts: The Second-Family Bestiary: Commentary, Art, Text and Translation* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006)
- Cocco, Mia, 'Il sonetto CXC del Petrarca o la poetica dello specchio', in Dennis J. Dutschke and others, eds, *Forma e parola: studi in memoria di Fredi Chiappelli* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1992), pp. 81–108
- Connolly, Ruth, 'Print, Miscellaneity and the Reader in Robert Herrick's *Hesperides*', in Graham Allen, Carrie Griffin and Mary O'Connell, eds, *Readings on Audience and Textual Materiality* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), pp. 23–36
- Contini, Gianfranco, 'Préhistoire de l'aura de Pétrarque', in his *Varianti e altra linguistica: una raccolta di saggi (1938–1968)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1970), pp. 193–99 (first publ. in *Actes et mémoires du premier congrès international de langue et littérature du Midi de la France* (Avignon: Palais du Roure, 1957), pp. 113–18)
- , 'Preliminari sulla lingua del Petrarca', in his *Varianti e altra linguistica: una raccolta di saggi (1938–1968)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1970), pp. 169–92 (first publ. in *Paragone*, 2 (1951), 3–26)
- , 'Saggio d'un commento alle correzioni del Petrarca volgare', in his *Varianti e altra linguistica: una raccolta di saggi (1938–1968)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1970), pp. 5–31 (first publ. Florence: Sansoni, 1943)
- Coolahan, Marie-Louise, "'We Live by Chance, and Slip into Events": Occasionality and the Manuscript Verse of Katherine Philips', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Iris an dá chultúr*, 18 (2003), 9–23
- Corti, Maria, 'Il modello analogico nel pensiero medievale e dantesco', in Michelangelo Picone, ed., *Dante e le forme dell'allegoresi* (Ravenna: Longo, 1987), pp. 11–20

- Crane, Susan, *Animal Encounters: Contacts and Concepts in Medieval Britain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013)
- Curti, Elisa, 'Un esempio di bestiario dantesco: la cicogna o dell'amor materno', *Studi danteschi*, 67 (2002), 129–60
- Curtius, Ernst R., *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by Willars R. Trask, 7th edn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990)
- Dalarun, Jacques, 'Regards de Clercs', in Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, eds, *Histoire des femmes en Occident*, 5 vols (Paris: Plon, 1992), II: *Le Moyen Âge*, ed. by Christiane Klapish-Zuber, pp. 31–54
- Daniélou, Jean, *Les figures du Christ dans l'Ancien Testament* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1950)
- De Robertis, Domenico, 'Cino e i poeti bolognesi', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 128 (1951), 273–312
- , 'Contiguità e selezione nella costruzione del *Canzoniere* petrarchesco', in his *Memoriale petrarchesco* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1997), pp. 65–86 (first publ. in *Studi di filologia italiana*, 43 (1985), 45–66)
- Del Ninno, Maurizio, 'Proverbi', in Ruggiero Romano and others, eds, *Enciclopedia Einaudi*, 16 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 1977–1984), XI, pp. 385–400
- Delcorno, Carlo, '*Quasi quidam cantus*': *studi sulla predicazione medievale*, ed. by Giovanni Baffetti and others (Florence: Olschki, 2009)
- Diekstra, Frans N. M., 'The *Physiologus*: The Bestiaries and Medieval Animal Lore', *Neophilologus*, 69 (1985), 142–55
- Dines, Ilya, 'Latin Bestiaries', in Siân Echard and others, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain*, 4 vols (Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell, 2017), II, pp. 278–81
- Dittmar, Pierre-Olivier, 'Le seigneur des animaux entre "pecus" et "bestia": les animalités paradisiaques des années 1300', in Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, ed., *Adam, le premier homme* (Florence: SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2012), pp. 219–54
- Doglio, Maria Luisa, 'Il sonetto CXC', in Gianfranco Folena, Alberto Limentani and Paolo Sambin, eds, *Lectura Petrarce*, 18 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1982–1999), V (1985), pp. 249–70
- Dörrie, Heinrich, 'Le renouveau du platonisme à l'époque de Cicéron', *Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, 24 (1974), 13–29
- Dunkle, Roger, 'The Hunter and Hunting in the *Aeneid*', *Ramus*, 2.2 (1973), 127–42



