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Far from Naples: The Stinche's Role in the
Manuscript Tradition of the *Caccia di Diana*

T his essay focuses on the role of two manuscript witnesses written at the Florentine municipal prison, called the Stinche, in the context of the manuscript tradition of the *Caccia di Diana* (*Diana's Hunt*).[1] Undoubtedly one of the lesser known of Boccaccio's poetic works, the *Caccia* is a short poem consisting of eighteen cantos in *terza rima,* written to celebrate the women of the Angevin court. It is highly likely that this is the first of the works composed by Boccaccio while he was living in the court of Roberto d'Angiò. It is assumed to have a composition date surely before 1338.[2]

1. *The Manuscript Tradition and the* Silloge

The *Caccia di Diana* is present in six manuscripts, listed below in chronological order:

FLORENCE, Biblioteca Riccardiana, ms. 1066 [O. IV. 39] (= Fr2)[3]
Paper, 14th cent. ex.; codex of thirty-eight leaves written by an unknown scribe (most probably not Matteo Castellani, as indicated in previous de-

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[1] For the text, see Boccaccio 2016. A modern English translation is available in Boccaccio 1991.

[2] See Boccaccio 2016, xxi–xxiii. Branca dates the *Caccia* to approximately 1334, both by historical evidence (the date of death of one of the young protagonists) and by internal stylistic features (primarily the absence of Fiammetta or, perhaps better, the presence of a Fiammetta *in nuce,* represented by the nameless woman) that are suggestive of a youthful author who still needs to improve his skills (1958, 140–43 and 190–92).

[3] See: Morpurgo 1900, 56–57; Boccaccio 1914, xxviii; Boccaccio 1944, xi; Branca 1958, 152; Boccaccio 1967, 679–80; Petrucci Nardelli 1988, 510; Boccaccio 2013, lxxviii–lxxix, and 2016, 140–42.

scriptions).[4] It is the earliest extant witness and preserves the *Caccia di Diana* (cc. 1ʳ–8ʳ), bound with two of Boccaccio's other works in *terza rima*: a *polimetro* titled *Contento quasi ne' pensier d'amore*, composed of a *ternario* and a *ballata* that begins "Amor dolce signore" (cc. 8ʳ–8ᵛ), and the *Amorosa visione* (cc. 8ᵛ–36ʳ). The last two leaves contain ancient recipes written in a different and later hand.

FLORENCE, Biblioteca Riccardiana, ms. 1060 (= Fr1)[5]
Paper, 15th cent. (dated 15 May 1429); composite manuscript formed of two independent codicological sections. The first (cc. 1ʳ–77ᵛ) contains the *Documenti d'amore* composed by Francesco da Barberino; the second part (cc. 78ʳ–170ᵛ) preserves the *Caccia di Diana* (cc. 78ʳ–95ʳ), followed by *Contento quasi ne' pensier d'amore* (cc. 95ᵛ–97ʳ), and the *Amorosa visione* (cc. 98ᵛ–170ᵛ). This section was written in 1429 by Giovanni Ardinghelli, as indicated in a note at the bottom of the final leaf (c. 170ᵛ): "Giovannes de Ardinghellis me scrixit a petitionem Angeli Ghuasparris Tomme Marci de Vulterris anni Domini 1429 die XV madii."

FLORENCE, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. ms. 90 sup. 93 (= L)[6]
Paper, 15th cent. (post-1420); codex of 112 leaves written by the same hand, including transcriptions of *Contento quasi ne' pensier d'amore* (cc. 1ʳ–3ʳ), followed by the *Amorosa visione* (cc. 3ʳ–90ʳ) and the *Caccia di Diana* (cc. 91ʳ–111ʳ). Following a palaeographical investigation, Marco Cursi was able to assign the hand to Giovanni Ardinghelli, the scribe of Fr1.[7]

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[4] The misinterpretation of a reading note written on the final page (c. 38ᵛ) led to the hand being attributed to Matteo Castellani. This misattribution also had the effect of pushing the date of the manuscript forward to 1433 (see Branca 1958, 152).

[5] See: Morpurgo 1900, 53; Boccaccio 1914, xxviii; Boccaccio 1944, ix–xi; Branca 1958, 151–52; Boccaccio 1967, 679–80; *Mostra di manoscritti* 1975, 1:39 n. 18; Petrucci Nardelli 1988, 512–13; De Robertis and Miriello 1999, 10; Cursi 2007, 105–06; Cursi 2009, 151–92; Boccaccio 2016, 139–40.

[6] See: Boccaccio 1914, cccxii–cccxiii; Boccaccio 1944, ix; Branca 1958, 149; Boccaccio 1967, 679–80; *Mostra di manoscritti* 1975, 1:25 n. 1; Petrucci Nardelli 1988, 511–12; Cursi 2007, 106–07; Cursi 2009, 177–78; Boccaccio 2013, xxxix–xl; Scipioni 2013, 213; Boccaccio 2016, 142–43.

[7] Cf. Cursi 2007, 106–07.

