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ANTONIO PISTOIA: THE POETIC WORLD OF A CUSTOMS COLLECTOR

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### Abstract

The object of the present study is Antonio Pistoia (1436?-1502), a jocular poet and customs collector who worked mainly in Northern Italy. Although his reputation as a notable literary figure has suffered from neglect in recent times, his work was appreciated by and known to his contemporaries including Pietro Aretino, Ludovico Ariosto, Matteo Bandello, Francesco Berni and Baldesar Castiglione. Research on his life and work came to a halt at the beginning of this century and since then he has failed to attract significant attention. The present study attempts to review and re-examine both the man and his work with a view to putting Antonio Pistoia back on the literary map.

My thesis is based on the idea that a poet can be explored from various points of view and with different methodologies tailored to the objects under investigation. In the case of Pistoia a biographical history alone or an interpretation of his work alone would provide only partial results. By combining the two I have attempted to see how he and his work fitted within the cultural scene, the social and historical setting of Renaissance Italy in a period of political and military crisis. Based on archive work and on new textual material retrieved from a number of European libraries, this study challenges and tests widely held theories concerning both his biography and his literary production. By collecting fresh references and winnowing old ones, it throws new light on a series of specific issues from matters of identification relating to the poet's life, the

critical fortune of his collection of sonnets, his play *Panfila* and other minor works, and to problems of uncertain authorship, including poems of undisputed, doubtful and arbitrary attribution; the final section is devoted to his *Canzoniere*, its composition and the tradition to which it belongs and a thematic and stylistic overview of his poems. A codicological analysis of the allegedly autograph manuscript and a listing of Pistoia's archival documents, manuscripts and early printed sources, completely assembled for the first time and comprehensive of additional new findings, conclude the study.

### Acknowledgments

I should like to express my profound thanks to Professors Anna Laura Lepschy and Giovanni Aquilecchia for their unswerving support and for having patiently supervised my dissertation.

I am indebted to the Gladys Kriebble Delmas Foundation, the Society for Renaissance Studies, the Central Research Fund and the Graduate School of University College London for having generously supported my research throughout the years. My thanks also go to Professors Albinia de La Mare and Lauro Martines as well as to the staff of the British Library, the Bodleian Library and to all those European libraries and archives which I have visited in the course of my study.

I wish to dedicate my work to Diego Zancani who, for the past years, has put up with me and Pistoia with great *sprezzatura*.



## Preface

Apart from a very faint school recollection, it was really in the *quondam* British Library that I came across that 'spirito bizzarro del Pistoia' as Francesco Berni had aptly described him almost five hundred years ago. More curiosity was aroused after a reading of a few of his poems, some lines of which had been widely quoted by his contemporaries as evidence of his facility of composition and originality. So the question from which I started was a straightforward 'Why was Antonio Pistoia *bizzarro*? and 'Was there a model for such *bizzarria*?'. After having enjoyed a short but fairly intense popularity following his death in 1502, his poetry had quickly fallen into a steady decline until the middle of last century when together with many other poets of his time, his work was resurrected from obscurity. It was thanks to the interest and discoveries of five scholars, namely Antonio Cappelli, Severino Ferrari, Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti, Rodolfo Renier and above all Erasmo Pèrcopo that Pistoia, or perhaps I should say, like most, Antonio Cammelli detto Il Pistoia, became more than just a name. It was from this period up to the beginning of the current century that the most important manuscripts were located and edited, archival documents were published and a major biography, together with a number of articles, were written; all this work was going to be crowned, much later on in the 1970s, by an exhaustive entry prepared by Domenico De Robertis for the *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*. It really sounded as if nothing much could be added

apart from a critical edition of his *Canzoniere*. And yet this was far from the truth as I hope my research will prove. Apart from the correction of factual errors, and the discovery of a few new testimonies of Pistoia's work - some of which are described in a short article of mine in *Schede umanistiche* - I felt that some more questions needed further investigation, but without a thorough examination of the foundations on which previous work was based it was impossible to proceed. It was through the task of re-tracing the steps of previous scholars that I realized the importance of a full re-examination of their work. Thanks to the perusal of archival documents I was able to establish the poet's real name and to shed new light on matters which had never been tested before but simply taken for granted (this explains the reason why it was necessary to peg down almost every sentence with footnotes). The exciting task of directly consulting documentary and textual material, which was partially known or completely fresh, allowed me to establish new facts and to question old ones; a codicological study of the Ambrosiana manuscript H.223 inf., the very codex which was believed to be autograph, proved of great importance and a comparison between Antonio Pistoia's hand, known to us from some personal letters, and the script of MS H.223 inf. gave remarkable results. It soon became clear that a complete reassessment of both the life and the work of Antonio Pistoia was really necessary and the research could not therefore privilege or focus on one aspect instead of another. Pistoia was primarily a tax collector of the Duke of Ferrara, beset by financial worries and by ill-health largely caused by venereal disease, and yet he was able to produce a

substantial amount of poetic compositions which he collected to donate to the Marchioness of Mantua. Therefore I was constantly aware of the need to investigate many more aspects of his work than was possible in the present thesis. The need to keep it within manageable limits of space has dictated many constraints.

Each of the topics discussed here might deserve a book to itself, but it is hoped that my work, which I consider preliminary and incomplete, will prove a sound starting point for future research in which individual issues can be investigated and assessed in greater detail.

From a practical point of view, I have tried to double check all my material, including quotations and sources. This has involved a considerable amount of time and patience, but I hope it was worth it, as I commend this work to the *benevolo lettore* or *lettrice*.



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## List of abbreviations

## Archives and libraries

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| ASGu               | Sezione di Archivio di Stato, Gubbio                                |
| ASMi               | Archivio di Stato, Milan  |
| ASMn               | Archivio di Stato, Mantua   |
| ASMo               | Archivio di Stato, Modena   |
| ASPC               | Archivio di Stato, Piacenza   |
| ASPt               | Archivio di Stato, Pistoia  |
| Birmingham C       | Central Library   |
| Bologna C Carducci | Casa Carducci   |
| Bologna C          | Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio                              |
| Bologna U          | Biblioteca Universitaria  |
| Budapest F         | Fővárosi Szabó Ervin Könyvtár (Metropolitan<br>Ervin Szabó Library) |
| Chicago JR         | The Joseph Regenstein Library                                       |
| Ferrara C          | Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea  |
| Florence N         | Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale                                       |
| Forlì C            | Biblioteca Comunale A. Saffi  |
| London BL          | The British Library   |
| Lucca S            | Biblioteca Statale  |
| Mantua C           | Biblioteca Comunale   |
| Milan Ambr         | Biblioteca Ambrosiana   |
| Milan N            | Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense                                      |
| Milan T            | Biblioteca Trivulziana  |
| Modena Est         | Biblioteca Estense  |
| Naples SNSP        | Società Napoletana di Storia Patria                                 |

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Oxford <i>B</i>         | Bodleian Library   |
| Paris <i>BN</i>         | Bibliothèque Nationale de France                               |
| Parma <i>Pal</i>        | Biblioteca Palatina  |
| Perugia <i>C</i>        | Biblioteca Comunale Augusta                                    |
| Pesaro <i>O</i>         | Biblioteca Oliveriana  |
| Pisa <i>U</i>           | Biblioteca Universitaria                                       |
| Pistoia <i>C</i>        | Biblioteca Comunale Forteguerriana                             |
| Ravenna <i>C</i>        | Biblioteca Classense   |
| Reggio Emilia <i>C</i>  | Biblioteca Comunale Antonio Panizzi                            |
| Rome <i>Ang</i>         | Biblioteca Angelica  |
| Rome <i>Cas</i>         | Biblioteca Casanatense   |
| Rome <i>Cors</i>        | Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei<br>Lincei e Corsiniana |
| Rome <i>N</i>           | Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio<br>Emanuele II          |
| Seville <i>BC</i>       | Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Colombina                    |
| Vatican City <i>BAV</i> | Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana                                 |
| Venice <i>N</i>         | Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana                                  |
| Verona <i>C</i>         | Biblioteca Civica  |

Most frequently cited literary journals

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <i>BSP</i>  | <i>Bullettino Storico Pistoiese</i>                |
| <i>GSLI</i> | <i>Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana</i> |
| <i>LI</i>   | <i>Lettere Italiane</i>                            |
| <i>RCLI</i> | <i>Rivista Critica della Letteratura Italiana</i>  |
| <i>SFI</i>  | <i>Studi di Filologia Italiana</i>                 |
| <i>SLI</i>  | <i>Studi di Letteratura Italiana</i>               |

## Other abbreviations

|       |                 |
|-------|-----------------|
| bk.   | book            |
| c.    | circa           |
| cent. | century/ies     |
| col.  | column/s        |
| chap. | chapter         |
| fasc. | fascicule/s     |
| fn.   | footnote        |
| n.s.  | new series      |
| no.   | number/s        |
| pt.   | part            |
| s.    | series          |
| s.a.  | sine anno       |
| s.l.  | sine loco       |
| s.n.  | sine notis      |
| s.t.  | sine typographo |
| t.    | tome            |



### Transcription criteria

All transcriptions and translations are mine unless otherwise indicated. The following rules apply to all transcriptions from primary and secondary sources, whether archival documents, manuscripts, early printed editions and eighteenth-century texts. I expanded abbreviations, both suspensions and contractions, into round brackets ( ) and the symbol of the ampersand into *et*. As for textual omissions by the scribe I used angle brackets (< >) when I wished to make good or I could not make good; when it was necessary to draw on another source due to damage to the manuscript, and the supplement was not conjectural, I have indicated so with half square brackets (⌊ ⌋). As to textual interpolation by the scribe I used braces when I wished to cancel ({ }). For a problematic reading where the text was corrupt, obscure or I was unsure of the correct reading I used *obeli* alias daggers († †). As for scribal alterations I used slashes when the insertions appear on the writing line (/ \), between the lines (\ /) and double slashes if they appear in a margin (\\ //). With regard to cancellations by washing, scraping, pouncing, crossing out and expunction I used square brackets ([ ]) and as to accidental loss due to trimming, tearing, rodents and spillage I used double square brackets ([ ]). I applied modern word division; however the prepositions *de la*, *a la*, etc., were transcribed both as one or two separate words according to how they were originally written; in some cases, when necessary, I supplied or altered the original

punctuation. As far as orthography is concerned, I added accents and apostrophes according to modern usage, I differentiated between consonantal *u*, which I transcribed as *v* and vocalic *u*. I transcribed *j* as *i*, and I applied lower and capital cases, where necessary, according to modern use; I did not modify the length of any anomalous lines.

When folios were not numbered I used square brackets. I have scrupulously followed the original signatures of printed editions leaving majuscules and minuscules unaltered. The first time I cite from an archival document I indicate, when possible, the relevant modern edition in which the complete or partial text has been published.

## CHAPTER ONE

## ANTONIO PISTOIA: THE LIFE OF A CUSTOMS COLLECTOR

Reggio Emilia, April 1494. Middle of the night. The captain of Porta Santa Croce was at the time fast asleep in the tower. Suddenly he was awakened. Someone was attempting to break in. The image he must have conjured up was that of Biasio da le Charte and Hieronimo da Predoniera who, in the past, had trespassed on his property and jeopardized his life. This time the two armed men and their accomplices, 'p(er)son(e) p(re)sumptuose c(he) ardiscono mette(r) mano ala porta p(redet)ta et ali rastelli', were after his weapons '\\minacian<d>o la moglie et figlioli soi//'.<sup>1</sup> On 12th of April 1494, Matteo Maria Boiardo, at the time captain of Reggio Emilia, was informed of the incident and he was asked to sort out the wrongs and put an end to 'tali mancham(en)ti et desordeni'<sup>2</sup> committed against Antonio Pistoia, the captain of Porta Santa Croce.

Remembered by the Marchioness of Mantua, Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, as an 'ingenioso et faceto poeta [...] digno de eterna memoria',<sup>3</sup> Antonio Pistoia was a small, stooping man of dark

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<sup>1</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Archivio per Materie, Letterati Carteggio, Busta 13 (complete text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'Nuovi documenti su Antonio Cammelli, i figliuoli ed i suoi "Sonetti"', *RCLI*, 19, Jan-March 1914, no. 1-3, pp. 244-250 (pp. 245-246)).

<sup>2</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Archivio per Materie, Letterati Carteggio, Busta 13.

<sup>3</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 14.01.1511-02.02.1512, Busta 2996, Registro 29, f. 81r (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite ed inedite di Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoia*, edited by Antonio Cappelli and Severino Ferrari (Leghorn: Vigo, 1884), pp. lii-



complexion and irregular features who left his home town in Tuscany to set out for a journey which was to lead him through some of the major cultural centres of Renaissance Italy. His apophthegms and repartees were well known to his contemporaries who praised his sarcasm, sense of humour<sup>4</sup> and style for being 'più presto al senso [...] che non alla limata, tersa et leggiadra lingua'.<sup>5</sup> Baldassarre Castiglione and Matteo Bandello talked of his quick-witted answers and 'festevoli muse'.<sup>6</sup> Pietro

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liii; from now on it will be quoted as Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*). It is worth mentioning that in their transcription the editors omitted the adjective 'cara' in front of 'gentildonna', line two, and italianized several words among which 'compositioni', 'domesticheza', 'referendovi' and 'dilligentia'.

<sup>4</sup> Galeotto del Carretto, *Tempio de amore* (Milan: Alexander Minutianus, 1518), sig. F2v: 'L'altro è il Pistoia, che con stil faceto/dà a gli ascoltanti, et a li lector gran spassi'; Cassio da Narni, *La morte del Danese* (Venice: Alvise de Tortis, 1534), sig. K1v-K2r (bk. 2, canto 4): 'Pistoia v'era in la medesma sede/che <in> dir faceto ogn'altro al mondo excede [...] Un altro di tal vena era con ello/da cui forse il Pistoia imparò l'arte/in fro(n)te scripto haveva io son Burchiello/che di obscuri sonetti e(m)pì più carte'. The scene is taking place in the palace of the Venere Celeste where Cassio placed a number of illustrious characters who had belonged to the Este court; according to Daniela Calarco this passage was Cassio's 'più ardita impresa poetica con la citazione del fiore delle corti di Ferrara e di Mantova'. Daniela Calarco, 'La "Morte del Danese" di Cassio da Narni' (unpublished dissertation, University of Rome La Sapienza, 1985-1986), pp. 106-107. An anastatic printing of the *editio princeps* of *La morte del Danese* (Ferrara: Lorenzo di Rossi da Valenza, 1521) will be edited by Alberto Casadei and published by the Istituto di Studi Rinascimentali di Ferrara. Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena, in his elegiacal sonnet for the death of Serafino Aquilano, imagined that the latter had bequeathed to Pistoia his 'facetie'. The sonnet is published in Serafino Aquilano, *Collettanee grece, latine, e vulgari per diversi auctori moderni, nella morte del'ardente Seraphino Aquilano*, edited by Giovanni F. Achillini (Bologna: Caligula de' Bazaleriis, 1504), sig. G1v-G2r.

<sup>5</sup> Sigismondo Fanti, *Triumpho di fortuna* (Modena: Edizioni Aldine, 1983 [reprint of the 1527 edition]), sig. AA3r.

<sup>6</sup> Baldassarre Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano*, edited by Ettore Bonora (Milan: Mursia, 1972), pp. 174-175 (bk. 2, chap. 67): 'Rise messer Bernardo, poi suggiunse: - Di questi sono



Aretino was familiar with his 'arguzia' and 'prontezza',<sup>7</sup> Ludovico Ariosto enjoyed his pungent satire and Francesco Berni appreciated his bizarre sense of humour.<sup>8</sup> Who was then this man remembered by both major and minor figures of the time like Leonardo da Vinci,<sup>9</sup> Lelio Manfredi, Girolamo Casio de' Medici,

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infiniti esempi, detti da gran signori ed omini gravissimi. Ma ridesi ancora spesso delle comparazioni, come scrisse il nostro Pistoia a Serafino: «Rimanda il valigion che t'assimiglia»; ché, se ben vi ricordate, Serafino s'assimigliava molto ad una valigia'; Matteo Bandello, *Novelle*, edited by Giuseppe G. Ferrero (Turin: UTET, 1978), p. 317 (tale 34): 'questa bella e nobilissima compagnia si saporitamente rise, non ci essendo nessun di loro, credo io, che meglio di me non conosca tutte le sue [i.e. Gandino's] taccherelle e tutti i suoi fecciosi modi, degni de le festevoli muse del Pistoia o de le piacevoli del Bernia che ora vive'.

<sup>7</sup> Pietro Aretino, 'Dal «Ragionamento de le corti»', *Opere di Pietro Aretino e di Anton Francesco Doni*, edited by Carlo Cordié (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1976), pp. 436-457 (p. 454): 'Il Pistoia [...] ebbe [...] arguzia e prontezza, ma un carlino non mai; e ciò dicano i sonetti contra tinelli, camere locande e letti a vettura'.

<sup>8</sup> Ludovico Ariosto, *Opere: Carmina, rime, satire, Erbolato, lettere*, edited by Mario Santoro (Turin: UTET, 1989), p. 428 (satire 6, lines 94-96): 'Ma se degli altri io vuo' scoprir gli altari, /tu dirai che rubato e del Pistoia/e di Petro Aretino abbia gli armari'; Francesco Berni, *Rime*, edited by Danilo Romei (Milan: Mursia, 1985), p. 126 (sonnet 49, lines 1-4): 'O spirito bizzarro del Pistoia, /dove sei tu? Ché ti perdi un soggetto, /un'opra da compor, non che un sonetto, /più bella del Danese e dell'Ancroia'. In a poem of doubtful attribution entitled 'In lode del caldo del letto', Berni refers to Pistoia in the following fashion: '[Il caldo delle stufe] guarisce i granchi, e fa tirar le tirar [sic] le cuoia; /E fa tant'altri mirabili effetti, /Che stancherian l'Aretin e 'l Pistoia'. The poem is published in Francesco Berni, *Rime, poesie latine e lettere edite e inedite*, edited by Antonio Virgili (Florence: Le Monnier, 1885), p. 174 (chap. 3, lines 40-42). According to Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage: le lexique érotique des poètes de l'équivoque de Burchiello à Marino (XV<sup>e</sup>-XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Lille: Presses Universitaire de Lille, 1981), 4 tomes, the title 'In lode del caldo del letto' means 'en réalité, "A la louange de l'anus"', t. 1, p. 279 (from now on this work will be quoted as Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*).

<sup>9</sup> Leonardo da Vinci, *Il codice Atlantico di Leonardo da Vinci nella Biblioteca Ambrosiana di Milano*, edited by Giovanni Piumati (Milan: Hoepli, 1894-1904), vol. 1, p. 6: 'Antonio da



Diomede Guidalotti<sup>10</sup> and Nicolò Franco<sup>11</sup> who mentioned his name

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pistonia glia glia djche/antonio chitenpo a . e tempo .  
 aspetta/p(er)de l'amjcho . e danari no na maj/chiasino . e  
 eccerbio esser sicrede/ & & & & & &ssendo/&ssendo et max°/4/  
 v(er)ra/v(er)ra' [sic].

<sup>10</sup> Lelio Manfredi, *Manfrediana, un poema e una commedia inediti del primo Cinquecento italiano*, edited by Carmelo Zilli (Bari: Adriatica, 1991), p. 122 (chap. 8, lines 52-57): '«[...] Vedi Giovanni cum Anton Pistoia». /Alora il vólto a lacrime dipinsi, /tratte dal core per suprema gioia. /Tre volte cum le braccia il col gli avinsi, /e per tre volte ogni bramata imago/fuggì gli amplexi, unde lieve aura io strinsi'; Girolamo Casio de' Medici, *Libro intitulato cronica ove si tratta di epitaphii di amore e di virtute* ([Bologna: Cinthio Achillini, 1529?]), f. 35v: 'Di l'unico poeta Anton Pistoia/Quivi, è, il suo velo, toltovi da morte/Che senza lira, et pletro, il gionse a sorte, /Onde gli disse convien che tu moia'; Diomede Guidalotti, *Tirocinio de le cose vulgari* (Bologna: Caligula de Bazaleriis, 1504), sig. S2v:

Ferma il pie' tu che passi, e il novo caso  
 non ti sia udir con poca indugia a noia:  
 Antonio giace qui detto il Pistoia  
 noto dal primo sol sino all'ocaso.

Il corpo di lui chiude un picol vaso  
 che dil cener di un tal fa festa, e gioia  
 e virtù che non vol che il resto moia  
 gli apre pirene, cirrha, e il bel parnaso.

La fama che empie il mondo ai mortai resta,  
 l'alma è volata fuor di humani inciampi  
 al loco de beati in gioco, e festa.

La ride, e si sollaza, in dolci vampi  
 e, con la cethra in man, l'anime desta  
 che più lieti gli fa li elisii campi.

Antonio Alamanni appealed to Pistoia in a sonnet printed in [Burchiello et al.], *Sonetti del Burchiello del Bellincioni e d'altri poeti fiorentini alla burchiellesca* (London [Lucca & Livorno: s.t.], 1757), 'Sonetti di Messer Antonio Alamanni', pp. xv-xvi: 'Io non invoco Apollo, o altro Iddeo;/e veggio, che le Muse han troppa noia:/l'aiuto Orrinzo, e 'l Fedele, e 'l Pistoia,/Pietro, Panfilo Sasso, e 'l Tibaldeo:/e fra i nostri Toscan l'unico, e 'l Ceo,/questi versacci miei son loro a noia;/E come Marsia, io prenderei [sic] le quoia,/ch'io non son con costor buon citareo'. The edition was according to Michele Messina probably edited by Anton Maria Biscioni. Domenico di Giovanni detto il Burchiello, *Sonetti inediti* (Florence: Olschki, 1952), edited by Michele Messina, p. 36: 'Anche l'edizione con la data di Londra 1757, frutto sembra delle fatiche di A. M.

in conjunction with the mysterious author of *Il Manganello*,<sup>12</sup> one of the most intriguing misogynist poems of the Italian Renaissance? The answer is not easy and Pistoia's life remains an incomplete mosaic from which several tesserae are missing. In his main work, the *Canzoniere*, he dealt with issues ranging from his financial problems, his illness, 'la importunità de la mia galicha egritudine',<sup>13</sup> to his day-to-day activities, political views, sexual tendencies and social life. He shaped and wrought verse to make veiled and cutting statements about rational and emotional matters. Whenever a suitable occasion arose, he did not hesitate to launch an attack against the court, and being a hard-bitten political observer he praised some political leaders while he inveighed against others using poetry as a means of political propaganda. Alternating from a playful to a chastizing mode, from aggressive derision to light-hearted mocking, Pistoia lashed out at his rival poets and made them the butt of scathing derision. In more than five hundred poems he gave insights into his life, but the picture he conveyed was very often elusive. The memory of that spring night of more than five centuries ago which froze

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Biscioni'.

<sup>11</sup> Nicolò Franco, *Rime di Nicolò Franco contro Pietro Aretino*, edited by E[nrico] S[icardi] (Lanciano: Carabba, 1916), p. 99 (lines 9-14): 'Or' io ti pregarei, vecchion mio bello, /che salutassi quella compagnia, /ma sarei pazzo se più ne favello. /Basterà salutarmi a qualche via /il Berna e il Pistoia, e 'l Manganello, /e tutti quei dell'accademia mia'. The 'vecchion mio bello' is Pietro Bembo to whom the sonnet is dedicated.

<sup>12</sup> Diego Zancani ed., *Il Manganello. La repressione del Cornazano contra Manganello* (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1982).

<sup>13</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXIX.3, Novellara, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1452-1706, Busta 1354 (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. xlix-li).



an image of a harassed man, remained with him for a long time and the feeling of a harrowing inability to control one's destiny was to shape his poetic writings as well as his private correspondence.

The circumstances under which Antonio Pistoia abandoned his home town in Tuscany and decided to head northwards are unclear. Even in his *Canzoniere* he very seldom referred to his past and when he did, it was in an ambiguous fashion. No documents and no real evidence have surfaced concerning his whereabouts and his career until the mid-1480s or more precisely until the late spring of 1485 when he became an employee of Duke Ercole I d'Este. On 6th June 1485 he was appointed 'capitano' of Porta Santa Croce<sup>14</sup> in the town of Reggio Emilia having succeeded Michele Tintori known as 'Fra Hi/e\ronimo'<sup>15</sup> who had died on 5th June 1485.<sup>16</sup> As far as his personal finances are concerned, one learns from the extant archival documentation that Pistoia's income for the period June-December 1485 was fixed at 109 'lire de mon(eta) regiana',<sup>17</sup> six 'soldi' and eight 'denari'<sup>18</sup> but

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<sup>14</sup> Porta Santa Croce was erected in 1199 under the *podestà* Guidone Lambertino Bolognese in the second year of his mandate. A manuscript history of Porta Santa Croce dated 12th April 1858 was drawn<sup>u</sup> by D. Gaetano Chierici; the codex is now at Reggio Emilia C, MS Regg.C.259.

<sup>15</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1486, f. 75r.

<sup>16</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1485, segnato 'R', f. LXXVIIIr. The document contains a reference to Biasio da le Charte who was given fourteen 'lire' and eight 'soldi' to proceed with the burial of Michele Tintori.

<sup>17</sup> The Emperor Frederick II granted the town of Reggio Emilia the authority to mint in 1233. The history of the mint in Reggio Emilia is illustrated by Mario Borghi, *Reggio comunale e*



until December 1491 his monthly wage amounted to sixteen 'lire' for a yearly income of 192 'lire'.<sup>19</sup> Although his wage as a

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la sua zecca 1233-1573 (Reggio Emilia: Libreria Moderna, 1977).

<sup>18</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1485, segnato 'R', f. 79r (complete text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli e i suoi "sonetti faceti" (Rome [Naples]: Giannini, 1913<sup>2</sup>), p. 606; from now on it will be quoted as Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli). The work was favourably reviewed by Alfredo Chiti, 'Erasmo Pèrcopo - Antonio Cammelli e i suoi «Sonetti faceti» - Roma, 1913', *BSP*, 16, 1914, fasc. 3-4, pp. 196-199. Some confusion seems to surround the actual date of publication of Pèrcopo's biography, whose first part bears the date 1904-1906. This was also pointed out by Tobia R. Toscano in 'Bibliografia degli scritti di Erasmo Pèrcopo' published in Luigi Tansillo, *Il canzoniere edito ed inedito: secondo una copia dell'autografo ed altri manoscritti e stampe. Poesie eroiche ed encomiastiche. Edizione delle carte autografe di E. Pèrcopo*, edited by Tobia R. Toscano (Naples: Liguori, 1996), vol. 2., pp. 329-366 (p. 351): 'La seconda parte di questo lavoro, poi raccolto in volume (vedi anno 1913), compare nel vol. VI di SLI [i.e. Studi di letteratura italiana], fascicoli 3-4, che, sebbene sul frontespizio rechino l'attestazione «pubblicati nel maggio 1909», nel 1912 non erano stati ancora stampati. Sulla III pag. di copertina di «RCLI» [i.e. Rassegna critica della letteratura italiana] XVI (1911 [ma 1912]) vengono infatti ancora segnalati come «di pross. pubblicazione»'.

<sup>19</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Giornale, 1485, ff. 87v-88r, f. 90r, f. 92r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1486, f. 75r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1487, f. 8r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1488, f. 9r (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 608); Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1489, f. 9r (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 608); Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1490, f. 6r (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 608); Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1491, f. 7v (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 609). From September to October 1485 and again from July to August 1499, Pistoia was assisted in his work by his nephew Andrea who acted as his 'locotene(n)te': ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro autentico, 1485, segnato 'R', f. LXXVIIIr; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei



'salarariato'<sup>20</sup> remained unaltered throughout the years, his job title varied from time to time. In the account books relating to the years 1485-88, he appears as 'capitano'<sup>21</sup> and for the two-

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Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Giornale, 1485, f. 87v, f. 90r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1499, segnato 'B', f. LXXXVIIIr; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Giornale, 1499, segnato 'B', f. 87r.

<sup>20</sup> It is very likely that Pistoia did not rent the gabella; he was probably paid directly from the local Massaria as can be evinced from the following documentation: ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1486, f. 75r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1487, f. 27v, f. 38r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1488, f. 52r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1489, f. 55r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1490, f. 43v; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1491, f. 55v. The differences among 'nomine regolari, vendite' and 'affitti' are after all rather subtle as Marco Folin points out in his detailed and highly fascinating article 'Note sugli ufficiali negli stati estensi (secoli XV-XVI)', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, s. 4, 1, 1997, pp. 99-154 (p. 120): 'di fatto v'erano poche differenze - e in ogni caso si tratta di differenze in gran parte sfuggenti nelle fonti - fra il comprare una carica, l'affittarla per qualche anno, l'esservi regolarmente nominato dopo aver versato una congrua garanzia di solvibilità che sarebbe stata restituita alla fine dell'incarico, oppure ancora l'accedervi anticipandone le rendite al duca all'atto della nomina e riscuotendo poi gli interessi sulle entrate dell'ufficio'.

<sup>21</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1485, segnato 'R', f. 79r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1486, f. 75r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1487, f. 8r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1488, f. 52r.



year period 1487-89 he was also referred to as 'contestabile';<sup>22</sup> in 1489 he lost the title of 'capitano', retained that of 'contestabile' and acquired that of 'gabelino',<sup>23</sup> customs official, while in the biennium 1490-91 he was simply called 'contestabile';<sup>24</sup> in other words his post was part of the *officia minuta* which also included judges *ad minora* and *notai*.

Although the account books of the Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, relating to the years 1492-97 have not survived in the State Archive of Modena,<sup>25</sup> it is still possible

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<sup>22</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1487, f. 27v, f. 38r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1488, f. 9r; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1489, f. 8v. According to Angelico Prati, *Vocabolario etimologico italiano* ([Milan]: Garzanti, 1951), the term 'conestabile' or 'contestabile', pp. 310-311, referred to the officer in charge of a group of soldiers or of a fortress and this is how it was explained by Machiavelli and Varchi. The etymology comes *stabuli* indicates that originally the term meant stables inspector.

<sup>23</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1489, f. 9r, f. 55r. Tomaso Garzoni in his work *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*, edited by Giovanni B. Bronzini with the collaboration of Pina De Meo and Luciano Carcereri (Florence: Olschki, 1996), vol. 2, p. 1051 (discourse 138), gave a poignant description of this job: 'quando si ragiona di daciari, et gabellieri, par che si nomini il diavolo et peggio, essendo essi tiranni de' passeggeri in ogni minutezza, perché la guardan tanto in sottile, che una puina a pena portata da un villano non è sicura dalla gabella'.

<sup>24</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1490, f. 6r, f. 43v; Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1491, f. 7v.

<sup>25</sup> Although within the system of the Camera Ducale, due to the type of accountancy employed in the Este chancery, the same payments were transcribed both in the *Giornale*, which contained



to establish, on the basis of some official correspondence and the poet's private letters, the duration of his appointment as tax collector at Porta Santa Croce and the year of his dismissal. A letter of complaint, sent to Matteo Maria Boiardo, captain of Reggio Emilia, on 12th April 1494, documents that Pistoia at the time was still acting as 'capitano d(el)la porta d(i) S(an)ta Croce'.<sup>26</sup> In two epistles respectively penned on 1st May 1497 and on 1st January 1498, both addressed to Duke Ercole I d'Este, the poet, while seeking help, gave an indication as to the year of his dismissal which is likely to have taken place at the beginning of 1497 directly on the Duke's orders:

P(er)ché io ill(ustrissi)mo Signor mio non crederò mai che quella mi abbi aba(n)donato p(er) avermi privo dello ofitio qui a Rezo, essendo servo fedele a quella [...] e dal bisogno mio essendo mosso, piglierò ardire di domandare che epsa scriva al massaro qua da Rezo che mi dia o faccia dare uno mozo di formento e otto misure di vino, aciò che chon li mei figl<i>oli io sobstentar mi possi p(er)ché sono qua senza guadagno, senza roba e forestiero<sup>27</sup>

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very detailed information, and in the *Libro Autentico*, which listed information taken from other registers, no documentation has survived in the present instance; the same destiny is shared by the majority of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *archivi comunali* in Emilia Romagna. The accounting system employed in the Este chancery is illustrated by Pietro Sitta in his *Saggio sulle istituzioni finanziarie del ducato estense nei secoli XV e XVI* (Ferrara: Tipografia Sociale, 1891 [offprint]) and more recently by Thomas Tuohy, 'Struttura e sistema di contabilità della camera estense nel Quattrocento', *Atti e memorie deputazione di storia patria per le antiche provincie modenesi*, s. 11, 4, 1982, pp. 115-139 and Marco Folini, 'Note sugli ufficiali negli stati estensi (secoli XV-XVI)', cit.

<sup>26</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Archivio per Materie, Letterati Carteggio, Busta 13.

<sup>27</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Archivio per Materie, Letterati Carteggio, Busta 13 (complete text in Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi di Antonio Pistoia e sonetti satirici senza nome d'autore*, edited by Antonio Cappelli (Bologna: Commissione per i Testi di Lingua, 1968 [reprint of the 1865 edition]), p. 19; from now on it will be quoted as Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti*

and again:

Colui che non senza lacrime ti scrive è quel tanto tuo svicierato servo Antonio da Pistoia al quale mo fa lo anno tolesti quel povero naufragio dello ofitio della porta di Santa Crocie a Rezo [...]; conducesti un povero peregrino, nelle altrui terre forestiero, senza peculio alcuno disperso tra le fortune le quale tante sono ch'io no(n) obstare a li diversi colpi posso senza lo adiuto tuo.<sup>28</sup>

His pleas did not fall on deaf ears and his services were not rejected because by 1497 'm(ast)ro Antonio da Pistolia' received a payment of 120 'lire', eleven 'soldi' and one 'denar[o]' and on 19th November 1498 he was given ninety-three 'lire' and fifteen 'soldi'.<sup>29</sup> To his assistance also came Isabella d'Este Gonzaga who on 22nd December 1498 received a letter from Siviero dei Sivieri, secretary to Duke Ercole I, in which she was reassured as to a probable appointment for Pistoia:

Io ho inteso, p(er) due de V(ostra) S(ignoria), q(uan)to la me ricoma(n)da el facto del Pistoia et de M(esser) B(er)nardino Minutello p(er) uno officio che cadauno desideraria c(on)sequir(e) da q(ue)sto n(ost)ro ill(ustrissi)mo S(ignor) Duca in q(ue)sta sua nova distributione de officii. Et p(er) risposta li dico ch(e) certam(en)te p(er) honor(e) et rivere(n)tia de la S(ignoria) V(ostra), io me sforzarò in tuto q(ue)llo che me serà possibile, p(er)ch(é) loro habiano suo intento et multo volunteri et de bona voglia. Subiu(n)gendo a loco et t(em)po debito ala Ex(cellentia) del p(re)libato n(ost)ro S(ignor) Duca, la calda int(er)cessione che ne fa V(ostra)

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*giocosi*).

<sup>28</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Archivio per Materie, Letterati Carteggio, Busta 13 (complete text in Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., pp. 20-21).

<sup>29</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1498, f. LXVr (complete text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 609); f. 65r (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 609).



S(ignoria) p(er) loro.<sup>30</sup>

Siverio dei Sivieri did in the end succeed in his objective and on the last day of March 1499 Pistoia received sixteen 'lire r(eggia)ne' for his first payment as 'contestabile' at Porta San Pietro in Reggio Emilia, having replaced Andrea da Nigoni.<sup>31</sup> From a letter sent by the Marchioness on 15th July 1499 to Francesco Rangone, who had succeeded Matteo Maria Boiardo as captain of Reggio Emilia, we learn that the tower, which was about to accommodate Pistoia, was in bad condition as Rangone was asked to refurbish it:

El Pistoglia ne ha facto intendere ch(e) la porta de la quale lui è capitaneo, lî a n(ost)ra intercessione, ha bisogno di riparatione p(er) comodità di sua habitatione, quando li accaderà venirli. Et p(er) lo amore ch(e) p(er) le vertù sue li portiamo, desiderarissimo fusse acomodato. Però ve pregamo ch(e), p(er) nostro amore et respecto, vogliate operare ch(e) la casa li sia aconcia i<n> modo ch(e) comodamente possi habitarla.<sup>32</sup>

Although Rangone replied ten days later reassuring the

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<sup>30</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXI.3, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1497-1499, Busta 1235, f. 545r (partial text in Alessandro Luzio and Rodolfo Renier, 'La coltura e le relazioni letterarie d'Isabella d'Este Gonzaga', *GSLI*, 39, 1902, pp. 193-251 (p. 197)).

<sup>31</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1499, segnato 'B', f. 89r (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 609). According to D. Gaetano Chierici the area between Porta San Pietro, which was built around 1200-1226, and Porta Santa Croce was walled in 1314. This was the last part to be furnished with walls as the town of Reggio Emilia had already completed its fortification in 1281. Reggio Emilia C, MS Regg.C.259, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 11.02.1499-28.10.1499, Busta 2993, Registro 10, f. 33v, no. 105 (complete text in Rodolfo Renier, 'Del Pistoia', *Rivista storica mantovana*, 1, 1885, fasc. 1-2, pp. 71-87 (p. 75, fn. 1)).

Marchioness that the tower would be restored as soon as possible 'et se ben no(n) lo farò cusì p(re)sto, {p(re)sto} lo farò o(mn)i(n)o',<sup>33</sup> Isabella sent him a further note on 8th August reiterating her request.<sup>34</sup> This clearly indicates that although Pistoia was not one of Isabella's court protégés, he certainly was favoured by her on numerous occasions.

The new post of Porta San Pietro brought Pistoia a monthly salary of sixteen 'lire re(ggia)ne' and regular payments until the end of December 1499.<sup>35</sup> One last payment of one 'lira', thirteen 'soldi' and four 'denari' was made on 8th January 1500 and the last mention of him as 'co(n)testabile' bore the date of 3rd February 1500.<sup>36</sup> It is impossible, owing to the lack of documentation, to establish precisely when he lost his post but it must have been prior to the end of October 1500 because at this stage Pistoia had already repaired to Novellara, a village about eleven miles from Reggio Emilia. It was from there that on 29th October and 28th November 1500 he corresponded with the Marchioness, pleading for her assistance in a private matter

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<sup>33</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXII.3, Modena-Reggio, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1477-1499, Busta 1289, f. 624r (partial text in Rodolfo Renier, 'Del Pistoia', cit., p. 75, fn. 1).

<sup>34</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 11.02.1499-28.10.1499, Busta 2993, Registro 10, f. 38r, no. 118 (partial text in Rodolfo Renier, 'Del Pistoia', cit., p. 75, fn. 1).

<sup>35</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1499, segnato 'B', f. 89r.

<sup>36</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Giornale, 1499, segnato 'B', f. 98r, f. 101r (complete texts in Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 610).



relating to a stolen cloak.<sup>37</sup> He also wrote twice on 10th January 1501 to her husband Francesco Gonzaga trying to persuade him to stage one of his works<sup>38</sup> and to ask for justice in connection with a bogus treatment given by a roguish Spanish physician to a son of his who had died of syphilis on 5th January 1501.<sup>39</sup> The Marquis, who reassured Pistoia on the above matter,

a la parte del medico spagnolo ch(e) dici haverti  
aggiuntato, respondemo ch(e) havendo tu ragione, et  
dima(n)dandola, la no(n) ti mancharà ali tribunali  
n(ost)ri<sup>40</sup>

had, in a previous occasion, endeavoured to engage the good offices of the Podestà of Mantua so that a young son of the poet, who had been accused of sodomy, would be released from prison:

e siamo contenti ch(e) relaxati il figliol del Pistoia  
imputato de havere consentito a sodomia p(er)ch(é) havemo

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<sup>37</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXIX.3, Novellara, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1452-1706, Busta 1354 (complete texts in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. xlvii-xlviii; the transcription slightly differs from the original text as some terms which were written in full such as 'fidelissimo' are published in an abbreviated form). The Marchioness replied shortly after, saying that the matter was being pursued. ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 05.11.1500-13.10.1501, Busta 2993, Registro 12, f. 7v, no. 23 (complete text in Rodolfo Renier, 'Del Pistoia', cit., pp. 75-76, fn. 2).

<sup>38</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXIX.3, Novellara, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1452-1706, Busta 1354 (complete texts in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. xlix; the modern transcription varies from the original as some terms which were written in full, for example 'excelentissimo', 'Excelentia' are published in an abbreviated form and vowels are added at the end of words, i.e. 'vol' is transcribed as 'vole').

<sup>39</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXIX.3, Novellara, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1452-1706, Busta 1354.

<sup>40</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga F.II.9, Copialettere Ordinari Misti, 23.10.1500-18.04.1501, Busta 2910, Registro 169, f. 54v (complete text in Rodolfo Renier, 'Del Pistoia', cit., p. 86).

co(m)passione ala pueritia et ignorantia sua.<sup>41</sup>

As we have just seen, the last year of Pistoia's life was particularly troubled financially and emotionally and his ill-health, being father like son affected by syphilis, did not leave much to be hoped for, and on 29th April 1502 the poet expired:

Veneri a 29 d'aprile MDII morite i(n) Ferr(ar)a Antonio da Pistoia ex(cellentissi)mo poeta vulgare.<sup>42</sup>

It is not known where his mortal remains were interred but it seems reasonable to assume that he was buried in the town of Ferrara.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Ordinari Misti, 26.12.1499-01.06.1500, Busta 2909, Registro 165, f. 61v (partial text in [Anonymous], [untitled short notices], *GSLI*, 22, 1893, p. 437).

<sup>42</sup> Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408, f. 5v. The manuscript is a late fifteenth-, early sixteenth-century miscellaneous collection of poems by Serafino Aquilano, Pietro Bembo, Vincenzo Calmeta, Nicolò Correggio, Lelio Nicolò Cosmico, Antonio Pistoia, Antonio Tebaldeo and many other versifiers of the time.

<sup>43</sup> In his description of the Ferrarese church Santa Maria della Rosa, Thomas Tuohy, *Herculean Ferrara: Ercole d'Este (1471-1505) and the invention of a ducal capital* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), affirms that, p. 386: 'the poet Tomaso Camelli da Pistoia' was buried in Santa Maria della Rosa in 1516. This is only partially correct. Tuohy's source is Marco A. Guarini's *Compendio storico dell'origine, accrescimento, e prerogative delle chiese, e luoghi pii della città, e diocesi di Ferrara* (Ferrara: Baldini, 1621). Guarini in his book does state that Tomaso Camelli da Pistoia was buried in Santa Maria della Rosa in 1516. He also transcribes Tomaso's epitaph whose tombstone has unfortunately not survived because the church was demolished in 1950. Guarini, however, does not describe Tomaso as a 'poet' but, p. 139, as a 'gran favorito del Duca Ercole Primo' and in the funeral inscription he is allegedly indicated as 'Ducis Herculis alumno'. It may be likely that Tuohy partially confused the poet Antonio Pistoia with his nephew, Tomaso, who in real life was a high-ranking civil servant of Duke Ercole I d'Este.



### 1.1 An unlikely courtier.

Antonio Pistoia was neither a professional man of letters who lived by his pen nor was he part of a coterie of courtiers<sup>44</sup> or intellectuals. He belonged neither to the 'publish-or-perish humanist' type nor to 'the prosperous humanist of the gentry'.<sup>45</sup> He had a professional status outside the court, while at court he was dismissed as a minor figure, of little interest to cultural life. This state of affairs, however, did not discourage him from becoming a prolific poet whose sonnets enjoyed a high circulation both during and after his lifetime. He promoted his work by sending his composition to high-ranking and distinguished rulers of the time like Ludovico Sforza, Francesco Gonzaga and of course the Marchioness of Mantua, who was truly appreciative of his poetic abilities. He may have either worked for or at their courts as well as at those of Nicolò Correggio, Ercole I d'Este, and Giovanni Pietro Gonzaga but very little evidence has come to light as to his possible visits or sojourns. Much useful information in this respect can be gained from Pistoia's *Canzoniere*, but let it not be forgotten that the intermingling of real life and conventions of court poetry makes the boundary between the two highly problematic. Penning verse was a give and take activity within the patron-poet relationship and Pistoia in his poems would often but not always fulfil the needs of his patrons and cater to their viewpoints in the hope of gaining

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<sup>44</sup> The term *cortigiano* in the Estense administration ranked second after *ufficiale*; the category included *compagni*, *gentiluomini*, *camerlenghi* and *scudieri*.

<sup>45</sup> Werner L. Gundersheimer, *Ferrara: the style of a Renaissance despotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 222-223.



influence and advancement in what was to be an unlikely career as a courtier.

His relationship with Nicolò Correggio, Ercole I d'Este, Francesco Gonzaga, Ludovico Sforza and Giovanni Pietro Gonzaga may be ascertained from Pistoia's poems, enabling the reader, from time to time, to have an idea about which court the poet is referring to and which particular Lord he is addressing. According to what the poet recounts in his *Canzoniere*, it would appear that he had his first taste of courtly life at Correggio. Familiarity, intimacy and genuine affection for Nicolò seemed to have been the main traits characterizing Pistoia's relationship with his first patron. Nicolò is regarded and addressed by Pistoia, throughout the *Canzoniere*, as 'divo signor' and 'fratello'. He is the only Lord mentioned in the concluding sonnet of the collection in which the poet asks his best and most trusted friends to defend his memory after his death. However, the apparently close ties between the two did not seem to have helped Pistoia to elevate his position at court, where he appeared to receive very little consideration. In his sonnets he recounts being ill-treated and finding himself on the lower rungs of the social ladder. He did not gain any material preferment or financial security and most likely, because his expectations were dashed, he decided to venture to Ferrara where, however, he did not encounter better treatment. From his sonnets, it appears that his presence at the Este court furnished entertainment more than erudition. His friends were jesters and people on the fringes of and outside the court *milieu*. His relationship with Ercole I seemed based on deference and awe: the Lord turned into an aloof

figure with whom the poet did not have direct contacts. His financial position must have been critical as he was reduced to asking for individual garments, food and firewood for the winter. This time he addressed the Duke and the Duchess alike in the hope that she would intercede for him and act as a go-between. From the extant documentation, we can affirm that Pistoia certainly had a long-standing relationship with the Gonzagas of Mantua and Novellara and that his contacts with members of the Gonzaga household were frequent. Although he often wrote to the Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, his main interlocutor was the Marchioness, the only one who also seemed to appreciate his work. The sonnets addressed to the Gonzagas often contain specific topographic references, personal information and precise requests. In contrast there is no indication that Pistoia ever worked or stayed at the Sforza court and his relationship with Ludovico Sforza seems to point in this direction. With the exception of a handful of sonnets, most of Pistoia's work relating to the Milanese court deals with Ludovico's political power and activities. His verse for the Sforza ruler is devoid of complaints and requests of any kind and this may well mean that he was not writing on commission and that his poems were unsolicited although, by setting himself the task of extolling Il Moro, Pistoia was possibly hoping for or expecting a tangible reward. From the *Canzoniere*, however, it appears that at the same time Pistoia was familiar with the denizens and poets of the Sforza court among whom he had friends such as Gaspare Visconti and sworn enemies like the Florentine sonneteer Bernardo Bellincioni. Strangely enough, Pistoia's first known sonnet to



be published was a poem written for the death of Bellincioni in the latter's posthumous collection of *Rime*.<sup>46</sup>

## 1.2 Questions of identification.

So far we have looked at the documents which help us build up certain areas of Antonio Pistoia's life. And now I would like to look at the way in which some information was misinterpreted and misled previous scholars in their investigation of Pistoia's existence and contacts with the powerful rulers of his time.

In the official documents relating to his fifteen-year stay in Reggio Emilia, the poet is indicated as Pistoia, Antonio da Pistoia, da Pistolia or Pistolgia and once as Antonio de B(ar)tolomio da Pistoia.<sup>47</sup> He signed his private correspondence in the following fashion: Antonio Vincio da Pistoia, Antonio Vincio Pistoia, Antonius Vintius Pistoriensis, Antonio Pistoia

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<sup>46</sup> Bernardo Bellincioni, *Rime*, edited by Francesco Tanzi (Milan: Filippo di Mantegazzi, 1493), sig. a2r-v. The sonnet is published in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. 55. Pistoia probably penned it either in response to a direct commission or with the hope of replacing the vacuum left by the Florentine poet at the Sforza court in Milan. It is unlikely that he wrote it because he was 'amico e sostenitore del poeta laureato'. The hypothesis, which is put forward by Raffaella Castagnola in 'Milano ai tempi di Ludovico il Moro: cultura lombarda nel codice italiano 1543 della Nazionale di Parigi', *Schifanoia*, 5, 1988, pp. 101-117 (p. 103), is implausible in view of a ferocious invective of twenty sonnets written by Pistoia against Bellincioni. The tirade is listed in Pistoia's most exhaustive extant manuscript, Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 35v, ff. 70v-79v. Many years before Castagnola, Rodolfo Renier had expressed the same opinion in a review of 'Luca Beltrami - Bramante poeta - Milano, A. Colombo e O. Cordani, 1884', *GSLI*, 5, 1885, pp. 234-242 (p. 240, fn. 2): 'Chi sinceramente ne pianse la morte fu il Cammelli'. At that time, however, the assumption was still conceivable because the Ambrosiana manuscript had not been located yet.

<sup>47</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Giornale, 1485, f. 87v.



or simply Pistoia. Since the late seventeenth century, however, the poet's first name and surname have undergone dramatic changes in some literature. Manutio da Pistoia and Giovanni de' Rossi were at different stages thought to be the poet's real names, Pistoia his nickname and Velletri his home town, Tomaso his patronymic and Cammelli his surname. Let us first establish what is accurate and inaccurate, and see how these assumptions originated.

During the course of my research I located a manuscript note attached to a miscellaneous edition of Vincenzo Calmeta published in 1507, which carries the following statement:

Fra le poesie del Calmeta vi sono di particolare alcuni sonetti del Pistoia, cioè del Manutio da Pistoia, come si ricava dal sudd(ett)o catalogo [i.e. of the Capponi Library] fol. 93. Avvi ancora la tragedia d'Antonio da Pistoia, ma se fossero due persone distinte, quello della tragedia e quello de' sonetti, vedi il d(ett)o catalogo fol. 302 et seg(uenti). Vedi anche le Rime de' Poeti Ferraresi nella parola = Antonio da Pistoia.<sup>48</sup>

The 1507 edition does in fact report a sonnet attributed to Antonio Pistoia,<sup>49</sup> but no composition by Manutio da Pistoia. However, a miscellaneous collection of works by Calmeta and other poets published in 1502 lists a 'Capitulo del Manutio da

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<sup>48</sup> Vincenzo Calmeta, *Compendio de cose nove di Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino, 1507), f. [1v]. Copy at London BL, G.10646. The hand looks earlier than and quite different from Thomas Grenville's (1755-1846) and there is no mention of it in R[obin] C. Alston, *Books with manuscript: a short title catalogue of books with manuscript notes in the British Library* (London: The British Library, 1994).

<sup>49</sup> Vincenzo Calmeta, *Compendio de cose nove di Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v].

Pistogia'<sup>50</sup> with the opening line 'Qual pelegrin che i(n) frigida acqua cascha'. If we believed that Manutio da Pistoia and Antonio da Pistoia were the same person then we ought to attribute the capitolo to the latter. But this is not the case. I found no documentation of any kind indicating that Manutio and Antonio are one and the same person and in no primary or secondary sources is the composition 'Qual pelegrin che i(n) frigida acqua cascha' ascribed to the latter.<sup>51</sup>

Further speculations were brought out in the open by the scholar Giovanni Crescimbeni who was responsible for asserting that the poet's real name was Giovanni de' Rossi, Pistoia his nickname and for repeating, although he himself was not very convinced, that the poet originally came from Velletri, a town not far from Rome:

Il Pistoia, di cui non si ha altra certa notizia, che il cognome, quantunque alcuni ci asseriscono che fosse Velletrano [...]. Il suo maggior fiorire fu intorno al 1490, e se, come noi crediamo, è egli questo Pistoia,

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<sup>50</sup> Vincenzo Calmeta, *Opera nova composta per diversi auctori* (Bologna: Giustiniano da Rubiera, 1502), sig D1v-[D2v]. This edition was recently studied by Antonio Rossi 'Opera noua composta per diuersi auctori: un'antologia del 1502', *Il libro di poesia dal copista al tipografo*, edited by Marco Santagata and Amedeo Quondam (Modena: Panini, 1989), pp. 157-176. Although Rossi declares, p. 165, that he was unable to gather any information on Manutio da Pistoia, I found a further mention of him in Marina Bersano Begey and Giuseppe Dondi eds., *Le cinquecentine piemontesi* (Turin: Tipografia Torinese Editrice, 1961-1966), 3 vols. In the section concerning works published in the town of Chivasso, the editors describe Vincenzo Calmeta's *Opera nuova* (Chivasso: Francesco Garrone da Livorno, 1529), vol. 2, p. 397, which allegedly contained a composition or possibly more by Manutio da Pistoia. Unfortunately the edition has not survived.

<sup>51</sup> The *Incipitario unificato della poesia italiana*, edited by Marco Santagata, Bruno Bentivogli, Paola Vecchi Galli and Maria G. Miggiani (Modena: Panini, 1988-1990), 4 vols., does not list the opening line.



quello, al quale scrive il suddetto Aretino una lettera in data del 1545 [...], egli si chiamava Giovanni de' Rossi detto per soprannome il Pistoia venendo così appellato nel corpo di essa; e visse oltre il suddetto anno.<sup>52</sup>

Pietro Aretino had indeed corresponded with a certain Giovanni de' Rossi da Pistoia to whom between 1543 and 1545 he had sent eleven letters.<sup>53</sup> These were addressed both to Giovanni de' Rossi and to Pistoia and we know they are one and the same person because in a letter dated February 1545 and bearing the heading 'A Giovanni de' Rossi', Aretino began his epistle in the following manner: 'Pistoia caro al core del mio affetto'.<sup>54</sup> However, Aretino did not correspond with our Antonio Pistoia who by then was dead. Further evidence is also provided by a letter of Isabella d'Este Gonzaga dated 13th June 1502 in which the Marchioness referred to the poet using the past tense and the telling phrase 'Quando viveva il Pistolia'.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Giovanni M. Crescimbeni, *Comentari intorno alla sua istoria della volgar poesia* (Venice: Basegio, 1730-1731), vol. 2, pt. 2, pp. 329-330. Crescimbeni's statement was also repeated by Andrea Rubbi, *Parnaso italiano ovvero raccolta de' poeti classici italiani* (Venice: Zatta, 1784-1791), t. 6, p. 364: 'Si crede la sua patria Velletri, e il suo nome Giovanni de' Rossi. Fiorì circa il 1490'.

<sup>53</sup> Pietro Aretino, *Il terzo libro de le lettere* (Venice: Gabriel Giolito de' Ferrari, 1546), f. 89v, February 1545; ff. 39v-42v, October 1543; f. 130r-v, May 1545; f. 134v, June 1545; ff. 136v-137r, June 1545; ff. 139v-140r, ff. 141r-142v, ff. 149v-150r, July 1545; f. 244v, f. 260r-v, November 1545 (in this letter Aretino also sent his addressee some stanzas of the epic poem *Marfisa*).

<sup>54</sup> Pietro Aretino, *Il terzo libro de le lettere*, cit., f. 89v.

<sup>55</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 20.10.1501-29.07.1502, Busta 2993, Registro 13, f. 80v, no. 216 (partial text in Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti del Pistoia giusta l'apografo Trivulziano*, edited by Rodolfo Renier (Turin: Loescher, 1888), p. viii; from now on this will be quoted as Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*).



As to the statement that Pistoia was merely a nickname, the bulk of surviving evidence points in one direction only: the name Pistoia was constantly used as a family name, and therefore it is more than plausible to affirm that it was not a nickname.<sup>56</sup>

The matter relating to his patronymic Tomaso is easily explained. Tomaso was one of Pistoia's nephews who had made it so to speak. He was one of Ercole I d'Este's favourite secretaries, 'n(oste)r dil(ectissi)mus',<sup>57</sup> a high-ranking civil servant, who enjoyed a powerful position at court, and in addition to that, he had also married the daughter of Bartolomeo Sivieri, an ex-chancellor of Duke Ercole.<sup>58</sup> Tomaso was a public

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<sup>56</sup> Further evidence is also provided by a letter sent to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga by one of Pistoia's sons; the epistle is signed Marchus Antonius Vincius de Pistoia (ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXVII.3, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1367-1585, Busta 1321; complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. li-lii). A considerable number of other documents providing tangible evidence to this effect can be found in the State Archive of Modena and in particular in the file Archivio Segreto Estense, Particolari, Busta 1114.

<sup>57</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Herculis I Decretorum Archetypa, 1491-1505, Registro XI, Atto 83, f. 73r-v (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'La famiglia di Antonio Cammelli', BSP, 2, 1899, fasc. 2, pp. 49-62 and in particular pp. 58-59, fn. 2).

<sup>58</sup> The diary of the fifteenth-century Ferrarese chronicler Ugo Caleffini is a rich source of information in relation to Tomaso. The manuscript is now at Vatican City BAV, MS Chigiano J.I.4 (a twentieth-century copy of it is at Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.769). To the manuscript collection of the British Library also belongs a work by Caleffini and precisely a diary of the annals of Ferrara relating to the years 1471-1483. The work, MS 22,324, is an abridged copy of the original transcribed in February 1581 by Giulio Mosti and subsequently continued by Girolamo Merenda. The manuscript however, did not prove to be of assistance in my investigation. Further information on Tomaso can be found at ASMo, Camera Ducale, Libri Camerali Diversi, no. 205, *Giornale d'Uscita dell'Anno 1502*, segnato 'BBBB', f. 14r, f. 29v (complete text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'La famiglia di Antonio Cammelli', cit., pp. 58-59, fn. 2); Cancelleria Ducale, Alphonsi I Decretorum Exempla (1505-1533), Registro XIII, Atto 35, f. 32r; Atto 52, f. 51r-v (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'La famiglia di Antonio Cammelli', cit., p. 59, fn. 1).

figure whose fame and social status overshadowed that of his uncle Antonio who struggled to earn a living and often failed to make ends meet. It is interesting to note that the uncle himself in 1498 resorted to the prestige of his nephew in an attempt to win Ercole's favours and gain a new job:

ricordoti almanco l'onore delli mei nepoti se no(n) delli altri almeno di Tomaso da Pistoia al quale ogni detrimento, ogni vergogna mia, sua da tutti si stima; et ti ricordi quanto volentieri da me ancora in erba ti fu oferto. Queste parti Signor mio ti movino a darmi adiuto di qualche ofitio tuo.<sup>59</sup>

Although Tomaso in an official document was also described as 'filiu(m) quonda(m) Antonii de Camellis Pistorien(sem)',<sup>60</sup> it is clear that the poet was not Tomaso's father although the latter and the poet bore the same name and surname.<sup>61</sup>

It is impossible to trace the source according to which seventeenth and eighteenth-century scholars established that Cammelli was the family surname, but the matter can be explained, at least up to a point, thanks to some discoveries of the following century. In a tax return to the Catasto Comunale of Pistoia, allegedly excerpted from the 'Libro delle Portate avanti i Signori Deputati prima del Catasto del 1450 (cod. 710, stanza viii, ult. carte)', - the document can no longer be consulted at

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<sup>59</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Archivio per Materie, Letterati Carteggio, Busta 13 (complete text in Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., pp. 20-21).

<sup>60</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, *Herculis I Decretorum Archetypa*, 1491-1505, Registro XI, Atto 4, f. 4r (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'La famiglia di Antonio Cammelli', cit., p. 58).

<sup>61</sup> Pistoia refers to Tomaso as 'nipote' which in Italian means both nephew and grandson but in the present instance, it ought to be interpreted as nephew.



the State Archive in Pistoia as it is missing -<sup>62</sup> a man by the name of Biondo di Nicholao di Chamelli declared to be forty years of age, to be married to Monna Gienevra, four years his junior, to have two daughters, Lorenza and Teresa respectively fifteen and nine years old, and three sons Bastiano, aged eleven, Agostino, aged five and Antognio, aged fourteen. The document was published, bearing the date 1450 in square brackets, in the biography of Antonio Pistoia compiled by the major auctoritas on the poet that is the Neapolitan scholar Erasmo Pèrcopo.<sup>63</sup> This document, according to Pèrcopo, established two main facts relating to the life of Antonio Pistoia, in addition to providing further information on his family: his year of birth, that is

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<sup>62</sup> The so called 'Libro delle Portate cod. 710' is listed in the nineteenth-century inventory, no. 6, of the Archivio Comunale of Pistoia but it is not reported in the latest edition edited by Ezelinda Magliozzi Altieri, *L'Archivio del comune di Pistoia* (Scandicci: Giunta Regionale Toscana, La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1985). It may have gone missing during the Second World War when the State Archive was heavily damaged because of allied bombings in 1943, or, according to the director of the Archive, it may have gone astray long before 1943. However, not so long before. During a visit to the Società Napoletana di Storia Patria in Naples, I succeeded in locating a transcription of the original document. Alfredo Chiti, a scholar from Pistoia, while researching in the local archive found the above mentioned document and kindly sent it to Erasmo Pèrcopo on 16th April 1899: 'Mi affretto a comunicarle la seguente notizia sul Cammelli utile per accertare la paternità di Antonio. La ho trovata nelle ult. cc. del cod. 710 [stanza viii] dell'Arch. Comunale Pistoiese, intitolato "Libro delle Portate avanti i Signori Deputati prima del Catasto del 1450"'. The transcription is kept in a yellow folder bearing the number 32 and the heading 'Pistoia, Documenti'. The Società Napoletana di Storia Patria has forty-five folders of different sizes containing correspondence, papers and documents relating to Erasmo Pèrcopo and his work. The documents were donated to the Library by Pèrcopo's sons in 1928 following their father's death.

<sup>63</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 610.



1436,<sup>64</sup> being the above mentioned Antognio fourteen years old in 1450, and his patronymic, that is Biondo. This is fair enough but where is the connection between Antognio and the poet Antonio Pistoia? How can one prove that Antonio Pistoia is the young boy mentioned in the tax declaration? The missing link was, in Pèrcopo's view, to be found in the patronymic of an alleged son of Pistoia:

Che padre del nostro fosse appunto quel Biondo di Niccolò di Benedetto [...] ce lo rivelano alcuni documenti dell'Archivio comunale pistoiese, riguardanti il più noto dei figliuoli del poeta, quel Francesco che fu studente nella Sapienza di Pistoia e nello Studio ferrarese, canonico d'Adria e rimatore.<sup>65</sup>

The so-called documents of the 'Archivio comunale pistoiese' are a collection, known as *Il Priorista*, of second-hand information gathered by the seventeenth-century Pistoiese scholar Pier Lorenzo Franchi.<sup>66</sup> In *Il Priorista*, there are two entries

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<sup>64</sup> I would like to point out that Erasmo Pèrcopo in Antonio Cammelli, cit., expressed some doubts on the matter, p. 28: 'Morto, dunque, - se la data della sua nascita assodata da me è la vera, - a sessantasei anni'. Similar doubts had also been expressed by Antonio Rafanelli, one of the numerous scholars whom Pèrcopo had asked to carry out research on his behalf. Naples SNSP, Fondo Erasmo Pèrcopo, Busta 32: 'Per sceverare dalla famiglia Cammelli ciò che appartiene esclusivamente al poeta Antonio da ciò che non gli appartiene, sarebbe necessario un tempo maggiore di quello di cui può disporre Lei [i.e. Pèrcopo], se pel 26 di questo mese [i.e. August, 1898] vuol pubblicare il suo libro. Può essere che lavorando con calma si riuscisse a dir qualcosa di più e di meglio di quanto si sa sul nostro Pistoia; ma nella gran confusione dell'Archivio comunale, creda, ci si raccapezza male. Ed è l'unico luogo dove si può pescare qualche notizia sul Cammelli'.

<sup>65</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'La famiglia di Antonio Cammelli', cit., p. 50.

<sup>66</sup> Vittorio Capponi, *Biografia pistoiese o notizie della vita e delle opere dei pistoiesi* (Bologna: Forni, 1972 [reprint of the 1878 edition]), pp. 197-198.



relating to Francesco de Antonio di Biondo Chamelli and Franciscus Antonii de Cammellis respectively:

Francescho de Ant(oni)o di Biondo Chamelli C(appell)a di S(an) Piero in Vincio si batezò 25.fevr(ai)o 1472<sup>67</sup>

and

D(o)m(inus) Franciscus Antonii de Cammellis electus ia(m) scolarem Sapie(ntiae) 2 Ap(ri)lis 1493.<sup>68</sup>

Once again we are faced with the same problem: on which basis did Pèrcopo establish the parental relationship between Francesco de Antonio di Biondo Chamelli and Antonio Pistoia?<sup>69</sup> Pèrcopo's hypothesis appears to be marred because the evidence in his possession does not allow him to establish the missing link between Francesco and Antonio and therefore justify the parentage between Antonio Pistoia and Biondo di Nicholao di Chamelli.<sup>70</sup> In the course of my research I have also located a

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<sup>67</sup> ASPt, Priorista Franchi, vol. 6, f. 27v (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'La famiglia di Antonio Cammelli', cit., p. 51).

<sup>68</sup> ASPt, Priorista Franchi, vol. 6, f. 27v (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'La famiglia di Antonio Cammelli', cit., p. 51).

<sup>69</sup> Further documents relating to Francesco de Antonio di Biondo Chamelli which were edited by Alessandro Ferrajoli, 'Il ruolo della corte di Leone X', *Archivio della r. società romana di storia patria*, 36, 1913, pp. 519-584, and in particular pp. 531-548, do not assist in this instance. Ferrajoli summarized the story previously told by Pèrcopo and the new documents concerning Francesco contain no reference to his patronymic or to his father.

<sup>70</sup> In view of the above consideration, I shall not discuss the information on Biondo di Nicholao di Chamelli, Antonio di Biondo Chamelli di Vincio and his alleged sons published by Erasmo Pèrcopo in his works 'La famiglia di Antonio Cammelli', cit., pp. 49-62 and in *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., pp. 605-606 and pp. 610-613. The documents in question are at ASPt, Comune, Anziani 1, Quaderno 25, ff. 10v-11r; ASPt, Priorista Franchi, vol. 6, ff. 25r-30v; Pistoia C, MS B.126, t. 1, f. 152v. The matter is however amply illustrated by Domenico De Robertis in 'Cammelli, Antonio, detto il Pistoia', *Dizionario biografico*

document relating to Pistoia when he was captain of Porta Santa Croce in Reggio Emilia, in which the poet is indicated as Antonio de B(ar)tolomio da Pistoia.<sup>71</sup> Although this furnishes highly valuable clues, it cannot solve the matter because the note following the one relating to Antonio de B(ar)tolomio da Pistoia concerns a man by the name of B(ar)tolomio dala Casella. Because of this, the following two possibilities must be considered: a) in writing B(ar)tolomio, the scribe made an error of anticipation and therefore B(ar)tolomio cannot be the poet's real patronymic; b) B(ar)tolomio is Pistoia's patronymic, the scribe did not make a mistake and the fact that B(ar)tolomio happens to be the name of the person mentioned after Pistoia is simply a coincidence. Unfortunately this is the only instance in which the patronymic is cited, it does not appear in other official documents relating to Pistoia, either in his private correspondence or in the letters addressed to him. The issue remains therefore open to question and it cannot be solved until new evidence has surfaced that might help to elucidate this aspect. However, this has proved a valid testing ground for the most widely-held theories

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*degli Italiani* (Rome: Treccani, 1960-), vol. 17, pp. 277-286. The entry which is doubtless exhaustive, well-written and furnished with a rich bibliography, presents however one major problem: it is in fact, for obvious reasons, mainly based on Pèrcopo's works, whose sources, as we have seen, are not entirely reliable. Other biographical profiles of Pistoia include Umberto Renda and Piero Operti, *Dizionario storico della letteratura italiana* (Turin: Paravia, 1959), pp. 220-221; Giuseppe Petronio, *Dizionario enciclopedico della letteratura italiana* (Bari; Rome: Laterza; UNEDI, 1966-[1970]), vol. 1, pp. 540-541; Giorgio Varanini, 'Cammelli, Antonio', *Dizionario critico della letteratura italiana*, directed by Vittore Branca (Turin: UTET, 1986<sup>2</sup>), vol. 1, pp. 475-477.

<sup>71</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Giornale, 1485, f. 87v.



about Pistoia and it has shown that it was a dangerous and short-sighted approach on the part of those scholars who dealt with Pistoia to take the whole matter as good without investigating the accuracy and reliability of Pèrcopo's biography and its sources. As to Cammelli,<sup>72</sup> in view of these and other documents

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<sup>72</sup> Girolamo Baruffaldi definitely contributed to make matters even worse by affirming that Antonio Pistoia was Tomaso's son. [Girolamo Baruffaldi], *Rime scelte de' poeti ferraresi antichi, e moderni* (Ferrara: Pomatelli, 1713), p. 566, entry no. 34: 'Antonio Pistoia della famiglia Camelli figliuolo di quel Tommaso, che partito da Pistoia piantò la sua famiglia in Ferrara, et assunse il cognome dell'antica sua patria, col quale in corte del duca Ercole Estense era chiamato. Poetò bizzarramente, e viveva nel 1516 allorché compose l'epitaffio a suo padre, il qual si legge nella chiesa della Rosa M(aria) S(anta)'. It is very likely that Baruffaldi based his assertion on a piece of information recounted by Marco A. Guarini in *Compendio storico dell'origine, accrescimento, e prerogative delle chiese, e luoghi pii della città, e diocesi di Ferrara*, cit., p. 139: 'Thomæ Pistoriensis Ducis Herculis alumno, filius cum Fratre mestiss(imi) posuere pietatis ergo. MDXVI'. Baruffaldi's short entry on Pistoia and additional information he gleaned on the same subject, now at Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.322, constituted the backbone of the poet's standard biography. It was in fact later repeated with just slight variations by the following eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century scholars: Ferrante G. Borsetti Ferranti Bolani, *Historia almi Ferrariæ gymnasii* (Ferrara: Pomatelli, 1735), t. 2, pp. 386-387; Francesco S. Quadrio, *Della storia, e della ragione d'ogni poesia* (Bologna; Milan: Agnelli, 1739-1752), vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 556-557; Francesco A. Zaccaria, *Bibliotheca Pistoriensis* (Turin: Tipografia Regia, 1752), pp. 177-178; Luigi Ughi, *Dizionario storico degli uomini illustri ferraresi* (Ferrara: Rinaldi, 1804), t. 2, p. 115; G[aetano] M[elzi], *Dizionario di opere anonime e pseudonime di scrittori italiani* (Milan: Pirola, 1848-1859), t. 1, pp. 70-71. It ought to be pointed out that according to Quadrio and Zaccaria, Pistoia had passed away before the year 1504. Baruffaldi is well-known for providing misleading information and creating some anew as was pointed out by Antonia Tissoni Benvenuti, 'Appunti sull'antologia dei poeti ferraresi di Girolamo Baruffaldi', *GSLI*, 146, 1969, pp. 18-48; Andrea Comboni, 'Alcune puntualizzazioni sulla tradizione delle rime del Cornazano con una canzone inedita sulla minaccia del Turco (1470)', *Bollettino storico piacentino*, 80, July-December 1985, fasc. 2, pp. 195-209; Diego Zancani, 'Postille Cornazzaniane', *LI*, 38, 1986, pp. 60-68. The edition of the *Rime scelte de' poeti ferraresi antichi, e moderni*, cit., was published anonymously but in the introduction, f. [11v], it is stated that it was largely compiled by Giulio Cesare Grazzini, Giuseppe Lanzoni and Girolamo Baruffaldi. Antonia Tissoni Benvenuti maintains in her article

I culled in the State Archive of Modena,<sup>73</sup> it appears that there may be a connection between Cammelli and Pistoia but no evidence has yet been unearthed to establish whether Tomaso, Pistoia's relative, was the son of a brother or a sister of our poet. If, however, Tomaso were the son of a sister, the family surname Cammelli would not apply to the poet. It does seem odd, however, that Tomaso's father was called Antonio, if he were one of the poet's brothers, since it is unlikely that the same first name was used twice in the same family. As to his home town, from two autograph letters addressed to Ercole I d'Este dated 1st May 1497 and 1st January 1498 respectively we learn that the poet was not originally from Velletri but from the town of Pistoia and that he was 'povero peregrino nelle altrui terre forestiero'.<sup>74</sup> This also excludes the possibility that he was born in Ferrara although a branch of a Pistoia family had established its residence in town well before the year 1454.<sup>75</sup>

In the present context, it would be redundant to summarize each single theory held by nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars on the life of Antonio Pistoia. I shall mention the most recurrent ones indicating in note the relevant sources. Antonio

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'Appunti sull'antologia dei poeti ferraresi di Girolamo Baruffaldi', cit., that the book was regarded by contemporary scholars as the work of Baruffaldi and that the latter after a short while, p. 18, 'ne rivendicò pubblicamente la paternità'.

<sup>73</sup> ASMo, Archivio Segreto Estense, Particolari, Busta 1114; ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Busta 260, Voce Cammelli.

<sup>74</sup> ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Archivio per Materie, Letterati Carteggio, Busta 13.

<sup>75</sup> ASMo, Archivio Segreto Estense, Particolari, Busta 1114; Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.753, f. [208r]: 'Anno 1454 a dì 2 settembre Pasqualino figlio di Antonio Pistoia impicato alle forche oltre il Po'.



Pistoia was born in 1440 and his wife was of the Ambrogi family.<sup>76</sup> Around 1475-76 and again in 1490, the poet was in Rome where he met Filelfo and Ascanio Sforza.<sup>77</sup> He left his home town in Tuscany and moved to Correggio where he arrived before August 1478.<sup>78</sup> From Correggio he departed for Ferrara where in 1481 he

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<sup>76</sup> Vittorio Capponi, *Biografia pistoiese o notizie della vita e delle opere dei pistoiesi*, cit., p. 79. Most of the information contained in the entry is misleading and it is not supported by any evidence. However, some was repeated by other scholars in the following works: Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., p. 5; Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. xxv; Berthold Wiese and Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Storia della letteratura italiana* (Turin: Unione Tipografica Editrice, 1904), pp. 303-304.

<sup>77</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. xxxiii: 'Giunto nell'eterna città, [Pistoia] presentossi ad un monsignore (il card. Ascanio Sforza)'; Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 5: 'Se non è uno scherzo, - e non par che sia, - quello del suo sonetto 186, in cui dice di aver parlato in Roma col Filelfo'. Domenico De Robertis, 'Cammelli, Antonio, detto il Pistoia', cit., p. 278: 'Al suddetto periodo, e precisamente al maggio del 1490, si riferisce un suo soggiorno a Roma, sulla concorde (ma non si sa se indipendente) testimonianza di una lettera di Raffaele Cupino a Iacopo d'Atri, segretario del Marchese di Mantova, e della didascalia del sonetto «Che fa san Marcho?» [...] nel cod. 54 dell'Oliveriana di Pesaro, che lo danno composto il 4 di quel mese'. Although there is at times a strong correlation between the content of Pistoia's sonnets, his autograph letters, archival documents and the historical events of the time, in this instance, no evidence has surfaced to support Pèrcopo's hypothesis.

<sup>78</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., based his hypothesis on one single line of poetry by Pistoia, pp. 8-9:

... per fin che Marzocco sia pentito,  
te aspetteremo, orando!

E cioè: attenderemo che tu [i.e. Nicolò Correggio] ritorni dalla guerra di Toscana, da quella, vale a dire, che si combatteva, dopo la congiura dei Pazzi, tra Firenze e Ferdinando I d'Aragona, alleato di Sisto IV, alla quale noi sappiamo aver preso parte, con Ercole I d'Este, capitan generale dei fiorentini, anche Niccolò da Correggio, come «gran capitano», o condottiero d'armi, del duca di Ferrara. Dunque, già prima dell'agosto '78 il P., - aveva allora oltrepassati i quarant'anni, - dolev'essere tra i famigliari di Niccolò'. Although it is likely that Pistoia lived in Correggio, the above line constitutes a slender basis for estimating the date of his arrival there.

was enrolled in the army of Ercole I d'Este in the capacity of 'tamburino', drummer-boy, and settled in town before the middle of November 1482 or possibly even a few months before.<sup>79</sup> In the Este court he worked in the kitchen and was occasionally ordered to take messages to Milan.<sup>80</sup> He definitely stayed at the courts of Ludovico Sforza<sup>81</sup> and Cesare Borgia.<sup>82</sup> He probably acted as

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<sup>79</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 10: 'Fu allora, certamente, che il Pistoia dovè recarsi nella vicina Ferrara, sperando d'esser accolto nella corte estense. In Ferrara si trovava senza dubbio già prima che i Veneziani invadessero quella città, cioè prima del 20 novembre 1482:

nanti che Marco in qua movesse il pe',

come dic'egli nel sonetto 69: «nel tempo», egli soggiunge:

nel tempo che del mal rincrebbe a me,  
vedendo a li Schiavon far ponti al Po.

Alludeva, qui a un episodio della guerra veneto-ferrarese (1482-84), durante la quale il Pistoia visse certo a Ferrara, avendo descritti alcuni fatti di essa nei sonetti 376-7. Forse forse, - se dobbiam credere a un documento, - egli dovè prender parte fin dagl'inizii a quella guerra come semplice «tamburino» se è lui quel «Pistoia», cui Ercole I, in un documento del 23 maggio 81 «dona» tre «fiorini d'oro», «de soa solita liberalitate». Così che fin dall'81 il Cammelli era già entrato nelle buone grazie di quel duca, che, tanto inclinato alla poesia e alla vita lieta, dovette subito accogliere fra i suoi protetti il bizzarro ed arguto poeta'. The document Pèrcopo is quoting from is at ASMO, Camera Ducale, Conto Generale, no. 21, anno 1481, segnato 'eee', f. CLXXXVIIIr. The entry contains a reference to thirty-three 'lire' and the phrase 'a pistoia et a 3 tamborini suoi' might actually refer to some drummers from the town of Pistoia (partial text in Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 606).

<sup>80</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. xxvii: 'ottenne un posto nella cucina e dispensa di Corte, con incarico altresì di far cavalcate quando occorresse a Milano'.

<sup>81</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., pp. 17-18: 'Da altri suoi sonetti si ricava che ei fu, prima del 97, a Milano, di cui fece un elogio, cantò le belle e lussuose donne [...]. Pare che il Moro lo accogliesse nel numero dei suoi sussidiati: così si spiegherebbero il tono costantemente sforzesco dei sonetti politici del nostro e la grande familiarità ch'egli ebbe con i principali personaggi di quella corte [...]. Il certo è che nel *Dialogo* il Pistoia si dice chiaramente «servo» di quel «signore vigilante più che la serpe che per insegna portava».



a kind of ambassador at the Papal court in Rome on behalf of Francesco Sforza in 1453 and again from July to August 1458.<sup>83</sup>

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Nell'aprile 1500 era ancora tra gli stipiendiati del Moro, perchè, sempre nel *Dialogo*, accennando alla caduta dello Sforza in mano dei Francesi, avvenuta appunto allora, il poeta attribuiva la «tanta sua miseria» al «galico furore, spogliatore de li thesori di Hesperia, exiliatore de li italici principi, stipendiarii de le virtù.»'. Despite the weakness of Pèrcopo's statement and the lack of evidence of a possible sojourn of Pistoia at the Milanese court, twentieth-century scholars have kept commenting on the poet's stay at the Sforza court. Their hypothesis mainly stems from the content of many sonnets by Pistoia in which he gives the impression to be familiar with the Milanese court and its denizens. The only document establishing a connection between the Milanese ruler and Pistoia is an undated letter by the latter to Ludovico Sforza in which the poet extols the Duke's deeds, Bologna U, MS. 2618 (Codice Trombelli), f. 108r: 'Invictissimo principe unico de Italia lume a tutto el mondo trasparente non altrimenti che il sole, a me pareria la verità tacere et le fatiche perdere se io a luce venir no(n) facesse alquanti epigrami in sonetti in laude et meritamente a la tua Excellencia' (complete text in Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., p. 402).

<sup>82</sup> Edoardo Alvisi, *Cesare Borgia duca di Romagna* (Imola: D'Ignazio Galeati, 1878), p. 99: 'E accanto a questi latinisti si veggono il «divino» Aquilano, Vincenzo Calmeta da Castelnuovo [...] e Antonio Cammelli da Pistoia, le cui «facezie» anche oggi sono leggibili. Con questi letterati latini e italiani, la corte di Cesare rappresenta un momento del contrasto durato per tutto il secolo tra i due elementi della letteratura nazionale'. No documentation is provided by Alvisi to back his hypothesis and no indication is given as to the possible date of Pistoia's stay.

<sup>83</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 617: 'In un cod. dell'Ambrosiana (Z, 219, sup.) si trovano delle lettere firmate "Servus Antonius de Pistorio" datate da Roma nel 1453 e nel luglio ed agosto 1458 [...]. Al prof. D. Bassi, che le esaminò per mia preghiera, parvero scritte dalla stessa mano che vergò il cod. dei *Sonetti*, simili le lettere, i nessi ecc. Si potrebbe dire che il C. fu corrispondente dello Sforza a Roma nel settembre 53 e nel luglio-agosto 58'. The Ambrosiana manuscript MS Z.219 sup., which groups thirteen folders, contains six letters by Antonius de Pistorio sent from Rome between 24th June 1458 and 6th September of the same year in file number 12 (epistles no. 9364-9366, 9368 and 9370) and number 13 (no. 9471). Antonius de Pistorio however did not prove to be yet another name for Antonio Pistoia and the mystery was later unlocked by Alberto Chiappelli in his article, 'Nuovi dati documentari su Antonio da Pistoia al servizio del Duca Francesco Sforza', *BSP*, 28, 1926, fasc. 4, pp. 160-164 (pp. 160-161): 'Questo Antonio, al quale ci riferiamo, apparteneva alla famiglia pistoiese Dalla Torre. Egli non era un ecclesiastico, sebbene sia stato cantore, ed a Pistoia

Two genealogical trees drawn by Tommaso Caramelli and Luigi N. Cittadella in the eighteenth century do not assist further as they contain previous information which is unfortunately inaccurate.<sup>84</sup>

The hard evidence so far gathered on Antonio Pistoia, also in view of the new documentation gleaned in the course of my research, allows the following considerations only. Due to the

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aveva sposato una donna appartenente alla classe nobiliare, Giuliana di Ser Gaspero di Ser Francesco detto del Campana. [...] Antonio da Pistoia aveva conseguito il notariato, ed esercitava tale professione a Pistoia durante la sua primitiva dimora. Nell'anno 1448 egli fu a custodire [...] la cittadella di S. Miniato, e ebbe per questo ufficio una indennità dal Comune di Pistoia. Il primo di Settembre del 1452 egli fu estratto dalla borsa dei dodici di collegio del Comune pistoiese, e fu notaro dei Priori dello stesso Comune sul principio del 1454'. Although Chiappelli did not succeed in finding a record explaining the reason why Antonio moved to Rome, a good biographical picture is provided in the article together with an indication relating to Antonio's death which must have occurred sometimes between 1460 and 1470. In a previous article Alberto Chiappelli, 'Sette lettere di Antonio da Pistoia a Cicco Simonetta ed a Francesco Sforza Duca di Milano', *BSP*, 28, 1926, fasc. 2, pp. 57-64, had published additional correspondence by Antonius de Pistorio written in the year 1457. In the course of my research I also located a further twenty-nine letters penned by Antonius de Pistorio between 16th November 1453 and 12th May 1454 and sent to Francesco Sforza for whom he acted as a secret agent at the papal court in Rome. ASMi, Carteggio Visconteo-Sforzesco, Potenze Estere, Roma, Cartella 40, marzo 1450-dicembre 1453, no. 414-415, 422, 440-441; Cartella 41, 01.01.1454-30.06.1455, no. 34, 43-46, 49-50, 57, 88-90, 116, 124-126, 128-129, 132-136, 138 and 140. In one letter (Cartella 41, no. 50) dated 7th February 1454, the author declared that he was at the papal court 'come simpliciter Antonio da Pistoia'. The epistles, some of which are partly written in coded language, contain detailed information relating to the events unfolding at the papal court during the mid 1450s; they also give insights into the author and into his relationship with Nicodemo Tranchedini. All the above letters are unpublished except one, dated 24th April 1454, which was edited by Daniele Giampietro, 'Il carteggio originale di Francesco I Sforza', *Archivio storico italiano*, 4, 1878, pt. 1, pp. 358-369 (p. 359).

<sup>84</sup> Florence N, MS Rossi C.351<sup>bis</sup>, f. 44r-v; Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.222 (Appunti Luigi N. Cittadella), Scatola 7, Famiglie OC-P.



paucity or in some cases lack of supporting evidence<sup>85</sup> it is impossible to establish Pistoia's patronymic and date of birth, to link Francesco Cammelli to Antonio Pistoia and the latter to Biondo di Nicholao di Chamelli and although one may still argue that the three men may have shared a parental link this has yet to be proved. However, one thing is certain: the poet's correct name is Antonio Pistoia and not Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoia as he was inaccurately called throughout the last and current century and it is time that the record is put straight. Let us now turn to the reception of Pistoia's work and its survival in bibliographical history.

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<sup>85</sup> My investigations at the Notarial and State Archives in Reggio Emilia with respect to the documentation 'Dazi, gabelle e imposte: dazi delle porte della città', 'Milizie, guarnigione: lettere, ordini, rapporti, note e altre carte', proved unfruitful.

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## CHAPTER TWO

## THE CIRCULATION OF PISTOIA'S WORKS

2.1 The *Canzoniere*.

Around the middle of October 1511, Isabella d'Este Gonzaga was given as a very special present, a handsome gift which she had coveted for well over nine years: 'un libro de li soneti d(e)l Pistoia'.<sup>1</sup> The lavishly illuminated manuscript was donated to her by Gianfrancesco Gianninello, a close friend of the Tuscan poet. In her thank-you letter, Isabella informed Gianninello that his present, a most spectacular manuscript decorated, according to the Marchioness, 'in un certo bellissimo et inconsueto modo',<sup>2</sup> 'meglio ligato, sî di nova inve(n)tione', was 'sumam(en)te grato'<sup>3</sup> and it would be kept among her most beloved possessions:

confesando ch(e) un gran(de) thesoro no(n) ce saria stato  
al pare de questo libro grato, il quale teneremo fra le più

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<sup>1</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 14.01.1511-02.02.1512, Busta 2996, Registro 29, f. 80v (partial text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. liv). Isabella talked about the extraordinary features of the manuscript in two letters, both dated 18th October 1511, which she sent to Bernardino Prospero and Gianfrancesco Gianninello respectively. ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 14.01.1511-02.02.1512, Busta 2996, Registro 29, ff. 80v-81v (partial texts in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. liv-lvi).

<sup>2</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 14.01.1511-02.02.1512, Busta 2996, Registro 29, f. 81v.

<sup>3</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 14.01.1511-02.02.1512, Busta 2996, Registro 29, f. 80v.

care delicie n(ost)re carissimo.<sup>4</sup>

The Ferrarese art collector Gianfrancesco Gianninello had succeeded where others had previously failed. Isabella had in fact been let down by Pistoia himself who, on 18th June 1499, informed her that in a matter of weeks he would dedicate and send her his collection of poems 'a quella sola tale opera solazevole intitulata'.<sup>5</sup> However, Isabella never saw the project through to its conclusion, and a month and a half later following Pistoia's death she was left with no choice but to resort to Nicolò Correggio whom she knew had started collecting Pistoia's scattered poems:

Quando viveva il Pistoria se offerse et promise molte volte mettere insieme in una opera tutte le cose p(er) lui composte et intitularle a nui ma p(er) non haverli servito il tempo no(n) ha potuto exequirlo.<sup>6</sup>

In his reply, Correggio declared that he was the owner of a 'libro facto solam(en)te de suoi sonetti', that is Pistoia's, and at the same time he was 'dreto a cerchar con diligentia in ogni loco' for new ones,<sup>7</sup> so as to put a collection together and

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<sup>4</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 14.01.1511-02.02.1512, Busta 2996, Registro 29, f. 81v.