- Durling, Robert M., 'Petrarch's "Giovene donna sotto un verde lauro"', *Modern Language Notes*, 86.1 (1971), 1–20
- Dutschke, Dennis, *Francesco Petrarca: Canzone XXIII from First to Final Version* (Ravenna: Longo, 1977)
- Eco, Umberto, 'L'Epistola XIII, l'allegorismo medievale, il simbolismo moderno', in his *Sugli specchi e altri saggi* (Milan: Bompiani, 1985), pp. 215–41 (first publ. in *Carte semiotiche*, 0 (1984), 13–31)
- , 'Sul latrato del cane (e altre archeologie zoosemiotiche)', in his *Dall'albero al labirinto: studi storici sul segno e l'interpretazione* (Milan: Bompiani, 2007), pp. 159–202
- Eliade, Mircea, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, trans. by Philip Mairet (London: Harvill, 1961)
- , *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. by Rosemary Sheed (London: Sheed and Ward, 1958)
- , *Zalmoxis: The Vanishing God*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970)
- Fabbi, Maria Cristina, 'Le "disperse" del manoscritto Casanatense 924', *Studi petrarcheschi*, 5 (1987), 313–23
- Falkeid, Unn, *The Avignon Papacy Contested: An Intellectual History from Dante to Catherine of Siena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017)
- , 'Petrarch's Laura and the Critics', *Modern Language Notes*, 127.1 (2012), 64–71
- Falzone, Paolo, 'Dante e la nozione aristotelica di bestialità', in Giuseppe Crimi and Luca Marcozzi, eds, *Dante e il mondo animale* (Rome: Carocci, 2013), pp. 62–78
- Faucon, Maurice, *La librairie des papes d'Avignon: sa formation, sa composition, ses catalogues (1316–1420), d'après les registres de comptes et d'inventaires des archives vaticanes*, 2 vols (Paris: Thorin, 1885–1887)
- Fenzi, Enrico, 'Per una "dispersa" attribuibile a Petrarca: la frottola "Di ridere ò gran voglia"', *Filologia e critica*, 23 (1998), 169–205
- Feo, Michele, 'La biblioteca', in Michele Feo, ed., *Petrarca nel tempo: tradizioni, lettori e immagini delle opere: catalogo della mostra, Arezzo, Sottoc chiesa di San Francesco, 22 novembre 2003–27 gennaio 2004* (Pontedera: Bandecchi & Vivaldi, 2003), pp. 457–96
- , '"In vetustissimis cedulis": il testo del postscriptum della *Senile* XIII. 11 γ e la "forma Malatesta" dei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*', in Loredana Chines and Paola Vecchi Galli, eds, *Verso il Centenario: atti del*

- seminario di Bologna, 24–25 settembre 2001* (= *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 11 (2001)), pp. 119–48
- , ‘Petrarca e Cicerone’, in Emanuele Narducci, ed., *Cicerone nella tradizione europea: dalla tarda antichità al Settecento: atti del VI Symposium Ciceronianum Arpinas, Arpino 6 maggio 2005* (Florence: Le Monnier, 2006), pp. 17–50
- Ferrone, Silvano, ‘Introduzione’, in Francesco Petrarca, *De viris illustribus*, ed. by Silvano Ferrone and others, 3 vols (Florence: Le Lettere, 2003), I, pp. VII–XIV
- Finazzi, Silvia, *Fusca claritas: la metafora nei ‘Rerum vulgarium fragmenta’ di Francesco Petrarca* (Rome: Aracne, 2012)
- Fletcher, Angus, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1964)
- Fögen, Thorsten, ‘Animal Communication’, in Gordon Lindsay Campbell, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 216–32
- Folena, Gianfranco, *Culture e lingue nel Veneto medievale* (Padua: Programma Editore, 1990)
- Fontana, Alessio, ‘La Filologia Romanza e il Problema del Rapporto Petrarca–Trovatori (premesse per una ripresa del problema secondo nuove prospettive)’, in Fritz Schalk, ed., *Petrarca 1304–1374: Beiträge zu Werk und Wirkung* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1975), pp. 51–70
- Formisano, Luciano, ‘Cavalcanti e la pastorella’, *Critica del testo*, 4.1 (2001), 245–62
- Foster, Kenelm, ‘Beatrice or Medusa’, in Charles P. Brand, Kenelm Foster and Umberto Limentani, eds, *Italian Studies Presented to E. R. Vincent on his Retirement from the Chair of Italian at Cambridge* (Cambridge: Heffer, 1962), pp. 41–56
- Frank, István, ‘La chanson “Lasso me” de Pétrarque et ses prédécesseurs’, *Annales du Midi*, 66 (1954), 259–68
- Frasso, Giuseppe, ‘Petrarca, Andrea da Mantova e il canzoniere provenzale N’, *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, 17 (1974), 185–205
- , *Studi sui ‘Rerum vulgarium fragmenta’ e i ‘Triumphs’: volume primo: Francesco Petrarca e Ludovico Beccadelli* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1983)
- Freccero, John, ‘The Fig Tree and the Laurel: Petrarch’s Poetics’, *Diacritics*, 5.1 (1975), 34–40