WELLESLEY, Plimpton Collection of Wellesley College Library, ms. 858 (= We)[8]
Parchment, 15th cent. (1430); manuscript of eighty-eight leaves (most are palimpsests from late fourteenth-century documents) written by three different scribes, the last of whom, Carlo Maria di Battifolle, provides an inscription.[9] It contains the *Amorosa visione* (cc. 1^r–66^v) and the *Caccia di Diana* (cc. 67^r–88^r). Due to the loss of one or more leaves, the *Amorosa visione* ends abruptly at canto 50.84 (lacking the last ten lines) and the *Caccia* begins at canto 1.19 (lacking the title and the first eighteen lines).[10]

FLORENCE, Biblioteca Riccardiana, ms. 1059 [O. III. 2] (= Fr)[11]
Paper, 15th cent.; collection of vernacular poetic works: the *Ninfale fiesolano* (cc. 1^r–51^r); the anonymous *Cantare di Piramo e Tisbe* (cc. 51^r–56^r); an anonymous and untitled *frottola* (cc. 57^r–58^v)[12]; the *Caccia di Diana* (cc. 59^r–74^r); an anonymous *serventese* entitled *I versi di Narcisso*, which begins *Donne piatose diventate crude* (cc. 74^r–79^v); an anonymous *serventese* that begins "*O sconsolate a pianger l'aspra vita*" (cc. 79^v–81^v); the *Serven-*

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[8] See: De Ricci 1962, 1075–76; Boccaccio 1914, ix; Boccaccio 1944, xiv–xvi; Branca 1958, 154–55; Boccaccio 1967, 679–80; Petrucci Nardelli 1988, 513–14; Boccaccio 2016, 143–46.

[9] The inscription on the final page (c. 88^r) reads: "Qui finisce la Caccii di diana e sue compagne deo gratias amen 1430. Ego Karolus Maria de Battifolle scripsi hunc librum mea manu propia in etate puerily." Putting forward an alternative point of view, Vittore Branca and Franca Petrucci Nardelli suggested that the manuscript was entirely copied by Carlo, who changed his handwriting in order to practise different kinds of writing (Branca 1958, 154, and Petrucci Nardelli 1988, 513–14). On this hypothesis, cf. Boccaccio 2016, 146.

[10] Since the original numeration stops on the last *charta* of the *Amorosa visione*, it is hard to determine how many folios are missing. In Branca's opinion, at least four leaves are missing, and these would have also contained *Contento quasi* (see Branca 1958, 156 n. 1). But, if we presume the loss of a single leaf (that is, enough to contain on the *recto* the end of the *Amorosa visione* and on the *verso* the beginning of the *Caccia*), this would suggest that this quire was originally made of four bifolia, the manuscript's prevalent form.

[11] See: Morpurgo 1900, 52; McKenzie 1940, 169; Branca 1958, 150–51; Balduino 1965, 117–18; Boccaccio 1967, 679–80; *Piramo e Tisbe* 2002, 2:889–92; Boccaccio 2016, 136–38.

[12] This is an invective against Love (beginning "O falso lunsinghiere e pien d'inganni") followed by its answer (beginning "Per certo che mi piace di responder"). In Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana, ms. Marucelliano C. 155 (cc. 46^r–46^v), it is referred to as a *froctola* (Ferrari 1882, 318), while in Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, ms. II. II. 49, (cc. 194^v–195^v), it is entitled "froctola che dice contro all amore e lla risposta che fa l amore per sua scusa" (Bartoli 1881, 63–66).

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tese della vecchiezza by Antonio Pucci (cc. 81^v–83^r); an anonymous *serventese*, known as the *Ruffianella* (no heading) that begins "*Venite pulzellette e belle donne*" (cc. 83^r–86^r)[13]; sonnet 167 (*Non pur quella mia bella, nuda mano*) of Petrarch's *RVF* (c. 86^v). As the scribe himself tells us in the last leaf, the copy was made in order to meet the wishes of an unknown lady H.[14]

FLORENCE, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, ms. II. IX. 125 (= F)[15]
Paper, 15th cent.; composite manuscript made up of twenty-seven independent quires, most probably bound together before 1595, as gathered from the note written by the librarian of the Magliabechiana library, who bought the manuscript from the heirs of Dino il Pasciuto, the first owner.[16] F contains several works by different authors, produced at different times, both in the vernacular and Latin[17]: quire 25 preserves the *Caccia di Diana*

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[13] The *Ruffianella* has historically been attributed both to Boccaccio and to the fifteenth-century Venetian poet Leonardo Giustinian. See: Morpurgo 1900, 44; Oberdorfer 1911, 204 n. 1; Frati 1913, 1:234–41; Wiese 1883, 371–78. Both these attributions have been rejected, and the author of this *serventese* therefore remains unknown.

[14] Florence, ms. Ricc. 1059, c. 86^v: "Iscritto questo senprice libretto per me Landone, a petitione e per consolatione della vertudiosa e singhulare fanciulla H., la quale io pregho il nipotente Iddio che conservi in lungha e prospera felicità, e me mantengha senpre a' suoi comandamenti, non altrimenti che come mio unico signore e amen." 'This humble book has been written by myself, Landone, upon the request and for the consolation of the virtuous and excellent Lady H. I pray to omnipotent God to keep this lady happy and to allow me to be hers to command; I intend to serve her for the rest of my life. Amen"). My translation.

[15] See: Mazzatinti 1902–03, 12–14; Levi 1908–11, 79–84; Corsi 1969, 946; Bentivogli 1980, 87–88; Butrica 1981, 290–92; Bettarini Bruni 2002, 315–16; Iocca 2013, 74–76; Boccaccio 2016, 133–36.