<sup>5</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Mantova, 1499, Busta 2453, f. 166r (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. xlvi-xlvii).

<sup>6</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 20.10.1501-29.07.1502, Busta 2993, Registro 13, ff. 80v-81r, no. 216.

<sup>7</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXVII.2, Correggio, Lettere dei Signori di Correggio ai Gonzaga, 1500-1511, Busta 1314, f. 127r (complete text in Rodolfo Renier, 'Nuovi documenti sul Pistoia', *GSLI*, 5, 1885, pp. 319-320 (p. 320)). The letter had been previously but only partially published by Luigi Pungileoni,



present it to her. Unfortunately it is not known whether Correggio succeeded in his enterprise. It seems reasonable to assume that he did not, because Gianninello's present received such a warm welcome by the Marchioness as if it was the first time she had ever been given a book of Pistoia's poems. The manuscript was highly appreciated by Isabella and towards the early 1530s it was much sought after. Francesco dalla Torre, a friend of Francesco Berni, in the spring of 1531 wrote to Isabella warmly asking her to send him the manuscript, because Berni desired to have it:

et stima(n)do assai le cose del detto Pistoia, o per lo ingegno, et acutezza che si vede in esse, o forse per qualche convenientia che sia tra l'ingegno di colui et 'l suo, è venuto in tanto desiderio di vederlo, che desidera poche cose più.<sup>8</sup>

The manuscript was later lent to Alessandro Bentivoglio who returned it to its owner but no further mention of it has been

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<sup>8</sup> 'Alcune notizie intorno a Gentile e Giovanni Bellini', *Giornale arcadico di scienze lettere ed arti*, 50, 1831, pp. 287-294 (p. 292).

<sup>9</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XLV.3, Venezia, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1531, Busta 1465, f. 539r (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. lvi-lviii). The manuscript was returned to Isabella with a note by Francesco dalla Torre probably suggested by Berni who had found the language of the sonnets slightly unpalatable. ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XLV.3, Venezia, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1531, Busta 1465, f. 588r (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. xl-xli): 'il libro è bello secondo quei tempi, nei quali questa nostra lingua no(n) era condotta così al som(m)o come hora, et se l'authore mostra no(n) essere molto ricco di giudicio, mostra certo non esser povero di spirito, et di inventione. Secondo questi tempi più floridi, mi pare, per dire il vero, un poco spinoso, ma no(n) sì però che tra li spini no(n) si possano cogliere di molte rose'.

recorded since 1532.<sup>9</sup> The collection was not listed in the book inventory drawn up some two years after Isabella's death (13th February 1539),<sup>10</sup> and it has been missing ever since.

Quite separately from what happened to Isabella's manuscript, Pistoia's sonnets must have started circulating when the poet was alive as well as in the years following his death. Jocular poems by Pistoia and attributed to him were often

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<sup>9</sup> From a letter by Isabella to Alessandro Bentivoglio we learn that the latter sent the manuscript to have it restored because of a damaged or missing clasp. ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari di Isabella d'Este, 02.04.1532-19.03.1534, Busta 3000, Registro 51, f. 66v (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. lviii-lix): 'No(n) era veramente necessario ch(e) v(ostra) S(ignoria) p(er) parer buon fittabile facesse fare le serraglie sì come ha fatto al mio libro del Pistoia ch(e) ella mi ha rimandato'. Although Isabella's irritation may appear unjustified, it can be easily explained. It was in fact common that clasps, usually fixed in the upper cover in Italy, often bore the name or the coat of arms of their owners; therefore it may be likely that the new clasps happened to reproduce a special motif relating to the Bentivoglio instead of the Gonzaga dynasty.

<sup>10</sup> The inventories concerning Isabella's collection and that of Federico Gonzaga were published by Alessandro Luzio and Rodolfo Renier, 'La coltura e le relazioni letterarie di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga', *GSLI*, 42, 1903, pp. 75-111. It may be likely as rightly pointed out by Ubaldo Meroni, *Mostra dei codici gonzagheschi: la biblioteca dei Gonzaga da Luigi I ad Isabella* (Mantua: [s.t.], 1966), that many books and manuscripts were not included in the inventory, p. 65: 'Isabella ebbe una sua biblioteca personale distinta, anche per ubicazione, dalla biblioteca di Casa Gonzaga e di essa ci è giunto l'inventario redatto nel 1541. Sono 133 opere, tra manoscritte e a stampa, che non rappresentano tutta la biblioteca di Isabella perché si sa, attraverso i carteggi di lei e dei suoi corrispondenti, ch'ella possedette molti altri libri che non compaiono nell'elenco, perciò si pensa che la sua grande liberalità nei prestiti ne abbia divertiti molti e che altri libri siano stati rimossi dai «camerini» di Isabella nei tre anni che intercorsero tra la sua morte (1539) e la redazione dell'inventario (1541)'. Meroni also mentions Gianninello's manuscript adding, p. 68 fn. 31, that the epistle Isabella wrote him is untraceable but this is not the case. The letter is at ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 01.02.1512-11.06.1513, Busta 2996, Registro 30, f. 90r (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. lvi).



transcribed. Two miscellanea dating back to the fifteenth and sixteenth century, MS  $\alpha$ .W.2.11<sup>11</sup> and MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1<sup>12</sup>, preserve one and sixteen poems respectively. Codex Cl.I.408 of the Ariostea Library lists fifty-four sonnets<sup>13</sup> and manuscript 89 of the Classense Library contains one sonnet of doubtful attribution.<sup>14</sup> Numerous codices, among which an autograph manuscript of the Pistoiese poet Paolo Panciatichi,<sup>15</sup> two sixteenth-century and

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<sup>11</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .W.2.11, f. 345r. The autograph manuscript of the sixteenth-century Ferrarese historian Gaspare Sardi is described in Paola Di Pietro Lombardi, 'Gaspare Sardi, [Miscellanea]', *I luoghi della memoria scritta: manoscritti, incunaboli, libri a stampa di biblioteche statali italiane*, edited by Guglielmo Cavallo (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1994), pp. 261-262. The manuscript was first referred to in Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., p. 22 and it was quoted as 'Cod. miscell. lat. e ital. N. 288'. The editor Antonio Cappelli mentioned the manuscript in connection with twenty-two anonymous sonnets written against Nicolò Ariosto and attributed to the pen of Antonio Pistoia.

<sup>12</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, f. 57v, f. 60r, ff. 68v-70r, f. 71r, ff. 81v-82r, ff. 83v-84v. The manuscript which was first mentioned in Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., p. 22, and it was quoted as 'Cod. miscell. N. 832 [sic]', was described by Giorgio Rossi, 'Il codice estense X.\*.34', *GSLI*, 30, 1897, pp. 1-62; 32, 1898, pp. 90-108; 33, 1899, pp. 265-302.

<sup>13</sup> Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408, ff. [6r]-[29v], f. [33v], f. [248v], f. 269v, f. 369r-v (the manuscript was first mentioned in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. vii-ix, and it was referred to as 'Cod. 408., N., D., 3'). The number of sonnets is actually fifty-three because the poem 'Io tolsi moglie e non mi fu fatica' is transcribed twice, first on f. 8v and again on f. 369r.

<sup>14</sup> Ravenna C, MS 89, f. 68v. The sonnet, which is transcribed anonymously, is attributed to Antonio Pistoia in the library catalogue. I located the manuscript during the course of my research.

<sup>15</sup> Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), ff. 140v-155v, ff. 209r-213r, f. 216v, ff. 217r-218v, ff. 219v-223v, f. 227r (it was first quoted in Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., p. 16).

one eighteenth-century manuscripts of the State Library of Lucca<sup>16</sup> and several miscellanea at the National Library of Florence<sup>17</sup> and Rome,<sup>18</sup> dating from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, report a number of poems and opening lines of Pistoia's playful compositions. A sixteenth-century manuscript note attached to an edition of Antonio Tebaldeo's *Opere* printed in 1500 by Battista Sessa in Venice, contains two sonnets<sup>19</sup> while two manuscripts at the Marciana Library report six and

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<sup>16</sup> Lucca S, MS 474, f. 179r; MS 1537, ff. 51r-53v; MS 1328, p. 205. The provenance of the first two manuscripts is discussed by Marco Paoli, 'Il carteggio Bandini-Lucchesini: l'edizione degli annali Giuntini e i manoscritti di F. Moücke', *Accademie e biblioteche d'Italia*, 55, 1987, no. 4, pp. 24-40. The manuscripts emerged during my investigation at the Library in Lucca.

<sup>17</sup> Florence N, MS Palat.325, f. 53r (the manuscript was first mentioned in Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti di Antonio Cammelli*, edited by Erasmo Pèrcopo (Naples: Jovene, 1908), pp. xlix-1 (from now on it will be quoted as Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*); MS Palat.218, Rime adespote no. 8-12, f. 9r (the codex was first cited in Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., p xiv); MS Magl.Cl.VII.877, f. 79r, ff. 99v-101v; MS Magl.Cl.VII.669, ff. 47r-50v; MS Magl.Cl.VII.873, ff. 37v-38r, f. 48r (they were first quoted in Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., pp. 566-568); MS Magl.Cl.VII.25, ff. 130v-131r; MS II.II.109, f. 345r (both manuscripts were first mentioned in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. x-xi, and they were respectively quoted as 'Cod. Mgl.VII, II, 25' and 'Cod. Mgl. pal. II., 109'); MS Magl.Cl.VII.1398, ff. 159r-160v (this codex was unearthed during the course of my research).

<sup>18</sup> Rome N, MS Sessoriano 413, ff. 70r-72r, ff. 171r-173, f. 174r; Rome Cors, MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092, f. 210r, ff. 232r-234r (it was first cited in Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. xxv). MS Sessoriano was first described by Antonio G. Spinelli, 'Di un codice milanese', *Archivio storico lombardo*, 4, 1887, pp. 808-819; Rodolfo Renier later studied it with particular reference to Antonio Pistoia in 'Poeti sforzeschi in un codice di Roma recentemente segnalato', *Rassegna emiliana di storia, letteratura ed arte*, 1, 1888, fasc. 1, pp. 15-26.

<sup>19</sup> Ferrara C, S.14.1.5, f. 2r, f. 3v (I located the manuscript note during my research).



eight poems.<sup>20</sup> A sixteenth-century manuscript containing the *capitoli* in tercets of *Il Manganello* lists two scurrilous poems by Pistoia and three further ones are transcribed in a manuscript at the Vatican Library.<sup>21</sup>

A set of Pistoia's political sonnets was also widely circulated. On New Year's Eve 1492, his poem 'O il Duca n(ost)ro fa i gran cavamenti', penned in support of Duke Ercole I d'Este and Ludovico Sforza against Venice, together with two others, 'Se el Ducha annove chosse ha i spiriti atenti' and 'Sam Marcho ode vede sofre e taze', the latter attributed to Andrea Michieli called Squarzòla or Strazzòla,<sup>22</sup> were posted on the columns of the Doge's Palace in Venice. Ugo Caleffini, the fifteenth-century Ferrarese chronicler, while taking note of the event, transcribed all three sonnets together with his interpretation of Pistoia's poem:

A questi zorni passati furon ritrovati atachati ale colon(n)e del palatio del Principe sive Doxe i(n) Vinesia

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<sup>20</sup> Venice N, MS It.IX.113(6745), ff. 32v-35r; MS It.XI.66(6730), f. 284v, ff. 301r-302r. The manuscripts were first mentioned in Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., pp. xiv-xv. The editor Rodolfo Renier gives a different foliation for MS It.XI.66(6730) which was later described by Maria Cristofari, *Il codice marciano It.XI, 66* (Padua: Cedam, 1937).

<sup>21</sup> Seville BC, MS 7.1.51, f. 33r, f. 35r (the manuscript is described in Diego Zancani ed., *Il Manganello. La repressione del Cornazano contra Manganello*, cit.; the sonnets in question are mentioned on p. xl, although no reference to their author is made); Vatican City BAV, MS Barb. Lat. 3800, f. 4v, f. 13r, f. 34r (it is worth noticing that this manuscript, which I located during my study, contains two sonnets of doubtful attribution namely 'Signor io dormo n'un letto a vettura', and 'Amor vuol pur ch'io v'ami, et io no(n) posso', a poem by Antonio Alamanni and which is ascribed to the pen of Pistoia in this instance only).

<sup>22</sup> The question of attribution is discussed by Vittorio Rossi, 'Il Canzoniere inedito di Andrea Michieli detto Squarzòla o Strazzòla', *GSLI*, 26, 1895, pp. 1-91 (pp. 67-71).

li i(nfrascrit)ti tri soneti. El p(ri)mo fu estimado ch(e) fusse stato facto cu(m) intelligentia del S(igno)re Lud(ovic)o Sforza barba del Duca Zoanne Galeaz<o> Sforza Duca de M(i)l(an)o et li altri dui cum intelligentia de la S(igno)ria de V(enezi)a i(n) risposta del p(ri)mo soneto. Et il p(rim)o Duca è il Duca Hercule, Duca de Ferr(ara). Et p(er) il Moro se intende el p(re)fato S(igno)re Ludovico. Et s(e)c(ond)o Marcho p(er) la S(igno)ria de V(enezi)a. Et li cavamenti sono le fosse noviter facte a Ferr(ara) p(er) grandir(e) Ferr(ara). Et il bison se intende p(er) il Duca de M(i)l(an)o.<sup>23</sup>

Four other political sonnets were also noted down in the so-called Zichy manuscript now at Fővárosi Szabó Ervin Könyvtár (Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library), Budapest.<sup>24</sup> Ludovico Sforza was the dedicatee of a collection, partially put together by Pistoia, of political sonnets<sup>25</sup> labelled by the author as 'epigrami in sonetti' and 'pronostici' which had mostly been

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<sup>23</sup> Vatican City BAV, MS Chigiano J.I.4, f. 301v; Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.769, pp. 739-740.

<sup>24</sup> Budapest F, MS Zichy 09/2690, f. 6v, ff. 14v-15r. The manuscript was first studied by Luigi Zambra, 'Il codice Zichy della Biblioteca Comunale di Budapest: contributo allo studio della lirica italiana del Quattrocento', *La Bibliofilia*, 16, 1914 [but 1915], fasc. 1, pp. 5-16; Idem, 'Versi inediti del Tebaldeo nel codice Zichy della Biblioteca Comunale di Budapest', *La Bibliofilia*, 16, 1914, fasc. 7-8, pp. 254-275; Idem, 'Sonetti editi ed inediti di Niccolò da Correggio nel codice Zichy della Biblioteca Comunale di Budapest', *La Bibliofilia*, 16, 1915, fasc. 11-12, pp. 429-433; Idem, 'Il codice Zichy della Biblioteca Comunale di Budapest', *La Bibliofilia*, 17, 1915, fasc. 7-8, pp. 278-288; Idem, 'Il codice Zichy della Biblioteca Comunale di Budapest: tavola e indici', *La Bibliofilia*, 17, 1916, fasc. 4-6, pp. 184-213.

<sup>25</sup> Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli), ff. 109r-121v. The manuscript was first mentioned in Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., pp. xvi-xvii and the editor Rodolfo Renier published the dedicatory letter together with three sonnets, pp. 402-403. The manuscript was described by Ludovico Frati, 'I codici Trombelli della R. Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna', *Il propugnatore*, n.s. 6, 1893, pt. 2, pp. 227-296 (pp. 242-250). Two hands are responsible for having transcribed the sonnets: the first one belongs to Antonio Pistoia himself who penned the letter, f. 108r, the first nineteen sonnets, ff. 109r-118r, and the first quatrain of the poem on f. 118v. I have been unable to identify the second hand.



proved right, 'quasi tutti o per la maggior parte veri stati'.<sup>26</sup> Between 1489 and 1493, the Piacentine notary Marco Antonio Gatti inserted, among the leaves of his registers, two political poems namely 'Marzocho io penso il tuo tempo futuro', a sonnet in which Pistoia urged Florence to enter an alliance with Ludovico, and 'Che fa Sam Marcho? Guarda ove lampeggia', a eulogy of the latter and an outcry against Venice.<sup>27</sup> This particular poem became very popular and was transcribed, among others, by Teodoro di Pandolfo Collenuccio in one of his *zibaldoni*,<sup>28</sup> it was sent by letter from Raffaele Cupino to Iacopo d'Atri,<sup>29</sup> secretary of the

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<sup>26</sup> Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli), f. 108r.

<sup>27</sup> ASPc, Notai e Cancellieri della Comunità, Notaio Marco Antonio Gatti, volume contenente gli atti dal 1489 al 1493 (the leaves are not foliated). The indication provided by Domenico De Robertis, 'Cammelli, Antonio, detto il Pistoia', cit., p. 284, is not entirely correct as the 'rogiti' are kept in the State Archive and not in the 'Bibl. comunale'. Gaetano A. Tononi, 'Note storiche e rime politiche e morali tra gli atti di un notaio piacentino del secolo XV', *Strenna piacentina*, 1891 [offprint 1892], pp. 1-17, gleaned some information about Gatti and his registers, pp. 1-2: 'Innanzi e qualche volta anche in fine ai quaderni, coi quali quel notaio dà principio ai suoi rogiti secondo i diversi anni, vi sono alcune note storiche oppure rime politiche e morali. [...] Il Gatti fu ascritto al Collegio dei notai piacentini ai 2 luglio 1473, e la sua morte deve essere avvenuta circa l'anno 1501 o poco dopo, come si argomenta da' suoi rogiti che cessano in quel tempo'.

<sup>28</sup> Pesaro O, MS 54, f. 77r. In the manuscript the sonnet bears the date 1490 while in Gatti's registers is 1493. The manuscript was first described by Alfredo Saviotti, 'Rime inedite del secolo XV (dal codice Oliveriano 54)', *Il Propugnatore*, 5, 1892, pt. 2, pp. 303-345 and later by Giuseppe S. Scipioni, 'Un poeta burlesco del Quattrocento', *Gazzetta letteraria artistica e scientifica*, 13, 1888, no. 8, pp. 61-63.

<sup>29</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Paesi, 1490-1491, Busta 2439, f. 11r (partial text in Rodolfo Renier, 'Nuovi documenti sul Pistoia', cit., p. 319). In the letter Cupino referred to the sonnet, which bears the date 1490, as 'rithmo' which the fifteenth-century poet Guido Stella from Forlì defined in his treaty *De compendis in lingua materna versibus* as 'versi vulgari [...] de undice syllabe, e de dodice, e de septe'. Carlo Dionisotti, 'Ragioni metriche del Quattrocento', *GSLI*, 124, 1947,

Marquis of Mantua, and it was copied in two manuscripts now both at the National Library in Florence, that is MS Palat.218 and MS Palat.325, the latter also containing 'Italia le tue chose van sag[rete]'.<sup>30</sup> Giorgio Sommariva, the 'perpetrator' of the first poetic translation of Juvenal's satires (1475), noted down the already mentioned 'Italia le tue cose van secrete', 'Marzocho io penso al tempo tuo futuro', and 'Le lingue batton oro e quel \si/spende'.<sup>31</sup> These poems together with three more were copied by Marin Sanudo in a manuscript in which the Venetian diarist exclusively grouped compositions relating to 'la venuta dil Re di Franza in Italia nel an(n)o 1494'.<sup>32</sup>

As far as incunabula are concerned, the only one surviving and dated, containing a poem attributed to Pistoia, is the posthumous edition of Bernardo Bellincioni's *Rime* issued in 1493. In the incunable, the Milanese priest turned editor Francesco Tanzi ascribed to the pen of Pistoia 'Ruppe la parcha una più dolce cetra', an elegiacal poem occasioned by the death of the

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pp. 1-34 (p. 6).

<sup>30</sup> Florence N, MS Palat.218, *Rime adespote* no. 8-12, f. 9r; MS Palat.325, f. 53r.

<sup>31</sup> Verona C, MS 1657, f. 8r-v, f. 13r. From folio 12r the foliation of MS 1657 does not coincide with that provided by Giuseppe Biadego, *Catalogo descrittivo dei manoscritti della Biblioteca Comunale di Verona* (Verona: Civelli, 1892), pp. 119-122, because Biadego omitted to count the blank folio 12r-v (though to be precise f. 12r is not entirely blank as there is reported a very short note later crossed out with a stroke of the pen).

<sup>32</sup> Venice N, MS It.IX.363(7386), f. 10r, f. 11r-v, ff. 72v-73r, f. 74r. The manuscript which was first described by Alessandro D'Ancona and Alessandro Medin, 'Rime storiche del sec. XV', *Bullettino dell'istituto storico italiano*, 6, 1888, pp. 17-35, was also studied by Vittorio Rossi, 'Poesie storiche del sec. XV: a proposito di una recente pubblicazione', *Archivio veneto*, 35, 1888, pp. 207-225.



Florentine poet.<sup>33</sup> No copies of the 1495 Scandianese edition of the *Orlando innamorato*, most likely containing three sonnets attributed to Pistoia, have survived, though its existence and date are indisputable thanks to archival documents.<sup>34</sup> For the death of Matteo Maria Boiardo († 19th December 1494), Pistoia is in fact believed to have written a consolatory, a laudatory and an elegiacal sonnet: 'Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive', 'Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el vento' and 'Morte crudel superba invida e fera'. The consolatory and laudatory poems were published in the first sixteenth-century edition of Boiardo's poem printed in 1506,<sup>35</sup> which, according to Neil Harris, derives from the 1495

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<sup>33</sup> Bernardo Bellincioni, *Rime*, cit., sig. a2r-v.

<sup>34</sup> The notary document backing the existence and printing run of 1,250 copies was drawn up by Tommaso Mattacoda on 15th September 1495. The date of the Scandianese edition is confirmed by a letter written by Antonio Caraffa to Camillo Boiardo, Matteo Maria's son, on 15th June 1495. The document and all the relevant information is published in Neil Harris, *Bibliografia dell'«Orlando innamorato»* (Modena: Panini, 1988-1991), vol. 1, pp. 26-28 and pp. 68-70.

<sup>35</sup> Matteo M. Boiardo, *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1506), sig. [I7v]. Neil Harris in *Bibliografia dell'«Orlando innamorato»*, cit., vol. 1, p. 35, points out: 'Noti a noi oggi da questa edizione, ma provenienti quasi certamente dalla edizione scandianese del 1495 e presenti forse anche nella prima edizione rusconiana del libro IV dell'anno precedente, sono l'epigramma di Antonio Caraffa, 2 sonetti di Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoia ed un sonetto di Tommaso Mattacoda, il notaio ed intimo del Boiardo'. The two sonnets are also published in the following editions: Matteo M. Boiardo, [*Orlando innamorato*] (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1511), sig. [I7v]; Idem, *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Milan: Leonardo Vegio, 1513), sig. [E4r]; Idem, *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1513), sig. [I7v]; Idem, *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Milan: Rocho da Valle & Brothers, 1518), sig. [EE7v]; Idem, [*Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato*] ([Venice: Ales]sandro Bindoni, [1522?]), sig. [K7v]; Idem, [*Tutti li libri di Orlando innamorato*] (Venice: Francesco D'Alessandro Bindoni & Maffeo Pasini, 1525), sig. [LL8r]; Idem, *Tutti li libri d'Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Aurelio Pincio, 1532), sig. [LL6r]; Idem, *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Milan: [s.t.], 1539), sig. [I5r]. All three poems are



Scandianese edition of the poem. The sonnet 'Morte crudel superba invida e fera' was published for the first time in the 1521 edition of the *Orlando innamorato* printed in Venice by Nicolò Zoppino. According to Harris, the Venetian printer was the first to use a copy of the 1495 print for his edition. It would therefore seem logical to infer that the elegiacal sonnet was already present in the Scandianese edition.<sup>36</sup> However, if this is the case it remains to be explained why the 1506 edition which most likely derives from the 1495 print only has two sonnets rather than three.

The most comprehensive sixteenth-century printed collections of Pistoia's poems are three early editions of which one copy of each is preserved at the Marciana Library in Venice,<sup>37</sup> and a

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printed in Matteo M. Boiardo, *Libri tre de Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino & Vincenzo di Paolo, 1521), edition unavailable for consultation - private collection; Idem, *Libri tre de Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino, 1528), sig. A2r; Idem, *Libri tre di Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino, 1532/33), sig. A2r; Idem, *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Pietro dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1534), sig. A2r; Idem, *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Pietro dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1539), sig. A2r; Idem, *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Giovanni Antonio & Pietro dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1544), sig. A2r. All the editions indicated above are described in Neil Harris, *Bibliografia dell'«Orlando innamorato»*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 34-39, pp. 41-42, pp. 46-50, pp. 61-63, pp. 68-72, pp. 80-81, pp. 87-90, pp. 99-100, pp. 104-109, pp. 116-117, pp. 122-123. The sonnets were first published in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. 56-58.

<sup>36</sup> Neil Harris, *Bibliografia dell'«Orlando innamorato»*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 68-69.

<sup>37</sup> [Anonymous], *Frotula ala bergamascha co(n) alchuni sonetti* ([s.l.]: Felis Bergamascho, [s.a.]), sig. [A3r]-[A4v]; Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti novi del preclarissimo poeta misser Antonio decto el Pistoia* ([s.n., not before 1503]), ff. [1r]-[2v]; Faustino da Terdocci et al., *Barzeleta de Messer Faustino da Terdocio in laude dela pecunia, et la autorità de Salomone in frotola de Belizario da Cinguli con alquanti sonetti artificiosi. Opera nova* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino, [c. 1520?]), sig. [B3v]-[B4r]. Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 571, stated that the following edition, *Questa sie la profetia del re de*



number of chapbooks at the National Library in Florence,<sup>38</sup> the Colombina Library of Seville<sup>39</sup> and the British Library.<sup>40</sup> Numerous miscellaneous editions, most of which are compilations of Vincenzo Calmeta's works, list 'Signori io dormo in un lecto a victura', a sonnet attributed to the pen of Pistoia.<sup>41</sup>

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*Francia: cosa nova* (Venice: [s.t.], 1523), belonging to the collection of the Marciana Library, pressmark 2623, contained the sonnet 'Marzocco io penso al tuo tempo futuro'. I consulted the Marciana Library copy, pressmark 2623.1, but it does not list the sonnet indicated. There is no reference to the poem in the description of the above cited book given by Victor Masséna Prince of Essling, *Bibliographie des livres a figures vénétiens de la fin du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle et du commencement du XVI<sup>e</sup> 1469-1525* (Paris: Techner, 1892), p. 467.

<sup>38</sup> [Anonymous], *Barzelleta stramboti soneti de amore de diversi auctori* ([s.n.]), ff. [2v-3r]. Erasmo Pèrcopo in his biography of Pistoia, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 514, fn. 3, states that the above mentioned edition also contains 'Signori io dormo in un letto a vettura' but this is not the case.

<sup>39</sup> [Anonymous], *Frottole nove d'amore con alquanti sonetti et dialoghi* ([s.n.]), sig. A2v-[A3r]; Anonymous, [Poems] ([s.n.]), ff. [2v-3r]; Bellizario da Cingoli, *Sonetto de Bellizario da Cingoli nova trama. Con l'autorità de Salamone. Cosa nova* ([s.n.]), ff. [3v]-[4v]; Angelo M. Finetti, *Sonetti bellissimi et ornatissimi dello egregio homo Angelo Maria Finetti sanese: co(m)posti in laude di una sua amata. Ancora co(n)tiene q(ue)sta op(er)a molti altri ornati sonetti di diversi altri autori. Opera nuova* (Siena: Simeone di Nicolò Nardi & Giovanni di Alexandro, [s.a.]), sig. [c4v]. These editions were located during my visit at the Colombina Library in Seville; the results of my investigation were illustrated in the following article: Valentina Olivastri, 'Nuove testimonianze poetiche del Pistoia', *Schede umanistiche*, 2, 1996, pp. 93-107. The Colombina library has 893 Italian early printed books which are described in Klaus Wagner and Manuel Carrera, *Catalogo dei libri a stampa in lingua italiana della Biblioteca Colombina di Siviglia* (Modena: Panini, 1991).

<sup>40</sup> Bellizario da Cingoli, *Sonetto de Bellizario da Cingoli nova trama. Con l'autorità de Salamone. Cosa nova* ([s.n., 1530?]), ff. [3v-4v] (the edition was located during my research at the British Library).

<sup>41</sup> [Anonymous], *Collectanee de cose facetissime e piene de riso* (Goga Magoga [Milan: Joannes Angelus Scinzenzeler, 1515?]), sig. [d3v-d4r]; Vincenzo Calmeta, *Compendio de cose nove di Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori* ([s.n.]), sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove di Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori*,



During the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, a number of Italian scholars briefly referred to Pistoia in their works. Their entries provide fragmented and often inaccurate information about his work and only a very limited number of early prints were acknowledged. According to these sources, Pistoia's poetic production amounted to three sonnets: 'Signori, io dormo in un letto a vettura',<sup>42</sup> 'In rima taccia ognun, che 'l pregio è dato',<sup>43</sup> and 'Chi dice in versi ben, che sia toscano?'.<sup>44</sup> Francesco Quadrio and Francesco Zaccaria<sup>45</sup> also

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cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Opera nuova de Vincentio Calmeta, Lorenzo Carbone, Orpheo mantuano et Venturino da Pesaro, et altri auctori* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1507), f. [11v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove de Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Manfredo Bonelli, 1508), sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove di Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Melchiorre Sessa, 1515), sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Alessandro Bindoni, 1515), sig. BB3v; Idem, *Compe(n)dio de cose nove de Vince(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1516), sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Joannes Tacuinus, 1517), sig. BB3v; Idem, *Vincenzo Calmeta poeta vulgare non manco facetto che elegante. In ditto opera se contiene: sonetti strambotti eccloghe capituli dialoghi et una predica d'amore cosa bellissima* (Chivasso: Francesco Garrone, 1529), sig. C3v. Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 514, fn. 3, stated that an anonymous edition entitled *Barzelleta stramboti soneti de amore de diversi auctori* ([s.n.]) contained the sonnet in question. The edition I consulted at the National Library in Florence lists no such sonnet although it does report two poems by Pistoia without any attribution.

<sup>42</sup> Giovanni M. Crescimbeni, *Comentari intorno alla sua istoria della volgar poesia*, cit., vol. 2, pt. 2, p. 330; Angelo Mazzoleni, *Rime oneste de' migliori poeti antichi e moderni scelte ad uso delle scuole* (Bergamo: Lancellotto, 1750), t. 1, p. 303; Andrea Rubbi, *Parnaso italiano ovvero raccolta de' poeti classici italiani*, cit., t. 6, p. 330.

<sup>43</sup> [Girolamo Baruffaldi], *Rime scelte de' poeti ferraresi antichi, e moderni*, cit., p. 58; Ferrante G. Borsetti Ferranti Bolani, *Historia almi Ferrariæ gymnasii*, cit., t. 2, p. 387.

<sup>44</sup> [Girolamo Baruffaldi], *Rime scelte de' poeti ferraresi antichi, e moderni*, cit., p. 57; Ferrante G. Borsetti Ferranti Bolani, *Historia almi Ferrariæ gymnasii*, cit., t. 2, p. 386.



mentioned the poem 'Ruppe la parcha una più dolce cetra' in connection with the 1493 edition of Bellincioni's *Rime*.

These scant bibliographical data were interspersed with critical opinions supporting the view that Pistoia was a 'comico giocoso'. Ireneo Affò in a letter dated 8th February 1774, describes the poet as 'bizzarro umore'.<sup>46</sup> Giovanni Crescimbeni defines him:

assai faceto, grazioso, e tutto dedito a mantener le brigate in solazzo co' motti vivaci, e colle argutezze, che sempre avea pronte.<sup>47</sup>

Although too concise and limited, Crescimbeni's judgement is on the whole correct but it is based on an indirect knowledge of Pistoia's work. His view derives from second-hand material, that is Cassio da Narni's, Bibbiena's and Diomedè Guidalotti's sonnets and epitaphs on Pistoia, with which seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholars were familiar. It is in fact in their writings that Guidalotti and his contemporaries depict Pistoia as someone intent on amusing the virtuous souls with his cithara in the Elysian fields.

It was only towards the middle of the last century that Antonio Pistoia's poetic production began to attract some serious

<sup>45</sup> Francesco S. Quadrio, *Della storia, e della ragione d'ogni poesia*, cit., vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 210; Francesco A. Zaccaria, *Bibliotheca Pistoriensis*, cit., p. 228.

<sup>46</sup> Giuseppe Simonetti ed., 'Lettere inedite di Girolamo Tiraboschi e Ireneo Affò a eruditi correggesi', *Atti e memorie della r. deputazione di storia patria per le provincie modenesi*, s. 5, 8, 1914, pp. 1-418 (p. 43).

<sup>47</sup> Giovanni M. Crescimbeni, *Comentari intorno alla sua istoria della volgar poesia*, cit., vol. 2, pt. 2, p. 329.

attention.<sup>48</sup> The sonnets extracted from an autograph manuscript of Paolo Panciatici, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), were re-copied by a nineteenth-century scribe<sup>49</sup> and further transcriptions, this time on loose pieces of paper, reporting several initial lines, biographical and bibliographical information concerning the Tuscan poet and a sonnet of his, were carried out by Giosuè Carducci.<sup>50</sup> In 1858 eighteen poems appeared in the literary

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<sup>48</sup> A mention of Pistoia as a writer of 'poesie burlesche e satiriche' appears slightly earlier in Pietro Napoli Signorelli, 'Sulla satira antica e moderna: osservazioni', *Atti della società pontaniana di Napoli* (Naples: Filomatica, 1819), pp. 1-78 (p. 40).

<sup>49</sup> Rome Ang, MS 2014, pp. 42-83, pp. 89-103. The scribe added three more sonnets on pp. 81-83, ('Ognun mi dice tu sei magro e secco', 'Cenando Fedel mio iersera in corte' and 'Novel Narciso in cui fu la vertute', the first two by Pistoia and the latter of doubtful attribution), which are not present in MS D.313 (Codice Tonti). MS 2014, which originally belonged to the Tuscan linguist Pietro Fanfani, was acquired by the Angelica Library on 25th June 1889 from the bookseller Vincenzo Menozzi. The vicissitudes of the Fanfani collection are illustrated in Carla Casetti Brach, 'I manoscritti di Pietro Fanfani alla Biblioteca Angelica', *Biblioteca nazionale centrale Vittorio Emanuele II quaderni*, 4, 1996, pp. 59-61. I located the manuscript in the course of my research.

<sup>50</sup> Bologna, C Carducci, MSS Carducci Cart.XLII, Ludovico Ariosto, no. 21, (I) and (II). Part I reports the opening lines of MS X.\*.34 (now Modena Est, MS α.H.6.1), which were transcribed by either Francesco Carta, the then Director of the Estense Library, or by an assistant of his; part II groups some notes on 'Antonio Cammelli' written by Carducci. MSS Carducci Cart.LVII, Schede Bibliografiche - 1, is a wallet comprising 166 bibliographical entries and the one relating to Pistoia is numbered 20; MSS Carducci Cart.XXVI, Lirici antichi, no. 18. The sonnet 'In rima taccia ognun, che 'l pregio è dato' listed in the latter manuscript was transcribed by Giulio Gnaccarini while the heading 'Antonio Cammelli' was pencilled by Carducci himself during the years 1900-1905 while he was compiling, with the assistance of Guido Mazzoni, the *Antica lirica italiana (canzonette, canzoni, sonetti dei secoli XIII-XV)* (Florence: Sansoni, 1907). The anthology reports the sonnet on col. 464. The poem was copied from [Girolamo Baruffaldi], *Rime scelte de' poeti ferraresi antichi, e moderni*, cit., p. 58.



journal *Il Piovano Arlotto*,<sup>51</sup> seven years later Antonio Cappelli, published a collection of twenty sonnets<sup>52</sup> and in 1869 Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti edited eighteen poems.<sup>53</sup> Since then numerous publications relating to Pistoia's work and life appeared. A comprehensive edition numbering 117 sonnets, edited by Antonio Cappelli and Severino Ferrari, came out in 1884.<sup>54</sup> This publication was followed by two major discoveries. In 1885 in the Trivulziana Library in Milan, Rodolfo Renier came across a manuscript containing 388 sonnets.<sup>55</sup> Renier's edition came out

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<sup>51</sup> [Pietro Fanfani], 'Cammelli Antonio detto il Pistoia', *Il Piovano Arlotto*, 1, 1858, pp. 24-39. Seven years earlier Francesco Zanotto had published the sonnet 'Signori, io dormo in un letto a vettura' in *Parnaso italiano* (Venice: Antonelli, 1832-1851), vol. 12, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit.

<sup>53</sup> Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoja, *Sonetti politici e burleschi inediti di Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoja*, edited by Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti (Leghorn: Vigo, 1869). Between 1869 and 1883 Targioni Tozzetti edited a further seven sonnets: Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti ed., *Due sonetti inediti del Pistoia* (Ferrara: Bresciani, 1869); Idem, *Ghirlandella di brevi scritture sacre e profane dei secoli XIV, XV, e XVI* (Leghorn: Vigo, 1870); Belacqua [but Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti], 'Tre sonetti di Antonio Cammelli "detto il Pistoia"', *Il Mare, Gazzettino estivo*, 1, 1872, fasc. 7, pp. [1-4]; [Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti] ed., *Nozze Marradi-Foraboschi* (Leghorn: Giusti, 1883). Two further sonnets, 'Nel tempo che il cervel regna in verdura' and 'O viatori in questo tumulto giace' had been edited in 1880 by Pietro Volpini in *Per nozze Avv. Pellegrino Ducceschi e Leonilda Masi* (Leghorn: Meucci, 1880).

<sup>54</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit. The edition was favourably reviewed in several literary journals among which [Anonymous], *Il fanfulla della domenica*, 4, 13th July 1884, no. 28, pp. [3-4]; Salomone Morpurgo, *RCLI*, 1, 1884-1885, pp. 14-18 and Giuseppe S. Scipioni [review], 'Rime edite ed inedite di Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoia, per cura di A. Cappelli e S. Ferrari - Livorno, Vigo, 1884', *GSLI*, 5, 1885, pp. 242-258.

<sup>55</sup> Milan T, MS 979, pp. 1-388.



in 1888<sup>56</sup> and, although mainly based on MS 979, it contains several sonnets preserved in various miscellaneous manuscripts and early sixteenth-century editions.<sup>57</sup> Five years later, Erasmo Pèrcopo managed to locate Pistoia's most exhaustive manuscript, MS H.223 inf., which he regarded as autograph, at the Ambrosiana Library in Milan.<sup>58</sup> The manuscript lists 535 tailed and

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<sup>56</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit. The edition was reviewed by Vittorio Cian, 'R. Renier, *I sonetti del Pistoia giusta l'apografo Trivulziano*, Torino, Loescher, 1888', *Rivista storica italiana*, 5, 1888, pp. 78-88; Ludovico Frati, 'I sonetti del Pistoia giusta l'apografo Trivulziano a cura di Rodolfo Renier - Torino, E. Loescher, 1888', *Giornale ligustico*, 15, 1888, fasc. 1-2, pp. 1-9; Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'I sonetti del Pistoia: a proposito di una recente pubblicazione', *Il Propugnatore*, 1, 1888, pt. 1, pp. 249-290; Giuseppe S. Scipioni, 'Un poeta burlesco del Quattrocento', cit., pp. 61-63.

<sup>57</sup> Renier in his introduction, pp. xi-xii, puts forward the hypothesis that the Trivulziana manuscript could be the 'libro facto solamente de' [...] sonetti' owned by Nicolò Correggio. Pèrcopo did not agree with Renier's hypothesis, and explained the reason why in Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. xxxv, fn. 1: '[il manoscritto del Correggio] dovette essere del tutto indipendente dalla raccolta originale, mentre il ms. de' Trivulzio deriva [...] da una silloge del tutto identica all'autografo. Se il Correggio avesse tenuto presente la raccolta originale, piuttosto che farne una scelta, ne avrebbe trascritti tutt'i sonetti, d'alcuni de' quali, invece, ei dice d'andare in cerca'. The Trivulziana manuscript is neatly and clearly written in an early sixteenth-century cursive hand. The manuscript is well preserved, and the spelling adopted by the scribe shows quite a few features typical of northern Italian (e.g. 'cenciale', with the typical hypercorrection from 'zenzale', that is mosquitoes. The term for example was misunderstood by Renier, who transcribed 'cicale' instead of 'cenciale'). The first person of the auxiliary verb to be is often transcribed in the northern Italian and Latinized form of *sum*, and the preposition *con* is often found in the Latinized form *cum*. It is worth noting that the whole manuscript was 'tuscanized' by a later hand, which systematically inserted some double consonants according to the Tuscan norm, it expunged redundant *h* (such as 'tocchè', 'eccho', 'dicha', etc.), and it transformed the *u* of 'cu(m)' into an *o*, that is 'co(m)'. This may have been done with a view to a possible publication, which was perhaps in the end never carried out; other hypotheses are that it was on the contrary published but it did not survive or that has not yet been located.

<sup>58</sup> Milan *Ambr*, MS H.223 inf., ff. 1r-210r, ff. 211r-215v, ff. 216v-288r.



sonettessa<sup>59</sup> sonnets and other works by Pistoia, some of them of doubtful attribution. The edition appeared in 1908.<sup>60</sup> Vittorio Rossi referred to this work in his *Quattrocento* and Gianfranco Contini added that it integrated 'oltre tutto di numerosi inediti le precedenti edizioni dovute ad Antonio Cappelli e Severino Ferrari (1884) e Rodolfo Renier (1888), le quali peraltro attestano redazioni più antiche';<sup>61</sup> and finally Paolo Bongrani described it as 'meritoria edizione commentata'.<sup>62</sup> Pèrcopo's work has remained until now the standard and the most comprehensive study of Pistoia's *Canzoniere* although the editor never consulted the Ambrosiana manuscript on which he later based his edition:

Ritrovai questo cod. in una rapida visita, dell'aprile 1893 all'Ambrosiana, nel cui catalogo, sotto la lettera V, era notato: "Vinci Antonio da Pistoia, Rime"; ma io, credendo si trattasse di qualche sonetto disperso, non mi curai di esaminare il manoscritto, che poi non ho potuto più vedere.

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<sup>59</sup> A sonnet is defined *caudato*, tailed, when it is furnished with a three-line coda of a seven-syllable line plus two hendecasyllables. When a sonnet has more than one tail it takes the name of *sonettessa* sonnet.

<sup>60</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit. The edition was reviewed by N. Zingarelli, 'L'autografo di un poeta giocoso', *Il fanfulla della domenica*, 6th September 1908, pp. [1-2]; Rodolfo Renier [review], 'I sonetti faceti secondo l'autografo ambrosiano, editi e illustrati da Erasmo Pèrcopo - Napoli, tip. Jovene, 1908', *GSLI*, 53, 1909, pp. 375-379 and Alfredo Chiti, 'Cammelli Antonio - I sonetti faceti secondo l'autografo ambrosiano editi e illustrati da Erasmo Pèrcopo - Napoli, Iovene e C., 1908' *BSP*, 11, 1909, fasc. 2, pp. 103-104.

<sup>61</sup> Vittorio Rossi, *Il Quattrocento*, revised and updated by Rossella Bessi (Milan: Piccin Nuova Libreria; Vallardi, 1992 [reprint of the 1933 edition]), p. 814, (chap. 10, fn. 61); Gianfranco Contini, *Letteratura italiana del Quattrocento* (Florence: Sansoni, 1976), p. 349.

<sup>62</sup> Paolo Bongrani, *Lingua e letteratura a Milano nell'età sforzesca: una raccolta di studi* (Parma: Università degli Studi, Istituto di Filologia Moderna, 1986), p. 161.



Chiesto poi ed ottenuto dall'amico Emidio Martini, allora bibliotecario della Braidense, un indice del codice, ne riconobbi, quando n'ero troppo lontano, tutta l'importanza; e dovetti contentarmi di avere, colla descrizione del ms., una copia dei soli sonetti inediti e una collazione degli editi sui testi a stampa, fatiche tutte del dott. Virginio Mazzelli, allora sottobibliotecario della Braidense. Un'accuratissima revisione definitiva sulle bozze di stampa debbo alla cortesia degli amici proff. Domenico Bassi e Bernardo Sanvisenti, che qui ringrazio pubblicamente.<sup>63</sup>

Although Pèrcopo's personal integrity in acknowledging all the help received cannot be questioned, one has to handle his edition with great caution. Even Pèrcopo himself was not very happy with the outcome as he reiterated in his correspondence with Professor Francesco Novati whom he tried to persuade to check the over 500 sonnets on his behalf. The work carried out by Virginio Mazzelli he wrote:

lascia moltissimo a desiderare e non mi contenta per nulla. Ho già stampati alcuni fogli (tutto il *Dialogo*), ma tempestando di cartoline il copista che è frettoloso e poco paziente; e con tutto ciò son sicuro che gli saranno sfuggiti errori e sviste a dozzine!<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., pp. xvi-xvii, (fn. 1).

<sup>64</sup> Milan N, Carteggio Novati, Busta 869/1-24 (letter no. 12). The correspondence sent by Pèrcopo to Novati, hitherto unknown, and which I located at the Braidense Library, Milan, is constituted by twenty-four letters and postcards dating from October 1886 to September 1915. The correspondence contains numerous remarks, at times endearingly quaint, concerning the publication of the Ambrosiana manuscript. Pèrcopo, for example, told Novati that he had 'la fortuna o la sfortuna (in Italia è meglio dire così) di ritrovare l'autografo Canzoniere del Pistoia' and that he had decided to publish the volume 'a mie spese, lento lento, come mi aiutano i miei risparmi' (letter no. 12). Some of his worries might still in a way be relevant today: 'È quasi inutile che io le raccomandi di non dire a nessuno dell'esistenza dell'autografo cammelliano in Milano: ella è troppo galantuomo, ma non tutti gli studiosi sono come Lei!' (letter no. 13). Perhaps, in this instance Pèrcopo intended to refer to his personal vicissitudes with Vittorio Cian who was his 'accanito avversario' (letter no. 21) and who, among other things, 'ebbe la sfacciataggine di scrivere al Croce che il suo



Pèrcopo regretted not to have published 'il mio Pistoia, mezzo assassinato da un tipografo di Napoli' in the 'Biblioteca storica' edited by his friend Novati.<sup>65</sup> Since 1908 no further study has been carried out on the Ambrosiana manuscript and on the textual tradition of Pistoia's poetic corpus therefore leaving Pèrcopo's edition the only one available to date.<sup>66</sup>

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[i.e. Cian's] giudizio negativo verso di me era condiviso da tutti gli eminenti studiosi e critici italiani' (letter no. 21). I edited the twenty-four letters and postcards and furnished them with commentary and explanatory notes in an article entitled 'Un carteggio inedito di Erasmo Pèrcopo a Francesco Novati'; it will be published in *Atti del congresso sull'attività di Erasmo Pèrcopo (1860-1928) tra storiografia letteraria e pratica filologica*, edited by Tobia R. Toscano, [Naples: 1999/2000], pp. [1-45].

<sup>65</sup> Milan N, Carteggio Novati, Busta 869/1-24 (letter no. 20).

<sup>66</sup> The last and latest general works on Pistoia are a number of essays by Antonio Piromalli, a study by Rocco Pallone and a paper presented at a conference by Adriana Mauriello: Antonio Piromalli, 'Antonio Cammelli', *Convivium*, 29, 1961, pp. 531-554; Idem, *Dal Quattrocento al Novecento: saggi critici* (Florence: Olschki, 1965); the section on Pistoia is entitled 'Antonio Cammelli: stile giocoso e poesia', pp. 11-32; Idem, 'Società ferrarese e mondo morale dal Pistoia all'Ariosto', *Italianistica*, 3, September-December 1974, no. 3, pp. 606-618; Idem, *Società cultura e letteratura in Emilia e Romagna* (Florence: Olschki, 1980); the part concerning Pistoia is entitled 'La letteratura popolare a Ferrara e Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoia', pp. 49-64; Rocco Pallone, *Anticlericalismo e giustizia sociale nell'Italia del '400* (Rome: Trevi, 1975). The title reported on the first page of the book slightly differs from the one on the front cover which reads as *Anticlericalismo e ingiustizie sociali nell'Italia del '400: l'opera poetica e satirica di Antonio Cammelli detto «Il Pistoia»*; Adriana Mauriello, 'L'edizione dei Sonetti faceti di Antonio Cammelli', *Atti del congresso sull'attività di Erasmo Pèrcopo (1860-1928) tra storiografia letteraria e pratica filologica*, cit., pp. [1-22]. It is unfortunate that practically nothing new has been added to our knowledge of Pistoia and his work. Out of curiosity, it is worth mentioning that Edmund G. Gardner translated a few sonnets by Pistoia into English in his work *Dukes & poets in Ferrara: a study in the poetry, religion and politics of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries* (London: Constable, 1904), pp. 477-482, and that the Russian author Dmitry S. Merezhkovsky quoted a number of Pistoia's lines in his book, originally published in Russian in 1902, and later translated into several European

According to these testimonies, it appears that Pistoia's production in verse was mostly sought after and appreciated during the sixteenth century while it passed almost unnoticed from the seventeenth until the middle of the nineteenth century. His most popular sonnets, in terms of manuscript tradition, were jocular, *contra* and political while printed texts brought down to us a slightly different picture. His most successful poems were jocular only but his most printed sonnets were those written *in morte* of Matteo Maria Boiardo. The following two charts list the first ten most popular sonnets transcribed in manuscripts and the first five published in early editions. I have excluded the three sonnets written for Boiardo because their popularity was exclusively due to the fact that they accompanied the 'best seller' *Orlando innamorato*.



Table 1

The most popular sonnets in the manuscript tradition from the 15th to the 20th century.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando in dono <sup>67</sup>  | 14 |
| Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo <sup>68</sup>     | 11 |
| Cenando Fidel mio hersira in corte <sup>69</sup>       | 10 |
| Che fa San Marco? <Guarda> ove lampeggia <sup>70</sup> | 10 |
| Lasciamo andar che per un\o/ scudieri <sup>71</sup>    | 10 |

<sup>67</sup> Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408, f. [21v]; Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.877, f. 100v; Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.1398, f. 159v; MS Magl.Cl.VII.669, f. 48v; MS Magl.Cl.VII.873, f. 38r; MS II.II.109, f. 345r; Lucca S, MS 1537, f. 52r-v; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 140r; Milan T, MS 979, p. 167; Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), f. 151r; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 63; Rome Cors, MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092, f. 233r; Venice N, MS It.IX.113(6745), f. 34r and MS It.XI.66(6730), f. 301r.

<sup>68</sup> Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.877, f. 101r; MS Magl.Cl.VII.669, f. 47r; MS Magl.Cl.VII.873, f. 48r; MS II.II.109, f. 345r; Lucca S, MS 1537, f. 53r; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 147v; Milan T, MS 979, p. 182; Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), f. 151v; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 64; Rome Cors, MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092, f. 233v; Venice N, MS It.IX.113(6745), f. 34v.

<sup>69</sup> Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.877, f. 99v; MS Magl.Cl.VII.873, f. 37v; MS II.II.109, f. 345r; Lucca S, MS 474, f. 179r and MS 1537, f. 51r-v; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 28v; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 82; Rome Cors, MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092, f. 232r; Vatican City BAV, MS Barb. Lat. 3800, f. 34r; Venice N, MS It.IX.113(6745), f. 33v.

<sup>70</sup> Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli), f. 109r; Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408, f. [26r]; Florence N, MS Palat.218, Rime adespote no. 8-12, f. 9r and MS Palat.325, f. 53r; ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Paesi, 1490-1491, Busta 2439, f. 11r; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 204r; Modena Est, MS α.W.2.11, f. 345r; Pesaro O, MS 54, f. 77r; ASPc, Notai e Cancellieri della Comunità, Notaio Marco Antonio Gatti, volume contenente gli atti dal 1489 al 1493, not foliated; Venice N, MS It.IX.363(7386), f. 73r.

<sup>71</sup> Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.877, f. 101v; MS Magl.Cl.VII.669, f. 50v; MS II.II.109, f. 345r; Lucca S, MS 1537, f. 53v; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 117r; Milan T, MS 979, p. 153; Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), f. 141v; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 44; Rome Cors, MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092, f. 234r; Venice N, MS It.IX.113(6745), ff. 34v-35r.

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| Ognun mi dice tu sei magro et secco <sup>72</sup>      | 8 |
| O il duca n(ost)ro fa i gran cavam(en)ti <sup>73</sup> | 7 |
| Quando tu vai madonna ai templi santi <sup>74</sup>    | 7 |
| Rimandovi i danari ch'io accattai <sup>75</sup>        | 7 |
| Una donna ne va tutta contrita <sup>76</sup>           | 7 |

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<sup>72</sup> Bologna C Carducci, MSS Carducci Cart.XLII, Ludovico Ariosto, no. 21, (I), f. 13r; Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.877, f. 79r and MS II.II.109, f. 345r; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 38r; Modena Est, MS α.H.6.1, f. 84r; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 81; Rome Cors, MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092, f. 210r; Venice N, MS It.IX.113(6745), ff. 32v-33r.

<sup>73</sup> Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli), f. 112v; Budapest F, MS Zichy 09/2690, f. 6v; Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.769, pp. 739-740; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 212r; Milan T, MS 979, p. 278; Vatican City BAV, MS Chigiano J.I.4, f. 301v; Venice N, MS It.IX.363(7386), f. 74r.

<sup>74</sup> Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.1398, f. 159r; MS Magl.Cl.VII.669, f. 48r and MS II.II.109, f. 345r; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 150v; Milan T, MS 979, p. 188; Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), f. 150v; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 62.

<sup>75</sup> Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.1398, f. 160v; MS Magl.Cl.VII.669, f. 49v and MS II.II.109, f. 345r; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 59r; Milan T, MS 979, p. 37; Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), f. 143r; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 47.

<sup>76</sup> Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.1398, f. 160r; MS Magl.Cl.VII.669, f. 49r and MS II.II.109, f. 345r; Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 56v; Milan T, MS 979, p. 32; Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), f. 142v; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 46.



Table 2

Top five sonnets in 15th- and 16th-century printed editions.

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|--|----|
| Signore e dormo in uno lecto a victura <sup>77</sup> | 10 |
| Che cosa è amor? Un fanciulin da gioco <sup>78</sup> | 4  |
| Cenando Fidel me iarsira in corte <sup>79</sup>      | 3  |
| Il tuo caval da quattro gambe infermo <sup>80</sup>  | 3  |

<sup>77</sup> [Anonymous], *Collectanee de cose facetissime e piene de riso*, cit., sig. [d3v-d4r]; Vincenzo Calmeta, *Compendio de cose nove di Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove di Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Opera nuova de Vincentio Calmeta, Lorenzo Carbone, Orpheo mantuano et Venturino da Pesaro, et altri auctori*, cit., f. [11v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove de Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove di Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. BB3v; Idem, *Compe(n)dio de cose nove de Vince(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. BB3v; Idem, *Vincenzo Calmeta poeta vulgare non manco facetto che elegante. In ditta opera se contiene: sonetti strambotti eccloghe capituli dialoghi et una predica d'amore cosa bellissima*, cit., sig. C3v. The sonnet is also attributed to Giovanni de' Rossi detto il Pistoia and Iacopo Corsi; the matter is discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>78</sup> [Anonymous], *Frottole nove d'amore con alquanti sonetti et dialoghi*, cit., sig. A2v-[A3r]; Bellizario da Cingoli, *Sonetto de Bellizario da Cingoli nova trama. Con l'autoritâ de Salamone. Cosa nova*, cit., f. [4r]; Idem, *Sonetto de Bellizario da Cingoli nova trama. Con l'autoritâ de Salamone. Cosa nova*, cit., f. [4r-v]; Faustino da Terdocci et al., *Barzeleta de Messer Faustino da Terdoccio in laude dela pecunia, et la autoritâ de Salomone in frotola de Belizario da Cinguli con alquanti sonetti artificiosi. Opera nova*, cit., sig. [B3v-B4r].

<sup>79</sup> [Anonymous], *Barzelleta stramboti soneti de amore de diversi auctori*, cit., f. [2v]; [Anonymous], *Frotula ala bergamascha co(n) alchuni sonetti*, cit., sig. [A3v-A4r]; Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti novi del preclarissimo poeta misser Antonio decto el Pistoia*, cit., f. [1r].

<sup>80</sup> Bellizario da Cingoli, *Sonetto de Bellizario da Cingoli nova trama. Con l'autoritâ de Salamone. Cosa nova*, cit., ff. [3v-4r]; Idem, *Sonetto de Bellizario da Cingoli nova trama. Con l'autoritâ de Salamone. Cosa nova*, cit., ff. [3v-4r]; Faustino da Terdocci et al., *Barzeleta de Messer Faustino da Terdoccio in laude dela pecunia, et la autoritâ de Salomone in frotola de Belizario da Cinguli con alquanti sonetti artificiosi. Opera nova*, cit., sig. [B3v].

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| Madonna ancor son vivo e non n'è zanza <sup>81</sup> |
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|---|
| 2 |
|---|

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<sup>81</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti novi del preclarissimo poeta misser Antonio decto el Pistoia*, cit., f. [1r]; [Anonymous], *Frotula ala bergamascha co(n) alchuni sonetti*, cit., sig. [A4r].



## 2.2 Antonio Pistoia's three plays: the *Panfila* and the two lost 'comedie'.

In 1499 Pistoia sent the Marchioness of Mantua a tragedy by the name of *Panfila*.<sup>82</sup> In a letter addressed to her on 18th June, the author wrote:

[Illustrissima] Madonna ma(n)do questo libretto della tregiedia nominata [*Panfila*] la quale presentai<sup>83</sup> la

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<sup>82</sup> Domenico De Robertis in 'L'esperienza poetica del Quattrocento', *Storia della letteratura italiana*, directed by Emilio Cecchi and Natalino Sapegno (Milan: Garzanti, 1966), vol. 3, pp. 357-784, quotes it as, p. 628, '*Filostrato e Pasitea*'.

<sup>83</sup> It still remains unclear what Pistoia meant by 'presentai'. Did he intend to say that his tragedy had been performed on stage or that a written copy of it had been previously given to someone else? In their modern edition of the tragedy, Antonia Tissoni Benvenuti and Maria P. Mussini Sacchi, *Teatro del Quattrocento: le corti padane* (Turin: UTET, 1983), also comment upon the verb 'presentai', p. 400: 'resta però il dubbio sul termine usato «presentai», che può non equivalere a «feci rappresentare» o simili (oltre tutto, in Quaresima non si potevano fare spettacoli teatrali)'. Alessandro D'Ancona, *Origini del teatro italiano* (Turin: Loescher, 1891), vol. 2, p. 376, remarks: 'Se quel presentai volesse dire rappresentai, feci rappresentare, forse se ne indurrebbe che alla recita della tragedia, probabilmente fatta in Ferrara, avesse assistito Isabella, la quale nel febbraio almeno trovavasi certo presso il padre'; Carlo A. Chiesa, *Teatro italiano del Cinquecento* (Milan: Maestri Arti Grafiche, 1953), p. 23: 'Questa tragedia [...] fu fatta rappresentare dall'autore nel 1499 a Mantova alla presenza del Duca e d'Isabella d'Este sua consorte'. At the entry 'presentare' Carlo Battisti and Giovanni Alessio, *Dizionario etimologico italiano* (Florence: Giunti Marzocco, 1975 [reprint]), vol. 4, p. 3068, report: 'XIV sec., [...] sottoporre alla vista, consegnare, portare alla presenza' and Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti eds., *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana* ([Turin]: UTET, [1961-]), vol. 14, pp. 220-220 (p. 220, entries [1] and 2 state: 'XIV sec., far donativo; far conoscere, far fare conoscenza; mostrare, far vedere [...] regalare, donare, offrire in dono'. The verb 'presentare' could plausibly be an apheretic form of 'rappresentare' and in a letter written in 1501 by Pistoia to Francesco Gonzaga there is an explicit instance of the verb 'presentare' with the clear meaning of 'to put on stage': 'Ho inteso [...] come q(ue)lla [i.e. Your Lordship] si è per far(e) alcune comedie et perch(é) ne <h>o una facta a nome di quella se vol la Excelentia v(ost)ra presentarla su quel medesimo spettacolo senza far altra spesa ma(n)di a darne a dir ch(e) io serò pro(n)to'. ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXIX.3,



quaresima passata.<sup>84</sup>

The subject of the tragedy, divided into five acts with choral interludes and a dialogue in tercets, was taken from the first tale of the fourth day of the *Decameron*:

Tancredi, prenze di Salerno, uccide l'amante della figliuola e mandale il cuore in una coppa d'oro; la quale, messa sopr'esso acqua avvelenata, quella si bee e così muore.<sup>85</sup>

Pistoia altered the plot of Boccaccio's tale by changing the characters' names and the location (Tancredi Prince of Salerno becomes Demetrio King of Thebes, and Ghismonda and Guiscardo change their names into Panfila and Filostrato), and by adding two new characters, that is Tindaro and Pandero.<sup>86</sup> While the

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Novellara, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1452-1706, Busta 1354. It would therefore seem more than plausible to conclude that even in the letter to Isabella, Pistoia by 'presentai' meant 'to put on stage', although it cannot be proven conclusively. Both the first dated edition of 1508 published in Venice by Manfredo Bonelli and the following ones report this dedication: 'A lo ill(ustrissimo) et excellen(tissimo) Duca Hercule de Ferrara'.

<sup>84</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Mantova, 1499, Busta 2453, f. 166r.

<sup>85</sup> Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, edited by Vittore Branca (Turin: Einaudi, 1980), pp. 471-486 (p. 471).

<sup>86</sup> It is worth mentioning the comparison made by Paolo Baldan between the black comedy *La Mandragola* by Nicolò Machiavelli and the remaking of Boccaccio's tale by Pistoia in 'Titoli legittimi, adottivi e naturali. (Un notevole caso di compresenza: La «Mandragola»)', *Il titolo e il testo: atti del XV convegno interuniversitario (Bressanone 1987)*, edited by Michele A. Cortelazzo (Padua: Editoriale Programma, 1992), pp. 177-181 (p. 178): 'un autore caro al Nostro [i.e. Machiavelli] come il Cammelli ne ricava, con il suo *Filostrato* e *Panfila*, un'attualizzazione drammatica. A parte la diversa qualità artistica c'è invero una singolare corrispondenza inversa tra questa tragedia condotta con toni da commedia e la commedia del Machiavelli nella quale più di un critico ha creduto di avvertire un sentore di tragedia'.



latter acts as Demetrio's personal counsellor, who tries in vain to stop him from going ahead with his bloody plan, Tindaro represents an old, mistreated servant whose faithful services have never been taken into any consideration by the King. In the hand of Pistoia, Tindaro becomes the perfect mouthpiece for the author's anti-courtly polemic.<sup>87</sup> On a fictional level the poet, for the first time, mounts an attack against the King, the embodiment of power. Never before in his sonnets had he dared to criticize explicitly the figure of the lord-patron although he had often covered the experience of life at court in a rather critical fashion.

No manuscripts of the *Panfila* have come down to us. There is no surviving evidence for its printed circulation before 1508 and since then six editions span the period between 1516 and 1520.<sup>88</sup> From this initial popularity, the work was soon

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<sup>87</sup> Antonia Tissoni Benvenuti and Maria P. Mussini Sacchi, *Teatro del Quattrocento: le corti padane*, cit., p. 420, fn. 89d: 'È la prima comparsa di questa figura originale (non ne esiste una corrispondente nella novella boccaccesca che è servita da fonte al Pistoia) di servo rancoroso e desideroso di vendetta nei confronti del re che, a suo dire, si è dimostrato ingiusto verso di lui [...]. Questa figura ha inoltre il merito di movimentare la narrazione e di fornire l'occasione di introdurre numerose frasi sentenziose, di esporre opinioni ed idee anticortigiane che nascono probabilmente dall'esperienza dello stesso autore'.

<sup>88</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Tragedia* (Venice: Manfredo Bonelli, 1508). The Marciana Library in Venice has a 1508 edition, printed by Manfredo Bonelli, pressmark Rari Ven. 703, whose frontispiece bears the device of Melchiorre Sessa Il Vecchio. The tragedy was published at regular intervals of one- and two-year distance in 1515, 1516, 1518, 1519 and 1520. The editions so far recorded are: Antonio Pistoia, *Tragedia* ([Florence]: Francesco Benvenuto, [not before 1515]); Idem, *Tragedia* (Venice: Melchiorre Sessa, 1516); Idem, *Operetta nova de doi nobilissimi ama(n)ti Philostrato et Pamphila* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1518); Idem, *Operetta nova de doi nobilissimi amanti Philostrato et Pamphila* (Milan: Giovanni da Castiglione, 1519); Idem, *Tragedia* ([Florence]: Francesco di Giovanni Benvenuto, [c. 1520]); Idem, *Operetta nova de doi nobilissimi amanti Philostrato et Pamphila*



neglected and it was really only in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century that it received some new attention.<sup>89</sup> The play, of which only the 1508 and 1518 editions were known, was quoted as *Filostrato e Panfila* and *Demetrio re di Tebe*.<sup>90</sup>

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(Milan: Rocho da Valle & Brothers, 1520). During the course of my research I located a sixteenth-century imperfect edition at the Casanatense Library in Rome, missing the title-page and colophon, and commencing with the second act: [Antonio Pistoia], [Tragedia] ([s.n.]), pressmark Comm.178/1. No mention of this edition is made in Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico delle Biblioteche Italiane e per le Informazioni Bibliografiche, *Le edizioni italiane del XVI secolo: censimento nazionale* (Rome: Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico delle Biblioteche Italiane e per le Informazioni Bibliografiche, 1990<sup>2</sup>-) at the entry 'Cammelli, Antonio', vol. 3, p. 56, or in the modern edition of the play which also makes no mention of the 1520 edition. The editors Antonia Tissoni Benvenuti and Maria P. Mussini Sacchi in their work, p. 402, also refer to an edition published by Melchiorre Sessa in 1515. The *Index Aureliensis: catalogus librorum sedecimo saeculo impressorum* (Aureliae Aquensis: [s.t.], 1962-), pt. 1, t. 6, p. 347, does indeed report that a 1515 edition printed by Sessa is kept at Chicago University Library. However my enquiries have established that this is not the case. The edition printed by Melchiorre Sessa and kept in the Department of Special Collections of the Joseph Regenstein Library, University of Chicago, pressmark PQ 4617 C18F5 1516, bears the year 1516 and not 1515 as indicated. Perhaps the misunderstanding may have stemmed from confusing the year, 1516, with the actual printing day 'a di XV del mese di Mazo [sic]'. Riccardo Bruscaagli states in his article 'La corte in scena: genesi politica della tragedia ferrarese', *Il Rinascimento nelle corti padane: società e cultura* (Bari: De Donato, 1977), pp. 569-595 (p. 574, fn. 12), that the work appeared in 1499 but there is no mention of such an edition in any of the relevant bibliographical reference works. It is likely that Bruscaagli confused the date of the letter, that is 18th June 1499, in which Pistoia mentioned this work to Isabella with the printing date.

<sup>89</sup> The earliest mention so far traced in the seventeenth century is by Liono Allacci (1588-1669), *Drammaturgia* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1961 [reprint of the 1755 edition]), col. 353-354.

<sup>90</sup> Giovanni M. Crescimbeni, *Commentari intorno alla sua istoria della volgar poesia*, cit., vol. 1, p. 305 and vol. 4, p. 58 ; Francesco S. Quadrio, *Della storia, e della ragione d'ogni poesia*, cit., vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 58. Peter Stallybrass declares in 'Dismemberments and re-memberments: rewriting the Decameron, 4.1, in the English Renaissance', *Studi sul Boccaccio*, 20, 1991-1992, pp. 299-324 (p. 317) that the title of the 1508 edition



This gave rise to the widespread belief that the two titles referred to two separate works by the same author.<sup>91</sup> The first modern edition of the *Panfila* appeared in 1884<sup>92</sup> while the latest one came out in 1983.<sup>93</sup>

In an attempt to ingratiate Francesco Gonzaga, Pistoia dedicated two plays to him which had been penned by the poet before his departure from Mantua, and during his stay in Novellara in 1501 under the protection of Giovanni Pietro Gonzaga. The author in a letter addressed to the Marquis, informed him that he had written:

una nuova comoedia amorosa de amicitia dove per interlocutori paliatamente la vita di vostra Ex(cellen)tia si parlerà: e conclusive si faranno noze [...] non quella si sdegni o del sì o del no farmi una risposta, perché piaciendo alla Ex(cellen)tia vostra, alla sua venuta gliene lezerò dui atti, e dove parerà che quella manchi o troppo

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bore the name of 'the daughter', that is Panfila, but this is not the case.

<sup>91</sup> Francesco S. Quadrio, *Della storia, e della ragione d'ogni poesia*, cit., vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 64; Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Storia della letteratura italiana* (Modena: Società Tipografica, 1787-1794<sup>2</sup>), vol. 6, p. 903; Francesco A. Zaccaria, *Bibliotheca Pistoriensis*, cit., p. 178.

<sup>92</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. 279-351. The 1508 edition is the only one the editors Antonio Cappelli and Severino Ferrari refer to.

<sup>93</sup> Antonia Tissoni Benvenuti and Maria P. Mussini Sacchi, *Teatro del Quattrocento: le corti padane*, cit., based their edition on the princeps of 1508. The first study on the tragedy was carried out by Attilio Angeloro, *Filostrato e Panfila «tragedia scura» di Antonio Cammelli* (Naples: Tessitore, 1907); the work was reviewed by Alfredo Chiti in *BSP*, 10, 1908, fasc. 1, pp. 46-47. The most exhaustive study to date remains that by Marcello Aurigemma, *Studi sulla letteratura teatrale ed eroica del Rinascimento* (Rome: Signorelli, 1968). The section concerning Pistoia's work is entitled 'La "Panfila" di A. Cammelli e la posizione storica del teatro dell'ultimo Quattrocento', pp. 11-68.

dichi la emendarà.<sup>94</sup>

Unfortunately no trace of this work has so far been found.

Hardly anything else is known about another play, described by the author as 'amorosa nova e piacevel comedia'.<sup>95</sup> However, a note written by the dedicatee, the Marquis of Mantua, to the author throws light on the way Pistoia and his work were perceived:

Pistoia essendo tu nel loco ove sei no(n) potresti farni offerta de cosa ch(e) fosse bona né ch(e) ni piacesse, sì che tienti pur le tue comedie per te.<sup>96</sup>

Francesco Gonzaga did not enjoy Pistoia's company and work as much as his consort Isabella. However, such a strong reply might have been triggered by a personal dispute going on at the time between the Marquis and Giovanni Pietro Gonzaga who was sheltering the stranded Pistoia. The poet hinted at this disagreement in the sonnet 'Conte Gian Petro mio se alle parole'<sup>97</sup> in which the latter was advised to make peace with his

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<sup>94</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Mantova, 1499, Busta 2453, f. 165r (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. xlv-xlvi). Pèrcopo in his full-scale biography of Pistoia, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., affirmed that the poet in writing his play was influenced by Terence and Plautus, p. 43: 'Di tutt'e due i comici latini dovè anche seguire, senza dubbio, le orme nella sua «commedia amorosa»'. It is perhaps exaggerated to use a phrase like 'senza dubbio' in the absence of any manuscripts and printed editions of this work.

<sup>95</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXIX.3, Novellara, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1452-1706, Busta 1354.

<sup>96</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga F.II.9, Copialettere Ordinari Misti, 23.10.1500-18.04.1501, Busta 2910, Registro 169, f. 54v.

<sup>97</sup> Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 195r (CCCLX, pp. 390-391). From now on I will quote directly from this manuscript; the Roman and Arab numerals between round parentheses refer to the numbering and paging of the sonnets in the edition of the



powerful relative.<sup>98</sup>

### 2.3 The *frottola* for Isabella.

A *frottola*, that is an epistle in verse,<sup>99</sup> reached Isabella at Mantua during the autumn of 1499. The composition, occasioned by an unkept promise of the Marchioness to visit Ferrara, was a celebration of her parade as imagined by the author:

Madon(n)a mia ill(ustrissi)ma  
o quanto era car(issi)ma

che molto più che cara  
la venuta ad Ferrara

della tua Sig(nori)a,  
che andando p(er) la via

la cantavano i putti,  
donne et homini tutti...<sup>100</sup>

In the poem Pistoia provides Isabella with local gossip disguised under oblique references as well as news about the latest national and international political events. In the body

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Ambrosiana Canzoniere by Pèrcopo.

<sup>98</sup> The difficulties between Giovanni Pietro Gonzaga and Francesco Gonzaga are analysed by Gabriele Fabbrici in 'L'archivio dei Gonzaga di Novellara' (unpublished dissertation, University of Bologna, 1977-1978), pp. 17-25.

<sup>99</sup> Pietro G. Beltrami, *La metrica italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991), p. 345: 'Componimento in versi di varia misura, per lo più brevi con rime bacciate o ulteriormente reiterate (la regola fondamentale vuole che le rime procedano in gruppi regolari, per es. a coppie o a terne), o in endecasillabi con rima al mezzo, caratterizzato da un modo prossimo al "nonsenso" nell'aggancio fra le diverse frasi'.

<sup>100</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXI.3, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1497-1499, Busta 1235, f. 659r-v, lines 1-8 (complete text in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. 23-29). The manuscript copy of the *frottola* is not autograph as is generally believed.

of the letter, he constantly refers to himself as one of her faithful servants, and begs her to intercede with her husband Francesco to look favourably upon him. He also declares that she can dispose of him as it pleases her:

e te insieme con lui  
della qual sempre fui  
schiavo no(n) comperato,  
ché mi t'hai guadagnato

così vender mi puoi:  
fa di me quel che voi,

o di giocarmi o vender,  
puomi a tua voglia spendere

in carne o i(n) insalate ...<sup>101</sup>

The epistle must have been confined in the Gonzaga archives for a very long time, because no transcription in miscellaneous manuscripts and no early editions of it have so far been traced. It was published for the first and last time in 1884.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXI.3, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1497-1499, Busta 1235, f. 659r-v, lines 59-67.

<sup>102</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. 23-29.



## CHAPTER THREE

## PROBLEMS OF ATTRIBUTION: AN OPEN QUESTION

Numerous sonnets, not listed in a partly autograph codex, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli),<sup>1</sup> and in MS H.223 inf., bear Pistoia's name in various manuscripts and early-printed editions. Furthermore a number of anonymous poems were ascribed to the pen of our Tuscan sonneteer by nineteenth-century scholars in a completely arbitrary way. It did not take long for some academics to see the fallacy of the other camp's argument but Pistoia's name has remained attached to many of those poems ever since.

Apart from a few articles and some stray remarks, the debate concerning doubtful attributions, which started at the end of the last century and ended with questionable conclusions shortly after, has failed to attract any significant attention. The whole issue has never been properly investigated and the matter cries out for an in-depth study. My aim in this chapter is to illustrate the situation, provide a summary of all the various opinions and add, where possible, new findings. I shall start with those poems ascribed to Pistoia in manuscripts and early editions alike, and then move on to considering four different groups of anonymous *contra* sonnets, a *strambotto* and a sonnet attributed to Pistoia by nineteenth-century scholars. I will also discuss an attribution to our author of a *sonettessa* poem which

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<sup>1</sup> Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli). The miscellaneous manuscript contains one poem, 'Ogni dì cose nuove di te sento', f. 111r, which is not listed in the Ambrosiana manuscript. The sonnet is published in Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., p. 403.

had never been previously mentioned as it only emerged during the course of my research. The chapter will end with the *disperata* *La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto* which although widely believed to belong to Pistoia's works needs to be considered with more caution.

I would like to emphasize the fact that the topic which I am about to introduce and comment upon is entirely based on the belief that MS H.223 inf. was autograph.

### 3.1 Five elegiac sonnets of undisputed attribution.

Five elegiac sonnets paying tribute to the poets Bernardo Bellincioni, Matteo Maria Boiardo and Nicolò Lelio Cosmico are ascribed to the pen of Pistoia in an incunable, in a number of early-printed editions and in a sixteenth-century manuscript respectively. The first sonnet 'Ruppe la parcha una più dolce cetra', edited by Francesco Tanzi in the 1493 collection of Bellincioni's *Rime*, is introduced by the following inscription:

Sonetto fatto al signore Duca di Milano contra a detractori del nobile poeta laureato Bernardo Belinzone cittadino fiorentino per Antonio Vinci da Pistoia.<sup>2</sup>

The attribution has never raised any doubts among scholars and the sonnet has always been regarded as the genuine work of Pistoia. The Ambrosiana manuscript lists a further elegiac poem 'Tronca la corda del tuo sacro legno',<sup>3</sup> written for the death of Bellincioni, who died on 12th September 1492. The *Rime* came out when Pistoia was alive and he is believed to have been familiar

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<sup>2</sup> Bernardo Bellincioni, *Rime*, cit., sig. a2r.

<sup>3</sup> Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 80r.



with the edition in view of the fact that, as some scholars claimed, the sequence according to which the sonnets are arranged in MS H.223 inf. resembles that of the *Rime*. However a close comparison between the two shows no similarity in term of their structure. It is nonetheless true that Pistoia's intention to collect his poems followed the publication of the incunable by roughly six years: it was in fact in 1499 and precisely in a letter to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga that the poet referred to his work in terms of a *Canzoniere*.<sup>4</sup>

It is thought that Matteo Maria Boiardo, the Count of Scandiano, and Pistoia were on friendly terms and numerous indications of this sort are indeed contained in Pistoia's poems. For a span of seven years they both lived in Reggio Emilia where Boiardo, from 1487 to 1494,<sup>5</sup> was *capitano ducale*, town governor, and Pistoia worked as a tax collector at Porta Santa Croce and later at Porta San Pietro. Fifteen editions of the *Orlando innamorato*, published between 1506 and 1544, list either two or three of the elegiac poems which Pistoia apparently wrote for the Count's death. The compositions are accompanied by three separate headings: 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia', 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio' or 'Sonetti d'Antonio

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<sup>4</sup> In the letter, dated 18th June 1499, Pistoia announced to the Marchioness that in a matter of weeks she would receive his collection of poems, ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Mantova, 1499, Busta 2453, f. 166r: 'e se la opera fosse p(er) più degno poeta <di> me composta la averia in carta membrana con maiuscole d'oro fatta scrivere e pingiere, ma tale qual'è l'opera tal vesta porta'.

<sup>5</sup> Naborre Campanini, 'Matteo Maria Boiardo al governo di Reggio', *Studi su Matteo Maria Boiardo*, edited by [Naborre Campanini] (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1894), pp. 69-116 (p. 69): 'Non due governi tenne a Reggio il Boiardo, ma uno solo: dal gennaio del 1487 al dicembre del 1494'.

Pistoia'. Two later editions of the *Orlando innamorato*, dated 1574 and 1576 respectively,<sup>6</sup> contain one sonnet only namely 'Cantate o ninfe gloriose, e dive', followed by the printer's initials, M.B.V., that is Michele Bonelli Venetiano. The latter transcribed the poem from a previous edition and then added a personal touch to it by partially altering both tercets.<sup>7</sup> No doubts have ever been raised in connection with the authorship and the three sonnets are considered to be the genuine work of Pistoia.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Matteo M. Boiardo, *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Michele Bonelli, 1574), sig. [a7v]; Idem, *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Michele Bonelli, 1576), sig. [a7v].

<sup>7</sup> Matteo M. Boiardo, *Orlando innamorato*, cit., sig. [a7v]; Idem, *Orlando innamorato*, cit., sig. [a7v]. The tercets in the 1574 and 1576 editions read as follows (I quote from the 1574 edition of the Central Library, Birmingham, pressmark 094,1574.1):

Non per sempre il maestro un dona, o vende;  
ma il pellegrin sott'il mondan vesillo  
al mondo il presta, e poi morte a lui il rende.

Non pianger più, non t'oscurar Tranquillo,  
che 'l gran signor Matteo Maria risplende,  
nel ciel con l'honorato suo vessillo

while all the previous editions, although with a number of orthographical variants, report the following tercets (I quote from the 1506 edition of the *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato*, cit., sig. [I7v], of the Marciana Library, Venice, pressmark Rari V.477):

Non per sempre el maestro una dona o vende,  
ma pelegrin soto il mondo vexilo,  
al mondo il presta e poi morte il rende.

Non pianger più, non ti obscurar, Camilo,  
che 'l patre tuo Mathemaria risplende,  
per merto e per virtù nel ciel tranquillo.

<sup>8</sup> Although Pèrcopo excluded the sonnets in question from his edition of Pistoia's *Canzoniere* on the grounds that they were not jocular, he did not dispute the attribution; Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. 12: 'egli (that is Pistoia) ebbe vera stima e venerazione pel cantore dell'*Innamorato*: lo



A fifth elegiac sonnet 'Nasce chi nasce in pregon de la morte', listed in MS Cl.I.408 of the Ariostea Library in Ferrara, is ascribed to the pen of 'Ant(onius) Pistoia'.<sup>9</sup> The poem was occasioned by the death of the Paduan poet Nicolò Lelio Cosmico († 28th June 1500)<sup>10</sup> who was often mentioned and addressed in an amicable fashion by Pistoia in his *Canzoniere*.

No other manuscripts or early editions so far located report the five sonnets either anonymously or with a different attribution, with the exception, as already pointed out, of the 1574 and 1576 edition of the *Orlando innamorato*. The claim of Antonio Pistoia to authorship of these poems was never questioned by nineteenth-century scholars and no evidence has surfaced to this effect to dispute it.

### 3.2 Sonnets of doubtful authenticity.

The highly allusive poems 'Quando di Vener fu l'alma superba' and 'Poteva esser più ria malvagia, et fella' are ascribed to the pen of Pistoia by the Tuscan sixteenth-century poet Paolo Panciatichi.<sup>11</sup> Antonio Cappelli and Severino Ferrari,

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attestano i tre affettuosi sonetti indirizzati al figliuolo del poeta, Camillo, quando, in Reggio istesso, il padre di costui morì'.

<sup>9</sup> Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408, f. [248v]. The sonnet is published in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. 59.

<sup>10</sup> Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408 reports on folio 5v a funeral inscription relating to Cosmico: 'Domenica a.28. de zugno.M.D. morite a Ieolo i(n) Padoana i(llustrissi)m(o) Cosmico Padoano philosopho ex(cellentissi)mo ho(mo) d'amici verissimo'.

<sup>11</sup> Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), f. 217v and f. 218v. The nineteenth-century copy of Panciatichi's autograph, Rome Ang, MS 2014, lists the sonnets on p. 92 and p. 94 respectively. The sonnet 'Quando di Vener fu l'alma sup(er)ba' is transcribed with a slightly different incipit, 'Po' che di Vener fu l'alma et

who edited the sonnets in 1884,<sup>12</sup> found no ground to doubt the authorship which was *en passant* questioned by Pèrcopo. In the first instance the latter accepted the sonnets as the genuine work of Pistoia claiming that the Panciatichi manuscript reported 'alcuni dei sonetti giovanili, che il poeta rifiutò e non inserì nella raccolta definitiva dedicata ad Isabella d'Este'.<sup>13</sup> In the introduction to his edition of the Ambrosiana manuscript, Pèrcopo repeated what had been previously stated with the following addition: 'se l'attribuzione non è errata'.<sup>14</sup> In the end, however, he published the sonnets in the section 'Sonetti faceti del Pistoia mancanti all'autografo'.<sup>15</sup>

MS Sessoriano 413 of the National Library in Rome lists under the heading 'Sonetti di m(esser) Antonio da Pistoia' two poems, 'Che pensi amante? A che penso? Al mio peggio' and 'Senza ale fu nel ciel senza thalari'.<sup>16</sup> Rodolfo Renier was in favour of attributing the first poem to Pistoia because 'L'*idem*, che apre la rubrica, ci fa assegnare con sicurezza al Pistoia il sonetto adespoto precedente' that is 'Che pensi amante? A che penso? Al mio peggio'.<sup>17</sup> As regards the second one, Renier based

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superba', and without attribution in Modena Est, MS γ.F.6.15 (Codice Campori 187), f. 87r-v. The manuscript is described by Laura Leonardi, 'Il codice Campori 187', *La Bibliofilia*, 85, 1983, pp. 3-25.

<sup>12</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. 200-201.

<sup>13</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 563.

<sup>14</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. xxiii.

<sup>15</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., pp. 592-593.

<sup>16</sup> Rome N, MS Sessoriano 413, f. 71v, f. 72r.

<sup>17</sup> Rodolfo Renier, 'Poeti sforzeschi in un codice di Roma recentemente segnalato', cit., p. 21.



his attribution on what he declared to be at the time, a very faded note asserting that Pistoia had sent the poem to Angiolo da Firenze on 8th March 1493.<sup>18</sup> Renier's conclusions were welcomed by Pèrcopo who, in turn, added that the sonnets were not included in the Ambrosiana manuscript probably because the first one was a love sonnet and 'quantunque in istile piacevole, dovè forse sembrare al Pistoia una stonatura fra gli altri amorosi della raccolta, tutti osceni e lubrici', while the second one, being an occasional poem, was not transcribed in the Ambrosiana manuscript because Pistoia had not presumably kept a copy of it.<sup>19</sup>

An undated sixteenth-century edition at the Marciana Library in Venice,<sup>20</sup> reports fourteen poems of the 'preclarissimo poeta misser Antonio decto el Pistoia', eight of which are not present in MS H.223 inf. A diplomatic transcription of all fourteen sonnets was provided by Renier in his edition of the Trivulziana codex MS 979.<sup>21</sup> The opening lines of the doubtful poems are: 'Ferro o ferto qua non gemme et horo',<sup>22</sup> 'La scure, el culeo, el

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<sup>18</sup> Rodolfo Renier, 'Poeti sforzeschi in un codice di Roma recentemente segnalato', cit., p. 20: 'Quantunque l'acqua abbia fortemente danneggiato il margine, riuscì a leggere che al medesimo Angiolo da Firenze fu dal Pistoia, mandato l'8 marzo 1493 il sonetto seguente (c. 72r), che credo inedito: 'Senza ale fu' nel ciel, senza thalari'. Only the year 1493 is still visible.

<sup>19</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. xxii.

<sup>20</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti novi del preclarissimo poeta misser Antonio decto el Pistoia*, cit.

<sup>21</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., pp. xix-xxvi.

<sup>22</sup> This sonnet is also listed, with the heading 'Sonetto de Vitellozo', in the following edition: [Anonymous], [Poems], cit., f. lv.

capestro, el cortello', 'Se col tempo ogni cosa si matura', 'Volendomi partir dala mia diva', 'Charon che voi? Mena la barcha a riva', 'Chi segue amor chi è toco del suo telo', 'Pelago di tempesta e un mar d'affanni' and 'Ave Maria o virgo gloriosa'. Pèrcopo questioned the attribution on the following grounds:

Di questi, però, cinque non sono nè faceti nè satirici; e gli altri tre - il primo, il secondo e il quinto, - non sono del Pistoia perché scritti, i due primi, per la morte di Vitellozzo Vitelli (31 dicembre 1502), ed il terzo per quella di Bernardino da Corte: (giugno 1503), tutti, quindi, postumi, di sei mesi i primi due, l'altro di più di un anno, al Pistoia.<sup>23</sup>

The above description is in part inaccurate because only one sonnet, that is 'Ferro o ferto qua non gemme et horo' concerns the death of a man named 'Vitelozo', while the remaining two, 'La scure, el culeo, el capestro, el cortello' and 'Charon che voi? Mena la barcha a riva' regard someone designated as 'Bernardin' and 'Bernardi'. It may be premature to identify 'Vitelozo' and 'Bernardin' respectively with Vitellozzo Vitelli and Bernardino da Corte because no elements were brought forward by Pèrcopo to bear out his hypothesis. The reason by which he ruled out the attribution to Pistoia, namely the poems are neither jocular nor satirical, is unsatisfactory because Pistoia did write a large number of poems which did not belong to either category. In the dispute, however, an important detail escaped the attention of both Renier and Pèrcopo. They failed to notice that 'Pelago di tempesta e un mar d'affanni' was also published, under the caption 'S(onetto) moralissimo', in the edition of Bellincioni's

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<sup>23</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. xxvii.