- Gagliardi, Antonio, *Cino da Pistoia: le poetiche dell'anima* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2004)
- , *Guido Cavalcanti: poesia e filosofia* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2001)
- Gáldi, Ladislav, 'Les origines provençales de la métrique des *canzoni* de Pétrarque', in Georges Straka, ed., *Actes du X<sup>e</sup> congrès international de linguistique et philologie romanes, Strasbourg 23–28 avril 1962*, 2 vols (Paris: Klincksieck, 1965), II, pp. 783–90
- Galloni, Paolo, 'L'ambiguità culturale della caccia nel medioevo', *Quaderni medievali*, 27 (1989), 14–37
- , 'Cacciare l'orso nelle foreste medievali', in Renzo Nelli, ed., *L'orso: il simbolo, la tradizione, la storia* (= *Storia e linguaggi: rivista di studi umanistici*, 3.2 (2017)), pp. 261–87
- , *Il cervo e il lupo: caccia e cultura nobiliare nel medioevo* (Bari: Laterza, 1993)
- Galvez, Marisa, *Songbook: How Lyrics became Poetry in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012)
- Gentile, Sebastiano, 'Le postille di Petrarca al *Timeo* latino', in Michele Feo and others, eds, *Il Petrarca latino e le origini dell'umanesimo: atti del convegno internazionale, Firenze, 19–22 maggio 1991*, 2 vols (= *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 9–10 (1992–1993)), I, pp. 129–39
- Giannantonio, Pompeo, *Dante e l'allegorismo* (Florence: Olschki, 1969)
- Giggio, Claudio, 'Forme dell'invettiva in Petrarca', in Gianfranco Folena, Alberto Limentani and Paolo Sambin, eds, *Lectura Petrarce*, 18 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1982–1999), XVII (1997), pp. 375–92
- Gilhus, Ingvild S., *Animals, Gods and Humans: Changing Attitudes to Animals in Greek, Roman and Early Christian Ideas* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006)
- Giunta, Claudio, 'Introduzione', in Dante Alighieri, *Opere*, ed. by Marco Santagata and others, 3 vols (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2011–), I: *Rime, Vita Nova, De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. by Claudio Giunta, Guglielmo Gorni and Mirko Tavoni, pp. 5–57
- , *Versi a un destinatario: saggio sulla poesia italiana del Medioevo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002)
- Gorman, Michael M., 'The Manuscript Tradition of Augustine's *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*', *Revue des études augustinienes*, 47 (2001), 303–11
- Gorni, Guglielmo, "'Gru" di Dante: lettura di *Purgatorio* XXVI', *Rassegna europea di letteratura italiana*, 2 (1994), 11–34

- Graf, Arturo, *Roma nella memoria e nelle immaginazioni del Medio Evo: con un'appendice sulla leggenda di Gog e Magog* (Turin: Chiantore, 1923)
- Grant, Robert M., *Early Christians and Animals* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999)
- Gregory, Tullio, 'Discorso di chiusura', in Raoul Manselli and others, eds, *L'uomo di fronte al mondo animale nell'alto medioevo: 7–13 aprile 1983*, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 31, 2 vols (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 1985), II, pp. 1445–85
- , 'Lo spazio come geografia del sacro nell'Occidente altomedievale', in his *'Speculum naturale': percorsi del pensiero medievale* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2007), pp. 197–221 (first publ. in *Uomo e spazio nell'alto medioevo: 4–8 aprile 2002*, ed. by Ovidio Capitani and others, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 50, 2 vols (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 2003), I, pp. 27–60)
- Grubitzsch-Rodewald, Helga, 'Petrarca und Arnaut Daniel: Petrarca's Imitationstechnik in der Kanzone "Verdi panni"', *Arcadia*, 7 (1972), 135–57
- Gualtieri, Teresa, 'Dante's Crane and the Pilgrimage of Poetic Inspiration', *Rivista di studi italiani*, 13 (1995), 1–13
- Guerreau, Alain, 'Les structures de base de la chasse médiévale', in Agostino Paravicini Bagliani and Baudouin van den Abeele, eds, *La chasse au Moyen Âge: société, traités, symboles* (SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2000), pp. 25–32
- Heffernan, Thomas J., 'Mary Magdalene', in Robert E. Bjork, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, 4 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), III, pp. 1096–97
- Henderson, John, *The Medieval World of Isidore of Seville: Truth from Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- Holbrook, Richard T., *Dante and the Animal Kingdom* (New York: The Columbia University Press, 1902)
- Hollander, Robert, *Allegory in Dante's 'Commedia'* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969)
- Holmes, Olivia, *Assembling the Lyric Self: Authorship from Troubadour Song to Italian Poetry Book* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)
- , 'Petrarch and the Vernacular Lyric Past', in Albert Russell Ascoli and Unn Falkeid, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Petrarch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 154–66
- Horsfall, Nicholas, *Virgil, 'Aeneid' 7: A Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2000)

- Huot, Sylvia, *The Romance of the Rose and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)
- Imbriani, Vittorio, *Studi danteschi* (Florence: Sansoni, 1891)
- Jansen, Katherine L., *The Making of the Magdalene: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000)
- Judkins, Ryan R., 'The Game of Courtly Hunt: Chasing and Breaking Deer in Late Medieval English Literature', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 112.1 (2013), 70–92
- Kay, Sarah, *Parrots and Nightingales: Troubadour Quotations and the Development of European Poetry* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2013)
- Kennedy, William J., 'The Economy of Invective and a Man in the Middle (*De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*)', in Victoria Kirkham and Armando Maggi, eds, *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 263–73
- King, Peter, 'Augustine on Language', in David V. Meconi and Eleanore Stump, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 292–310
- Kirkham, Victoria, 'Petrarch the Courtier', in Victoria Kirkham and Armando Maggi, eds, *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 141–50
- Klemetilä, Hannele, *Animals and Hunters in the Late Middle Ages: Evidence from the BnF MS fr. 616 of the 'Livre de la Chasse' by Gaston Fébus* (New York: Routledge, 2015)
- Kristeller, Oskar, 'Petrarch's Averroists: A Note on the History of Aristotelianism in Venice, Padua and Bologna', in his *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters*, 4 vols (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1956–1996), II, pp. 209–16 (first publ. in *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 14 (1952), 59–65)
- Kuon, Peter, "'Sol una nocte" ed altre "delire imprese": Petrarca narratore in Rvf 21–30', in Michelangelo Picone, ed., *Il 'Canzoniere': lettura micro e macrotestuale* (Ravenna: Longo, 2007), pp. 73–95
- La Brasca, Frank, *La bibliothèque de Pétrarque* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011)
- Lausberg, Heinrich, *Handbuch der Literarischen Rhetorik: Eine Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft* (Munich: Hueber, 1960)