[16] Florence, ms. II. IX. 125, c. 243^v: "Codicem hunc, olim Petri Dini Patricii / Florentini & Archipiscopi firmani, in Academia Furfureorum anno 1595. / cognom. Il Pasciuto, & postmodum Diniae / familiae ex hereditate eiusdem: / Vincentius Follinius Publicae Bibliothecae / Malliabechianae Praefectus, una cum / aliis XXXIV. Codd. Mss. ad eundem / Praesulem iam pertinentibus, eidem / Bibliothecae acquisivit, impressis Libres / cum Mss commutatis, VII Kal Aprilis / MDCCCXIX a Petro, Ioanne et Alexandro / filiis & haeredibus Augustini Dini."

[17] The contents are as follows: Latin commentary on the first of Cicero's *Epistulae ad familiares* (cc. 3^r–6^r); Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes*, fr. book 1 (cc. 11^r–12^v); Bracciolini, *Facetie* (cc. 13^r–18^r); Cicero, *Somnium Scipionis* (cc. 25^r–28^v); *Collatio Alexandri Magni cum Dindimo* (cc. 29^r–29^v); Pseudo-Seneca, *De remediis fortuitorum* (cc. 35^r–39^r); Martial, *Liber spectaculorum* (cc. 43^r–47^r) and *Epigrammata* (cc. 47^v–56^r); Propertius, *Elegie*, books 1 and 2 (cc. 61^r–88^v); Horace, *Carmina* 1 (cc. 91^r–106^v); Aesop translated by Gualtiero Anglico (cc. 111^r–20^v); *Sonetti dell'albero d'Amore* (cc. 121^r–23^r); *M'era già messa l'anima in obrio* attr. to Niccolò Povero (c. 123^v); anon., *Per me farebbe volendo godere* (c. 123^v); anon., *La volpe e 'l lupo colla bigia veste* (c. 124^r); anon., *L'alta bellezza*

(cc. 222^r–33^r) written by an unknown hand and interrupted at the middle of c. 233^r, just before the end of the fourteenth canto.

It is well known that none of the six surviving manuscript copies of the *Caccia di Diana* transmits the author's name.[18] In addition to the lack of an explicit indication of authorship in the manuscript witnesses, Boccaccio never refers to the poem in his later works or letters. Thus, his authorship of the *Caccia* was in question for a long time. After much debate,[19] the little

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tua e lo sprendore (c. 124^r); anon., *Tapina me ch'io non so la cagione* (c. 124^v); anon., *Autenticha istella mattutina* (c. 124^v); anon., *De non mi riprendete si perch'io* (c. 125^r); F. Petrarca, *Gli occhi, di ch'io parlai sì caldamente* and *Era il giorno ch'al sol si scoloraro* (c. 125^r); anon., *I' non credea che ttu fussi sì sciocha* (c. 125^v); Antonio Beccari, *Io benedico il dì che Dio te cinse* (c. 125^v); F. Petrarca, *Dicesette anni à già rivolto il cielo* (c. 126^r); *I' ò privato l'amico e 'l parente* (c. 126^r); anon., *Muovi sonetto a quella chiara luce* (c. 126^v); anon., *Se io 'l potessi far, fanciulla bella* (c. 126^v); anon., *Muovi sonetto omai e non ristare* (c. 127^r); *Occhi miei vergognosi, i' sento bene* attr. to F. Petrarca (c. 127^r); G. Guinizzelli, *Vedut' ho la lucente stella Diana* (c. 127^v); F. Petrarca, *Ahi, bella libertà, come tu m'hai* and *Piovonmi amare lagrime dal viso* (c. 127^v); A. Beccari, *O novella Tarpea in cui s'asconde* (c. 128^r); F. Petrarca, *Ingegno usato alle question profonde, Quest'anima gentil che si diparte* and *Non è falso chi è falso in ver' falsia* (cc. 128$^{r–v}$); anon., *Urbano s'amor non fussi in abandono* (c. 128^v); F. Petrarca, *Quelle pietose rime in ch'io m'accorsi* and *Gli antichi e bei pensier convien ch'io lassi* (c. 129^r); anon., *Non può aquetarsi la mia fantasia, Come la pace è casa di letizia* and *Rosa novella sparsa alla diana* (cc. 129^v–30^r); A. Pucci, *Amico mio, da poi che hai tolto moglie* (c. 130^r); anon., *Quel ch'a re Carlo tolse il suo nipote* (c. 130^v); Benuccio Salimbeni, *Quanto si può si dè sanza disinore* (c. 130^v); anon., *Io sì non ti rispondo a quelle rime* (c. 130^v); A. Pucci, *Un à tre figlie e vuol maritar l'una* (c. 131^r); anon., *Ben è folle colui che femmina ama* (c. 131^r); *La profezia di Santa Brigida* (cc. 132^r–36^v); Sallust, *Bellum Iugurthinum* (cc. 139^r–60^v); Virgil, *Georgics*, book 1 (161^r–66^v); Virgil, *Georgics*, books 2–4 (cc. 171^r–97^v); ancient Florentine sumptuary legislation (cc. 198^r–201^v); *Appendix Vergiliana*: *De institutione viri boni* and *De rosis nascentibus* (cc. 206^r–06^v); G. Veronese, *Carmina differentalia* (cc. 207^r–13^r); *Appendix Vergiliana*: *De institutione viri boni* (only the first line: "[V]ir bonus et sapiens q[ualem]") (c. 213^v); Sallust, *De coniuratione Catilinae* (cc. 216^r–18^r); G. Boccaccio, *Caccia di Diana* (cc. 222^r–33^v); Servius, *Commentarius in Artem Donati* (cc. 234^r–41^v); Latin commentary on the first of Cicero's *Epistulae ad familiares* (cc. 242–43^r).