*Rime*.<sup>24</sup> Both scholars were aware of the existence of the incunabile but perhaps they did not have direct access to it.<sup>25</sup> However, Pietro Fanfani had edited the complete works of Bellincioni between 1876 and 1878,<sup>26</sup> ten years prior to Renier's publication of the *Sonetti novi del preclarissimo poeta misser Antonio decto el Pistoia*.

An early sixteenth-century manuscript owned by the Venetian playwright and scholar Apostolo Zeno ascribes to 'El Pistoia' an ambiguous love sonnet, 'Qual cosa o Dio qual cosa è quella cosa',<sup>27</sup> which was edited by Renier together with an anonymous religious poem 'Ave di pietà fonte alma Maria'.<sup>28</sup> The latter, which crowns a sequence of seven poems by Pistoia listed in MS It.XI.66(6730), was regarded tentatively by Renier as the work of the Tuscan poet.<sup>29</sup> Pèrcopo disagreed with Renier and excluded both sonnets from the section 'Sonetti faceti del Pistoia mancanti all'autografo' once again on the grounds that they were

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<sup>24</sup> Bernardo Bellincioni, *Rime*, cit., sig. [p2v].

<sup>25</sup> According to the *Illustrated incunabula short-title catalogue* (CD-Rom version, 1998<sup>2</sup>) there are twenty-two extant copies of which seventeen belong to Italian libraries.

<sup>26</sup> Bernardo Bellincioni, *Le rime di Bernardo Bellincioni*, edited by Pietro Fanfani (Bologna: Romagnoli, 1876-1878), 2 vols. The edition is mostly based on the 1493 incunabile and the sonnet in question is published in vol. 2, pp. 113-114.

<sup>27</sup> Venice N, MS It.XI.66(6730), f. 301r. The sonnet is published in Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., p. xv.

<sup>28</sup> Venice N, MS It.XI.66(6730), f. 302r. The sonnet is published in Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., pp. xv-xvi.

<sup>29</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., p. xv: [il sonetto] sinora ignoto, nè certo disdicevole al Pistoia per la qualità del soggetto, giacchè di resipiscenze religiose sembra ei ne abbia avute parecchie, metto qui in luce'.

not facetious.<sup>30</sup>

The poems 'Novel Narcisso in cui fu la vertute' and 'In nell'eterna et gloriosa schuola' are both attributed to the Tuscan sonneteer in a fifteenth-century manuscript<sup>31</sup> which belonged to Antonio Magliabechi and in one of the latter's autographs.<sup>32</sup> 'Novel Narcisso in cui fu la vertute' is also ascribed to Pistoia in MS 2014 of the Angelica Library in Rome.<sup>33</sup> A third sonnet 'Che fai, che pensi? Destate columbo', which is also listed anonymously in the Parisian MS Ital.560,<sup>34</sup> appears under Pistoia's name in the Estense manuscript  $\alpha$ .H.6.1.<sup>35</sup> Cappelli and Ferrari considered the poems to be the work of Pistoia and included them in their edition. Renier and Pèrcopo did not comment on the matter and the latter limited himself to excluding the three sonnets from the section 'Sonetti faceti del Pistoia mancanti all'autografo' because of their non-

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<sup>30</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 566: '(«Qual cosa o dio è quella cosa») non si trova mai dato al Cammelli [...] («Ave di pietà fonte, alma Maria»), invece, non è del nostro, perché non ci soccorrono altre fonti per attribuirglielo'; and then again, pp. 566-567, fn. 3: 'Dalla mia ediz. esclusi il primo di essi, perché non mi sembrò cosa del P. Esso, di fatti, non è altro che un bisticcio continuato della parola «cosa» con significato osceno, non degno del nostro, ma di un precursore o seguace cinquecentista dell'Aretino o del Franco'.

<sup>31</sup> Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.25., ff. 130v-131r (the poems are published in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. 172, p. 209).

<sup>32</sup> Florence N, MS II.II.109, f. 345r (opening lines only).

<sup>33</sup> Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 83. It is worth mentioning that MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), which is the source of MS 2014, does not list the sonnet.

<sup>34</sup> Paris BN, MS Ital.560, f. 122r.

<sup>35</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, f. 70r. The sonnet is published in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. 171.



jocular content.

The attribution to Pistoia of the poem 'In rima taccia ognun che 'l pregio è dato', a critical review of fifteenth-century Italian poets, was strongly contested by Pèrcopo because, in his view, the poem had been arbitrarily ascribed to Pistoia by Girolamo Baruffaldi.<sup>36</sup> Pèrcopo made his assertion on the basis of MS Cl.I.408 of the Ariostea Library, in which the poem appears anonymous.<sup>37</sup> Cappelli and Ferrari, on the contrary, had previously included the sonnet in their edition of Pistoia's *Rime*.<sup>38</sup> In the course of my research, I located two further manuscripts containing the poem in question but unfortunately they do not help. The first one, an autograph note by Giosuè Carducci,<sup>39</sup> quotes the whole sonnet together with an indication of its source, namely the *Rime scelte de' poeti ferraresi antichi, e moderni* edited by Baruffaldi. The second, a late sixteenth-century hand-written appendix, attached to an edition of Antonio Tebaldeo's *Opere* published in 1500,<sup>40</sup> quotes the sonnet anonymously soon after a poem by Pistoia.<sup>41</sup>

The sonnet 'Da Leon vengo e là si fa banchetto' presents a very intricate situation both in terms of attribution and textual

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<sup>36</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. xlvi, fn. 1. Girolamo Baruffaldi edited the sonnet in *Rime scelte de' poeti ferraresi antichi, e moderni*, cit., p. 58.

<sup>37</sup> Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408, f. [36v].

<sup>38</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., p. 51.

<sup>39</sup> Bologna C Carducci, MSS Carducci Cart.XXVI, *Lirici antichi*, no. 18, f. [1r].

<sup>40</sup> Antonio Tebaldeo, *Opere*, cit.

<sup>41</sup> Ferrara C, S.14.1.5, f. 2v.

tradition. The poem, which is listed in the Ambrosiana manuscript,<sup>42</sup> is, according to Pèrcopo, by Andrea Michieli called Squarzòla or Strazzòla.<sup>43</sup> Its presence in MS H.223 inf. is justified, in Pèrcopo's view, by the sonnet 'Di Franza torno e là vidi in effetto'<sup>44</sup> which is considered Pistoia's answer to the poem in question. Pèrcopo's opinion is based on some conclusions reached by Vittorio Rossi to which we shall return shortly. In the Trivulziana MS 979 the sonnet is attributed to Pistoia;<sup>45</sup> in MS Sessoriano 413 it bears the initial 'A. P.' and it comes after a composition by Pistoia,<sup>46</sup> while in Verona C MS 1657 and in MS Magl.Cl.VII.1125 it is reported anonymously.<sup>47</sup> It is important to point out that while in MS H.223 inf., MS 979, MS Sessoriano 413 and MS 1657, the poem is of the *sonettessa* type, that is it has more than one tail, and precisely two in our case, in MS Magl.Cl.VII.1125 the sonnet is *caudato* namely it is furnished with one tail only (from now on I shall refer to the *sonettessa* version as A and to the caudate one as B). Not only are A and B different for stylistic reasons but also for numerous important textual variants. Marin Sanudo, in his autograph

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<sup>42</sup> Milan *Ambr*, MS H.223 inf., f. 215v.

<sup>43</sup> The sonnet is published in Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., pp. 596-597, in the section 'Sonetti di altri autori di proposta o di risposta a sonetti del Pistoia'.

<sup>44</sup> Milan *Ambr*, MS H.223 inf., f. 216v.

<sup>45</sup> Milan *T*, MS 979, p. 285.

<sup>46</sup> Rome *N*, MS Sessoriano 413, f. 173r.

<sup>47</sup> Verona *C*, MS 1657, f. 10r. The sonnet bears the following heading: 'Epigramm(a) cuiusdam fugitivi ex Lugdunensi civitate confugientis. Ad urbem Roma(m) an(n)o 1494 die primo Maii'; Florence *N*, MS Magl.Cl.VII.1125, f. 53v.



manuscript MS It.IX.363(7386), included both versions: he first transcribed B anonymously<sup>48</sup> and therecorded A with the heading 'Aliud alio modo' adding the name 'Strazola' at the bottom.<sup>49</sup> Vittorio Rossi, who analysed the situation in detail, although he referred neither to MS 1657 nor obviously to MS H.223 inf. which had not been published at the time, reached the following conclusion. According to him, version A was transcribed in the Trivulziana manuscript because 'si intromise solo come proposta del sonetto *Di Francia torno e là vidi in effetto che il Pistoia condusse sulle medesime rime*'.<sup>50</sup> Rossi ruled out the attribution to Pistoia on the basis of MS  $\alpha$ .G.6.13, an autograph of Strazzòla, which lists version A.<sup>51</sup> For this reason he declared that the sonnet 'è certo opera dello Strazzola'.<sup>52</sup> As for the authorship of B, Rossi did not put forward any hypothesis, 'di chiunque sia', leaving the matter out in the open.<sup>53</sup>

Three different attributions are found for the sonnet 'Signore io dormo in un letto a vettura'. It is ascribed to the pen of Pistoia in six manuscripts, dating from the sixteenth to

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<sup>48</sup> Venice N, MS It.IX.363(7386), f. 13r. There is no heading except for the word 'Soneto'.

<sup>49</sup> Venice N, MS It.IX.363(7386), f. 14r.

<sup>50</sup> Vittorio Rossi, 'Il Canzoniere inedito di Andrea Michieli detto Squarzòla o Strazzòla', cit., p. 69, fn. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .G.6.13, f. 48v.

<sup>52</sup> Vittorio Rossi, 'Il Canzoniere inedito di Andrea Michieli detto Squarzòla o Strazzòla', cit., p. 69, fn. 1.

<sup>53</sup> Vittorio Rossi, 'Il Canzoniere inedito di Andrea Michieli detto Squarzòla o Strazzòla', cit., p. 69, fn. 1.

the nineteenth century.<sup>54</sup> It is also attributed to him in several sixteenth-century editions of Vincenzo Calmeta's work<sup>55</sup> as well as in a very rare early sixteenth-century collection of jocular verse.<sup>56</sup> According to Pietro Aretino the poem was the genuine work of Pistoia whose production, to his knowledge, included 'sonetti contra tinelli, camere locande e letti a vettura'.<sup>57</sup> The composition, however, is also ascribed to Iacopo Corsi in MS 124 (A.IV.30)<sup>58</sup> and in MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1<sup>59</sup> as well as to

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<sup>54</sup> Pistoia C, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), f. 222r; Ravenna C, f. 68v (the attribution to Pistoia appears in the library catalogue and not in the manuscript); Vatican City BAV, MS Barb. Lat. 3800, f. 13r; Lucca S, MS 1328, p. 205; Rome Ang, MS 2014, p. 100; Bologna C Carducci, MSS Carducci Cart.XLII, Ludovico Ariosto, no. 21, (II), f. [2r]. Giosuè Carducci transcribed the opening line only indicating its source: 'Opera nuova de Vincentio Calmeta'.

<sup>55</sup> Vincenzo Calmeta, *Compendio de cose nove di Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove di Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Opera nuova de Vincentio Calmeta, Lorenzo Carbone, Orpheo mantuano et Venturino da Pesaro, et altri auctori*, cit., f. [11v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove de Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove di Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. BB3v; Idem, *Compe(n)dio de cose nove de Vince(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. [C3v]; Idem, *Compendio de cose nove Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori*, cit., sig. BB3v; Idem, *Vincenzo Calmeta poeta vulgare non manco facetto che elegante. In ditte opera se contiene: sonetti strambotti ecclloghe capituli dialoghi et una predica d'amore cosa bellissima*, cit., sig. C3v.

<sup>56</sup> [Anonymous], *Collectanee de cose facetissime e piene de riso*, cit., sig. [d3v-d4r].

<sup>57</sup> Pietro Aretino, 'Dal «Ragionamento de le corti»', cit., p. 454.

<sup>58</sup> Mantua C, MS 124 (A.IV.30), f. 60r-v (folio 60r-v actually corresponds to folio 61r-v because the foliation 22r-v is repeated twice by mistake).

<sup>59</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1., f. 118v.



Giovanni de' Rossi in MS A.2429.<sup>60</sup> Pèrcopo was against the attribution to Pistoia and was in favour of Iacopo Corsi's.<sup>61</sup> Vittorio Rossi speculated that Corsi altered the sonnet, originally by Pistoia, in view of the fact that the version attributed to Corsi presents 'notevoli varietà di lezione'.<sup>62</sup> As to the attribution to Giovanni de' Rossi, this can be easily explained in view of the fact that Giovanni Crescimbeni, as we have already seen, stated that this was Antonio Pistoia's real name.

### 3.3 Arbitrary attributions: the tirade against Nicolò Ariosto, the *carmina maledica* and the invectives against Ferrara and Gregorio Zampante.

I will now move on to consider four groups of anonymous *contra* poems which were ascribed to Pistoia by nineteenth-century scholars and for whose attribution no convincing or strong argument, let alone evidence, was ever brought forward.

On 9th June 1487 and during the following days, numerous

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<sup>60</sup> Bologna C, MS A.2429, p. 110.

<sup>61</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., pp. xxiv-xxv.

<sup>62</sup> Vittorio Rossi, 'Di una rimatrice e di un rimatore del sec. XV: Girolama Corsi Ramos e Jacopo Corsi', *GSLI*, 15, 1890, pp. 183-215 (p. 201, fn. 2 and p. 214, fn. 4). Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 514, fn. 2, disagreed with Rossi: 'Le varianti principali fra le due lezioni di quel compon. si riducon a questo: che nelle stampe (e nel cod. pistoiese che deriva evidentemente da esse) è invertito l'ordine dei vv. 2-3 e manca, in fine, la 2<sup>a</sup> coda; le altre son inezie, e dovute, certamente, all'editore della prima di quelle stampe, il quale ligio alla riforma del Bembo, ridusse a toscane le voci dialettali del ms. [...] ma lasciò intatte le rime: sicchè non si può parlare di due redazioni differenti'. I am inclined to accept Rossi's opinion in view of the fact these are different versions.

*bischizi*, satirical poems based on wordplay and puns,<sup>63</sup> penned against Nicolò Ariosto, the great poet's father, were scattered throughout the town of Ferrara:

Fu adì dicto (i.e. 9th June) ritrovato essere stato atacato cum colla suso ambedue le porte del palatio del Duca p(er) mezo il vescoato et S(an) D(omi)nico et soto le banche di Calegari et i(n) m(ul)ti altri tribi, bischizi i(n) gran(dissi)ma vergogna et obrobrio de Nicolò di Areosti, iudice di XII savii d(e) Ferr(ara), in rima e non se potè intendere lo auctore et scriptore. D(ome)nica adì X dic(t)o ne fue et(iam) ritrovati de altra manera pur(e) co(ntra) el dic(t)o Nicolò Areosto. Lunii si(mi)li(te)r ne fu ritrovati lì de altra sorte. Marti si(mi)li(te)r ne fu ritrovato de altra sorte. Vegneri adì XV d(i)c(t)o ne fu ritrovato m(u)lto più vitup(er)osi contra el dicto.<sup>64</sup>

The nineteenth-century scholar Antonio Cappelli transcribed the poems from MS  $\alpha$ .W.2.11,<sup>65</sup> the only source so far traced containing the *bischizi*, and published them in 1865.<sup>66</sup> In the first instance, the editor hypothesized that the sonnets could be the work of Pistoia but a 'natural propensione al dialetto lombardo e un fare talora men curato e men proprio'<sup>67</sup> convinced him of quite the opposite. Besides he added:

Occorrrebbe poi credere che il Pistoia li avesse scritti

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<sup>63</sup> Tina Matarrese, 'Il volgare a Ferrara tra corte e cancelleria', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 8, 1990, no. 3, pp. 515-560 (p. 558): 'poesie satiriche anonime e di circolazione clandestina, che eccezionalmente potevano venire affisse ai muri della città per denunciare furti, angherie, malefatte degli amministratori della giustizia ai danni dei poveri villani ignoranti'.

<sup>64</sup> Vatican City BAV, MS Chigiano J.I.4, f. 256r.

<sup>65</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .W.2.11, ff. 179r-188v.

<sup>66</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., pp. 47-69. The sonnets were published under the heading 'Sonetti satirici senza nome d'autore'.

<sup>67</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., p. 16.



negli anni 1487-88 in Reggio ove Nicolò era stato capitano della cittadella [...]. Ma i sonetti satirici si mostrano dettati a Ferrara quando il nostro poeta n'era lontano, né Lodovico Ariosto conoscendone autore il Pistoia si sarebbe indotto a rammentar con onore nelle sue *Satire* un tanto detrattore della fama del padre.<sup>68</sup>

However nineteen years later, and exactly in 1884, Cappelli changed his mind and declared himself to be in favour of the attribution of the sonnets to Pistoia:

a giudicarli del Pistoia, oltre alla forma ed acutezza loro, [...] acquisto maggior persuasione coll'essermi accorto che il codice miscellaneo estense ha dove incominciano i sonetti contro Nicolò Ariosto una striscia di carta piegata a guisa di segno, nel cui interno si legge di vecchio carattere *Antonius ex familia Camelli oriunda Pistorio, floruit XV et XVI saec.*<sup>69</sup>

Although there was no trace of this loose piece of evidence when I consulted the manuscript, two other scholars, Giulio Bertoni and Emilio P. Vicini, remarked on its existence. According to them the handwriting could not be defined as old but it was likely to be the work of an eighteenth-century scholar.<sup>70</sup> With very few exceptions,<sup>71</sup> the majority of critics do not consider

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<sup>68</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., pp. 16-17. Nicolò Ariosto was capitano of Reggio Emilia from 1472 to 1480 and of Polesine di Rovigo during the years 1481-82; he then became *giudice dei Savi* in Ferrara in 1486 until 1488; he was appointed *capitano* of Modena in 1489 and he held the office until 1491; he was later given the office of *commissario* in Romagna in 1496.

<sup>69</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. xxxi-xxxii.

<sup>70</sup> Giulio Bertoni and Emilio P. Vicini eds., *Poeti modenesi dei secoli XIV-XV* (Modena: Rossi, 1906), pp. xv-xvi: 'La striscia esiste realmente, ma il carattere non puo' dirsi vecchio; è dovuto a uno studioso del ms. del sec. XVIII, che fondandosi sul contenuto dei sonetti li aggiudicò al Pistoja'.

<sup>71</sup> Anonymous [review], 'Giulio Bertoni ed E. P. Vicini - *Poeti modenesi dei secoli XIV-XV* - Modena, tip. Rossi, 1906', *GSLI*, 48, 1906, p. 462: 'Nella prefazione rileviamo che gli AA. vorrebbero ascrivere ad un ignoto poeta modenese i sonetti contro



Pistoia to be the author of the tirade. The attribution has been opposed for different reasons: the sequence is not in the Ambrosiana manuscript, there are no striking resemblances in the diction, style and linguistic choices between Pistoia's contra poems and those penned against Ariosto and until new evidence is unearthed, the sonnets, which are reported anonymously, have to remain so, the rest can only be speculation.<sup>72</sup> Let it not be

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Niccolò Ariosti che vanno sotto in nome del Pistoia. L'unico argomento su cui si appoggiano è l'esservi in uno di quei sonetti espressioni che affermano caratteristiche del dialetto di Modena. Ma questo non dovrebbe essere ostacolo insormontabile per l'assegnazione al Cammelli, giacchè costui, com'è risaputo, visse in varie parti del dominio estense e fece suo pro molte volte di termini dialettali e fin gergali'; Giosuè Carducci, *La coltura estense e la gioventù dell'Ariosto* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1939), p. 291: 'per me, a giudicarne dallo stile, fu Anton da Pistoia'; Aldo Scalpelli, 'La poesia popolare nella Ferrara del tempo di Rossetti', *L'unità*, 33, 19th July 1956, no. 169, p. 3: 'che pare si possano oggi attribuire ad Antonio Cammelli'; Lauro Martines, 'Love and hate in Renaissance patronage: Italy', *The Italianist*, 14, 1994, pp. 5-31 (pp. 17-18): 'At about the same time, Antonio Cammelli (il Pistoia), a dependent - later sharply dismissed - of duke Ercole I of Ferrara, issued a cascade of scathing sonnets against [...] Nicolò Ariosto'.

<sup>72</sup> Giuseppe S. Scipioni [review], *Rime edite ed inedite di Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoia*, per cura di A. Cappelli e S. Ferrari - Livorno, Vigo, 1884', cit., p. 246: 'Non mi pare il caso di ricorrere, come fa il Cappelli (p. xxxi) a congetture sui sonetti contro [...] Nicolò Ariosto. Fino a più fondate scoperte io non so intendere autore di quei sonetti il Pistoia'; Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. xxvi: 'Coloro che han contrastata e contrastano codesta attribuzione hanno ora una valida conferma alla loro opinione nell'autorità indiscutibile della raccolta originale, in cui [...] non vi compariscono quegli [...] contro Niccolò Ariosti, che lo stesso Cappelli, volle, senza alcun solido fondamento, pure affibbiare al nostro'; Rodolfo Renier followed suit in his review of *I sonetti faceti secondo l'autografo ambrosiano*, editi e illustrati da Erasmo Pèrcopo - Napoli, tip. Jovene, 1908', cit., p. 378, fn. 3, albeit he added that 'non sia di per sé risolutiva l'assenza di quella serie nell'autografo dell'Ambrosiana'; Giulio Bertoni and Emilio P. Vicini eds., *Poeti modenesi dei secoli XIV-XV*, cit., were, as we have seen, inclined to ascribe the sonnets to an unidentified Modenese poet for linguistic reasons, p. xvi: '[alcuni versi] sono in dialetto modenese e recano anzi parole caratteristiche di questo dialetto. Ci par ammissibile insomma la congettura che un poeta modenese sia stato autore di questi versi, ormai



forgotten, as was pointed out by Cappelli, that the contra sonnets were penned in Ferrara in 1487 at a time when Pistoia lived in Reggio Emilia, as he covered the post of customs

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celebri. Chi esso sia stato noi non sappiamo indicare; ma certo appartenne al circolo di letterati e poeti, che raccoglievasi intorno agli Estensi sul finire del sec. XV'. Four years later Bertoni embraced a more neutral stance in 'Intorno a un sonetto dialettale attribuito al Pistoia', *GSLI*, 55, 1910, pp. 455-457 (p. 456): 'Lontana da me è ogni idea di aprire un dibattito sull'autore di codesti violenti e significativi sonetti, intorno ai quali dovrei anch'io accontentarmi, in mancanza di prove, di congetture e supposizioni'; Domenico Fava, *La biblioteca estense nel suo sviluppo storico* (Modena: Vincenzi e Nipoti di D. Cavallotti, 1925), p. 102: '[nel] codice latino 228 (=  $\alpha$ .W.2, 11) [...] havvi tra l'altro un gruppo di versi [...] forse del Pistoia (24 sonetti satirici contro Nicolò Ariosto e certo Magnaferro)'; Giuseppe Fatini, 'Le "Rime" di Ludovico Ariosto', *GSLI*, suppl. 25, 1934, pp. 1-254 (p. 38): 'Alla fiera e maledica poesia cammelliana ci riportano, non per l'identità dell'autore, ma per l'asprezza della caricatura o per la violenza dell'attacco i gruppi di sonetti contro [...] Niccolò Ariosto'; Vittorio Cian, *La satira* (Milan: Vallardi, 1945'), vol. 1, p. 382: 'Minor grado di probabilità sembra avere l'assegnazione al Cammelli dei 22 - non 23 - sonetti contro Nicolò Ariosto'; Marisa Milani, 'Sonetti ferraresi del '400 in una raccolta di poeti cortigiani', *GSLI*, 150, 1973, pp. 292-322 (p. 299, fn. 16), quickly resolves the matter by saying that on the 'vexata quaestio dell'attribuzione al Pistoia, valga per tutti il parere contrario del Pèrcopo'; Domenico De Robertis 'Cammelli, Antonio, detto il Pistoia', cit., p. 281, is definitely against the attribution: 'non sono comunque suoi [...] i 23 sonetti contro Niccolò Ariosto'; Paola Vecchi Galli, 'Poeti e libri di poesia alla corte degli Estensi: nuovi accertamenti', *Alla corte degli Estensi: filosofia, arte e cultura a Ferrara nei secoli XV e XVI*, edited by Marco Bertozzi (Ferrara: Università degli Studi, 1994), pp. 405-424, welcomes the fact that the sonnets are now regarded as anonymous, p. 408: '(i sonetti) attribuiti al Pistoia, oggi più prudentemente ricondotti all'anonimato'. Antonio Piromalli seems unable to take a firm stance as in *La cultura a Ferrara al tempo di Ludovico Ariosto* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1975) he makes two contrasting statements. First he declares that, pp. 143-144: 'non abbiamo elementi sufficienti per potere affermare che [...] sia autore il Pistoia' but then a few pages later he adds, p. 156, fn. 1: 'sembra che, per lo stile, siano da attribuire al Cammelli i sonetti contro Niccolò Ariosti. Pur essendo la questione non ancora definita, ci sembra che il sonetto CLVI del Pistoia contro un magistrato depresso dal Duca Ercole I, per i medesimi epiteti di «struzzo», «mangiaferro o sassi» che ricorrono nei titoli dei sonetti anonimi e in quello del Pistoia, sia da non trascurare al fine dell'identificazione dell'autore'. The very same remark had been made by Pèrcopo sixty-seven years earlier in Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. 193, fn. [1].



collector at Porta Santa Croce. As we have just seen, many had their say in the matter but no proper study was ever carried out and even basic observations were not made. With the exception of Vittorio Cian,<sup>73</sup> scholars have always described the series as a sequence of twenty-three sonnets but this is not correct. Only twenty-two sonnets are directed against Ariosto, (and of these, four are in his defence although they are heavily coated with irony), while the last but one is penned against the tax collector Giovanni Girolamo Marchesi,<sup>74</sup> a detail which had not escaped the attention of the fifteenth-century chronicler Ugo Caleffini:

Vegneri adì XV dicto ne fu ritrovato m(u)l(t)o più vitup(er)osi [...] contra Zoanne Jeronimo Marchese, fiolo ch(e) fu de Zoanne Ludovico Marchese da Ferr(ara).<sup>75</sup>

As regards the authorship, there could be more than one author. An imagined dialogue taking place between an admirer of the author and the author himself does in fact point in this direction.<sup>76</sup> To the first quatrain of the sonnet headed 'Data al divoratore de la cità de Ferrara' echoes the first four lines of the poem 'Data a Nicolò de li Ariosto mato de li xii savii':

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<sup>73</sup> Vittorio Cian, *La satira*, cit., vol. 1, p. 382.

<sup>74</sup> Modena Est, MS α.W.2.11, f. 188r; the sonnet bears the heading 'Ad Io(hanem) Hieronimu(m) t..t. Cappelli in his edition published in 1865 and in the volume he edited with Ferrari in 1884, inverted the order of the last two sonnets thus presenting this poem as the last one in the series.

<sup>75</sup> Vatican City BAV, MS Chigiano J.I.4, f. 256r.

<sup>76</sup> Marisa Milani was the first one to notice it in 'Sonetti ferraresi del '400 in una raccolta di poeti cortigiani', cit., pp. 300-301.



O tu che mosso sei tanto terribile  
 in dir de Nicolò ladro expresissimo  
 parlar cu(m) teco me seria gratissimo  
 fa ch'io conoscha te se gli è possibile.<sup>77</sup>

O tu che saper brami chi sia q(ue)llo  
 che s'ì di Nicolò predica e dice  
 predoname [sic] ché qui {qui} dir no(n) me lice  
 il nome mio, ma io t'amo qual fratello.<sup>78</sup>

The admirer later on declares that he is extremely well-informed about Ariosto's inside dealings and the author, in turn, urges him to take up his pen and help him to divulge Ariosto's misdemeanours in view of the fact that he intends to print his work and sell it. Although the author wishes to remain anonymous, at the same time enough information is scattered throughout the sonnets for the reader to build up an image of him. Like the citizens of Ferrara, the author alike is acquainted with Ariosto's crimes. His knowledge, however, is more in-depth and his sources seem to be first-hand. For example he is aware of the plans which Ariosto intends to implement with a view to safeguarding his position, seriously undermined by the widespread hatred and the damaging publicity brought upon him by the sonnets. The author is also very familiar with the Ferrarese court and its denizens, giving the clear impression that he himself enjoys an official powerful position within the court apparatus. The common herd goes and complains directly to him about the crimes perpetrated by Ariosto: 'A me ne vene a li giorni passati/di Corbola il contado aflitto e mesto' and again 'Ma Stephano Furlan buon contadino, venuto è a me dolente e assai

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<sup>77</sup> Modena Est, MS α.W.2.11, ff. 181v-182r, lines 1-4.

<sup>78</sup> Modena Est, MS α.W.2.11, f. 182r-v, lines 1-4.

meschino'.<sup>79</sup> It is interesting to remark that although the author's aim is to bring Ariosto's reputation into complete disrepute, at the same time he urges him to repent and clear his name as if his immoral behaviour brought shame not only on himself but on the entire court as well.

*In Cosmicum Patavinum carmina maledica.*

MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1 of the Estense Library contains a series of twenty-three anonymous sonnets entitled *In Cosmicum Patavinum carmina maledica* which are directed against the Paduan poet Nicolò Lelio Cosmico.<sup>80</sup> The series, edited in 1884 by Cappelli and Ferrari, was published under the heading 'D'autore incerto'<sup>81</sup> although in Cappelli's view the invective, which was listed in a manuscript containing 'tanti altri componimenti del poeta',<sup>82</sup> that is Pistoia, was probably his work in view of its 'forma ed acutezza'.<sup>83</sup> Cappelli based his hypothesis on an autograph manuscript of Antonio Magliabechi in which the Florentine scholar attributed the opening line of the eighteenth sonnet of the series, which is often but erroneously cited as the seventeenth, 'Cosmico non pensar p(er) tuo conforto', to Antonio Pistoia.<sup>84</sup> Cappelli was unaware that the poem is also attributed

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<sup>79</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .W.2.11, f. 180v, f. 182v.

<sup>80</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, ff. 61r-67v.

<sup>81</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. 221-248.

<sup>82</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Rime edite*, cit., p. x.

<sup>83</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Rime edite*, cit., p. xxxi.

<sup>84</sup> Florence N, MS II.II.109, f. 345r (opening line only). In the introduction to Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., p. xliii, Renier stated that MS Magl.IX.1.16-12 of the National Library of



to Pistoia in MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092 of the Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, in MS Magl.Cl.VII.877 of the National Library in Florence, and in MS 1537 of the State Library in Lucca.<sup>85</sup> It is also listed, with no attribution, in an autograph manuscript of Paolo Panciatici and it is transcribed in MS It.IX.113(6745), in which only the first seven lines of the sonnet are reported, and the attribution to Pistoia is later crossed out together with the poem.<sup>86</sup> Despite the scant evidence in his possession, Cappelli attributed the whole series to Pistoia, a position which was shared, after some initial hesitation, by Vittorio Rossi and others.<sup>87</sup> The

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Florence also listed the sonnet in question but there appears to be no such pressmark in the library catalogues. This was certainly a misprint for MS IX.1.6-12 which was an old pressmark for MS II.II.109. The misprint had already been spotted by Vittorio Rossi, 'Niccolò Lelio Cosmico: poeta padovano del secolo XV', *GSLI*, 13, 1889, pp. 101-158 (p. 133, fn. 1).

<sup>85</sup> Rome Cors, MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092, f. 232v; Florence N, MS Magl.Cl.VII.877, f. 100r; Lucca S, MS 1537, ff. 51v-52r.

<sup>86</sup> Pistoia C, MS B.176, f. 158r; Venice N, MS It.IX.113(6745), f. 34r.

<sup>87</sup> Vittorio Rossi, 'Di un poeta maccheronico e di alcune sue rime italiane', *GSLI*, 11, 1888, pp. 1-40 (p. 14): 'è dubbio se possano a lui [that is Pistoia] attribuirsi'. One year later, Rossi illustrated at length the situation in 'Niccolò Lelio Cosmico: poeta padovano del secolo XV', *cit.*, and although he was unable to bring any corroborative evidence in favour of the attribution to Pistoia, he hoped to have partially dismantled, p. 133: 'le obbiezioni che le si potevano fare'; Ferdinando Gabotto, *Saggi critici di storia letteraria* (Venice: Merlo, 1888), pp. 102-103: 'Contro costui scagliò ventitrè *Carmina Maledica*'; Antonio G. Spinelli, 'Di un codice milanese', *cit.*, p. 810: 'Ed accanto a questi [i.e. other poets] sbriglia l'insolente vena, Antonio da Pistoia, in ventitrè sonetti (editi poi dal Cappelli) vituperanti Nicolò Lelio Cosmico di Padova'; Vittorio Cian, *La satira*, *cit.*, vol. 1, p. 381: 'pei sonetti contro il Cosmico, la bilancia mi sembra ormai pendere in favore del Cammelli'; Lauro Martines, 'Love and hate in Renaissance patronage: Italy', *cit.*, p. 17: 'At about the same time, Antonio Cammelli (il Pistoia), [...] issued a cascade of scathing sonnets against [...] Niccolo [sic] Lelio Cosmico'.

hypothesis, however, was not widely accepted. Renier, who was first in favour of and then against the attribution to Pistoia,<sup>88</sup> considered the possibility, on the basis of a letter from Apostolo Zeno to Giambattista Parisotti, that the *carmina maledica* could be the work of Ludovico Ariosto.<sup>89</sup> In the epistle, Zeno informs his addressee that he has learnt of Ariosto's hatred for Cosmico from a miscellaneous codex containing 'alcuni sonetti sommamente satirici e sanguinosi dell'Ariosto contro di lui',<sup>90</sup> that is Cosmico. Renier gleaned further evidence of Ariosto's dislike for Cosmico from two additional sources: the sixth satire of the Ferrarese poet<sup>91</sup> and a sonnet he had penned against Alfonso Trotti, in which the latter is accused of having learnt a number of vices from Cosmico.<sup>92</sup> Renier's supposition was received with mixed

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<sup>88</sup> Rodolfo Renier, 'Del Pistoia', cit., p. 79, fn. 1: 'la maniera di questi sonetti è tutta quella del Pistoia'; Rodolfo Renier [review], 'I sonetti faceti secondo l'autografo ambrosiano, editi e illustrati da Erasmo Pèrcopo - Napoli, tip. Jovene, 1908', cit., p. 378: '[è] sempre meno probabile che appartengano al Cammelli i 23 violenti sonetti contro di lui (i.e. Cosmico) inseriti nell'ediz. CF.'; and then again, p. 378, fn. 3: 'Quell'attribuzione mi lasciò sempre esitantissimo'.

<sup>89</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., pp. xlv-xlvii. The hypothesis had already been hinted at by Vittorio Cian, *Un decennio della vita di M. Pietro Bembo: appunti biografici e saggio di studi sul Bembo* (Turin: Loescher, 1885), pp. 231-232.

<sup>90</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., p. xlv.

<sup>91</sup> Ludovico Ariosto, *Opere minori*, edited by Cesare Segre (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1954), p. 563, lines 58-61:

Il nome che di apostolo ti denno  
o d'alcun minor santo i padri, quando  
cristiano d'acqua, e non d'altro ti fenno,  
in Cosmico, in Pomponio vai mutando.

<sup>92</sup> Ludovico Ariosto, *Opere minori*, cit., p. 151, lines 5-8:

Da Cosmico imparasti d'esser giotto



feelings: some discarded it as far-fetched,<sup>93</sup> while others took it seriously to the point that the tirade found its place among Ariosto's works of dubious attribution.<sup>94</sup>

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di monache e non creder sopra il tetto,  
l'abominoso incesto, e quel difetto,  
pel qual fu arsa la città di Lotto.

Pèrcopo also raised some doubts about Ariosto's authorship in connection with the sonnet against Trotti in his article 'I sonetti del Pistoia: a proposito di una recente pubblicazione', cit., due to, among other things: '[il] carattere e la dignità e il concetto che l'Ariosto aveva dell'arte e della poesia', p. 285. Pèrcopo's hypothesis met with no favour and a few years later he himself changed his mind in *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., pp. 529-530.

<sup>93</sup> Michele Catalano, *Vita di Ludovico Ariosto* (Geneva: Olschki, 1930-1931), vol. 1, p. 98, fn. 36: 'Non ignoriamo che dei 23 sonetti contro il Cosmico si è voluto additare l'autore nell'Ariosto giovanetto, ma l'attribuzione poggia su basi malfide'; Vittorio Cian, *La satira*, cit., vol. 2, p. 18: 'Non mancano tuttavia argomenti che indurrebbero ad assegnare la paternità di questa serie di sonetti all'Ariosto; [...] Sennonché un fatto strano ci si presenterebbe, e tale da costituire una difficoltà innegabile per chi fosse tentato di assegnare quei sonetti al giovane Ariosto; ed è che la serie che gli avrebbe servito da modello, era tutta una terribile, per quanto ingiusta requisitoria contro il padre suo, Nicolò'; Roberto Ricciardi, 'Cosmico, Niccolò Lelio', *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, cit., vol. 30, pp. 72-77 (pp. 75-76): 'L'attribuzione al Pistoia, pur sostenuta da parecchi critici, non appare del tutto convincente [...]. Delle altre ipotesi che sono state fatte circa l'autore dei ventitré sonetti (Ariosto, Panciaticchi) non mette conto parlare'. The name of Paolo Panciaticchi was suggested by Dino Provenzal, 'Dei sonetti contro il Cosmico attribuiti al Pistoia', *BSP*, 2, 1900, pp. 146-151, but the hypothesis was put forth and set aside straightaway, pp. 150-151: 'Vedendo questo sonetto di mano del Panciaticchi in fondo ad un codice di poesie autografe, verrebbe subito fatto di pensar che l'autore ne fosse il Panciaticchi stesso, tanto più che non è del tutto diverso dalla sua maniera. Ma la cronologia esclude assolutamente quest'attribuzione poiché il Panciaticchi nacque nel 1499, solo un anno prima della morte del Cosmico e i 23 sonetti indicano evidentemente per la loro natura e per il loro contenuto che eran diretti ad un vivo'.

<sup>94</sup> Vittorio Cian [review], 'R. Renier, *I sonetti del Pistoia giusta l'apografo Trivulziano*, Torino, Loescher, 1888', cit., p. 79: '[Renier] combatte poi, e ci pare con buone ragioni, l'opinione già espressa dal Cappelli, che cioè i ventitré terribili sonetti adespoti contro il Cosmico, contenuti nel codice modenese, sieno da attribuirsi al Pistoia. Con piacere



The whole issue of the *carmina maledica* brought about two different attitudes among scholars: those who, although sceptical, limited themselves to taking stock of the situation<sup>95</sup> and those who definitely spoke up against the attribution of the series to Pistoia.<sup>96</sup> Their main arguments are as follows: the twenty-three sonnets are transcribed anonymously in MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1 as well as in MS Sessoriano 413;<sup>97</sup> they are not reported in the

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vediamo aumentare, mercè le sue osservazioni, la possibilità, se non altro, che i fieri sonetti appartengano invece a Lodovico Ariosto'. The sonnets were edited by Giuseppe Fatini in Ludovico Ariosto, *Lirica* (Bari: Laterza, 1924) in the section 'liriche dubbie', pp. 243-257. Fatini gave a very detailed account of the whole question in 'Su la fortuna e l'autenticità delle liriche di Ludovico Ariosto', *GSLI*, suppl. 22-23, 1924, pp. 133-296 (pp. 222-233).

<sup>95</sup> Federico Patetta, 'Una lettera inedita di Niccolò Lelio Cosmico', *GSLI*, 23, 1894, pp. 461-463 (p. 461); Antonio Piromalli, *La cultura a Ferrara al tempo di Ludovico Ariosto*, cit., p. 107.

<sup>96</sup> Giorgio Rossi, 'Il codice estense X.\*.34', cit., p. 35: 'Quanto a me credo falsa senz'altro tale attribuzione'; Dino Provenzal, 'Dei sonetti contro il Cosmico attribuiti al Pistoia', cit., p. 151: '[tali ragioni] rend[ono] ancora più dubbia l'attribuzione al Pistoia dei 23 sonetti famosi, attribuzione che di per sè [sic] stessa era stabilita su fragilissime basi'; Giuseppe Fatini, 'Le "Rime" di Ludovico Ariosto', cit., p. 38: 'Alla fiera e maledica poesia cammelliana ci riportano, non per l'identità dell'autore, ma per l'asprezza della caricatura o per la violenza dell'attacco i gruppi di sonetti contro [...] il Cosmico'; Domenico De Robertis, 'Cammelli, Antonio, detto il Pistoia', cit., p. 281: 'non sono comunque suoi i 23 sonetti contro il Cosmico dell'Estense  $\alpha$ .H.6.I'.

<sup>97</sup> Rome N, MS Sessoriano 413, ff. 26r-32v. The order of the sonnets in the Sessoriano slightly differs from that of the Estense. Renier pointed out in 'Poeti sforzeschi in un codice di Roma recentemente segnalato', cit., p. 18, that on folio 26r there must have been a heading, (a trace of which is still visible), containing probably an indication of the author, but alas it was no more legible being irrevocably damaged by damp. It is for this reason that Giorgio Rossi claimed in 'Il codice estense X.\*.34', cit., p. 302, that the sonnets were not transcribed anonymously: 'È erronea l'affermazione che i sonetti contro il Cosmico siano adespoti nel cod. Sessoriano della Vitt. Em. di Roma. Hanno la didascalia quasi illeggibile a occhio nudo, ma forse leggibilissima sottoponendo la parte superiore della c.



Ambrosiana codex listing on the contrary several sonnets in which Cosmico is addressed in a very friendly manner and he is praised for his poetic abilities;<sup>98</sup> and finally it would be an open contradiction if Pistoia, who wrote an elegiacal sonnet for Cosmico's, were also the author of the tirade.<sup>99</sup> A further proof against the attribution derives, according to Giorgio Rossi,<sup>100</sup> from a *Poemetto* in tercets by the fifteenth-century author Lelio Manfredi. In his fantastic journey in the reign of fame, Manfredi describes a very emotional encounter between Pistoia and himself unfolding in the presence of Cosmico who had been elected by

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26r. a trattamento chimico'.

<sup>98</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., p. xxvi: 'il Cappelli [...] corse un po' troppo a darli al Pistoia, del quale, [...] non possono assolutamente ritenersi. Coloro che han contrastata e contrastano codesta attribuzione hanno ora una valida conferma alla loro opinione nell'autorità indiscutibile della raccolta originale, in cui non compariscono affatto quegli arguti e virulenti sonetti contro il Cosmico'. Vittorio Cian, *La satira*, cit., vol. 1, p. 381, who was initially in favour of the attribution to Ariosto, explained their absence from the Ambrosiana manuscript due to an act of 'doverosa deferenza usato dal poeta raccoglitore verso la marchesa Isabella d'Este, sua protettrice e un tempo discepola grata del defunto umanista e rimatore padovano'.

<sup>99</sup> Giuseppe S. Scipioni [review], *Rime edite ed inedite di Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoia*, per cura di A. Cappelli e S. Ferrari - Livorno, Vigo, 1884', cit., p. 246, fn. 1: 'alla morte [Pistoia] lo piange con affetto dicendolo ogni nostra salute e il cultor della virtute per eccellenza'; Dino Provenzal, 'Dei sonetti contro il Cosmico attribuiti al Pistoia', cit., p. 147: 'ma quando egli morì, il Pistoia ne pianse la morte con un sonetto affettuosissimo [...]. E una contraddizione così aperta coi sonetti maledici se apparirebbe strana in chiunque, giustamente appare allo Scipioni ancor più strana in un uomo dell'indole del Pistoia'. However, it ought to be born in mind that in the case of Bellincioni, Pistoia first penned a vicious invective against him and then when the latter died, he wrote a commemorative sonnet.

<sup>100</sup> Giorgio Rossi, 'Il codice estense X.\*.34', cit., pp. 35-38.

Manfredi as his personal guide.<sup>101</sup> If Pistoia were the author of the *carmina maledica*, Manfredi's outburst of joy at the sight of Pistoia would seem rather inappropriate.

These sonnets to which hardly anyone, whether in favour or against, paid much attention, contain some interesting details with regard to the identity of the author. The tirade was written when Cosmico was 'd'an(n)i già carco',<sup>102</sup> and the author, who shows great familiarity with Cosmico's literary clique and his stay in Rome and in Ferrara, must have been a familiar face, 'Scio che tu sciai ch'io sum'.<sup>103</sup> He portrays himself as a sycophant: 'Tacerei sel fost'un che mi potesse/giovar, ma trar di te si po' niente'.<sup>104</sup> However, in the end he has to put a stop to his invective, 'Se più troverai versi alla colonna,/non seran mei, che non seró più stolto',<sup>105</sup> because lampooning Cosmico is after all a damaging exercise: 'Vegio sdignata contra me Madon(n)a/e se pria mi solea mostrar il volto,/veder mi lassa a poena hora la gon(n)a'.<sup>106</sup> This leaves the author with no choice but to go back to his love sonnets: 'e l'interrotto stil

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<sup>101</sup> Lelio Manfredi, *Manfrediana, un poema e una commedia inediti del primo Cinquecento italiano*, cit., p. 122 (chap. 8, lines 52-57).

<sup>102</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, f. 64r. Vittorio Rossi in his article 'Niccolò Lelio Cosmico: poeta padovano del secolo XV', cit., p. 126, dates the composition of the sonnets back to the year 1494 when Cosmico was most likely in Ferrara and he was in his early seventies.

<sup>103</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, f. 65v.

<sup>104</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, f. 67v.

<sup>105</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, f. 67v.

<sup>106</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, f. 67v.



di amor riprhendo [sic]'.<sup>107</sup> This last piece of information is very important in view of the fact that Pistoia was not a sonneteer in the Petrarchan fashion.<sup>108</sup> His poetic stance throughout the *Canzoniere* is in direct antithesis to love poetry: he is a jocular poet and the majority of his sonnets are of a derisive nature. At the beginning of his *Canzoniere*, which does not include a single love sonnet, Pistoia clearly spells out his poetic stance and his intentions:

Questo è sol la cagione  
che s'io canto d'amor ne canto poco  
sbeffando ogni huom ch(e) da lui toglie foco.

Faccio cose da gioco  
che a chi legendo la lor fine tocca,  
se gli trarebbe i denti for di bocca.<sup>109</sup>

The invectives against Ferrara and Gregorio Zampante.

On 10th May 1494, Ermete Bentivogli, Giovanni II's son, transcribed thirty anonymous sonnets penned against the town of Ferrara and its citizens<sup>110</sup> which were published for the first time in 1887 by Ludovico Frati.<sup>111</sup> The editor, who later changed his mind, at first regarded them as the work of Pistoia for their

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<sup>107</sup> Modena Est, MS α.H.6.1, f. 67v.

<sup>108</sup> Pèrcopo had also noticed this phrase in Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 527, fn. 2, while Vittorio Cian, *La satira*, cit., vol. 1, p. 382, interpreted it as a trick used by the author to confuse readers about his real identity.

<sup>109</sup> Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., f. 16r (III, p. 49), lines 15-20.

<sup>110</sup> Bologna U, MS 283, ff. 19r-35r. Of this manuscript there is an eighteenth-century copy (not seventeenth as Frati stated by mistake) at Bologna C, MS A.379, ff. 18v-34v.

<sup>111</sup> Ludovico Frati, 'Sonetti satirici contro Ferrara in un codice bentivolesco del secolo XV', *GSLI*, 9, 1887, pp. 215-237.

style and content;<sup>112</sup> Renier and others strongly doubted that the sonnets were the work of Pistoia<sup>113</sup> although fairly recently Werner L. Gundersheimer has spoken in favour of the attribution to our poet.<sup>114</sup>

A further cascade of sonnets this time centred on the Lucchese captain Gregorio Zampante during his time in office in

<sup>112</sup> Ludovico Frati, 'Sonetti satirici contro Ferrara in un codice bentivolesco del secolo XV', cit., p. 218 and p. 220: 'Il poeta dunque si dichiara servo di Ercole I, e ciò solo potrebbe bastare, a mio avviso, per indicare nella persona di Antonio Cammelli l'autore di cotesti sonetti. [...] A queste concordanze di tempo e di fatto, altre ne potrei aggiungere relativamente alla forma ed allo stile de' sonetti, che moltissimo tengono della maniera propria del Pistoia'. According to Emilio Lovarini, ed., *Antichi testi di letteratura pavana* (Bologna: Romagnoli Dall'Acqua, 1894), p. xxiv, fn. 1, Frati changed his mind at a later date: 'L. Frati credette potessero essere del Pistoia, ma oggi non è più persuaso neppur lui della sua ipotesi e ragionevolmente'. Despite all, Luciano Chiappini re-stressed in the bibliographical notes to *Gli Estensi* (Varese: Dall'Oglio, 1967), p. 530, that 'i sonetti appartengono, con tutta probabilità ad Antonio Cammelli detto il Pistoia'.

<sup>113</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *I sonetti*, cit., p. xvi, fn. 1: 'Ma che essi siano veramente opera del Cammelli io dubito forte. Nel 1494, in cui quei sonetti furono scritti, egli era capitano alla porta di Santa Croce in Reggio, nè aveva avuto ancora gravi cagioni di disgusto col duca di Ferrara. Il Frati suppone che appunto per quei sonetti satirici il Duca lo accomiatasse, ma se ciò fosse vero, come mai quel signore avrebbe atteso tre anni, dal 1494 al 1497, per prendere una simile decisione? [...] Il fatto poi che nessuno di quei sonetti, di colorazione dialettale assai marcata, si rinviene nel cod. Trivulziano, non milita certo in favore della loro autenticità'; Giuseppe Fatini, 'Le "Rime" di Ludovico Ariosto', cit., p. 38: 'Alla fiera e maledica poesia cammelliana ci riportano, non per l'identità dell'autore, ma per l'asprezza della caricatura o per la violenza dell'attacco i gruppi di sonetti contro Ferrara'; Marisa Milani, 'Sonetti ferraresi del '400 in una raccolta di poeti cortigiani', cit., p. 293: 'Chi sia il «servo», non è dato sapere (almeno per ora), ma che qui l'autore si dica servo di Lucrezia [that is Ercole I d'Este's illegitimate daughter] e non già di Ercole, come invece interpretava il Frati, mi pare ovvio'. This had already been pointed out by Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Antonio Cammelli*, cit., p. 535, fn. 1.

<sup>114</sup> Werner L. Gundersheimer, *Ferrara: the style of a Renaissance despotism*, cit., p. 15, fn. 4: 'These sonnets are perhaps the work of Antonio Cammelli ("Il Pistoia")'.



Ferrara was copied by a local chronicler in his diary in 1496.<sup>115</sup> The sonnets were never found ascribed to the pen of Pistoia either by his contemporaries or by future scholars, although in view of the strong similarities which were found between this tirade and the sonnets which Pistoia himself had penned against Zampante, a possibility was brought forward by Vittorio Rossi that they could belong to his pen.<sup>116</sup>

A *strambotto*, an untraceable sonnet and the latest discoveries.

A *strambotto* with the opening line 'Alla pianta caduta taglia taglia', which is attributed to Iacopo Corsi in MS 124 (A.IV.30) of the Biblioteca Comunale of Mantua and in MS 89 of the Classense Library,<sup>117</sup> was ascribed to Pistoia by Cappelli who provided no justification for his attribution.<sup>118</sup>

Gaetano Tononi, a nineteenth-century scholar, speculated

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<sup>115</sup> Giuseppe Pardi ed., *Diario ferrarese dall'anno 1409 sino al 1502 di autori incerti* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1928-1933), t. 24, fasc. 254, pp. 182-186 (pp. 184-185).

<sup>116</sup> Vittorio Rossi, 'Poesie storiche del sec. XV: a proposito di una recente pubblicazione', cit., p. 225: 'Certo fra queste poesie furono anche i sonetti del Pistoia [...] con alcuno de' quali ha grande affinità di contenuto e di movenza il sonetto *O Acheronte passami di là*'; Antonio Piromalli, *La cultura a Ferrara al tempo di Ludovico Ariosto*, cit., p. 144: 'a noi importa rilevare il carattere popolare sia delle rime anonime contro lo Zampante sia di quelle che il Pistoia scrisse sullo stesso argomento nel suo Canzoniere'.

<sup>117</sup> Mantua C, MS 124 (A.IV.30), f. 61r; Ravenna C, MS 89, f. 68v. It is also transcribed without attribution in Modena Est, MS α.H.6.1, f. 121r. According to Giorgio Rossi, 'Alcune rime inedite di Iacopo Corsi', *GSLI*, 26, 1895, pp. 390-397 (p. 391, fn. 3), the octave should also be listed in MS 201 of the Biblioteca Palatina, Parma, but I have been unable to trace it.

<sup>118</sup> Antonio Pistoia, *Sonetti giocosi*, cit., p. 12: 'così il Pistoia, abbandonando gli stati del Duca, dava sfogo al suo dolore col ripetere: «Alla pianta caduta: - taglia, taglia»'.

that a sonnet 'Ave rabi col base de la pace' was probably the work of Pistoia.<sup>119</sup> The poem in question was found by Angelo Pezzana,<sup>120</sup> around the middle of the nineteenth century in the documents of the notary Marco Antonio Gatti who, between 1489 and 1493, copied onto his registers two political poems by Pistoia. When Tononi consulted the registers he was unable to find the poem because it is no longer there. However, Tononi edited the sonnet using the text previously published by Pezzana.<sup>121</sup> It is interesting to note that Marin Sanudo reported the poem anonymously in an autograph manuscript of his which also contains the responsory sonnet to the above mentioned poem by the Veronese author Tiberio Schioppo.<sup>122</sup>

A sixteenth-century manuscript belonging to the collection of the Vatican Library lists a tailed sonnet, whose incipit is 'Amor vuol pur ch'io v'ami, et io no(n) posso', with attribution to Antonio Pistoia.<sup>123</sup> The jocular poem in question is transcribed with attribution to Antonio Alamanni in two other manuscripts and it is usually regarded as the genuine work of

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<sup>119</sup> Gaetano A. Tononi, 'Note storiche e rime politiche e morali tra gli atti di un notaio piacentino del secolo XV', cit., p. 8.

<sup>120</sup> The poem was published by Angelo Pezzana, *Storia della città di Parma* (Parma: Reale Tipografia, 1837-1859), t. 5, in the section 'Appendice dei documenti', p. 41, no. 36.

<sup>121</sup> Gaetano A. Tononi, 'Note storiche e rime politiche e morali tra gli atti di un notaio piacentino del secolo XV', cit., pp. 15-16.

<sup>122</sup> Venice N, MS It.IX.363(7386), f. 50v, f. 61v.

<sup>123</sup> Vatican City BAV, MS Barb. Lat. 3800, f. 4v.



the latter.<sup>124</sup>

### 3.4 *La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto: a disperata* in search of an author.

It is believed that the sudden death of Beatrice d'Este Sforza, on 3rd January 1497, prompted Pistoia to write a poem in her memory. In an undated autograph letter to her bereaved husband Ludovico, Pistoia briefly refers to a poem penned in Beatrice's memory:

ritrovarai scricta la felicissima fine di quella tua sì chara anci charissima coniuncta da te amata in terra Beatrice hora nel cielo tra le caste martire locata.<sup>125</sup>

However, manuscript 2618 (Codice Trombelli), now at Bologna University Library, containing the above autograph letter and twenty-six political sonnets in praise of Ludovico, has not brought down to us the poem mentioned by Pistoia.

At the beginning of this century, Pèrcopo published a *disperata*<sup>126</sup> with the opening line *La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto*.<sup>127</sup> The publication followed the discovery of MS H.223

<sup>124</sup> Bologna C, MS A.2429, p. 111; Modena Est, MS γ.F.6.15 (Codice Campori 187), f. 42v. The sonnet is published in Carlo Muscetta and Daniele Ponchiroli, *Poesia del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento* (Turin: Einaudi, 1959), pp. 108-109, in the section devoted to Alamanni.

<sup>125</sup> Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli), f. 108r.

<sup>126</sup> Dating back to the thirteenth century, the *disperata* is a genre which mixes various elements such as suffering caused by love, invective against a cruel destiny and a moral consideration of human action and character.

<sup>127</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'Una disperata famosa', *Raccolta di studi critici dedicata ad Alessandro D'Ancona festeggiandosi il XL anniversario del suo insegnamento* (Florence: Barbèra, 1901), pp. 701-718.

inf.,<sup>128</sup> which contained among others, this very poem.<sup>129</sup> In the introduction to his publication, Pèrcopo stated that:

l'autografo de' *Sonetti faceti* di Antonio Cammelli, contiene il nostro componimento nelle sue ultime carte (283v-288), dopo i sonetti politici, senza indicazione alcuna, ma tutta piena di correzioni e pentimenti.<sup>130</sup> Al giocondo burlesco pistoiese (affatto irriconoscibile in codest'abito non suo!) si dovrà, dunque, d'ora in poi attribuire la disperata famosa.<sup>131</sup>

The composition, which focuses on the utter despair of a man whose young beloved has passed away, had been previously transcribed and published, but never associated with Antonio Pistoia. In the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, the work, which was often accompanied by a sonnet 'Vanne canzon mia, disperata e mesta' usually described, in the various editions, as 'conforme alla medesima materia',<sup>132</sup> circulated

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<sup>128</sup> It still remains unclear how Pèrcopo reached the conclusion that MS H.223 inf. was autograph: he never consulted either the manuscript or the poet's autograph letters.

<sup>129</sup> Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf., ff. 283v-288r.

<sup>130</sup> The 'pentimenti' Pèrcopo is referring to are later corrections carried out by a different hand of that of MS H.223 inf. Insertions above the line can be found throughout the poem.

<sup>131</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'Una disperata famosa', cit., p. 702.

<sup>132</sup> The sonnet also circulated on its own with and without attribution. It was ascribed to the pen of Simone Serdini called Il Saviozzo although this was disputed by Emilio Pasquini in his edition of Serdini's work, *Rime* (Bologna: Commissione per i Testi di Lingua, 1965); the poem was in fact included in the section dedicated to texts of dubious attribution, pp. 272-273: 'Dato al S. nell'ediz. Baleni (1584) insieme col Cerbero e con la risposta per le rime, Certo Jesù intendo di chiamare [...]. Il Bilancioni lo pose tra le rime erroneam. attrib. al Serdini. Fu stampato insieme con le disperate di Serafino Aquilano a Venezia, dal Bindoni, nel 1577'. The sonnet is also listed in the two following editions of Serdini although it is not clear whether it was meant to be ascribed to the Siense poet: Simone Serdini, *Cerbero invoco* (Florence: Appresso alle Scalee di Badia, [c. 1560-1600]), f. 87r; Idem, *Cerbero invoco* (Florence: Appresso



both in manuscripts and printed editions, either anonymously<sup>133</sup> or with attributions to Antonio Tebaldeo<sup>134</sup> and Serafino

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alla Badia, 1569), sig. [a4v]. It was transcribed on its own and without attribution in Pesaro O, MS 1897, Fasc. I, g<sup>bi</sup>, no. 18, f. [1r]. I have been unable to trace the 1584 edition mentioned by Pasquini, although according to Dennis E. Rhodes, 'Le antiche edizioni a stampa delle poesie di Simone Serdini', *Anatomie bibliologiche: saggi di storia del libro per il centenario de «La Bibliofilia»*, edited by Luigi Balsamo and Pierangelo Bellettini (Florence: Olschki, 1999), pp. 253-266, a copy of it is kept at the National Library of Florence but my research there has proved fruitless.

<sup>133</sup> The *disperata* appears anonymously, with and without the sonnet, in the following manuscripts: Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408, ff. 370r-[374v] (without sonnet). It is perhaps interesting to point out that although Pèrcopo quoted MS Cl.I.408 in Antonio Cammelli, cit., p. 564, with reference to Pistoia's sonnets therein listed, he made no mention of the poem; ASGu, Fondo Armani, I.D.2., ff. 39r-45v (without sonnet); Mantua C, MS 124 (A.IV.30), ff. 15r-17v (with sonnet); Paris BN, MS Ital.560, ff. 91v-95v and MS Ital.1047, ff. 38v-42v (both without sonnet); Pesaro O, MS 54, ff. 44r-49v (with sonnet) and MS 1897, Fasc. I, g<sup>bi</sup>, no. 6, ff. [1r-4v] (without sonnet). The poem was also transcribed without attribution and lacking the first seventeen tercets in Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.378, ff. 51r-53v (with sonnet). However a later hand added 'mi par del Pistoia' on top of the two opening lines of the poem and of the sonnet, f. 51r and f. 53v respectively. According to Nadia Cannata Salamone, 'Per una storia delle rime del Tebaldeo: alcune recenti indagini critiche', *Roma nel Rinascimento* ([s.l.: s.t.], 1995 [offprint]), pp. 3-24 (p. 19), the note was penned by Angelo Colocci, a patron of the arts and literati in Renaissance Rome. The poem is also published without attribution in the following two early printed editions: [Simone Serdini], [*Cerbero invoco. Contro a Cerbero. La Disperata. Spechio di Narcisso*] ([Rome: Johann Besicken, c. 1505]), ff. 2v-4r (with sonnet); [Anonymous], *La disperata. Sventurato Pelegrino. Littera d'amore. Sonetti* ([s.n., 1510?]), ff. [1v-3r] (with sonnet). It is once again not entirely clear whether the poem was meant to be attributed to Serdini. The edition datable to the year 1505, which was once part of a bigger volume containing fifty-three chapbooks, is believed to have belonged to a mountebank who lived in Rome at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The edition is described by Antonio M. Adorisio, 'Cultura in lingua volgare a Roma fra Quattro e Cinquecento', *Studi di biblioteconomia e storia del libro in onore di Francesco Barberi*, edited by Giorgio De Gregori and Maria Valenti (Rome: Associazione Italiana Biblioteche, 1976), pp. 19-36.

<sup>134</sup> It is ascribed to Antonio Tebaldeo in Parma Pal, MS Parmense 201, ff. 204r-207r (with sonnet) and in the following fifteenth- and sixteenth-century miscellaneous editions: Simone



Aquilano.<sup>135</sup> Pèrcopo must have thought that the presence of La

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Sardini, *Cerbero i(n)voco composto per Simone Sardini Senese vocato Saviozo. El co(n)trario di Cerbero che comi(n)cia: Certo Iesù intendo di chiamare. La disperata composta da Antonio de Tibaldi ferrarese* ([Florence: Lorenzo de' Morgiani, 1495?]), ff. [3r-4v] (with sonnet); Idem, *Cerbero invoco composto per Simone Sardini Senese vocato Saviozo. El contrario di Cerbero che comincia: Certo Iesù intendo di chiamare. La disperata composta da Antonio de Tibaldi ferrarese* ([Florence: Lorenzo de' Morgiani, c. 1498-1500]), sig. [a3r-a4v] (with sonnet); Idem, *Cerbero invoco composto per Simone Sardini Senese vocato Saviozo. El contrario di Cerbero che comincia: Certo Iesù intendo chiamare. La disperata composta da Antonio de Tibaldi ferrarese* (Turin: Franciscus de Silva, [c. 1510]), sig. [a3r-a4v] (with sonnet); Idem, *Cerbero invoco composto p(er) Simone Sardini Senese vocato Saviozo. El contrario di Cerbero che comincia: Certo Iesù inte(n)do di chiamare. La disperata composta da Antonio de Tibaldi ferrarese* ([Florence: c. 1510?]), sig. [a3r-a4r] (without sonnet); Idem, *Cerbero invoco co(m)posto p(er) Simone Sardini senese co(n) el co(n)trario di Cerbero. Intendo di chiamare la disperata composta da Antonio di Tibaldi Ferrarese* ([Venice: Agostino Bindoni, 1520?]), ff. [1r-2v] (with sonnet); Idem, *Cerbaro invoco. Et contra Cerbaro, con la disperata de M(esser) Antonio Tebaldeo* ([Florence: 1520?]), sig. [A3r-A4v] (with sonnet); Cesare Torti, [Poesie] ([Florence: Piero Pacini, 1490?]), sig. [e7r-e10v] (with sonnet); Idem, [Poesie] (Florence: Francesco Bonaccorsi, [1490?]), sig. [f5r-f8v] (with sonnet); Idem, *Opera nova de Cesar Torto escula(n)o et Augustino da Urbino et Nicolò Filibcne [sic] senese et Bernardo Illicino medico et philosopho* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1508), sigs. [113v-mm3r] (with sonnet). Despite the numerous attributions to Tebaldeo, Antonio Rossi, 'Opera noua composta per diuersi auctori: un'antologia del 1502', cit., regards the *disperata* as a genuine work by Pistoia, p. 171: '(è da ritenere del Cammelli, e non di Antonio Tebaldeo - come indica la titolazione nella silloge - la disperata, *La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto*)'. Tania Basile and Jean-Jacques Marchand in their multi-volume edition of Antonio Tebaldeo's *Rime* (Modena: Panini, 1989-1992), 3 vols. in 5 tomes, reached the conclusion that despite the numerous attributions to Tebaldeo, the work was penned by Pistoia, vol. 1, p. 43, fn. 6: 'Occorre infatti respingere la paternità tebaldeana del componimento (e del sonetto che solitamente l'accompagna) [...] è fuor di dubbio che la testimonianza dell'autografo ambrosiano costituisce prova inconfutabile dell'appartenenza al Pistoia della 'disperata''. The editors, in my view, gave too much credit to Pèrcopo's assertions; the matter is far from being conclusive and it is again open for discussion in view of the fact that the Ambrosiana manuscript is not autograph.

<sup>135</sup> Serafino Aquilano, *Opere* (Florence: Filippo Giunta, 1516), ff. 110v-114r (with sonnet); Idem, *Opere* (Florence: Bernardo Zucchetto, 1517), ff. 90v-94r (without sonnet); Idem, *Opere* (Venice: Melchiorre Sessa, 1526), ff. 115v-119r (with



nuda terra in the Ambrosiana manuscript was sufficient to exclude any doubts about the authorship and to settle the matter for good but the following factors, in addition to the fact that the Ambrosiana manuscript is not autograph, come to undermine the occasion for which the *disperata* was composed.

In his letter to Ludovico Sforza, Antonio Pistoia declares that he would soon send him the 'felicissima fine di quella tua sì chara anci charissima coniuncta da te amata in terra Beatrice'.<sup>136</sup> On the basis of this statement, it is plausible to assume that Pistoia's poem may be a celebration of Beatrice's life and deeds. On the contrary *La nuda terra* revolves around the character of a distressed man who, for the entire length of the

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sonnet); Idem, *Opere* (Venice: Giovanni Andrea Valvassori, 1539), sig. P3v-[P7r] (with sonnet); Idem, *Opera* (Venice: Pietro dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1540), sig. P3v-[P7r] (with sonnet); Idem, *Opera* (Venice: Bartolomeo Imperadore & Francesco, 1544), sig. P3v-[P7r] (with sonnet); Idem, *Opere* (Venice: Nicolò de Bascarini, 1548), ff. 100v-114r (with sonnet); Idem, *Opera* (Venice: Agostino Bindoni, 1550), sig. P3v-[P7r] (with sonnet). The attribution to Serafino Aquilano started with the 1516 edition of Filippo Giunta. To this regard, Mario Menghini comments as follows in his edition of *Rime di Serafino de' Ciminelli dall'Aquila* (Bologna: Romagnoli-Dall'Acqua, 1894 [the date on the wrapper and in the colophon is 1896]), vol. 1 [but no more published], p. ciii: 'Con l'edizione fiorentina, pubblicata da Filippo di Giunta, il repertorio poetico di Serafino dall'Aquila segna nuove e più copiose modificazioni. Il rinomato tipografo, prima di accingersi al lavoro, pensò bene di procurarsi tutte le edizioni precedenti - almeno le più importanti - e di sottoporle a una lunga disamina, perchè potesse procedere a una regolare fusione di tutte le rime che racchiudono; di più, imaginando che qualcosa di inedito avrebbe ancora adescato il lettore, volle notevolmente accrescere il repertorio poetico; nel quale comprese sonetti, epistole, capitoli, barzellette che vagavano manoscritte, e tutto ascrisse all'Aquilano, se bene, nel corso di questa mia edizione si vedrà facilmente con quanta leggerezza abbia il Giunti proceduto'. Menghini in fact did not include *La nuda terra* in his edition; the poem was however published as the work of Aquilano in Barbara Bauer-Formiconi, *Die Strambotti des Serafino dall'Aquila* (Munich: Fink, 1967), pp. 359-364.

<sup>136</sup> Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli), f. 108r.



poem, inveighs against the world because of the premature death of his beloved. The mourning takes place in the spring while Beatrice died in the middle of the winter. Even if the distressed man were Ludovico, it is natural to ask why the author postponed the action from winter to spring, that is three months after Beatrice's death. Finally, mention must be made of a miscellany by Cesare Torti, considered to be 'la prima raccolta a stampa di rime scelte di varii autori del Quattrocento',<sup>137</sup> which could rule out for good that *La nuda terra* was occasioned by the death of Beatrice.<sup>138</sup> In the miscellaneous edition,

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<sup>137</sup> Carlo Dionisotti, 'Jacopo Tolomei fra umanisti e rimatori', *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, 6, 1963, pp. 137-176 (p. 175). Dionisotti in his essay briefly refers to it as, p. 176: 'importante primizia, [...] conchiusa da un sonetto di congedo del ferrarese Tebaldeo' while Giovanni Parenti describes it in 'Antonio Carazolo desamato: aspetti della poesia volgare aragonese nel ms. Riccardiano 2752', *SFI*, 37, 1979, pp. 119-279 (p. 139) as: 'silloge poetica che l'ascolano Cesare Torto aveva fatto stampare a Firenze (1490 ca.)' in which the editor offered 'oltre alla proprie «inepte rime et degne de riso, con una epistola amatoria», componimenti di Agostino Staccoli, Niccolò Salimbeni, Bernar[do] Illicino, Saviozzo e Tebaldeo: scelte che sottendono al «piccol volume et librecto d'ogni scientia casso, ma di perfecta fede et servitù referto» un diagramma comprendente Urbino, Siena e Ferrara'. Antonio Rossi in his article, 'Opera noua composta per diuersi auctori: un'antologia del 1502', cit., adds that the material collected by Torti in his edition is, p. 171: 'riconducibile all'asse Siena-Napoli, sul quale vengono a inserirsi da un lato, con lo Staccoli, l'ambiente, piuttosto che urbinate, romano, dall'altro, con il Cammelli, quello pistoiese'. However, this seems to me a moot point for two reasons: first Rossi takes for granted that the work is by Pistoia and second, most important, that this very composition represents the Pistoiese cultural scene when on the contrary our poet, though Pistoiese by birth and possibly by parentage, had left his native city and had operated for most of his adult life in northern Italy.

<sup>138</sup> Antonio Tebaldeo, *Rime*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 43-44, fn. 6: 'Tale collocazione cronologica [that is 1497] è ovviamente posta in forse dalla presenza de *La nuda terra* nella stampa fiorentina del Bonaccorsi, sfuggita al Pèrcopo (né appare convincente l'ipotesi relativa all'"occasione" che avrebbe ispirato la composizione dei versi)'. .



printed by Francesco Bonaccorsi (active 1485-1496) without date, the poem is attributed to Antonio Tebaldeo. The edition is normally ascribed to the year 1490, though the date appears in brackets and with a question mark in most catalogues of incunabula.<sup>139</sup> If the date, however, were 1490 it would be impossible to maintain that the poem was written for Beatrice who was, at the time, still alive. An eighteenth-century manuscript note pasted onto the flyleaf of the British Library copy of Torti's edition (pressmark C.8.g.12) bears the following statement:

This collection is pretty accurately described by Quadrio in his 2<sup>d</sup> [3<sup>d</sup>] volume page 347. He does not however seem justifyd [sic] in assigning the years 1490 as the date of the edition, meirly [sic] on the authority of an epitaph written by Torti (and occurring in the 32<sup>d</sup> Page) on a young Florentine named Ambra, who is said to have died in 1489.<sup>140</sup>

The author of the manuscript note very accurately reported what Francesco Quadrio had written about Torti's miscellany although Quadrio himself had missed a further indication. In his dedicatory letter, Torti remarks that he is in his twenty-first year.<sup>141</sup> He is thought to have died shortly after 1517,<sup>142</sup> but

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<sup>139</sup> *Illustrated incunabula short-title catalogue*, cit., istc no. it00403300

<sup>140</sup> Cesare Torti, [*Poesie*], cit. The hand is that of a person who was taught to write in the eighteenth century: this is shown by capitalization conventions (e.g. Volume, Date, Edition, Epitaph) and general layout among other clues, although it is not possible to say definitely that it was written in the eighteenth century. The note must have been written before 1827 when the volume came into the British Library's collections.

<sup>141</sup> Cesare Torti, [*Poesie*], cit., sig. a2r.

unfortunately his date of birth still remains unknown. If one argued that the incunable was printed around the time of Ambra's epitaph (1489), this would fix the date of the edition around 1490 or shortly after, therefore proving that *La nuda terra* was not occasioned by Beatrice's death. A confirmation could come from Torti's date of birth, which one could assume to be around 1468 (that is twenty-one years before 1489, although one cannot be sure that the date of his collection is the same as Ambra's epitaph).<sup>143</sup>

Despite the controversy concerning its authorship, it is beyond doubt that the poem met with great success and was very popular indeed. It prompted a Venetian by the name of Antonio Salvazo to write a poem against it on 25th April 1512 in Mazorbo, a location not far from Burano. The work '*Lauda co(n)tra la nuda tera dita desperata*' was transcribed by Marin Sanudo in two of his manuscripts<sup>144</sup> and it was published in 1901 by Pèrcopo.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> A propos of Torti, Giuseppe Fabiani, *Ascoli nel Quattrocento* (Ascoli Piceno: Società Tipografica Editrice, 1950-1951), vol. 1, pp. 287-288, writes: 'Cesare Torto [sic], medico al servizio del marchese di Bitonto, che è ritenuto il primo compilatore di una antologia poetica, in cui aggiunse anche alcune sue rime impressa a Firenze nel 1490 e successivamente a Venezia nel 1508. [...] fu medico per molti anni a Ripatransone e morì dopo il 1517'.

<sup>143</sup> Unfortunately my enquiries at the State Archive of Ascoli Piceno were unfruitful.

<sup>144</sup> Venice N, MS It.IX.430(6338), ff. 155v-156r. The work is concluded by the sonnet '*Vatene laude mia lietta e no(n) mesta*', f. 156r; MS It.IX.369(7203), ff. 36r-37r.

<sup>145</sup> Erasmo Pèrcopo, '*Una disperata famosa*', cit., pp. 717-718 (the sonnet '*Vatene laude mia lietta e no(n) mesta*' was not published). The composition had been previously mentioned by Vittorio Rossi in his review of '*Le rime di Bartolomeo Cavassico notaio bellunese della prima metà del secolo XVI, con*



This long and intricate story shows how the complex issue of authorship was sometimes treated with superficiality. Even though in the course of my research I located new manuscripts and relevant details, there will always remain a few poems for which sufficient, positive documents may never be found. It is likely that the reason for attributing the various groups of contra sonnets to the pen of Pistoia lies in his whip-lash tongue. To conclude, it may be useful to summarize the above illustrated responses of critics to the question of attribution in the following tables. The *disperata* is not included since its attribution has never been disputed before.

Table 3  
Sonnets of undisputed attribution.

|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive      |
| Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el vento |
| Morte crudel superba invida e fera    |
| Nasce chi nasce in pregon de la morte |
| Ruppe la parcha una più dolce cetra   |

Table 4  
Sonnets of doubtful authenticity.

| Incipit   | AC | GC | SF | EP | RR | VR |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Amor vuol pur ch'io v'ami, et io<br>no(n) posso * |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Ave di pietà fonte alma Maria                     |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |
| Ave Maria o virgo gloriosa                        |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |
| Charon che voi? Mena la barcha a<br>riva          |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |
| Che fai, che pensi? Destate columbo               | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    |    |
| Che pensi amante? A che penso? Al<br>mio peggio   |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓  |    |
| Chi segue amor chi è toco del suo<br>telo         |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |
| Da Leon vengo e là si fa banchetto                |    |    |    | x  |    | x  |
| Ferro o ferto qua non gemme et horo               |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |
| In nell'ecterna et gloriosa schuola               | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    |    |
| In rima taccia ognun che 'l pregio<br>è dato      | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | x  |    |    |
| La scure, el culeo, el capestro, el<br>cortello   |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |
| Novel Narcisso in cui fu la vertute               | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    |    |
| Pelago di tempesta e un mar<br>d'affanni **       |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |
| Poteva esser più ria, malvagia et<br>fella        | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |
| Qual cosa o Dio qual cosa è quella<br>cosa        |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |
| Quando di Vener fu l'alma superba                 | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |
| Se col tempo ogni cosa si matura                  |    |    |    | x  | ✓  |    |



|   |   |  |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| Senza ale fu nel ciel senza thalari           |   |  |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| Signore io dormo in un letto a<br>vettura *** | ✓ |  | ✓ | x |   | ✓ |
| Volendomi partir dala mia diva                |   |  |   | x | ✓ |   |

\* Also attributed to Antonio Alamanni

\*\* Also ascribed to Bernardo Bellincioni

\*\*\* Also attributed to Iacopo Corsi and Giovanni de' Rossi

## Tables 5

### Arbitrary attributions.

#### 5.1 Tirade against Nicolò Ariosto

| GB | AC     | GC | VC | DR | GF | SF | LM | MM | EP | AP     | RR | GS | V<br>G | E<br>V |
|----|--------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--------|----|----|--------|--------|
| x  | x<br>✓ | ✓  | x  | x  | x  | ✓  | ✓  | x  | x  | x<br>✓ | x  | x  | x      | x      |

#### 5.2 Invective against Nicolò Lelio Cosmico

| AC | VC     | DR | GF | SF | FG | LM | EP | DP | RR | RR* | GR | VR     | G<br>S | A<br>S |
|----|--------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|--------|--------|--------|
| ✓  | ✓<br>x | x  | x  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | x  | x  | x  | x   | x  | x<br>✓ | x      | ✓      |

#### 5.3 Poems written against Ferrara

| GF | LF     | WG | MM | EP | RR |
|----|--------|----|----|----|----|
| x  | ✓<br>x | ✓  | x  | x  | x  |

#### 5.4 Sonnets penned against Gregorio Zampante

|    |
|----|
| VR |
| ✓  |

#### 5.5 A strambotto ('Alla pianta caduta taglia taglia')

|    |
|----|
| AC |
| ✓  |

#### 5.6 An untraceable sonnet ('Ave rabi col base de la pace')

|    |
|----|
| GT |
| ✓  |

## Legenda

✓ = in favour  
x = against

## Critics

GB = Giulio Bertoni  
AC = Antonio Cappelli  
GC = Giosuè Carducci  
VC = Vittorio Cian  
DR = Domenico De Robertis  
GF = Giuseppe Fatini  
SF = Severino Ferrari  
LF = Ludovico Frati  
FG = Ferdinando Gabotto  
WG = Werner L. Gundersheimer  
LM = Lauro Martines  
MM = Marisa Milani  
EP = Erasmo Pèrcopo  
AP = Antonio Piromalli  
DP = Dino Provenzal  
RR = Rodolfo Renier  
RR\* = Roberto Ricciardi  
GR = Giorgio Rossi  
VR = Vittorio Rossi  
GS = Giuseppe Scipioni  
AS = Antonio G. Spinelli  
GT = Gaetano Tononi  
VG = Paola Vecchi Galli  
EV = Emilio Vicini



## CHAPTER FOUR

## THE CANZONIERE

The long-held belief that the Ambrosiana manuscript was autograph has had, as we have just seen, considerable consequences. Not only have doubtful compositions such as *La nuda terra* been considered definitely by Pistoia, but the whole process by which the codex was put together can now be seen in a different context. The following pages will attempt to evaluate how the Ambrosiana collection was compiled and how far it was organized and structured. But first let us briefly look at the cultural tradition to which Pistoia's *Canzoniere* belongs.

4.1 The tradition of the *Canzoniere*.

Antonio Pistoia was a comic sonneteer and his poetic stance can be described as anti-stilnovistic. Many of his sonnets are based on swift exchanges of *botta e risposta*, a technique going back to the Provençal *coblas tensonadas*, while some of the themes hark back to the *Roman de la rose*,<sup>1</sup> the *Elegia* by Arrigo da Settimello<sup>2</sup> and the French *fabliaux* in view of their widespread lampoonery of peasants, humble folks, women and priests. Some of Pistoia's poems focus on the core issues of the goliardic tradition,<sup>3</sup> such as the exaltation of wine, women, gambling,<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Guillaume De Lorris and Jean De Meun, *Le roman de la rose*, edited by Félix Lecoy (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1965-1975), 3 vols.

<sup>2</sup> Arrigo da Settimello, *Elegia*, edited by Giovanni Cremaschi (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano Edizioni Atlas, 1949).

<sup>3</sup> Franco Suitner, *La poesia satirica e giocosa nell'età dei comuni* (Padua: Antenore, 1983), p. 120: 'In genere si potrà dire che l'influsso della poesia goliardica è stato tematico e

money or the lack of it. The author's poetic stance is in direct antithesis to love poetry and it is characterized by a low stylistic register. This does not necessarily mean, however, that Pistoia and his fellow comic sonneteers wrote in an instinctive fashion.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary. Their poetry responded to a set of rhetorical rules in which formal elements played an important role in order to reach the desired effect. Broken syntax, for example, was often favoured to reproduce the spoken quality of language and the evocative texture of words was privileged by working on phonic effects neglected in everyday usage. This in part explains why their sonnets often are, and even possibly were, real conundrums and at times joyful nonsense. Good sound effects were achieved through depriving words of their meaning, playing with syllables, prefixes, roots and suffixes. The writer and poet Franco Sacchetti was among the very first vernacular poets to offer us such an example in three poems

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sostanzialmente indiretto sulla poesia dei nostri comici, mentre più evidenti ricalchi stilistici si trovano ponendo a riscontro certe esperienze trobadoriche. [...] Le tradizioni giullaresche [...] vanno ritenute un punto di partenza più vicino e più ovvio per i nostri giocosi'.

<sup>4</sup> Mario Marti, *Cultura e stile nei poeti giocosi del tempo di Dante* (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi, 1953), p. 27: 'I ritmi latini sulla donna, la taverna e il dado sono fra i più noti; e chi abbia una pur superficiale conoscenza della nostra poesia giocosa dalle origini al Berni, vi vorrà volentieri riconoscere la loro reale, anche se dissimulata, presenza, dall'Angiolieri al Tedaldi, dal Sacchetti al Pucci, dal Burchiello allo Squarzola, dal Pistoia al Pulci, al Berni'.

<sup>5</sup> According to Mario Marti, *Cultura e stile nei poeti giocosi del tempo di Dante*, cit., the emphasis is on, p. 207: 'la letterarietà dei motivi giocosi, i quali, anche se derivarono da occasioni biografiche, si modellano su tutta un'ormai individuata tradizione; e per affermare quindi che gli interessi di poeti come il Sacchetti, il Burchiello, il Pistoia ecc. sono prevalentemente d'ordine stilistico, anche nella parte giocosa della loro produzione'.



bearing the headings 'Sonetto fatto per motti', 'Sonetto per scherne d'uno, di Franco detto' and 'Sonetto di Franco per motti ad uno'.<sup>6</sup> His last but one definition is important in view of the words 'per scherne' because it allows us to establish a link between satire and formal nonsense in which the phonic qualities of language are fully exploited<sup>7</sup> and the meaning is cleverly concealed. This particular technique reached its zenith with Domenico di Giovanni known as Il Burchiello who, in his sonnets, gave prominence to linguistic play.<sup>8</sup>

The role Pistoia assumed as a poet was in many ways similar to that of the French *losengier*,<sup>9</sup> the Tuscan *morditore*,<sup>10</sup> that

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<sup>6</sup> Franco Sacchetti, *Il libro delle rime*, edited by Franca Brambilla Ageno (Florence: Olschki, 1990), p. 347: 'Questo sonetto e i due seguenti costituiscono il più antico esempio di poesia «burchiellesca» ante litteram della letteratura italiana. Il secondo definito «per scherne d'uno», ha chiaramente intenzione satirica, ma forse il significato degli altri due non è molto differente'.

<sup>7</sup> According to Giovanni Pozzi, *Poesia per gioco: prontuario di poesie artificiali* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1984), this implies that, pp. 24-25: '1) il suono linguistico abbia una sua qualità propria (molle, dura, squillante, profonda), che può essere assunta di per se stessa, senza funzioni rappresentative; 2) che ciò valga anche per le serie che risultano dalle combinazioni di quei suoni'.

<sup>8</sup> Luisa Avellini, 'Metafora «regressiva» e degradazione comica nei sonetti del Burchiello', *Lingua e stile*, 8, 1973, pp. 291-319 and in particular pp. 304-315.

<sup>9</sup> Frédéric Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IX<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Vieweg, 1880-1902), at the entry for *losengier* reports, vol. 5, p. 36: 'flatteur, enjôleur, complimenteur, ami perfide, suborneur'. The term also meant 'liar' and this use is attested in old Provençal poems by Arnaut Daniel and Bernart de Ventadorn among others. The following lines are taken from a poem by Arnaut Daniel published in Carl Appel, *Provenzalische Chrestomathie mit Abriss der Formenlehre und Glossar* (Leipzig: Reisland, 1930<sup>6</sup>), p. 55, lines 33-36:

Ai Dieus! car si fosson trian  
d'entrels fals li fin amador,



is slanderer and detractor, whose prime motive was envy and whose main task consisted in ferociously attacking his enemies. Pistoia inveighed against them through a variety of techniques and by often recurring to commonplaces, alternating from a playful to a chastizing mode. First he reproached his adversaries because of their alleged homosexuality, this being a well-established sarcastic trope of the comic tradition widely present in the *cantigas d'escarnio*<sup>11</sup> and in the *mal dizer*. Later he accused them of being dirty and smelly. This last attribute, an ever present ingredient of jocular poetry, has significance because it was traditionally linked with the idea of illness and death and therefore progressive isolation and permanent exclusion from society.<sup>12</sup> The descriptions of the people who are at the

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el lauzengier el trichador  
portesson corns el fron denan!

<sup>10</sup> In Medieval Siena the term came to indicate jesters and buffoons because of their custom of spreading rumours and *motti infamanti* upon commission. Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti eds., *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, cit., explain the term as, vol. 10, p. 896, entry no. [1], 2 and 3: 'che morde; che si difende o attacca con morsi; mordace, feroce [...]; che è pronto alla battuta ironica e pungente; che è solito schernire con allusioni mordaci e malevole [sic]; motteggiatore [...] che rimprovera duramente, biasimatore severo; denigratore, detrattore, calunniatore'. The above meaning was already well in use at the time of Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, cit., pp. 1084-1085 (9th day, 8th tale): 'essendo in Firenze uno da tutti chiamato Ciacco [...] essendo per altro assai costumato e tutto pieno di belli e di piacevoli motti, si diede a essere non del tutto uom di corte ma morditore'.