- Lazzerini, Lucia, 'L'“allodetta” e il suo archetipo: la rielaborazione di temi mistici nella lirica trobadorica e nello Stil novo', in Leonella Cogliervina and Domenico De Robertis, eds, *Sotto il segno di Dante: scritti in onore di Francesco Mazzoni* (Florence: Le Lettere, 1998), pp. 165–88
- Ledda, Giuseppe, 'Animali nel *Paradiso*', in Giuseppe Ledda, ed., *La poesia della natura nella 'Divina Commedia': atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Ravenna, 10 novembre 2007* (Ravenna: Centro dantesco dei Frati minori conventuali, 2009), pp. 93–135
- , “‘Uno bellissimo paone’: immagini animali tra Dante e Boccaccio”, in Gian Mario Anselmi and others, eds, *Boccaccio e i suoi lettori: una lunga ricezione* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2013), pp. 405–17
- , 'Un bestiario metaletterario nell'*Inferno* dantesco', *Studi danteschi*, 78 (2013), 119–53
- , 'A Bestiary of Desire', in Manuele Gragnolati and others, eds, *Desire in Dante and the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Legenda, 2012), pp. 58–70
- , 'La *Commedia* e il bestiario dell'aldilà: osservazioni sugli animali nel *Purgatorio*', in Alfredo Cottignoli and others, eds, *La fabbrica della 'Commedia': atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Ravenna, 14–16 settembre 2006* (Ravenna: Longo, 2008), pp. 139–59
- , 'Immagini di pellegrinaggio e di esilio nella *Commedia* di Dante', *Annali di Ferrara online*, 1 (2012), 295–308
- , 'Per lo studio del bestiario dantesco', *Bollettino dantesco per il settimo centenario*, 1 (2012), 87–102
- , 'Per un bestiario dantesco della cecità e della visione: vedere “non altrimenti che per pelle talpe” (*Purg.* XVII. 1–3)', in Gian Mario Anselmi and others, eds, *Da Dante a Montale: studi di filologia e critica letteraria in onore di Emilio Pasquini* (Bologna: Gedit, 2005), pp. 77–97
- , 'Per un bestiario di Malebolge', in Giuseppe Crimi and Luca Marozzi, eds, *Dante e il mondo animale* (Rome: Carocci, 2013), pp. 92–113
- Lennox, James G., 'Aristotle on the Biological Roots of Virtue: The Natural History of Natural Virtue', in Jane Maienschein and Michael Ruse, eds, *Biology and the Foundation of Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 10–31
- Leonardi, Lino, and others, eds, *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini* <<http://tlio.oiv.cnr.it>>
- Levering, Matthew, 'Aquinas on Romans 8: Predestination in Context', in Matthew Levering and Michael Dauphinais, eds, *Reading Romans with St Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012), pp. 196–215

- Lombardi, Elena, *The Wings of the Dove: Love and Desire in Dante and Medieval Culture* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen’s University Press, 2012)
- Lubac, Henri de, *Exégèse médiévale: les quatre sens de l’Écriture*, 3 vols (Paris: Aubier, 1959)
- Maldina, Nicolò, ‘Api e vespe nella *Commedia*: osservazioni sul bestiario dantesco’, *L’Alighieri*, 29 (2007), 121–42
- Marcozzi, Luca, *La biblioteca di Febo: mitologia e allegoria in Petrarca* (Florence: Cesati, 2002)
- Martinez, Ronald L., ‘The Book without a Name: Petrarch’s Open Secret (*Liber sine nomine*)’, in Victoria Kirkham and Armando Maggi, eds, *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 291–99
- , ‘Dante’s Bear: A Note on “Così nel mio parlar”’, *Dante Studies*, 111 (1993), 213–22
- , ‘Italy’, in Frank R. P. Akehurst and Judith M. Davis, eds, *A Handbook of the Troubadours* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 279–94
- Mazzotta, Giuseppe, *The Worlds of Petrarch* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993)
- McCulloch, Florence, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962)
- McLaughlin, Martin, ‘Petrarch and Cicero: Adulation and Critical Distance’, in William H. F. Altman, ed., *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Cicero* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 19–38
- Meneghetti, Maria Luisa, *Il pubblico dei trovatori: ricezione e riuso dei testi lirici cortesi fino al XIV secolo* (Modena: Mucchi, 1984)
- Mercken, Paul F., ‘Introduction’, in Paul F. Mercken, ed., *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (†1253)*, 3 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1973; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1991), I: *Eustratius on Book I and the Anonymous Scholia on Books II, III, and IV*, pp. 1–135
- Minio-Paluello, Lorenzo, ‘Il *Fedone* latino con note autografe del Petrarca (Parigi, Bibl. Naz., Cod. lat. 6567 A)’, *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei: Rendiconti: Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, 8th ser., 4.1–2 (1949), 107–13