[18] The oldest clue to its authorship comes, in fact, from an early biography of Boccaccio conserved in a manuscript that belonged to Giovanni Conversini: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, ms. S 72 sup. This biography mentions the *Caccia di Diana* ("*item de venatione Dyane metricos*") in the list of his works, just after a "*librum de visione amoris*" (the *Amorosa visione*). See Billanovich 1974, 439–40, Branca 1958, 167.

[19] The main points of this debate are as follows. In 1832 Ignazio Moutier, convinced of Boccaccio's authorship (Boccaccio 1832, 3–6), produced the first modern critical edition of the little poem. Gustav Koerting was also inclined to attribute the *Caccia* to Boccaccio

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poem was definitively assigned to Boccaccio in 1938 by Vittore Branca. This attribution met with general consent and is still accepted today.[20]

One of the arguments used by Branca to prove that Boccaccio was the *Caccia*'s author was based on the fact that several manuscripts preserve the little poem together with two works that can definitely be attributed to him: *Contento quasi* and the *Amorosa visione*. Similar in metre and theme — they are written in praise of lovely ladies, listed one by one — these three works gathered together were considered by Branca to constitute a *silloge*.[21] It is worth noting that this collection in *terza rima* certainly has a self-sufficient status, since it is never preserved together with other works. If we look more closely at the four manuscripts in which it is extant (Fr1, Fr2, L, We), however, we discover that it is not just the *Caccia* that is transmitted as authorless.[22] In fact, only the Pluteo L and the Plimpton We include an explicit attribution to Giovanni Boccaccio, but only for the main poem, the *Amorosa visione*.[23] In Branca's opinion, this is due to the loss of an initial leaf that should have contained the author's name.[24]

Branca was sure of Boccaccio's authorship of the *Caccia*, and also proposed the idea that the *silloge* was compiled by him or by a person close to him:

> La probabilità che questa silloge [...] risalga all'autore o a persona a lui vicinissima appare così sempre più forte. Non è soltanto la difficoltà di attribuire ad altri l'idea di riunire scritti diversi del Boccaccio, e particolarmente il Ternario che, se mai, poteva più naturalmente esser compreso in un "corpus" del tutto diverso. È soprattutto il vedere riflettersi la silloge in

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(Koerting 1880, 460). In reaction to the edition produced in 1914 by Aldo Francesco Massèra under Boccaccio's name (Boccaccio 1914, ix), Henri Hauvette firmly denied the possibility of attributing the *Caccia* to our author (Hauvette 1914, 139 n. 4; 1916, 57–70).

[20] See Branca 1958, in particular "Per l'attribuzione della *Caccia di Diana* a Giovanni Boccaccio," 122–43, and "Nuove note sulla *Caccia di Diana*," 145–98.

[21] Cf. Branca 1958, 125.

[22] The most recent critical editor of the *Rime*, Roberto Leporatti, has observed that, as regards the whole tradition of the *polimetro*, "il nome del Boccaccio si affaccia [...] ai piani bassi dello stemma" (Boccaccio 2013, 341).

[23] Florence, BML, Plut. 90 sup 93 (L), c. 4ᵛ: "Incomincia l'amorosa visione fatta per messer Giovanni Boccaccio"; Wellesley, Plimpton Coll., 858 (We), c. 2ʳ: "Qui comincia l'amorosa visione facta per lo eccellentissimo poeta miser Giovanni Boccaccio di certaldo excellentissimo poeta florentino."

[24] "Ammettendo quindi l'autenticità della *Caccia*, è facile pensare che il nome dell'autore fosse solo indicato all'inizio, su di un frontespizio per esempio, e che si ritenesse superfluo ripeterlo per ogni operetta, bastando la continuità onde erano scritte ad indicarne chiaramente l'autore" (Branca 1958, 126–27). See also Boccaccio 2013, 341.

> gruppi di manoscritti dei primi del Quattrocento, già fra di loro fortemente differenziati, che costringe a far risalire l'origine di questa raccolta assai più indietro, agli anni stessi del Boccaccio.[25]

As a result of his investigation into the manuscript tradition, Branca considered Fr1, Fr2, L and We to be genealogically independent from one another[26] and suggested that the construction of the *silloge* was made very early, possibly even by Boccaccio himself. Although this hypothesis is more than probable, it is worthwhile to point out that the content of an ancestor cannot be determined by a comparison of different stemmas (since a stemma is a hypothetical model of the relationships established between a limited group of manuscripts).