<sup>11</sup> Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1992<sup>21</sup>), p. 616: 'escarnio. (De escarnir.) m. Befa tenaz que se hace con el propósito de afrentar'.

<sup>12</sup> Fetor had a number of connotations associated with the *mal dizer*, punishment and damnation. Numerous examples can be found in Bernardino da Siena's sermons: 'El terzo veleno è sboccato. Elli so' molti che hanno bene, quanto ellino possono dire male d'altrui. [...] E sappi che questo è uno vizio che chiunque l'ha, li pute la bocca. E imparate voi, donne e anco



centre of Pistoia's attack are intentionally grotesque to comply with the Medieval idea that a misshapen body conceals a marred soul, a concept which goes back to classical and Biblical sources:

La vituperatio era espressamente prevista dai trattati medievali di *ars versificandi*. [...] l'idea della *reprehensio* è essenzialmente legata a quella della *descriptio personae* e rispecchia anche in questo caso il consueto principio del *conueniens*, dell'adeguamento tra forma e contenuto.<sup>13</sup>

This satire, whose action was released through verbal assault and was meant not to pass unobserved by its victims, was so caustic as to become associated with the image of sharp teeth caught in the process of piercing human flesh. The diction and images Pistoia resorted to in his poems are explicitly gross, and there is no attempt on his part to disguise his invective. In this respect his stance is not ironic but sarcastic because he clearly

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voi, uomini; ché la puzza di questi cotali si può assomigliare a la puzza de' pozzi; che vedi il pozzo che pute da la bocca sua. Così è di costoro: la puzza loro è nella bocca loro. E però fa' che ogni volta che tu odi uno di questi cotali che parli male d'altrui, subito come tu l'odi, turati il naso, e fa' così ... e di': «Oh, elli ci pute!». Se egli seguita pure col suo dire, e tu seguita col tuo dire, e voltati in là, e di': «Oh, elli ci pute forte!». Bernardino continues to comment on the 'puzza' backing his arguments with passages from the Bible and classical authors. Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche volgari sul Campo di Siena 1427*, edited by Carlo Delcorno (Milan: Rusconi, 1989), vol. 1, p. 241, lines 58-60.

<sup>13</sup> Franco Suitner, *La poesia satirica e giocosa nell'età dei comuni*, cit., p. 25. A similar view is expressed by Ernst R. Curtius, *European literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1979 [reprint of the 1953 edition]), p. 182, fn. 37: 'Description of human ugliness derives from the *vituperatio*. In its treatment of epideixis antique rhetoric made "blame" the opposite of praise. [...] Sidonius' description of Gnatho (Epistle III, 13) was the model for the style'.



means what he says.<sup>14</sup> Sarcasm was in fact considered a 'fleshy mode' and hence it was the perfect means for conveying cutting remarks<sup>15</sup> and for acting as a *morditore*. In the political sonnets the author often resorted to *invectiva per fabulam* and used names of animals in order to conceal those of real people, a practice that had begun during the Middle Ages<sup>16</sup> and which Burchiello considered particularly suited to tirades against fellow poets.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Dilwyn Knox, *Ironia: Medieval and Renaissance ideas on irony* (Leiden; New York; Copenhagen; Cologne: Brill, 1989), p. 177: 'If, on the other hand, sarcasmos was defined more broadly, as it almost always was, as a hostile, bitter, derision, then it was not a species of ironia. Indeed, as Beumler and others added, according to this broad definition sarcasmos was not even a trope: sarcasmos could mean what it indelicately said'.

<sup>15</sup> Dilwyn Knox, *Ironia: Medieval and Renaissance ideas on irony*, cit., p. 172: 'Another late medieval etymology, apparently stemming from the late classical author Cassiodorus (c. 490-c. 583), suggested the term derived from the Greek *sarcos* (i.e., σάρξ, σάρκός) meaning 'flesh' and *mos* meaning 'mode' because sarcasmos was a "fleshy mode", that is, derision which "pierced flesh"'. .

<sup>16</sup> Vittorio Cian, *La satira*, cit., vol. 1, p. 75: 'In quel grande fervore di vita politica che contrassegna il Dugento italiano, tutte le armi erano buone [...] persino i versi in apparenza più innocui diventavano satire sospettate e quindi pericolose. Ad es., in Padova, durante la tirannide ezzeliniana, anche le favole di Esopo [...] acquistavano un significato di temeraria allegoria politica'. The practice was also adopted among others by Petrarch. Emanuela Scarpa, 'Machiavelli e la «neutralità» di F. Petrarca, *LI*, 27, 1975, no. 1, pp. 263-285 (p. 282, fn. 83): 'Si noti qui brevemente anche che la tecnica [...] di nominare stati e famiglie con il nome animalesco derivante dalle loro insegne, oltre che nella tradizione canterina (Pucci, Sacchetti, Pistoia, ecc.), si trova nella canzone *Spirto gentil* (LIII) al v. 71, dove, parlando di «Orsi, lupi, leoni, aquile et serpi», il poeta allude alle famiglie romane ostili ai Colonna'.

<sup>17</sup> In a poem addressed to Rosello Roselli, Burchiello criticizes him for not having learnt this particular technique. Antonio Lanza ed., *Lirici toscani del Quattrocento* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1973-1975), vol. 2, p. 453, lines 1-8:

Avendomi, Rosello; a torto offeso,  
qui t'ho risposto per le rime propi;



Numerous influences contributed to Pistoia's poetic outlook. Some of his turns of phrase are highly reminiscent of the works of the great thirteenth- and fourteenth-century authors, such as Cecco Angiolieri, Rustico di Filippo, Cecco Nuccoli, Pieraccio Tedaldi<sup>18</sup> and Dante, whose *Divine Comedy* with its powerful iconography provided a fundamental source; others are more difficult to identify, being subtly camouflaged and at times invisible to the eye of the twentieth-century reader, while some may have simply been part of every-day language to such an extent that it was difficult for Pistoia himself to be aware of their possible literary provenance.<sup>19</sup> By reading the *Canzoniere* one

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non bolle il sol sì sopra gli Etiopi  
com'io fo verso te coll'arco teso.

Tu non hai ben questo mestieri appreso  
con favole d'Ovidio e versi esopi,  
sicché convien che 'l mastro il cul ti scopi,  
avendo il tempo tuo sì male speso.

<sup>18</sup> Mario Marti, *Cultura e stile nei poeti giocosi del tempo di Dante*, cit., pp. 214-215: 'Ed il lessico, spruzzato di gergo, è sempre quello, la sintassi è quella di sempre; la tecnica del dialogato frequente e vivacissima; spassosa la contraffazione linguistica, ritornante l'onomatopea. Tutto il noto repertorio riconfluisce nel Cammelli; il Burchiello è il suo più vicino modello, e pure egli ha delle immagini, delle movenze, addirittura dei versi che sembrano tratti da Rustico, da Cecco, da Pieraccio'.

<sup>19</sup> A recent essay on book diffusion in fifteenth-century Italy by Attilio Bartoli Langeli and Mario Infelise, 'Il libro manoscritto e a stampa', *L'italiano nelle regioni: lingua nazionale e identità regionali*, edited by Francesco Bruni (Turin: UTET, 1992), pp. 941-977, expresses this succinctly, p. 949: 'Il libro faceva parte di un sistema comunicativo nel quale l'oralità dominava, sia in generale sia come modalità tipica di uso «popolare» del libro. S'intende sì la lettura vera e propria, individuale o collettiva che fosse; ma s'intendono soprattutto quelle pratiche formalizzate di comunicazione orale urbana (la *lectio* pubblica, la predica, la propaganda, la sacra rappresentazione, la *performance* del canterino) nelle quali il rapporto con i testi «letterari» - rievocati, ripetuti, storpiati - è strettissimo e vitale'.

conjures up an image of Pistoia as someone reasonably well-read, fairly familiar with the Bible, fourteenth-century vernacular literature, early and contemporary texts such as Aesop's fables in translation,<sup>20</sup> the *Morgante*<sup>21</sup> and Burchiello's poetic production.<sup>22</sup> In his verse mention is made of two Latin authors namely Priscian and Sallust, but this does not necessarily mean that our poet was acquainted with their works or rather with those circulating at the time. Nineteenth-century scholars have exaggerated the dependence of Pistoia's cultural background on a disparate variety of sources, especially direct classical ones. Pèrcopo in his biography asserted that Pistoia was familiar with a host of Greek and Latin authors from Aristotle and Plato to Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Catullus, Cicero, Caesar, Apuleius, Martial, Seneca and many others. It is unlikely that someone like him, being a tax collector and therefore not directly and professionally involved in literary debates of the time, had access to many Latin originals; it is more probable that like many other contemporaries he was acquainted with well-known

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<sup>20</sup> Franca Ageno, 'Tradizione favolistica e novellistica nella fraseologia proverbiale', *LI*, 8, 1956, no. 4, pp. 351-384 (pp. 377-379): 'Antonio Cammelli [...] ha tutto un repertorio favolistico, sia pure formato soprattutto (almeno bisogna dedurlo dalle citazioni esplicite) sull'Esopo medievale [...]. Perfino in certe espressioni (che non sono però proverbiali) è evidente l'influenza o la reminiscenza di singole favole'.

<sup>21</sup> Luigi Pulci, *Morgante e lettere*, edited by Domenico De Robertis (Florence: Sansoni, 1984).

<sup>22</sup> Although it is not possible to establish whether Pistoia borrowed some of the books belonging to the well-endowed library of Ercole I d'Este, it is documented from a list published by Giulio Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense e la coltura ferrarese ai tempi del Duca Ercole I (1471-1505)* (Turin: Loescher, 1903), p. 250, no. 451, that the collection included a book of Burchiello's listed under the letter 'S' as 'Sonitti del Burchiello coperto de brasilio stampato'.



*zibaldoni* which were very popular especially among representatives of the merchant classes.<sup>23</sup>

One of Pistoia's most significant links with his literary forebears is constituted by images and expressions recurrent in Sacchetti's *Trecentonovelle*. In the tale centred on Ferrantino degli Argenti da Spuleto the expression 'veggendo in possessione della carne cotta e della cruda'<sup>24</sup> is used by the Florentine story-teller to refer to the possessions of a priest, namely his food, 'la carne cotta', and his female servant, 'la carne cruda', both unlawfully enjoyed by Ferrantino. Another example of the contact area between Sacchetti and Pistoia is provided by the tale focused on Tommaso Baronci,<sup>25</sup> and Pistoia's opening line of the sonnet 'Che viso nato al tempo de' Baronci',<sup>26</sup> a poem directed against his rival Bellincioni. The contexts in which both authors mention the Baronci are similar in as far as both aim at mocking their characters respectively by playing a prank and writing a *contra* sonnet teeming with insults. It could also be asserted that the above expression was common knowledge, and part of everyday language, as the Baronci were famous for their ugliness and clumsiness; Boccaccio in the sixth tale of the sixth day of the *Decameron* had in fact already commented on their

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<sup>23</sup> The critical fortune and circulation of *zibaldoni* are illustrated by Giuliano Tanturli, 'I Benci copisti: vicende della cultura fiorentina volgare fra Antonio Pucci e il Ficino', *SFI*, 36, 1978, pp. 197-313.

<sup>24</sup> Franco Sacchetti, *Opere*, edited by Aldo Borlenghi (Milan: Rizzoli, 1957) pp. 136-144 (tale 34, pp. 140-141).

<sup>25</sup> Franco Sacchetti, *Opere*, cit., pp. 265-271, (tale 83, p. 265).

<sup>26</sup> Milan *Ambr*, MS H.223 inf., f. 72r (CXIV, p. 154).

deformity.<sup>27</sup> One may also put forward the hypothesis that the name Baronci had probably become a euphemism for sodomite. A certain Giuliano Baronci was in fact famous during the 1470s for being among the 'greatest sodomites in Florence' and therefore the name may have referred both to physical and moral ugliness alike.<sup>28</sup>

Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century vernacular *novellistica* had in many ways influenced jocular poetry. Boccaccio, Sacchetti, Gentile Sermini, Giovanni Sercambi, Masuccio Salernitano, and Sabadino degli Arienti made extensive use of *motti vituperosi e satirici*, bitter quips, *motti sentenziosi*, gnomic phrases, and *motti piacevoli*, pleasant common sayings, which were later employed by comic sonneteers because they were short, effective, rhythmical, hence easy to remember.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, cit., pp. 743-744: 'Voi dovete sapere che i Baronci furon fatti da Domenedio al tempo che Egli aveva cominciato d'apparare a dipignere, ma gli altri uomini furon fatti poscia che Domenedio seppe dipignere. [...] potrete vedere i Baronci qual col viso molto lungo e stretto, e quale averlo oltre a ogni convenienza largo, e tal v'è col naso molto lungo e tale l'ha corto, e alcuni col mento in fuori e in sú rivolto e con mascelloni che paion d'asino; ed èvvi tale che ha l'uno occhio piú grosso che l'altro, e ancora chi ha l'un piú giú che l'altro, sí come sogliono essere i visi che fanno da prima i fanciulli che apparano a disegnare'.

<sup>28</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships: homosexuality and male culture in Renaissance Florence* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 187: 'According to an informer in 1475, Piermatteo Sacchetti took a young cleric twice weekly to the meeting hall of his confraternity, San Zanobi, and sodomized him there; "it's a disgrace", he said, that Sacchetti and two of his *confratelli*, the apothecary Simone di Taddeo and Giuliano Baronci, "have made a brothel of that company, because they are the three greatest sodomites in Florence"'. From now on this text will be quoted as Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*.

<sup>29</sup> Francesco Di Capua, *Sentenze e proverbi nella tecnica oratoria e loro influenza sull'arte del periodare* (Naples: Libreria Scientifica Editrice, 1946), p. 46: 'Una sentenza, perchè entri nel patrimonio spirituale di un popolo e,



Another important genre which contributed to the spreading of anecdotes, many of them comic and licentious, and of witty sayings was the *facetia*, revived by the humanist Poggio Bracciolini in his *Liber facetiarum* composed around 1452,<sup>30</sup> but also actively pursued by characters like Piovano Arlotto.<sup>31</sup> Among the writers of the second half of the fifteenth century, both of them operating in northern Italy, mention must be made of Antonio Cornazano who wrote his *De Proverbiorum origine*<sup>32</sup> in

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acquistando il carattere di proverbio, diventi popolare, è necessario che alla bontà del contenuto morale unisca una forma ritmica, densa ed efficace, per mezzo della quale possa imporsi alla volontà e dominarla. È necessario che l'espressione venga chiusa in uno schema ritmico in modo che riesca agevole a pronunziarsi e facile a ritenersi a memoria. [...] È un ritmo particolare che non è quello poetico, ma ad esso affine'. It is likely that the poets themselves had recourse to word association and to mnemonic exercises as shown in the treatise of Michele di Nofri di Michele di Maso Del Giogante based on the mnemonic rules used by Nicolò Cieco from Florence. The treaty was edited by Felice Tocco, 'Un trattatello mnemonico di Michele del Giogante', *GSLI*, 32, 1898, pp. 327-354. The well known exercise, which goes back to classical sources, was based on the art of memory training through 'architectural principles'. This is succinctly explained by Ivan Illich, *In the vineyard of the text: a commentary to Hugh's Didascalicon* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 41: 'The one most common method used by the Greeks to achieve this purpose was the mental construction of a memory palace. [...] Each school had its own rules according to which this edifice had to be constructed. It had to contain several visually distinct classes of features such as columns, angles, rafters, rooms, archways, niches, and thresholds. Early on it was found that the most effective way for locating and retrieving memories was that of randomly affixing to each one a mental label from a large set familiar to the student. For example, to a goat or the sun, a branch or a knife, a sentence was attached for rote memorization'. See also Frances A. Yates, *The art of memory* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969).

<sup>30</sup> Poggio Bracciolini, *Facezie*, edited by Marcello Ciccuto (Milan: Rizzoli, 1983).

<sup>31</sup> [Arlotto Mainardi], *Motti e facezie del Piovano Arlotto*, edited by Gianfranco Folena (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1995 [reprint of the 1953 edition]).

<sup>32</sup> Antonio Cornazano, *De proverbiorum origine* (Milan: Pietro Martire Mantegazza, 1503).

1464 and later prepared a vernacular version of it,<sup>33</sup> and of Ludovico Carbone from Ferrara whose *Facezie*, probably composed between 1466 and 1471, were dedicated to Borso d'Este and enjoyed considerable success.<sup>34</sup> The much earlier *Disticha Catonis* were just as popular, as witnessed by the various translations into the vernacular both in prose and tercets of hendecasyllables since the second half of thirteenth century.<sup>35</sup>

#### 4.2 The Ambrosiana collection: an introduction.

The Ambrosiana manuscript<sup>36</sup> is the most extensive collection of Pistoia's works. It opens with a letter addressed to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga in which the poet, back from an imaginary journey to the underworld, briefly tells his interlocutor of his experience.<sup>37</sup> His descent into the *Inferno* has left him deeply shaken, his voice is trembling but he is determined to provide Isabella with a clear account of what he witnessed, 'questo mio anchora tremante parlare chiarir intendo'.<sup>38</sup> The journey is described in a dialogue in prose,

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<sup>33</sup> Antonio Cornazano, *Proverbi in facezie* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino & Vincenzo di Paolo, 1523).

<sup>34</sup> Ludovico Carbone, *Facezie e dialogo de la partita soa*, edited by Gino Ruoizzi (Bologna: Commissione per i Testi di Lingua, 1989).

<sup>35</sup> Paolo Roos, *Sentenza e proverbio nell'antichità e i 'Distichi di Catone'* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1984), pp. 232-244.

<sup>36</sup> Milan Ambr, MS H.223 inf. From now on I will only quote the pressmark followed by the relevant folios.

<sup>37</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 1r-v (pp. 3-4).

<sup>38</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 1r-v (p. 4).



reminiscent of classical accounts of the underworld,<sup>39</sup> and inevitably of Dante, taking place between the poet and fictional figures encountered in the Kingdom of Hell. These are Charon, the ferryman who takes the dead in his boat across the rivers Styx and Acheron, a courier by the name of Archidromo and Pluto, King of Hell. In their company, the poet discusses worldly vices and weaknesses, the frailty and deception of human life, the political and social situation of his time, his existence and the infernal sights. The author is depicted as a destitute old man in very poor health who, in his past, had poetic aspirations: 'poeta no(n) fui ma voglia ne hebbi'.<sup>40</sup> His fame as a Tuscan *morditore*<sup>41</sup> and of 'persona faceta',<sup>42</sup> jocular character, has, however, reached the infernal region.<sup>43</sup> The reputation of his 'facetie'<sup>44</sup> is well known to Proserpina, Queen of Hell and wife of her ravisher Pluto who, in his conversation with the poet, quotes the opening line of one of Pistoia's most popular sonnets, 'A Roma ch(e) si vende? Le parole',<sup>45</sup> an off-colour poem about ecclesiastical power. Halfway through the journey, the author

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<sup>39</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 1v-14r (pp. 5-46). Of the three major authors of the classical dialogue, Plato, Lucian and Cicero, it may be fair to say that it was the Greek satirist who mostly influenced Pistoia's work. Lucianic dialogues were in fact the most fictitious ones as well as pervaded by humour, satire and instruction.

<sup>40</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 6r (p. 18).

<sup>41</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 4v (pp. 13-14): 'mordendo questo, e quello'.

<sup>42</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 4v (p. 14).

<sup>43</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 4r-v (pp. 13-14).

<sup>44</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 4v (p. 14).

<sup>45</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 10v (p. 37).

hints for the first time at his attempt, prior to his descent into the abode of the dead, to group his poems for Isabella:

havendo confusamente raccolto alcune mie facetie, per farne dono alla figliuola del figliolo de Amphitrione,<sup>46</sup> congiunta col novo Apollo,<sup>47</sup> ch(e) impera la cittade la quale dalla figliola del vaticinatore Thiresia,<sup>48</sup> il suo primo nome tolse, no(n) ne havendo a satisfatione mia, promissegli in fra poco tempo in maggior som(m)a et più venusta forma presentargline.<sup>49</sup>

In view of this statement, Pluto allows the poet to go back to earth in order to let him fulfil his promise: 'io voio ch(e) satisfaci all'obligo ch(e) nel fronte hai scritto verso una gentile sig(nor)a'.<sup>50</sup> The dialogue ends with Pistoia leaving the underworld and presenting his collection of poems to his dedicatee:

perch(é) no(n) siano più promesse le mie parole, ecco la executione ch(e) cu(m) lo animo del tuo servo a tua S(igno)ria ne viene.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> That is Ercole I d'Este. Electryon, King of Argos, promised Amphitryon, a Theban Prince, his crown and daughter Alcmena if he succeeded in avenging the death of his sons killed by the Teleboans, a people of Aetolia. While Amphitryon was waging war on the Teleboans, Jupiter, who was captivated by Alcmena, decided to introduce himself into her bed. He impersonated Amphitryon and declared that he had obtained a victory over the Ae $\tilde{t}$ olians. As a result Alcmena became pregnant with Hercules.

<sup>47</sup> That is to say Francesco Gonzaga who is often described by Pistoia as Apollo in his verse.

<sup>48</sup> That is Mantua. Tiresias, a prophet of Thebes, fathered a daughter by the name of Manto who, like her father, was endowed with the gift of prophecy. Her son, Bianor, founded a town which he called Mantua in honour of his mother.

<sup>49</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 6r-v (p. 19).

<sup>50</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 11r (p. 37).

<sup>51</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 14r (p. 46).



However, it is documented from the Marchioness's correspondence<sup>52</sup> that Pistoia never achieved his goal and his promise was accomplished at fictional level only. At the same time, his intention of gathering his poems and of dedicating the collection to Isabella cannot be questioned in view of a letter dated 18th June 1499 wherein the poet promised Isabella that in a matter of weeks she would receive his book of poems.<sup>53</sup> If the author had fulfilled his promise at that time, Isabella would presumably have received a shorter version of the Ambrosiana collection, since it contains numerous sonnets referring to political events comprised between 1500 and 1501. The dialogue, which, like the letter, has exclusively survived in the Ambrosiana manuscript, was certainly written after 10th August 1500 and prior to 29th April 1502.<sup>54</sup> Among the souls encountered in his journey, the poet mentions Nicolò Lelio Cosmico who died on 28th June 1500 and Serafino Aquilano who died on 10th August of the same year. As to the *terminus ante quem*, the dialogue must have been penned before 29th April 1502, that is before the poet's death.

The dialogue is followed by a collection of 535 tailed

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<sup>52</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 20.10.1501-29.07.1502, Busta 2993, Registro 13, ff. 80v-81r, no. 216; Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 14.01.1511-02.02.1512, Busta 2996, Registro 29, f. 81r-v.

<sup>53</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Mantova, 1499, Busta 2453, f. 166r.

<sup>54</sup> The same *terminus post* and *ante quem* applies to the letter. The epistle, which is not a dedicatory letter as it is often described, introduces the dialogue and performs the function of the prologue. For this reason it is reasonable to argue that both the letter and the dialogue must have been penned at the same time.

sonnets of which 534<sup>55</sup> are ascribed to Pistoia and one is attributed to Nicolò Lelio Cosmico,<sup>56</sup> and it is concluded by the *disperata La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto.*<sup>57</sup> In view of its mixture of prose and verse, MS H.223 inf. may be described as a *zibaldone* composed of two main parts: the letter to Isabella, the dialogue and the *Canzoniere* comprise the first section, while the lament, which has no formal or thematic connections with the first part, constitutes the second and final one.

#### 4.3 The compilation of the *Canzoniere*.

If one accepts the hypothesis that the Ambrosiana collection also derives from an autograph of Pistoia, the following considerations can be made.

It was towards the end of his life that Pistoia faced a challenging and demanding task, that of grouping his scattered poems into a book. Famous for his remarkable skill at churning

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<sup>55</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 15r-210r, ff. 211r-215v, ff. 216v-283r (I-DXXXIII, pp. 47-586). The edition of the Ambrosiana manuscript prepared by Erasmo Pèrcopo lists 533 sonnets instead of 534. The editor rejected the sonnet 'Da Leon vengo e là si fa banchetto', transcribed on f. 215v, on the basis that it belonged to the pen of Andrea Michieli called Squarzòla or Strazzòla.

<sup>56</sup> The sonnet 'Pistoia il Gallo che stette gra(n) tempo', is transcribed on f. 216r and bears the heading 'Cosmico de MCCCCLXXXV'. The poem is also transcribed in Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.408, f. 85v. Therein the heading, which is partially legible, bears the name of Cosmico and the date of the year, 1495. The second tercet and the four tails are crossed out. The sonnet, which was edited for the first time in Antonio Cammelli, *Rime edite*, cit., pp. 21-22, was also published by Pèrcopo in his edition of the *Canzoniere* in the section 'Sonetti di altri autori di proposta o di risposta a sonetti del Pistoia' in Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, cit., pp. 598-599.

<sup>57</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 283v-288r.



out sonnets on any subject at a remarkable speed<sup>58</sup> Pistoia needed to organize hundreds of sonnets written on loose pieces of paper. The occasional nature of the majority of his sonnets allowed him one course of action only: the sonnets had to be arranged thematically. This implied that the author had to put a stop to his production in order to have the material laid out in front of his eyes ready to be sifted, grouped and organized into a corpus.<sup>59</sup> This time-honoured task, whose origins go back to classical antiquity, was only partially achieved and the result turned out to be unsystematic probably because the poet underestimated the time needed to revise and organize his vast and multifarious production.<sup>60</sup> Time was running short and the poet, consumed by syphilis, was aware of this. A sense of death does in fact hover over the collection. The opening paragraph of the letter to Isabella refers to the day in which the soul

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<sup>58</sup> His prodigious output was commented upon on the first quatrain of 'Di tutto quel che vedi fai sonetti', MS H.223 inf., f. 58r (LXXXVI, pp. 128-129):

Di tutto quel che vedi fai sonetti  
dice un ch'io taccio, anchor no(n) sei satollo  
se tu vedessi pur cacare un pollo  
o far questione insieme dui galletti.

It was summarized again with the line 'ad ogni hora del dì sputi un sonetto' both on f. 31v (XXXIII, pp. 76-77) and on f. 35v (XLI, p. 83).

<sup>59</sup> This partly explains why the physical act of collecting the sonnets had in a sense to take place at the very end of the poet's life and one may put forward the hypothesis that it most likely occurred between 1501 and the first months of 1502. This is backed by the presence in the *Canzoniere* of several political sonnets whose subject matter derives from historical events which took place in 1501.

<sup>60</sup> Nothing in the poet's private correspondence indicates that the author intended to publish his works or that he envisaged his collection in terms of a printed text.

departs from the body, 'quel'ultimo giorno nel quale l'anima dalla corporale sua vagina si parte', and the very first word of the same paragraph regards 'la fragilità de l'humana vita'.<sup>61</sup> In the opening sonnet there are several references to the approach of death, to lack of physical strength and to the poet's advanced stage of illness: 'e già serei al fin', 'onde usarò quanto in me resta forza', 'la mia debil vita', 'la bollata scorza'.<sup>62</sup> Further on the poet makes it clear that he is towards the end of his life: 'e perch(é) homai sonar sento compieta/e corro dietro alle vintiquattro hore' and once again 'nanti che 'l ferro la mia stopp\i/a mieta'.<sup>63</sup> An image of death opens the concluding sonnet, 'Ecco la morte', and the feeling that very little time remains is stressed again in the first line of the second quatrain, 'perch(é) del viver mio resta anchor poco'.<sup>64</sup>

As far as one can tell the compilation of the *Canzoniere* was unsolicited, it was an act of free will, a personal decision.<sup>65</sup> It was the poet, who in Isabella's words, 'se offerse et promise molte volte mettere insieme in una opera tutte le cose p(er) lui composte et intitularle a nui' but he had failed to do so 'p(er) non haverli servito il tempo'.<sup>66</sup> Death had prevented the poet

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<sup>61</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 1r (p. 3).

<sup>62</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 15r (I, p. 47).

<sup>63</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 43v (LVII, pp. 99-100).

<sup>64</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 283r (DXXXIII, p. 586).

<sup>65</sup> This does not exclude that some of the sonnets may have been commissioned.

<sup>66</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 20.10.1501-29.07.1502, Busta 2993, Registro 13, ff. 80v-81r, no. 216.



from presenting his dedicatee with the finished work but it had not thwarted the poet/compiler from arranging his sonnets into a book.<sup>67</sup>

#### 4.4 The macrotext and the microtexts.

The occasional nature of the production prevented the collection from having a unity, a story, a narrative. The sonnets or 'casualità episodiche', as Roberto Fedi aptly defined them,<sup>68</sup> were linked to historical, social and private events. This shaped the collection into a *Canzoniere ad occasionem*, and prevented the macrotext from having a plot, a movement. Pistoia's *Canzoniere* is not in fact a collection in the Petrarchan sense: it is not held together by a story and a sequence in which the sonnets alternate according to a planned succession. There is no progressive alternation of moods, no psychological development, no inner chronology and most of all no love story. Pistoia had no *senhal*, no *donna angelicata*, no Beatrice or Laura. The few 'love poems' present in the collection either lampoon rustics in

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<sup>67</sup> It is interesting to note that both the letter and the dialogue are without observations concerning the collection.

<sup>68</sup> Roberto Fedi, *La memoria della poesia: canzonieri, lirici e libri di rime nel Rinascimento* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1990), pp. 87-88: 'La lirica "toscana" del ferrarese - almeno per mestiere e adozione - Ariosto, così diversa da quella generosamente cittadina del Boiardo non a caso venuta alla stampa proprio allo spirare del secolo, sembra isolarsi, nella memoria dell'ambiente estense fra Quattrocento e Cinquecento, per alcuni suoi specifici caratteri distintivi, che ancora tengono dei modi tipici della scuola curtense, ma già sfiorano con decisione la motivazione più universalistica della poesia del nuovo secolo - e, in questo senso, essa lasciava intravedere in filigrana e già nel suo primo modularsi formale una traiettoria almeno potenzialmente aliena dalle casualità episodiche di un Tebaldeo o di un Cammelli, e ugualmente divergente dalle più invecchiate sequenze monotematiche e paratattiche di Giusto'.

love or are inspired by an unusual muse by the name of syphilis, 'il Petrarca cantò dolce d'amore/et io canto d'amore amaramente'.<sup>69</sup> The collection is wrapped in the present and it is often defined in terms of time and space.<sup>70</sup> The past and memory are disregarded, carefully kept at bay and although the sonnets cover a sixteen-year span starting at least from 1485, but probably even earlier than that, up to 1501, there is no passing of time, everything is happening now.<sup>71</sup> The effect is easily achieved through the use of dialogue, linguistic colouring, numerous references to anecdotes, historical and factual events and a direct emphasis on the relationship between the poet and the characters inhabiting his sonnets.

The collection, which despite the presence of a sonnet by Cosmico can be regarded as a *Canzoniere d'autore*, does not have a structure, it is not divided into books in which poems of

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<sup>69</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 128v (CCXXVII, pp. 265-266).

<sup>70</sup> Both the biographical and political sonnets contain numerous topographical elements. Here I shall only indicate a few: MS H.223 inf., f. 17r (V, pp. 50-51) 'quando la Lombardia mi fu palese/passata Secchia ch(e) è nel modenese'; f. 53v (LXXVII, pp. 120-121) 'fugir l'acqua a Corregio quando piove'; f. 68v (CVII, pp. 146-147) 'la gran comunità di Nuvolarà'; f. 116r (CCII, pp. 241-242) 'su 'n un targon l'altr'hier dentro a Bologna'; f. 122v (CCXV, pp. 254-255) 'io vedo Reggio e tu Fabrico vede [sic]'; f. 159v (CCLXXXIX, pp. 325-326) 'cerchiamo in ogni canto/l'heremo in Casentin Poppi e Bibiena/vedemo dove dorme e veggia Siena'.

<sup>71</sup> The poet refers to dates through historical events as well as quoting the actual date: MS H.223 inf., f. 49v (LXIX, p. 112) 'nanti che Marco in qua movesse il pe''; f. 109v (CLXXXIX, pp. 229-230) 'che 'l Duca de Orliens è in genoese'; f. 221v (CCCCX, pp. 447-448) 'non passa il mille quattro nove e nove'; f. 225v (CCCCXVIII, pp. 456-457) 'del mille quattrocen quatro e nonanta'; f. 231v (CCCCXXX, pp. 470-471) 'correa in decembre quando fu l'entrata/novantaquatro a giorni vintinove'; f. 249v (CCCCLXVI, pp. 510-511) 'pel cinquecento fa il no\n/antanove' etc. Many non-political sonnets alike contain historical, social and biographical references which can help us to date them.



different styles alternate throughout the collection.<sup>72</sup> Even the *sonettus consuetus*, that is the standard fourteen-line sonnet, is banned from the *corpus*. All poems are *caudati*, tailed; the length of the *coda* is the only stylistic variation, apart from rhyme combinations: it may go from a minimum of one to a maximum of four tails. On a thematic level, the situation is reversed: the collection offers a great variety of themes from encomiastic, historical, jocular, to satirical, elegiacal and gnomic verse. The author sang of religious and political matters, poetry and poets, sexual matters, his own life and the customs, attitudes and preoccupations of his age. He penned lubricious, cryptic, satirical as well as misogynous, Burchiellesque, *in risposta*, *in morte* and *contra* sonnets. Thematic heterogeneousness versus stylistic unity: these are the two main features. Lack of structure but plenty of freedom for the readers: Pistoia's *Canzoniere* does not impose an obligatory reading path, all routes seem to be allowed. The only restrictions are imposed on the first, second and last sonnets and on some thematic groups as they may have an internal structure. However each group remains independent and this means that the reader can choose which one to read first or last.

The poems, that is the microtexts, are single autonomous

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<sup>72</sup> Although very rare, there were also collections of lofty, proper love poems, like for example those by Antonio Romanello and by Giovanni A. De Petrucci, the Count of Policastro, which did not follow the Petrarchan fashion of mixing various stylistic registers. The work by Antonio Romanello, *Rithmorum vulgarium* (Verona: Giovanni & Alberto Alvisè, [1480?]) contains twenty-three love poems preceded by an introductory sonnet and concluded by a love dialogue. A manuscript listing eighty-three sonnets and a few letters by the Count of Policastro was edited and published under the title *Sonecti* by Jules Le Coultre and Victor Schultze (Bologna: Romagnoli, 1879).

units. These are often gathered in clusters of a minimum of two to a maximum of 103 poems. Within a group, the sonnets are at times ordered with a view to shaping a fully-developed mini-story. The groups, however, are separate and independent, they are not linked by a dynamic progression and they are not balanced either numerically or structurally. The positions of both single-compartment sonnets, that is poems which stand on their own, and thematic groups, that is sonnets brought together in view of their theme, are interchangeable. This is possible because both single-compartment sonnets and thematic groups are not linked by a sequence or by a formal structure. They are not organized according to an inner logic of progression and concatenation to express a global message with the only exception of the first, second and last sonnets. This is in part an indication of the concern the author felt with regard to the overall structure of the sequence,<sup>73</sup> but the occasional nature of the sonnets prevented the *Canzoniere* from having an internal narrative.

#### 4.5 The poet's view: reading instructions and directions for use.

*Sonetti*,<sup>74</sup> *versi*,<sup>75</sup> *rime*,<sup>76</sup> *frittelle*,<sup>77</sup> *ciance*<sup>78</sup> and *soie*,<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> This is further backed by the position of the letter to Isabella and of the dialogue. Adrienne Laskier Martín in her book *Cervantes and the burlesque sonnet* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; Oxford: University of California Press, 1991) states, rather daringly, that Pistoia's *Canzoniere* 'was the first conscious attempt to produce a book composed solely of burlesque sonnets'.

<sup>74</sup> The word is employed in several instances: MS H.223 inf., f. 109r (CLXXXVIII, p. 228) 'togli questo sonetto a tutti i modi'; f. 110r (CXC, pp. 230-231) 'tanti sonetti tanti bolettini'; f. 112v (CXCv, pp. 234-235) 'per presentarti un sacco de sonetti'; f. 123v (CCXVII, pp. 256-257) 'lui gli dà inchiostro sonetti e parole'; f. 125r (CCXX, p. 259) 'ognun mi dice pur fami un sonetto'; f. 126v (CCXXIII, pp. 261-262) 'che ti manda il sonetto è tuo prigionio'; f. 129v (CCXXIX, pp. 267-268) 'che 'l



trifles, amusing remarks of no consequence, *facetie*,<sup>80</sup> jocular, flippant remarks but most of all *frasche*:<sup>81</sup> nonsense talk,

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diavol te ne porti e tua [sic] sonetti'; f. 172r (CCCXIV, pp. 348-349) 'che un dî tu me rimandi in un sonetto'; f. 191v (CCCLIII, pp. 384-385) 'mai più in tua laude io no(n) farò sonetto'; f. 197v (CCCLXV, pp. 395-396) 'perché? per un sonetto fatto adesso'; f. 199r (CCCLXVIII, pp. 398-399) 'gli altri fanno gra(n) sonni, io fo sonnetti'; f. 210r (CCCXC, p. 425) 'in un altro sonnetto ho detto a voi'; f. 283r (DXXXIII, p. 586) 'ecco la morte i miei sonnetti al foco'.

<sup>75</sup> The term appears in the following instances: MS H.223 inf., f. 125r (CCXX, p. 259) 'come s'io havessi i versi 'n un sacchetto'; f. 283r (DXXXIII, p. 586) 'gli altri versi d'amor sian posti in sale'.

<sup>76</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 147v (CCLXV, pp. 304-305) 'queste mie rime sdrucchiole'; f. 282v (DXXXII, p. 585) 'per questa rima sdrucchiola'.

<sup>77</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 104v (CLXXIX, pp. 216-217) 'io te rimando sedeci fritelle'.

<sup>78</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 109v (CLXXXIX, pp. 229-230) 'e votarte de ciance un pien sachetto'.

<sup>79</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 104v (CLXXIX, pp. 216-217) 'et io alla lombarda qualche soia'; f. 112v (CXCXV, pp. 234-235), 'de gli altri un'altra soia'. The term, originally used in the expression 'dare la soia', to flatter someone, also meant pranks, practical jokes. Both meanings were employed by Pietro Aretino in *Sei giornate*, edited by Giovanni Aquilecchia (Bari: Laterza, 1969), p. 168: 'Adulazione e finzione son la pincia dei grandi: così si dice; e perciò sbalestra la soia con tali, se vuoi carpirne qualche cosa'; p. 306: 'adunque io sono uomo da soie, ah?'; p. 331: 'Pur, chi scampa da una scampa da cento: e perciò la soia si convertì in risa'.

<sup>80</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 36r (XLII, pp. 84-85) 'ch'ogni facetia mia in versi sona'.

<sup>81</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 15r (I, p. 47) 'rinchiusa fra due asse ogni mia frasca'; f. 15v (II, p. 48) '(un giardino) cinto intorno di frasche e non di mura'; f. 17v (VI, pp. 51-52) 'ognun vuol piantar frasche come il sole'. The term also referred, and it still does, to twigs, slender shoots of trees, shrubs and bushes. The poet used it in this way in the following instances: f. 28r (XXVII, pp. 69-70) 'biancho sopra le frasche in gelatina'; f. 105v (CLXXXI, pp. 221-222) 'né vengo più che uccel chiamato in frasca'; f. 165r (CCC, p. 336) 'fra le frasche rapresa la gioncata'. The term was also widely used to mean practical jokes. It is very often found in the *novellistica* and especially in Sacchetti's *Trecentonovelle in Opere*, cit., p. 166 (tale 43):

quips, pranks, mischievous tricks. This is how the poet perceived his sonnets, the activity of writing poetry, 'hor su mandami in frasca',<sup>82</sup> and the ceremony of being crowned poet, 'se chi è di questa frasca incoronato/è bon poeta [...]'.<sup>83</sup> Books were 'infrascat[i] di sonetti',<sup>84</sup> *frasche* were exchanged between friends<sup>85</sup> and directed against fellow poets; they were the perfect means of expressing sarcasm, a fleshy mode, to accomplish the task of *morditore*, that is detractor. Pistoia's sonnets were biting remarks of a facetious nature often characterized by an odd destiny: they ended up in 'monte rotondo',<sup>86</sup> in 'culiseo'<sup>87</sup> so as to be given the official seal of approval 'dove alle volte si spregna un cristeo';<sup>88</sup> they are described as 'bone per quei che si purgano al bagno',<sup>89</sup> 'da fa l'officio ove il pasto si

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'Meglio s'avvide degli atti, che gli Aretini faceano contra a lui, uno cavaliere [...] che nel principio del suo officio al giuramento tagliò la via a chi avesse animo d'appiccare orinali e o fare simili frasche' and again p. 335 (tale 104): 'E si conviene molte volte dare inframesse di frasconi, e mostrare di nuove novelle, nate da nuovi uomeni, come erano queste. E benché nel primo dire paiano frasche e bugie, nell'effetto son pur vere, e la novità degli uomini si truova di molti modi, i quali il più delle volte sono veri, e non paiano'.

<sup>82</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 43v (LVII, pp. 99-100).

<sup>83</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 162r (CCXCIV, pp. 330-331).

<sup>84</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 136v (CCLXIII, pp. 282-283).

<sup>85</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 136r (CCXLII, pp. 281-282) 'de ricoprirti cu(m) qualche mia frasca'.

<sup>86</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 45r (LX, p. 102).

<sup>87</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 45r (LX, p. 102).

<sup>88</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 45r (LX, p. 102).

<sup>89</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 136r (CCXLII, pp. 281-282).



sbotta',<sup>90</sup> 'tanti sonetti tanti bolettini/che per mancar non era a culi strame'.<sup>91</sup> However in a letter to Isabella, Pistoia defined his poems in a more orthodox way and precisely as 'sonetti faceti'.<sup>92</sup> Whether he referred to them in a more or less irreverent fashion, he never regarded them as accomplished works of poetry with a sophisticated role to play. Their aim was simply to amuse and to provide entertainment. 'D'ogni opra mia si faccia un carnevale', this was the poet's last wish: merrymaking and feasting were the best way to celebrate and enjoy his poetic work.<sup>93</sup>

The letter which the author sent to Isabella in 1499 contains an interesting paragraph on when and where to read his 'opera solazevole', as the poet defined it:

questa basti p(er) leggerla tal volta la Ecxillentia [sic] vostra in villa p(er) fuggire e p(er) il troppo caldo o p(er) le noiose piogge lo otio.<sup>94</sup>

The work was meant to be read every now and then, at intervals, 'tal volta' therefore stressing once again the occasional nature of the *Canzoniere* and its lack of narrative. It was and it still is the best way to enjoy it: a few sonnets or a group of them at a time. The work is not suited to prolonged reading: the poet knew it and advised his readers accordingly. The main

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<sup>90</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 136r (CCXLII, pp. 281-282).

<sup>91</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 110r (CXC, pp. 230-231)

<sup>92</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Mantova, 1499, Busta 2453, f. 166r.

<sup>93</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 283r (DXXXIII, p. 586).

<sup>94</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Mantova, 1499, Busta 2453, f. 166r.

characteristic of the collection is functional and not didactic: 'fuggire [...] lo otio', a concept which resurfaces in the first quatrain of the concluding poem: '[i.e. i sonetti] stiano per fugir otio fermi in gioco'.<sup>95</sup> The aim of the *Canzoniere* is to entertain the reader during the sultriest hours of the day or when the rain pours down, that is when outdoor activities have lost their appeal. The author did not advise Isabella on whether to read the sonnets aloud or to herself alone in her *studiolo* or in the company of her jesters, courtiers and ladies in waiting. This type of instructions was highly redundant and certainly inappropriate. The sonnets were of course to be read aloud to get the best out of their phonic qualities. The occasional nature of the sonnets involved more than one interlocutor at a time and this is the reason why the poems were not tailored to be read in solitude: studded with cross-references, names and events, even then they demanded a large audience, belonging to different social classes, milieux and geographical provenance in order to unlock their actual significance. Language was keyed to the occasion: obscure details, cryptic allusions, indirect references, word plays needed more than one 'decoder' to yield insight into their meaning.

#### 4.6 The opening and concluding sonnets.

The opening sonnet of the collection is, in actual fact, the concluding poem of the prose introduction:

Madonna poiché dal regno di Pluto  
ritornò il spirito alla terrestre spoglia,

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<sup>95</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 283r (DXXXIII, p. 586).



ben che osservar quel ch'io prometto soglia  
pur vo' ubidir quanto in precetto ho havuto.

E già serei al fin, ma son tenuto  
da una dignità contra mia voglia,  
la qual possedo cu(m) sì extrema doglia,  
che fa s'io vo che 'l par ch'io sia venuto.

Onde usarò quanto in me resta forza,  
che sol per questo la mia debil vita  
ritien di vivo la bollata scorza.

E se quel masso bel di marcasita  
che a partirmi di qua spesso mi sforza  
per me no(n) si tramuti in calamita,

forse verde e fiorita  
harai da me prima che maggio nasca  
rinchiusa fra due asse ogni mia frasca.<sup>96</sup>

The sonnet which, like the letter, addresses 'Madonna', that is Isabella, is the continuation and the conclusion in verse of the epistle and the dialogue in prose: the poet, back from the Kingdom of Pluto, tells Isabella that she will be presented with a book containing his sonnets before the beginning of May.<sup>97</sup> The poem, which was created *ad hoc* for the compilation of the *Canzoniere*, served the purpose of establishing contact between the author and his official/ideal reader Isabella. Its three elements - that is the addressee, the sender, and the message - make the sonnet stand out from all the others and render its position the only one possible in the entire *Canzoniere*. The same applies to the following poem because, although it ranks second,

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<sup>96</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 15r (I, p. 47).

<sup>97</sup> It is difficult to establish whether the poet referred to May 1501 or to May 1502. From a letter by Isabella to Nicolò Correggio dated 13th June 1502, one learns that Pistoia had not fulfilled his promise or better his numerous promises of presenting the Marchioness with his *Canzoniere* for the simple reason that he had died before being able to do so. Consequently May 1502 would seem a more likely date but there is no further evidence to substantiate this hypothesis.

it is the real opening sonnet of the collection; it puts the *Canzoniere* into perspective and it establishes the general atmosphere:

Nel tempo che 'l cervel regna in verdura  
e il miglior pasto al falcon peregrino,  
termino, pianto, incalmo un mio giardino  
cinto intorno di frasche e non di mura.

Piantol di frutti che pò dar natura:  
nel mezzo il moro alla palma vicino,  
salvia ci metto assentio et rosmarino  
poi sotto il lauro un fonte d'aqua pura.

A nome di qualchuno ogni herba pianto  
chi crede che per lui sia qua l'ortica  
lascila stare, o s'armi ben d'un guanto.

Tolga la rosa ognun per men fatica  
e poi lasciata la spina da canto  
l'herba che pare al gusto suo più amica.

Qui serà d'ogni spica  
pur se alcun ci vedesse del suo grano,  
diami una accusa e tenghi a sè la mano.<sup>98</sup>

As in the Provençal and Sicilian lyrics, nature and springtime offer the backdrop against which the author describes his plan of action, although in the present case, the poet is no lover and his intentions are not amorous. The *Canzoniere* is compared to a garden and like a gardener who defines the boundaries of a space to be cultivated, plants seeds, roots and cuttings and unites shoots and buds with growing plants, 'termin[a], piant[a], incalm[a]', the poet sets his poetic choices, pens verse, borrows and transforms other poets' works into something new by mixing words, sounds, rhymes, rhetorical devices and grammatical structures. The garden-*Canzoniere* is 'cinto intorno di frasche e non di mura', it is surrounded by unusual twigs, that is jokes

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<sup>98</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 15v (II, p. 48).



and nonsense. The *frasche*, which are written with a specific addressee in mind or on behalf of someone else<sup>99</sup> possibly upon commission, 'a nome di qualchuno ogni herba pianto', are of a caustic and pungent nature, 'chi crede che per lui sia qua l'ortica/lascila stare, o s'armi ben d'un guanto'. Like a gardener who selects which seeds and roots to plant, advises against handling certain flowers because of unpleasant effects they may have on the skin, and suggests picking harmless ones, the poet warns his readers about the pungent nature of some of his sonnets and advises them to select more agreeable ones. Readers are admonished and those who think that they may be the targets of the poet's bitter quips are advised either to abstain from retaliating or to be prepared to bear the brunt. The warning also tells us something about Pistoia's perception of himself as a poet. By declaring that his sonnets are of a derisive nature, Pistoia places his choices in a precise category and automatically defines his role in poetry. A remark on the multifarious thematic nature of the collection, 'qui serà d'ogni spica', and an apology for having plundered other authors' works, 'pur se alcun ci vedesse del suo grano/diami una accusa e tenghi a sè la mano', conclude the poem.

Accusations, caustic remarks, biting quips: this was a game

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<sup>99</sup> In both instances the biographical elements are altered to a smaller or larger degree in the process of transporting them to a literary level in a frame responding to a pre-established set of rules. Fiction and reality were brought constantly together along those lines as Mario Marti pointed out in *Con Dante fra i poeti del suo tempo* (Lecce: Milella, 1966), p. 140: 'Che siffatta poesia possa assumere addirittura valore di documento non è da escludere in particolari casi da accertarsi singolarmente; ma bisognerà non dimenticare mai che anche la versificazione «comica» è sempre di natura letteraria e non esita a ripetere addirittura dei tradizionali *loci communes*'.

of tit for tat and sooner or later Pistoia was bound to get his comeuppance, that is a taste of the unpleasant experience of being bitten. In his sonnets he did complain about the sharpness and pungency of his enemies' attacks, lamenting the acrimony of the tirade.<sup>100</sup> The poet knew that his *Canzoniere* would give him lasting renown as a *morditore* and this meant that even after his death he would be the butt of scathing derision and violent attacks. He therefore entrusted his Lord and patron Nicolò Correggio, his close friends Gianfrancesco Gianninello, Girolamo Casio, Paride da Ceresara and Lelio Manfredi with the task of apologizing on his behalf but mostly of defending his memory with more biting sonnets, and even with fist fights against potential attacks from ruthless slanderers:

Ecco la morte i mei sonnetti al foco,  
 gli altri versi d'amor sian posti in sale  
 pur se gli è alcu(n) faceto o alcu(n) morale  
 stiano per fugir otio fermi in gioco.

Perch(é) del viver mio resta anchor poco  
 d'ogni opra mia si faccia un carnevale,  
 ch(e) quando un pezzo l'homo ha fatto male  
 e pur bon ravedersi a t(em)po e a loco.

Lascio il Corregigio [sic] mio ch'è la mia musa  
 per quei ch(e) in tumult mi daran libello,  
 ottimo ostacul contro a chi m'accusa.

E lascio Gianfrancesco Gianninello,  
 Hieronimo da Casi a far mia scusa  
 e a Mantua Paris col dir raro e bello.

A Correggio un fratello

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<sup>100</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 58r (LXXXVI, pp. 128-129) 'non ti meravigliar s'io poco rido/che l'ofesa a chi tocca troppo dole'. Carmelo Previtera, *La poesia giocosa e l'umorismo* (Milan: Vallardi, 1953<sup>2</sup>), p. 284: 'Anche tenendo presente che tali baruffe in rima, a base di cattive parole e di violenza plebea, erano cose lecite fra i poeti del tempo e spesso veri giochi letterari, tuttavia rimane sempre l'impressione d'un uomo tenuto in ispregio'.



Lelio Manfredi contro a q(ue)sti cani,  
ch(e) la farà con versi e con le mani.<sup>101</sup>

The boundaries of Pistoia's poetic choices are set: the gardener has carefully demarcated his space even for the future.

#### 4.7 The *Canzoniere*: from macrotext to microtexts in search of a structure.

The Ambrosiana collection is constituted by single-compartment sonnets and groups of poems. The following pages illustrate an attempt to see how far the poems are arranged by themes. I first divided the *Canzoniere* into numerical sections. The original idea was to have a fixed number of sonnets in each one but this did not prove practical because it affected the unity of some thematic groups. The sections are therefore numerically different although I tried to keep them fairly balanced. I consequently ended up with eleven sections and I indicated each one with a letter from A to K. I primarily singled out ten main thematic categories namely poetry, politics, autobiography,<sup>102</sup> contra sonnets,<sup>103</sup> miscellany,<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 283r (DXXXIII, p. 586).

<sup>102</sup> The category 'autobiography' functions as an umbrella under which I grouped sonnets dealing with a number of issues relating to the poet's life (his physical aspect, health, finance, family and relatives, friends and lovers, social outings, his relationship with his Lords and patrons, etc.). This was necessary for the present exercise as it made the whole *Canzoniere* more compact.

<sup>103</sup> This category includes a variety of contra sonnets: there are poems against a host of anonymous people, inhabitants of different regions, Venetians, Reggiani and Ferraresi, a number of professions, craftsmen, soldiers, civil servants, treasurers and lawyers, courtiers and poets, rustics, women, priests, friars and popes, rulers and popular governments.

lubricity,<sup>105</sup> religious parody, caricatures, Burchiellesque and *in morte* sonnets plus one poem *in risposta* by Cosmico. It must be borne in mind that a sonnet may touch more than one theme and therefore it may belong to more than one category; however for the purpose of the present exercise it was necessary to choose one category only. The results are as follows. Section A, which includes the first fifty-three sonnets,<sup>106</sup> is organized into single sonnets and thematic groups. The poems deal with six themes arranged in a successions of poetic, autobiographical, Burchiellesque, lubricious and *contra* sonnets.<sup>107</sup> The first section is characterized by a formal pattern (a structured thematic sequence) cemented together by the autobiographical element. Thanks to his thematic choices, the poet accomplished three tasks: he introduced the reader to his collection through those poems dealing with poetry, to his life thanks to the autobiographical sonnets<sup>108</sup> and to his poetic stance by

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<sup>104</sup> Under this section I grouped those poems relating to a variety of matters (for example verse concerning the city of Milan and Reggio Emilia, unhappily married women, prostitutes and panders, jousts, inn-keepers, drinking booths, noble ladies, fops etc.).

<sup>105</sup> The poems grouped under this category are of a lascivious nature; they focus on heterosexual and homosexual intercourse, fights between the female and male sexual organs and sodomy.

<sup>106</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 15r-41v (I-LIII, pp. 47-96).

<sup>107</sup> The precise sequence is: poetry (3), autobiography (2), poetry (1), Burchiellesque sonnets (1), lubricity (11), autobiography (4), lubricity (1), *contra* sonnets (1), lubricity (2), autobiography (5), *contra* sonnets (1), caricatures (9) and autobiography (12). The Arabic number in parentheses refers to the amount of sonnets present in each section.

<sup>108</sup> The first two autobiographical sonnets respectively deal with the author's departure from Pistoia, and his arrival in Lombardy.



including *contra*, Burchiellesque, licentious and grotesque sonnets which are the hallmarks of comic sonneteers. Section B, comprising forty-nine poems,<sup>109</sup> has a predominance of single-compartment sonnets and thematic groups mostly constituted by two poems.<sup>110</sup> This may be due to the introduction of two new themes that is religious parody and eulogistic verse as well as to the retention of four of the previous six categories. Most sonnets are arranged in a thematic succession: for example in the first part of B *contra* and autobiographical sonnets alternate with poems dealing with the theme of poetry. Thematic groups are composed of a minimum of five to a maximum of twelve sonnets. The autobiographical element is still pervasive although the theme which has the highest number of sonnets is religious parody. The presence of *contra* poems is definitely much more prominent (two sonnets in A compared to eight in B) to the point of becoming dominant in C where fifty-two poems out of sixty-three are penned against someone or something. The section<sup>111</sup> does in fact open and end with a *contra* sonnet and *contra* groups alternate with verse dealing with marriage, poetry, contemporary figures as well as with clusters of further *contra* sonnets (for example three poems directed against Giovanni Battista Refrigerio are followed

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<sup>109</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 42r-66r (LIV-CII, pp. 96-142).

<sup>110</sup> The sonnets are organised as follows: *contra* poems (2), autobiography (1), poetry (1), autobiography (2), poetry (1), religious parody (5), poetry (1), miscellany (1), *contra* sonnets (1), miscellany (1), *contra* sonnets (3), autobiography (10), *contra* sonnets (1), lubricity (2), *contra* sonnets (1), autobiography (2), miscellany (1), *in morte* sonnets (1) and religious parody (12).

<sup>111</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 66v-97v (CIII-CLXV, pp. 142-203).

by nineteen sonnets penned against Bellincioni).<sup>112</sup> The backbones of *D*,<sup>113</sup> *E*<sup>114</sup> and *F*<sup>115</sup> present several similarities: an extensive variety of themes, (each section has a good percentage of miscellaneous sonnets: ten in *D*, twelve in *E* and five in *F*), a very strong presence of single-compartment poems and two-sonnet groups, (therefore the thematic succession is highly fragmentary and the themes are all mixed together), one major group in each section (a cluster of four miscellaneous poems in *D*, and two groups of nine and five autobiographical sonnets in *E* and *F* respectively), the prominence of the personal element (fifteen sonnets in *D*, twenty-eight in *E* and twenty-six in *F*), and the lack of pattern within each section. A sequence of twenty-one Burchiellesque sonnets and six poems dealing with the poet's finances characterize section *G*.<sup>116</sup> Thematically speaking the sequence has no pattern, it is a succession of

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<sup>112</sup> Section *C* is organised in the following manner: contra sonnets (1), miscellany (1), contra sonnets (1), poetry (1), religious parody (1), contra sonnets (22), *in morte* sonnets (1), contra sonnets (5), caricature (1), contra sonnets (7), *in morte* sonnets (5), contra sonnets (7), miscellany (1) and contra poems (9).

<sup>113</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 98r-118r (CLXVI-CCVI, pp. 203-246). The themes are: autobiography (15), miscellany (10), contra sonnets (8), lubricity (5), caricatures (2) and politics (1).

<sup>114</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 118v-143r (CCVII-CCLVI, pp. 246-296). The subject matters are: autobiography (28), miscellany (12), contra sonnets (2), Burchiellesque (2) and *in morte* poems (2), lubricity (1), caricatures (1), poetry (1) and religious parody (1).

<sup>115</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 143v-165v (CCLVII-CCCI, pp. 296-337). The issues are: autobiography (26), contra sonnets (10), miscellany (5), Burchiellesque sonnets (2), lubricity (1) and religious parody (1).

<sup>116</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 166r-190v (CCCII-CCCLI, pp. 337-383). The topics are: Burchiellesque sonnets (22), autobiography (19), miscellany (4), contra poems (4) and lubricity (1).



single units, although, once again, the autobiographical element ranks high with nineteen poems. Section H<sup>117</sup> can be described as a turning point: it maintains the miscellaneous element (five sonnets), it reduces the number of autobiographical sonnets (eight only), which had been the prominent feature of the *Canzoniere*, but it introduces the other major theme of the collection, that is politics. The section is characterized by a much higher percentage of sonnets with an external, social focus dealing with matters not strictly connected with the poet's life: the attention has therefore shifted from an interior space towards an external, public one. The succession of the sonnets has no structure: single-compartment poems and two-sonnet groups alternate without shaping a pattern while the two groups of political sonnets are divided by a miscellaneous poem. With sections I,<sup>118</sup> J,<sup>119</sup> and K<sup>120</sup> the *Canzoniere* has now fully entered the political space and it speaks of the drums of war. Its frame is occupied by a public persona although the author has not lost his capacity to quarrel, instruct, implore and deride. The sections could be defined as a collection within the collection, a non-stop sequence of political sonnets arranged by theme and in some cases by chronological order. Section I and J include fifty-one and fifty political sonnets respectively, while

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<sup>117</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 191r-216r (CCCLII-CCCXCIX, pp. 383-436). The issues are: politics (30), autobiography (8), miscellany (5), contra poems (3), lubricity (2), religious parody (1) plus one sonnet by Cosmico.

<sup>118</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 216v-241v (CCCC-CCCCL, pp. 436-494).

<sup>119</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 242r-266v (CCCCLI-D, pp. 494-549).

<sup>120</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 267r-283r (DI-DXXXIII, pp. 549-586).

K's twenty-eight political poems are followed by one autobiographical poem, a miscellaneous and two Burchiellesque sonnets all of them crowned by the concluding poem of the *Canzoniere*, which is highly autobiographical in tone. The collection can therefore be summarized as follows: sections A and B are characterized by a thematic succession, C by one major theme, D, E and F have a highly fragmentary structure, G has one major theme, H is a turning point, and I, J and K constitute a collection apart, the political *Canzoniere*.

Pistoia's book of poems is a kaleidoscope which produces random and at times regular patterns according to the way it is viewed. At macrotextual level it lacks unity, it is disjointed and stripped of narrative. Any analysis aimed at finding a structure, an interdependence between the microtexts and the macrotext is bound to fail: the mechanism relies on the autonomy of the single sonnets and of the groups alike. The occasional nature of the production is in direct relationship with its final product, the *Canzoniere*: its discontinuity affects the macrotext and the microtexts alike. Stylistically the collection is uniform and thematically it is faceted. It is a private and public record of historical and personal experiences, a public projection of an intimate diary and a personal comment on public events. It is an outward as well as an inward-looking *Canzoniere*. At microtextual level, the book is made up of single units, groups of disconnected short stories. Thematic and formal elements are not supported either by internal rules or by external ideological models. The *Canzoniere* is not linked to a particular milieu or a precise occasion. It is neither an off-shoot of the court nor



is it put together for the court milieu and its denizens. Its variety of themes calls for a wider audience than that of the court. It is an unusual, eccentric collection though its eccentricity should not come as a surprise. Pistoia was a tax collector, he was neither a courtier nor a professional man of letters; at court he was perceived as an outsider:<sup>121</sup> he was an outcast and his *Canzoniere* was a misfit. If one compares his collection with those by contemporary poets like Bellincioni,<sup>122</sup> Visconti,<sup>123</sup> Tebaldeo<sup>124</sup> and Cosmico, just to mention a few, no stylistic and usually no thematic common ground can be found

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<sup>121</sup> This can be evinced by the extant documentation as well as by some of Pistoia's lines, MS H.223 inf., f. 118v (CCVII, pp. 246-247) 'per esser quasi a ciascuno in oblio/tutta la corte s'è maravigliata'.

<sup>122</sup> Although it has often been suggested that Pistoia's *Canzoniere* shared a number of similarities with Bellincioni's *Rime* this is not really the case. His collection included a variety of stylistic registers and proper love poems. The sonnets were arranged by Francesco Tanzi who described his task in the introductory letter to Ludovico Sforza, the dedicatee of the collection. Bernardo Bellincioni, *Le rime di Bernardo Bellincioni*, cit., pp. 6-7: 'Essendo morto il predicto Belinzone senza avere misso per ordine alcuna delle sue rime, con grandissima instantia mi impose che io insieme le riducesse. [...] Veramente da hom di magior giudicio che da me era questa impresa [...] ma per che [sic] già son molti anni che converso di continuo con il prefato nostro poeta Belinzone, più facilmente ho possuto cognoscere la intentione sua. Et ben che questa cosa mi sia stata asai difficile et laboriosa, per aver trovato, come ho predicto, queste rime molto confuse, senza ordine et senza tituli, o vero argomenti; et in tante diverse carte quanti erano li sonetti; non di meno con quel migliore ordine ch'io ho saputo le ho reducte in questo volume, dove tu troverai gran copia di Sonetti arguti, faceti, et delectevoli de molti e varii soggetti in ogni qualitate; et similmente Capituli, Canzoni, Sestine, Elegie funebre, Egloge, Canzonette, Frotule, Comedie o vere Ripresentatione'.

<sup>123</sup> Gasparo Visconti, *I canzonieri per Beatrice d'Este e per Bianca Maria Sforza*, edited by Paolo Bongrani (Milan: Mondadori, 1979).

<sup>124</sup> Antonio Tebaldeo, *Rime*, cit.

between their *Canzoniere* and that by Pistoia.<sup>125</sup> The main reason lies in the fact that these poets were professional courtiers who held the Petrarchan *Canzoniere* as their archetype. Pistoia did not. After all the dispersive nature of the book fits in perfectly with the political condition of the time: the disorder, the uncertainty, the upheaval of the last decade of the fifteenth century in Italy are fully reflected in the *Canzoniere* as if the genre, under Pistoia, underwent a deterioration, a crisis.

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<sup>125</sup> The autobiographical element is of course an exception as Marco Santagata noted in *La lirica aragonese: studi sulla poesia napoletana del secondo Quattrocento* (Padua: Antenore, 1979), p. 244: 'possiamo affermare che per essa [i.e. la lirica cortigiana] l'elemento autobiografico, così esibito e trasparente, condotto sino ai limiti dell'aneddotica quotidiana, non è che uno dei materiali sui quali o coi quali fare poesia'.



Table 6  
Number of sonnets per section

| A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  | H  | I  | J  | K  |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 53 | 49 | 63 | 41 | 50 | 45 | 50 | 50 | 51 | 50 | 33 |

Table 7  
Number of sonnets by theme

| THEMES                 | NUMBER OF SONNETS |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| POLITICS               | 160               |
| AUTOBIOGRAPHY          | 136               |
| CONTRA SONNETS         | 89                |
| MISCELLANY             | 42                |
| BURCHIELLESQUE SONNETS | 29                |
| LUBRICITY              | 26                |
| RELIGIOUS PARODY       | 21                |
| CARICATURES            | 13                |
| IN MORTE POEMS         | 9                 |
| POETRY                 | 9                 |
| POEMS BY OTHER AUTHORS | 1                 |

Table 8  
Thematic breakdown of each section

|                        | A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  | H  | I  | J  | K  |
|------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Politics               | -  | -  | -  | 1  | -  | -  | -  | 30 | 51 | 50 | 28 |
| Autobiography          | 23 | 15 | -  | 15 | 28 | 26 | 19 | 8  | -  | -  | 2  |
| Contra sonnets         | 2  | 8  | 52 | 8  | 2  | 10 | 4  | 3  | -  | -  | -  |
| Miscellany             | -  | 3  | 2  | 10 | 12 | 5  | 4  | 5  | -  | -  | 1  |
| Burchiellesque poems   | 1  | -  | -  | -  | 2  | 2  | 22 | -  | -  | -  | 2  |
| Lubrlicity             | 14 | 2  | -  | 5  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 2  | -  | -  | -  |
| Religious parody       | -  | 17 | 1  | -  | 1  | 1  | -  | 1  | -  | -  | -  |
| Caricatures            | 9  | -  | 1  | 2  | 1  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  |
| In morte sonnets       | -  | 1  | 6  | -  | 2  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  |
| Poetry                 | 4  | 3  | 1  | -  | 1  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  |
| Poems by other authors | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | -  | 1  | -  | -  | -  |

## CHAPTER FIVE

## A THEMATIC AND STYLISTIC OVERVIEW OF THE CANZONIERE

## 5.1 Introduction.

Benché diventato in fatto emiliano, il Pistoia fu diffusore d'una certa comicità toscana che si raccomandava all'invenzione del Burchiello e si svolgeva in parallelo ai verseggiatori fiorentini (Pulci, Franco, Bellincioni). Ma dell'«assurdo» burchiellesco quasi ogni cosa è perduto [sic]: il Pistoia nell'otre dei sonetti caudati versa un vino che quasi è retrospettivo, rinnovando una giocosità tre- o addirittura duecentesca; mentre poi costituisce la principale auctoritas per il titolare della lepidità cinquecentesca, il Berni, i cui moduli imperverseranno accademicamente per secoli.<sup>1</sup>

Gianfranco Contini thus described the form and essence of Antonio Pistoia's poetic corpus. Similarly defined by others as 'a poet of transition between the Burchiellesque sonnet and the new type of burlesque sonnet to be written by Berni',<sup>2</sup> Antonio Pistoia was a story-teller *manqué*: the sonnet for the poet was above all a narrative space. Pistoia was no stylistic innovator: experimentation in metrical construction and formal structure were of little interest to him. His repertory of rhetorical devices is rather limited and mostly teeming with similes, metaphors, periphrasis and personification. His *Canzoniere* offers no other poetic form but the *sonetto caudato*,<sup>3</sup> a fourteenth-

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<sup>1</sup> Gianfranco Contini, *Letteratura italiana del Quattrocento*, cit., p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> Adrienne Laskier Martín, *Cervantes and the burlesque sonnet*, cit., p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Adrienne Laskier Martín, *Cervantes and the burlesque sonnet*, cit., incorrectly states that, p. 26: 'Pistoia's 553 burlesque sonnets [are] almost all tailed'.



century innovation of the *sonetto ritornellato*.<sup>4</sup> The caudate sonnet represented a stylistic departure from the traditional fourteen-line poem. It was an open form: it allowed poets a higher degree of freedom and sonnets a longer duration thanks to a three-line addition constituted of a heptasyllable, rhyming with the last line of the tercet, and a distich of two hendecasyllables a *rima baciata* (dEE, eFF, fGG, etc.).

Out of 534 tailed sonnets listed in the Ambrosiana manuscript, 272 are fitted with one tail while the remaining ones belong to the *sonettessa* type, that is they are equipped with more than one tail and precisely 227 are provided with two, thirty-two with three and three with four.<sup>5</sup> There is no apparent connection between the topic treated and the number of tails appended to the first fourteen lines. In terms of their metrical form, 507 sonnets have a *rima incrociata* scheme (ABBA) for the quatrains and a *rima alternata* (CDC DCD) for the tercets; these two types of metrical structures were very popular among the poets of *Il Dolce Stil Novo* while the combination of the alternating rhyme for the sestet was much favoured in the fourteenth century by comic sonneteers as it proved suitable for attaching the tail. Of the remaining twenty-seven poems, twenty-

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<sup>4</sup> Pietro G. Beltrami, *La metrica italiana*, cit., p. 244: 'Nel sonetto ritornellato viene aggiunto alla normale struttura del sonetto un 'ritornello' (cioè una chiusa) di un verso (ritornello semplice) in rima con l'ultimo verso del sonetto [...] oppure, più normalmente, di due: in questo caso si tratta di un distico a rima baciata, con rima diversa rispetto a quella del sonetto (ritornello doppio)'.

<sup>5</sup> My calculation differs slightly from Erasmo Pèrcopo's in Antonio Cammelli, cit., pp. 492-494. The latter in fact did not take into account the sonnet, 'Da leon vengo e là si fa banchetto', listed in the Ambrosiana manuscript, MS H.223 inf., f. 215v, but he did include an extra five not listed therein.



one are characterized by anomalies in rhyming positions; these are mostly due to imperfect rhymes<sup>6</sup> namely phonetic variants,<sup>7</sup> reduction and doubling of letters,<sup>8</sup> grapheme transposition,<sup>9</sup> while others seem the result of either the poet's carelessness or errors made by the scribe in copying the sonnets;<sup>10</sup> four

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<sup>6</sup> Pietro G. Beltrami, *La metrica italiana*, cit., p. 354: '[Rima imperfetta] Una rima senza perfetta identità dei suoni, cioè in genere un'assonanza o una consonanza. In astratto sono imperfette la rima aretina, la bolognese, la siciliana; ma storicamente si deve intendere come imperfetta la rima che non rientra fra quelle accettate come perfette per ragioni culturali, a prescindere dall'esattezza nella corrispondenza dei suoni'.

<sup>7</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 83r (CXXXVI, pp. 173-174) octave ends in ESCO/ALE/ARE/ESCO-ESCO/ARE/ARE/ESCO; f. 129v (CCXXIX, pp. 267-268) tail ends in OCO/UNGI/ONGI; f. 148v (CCLXVII, p. 306) sestet ends in ASCE/ATE/ASCE-ADE/ASCE/ADE; f. 160r (CCXC, pp. 326-327) octave ends in ETO/ENI/ENI/EDO-ETO/ENI/ENI/ETO; f. 199r (CCCXLVIII, pp. 398-399) tails end in EGRA/ONTO/UNTO-ONTO/ULTO/ULTO. This last case may have regional implications: whilst the form with the u is Tuscan, the regular development from Latin unctus > onto is typical of northern varieties of Italian.

<sup>8</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 141v (CCLIII, pp. 293-294) sestet ends in ALE/ELLE/ALE-ELLE/ALE/ELLE; f. 149v (CCLXIX, pp. 307-308) sestet concludes in ATTA/ORTE/ATTA-ORTE/ATA/ORTE; f. 173v (CCCXVII, p. 351) octave finishes in ATTO/ERI/ERI/ATO-ATTO/ERI/ERI/ATTO; f. 224r (CCCCXV, pp. 453-454) concluding tail ends in ELLA/OPRIO/OPIO; f. 255r (CCCCLXXVII, pp. 523-524) octave ends in ANNO/EMPLI/EMPI/ANNO-AN(N)O/EMPI/EMPI/ANNO.

<sup>9</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 94v (CLIX, pp. 196-198) octave ends in (OST)RO/AGNE/AGNE/OSTRO-OSTRO/AGNE/ANGE/(OST)RO.

<sup>10</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 24v (XX, pp. 63-64) sestet ends in ERI/AGLIA/ERI-AGLIA/ERO/AGLIA; f. 39r (XLVIII, pp. 90-91) sestet ends in ENTI/ANI/ENTI-ANE/ENTI/ANI; f. 59v (LXXXIX, pp. 130-131) tail ends in ARDI/ATI/ATE; f. 111r (CXCII, pp. 232-233) octave ends in ATO/ORTO/ORTO/ATA-ATO/ORTO/ORTO/ATO; f. 139r (CCXLVIII, p. 288) octave ends in INA/ATI/ATI/INA-INA/ONA/ATI/INA; f. 157r (CCLXXXIV, p. 321) sestet ends in ONEO/ETTO/ONIO-ETTO/ONIO/ETTO; f. 161r (CCXCII, p. 328-329) the tails end in ESTA/ERTO/BRCHIO-ERTO/USTO/USTO; f. 165r (CCC, p. 336) octave ends in ERI/ONI/ONI/ERI-ERI/ONE/ONE/ERI; f. 183v (CCCXXXVII, pp. 369-370) octave ends in ELO/ELLA/ELLA/ELO-ELO/ELLA/ORNO/ELO; f. 232r (CCCCXXI, pp. 471-472) tail ends in FU/ARA/FA; f. 245r (CCCCLVII, pp. 501-502) octave finishes in AME/ONE/ORE/AME-AME/ONE/ONE/AME.



poems present the time-honoured *rima replicata* scheme for the tercets (CDE CDE),<sup>11</sup> one the *rima identica*<sup>12</sup> and another one an irregular form CDE DED,<sup>13</sup> although in all six cases the octaves are characterized by a crossed-rhyme pattern.

Pistoia's extensive poetic corpus remains, however, a heterogeneous collection in thematic terms. The poet wrote many types of verse (satirical, burlesque, misogynous, occasional, historical, political and moral) on as many topics often belonging to a type of well-established comicality. Numerous poems can be described as jocular, ribald anecdotes akin to the *facetiae* or *Sittensatiren*,<sup>14</sup> whose lines, at times fashioned around conventional turns of phrase, lend themselves well to being easily memorized and possibly recited off the cuff. Written in monologue and dialogue, the poems may hinge on a mimetic device directly reproducing the conversations of the characters

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<sup>11</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 90v (CLI, pp. 188-189); f. 165v (CCCI, pp. 336-337); f. 167r (CCCIV, pp. 339-340); f. 193v (CCCLVII, pp. 387-388). The scheme CDE CDE was rarely employed in caudate sonnets.

<sup>12</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 130r (CCXXX, pp. 268-269). In the seventeen-line sonnet 'Tu mi di' sempre mai vuoi tu niente', each verse is concluded by the word 'niente'. The sonnet is based on a poem by Matteo Franco whose incipit is 'Tu mi domandi sempre s'i' vo nulla'. The poem is published in Luigi Pulci and Matteo Franco, *Il "libro dei sonetti"*, edited by Giulio Dolci (Milan; Genoa; Rome; Naples: Società Anonima Editrice Dante Alighieri, 1933), p. 89.

<sup>13</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 217r (CCCCI, pp. 437-438).

<sup>14</sup> Peter Schunck, 'Die Stellung Ariosts in der Tradition der klassischen Satire', *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 86, 1970, pp. 49-82 (p. 79): 'Viel "satirischer" d.h. angriffslustiger, schärfer und konkreter waren die Sonette von Antonio Camelli [sic], dessen Situation der des Ariost nicht unähnlich gewesen zu sein scheint. Es finden sich darunter neben zahlreichen sogenannten Sittensatiren auch manche mit politischem Inhalt'.



at the centre of the sonnets<sup>15</sup> while on other occasions they are exclusively based on a narration or description in which the monadic pronoun /I/ in turn speaks to a located and unlocated audience. Many poems present exegetical difficulties mostly due to the use of cryptic diction and unusual imagery.

To provide a detailed analysis of the language would take us far beyond the scope of the present research. It may however be useful to point out that the language is in most cases strongly realistic, colourful, dialectal, colloquial<sup>16</sup> and coated with a firm veneer of Northern terms<sup>17</sup> and a handful

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<sup>15</sup> Two good examples are 'Non gridar più, che vuoi tu Salvatore [sic]?', MS H.223 inf., f. 98r (CLXVI, pp. 203-204), and 'Anna che fa<n> là quelle brigate?', f. 114v (CXCIX, pp. 238-239).

<sup>16</sup> It is only rarely that the sonnets are sprinkled with refined, Latinate terms such as 'aurate', MS H.223 inf., f. 62r (XCIV, p. 135), 'laude' f. 69r (CVIII, pp. 147-148), 'aspe' f. 70r (CX, pp. 149-150), 'preterita' f. 96v (CLXIII, p. 201), 'fercole' f. 144r (CCLVIII, pp. 297-298), 'patena' and 'politi' both on f. 150v (CCLXXI, pp. 309-310).

<sup>17</sup> Pèrcopo gave two contradictory statements in connection with Pistoia's diction. In his biography of the poet, Antonio Cammelli, cit., he asserted, pp. 480-482: 'Sicchè, se migliorarono artisticamente molti de' sonetti, non riuscirono a sopprimere dalla maggior parte di essi il principal difetto: la lingua ibrida per gli infiniti dialettalismi non toscani, di cui son piene tutte le composizioni del nostro. [...] i Sonetti faceti, tranne qualche lieve traccia del vernacolo pistoiese, son scritti nel solito linguaggio letterario dei poeti dotti toscani del quattrocento, tutto cosperso, però, di voci dialettali della Lombardia, comprendendo in questa, come nel trecento e quattrocento s'intendeva, anche l'Emilia, dove propriamente il nostro soggiornò', while in Berthold Wiese and Erasmo Pèrcopo, *Storia della letteratura italiana*, cit., the Neapolitan scholar stated that, p. 304: 'La lingua del Pistoia, quantunque egli abbia vissuto nell'Italia superiore, è un puro e non falsificato toscano che non mostra nè alcun influsso dialettale nè alcuna quisquiglia latina o greca: anche in ciò, egli si solleva al di sopra dei suoi contemporanei'. Although Gianfranco Contini, *Letteratura italiana del Quattrocento*, cit., stated that, p. 349: 'una spolveratura padana è passata sul suo linguaggio', the term 'spolveratura' perhaps does not really reflect the large number of northern terms scattered in the sonnets. Amongst the most



borrowed from the *lingua zerga*.<sup>18</sup> Hypercorrections, erroneous doubling<sup>19</sup> and reduction<sup>20</sup> of letters, graphic Latinisms,<sup>21</sup>

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frequent are: 'sguerzo' and 'bestiazza', MS H.223 inf., f. 33r (XXXVI, pp. 79-80), 'gallana' f. 33v (XXXVII, p. 80), 'fazza' f. 34v (XXXIX, pp. 81-82), 'consienza' f. 35v (XLI, p. 83), 'sompogna' f. 50v (LXXI, p. 114), 'trezze' f. 61v (XCIII, p. 134), 'vesiche' f. 69r (CVIII, pp. 147-148), 'piasentin' f. 71r (CXII, p. 152), 'guanze' f. 72r (CXIV, p. 154), 'calcia' f. 74v (CXIX, pp. 158-159), 'magnani' f. 75v (CXXI, pp. 160-161), 'giotto' f. 78r (CXXVI, p. 165), 'ragio' f. 79r (CXXVIII, pp. 166-167), 'ongie' f. 108v (CLXXXVII, pp. 227-228), 's\c/ella' f. 177r (CCCXXIV, pp. 357-358) and 'giande' f. 209r (CCCLXXXVIII, pp. 422-423).

<sup>18</sup> The presence of terms taken from the *lingua zerga* was defined by Antonio Piromalli as 'linguaggio ionadattico'. Antonio Piromalli, 'Antonio Cammelli', cit., p. 551, fn. 1: 'Il linguaggio ionodattico [sic], col quale si dà un nome diverso alle cose deducendolo dal capriccio, dall'affinità o dal significato stesso della cosa, si trova, invece, in numerosi sonetti del Pistoia il quale usa, per esempio, *calchi* per piedi, *lima* per camicia, *sfoiosa* per borsa, *bolla* per città, *bistolfo* per prete, *aste* per danari, *tappo* per vestito, *maggio* per signore etc.'. The term *ionadattico* or *ianadattico* is described in Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Barberi Squarotti eds., *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, cit., vol. 8, p. 485 as a 'sorta di linguaggio allusivo ed enigmatico, per lo più burlesco, caratterizzato dall'uso improprio di parole in sostituzione di altre con cui hanno in comune soltanto le lettere o le sillabe iniziali (e tale modo di parlare o di scrivere, di antica tradizione popolare, fu assai di moda a Firenze dalla fine del secolo XVI, costituendo anche la lingua di composizioni burlesche come *cicalate*, *poesie d'intrattenimento*, ecc., in voga sino al secolo XVIII). Per estens.: linguaggio oscuro, incomprensibile, bizzarro'. Pistoia was using the *lingua zerga* and the above terms are duly listed with a translation in Piero Camporesi ed., *Il libro dei vagabondi: lo «Speculum cerretanorum» di Teseo Pini, «Il vagabondo» di Rafaele Frianoro e altri testi di «furfanteria»* (Turin: Einaudi, 1973) in the following order: p. 214, p. 225, pp. 208-209, p. 205, p. 240 and p. 228.

<sup>19</sup> Hypercorrections include 'cometta' for 'cometa', MS H.223 inf., f. 18r (VII, pp. 52-53); 'pen(n)a' for 'pena' f. 23r (XVII, p. 61); 'occa' for 'oca' f. 24r (XIX, pp. 62-63); 'telle' for 'tele' f. 37r (XLIV, p. 86); 'peccore' for 'pecore' f. 57v (LXXXV, pp. 127-128); 'petti' for 'peti' f. 94v (CLIX, pp. 196-198); 'elletto' for 'eletto' f. 127v (CCXXV, pp. 263-264); 'candelle' for 'candele' f. 141v (CCLIII, pp. 293-294); 'scattole' for 'scatole' 149v (CCXIX, pp. 307-308); 'mettallo' for 'metallo' f. 152r (CCLXXIV, pp. 312-313); 'mullo' for 'mulo', f. 171v (CCCXIII, pp. 347-348); 'toppi' for 'topi' f. 177v (CCCXXV, pp. 358-359); 'doppo' for 'dopo' f. 183r (CCCXXXVI, pp. 368-369); 'oppulentissima' for 'opulentissima' f. 200v (CCCLXI,



widespread use of graphic *h*<sup>22</sup> are among the most frequent

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pp. 400-402) and so on and so forth. Pistoia was writing at a time when there was no language codification for writing in vernacular. The so-called *norma* was established in 1525 with Pietro Bembo's publication of *Prose della volgar lingua* although graphic uncertainties would continue for at least two more centuries. The matter is investigated among others by Nicoletta Maraschio, 'Grafia e ortografia: evoluzione e codificazione', *Storia della lingua italiana*, edited by Luca Serianni and Pietro Trifone (Turin: Einaudi, 1993-1994), vol. 1, pp. 139-227; Paola Manni, 'Dal toscano all'italiano letterario', *Storia della lingua italiana*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 321-342 and Brian Richardson, *Trattati sull'ortografia del volgare 1524-1526* (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1984).

<sup>20</sup> Reductions of letters include 'arosto' for 'arrosto', MS H.223 inf., f. 23v (XVIII, pp. 61-62); 'petinar' for 'pettinar' f. 24r (XIX, pp. 62-63); 'cane' for 'canne' f. 34v (XXXIX, pp. 81-82); 'matina' for 'mattina' f. 36v (XLI, pp. 85-86); 'adosso' for 'addosso' f. 40v (LI, p. 43) and 'rupe' for 'ruppe' f. 57v (LXXXV, pp. 127-128).

<sup>21</sup> These include use of *ph* as in names of mythical figures, common names and verbs such as 'Phallar', MS H.223 inf., f. 32v (XXXV, pp. 78-79), 'Orpheo', 'Amphione' f. 35v (XLI, p. 83) and 'Delpho' f. 75v (CXXI, pp. 160-161); 'pharphalla' f. 60v (XCI, pp. 132-133), 'propheti' f. 66r (CII, pp. 141-142), 'philosopho' f. 97v (CLXV, pp. 202-203); 'triomphare' f. 69r (CVIII, pp. 147-148), etc. There is also a widespread use of the group *-tia-* and *-tie-* in the middle and at the end of words as in 'sententie' f. 73v (CXVII, pp. 156-157), 'absentia' f. 96v (CLXIII, p. 201), 'gratia' f. 138r (CCXLVI, pp. 286-287), 'generatione' and 'compositione' f. 156r (CCLXXXII, pp. 319-320). Other phenomena, although not far from fifteenth-century practice, include the use of *x* as in 'exempio' f. 58r (LXXXVI, pp. 128-129), 'exerce' f. 73v (CXVII, pp. 156-157), 'extreme' f. 77r (CXXIV, pp. 163-164); *ct* as in 'rectore' f. 32v (XXXV, pp. 78-79), 'nocte' f. 33r (XXXVI, pp. 79-80); *pt* and *ps* as in 'optima' f. 47r (LXIV, pp. 105-106), 'psaltero' f. 76r (CXXII, pp. 161-162) and *q* as in 'antiqua' f. 62r (XCIV, p. 135). Although sparingly employed, a few Latin expressions and words appear in a handful of sonnets and in particular in those dealing with religious matters (e.g. 'pax tibi' f. 47v (LXV, pp. 106-107), 'surrexit non est hic', 'noli tangere me', 'laus tibi Christi' f. 65v (CI, pp. 140-141) and 'accipite' f. 66r (CII, pp. 141-142). These phenomena are illustrated at length by Pier Vincenzo Mengaldo, *La lingua del Boiardo lirico* (Florence: Olschki, 1963).

<sup>22</sup> Examples abound throughout the *Canzoniere*. The *h* can either be found in initial position as in 'haver', MS H.223 inf., f. 33r (XXXVI, pp. 79-80), 'hoggi' f. 62r (XCIV, p. 135), 'honesto', f. 66v (CIII, pp. 142-143), or medially after consonant especially *c* and *t* (e.g. 'incathenato' f. 50r (LXX, pp. 113-114), 'anchor' f. 58r (LXXXVI, pp. 128-129), 'choro' f. 63r



phenomena to be encountered in the Ambrosiana manuscript.

In the following sample of Pistoia's rich poetic production I have attempted to give a general comment on his sonnets. Though his subject matter is rather disparate and does not lend itself to a satisfactory classification, I have nonetheless grouped the poems into main categories which I hope will prove both useful and stimulating.