- Montanari, Massimo, *L'alimentazione contadina nell'alto medioevo* (Naples: Liguori, 1979)
- Montinaro, Antonio, 'Il "bestiario d'amore" della Scuola poetica siciliana: anticipazioni da un glossario del lessico animale (con analisi delle fonti)', *Medioevo letterario d'Italia*, 10 (2013), 9–30
- Morini, Luigina, 'Introduzione', in Luigina Morini, ed., *Bestiari medievali* (Turin: Einaudi, 1996), pp. VII–XXII
- Morpurgo, Salomone, 'Rime inedite di Giovanni Quirini e Antonio da Tempo', *Archivio Storico per Trieste, l'Istria e il Trentino*, 1 (1881–1882), 152–53
- Mouchet, Valeria, *Gli animali tra racconto e novella: repertorio ipertestuale delle occorrenze zoonime nella narrativa volgare due-trecentesca* (Fregene: Spolia, 2008)
- Muratova, Xénia, 'Adam donne leurs noms aux animaux: l'iconographie de la scène dans l'art du Moyen Âge et ses traits particuliers dans les manuscrits des bestiaires enluminés du XII<sup>e</sup> et du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., 18.2 (1977), 367–94
- Nardi, Bruno, 'Letteratura e cultura veneziana del Quattrocento: la scuola di Rialto e l'umanesimo veneziano', in his *Saggi sulla cultura veneta del Quattro e del Cinquecento*, ed. by Paolo Mazzantini (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1971), pp. 3–98
- , 'Sull'interpretazione allegorica e sulla struttura della *Commedia* di Dante', in his *Saggi e note di critica dantesca* (Milan and Naples: Ricciardi, 1966), pp. 110–65
- Neri, Giovanna, 'Il bestiario contemplativo di Dante', *Intersezioni*, 10 (1990), 15–33
- Nolhac, Pierre de, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme*, rev. edn, 2 vols (Paris: Champion, 1907)
- Ogle, Marbury B., 'On a Passage in Vergil, *Aeneid*, IV. 550–551', *American Philological Association*, 56 (1925), 26–36
- Orlandi, Giovanni, 'La tradizione del *Physiologus* e i prodromi del bestiario latino', in Raoul Manselli and others, eds, *L'uomo di fronte al mondo animale nell'alto medioevo: 7–13 aprile 1983*, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 31, 2 vols (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 1985), II, pp. 1057–106
- Orlando, Sandro, 'Dall'ossequio nei confronti di Guittone all'"intenerimento stilnovista": i casi di Onesto da Bologna e di Guido Orlandi', in Michelangelo Picone, ed., *Guittone d'Arezzo nel settimo centenario della*



- morte: atti del convegno internazionale di Arezzo, 22–24 aprile 1994* (Florence: Cesati, 1995), pp. 295–306
- Orvieto, Paolo, and Lucia Brestolini, *La poesia comico-realistica: dalle origini al Cinquecento* (Rome: Carocci, 2000)
- Paden, William D., ‘Manuscripts’, in Frank R. P. Akehurst and Judith M. Davis, eds, *A Handbook of the Troubadours* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 307–33
- , ‘Petrarch as a Poet of Provence’, *Annali d’Italianistica*, 22 (2004), 19–44
- Pagani, Giacomo, *Petrarca e la poesia trobadorica* (Rovigo: Istituto padano di arti grafiche, 1946)
- Paolino, Laura, ‘In margine all’edizione delle “disperse”’, *Schifanoia*, 15–16 (1995), 47–51
- Pasquini, Emilio, *Le botteghe della poesia: studi sul Tre-Quattrocento italiano* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991)
- , ‘Il *Dolce stil novo*’, in Enrico Malato, ed., *Storia della letteratura italiana*, 14 vols (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1995), I: *Dalle origini a Dante*, pp. 649–721
- , ‘Il mito polemico di Avignone nei poeti italiani del Trecento’, in Ovidio Capitani and others, eds, *Aspetti culturali della società italiana nel periodo del papato avignonese: 15–18 ottobre 1978* (Todi: Accademia Tudertina, 1981), pp. 257–309
- Pastoureau, Michel, *The Bear: History of a Fallen King*, trans. by George Holoch (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011)
- Peirone, Luigi, ‘La prospettiva occitanica del Petrarca’, *Giornale italiano di filologia*, 20 (1967), 235–42
- Pépin, Jean, *La tradition de l’allégorie: de Philon d’Alexandrie a Dante* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1987)
- Pertile, Lino, ‘Il nodo di Bonagiunta, le penne di Dante e il *Dolce Stil Novo*’, *Lettere italiane*, 46.1 (1994), 44–75
- Perugi, Maurizio, ‘Petrarca provenzale’, *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 7 (1990), 109–81
- , *Trovatori a Valchiusa: un frammento della cultura provenzale del Petrarca* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1985)
- Peterson, Thomas E., *Petrarch’s ‘Fragmenta’: The Narrative and Theological Unity of ‘Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta’* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016)