We have already seen that the order in which the collection appears in the manuscripts is not always the same:

Fr2	Ricc. 1066	*Caccia – Contento quasi – Amorosa visione*
Fr1	Ricc. 1060	*Caccia – Contento quasi – Amorosa visione*
L	Plut. 90 sup. 93	*Contento quasi – Amorosa visione – Caccia*
We	Plimpton 858	*Amorosa visione – [Contento quasi?[27]] – Caccia*

Branca believed that the original combination had to be *Caccia — Contento quasi — Amorosa visione* (as we find in Fr2 and Fr1). From this perspective, this order is not only chronological, but also logical: it reflects the passage from a wholly Neapolitan poem (*Caccia di Diana*) to a typical Florentine atmosphere (*Amorosa visione*) by way of an intermediate moment, represented by *Contento quasi ne' pensier d'amore*. The other combinations, in Branca's opinion, are nothing more than physiological changes resulting from the limited appeal of a little poem full of Neapolitan names from the previous century. The *Caccia di Diana* moves to third position in order to put the most Florentine and attractive piece (*Amorosa visione*) at the beginning.[28]

Let us now try to see if a codicological approach can give us more information on these four witnesses. We are certain that the *silloge* was transcribed continuously in Fr2, L and We because one work ends and another begins within the same quire. Let us therefore focus on Fr1 (Riccardiano 1060), starting with its material features. Fr1 is made up of nine quires, with all but the last consisting of ten leaves: $1^{10} - 2^{10} - 3^{10} - 4^{10} - 5^{10} - 6^{10} - 7^{10} - 8^{10} - 9^{10} - 10^{4-1}$. The *Caccia* is copied in the first two quires, with the

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[25] Branca 1958, 156.
[26] Cf. Branca 1958, 164.
[27] See note 10 above.
[28] Cf. Branca 1958, 157.

Amorosa visione in the other eight. These two codicological sections are independent, and are also separately enumerated by the scribe. As Marco Cursi clearly explains in his description:

> La sezione del Ricc. 1060 di mano di Giovanni [Ardinghelli] non era stata progettata fin dall'origine per una costituzione unitaria, ma si presentava formata da due unità codicologiche autonome: la prima conteneva la *Caccia di Diana* e la seconda l'*Amorosa Visione*. A dimostrarlo bastano l'esistenza di una numerazione separata per ciascuna di esse (di mano del copista) e la struttura della fascicolazione: i primi due fascicoli contengono la sola *Caccia*, e alla fine del secondo vengono lasciate due carte bianche; tale abitudine grafica era tipica dei copisti a prezzo, che tendevano a lasciare alcune carte in bianco al termine della copia, quando la fine d'opera non coincideva con la fine di fascicolo, per rendere autonomo ciascun testo [...]. In questo caso, dopo aver deciso di legare tra loro in un unico contenitore testuale la *Caccia* e l'*Amorosa visione*, Giovanni nelle carte intermedie rimaste in bianco aggiunse le *Rime* [i.e., the *polimetro*].[29]

The transcription of Fr1 seems to have been arranged in order to have the main works copied as independent units. This is a sign that we are dealing with a particular kind of manuscript: a copy made for payment (*a prezzo*). The relevance of this material feature appears in a clearer light if we consider how it is linked to the commercial network. Since such copies are commissioned, the buyer needs to be able to organize his manuscript according to his preference. The transcription process can therefore be organized in such a way that the scribes copy each work as an autonomous unit, consisting of one or more quires. Moreover, since the quires need to be delivered untied, the transcription begins on the *verso* of the first page, as the *recto* is used as a cover (hence, as we see in Fr1, the *Amorosa visione* begins on the *verso* of the first leaf of the third quire). In this way, when the buyer receives the quires, he is able to construct his manuscript however he likes.[30] It goes without saying that manuscripts made in this way can potentially be combined in various ways, and likewise it is therefore possible that the order in which the works appear in Fr1 is not necessarily the same as that found in its ancestor.

2. *The* Caccia a prezzo *at the Stinche*

The business of copying manuscripts for money was a quite ordinary practice. In Florence, at the end of the fourteenth century, those who wanted to commission a copy of a manuscript would direct themselves to the scribes employed in the stationers (*botteghe di cartoleria*). Alongside this usual

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[29] Cursi 2007, 106. See also Petrucci Nardelli 1988, 507.
[30] Cursi 2007, 106 n. 147.

means of employing a copyist, there was another place in which it was possible to find a scribe willing to copy for payment: the Florentine municipal prison, known as the Stinche. Marco Cursi has shown how, between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Stinche was an active centre of manuscript production.[31] Through the investigation of thirty-three manuscripts written in the Florentine jail, identified by the colophon, Cursi also managed to make a sort of identikit of these copies. We are dealing with manuscripts mostly written on paper (as opposed to parchment), mostly medium-sized, with either basic decoration or not decorated at all.[32] Besides their material similarities, there is a further characteristic that these thirty-three manuscripts have in common, which is even more remarkable; with just one exception (Vatican City, Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 4527, which transmits a collection of Petrarch's Latin works),[33] all of the Stinche manuscripts preserve vernacular texts.[34] Excluding those of a practical, historiographical or devotional nature, nineteen of the Stinche manuscripts contain literary works, mostly by the three crowns of Florence. Of these copies, only two preserve Dante's works,[35] and four Petrarch's,[36] versus the nine witnesses that transmit Boccaccio's texts. Well-represented both as narrator and poet, Boccaccio is, at our present state of knowledge, the most copied author at the Stinche.[37] Amongst this group of manuscripts identified by Cursi, we also find Fr1, which is therefore a manuscript made *a prezzo* in the Florentine prison, written by Giovanni Ardinghelli, who was

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[31] Cf. Cursi 2009, 151–71, Cursi 2007, 105–11, and Cursi 2014. See also earlier studies by Petrucci 1988, 825–26; Scarpa 1989, 152; Signorini 1995, 142–43.

[32] Cf. Cursi 2009, 160–61, and Cursi 2014, 159.

[33] A parchment manuscript written in 1405 by Simone de Allydoxiis. See its description in Cursi 2009, 173.