## 5.2 The fashioning and projection of a human identity.

From health to personal finances, work, sexual activities, family life and socializing: the 'fashioning' and projection of a human identity unfolds in a realistic setting against a backdrop of jocular poetry. In 145 sonnets,<sup>23</sup> Antonio Pistoia

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(XCVI, pp. 136-137), 'labirintho' f. 71v (CXIII, p. 153), 'thoscano' f. 78v (CXXVII, p. 166) and 'thesoro' f. 97v (CLXV, pp. 202-203).

<sup>23</sup> This section also includes the nine poems centred on poetical matters as they very often merge and overlap with those dealing with autobiographical issues. MS H.223 inf., ff. 15r-17v (I-VI, pp. 47-52); ff. 24r-25v (XIX-XXII, pp. 62-65); ff. 28r-29v (XXVII-XXX, pp. 69-75); f. 30v (XXXI, p. 75); ff. 36r-41v (XLII-LIII, pp. 84-96); ff. 43r-45r (LVI-LX, pp. 98-102); f. 48r (LXVI, pp. 107-110); ff. 51v-56r (LXXIII-LXXXII, pp. 116-125); ff. 58v-59r (LXXXVII-LXXXVIII, pp. 129-130); f. 68r (CVI, pp. 145-146); ff. 100v-101v (CLXXI-CLXXIII, pp. 208-210); ff. 104v-105r (CLXXIX-CLXXX, pp. 216-221); f. 106r-v (CLXXXII-CLXXXIII, pp. 222-224); ff. 107v-108r (CLXXXV-CLXXXVI, pp. 225-226); f. 109r (CLXXXVIII, p. 228); ff. 110v-111r (CXCI-CXCII, pp. 231-233); ff. 112r-113r (CXCIV-CXCVI, pp. 234-236); ff. 118v-119v (CCVII-CCIX, pp. 246-249); f. 122r-v (CCXIV-CCXV, pp. 253-255); f. 123v (CCXVII, pp. 256-257); f. 125r (CCXX, p. 259); f. 126r-v (CCXXII-CCXXIII, pp. 260-262); ff. 127v-128v (CCXXV-CCXXVII, pp. 263-266); f. 129v (CCXXIX, pp. 267-268); ff. 131v-132r (CCXXXIII-CCXXXIV, pp. 271-273); ff. 133r-134r (CCXXXVI-CCXXXVIII, pp. 274-277); f. 136r-v (CCXLII-CCLXIII, pp. 281-283); ff. 139r-143r (CCXLVIII-CCLVI, pp. 288-296); ff. 144v-145r (CCLIX-CCLX, pp. 298-300); ff. 146v-147r (CCLXIII-CCLXIV, pp. 302-303); ff. 148r-150r (CCLXVI-CCLXX, pp. 305-309); f. 151r-v (CCLXXII-CCLXXIII, pp. 310-312); f. 152v (CCLXXV, pp. 313-314); ff. 153v-154v (CCLXXVII-CCLXXIX, pp. 315-317); ff. 158r-159v (CCLXXXVI-CCLXXXIX, pp. 322-326); ff. 160v-161v (CCXCI-CCXCIII, pp. 327-

brings his world into focus and guides his readers into the meanders of his life.<sup>24</sup> From time to time the poet lets them gain a perception of the world he observed and lived through: he allows them to have a taste of court life, to take part in a fifteenth-century banquet and in turn to savour both its unpalatable and its succulent dishes, to take a ride on his horse, to eavesdrop on him and his wife, to have a look at his run-down home and meagre finances and to keep him company while bedridden. Having recorded in verse scenes from his life, Pistoia informs his readers of his literary preferences and sexual tendencies, brings them up to date on the precarious state of his health, and the vicissitudes of his friends. But he also restricts their access, bewilders them by speaking in a cryptic language and at times cuts them off completely from his life, leaving them with a string of caudate sonnets and no clue on how to decode them. Readers are both guided and misguided by the poet who tries to hinder their movements and curtail their freedom, to confound and to leave them puzzled. Not only are they at times badly equipped to tread upon unexplored terrain but they must

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330); f. 163r-v (CCXCVI-CCXCVII, pp. 332-334); ff. 164v-165r (CCXCIX-CCC, pp. 335-336); f. 166v (CCCIII, pp. 338-339); ff. 167v-168v (CCCV-CCCVII, pp. 340-342); ff. 169v-170r (CCCIX-CCCX, pp. 343-345); ff. 171r-172v (CCCXII-CCCXV, pp. 346-349); f. 173v (CCCXVII, p. 351); f. 175r (CCCXX, p. 354); ff. 186v-189v (CCCXLIII-CCCXLIX, pp. 375-381); f. 191r-v (CCCLII-CCCLIII, pp. 383-385); f. 192v (CCCLV, p. 386); f. 194v (CCCLIX, pp. 389-390); ff. 195v-196r (CCCLXI-CCCLXII, pp. 391-393); f. 199r-v (CCCXLVIII-CCCLXIX, pp. 398-400); f. 268r (DIII, pp. 551-552); f. 283r (DXXXIII, pp. 586).

<sup>24</sup> Although Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti describes 'il movimento fra autobiografia e narrazione' in Antonio Pistoia as 'lineare', a close-up reading of the poet's verse proves that this is not always the case. Francesco Berni, *Rime*, edited by Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti (Turin: Einaudi, 1969), p. xiii.



also find their way in a rich undergrowth of conventions, hidden literary and topical references, obscure allusions, layers of oblique and coded meaning, because 'things in poetry are and are not what they seem' and 'like other people, poets often say more than they mean to or mean more than they say'.<sup>25</sup>

The following pages will deal primarily with four themes: the topos of the court, the jocular topics of good and bad repasts, lack of money and the poet's illness. The reason for choosing these issues lies in my attempt to establish a connection between verse and reality, to highlight the pragmatic aspect of poetry while unveiling the ambiguous nature of language. As the themes often merge into each other I have not subdivided them into separate sections.

From the sonnets listed in the Ambrosiana collection, one learns that the poet left his home town in Tuscany<sup>26</sup> and headed towards Lombardy. Although there is no clue to the year of his journey,<sup>27</sup> the poet gives at least his geographical position; he informs us that he crossed the river Secchia and stopped at the court of Nicolò Correggio: 'quando la Lombardia mi fu palese/passata Secchia ch(e) è nel Modenese/una correggia d'oro

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<sup>25</sup> Lauro Martines, *Society and history in English Renaissance verse* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), p. 106, p. 113.

<sup>26</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 16v (IV, p. 50), lines 1-4:

Adio ti lascio o bel paese thosco  
 e tu cità dove il rubel di Roma  
 Catilina portò la mortal soma  
 poiché in te mia salute no(n) cognosco.

<sup>27</sup> It is however indisputable that the poet left Pistoia before 1485 because on 6th June of the same year he was appointed *capitano* of Porta Santa Croce in Reggio Emilia.

mi strinse il core'.<sup>28</sup> No documentation has survived in conjunction with his sojourn at Correggio and there is no way to establish whether the poet really stayed at Nicolò's court. However in view of the fact that on several occasions the information provided by the poet in his sonnets matches the content of archival documents and that of his private correspondence, I am inclined to believe that he is likely to have spent some time there. Whether from Correggio he moved first to the Este and later to the Gonzaga courts is once again a matter for speculation. One thing however is beyond doubt: Pistoia was not a professional courtier. From the spring of 1485 to the early autumn of 1500 he was an employee of Ercole I d'Este and worked as a tax collector in the town of Reggio Emilia. He lived outside the court milieu and observed the establishment from a distance, though it is safe to assume that he occasionally visited both the palaces of the Este and the Gonzaga. His experience of life at court seems to be fairly erratic and the sonnet 'A visitar la tua consorte amata' points in this direction:

A visitar la tua consorte amata  
 son gionto adesso illustro Signor mio  
 per esser quasi a ciascuno in oblio  
 tutta la corte s'è maravigliata.

[...]

Pax vobis dico, a ciascu(n) par gran caso  
 per non mi haver gran t(em)po visto o udito.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 17r (V, pp. 50-51), lines 2-4.

<sup>29</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 118v (CCVII, pp. 246-247), lines 1-4, 10-11.



Nonetheless, in his verse Pistoia often referred to life at court and commented upon it. In his poems, he draws on and exemplifies the Medieval tradition from John of Salisbury<sup>30</sup> to Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Pope Pius II.<sup>31</sup> In his famous letter to Johannes de Eyck, known as *De curialium miseriis epistola* (1444), Piccolomini gives a poignant description of courts. These were regarded as the reign of sycophants, ruffians, liars and flatterers whose main characteristics were ignorance, avarice, cruelty, ambition and envy.<sup>32</sup> The topos is central to Pistoia's verse in which

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<sup>30</sup> In his treaty *Policraticus*, John of Salisbury analyses the art of rulership and also discusses the vices relating to the court, its prince and entourage with particular emphasis on the craft of flattery. The three books, known as *Frivolities of courtiers*, were translated and edited by Joseph B. Pike in *Frivolities of courtiers and footprints of philosophers* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1938).

<sup>31</sup> Sydney Anglo in his essay 'The courtier: the Renaissance and changing ideals', *The courts of Europe: politics, patronage and royalty 1400-1800*, edited by A. G. Dickens (New York: Greenwich House, 1984), pp. 33-53, gives a comprehensive picture of the literary court tradition from the twelfth to the early seventeenth century, pp. 33-34: '[the court] was a place of danger, discomfort, and iniquity: a school for developing the worst features of human ambition. To Peter of Blois, in the twelfth century, the courtier seemed a martyr of the world, who, after many tribulations, enters at last into the Kingdom of Hell. For William of Malmesbury, the court was "a death in life, a hell on earth"; and Walter Map, based his *Courtiers' Trifles* (c. 1190) upon an analogy between the court and Hades where courtiers undergo perpetual and senseless torments'. Anglo also points out that according to Pierre Michault, a critic of courtiers, there were even courses of lectures, p. 35, 'given by professors of the Faculty of Vice, in which the aspiring courtier is instructed that, in order to become rich, he must lie, comply, swear, slander, and drink'. The theme is also analyzed by Peter Burke in his book *The fortunes of the courtier: the European reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995) and especially in the chapter entitled 'The Courtier criticized', pp. 99-116.

<sup>32</sup> Wilfred P. Mustard ed., *Aeneae Silvii de curialium miseriis epistola* (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press; H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 68: 'avaricia tantum, libido, crudelitas, crapula, invidia et ambitio dominatur'.

disdain for the court and all that it stood for is a common, widespread feeling. The poet likens court life to a 'vita bestial da far rinegar Christo'<sup>33</sup> and the person who dwells therein 'se 'l non mor santo el si mor disperato'.<sup>34</sup> In the following poem, Pistoia reiterates and exemplifies the commonplaces of anti-court literature according to which courts made human beings well versed in the craft of flattery, corruption, and hypocrisy and preference was therefore for life away from the *turba iocosa* of fellow poets, courtiers, *moni*, fawning court employees and entertainers:

Tornato in terra di promissione  
di parole trovai pieni i sentieri  
e le bugie che facean cavallieri,  
il ver vidi battuto 'n un cantone.

Le lodole eron tutte in processione,  
vidi la invidia che spargea pensieri,  
gli detrator portavano i dopieri,  
gli adulator guidavan un confalone.

Di cera avea iustitia le bilanze,  
il dispetto havea mano in ogni loco,  
il credito era in mezzo de le cianze.

La ingiuria tra le legne mettea foco,  
il tradimento gl'inferrava lanze,  
e l'avaritia ministrava il coco.

Vedendo in tempo poco  
la verità galeggiata di frappe,  
una matina via portai le chiappe.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 36v (XLIII, pp. 85-86).

<sup>34</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 28v (XXVIII, pp. 71-72).

<sup>35</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 131v (CCXXXIII, pp. 271-272). The sonnet strongly recalls a poem penned by Antonio di Meglio (1384-1448) and edited by Antonio Lanza in *Lirici toscani del Quattrocento*, cit., vol. 2, p. 140:

Superbia ha l'Umiltà sommersa in terra,  
Avarizia ha ne' ferri Cortesia,  
Lusuria ha Castità cacciata via,



The traditional critique of the court may also be linked to a personal experience: complaints of the poet's sufferings, his anxieties and strains appear in abundance in the *Canzoniere* and the poet resents the fact that nobody at court acknowledges his presence, 'sì ch'io non trovo qua per alcu(n) loco/che dica: "Antonio, o can, perché ci se'?"'.<sup>36</sup> His bitterness and resentment may also stem from the fact that, though he harboured hopes of becoming a professional courtier, he never succeeded: he was a court outsider, a tax collector who moonlighted as a poet and never found a chance to make poetry remunerative as he himself said 'così barrato le parole al vento'.<sup>37</sup>

The attack on court life is further deployed through another topos, that of the appalling food. In the sonnets, 'Cenando Fidel mio hersira in corte'<sup>38</sup> and 'Qua si suona una zucca a concistoro',<sup>39</sup> the poet gives a detailed picture of eating at court: both poems are a series of complaints ranging from the

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Invidia a Carità la strada serra.

La Gola ha vinta l'Astinenza in guerra,  
sbranata è Purità da Fellonia,  
il Vero è sotto i piè della Bugia  
e 'l giusto è condannato da chi erra.

Ipocresia la Fede ha messa in fondo,  
l'Infedeltà ha vinta la Speranza,  
Libertà inanzi a Tirannia si fugge.

Adunque puo' veder come va il mondo  
e quanto a star con lui si disavanza  
e come neve al sole il Ben si strugge.

<sup>36</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 37r (XLIV, p. 86).

<sup>37</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 125r (CCXX, p. 259).

<sup>38</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 28v (XXVIII, pp. 71-72).

<sup>39</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 36v (XLIII, pp. 85-86).

tablecloth 'lavata col grasso',<sup>40</sup> to various dishes including unsavoury salads, stale bread, 'pan peloso duro quanto un sasso',<sup>41</sup> hardly edible meat and undrinkable wine. The theme of food is very much present in Pistoia's verse: in addition to the two sonnets already mentioned, the poet devotes a further nine to the topic.<sup>42</sup> On several occasions he refers to his table companions: his close friend Gianfrancesco Gianninello, the court employee Pignatta, the jesters Fidel, Serafino and Galasso, as well as to Marco Nigrisollo, Alfonso Comi and Pandolfo Ariosto. The emphasis, however, is not on social relations but on the banquet, and in turn on its sumptuous delicacies as well as on its truly dreadful dishes. While describing the various items of food, the poet makes widespread use of periphrasis: a castrated lamb is described as 'il fratel de' testic\c/oli privato', a calf as 'il figli\u/ol de la vacca', broad beans as 'anime di tegia in pregon morte' and a type of custard as 'sugo di tetta vaccina'.<sup>43</sup> Penning verse about bad and good meals goes back to the core issues of the goliardic tradition and to those of jocular poetry alike. When Pistoia wrote his sonnets about good

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<sup>40</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 28v (XXVIII, pp. 71-72).

<sup>41</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 28v (XXVIII, pp. 71-72).

<sup>42</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 24r-25v (XIX-XXII, pp. 62-65); f. 28r (XXVII, pp. 69-70); f. 29r-v (XXIX-XXX, pp. 72-75); f. 30v (XXXI, p. 75); f. 165r (CCC, p. 336).

<sup>43</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 28r (XXVII, pp. 69-70). Marcella Marighelli in her study 'Spese di una terziaria domenicana, registrate in volgare dal 1449 al 1473', *Analecta Pomposiana: studi di storia religiosa delle diocesi di Ferrara e Comacchio*, 16, 1991, pp. 117-189, refers, among other things, to food terminology cited by Pistoia in his verse and in particular to 'marzapan', p. 168, 'ovo' and 'passara', p. 170. The latter is also listed in Claudio Benporat, *Cucina italiana del Quattrocento* (Florence: Olschki, 1996), p. 141, p. 224 and p. 279.



and bad repasts, he used a literary topos to describe a real event namely a dinner often shared with his friends at court, in a private house or in a tavern.

In addition to the sonnets mentioned above, the *Canzoniere* lists other poems in which Pistoia refers to food and uses culinary terms. It is in these instances that the modern reader is faced with a thorny issue: where does the primary sense of the sonnet lie? Is it in the *prima facie* meaning or is it hidden behind it? In certain cases the literal meaning is the least important and possibly the most deceptive. The sonnets need to be approached from different angles as they communicate at various levels. In his study *Le carnaval du langage*, Jean Toscan shows that Pistoia, like many other contemporary and later poets, charged his lines with a varied spectrum of meanings and therefore a literal interpretation may be rather misleading. In a sonnet written against a woman, Pistoia reproaches her for her sexual lust and appetite for a certain 'focaccia' namely the male sexual organ. Though in the above example the lexical ambiguity is blatant, in the following tercet the sexual pun may not be so obvious:

Il ti bisogna dar lessò et arosto,  
tu sai ben che Firenze suole  
ber del vin tondo e di marzo e d'agosto.<sup>44</sup>

By 'dar lessò et arosto' the poet refers to sexual intercourse 'par devant' and 'par derrière' and warns the woman in question that the act of sodomy, that is 'ber del vin tondo', is an activity also practised during 'carême', Lent, when 'natural'

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<sup>44</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 26v (XXIV, p. 67), lines 9-11.

sexual intercourse was forbidden by the Church, and 'canicule', the dog days.<sup>45</sup> In another sonnet, Pistoia talks about 'la carne de la vacca'<sup>46</sup> by which he meant the female body:

Pour Pistoia, qui pour une fois s'emporte contre les sodomites, la carne della vacca n'est, à l'évidence, que le "corps féminin":

Che diran dunque questi asini vestiti,  
che disprezzon la CARNE DELLA VACCA  
per tor alle caprette i lor mariti?

Les "ânes habillés" du vers 1 sont des individus qui, n'ayant d'humain que le vêtement, se révèlent des ânes, c'est-à-dire des ignorants, par leurs goûts. Ils méprisent le corps féminin auquel ils préfèrent ... "les maris des chevrettes". Cette périphrase cocasse ne sert guère qu'à suggérer le term capretto "chevreau" qui [...] est l'un des noms les plus courants du giton.<sup>47</sup>

The link between food and sexual activities becomes even more evident and pervasive in Pistoia's lubricious verse as well as in those sonnets in which the poet provides a long list of ingredients for highly unlikely recipes which 'contiennent presque toujours un élément obscène'.<sup>48</sup> Whether it is a matter of privations and misfortunes, the unfairness of life spent in want or a dinner party among friends, the poet and his

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<sup>45</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 255. The phrase 'vin tondo' does not appear as a type of wine in Giovanna Frosini, *Il cibo e i signori: la mensa dei priori di Firenze nel quinto decennio del sec. XIV* (Florence: Accademia della Crusca, 1993) nor in the letter addressed by Sante Lancerio (mid sixteenth century) to Cardinal Guido Ascanio Sforza on Italian wines. Sante Lancerio, 'Della qualità dei vini', *L'arte della cucina in Italia: libri di ricette e trattati sulla civiltà della tavola dal XIV al XIX secolo*, edited by Emilio Faccioli (Turin: Einaudi, 1987), pp. [327]-355.

<sup>46</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 176v (CCCXXIII, pp. 356-357).

<sup>47</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 3, p. 1513.

<sup>48</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 87.



surrounding world are the subject of his own verse.<sup>49</sup> Pistoia pictures himself as a poor man of no great stature, 'io come basso ho fatto picciol salto',<sup>50</sup> who has attempted to lead an existence according, whenever possible, to the following principle 'io vivo come voglio e come io posso'.<sup>51</sup>

In his verse he gives vent to his complaints and needs and asks for a variety of favours, an attitude which he held in common with a host of contemporary poets. Poetry had a pragmatic aspect and Pistoia shaped and wrought verse in the hope that his Lords might fulfil his needs, 'le mie voglie prime',<sup>52</sup> though often his 'tanti sonetti e tante rime',<sup>53</sup> fell on deaf ears 'canton nel deserto'.<sup>54</sup> In one of his many rhymed appeals, the poet asks the aloof Ercole I d'Este to come to his aid so that the tower of Santa Croce could be restored:

D'una lettera cura  
e habbi Signor mio questo a memoria  
de scriverla a Regian comendatore.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> The author directly cites his name, Antonio, Pistoia, Antonio Vinci and Pistorese, in numerous sonnets among which the following: MS H.223 inf., f. 37r (XLIV, p. 86); f. 39v (XLIX, pp. 91-92); f. 41r (LII, pp. 94-95); f. 43r (LVI, pp. 98-99); f. 44r (LVIII, pp. 100-101); f. 58v (LXXXVII, p. 129); f. 105r (CLXXX, pp. 217-221); ff. 112v-113r (CXCv-CXCVI, pp. 234-236); f. 119r (CCVIII, pp. 247-248); f. 134r (CCXXXVIII, pp. 276-277); f. 139r (CCXLVIII, p. 288).

<sup>50</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 39v (XLIX, pp. 91-92).

<sup>51</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 40v (LI, p. 93).

<sup>52</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 39r (XLVIII, pp. 90-91).

<sup>53</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 39r (XLVIII, pp. 90-91).

<sup>54</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 54v (LXXIX, p. 122).

<sup>55</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 147r (CCLXIV, p. 303), lines 18-20.

Through his verse, Pistoia often tried to gain material necessities: he asked for wood,<sup>56</sup> items of food,<sup>57</sup> clothing,<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 40r (L, pp. 92-93); f. 101v (CLXXIII, p. 210).

<sup>57</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 126r (CCXXII, pp. 260-261); f. 186v (CCCXLIII, pp. 375-376). It is perhaps worth noticing that the poet while asking for food in one instance uses the same image both in his verse and in his private correspondence. The sonnet 'Per celebrare allegro e più sicuro', f. 186v, in which the poet asks for wine, flour and pork meat to celebrate Christmas, ends with a word picture of a hungry baby swallow waiting for its food, lines 18-20:

E così mi riposo  
qual rondanino aspettando la offerta  
col capo for del nido a bocca aperta.

In an epistle written on 1st May 1497 and addressed 'al mio ill(ustrissi)mo et eccelentissimo Signore e patrone e benefattore S(igno)re Duchà di Ferrara', the poet once again asks for wheat and wine and concludes his letter with the image of baby swallows: 'né altrimenti tanto adiuto aspetto che li zovini rondinini el disiato cibo della madre'. ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Archivio per Materie, Letterati Carteggio, Busta 13. It is perhaps interesting to notice that the scribe of MS H.223 inf. wrote 'rondanino', a more northern dialectal form from *rondana* (*rundanéna* in Romagnolo, *rundàna/rundanina* in Pavese, *rundanèina* in Modenese and *rondàna/rondanina* in the dialect from Polesine) while Pistoia used the Italian/Tuscan form of 'rondinini' (*rondine*, *rondina*).

<sup>58</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 38v-39r (XLVII-XLVIII, pp. 89-91). In the sonnet 'Signor già pensai ir teco in levante', f. 39r, the poet is saddened by the fact that numerous poems have been penned to no avail because he has failed in getting the official backing of his Lord for two 'lime', that is two shirts, lines 1-4:

Signor già pensai ir teco in levante  
dopo tanti sonetti e tante rime  
per farti trar duo bolli per due lime,  
ma io mi trovo pur frate osservante.

As we have already pointed out, Pistoia often borrowed terms from the *lingua zerga* and *furbesca*, which was defined by Nicolò Villani in the *Ragionamento dello Academico Aldeano sopra la poesia giocosa de' Greci, de' Latini, e de' Toscani* (Venice: Pietro Pinelli, 1634), in the following fashion, p. 81: 'il gergo è più privato, e men conosciuto. Talora ciò fassi con certe parole nuove di sentimento, e non di voce: il qual sentimento sia stato loro attribuito, non dall'uso comune, ma da qualche autore particolare. E tale è quella lingua che, malauventurosamente [sic] dalle persone, che la frequentano, è chiamata *furbesca* e



and lamented the fact that he had neither money nor benefits, 'denari e favore'.<sup>59</sup> The issue of money, whether it is lack of it, 'tu non mi trovi mai danari adosso',<sup>60</sup> a delayed payment or a loan, often appears in the poet's verse and every time it is treated in depth and with renewed zest. Pistoia is affected by what he calls 'il mal di San Francesco',<sup>61</sup> he laments, using anadiplosis and chiasmus, the fact that 'l'oro m'ha in odio, in odio m'ha l'argento'<sup>62</sup> and finally reaches the conclusion that a man of no financial means is a very sorry sight 'un huom senza danar quanto par brutto'.<sup>63</sup> In four sonnets the poet specifically deals with difficulties of both borrowing money from his friends and paying it back,<sup>64</sup> while in a further nine he complains about the delays in having his salary paid.<sup>65</sup> These sonnets are of special interest because they reveal the interplay

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di cui fu l'inventore un tal Broccardo [...] E non è altra differenza tra 'l gergo, e 'l furbesco, se no(n) che tutto quello che è furbesco è anche gergo, ma tutto quello che è gergo non è furbesco'. Among the most important studies on *lingua zerga* are Pietro S. Pasquali, 'Appunti lessicali furbeschi', *L'Italia dialettale*, 10, 1934, pp. 241-262; Teresa Cappello, 'Saggio di un'edizione critica del «Nuovo modo de intendere la lingua zerga», *SFI*, 15, 1957, pp. 303-399; Franca Ageno, 'Per una semantica del gergo', *SFI*, 15, 1957, pp. 401-437.

<sup>59</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 39v (XLIX, pp. 91-92)

<sup>60</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 40v (LI, p. 43).

<sup>61</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 41r (LII, pp. 94-95).

<sup>62</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 37v (XLV, pp. 87-88).

<sup>63</sup> MS H.233 inf., f. 38r (XLVI, pp. 88-89).

<sup>64</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 59r (LXXXVIII, p. 130); f. 110v (CXCI, p. 231); f. 168r (CCCVI, p. 341); f. 171v (CCCXIII, pp. 347-348).

<sup>65</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 43r (LVI, pp. 98-99); f. 58v (LXXXVII, p. 129); f. 172v (CCCXV, p. 349); ff. 187r-189v (CCCXLIV-CCCXLIX, pp. 376-381).

between life and verse. Lack of money, financial worries, poverty were of course *topoi* of jocular poetry often dictated by precise reasons:

Les choix des poètes comico-réalistes ne sont pas sans signification, tous révèlent une attitude d'intolérance et de rejet à l'égard des systèmes de pensée imposés par les classes dominantes et des types de sensibilité qui en sont dérivés; [...] Les manques de cheval, de maison et de vêtement occupent les premières places parmi les signes du déclassement. Le défaut d'argent entraîne la pénurie de nourriture [...] Le cheval est à la fois matière de don et signum de classe. [...] Les manteaux râpés, les taudis, les mules difformes n'ont plus de référents dans la vie: ils sont devenus les pièces d'un blason de bonne roture, les emblèmes d'une confrérie dont les membres affectent de regarder vers la terre.<sup>66</sup>

Although in the poet's written word often there is 'a play-element at work'<sup>67</sup> and longing for money and actual hardship are stock material of burlesque poetry, it is nonetheless possible to establish a link between verse and reality and see how *topoi* and life were brought together by the poet.<sup>68</sup> It is in fact not entirely correct to define some of Pistoia's poems as 'scherzi,

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<sup>66</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, pp. 65-68. Pistoia penned ten sonnets centred on the theme of the ruinous house and primitive lodgings, MS H.223 inf., ff. 51v-55v (LXXIII-LXXXI, pp. 116-124), f. 161r (CCXCII, pp. 328-329) and six on the other commonplace of burlesque literature that is the old infirm horse and skinny lame mule, f. 56r (LXXXII, pp. 124-125), f. 119r (CCVIII, pp. 247-248), f. 133r (CCXXXVI, pp. 274-275), f. 152v (CCLXXV, pp. 313-314), f. 158r-v (CCLXXXVI-CCLXXXVII, pp. 322-324).

<sup>67</sup> Johan Huizinga, *Homo ludens: a study of the play element in culture* (London: Paladin, 1970), p. 155: 'In the turning of a poetic phrase, the development of a motif, the expression of a mood, there is always a play-element at work'.

<sup>68</sup> The subject was not just a poetical topic or topos; written complaints against the mismanagement at the hands of *fattori* and *massari* are plentiful and many can be consulted at ASMo, Rettori, Reggio, B.151.



s'intende, questi sonetti, non documenti di vita'<sup>69</sup> because some of the lines present in the sonnets are fortified by and find their counterpart in the content of archival documentation.<sup>70</sup> In his sonnets, Pistoia recounts the difficulty in getting paid:

Questo tu hai ragion mi dà speranza  
 ma un torna diman troppo mi duole  
 fattor, perché dai fatti alle parole  
 è pur come tu sa' una gran distanza.<sup>71</sup>

The poems contain specific references to account books such as the 'vacchetta', 'partite sul giornale', court salary lists, and sums of money. Pistoia's main preoccupation lies in the fact that if his payments are not registered in the Exchequer, 'la camera', he may lose up to one year's salary:

Ecco la mia sventura:  
 che se le paghe in camera no(n) vanno  
 mi perderò il salar di più d'un anno.<sup>72</sup>

If one now turns to archival documentation, one sees that for the years 1489, 1490<sup>73</sup> and 1491,<sup>74</sup> Pistoia was paid at the end of

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<sup>69</sup> Vittorio Rossi, *Il Quattrocento*, cit., p. 815.

<sup>70</sup> Lauro Martines, *Society and history in English Renaissance verse*, cit., p. 6: 'We cannot turn a prose document into a poem of the period, but we can turn a poem into an historical document - and yet not quite. We cannot turn a poem into an historical document if we mean by this that we can distil it into a statement in prose. Some part of the poem can be thus reduced, but not the poem'.

<sup>71</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 189r (CCCXLVIII, pp. 380-381), lines 1-4.

<sup>72</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 188v (CCCXLVII, pp. 379-380), lines 15-17.

<sup>73</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1490, f. 6r.

the year:

Antonio da Pistolia gabelino a Porta Sa(n)cta Croxe de  
 havere adì ultimo de dextr(e) l(ire) centonovantadoe de  
 moneta r(e)x(a)na p(er) sua p(ro)viso(n)e et salario del  
 pre(sen)te anno, p(er) dodese page integre: in ragio(n)e de  
 l(ire) sedese el mese.<sup>75</sup>

This is not the only instance in which Pistoia's verse can be given biographical and factual credence. For example, in another poem, he addresses Ercole I d'Este and talks about his job: 'stomi in Emilia a guardarti il portello/che 'l nome suo ritrovò Santa Helena'.<sup>76</sup> In this case the archival documentation fully backs his statement, as it tells us black on white that he worked as a *gabelle* official at the gate of Santa Croce in Reggio Emilia. In other cases, it is thanks to the poet's private correspondence that it is possible to prove that there is a strong correlation between reality and poetry. Long before the publication of Girolamo Fracastoro's treaty and even Strascino's lament on syphilis,<sup>77</sup> Pistoia had devoted eight poems<sup>78</sup> to the

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<sup>74</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1491, f. 7v.

<sup>75</sup> ASMo, Camera Ducale, Amministrazione Finanziaria dei Paesi, Reggio e Reggiano, Massaria di Reggio, Libro Autentico, 1489, f. 9r.

<sup>76</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 126v (CCXXIII, pp. 261-262). Pistoia refers to Saint Helen because since the end of the fourth century her name was associated with the discovery of the cross on which Jesus Christ suffered.

<sup>77</sup> Girolamo Fracastoro, *Syphilis*, edited by Geoffrey Eatough (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1984). The treaty written in Latin and organized in three books, was first published in 1530 at Verona. Among the earliest accounts of the horrifying disease are those by two Venetian doctors Marcello Cumano and Alessandro Benedetto, who had both cared for the Venetian troops following the battle of Fornovo in July 1495, and that by Leoniceno, a professor of medicine at the Ferrarese Studium, who in 1497



venereal disease which the French called 'the Neapolitan sickness' and the Italians 'the French sickness'.<sup>79</sup> Though the new illness may seem like a perfect topic for a burlesque poet to turn into verse, it is possible to establish that the issue was grounded in the poet's life. In his verse, Pistoia recounts

his personal sufferings, the profusion of symptoms and the struggle to find a sense of relief and adequate remedies as well as nutrition.<sup>80</sup> He describes his swollen limbs, 'la gamba

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published *De morbo gallico*. Nicolò Campani called Strascino, who contracted syphilis in Rome around 1503 and only recovered around 1511, wrote an interesting poem in octaves entitled *Storia, e lamento di quel tribolato di Strascino Campani sanese dove si tratta della pazienza et impazienza, che cagiona il mal franzese* (Siena: [s.t., s.a.]). A comprehensive and most detailed picture of the 'unknown sickness' is painstakingly reconstructed by Claude Quézel, *History of syphilis* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992).

<sup>79</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 127v-128v (CCXXV-CCXXVII, pp. 263-266); ff. 140v-142v (CCLI-CCLV, pp. 290-295). References to syphilis can also be found in other poems among which the opening sonnet of the *Canzoniere* where Pistoia mentions 'la bollata scorza', f. 15r (I, p. 47); other instances are 'quando io vo caminare alla franciosa', f. 189r (CCCXLVIII, pp. 380-381), and 'nacque una piaga in la p(er)sona mia/la qual suol portar seco il mal di franza', f. 268r (DIII, pp. 551-552).

<sup>79</sup> Italians referred to the disease as the French sickness because they believed that the new illness had been brought to Italy by the mercenary troops of Charles VIII when he invaded Italy on 1st September 1494. In turn the French army named it the Neapolitan sickness because they thought to have been infected by it when they entered Naples on 22nd February 1495. These are only two of the plentiful names given to the illness which was in turn referred to as the disease of *las bubas*, *morbus gallicus*, the 'serpentine sickness' and so on. The DNA blueprint of syphilis, which had remained a mystery for a long time, was discovered in July 1998 when genetic researchers from the University of Texas in Houston and from the Institute of Genomic Research in Maryland managed to decipher the 1.4 million letter 'alphabet' for the bacterium responsible for syphilis, the *Treponema pallidum*, which had first been detected in 1905.

<sup>80</sup> Items of food which the poet describes as 'cibo stomacale', namely 'cappe', scallops, and 'ove', eggs, MS H.223 inf., f. 127v (CCXXV, pp. 263-264) and f. 141r (CCLII, pp. 291-293), were, according to Pistoia, preferable to meat and game,

insuperbisse e dà del grosso',<sup>81</sup> the appearance of sores, 'bolle',<sup>82</sup> blisters and cyst-like pustules on his thigh, 'un gran rubino';<sup>83</sup> the throbbing and unbearable pain as well as the high temperature, 'la coscia è da la testa martellata/che Vulcan ci par dentro e tutti i fabri/la crudel febre è in possession tornata'.<sup>84</sup> The suffering tormented the poet so much, 'hora ho un pugnale in spalla, hora una lancia',<sup>85</sup> that death was perceived as the only remedy:

Son come quel che dai piedi alla testa  
tutto è piagato e posto in mezzo a un foco  
tra fulguri, saette, e fra tempesta.

Non riposo dî, e notte assai o poco  
la carne tutta col martel par pesta  
coi pie' né cum le man trovo mai loco.

Onde che semp(re) invoco  
con ogni crudeltà con ogni possa  
il diavol che mi porti in carne e in ossa.

Auguromi ogni fossa  
ogni altro gran supplitio e dura morte  
tanto è il mal crudo e di cativa sorte.<sup>86</sup>

Unlike Fracastoro, who 'drew a veil over the sexual origins of the disease',<sup>87</sup> Pistoia had no qualms about pointing out the

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'carni o co(n) l'ale', f. 141r (CCLII, pp. 291-293).

<sup>81</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 127v (CCXXV, pp. 263-264).

<sup>82</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 140v (CCLI, pp. 290-291).

<sup>83</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 128r (CCXXVI, pp. 264-265).

<sup>84</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 128r (CCXXVI, pp. 264-265), lines 10-12.

<sup>85</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 140v (CCLI, pp. 290-291).

<sup>86</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 142r (CCLIV, p. 294), lines 9-20.

<sup>87</sup> Girolamo Fracastoro, *Syphilis*, cit., p. 20.



fact that syphilis was a sexually transmitted disease:

Madonna io parlerò senza paura:  
io non sarrei così precipitato  
s'io seguia il mio stil contra natura.

Ma poi ch'io volse il foglio dal bon lato  
mandai il membro viril in sepultura,  
così mal va chi cangia stato a stato.<sup>88</sup>

The *morbus gallicus* was defined by Pistoia in his verse as 'egra e spiacevol malatia',<sup>89</sup> an expression which the poet also used in a letter written on 10th January 1501 and addressed to the Marquis of Mantua. In the epistle, in which the loathsome disease is called 'galicha egritudine', Pistoia gives a further poignant description of the illness, of which both he and a son of his had fallen victim. In the letter he describes how his son was 'involto nel male' and 'piagato in più lochi della persona', how the ulcerations had gnawed deep into his limbs as if he had been eaten alive, 'parea che li cani li havesseno mangiato dentro alla bocca ogni cosa'. He also recounts how an ointment given to his son by a Spanish doctor had proved useless and ultimately perhaps even lethal.<sup>90</sup> On 5th January 1501 Pistoia's son died 'aspirò mio figliolo' and the father having witnessed the entire ordeal, 'i(n) quanto vedendo io la crudeltà di mio figliolo', decided

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<sup>88</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 141r (CCLII, pp. 291-293), lines 9-14.

<sup>89</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 142v (CCLV, p. 295).

<sup>90</sup> It is perhaps relevant to point out that among the very first doctors who tried to treat the illness, there were several Spaniards. Gaspar Torella, Pedro Pintor, Francisco Lopez de Villalobos had studied the new disease and had published their accounts between 1497 and 1499. Claude Quétel, *History of syphilis*, cit., p. 19, reports that Gaspar Torella was a protégé of Rodrigo de Borja Xavita and had followed his patron to Rome when the latter became Pope in 1492.

against applying the lotion to his body 'no(n) volsi ungiarmi perch(é) andava el patre dove è il figliolo'.<sup>91</sup>

Through his sonnets Pistoia sent his regards to his acquaintances at the Milanese court,<sup>92</sup> asked for clemency<sup>93</sup> and interceded for his friends,<sup>94</sup> arranged to meet them,<sup>95</sup> commented about contemporary poets,<sup>96</sup> and tried with 'un sacco di sonetti' to find himself a patron;<sup>97</sup> he used sonnets to accompany presents,<sup>98</sup> to communicate with his friends<sup>99</sup> and to exchange his news in rhyme with some of theirs:<sup>100</sup> 'non mai vedrassi luna tonda intiera/che in carta a te no(n) mi presenti vivo'.<sup>101</sup> In the concluding tail of the sonnet 'Inanti che lo agresto torni in bruna', Pistoia reminds one of his friends to bring a book of sonnets:

Se ben no(n) me rispondi

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<sup>91</sup> ASMn, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXIX.3, Novellara, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1452-1706, Busta 1354.

<sup>92</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 105r (CLXXX, pp. 217-221); f. 151v (CCLXXIII, pp. 311-312); f. 172r (CCCXIV, pp. 348-349).

<sup>93</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 126v (CCXXIII, pp. 261-262).

<sup>94</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 170r (CCCX, pp. 344-345); f. 175r (CCCXX, p. 354).

<sup>95</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 136v (CCLXIII, pp. 282-283).

<sup>96</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 48r (LXVI, pp. 107-110).

<sup>97</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 112v (CXCIV, pp. 234-235).

<sup>98</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 148v-150r (CCLXVII-CCLXX, pp. 306-309); f. 164v (CCXCIX, pp. 335-336).

<sup>99</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 109r (CLXXXVIII, p. 228).

<sup>100</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 104v (CLXXIX, pp. 216-217); f. 136r (CCXLII, pp. 281-282).

<sup>101</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 148r (CCLXVI, p. 305).



fa che col Cassio al convito mi aspetti  
con un libro infrascato di sonetti.<sup>102</sup>

In view of the fact that poetry was a mode of internal communication among friends and courtiers, the whole issue of interpretation is very complex and it becomes even more difficult when no documentation has survived; the poet's topical references and allusions to events and people cannot be proven and they appear very obscure. It is not easy for readers to interpret the poet's words at a distance of five centuries and to understand some of his private and cryptic allusions. In order to take a fresh approach and to test how a reading, which includes modern interpretative tools,<sup>103</sup> especially those concerning burlesque poetry, could change the accepted traditional interpretation, I have selected a sonnet as a sample of what could be done, though with due reservation for the tentative character of the argument which is about to follow.

I have chosen the sonnet 'Troncato il fil dove i leon se

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<sup>102</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 136v (CCXLIII, pp. 282-283), lines 18-20. A study of sonnet exchange would throw light on the circumstances and occasions under which the practice of verse exchange happened, on the channels and routes through which the circulation of poems took place and on how the poets were made aware of particular poems, whether it was mainly through oral recitation or the act of having them copied by professional scribes.

<sup>103</sup> Sexual metaphors in the work of vernacular poets are fully investigated by Jean Toscan in *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., although Antonio Marzo describes the work as 'un primo, parziale contributo al superamento di una visione angusta e convenzionale della funzione dell'erotismo nella letteratura cinquecentesca'. Antonio Marzo, 'La lingua come distintivo di genere: il caso della letteratura erotica del Cinquecento', *Atti del terzo convegno della società internazionale di linguistica e filologia italiana*, edited by Luciano Agostiniani, P. Bonucci, G. Giannecchini, F. Lorenzi and L. Reali (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1997), vol. 2, pp. 417-430 (p. 417).

honorano' because of its difficulty, potential ambiguity and in order to illustrate how a reading which takes into account Toscan's study, which is at times controversial, may completely change the traditional understanding of the poem as illustrated by Pèrcopo's notes to his edition. The text runs as follows:

Troncato il fil dove i leon se honorano  
 e l'arbor sopra il qual folgor no(n) cascano,  
 più non si scandon là versi né intascano  
 né più le Muse i buon poeti infiorano.

Se alcune gliene son, d'ognhor si moreno,  
 quelle pochette ch'hoggi in terra nascono  
 in fra Galliera e San Iacobo pascono.  
 Molti intaglion metalli, altri trasforano,

di queste se ne fa in fra voi l'archimia  
 in boce incorporando herba e gramatica  
 musica tutta e tempestosa scrimia.

Sperimentasi ognhor gente lunatica  
 a parangon di natura di simia,  
 civette e barbastrei volano in pratica.

Se Helicon a insalvatica,  
 fami, divo Anibal, chiamar col ciuffolo,  
 ché al suon di tanti buoi, vi canti un buffolo.<sup>104</sup>

Before looking at the sonnet, I shall mention its position in the Ambrosiana manuscript, even if there does not seem to be much correlation between the preceding and the successive sonnets in terms of either subject, themes or addressees.

'Troncato il fil dove i leon se honorano' is preceded by the poem 'Soldati ite al bordel che Marte attende' in which the poet satirizes soldiers and invites them, in the first line, to go 'to the brothel' rather than to the battlefield.<sup>105</sup> After all,

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<sup>104</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 122r (CCXIV, pp. 253-254).

<sup>105</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 121v (CCXIII, p. 252). It must be pointed out that on f. 121v the scribe made an error in transcribing the catchword and in order to correct his mistake



continues Pistoia, Mars is busy fighting battles 'in letto e in ballo', in other words the god of war himself is devoting his time to two of the most traditional pleasures represented by the images of the bed and of the dance, decadent occupations or *otia* frequently mentioned in opposition to the serious pursuits of soldiers. The sonnet is concluded by a case of false reticence in which the poet refers to the dynasty of the Pio in Carpi and to another unidentified family in Ravenna.<sup>106</sup>

In the successive sonnet 'Io vedo Reggio e tu Fabbrico vede'<sup>107</sup> topographic references are again rather precise. It begins with the mention of Reggio Emilia, the town where the author was stationed at the time when his correspondent resided in Fabbrico, a small place which belonged to the diocese and the commune of Reggio Emilia until 1306 before passing to the Correggio family. The poet compares himself to a cuckoo who puts his eggs in somebody else's nest. The key to the name of the addressee seems to be in the final line in the phrase 'porto il tuo nome in bocca'.

There does not seem to be any connection between 'Troncato il fil dove i leon se honorano' and its immediately preceding and following sonnets, although all make references to specific

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another hand added a letter of the alphabet in the upper corner of the following folios: 120v, a; 121r, d; 121v, e; 122r, b; 122v, c. According to the new amendment, the sonnet preceding 'Troncato il fil dove i leon se honorano' is therefore 'Toch, chi pichia, chi batte a raccolta?', a poem centred on a joust taking place at Ferrara between a Spaniard by the name of Michel da Gingiga and a certain Adriano of French origin.

<sup>106</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 121v (CCXIII, p. 252): 'Ma qui tacer si vole/di quel da Carpi e l'altro da Raven(n)a/che a dirne poco il bel rimane in pen(n)a'.

<sup>107</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 122v (CCXV, pp. 254-255).

places and families, suggesting that an investigation in the field of historical toponymy may yield some results as to the identification of further allusions.<sup>108</sup> The first line of our sonnet begins with a variation of a verb used in another poem, 'Tronca la corda del tuo sacro legno',<sup>109</sup> in which 'tronca' refers to the sudden severing or ending of life. The traditional interpretation of our sonnet is given in the footnote by Pèrcopo who sums it up as 'mancano i poeti per mancanza di protettori'.<sup>110</sup> Is the poem therefore a mere meditation on the pattern of patronage in late Quattrocento Italy, or is there another, more obscure, and potentially scurrilous reading?

To the perfectly plausible explanation that the initial reference to a place where lions are honoured is purely a space-temporal one namely the death of Eleonora d'Aragona d'Este and to the end of the laurel tree that is Lorenzo de' Medici, one could interpose the possible reference to an episode of impotence 'troncato il fil' where 'filo' has the meaning of the male sexual

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<sup>108</sup> In 'Troncato il fil dove i leon se honorano', for example, the mention of 'simia' in the context of other Bolognese references might point to a 'Vicolo della Scimmia', also known as 'Via Stufa della Scimmia' o 'Postribolo o Lupanare nuovo'. Sources dating from 1543 also indicate that there was a family called Simi which may have given its name to the place. Mario Fanti, *Le vie di Bologna: saggio di toponomastica storica e di storia della toponomastica urbana* ([Bologna]: Istituto per la Storia di Bologna, 1974), p. 457: 'Parrebbe dunque accertato che il nome della strada avesse avuto un'origine da un'insegna di osteria: ma una serie di notizie date dal Guidicini in più luoghi della sua opera (cfr. Breventani, p. 245) ci danno la sicurezza dell'esistenza di una famiglia Simi (talvolta la grafia è Simij o Simy) che nel 1543 possedeva una casa nella ricordata piazzetta in capo al vicolo, in confine coll'altro vicolo detto *Cul di Ragno*'.

<sup>109</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 80r (CXXX, pp. 168-169).

<sup>110</sup> Antonio Cammelli, *I sonetti faceti*, p. 253.



organ<sup>111</sup> in the city of Eleonora or at least to a transformation of sexual interests, as the *lauro* is frequently associated with the *podex*.<sup>112</sup> But since 'troncato' should also grammatically refer to the following tree, which can only be the laurel or bay, the meaning of 'when power (in both senses) is cut off one cannot write poetry any more' could also come into play, establishing a connection between poetry and sexual prowess or sexual tendencies. After all one of the meanings of *poeta*, according to Toscan, is that of sodomite.<sup>113</sup> The line 'non si scandon là versi' may be taken literally but it might also contain an extra reference in view of the fact that the phrase 'far versi' can mean 'agir en sodomie'.<sup>114</sup> In this case we could be faced with a synonymic couple in that 'intascare' would be the ancestor of the Italian euphemism 'averlo in tasca'. The syntactical significance of 'Muse' is also ambiguous. 'Muse' could be either the object of the 'buon poeti' and, as we have seen, *poeta* in the 'personnification du sodomite', or the subject, with a possible reference to either passive or active participants. In any case it is likely that the few Muses who are born nowadays are courtesans living between Galliera and San Iacobo.

And what is the meaning of 'infiorano'? Does it literally refer to 'cover with flowers' or might it have a jocular meaning in that Muses, like prostitutes, give their clients venereal

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<sup>111</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 4, p. 1695.

<sup>112</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 3, pp. 1495-1498.

<sup>113</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 4, p. 1734.

<sup>114</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., vol. 4, p. 1766.

diseases, 'fiori'?

'Se alcune ve ne son d'oghor si moreno', 'if there are any they keep dying', is the meaning of line five which, in view of its feminine ending, seems still to be referring to the Muses, but the verb 'morire' also has a double meaning. It was used in early French poetry as a reference to sexual orgasm and exploited in English by John Donne among others. And the metareading that we started could still be valid. Why do the few ones who are born 'graze' between Galliera and San Iacobo? Here the explanation given by Pèrcopo seems quite adequate: it refers to two well-known areas in the centre of Bologna. Galliera is the name of a street and of one of the Medieval gates, replaced in the seventeenth century by the one which is visible today leading to the village of Galliera near Bologna. As a street it probably followed the Roman *cardo*, which always had a tradition of aristocratic wealth. San Iacobo or Giacomo is the name of a church which was erected by Dominican monks in 1267 in Strada S. Donato.<sup>115</sup>

How then can one explain the movement to a masculine again in the line 'Molti intaglione metalli, altri trasforano'? It looks as if poets are as ambiguous in their activities as the language of poetry itself; they are engaged in other pursuits such as metal cutting and perforating, which could obviously be interpreted as sexual metaphors.

The next line goes back to a feminine 'di queste'. Could

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<sup>115</sup> Both Giovanni Ricci, *Bologna* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1980), p. 57, and Mario Fanti, *Le vie di Bologna: saggio di toponomastica storica e di storia della toponomastica urbana*, cit., p. 366, mention the ancient name of the street as Borgo S. Giacomo.



this refer to the 'opere' of the poets, which, cut out and wrought like metal, are then put together in a mysterious way, 'archimia', mixing together in the poetic voice two heterogenous elements such as 'herba e gramatica'? The poet has created a kind of Merlin's cave in which anything could happen and strange birds, together with lunatic people, are imitating others like monkeys, or stealing other people's verses and ideas. If therefore Mount Helicon becomes wild, the poet asks to be called by Anibal (Bentivoglio?) so that he, like a buffalo, may start singing among so many oxen.

Pistoia's originality is also shown in his choice of metrical scheme in which the first two quatrains are composed of *rime sdrucchiole*, all of them ending in -ano and -ono, a rare and peculiar occurrence which may give some credence to my interpretation which also represents the result of an extreme use of Jean Toscan's critical work.<sup>116</sup>

This reading is far from being conclusive, but it seems to me that the possibility of this sonnet being about the ambiguous nature and role of poets with different sexual orientation, and of this ambiguity being reflected at the grammatical and semantic level of poetry, cannot be wholly discarded. This does not reject the traditional reading of Pèrcopo: poets do need patrons and if these become scarcer, they will have to resort to new tricks.

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<sup>116</sup> Pietro G. Beltrami, *La metrica italiana*, cit., p. 183: 'Caratteristica del Quattrocento è l'idea che la rima sdrucchiola abbia un sapore popolareggiante, in virtù del quale essa entra nella terza rima delle bucoliche dei poeti senesi e in genere nella poesia bucolica'.

### 5.3 Sycophant, deserter and turncoat: a man of his time.

The governor of the castle dismissed, Il Moro bade the page prepare his camp bed. He prayed, and laid himself down, but sleep proved impossible. He lighted a candle, took a packet of papers from his wallet, and found a poem by one Antonio Cammelli da Pistoia, Bellincioni's rival, who on the first appearance of the French had deserted his patron. The poem represented the war between Ludovico and Louis XII. as a conflict between a winged serpent and a cock:-

Italia's lord, we lay to heart thy fate,  
 For good it is to learn by other men's undoing.  
 O bitter word to speak, the loss all things rueing-  
 When fickle fortune smiled, I was a potentate!  
 The world to Ludovico seemed a fief but late;  
 Itself and all its glory appeared but of his doing;  
 Yet Heav'n, his stomach high and proud presumption viewing,  
 His every hope and scheme did suddenly frustrate.

The Duke's soul was pervaded by melancholy, which was not, however, entirely disagreeable. It was partly the pride of a martyr. He remembered the servility of the sonnets the same poet had dedicated to him not long ago:-

Speak, potent lord, and say, The world to me is given!

It was midnight, and the flame of the dying candle flickered and grew dim, but still the Duke continued to pace the gloomy room, thinking of his griefs, of the injustice of blind fortune, of the ingratitude of men.<sup>117</sup>

Fiction or reality? Perhaps at the outset of the second French invasion of 1499, before his flight from Milan, Ludovico Sforza did think of Antonio Pistoia and maybe the words sycophant, deserter, turncoat did cross his mind. After all, eulogy had been quickly ousted by harsh criticism: the poet had wasted no time in turning his encomiastic lines into poisonous darts and he had gone as far as substituting the Duke of Milan's

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<sup>117</sup> Dmitry S. Merezkovsky, *The romance of Leonardo da Vinci*, cit., p. 262. It is interesting to notice that the same passage in the 1931 edition is furnished with two more sonnets by Pistoia. The incipit of the sonnet in vernacular is 'Italici Signor lo exemplo è degno', MS H.223 inf., f. 265r (CCCCXCVII, pp. 545-546).



name with that of Ercole I d'Este in one of his sonnets.<sup>118</sup>

Between 1490 and 1501,<sup>119</sup> Pistoia penned 160<sup>120</sup> poems describing at some length the political situation in Italy broadly following the historical events in rough chronological order. The poet, who was writing at a time of profound political crisis, witnessed the rise and fall of Ludovico, the ascent of Alexander VI and Cesare Borgia, the military activities of 1494,<sup>121</sup> the anti-French alliance and the battle of Fornovo in

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<sup>118</sup> The sonnet in question is 'La Italia è posta in fren de la paura'. The concluding hendecasyllable of the tail differs in Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli), f. 114v, and in MS H.223 inf., f. 219v (CCCCVI, pp. 442-443). While in the former the line reads as 'se no(n) ch(e) 'l Moro ha posto un braccio in cielo', the latter bears the following version: 'se no(n) che Hercule ha posto un braccio in cielo'. The approximate date of MS 2618 can be fixed to the last decade of the fifteenth century while MS H.223 inf. can be datable to the first half of the sixteenth century.

<sup>119</sup> Before 1490, only six sonnets had been devoted to a political issue namely the Ferrarese-Venetian war of 1482-1484, MS H.223 inf., ff. 201r-203v (CCCLXXII-CCCLXXVII, pp. 402-409).

<sup>120</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 109v (CLXXXIX, pp. 229-230); f. 197r-v (CCCLXIV-CCCLXV, pp. 394-396); ff. 201r-207r (CCCLXXII-CCCLXXXIV, pp. 402-419); ff. 208r-210r (CCCLXXXVI-CCCXC, pp. 420-425); ff. 211r-215r (CCCXCI-CCCCXIX, pp. 426-436); f. 215v (the sonnet was published by Pèrcopo in the doubtful attribution section, III, pp. 596-597); ff. 216v-267v (CCCC-DII, pp. 436-551); ff. 268v-281r (DIV-DXXIX, pp. 552-582). The following articles deal to a lesser or major degree with Pistoia's political sonnets: Ferdinando Gabotto, 'La storia genovese nelle poesie del Pistoia', *Giornale ligustico*, 15, 1888, pp. 81-121; Elia Zerbini, 'Sonetti politici vernacoli', *GSLI*, 11, 1888, pp. 156-165; Giuseppe Pardi, 'Le rime storiche del Pistoia', *BSP*, 46-47, 1946, pp. 3-20; 48, 1946, pp. 15-27; 49, 1947, pp. 41-64.

<sup>121</sup> A thorough analysis of the origins of the Italian wars and aftermath of the French invasion is provided in David Abulafia ed., *The French descent into Renaissance Italy 1494-95: antecedents and effects* (Aldershot: Variorum Press, 1995). As to Florence, an account of the reactions and effects brought about by the French descent is given by Guidobaldo Guidi, *Ciò che accadde al tempo della Signoria di novembre dicembre in Firenze l'anno 1494* (Florence: Arnaud, 1988).

1495 and finally the triumph of the French armies in 1499.<sup>122</sup> Though it could be said that he wrote a chronicle of the last decade of the fifteenth century, his interests were not towards factual accuracy, his aspirations did not match those of the impartial chronicler or the historian. The majority of his statements are prejudiced in favour of certain leaders and in derision of others. His response to contemporary political events is biased, personal and sectional: his poems voice opinions of a partisan sort. In his verse Pistoia sees himself as a soothsayer:<sup>123</sup> he seems keen to project an image of himself as a teller of the truth. He advises and warns leaders, urges upon them the need to re-consider their positions before setting out their policies, reminds them of past history, condemns and praises their actions. He judges, reveals, complains but above of all he foresees.<sup>124</sup> The sonnets are often set out in terms of a prophecy, 'mai dissi prophetia ch(e) no(n) sia piena',<sup>125</sup> in which the poet consistently predicts trouble in Italy, the destruction of the peninsula, the rise and fall of

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<sup>122</sup> A thorough and exhaustive exposition of the historical events affecting Lombardy is provided by Franco Catalano, Nino Valeri, Caterina Santoro et al., *Storia di Milano: l'età sforzesca dal 1450 al 1500* (Milan: Fondazione Treccani degli Alfieri, 1956-1962), vol. 7.

<sup>123</sup> In the sonnet 'Cra, cra, cra, cra, cra, cra, cra il corbo gracchia', MS H.223 inf., f. 229v (CCCCXXVI, pp. 465-466), the poet regards himself as someone who can and does speak the truth, lines 15-16: 'So che tu n'intendi, e tocchi/con man che a consigliarti parlo il vero'.

<sup>124</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 232r (CCCCXXXI, pp. 471-472), lines 5-6: 'Già questa prophetia nacque di me/ma hor di novo un p(ro)nostico fo'.

<sup>125</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 272v (DXII, pp. 562-563), line 7.



the Italian leaders.<sup>126</sup> The verse is often apocalyptic in tone, 'pien d'ira a iudicar viene il Messia/per far de suoi nimici la vendetta',<sup>127</sup> and the terminology is reminiscent of Biblical passages, of a Last Judgement scenario:

Io vedo un fin no(n) di grandine o pioggia  
ma dal ciel qual la neve scender fiamme,  
fulmine ardenti qui piovere a moggia.

Patri pianger sento io, figliuoli e mamme,  
né veggio per fugir teto né loggia,  
li peccati punire a pesi e dram(m)e.<sup>128</sup>

As in all prophecies, the poet pretends to anticipate events; he furnishes the sonnets with rather accurate indications and in a few instances he gives precise chronological indications such as the year or even the month and the exact day<sup>129</sup> in order to flesh out his predictions, though the actual poems may have well been written *post eventum* using the prophecy as a mere literary device.<sup>130</sup> Out of 160 sonnets, more than two thirds are an

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<sup>126</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 209r (CCCLXXXVIII, pp. 422-423), lines 1-2: 'Hor oltre, ecco che 'l papa è incoronato/io lo pronosticai e non son santo'.

<sup>127</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 224r (CCCCXV, pp. 453-454), lines 7-8.

<sup>128</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 223v (CCCCXIV, p. 452), lines 9-14.

<sup>129</sup> Political and historical clues present in the poems allow the latter to be roughly datable. In five instances, the poet himself provides specific clues: 'non passa il mille quattro nove e nove', MS H.223 inf., f. 221v (CCCCX, pp. 447-448); 'del mille quatrocen quatro e nonanta', f. 225v (CCCCXVIII, pp. 456-457); 'correa in decembre quando fu l'entrata/novantaquatro a giorni vintinove', f. 231v (CCCCXXX, pp. 470-471); 'pel cinquecento fa il no\n/antanove', f. 249v (CCCCLXVI, pp. 510-511); 'il millesimo è presso', f. 276r (DXIX, pp. 570-571). However it should be stressed that the dates in the sonnets do not necessarily match the actual dates of their composition.

<sup>130</sup> The fortune of prognostication is widely attested by the yearly predictions published by astrologers. Numerous pronostici relating to the years 1491-1496 and 1498-1502 are preserved in

account of the events leading up to the invasions of 1494 and 1499, their escalation, outcome and aftermath. In his sonnets, Pistoia is concerned with home as well as with foreign affairs. His main subjects are the five major states of the Italian peninsula: the Milanese Duchy, the Papal State, the Kingdom of Naples,<sup>131</sup> the Venetian and Florentine Republics as well as those minor leaders and foreign powers whose political manoeuvres affected Italy to a major or lesser degree. Francesco Gonzaga, Ercole I d'Este, Caterina Sforza, Cesare Borgia, the Emperor Maximilian, the Turks, France and Spain are referred to and commented upon in the poems.

In the face of the invading armies, first in 1494 and later in 1499, the poet shows a strong concern with 'our' Italy. He warns the country against Charles VIII, 'Italia, tu haverai più d'un boffetto',<sup>132</sup> and urges it to be prepared to fend off the long-threatened foreign invasion: 'preparati pur viva a veder morte/crudel cibar di sangue alla tua me(n)sa'.<sup>133</sup> The poet's greatest fear is that the country is doomed, 'tu mi sai già d'arsic\c/io',<sup>134</sup> and that the 'poverella mischina'<sup>135</sup> is left

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Seville at the Colombina Library. Klaus Wagner and Manuel Carrera, *Catalogo dei libri a stampa in lingua italiana della Biblioteca Colombina di Siviglia*, cit., pp. 53-62.

<sup>131</sup> The poet often refers to the situation in the Kingdom of Naples from the entry of the French army into the capital city in February 1495 to the quick and sudden succession of Aragonese Kings, the death of Ferrante of Aragon, the abdication of Alfonso II in 1495 in favour of his son Ferrante II who died in the following year to leave the power in the hands of his uncle Federico.

<sup>132</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 216v (CCCC, pp. 436-437).

<sup>133</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 218v (CCCCIV, pp. 440-441), lines 3-4.

<sup>134</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 234r (CCCCXXXV, pp. 476-477).



to its own devices, 'povera gregge abbandonata sei'.<sup>136</sup> He appeals to the unity of Italy, he warns against the discord within a country and in particular among its leaders, but the five Italian entities are anything but united. Pistoia invokes terms such as *Italia*, *Italico Regno*, *Italiani*, and *Italici*; he dwells upon the conventional theme that a nation is strong while united but weak when divided. The reality, however, is quite different: Italy is a country deeply divided against itself and the poet is well aware of it. Using a terminology with a Dantesque flavour, the nation is defined 'serva',<sup>137</sup> 'simplicetta istolta',<sup>138</sup> 'male accorta',<sup>139</sup> without leader and hope, 'senza nochier'<sup>140</sup> and 'fuor di speme',<sup>141</sup> wretched and tearful, 'misera dolente',<sup>142</sup> and caught in the grips of fear, 'è tutta di paura tinta'.<sup>143</sup> Italy is described as highly corrupted, squeezed between Crassus and Midas,<sup>144</sup> opulence and wealth, run by evils, 'tutta d'ogni mal se insiepa',<sup>145</sup> torn and

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<sup>135</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 234r (CCCCXXXV, pp. 476-477).

<sup>136</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 235r (CCCCXXXVII, pp. 478-479).

<sup>137</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 210r (CCCXC, p. 425).

<sup>138</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 218v (CCCCIV, pp. 440-441).

<sup>139</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 228v (CCCCXXIV, pp. 463-464).

<sup>140</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 228v (CCCCXXIV, pp. 463-464).

<sup>141</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 234v (CCCCXXXVI, pp. 477-478).

<sup>142</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 234r (CCCCXXXV, pp. 476-477).

<sup>143</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 272r (DXI, pp. 560-562).

<sup>144</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 204r (CCCLXXVIII, pp. 410-412).

<sup>145</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 223v (CCCCXIV, p. 452).

laughed at, 'ch(e) l'un ti stratia e l'altro te deride'.<sup>146</sup> The poet cannot but criticize the current state of affairs: 'Ch(e) dirai tu de Italia? Dirò male./Che mal se ne po' dir? Quanto se 'n trova'.<sup>147</sup> In these somewhat conventional 'evils of the age' pieces, Pistoia laments the lack of faith and trust: 'che in questi t(em)pi no(n) si serva fede',<sup>148</sup> 'fede no(n) c'è, ch(e) in ciel n'andò la fede',<sup>149</sup> and again 'la fede è tra 'l thesoro e tra l'inganno'.<sup>150</sup> The country's misfortunes are attributed to an abdication in leadership as Italian states are only good at fighting with words and unable to implement their policies, 'per no(n) formar coi fatti le parole'.<sup>151</sup> On more than one occasion he reminds leaders that 'son maschi i fatti e donne le parole'<sup>152</sup> and advises Caterina Sforza, the only woman who played a part in the defence during the siege of Imola, spearheaded by Cesare Borgia, to act and leave talk aside: 'habbi nei fatti più che in parlar l'animo'.<sup>153</sup> Insider dealings, tergiversations, lies, uncertainty, confusion, duplicity and lack of *equilibrium*: this is the state of affairs in Italy at the turn of the fifteenth century. Nothing and nobody is to be trusted

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<sup>146</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 265v (CCCCXCVIII, pp. 546-547), line 4.

<sup>147</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 254v (CCCCLXXVI, p. 522), lines 1-2.

<sup>148</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 231v (CCCCXXX, pp. 470-471), line 16.

<sup>149</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 252r (CCCCLXXI, p. 516), line 10.

<sup>150</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 255r (CCCCLXXVII, pp. 523-524), line 8.

<sup>151</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 258v (CCCCXXXIV, pp. 530-531), line 6.

<sup>152</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 273v (DXIV, pp. 564-565), line 2.

<sup>153</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 270v (DVIII, pp. 557-558), line 12.



because 'tal mostra di saper che nulla intende'<sup>154</sup> and 'nulla no(n) sa chi mostra di sapere'.<sup>155</sup> In the present situation the power rests with those who are smooth operators: 'Chi ha fra i grandi in Italia balia?/Collor che sanno simular parole'.<sup>156</sup> At the outset of the first French descent in the autumn of 1494, the poet warns his country and advises it to be cautious because Charles VIII and the French mean what they say, 'il lor parlare è vero il tuo bugia'.<sup>157</sup> Nobody really knows what is going on among a flow of contrasting opinions, 'per gli tanti pareri varii e strani',<sup>158</sup> 'tanti sono i parer quante persone',<sup>159</sup> and emotions, 'chi sputa il core e chi sputa il cervello'.<sup>160</sup> Words have no consistency, no real depth, 'fatte di cera al foco e neve al sole';<sup>161</sup> a new invented story is told every day, 'diman haren qualche bugia di fresco',<sup>162</sup> and the truth is never spoken, 'nulla dil ver Signor qua no(n) s'intende'.<sup>163</sup> The country is seized by a tumult of confusion whose nature and extent the poet well summarizes in a sonnet dealing with the

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<sup>154</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 218r (CCCCIII, pp. 439-440), line 8.

<sup>155</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 234v (CCCCXXXVI, pp. 477-478), line 12.

<sup>156</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 204v (CCCLXXIX, p. 413), lines 1-2.

<sup>157</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 216v (CCCC, pp. 436-437), line 12.

<sup>158</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 217v (CCCCII, pp. 438-439), line 10.

<sup>159</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 218r (CCCCIII, pp. 439-440), line 9.

<sup>160</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 218r (CCCCIII, pp. 439-440), line 12.

<sup>161</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 218r (CCCCIII, pp. 439-440), line 17.

<sup>162</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 222r (CCCCXI, pp. 448-449), line 17.

<sup>163</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 230v (CCCCXXVIII, pp. 468-469), line 1.

state of Italy in the late autumn of 1494:

Quasi piglia ogni dì Napoli el Re,  
e la mitria papale ad altri danno,  
Firenze è tutta in preda a saccomanno  
pensa tu di Bologna quel ch(e) n'è.

Vinegia harà fatica a tener sé,  
Ferrara no(n) serà senza gran danno  
tutta Romagna infin desolata hanno.  
Non vi vo' dire a quel che Mantua è,

Genoa ha ben trenta gallee in porto  
scorrendo il mar con le navi ogni giorno  
perché de scudi un gran soccorso è gionto.

Pisa è disfatta il Fanale e Livorno,  
stata alhor è Sarazana un pan onto  
Pietra Santa impastata e missa in forno.

De Italia i mo(n)ti intorno  
rodono i galli come il gran la tarma  
talch(é) molti hanno già i lor covo in Parma.

Ciascuno invan qui s'arma  
chi di parlar chi d'ascoltar si pasce  
e fra mille bugie un ver no(n) nasce.<sup>164</sup>

In 1499 'La Italia è caduta'<sup>165</sup> and a cruel destiny is awaiting  
the country:

Italia la tua taglia  
serà d'essere ischiava invidia e stolta  
tra gotti e longobardi un'altra volta.<sup>166</sup>

The poet recognizes a deep feeling of unease and the nation's  
grievances find ample expression in his verse through the  
conventional formula of 'abuses of the age'. The poet's sense of  
frustration is stressed with references to the country's glorious

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<sup>164</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 217r (CCCCI, pp. 437-438).

<sup>165</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 275v (DXVII, pp. 569-570).

<sup>166</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 278r (DXXIII, pp. 574-576), lines 18-



past which is recalled in more than one poem. Written after 1494, the following sonnet evokes the greatest and most lasting domain that had ever been known, the Roman empire:

Passò il Re franco Italia al tuo dispetto,  
 cosa che no(n) fé ma il popul romano  
 con legno in resta e con la spada in mano  
 con nemici alle spalle e inanti al petto.

Cesare e Scipion di cui ho letto  
 i nimici domor di mano in mano  
 e costui come un can che va lontano  
 mordendo questo e quel passò via netto.

Matre vituperata da taliani,  
 che Cesare acquistò più no(n) si dica  
 insubri, galli, cimbri, indici e germani.

Concubina di Mida al ciel nimica  
 che hai dato a Vener Marte ne le mani,  
 discordia con un vel gli occhi t'intrica,

che con poca fatica  
 in sul transirte il gallo le confine  
 tutti i tuo figli diventar galline.

Sia come vuole il fine:  
 se ben del mo(n)do acquistasti lo impero  
 mai no(n) si extinguerà il tuo vituperio.<sup>167</sup>

Great historical precedents are used as a device to advise leaders and to substantiate the poet's argument. In the following instance exempla are employed to stir Ludovico into action and to urge him to return to Milan after his flight in 1499 in the hope that he may free the city from the French invaders:

Torna e dispiega il tuo ducal vexillo  
 sotto del quale spera anchor Mil(an)o  
 di ritornarsi in un età tranquillo,

ch(e) no(n) tanto aspettò il popul romano  
 da galli oppresso il tornar di Camillo  
 libero poi con la sua forte mano.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 235v (CCCCXXXVIII, pp. 479-480).

<sup>168</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 273r (DXIII, pp. 563-564), lines 9-14.

Though Il Moro did come back from Germany in 1500, his return was short-lived. The poet, who had shown an unswerving support for the Duke of Milan and had paid fulsome praise to him, realizes, following the latter's ultimate downfall, that even his much loved Duke, like the rest of the Italian leaders, lacked the clue to successful statecraft.

In his sonnets Pistoia exposes the inner weakness of the Italian states. In turns, the poet's attention focuses upon the leading men and he deplures them all with the exception of Ercole I d'Este and Francesco Gonzaga who, in the eyes of the poet, are not culpable of any misdemeanours, though the causes for their better treatment are not to be found in their political abilities but in Pistoia's consciousness that his verse may jeopardize his job and safety.<sup>169</sup>

Venice, Florence, the Papal States, the Kingdom of Naples and even the Milanese Dukedom, after its downfall, are shown no

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<sup>169</sup> Not on one single occasion and in the space of nineteen years from 1482 to 1501 does Pistoia turn his pen against Ercole I d'Este or Francesco Gonzaga. Whenever he refers to them, the poet either weighs his words carefully or simply speaks out in their favour. The reasons are patently clear: he was an employee of the former and a protégé of the latter's wife. Pistoia clearly states that the best thing is to humour one's Lords, Duke Ercole in his case, and follow his example, MS H.223 inf., f. 244r (CCCCLV, pp. 499-500), lines 15-17:

Purché 'l si satisfaccia  
Hercule, basta che in conclusione  
il tutto fa chi satisfa al patrone.

The following sonnets contains lines in praise of the two rulers: f. 222r (CCCCXI, pp. 448-449); f. 247v (CCCCLXII, pp. 506-507); f. 255r (CCCCLXXVII, pp. 523-524); f. 259r (CCCCLXXXV, p. 532); f. 268v (DIV, pp. 552-553); f. 278v (DXXIV, pp. 576-577).



mercy. Pistoia complains of the leaders' ill-judged actions,<sup>170</sup> deploras their conduct and calls them 'Italici mastin crudi tiranni'.<sup>171</sup> The poet refers to the states and their rulers by means of features of their badges or coats of arms and through the use of Aesop's fables,<sup>172</sup> a device often used in political verse and amply employed in the thirteenth and fourteenth century.<sup>173</sup> 'Sega', 'Marzocco, Giglio' or 'Leone', 'Pantera', 'Biscia', 'Lupa' and 'Cerva' this is how the poet often alludes to the cities of Bologna, Florence, Lucca, Milan, Siena and Pisa respectively. The same technique is used with reference to political leaders: the poet terms Charles VIII 'Gallo', 'Basilisco' and 'Nibbio', he refers to Ercole as 'Aquila bianca' and 'Diamante' and to Ludovico as 'Biscione', 'Angue', and 'Biscia'.

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<sup>170</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 230r (CCCCXXVII, pp. 466-467), line 5-8:

Mal pensò il Re di Franza e pegio il Moro  
 a tor sopra le spalle sì gran soma  
 alcun no(n) volse Italia mai far doma  
 che no(n) lasciasse e la vita e 'l thesoro.

<sup>171</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 247r (CCCCLXI, pp. 505-506), line 2.

<sup>172</sup> Specific references to Aesop's fable are contained in several sonnets among which the following: 'Cra, cra, cra, cra, cra, cra il corbo gracchia', MS H.223 inf., f. 229v (CCCCXXVI, pp. 465-466); 'Italia piange misera dolente', f. 234r (CCCCXXXV, pp. 476-477); 'Ch(e) fai tu Ludovico ogn'huom ti mira', f. 242r (CCCCLI, pp. 494-495) and 'La maliciosa volpe fé pensiero', f. 248v (CCCCLXIV, pp. 508-509).

<sup>173</sup> The technique of personifying cities as animals was also used by the fourteenth-century Lucchese poet Pietro dei Faitinelli known as Il Mugnone in his political sonnets. The subject is investigated by Annabel M. Patterson, *Fables of power: Aesopian writing and political history* (Durham; London: Duke University, 1991) and Caterina Griffanti, 'Esopo tra Medio Evo ed Umanesimo: rassegna di studi', *LI*, 46, 1994, no. 2, pp. 315-340.

Antonio Pistoia produced a considerable amount of satirical verse through which he tried to promote his views and those of the leaders he supported. In view of the fact that Venice and Florence refused to back the policies implemented by Il Moro, Pistoia attacks them:

Prior m'inculo, Ancian nel forame,  
Signor cani di dieci ne lo avello  
otto, dodice, sedece, al bordello  
gli altri officiucci tutti al bolicame.<sup>174</sup>

Venice is reviled and the city's characteristic accent is ridiculed:

Il Re de li animali alato mostro  
guarda da la Adriatica fenestra  
se a man sinistra vede o a man destra  
per dir di quel d'altrui: 'Questo xe n(ost)ro'.

Ad un manda denari a un altro inchiostro  
per far col cazzo in man la sua menestra  
ma l'angue ognhor fra pie' se gli incapestra  
dicendogli: 'Messer quel no(n) xe v(ost)ro'.<sup>175</sup>

Pistoia voices his disapproval and calls the city 'superba',<sup>176</sup> he accuses it of duplicity, 'spesso all'ingan(n)ator torna l'ingan(n)o',<sup>177</sup> as well as of inadequacy, 'e non hai cor viril come i leoni',<sup>178</sup> as the Venetian Republic cannot stand up to the Milanese Dukedom. Using a damaging simile, the poet summarizes his argument in a scene with a comic and proverbial

<sup>174</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 280v (DXXVIII, pp. 581-582), lines 1-4.

<sup>175</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 253v (CCCCLXXIV, pp. 519-520), lines 1-8.

<sup>176</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 266r (CCCCXCIX, pp. 547-548).

<sup>177</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 266r (CCCCXCIX, pp. 547-548), line 8.

<sup>178</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 267r (DI, pp. 549-550), line 2.



dimension:

Coi par si vede d'un la forza intiera  
 ma tu hai tutte perse le ragioni  
 come collui che si cava i coglioni  
 per far maggior dispetto alla mogliera.<sup>179</sup>

Florence gets a similar if not worse treatment both during the Savonarolan interval and the Republican period. The poet denounces the town's lack of prowess and of guidance; he describes Florence as 'di paura pregno',<sup>180</sup> speaks of its faults, 'crudel fiera et accerba',<sup>181</sup> and blames it for its greed, 'et io più ingordo ogni giorno ti provo'.<sup>182</sup> He deplores its ruling class, 'tu popul vil nel regger mal perito',<sup>183</sup> and shows his disdain for its inhabitants whom in turn he calls 'cani fiorentin'<sup>184</sup> and 'teste pacie [i.e. pazze] foderate a vai'.<sup>185</sup> Florence has, according to the poet, no political control and it will not succeed in regaining Pisa in 1499:

Tu credevi paparti come un pane  
 Marzocco, Pisa, e tu no(n) fosti quello.  
 Le tue bombarde d'or sono in bordello,  
 Pisa le ha date in guardia alle puttane.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 267r (DI, pp. 549-550), lines 4-8.

<sup>180</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 243v (CCCCLIV, pp. 498-499).

<sup>181</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 256r (CCCCLXXIX, pp. 525-526).

<sup>182</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 256v (CCCCLXXX, pp. 526-527), line 17.

<sup>183</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 257r (CCCCLXXXI, pp. 527-528), line 12.

<sup>184</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 252r (CCCCLXXI, p. 516).

<sup>185</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 253r (CCCCLXXIII, pp. 518-519), line 12.

<sup>186</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 253r (CCCCLXXIII, pp. 518-519), lines 1-4.

The poet wishes the town were destroyed:

Sì che 'l viver tuo tristo  
fa a più iusti bramarti in ogni loco  
a sacco, a morte, alla ruina, al foco.<sup>187</sup>

Florence's misfortunes are attributed to its change in leadership and the poet lashes out angrily at Friar Girolamo Savonarola who is held responsible for the city's political collapse. The preacher, who is labelled 'indivino'<sup>188</sup> and 'speculativo',<sup>189</sup> has turned Florentines, who used to sell cunning to all the world, 'vendevon l'astutia a tutto il mondo',<sup>190</sup> into simpletons 'credul[i] al garrular d'una cornacchia'.<sup>191</sup> The city's prestige is gone with its political leadership:

Tal che a chi fusti più non t'assimiglio  
di mercanti e d'ingegno famosa  
il mondo si regeva a tuo consiglio.<sup>192</sup>

The present state of affairs would have never occurred, according to the poet, under the Medici's leadership though, in reality, Florence's setback was due to the political inadequacy of Piero de' Medici whose blunders led to his expulsion from the city in 1494. Piero's father, Lorenzo the Magnificent, would have on the contrary put an end to the city's mismanagement if he were still

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<sup>187</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 255v (CCCCLXXVIII, pp. 524-525), lines 18-20.

<sup>188</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 236v (CCCCXL, pp. 481-483).

<sup>189</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 236v (CCCCXL, pp. 481-483).

<sup>190</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 243v (CCCCLIV, pp. 498-499), line 20.

<sup>191</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 243v (CCCCLIV, pp. 498-499), line 17.

<sup>192</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 241r (CCCCXLIX, pp. 492-493), lines 9-11.



alive. Singled out for special mention and praised for his political skills, Lorenzo, says Pistoia, would have solved the political crisis because he 'haria fatto vendetta col silenzio'.<sup>193</sup> The Tuscan capital, however, can still redeem itself provided that it abandons its religious fervour, 'quando il frate t'harà reso il cervello'.<sup>194</sup> On many an occasion the poet urges the city to act wisely and this means one thing only: joining il Moro in his alliance with Charles VIII, 'fa pur di star col Mor ligato o cinto'.<sup>195</sup> Pistoia expresses his dissatisfaction with the city for having shifted alliances and urges it to imitate Il Moro's conduct and invites it to consider the lesson of its past history:

Già te 'l dissi: ama la casa regale  
e la sforzesca come i tuoi proavi  
e 'l Moro qual pò farti bene e male.<sup>196</sup>

The poet's indignation against Florence and Venice goes hand in hand with his disdain for the *vulgo*. Not even once does the poet express his solidarity with the common people. He always looks down on the lower classes. In his verse, the antithesis between elites and the poor and socially alienated, rulers and ruled is highly stressed. Not only does he show a general lack of interest in the conditions and grievances of the masses, but he covers them with sarcasm and scorn. The common people are not

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<sup>193</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 257r (CCCCLXXXI, pp. 527-528), line 11.

<sup>194</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 253r (CCCCLXXIII, pp. 518-519), line 6.

<sup>195</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 219r (CCCCV, pp. 441-442), line 16.

<sup>196</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 227v (CCCCXXII, pp. 460-461), lines 9-11.

to be trusted and not to be listened to; they lie, 'parla il vulgo e mente',<sup>197</sup> they talk nonsense, 'novelle nove son tra il vulgo e 'l vento',<sup>198</sup> and make lots of noise and nothing else, 'il vulgo trombetta'.<sup>199</sup> They must be silenced, 'lingue tacete',<sup>200</sup> because 'questa turba', the ignorant mass, the vulgar mass, 'ogni bon guasta e conturba'.<sup>201</sup> The Italian humbler social ranks are gossipy, opinionated<sup>202</sup> and lazy.<sup>203</sup> When the populace, among whom women, come to the rescue of Pisa, Pistoia cannot but express his greatest amazement for such an action:

Ma il popul vago di salvar tuo impero  
t'ha con le donne insieme liberata  
cosa da creder dura e pur fu vero.<sup>204</sup>

As we have just seen, the poet uses his pen to discredit Republican governments, to condemn the meddling in political affairs of the lower classes but also to denounce the moral corruption of the clergy, to discredit the church, to cry out its

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<sup>197</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 208v (CCCLXXXVII, pp. 421-422).

<sup>198</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 222r (CCCCXI, pp. 448-449), line 2.

<sup>199</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 278r (DXXIII, pp. 574-576).

<sup>200</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 225r (CCCCXVII, pp. 455-456).

<sup>201</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 280v (DXXVIII, pp. 581-582).

<sup>202</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 217v (CCCCII, pp. 438-439), lines 15-17:

O quanti Italiani  
sento d'ognhor novi iudicii tessere  
e duo sanno e no(n) più quel che debbe essere.

<sup>203</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 219v (CCCCVI, pp. 442-443).

<sup>204</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 252v (CCCLXXII, pp. 517-518), lines 12-14.



vices and follies. The deeper division between the practice and the ideal aims of religion, between spirituality and the cynical attitudes of the clergy are fully revealed and exposed by Pistoia in his verse. On numerous occasions the poet gives voice to his discontent with ecclesiastical matters: the church has forsaken its real duty and is only interested in making money, in power and nepotistic politics. Simony, incest and sodomy are the clergy's main activities and the church's devotions are towards power, pleasure and wealth. Perhaps it is right to say that the most inflamed and harsh poems ever penned by Pistoia were inspired by the conduct of the clergy, of its pontiffs Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII and above all by the behaviour of the infamous Rodrigo de Borja Xavita alias Pope Alexander VI. The following sonnet provides a comprehensive picture of the religious dimension in Rome:

A Roma che si vende? Le parole.  
 Del vero e de la fe'? C'è carestia.  
 Che mercanti vi son? Di simonia.  
 Che vita se gli fa? Come l'huom vole.

Chi se bestemia più? Chi formò il sole.  
 Che vicii sonvi? Incesti e sodomia.  
 Dove si fa iustitia? In beccaria.  
 De la ragion? Son serrate le scole.

U' vanno i benefitii? Fra denari.  
 Bisognavi altro? Poca consientia.  
 Che altro? Amici bon, ma qua son cari.

Vendevisi altro? Sì che la indulgentia.  
 Il v(ost)ro Dio perdona a questi avari?  
 Sì, se confesson ogni lor fallentia.

Vuole altro? Penitentia.  
 Altro? Restitution di fama et oro.  
 La n(ost)ra legge poi perdona loro.

È di questi il tuo Moro?  
 No, che ante visto Dio il suo iusto stato,

lo elesse prima in ciel ch(e) fusse nato.<sup>205</sup>

Though Pistoia shows his indignation for the overall misconduct of the clergy and denounces the vices of the papacy, 'la ingorda simonia del clero',<sup>206</sup> it is towards Pope Alexander VI that the fiercest attack is spearheaded. Pistoia is most critical that the pontificate is in the hands of a Catalan<sup>207</sup> who has achieved his position through corruption because the papal throne is up for sale to the wealthiest bidder:

Enorme caso e rio  
che la sedia apostolica si vende  
a quel che ha più denari, e chi più spende.<sup>208</sup>

More than in the care of souls, Alexander VI, like his two predecessors, is concerned with accruing personal wealth and with bringing as much land as possible under his control: 'il novo patre santo d'or fa massa/perché il vuol Cervia da la Signoria'.<sup>209</sup> The poet contrasts the current state of laxity and immorality of the church with the conduct and piety of the early martyrs and saints:

Navicella mal retta dal nochiero  
dove solea pescar l'anime a Dio  
lo iusto poverel discalzo Piero<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 205r (CCCLXXX, pp. 413-414).

<sup>206</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 210r (CCCXC, p. 425).

<sup>207</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 209v (CCCLXXXIX, p. 424), line 13: 'la chiesa è ne le man d'un catelano'.

<sup>208</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 210r (CCCXC, p. 425), lines 15-17.

<sup>209</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 211r (CCCXCI, pp. 426-427), lines 5-6.

<sup>210</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 210r (CCCXC, p. 425), lines 9-11.



and again:

Al primo successor bastò la rete  
sol per pescare a Dio fedel tumulto,  
e tu d'ognhor con qualch(e) novo insulto  
tien de la fede le chiavi segrete.<sup>211</sup>

The Pope is neglecting his duty and responsibilities, engages in activities which are more political than pastoral, he does not conduct himself with the dignity due to his office: he is venal, corrupt and only interested in pursuing the promotion of himself and of the individual members of his family. Alexander is rebuked for his worldliness, his misconduct, 'le tue voglie acerbe et empie',<sup>212</sup> which will transform the church into a pigsty, 'vedremo un dì far del tempio una stalla'.<sup>213</sup> Pistoia accuses him of deceit, misguidance, deadly sins, condemns him for his greed, vanity, attacks the faults of his papal policies and denounces his deplorable conduct. The following anti-clerical lines, which are all part of one sonnet, are perhaps among the most striking and violent Pistoia ever wrote: an explosive miscellany of specific charges are brought against the Pontiff. The scorn and rage heaped upon the Pope seem to know no bounds:

Ruina de' christiani, tu falso prete  
per simonia comprasti il divin culto  
da cui è fatto il templo santo stolto,  
con homicidii, stupri e con monete,  
[...]  
Così mal vanno le cose divine  
in man d'un simoniaco il qual fa il gregge  
d'ogn'hor guidare alle sue concubine.

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<sup>211</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 258r (CCCCLXXXIII, pp. 529-530), lines 5-8.

<sup>212</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 228r (CCCCXXIII, pp. 462-463).

<sup>213</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 275r (DXVII, pp. 568-569), line 16.