- Petrucchi, Armando, *La scrittura di Francesco Petrarca* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1967)
- Phillips-Robins, Helena C., 'Liturgical Song in Dante's *Commedia*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2016)
- Picone, Michelangelo, 'Avignone come tema letterario: Dante e Petrarca', *L'Alighieri*, n.s., 43.2 (2002), 5–22
- , ed., *Dante e le forme dell'allegoresi* (Ravenna: Longo, 1987)
- , *'Vita nuova' e tradizione romanza* (Padua: Liviana, 1979)
- Pillet, Alfred, and Henry Carstens, *Bibliographie der Troubadours* (Halle an der Saale: Niemeyer, 1933)
- Pirovano, Donato, 'Introduzione', in Donato Pirovano, ed., *Poeti del Dolce stil novo* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2012), pp. VII–XXXVI
- Poe, Elizabeth W., 'The *Vidas* and *Razos*', in Frank R. P. Akehurst and Judith M. Davis, eds, *A Handbook of the Troubadours* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 185–97
- Pozzi, Giovanna, 'Petrarca, i Padri e soprattutto la Bibbia', *Studi petrarcheschi*, 6 (1989), 125–69
- Praloran, Marco, 'La canzone delle citazioni (*Rvf* 70)', in Gianfelice Peron, ed., *La citazione: atti del XXXI convegno interuniversitario, Bressanone, 11–13 luglio 2003* (Padua: Esedra, 2009), pp. 183–96
- Proto, Enrico, 'Il sonetto "Una candida cerva" di Francesco Petrarca', *Rassegna critica di letteratura italiana*, 28 (1923), 129–40
- Pulsoni, Carlo, 'Appunti per una descrizione storico-geografica della tradizione manoscritta trobadorica', *Critica del testo*, 7.1 (2004), 357–89
- , 'Petrarca ultimo trovatore', in Jacques Gourc and François Pic, eds, *Toulouse à la croisée des cultures: actes du V<sup>e</sup> congrès international de l'Association internationale d'études occitanes, Toulouse, 19–24 août 1996*, 2 vols (Pau: Association internationale d'études occitanes, 1998), I, pp. 69–73
- , '"Propter unum quod (...) leggi in Cantilena Arnaldi Danielis": una citazione del Petrarca volgare', *Critica del testo*, 6.1 (2003), 337–52
- , *La tecnica compositiva nei 'Rerum vulgarium fragmenta': riuso metrico e lettura autoriale* (Rome: Bagatto, 1998)
- Raimondi, Ezio, *Le metamorfosi della parola: da Dante a Montale* (Milan: Bruno Mondadori, 2004)
- Rea, Roberto, *Cavalcanti poeta: uno studio sul lessico lirico* (Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2008)

- Ribémont, Bernard, *Les origines des encyclopédies médiévales: d'Isidore de Séville aux Carolingiens* (Paris: Champion, 2001)
- Rico, Francisco, 'La biblioteca di Petrarca', in Sergio Luzzatto and Gabriele Pedullà, eds, *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, 3 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 2010–2012), I: *Dalle origini al Rinascimento*, pp. 229–34
- Riquer, Martín de, *Los trovadores: historia literaria y textos*, 3 vols (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1975)
- Rocca, Silvana, *Animali (e uomini) in Cicerone ('De nat. deor.' 2. 121–161)* (Genoa: Compagnia dei Librai, 2003)
- Rossi, Luciano, 'Il "nodo" di Bonagiunta e le "penne" degli stilnovisti: ancora sul XXIV del *Purgatorio*', in Katharina Maier-Troxler and Costantino Maeder, eds, *Fictio Poetica: studi italiani e ispanici in onore di Georges Güntert* (Florence: Cesati, 1998), pp. 27–52
- Ryan, Lawrence V., "'Stornei", "Gru", "Colombe": The Bird Images in *Inferno* V', *Dante Studies*, 94 (1976), 25–45
- Salisbury, Joyce E., *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 1994)
- Santagata, Marco, *I frammenti dell'anima: storia e racconto nel 'Canzoniere' di Petrarca*, 2nd edn (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2004)
- , 'Introduzione', in Francesco Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Marco Santagata, 2nd edn (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2005), pp. xvii–ccxvi
- , *Per moderne carte: la biblioteca volgare di Petrarca* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990)
- Scarano, Nicola, 'Fonti provenzali e italiane della lirica petrarchesca', *Studi di filologia romanza*, 7 (1901), 250–360
- Scarpati, Oriana, *Retorica del trobar: le comparazioni nella lirica occitana* (Rome: Viella, 2008)
- Scott, John A., 'Dante's Allegory', *Romance Philology*, 26 (1973), 558–91
- , 'Dante's Allegory of the Theologians', in Tom O'Neill, ed., *The Shared Horizon: Melbourne Essays in Italian Language and Literature in Memory of Colin McCormick* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1990), pp. 27–40
- Segal, Charles, 'Dido's Hesitation in *Aeneid* 4', in Stephanie Quinn, ed., *Why Vergil: A Collection of Interpretations* (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2000), pp. 90–100
- Segre, Cesare, 'Les isotopies de Laure', in Herman Parret and Hans-George Ruprecht, eds, *Exigences et perspectives de la sémiotique: recueil*