[34] It is of course possible that information and data will improve as research progresses. None the less, the *Profezia di Santa Brigida*, written by "Jacobus da Montepulciano mentre era nelle [...] carcere del comune di Firenze," which I found among the gatherings of the composite codex F (Florence, BNC, ms. II. IX. 125; cc. 132^r–36^v), is entirely coherent with the model proposed by Cursi.

[35] Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, ms. Riccardiano 1042 (*Convivio*, 1468) and Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, ms. Palatino 19 (*Convivio*, 1468). Both are described in Cursi 2009, 187–88.

[36] Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, ms. Acquisti e Doni 688 (*Trionfi*, 1427); Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, ms. Riccardiano 1133 (*Trionfi*, 1451); Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, ms. II. III. 67 (*De viris illustribus* translated by Donato degli Albanzani, 1456); Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, ms. Palatino 187 (*Trionfi* and *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, 1468). For descriptions see Cursi 2009, 177, 185–86 and 188.

[37] Cf. Cursi 2009, 160.

a prisoner there from 1420.[38] Having been imprisoned for debts, Ardinghelli was involved in copying manuscripts for payment during his long detention (which started around 1420 and lasted probably until his death in 1450), in order to try to clear them.[39]

It is extremely interesting to explore how the prisoners managed to obtain the necessary items to make their transcriptions. Who gave them the materials and the manuscripts? Cursi explains:

> si può ipotizzare che in qualche caso a fare da tramite fosse il creditore stesso, che, assunti i panni del committente, mettesse a disposizione di chi gli doveva una certa somma di denaro il materiale di scrittura e l'antigrafo, per veder ripagato, almeno in parte, il suo credito. Accordi di tal genere si stringevano frequentemente fuori dal carcere [...]. Più di frequente, comunque, erano le botteghe di cartoleria che si rivolgevano ai copisti imprigionati alle Stinche, probabilmente poiché erano disposti a prestare la loro opera per un compenso inferiore rispetto a quello richiesto da copisti reclutati nel libero mercato.[40]

Thus, the most common case was of stationers regulating this kind of commerce, employing the prisoners and providing them with all they needed. Nevertheless, sometimes private arrangements could also be made, mostly by a free citizen to whom a prisoner already owed a debt. On this last point, let us recall the note written in the bottom of the last leaf of Fr1 (c. 170^v): "Giovannes de Ardinghellis me scrixit a petitionem Angeli Ghuasparris Tomme Marci de Vulterris anni Domini 1429 die XV madii." The manuscript was commissioned by Angelo Marchi, about whom relatively little is known to date.[41] His name appears in an early history of the city of Volterra published in 1758 by Lorenzo Aulo Cecina.[42] An interesting detail emerges from one of the documents collected by Cecina: in 1427 Angelo was involved in diplomatic activities related to protests against a law issued by Florence that forced Volterra to pay new taxes. According to Cecina, when the delegates arrived in Florence they were immediately imprisoned:

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[38] Cf. Cursi 2007, 106, Cursi 2009, 157–60, and Cursi 2014, 162–64.

[39] Cf. Cursi 2007, 107–09.

[40] Cursi 2009, 163–65. See also Cursi 2007, 111.

[41] All that is known concerning Marchi is that he was the scribe of ms. Riccardiano 1200 of the Biblioteca Riccardiana of Florence, in which he left the following note: "Epistole dicerie e varî altri opuscoli volgari e latini raccolti da Angelo Marchi volterrano." See De Robertis and Miriello 1999, 20–22, and n. 33.

[42] Cf. Cecina 1758.

> Ma la bisogna andò d'una maniera, che dopo molti trattati, e dispute, non
> volendo i Volterrani obbedire, che gli Ufficiali acconsentendovi, il Gonfa-
> loniere Dati, e quella Signorìa, li fecero in più volte diciotto di loro venire
> in Firenze, i quali dopo molte pratiche furono messi in prigione.[43]

Among these prisoners was "Angiolo di gasparo Marchi," which means we can reasonably exclude Angelo from the ranks of Giovanni's creditors. Despite the lack of direct evidence, it is still possible that the scribe-prisoner and the future buyer simply met each other in the Florentine jail, both of them having probably been detained in the section for minor crimes.

Why did Angelo commission Giovanni to copy Fr1? Probably because he was not an ordinary scribe-prisoner. During his long detention in the Stinche (1420–50), Giovanni became a professional Boccaccio scribe. Through palaeographic investigation, Cursi has identified nine manuscripts written by Ardinghelli.[44] The group is surprisingly homogeneous. With the exception of two codices (Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, ms. 11, which preserves a vernacular version of *De civitate Dei* by Augustine, and Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magl. XXI.85, which preserves a collection of medieval poetic texts), the others are all copies of Boccaccio's vernacular works:

> Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 90 sup. 9 (=L):
>   *Contento quasi*, *Amorosa visione*, *Caccia di Diana*
> Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 1022:
>   *Filocolo*
> Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 1060 (=Fr1), dated 1429:
>   *Caccia di Diana*, *Contento quasi*, *Amorosa visione*
> Rome, Accademia dei Lincei e Corsiniana, 44 G 5 (Rossi 6):
>   *Filocolo*
> Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, 969:
>   *Ninfale fiesolano*
> Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 8538, dated 1430–40:
>   *Decameron*
> Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ital. 493:
>   *Filocolo*