[...]  
 Scacciaranno le bisce  
 il famelico verme iniquo e tristo  
 che divora la croce a Iesù Christo.<sup>214</sup>

Pistoia gives the impression that he is genuinely concerned with the decadence of his times, he sounds like someone who really cared for the fate of his country, a poet who was worried about the ethics of government, moral corruption and political instability. He also addresses the vexed question of *lo straniero*, the barbarian, which had an illustrious vernacular literary precedent in Petrarch. In another sonnet the poet is confident that Il Moro will be able to bring Italy together and avoid further foreign incursions: 'Ma se tu accordi la Italica lira/non torneran più barbari a cavallo'.<sup>215</sup> The poet expresses his dissatisfaction with soldiers and discredits them in the eyes of the entire nation. He attacks their faults and accuses them of lacking courage and wasting their time in prayers:

Ben so io che voi sete confessati  
 come collor che temon di morire  
 che pria solei giurare e maledire,  
 hor dite l'hore a paragon de frati.

Vo' tutto il giorno state in ginocchione  
 a graffiar santi et a mangiare altari,  
 le note poi spendeti in far corone.<sup>216</sup>

In Italy even the god of war, Mars, says the poet, is crippled by fear, and soldiers are derided:

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<sup>214</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 258r (CCCCLXXXIII, pp. 529-530), lines 1-4, 9-11, 18-20.

<sup>215</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 242r (CCCCLI, pp. 494-495), lines 5-6.

<sup>216</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 237v (CCCCXLII, pp. 484-485), lines 5-11.



Dove è Marte francioso? Tra le dame.  
 Quel de Italia dove è? Tra la paura.  
 Ch(e) fan collor che portan l'armatura?  
 Chi pover vive, e chi se mor di fame.<sup>217</sup>

After Italy's final loss of independence in 1499, soldiers or better 'our' soldiers, 'n(ost)ri soldati',<sup>218</sup> are a shambles: swollen heads, feet covered in mud, bodies infested with lice and bitten by mosquitos, limbs wrapped in bandages:

Cinti de fassi e veste di scopati,  
 calce di pele viva naturale,  
 scarpe fatte nel letto d'un canale  
 berete de nie(n)te e capi infiati

ne riporton di qua n(ost)ri soldati,  
 de pedochi dipinti e da senzale  
 chiamando un pasca, un altro carnevale  
 el par del boglion ch(e) fanno i frati.<sup>219</sup>

Is this patriotic outburst, national pride and contempt for foreigners genuine? Is Pistoia a passionately nationalistic poet who does care for the fate of his country? The answer is no.<sup>220</sup> His interests in politics and his treatment of the historical events are an exercise in propaganda, though his versified manifesto had different objectives at times, and in the very end knew no loyalty but to a deep-rooted cynicism. Pistoia was both

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<sup>217</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 246v (CCCCLX, pp. 504-505), lines 1-4.

<sup>218</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 276v (DXX, p. 572).

<sup>219</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 276v (DXX, p. 572), lines 1-8.

<sup>220</sup> Vittorio Rossi, *Il Quattrocento*, cit., p. 818: 'Non gabelleremo questi sonetti per alta lirica patriottica, né ascriveremo a ispirazione profonda e sincera l'incisiva e talvolta solenne vigoria della forma'.

a deceitful flatterer and a fine and alert observer.<sup>221</sup> His verse oscillated between the two but in the end only responded to the poet's own exigencies as he was far too conscious that the existence of his verse could jeopardize his personal safety.

Up to September 1499, when Louis XII of Orléans took Milan by force of arms and overthrew Il Moro, Pistoia had been a strong supporter of the Duke as if he had almost assumed a sort of unofficial laureateship. The personality and achievements of Ludovico, in whose hands the government of Milan had rested since 1479, received enormous attention in Pistoia's poetry. In the sonnets, Ludovico is lavishly praised; he is referred to as 'novo Augusto',<sup>222</sup> 'novo Ottavian',<sup>223</sup> and he is described as being even worthier than Caesar, 'anzi è un Cesar più degno'.<sup>224</sup> The comparison with the heroes of ancient history is a eulogistic device which Pistoia often employs to celebrate Il Moro's domestic achievements and to increase his overall prestige. Ludovico is the only one, according to the poet, who can redress all wrongs, the country's future depends entirely on him because

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<sup>221</sup> From his verse, it is evinced that the poet had an eye on the state of affairs. He often uses the verbs to notice, to listen and pay attention to: 'io [...] noto e sento', MS H.223 inf., f. 223r (CCCCXIII, pp. 451-452); 'io sento', f. 238v (CCCCXLIV, p. 487); 'et io [...] mi resto attento', f. 278r (DXXIII, pp. 574-576). The emphasis is often on the act of observing and the poet draws attention to himself by laying stress on the pronoun I: 'io 'l vidi', f. 216v (CCCC, pp. 436-437); 'io ti vedo', f. 219r (CCCCV, pp. 441-442) and 'io vedo', f. 229r (CCCCXXV, pp. 464-465).

<sup>222</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 204r (CCCLXXVIII, pp. 410-412).

<sup>223</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 209r (CCCLXXXVIII, pp. 422-423).

<sup>224</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 204r (CCCLXXVIII, pp. 410-412).



he has 'il mondo in mano'.<sup>225</sup> The poems are skilfully angled to give the impression that public opinion is moving towards Ludovico, 'un Moro solo e no(n) altri si grida',<sup>226</sup> and fulsome praise is constantly lavished on him. When it comes to the Milanese leader, the poet does not find deplorable that the papal seat is up for sale. Quite the opposite: he overtly endorses the dishonesty which he had previously criticized. Pistoia praises the Duke because thanks to him and his brother, Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, the clergy has a new Pope and the Emperor a wife in the person of Bianca Maria Sforza:

Ben puoi dir Signor mio ho nele mani  
 il cielo e 'l mondo tutto sotto il manto,  
 tu hai dato marito al culto santo  
 et una moglie al gra(n) Re de' Romani.<sup>227</sup>

Ludovico is depicted as a god-like figure, 'che chi sa più di te sa quanto Dio',<sup>228</sup> a divine entity descended upon the earth, 'chi negherà che 'l no(n) sia un Dio in terra?'.<sup>229</sup> The poems teem with eulogistic passages, they pivot on flattery and on elaborate praise. Through his verse Pistoia celebrates the high point of Ludovico's success, his accession to the Duchy of Milan

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<sup>225</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 240v (CCCCXLVIII, pp. 491-492).

<sup>226</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 204r (CCCLXXVIII, pp. 410-412), line 14.

<sup>227</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 214r (CCCXCVII, pp. 433-434), lines 1-4. In another sonnet, Pistoia reminds Alexander VI that it is thanks to Il Moro and his brother Ascanio that he was elected Pope, 'qual ti formò la mitra su la chioma', f. 228r (CCCCXXIII, pp. 462-463), line 2.

<sup>228</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 214r (CCCXCVII, pp. 433-434), line 20.

<sup>229</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 240v (CCCCXLVIII, pp. 491-492), line 2.

in 1494 therefore confirming immediate glory and lasting reputation on his patron.<sup>230</sup> The poet even finds occasion for legitimizing Ludovico's power: 'dal popul gli fu in mano lo sceptro offerto'.<sup>231</sup> The birth of Il Moro's sons and the marriage of his niece Bianca Maria Sforza to the Emperor Maximilian are seized upon as opportunities for tributes in which flattery leaves room for dynastic propaganda.<sup>232</sup> Pistoia glorifies the Duke's political ability and celebrates his deeds: 'tu più fatto hai con duo occhi e duo labbia/che con la forza e coi denti un leone'.<sup>233</sup> Ludovico 'vede ogni segreto'<sup>234</sup> and 'tutto glosa'.<sup>235</sup> The poet invites leaders to share his support for him and embrace his political credo: 'e di cantando de la n(ost)ra fede/quel ne credo io che Ludovico crede'.<sup>236</sup> When it comes to the ruler's achievements, Pistoia puts aside his anti-French feelings and invites the Italian states to join the Duke and Charles VIII.<sup>237</sup> The poet is enthusiastic in tone and welcomes the French King whom he addresses as '*l bon Re*

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<sup>230</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 225v-226v (CCCCXVIII-CCCCXX, pp. 455-459).

<sup>231</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 226v (CCCCXX, pp. 458-459), line 5.

<sup>232</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 207r (CCCLXXXIV, pp. 418-419); f. 213r (CCCXCV, pp. 430-432); f. 215r (CCCXCIX, pp. 435-436).

<sup>233</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 226r (CCCCXIX, pp. 457-458), lines 12-13.

<sup>234</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 227r (CCCCXXI, pp. 459-460).

<sup>235</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 231v (CCCCXXX, pp. 470-471).

<sup>236</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 240v (CCCCXLVIII, pp. 491-492), lines 16-17.

<sup>237</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 219r (CCCCV, pp. 441-442).



Carlo'.<sup>238</sup> But in 1499 events took a nasty turn: Louis XII invaded Milan and Il Moro in cowardice fled the country. At this point the latter incurs the scorn of Pistoia and the worshipping tone undergoes a sudden dramatic shift. The poems turn into open criticism: they fully bring to the reader's notice the true nature of Il Moro's political and moral behaviour. The Duke is the culprit, writes the poet, he is the one responsible for the political catastrophe and the degeneration of Italy. He has grossly failed to fulfil his obligations and honour his promises, he has not lived up to the expectations which were aroused when he came to the throne. His descent, sustains Pistoia, was foiled by over-ambition and pride: 'ma il ciel visto i superbi modi sui/troncogli in un momento ogni disegno'.<sup>239</sup> The sonnets become the perfect framework for denunciation in which the poet lists precise charges against the accused:

E come per rapina hebbe Mil(an)o  
doppo la violentia d'un pupillo  
senza rapina gli cascò di mano.

Pianse il suo errore invano  
poi da tirano vil cangiò paesi  
temendo per le inurie de li offesi.

O peccati palesi  
puniti anchor per sangue e per favelle,  
ch(e) 'l mal d'un sol serà pena de mille.<sup>240</sup>

And again in an another poem:

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<sup>238</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 230r (CCCCXXVII, pp. 466-467).

<sup>239</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 265r (CCCCXCVII, pp. 545-546), lines 7-8.

<sup>240</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 265r (CCCCXCVII, pp. 545-556), lines 12-20.

Tu che per tor lo sceptro violasti  
 il proprio sangue con sì gran vergogna  
 oh tiranno crudel l'abbandonasti.<sup>241</sup>

Adulation has abandoned the poet's fickle pen but not for long. When rumour reaches him that the Duke is staging his comeback and is plotting ways of recovering the throne, Pistoia reverts to his former lines and extends his full sympathy to the Duke again. For the occasion he pens more than one sonnet in his support in which Ludovico is begged to come back and stay for good.<sup>242</sup> But the Duke does not succeed in his aims: the mercenary troops have deserted him and in April 1500 he is taken prisoner at Novara. The great Lord has capitulated and he is put behind bars in a dungeon in Loches where he was to spend the last eight years of his life. The end has arrived and after much praise, harsh criticism and praise again, Il Moro is gone for good and Italy is in the hands of the French.

After all did it really matter to Pistoia whether Il Moro succeeded or not? At this point it is legitimate to ask oneself whether the poet's propaganda in support of Ludovico had practical aims, whether it was designed to influence society and public life and to have an effect on those governments which opposed the Milanese Dukedom. What was Pistoia really trying to do with his political verse? Whom was he supporting and writing for, who were his audience and readership, which were his concerns if he had any? In order to try and reach an understanding of what is going on under the surface of the

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<sup>241</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 265v (CCCCXCVIII, pp. 546-547), lines 9-11.

<sup>242</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 273r-274v (DXIII-DXVI, pp. 563-568).



sonnets, certain considerations must be made. First let us look at the issue of commissioning verse. In his sonnets Pistoia conveys a strong impression that, though he is constantly reviewing current political events, he is far away from their focal point, the political centre and the leader he so often mentions and invokes. He does not seem to have insider detailed knowledge and his lines are for example free of references to Il Moro's closest aides. Though in the past critics believed that Pistoia was a retainer of the Sforza establishment in Milan, the extant documentation clearly denies it. He may well have visited the Milanese court but no documentation has survived in this respect. Pistoia was not one of the Sforzas' courtiers, he was outside the patronage system and the Milanese establishment. This explains why the sonnets give a very strong impression that the issues discussed are somehow far away and that the author is looking at them from a distant observatory. There is no evidence that his poems were ever commissioned, though the poet did tailor his production first to the taste of his real patrons, Ercole I d'Este and the Gonzagas,<sup>243</sup> and second to that of Ludovico, most likely in the hope of winning the latter's favours.

The power of censorship must also be borne in mind. The written word is a double-edged weapon and the poet knew that if he spoke his mind he could expose himself to some risk:

Il vedere e 'l tacere a chi no(n) tocca  
del gioco n'ha duo parti, e molto importa

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<sup>243</sup> In a sonnet the poet affirms he is praising Francesco without fearing for his personal safety, MS H.223 inf., f. 278v (DXXIV, pp. 576-577): 'laudo senza paura il mio Marchese'.

con gli occhi aperti haver chiusa la bocca.<sup>244</sup>

A literary topos, perhaps, but one which could have, if disregarded, serious practical consequences. In his sonnets Pistoia remarks on the issue of censorship and while addressing il Moro, he says of himself: 'ma io che voluntier seguo il tuo gusto/con la briglia alla lingua nulla parlo'.<sup>245</sup> It may be said that Pistoia expressed the political views of the establishment: his verse is conservative, free of suggestions aimed at changing or improving the *status quo* and yet at the same time it sounds far too cynical and disillusioned to look like the product of the patronage system. The poet represents a certain group, and yet he is also concerned with expressing his own opinions, 'il mio parere'<sup>246</sup> his attitudes and feelings<sup>247</sup> though with due caution.<sup>248</sup> His verse is not representative of popular feeling

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<sup>244</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 228v (CCCCXXIV, pp. 463-464), lines 9-11.

<sup>245</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 228v (CCCCXXIV, pp. 463-464), lines 3-4.

<sup>246</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 256v (CCCCLXXX, pp. 526-527); 'io per me stimo ch(e) 'l serà così', f. 259v (CCCCLXXXVI, p. 533), line 10.

<sup>247</sup> In the sonnets the poet gives vent to his feelings and expresses them with the verbs *dolersi*, *rincreocere* and *temere*: 'duolmi di te [i.e. Pisa] mi rincresce assai', MS H.223 inf., f. 250v (CCCCLXVIII, p. 513), line 3; 'Di voi mi dole o poveri pisani', f. 252r (CCCCLXXI, p. 516), line 1; 'ma temo perch'io t'amo e perch'io veggio', f. 274r (DXV, pp. 566-567), line 10.

<sup>248</sup> The verb *tacere* often recurs in Pistoia's lines: 'taccio a chi 'l sa dove la crudel nacque', MS H.223 inf., f. 227r (CCCCXXI, pp. 459-460); 'o quante cose a me convien tacere/perché 'l timor questa mia lingua agiaccia', f. 244r (CCCCLV, pp. 499-500); 'io tacerò chi ride e chi si dole/e i pensier che {che} ne van di me(n)te in me(n)te', f. 258v (CCCCXXXIV, pp. 530-531); 'per no(n) spiacere al ciel del papa taccio', f. 278v (DXXIV, pp. 576-577).



and public opinion insofar as this existed in the fifteenth century; most of his sonnets are partisan and, as we have seen, they are a celebration of Ludovico in contemptuous derision at the policies pursued by those who did not fit or share his plans. Pistoia's historical narrative in verse appears to be meant both for the public at large as well as for a restricted circle of friends. At times the poet wishes to bring his verse to the attention of a large number of people as he declares: 'io voglio esser udito'.<sup>249</sup> After all his sonnet 'O il Duca nostro fa i gran cavamenti' enjoyed wide circulation. It survived in numerous manuscripts<sup>250</sup> and, as we have seen, in 1492 it was posted up on the columns of the Doge's Palace in Venice as well as being incorporated by Ugo Caleffini into his chronicle.<sup>251</sup> At other times the sonnets seem to be designed for a clique as the poet questions and challenges the public ability to understand him, 'chi intende il mio parlar'.<sup>252</sup> If Pistoia wanted his verse to be public, it had to make an immediate impact on its audience in order to be effective and to be accessible to a large number of people. However, the poet does not seem to make up his mind: he shifts between the second person singular and the plural pronoun,

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<sup>249</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 225r (CCCCXVII, pp. 455-456); f. 257r (CCCCLXXXI, pp. 527-528).

<sup>250</sup> Bologna U, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli), f. 112v; Budapest F, MS Zichy 09/2690, f. 6v; Milan T, MS 979, p. 278; Venice N, MS It.IX.363(7386), f. 74r.

<sup>251</sup> Vatican City BAV, MS Chigiano J.I.4, f. 301v; Ferrara C, MS Cl.I.769, pp. 739-740.

<sup>252</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 254r (CCCCLXXV, pp. 520-521).

between *tu*<sup>253</sup> and *voi*<sup>254</sup> therefore moving back and forth from a public to a private dimension. Perhaps it is worth noticing that the collection is concluded by a sonnet which is neither in praise nor in derision. The poet has finally reached his own conclusion or, perhaps he is clearly stating his own point of view, his own belief. Nothing in the end ever changes, so he declares to a friend addressed in the verse: wars will be fought, new leaders will be in power and later overthrown but in the end it does not really matter.<sup>255</sup> No choice is ever given to people: 'pagare e ringratiare chi ce bastona', this is the only option. Or perhaps, the poet adds, things will change despite everything but it will be too late for him and his friend as they will no longer be around:

Io ti mando un capitol fatto adesso  
de Italia, ove i pensier tuo exaltar possi;  
udiralla smembrata insino agli ossi  
col capo chino e 'l corpo genuflesso.

Sentirai all'auctor fare un processo

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<sup>253</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 254r (CCCCLXXV, pp. 520-521): 'tu ch(e) m'ascolti'; f. 274r (DXV, pp. 566-567): 'non altro ti vo' dir(e)'.

<sup>254</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 210r (CCCXC, p. 425): 'in un altro sonetto ho detto a voi'; f. 220r (CCCCVII, pp. 443-445): 'come voi sapete'. Of course *voi* could also be used for one person, as a formal pronoun.

<sup>255</sup> In this sense Pistoia is like an anonymous Piacentine who in 1494 wrote in his diary that, contrary to popular belief, things would not change under Charles VIII. Diego Zancani, 'Lingua e cultura scritta a Piacenza dal Trecento al Quattrocento', *Storia di Piacenza* (Piacenza: TIP.LE.CO., 1997), vol. 3, pp. [355]-401 (pp. 378-379): '1494 18 Ottobre, ha fato intrata in Piacentia de note el Re de Franza [Carlo VIII] con gran baldoria et tapeti et populo che cridava viva. Se crede che farà giustitia, se sarà patrono perché ha fato bone promissioni, ma za sarà lo steso gloria se ghe sarà mutatione de Stato, et me ricordo de tute le promissioni del Duca de Milano et poi le cose andarono pezo de prima et el populo ge crede sempre'.



e dir ch(e) per le' anchor seran percossi  
 e Gelfi e Gebellin e bianchi e rossi  
 come gran t(em)po è già dal ciel promesso.

Timida qui si regge ogni p(er)sona  
 e bisogna p(er) forza e p(er) paura  
 pagare, e ringratiare chi ce bastona.

Ma perch(é) semp(re) una stagion no(n) dura  
 ne aspetteremo un'altra o trista o bona  
 ne la qual trovaren miglior ve(n)tura,

e forse p(er) sciagura  
 prima ch(e) giunga, e giunta sbucchi fore,  
 il n(ost)ro lume serà senza humore.<sup>256</sup>

In a badly-led, divided and confused country, in a time of political instability, fear and insecurity, the poet often invokes one word: *fortuna*.<sup>257</sup> The theme of fortune is obviously linked to what we have already said, but certain aspects are worth emphasizing. To Pistoia, as to other contemporary writers, no other goddess must have seemed more suitable to justify the Italian political arena brought about by the descent of Charles VIII upon Italy. In his sonnets, Pistoia often resorted to the image of *fortuna* to justify the instabilities of the age and to make sense of what was happening towards the end of the fifteenth century. *Fortuna* was believed to be partly responsible for the terrors and destruction of Italy, the French invasion of 1499, the lack of leadership, the inadequate government, the downfall of Ludovico, the internal divisions, the political collapse, the country's misfortunes. No longer depicted as a *bona dea*, *fortuna* had, with the advent and triumph of Christianity, turned into a

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<sup>256</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 281r (DXXIX, p. 582).

<sup>257</sup> The notion of *fortuna* is investigated among others by Mario Santoro, *Fortuna, ragione e prudenza nella civiltà letteraria del Cinquecento* (Naples: Liguori, 1978<sup>2</sup>) and Elizabeth Adler, *Fortune is a woman* (Dunton Green: Coronet, 1993).

blind power whose old symbol, the cornucopia, had been replaced by the wheel of change. *Fortuna* could in turn be neutral, helpful as well as adverse but above all it was fickle, voluble, changeable: 'e si tien dea essendo una baghassa'.<sup>258</sup> Careless and indiscriminate in the bestowal of her gifts, the goddess was an irrational force, a blind power whose benevolent or malicious wheel could turn at any time. In an imaginary dialogue, the Aragonese King Alfonso II informs his son Ferrante II, better known as Ferrandino, in whose favour he was to abdicate in 1495, that he is left with no hope, support and direction and that he is unable to withstand the blows of *fortuna* and to overcome the obstacles which the goddess has placed in his way:

Privo di speme vo solo e smarito  
come tal volta la fortuna mena  
che al suo vantaggio mal sa tuor partito.<sup>259</sup>

On the contrary Caterina Sforza, Countess of Imola, can successfully withstand the attack of Cesare Borgia because the force looks favourably upon her:

Tanto è il valor di te don<n>a profondo  
che ogn'altra forza fai parer pusilla  
propitia hai la fortuna e 'l ciel secondo.<sup>260</sup>

However very little can be done against the workings of this

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<sup>258</sup> In this fashion the Piacentine author Antonio Cornazzano labels *fortuna* in his work *De virtute et fortuna*. The quotation comes from Roberto L. Bruni and Diego Zancani, *Antonio Cornazzano: la tradizione testuale* (Florence: Olschki, 1992), p. 139.

<sup>259</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 233r (CCCCXXXIII, pp. 473-474), lines 9-11.

<sup>260</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 269v (DVI, pp. 554-556), lines 12-14.



fickle goddess which has struck down the once powerful city-state of Florence. Following the expulsion of Piero de' Medici in 1494, the occult force has turned the Tuscan capital into a weak state held in no consideration: 'che 'l topo pur no(n) ti fa rivere(n)tia'.<sup>261</sup> The political change in Florence is, according to Pistoia, due to the goddess's envy: 'volse poi la fortuna invidiosa/romper le palle e disfondrarti il giglio'.<sup>262</sup> Strongly opposed to republican governments, Pistoia describes the Savonarolan interlude and the Republic of Florence as the result of the irrational vagaries of *fortuna* which have thrown the city into dismay: 'Firenze i fatti tuoi peggio ogn'hor van(n)o/fortuna è sempre contro alla tua vela'.<sup>263</sup> It is not only a destructive force but it can also be a providential mystery. Things are going well for Ercole I d'Este because the non-human force has befriended him, 'non mai miracol fu pari di questo/che la fortuna ogni mal per lui tace',<sup>264</sup> and they go even better for Ludovico who has apparently brought it under his control, 'il mondo ha in freno e la fortuna in briglia/e quanto piace a lui l'abassa e inalza'.<sup>265</sup> *Fortuna* can be the ultimate lord, the only decision maker: no diplomat, however skilled, can reverse or thwart its course. The result of the talks between Ercole I d'Este's

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<sup>261</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 241r (CCCCXLIX, pp. 492-493), line 4.

<sup>262</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 241r (CCCCXLIX, pp. 492-493), lines 12-13.

<sup>263</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 245v (CCCCVIII, pp. 502-503), lines 1-2.

<sup>264</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 255r (CCCCLXXVII, pp. 523-524), lines 12-13.

<sup>265</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 258v (CCCCXXXIV, pp. 530-531), lines 12-13.

ambassadors and the Emperor Maximilian in 1496 are determined by *fortuna*:

A voi tocca a dir cosa che gli piaccia  
e a porlo con Cesare a sedere  
et a darlo a fortuna ne le braccia.<sup>266</sup>

Interference must be avoided. Following Il Moro's downfall in 1499 and his flight from Milan, the poet advises him not to push his luck: 'che 'l Duca si restasse con quel poco/ch(e) la fortuna gli ha lasciato in gioco'.<sup>267</sup> Nobody can escape its fate and even when justice fails, *fortuna* triumphs:

Giustizia che no(n) vuol che al fin si goda  
per longo tempo chi l'altrui ben ciuffa  
alla fortuna sotti i pie' lo inchioda.<sup>268</sup>

In one instance Pistoia uses *fortuna* in conjunction with another term: *virtù*. The two terms, which, together with *occasione*, will become key words in Machiavelli's treatise *De Principatibus* a few years later, can be found interlocked in a tercet in which Pistoia refers to Ludovico after the French invasion of 1494:

Il qual già per virtù me 'l par vedere  
da la fortuna nel suo grembo accolto  
invito triomphare e possedere.<sup>269</sup>

Thanks to his *virtù*, which may already correspond to ability, energy, determination, strength, prowess, Il Moro will be able,

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<sup>266</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 244r (CCCCLV, pp. 499-500), lines 12-14.

<sup>267</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 267v (DII, pp. 550-551), lines 16-17.

<sup>268</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 212v (CCCXCIV, p. 430), lines 12-14.

<sup>269</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 225r (CCCCXVII, pp. 455-456), lines 12-14.



in Pistoia's view, to attract the goddess's favours and be triumphant and powerful. In Pistoia's world, *virtù* can be, however, as tricky as its counterpart *fortuna*. It may not be sufficient to assist a leader to overcome difficulties and in the case of Caterina Sforza to fight the siege laid by Cesare Borgia:

E se la tua virtù  
 contra a nimici suoi ostar no(n) pò  
 o vincere o morire l'honore è to.<sup>270</sup>

In the end *virtù* like *fortuna* is also reserved a harsh treatment at the hands of Pistoia when things take a bad turn and the poet has no hesitation in expressing his dissatisfaction:

Ah virtù tignosa  
 sarebbe il tuo guadagno stato molto  
 se ponevi un bel cul ove tu hai 'l volto.<sup>271</sup>

As we have seen the poet used poetry to lash the infamies of lay and religious leaders, a feature which is very much present in Pistoia's work as the following section will attempt to show.

#### 5.4 Poetic jousts.

Armed with 102 *contra* sonnets,<sup>272</sup> Antonio Pistoia charges

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<sup>270</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 271r (DIX, pp. 558-559), lines 15-17.

<sup>271</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 246v (CCCCLX, pp. 504-505), lines 15-17.

<sup>272</sup> The section also includes the sonnets previously gathered under the category 'caricatures'. MS H.223 inf., f. 26v (XXIV, p. 67); ff. 31r-35v (XXXII-XLI, pp. 76-83); f. 42r-v (LIV-LV, pp. 96-98); f. 49r (LXVIII, pp. 111-112); ff. 50r-51r (LXX-LXXI, pp. 113-114); f. 56v (LXXXIII, pp. 125-126); f. 58r (LXXXVI, pp. 128-129); f. 66v (CIII, pp. 142-143); f. 67v (CV, 144-145); ff. 69r-79v (CVIII-CXXIX, pp. 147-168); ff. 80v-86v (CXXXI-CXLIII, pp. 169-180); ff. 89v-92v (CXLIX-CLV, pp. 185-193); ff. 93v-97v (CLVII-CLXV, pp. 194-203); ff. 99r-100r (CLXVIII-CLXX, pp. 205-208); f. 102r (CLXXIV, pp. 210-211); f. 107r (CLXXXIV, p. 224);

the targets of his poetic jousts by debasing and ridiculing them with intent to provoke laughter and arouse negative feelings in the reader or listener. The poet handles the subject matter in such a way as to stamp the sonnets with a common matrix, regardless of the fact that the people at the centre of the attack may be poets, singers, women, servants, villains, judges, clergymen, court employees, lawyers, scholars, soldiers or craftsmen, the citizens of Venice or of Ferrara.

First a caricatural portrait, executed in an offensive spirit and with parodic intent, is provided. The characters inhabiting the poems are depicted as dirty, malodorous, sick and ill-fitted to live in the midst of society. Nature makes them with discarded sheared fleece, coarse broken flax and hemp, bile, mud, contaminated water and blood of crocodile, the latter being a symbol of greed, hypocrisy and treachery. The ingredients are mixed together at random, sometimes using a wooden phallus-shaped ladle in an unhealthy environment or in Tartary:

Quest'altro il fé natura in Tartaria,  
cu(m) qua(n)te ale potè di vespertillo,  
tolse del sangue sol di crocodillo  
f<e>ccia di terra ed aqua di moria.<sup>273</sup>

Tolto oglio, zolfo, fel et orpimento  
lo mestò ben cu(m) un cazzo di legno.

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f. 108v (CLXXXVII, pp. 227-228); f. 111v (CXCIII, p. 233); ff. 116v-117r (CCIII-CCIV, pp. 242-244); f. 118r (CCVI, pp. 245-246); f. 121v (CCXIII, p. 252); f. 132v (CCXXXV, pp. 273-274); f. 138v (CCLXVII, p. 287); ff. 143v-144r (CCLVII-CCLVIII, pp. 296-298); f. 146r (CCLXII, pp. 301-302); f. 147v (CCLXV, pp. 304-305); f. 150v (CCLXXI, pp. 309-310); f. 155v (CCLXXXI, pp. 318-319); ff. 156v-157v (CCLXXXIII-CCLXXXV, pp. 320-322); f. 160r (CCXC, pp. 326-327); f. 166r (CCCII, pp. 337-338); f. 173r (CCCXVI, p. 350); f. 175v (CCCXXI, p. 355); f. 190r (CCCL, p. 382); ff. 193v-194r (CCCLVII-CCCLVIII, pp. 387-389); f. 200r (CCCLXX, p. 400).

<sup>273</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 32v (XXXV, pp. 78-79), lines 1-4.



Fatto di tal mestura un corpo pregno,  
al sol leon lasciò tre dì l'onguento.<sup>274</sup>

The poet creates a mini bestiary of hunchbacked, lame, squint-eyed dumb and evil looking dwarves and giants whose dark or deathly-pale skin is covered in sweat, excrescences and warts:

Di sudor proffumato  
con mille odori e savoretti strani  
e perle al volto e gioie su le mani.<sup>275</sup>

The bodies are wrapped in filth and often encrusted with wings of bats, the dark and threatening denizens of the underworld, symbols of envy and malevolence. These vast, extremely thin bodies, sporting back-to-front limbs are also riddled with anomalies:

Ma l'arsura del sol aspra e molesta  
strinse nel vaso la compositione  
che le spalle gli andar sopra la testa,  
  
le chiappe se gli avolsero al galone;  
pare un melon che havuta ha la tempesta  
è sguerzo e zoppo senza proportione.<sup>276</sup>

Drawn with piercing and deft strokes of the pen, the caricatural portraits not only exaggerate and deform parts of the body but they completely alter the functions and the purpose of the various organs. Based on an accumulative structure, this effect is reached in the following lines by employing the iterative syntactical arrangement *da* followed by an infinitive:

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<sup>274</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 33r (XXXVI, pp. 79-80), lines 5-8.

<sup>275</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 117r (CCIV, pp. 243-244), lines 15-17.

<sup>276</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 33r (XXXVI, pp. 79-80), lines 9-14.

Capo da punteggiar con un trivello,  
 testa da darla al beccar p(er) un soldo,  
 occhi da dargli in man del manigoldo,  
 naso da darlo al cul per un pennello.

Bocca da farla un destro nel bordello,  
 lingua da porla in sal con un beroldo,  
 golla da dargli in picardia bon soldo,  
 petto da porlo in quarti 'n uno avello.

Spalle da ripol[l]er con un bastone,  
 corpo da carregiarlo come un thoro,  
 chiappe da darle pasto d'un leone.

Membro viril da qualche falcon soro,  
 coscie da farle cibo d'un griffone,  
 gambe da ferri e pie' insieme fra loro.<sup>277</sup>

Further depth is lent to the portraits by extended zoological and botanical comparisons and in particular by ornithological similes,<sup>278</sup> often employed in *ad hominem* satire. A string of unappealing features including running noses,<sup>279</sup> eyes covered in sleep<sup>280</sup> and ears full of wax enrich the texture of the exaggerated and twisted images:

Comincion da l'estate a primavera  
 gli occhi a stillare e por da lato mele,  
 il naso a lambicare e far candel[l]e,  
 giù ne le orecchie si vendemia cera.

La boca sputa cappe infino a sera,  
 a denti nasce tarso e ragnatel[l]e,  
 i labri filan corde da far vele,  
 il collo d'ogni tempo ha la gorghiera.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 95v (CLXI, pp. 199-200), lines 1-14.

<sup>278</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 77v (CXXV, pp. 164-165).

<sup>279</sup> MS H.223 inf. f. 81r (CXXXI, pp. 170-171), lines 12-14:  
 'Nel naso va la broda de tuo occhi/la bocca stribuisse tante  
 colpe/la bava convien poi che fuor trabocchi'.

<sup>280</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 81r (CXXXI, pp. 170-171), line 6 and  
 9: 'Che i tuoi balcon son netti come chiassi'; 'Che occhi, occhi  
 no(n) già potte di volpe'.

<sup>281</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 108v (CLXXXVII, pp. 227-228), lines 1-  
 8.



Women are drawn as withered and shrivelled, 'vesiche secche senza vento', with their faces heavily made up, 'viso unto e imbratato o di belletto o di biacca o di albume', and covered in excrements, 'unto il visto e smerdacciato'.<sup>282</sup> They are corpulent and heavily built, 'ben quartate in l'anche', like stocky fat capons, 'paion capon pastati in su le groppe'.<sup>283</sup> The images, as we have seen, hinge on a combination of monstrous, human and animal forms because this implies a flawed nature: a vice-ridden origin does in fact lie behind this cluster of gargoyles.

Characterized by human abilities, Nature is described as incapable of sane and rational behaviour and therefore creates human beings without *ingegno*, rationality, and without the *maestro*, God. Created out of spite, these nefarious creatures are governed by an internal and external chaos. Their deformed bodies and evil origins are treated by Pistoia in scatological images. Excretory organs are given a prominent position in the contra

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<sup>282</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 49r (LXVIII, pp. 111-112). Pistoia wrote twelve misogynous poems: f. 26v (XXIV, p. 67); f. 49r (LXVIII, pp. 111-112); f. 50r (LXX, pp. 113-114); f. 56v (LXXXVIII, pp. 125-126); f. 66v (CIII, pp. 142-143); f. 92v (CLV, pp. 192-193); f. 99v (CLXIX, pp. 206-207); f. 102r (CLXXIV, pp. 210-211); f. 144r (CCLVIII, pp. 297-298); f. 146r (CCLXII, pp. 301-302); f. 150v (CCLXXI, pp. 309-310) and f. 160r (CCXC, pp. 326-327). Antonio Piromalli à propos of these sonnets made a rather misleading statement in 'Antonio Cammelli', cit., p. 554: 'Le donne appaiono come in una ricca cornice figurativa che le ferma nella loro perfezione estetica [...] In questo amore della bella forma e in questo illeggiadrimento della realtà si completa l'individualità del Pistoia, che non va ricordato soltanto come un momento di una tradizione giocosa ricca ed antica, bensì anche come umano e gentile interprete dello spirito dell'Umanesimo e del Rinascimento'. Piromalli refers to the sonnet 'Belle donne a Millan, ma grasse troppe', f. 50r (LXX, pp. 113-114), in which Pistoia after an initial praise of their beauty reverses the tone and elaborates a series of strong criticisms.

<sup>283</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 50r (LXX, pp. 113-114).

sonnets and in view of the fact that bodily functions are perceived and regarded as self-debasing and foul, they end up projecting unappealing and shameful characteristics on the people who are lampooned in turn. Pistoia associates the targets of his satire with scatological details: his rivals are filthy, foul-smelling, disagreeable to the touch as if endowed with special power to contaminate or stain. The poet uses stercoraceous satirical weapons on his enemies and he depicts them as repugnant and repulsive: the ultimate aim is to turn them into cast-offs shunned by all. Burlesque scatological devices are employed with a view to arousing negative feelings in the reader who may consequently assume a hostile stance towards the targets at the centre of the attack. In the tenson with Bellincioni<sup>284</sup> Pistoia for example relies heavily on gross language: the attack is interspersed with obscene details, visual bawdiness and grotesque realism. Bellincioni's portrait is done in an insulting spirit as Pistoia's poetic vein yields obscene images to ridicule him both as a man and a poet. The highly descriptive phrases are mordant and sardonic and the literary warfare is sarcastically cutting. The mood is abusive and the tone is fierce: scatological vituperation includes both the treatment of Bellincioni's physical appearance and his literary output. Born when the river Arno washed a latrine, 'che Arno ti ritrovò lavando un cesso',<sup>285</sup> Bellincioni's face is stamped in dung, 'da far lo

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<sup>284</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 58r (LXXXVI, pp. 128-129); ff. 70v-79v (CXI-CXXIX, pp. 150-168).

<sup>285</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 71v (CXIII, p. 153), line 11.



impronto in grembo d'una meta',<sup>286</sup> and it is equated to his backside, 'perch'io t'ho già col capo in giù dipinto/dove si scarca quel che si manduca'.<sup>287</sup> He has a phallus-shaped head, swollen cheeks which break wind, 'gvanze gonfiate da generar peta',<sup>288</sup> and he defecates and urinates sonnets, 'tanti bei sonetti caca e piscia'.<sup>289</sup> The Modenese poet Panfilo Sasso,<sup>290</sup> who is depicted as a monstrous hybrid, with a body misshapen sporting a face triangular in shape and covered in reddish hair, is also portrayed as born and fed in a cesspool:

Trovan che essendo Panara cresciuta,  
havendo un dextro a Modena lavato,  
del ventre for allhor lî ritrovato  
fosti, e quel [dì] dî la luna era cornuta.<sup>291</sup>

Sasso is compared to one of the harpies, the winged monsters, because like them he emanates a bad smell and leaves excrement wherever he goes. Pistoia resorts to abundant examples of vituperia by using a vocabulary strongly suggestive of bodily functions such as 'stercorizzare', 'cul', 'cristero' and 'peti'. Sasso's act of writing is equalled to that of defecation 'smerdacia<r>e [...] d'inchioostro'.<sup>292</sup> The same treatment is

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<sup>286</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 72r (CXIV, p. 154), line 2.

<sup>287</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 71v (CXIII, p. 153), lines 3-4.

<sup>288</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 72r (CXIV, p. 154), line 7.

<sup>289</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 79v (CXXIX, pp. 167-168), line 13.

<sup>290</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 94v-97v (CLIX-CLXV, pp. 196-203).

<sup>291</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 95r (CLX, pp. 198-199), lines 5-8.

<sup>292</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 94v (CLIX, pp. 196-198).

reserved for a poet by the name of Cinzio<sup>293</sup> as Pistoia in the *tenson* repletes the lines with references to excrements and excretory functions. Cinzio's sonnets are degraded to wipes destined to clean one's private parts and the Muses, instead of presiding over verse, are intent on preparing an enema to be infused into Cinzio's rectum, 'la porta fetida e secreta',<sup>294</sup> with a view to crowning him poet. Their action is expressed in a well-executed binary structure of *adynata*, in which the ingredients are wrapped in magic undertones:

Le muse ha<n> tolto per fargli un cristeo  
cul di cicade e noce di moscino,  
canto di grillo e suon di tamborino,  
merda di gatta e stronci di g\i/udeo.<sup>295</sup>

In the *contra sonnets*, Pistoia is often irreverent in his use of mythological figures: the Muses, as we have just seen, are no longer engaged in lofty pursuits but they are busy with more down to earth activities. In the sonnet 'Toch toch, chi è la? Gli è Amphione', Pistoia continues to debase classical mythology in the space of a few lines. Calliope, Apollo and the whole Parnassus are portrayed up in arms because Bellincioni is to be crowned

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<sup>293</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 89v-90r (CXLIX-CL, pp. 185-188). The poet was identified by Pèrcopo as Cinzio Francesco Benincasa but no indications can be found in the sonnet to support this hypothesis. Although chronologically the identification with Benincasa may be plausible, it is difficult to imagine that the two poets ever came into contact. Benincasa, a native of Ancona, entered the service of Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, around 1483 and worked as a diplomatic agent for many years; he later spent some time in his home town from which he was banished and died behind bars in the Rocca di Fano in 1507. The figure is discussed by Ronald W. Lightbown, 'Francesco Cinzio Benincasa', *Italian Studies*, 19, 1964, pp. 28-57.

<sup>294</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 89v (CXLIX, pp. 185-187).

<sup>295</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 89v (CXLIX, pp. 185-187), lines 5-8.



poet: their disarray is couched in exuberant sinewy comic verse as Pistoia gives a good example of his stylish bad taste: 'Caliope s'ha squarciata la fica/vista tolta al figliuol la possessione' while 'Apollo per dolor tien basso il ciglio/inteso che un sonetto di Bernardo/ha fatto torcer tutto il suo consiglio'.<sup>296</sup> In another poem, 'Felice la testudine e la chiocciola', the poet ridicules Bellincioni's poetic skills through a parody of Orpheus. Legend has it that when the latter played his lyre, wild beasts were charmed, the rivers stopped to flow, rocks, trees and mountains moved to listen to his music. In the case of Bellincioni, the reader is faced with a comic scene which is further highlighted by the use of *rime sdrucchiole*:

Sì dolce suona il suo rustico ciuffolo  
che spesso dal sol[l]ar cascano i ragnoli,  
sentendo il bel trombar di questo buffolo.

Fermansi l'aque de tutti i rigagnoli,  
la rapa corre, la fava, el tartuffolo,  
birri, fachini, magnani e piccicagnoli;

gli asini cu(m) soccodagnoli  
corrano insieme al suon di questa phistola,  
e trombando col cul cantan la epistola.<sup>297</sup>

Pistoia uses scatology to defame, to expose his enemies but also to discredit their reputation. *Contra sonnets* are in fact heavily charged with moralizing tendencies: the characters' physical filth is a metaphor for moral corruption. Scatological images are often laced with sexual overtones and they bear strong allusions to sexual intercourse. Men are often accused of being

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<sup>296</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 70v (CXI, pp. 150-151), lines 7-11.

<sup>297</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 75v (CXXI, pp. 160-161), lines 9-17.

homosexual, 'tanta fava ha nel buc[c]o del canale',<sup>298</sup> and portrayed both as active and passive sodomites while women's behaviour is characterized by inordinate carnal desires: 'che a voler far quel ch(e) alla moglie piace/il mondo tutto no(n) seria capace'.<sup>299</sup> The poet bewails the hardships of being a married man, 'a mio danno compresi/quanto son saggi i papi e cardinali/che no(n) vogliono a pie' questi animali',<sup>300</sup> and warns of the unpleasant side of wedlock and the hidden dangers of heterosexual intercourse, 'del'arte che a voi novi par sî agevole'.<sup>301</sup>

The subject matter of the attack, as we have seen, stems from a common matrix which becomes especially obvious when the *contra* sonnets are grouped by category. If one for example focuses on Pistoia's poetic quarrels, that is poems of dispute and contention written against fellow poets and courtiers, the similarities are even more striking. In addition to creating a caricature of his rivals, emphasising their vice-ridden nature and behaviour, Pistoia mocks their literary output, plays with their verse by drawing directly from their compositions and berates them for their sharp tongues. In the case of Giovanni Battista Refrigerio,<sup>302</sup> Pistoia disparages a composition of the Bolognese scholar, a *Triumpho*, which was penned, together with two *canzoni*, to pay tribute to the army captain Roberto San

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<sup>298</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 31r (XXXII, p. 76), line 4.

<sup>299</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 99v (CLXIX, pp. 206-207), lines 19-20.

<sup>300</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 99v (CLXIX, pp. 206-207), lines 15-17.

<sup>301</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 144r (CCLVIII, pp. 297-298), line 2.

<sup>302</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 69r-70r (CVIII-CX, pp. 147-150).



Severino, the Count of Caiazzo.<sup>303</sup> Similarities can be drawn between the *Triumpho* and Pistoia's tailed sonnets: both are written in the persona of San Severino, the narrative style is direct speech, a conversation in the *Triumpho* and a monologue in the sonnets, but while in the *Triumpho* this technique is employed with a view to lending dramatic weight to the dialogue, in the sonnets the same tool is used to mock and disparage the work by Refrigerio. In the *Triumpho*, San Severino makes himself known to his former secretary by affirming 'Io son quel che te traxi de Bologna'<sup>304</sup> and in one of the sonnets by Pistoia a similar turn of phrase is employed, 'io liberai di te Bologna'.<sup>305</sup> The first line is an almost clear rendition of Refrigerio's but with a semantic opposition: the Latinism 'traxi' is replaced by the incisive 'liberai'. When San Severino refers to his death in the *Triumpho*, he says 'cinque piaghe hebi e due de lor mortale'<sup>306</sup> while in Pistoia's verse the captain exhorts Refrigerio to leave him alone and not to bother him any longer with his lyrical compositions, 'hor ch'io son morto no(n) mi dar vesiche'.<sup>307</sup> Refrigerio's and Pistoia's lines are linked by a difference in register between 'piaghe' and 'vesiche', a more refined term versus a more plebian one; then the extra semantic value conveyed

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<sup>303</sup> Giovanni B. Refrigerio, *Triumpho* [and other verses] ([Venice: B. Rizus, 1487]).

<sup>304</sup> Giovanni B. Refrigerio, *Triumpho* [and other verses], cit., sig. a[1]r.

<sup>305</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 69r (CVIII, pp. 147-148).

<sup>306</sup> Giovanni B. Refrigerio, *Triumpho* [and other verses], cit., sig. a2r.

<sup>307</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 69r (CVIII, pp. 147-148), line 17.

by 'vesich<a>', that is bladder, adds a comic tone to the line.

In the tenson with Bellincioni, Pistoia employs the former's favourite adjective 'gagliardo', lusty, three times with reference to the poet and his lyrics:

acciò che 'l possa dire: 'io son gagliardo.<sup>308</sup>

un de t\u/oi bon sonetti, il più gagliardo.<sup>309</sup>

Tornò il capitol mio integro e sano,  
io lo ripresi assai del tornar tardo  
lui disse a me: 'quanto fusti gagliardo'  
in cercar per havermi [ne] in la tua mano.<sup>310</sup>

The opening line of Bellincioni's poem 'Che fa la lega? Mal che Dio vi dia!'<sup>311</sup> is divided by Pistoia into two parts and inserted into the first tercet of the sonnet 'Ecci, San Buovo aiuti il mio Bernardo':

Qual ti parria miglior? Non dir bugia.  
Che fa la lega? Sì, meglior più forte.  
Perché? Perché gli è mal che Dio te dia.<sup>312</sup>

Strong references to some of the poems written by the Florentine versifier against the court treasurer Ambrogio da Corte are provided in the forenamed 'Ecci, San Buovo aiuti il mio Bernardo' and 'Io intendo che Bernardo Bellincione'.<sup>313</sup>

In the poetic debate Pistoia often rebukes his enemies for

<sup>308</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 70v (CXI, pp. 150-151), line 14.

<sup>309</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 75r (CXX, pp. 159-160), line 8.

<sup>310</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 78v (CXXVII, p. 166), lines 1-4.

<sup>311</sup> Bernardo Bellincioni, *Le rime di Bernardo Bellincioni*, cit., vol. 1, p. 30.

<sup>312</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 75r (CXX, pp. 159-160), lines 9-11.

<sup>313</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 79v (CXXIX, pp. 167-168).



spreading rumours; sharp malicious statements: *tagliare*, *traferrire*, *trivellare* and *lacerare* are some of the verbs chosen by the poet to describe the effects of their actions. Words have a devastating effect on both parties, first on the addressee and later on the sender:

E così spesso le parole sono saete, che ritornano in coste  
a chi le dice senza pensargli su tercento volte.<sup>314</sup>

The three invectives against Sasso, Cinzio and Bellincioni offer a variety of images all centred around the 'tongue'. Although differently phrased in the shape of advice, warning, threat or insult, the refrain remains the same: the poets are rebuked for their critical temperament and they are accused of being *lauzengiers*, slanderers, and therefore deserve to be chided for their sharp tongue. Pistoia lashes out at his rivals and the original *morditori* turn into victims while those *morsi* get their revenge. The poets are repeatedly subjected to Pistoia's goading satirical barb and his buoyant exercise in vituperation:

Ma sai tu ben quel che farti bisogna?  
Fermar la lingua e[t] metterla nel sale.<sup>315</sup>

Se tu (no)n cavi la lingua alle penne  
te la sotterarò dirietro all'enne.<sup>316</sup>

Se non, ti trovarai  
collei che tu adopri a tante frappe  
fitta in quel .O. che è in mezzo de due chiappe.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Modena Est, MS  $\alpha$ .F.5.17, f. 154r; the lines are from Antonio Cornazzano's *De l'integrità de la militare arte*.

<sup>315</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 72v (CXV, p. 155), lines 3-4.

<sup>316</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 74r (CXVIII, pp. 157-158), lines 16-17.

<sup>317</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 77v (CXXV, pp. 164-165), lines 15-17.

Quando di' d'altri pensa a toi diffetti,  
ferma collei che ti possa esser mozza.<sup>318</sup>

Che l'hor(r)ida tua lingua un giorno spero  
di vedertel<a> in cul per un cristero.<sup>319</sup>

Pistoia showers the characters at the centre of his attack with hyperbolic and humorous insults such as 'schiumazza d'Arno, bertuccia, maccaronazzo mio senza formaggio, rapa, casa da cimitero, bambolin da pappe, testa di luccio, cervel d'oco, otre de vin, saccazzo da scudelle, vil pennarol, figliol de la fortuna, bestion bestial' and 'stronzo'.

It is difficult to determine to what extent the rancour and rage expressed in the *contra sonnets* were sincere or whether they simply responded to the requirements of a well-defined genre. In the case of Bellincioni a personal grudge appears to be at the source of the *tenson*,<sup>320</sup> and in the *diatribe* with Sasso<sup>321</sup> the

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<sup>318</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 79r (CXXVIII, pp. 166-167), lines 9-10.

<sup>319</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 94v (CLIX, pp. 196-198), lines 16-17.

<sup>320</sup> Pistoia represents Bellincioni as saying to him, MS H.223 inf., f. 58r (LXXXVI, pp. 128-129), lines 1-4:

Di tutto quel che vedi fai sonetti  
dice un ch'io taccio, anchor no(n) sei satollo  
se tu vedessi pur cacare un pollo,  
o far questione insieme dui galletti.

Pistoia and Bellincioni enjoyed different positions in the social ladder and at court: this may in part explain their rivalry. First a protégé of Lorenzo de' Medici, Bellincioni pursued a brilliant career at the Milanese court of Ludovico where, through a series of favourable opportunities he found the route to wealth and power. In a document dated 13th October 1487, drawn up by the notary Antonio De Capitani, he figures among the *cubicularii*, personal secretaries, of the Duke Giovanni Galeazzo. This position certainly enabled him to secure discreet wealth for himself. In his will he appointed as his heir the Ospedale Maggiore of Milan to which he donated a house located in Piazza di Sant'Ambrogio. As a poet he was held in high regard as the editor of his *rime* Francesco Tanzi declared in his introduction to Bellincioni's collection of poems. Bernardo Bellincioni, *Le*



real issue at hand is a booklet penned by the latter<sup>322</sup> against Ludovico, following his escape from the Lombard capital in 1499. Sasso is repeatedly attacked for his sharp invective against the Duke and for his vehement words which tore the Milanese ruler apart: 'per lacerare il traferrito Moro'<sup>323</sup> and again 'per haver tanto lacerato il Moro'.<sup>324</sup> As to Refrigerio, Pistoia's critical jest is exclusively fired at his eulogistic verse which, according to Pistoia, produces the opposite effect, as the poems which are meant to be 'laude' turn into 'vituperio'.<sup>325</sup> It should be noted that the sonnets written against Refrigerio are, for once, surprisingly free of abusive epithets, crude language

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*rime di Bernardo Bellincioni, cit., vol. 1, p. 5: 'acciochè per l'ornato fiorentino parlare di costui, et per le argute, terse et prompte sue rime, la città nostra venesse a limare et polire il suo alquanto rozo parlare. Nè in questa ha fatto poco frutto, però che, prima che venesse, pochi qui erano chi sapesse che volesse dir sonetto'.*

<sup>321</sup> The composition date of the sonnets is comprised according to Pèrcopo between the autumn of 1499 and the very beginning of 1500. Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'Un «libretto» sconosciuto di Panfilo Sasso', *SLI*, 1, 1899, pp. 194-212 (p. 196): 'Questi versi del Pistoia erano, dunque, stati composti dopo il 1 settembre 1499, quando il Moro fuggì da Milano, e prima del 30 gennaio 1500, quando egli ritornò in Italia'; Erasmo Pèrcopo, 'Un carne di Ercole Strozzi contro Panfilo Sasso', *SLI*, 4, 1902, pp. 222-224 (p. 222): 'i sette violenti sonetti che il Pistoia lanciò contro il Sasso, i quali perciò dovettero essere scritti prima del 10 nov. 1499'.

<sup>322</sup> Panfilo Sasso, [*Poems*] ([s.n.]).

<sup>323</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 97r (CLXIV, pp. 201-202), line 2.

<sup>324</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 97v (CLXV, pp. 202-203), line 2.

<sup>325</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 69r (CVIII, pp. 147-148), line 2: 'quanto il laudarmi tuo m'è vituperio'. The same device is exploited in the series against Cinzio who is reprimanded for having extolled Vincenzo Calmeta because the praises of a ruffian can only bestow shame on the recipient: 'son vergogna le laude d'un rubaldo', and again 'che le tue laude a noi sarian vergogna', ff. 89v-90r (CXLIX-CL, pp. 185-188), line 20 and 4.

and derogatory comments both on his habits and physical appearance.

As to the twelve poems written against women, Pistoia's stance can be described as an ambiguous mixture of aggressive derision and light-hearted mocking.<sup>326</sup> The sonnets are fashioned around well-established tropes of the anti-female tradition: the alleged vanity of women, their affected manners and haughtiness, hypocrisy, greed and lust.<sup>327</sup> However, despite the occasional hail of words and the adherence to standard thematic issues, Pistoia's poetry is far from having the full features of the misogynous *vituperium*. His sonnets are a far cry from the powerful invectives based on the alleged inferiority of women, first mentioned by Aristotle, and which found its most congenial authors in Juvenal,<sup>328</sup> Tertullian,<sup>329</sup> Gerardo Pateg,<sup>330</sup> Boccaccio,<sup>331</sup> the anonymous author of the *Proverbia quæ dicuntur*

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<sup>326</sup> The sonnet 'Figli\o/ola non andar senza belletto', MS H.223 inf., f. 66v (CIII, pp. 142-143) was commented by Benedetto Croce, *Poesia antica e moderna: interpretazioni* (Bari: Laterza, 1950), pp. 200-208.

<sup>327</sup> It is perhaps worth observing that there are no sonnets on crones who were stock material of early burlesque poetry.

<sup>328</sup> Aulo Persio Flacco and Decimo Giunio Giovenale, *Satire*, edited by Paolo Frassinetti and Lucia di Salvo (Turin: UTET, 1979). The sixth satire, the longest ever written by Juvenal, is a milestone in misogynist literature and exerted a great influence. The satires were translated, though poorly, into the vernacular by Giorgio Sommariva and published in 1480.

<sup>329</sup> Tertullien, *La toilette des femmes (De cultu feminarum)*, edited by Marie Turcan (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1971).

<sup>330</sup> Gianfranco Contini ed., *Poeti del Duecento* (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1995 [reprint of the 1960 edition]), vol. 1, t. 2, pp. 571-573.

<sup>331</sup> Giovanni Boccaccio, *Il Corbaccio*, edited by Tauno Nurmela (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1968).



*super natura feminarum*<sup>332</sup> and Antonio Pucci.<sup>333</sup> Pistoia's verse contains no phrase or image of the same intensity found in the work of sonneteers such as Francesco Scambrilla, Giovanni Matteo di Meglio and Pietro dei Faitinelli known as Il Mugnone; he does not savagely attack women and his jeering is more satirical than abusive. When Pistoia wrote misogynous verse, it is fair to say that he first exercised his poetic skills and secondly he drew up a personal comment, showing his attitude towards the subject matter leaving the standard formulas in the background.

#### 5.5 The 'art of silk' and other amorous pursuits.

Nofri, sendo preso per sessantasei, si scusava con dire: Io non sapevo nulla di questo; ché io attendeva a sodomitare e fare e fatti miei.<sup>334</sup>

Cerca per le taverne, arte! [...] Qui se ne fa arte! Annole posto nome l'arte gentile della seta!<sup>335</sup>

Between 6th and 8th April 1424, Bernardino da Siena spearheaded

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<sup>332</sup> Gianfranco Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, cit., vol. 1, t. 2, pp. 523-555. The anonymous author comments on the artificial beauty of women, their greed and stinginess, their hypocritical behaviour and carnal desires.

<sup>333</sup> Antonio Pucci, *Libro di varie storie*, edited by Alberto Vârvaro (Palermo: Presso l'Accademia, 1957).

<sup>334</sup> Angelo Poliziano, *I detti piacevoli*, edited by Mariano Fresta (Siena: Editori del Grifo, 1985), p. 83. The expression 'essere preso per sessantasei' means to be put behind bars for having engaged in sodomy.

<sup>335</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, edited by Ciro Cannarozzi (Pistoia: Pacinotti, 1934), vol. 2, p. 35 (sermon 30). Bernardino's exhortations on sodomy were the focus of an article by Michael Rocke, 'Sodomites in fifteenth-century Tuscany: the views of Bernardino of Siena', *The pursuit of sodomy: male homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe*, edited by Kent Gerard and Gert Hekma (New York; London: The Haworth Press, 1989), pp. 7-31.

his campaign against '[la] porcinosa sodomia'<sup>336</sup> by delivering three sermons in the church of Santa Croce in Florence. Bernardino's words remain at a distance of more than five-hundred years highly effective and powerful, as if they were images surfacing from an illuminated trompe-l'œil initial of a bestiary. First he depicted the acolytes of the so-called art of silk in the following fashion:

Sono di tre ragioni porci. E primi sono e salvatichi; e sicondi e dimestichi; e terzi l'istrici, che saettano le penne. E salvatichi porci sono e sodomiti che sempre vanno, di notte al buio, colle vostre bullette le quali guastano la vostra terra, e non vi provvedete. E porci salvatichi si pascano più di notte che di dì; sono assomigliati a loro. E porci domestici sono queglii che più a scoperta faccia, non curandosi nè d'onore nè di vergogna di mondo, con parenti e cor ogni materia; mariti indimoniati colle loro donne medesime. Cose da scurare el sole! El terzo porco è l'istrice. Questi sono e sodomiti ostinati, che non vogliono udire riprensione nessuna, ma saettano da segno dardi avvelenati.<sup>337</sup>

Then he indicated the causes for the pervasiveness of sodomy:

Tre cose fanno crescere il fuoco della sodomia: prima le molte legne del mangiare, del pappare, del bere e inzeppare. La borsa piena, giuocare, istarne, capponi, lamprede, istorioni a taverne di corso di malvagge e ne' luoghi riposti ove si tiene pubrico bordello de' garzoni come di pubbliche meritrici, i letti per albergare la notte quando ànno pieno il corpo di vino, la lossuria sodomita in campo.<sup>338</sup>

And finally he gave a number of guidelines in order to stick to what was regarded to be the right path:

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<sup>336</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, cit., vol. 2, p. 40 (sermon 31).

<sup>337</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 33-34 (sermon 30).

<sup>338</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, cit., vol. 2, p. 45 (sermon 31).



El sapere scampare dall'arte della mala compagnia, e il guardarsi dalle taverne, e dal giuoco, e dal bestemmiare, e dalle ghiottornie, queste sono le penne maestre degli uccelli che campano dinanzi alla rete.<sup>339</sup>

The sin of Sodom<sup>340</sup> had a prominent place in Bernardino's sermons. In 1427 while addressing a crowd in the Campo of Siena, the friar repeatedly inveighed against 'lo maledetto vizio',<sup>341</sup> the 'abominable vice' of sodomy.<sup>342</sup> Sixty-seven years later, on 14th December 1494, another preacher, Friar Girolamo Savonarola, lashed out against the sexual antics of the Florentines:

Item è necessario che la Signoria faccia legge contra quello maledetto vizio della sodomia, del quale tu [i.e. Magnifica Signoria] sai che per tutta Italia Firenze ne è infamata, e questa infamia nasce forse perché tanto di questo vizio tu ne parli e cianci, che forse non è tanto in fatto, quanto se ne dice; fanne una legge, dico, che sia senza misericordia, cioè che tali persone siano lapidate ed abrusciate. Da altra parte bisogna rimuovere da te queste

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<sup>339</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, cit., vol. 2, p. 68 (sermon 32).

<sup>340</sup> The city of ancient Palestine, possibly located south of the Dead Sea, was with nearby Gomorrah demolished due to their vice and depravity. Alberto Colunga and Laurentio Turrado eds., *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam clementinam* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1977<sup>5</sup>), p. 16, (Genesis 19:24): 'Igitur Dominus pluit super Sodomam et Gomorrhham sulphur et ignem a Domino de caelo'.

<sup>341</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche volgari sul campo di Siena 1427*, cit., vol. 1, p. 593 (sermon 20).

<sup>342</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche volgari sul campo di Siena 1427*, cit., vol. 2, p. 1021 (sermon 35): 'El sicondo peccato si è quello che è contra a natura. Questo non si fa già a Siena! Doh, cittadini, non considerate voi nulla? Per certo ch'io non so se voi vi sete impazzati. Doimmè, no avete voi l'essempli di Sodoma e di Gomorra? Non temete voi Idio? Non senti quello che sente il cielo del peccato tanto multiplicato nel mondo? Quanto ch'è a me, io mi credo che tu nol senta; ché se tu il sentisse, tu terrestri altri modi. Sai la cagione perché tu non senti questo? Perché tu hai l'orecchie tutte piene di cacola. Perché dunque non le sturi? Perché tu non vuoi udire: vuoi più ratto aspettare il giudizio di Dio'.

poesie e giuochi e taverne ...<sup>343</sup>

A certain type of poetry was of great concern to Savonarola as it had been, more than a century before, to the Florentine commune which in 1325 imposed a fine of ten *lire* on anyone who was responsible for penning a poem on sodomy or even for reciting it.<sup>344</sup> The commune was afraid that these poems, by simply hammering out the theme of sodomy, might urge people to develop a curiosity and consequently a taste for this sexual practice. But the popularity of 'queste poesie' did not show any signs of abating and the fine did not prove very effective. In 1425, Antonio Beccadelli called Il Panormita dedicated to Cosimo de' Medici his *Hermaphroditus*, a collection of Latin epigrams in praise of homosexual and heterosexual practices of love making.<sup>345</sup> Towards the middle of the century an anonymous author composed *Il Manganello*,<sup>346</sup> a misogynous poem and a celebration of the pleasures of sodomy; a few decades later Politian penned his *Detti piacevoli* offering numerous anecdotes on sodomy.<sup>347</sup> Francesco Beccuti known as Il Coppetta wrote *In lode della*

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<sup>343</sup> Girolamo Savonarola, *Prediche italiane ai fiorentini*, edited by Francesco Cognasso (Perugia-Venice: La Nuova Italia, 1930), vol. 1, p. 191.

<sup>344</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., p. 21.

<sup>345</sup> [Antonio Beccadelli], *Hermaphroditus*, edited by Friederich C. Forberg (Coburg: Sumtibus Meusehorum, 1824).

<sup>346</sup> Diego Zancani ed., *Il Manganello. La repressione del Cornazano contra Manganello*, cit.

<sup>347</sup> Angelo Poliziano, *I detti piacevoli*, cit.



*pederastia*,<sup>348</sup> and works in the same vein were penned by Francesco Berni, the so-called Berneschi and by Antonio Vignali, better known as Arsiccio Intronato, who wrote the treatise *La cazzaria*, a mock philosophical dialogue in praise of the male sexual organ.<sup>349</sup> Other examples abound in collections of tales by Boccaccio, Sermini, Sacchetti, Sercambi and in many a poem of jocular poetry.

The town of Florence in order to keep the 'pessimo e pestifero peccato'<sup>350</sup> under control established in 1432 the *ufficiali di notte*, the officers of the night, whose task was to pursue and banish sodomy.<sup>351</sup> In the spring of 1494, Duke Ercole I d'Este issued an edict outlawing swearing, prostitution 'e quel vitio fetente sodomito'.<sup>352</sup> This line is perhaps one of the very few in which Antonio Pistoia apparently condemned the practice of sodomy, a topic which was, on the contrary, very dear to him.

Pistoia wrote twenty-six poems dealing with lubricious matters,<sup>353</sup> although plenty of references and allusions of this

<sup>348</sup> Giovanni Guidiccioni and Francesco Coppetta Beccuti, *Rime*, edited by Ezio Chiorboli (Bari: Laterza, 1912), pp. 283-286.

<sup>349</sup> Antonio Vignali, *La cazzaria*, edited by Pasquale Stoppelli (Rome: Edizioni dell'Elefante, 1984).

<sup>350</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche volgari sul campo di Siena 1427*, cit., vol. 2, p. 1140 (sermon 39).

<sup>351</sup> Michael Rocke in his study *Forbidden friendships*, cit., offers a painstaking and thorough analysis of the office of the night and in particular of its activities from November 1478 up to November 1502, the year in which the office of the night was abolished.

<sup>352</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 129r (CCXXVIII, pp. 266-267).

<sup>353</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 18v-23v (VIII-XVIII, pp. 53-62); f. 26r (XXXIII, p. 66); f. 27r-v (XXV-XXVI, pp. 67-69); f. 57r-v (LXXXIV-LXXXV, pp. 126-128); f. 105v (CLXXXI, pp. 221-222); f.

nature are also scattered throughout his verse. The poet never missed an opportunity to sing the earthly delights of the 'gentil arte de la seta'.<sup>354</sup> Although no evidence has so far surfaced as to Antonio Pistoia's sexual preferences and whether he committed or was denounced for sodomy during his life time, it is reasonable to assume, due to its widespread practice, that he engaged in it. However there can be no doubts that sodomy was given the role of prima donna in his verse. The sin against nature is the focus of the poems 'Ciascun che \`è/ nato pò senza pensiero'<sup>355</sup> and 'Ogni arte in sé si pò chiamar gentile'.<sup>356</sup> In the sonnets Pistoia makes 'il pretor de Nuvolara' and the Lucchese captain Gregorio Zampante pay tribute to this very special art. Sodomy, which in both cases is referred to as the genteel art of silk, is, according to the above characters, an activity which is often forbidden in order not to make it too widespread and therefore common, 'che 'l troppo sempre fa la cosa vile'.<sup>357</sup> It is a subtle and secretive occupation,<sup>358</sup> 'più bel mi par fra mestieri il sottile',<sup>359</sup> which requires a certain skill and *savoir faire*, 'bisognassi guidar per man

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110r (CXC, pp. 230-231); ff. 115r-116r (CC-CCII, pp. 239-242); f. 131r (CCXXXII, pp. 270-271); f. 164r (CCXCVIII, pp. 334-335); f. 174r (CCCXVIII, p. 352); f. 192r (CCCLIV, p. 385); f. 196v (CCCLXIII, pp. 393-394).

<sup>354</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 57v (LXXXV, pp. 127-128).

<sup>355</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 57v (LXXXV, pp. 127-128).

<sup>356</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 57r (LXXXIV, pp. 126-127).

<sup>357</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 57r (LXXXIV, pp. 126-127), line 4.

<sup>358</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 57v (LXXXV, pp. 127-128), line 11: 'bisogna far secreto lo exercitio'.

<sup>359</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 57r (LXXXIV, pp. 126-127), line 5.



discreta/ch'abbia lo ingegno pronto e bono stile',<sup>360</sup> otherwise it is better to refrain from it, 'ma non la faccia chi no(n) sa incanare/che se diria poi guasta mestiero'.<sup>361</sup> Sodomy, which is thought to have included anal and intercrural intercourse and fellatio alike,<sup>362</sup> was defined an arte. A two-faced reality is disclosed by the polysemous value of the term: as we have seen, this sexual practice was regarded as a subtle mestiere, it was therefore an arte as such.<sup>363</sup> Secondly the word arte was and still is a synonym for guild as if those who belonged to it were part of a privileged corporation.<sup>364</sup> This peculiarity of elitism had already been pointed out by Bernardino da Siena in his sermon on sodomy delivered in Florence on 7th April 1424:

E i terzi sono coloro che, nel detto tempo contaminati, indurano e non si vogliono pentere nè ammendare, ma scusano

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<sup>360</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 57r (LXXXIV, pp. 126-127), lines 7-8.

<sup>361</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 57v (LXXXV, pp. 127-128), lines 3-4.

<sup>362</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., p. 91. In a widespread fifteenth-century confessional by Saint Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, known as *Defeceru(n)t* (Florence: Lorenzo Morgiani & Johannes Petri for Piero Pacini, 1496) sodomy is defined as follows, sig. g2r: 'Item se con maschi commette bruttura overo femina con femina: overo huomo con don(n)a alcuna fuor del vaso debito, è chiamato acto sogdomiticho. Et se tale opera si commette con animali bruti è chiamato nefas et bestialità'. The impact of preaching on life in Florence is investigated by Peter F. Howard, *Beyond the written word: preaching and theology in the Florence of Archbishop Antoninus 1427-1459* ([Florence]: Olschki, 1995).

<sup>363</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 6, p. 1663, lists a number of meanings for arte among which feature ability, sex, sexual activity, anus and sodomy.

<sup>364</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., p. 151: 'In a few sources, in fact, from accusations and chronicles to sermons and burlesque poetry, sodomites were occasionally portrayed as constituting an arte (corporation) or even "sects", perhaps implying a clandestine organization and specialized skill or know-how'.



el peccato dicendo che tutti gli uomini da bene sono di quell'arte.<sup>365</sup>

*L'arte della seta*, an expression which was still much en vogue during the fifteenth and sixteenth century alike,<sup>366</sup> strongly gives the impression that it was endowed with an aristocratic element, 'a class content',<sup>367</sup> as if it could brandish its own coats of arms.<sup>368</sup>

*L'arte della seta* was an expression widely employed at least

<sup>365</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, cit., vol. 2, p. 51 (sermon 31). Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., comes to the conclusion that sodomy in the Tuscan capital was instead far too spread to retain an elitist mark, p. 146: 'Sodomy in Florence was not limited to any particular social group or to a distinctive and permanent "homosexual" minority. Rather, it was part of the whole fabric of Florentine society, attracting males of all ages, matrimonial condition, and social rank'.

<sup>366</sup> The expression was also used among others by Pietro Aretino, *Sei giornate*, cit., p. 304: 'E così io con la destrezza vinsi la castità, ruffianando senza ruffianare: la quale arte è sottile più che quella de la seta, e dotta e laudabile e sicurissima'.

<sup>367</sup> Lynne Lawner ed., *I modi: the sixteen pleasures. An erotic album of the Italian Renaissance* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988), pp. 45-46: 'the potta is the old-fashioned way, the cul the new way dei grandi - that is to say, of the great noblemen and prelates. Yet, despite their high positions, the practitioners of this vice necessarily formed a clandestine elite. What is interesting is the class content. Why should the back way be considered aristocratic and the front way plebeian? I can only think that this was a combination of long-term clerical practice and "humanistic" homosexuality. But there are elements that elude us'.

<sup>368</sup> The early sixteenth century also witnessed the birth of a literary genre known as the erotic 'blazon' which celebrated buttocks and other body parts; Jean-Luc Hennig devotes a chapter to blazons in *The rear view: a brief and elegant history of bottoms through the ages* (London: Souvenir Press, 1996), pp. 23-28 (p. 23): 'Blazons were extremely widespread in the first half of the sixteenth century. Absolutely everything was "emblazoned"'. Eustorg de Beaulieu also penned a blazon centred on the bottom entitled 'Du cul'. The poem is published in Eustorg de Beaulieu, *Les divers rapportz*, edited by M. A. Pegg (Geneva: Droz, 1964), pp. 298-302 (p. 300).



since the early fourteenth century to denote sodomitical activity. Jean Toscan states that the use of the term *seta* 'supporte et impose l'idée de "sodomie"'.<sup>369</sup> Although the following explanation concerns the opposition velvet and satin, one could safely affirm that it is also valid for the term silk:

Le sexe, que distingue sa toison, sera dit il velluto ("le velu" puis, par substitution homonymique, "le velours"); le fondement, qui au contraire, est glabre, sera appelé il raso ("le rasé" puis, par substitution homonymique, "le satin").<sup>370</sup>

It is perhaps worth putting forward two further hypotheses. Both the terms *seta*<sup>371</sup> and *setola* stem from the Latin *saeta* meaning thick hair or bristles of an animal such as a pig, a boar, a horse or a porcupine.<sup>372</sup> Although silk is a much more delicate material, less coarse than bristle, it offers the suggestive image of a lustrous fibre spun by the silk worm which is in a sense analogous to that of the discharge of seminal fluid. The art of silk could therefore indicate the activity of the male sexual organ by the same token, since *seta* is produced by a *filugello* or *bigatto*, a silk worm, which has always been used as an image

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<sup>369</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 205.

<sup>370</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 155.

<sup>371</sup> Manlio Cortelazzo and Paolo Zolli, *Dizionario etimologico della lingua italiana* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1984-1991<sup>6</sup>), vol. 5, p. 1188: 'Lat. *sēta(m)*, variante rustica di *sāeta(m)* "setola, crine" (d'etim. incerta)'.  
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<sup>372</sup> Saint Isidore stated: 'Porcorum pilos setas vocamus, et setas a sue dictas', in which the connection with pigs is quite clear. *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi, Etymologiarum sive originum*, edited by W. M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, [1995] [reprint of the 1911 edition]), t. 2, p. 36.

for the *membrum*. In Medieval Latin *silk*<sup>373</sup> also meant *cordone* and *randellus*, two terms used in jocular poetry and in the *novellistica* to refer to the male member. It is also worth keeping in mind a homographic fourteenth-century term *setola*<sup>374</sup> which denotes a cleft in hooves of horses.<sup>375</sup> The term probably derives from the Latin *secare* meaning to divide and to separate.<sup>376</sup> One may hypothesize that if the word *seta* were related to the latter *setola*, the expression could also have denoted the cleft between the nates, the *fessa par excellence*.<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>373</sup> Pietro Sella ed., *Glossario latino emiliano* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1937), p. 324: '*seta*: «libram de seta orexelli», Inv. farmacia Modena (sec. XIV); v. *balcium, banderia, binda, borsa, borsellus, bursa, camusia, cendatus, centura, cerata, cerra, chiavacorium, cordella, cordone, cultra, drappus, fecta, filatorium, fluba, francia, gabanus, guarnachia, guarnimentum, intrezatorium, mappa, mulinellus, palium, panisellus, randellus, redita, sericum, tela, veleria, velum, zinzellus*. - *setola*: «cordoaneriis emeret unam setam», Bologna calzolai 1254, 56; «extrahere setas de cauda», Frignano 1338 III, 34'.

<sup>374</sup> Carlo Battisti and Giovanni Alessio, *Dizionario etimologico italiano*, cit., at the entry '*setola*' report: '[...] Lat. *s(a)etula* (Arnobio), diminutivo di *saeta* '*séta*' [...] veter.; fessure nello zoccolo del cavallo', vol. 5, p. 3468, entry 1 and 2.

<sup>375</sup> Manlio Cortelazzo and Paolo Zolli, *Dizionario etimologico della lingua italiana*, cit., vol. 5, p. 1188: '*setola*,<sup>1</sup> [...] Forse dal lat. *sēcta* (f. sost. del part. pass. di *secāre* "tagliare": V. *secānte*), con sovrapp. di *setola*<sup>2</sup>'.

<sup>376</sup> William Smith ed., *A Latin-English Dictionary* (London: Murray, 1926<sup>25</sup>), pp. 1003-1004.

<sup>377</sup> Jean-Luc Hennig, *The rear view: a brief and elegant history of bottoms through the ages*, cit., p. 66: 'What are the buttocks? The Greeks defined them mainly through their density, their mass, assimilated to a ball (*gloutos*) or a tubercle (*pugé*). The Romans saw things more or less the same way, describing the buttocks by the word *nates*, which has been compared to the Sanskrit *nitambah*, signifying the slope or rear side of a mountain. [...] In fact, since the Byzantine Empire, there had been a serious competitor, the vulgar Latin *fissa* which produced



The sexual canvas painted by Pistoia is constantly permeated by 'lo peccato contra natura'.<sup>378</sup> A further nine lubricious poems<sup>379</sup> are further charged with homosexual and heterosexual sodomy although to the latter the poet only devotes three sonnets.<sup>380</sup> In several poems dealing with homosexual sodomy, among which 'La entrata che ti rende el culiseo',<sup>381</sup> the poet

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the French word *fesse* (buttocks) about 1200 and came from the classical Latin *fissum*, the cleft'.

<sup>378</sup> Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche volgari sul campo di Siena* 1427, cit., vol. 1, p. 357 (sermon 11).

<sup>379</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 22v-23v (XVI-XVIII, pp. 60-62); f. 26r (XXXIII, p. 66); f. 27r-v (XXV-XXVI, pp. 67-69); f. 110r (CXC, pp. 230-231); f. 131r (CCXXXII, pp. 270-271).

<sup>380</sup> The sonnets in question are 'Quando le fiche vanno in sapore', MS H.223 inf., f. 27r (XXV, pp. 67-68), 'Tu mi mandasti a denticar coiamè', f. 110r (CXC, pp. 230-231) and 'La pena è mia come ne vien la sera', f. 131r (CCXXXII, pp. 270-271). In the first poem the poet describes a salacious encounter of his with a woman who is bathing her feet bending 'in mità d'otto' and clothed in a tight robe, lines 7-8: 'volta in bianco e sotil camisotto/che le ch*>*appe il mordevon per amore'. The poet approaches her 'a passi pec\c/orino' in order to enter 'dal canal nel molino', lines 12-17:

Hor pur vista la posta cauto andai  
e su la groppa qual fassi a un roncino  
la man due o tre volte gli fregai.

Sentimi lei: 'E ch(e) fai?' -  
mi disse - e seria via da me scappata  
ma la porta de drieto era chiavata.

According to Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 245, heterosexual sodomy was more popular than its male counterpart: 'Encore que les textes résolument homosexuels ne manquent guère, c'est à la sodomie hétérosexuelle que les poètes burlesques et les chants de carnaval font le plus souvent allusion'.

<sup>381</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 22v (XVI, p. 60). It is perhaps worth quoting an interpretation given by Toscan in *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., with regard to this sonnet, t. 1, pp. 426-427: '"Il Giubileo". - La valeur secondaire de giù est certainement à l'origine du passage du substantif Giubileo "le Jubilé" dans le lexique de l'équivoque. Le sens de Giubileo, qui paraît être chez les burlesques celui de "plaisir sodomitique", résulte dans

amply comments on 'l'anello', '<i>l tondo', '<la> carne arrosto' and '<il> fil de la schena'. In 'Togliel Signor che egli è bon cancellieri'<sup>382</sup> and 'Per un bon servitor costui è desso',<sup>383</sup> Pistoia advises his Lord to employ the good services of a discreet and reliable valet who can perform both as an active and passive sodomite:

Mettil come ti pare arosto o alesso  
ad ogni modo a tutti è paziente,  
il tuo il poco e lo assai gli è ubidiente  
in quel modo si sta come gli è messo.<sup>384</sup>

The difference in passive and active roles was not just a matter of taste or age, but it was also very important from a legal point of view. Florentine judiciary practice had recognized the

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doute du croisement de giù "anus" avec giubilo "joie". Dans certains textes où il a la valeur d'"anus", giubileo est employé en fonction de substitut parophonique de giù. Le texte le mieux apte à faire apparaître le sens équivoque de giubileo est vraisemblablement le premier quatrain d'un sonnet de Pistoia, écrit en dérision d'un personnage que le poète taxe évidemment de sodomie:

L'entrata che ti rende il culiseo,  
e la virtù del tuo comune anello,  
han fatto sgomberar tutto 'l castello  
per venir al perdon del GIUBILEO

Il est bien connu que Culiseo "Le Colisée" est un substitut parophonique de culo. Au vers 2, anello signifie "anus". Au vers 3, castello, soutenu par son homologue tutto, désigne la vulve [...] Au vers 4, le terme perdon signifie "coït anal": il est formé du préfixe per "à travers" et de dono "anus". On comprend: "Les rentes que te procure ton cul et l'habilité d'un anus devenu le bien de tous (comune) ont eu pour effet d'amener [les gens] à désertir la vulve (sgomberar tutto 'l castello) pour jouir (venir) de rapport (al perdon) offrant les plaisirs de Sodome" (del giubileo)'.

<sup>382</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 23r (XVII, p. 61).

<sup>383</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 23v (XVIII, pp. 61-62).

<sup>384</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 23v (XVIII, pp. 61-62), lines 5-8.



difference since the early fifteenth century<sup>385</sup> and the Venetian legal system had followed suit a few decades later.<sup>386</sup> The term sodomite only referred to the 'active partner' that is to the 'anal inserter', the only person responsible for having committed an act of sodomy.<sup>387</sup>

Not content with human sexual practices, Pistoia goes as far as describing an anal intercourse between a male and a female donkey:

Po' il vidi dove il turco i ladri impala  
l'asino haverlo all'asina di brocca;<sup>388</sup>  
io dissi: 'Asina l'asin te l'accala'.

Egli ha fallito all'entrar de la rocca,<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., pp. 89-90: 'The expressive language of these early laws yielded for the first time in the statutes of 1408/1409 and of 1415 to the categorical terms "active" and "passive": "whoever will have voluntarily committed the crime of sodomy, whether actively or passively [quicumque voluntarie commiserit crimen sodomie agendo vel patiando]". This dualistic formula occurred routinely in rulings against sodomy from this point on to at least the mid-sixteenth century. Sometimes trial summaries also identified the respective partners as either *agens* or *agente* (active), or *patiens* or *paziente* (passive)'.

<sup>386</sup> Guido Ruggiero, *The boundaries of eros: sex crime and sexuality in Renaissance Venice* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 121: 'Formally the distinction between passive and active sodomy only began to appear regularly in the records in the mid-1440s'.

<sup>387</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., p. 14: 'While this term, as mentioned earlier, included both a man who had sex with boys and a man who engaged in the same illicit sexual acts with women, it virtually never included their "passive" partners of either sex. Not all who engaged in homosexual activity, therefore, were considered sodomites, but only those who took the dominant, "active" role'.

<sup>388</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 4, p. 1670: 'metaph. de l'anús'.

<sup>389</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 4, p. 1742: 'métaph. de l'O. f.'. Evidently like castello earlier on.

ancho alle bestie piace questa gala<sup>390</sup>  
 il cibo è buono, e grato ad ogni bocca.<sup>391</sup>

Obsession, fascination or simply a widespread social phenomenon? The sin of Sodom was part of the customs and culture of Quattrocento Italy, it was a common way of being for Renaissance males who experienced 'a sort of "situational bisexuality"'.<sup>392</sup> To engage in same-sex sodomy did not mean to jeopardize one's sexual identity. Sodomy was often 'an occasional or temporary transgression', 'an incidental and transitory experience' and it 'did not constitute a problem of gender deviance':<sup>393</sup>

Sodomy was one of the many strands that composed the fabric of male experience, one that not only grew out of established social bonds and patterns of collective life but also contributed in creative ways to fashioning and reinforcing them. [...] For Florentine males, same sex-sodomy was probably one of several socially recognized and more or less accepted erotic options, without necessitating a categorical choice of one sex over the other.<sup>394</sup>

Descriptions of 'natural' love making play a very minor role with only three sonnets.<sup>395</sup> Pistoia's lubricious verse also

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<sup>390</sup> A propos of the term 'gala' in this very sonnet Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 402, remarks: 'Pistoia se sert du terme gala, dont l'une des acceptions est celle d'"ornement", pour évoquer l'anus. Son texte ne saurait être plus clair'.

<sup>391</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 21r (XIII, p. 58), lines 9-14.

<sup>392</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., p. 122.

<sup>393</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., p. 15; p. 127; p. 110.

<sup>394</sup> Michael Rocke, *Forbidden friendships*, cit., p. 15; p. 126.

<sup>395</sup> The sonnets in question are 'Quel fratichel che schiuma la pignatta', MS H.223 inf., f. 20r (XI, p. 56), 'Il cavalcar madonna sposa spesso', f. 21v (XIV, pp. 58-59) and 'Tosto m'hai rotto legge, patti e modi', f. 105v (CLXXXI, pp. 221-222). The



offers two poems<sup>396</sup> describing a peasant engaged in earthy amorous preoccupations, 'guarda se 'l tuo amor per me si stima/di non morir s'io no(n) ti chiavo prima',<sup>397</sup> and three sonnets on the personification of love.<sup>398</sup> Amore is depicted in a jocular fashion although the poet adheres to the canons of love's classical iconography.<sup>399</sup> Cupid is portrayed as *cecus et alatus, nudus puer et pharetratus*. The 'fanciulin' 'bel vermiglio e bianco'<sup>400</sup> possesses a further peculiarity:

Se gli entra in alcun lato  
 pon sempre duo sonagli in su la porta  
 ché in fin che 'l torna fuor \gli/ fan lor la  
 scorta.<sup>401</sup>

In this instance, Pistoia draws from a time-honoured pseudo myth of the golden age recounting a <sup>fight</sup> taking place between the various male and female sexual organs. At the end of the rebellion, the testicles were punished and placed by pairs in the scrotum and left hanging in the body cavity. Their fate, as their own name indicates, was that of witnessing the various activities performed by other organs without ever directly taking part in

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content of latter sonnet is however fairly ambiguous.

<sup>396</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 115r-v (CC-CCI, pp. 239-241).

<sup>397</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 115v (CCI, pp. 240-241), lines 19-20.

<sup>398</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 20v (XII, p. 57); f. 116r (CCII, pp. 241-242); 164r (CCXCVIII, pp. 334-335).

<sup>399</sup> J. Lemprière, *Classical dictionary of proper names mentioned in ancient authors*, revised by F. A. Wright (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1963), pp. 182-183: 'Cupid is represented as a winged infant, naked, armed with a bow and a quiver full of arrows'.

<sup>400</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 116r (CCII, pp. 241-242).

<sup>401</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 20v (XII, p. 57), lines 18-20.

them.<sup>402</sup>

Four other sonnets are devoted to the so-called *lotta tra potta*<sup>403</sup> e *cazzo*.<sup>404</sup> The sonnets, which present a rather limited inventory of body parts as one may easily imagine, describe the various stages of the playful sex-as-warfare theme in which love making is taking place between two anatomical parts: the ribaldry is vigorous and the jest is wanton. The poet describes the copulative act, the sexual appetite of both organs, their battle and exhaustion at the end of the fight in a sequence of progressive and dynamic scenes. Although the use of obscene

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<sup>402</sup> The story was also recounted by Antonio Vignali in *La cazzaria*, cit., p. 127: 'e questo è che noi gli chiudessimo [i.e. the testicles] in certi sacchi a coppie a coppie e dipoi gli distribuissimo che infra ogni cazzo e ogni culo ne fusseno messi un paio, e così fra ogni potta e ogni culo, devendo così distribuirsi secondo il prudente consiglio de la saggia <potta> da Modena. E così noi saremo securi che mai più ci opereranno contra e vedremo tutto il giorno le vendette nostre, facendoli patir mille strette e mille mali'. The work opens with a question concerning these very organs as Nino Borsellino points out in the introduction, pp. 9-10: 'Una perorazione in favore dell'argomento sottolinea la novità del trattato, che scolasticamente è avviato da una *quaestio* clamorosamente triviale: perché i coglioni non entrano nella potta o nel culo'. Pietro Aretino in the concluding tale of the sonnet 'Fottiamci anima mia, fottiamci presto', which is the opening poem of *I modi*, reiterates the fate of the testicles with a *calembour*. Pietro Aretino, *Sonetti sopra i 'XVI modi'*, edited by Giovanni Aquilecchia (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1992), p. 23, lines 15-17:

e s'è possibil, fore  
non mi tener la potta i coglioni,  
d'ogni piacer fottuto testimoni.