- d'hommages pour Algirdas Julien Greimas*, 2 vols (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins, 1985), II, pp. 811–26
- Shoaf, Richard A., 'Dante's "Colombi" and the Figuralism of Hope in the *Divine Comedy*', *Dante Studies*, 93 (1975), 27–59
- Singer, Samuel, and others, eds, *Thesaurus Proverbiorum Medii Aevii: Lexicon der Sprichwörter des romanish-germanischen Mittelalters*, 14 vols (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1995)
- Singleton, Charles S., *Dante's 'Commedia': Elements of Structure* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977)
- Soletti, Elisabetta, 'Proverbi', in Raffaele Simone, ed., *Enciclopedia dell'Italiano*, 2 vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2010–2011), II, p. 1183
- Solodow, Joseph B., *The World of Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988)
- Somfai, Anna, 'The Eleventh-Century Shift in the Reception of Plato's *Timaeus* and Calcidius's *Commentary*', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 65 (2002), 1–21
- Southerden, Francesca, 'Two Adams: On Dante and Petrarch's Views of Language in the Beginning' (unpublished lecture, Faculty of English, University of Cambridge, 11 October 2017)
- Sozzi, Bartolo T., 'Per il sonetto "Una candida cerva"', *Studi petrarcheschi*, 8 (1976), 213–17
- Spaggiari, Barbara, 'Cacciare la lepre col bue', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, 3rd ser., 12.4 (1982), 1333–409
- , 'Il tema "west-östlicher" dell'aura', *Studi medievali*, 3rd ser., 26 (1985), 185–290
- Steinberg, Justin, 'Dante *Estravagante*, Petrarca *Disperso*, and the Spectre of the Other Woman', in Zygmunt G. Barański and Theodore J. Cachey, Jr, eds, *Petrarch and Dante: Anti-Dantism, Metaphysics, Tradition* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), pp. 263–89
- , 'Petrarch's Damned Poetry and the Poetics of Exclusion (*Rime disperse*)', in Victoria Kirkham and Armando Maggi, eds, *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 85–100
- Stephens, Viola G., 'Like a Wolf on the Fold: Animal Imagery in Vergil', *Illinois Classical Studies*, 15.1 (1990), 107–30

- Stroppa, Sabrina, 'La conclusione della prima parte della "forma di Giovanni": il trittico *Rvf* 188–190 nello specchio di 163–165', *Per leggere: i generi della lettura*, 22.1 (2012), 7–22
- Strubel, Armand, "'Allegoria in factis" et "allegoria in verbis"', *Poétique: revue de théorie et d'analyse littéraires*, 23 (1975), 342–57
- Sturm-Maddox, Sara, 'Eaux troublés: la navigation de l'âme dans les *Rimes sparse* de Petrarque', in Jean Subrenat and others, eds, *L'eau au Moyen Âge* (Aix-en-Provence: CUERMA, 1985), pp. 335–47
- , *Petrarch's Laurels* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992)
- Suitner, Franco, 'L'invettiva antiavignonese del Petrarca e la poesia infamante medievale', *Studi petrarcheschi*, n.s., 2 (1985), 201–10
- , *Petrarca e la tradizione stilnovistica* (Florence: Olschki, 1977)
- , 'Le rime del Petrarca e l'idea della donna "beatrice": convenzioni letterarie e realtà psicologica', in Maria Picchio Simonelli, ed., *Beatrice nell'opera di Dante e nella memoria europea: 1290–1990* (Florence: Cadmo, 1994), pp. 261–78
- Tateo, Francesco, 'Transumptio', in Umberto Bosco and others, eds, *Enciclopedia dantesca*, 6 vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1976), V, pp. 690–92
- Thiébaux, Marcelle, 'The Medieval Chase', *Speculum*, 42.2 (1967), 260–74
- , *The Stag of Love: The Chase in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1974)
- Thumiger, Chiara, 'Metamorphosis: Human in Animals', in Gordon Lindsay Campbell, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 384–413
- Trombetti Budriesi, Anna Laura, 'Introduzione', in Federico II di Svevia, *De arte venandi cum avibus: edizione e traduzione italiana del ms. lat. 717 della Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna collazionato con il ms. Pal. lat. 1071 della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, ed. and trans. by Anna Laura Trombetti Budriesi (Bari: Laterza, 2009), pp. IX–CXLVII
- Trovato, Paolo, 'Sull'attribuzione di "Di ridere ò gran voglia" (*Disperse*, CCXIII), con una nuova edizione del testo', in Gianfranco Folena, Alberto Limentani and Paolo Sambin, eds, *Lectura Petrarce*, 18 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1982–1999), XVIII (1998), pp. 371–423
- Valenti, Gianluca, *La liturgia del 'trobar': assimilazione e riuso di elementi del rito cristiano nelle canzoni occitane medievali* (Berlin and Boston: de Gruyter, 2014)