Looking at the above list, we find another *Caccia* witness, the Pluteo manuscript (L), a codex that was not easy to date or locate precisely. However, thanks to Cursi's palaeographical identification, we can presume that L was written at the Florentine municipal prison by Giovanni Ardinghelli sometime after 1420, the date of his arrest. So, we owe to this one prisoner two

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[43] Cecina 1758, 212–13.
[44] Cf. Cursi 2014, 167.

witnesses of Boccaccio's little poem (that is, one third of the extant manuscript tradition). It should be noted, however, that Fr1 and L were copied from two different models. A collation of their texts shows that these copies belong to independent lines of transmission: Fr1 and L do not share any errors and there is no evidence to suggest a relationship between them.[45] They are, in other words, copied by the same hand but are not copies of the same ancestor. In fact, there are many more differences than similarities between these two witnesses. The most significant disparity concerns the quality of the text they transmit: Fr1 is considered trustworthy and is probably the most correct witness of the *Caccia*; conversely, L is very problematic and may be the worst copy of this little poem.

What makes L worse than the other witnesses? First and foremost, the errors. A new exploration of the text shows that L's unique readings number more than one hundred in the *Caccia* alone. Among these, we need to separate those that are clearly unacceptable from those that are not. As an example of the second category, let us consider the weapon used by Zizzola d'Anna, one of the *Caccia*'s huntresses. Boccaccio tells us that Zizzola had not been invited by Diana, but was hunting alone:

> E già eran discese tutte, quando
> Zizzola d'Anna venne, che soletta
> sanza richiesta era gita cacciando;
> molti animali avea con sua *saetta*
> feriti e presi, ma nessun tenere
> n'avea potuto né seguir con fretta
>
> (16.25–30, italics added)[46]

According to L, Zizzola has caught and killed the animals using a different trisyllabic weapon, the *accetta* 'hatchet,' rather than the *saetta* 'arrow.' Though *accetta* maintains the rhyme, it is surely a faulty reading. In fact, from the beginning of the poem we are aware of the huntress's equipment:

> E, dati cani e forti reti d'accia,
> girfalchi, astori e archi con saette,

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[45] See Boccaccio 2016, 160. These two manuscripts were also independent in Branca's estimation (1958, 148–65).

[46] Quotations from the *Caccia* are taken from the last critical edition unless otherwise stated; English translations of quotations are taken from the parallel-text edition of Cassell and Kirkham: "And they all had already descended when Zizzola d'Anna came, she who, unbidden, had gone hunting by herself. With her arrows she had wounded and caught many animals but none had she been able to keep hold of or pursue with any speed" (Boccaccio 1991, 145).

<div align="center">

e spiedi aguti che ' cinghiari impaccia

(2. 37–39)[47]

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Without doubt, the Pluteo's individual reading (*accetta*) should be rejected as an error.

Another significant example of the problems affecting the quality of L's readings can be found in lines 16–27 of canto 17 (the text is reproduced below as it appears in the manuscript alongside that of the critical edition):

ms. Plut. 90 sup. 93 (L):	Boccaccio 2016:
O santa Dea, poich'è nostro disire,	O santa dea, poich'è nostro disire,
per la virtù del nostro sacrificio	per la virtù del nostro sacrifizio
non isdegnar le nostre voci *a dire*	non isdegnar le nostre voci *udire*,
ma pietosa al tuo secondo officio	ma pïetosa al tuo secondo offizio,
per merito de' nostri preghi umili,	per merito de' nostri prieghi umili,
ricevi *poi* e per tuo benificio	ricevi *noi*; e per tuo benefizio
caccia de' petti nostri i pensier vili	caccia de' petti nostri i pensier vili,
e per la tua virtù fa eccellenti	e per la tua virtù fa eccellenti
gli animi nostri, e ' cor *lunghi* e gentili	gli animi nostri, e ' cor *larghi* e gentili.
Deh, fa sentire a noi quanto piacenti	Deh fa sentire a noi quanto piacenti
sieno gl' *affetti nostri*, e facci ancora,	sieno gl' *effetti tuoi*, e facci ancora,
alcuno amando, gli animi contenti.	alcuno amando, gli animi contenti.[48]

Once again, we are dealing with corrupt readings and errors found in L alone.[49] We could equally well have taken examples from the other texts preserved in L, as this problem extends across the manuscript as a whole. In his edition of the *Amorosa visione* published in 1944, Branca listed approximately two hundred "lezioni caratteristiche" that isolate L from the

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[47] "And when Diana had given them dogs and strong flaxen nets, gyrfalcons, goshawks, bows and arrows, and sharp spears to stay wild boars" (Boccaccio 1991, 103).

[48] Variants found in L (highlighted above in italics) are given below within square brackets: "O holy Goddess, since it is our desire, through the power of our sacrifice, disdain not to hear [to say] our voice but receive us [then] mercifully into your propitious rite through the merit of our humble prayers; and through your beneficence, banish base thoughts from our breasts and through your power make excellent our spirits and generous [long] and noble our hearts. Yea, let us feel how pleasing are your effects [our affections] and again, make our spirits content with someone to love" (translation adapted from Boccaccio 1991, 147).