<sup>403</sup> Vittore Pisani in his article 'Italiano potta - tedesco Fotze', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 80, 1979, pp. 85-87, discusses the term hoping to 'cavarla dall'isolamento in cui si trova, traendo a confronto anzitutto il sinonimo tedesco Fotze', p. 85.

<sup>404</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 18v-19v (VII-X, pp. 53-56); f. 192r (CCCLIV, p. 385).



terms is oddly enough rare as the term *cazzo* appears only once,<sup>405</sup> the vocabulary is highly pictorial while the actions and movements of the fused organs are graphically described. The metaphoric image of the forest is widely used by the poet to refer to the female crotch: Pistoia talks of the 'foltissimo bosco del Frignano',<sup>406</sup> the 'bosco ombroso de Monte Ficale',<sup>407</sup> a 'silva',<sup>408</sup> a 'bel boschetto'<sup>409</sup> and a 'bosco'.<sup>410</sup> It is worth noticing that, for once, the female organ overpowers its male counterpart: the former is in fact described as 'viril',<sup>411</sup>

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<sup>405</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 192r (CCCLIV, p. 385), lines 15-17:

Nante ch(e) l'esca fore  
 toglietene Madonna un poco guazzo,  
 che la vendetta sia fra potta e cazzo.

<sup>406</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 18v (VII, pp. 53-54). Frignano, refers here to the term *fregna* or *frigna*, whose etymon is obscure, meaning female pudenda. The word appears in Diego Zancani ed., *Il Manganello. La repressione del Cornazano contra Manganello*, cit., p. 23 (chap. 7, line 12), 'non si menasse la frigna col dito?'; it is also quoted by Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 2, p. 802: 'San Frignano, calembour toponymique, formé à partir de fregna "vulve"'. Frignano also denoted a subregion of Emilia Romagna and it is the name of an agriculture centre in the province of Caserta. Giuliano Gasca Queirazza, Carla Marcato, Giovan Battista Pellegrini, Giulia Petracco Sicardi and Alda Rossebastiano, *Dizionario di toponomastica: storia e significato dei nomi geografici italiani* (Turin: UTET, 1990), p. 287: 'Frignano. Subregione dell'Emilia, comprende la parte più elevata della provincia di Modena ed è compresa nell'Appennino modenese. [...] Il nome rappresenta un *fundus Frennianus*, dal personale latino *Frennius*, che richiama l'etnico *Friniates*, tribù storicamente attestata fra Modena e Lucca'.

<sup>407</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19r (IX, pp. 54-55).

<sup>408</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19r (IX, pp. 54-55).

<sup>409</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19v (X, pp. 55-56).

<sup>410</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19v (X, pp. 55-56).

<sup>411</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 18v (VII, pp. 53-54).

and voracious, 'apre la bocca e giù lo ingolla sano',<sup>412</sup>; it is compared to a wolf, 'lo piglia come il lupo la gallina'<sup>413</sup> and it is the ultimate winner:

La sera ven[n]e poi, questo fu bello  
perch(é) quel che pensò vincer li aguati  
se ne restò in pregon senza capello.<sup>414</sup>

Of the four sonnets in question, 'Nel bosco ombroso de Monte Ficale' presents both the natural and unnatural experience of love making. From the front area, that is 'Monte Ficale', the attention shifts to the rear end, 'Monte Ritondo':

Alcun per Monte Ritondo ne passa  
par questo loco de più dolce vena  
né l'un si smagra e né l'altro s'ingrassa.<sup>415</sup>

Not only does anal intercourse offer a greater and more refined enjoyment but it is also a safer place: while 'Monte Ficale' produces sulphur, a contagious matter believed to transmit venereal disease, most likely syphilis,<sup>416</sup> 'Monte Ritondo' contains wax a traditional euphemism for excrement and a definitely less harmful element:

Qui robba assai s'incassa,  
ciascun de questi hanno la sua miniera:  
nasce solfo ne l'un ne l'altro cera.

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<sup>412</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 18v (VII, pp. 53-54), line 5.

<sup>413</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19r (IX, pp. 54-55), line 7.

<sup>414</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19v (X, pp. 55-56), lines 9-11.

<sup>415</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19r (IX, pp. 54-55), lines 12-14.

<sup>416</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 617: 'lo zolfo qui semble représenter, plutôt que les menstrues, les écoulements jaunâtres qu'entraînent certaines maladies vénériennes'.



Hor chi de la matera  
 sulfurea prima troppo s'empie i panni,  
 si fa baron di Franza per cent'anni.<sup>417</sup>

The warning against engaging in this type of intercourse is repeated once again in the concluding tail of the sonnet 'Dui rapaci animal sono in rivera':

Queste vivande giotte  
 non se ne vuol mangiare in habondanza  
 che chi ne mangia men più vita avanza.<sup>418</sup>

Pistoia seems unable to or perhaps has no intention of going beyond the physical world. Whenever he works on a sonnet, he concentrates on the material elements through a predominance of concrete terms over abstract ones. His poetry is unable to raise itself or perhaps it is not intended to look towards heaven.

While no poems are exclusively devoted to the potta, the poet penned two more describing the activities of Priapus in rather basic terms. In 'Un miracol mi par no(n) meraviglia',<sup>419</sup> the poet once again slips into the obscene by commenting on the paucity in Ferrara of robust phalli among artisans. The subject of his topic is given a prominent position in the poem by placing the vulgar term at the end of the third line in the first quatrain so that we are constantly reminded of it: the rhyme words, which are in the service of the sexual act, are in fact 'populazzo, cazzo, mazzo' and 'solazzo'. The insistence on the vulgar term betrays an effort, on the part of the poet, to stamp

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<sup>417</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19r (IX, pp. 54-55), lines 15-20.

<sup>418</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 19v (X, pp. 55-56), lines 18-20.

<sup>419</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 22r (XV, pp. 59-60).

the verse with a forceful immediacy of realistic details. Later in the sonnet, Pistoia reaches the conclusion that the best phalli come from Sicily and although the reader may at first believe that the poet is describing a natural sexual intercourse, the amorous practice is on the contrary of a different nature:

tanto che 'l n'ha trovato un di tal vena  
 sî bono al proprio de la sua pignatta  
 che ognhor se 'l porta al gropon de la schena.<sup>420</sup>

The 'pignatta',<sup>421</sup> the female sexual organ, is superseded by the anus with the suggestive image of '<il> gropon de la schena'. Not only are we facing a sodomitical act of copulation, but, it would seem, a same-sex sodomy:

E come un ch(e) n'ha lui sî ben lo adatta  
 che quando un dentro e l'altro for si mena  
 due menestre si fan la carne tratta.<sup>422</sup>

The sonnet which keeps on shifting between heterosexual and homosexual sodomy, ends with an anti-heterosexual bias as the poet praises anyone who, in view of their sexual orientations, goes to Sicily to engage in anal sexual intercourse, that is to accommodate in one's bottom, 'berzaglio',<sup>423</sup> a 'coraglio', that is a phallus:

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<sup>420</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 22r (XV, pp. 59-60), lines 9-11.

<sup>421</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 3, p. 1408: 'Le terme pignatta, synonyme de pentola, est mis en oeuvre par Sermini, et apparaîtra en peu plus loin dans un texte de Pistoia'.

<sup>422</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 22r (XV, pp. 59-60), lines 12-14.

<sup>423</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 596: 'Il bersaglio est un métaphore usuelle pour "le podex".'



E però collui lodo  
 ch' <h>a desider di trar nel suo berzaglio  
 se va in Siciglia a tor un bon coraglio.<sup>424</sup>

In the sonnet 'De la presumption n'ha chi ne vuole'<sup>425</sup> the phallus is again at the centre of attention. The poet, without ever mentioning it, describes in daring detail how it comes from and goes into an aperture: 'sol dentro intrando cu(m) la testa dura' and 'chinando il capo honorò la natura'. The sonnet, which is highly suggestive, ends with a plea:

O donne mantuane,  
 se 'l batte apreti il primo uscio e 'l secondo  
 che no(n) ha il par prosumptuoso al mo(n)do.<sup>426</sup>

The personification of the male organ which is described as most presumptuous reminds us of literary debates and treatises 'in praise of'. The discussion about the pre-eminence of one organ over the other, or of a phallus from one particular region, is reminiscent of the *disputationes* between the artes or the ones concerning the pre-eminence of lawyers over soldiers or literati.<sup>427</sup>

Of course today's sensibilities may find Pistoia's verse blunt, coarse, profligate and hardly humorous. Roger Thompson in his book *Unfit for modest ears* provides some useful definitions

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<sup>424</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 22r (XV, pp. 59-60), lines 15-20.

<sup>425</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 174r (CCCXVIII, p. 352).

<sup>426</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 174r (CCCXVIII, p. 352), lines 15-20.

<sup>427</sup> Luisa Avellini, Andrea Cristiani, Angela De Benedictis eds., *Sapere e/è potere: discipline, dispute e professioni nell'università medievale e moderna. Il caso bolognese a confronto* (Bologna: Comune di Bologna & Istituto per la Storia di Bologna, 1990), 3 vols.

which may assist us in defining Pistoia's ribald, earthy sonnets:

(i) *Pornographic*, writing or representation intended to arouse lust, create sexual fantasies or feed auto-erotic desires [...]. (ii) *Obscene*, intended to shock or disgust, or to render the subject of the writing shocking or disgusting. [...] (iii) *Bawdy*, intended to provoke amusement about sex [...]. (iv) *Erotic*, intended to place sex within the context of love, mutuality and affection.<sup>428</sup>

Then as now the adjective bawdy is probably the most suited qualifier for this *rimeria*. And perhaps to those who might have accused Pistoia of being rather monothematic in view of his obsessive alternation between homosexual and heterosexual anal intercourse, he might have defended himself by quoting an epigram by Panormita:

Ad Minum, quod libellum castrare nolit

Mine, mones nostro demam de carmine penem, carmina sic  
cunctis posse placere putas. Mine, meum certe nolim  
castrare libellum, Phoebus habet penem, Calliopeque  
femur.<sup>429</sup>

#### 5.6 In the footsteps of the barber of Calimala.

For the sake of generating amusement. Directions: to be read aloud. Active ingredients: puns, conundrums, calembours. Dosage: unless otherwise directed, four to six sonnets per day. Warning: you may experience side-effects such as headaches, irritation and disturbed sleep. In extreme cases hair loss may occur.

Perhaps it would not be such a bad idea to attach the above

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<sup>428</sup> Roger Thompson, *Unfit for modest ears: a study of Pornographic, obscene and bawdy works written or published in England in the second half of the seventeenth century* (London: MacMillan, 1979), p. ix.

<sup>429</sup> [Antonio Beccadelli], *Hermaphroditus*, cit., p. 69.



warning to any collection of 'birichieleschi',<sup>430</sup> regardless of whether these belong to the pen of Orcagna,<sup>431</sup> Sacchetti, Burchiello, Bellincioni, Luigi Pulci or Pistoia. After all similar feelings of bewilderment had been experienced 446 years ago by Anton Francesco Doni, who in his prologue to the 1553 edition of Burchiello's poetic corpus,<sup>432</sup> told readers of the great difficulties encountered in trying to make head or tail of this riddling poetry and of his desire, in the end, to give up and throw these mad sonnets away:

Io, che ho mezzo [sic] lega con le sue albagie, più volte mi son fitto a leggere questi sonetti pazzi, et cavatone poco utile, cento volte l'ho gettato in terra.<sup>433</sup>

However, Doni persevered and curiosity made him so determined in his desire to understand the poems that he provided them with a commentary:

ma tratto dalla curiosità delle sue fanfalucole, mi

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<sup>430</sup> The term was used by Politian in a letter dated 23rd April 1491 and addressed to Bernardo de' Ricci, a Florentine ambassador to the Sforza court in Milan. The epistle is now at Paris BN, MS Ital.1543, f. 30r. Vincenzo Calmeta in his work *La vita del facondo poeta vulgare Serafino Aquilano*, published in Vincenzo Calmeta, *Prose e lettere edite ed inedite*, edited by Cecil Grayson (Bologna: Commissione per i Testi di Lingua, 1959), gives the following definition, p. 61: 'sonetti faceti e mordaci (che per trito vocabulo burchielleschi se chiamano)'.

<sup>431</sup> There is still some controversy relating to the identity of the poet Orcagna and precisely whether he was the famous painter Andrea Orcagna or the lesser known figure Mariotto di Nardo di Cione Orcagna.

<sup>432</sup> The long-awaited critical edition of Burchiello's sonnets will appear shortly, edited by Michelangelo Zaccarello for the Commissione per i Testi di Lingua, Bologna.

<sup>433</sup> [Domenico di Giovanni called il Burchiello], *Rime*, commented by Antonio Francesco Doni (Venice: Marcolini, 1553), sig. B1r-v.

conficcai quelle copie di cruscate nel capo, et rimestato assai buffonerie, berte, burle et baie, messi pur alla fine qualche ciarpa insieme, tanto che io ho fatto una corpacciata di chiacchiere.<sup>434</sup>

And, like Doni, in the present section I will attempt to put forward 'qualche ciarpa' and provide some exegetical pointers with a view to throwing light on some aspects pertaining to the twenty-nine Burchiellesque sonnets penned by Antonio Pistoia.<sup>435</sup> Given the body of critical material on Burchiello,<sup>436</sup> it would be repetitive to provide a detailed picture of Pistoia's main creditor. However, it may be useful to cast a quick glance at how this type of poetry originated and to see how Burchiello's sonnets were perceived and dealt with.

Among Burchiello's literary forebears were the French

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<sup>434</sup> [Domenico di Giovanni called il Burchiello], *Rime*, cit., sig. Blv.

<sup>435</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 18r (VII, pp. 52-53); f. 130v (CCXXXI, pp. 269-270); f. 134v (CCXXXIX, pp. 277-278); f. 152r (CCLXXIV, pp. 312-313); f. 162r (CCXCIV, pp. 330-331); f. 170v (CCCXI, pp. 345-346); ff. 176r-186r (CCCXXII-CCCXLII, pp. 356-375); f. 282r-v (DXXXI-DXXXII, pp. 584-585).

<sup>436</sup> Among the most significant contributions I would like to point out the following: Curt S. Gutkind, 'Burchielliana: Studien zur volkstümlichen Kehrseite der italienische Renaissance', *Archivum Romanicum*, 15, 1931, pp. 1-34; Mario Fubini, *Studi sulla letteratura del Rinascimento* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1971<sup>2</sup>), section entitled 'Sulla poesia del Burchiello', pp. 29-49; Domenico di Giovanni detto il Burchiello, *Sonetti inediti*, cit.; Domenico De Robertis, 'Una proposta per Burchiello', *Rinascimento*, 7, 1967, pp. 3-119; Renee Watkins, 'Il Burchiello (1404-1448): poverty, politics, and poetry', *Italian Quarterly*, 14, 1970, no. 54, pp. 21-57; Luisa Avellini, 'Metafora «regressiva» e degradazione comica nei sonetti del Burchiello', cit.; Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit.; Michelangelo Zaccarello, 'La dimensione vernacolare nel lessico dei Sonetti di Burchiello', *Cuadernos de Filología Italiana*, 3, 1996, pp. 209-219; Idem, '«Buffon non di comun né d'alcun sire»: Il Burchiello posseduto da Lorenzo (Laur. Pl. XL, 48)', *La Toscana al tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico: politica economia cultura arte* (Pisa: Pacini, 1996), vol. 2, pp. 609-632.



authors of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century poems known as *fatrasies*<sup>437</sup> and *fatras* respectively. Although the *fatras* were a genre no longer in existence by the beginning of the fifteenth century, one of its offshoots, and precisely the one based on nonsense rhyme, survived up to the 1430s.

This kind of poetry was very popular with story tellers and other public reciters who may well have performed in Florentine squares, and by doing so left a mark on their audience and possibly on the poetic work of Orcagna. Tradition has it that he was in fact the first one to have penned nonsense poetry in Italy, although the novelist and poet Franco Sacchetti is also believed to have been among the very first to have written such poems. The genre hit the headlines with Burchiello, who perfected and mastered the art of *rimare alla burchia*,<sup>438</sup> in which Antonio Pistoia was later to put himself to the test. Regardless of their authors, nonsense poems share a common trait which threw Doni and many others after him (myself included, needless to say) into

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<sup>437</sup> The *fatrasies* were eleven-line poems constituted by six five-syllable lines followed by five seven-syllable lines. Gianfranco Contini in his entry on Burchiello in *Letteratura italiana del Quattrocento*, cit., briefly refers to the literary tradition preceding Burchiello's sonnets, p. 343: 'Il loro precedente più stretto è nella frottola, frequentata perfino dal Petrarca, anche se incrociata metricamente col sonetto di tipo pucciano e orcagnesco (si tratta forse del pittore, immoderatamente celebre, Andrea Orcagna); e più antichi ancora sono i componimenti francesi (e anche provenzali) chiamati *fatrasies* (e poi *coq-à-l'âne*), dove si va precisamente, e non di necessità per velare un intento satirico, di palo in frasca'.

<sup>438</sup> Michelangelo Zaccarello, 'La dimensione vernacolare nel lessico dei *Sonetti* di Burchiello', cit., p. 209, fn. 3: 'Il quesito se questa definizione rimandi alla maniera di caricare le stive delle barche («burchielli») e valga così "alla rinfusa", "a casaccio", e da essa sia derivato il soprannome, o se invece "alla burchia" sia espressione risalente al nome stesso di Burchiello (ipotesi ormai respinta da tutti) ha impegnato duramente la critica'.

despair: that is their being almost completely unintelligible, a feature which is further sharpened by what Domenico De Robertis describes as a sense of vacuum:

il problema di Burchiello si poneva negli stessi termini che a noi oggi: il problema di un vuoto - vuoto di senso, di «dottrina», vuoto di informazione, vuoto di attendibilità - tumultuosamente colmato di parole.<sup>439</sup>

In the frame of a caudate sonnet, the world ends up head-over-heels: objects are wrenched from their original setting and paradoxical and grotesque elements fill the lines studded with riddles. Everything is out of context and the general effect is surreal:

Il giuoco, il gusto dell'assurdo, del gratuito, sono fuori discussione [...]. Le cose escono dall'anonimo, si affacciano, riempiono imperterrite lo spazio, senza uno sguardo indietro, sopraggiunte, cancellate da altre cose. [...] Il senso è quello di un continuo evento e intervento, di una continua modificazione della situazione, di un sottentrare di sempre nuove forze.<sup>440</sup>

And yet the vocabulary is persistently realistic: we are faced with 'una poetica delle cose'<sup>441</sup> in which the syntactical structure often emerges unscathed.<sup>442</sup> This state of affairs has

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<sup>439</sup> Domenico De Robertis, 'Una proposta per Burchiello', cit., p. 4.

<sup>440</sup> Domenico De Robertis, 'Una proposta per Burchiello', cit., p. 9.

<sup>441</sup> Domenico De Robertis, 'Una proposta per Burchiello', cit., p. 14: 'Per una poetica - si diceva - delle cose, sembra giusto che il vocabolario sia il lessico delle cose, restituite al loro prestigio e al loro valore di beni'.

<sup>442</sup> Gianfranco Contini, *Letteratura italiana del Quattrocento*, cit., p. 343: 'sonetti caudati (o materiali) che svolgono un filo di connessioni assurde su un fondo sintatticamente impeccabile, lessicamente risentito (in senso popolaresco, se non gergale), timbricamente ricco'; Luisa



left scholars puzzled and it has kept them very busy in the attempt to unlock the meaning of this type of poetry, granted that there is one. Leonardo Dati, a contemporary of Burchiello, had already defined the latter as 'Burchius, qui nihil est,' although 'cantu tamen allicit omnes, esto parasitus vatibus Etruriae'.<sup>443</sup> Since then the emphasis has been placed on '[la] gratuità assoluta del messaggio',<sup>444</sup> and Burchiello's sonnets have been labelled as 'a jumble of incoherent sounds [...] a series of grotesque and ultimately meaningless images'.<sup>445</sup> The main difficulty lies in reaching an understanding of the sonnets and in overcoming and reconstructing '[la] distruzione delle gerarchie negli accostamenti semantici'.<sup>446</sup>

Penning verse *alla burchia* was a difficult and subtle art which required the poet to be well versed with language manipulation. The lines of nonsense sonnets are in fact replete with lexical *aequivocatio*:

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Avellini in 'Metafora «regressiva» e degradazione comica nei sonetti del Burchiello', cit., p. 304, talks of '[una] rigida logicità della struttura sintattica' and Jean Toscan in *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 172, follows suit: 'La grammaire et la syntaxe des poètes de l'équivoque ne s'éloignent guère de celles de la langue'. However Toscan also devotes a section entitled 'Particularités sémantique relevant de la grammaire et de la syntaxe', t. 1, pp. 172-181, in which the author discusses unusual grammatical structures.

<sup>443</sup> Francesco Flamini, 'Leonardo di Piero Dati poeta latino del secolo XV', *GSLI*, 16, 1890, pp. 1-107 (p. 9).

<sup>444</sup> Luisa Avellini, 'Metafora «regressiva» e degradazione comica nei sonetti del Burchiello', cit., p. 304.

<sup>445</sup> Adrienne Laskier Martín, *Cervantes and the burlesque sonnet*, cit., p. 24.

<sup>446</sup> Luisa Avellini, 'Metafora «regressiva» e degradazione comica nei sonetti del Burchiello', cit., p. 315.

[un'ambiguità] che, intriseca alle parole che abbiano sviluppato un traslato vernacolare o che ricorrono in contesti idiomatici o proverbiali, può manifestarsi appunto come *aequivocatio* lessicale o allusione extracontestuale [...] La forma più semplice di *aequivocatio* lessicale in questo senso la si ritrova nell'uso di un traslato vernacolare di forte contrasto semantico con il primo significato della parola: l'effetto di sorpresa e di nonsense è dato proprio dall'interferenza delle due interpretazioni in un contesto che ne tollera solo una. L'interferenza può avvenire nelle due direzioni: il traslato si sovrappone ad un contesto di senso già compiuto rendendolo ambiguo fin quando un secondo elemento determina il prevalere di una interpretazione.<sup>447</sup>

The sonnets do in fact hide a rich and diversified texture, they are invested with a two-dimensional quality concealed by a coat of masked words: the reader's understanding is conditioned by his ability in disclosing the true character of this two-edged language in which the second meaning is no longer a flight of fancy:

on se trouve en réalité devant un discours à deux niveaux dont le deuxième est parfaitement cohérent.<sup>448</sup>

Furthermore in many cases the lines contain an obscene message:

La forme burchiellienne, enfin, dans laquelle, conformément aux règles de la fatrasie, le premier niveau est dépourvu de sens, alors que le deuxième est obscène et met en jeu les procédés les plus compliqués du travestissement verbal.<sup>449</sup>

Among the first texts to have exploited this technique is the French poem *Roman de la rose*, which exerted its influence on jocular poets and on the authors of *canti carnascialeschi*. In the

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<sup>447</sup> Michelangelo Zaccarello, 'La dimensione vernacolare nel lessico dei Sonetti di Burchiello, cit., pp. 211-212.

<sup>448</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 63.

<sup>449</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 116.



space of a tailed sonnet, poets created a string of alliances between real and imagined structures, obsolete and current euphemisms,<sup>450</sup> new coinings and proverbial sayings. Words were charged with new shades of meaning and with varying degrees of complexity; conventional terms acquired extra strength, and meaningful elements, stripped of their identity, triggered off a chain of surreal settings. In this *carnaval du langage*, highly intricate and sophisticated wordplays leap into view and well-orchestrated sounds run through in a hurried rhythm. Nothing is left to chance:<sup>451</sup> everything is carefully arranged to produce the desired result whether it is a matter of creating an acoustic effect or a sexual pun. The difficulties faced by the modern reader are obviously multifarious as not only linguistic problems need to be overcome but allusions and cross-references to a culture whose beliefs, opinions and surroundings are no longer there must be brought to life again. Previous scholarship has so far indicated three ways of coming to grips with this type of poetry: namely to work on the phonic qualities of the language,<sup>452</sup> on its *travestissement*<sup>453</sup> or on its literal

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<sup>450</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 143: 'Le langage érotique des auteurs burlesques se fonde essentiellement sur l'exploitation à des fins comiques d'un phénomène linguistique: l'euphémisme'.

<sup>451</sup> Michelangelo Zaccarello, '«Buffon non di comun né d'alcun sire» Il Burchiello posseduto da Lorenzo (Laur. Pl. XL, 48)', cit., p. 620, fn. 35: 'Contro l'ipotesi di una poesia improvvisatoria, conviviale o di piazza, va la testimonianza dello stesso Burchiello, nel son. *Questi plebei di virtù nemici* (LXXIV), vv. 12-14: «Io gli sghuardo di sberfia da un buco Poi metto a chasa tucti quegli im prosa Et poi in un sonetto gli riduco»'.

<sup>452</sup> Luisa Avellini in her essay 'Metafora «regressiva» e degradazione comica nei sonetti del Burchiello', cit., has devoted special attention to the matter, p. 315: 'Mentre la



value.<sup>454</sup> These different approaches are not at loggerheads and there is no need to favour one solution at the expense of the other: they are simply alternative ways of coming to terms with these texts which surprisingly enough lend themselves well to all three interpretative tools. What follows is an attempt to see how and to what degree language was manipulated by Pistoia and which types of tricks he practised in front of his audience; my aim is therefore to expose the message behind the lines leaving its phonic qualities aside.

Pistoia was no doubt conversant with nonsense poetry: an unmistakable Burchiellesque flavour wafts through his poems<sup>455</sup>

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sintassi gioca il ruolo di «metafora dell'ordine», il livello fonico è il ponte tra ordine da un lato e distruzione delle gerarchie negli accostamenti semantici dall'altro; è in fondo il veicolo concreto della degradazione comica, del momento ambiguo di passaggio dall'allusività semantica a una giustificazione puramente sintagmatica della presenza di certe parole nel verso'.

<sup>453</sup> In this respect Curt S. Gutkind paved the way with his article 'Burchielliana: Studien zur volkstümlichen Kehrseite der italienische Renaissance', cit., and in whose steps Jean Toscan has followed and given the matter full attention in his *Le carnaval du langage*, cit.

<sup>454</sup> Domenico De Robertis, 'Una proposta per Burchiello', cit., p. 10: 'E un altro fatto risulta evidente: l'assoluta identificazione della parola con l'oggetto designato: non semplicemente quella del significante col significato, la sua intera qualità simbolica e denotativa, ma la diciam pure poetica sostituzione delle parole con le cose (e non semplicemente le cose dette). Il movimento è quello delle cose, il loro entrare in scena; la sintassi, le ragioni sono quelle delle cose; [...] E cose assolutamente, terribilmente cose. [...] Quando leggiamo *spelazzini, broccolieri, salimbacche, berriuole, fuseragnoli*, si tratta nient'altro che di spelazzini, broccolieri, salimbacche, berriuole, fuseragnoli, come, più terra terra, più alla mano, di trampoli, penneccchi, ova sode, grimaldelli, dadi, bicchieri, mosconi e liofanti, ortaggi e bacherozzoli, Valdarno e Mugnone, Tarquin superbo e la vergin Camilla, e chi più ne ha più ne metta'.

<sup>455</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 95: 'Burchiello auteur d'énigmes salaces n'est pas resté sans successeurs. Pistoia lui a emboîté le pas, puis Antonio Alamanni



and his verse shares many traits with the works of his predecessors and with the anonymous poem *Il Pataffio*. Of the twenty-nine sonnets, which constitute the Burchiellesque section in the Ambrosiana manuscript, six are structured like a shopping list<sup>456</sup> or a recipe. It must not be forgotten that one of the key elements characterizing Burchiellesque poetry is in fact what Watkins calls the device of the list:

The basic device is the list, a device that is based, like linear perspective, on a fixed viewpoint for the observer-narrator and that requires a clear sense of the many relationships created among concepts by proximity, among objects by being seen together, among sounds through repetition.<sup>457</sup>

With the exception of one sonnet,<sup>458</sup> the remaining five, which are transcribed in sequence, start with the imperative or the future tense of the verb to send, *mandare*, followed by a list of objects or ingredients among which a 'cimier d'un fongo nero',<sup>459</sup> 'cor di ricci volti arosto',<sup>460</sup> a 'mazzolin di favacello'<sup>461</sup> and a 'piatel di gelatina'.<sup>462</sup> The language is colourful, strongly realistic, but the overall result is surreal

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en a, plus exactement encore, imité la manière'.

<sup>456</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 184r-186r (CCCXXXVIII-CCCXLII, pp. 370-375); f. 282v (DXXXII, p. 585).

<sup>457</sup> Renee Watkins, 'Il Burchiello (1404-1448): poverty, politics, and poetry', cit., p. 48.

<sup>458</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 282v (DXXXII, p. 585).

<sup>459</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 184r (CCCXXXVIII, p. 370).

<sup>460</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 184v (CCCXXXIX, p. 371).

<sup>461</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 185r (CCCLX, p. 372).

<sup>462</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 186r (CCCXLII, pp. 374-375).

as the lines bristle with oxymora and adynata. In the sonnet 'Chi vuol guarir del pie' quando formicola', the poet advises sufferers to get hold of a series of impossible ingredients so as to relieve pain:

Chi vuol guarir del pie' quando formicola  
 tolga del bianco ch(e) fa la filugine  
 il mel ch(e) adosso poi nasce alla rugine  
 e del piacer ch(e) sa fare uno agricola.

Posti che tu gli harai su la graticola,  
 toglì cantar di tigna e bel di mugine  
 et un miglio di corso di testugine  
 prima ch(e) tu li metta in sul'ombricola,

poi fa di nebbia e vento insieme polvere  
 ma col foco che al cul porta la lucciola  
 bisogna ben ogni cosa disciolvere.

Trai poi dil corpo il migliore alla succiola  
 e queste cose fa insieme rivolvere  
 poi tocandone i figli fa la cucciola.

Per questa rima sdrucchiola  
 serà quest'anno assai peripatetici  
 testo alegato qua da n(ost)ri metici.<sup>63</sup>

Recipe-sonnets go back to the thirteenth century, to the contes d'*animaux*<sup>64</sup> and the poetry of the fourteenth-century Florentine court jester Niccolò Povero who gave several indications on how

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<sup>63</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 282v (DXXXII, p. 585).

<sup>64</sup> The anonymous author of *Bella ch'ài lo viso chiaro*, is among the first to have created these impossible recipes together with the French court buffoon Rutebeuf. Some interesting parallels between these fantastic concoctions and popular medicine were drawn up by Giuseppe Cocchiara, *Il mondo alla rovescia* (Turin: Boringhieri, 1963), pp. 139-140: 'Contemporaneamente in Francia, infatti, quella tematica era materia poetica del noto giullare Rutebeuf, autore, fra l'altro, di un *Dit de l'Erberie* che è una serie di ricette fra le più curiose. [...] La medicina popolare ha indubbiamente i suoi richiami più immediati nei contes d'*animaux*. Nel *Roman de Renard* la volpe, per guarire il re, ricorre a una "manciata di foglie" che "pesta tra due tegole". Nel *Reinhart Fuchs* la volpe guarisce il re perché gli fa indossare la "pelle calda del lupo"'.



to treat alopecia, neck-ache and gout.<sup>465</sup> This time-honoured tradition paved the way for the poetry of Burchiello, Pistoia and later filtered into the verse of Giulio Cesare Croce<sup>466</sup> not to

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<sup>465</sup> Giuseppe Cocchiara, *Il mondo alla rovescia*, cit., p. 142: 'In un'altra Matana, la seconda, il Povero ritorna con maggiore impegno sulla "medicina che guarisce". Perciò, se si voglion far crescere i capelli:

Togli un quaderno di cicale lesse  
e grilli bianchi e pestagli con esse,

e poi le palme te n'ungi con esse  
de' piedi; statti al sol tredici notte  
senza dormire e fra le volte spesse.

E se ti desser fastidio le gote,  
Toi tre once di vento e fa bolire  
Con una filza di pilastre cotte.

E tre dí ne starai senza dormire  
e (poi) quella cocitura ti berai  
(e) migliorerai del gozzo a non mentire.

E al male dello collo sí torai  
tre rachi di ranocchi e sien ben coti  
in un buciuol di carta e sí farai

ched [sic] ella ne si amescoli con questi  
e quocila co' l'alito de' granchi  
e tie 'la al pié tanto che tu ti desti.

<sup>466</sup> Piero Camporesi, *La maschera di Bertoldo: le metamorfosi del villano mostruoso e sapiente. Aspetti e forme del Carnevale ai tempi di Giulio Cesare Croce* (Milan: Garzanti, 1993), pp. 116-117: 'È la stessa poetica del bizzarro e del grottesco che muoveva il cantastorie bolognese (cittadino d'una città scenografica nella quale i «capricci istoriati» sulle pareti e i bizzarri fondali illusionistici colpivano l'occhio con frequenza martellante) a scrivere canzonette come la *Spaliera in grottesco alla burchiellesca*. *Chiribizzo bellissimo*, o *La scatola historiata*, o *Nel tempo che la luna buratava*, o i fantastici «recipe», stravaganti ricette composte dai più mostruosi, repellenti e introvabili ingredienti, in una eterogenea, assurda miscellanea di metafore pseudofarmaceutiche ripugnanti l'una con l'altra'; Roberto L. Bruni, Rosaria Campioni and Diego Zancani, *Giulio Cesare Croce dall'Emilia all'Inghilterra* (Florence: Olschki, 1991), add, p. 219: 'A sottolineare l'interesse per il gioco verbale, leggero e faceto, ma non del tutto fine a se stesso, scegliamo questi due brevi esempi da un genere ben collaudato, i *Secreti di medicina mirabilissimi del Poco Eccell. e tutto ignorante M. Agresto de' Bruschi detto il dottor Braghetton* (Bologna, Girolamo Cochi s.d.):

mention Berni, Lasca, Molza and their mates. With the recipe-sonnets we encounter whims of fancy, a poetry which smacks of magic, teeming with fantastic remedies and concoctions as if these had come straight out of the steamy cauldron of a wizard. And yet the ingredients are not fantastic; on the contrary, they are all deeply rooted in the natural world, they are an integral part of the surrounding reality. They are, however, turned into something out of this world, something which has no real consistency, no effectual validity. The effect is easily reached through the creation of 'extra-ordinary' couples, thanks to the simple, although highly effective device of mixing real elements, which bear no relation to one another, together. What are we going to make of the following sonnet in which Pistoia asked one of his friends to send him several ingredients so as to make a concoction to treat his private parts?

Mandami un [favacin un] mazzolin di favacello

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*Alla sciatica*

Recipe un po' di suco di schiavina  
 con quattro o sei canzon a la pavana,  
 sei mugiti di vaca bergamina  
 e fin dieci tocchi di campana.  
 Fanne decoto, & ugni ogni matina  
 dov'è il dolor e s'ei non si risana  
 il foco da' <a>ll'una e a l'altra natica  
 ch'in breve guarira' de la sciatica.

e, ancora più 'fantastico', ma sempre con un tocco di concretezza alla fine:

*Alla quartana*

Recipe un trotto o dua di mulla vecchie,  
 Lacrimis putanorum quanto basta,  
 con quattro o cinque manichi di sechie  
 e l'occhio d'una pera che si guasta  
 et ungil dietro all'una e l'altra orecchie  
 e se per sorte questo non ti basta  
 trallo in Po quando grossa la fiumana  
 che tosto guarirà dalla quartana.



e un di ruta e l'altro di mentastro,  
e del coiaime che rade uno incastro  
quando si calza novo l'asinello.

Il mi bisogna per un mio fratello  
che gli vuo' fare al collo un novo impiastro  
qual per mostrarsi più che gli altri mastro  
per entrar dentro [spargerò] sguangerò il portello.

Mandami del vin bianco d'una vigna  
e rose seche e tarlo di castagno,  
alume pesto, aloe e gramigna.

Io gli vuo' far di queste cose un bagno  
per guarirgli la testa da la tigna,  
che così va chi tuol la stantia al ragno.

Io ti aviso compagno  
che se secondi più la via del vento  
magior per te s<a>rà il quarto eleme(n)to.<sup>467</sup>

It may be likely that when Pistoia wrote this sonnet he had already been infected with *las bubas*, syphilis, and that he was trying to gather the necessary, although rather extraordinary, ingredients to treat, I suspect, his private parts, 'un mio fratello'. What is perhaps even more striking is that these remedies in verse do not really differ much from those prescribed by fifteenth- and sixteenth-century physicians to their patients.<sup>468</sup> If we look at other salves which were prescribed to prevent and treat syphilis, we see that there is no great difference between the realm of nonsense poetry and that of medicine. For example in the case of prevention, men and women

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<sup>467</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 185r (CCCLX, p. 372).

<sup>468</sup> Although Giuseppe Cocchiara in *Il mondo alla rovescia*, cit., first affirms that some parallels can be made between poetry and medicine, he later shows a higher degree of scepticism, p. 140: 'In *Bella ch'ài lo viso chiaro* le prescrizioni della ricetta esigono un "intruglio" di "cose impossibili", per un male anch'esso fantastico. E le due cose insieme danno origine alla favola, mentre, se il poeta avesso voluto soltanto parodiare la medicina popolare, avrebbe potuto valersi anche e soltanto di una malattia reale, comune, vera'.

were advised to wash their private parts with wine or vinegar, and sufferers were prescribed hot white wine to cleanse their genitals. The following advice given by Gabriello Falloppio, a physician of great renown, does not differ much from Pistoia's; on the contrary it sounds even more bizarre:

To gain protection one must wash oneself after the act, then cover the glans with a piece of cloth which has macerated in a preparation of wine, shavings of gaiac, flakes of copper, precipitated mercury, gentian root, red coral, ash of ivory, burnt horn of deer (not to mention the rest). The protective must stay in place for four or five hours.<sup>469</sup>

If we now move away from medical treatises to high-brow culture, we can see once again that the border between science and literature is barely perceptible. Thirty-six years after the outburst of the 'serpentine illness', the Veronese physician Girolamo Fracastoro published his composition *Syphilis*. Written in Latin and dedicated to Pietro Bembo, the poem, which was published in 1530, furnishes the reader with several formulas for preparing medical compounds to treat the illness as one can see from the following excerpt:

Ergo Coryciumque thymum sit cura, thymumque  
 Pamphylium, thymbrae similis qui durior exit,  
 Prima tibi coxisse, lupique volubile gramen,  
 Foeniculumque, apiumque, et amari germina capni.  
 His polyporum hirtos imitata filicula cirros  
 Additur, et lymphis tangi renuens adiantus:  
 His sterile asplenum, his pictam phyllitida junge:

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<sup>469</sup> Claude Quétel, *History of syphilis*, cit., p. 59. When the great pox reached Japan, local doctors advised to cover 'the ulcerated parts with a spider's web and a band of violet fabric. The spider's web was probably intended to act like gauze and prevent the band from sticking to the wound. As for the colour violet, the Japanese used as a dyestuff the skin of a root, the Shikonsô, which is also mentioned in ancient pharmacopoeiae for its anti-ulcerative properties', p. 59.



Quorum ubi decoctum permultis ante diebus  
 Ebiberis, crudumque humorem incoxeris omnem,  
 Tum scilla medicare acri, et colocynthide amara,  
 Helleboroque gravi, necnon quae in littore surgens,  
 Qua ludit maris unda, ter evariata colorem,  
 Ter flores mutata die rem nomine signat,  
 Herba potens radice, suum cui zinziber adde:  
 Adde etiam anguineum cucumin, Nabathaeaque thura,  
 Myrrhamque, bdelamque, hammoniaticque liquorem,  
 Et lachrymam panaceam , et dulci colchica bulbo.<sup>470</sup>

Despite the fact that comparisons can be made in terms of style between Pistoia's sonnets, the medical treatise by Falloppio and the literary work by Fracastoro, no great differences seem to emerge in the treatment of the subject matter. All three works seem to contain fantastic elements, which however were part of the authors's impinging realities: this is one of the reasons why De Robertis has talked of 'una poetica delle cose'. In the above quoted sonnet in which Pistoia asked a friend of his to send him a bunch of buttercups, rue, wild mint, white wine, dried roses, ground alum, aloe and couch grass, the poet did not have a hidden agenda, he really meant buttercups, rue, wild mint, white wine, dried roses, ground alum, aloe and couch grass. And yet one

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<sup>470</sup> Girolamo Fracastoro, *Syphilis*, cit., p. 71: 'Make it your care first to prepare a decoction of Corycian thyme and Pamphylian thyme, which like savory grows more vigorously, and the winding tendrils of hop, and fennel and parsley and the seeds of stinging fumitory. To these is added the fern which imitates the rough tentacles of the polypus, and maidenhair that refuses to be touched by water; join to these sterile spleenwort and ornamented hartstongue. When over the course of very many days you have first strained off a decoction from these plants and boiled out all the raw essence, then medicate it with fierce squill and bitter gourd and severe hellebore, and the plant which, rising on the shore where the wave of the sea plays, changes its colour three times a day, changes its flower three times and marks the fact by its name, a plant with a powerful root. To this add the required ginger; add also wild snaky cucumber and incense from Nabataea, add myrrh and bdellium (i.e. an aromatic gum resin similar to myrrh) and ammoniac gum and tear of All-heal and autumn crocus with its sweet bulb'.

cannot deny that the lines are pervaded by an air of ambiguity. The poet addresses the male organ as 'fratello' which in order to distinguish himself in the act of penetration, 'qual per mostrarsi più che gli altri mastro/per entrar dentro', must pursue 'la via del vento'. In burlesque obscene parlance the fundamental constituents of the universe, water, earth, wind and fire are polyvalent in meaning. The presence of the word vento, a synonym for air, in the last but one line of the tail, triggers off various meanings and associations<sup>471</sup> although in the present context only one is perhaps possible: sodomy is 'la via del vento'. Practising an unnatural sexual act was regarded, at the time, as safe because it was believed that venereal diseases could not be caught through this sexual practice.<sup>472</sup> Hence 'Mandarami un [favacin un] mazzolin di favacello' contains a straightforward message, namely a request of ingredients and a piece of advice wrapped in a travestissement.

Sodomy was without any doubt a topic which enticed jocular

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<sup>471</sup> The term vento can in different contexts refer to the menstrual period, flatulence or the anus. Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, pp. 626-627: 'Le sens équivoque de vento que l'on rencontre le plus souvent est celui d'"anus". [...] L'anus est, en quelque sorte, il buco del vento. Le désir d'un peu de mystère, le goût de l'énigme ont procuré l'ellipse du déterminé trop concret au profit du déterminant, vento, qui suffit à lui tout seul pour suggérer le concept de "buco del vento".

<sup>472</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., p. 190: 'Ce sont les burlesques, surtout, qui ont révélé que, dans un premier temps, nombreux furent ceux qui crurent trouver dans l'homosexualité une parade au terrible mal [that is syphilis]. Et, à cet égard, les témoignages de Pistoia et de Strascino sont particulièrement précieux'.



poets who gave the subject a place of honour in their verse.<sup>473</sup> Of course Pistoia was no exception, and many obscene metaphors against nature are lodged in his verse. I will provide here two examples. In the concluding tail of the sonnet 'In su la terza doppo alle due hore', Pistoia bids farewell to his interlocutor in the following fashion:

Non ti mando altre nove,  
se no(n) che come vuolse al mastro accorto  
l'anima uscì per la porta del'horto.<sup>474</sup>

With the exception of the first line, whose meaning is clear, the following two are not so as they abound with double entendres. The kind of punning Pistoia indulges in is represented by the concluding hendecasyllable 'l'anima uscì per la porta del'horto' although additional overtones can be perceived in the word *mastro* and its adjective *accorto*, meaning both adroit and wise. The term *mastro* denotes someone who has direct knowledge and complete mastery, *maestria*, over something requiring skill. Sodomy was indeed regarded as a skilled art and those who practised it had to display a high degree of ability:

Les rapports contre nature, en revanche, demandent de l'habitude, de l'adresse, une véritable spécialisation technique, en somme, que les auteurs ne se font point faute de rappeler à chaque instant. De sorte que, d'un point de vue statistique au moins, la plupart des allusions au

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<sup>473</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, pp. 161-162: 'La poésie burlesque de caractère érotique réserve à la sodomie une place de choix. De Burchiello à Berni, de Berni à Marino, bien rares sont les sonnets, les chansons, les capitoli, qui ne contiennent quelque référence à des situations contre nature. C'est, en fait, une véritable vue dualiste de la sexualité qu'ont, ou affectent d'avoir, ces poètes'.

<sup>474</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 179v (CCCXXIX, pp. 361-362), lines 15-17.

savoir-faire peuvent être considérées comme une annonce du caractère sodomitique du texte qui les contient.<sup>475</sup>

The sexual pun concerning a sodomitic sexual act becomes blatant in the image of the soul escaping from the garden door. The term *anima*, which is a metaphor for the male sexual organ,<sup>476</sup> is pictured in the act of leaving by 'la porta dell'orto'.<sup>477</sup> *Porta*,<sup>478</sup> a synonym for *uscio*, denotes an orifice which in the majority of cases represents the anus.<sup>479</sup> The term *orto* is a time-honoured metaphor for the sex organs<sup>480</sup> while the verb *uscire* means to be engaged in the act of sodomy.<sup>481</sup> Hence the hidden message runs as follows: I will not send you any further news - 'Non ti mando altre nove' - but remember that you are

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<sup>475</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 3, p. 1277.

<sup>476</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 498.

<sup>477</sup> Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti eds., *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, cit., explains the expression *entrare per l'uscio dell'orto* as, vol. 12, pp. 165-167 (p. 166, no. 8): 'avere rapporti sessuali sodomitici'. The example there provided is by Politian: 'Nicolò Amici abbracciava la Maria Bella di Roma, e per paura di non la ingravidare, sempre entrava per l'uscio dell'orto'.

<sup>478</sup> At the entry *porta* Salvatore Battaglia and Giorgio Bàrberi Squarotti eds., *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*, cit., report, vol. 13, pp. 936-944 (p. 939, no. 9): 'Orifizio (nell'organismo di un essere umano o di animale)'.

<sup>479</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 4, p. 1763.

<sup>480</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 3, p. 1427: 'Tout le monde sait que les noms de terrains cultivables, tels que campo, orto, podere, etc., on fourni des désignations métaphoriques de la région sexuelle; que les verbes du sens de "travailler la terre", tels que arare, zappare, coltivare, etc., sont devenus des substituts de "coire". Toutes ces métaphores, aujourd'hui encore parfaitement claires, sont un héritage de l'antiquité romaine et la plupart d'entre elles ont été mises en oeuvre par Boccace'.

<sup>481</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 4, p. 1763.



better off, - 'se no(n) che come vuolse al Mastro accorto' - if you indulge in anal sexual intercourse - 'l'anima uscì per la porta dell'horto'. The other obscene metaphor I would like to point out is delivered at the very end of sonnet 'Mandarami un piatel de gelatina'. The poem could be described as a shopping list: Pistoia apparently asks a friend of his to send him a number of ingredients as he intends to throw a dinner party. However those who have reasons to know and understand the pun are not fooled by it. The concluding tail reveals that Pistoia's table companions have a soft spot for roast dishes:

In el mio apparato  
in cocer lessò tempo non si frusta  
poi so che a tutti voi lo arosto gusta.<sup>482</sup>

Are therefore Pistoia and his friends a group of foodies who drool at the sight of 'lo arosto'? They might well be, but the delicacies pleasing their refined palates are of a different nature. By setting in opposition the adjectives *lessò* and *arosto*, as we have seen in other instances, Pistoia refers to normal sexual intercourse and anal sex, or, at least to *coïtus a tergo*. However, because in the present case the poet's table companions are very likely to be men only, the opposition is between active and passive sodomites. It is perhaps worth noticing that in order to illustrate the opposition *lessò-arosto* in the context of homosexual sodomy, Jean Toscan has employed two lines of the sonnet 'Per un bon servitor costui è desso'<sup>483</sup> written by

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<sup>482</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 186r (CCCXLII, pp. 374-375), lines 18-20.

<sup>483</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 23v (XVIII, pp. 61-62).

Pistoia:

Dans un contexte ayant trait à l'homosexualité masculine, lesso et alesso marquent l'activité sexuelle; arrosto, la passivité. A propos du jeune homme dont il soutient la candidature à un emploi de valet, Pistoia écrit à son ami:

Mettil come ti pare ARROSTO o ALESSO,  
ad ogni modo a tutti è paziente

"Use de lui comme il te plaira, en tant que partenaire passif (arrosto) ou activ (alesso); dans tous le cas il se montre docile à la volonté d'autrui".<sup>484</sup>

We are no doubt reading a type of poetry penned with a specific audience in mind who could make a vast range of associations of a non-poetic type, a clique who knew how to get to the concealed 'goodies'.<sup>485</sup> In another Burchiellesque sonnet Pistoia affirms that he does not want to be understood, 'parlo da me per no(n) esser inteso'.<sup>486</sup> The verb *intendere* is often given a prominent position in the poet's verse, and in the Burchiellesque sonnets it crops up five times.<sup>487</sup> Pistoia, who is fully aware that this

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<sup>484</sup> Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage*, cit., t. 1, p. 546.

<sup>485</sup> Lynne Lawner in her book *I modi: the sixteen pleasures. An erotic album of the Italian Renaissance*, cit., puts forward the hypothesis that sodomy was a way of 'belonging'. À propos of the text *La cazzaria*, Lawner says, p. 43: 'Among the notable documents of Renaissance Italian literature containing propaganda in favour of sodomy is the dialogue *La cazzaria* (*Discourse on the Cock*) by Arsiccio Intronato, pseudonym of Antonio Vignali of Siena. This curious piece leads one to believe that sodomy as an ideology invested the very nature of the exclusive Sienese cultural association, the Accademia degli Intronati, at least in one phase of its history. Was this a kind of masonic organization with initiatory rites in which sodomy played a major role? Elite literary fraternities of explicit homosexual leanings did exist then, especially in Tuscany'.

<sup>486</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 182v (CCCXXXV, pp. 376-378).

<sup>487</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 176r (CCCXXII, p. 356); f. 180r-v (CCCXXX-CCCXXXI, pp. 362-364); f. 181v (CCCXXXIII, pp. 365-366); f. 182v (CCCXXXV, pp. 367-368).



type of poetry appeals to the erudition of a group of connoisseurs only, wishes nonetheless to remind both his 'specialist' and 'non-specialist' readers of the linguistic tricks they are about to encounter. In two instances, for example, the poet addresses a friend in the following fashion:

Bon sia per me se tu intendi il zergone.<sup>488</sup>

Hor hai inteso il testo,  
s'altro vuoi Florian da chi ti gerga  
con una can<n>a greca me lo inverga.<sup>489</sup>

The above lines in addition to containing the verb *intendere*, also display another key term and verb: namely 'zergone' and 'gerga'. The *lingua zerga* has been a much debated issue among scholars: the question is whether poets, who wrote nonsense poetry, resorted to jargon or not. In the case of Burchiello, for example, critics are not agreed: while some find a strong presence of *lingua zerga* in the verse of the Florentine poet,<sup>490</sup> others do not.<sup>491</sup> As to the verse of Pistoia, the presence of

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<sup>488</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 180v (CCCXXXI, pp. 363-364), line 11.

<sup>489</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 181v (CCCXXXIII, pp. 365-366), lines 18-20.

<sup>490</sup> Among the first ones in favour was Anton Maria Salvini who in his work *Discorsi accademici* (Florence: Manni, 1712-1733) made the following statement, vol. 2, p. 70: 'È ripieno di gerghi, cioè di geroglifici, sacri motti, cioè segreti, e nascosi all'intelligenza del vulgo'; Mario Fubini, *Studi sulla letteratura del Rinascimento*, cit., p. 38: 'si fa sentire il gusto del Burchiello per la frase gergale' and again p. 40: 'Certo non poco in queste rime è gergo'.

<sup>491</sup> Rodolfo Renier, 'Cenni sull'uso dell'antico gergo furbesco nella letteratura italiana', *Miscellanea di studi critici in onore di Arturo Graf* (Bergamo: Istituto di Arti Grafiche, 1903), pp. 123-142 (p. 125): 'in questa poesia alla burchia da cui il barbiere di Calimala trasse il suo soprannome, gergo vero non si trova, o ben poco'; Domenico De Robertis, 'Una proposta per Burchiello', cit., p. 10: 'Nonché di compiacimento

zerghi terms is very limited indeed in the Burchiellesque sonnets.<sup>492</sup> This is not surprising: the main difficulty in understanding nonsense poetry does not lie in the diction, in the single terms, hence the lack of zergo lexicon, but in the associations created by the poets between words. At the same time terms which may sound obscure or may seem recherché, in most cases are not. In his article 'Una proposta per Burchiello', De Robertis indicates 'il libro della gabella', the table of rates, as a key book, an invaluable tool in order to decode this type of verse:

Un libro sopra tutti s'impone alla nostra attenzione, in cui questa multiforme realtà è come raccolta e composta, e che ce ne restituisce la testimonianza intatta, l'originaria condizione d'usufruibilità; un libro in cui questa realtà è tutta trascritta in termini di consumo, controllata e rintracciabile in ciascuno dei suoi items, e che è come il portolano del mare magnum della vita economica cittadina. Dico il libro della gabella, ossia il tariffario dei dazi pagati dalle merci in entrata e in uscita.<sup>493</sup>

And indeed this table of rates may be mistaken for a specialized dictionary compiled by an expert of Burchiellesque poetry. Not only does the list include some of the exotic terms used by the

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o curiosità linguaiola, è assurdo parlare persino di gergo'; Michelangelo Zaccarello, 'La dimensione vernacolare nel lessico dei Sonetti di Burchiello', cit., p. 211: 'figure che hanno spesso suscitato (anche se a torto) l'accostamento alla dimensione gergale'.

<sup>492</sup> We encounter terms like 'zaffi', MS H.223 inf., f. 177r (CCCXXIV, pp. 357-358), 'maggio' and 'aste', f. 184r (CCCXXXVIII, pp. 370-371), meaning cops, kings and money respectively. The terms and their relative translations into Italian are listed in Piero Camporesi ed., *Il libro dei vagabondi: lo «Speculum cerretanorum» di Teseo Pini, «Il vagabondo» di Rafaele Frianoro e altri testi di «furfanteria»*, cit., p. 205; p. 228; p. 243.

<sup>493</sup> Domenico De Robertis, 'Una proposta per Burchiello', cit., p. 11.



barber of Calimala in his poetry, but many more are on offer:

ariento arso, fiore da filare, foderi di fianchi di lepre,  
coccole di pruni merle, paternostri di corallo, fiore di  
pietra, polvere di Babilonia, spodio di leofante<sup>494</sup>

and so on and so forth. And if one considers that Pistoia was a gabelle official himself, the table of rates becomes an even more enticing decoder. Another book, although it first appeared more than eighty years after Pistoia's death, has the same effect of the table of rates: the text in question is the late sixteenth-century book *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*.<sup>495</sup> Once again we are dealing with a book, like the previous one, chained to the trade world and this is not by chance: the practice of nonsense poetry was indeed rooted in the physical world. Pistoia's verse sparkles with a stream of images syphoned from the hurly-burly activities of workshop keepers: bakers, lard vendors, butchers, shirtmakers, smiths, wool merchants, woodcarvers, furriers, spicers, second-hand dealers, dyers, saddlers and apothecaries are often depicted against a

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<sup>494</sup> Domenico De Robertis, 'Una proposta per Burchiello', cit., p. 35; p. 37; p. 39; p. 48; p. 89; p. 98; p. 103 and p. 106.

<sup>495</sup> Tomaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*, cit. The influence which *La piazza universale* might have exerted on the work of Giulio Cesare Croce has already been pointed out by Roberto L. Bruni, Rosaria Campioni and Diego Zancani, *Giulio Cesare Croce dall'Emilia all'Inghilterra*, cit., p. 220: 'Non bisognerà poi trascurare l'ispirazione fornita al Croce, soprattutto nelle composizioni iterative, da opere 'di consultazione' comparse durante la sua vita, come ad esempio le enciclopedie di Tommaso Garzoni e in particolare la notissima *Piazza universale*, pubblicata nel 1585 e seguita da ristampe nel 1586, 1587, 1589, 1599 ed oltre, opera ben nota, tra l'altro a un amico del Croce - Orazio Vecchi - [...] questa, insieme alle numerose gride e ai bandi, fornisce ampio materiale per la parodia e l'elencazione'.

backdrop of street life at the end of a line, in the incipit or in the tails. And let us not forget their tools. With his detailed description of 'armaruoli, arruotatori, calderari, chiavari, conzalavesi, cortellari, ferrari, forbicciari, lanternari, lucernari, magnani, manticciari, morsari, peltrari, rigattinieri, spadari and strengari', just to mention a few, Garzoni calls to mind the trade world which inhabited the lines of Pistoia and his precursors. The book offers a tremendously rich, diversified and fascinating vocabulary, from exotic herbs, such as 'turbith' and 'surnag d'Africa', to different types of weights and measures, 'cantaraforfori, ereoli, ruotolozeroi', and professions.

Since, as we have seen in the previous section, Pistoia's contemporaries and successors did recognize his bravura, we can assume that the author must have felt encouraged to carry on his private challenge with a great master such as the Calimala barber. Perhaps one should emphasize the difference between professional *litterati*, such as Pietro Aretino and a few others, and those who belonged more to the *arti*, including Burchiello and perhaps Pistoia. Both were probably addressing an audience which will remain largely unknown to us, but which was likely to have shared the language, the detailed technical vocabulary of crafts, and of concrete recipe ingredients, as well as the gusto for obscenity, obscurity and puns. One should also perhaps underline that much of the poetry might have indeed been a verbal game, little more than a sustained joke, of the kind that is immediately recognizable in any social group. But language can be taken at face-value or at its opposite. If this is correct,



the constant praise of sodomy cannot be taken as evidence that this was as common as one might think. It might, in fact, also mean that it was relatively rare, and difficult to obtain and that is why it was good 'to talk about it' *in tutte le salse* and whenever possible.

### 5.7 Death, immortality and other spiritual matters: a jocular view.

The fundamental, intrinsic and formal aspects of religion, the major events in the life of Christ and of his followers are issues tackled by Pistoia in his verse.<sup>496</sup> Out of twenty-one sonnets, three open with a declaration of faith, 'Io credo',<sup>497</sup> a formula which stamps the poems with a strong incantatory feeling as it is reiterated at the beginning of several new lines:

Io credo in quello che in su dui tavolieri  
scrisse la legge e nel figlio maggiore,  
credo un dolce e bel foco de amore,  
credo in tre animali e in un banchieri.<sup>498</sup>

Credo 'n un figlio padre alla sua madre,  
credo 'n uno spirto non quel del Sosena,<sup>499</sup>  
credo che tale sia il figlio quale è il padre.<sup>500</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> MS H.223 inf. ff. 45v-47v (LXI-LXV, pp. 102-107); ff. 60v-66r (XCI-CII, pp. 132-142), f. 68v (CVII, pp. 146-147), f. 156r (CCLXXXII, pp. 319-320), f. 198v (CCCLXVII, pp. 397-398).

<sup>497</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 45v-46v (LXI-LXIII, pp. 102-105).

<sup>498</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 46r (LXII, pp. 103-104), lines 1-4. The last line of the quatrain refers to the four evangelists Mark, Luke, John and Matthew usually represented in art in the company of a winged lion, a cow or an ox, an eagle, and a pen in hand and scroll respectively. Matthew is referred to as a 'banchiere' because of his former activity as a publican.

<sup>499</sup> It is probably the Ferrarese astrologer Carlo Susenna.

<sup>500</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 45v (LXI, pp. 102-103), lines 9-11.

Easy to memorize, thanks to the pervasive presence of main clauses in single lines, the sonnets are a facetious mimicry of prayers and one even commences like an act of devotion: 'Io credo in Dio p(ad)re onnipotente'.<sup>501</sup> The content is perceptible to a reader conversant with the first four books of the New Testament as the octaves and sestets are studded with biblical allusions and resonances contained in the Gospels. In the poem 'Io credo in quel che a chi 'l toccò diè fe'',<sup>502</sup> Pistoia declares, in his realistic vein, to believe in the Holy Trinity and its saints but towards the end of the sonnet, the surface jocularity of the poetry paves the way to strong anti-clerical feelings, a standard motif of realistic poetry which goes back to the *Carmina Burana*.<sup>503</sup> The poet is in fact highly uncomplimentary of the moral behaviour of men of cloth whom he regards as hypocritical and reluctant to give:

Hipocriti et avari,  
che rubbati l'agnelo a povereti  
poi, per l'amore de Dio, date i zampetti.<sup>504</sup>

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<sup>501</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 46v (LXIII, pp. 104-105).

<sup>502</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 45v (LXI, pp. 102-103).

<sup>503</sup> Piervittorio Rossi ed., *Carmina Burana* (Milan: Bompiani, 1995), pp. xxviii-xxix: 'La loro poesia, è bene ripeterlo, non è mai anticclesiastica, ma solamente anticuriale; [...] biasimano la condotta immorale del clero e gli abusi da esso commessi nello svolgimento del servizio divino (primo fra tutti la simonia); ne denunciano inoltre con forza l'ipocrisia, frutto della discrepanza fra il messaggio evangelico e la condotta peccaminosa di vita. La maggior parte dei canti contiene pertanto una satira pungente contro la decadenza spirituale della Chiesa, provocata dall'intervento del potere laico nella vita spirituale, ma anche dalle ambizioni politiche e temporali del papato e dall'insaziabile avidità della curia'.

<sup>504</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 45v (LXI, pp. 102-103), lines 18-20.



The tone and the content become increasingly facetious in 'Io credo in quello che in su dui tavolieri'<sup>505</sup> in which faith has taken a much more materialistic turn, religion has been completely stripped of its mysticism and its meaning has been jeered at:

Credo più ne la carne e ne[l] l'ossa  
che ne la ciner che al vento vien meno,  
qual esser pò di legne, o bianca o rossa.<sup>506</sup>

The initial act of faith and the sacred mystery are further questioned in 'Che ne di' tu di questa n(ost)ra fede?'<sup>507</sup> in which the tone is highly derisive, mocking and even blasphemous. The poet animates his word-pictures with lines covered with a strong veneer of realism and couched in a decidedly comic-realistic idiom:

In questo [i.e. lo specchio di Narciso]<sup>508</sup> si mette  
oleo puro e sale,  
due cose che fanno optima cucina  
poi se ne lava il capo per segnale.

Viene il dì che alla sera si camina  
detto l'infermo al medico il suo male,  
di tre cose compon la medicina.

Vin toglie aqua e farina,  
preso che tu n'ha il cibo in breve e in poco,  
ti salva l'anima libera dal foco.<sup>509</sup>

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<sup>505</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 46r (LXII, pp. 103-104).

<sup>506</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 46r (LXII, pp. 103-104), lines 12-14.

<sup>507</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 47r (LXIV, pp. 105-106).

<sup>508</sup> This periphrasis is employed by the poet to denote water.

<sup>509</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 47r (LXIV, pp. 105-106), lines 9-17.

Pistoia comments both on the existence of Christ, his birth,<sup>510</sup> his manifestation to the Gentiles in the visit of the Magi,<sup>511</sup> the flight into Egypt,<sup>512</sup> his crucifixion and resurrection<sup>513</sup> and on the events which characterized the life of his disciples such as the death of the proto-martyr Saint Stephen<sup>514</sup> and the ascent of Saint John to Heaven.<sup>515</sup> He also discusses the truths of divine revelation contained in the Scriptures and the story of the Creation in the sonnets 'La fede fu formata ad una cena'<sup>516</sup> and 'Fece Dio l'homo e simigliolo a llui'.<sup>517</sup> The poems are strongly jocular, festive and comic in spirit. In the first composition the poet recalls events of the Gospel, some of which previously employed like for example the apparition of Christ to two disciples at the village of Emmaus and the doubt of Saint Thomas, while in the second he sums up *Genesis*, mainly the story of the creation and the curse of Adam and Eve. The language is concrete, colourfully expressive and interwoven with religious phraseology like 'tornaria viva d'ogni gratia piena'<sup>518</sup> and 'vivi, disse, in sudore vultus tui'.<sup>519</sup>

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<sup>510</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 60v-62r (XCI-XCIV, pp. 132-135).

<sup>511</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 64r (XCVIII, pp. 138-139).

<sup>512</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 64v (XCIX, p. 139).

<sup>513</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 65r-66r (C-CII, pp. 140-142).

<sup>514</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 62v-63r (XCV-XCVI, pp. 135-137).

<sup>515</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 63v (XCVII, pp. 137-138).

<sup>516</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 138r (CCXLVI, pp. 286-287).

<sup>517</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 156r (CCLXXXII, pp. 319-320).

<sup>518</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 138r (CCXLVI, pp. 286-287), line 8.

<sup>519</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 156r (CCLXXXII, pp. 319-320), line 8.



The poet, who reveals his familiarity with the New Testament, borrows Latin expressions and Hebrew words from the Gospels:<sup>520</sup> 'Surrexit non est hic',<sup>521</sup> 'Laus tibi Christi'<sup>522</sup> and 'Rabi'.<sup>523</sup> The author has a marked preoccupation with repetition as adjectives, nouns and at times entire phrases are duplicated from one sonnet to the next:

Col vecchio solo e cu(m) chi 'l fé si trova.<sup>524</sup>

Sol cu(m) un vecchio e cu(m) collei ch(e) 'l fé.<sup>525</sup>

Nel tempo che cu(m) l'ossa de la madre<sup>526</sup>  
furono i membri suoi dilacerati.<sup>527</sup>

Canta la chiesa che 'l fu già un garzone  
cu(m) l'ossa de la matre assassinato.<sup>528</sup>

The effect is further enhanced by the use of alliteration,

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<sup>520</sup> Attilio Bartoli Langeli and Mario Infelise, 'Il libro manoscritto e a stampa', cit., p. 952: 'La conoscenza di massa della Bibbia - una conoscenza naturalmente controllata e sterilizzata - si basava dunque su un diffuso supporto librario, oltre che su canali della liturgia, della predicazione e dell'iconografia'.

<sup>521</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 65v (CI, pp. 140-141). The expression was in the public domain and it is interesting to see that the versifier Panfilo Sasso in his *Strambotti* (Rome: Johann Besicken & Martin of Amsterdam, 1501) uses it in an amorous context, sig. [a1r]: 'Surrexit: non est hic il dio d'amore'.

<sup>522</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 65v (CI, pp. 140-141).

<sup>523</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 65v (CI, pp. 140-141).

<sup>524</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 61r (XCII, pp. 133-134), line 4.

<sup>525</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 61v (XCIII, p. 134), line 4.

<sup>526</sup> This is a periphrasis which the poet uses to refer to stones.

<sup>527</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 62v (XCV, pp. 135-136), lines 7-8.

<sup>528</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 63r (XCVI, pp. 136-137), lines 1-2.

epistrophe such as 'che fu parola di Re d'ogni Re',<sup>529</sup> 'partito da gli alati un nuntio alato'<sup>530</sup> and epanalepsis 'Un figliol fu che 'l padre un padre fece',<sup>531</sup> 'A che? A che? A rimemar di qua'.<sup>532</sup> The majority of the compositions derive their full force from single quatrains and tercets in which Pistoia shows his ability to recount the salient features of parables by restricting the scene in order to capture the attention of the reader:

Un figliol fu che 'l padre un padre fece  
 et a lui disse: "Cresci i patri tuoi",  
 e di quel patre discendemo noi  
 e <l>e nation hebrece, mor, turche e grece.

Morì questo figliol di acerba nece  
 e ritornossi vivo a i regni poi,  
 fé testamento e alli compagni soi  
 lasciò la pace che fur dui e diece.

Diè del giardin le chiave a un pescatore  
 dicendo: "Tante volte apri le porte  
 quanto a batter le torna un peccatore".

Tosto alhor disse per divina sorte:  
 "Mandarò il foco de lo eterno amore  
 per lucidar nel mondo la mia sorte.

State al martirio forte  
 a chiarir ben per fede il nome mio  
 che dove voi sarete sarò io".<sup>533</sup>

Framed in a mythological setting, palingenesis and immortal fame are introduced and elaborated in a concentrated form in two

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<sup>529</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 63v (XCVII, pp. 137-138), line 14.

<sup>530</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 64v (XCIX, p. 139), line 3.

<sup>531</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 65r (C, p. 140), line 1.

<sup>532</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 65v (CI, pp. 140-141), line 3.

<sup>533</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 65r (C, p. 140).



eulogistic poems penned for Roberto Malatesta,<sup>534</sup> ruler of Rimini, who died on 19th September 1482, and for Bernardo Bellincioni.<sup>535</sup> The symbolic images of the phoenix, the laurel and periphrases like 'il divin culto' and 'il sacro legno' are much favoured in the mythical narration:

E se pugnar pel divin culto lince,  
 ha Iove aperta la porta reale,  
 per rinovarło a sé una phenice.<sup>536</sup>

Del suo bene il ristauero  
 è che 'l si trovi in sul carro di Apollo,  
 riposto al sol cu(m) un serpente al collo.<sup>537</sup>

In the sonnet *in morte* for Malatesta, the poet uses a rhyme in -ale which is aptly keyed to the occasion, being reminiscent of the topos of winged fame and of heavenly ascension while a solemn effect, certainly well suited to the occasion, is produced by the technique of rebounding a sound, which, in the present case, is the vowel o. ... Difficult rhymes in -ulto and in -auro respectively conclude the poems whose fabric is characterized by an elevated vocabulary due to the presence of Latinisms such as 'plora', 'lice', 'pugnar', 'vidue' as well as graphic ones, 'phenice', 'alumno' and 'thesauro'.<sup>538</sup>

One of the two sonnets written for the jester Bernardo

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<sup>534</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 60r (XC, pp. 131-132).

<sup>535</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 80r (CXXX, pp. 168-169).

<sup>536</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 60r (XC, pp. 131-132), lines 12-14.

<sup>537</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 80r (CXXX, pp. 168-169), lines 15-17.

<sup>538</sup> The topic of death in the art of sonneteering was investigated by Claes Schaar, *On the motif of death in 16th century sonnet poetry* (Lund: Gleerup, 1960).

Tintori called *Il Mattello*,<sup>539</sup> who died on 26th May 1499, retains some of the features illustrated above. A high, though more limited, linguistic register with terms such as 'viatori', 'tumul', 'requia' and 'transito', characterizes the sonnet whose final rhyme scheme in -arca is relevant to the theme treated. The rhyme endings are in fact well suited to the occasion as they etch in the reader's mind the image of the three Fates who, after having presided over the birth and the life of men, cut the thread of human life. The general slant of the poem is more jocular than eulogistic and death is the main protagonist and ultimate winner:

Scherzò seco la morte  
e nel transito seco un pezzo rise  
di poi scherzando e ridendo l'uccise.<sup>540</sup>

The other poem '*Quasi era il giorno alla notte accostato*'<sup>541</sup> loses all traces of mysticism and a jocular tone permeates the lines. A different approach stamps the five sonnets<sup>542</sup> penned for the death of Gregorio Zampante, a public figure detested by the Ferrarese people, who was killed in 1496. In the poems, written in a dramatic form after his death, the sinner is confronted by death itself in an imagined dialogue. There are some Dantesque reminiscences: Pistoia's line 'ma il ciel ch'ogni

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<sup>539</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 137r-v (CCXLIV-CCXLV, pp. 283-286).

<sup>540</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 137r (CCXLIV, pp. 283-284), lines 15-17.

<sup>541</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 137v (CCXLV, pp. 284-286).

<sup>542</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 87r-89r (CXLIV-CXLVIII, pp. 180-185).



crudel sempre ha \i(n)/ dispetto'<sup>543</sup> recalls the famous phrase referred to Manente degli Uberti called Farinata in Dante's *Inferno*, 'com' avesse l'inferno a gran dispetto'.<sup>544</sup> In the present instance the author becomes the voice of the people, the avenger who helps to give vent to the emotions pent up during Zampante's period in office as *capitano di giustizia*. Pistoia's aim is to assure his readers that the 'butcher' is finally in Hell surrounded by snakes and suffering all possible pain while he is being dismembered and impaled in an obvious *contrappasso*.

### 5.8 Miscellanea.

Lamenting and unhappily married women, noblemen, gluttons, academics, condottieri, singers, scenes from popular life, balls and jousts give life to a varied fifteenth-century tableau black on white. In view of the great diversity of the subject matter, it is not possible, in the present context, to devote equal attention to all forty-two sonnets here gathered under the heading 'miscellany';<sup>545</sup> the discussion will be therefore

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<sup>543</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 87r (CXLIV, pp. 180-182), line 12.

<sup>544</sup> Dante Alighieri, *Commedia*, commented by Anna M. Chiavacci Leonardi (Milan: Mondadori, 1997<sup>2</sup>), vol. 1, p. 312 (canto 10, line 36).

<sup>545</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 48v (LXVII, pp. 110-111); f. 49v (LXIX, p. 112); f. 59v (LXXXIX, pp. 130-131); f. 67r (CIV, pp. 143-144); f. 93r (CLVI, pp. 193-194); f. 98r-v (CLXVI-CLXVII, pp. 203-205); ff. 102v-104r (CLXXV-CLXXVIII, pp. 211-216); ff. 113v-114v (CXCVII-CXCIX, pp. 237-239); f. 117v (CCV, pp. 244-245); ff. 120r-121r (CCX-CCXII, pp. 249-252); f. 123r (CCXVI, pp. 255-256); f. 124r-v (CCXVIII-CCXIX, pp. 257-259); f. 125v (CCXXI, p. 260); f. 127r (CCXXIV, pp. 262-263); f. 129r (CCXXVIII, pp. 266-267); f. 130r (CCXXX, pp. 268-269); f. 135r-v (CCXL-CCXLI, pp. 278-281); f. 145v (CCLXI, pp. 300-301); f. 153r (CCLXXVI, pp. 314-315); f. 155r (CCLXXX, pp. 317-318); f. 162v (CCXCV, pp. 331-332); f. 165v (CCCI, pp. 336-337); f. 167r (CCCIV, pp. 339-340); f. 169r (CCCVIII, p. 343); f. 174v (CCCXIX, p. 353); f. 190v

limited to special aspects and features of some poems in particular.

As well as being a highly prolific poet, Antonio Pistoia was, as we have already seen, a keen and acute observer. This ability of his is very clearly reflected in his work and in particular in some miscellaneous sonnets in which vivid scenes from daily life are depicted. Taking inspiration from the surrounding reality, the poems offer lively vignettes inhabited by recognizable characters such as husbands and wives,<sup>546</sup> a mother and a matchmaker,<sup>547</sup> two panders arguing over a harlot<sup>548</sup> and two gossips commenting on their neighbourhood.<sup>549</sup> The narrative, which appears to be made up of real-life events taken from an ordinary, popular environment, unfolds in lively exchanges of small excerpts of dialogues disclosing the characters' sentiments and attitudes. The author uses his personal ability to interpret popular feelings in a way which seems to run contrary to the aristocratic aloofness of Petrarch. Although Pistoia did share the same disdain for the populace and made no mystery of it, his eclectic nature allowed him to look at commoners, as well as at rulers and courtiers with equal authenticity.

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(CCCLI, p. 383); f. 193r (CCCLVI, pp. 386-387); f. 195r (CCCLX, pp. 390-391); f. 198r (CCCLXVI, pp. 396-397); f. 200v (CCCLXI, pp. 400-402); f. 207v (CCCLXXXV, pp. 419-420); f. 281v (DXXX, pp. 583-584).

<sup>546</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 113v-114r (CXCVII-CXCVIII, pp. 237-238).

<sup>547</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 67r (CIV, pp. 143-144).

<sup>548</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 98r (CLXVI, pp. 203-204).

<sup>549</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 114v (CXCIX, pp. 238-239).



Several miscellaneous poems are focused on a scene in particular, thus allowing the poet to frame the most effective aspects of the episode and to emphasise the most salient features of the characters who are in turn being described. Pistoia's depictions of and commentaries on popular life are executed in a humorous tone and observed from a comic angle: the results are incisive sketches and lively renditions of street life and marital scenes. The poet offers a sonnet reproducing a quarrel taking place inside the home of a jealous husband who is worried that the honour of his young wife may be compromised if she attends mass unchaperoned:

Perché tu entri ove la gente è spessa  
 un' ti potrebbe alciare il tovagliolo  
 e toccarti da berta il rusignolo,  
 questa è la gelos\i/a che mi vien messa.<sup>550</sup>

In turn the young wife curses her father who made her marry an old man and by so doing condemning her to find consolation in extra-marital affairs:

Il mio padre per vitio,  
 per avaritia sol mi dè a vec\c/hiezza  
 perch'io fussi putana in giovinezza.<sup>551</sup>

This structure which is rather theatrical, thanks to its short and sharp exchanges between the protagonists in a *botta e risposta* fashion, also constitutes the backbone of another miscellaneous sonettessa poem in which the author shows to have a strong command of the vitality of the language. A drinking

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<sup>550</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 113v (CXC VII, p. 237), lines 5-8.

<sup>551</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 113v (CXC VII, p. 237), lines 18-20.

booth serves to set the atmosphere in which the poet discloses a verbal altercation between two procurers by the name of Tubia and Salvatore: the contention is about Nastasia, a strumpet, who, according to Salvatore, was sold to Tubia by Angel Michiel 'stafier qui del Signore'. During the verbal exchange, the two men consider the possibility of fighting a duel, although the argument is later settled with a goblet of wine:

Non gridar più, che vuoi tu Salvatore [sic]?  
 Che tu mi renda la femina mia.  
 Chi te vendete a me, dil' Nastasia:  
 "Angel Michiel stafier qui del Signore".

Hai inteso? Sì, che tu se' un traditore.  
 Tu menti per la gola e[t] tu Tubia  
 qui su tecco combatto, andiamo via  
 la spada partirà questo rumore.

Domandiam prima campo, non bisogna  
 toglian pur le confin de l'uccellino  
 chi vincerà se ne vada a Bologna.

Guarda Tobia Salvatore è mancino.  
 Non curo, che l'honor e la vergogna  
 son posti ne le man del mio destino.

Hoste porta del vino,  
 fatte la pace, ognhom stia da fratello,  
 tu Nastasia ritornati in bordello.

Non saria questo e q(ue)llo  
 nel far question sì audaci e crudeli  
 se tutti i mezzator fusson fideli.<sup>552</sup>

In the present instance, the unity of the poem is established by its structure as a dialogue in which the two interlocutors often speak one sentence per line. The extensive use of direct discourse and the conversational nature of the common speech lend the poem an immediate, spontaneous quality nailing the actions to their temporal constraints and framing the narrative into a

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<sup>552</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 98r (CLXVI, pp. 203-204).



time-bound scene. The general tendency is to reproduce the quality of the spoken language through a casual syntactical structure and humorous colloquialisms verging on slang, as seen previously with 'tovagliolo' and 'rusignolo'. The skill of the poet in the above-mentioned sonnets lies in creating with words a good-humoured depiction of life filled with activity, vigour and spirit. The tone is colloquial and the diction is common and understandable to everyone, a feature which is very unusual in Pistoia's verse; the two sonnets in question are for once made available to the world at large instead of being restricted to a very limited readership. Thanks to the fact that the poet successfully recreates the general atmosphere of the scenes he is depicting, whether it is a married couple arguing or two pimps in a tavern, the reader can trace the outlines of a certain type of society and attempt to enter into its mental world. The same can be said of three poems staged in an outdoor setting and centred on street life. In these cases the subject matter consists largely of dialogues taking place in the streets between a mother who, by enlisting the help of a man called Pietro, attempts to arrange a marriage for her daughter,<sup>553</sup> an unhappily married woman by the name of Margherita who recounts her family problems to a certain Diamante<sup>554</sup> and two gossips commenting on their neighbourhood.<sup>555</sup> This last sonnet in particular successfully thrusts the reader into the midst of a remarkably animated picture reflecting life in a popular area of a town,

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<sup>553</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 67r (CIV, pp. 143-144).

<sup>554</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 114r (CXCVIII, pp. 237-238).

<sup>555</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 114v (CXCIX, pp. 238-239).

possibly Ferrara or Reggio Emilia:

Anna che fa<n> là quelle brigade?  
 Non lo sai tu? Alla vita di pria.  
 Quando partì fu la ventura mia  
 ch'io no(n) sento più tante cicalate.

Tiense la Chiara n(ost)ra più quel frate?  
 Il cavallier segue anchor la Maria?  
 Grida ognhor la Silvestra per la via?  
 Dagli il marito suo più bastonate?

E come suol rumor tra le vicine?  
 Sonvi la sera più le porte rotte?  
 Rubbasi come già de le galline?

Il n(ost)ro Michelaccio ha le sue gotte?  
 Tengon postricul più le Bergamine?  
 Vassi gridando a putane la notte?

O don(n)e nel mal dir dotte  
 ognuna de udir peggio si contenta  
 che spenger se ne possi la sementa.<sup>556</sup>

The opening quatrain sets the stage for the common woman's curiosity: having left the district where she lived, she is nonetheless eager to know, from her friend Anna, whether there have been any changes in the area. The following tercets and the first tail offer a highly effective painting of the actions and habits of the people inhabiting and visiting the quarter. The sonnet reflects what could be safely described as real-life events and the reader is offered a truly vivid representation as the poet engages the latter's interest by creating a vibrant picture. The deliberate omission of conjunctions between the lines stamps the sonnet with a hurried rhythm although there is no crescendo as the thematic elements are shuffled to attain a cumulative effect. The use of dialogue is, in the present instance, restricted to the first quatrain which is to be

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<sup>556</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 114v (CXCIX, pp. 238-239).



followed by an inquisitive monologue whose structure establishes the overall unit of the sonnet with an extended use of questions thus giving the poem a spontaneous, improvised effect and a flowing style. The unity is further enhanced by the pervasive presence of the present indicative while a sense of pause and a clear-cut thematic break occur between the last tercet and the tail which is completely detached from the rest as the poet's voice takes over to deliver its misogynous message using an admonitory tone.

Women constitute the subject matter of six other sonnets in which the poet pays tribute to the women of Siena and Ferrara,<sup>557</sup> attempts to console two madonnas subject to the caprices of fortune<sup>558</sup> and he compliments another two for having given their husbands an heir.<sup>559</sup>

With a further string of twelve sonnets Pistoia creates a picture gallery in verse in which in turn he portrays a judge,<sup>560</sup> a parish priest,<sup>561</sup> a thief<sup>562</sup> a talented but ugly singer,<sup>563</sup> academics,<sup>564</sup> courtiers<sup>565</sup> and noblemen,<sup>566</sup> the

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<sup>557</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 48v (LXVII, pp. 110-111); f. 49v (LXIX, p. 112).

<sup>558</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 59v (LXXXIX, pp. 130-131); f. 117v (CCV, pp. 244-245).

<sup>559</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 123r (CCXVI, pp. 255-256); f. 174v (CCCXIX, p. 353).

<sup>560</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 93r (CLVI, pp. 193-194).

<sup>561</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 125v (CCXXI, p. 260).

<sup>562</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 145v (CCLXI, pp. 300-301).

<sup>563</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 169r (CCCVIII, p. 343).

<sup>564</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 135r (CCXL, pp. 278-280).

glutton Zaccaria,<sup>567</sup> the great condottiere Bartolomeo Colleoni<sup>568</sup> and the Duke Ercole I d'Este.<sup>569</sup> The poet also penned a poem in favour of fancy dressing,<sup>570</sup> commented on the power of money<sup>571</sup> and on a great number of different issues ranging from the *mazzacrocca* dance,<sup>572</sup> matters of astrology<sup>573</sup> and jousts,<sup>574</sup> to an edict issued by Ercole I d'Este,<sup>575</sup> the

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<sup>565</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 121r (CCXII, pp. 251-252); f. 198r (CCCLXVI, pp. 396-397); f. 281v (DXXX, pp. 583-584).

<sup>566</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 190v (CCCLI, p. 383), f. 195r (CCCLX, pp. 390-391).

<sup>567</sup> MS H.223 inf., ff. 102v-104r (CLXXV-CLXXVIII, pp. 211-216).

<sup>568</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 167r (CCCIV, pp. 339-340).

<sup>569</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 207v (CCCLXXXV, pp. 419-420). In the sonnet Pistoia comments on Ercole's deep religious passion which was of public knowledge. Werner L. Gundersheimer referred to this issue in *Ferrara: the style of a Renaissance despotism*, cit., p. 185, fn. 21: 'Ercole's religious zeal is well known, though opinions have varied as to how it influenced his policies. Gardner, *Dukes and Poets*, suggests that Ercole's devotionalism increased during his life, and tended to override other tendencies toward cruelty or sensuality. There is no evidence for that. L. Lockwood, "Music at Ferrara in the period of Ercole I d'Este" in *Studi Musicali*, I (1972), 101-31, [...], considers his "deep personal religiosity, amounting almost to fanaticism", as one of the motivating factors in Ercole's effort to make Ferrara into an important musical center, and presents convincing evidence'.

<sup>570</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 124r-v (CCXVIII-CCXIX, pp. 257-259).

<sup>571</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 98v (CLXVII, pp. 204-205).

<sup>572</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 155r (CCLXXX, pp. 317-318). The *mazzacrocca* was a popular dance alike the *ballo della civetta*. Originally the term was also employed to indicate a bird and a type of stick, although its origin remains unclear. The term was discussed by Rodolfo Renier, 'Mazzacrocca', *GSLI*, 1888, 11, pp. 304-305, and Alfredo Saviotti, 'Di un codice musicale del secolo XVI', *GSLI*, 1892, 19, pp. 446-453 (p. 451).

<sup>573</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 127r (CCXXIV, pp. 262-263); f. 193r (CCCLVI, pp. 386-387).

<sup>574</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 120r-v (CCX-CCXI pp. 249-251).



city of Milan,<sup>576</sup> attires<sup>577</sup> and vices.<sup>578</sup> The tone of the poems differs greatly: some are didactic in nature with an enhanced tendency towards moralizing, others are simply descriptive and deal with events and people of the time.

The question of imitation is definitely raised in the sonnets 'Tu mi di' sempre mai vuoi tu niente?'<sup>579</sup> and 'Non son per le montagne tanti abeti';<sup>580</sup> while the first echoes a poem by Matteo Franco entitled 'Tu mi domandi sempre s'i' vo' nulla'<sup>581</sup> the second one is supposed to be modelled on a poem by Burchiello, 'Non son tanti babbion nel mantovano' which, according to some critics, was in turn rendered in French by Mellin de Saint-Gelais in his composition 'Il n'est point tant de barques à Venize'.<sup>582</sup> Both sonnets resemble the original as

<sup>575</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 129r (CCXXVIII, pp. 266-267).

<sup>576</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 200v (CCCLXI, pp. 400-402).

<sup>577</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 162v (CCXCV, pp. 331-332).