- Van Vleck, Amelia E., *Memory and Re-Creation in Troubadour Lyric* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991)
- Vàrvaro, Alberto, 'Introduzione', in Rigaut de Berbezilh, *Liriche*, ed. by Alberto Vàrvaro (Bari: Adriatica Editrice, 1960), pp. 7–89
- Vecchi Galli, Paola, 'Alle origini di una maniera: le "rime disperse" di Francesco Petrarca', in Elisa Tinelli, ed., *Petrarca, l'Italia, l'Europa: sulla varia fortuna di Petrarca: atti del convegno di studi, Bari, 20–22 maggio 2015* (Bari: Edizioni di Pagina, 2016), pp. 92–105
- , 'Per una stilistica delle "disperse"', in Antonio Daniele, ed., *Le lingue del Petrarca* (Udine: Forum, 2005), pp. 108–27
- , 'Le rime disperse', in Michele Feo, ed., *Petrarca nel tempo: tradizione, lettori e immagini delle opere: catalogo della mostra, Arezzo, Sottoc chiesa di San Francesco, 22 novembre 2003–27 gennaio 2004* (Pontedera: Bandecchi & Vivaldi, 2003), pp. 160–69
- , 'Voci della dispersione', in Claudia Berra and Paola Vecchi Galli, eds, *Estravaganti, disperse, apocrifi petrarcheschi: Gargnano del Garda (25–27 settembre 2006)* (Milan: Cisalpino, 2007), pp. 1–24
- Vitale, Maurizio, *Il canone cruscante degli 'Auctores' e la lingua del 'Canzoniere' del Petrarca* (Florence: Presso l'Accademia, 1996)
- , *La lingua del 'Canzoniere' ('Rerum vulgarium fragmenta') di Francesco Petrarca* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1996)
- Webb, Heather, 'Dante's Stone Cold Rhymes', *Dante Studies*, 121 (2003), 148–68
- , *The Medieval Heart* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010)
- Weiss, Roberto, *Un inedito petrarchesco: la redazione sconosciuta di un capitolo del 'Trionfo della Fama'* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1950)
- Wilkins, Ernest H., *Life of Petrarch* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961)
- , *The Making of the 'Canzoniere' and other Petrarchan Studies* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1951)
- , *Studies in the Life and Works of Petrarch* (Cambridge, MA: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1955)
- Wolff, Francis, 'L'Animal et le dieu: deux modèles pour l'homme: remarques pouvant servir à comprendre l'invention de l'animal', in Gilbert Romeyer Dherbey, Barbara Cassin and Jean-Louis Labarrière, eds, *L'Animal dans l'Antiquité* (Paris: Vrin, 1997), pp. 157–80

- Yamamoto, Dorothy, *The Boundaries of the Human in Medieval English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)
- Yarnall, Judith, *Transformations of Circe: The History of an Enchantress* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994)
- Zak, Gur, *Petrarch's Humanism and the Care of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- Zambon, Francesco, 'Allegoria in verbis: per una distinzione tra simbolo e allegoria', in his *Romanzo e allegoria nel medioevo* (Trento: La Finestra Editrice, 2000), pp. 3–34 (first publ. in *Simbolo, metafora, allegoria: atti del IV convegno italo-tedesco, Bressanone 1976*, ed. by Daniela Goldin (= *Quaderni del Circolo filologico-linguistico padovano*, 11 (1980)), pp. 75–106)
- , 'Il bestiario igneo di Giacomo da Lentini', in his *L'alfabeto simbolico degli animali* (Rome: Carocci, 2001), pp. 173–86 (first publ. in *La poesia di Giacomo da Lentini: scienza e filosofia nel XIII secolo in Sicilia e nel Mediterraneo occidentale: atti del convegno tenutosi all'Università autonoma di Barcellona, 16–18, 23–24 ottobre 1997*, ed. by Rossend Arqués (Palermo: Centro di studi filologici e linguistici occidentali, 2000), pp. 137–48)
- , 'Il mito della fenice nella poesia romanza del medioevo', in his *L'alfabeto simbolico degli animali* (Rome: Carocci, 2001), pp. 213–41 (first publ. in *Atrium*, 1.2 (1999), 61–72 and *Atrium*, 1.3 (1999), 5–24)
- , 'Sulla fenice del Petrarca', in Armando Balduino and others, eds, *Miscellanea di studi in onore di Vittore Branca per il suo settantesimo compleanno*, 5 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1983), I: *Dal Medioevo al Petrarca*, pp. 411–25
- Zingarelli, Nicola, 'Petrarca e i trovatori', in Vincenzo Crescini, ed., *Provenza e Italia* (Florence: Bemporad, 1930), pp. 97–139
- Zink, Michel, 'Le monde animal et ses représentations dans la littérature française du Moyen Âge', in Bernard Guillemin, ed., *Le monde animal et ses représentations au Moyen-Âge (XI<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècles): actes du XV<sup>ème</sup> congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public, Toulouse, 25–26 mai 1986* (Toulouse: Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 1985), pp. 47–71
- , *Nature et poésie au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Fayard, 2006)
- Zintzen, Clemens, 'Il platonismo di Petrarca', in Michele Feo and others, eds, *Il Petrarca latino e le origini dell'umanesimo: atti del convegno internazionale, Firenze, 19–22 maggio 1991*, 2 vols (= *Quaderni petrarcheschi*, 9–10 (1992–1993)), I, pp. 93–113

Zufferey, François, *Recherches linguistiques sur les chansonniers provençaux*  
(Geneva: Droz, 1987)