[49] *A dire* ("to say") comes from a misreading of the first letter of *udire* ("to hear"); *ricevi poi* ("receive then") instead of *ricevi noi* ("receive us") is a more significant error as the ladies want to be accepted by Venus; the women's hearts are obviously *generous* ("larghi") and not *long* ("lunghi"). Finally, since the good effects will come from Venus, the lovers say *your effects* ("effetti tuoi"); *our affections* ("affetti nostri") is therefore clearly another palaeographical error.

rest of the manuscript tradition, and pointed out that these were only a sample group.[50] The latest editor of Boccaccio's *Rime*, Roberto Leporatti, who published his edition in 2013, has also found a remarkable number of un reliable readings in the transcription of the *polimetro* preserved in L.[51] It is highly likely that the majority of the unique readings transmitted by L can be traced back to a bad model, which induced Ardinghelli to insert the blank spaces — probably due to missing, corrupted or unintelligible words in the exemplar — that can be found more than once in his transcription of the *Amorosa visione*.[52]

It is important to remember that L is a copy made to be sold. Nevertheless, besides the blank spaces, the correction strategies do not seem to aim at preserving the aesthetics of the page.[53] Furthermore, there is a high number of poor readings left uncorrected. All of this would seem to suggest that, in this particular witness, the transcription of a bad model could have been exacerbated by the difficulties of copying in jail.[54] On this point, Cursi's research reveals something worth pointing out. In the Florentine municipal prison, not all the inmates were treated equally. By paying a fee (known as an *agevolatura*) prisoners were allowed to spend periods of time in a more comfortable area located in a different section of the jail, known as the *mallevato*.[55] Of course, only a few prisoners could afford this opportunity, since they also had to pay the costs of their imprisonment. Even though Ardinghelli had economic troubles, documents show that he had the privilege of

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[50] Boccaccio 1944, lvi. The list of conspicuous unique readings exhibited by L alone vis-à-vis the united testimony of the other manuscripts convinced Branca to place this witness in a class quite by itself for the *Amorosa visione* (family y), isolated from the manuscripts that form the x family (l–lvi). Contini (1946, 70–72), persuaded that L should belong to the x family, contested this hypothesis.

[51] "L93 (i.e., L) è un codice piuttosto scorretto e portatore di un gran numero di *lectiones singulares*: cfr. Apparato ai vv. 2, 7, 11, 17, 18, 24, 29, 30, 38, 39, 40, 41, 52, 53, 54, 62, 65, 76, 95, 96" (Boccaccio 2013, 340, 343–34). See also Iocca 2016, 109–11.

[52] "Le lacune registrate si presentano spesso come spazi lasciati in bianco [...], e perciò risalgono senza dubbio a un antigrafo, a sue lacune, o a macchie e grafie incomprensibili" (Boccaccio 1944, l).

[53] The remedies used by Ardinghelli to correct his transcription are not always elegant. The words scraped off and superimposed are, in fact, fewer than might be expected. Most often he rewrites on the same line with an immediate but unsightly correction; or, if he notices the error at a later stage, the faulty reading is removed and rewritten in the line spacing or in the margin with a reference sign. See also Petrucci Nardelli 1988, 503.

[54] Franca Petrucci Nardelli 1988, 503 describes the copy of L as "laborious" ("faticosa"), since its scribe "sembra aver avuto un difficile rapporto con la sua opera di copiatura."

[55] Cf. Cursi 2009, 156.

spending the first part of his detention precisely in this area, which, mostly because of the light, appeared to be closely associated with scribal activities:

> nel *mallevato* si riuscivano a copiare manoscritti molto più agevolmente che in ogni altro ambiente nelle carceri fiorentine; questa è con tutta la probabilità la ragione per cui tanti prigionieri miserabili cercavano in ogni modo di recarvisi, anche soltanto per pochi giorni in un anno: nel malle-vato giungeva *lo lume*, quella luce che probabilmente filtrava a malapena o mancava del tutto nelle altre prigioni in cui erano divise le Stinche.[56]

The hypothesis that copying L required greater effort due to a change in the working conditions cannot be excluded; copying undertaken outside of the *mallevato* may well have affected the final output. Unfortunately, Ardinghelli never explicitly refers to his activity as a scribe-prisoner. Furthermore, the information related to this practice is usually very rare or more often generic. For that reason, the note found by Cursi in cc. 51^v–52^r of a Florentine manuscript written by Andrea di Pierino (another prisoner in the Stinche) after his transcription of the *Ameto* is even more valuable:

> Finito la Conmedia delle Ninphe, opera di misere Giovanny Bocacci, copiata per mano d'Andrea di Pierino da Firenze nelle Stinche, anno MCCCCXIIII, con molte sue fatiche, però chi ne fia legitore m'abia squsa se errore alquno ci fusse, considerato il luogo pieno d'insidie aparechiate dalla non estabile fortuna. Christo grazia. Amen.[57]

The scribe is speaking directly to his readers. Since he has copied in a place containing "many hardships," they must excuse him if they find any errors in the text. There are no such notes in any of Giovanni Ardinghelli's copies, but it is useful to keep in mind the conditions under which he completed them. Indeed, we owe a great deal to this Florentine prison because it indirectly helped to provide both the best and the worst copy of the *Caccia di Diana*, each made by the hand of a prisoner copying for payment, desperate to pay off his debts.

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[56] Emphasis added. Cursi 2009, 170. See also 168–71.

[57] Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, II. II. 17, cc. 51^v–52^r: "Here ends Giovanni Boccaccio's *Comedy of the Nymphs*, copied in the Stinche in the year 1414 by Andrea di Pierino from Florence in the midst of its many hardships, on account of which I pray those who will read this book will forgive me if there are errors in it, for the place is full of snares laid by capricious Fortune. Thanks be to Christ. Amen" (Cursi, 2009, 175; my translation).

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