<sup>578</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 165v (CCCI, pp. 336-337).

<sup>579</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 130r (CCXXX, pp. 268-269).

<sup>580</sup> MS H.223 inf., f. 153r (CCLXXVI, pp. 314-315).

<sup>581</sup> Luigi Pulci and Matteo Franco, *Il "libro dei sonetti"*, cit., p. 89.

<sup>582</sup> Luisa Avellini, 'Metafora «regressiva» e degradazione comica nei sonetti del Burchiello', cit., p. 308: 'Melin de Saint-Gelais [...] si divertí a dare di questo sonetto [that is 'Non sono tanti babbion nel mantovano'] una varazione in francese: *Il n'est point tant de barques à Venise*'. Luigia Zilli the editor of Mellin de Saint-Gelais' *Sonnets* (Geneva: Droz, 1990), provided a different view, p. 20: 'Le modèle, signalé par Vianey [...] et analysé en détail par Gutkind [...], en serait le sonnet 'Non è [sic] tanti babion nel Mantovano' attribué à Burchiello [...]. Il est toutefois difficile de rattacher le texte de Saint-Gelais à ce seul modèle. Nous avons suggéré [...] qu'il est possible d'établir un rapprochement avec le sonnet d'Antonio da Pistoia "Non son per le montagne tanti abeti", dont le vers 2 "Né tante barche Venezia incatena" rappelle de très

Pistoia tries to emulate the work of his predecessor very closely. From the samples of certain literary echoes that have been detected, it appears that Pistoia had a good knowledge of contemporary verse and it is not unlikely that, even as *gabelliere*, he had time to read some of the vast poetic production in Italian vernacular.

Although the present chapter is not a uniform and minute survey, it is hoped that this overview of particular issues and themes has illuminated the broad canvas of Pistoia's *Canzoniere*.

### 5.9 Glossary.

This is a selection of unusual terms from Pistoia's verse quoted in the text of the thesis. Only translations relevant to the contexts have been given.

|           |                   |
|-----------|-------------------|
| accalare  | to hoodwink       |
| agresto   | a kind of vinegar |
| alciare   | to lift           |
| alume     | alum              |
| avello    | grave, ditch      |
| beccar    | butcher           |
| beroldo   | sausage           |
| berzaglio | target, backside  |
| bolicame  | boiling pitch     |
| boglion   | broth             |
| bombarda  | bombard           |
| brocca    | jar, anus         |

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près l'incipit de notre sonnet'.



|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| bruna          | thick brown sauce  |
| buffolo        | buffalo            |
| cappa          | mollusc, sputum    |
| ciancia/cianza | babble, nonsense   |
| cicade         | cicadas            |
| cimier         | helmet, cap        |
| ciuffare       | to grab            |
| coiame         | leather            |
| cor di ricci   | chestnuts          |
| destro         | cesspool           |
| fava           | broad-bean, penis  |
| favacello      | buttercup          |
| fassi          | bandages           |
| feccia         | dregs, mud         |
| fel            | bile, gall         |
| formicolare    | to itch, to tingle |
| frappe         | tatters            |
| filugine       | silk worm          |
| gala           | ornament           |
| galone         | thigh              |
| impiastro      | poultice           |
| impronto       | imprint            |
| incanare       | to penetrate       |
| incapestrare   | to halter          |
| indici         | Indians            |
| infiati        | swollen            |
| insieparsi     | to adorn oneself   |
| insubri        | Insubres, Lombards |

|              |                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| magnano      | tinsmith                    |
| mele         | eye rheum                   |
| meta         | dung                        |
| metici       | physicians                  |
| moggia       | bushel                      |
| moscino      | midge                       |
| mugine       | mullet                      |
| ombricola    | leech (?)                   |
| orpimento    | orpiment                    |
| peta         | wind, flatulence            |
| picardia     | Picardy region              |
| piccicagnoli | sausage vendors             |
| pignatta     | pot, female pudenda         |
| potta        | female genitalia            |
| ragnoli      | spiders                     |
| rocca        | castle, female sexual organ |
| rusignolo    | nightingale, bottom         |
| saccomanno   | looting, pillaging          |
| savoretti    | odour                       |
| scopati      | scourged people             |
| scrimia      | fencing                     |
| senzale      | mosquitoes                  |
| sguerzo      | cross-eyed                  |
| simia        | monkey                      |
| soccodagnoli | tailpiece, girth            |
| soro         | young falcon                |
| stantia      | hole, shop                  |
| stribuire    | to distribute               |



stulto

succiola

tarso

tegia

testudine/testugine

tovagliolo

vespertillo

stupid

jujube (?)

tartar

broad-bean

tortoise

napkin, dress

bat

## CHAPTER SIX

## A CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF MS H.223 inf.

Pressmark: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS H.223 inf. (previous pressmark S.O.D.VI.25).

Contents: Works by Antonio Pistoia (1436?-1502), in vernacular.

Date: 16th century (probably between 1527 and 1553).

Provenance: Cardinal Federico Borromeo's collection.

## Details of contents

1. Epistle to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga (diplomatic transcription)

a) f. 1r-v La fragilità de l'humana vita [...] allaquale mi raccomando; Explicit epistle

## Dialogue in prose

b) ff. 1v-14r Era nel tempo che Diana da la faticosa caccia tornando al cielo [...] ecco la executione ch' cū lo animo del tuo seruo a tua S<sup>ria</sup> ne uiene; Explicit dialogue

## Canzoniere: 535 tailed and sonettessa poems

c) f. 15r Madonna poi che dal regno di Pluto [...] Rinchiusa fra due asse ogni mia frasca; Explicit sonnet

d) f. 283r Ecco la morte i mei sonnetti al foco [...] ch' la fara con uersi e con le mani; Explicit sonnet

## Disperata in tercets

e) ff. 283v-288r La Nuda terra sha gia messo il mato [...] ch' un sol exempio schiua molti danni; Explicit disperata

2. Best available printed text: Erasmo Pèrcopo, Antonio Cammelli e i suoi "sonetti faceti" (Rome [Naples]: Giannini, 1913' [first



published in 1908]). Differences between manuscript text and Pèrcopo edition:

a) major textual variants: lenaolo, f. 46v > lenciolo (LXIII, pp. 104-105); cosi, f. 58v > cossì (LXXXVII, p. 129); heu, f. 128r > heri (CCXXVI, pp. 264-265); lo fa, f. 244r > lo sa (CCCCL, pp. 499-500); poeti, f. 282r > pochi (DXXXI, pp. 584-585)

b) additions: Pero te manifesto/che essendo alieni da questi tirañi/Durra la vita sua mille e mille annj, f. 255r > Però te manifesto/O Dio, pon fine al gioco/che, essendo alieno da questi tiranni,/durrà la vita sua mille e mille anni (CCCCLXXVII, pp. 523-524)

c) inversions: Ma ben saper uorei, f. 193r > Ma ben vorei saper (CCCLVI, pp. 386-387)

d) gaps: da la biretta, f. 146r > da biretta (CCLXII, pp. 301-302); la mia uendetta, f. 156v > la vendetta (CCLXXXIII, pp. 320-321).

3. Annotations: on the upper part of the pastedown there is a bibliographical note written after 1908 in black ink relating to the publication of the manuscript edited by Pèrcopo; the inscription is followed by the old pressmark (S.O.D.VI.25) while the current one appears in the middle of the pastedown in light brown ink; on the flyleaf marked i<sup>r</sup> the current pressmark, written with a purplish felt-tip pen, appears on the top; this is followed by an annotation concerning Antonio Pistoia and two bibliographical indications in light brown ink and initialled B. O. Further down there is a reference to Pèrcopo's edition and the old pressmark is written with a blue biro by a twentieth-century

hand; on the lower part, the same hand scribbled a note relating to a tear on f. 135 with a red ink biro. On the flyleaf at the end which is marked *i<sup>r</sup>* in pencil, a late nineteenth-century hand has indicated eight subjects treated in the individual poems together with the relevant folios.

### Physical description

1. Number of leaves: *i* + 288 + *i* (ff. 14v, 30r, 210v are blank).
  2. Foliation: modern in a sepia ink, in the upper outer corner, possibly penned by the same hand which wrote the manuscript.
  3. Material: paper. Although in very good condition, the paper presents traces of foxing (ff. 3v, 87v, 143r-144v, 151r-152v, 217r-272v), black stains (ff. 123v-124r) and some tears (ff. 18, 90, 135). Watermark of the *chapeau* type, 45x41mm; clearly visible in central position (ff. 14, 18, 21, 36, 143, etc.) very close to Briquet no. 3407 (Bergamo 1527-36) and no. 3408 (Udine 1531; Cremona 1550; Reggio Emilia 1553). A back to front capital *r* appears in the left hand corner of ff. 16 and 17 and of ff. 151 and 152.
  4. Overall dimension of the leaves: 306x220mm.
  5. Collation: 1<sup>10</sup>, 2<sup>10</sup>, 3<sup>10</sup>, 4<sup>10</sup>, 5<sup>10</sup>, 6<sup>10</sup>, 7<sup>12</sup>, 8<sup>10</sup>, 9<sup>10</sup>, 10<sup>10</sup>, 11<sup>10</sup>, 12<sup>10</sup>, 13<sup>10</sup>, 14<sup>10</sup>, 15<sup>10</sup>, 16<sup>10</sup>, 17<sup>10</sup>, 18<sup>10</sup>, 19<sup>10</sup>, 20<sup>10</sup>, 21<sup>8</sup>, 22<sup>10</sup>, 23<sup>10</sup>, 24<sup>10</sup>, 25<sup>12</sup>, 26<sup>10</sup>, 27<sup>10</sup>, 28<sup>[10]</sup> (imperfect: wanting 7, 8, 9, 10, all cut out).
- The quires, which are normally of ten sheets, are foliated in Arab numerals on the outer corner of the recto of each leaf.
6. Ruling: blind; at times slightly visible on the left margins of folios.



7. Catchwords: vertically written towards the inner lower corner of ff. 10v, 20v, 30v, 40v, 50v, 60v, 70v, 82v, 92v, 102, 112v, 121v, 122v, 132v, 142v, 152v, 162v, 172v, 182v, 192v, 202v, 212v, 220v, 230v, 240v, 250v, 262v, 272v, 282v. Up to f. 60v they function as quire signatures because they match up with the quires. The scribe made an error in transcribing the catchword on f. 121v and in order to correct his mistake a letter of the alphabet was later added in the upper corner of the following folios: 120v, a; 121r, d; 121v, e; 122r, b; 122v, c.

### Handwriting

Late humanistic cursive script. The text is fairly well-written and nicely spaced. The writing has a tendency to lean to the right with elongated ascenders and descenders. Individual letters are often closed together. Single-compartment and 8-type a are both used (ff. 201r-v, 237r, 238r) while an open form, that is an a without a bar, is occasionally used for majuscules (ff. 16r, 39v). Nice forms of round c, short r and tall s; the latter has either a little horn or a hook in the upper and lower part of the ascenders and descenders; use of tailed c to represent z (ff. 168r, 175v, 241r). Long tail x (ff. 2r, 39v, 253v) and g with a closed upper and lower bow. I longa often used instead of i. Descenders of q with a loop to it when it is followed by a three-shaped contraction sign (ff. 20r, 39v, 49r). Ascenders and descenders of l and h are very often knobbed or hooked; p has a foot to it; d and b are slightly bent. Widespread use of u for both u and v. The ligatures ce and st are an essential element of the script. No lifting of the pen between minims. Personal

names on ff. 1v, 8r, 10v and the word *pace* on ff. 154r, 160r, 239r are written all in majuscule. Occasional punctuation (signs employed: flexus, semicolon, comma, question mark and full stop); apostrophe, accent marks, dots on the single *i* and round parentheses are also used. Heavy incidence of abbreviations, mostly contractions, very few suspensions, for common and unusual words. A horizontal line through the ascenders or the descenders is used to abbreviate the letters *h* and *p*; the latter is also contracted through the use of a superscript bar. Occasional use of superscript *r*, (ff. 39v, 89r, 279r) and vocative sign (ff. 21r, 28v, 55r, 105r, etc.); very rare use of ampersand for the conjunction *et* and of Tyronian sign (ff. 38r, 107r, 265v). The abbreviation stroke is curly with two fairly heavy wedges at the end and at the beginning. Initials at the beginning of the first lines for the quatrains and the tercets stick out. Rather good word division; two vertical hyphens are often used to divide words (ff. 18v, 22v, 24v, 59r, 95v, 107v, etc.). Numerous cancellation by crossing out (ff. 16v, 20r, 24r, 54v, 83r, etc.) and expunction (ff. 16r, 175v, 202r, 226v, etc.). Several contemporary and later insertions above the line (ff. 16r, 17v, 26v, 28r, 42r, 66r, etc.) and very few on the line (ff. 42r, 66r, 67v, 84v, 155v, etc.). Contemporary and later headings (ff. 15r-v, 18v, 200v written upside down, 201r, 216r contemporary one). Use of *signes-de-renvoi* (ff. 170r, 178r) and marginalia (f. 233v).

#### Decoration

Two-line initial letter 'L' supplied in sepia and dotted along



the ascender (f. 1r).

The text is written in a sepia and light brown ink.

A tiny light brown streak of fluff approximately seven millimetres long is inserted horizontally along the lower part of f. 173v.

### Binding

Modern binding (possibly eighteenth century) in parchment over card-boards, 316 x 223 mm; pastedowns. The spine has three raised bands and two headcaps. The bottom part presents a nineteenth-century small oval black label, slightly damaged, bearing the number 223 written in gold. The headband is in light brownish thread. The spine is fixed and flat.

### Some further observations

The scribe often does not understand what he is transcribing (e.g. *satollo* is copied down as *sat'ollo* f. 28r; *babbuino* as *babbino* f. 38r; *militia* as *malitia* f. 88r; *quando* as *quando* f. 150v; *rispondi* as *bispondi* f. 206v and so on). Individual syllables are often tampered with in order to make corrections (e.g. *a* is transformed in *e* and vice versa ff. 83v-84r, 261v, *c* in *s* f. 166r, capital *J* in *g* f. 89v, etc.). The scribe occasionally uses the abbreviation sign while simultaneously expanding what has just been abbreviated (ff. 20r, 52r, etc.); in two instances he repeats the initials at the beginning of a line (e.g. *RRimetterian* f. 84v). Inversions of lines (ff. 76v, 85r, 92v) with subsequent corrections using the letters *a* and *b* to restore the right sequence.

Most striking differences between the script of Antonio Pistoia and that of the scribe of MS H.223 inf.

Antonio Pistoia's script, as exemplified in some of his letters, is plainer compared to that of the scribe which is much more exaggerated. Individual letters: the lower part of *g* is angular-looking with an open loop (lines 2, 3, 7, 31, etc.); *p* has no foot to it (lines 9, 10); short and tall *t* mostly upright (lines 1, 11); the latter has a flattened serif on the ascender (line 20); tall and short *s* (lines 7, 10); very angular-looking *v* with thickening at the end of ascenders; *b* often presents an unclosed bow; curling down of *z* well below the line (lines 7, 11, 25). The eye of the *e* rises above the line (lines 11, 20, 29); slight feet on the minims of *m* (lines 2, 4, 11).

### Bibliography

[Antonio Ceruti], *Inventario dei manoscritti della biblioteca Ambrosiana* (Trezzano sul Naviglio: ETIMAR, 1975), 5 vols.



Antonio com'ua! ua mala Signorci'  
Per chi? per mi? per te? fati ~~ben~~ tristo,  
Quira chi? sia costi: si'm fedel' christo  
Tu giuri: Jo giuro, ch' non commetto erroi'  
Ch' h' manca e di non e' fauori'  
Tu mai per certo: mal' per me' si' e' iusto:  
A chi te' auedi? a l' mio ultimo acquisto.  
Pouer gabbato all' vintiquattro hore:  
Ma dimmi un poco: chi, chi t'ha gabbato?  
La troppo fedel' mia, l'esser liale  
Questo aduen' sempre a chi ama e non e' amato  
S' ardo mi son pentuto de far mali'  
E al ricordarsi del tempo passato  
E dolor' infinito e nulla uchi'

Chi discendi' e di sali'  
Jo come basso ho fatto picciol' salto  
Ma maggior salto da chi non da alto

Hora donq' io mi exalto  
De veder la uenditta in poco e in breui'  
Ch' l' uolter de la Rota e' cose breui'



Illustrissimo et eccellentissimo Signor mio se il tempo lo comportasse ho la impo-  
runita de la mia gallica egritudine seria gia dinante aquella orichiamarmi  
auore vna di quanto q<sup>da</sup> sotto scritto fera no vedendo piu giusto ne migliore  
aduocato per me che la eccellentia Vra per uendicari tanta inguria chioho  
da Vno emedario spagnolo ricenta et quale medicado va q<sup>sto</sup> morbo fraticoso  
e q<sup>lla</sup> noti il caso di hauendo io vno mio figliolo in uolto nel male di sopra detto  
piagato in piu lode della persona desideroso di farlo guarire scrissi a gran cristofano  
romano scultor de la eccellentia Vra di parlasse al detto medico e li scrissi p<sup>rese</sup>  
tutta la sua malatia rispuose el detto spagnolo che li bisognava vederlo e d<sup>uo</sup>  
mandassi per lui feri cosi giorni vna sera e vista la malatia disse in due mesi  
te lo dono libero e guarito quando cristofano mi hauea scritto chio no guardi adarli  
quasi ch<sup>o</sup> dubitato per liberarlo atachatomi alla sua fidantia domandari al detto  
spagnolo q<sup>llo</sup> ch<sup>o</sup> mi uolea torre fu facto in ducati quattro et mercedo ma  
d<sup>uo</sup> me uolea nanti: et no lo curaria al detto termine mi restitueria li mei di-  
nari ma uero e ch<sup>o</sup> mi disse ch<sup>o</sup> mi lassaria lonto e ch<sup>o</sup> di li a otto giorni tornaria  
co vna certa poluere a sanare li dette piage e cosi di otto di in otto di per fin ch<sup>o</sup> seria  
guarito Venetia promessemi che male in bocca no li ueneria e di li agiorni due  
parea che li conu li hauesse mangiato dentro alla bocca ogni cosa trouai quei  
ripari che piu utili si puotea ad aiutare la natura tanto che ueneroli otto  
giorni ali dieci madai per lui disse ch<sup>o</sup> hauea da fare troppo dentro da macha ch<sup>o</sup>  
no uolea uenire madai el secodo disse ch<sup>o</sup> no ueneria piu ch<sup>o</sup> li disse mille ducati  
in modo signor mio <sup>ad. s.</sup> di tenaro assiro mio figliolo per la crudelta de  
la medicina di q<sup>sta</sup> vita presente si ch<sup>o</sup> quella puo intendere questo esse stato  
robaria e omicidio e macamento di fide la eccellentia Vra lo stendera da la cristo  
fano: Vnaltra tentaria mi fece ch<sup>o</sup> in otto giorni mi uolea guarire de la doglie  
e ch<sup>o</sup> male alcuno no mi ueneria in bocca e mi fece trare di ducato eu quarto  
e iteru di tornar di nuovo mi promisse la mattina si parti co ducati quattro  
te e in quarto uedendo io la crudelta di mio figliolo io aspetai quelli otto  
giorni no uenendo no volsi ungiormi per ch<sup>o</sup> andaua el portre doue e il  
figliolo q<sup>st</sup> sono cose all<sup>mo</sup> signor mio da morire per far la uendetta bisogna doue  
che secondo el merito la. s. s. pagi costui la restitucione delli mei dinari e altre  
spese grade ch<sup>o</sup> ma facto fare la punitione del machar di fide e ch<sup>o</sup> il supplio dello  
omicidio tutta uolta la eccellentia Vra ne faccia quato li pare perche al tutto  
contento stavo niente di manco qualuq<sup>z</sup> padre a figliole consideri duno atto tale  
che uendetta faria mi risido nella iusta bilancia di quella e discusa alcuno no  
acessi per di tanto e uero quel che questa e scritto quato e q<sup>l</sup> ch<sup>o</sup> del diuin ve  
scrisse laquila uolante cognoscitore delli diuin secreti no altro mi uolade sen  
di aquella il suo sancomenda inuolant<sup>o</sup> di<sup>o</sup> io di tenant<sup>o</sup> isoi

Ant<sup>o</sup> uino  
La uicina



## APPENDIX

A list of manuscripts and early printed books containing works by Antonio Pistoia or attributed to him has never been compiled before. In the following appendix each entry is furnished with its pressmark and whenever possible previous ones. I have followed the transcription rules set out at the beginning of this study. The section ends with a list of archival sources and a brief indication as to the contents. The manuscript and archival sources are listed alphabetically by city and within each section they are put in chronological order. If the material in question was located by me I have indicated so with an asterisk.

## Manuscripts

Bologna, Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, MS A.379, 18th cent.

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| f. 18v      | 'Contra Feraria(m) nugarum inventrice(m) et Bononia(e) detractricem' |
|             | Che gh'è frael de nuovo? La guerra ghe ven                           |
| f. 19r      | Ferara el guidarascho assai mi tochi                                 |
| ff. 19v-20r | Zanza pur, Frara, o tu casa da rane                                  |
| f. 20r-v    | Un giorno scopiaran pur 'ste cichale                                 |
| ff. 20r-21v | Che zanzi tu Ferara de Bologna?                                      |
| f. 21r-v    | Quando i potenti e richi veneziani                                   |
| f. 22r      | Signor l'è gionto el campo in Ferrarese                              |
| ff. 22v-23r | Signor Marchese Alphonso ha preparato                                |
| f. 23r-v    | I zanzatur ormai n'havran più spacio                                 |
| ff. 23v-24r | El par che 'l Duca molto se lamenti                                  |
| f. 24r-v    | O Frara tien a conto la puina  |
| ff. 24v-25r | O Frara tu haverai pur dele botte                                    |
| f. 25r-v    | Quella che per haver eterno honore                                   |
| ff. 25v-26r | Frara tu ne prendi un grande affan(n)o                               |
| f. 26r-v    | Voi che in logica sempre studiate                                    |
| ff. 26v-27r | 'Bononia ad Ferariam'  |
|             | O Frara atiendi, il basto vien a te                                  |
| f. 27r-v    | 'In ea<n>dem'  |
|             | Che mercantia a Frara og(g)i se vende?                               |
| ff. 27v-28r | 'In ea<n>dem'  |

- f. 28r-v O Frara io te vorebe castigare  
'In eandem'
- ff. 28v-29r O Feraresi ingrati, o lichabroda  
'In eandem'
- f. 29r-v Come seresti in punto de corsieri  
'In eandem'
- ff. 29r-30v El vignirà de gli asin carastia  
El Papa ha l'interdicto già mandato
- f. 30r-v Gran tempo gha che a Frara se ritrova
- f. 31r El vien la guerra Frara che farai?
- f. 31v El Re de Spagna da diverse genti
- f. 32r O Frara vo' tu far con mi baratto?
- f. 32v O Frara adesso el Re te vol mandare
- f. 33r Non t'admirar o Frara s'io te tocho
- f. 33v O Frara s'io volesse seguitare
- f. 34r Non più Phebo si sdegna per mio errore
- f. 34v 'Scriptum ex Hermetis Bentivoli equitis  
aurati manu propria et complectum die decima  
mai anni MCCCCLXXXIIII'

Bologna, Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, MS A.2429, 19th cent. \*

- p. 110 'Describe la camera ove dorme, sonetto  
di Gio(vanni) de Rossi de(tt)o il Pistoia'\*
- p. 111 Signori, io dormo in un letto a vettura  
'Chi non ha denari non è amato  
d'Antonio Alamanni'\*  
Amor vuol pur ch'io l'ami, ed io non posso  
(Both attributions appear at the end of the  
sonnets).

Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 283, 15th cent.

- f. 19r 'Contra Feraria(m) nugarum inve(n)tricem et  
Bononia(e) detratricem'  
Che gh'è frael de nu<o>vo? La guer\r/a ghe  
vem
- f. 19v Ferara el guidarascho assai mi tochi
- f. 20r-v Zanza pur, Frara, o tu casa da rane
- ff. 20v-21r Un giorno scopiara(n) pur 'ste cichale
- f. 21r-v Che zanci tu Ferara de Bologna?
- ff. 21v-22r Qua(n)do i potenti e richi veneziani
- f. 22v Signor l'è gionto el campo in Ferarese
- f. 23r-v Signor Marchese Alphonso ha preparato
- ff. 23v-24r I zanzatur ormai n'haram più spacio
- f. 24r-v El par che 'l Duca molto se lamenti
- ff. 24v-25r O Frara tien a conto la puina
- f. 25r-v O Frara tu haverai pur dele botte
- ff. 25v-26r Quella che p(er) haver eterno honore
- f. 26r-v Frara tu ne prendi u(n) grande affan(n)o
- ff. 26v-27r Voi che in logica sempre studiate
- f. 27r-v 'Bononia ad Ferariam'  
O Frara atiendi, il basto vien a te



- ff. 27v-28r 'In eandem'  
Che mercantia a Frara ogi se vende?
- f. 28r-v 'In eandem'  
O Frara io te vorebe castigare
- ff. 28v-29r 'In eandem'  
O Feraresi ingrati, o lichabroda
- f. 29r-v 'In eandem'  
Come seresti i(n) pu(n)to de cursieri
- ff. 29v-30r 'In eandem'  
El vignirà de gli asin carastia
- f. 30r-v El papa ha l'interdicto già ma(n)dato
- ff. 30v-31r Gran tempo ghe che a Frara se ritrova
- f. 31v El vien la guerra Frara ch(e) farai?
- f. 32r El Re de Spagna da diverse genti
- f. 32v O Frara vo' tu far cu(m) mi baratto?
- f. 33r O Frara adesso el Re ti vol ma(n)dare
- f. 33v No(n) t'admirar o Frara s'io te tocho
- f. 34r O Frara s'io volesse seguitare
- f. 34v Non più Phebo si sdegna per mio errore
- f. 35r 'Scriptum ex Hermetis Bentivoli equitis  
aurati manu propria et complectum die decima  
mai anni MCCCCLXXXIIII'

Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 2618 (Codice Trombelli),  
15th-16th cent.

- f. 108r Invictissimo Principe unico de Italia lume  
(Letter from Antonio Pistoia to Ludovico  
Sforza, s.a.)
- f. 109r Che fa San Marcho? Guarda ove lampeggia
- f. 109v Che si vende qua a Roma? Le parole
- f. 110r La tua captività havrà mai fine?
- f. 110v Che fu? Che è? Che serà? Il tempo passa
- f. 111r Ogni dì cose nuove di te sento
- f. 111v El Papa è facto, parla el vulgo e mente
- f. 112r Hor oltre echo che 'l papa è coronato
- f. 112v O il Duca nostro fa i gran cavamenti
- f. 113r Questo felice invicto Duca sexto
- f. 113v Ben pòi dir Signor mio io ho ne le mani
- f. 114r Di' Signor a tua posta el mondo è mio
- f. 114v La Italia è posta in fren de la paura
- f. 115r Italia le tue cose van secrete
- f. 115v Marzocho i' penso al tuo stato futuro
- f. 116r Che se dice hor per Italia? Niente
- f. 116v Tu ridi Italia un altro tempo spensa
- f. 117r Che 'l fin suona il nuncio la trombetta
- f. 117v Lingue tacete il Re de Francia è qui
- f. 118r O capo de' pastori triste novelle
- f. 118v Li campi stan cossì via la vie a loro
- f. 119r Come sta hoggi Italia? In su le gale
- f. 119v Mentre ch(e) 'l Moro volle il mondo tacq(ue)
- f. 120r Ve' che è fiorita al Mor la nobil pianta
- f. 120v El Moro è facto pur Duca de certo
- f. 121r No(n) moro più ch(e) 'l nome t'è mutato
- f. 121v Se 'l primo dì facevi quel ch(e) adesso

(Only the first quatrain and the first three lines of the second one are transcribed).

Bologna, Casa Carducci, MSS Carducci Cart. XLII, Ludovico Ariosto, no. 21, (I) and (II), 19th cent. \*

- (I) f. [10r] 'Elenco dei capoversi dei sonetti di Antonio Cammelli tratti dal Codice estense X.\*.34'. [= MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1]
- f. 11r 'Estense X.\*.34. Carta 57. 71. i soli capiversi dei sonetti di Ant(onio) Pistoia' Tocch: chi batte? Aprite el g'è Amphione 'Attribuiti dal Cappelli al Pistoia c. 61 In Cosmicum patavinum carmina maledica' Per te contende il laccio, il ceppo il fuoco. 'Idem in Cosmicum' Quest'anno in San Jovan(n)i laterano 'Idem in Cosmicum' \Cosmico/ il si avvicina il giorno extremo 'c. 62 Idem in Cosmicum' Se ben te alliego così spesso Dante 'c. 62 Idem in Cosmicum' Cosmico l'hauve visto e letto Dante 'Idem in Cosmicum' Perché vuoi che di te se faci stima 'Idem in Cosmicum' Tu credi haver di lauro una grelanda '[c.] 63 Idem in Cosmicum' Quando Cosmico i son a fronte a fronte 'Idem in Cosmicum' Parmi vedere che in ordine si metta 'Idem in Cosmicum' Io sento fabricar tanti sonetti '[c.] 64 Idem in Cosmicum' Per ammonirti Cosmico te scrivo 'Idem in Cosmicum' Voi che nei santi templi avite cura 'Idem in Cosmicum' Non ve admirati se pochi fanciulli '[c.] 65 Idem in Cosmicum' Io vo pel campo volteggiando intorno' 'Idem in Cosmicum' Parmi sentir che fuor la fama extenda 'Idem in Cosmicum' Cosmico il creder ognun che habia dismesso 'Idem in Cosmicum' Sier Nicolò di la comar non tante 'Idem in Cosmicum' Cosmico non pensar per tuo conforto 'Idem in Cosmicum' Cosmico intendo che tu vuoi te stesso 'Idem in Cosmicum' De sonetti ch'io t'ho fin hor mandati
- f. 12r



'[c.] 67 Idem in Cosmicum'  
 A me di te parlando intravien quello  
 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 Io pur descrivo ogni tuo mal costume  
 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 Cosmico riposar la pen(n)a intendo  
 'c. 68v Antonius Pistoia'  
 Io credo in quel che su i tre tavolieri  
 'Eiusdem Antonii'  
 Mar laghi fiumi rivi stagni et valli  
 '[c.] 69 Eiusdem Antonii'  
 Non son per le montagne tanti abeti  
 'Eiusdem Antonii'  
 Una donna fu già che pregò Idio  
 'Eiusdem Antonii'  
 Tu non hai habitacul campo o vigna  
 'Eiusdem Antonii'  
 S'io dico gran mercé senza pagarti  
 '[c.] 70 Eiusdem Antonii'  
 Che fai che pensi, destati columbo  
 '[c.] 71 Antonius Pistoia'  
 Cantava il concubin di la gallina  
 'c. 81v Antonius Pistoia'  
 Tuto per la paura alhor mi scossi  
 'Idem Antonius Pist(oia)'  
 El tuo caval da quattro gambe infermo  
 'Incerto'  
 A che sei gionta Daphne afflitta e mesta  
 'Incerto'  
 Gli habitati giardin me paiano boschi  
 '[c.] 83v Antonius Pistoia'  
 Vieni a me pescator disse il Messia  
 'Antonius Pistoia'  
 Codro non sentì mai sì grand tormento  
 '[c.] 84r Antonius Pistoia'  
 Ognum mi dice tu se' magro e secco  
 'Idem Ant(onius)'  
 Ecco la maestà dil gram pretore  
 'Incerto'  
 Soccorri Signor buono al mio gran spasimo  
 'Incerto'  
 Il fuoco che m'abrusa acqua nol smorza  
 'Appunti su Antonio Cammelli'

f. 13r

(II) ff. [1r-3v]

Bologna, Casa Carducci, MSS Carducci Cart.LVII, Schede  
 Bibliografiche - 1, 19th cent. \*  
 The entry relating to Pistoia is no. 20.

f. [1r-v] 'Cammelli Ant(onio) [detto Il Pistoia]  
 Sonetti politici e burleschi [pubbl(icati)  
 per nozze da Ott(aviano) Targioni Tozzetti]  
 in 4°. Livorno. Vigo. 1869. ediz(ione) di 55  
 esempl(ari). Dono dell'ed(itore) O(ttaviano)  
 Targioni apr(ile) 1869'.

Bologna, Casa Carducci, MSS Carducci Cart.XXVI, Lirici antichi,  
no. 18, 1900-1905. \*

f. [1r] 'Antonio Cammelli, Antonio Pistoia'  
In rima taccia ognun, che 'l pregio è dato,

Budapest, Fővárosi Szabó Ervin Könyvtár (Metropolitan Ervin Szabó  
Library), MS Zichy 09/2690, 15th-16th cent.

f. 6v O il Ducha n(ost)ro fa gran cavamenti  
f. 14v Io vengo da Leone, e vide là  
f. 15r O Ducha Lodovicho il nuovo gallo  
O Pixa anchor sei viva? Habiti c<sub>u</sub>ra

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Cl.I.378, 15th-16th  
cent. \*

ff. 51r-53v 'Mi par del Pistoia'  
Gli altri vorian veder ciascun conte(n)to  
f. 53v Van(n)e canzon mia disperata e mesta  
(The *disperata*, lacking the first seventeen  
tercets, is transcribed anonymously. Both  
the text of the *disperata* and of the sonnet,  
with the only exception of f. 53v, are  
crossed out with a stroke of the pen.  
Additional foliation: ff. 36r-38v, f. 38v).

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Cl.I.408, 15th-16th  
cent.

f. [6r] 'Antonio Pistoia'  
El tempo che il cervel regna in verdura  
f. [6v] Al'aurora ne andai sopra de un monte  
f. [7r] Ogn'hom vuol pilucchar la fronde amata  
f. [7v] Nel foltissimo bosco del frignano  
f. [8r] Gran mercé del tuo bello alogiamento  
f. [8v] Io tolsi moglie e non mi fu fatica  
f. [9r] Chi dice in versi ben che sia toscano?  
f. [9v] Tratta la ciuca fuor de Lendinara  
f. 10r Io vidi intrando in casa una matina  
f. 10v Cantava il concubin de la galina  
f. [11r] O viatori in questo tumult iace  
f. [11v] Più de cent'anni imaginò natura  
f. [12r] La tua acquistata dal patron del basto  
f. [12v] Tornato in terra di promissione  
f. [13r] Vedendo di cambiar l'antico stratio  
f. [13v] Il tuo caval da quatro gambe infermo  
f. [14r] Nato e non nato che vai per la piacia  
f. [14v] Toch, chi è là? Aprite egli è Amphione  
f. 15r Se tu fossi un de quei che fan minestra  
f. 15v Felice un parvoletto in pudicitia  
f. [16r] Di quatro unguenti fu la creatura  
f. [16v] La casa mia somiglia una gallina



- f. [17r] Le gambe e pie' per alegrecia batte  
f. [17v] '1494'  
Il Re de Francia è in Roma, in Roma? E dove?  
f. [18r] Che cosa è amor? Un fanciulin da gioco  
f. [18v] Cu(m) semplice parole Iesuè  
f. [19r] 'A dì 13 luglio 1495'  
Passò il Re franco Italia al tuo dispetto  
f. [19v] 'A dì 9 agosto 1495'  
San Marco non si fida, el bisson teme  
f. 20r De l'arca di Noè dir non bisogna  
f. 20v Troncato el fil dove i lion si honorano  
f. [21r] Rimandoti la moglie del farsetto  
f. [21v] Questi son fichi ch'io te mando in dono  
f. [22r] Orbaca non pensar ch'io dica pepe  
f. [22v] Horsù che fia? Un sonetto al Burchello  
f. [23r] Inanti che lo agresto torni in bruna  
f. [23v] Il nome de cui servo amor mi diede  
f. [24r] '1495'  
Al'olio sancto è Pisa et ha giurato  
f. [24v] '1499'  
Perdi pur quanto vòi popul pisano  
f. 25r Chi ha fra i grandi in Italia balia?  
f. 25v A Roma che si vende? Le parole  
(The sonnet is crossed out but the text is still legible).  
f. [26r] Che fa San Marco? Guarda ove lampeggia  
f. [26v] Che di' tu raperonciol marciaiuolo?  
f. [27r] Io ti mando Madonna un cestellino  
f. [27v] 'A dì 23 luglio 1499'  
Il re degli animali alato mostro  
f. [28r] 'A dì 28 luglio 1499'  
Italia il turco vien, tien gli occhi aperti  
f. [28v] 'A dì 4 agosto 1499'  
Ecco il Re franco a te, Duca mio quarti  
f. [29r] 'A dì 23 agosto 1499'  
Sonato nona, a vespro andò a Valentia  
f. [29v] Nel bosco ombroso de monte ficale  
(The sonnet is crossed out but it is still legible).  
f. [33v] 'Antonio Pistoia'  
L'habito che ciascu(n) s'è estremo vede  
(The sonnet and the heading are crossed out but they are still legible).  
f. [36v] In rima tacia ognun che 'l preggio è dato  
f. [248v] Ant(onius) Pistoia  
Nasce chi nasce in pregon de la morte  
f. 269v 'Il Pistoia a m(esser) Cosmico p(er) li dui precede(n)ti sonetti'  
Le gioie son parangonate a Reggio  
f. 369r Io tolsi moglie et non mi fu fatica  
(This sonnet is transcribed twice, see f. [8v]. A late nineteenth-century or early twentieth-century hand pencilled 'Pistoia' in the top right hand corner of f. 369r).  
f. 369v Mandami cor di ricci volti arosto  
ff. 370r-[374v] La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto

(The *disperata* is transcribed anonymously).

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, S.14.1.5, 16th cent. \*  
(This is a manuscript note attached to an edition of Antonio  
Tebaldeo's *Opere* (Venice: Battista Sessa, 1500).

f. 2r 'Antonio Pistoia'  
Chi dice i(n) versi ben che sia toscano?  
f. 2v In rima tacia ognu(n) che 'l preggio è dato  
f. 3v 'Antonio Pistoia'  
Io tolsi moglie e no(n) mi fu fatica

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Cl.I.769, 20th cent.\*  
(Copy of MS Chigiano J.I.4., Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana,  
Vatican City).

pp. 739-740 O il Duca nostro fa i gran cavamenti  
(Additional pagination: pp. 923-924).

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Palat.325, 15th cent.  
Previous pressmark: B.R.70.

f. 53r [Che fa San Marco? Guarda ove lampeggia]  
(Only the beginning of the concluding lines  
of the sonnet is legible as the manuscript  
is severely damaged due to accidental loss  
caused by tearing).  
Italia le tue chose van sag[rete]

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl.Cl.VII.25, 15th  
cent.

f. 130v 'So(netto) di maestro Ant(oni)o da Pistoia'  
Novel Narcisso, in cui fu la vertute  
ff. 130v-131r 'So(netto) di m(aestr)o Antonio predetto'  
In nell'ecterna et gloriosa schuola  
(Additional foliation: f. 129v, ff. 129v-  
130r).

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Palat.218, Rime  
adespote no. 8-12, 15th-16th cent.  
Previous pressmark: Vecchio Palat. 1187 [E.B.5.1.25].

f. 9r 'Sonetto t...t nell'Italia'  
Chi fa San Marcho? El guarda ove lampeggia

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl.Cl.VII.877, 16th  
cent.

f. 79r 'Sonetto d'Antonio di(ct)o il Pistoia'



- f. 99v Ognun mi dice tu sei magro, et secco  
'Sonetto del Pistoia'
- f. 100r Cenando Fedel mio hiersera in corte  
'Del medesimo'
- f. 100v Cosmico no(n) pensar per tuo co(n)forto  
'Del medesimo'
- f. 101r Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando i(n) dono  
'Del medesimo'
- f. 101v Pincaro, io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
'Del medesimo'
- Lasciamo andar che per uno scudieri  
(Additional foliation: f. 78r, ff. 98v-100v).

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl.Cl.VII.1125, 16th cent.

- f. 53v Da Lion vengho et lì si fa banchetto

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl.Cl.VII.1398, 16th-17th cent. \*

- f. 159r 'Sonetti d(e)l Pistoia'
- f. 159v Quando tu vai madon(n)a ai templi santi
- f. 160r Questi son fichi, ch'io ti mando in dono
- f. 160v Una donna ne vien tutta contrita  
Rimandovi i denar ch'io accattai

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl.Cl.VII.669, 17th cent.

- f. 47r 'Del Pistoia'
- f. 47v Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
'Del Pistoia'
- f. 48r Morì la fede insieme con amore  
'Del Pistoia'
- f. 48v Quando tu vai Madonna ai templi santi  
'Del Pistoia'
- f. 49r Questi son fichi, ch'io ti mando in dono  
'Del Pistoia'
- f. 49v Una donna ne vien tutta contrita  
'Del Pistoia'
- f. 50r Rimandovi i denar ch'io accattai  
'Del Pistoia'
- f. 50v L'entrata che ti rende il culiseo  
'Del Pistoia'
- Lasciamo andar che per uno scudieri

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl.Cl.VII.873, 17th cent.

- f. 37v 'D'Anton da Pistoia'

f. 38r  
 f. 48r  
 Cenando Fedel mio hiersera in corte  
 'Anton da Pist(oia)a'  
 Questi son fichi, ch'io ti mando in dono  
 Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
 (Additional pagination pp. 56-57, p. 75).

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS II.II.109, 17th-18th cent.

f. 345r  
 'Sonetto d'Antonio detto il Pistoia'  
 Ognun mi dice tu sei magro e secco  
 'Un altro sonetto dell'istesso Pistoia che principia'  
 Cosmico non pensar p(er) tuo conforto  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Un altro sonetto dell'istesso Pistoia che principia'  
 Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando in dono  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Un altro sonetto del medesimo che principia'  
 Una donna ne vien tutta contrita  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Un altro sonetto dell'istesso che principia'  
 Lasciamo andar che p(er) uno scudieri  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Un altro sonetto d'Antonio da Pistoia comincia'  
 In nell'eterna e gloriosa scuola  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Un altro sonetto dell'istesso che principia'  
 Rimandovi i denar ch'io accattai  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Un altro sonetto che dell'istesso Pistoia che comincia'  
 Quando tu vai Madonna ai templi santi  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Un altro sonetto del medesimo che principia'  
 Morì la fede insieme con amore  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Un altro sonetto dell'istesso Pistoia che comincia'  
 L'entrata che ti rende e<l culiseo>  
 (Opening line only).  
 'Del medesimo Pistoia'  
 Cenando Fedel mio iersera in corte  
 'Del medesimo Antonio da Pistoia'  
 Novel Narciso, in cui fu la vertute  
 'Dell'istesso Pistoia'  
 Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
 (The last hendecasyllable is illegible).



Gubbio, Sezione di Archivio di Stato, Fondo Armani, I.D.2, 15th-16th cent.

Previous pressmark: XVIII.F.34.

ff. 39r-45v                    'Capitolo'  
La nuda terra s'<h>a già posto il ma(n)to  
(The *disperata* is transcribed anonymously).

Lucca, Biblioteca Statale, MS 474, 16th cent. \*

f. 179r                        'Del Pistoia'  
Cenando Fedel mio hier sera in corte  
(Additional foliation: f. 182r and f. 102r).

Lucca, Biblioteca Statale, MS 1537, 16th cent. \*

Previous pressmark: Codici Moücke, no. 50.

f. 51r-v                        'Sonetto di Antonio da Pistoia'  
Cenando Fedel mio hier' sera in corte  
ff. 51v-52r                    'Del medesimo'  
Cosmico non pensar per tuo conforto  
f. 51r bis                      'Antonio Pistoia'  
Chi dice in verssi [sic] ben, che sia  
toscano?  
(The folio is numbered 51\*).  
f. 52r-v                        'Del medesimo'  
Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando in dono  
f. 53r                            Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
f. 53v                            Lasciamo andar che per uno scudiero  
(Additional foliation: ff. 61r-63v. The  
folio numbered 51\* bears no additional  
foliation).

Lucca, Biblioteca Statale, MS 1328, 18th cent. \*

Previous pressmark: Codice Lucchesini 55.

p. 205                         'Il Pistoia, t(omo) 3, p. 330, burlesco'  
Signori, io dormo in un letto a vettura,

Mantua, Biblioteca Comunale, MS 124 (A.IV.30), 15th-16th cent.\*

ff. 15r-17v                    'Capitulum'  
La nuda terra se ha già messo il manto  
f. 17v                            Vanne canzon mia sconsolata e mesta  
(Both the *disperata* and the sonnet are  
transcribed anonymously).  
f. 60r-v                        'Eiusdem' [i.e. Iacopo Corsi]  
Signore io dormo in un lecto a vettura  
f. 61r                            'Eiusdem'  
Alla pianta caduta taglia taglia

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Paesi, 1490-1491, Busta 2439.

f. 11r 'Cum Antonius Pistorien(sis) Rome a magni fra(tre) Theveri iis de rebus quereretur fertur hoc respondisse rithmo Die 4. Maii 1490'  
Che fa San Marco? Guarda ove lampeggia

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXI.3, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1497-1499, Busta 1235.

f. 659r-v Madon(n)a mia ill(ustrissi)ma o quanto era car(issi)ma

Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS H.223 inf., 16th cent.  
Previous pressmark: S.O.D.VI.25.

f. 1r-v 'Alla Ill(ustrissi)ma S(igno)ra Isabella da Este da Gonzaga Marchesana de Mantua'  
La fragilità de l'humana vita  
(Epistle in prose).

ff. 1v-14r Era nel tempo che Diana da la faticosa caccia  
(Dialogue in prose).

f. 15r Madonna poi che dal regno di Pluto  
f. 15v Nel tempo che 'l cervel regna in verdura  
f. 16r All'aurora ne andai sopra d'un monte  
f. 16v Adio ti lascio o bel paese thosco  
f. 17r Col suo stral d'oro un dì ferrime amore  
f. 17v Ognun vuol piluccar la fronde amata  
f. 18r Lasciai la mia corregia el mio cavallo  
f. 18v Nel foltissimo bosco del frignano  
f. 19r Nel bosco ombroso de Monte Ficale  
f. 19v Dui rapaci animal sono in rivera  
f. 20r Quel fraticel che schiuma la pignatta  
f. 20v Che cosa è amore? È un fanciullin da gioco  
f. 21r Vidi l'altro heri andando in beccaria  
f. 21v Il cavalcar madonna sposa spesso  
f. 22r Un miracol mi par no(n) meraviglia  
f. 22v La entrata che ti rende el culiseo  
f. 23r Togliel Signor che egli è bon cancellieri  
f. 23v Per un bon servitor costui è desso  
f. 24r Habbiam fatto senza occa l'ognisanti  
f. 24v Non mi chiamati più ch'ho disinato  
f. 25r Signor il tuo suscalco hoggi fa un giorno  
f. 25v Quel desinar ch'io hebbi fu perfetto  
f. 26r Al bel pictor di maestro Iasone  
f. 26v Fatti in costà mosca apicccatic\c/ia  
f. 27r Quando le fiche vanno in sapore  
f. 27v Ecco un che ce 'l presenta il mondo bello  
f. 28r Con Marco Nigrisollo ho disinato  
f. 28v Cenando Fidel mio hersira in corte  
f. 29r Cosmico io cena<i> her cu(m) Gian Francesco



f. 29v Cenai cu(m) Gioan Francesco Gianninello  
 f. 30v Io alloggiài hersira al'hoste a Siena  
 f. 31r Melchisedech è in pontificale  
 f. 31v Quel bel ritratto, chi 'l pinse? Un pedestro  
 f. 32r Ossi di lucci e stecchi di granata  
 f. 32v Quest'altro il fé natura in Tartaria  
 f. 33r Vegliò natura de le nocte cento  
 f. 33v Per far natura un homo alla sua guisa  
 f. 34r Non ritrovò la natura lo ingegno  
 f. 34v Nel tempo che fu in succhio primavera  
 f. 35r Più di cent'anni imaginò natura  
 f. 35v O ch(e) brutto homiccio anzi isparuto  
 f. 36r Chi vuol la effige mia l'ho scritta in carte  
 f. 36v Qua si suona una zucca a concistoro  
 f. 37r Pur com'io soglio a casa son rimasto  
 f. 37v Codro non sentì mai sì gran tormento  
 f. 38r Ognun mi dice tu sei magro et secco  
 f. 38v Il sopra saio mio fa tuo pensiero  
 f. 39r Signor già pensai ir teco in levante  
 f. 39v Antonio come va? Va mal signore  
 f. 40r Pocho discreto fu il vecchio Noè  
 f. 40v Egli è pur un peccato a farmi male  
 f. 41r Anton vuoi tu giocar? No il mio Arighetto  
 f. 41v Duo dolci suoni hanno fatto consiglio  
 f. 42r Predicator tu hai troppo ignorato  
 f. 42v Che sì un che un di qualche forma d'un  
 quanto  
 f. 43r Madonna \io/ fui a Revere al fattore  
 f. 43v La tua virtù che vince ogni moneta  
 f. 44r Madonna io son pregon. De chi? Di quella  
 f. 44v Vieni ad un pescator disse il Messia  
 f. 45r Sognando, disse, io fu' in capo del mondo  
 f. 45v Io credo in quel che a chi 'l toccò diè fe'  
 f. 46r Io credo in quello che in su dui tavolieri  
 f. 46v Io credo in Dio p(ad)re onnipotente  
 f. 47r Che ne di' tu di questa n(ost)ra fede?  
 f. 47v Tu eri alegro perch'io ero morto  
 f. 48r Chi dice in versi ben che sia thoscano?  
 f. 48v Che dirai tu de le donne da Siena?  
 f. 49r Le fiorentine fra l'altre thoscane  
 f. 49v Le donne da Ferrara che ne di'  
 f. 50r Belle donne a Millan, ma grasse troppe  
 f. 50v Tu m'hai difeso io 'l so et no(n) ti dico  
 f. 51r Pure sei condotto a quel'ultimo stratio  
 f. 51v Io vidi intrando in casa una matina  
 f. 52r Vedendo di cambiar l'antiquo straccio  
 f. 52v La casa mia somiglia una gallina  
 f. 53r Sculse già il volto Santo Nicodemo  
 f. 53v De l'arca di Noè dir no(n) bisogna  
 f. 54r Le gambe e i pie' per alegrezza batte  
 f. 54v Dubito Signor mio che 'l ti dispiacci  
 f. 55r Signor fa un palazzo il tuo presente  
 f. 55v Nel tempo che la polve torna in fango  
 f. 56r Il tuo caval da quattro gambe infermo  
 f. 56v Una donna ne va tutta contrita  
 f. 57r Ogni arte in sé si pò chiamar gentile

f. 57v Ciascun che \è/ nato pò senza pensiero  
 f. 58r Di tutto quel che vedi fai sonetti  
 f. 58v Morì la fede insieme cu(m) lo amore  
 f. 59r Rimandovi i danari ch'io accattai  
 f. 59v Deh Madonna mia chara habbi avertentia  
 f. 60r Italia duolti e tu Rimine plora  
 f. 60v Danza in cielo ogni immortal pharphalla  
 f. 61r Quello a ccui mai non gli par cosa nova  
 f. 61v Hoggi si canta in pulpito che un Re  
 f. 62r Hoggi si canta che 'l magior figliolo  
 f. 62v Vidde cu(m) gli occhi molti alti e levati  
 f. 63r Canta la chiesa che 'l fu già un garzone  
 f. 63v Hoggi è il dì di quella aquila volante  
 f. 64r Dodice Re men tre quarti del tutto  
 f. 64v Dormendo il vecchio sposo di Maria  
 f. 65r Un figliol fu che 'l padre un padre fece  
 f. 65v Surrexit non est hic e dove andò?  
 f. 66r Bon giorno a tutti dui di compagnia  
 f. 66v Figli\u/ola non andar senza belletto  
 f. 67r Io vorrei maritar la mia figliola  
 f. 67v Hai tu veduto questo can levrieri  
 f. 68r Io vedo la virtù in sì poco pregio  
 f. 68v Ne la verde stagion tenera e chiara  
 f. 69r Giovan Battista io qui in ciel veduto  
 f. 69v Io vidi a Refrig\i/er compor sonetti  
 f. 70r Gionto i(n) Bologna vidi una gran lista  
 f. 70v Toch toch, chi è là? Gli è Amphione  
 f. 71r Un piacentin da Lodi che a Verona  
 f. 71v Bernardo horsù che fai? Esci di buca  
 f. 72r Che viso nato al tempo de baronci  
 f. 72v Sempre tu grati il corpo alle ciccale  
 f. 73r Che par costui del zeffo? Un can alano  
 f. 73v Horsù lacera più le altrui fatiche  
 f. 74r U guata viso, il pare un can alano  
 f. 74v Maestro il Bellinzon fa mille frappe  
 f. 75r Eccì, San Buovo aiuti il mio Bernardo  
 f. 75v Felice la testudine e la chiocciola  
 f. 76r O Dio guardate un po' chi costui pare  
 f. 76v Se tu fussi un di quei che fan minestra  
 f. 77r Nominativo hic et hec et hocche  
 f. 77v Che di' tu raparonciol marciaolo?  
 f. 78r Naque costui la notte de epiphana  
 f. 78v Tornò il capitol mio integro e sano  
 f. 79r Tacci schiumazza d'Arno cervel d'oco  
 f. 79v Io intendo che Bernardo Bellincione  
 f. 80r Tronca la corda del tuo sacro legno  
 f. 80v Messer Beneveneritis entrate  
 f. 81r Io penso sotio mio che tu ti credi  
 f. 81v Ogn'huom legge il suo libro ogn'huom lo  
 honora  
 f. 82r Anch'io sonar sentì più volte a ballo  
 f. 82v Eccol di qua che da per lui fantastica  
 f. 83r Capo fiamengo e fronte tartaresco  
 f. 83v Cuius figure, un homo simpliciotto  
 f. 84r Nato e non nato che vai per la piazza  
 f. 84v Qua è \a/pparso un crudel babuino



- f. 85r Parasito bambin d'anni maturo  
 f. 85v Tratta la zucca fuor de lendinara  
 f. 86r Ecco la maestà del gran pretore  
 f. 86v Non potendo lasciar altro impi\c/cato  
 f. 87r O voi beccar che andate per la via  
 f. 87v Toch, chi batte? Amici, apriti un poco  
 f. 88r Gregorio, come stai? Peggio ch(e) male  
 f. 88v O là, chi è là? M(esser) Gregor Ciampante  
 f. 89r Collui che mi agladiò no(n) fece inganno  
 f. 89v Con un legiardo stil macaroneo  
 f. 90r Cinthio ben cigolar non ti bisogna  
 f. 90v O grande scriba in le maggior facende  
 f. 91r Tu non hai habitacol campo o vigna  
 f. 91v Orbaca no(n) pensar ch'io dica pepe  
 f. 92r Da Padua ne viene un pontegotto  
 f. 92v Il viene una imbrunata viduetta  
 f. 93r Rafrenative lingue hor ch'io son casso  
 f. 93v Attolite le porte, chi è quello?  
 f. 94r Un gran poeta antiquo fiorentino  
 f. 94v Hoggi è comparso nel paese n(ost)ro  
 f. 95r Tra chiromanti vola la disputa  
 f. 95v Capo da punteggiar con un trivello  
 f. 96r Stato son già dui anni genuflesso  
 f. 96v Se gli era in cielo un Dio, e il Moro in  
 terra  
 f. 97r Sasso, tu pensi haver più il tuo pie' saldo  
 f. 97v Capo di ocagna pien di cimatura  
 f. 98r Non gridar più, che vuoi tu Salvatore  
 [sic]?
- f. 98v Messer datime un poco di conforto  
 f. 99r Bon giorno, udite messer Agustino  
 f. 99v Io tolsi moglie e non mi fu fatica  
 f. 100r Hai tu veduto questi fotiventi  
 f. 100v La fe' ch'era nel dito d'un Signore  
 f. 101r Quel son ch'io te fui sempre e quel sarò  
 f. 101v Di quatro unguenti fu la creatura  
 f. 102r O tomba indegna alla mia vita pura  
 f. 102v Qua Signor mio hier gionse Zacharia  
 f. 103r Di Zacharia Signor mio n'ho peccato  
 f. 103v Signor pon mente Zacharia vien grosso  
 f. 104r Descritto e sigillato il testamento  
 f. 104v Io te rimando sedeci fritelle  
 f. 105r Saluta Angel per me il Duca el biscione  
 f. 105v Tosto m'hai rotto legge, patti e modi  
 f. 106r Giunto settembre al suo ultimo aquisto  
 f. 106v Non tanti figli ritrovàn quei padri  
 f. 107r Ecco un villan che all'altrui spese vive  
 f. 107v Per secundar la tua vita tranquilla  
 f. 108r S'io fussi in libertà come io vorrei  
 f. 108v Comincion da l'estate a primavera  
 f. 109r Nel mio principio udirai quanto io posso  
 f. 109v Signor ecco il guardian de la tua porta  
 f. 110r Tu mi mandasti a denticar coiame  
 f. 100v S'io dico gran merzé senza pagarti  
 f. 111r Io no(n) fui mai da medici sfidato  
 f. 111v Charo ho che quel che {di'} di' me se dica

- f. 112r Tien pur messer da man destra la via  
 f. 112v O hostiario, o uscieri, o portinario  
 f. 113r Monsignor salve. Toi, chi mi saluta?  
 f. 113v Dove vuoi tu andar Francesca? A messa  
 f. 114r Bon dì Diamante, ancho a te Marg\h/erita  
 f. 114v Anna che fa<n> là quelle brigate?  
 f. 115r Tu lustrì più che no(n) fa l'or filato  
 f. 115v O Dio t'havess'io dato lo anello  
 f. 116r Ambrosio io ho veduto amor ritratto  
 f. 116v Che serà poi galletto montanaro?  
 f. 117r Lasciamo andar che per un\o/ scudieri  
 f. 117v Fu per antiquo mio patre ing\e/lese  
 f. 118r Quella che Esopo ad assai fé convito  
 f. 118v A visitar la tua consorte amata  
 f. 119r Un pistorese è fatto hoggi pedante  
 f. 119v Homo no(n) è felice Signor mio  
 f. 120r Il Duca fece fare uno steccato  
 f. 120v Toch, chi pichia, chi batte a raccolta?  
 f. 121r Dice il primo di te, gli ha fatto male  
 f. 121v Soldati ite al bordel che Marte attende  
 f. 122r Troncato il fil dove i leon se honorano  
 f. 122v Io vedo Reggio e tu Fabrico vede  
 f. 123r Tre figlioli hebbe Adamo in questo mondo  
 f. 123v Questi Signor fan come piace a lloro  
 f. 124r A ciascu(n) de imitare il mastro lece  
 f. 124v Mezzo bianco vidi io e mezzo nero  
 f. 125r Ognun mi dice pur fami un sonetto  
 f. 125v Io ho sentito dire a più persone  
 f. 126r Gran mercé del tuo bello allogiamento  
 f. 126v Quella che volontier fugge lo honore  
 f. 127r Fu nel suo tempo Mercurio eloquente  
 f. 127v A tua consolatione Signor mio degno  
 f. 128r La gamba avida pur di novo officio  
 f. 128v O medico mio car pur pianamente  
 f. 129r Con quatro trombe il tuo divin precetto  
 f. 129v Horsù che fia? Un sonetto al Burchiello  
 f. 130r Tu mi di' sempre mai vuoi tu niente  
 f. 130v Un fisico, uno artista, un che indivina  
 f. 131r La pena è mia come ne vien la sera  
 f. 131v Tornato in terra di promessione  
 f. 132r Quanto Madonna mi sia stato charo  
 f. 132v Se vuoi Cosmico mio sapere il caso  
 f. 133r La tua aquistata dal patron del basto  
 f. 133v Camello io già inteso il bel mestiere  
 f. 134r Rimandoti la moglie del farsetto  
 f. 134v Le gioie son paragonate a Reggio  
 f. 135r Che sî che 'l viene e che 'l non vien  
 quest'anno  
 f. 135v Tagliato a peci il veluto da Siena  
 (The last two hendecasyllable are missing).  
 f. 136r Giulian, se Gian Francesco t'ha promesso  
 f. 136v Inanti che lo agresto torni in bruna  
 f. 137r O viatori in questo tumult giace  
 f. 137v Quasi era il giorno alla notte accostato  
 f. 138r La fede fu formata ad una cena  
 f. 138v Quando un mi loda e tu poco mi vantì



f. 139r Cantava il concubin de la gallina  
 f. 139v Io ti mando Madonna un cestellino  
 f. 140r Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando in dono  
 f. 140v Madonna anchor son vivo e no(n) è ciancia  
 f. 141r Madonna il no(n) bisogna ch'io ti scriva  
 f. 141v Madon(n)a alla franciosa son vestito  
 f. 142r Duo lire ethrurie in Francia son citate  
 f. 142v Madonna io son da molti visitato  
 f. 143r Con ben faremo ogni giorno mi meni  
 f. 143v Togliete l'armi pur soldati in mano  
 f. 144r Nepote entrasti pur ne la matricola  
 f. 144v Gli altri son rossi in ciel tu sei qui nero  
 f. 145r Timotheo charo il mio antico amore  
 f. 145v Palmier maggio fiorisce sta sul noce  
 f. 146r Se costei fusse ricca come noi  
 f. 146v Tu m'hai pur chiuso gli usci da le lacche  
 f. 147r Signor mio car la tor di Santa Croce  
 f. 147v Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
 f. 148r Dolente a morte Mons(ign)or ti lasso  
 f. 148v Hieronimo e son fatti i tuo presenti  
 f. 149r Manda a tor presto la tua cotognata  
 f. 149v Sugo di pomi fatto in gelatia  
 f. 150r A te par d'haver tocco il ciel col dito  
 f. 150v Quando tu vai Madonna ai templi santi  
 f. 151r Io te rimando a pie' senza l'alphana  
 f. 151v Bramante tu vuoi far quel ch(e) Dio fé  
 f. 152r Sonando Orptheo con vinti soldi in mano  
 f. 152v Tutto per la paura alhor mi scossi  
 f. 153r Non son per le montagne tanti abeti  
 f. 153v Con semplice parole Iosue  
 f. 154r Quel che è scritto da te qua no(n) si crede  
 f. 154v Per no(n) portarne il corpo la semente  
 f. 155r Se amor la sua balestra al mondo scocca  
 f. 155v Se quel che disse io e non sa molto  
 f. 156r Fece Dio l'homo e simigliolo a llui  
 f. 156v Tre hebbe in corte già il n(ost)ro signore  
 f. 157r Quel gallo mozzo che ha sì poca cresta  
 f. 157v Largo brigata datigli la strada  
 f. 158r Signor bone novelle il mio roncino  
 f. 158v Caval mio ch(e) fai tu? Ch'io fo? Io stento  
 f. 159r Resuscitai perch'io no(n) ero morto  
 f. 159v Eccomi vivo salvo e migliorato  
 f. 160r Barbara il volgo ch(e) è poco discreto  
 f. 160v Io aspettavo di portar\n/e a Reggio  
 f. 161r Mar, laghi, fiumi, rivi, stagni e valle  
 f. 161v S'io rendo gratie alla tua signoria  
 f. 162r La poesia par cosa da mangiare  
 f. 162v L'habito che ciascu sì extremo vede  
 f. 163r Tu curi che Firenze habbi del grano  
 f. 163v Non più del tuo tornar dubito niente  
 f. 164r Con duo di quei che ne volse Argo cento  
 f. 164v Come è il tuo se(r)vo tal serà il presente  
 f. 165r Che 'l s'empia ben la cena del Chiappieri  
 f. 165v Felice un parvoletto in pudicitia  
 f. 166r Il volgo ride di quel ch'io no(n) rido  
 f. 166v Ben puoi Signor questo don tenir charo

f. 167r Accumulasti pur robba e danari  
 f. 167v Questi son pater n(ost)ri de un colore  
 f. 168r Potrebbe pur la tua magnificentia  
 f. 168v Il mio Fregoso in corpo human m'appar<v>e  
 f. 169r Tu pensi ch'io no(n) t'ami e se' in errore  
 f. 169v S'io 'l dissi già no(n) ho per questo errato  
 f. 170r Signor io so ch(e) a tutti i tuoi peccati  
 f. 170v Io vidi stamatina Antonio coco  
 f. 171r Scrolami e ferri a l'uno e l'altro piede  
 f. 171v Senza i toi dui ducati gionsi a Reggio  
 f. 172r Che farai tu cor mio? Se ben t'ho charo  
 f. 172v Venuto quel ch(e) fa nascer ciascuno  
 f. 173r Io ho Cosmico mio tanto piacere  
 f. 173v Tante virtù triacha di herbolatto  
 f. 174r De la presumption n'ha chi ne vuole  
 f. 174v Nel tempo quando il sole ha lo splendore  
 f. 175r Magnanimo Signor ecco un di tre  
 f. 175v Ecco due gran legisti stian da lato  
 f. 176r La excelsa fama di Metello e Caio  
 f. 176v Grasso di foco e cimatura d'ossa  
 f. 177r Un ladro, un losco, un sarto et un munaro  
 f. 177v Due zuche vode et un cervel balzano  
 f. 178r Cinque baccanti e la dea de le biade  
 f. 178v Che dirà questo volgo mantuano  
 f. 179r Non è miracol se i pipion son fieri  
 f. 179v In su la terza doppo alle due hore  
 f. 180r Sappi Signor che al n(ost)ro mullatieri  
 f. 180v Duo foderi de salti incathenati  
 f. 181r Se per due spade for d'una vagina  
 f. 181v Il nome de cui servo amor mi diede  
 f. 182r Quella che porta un burchio su le spalle  
 f. 182v Bel corpo ha del buglion 'n'una barchetta  
 f. 183r Vederai tratto il peto uno schioppetto  
 f. 183v Ficca Gaian col madre tosto il velo  
 f. 184r Mandarami il cimier d'un fongo nero  
 f. 184v Mandami cor di ricci volti arosto  
 f. 185r Mandami un [favacin un] mazzolin di  
 favacello  
 f. 185v Mandarami il giubon del mio somieri  
 f. 186r Mandarami un piatel de gelatina  
 f. 186v Per celebrare allegro e più sicuro  
 f. 187r Ecco Signore Anton Maria Guarnieri  
 f. 187v Io ho fattore del quinternetto mio  
 f. 188r Io non son più magnifico fattore  
 f. 188v Magnifico fattor a passo a passo  
 f. 189r Questo tu hai ragion mi dà speranza  
 f. 189v Chi volesse imitare il Salvatore  
 f. 190r Vecchia è la mulla mia tu vecchio e putto  
 f. 190v Io son pur una degna creatura  
 f. 191r Qualunque in questo hospitio mette il piede  
 f. 191v Meglio Madonna fai che un sordo il sordo  
 f. 192r Pensai che 'l ciel già me \vi/ avesse  
 elletta  
 f. 192v Ecco chi stato t'è desubidiente  
 f. 193r Non diede agli indivini il Duca fede  
 f. 193v Ecco hebbe un tempo già il manico i(n) mano



- f. 194r Tasso diminutivo a tristo vinto  
 f. 194v Signor mio charo il volgo errante agogna  
 f. 195r Conte Gian Petro mio se alle parole  
 f. 195v Pur tornasti Hieronimo a Bologna?  
 f. 196r Il giorno di natal passar s'è visto  
 f. 196v Non curò visto il cima il cavalliere  
 f. 197r Novelle nove, il papa ha havuto un figlio  
 f. 197v Bu bu che c'è? Bologna è sotto sopra  
 f. 198r Un bon precetto è di memoria degno  
 f. 198v Collui ch(e) questo Christo ha fabricato  
 f. 199r Gli altri fanno gra(n) sonni, io fo  
 son(n)etti  
 f. 199v Viditi in facci hier ma i duo balconi  
 f. 200r Non intesi o seppi mai che tu sapessi  
 f. 220v Millan famoso è una cità bellissima  
 f. 201r 'Iesus Maria'  
 f. 201v Vinegia hormai la tua vita superba  
 f. 202r Lavato Hercole il culo a Venetiani  
 f. 202v Gran cosa è che Bravier sia così tosto  
 f. 203r Che fantaria è questa Pistorese?  
 f. 203v Il Duca di Calabria è da la n(ost)ra  
 f. 204r Disposto Alcide far guerra a Marani  
 f. 204v Che fa San Marco? <Guarda> ove lampeggia  
 f. 205r Chi ha fra i grandi in Italia balia?  
 f. 205v A Roma che si vende? Le parole  
 f. 206r La tua captività harrà mai fine?  
 f. 206v Son nate anchor novelle? Ognhor si cianza  
 f. 207r Che se dice di me? No(n) lo sai tu?  
 f. 207v Triomphin le virtù Cesare è nato  
 f. 208r Hercule Duca n(ost)ro adesso attende  
 f. 208v Come sta Roma, in ch(e) stato si trova?  
 f. 209r Il papa è fatto parla il vulgo e mente  
 f. 209v Hor oltre, ecco che 'l papa è incoronato  
 f. 210r Che direte cicale il papa è fatto  
 f. 211r Mitrato il papa no(n) stiè molto poi  
 f. 211v Che fu? Che è? Che serà? Il t(em)po passa  
 f. 212r Questo felice invito Duca sexto  
 f. 212v O il Duca n(ost)ro fa i gran cavam(en)ti  
 f. 213r Vivo il iusto pastor con suoi arme(n)ti  
 f. 213v Che nove? Ottime sono. Et che se dice?  
 f. 214r Di' Signore a tua posta il mondo è mio  
 f. 214v Ben puoi dir Signor mio ho nele mani  
 f. 215r Ecco tornato il tempo de Ottaviano  
 f. 215v Una beata donna ha partorito  
 f. 216v Da Leon vengo e là si fa banchetto  
 f. 217r Di Franza torno e là vidi in effetto  
 f. 217v Quasi piglia ogni dì Napoli el Re  
 f. 218r Che se dice hor qui in Italia? Niente  
 f. 218v Le bugie batton oro e quel si vende  
 f. 219r Tu ridi Italia, un altro il tempo spensa  
 f. 219v Marzocco io penso al tuo tempo futuro  
 f. 220r La Italia è posta in fren de la paura  
 f. 220v Italia le tue cose van segrete  
 f. 221r Sicurami ch'io vidi a fronte nuda  
 f. 221v Come sta hoggi Italia? In su le gal[l]e  
 Forza m'è di scoprire un gran segreto

f. 222r Ad ogni hora del dì di mano in mano  
 f. 222v Vinegia ha fatto un capitan d'armata  
 f. 223r Che fai Signore illustre ogn'huom ti v\u/ole  
 f. 223v Il sacco è tanto pien hormai ch(e) 'l  
 crep[pl]a  
 f. 224r Già del fin suona il nuntio la trombetta  
 f. 224v O capo de pastor triste novelle  
 f. 225r Lingue tacete il Re di Franza è qui  
 f. 225v Ve' ch'è fiorita al Mor la nobil pianta  
 f. 226r Non moro più che 'l nome t'è mutato  
 f. 226v Il Moro è fatto pur Duca di certo  
 f. 227r Mentre che 'l Moro volse al mondo tacque  
 f. 227v Se 'l primo dì facevi quel ch(e) adesso  
 f. 228r Rendi Alexandro Ascanio al Duca novo  
 f. 228v Più no(n) si grida si no(n) Franza e Carlo  
 f. 229r O infortunata Alpheia città marina  
 f. 229v Cra, cra, cra, cra, cra, cra il corbo  
 gracchia  
 f. 230r Le campi stan così vie là vie loro  
 f. 230v Nulla dil ver Signor qua no(n) s'intende  
 f. 231r Di là dal Teverone il gallo canta  
 f. 231v Il Re di Franza è in Roma. In Roma, e dove?  
 f. 232r Hor son pacificati il papa e 'l Re  
 f. 232v Fatto il papa col Re lo accordio santo  
 f. 233r Disse Alfonso a Ferrando, figliol mio  
 f. 233v Carlo petito è in castel capuano  
 f. 234r Italia piange misera dolente  
 f. 234v San Marco no(n) si fida el Biscion teme  
 f. 235r La lepre teme el coniglio ha paura  
 f. 235v Passò il Re franco Italia al tuo dispetto  
 f. 236r Storcesi il crudel angue e l'occhio gira  
 f. 236v Il Re di Spagna solda e Maximiano  
 f. 237r Il gallo, Marco, la biscia, el leone  
 f. 237v La tromba suona timidi soldati  
 f. 238r Ciascu(n) fermo si sta dentro alla sbarra  
 f. 238v Che vuoi far pace Ludovico io sento  
 f. 239r Recusa il papa e lo imperio no(n) vuole  
 f. 239v Morto suo padre tornò il figlio in vita  
 f. 240r Pur si fé questa pace sia in bon hora  
 f. 240v Pur tornò Italia al Duca de Milano  
 f. 241r Marzocco il me ne incresce, pacientia  
 f. 241v Attienti Pisa hor che libera sei  
 f. 242r Ch(e) fai tu Ludovico ogn'huom ti mira  
 f. 242v Il ferro s'è rifeffredo in sul'ancugge  
 f. 243r Ecco il Re de' romani e 'l Re de' galli  
 f. 243v Morto è Ferrando Alfonso e Ferrandino  
 f. 244r Quanto di Maximiam sia l'acqua e 'l foco  
 f. 244v Io vidi l'altro dì dentro a Leone  
 f. 245r Io vedo Italia in guerre in sangue e fame  
 f. 245v Firenze i fatti tuoi peggio ogn'hor van(n)o  
 f. 246r Italia è in otio e l'uno e all'altro attende  
 f. 246v Dove è Marte francioso? Tra le dame  
 f. 247r Voi non voleti ravedervi anchora?  
 f. 247v Di Gallia vengo et ho veduto là  
 f. 248r Può far il ciel che la crudel ch(e) vuole  
 f. 248v La maliciosa volpe fé pensiero



- f. 249r Anchor nel zuffo tien Marco Bibiena  
 f. 249v Perdi pur quanto vuoi popul pisano  
 f. 250r Tra la volpe e tra 'l lupo sta la cerva  
 f. 250v Nobile cità d'Alphea a che partito  
 f. 251r Al'oglio santo è Pisa et ha giurato  
 f. 251v Pisa anchor sei tu viva? Habbiti cura  
 f. 252r Di voi mi dole o poveri pisani  
 f. 252v Se già suiugasti isole molte  
 f. 253r Tu credevi paparti come un pane  
 f. 253v Il Re de li animali alato mostro  
 f. 254r Standosi il gallo dentro al suo pollaio  
 f. 254v Ch(e) dirai tu de Italia? Dirò male  
 f. 255r Hercule al suo mantello agionge panno  
 f. 255v Pover Marzocco come ti sta il core?  
 f. 256r O città nido mio Pistoia vecchia  
 f. 256v Marzocco mio se a tuo modo di guidi  
 f. 257r Tu credi per haver morto il vitello  
 f. 257v Ch(e) fa il Re franco? Ferma ben lo scanno  
 f. 258r Ruina de' christian tu falso prete  
 f. 258v Il superbo leon forse hor si pente  
 f. 259r Occise il sol Pheton crudele e fiero  
 f. 259v Io vengo da Leone e vidi là  
 f. 260r Italia il Turco vien, tien gli occhi aperti  
 f. 260v Italici il Re franco si apparecchia  
 f. 261r In quel donde cascor tante pharphalle  
 f. 261v O Duca Ludovico il novo gallo  
 f. 262r L'hidra ha d'intorno sì gran fiam(m)a accesa  
 f. 262v Ecco il Re franco a te Duca mio quarte  
 f. 263r Guarda là in quel bichier, ch(e) vedi tu?  
 f. 263v Nona ha sonato il Duca de Mil(an)o  
 f. 264r Sonato nona a vespro andò Valentia  
 f. 264v Persa Alexandria Novara e Tortona  
 f. 265r Italici Signor lo exemplo è degno  
 f. 265v Per mezzo già la Italia si divide  
 f. 266r Tiran tirato è via dopo il tiran(n)o  
 f. 266v Hor ch'<h>ai il cazzo in man fa gran  
 minestra  
 f. 267r Non troppo è Marco la tua vista vera  
 f. 267v Dimanda quel ch(e) ne va travestito  
 f. 268r Non era il caso a fine anchor venuto  
 f. 268v Invictiss(imo) Re se Italia hai cara  
 f. 269r Monsignor il mio mal cresce d'ogn'hora  
 f. 269v Quel vince più che pugnando più dura  
 f. 270r Imola ha dato il castellan perito  
 f. 270v Sta più forte che puoi Madon(n)a d'Imola  
 f. 271r Aiutati Madonna di Forlì  
 f. 271v Da Forlì no(n) si dice ben nè male  
 f. 272r Forlì ha tratto hor tu Pesaro quarte  
 f. 272v Credei che \de/le donne fusse questa guerra  
 f. 273r Ritorna Ludovico se tu puoi  
 f. 273v Troppo stai Ludovico a far ritorno  
 f. 274r Poich(é) di novo t'è la sedia eletta  
 f. 274v Tornasti Ludovico, hor piaccia a Iove  
 f. 275r Duca Hercol stai adesso? Male  
 f. 275v Questo imperator vien m'è in odio troppo  
 f. 276r Tratta ha la Italia hormai son corsi gli

anni  
 f. 276v Cinti de fassi e veste di scopati  
 f. 277r Una donna fu già ch(e) pregò Dio  
 f. 277v Quando trasse Milan trasse Romagna  
 f. 278r Lo imperatore vien qui il vulgo trombetta  
 f. 278v Le cose van per hor tra lo N e lo S  
 f. 279r Anchora in pie' Signor Pisa se regge  
 f. 279v Seimillia oltramontan son quei ch(e) vanno  
 f. 280r Il Duca Valentin veduti i dan(n)i  
 f. 280v Prior m'inculo, ancian nel forame,  
 f. 281r Io ti mando un capitol fatto adesso  
 f. 281v Adio, la lira come fa Giovanni?  
 f. 282r Il duro ferro al foco se sfitella  
 f. 282v Chi vuol guarir del pie' quando formicola  
 f. 283r Ecco la morte i mei sonnetti al foco  
 ff. 283v-288r La nuda terra s'ha già messo il ma(n)to

Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, MS 979, 16th cent.

p. 1 Anton voi tu giocar? No il mio Arighetto  
 p. 2 Duo dolci suoni hanno fatto consiglio  
 p. 3 Predicator tu hai troppo ignorato  
 p. 4 Che si che un dì qualche forma d'u(n) quanto  
 p. 5 Madonna io fui a Revere al fattore  
 p. 6 La tua virtù che vince ogni moneta  
 p. 7 Madonna, io so(n) prigion, di chi? Di quella  
 p. 8 Vieni ad un pescator disse el Messia  
 p. 9 Sognando disse io fu' in capo del mondo  
 p. 10 Io credo in quel che a chi 'l tocchò diè fe'  
 p. 11 Io credo in quel che in su dui tavolieri  
 p. 12 Credo in un Dio patre onnipotente  
 p. 13 Che ne di' tu di questa nostra fede  
 p. 14 Tu eri allegro perché io ero morto  
 p. 15 Chi dice in versi ben che sia thoscano?  
 p. 16 Le fiorentine fra l'altre thoscane  
 p. 17 Che dirai tu de le donne da Siena?  
 p. 18 Le donne da Ferrara che ne di'?  
 p. 19 Belle donne a Milan, ma grasse troppe  
 p. 20 Tu m'hai difeso io el so e non ti dico  
 p. 21 Pur sei condotto a quello ultimo stratio  
 p. 22 Io vidi intrando in casa una matina  
 p. 23 Vedendo di cambiar l'antiquo straccio  
 p. 24 La casa mia somiglia una gallina  
 p. 25 Sculpse già el volto sancto Nicodemo  
 p. 26 De l'archa di Noè dir non bisogna  
 p. 27 Le gambe e pie' per alerezza batte  
 p. 28 Dubito Signor mio che 'l ti dispiacci  
 p. 29 Signor fu un bel palazzo il tuo presente  
 p. 30 Nel tempo che la polve torna in fangho  
 p. 31 Il tuo caval da quatro gambe infermo  
 p. 32 Una donna ne va tutta contrita  
 p. 33 Ogni arte in sé si pò chiamar gientile  
 p. 34 Ciascu(n) ch'è nato, pò senza pensiero  
 p. 35 Di tutto quel che vedi fai sonetti  
 p. 36 Morì la fede insieme co(n) l'amore



p. 37 Rimandovi i danar ch'io achattai  
 p. 38 Deh Madonna mia cara habbi avertentia  
 p. 39 Italia duolti e tu Rimine plora  
 p. 40 Danza già in cielo ogni immortal farfalla  
 p. 41 Quello a cui mai non gli par cosa nova  
 p. 42 Hoggi si canta in pulpito che un re  
 p. 43 Hoggi si canta che 'l maggior figliolo  
 p. 44 Vidde cu(m) gli occhi molli alti e levati  
 p. 45 Canta la chiesa che 'l fu già un garzone  
 p. 46 Hoggi è il dì, di quella aquila volante  
 p. 47 Dodice re men tre quarti del tutto  
 p. 48 Dormendo il vecchio sposo di Maria  
 p. 49 Un figliol fu che 'l padre un padre fece  
 p. 50 Sur(r)exit non est hic, e dove andò?  
 p. 51 Bon giorno a tutti dui di compagnia  
 p. 52 Figliola non andar senza belletto  
 p. 53 Io vorrei maritar la mia figliola  
 p. 54 Hai tu veduto questo can levr\i/eri  
 p. 55 Io vedo la virtù in sì poco pregio  
 p. 56 Nela verde stagion tenera, e chiara  
 p. 57 Giovambaptista io ho qui in ciel veduto  
 p. 58 Io vidi a Refrigier compor sonetti  
 p. 59 Giunto in Bologna vidi una gra(n) lista  
 p. 60 Toch toch, chi è là? Aprite è Amphione  
 p. 61 Un piacentin da Lodi che a Verona  
 p. 62 Bernardo horsù che fai? Esci di buca  
 p. 63 Che viso nato al tempo de' Baronci  
 p. 64 Sempre tu grati il corpo a le cichale  
 p. 65 Che par costui del zeffo? Un can alano  
 p. 66 Horsù laccera più le altrui fatiche  
 p. 67 U guata viso, el pare un can alano  
 p. 68 Maestro el Bellincion fa mille frappe  
 p. 69 Eccì san bovo aiuti il mio Bernardo  
 p. 70 Felice la testitudine, e la chiocciola  
 p. 71 Odio guardate un po' chi costui pare  
 p. 72 Se tu fussi un de quei che fan minestra  
 p. 73 Nominativo hic et hec et ocche  
 p. 74 Che di tu raparanciolo marci\u/olo  
 p. 75 Nacque costui la notte de Epiphana  
 p. 76 Tornò il capitol mio integro, e sano  
 p. 77 Taci schiumazzia d'Arno cervel d'ocho  
 p. 78 Io intendo che Bernardo Bellincione  
 p. 79 Troncha la corda del tuo sacro legno  
 p. 80 Tratta la zuccha for di lendinara  
 p. 81 Eccho la maestà de il gra(n) pretore  
 p. 82 Non potendo lasciare altro impicchato  
 p. 83 O voi becchar che andate per la via  
 p. 84 Toch chi batte? Amici aprimi un poco  
 p. 85 Gregor\i/o come stai? Peggio che male  
 p. 86 O là? chi è là? Miser Gregor Ciampante  
 p. 87 Colui che me agladiò non fece inganno  
 p. 88 Messer Beneveritis entrate  
 p. 89 Io penso sotio mio che tu ti credi  
 p. 90 Ogn'hom leggìe il suo libro, ogn'hom lo  
 honora  
 p. 91 Anch'io sonar sentì più volte a ballo

p. 92 Eccol di qua che da per lui fantastica  
 p. 93 Capo fiamengho, e fronte tartarescho  
 p. 94 Cuius figure, un homo simpliciotto  
 p. 95 Nato e no(n) nato che vai per la piazza  
 p. 96 Qua è apparso un crudel babuino  
 p. 97 Parasito bambin d'anni maturo  
 p. 98 Cu(m) un ligiadro stil maccharoneo  
 p. 99 Cinthio ben cigolar non ti bisogna  
 p. 100 O grande scriba in le maggior facende  
 p. 101 Tu non hai habitacol campo o vigna  
 p. 102 Orbacha non pensar ch'io dica pepe  
 p. 103 Da Padua ne viene un pontegotto  
 p. 104 Il viene una imbrunata vidoetta  
 p. 105 Raffrenatevi lingue hor ch'io su(m) casso  
 p. 106 Attolite le porte, chi è quello?  
 p. 107 Un gra(n) poeta antiquo fiorentino  
 p. 108 Hoggi è comparso nel paese nostro  
 p. 109 Tra chiromanti vola la disputa  
 p. 110 Capo da punteggiar cu(m) un trivello  
 p. 111 Stato so(n) già duo anni genuflesso  
 p. 112 Se gli era in cielo un Dio, e il Moro in  
 terra  
 p. 113 Sasso tu pensi haver più il tuo pie' saldo  
 p. 114 Capo di ochagna pien di cimatura  
 p. 115 Non gridar più, che voi tu Salvatore?  
 p. 116 Messer datemi un poco di conforto  
 p. 117 Bon giorno, udite messer Agustino  
 p. 118 Io tolsi moglie, e non mi fu fatica  
 p. 119 Hai tu veduto questi fottiventi  
 p. 120 La fe' ch'era nel dito d'un signore  
 p. 121 Quel son ch'io ti fui sempre, e quel serò  
 p. 122 Di quatro unguenti fu la creatura  
 p. 123 O tomba indegna a la mia vita pura  
 p. 124 Qua signor mio hier gionse Zacharia  
 p. 125 Di Zacharia signor mio n'ho pecchato  
 p. 126 Signor pon mente Zacharia vien grosso  
 p. 127 Discritto, e sigillato il testamento  
 p. 128 Io ti rimando sedice frittelle  
 p. 129 Saluta Angel per me il Duca el biscione  
 p. 130 Tosto m'hai rotto legge, patti, e modi  
 p. 131 Giunto settembre al suo ultimo acquisto  
 p. 132 Non tanti figli ritrovan quei padri  
 p. 133 Ecco un villan che a l'altrui spese vive  
 p. 134 Per secundar la tua vita tranquilla  
 p. 135 S'io fussi in libertà come io vorrei  
 p. 136 Comincia(n) dal'estate a primavera  
 p. 137 Nel mio principio udirai quanto io posso  
 p. 138 Signor eccho il guardian dela tua porta  
 p. 139 Tu mi mandasti a denticar coiame  
 p. 140 S'io dico gra(n) mercé senza pagarti  
 p. 141 Io no fu mai da medici sfidato  
 p. 142 Car ho che quel che di' di me si dica  
 p. 143 Tien pur messer da man destra la via  
 p. 144 O hostiario, o uscier, o portinario  
 p. 145 Monsignore salve. Toi chi mi saluta?  
 p. 146 Dove vo tu andar Francesca? A messa



p. 147 Buon dì Diamante, anche a te Marg\h/erita  
 p. 148 O Anna che fan la quelle brigate?  
 p. 149 Tu lustri più che non fa l'or filato  
 p. 150 O Dio te havess'io pur dato lo anello  
 p. 151 Ambrosio io ho veduto amor ritratto  
 p. 152 Che serà poi galletto montanaro  
 p. 153 Lasciamo andar che per uno scudieri  
 p. 154 Fu per antiquo mio patre ingelese  
 p. 155 Quella che Esopo de assai fé convito  
 p. 156 A visitar la tua consorte amata  
 p. 157 Un pistorese è fatto hoggi pedante  
 p. 158 Homo non è felice signor mio  
 p. 159 Il Duca fece fare uno stecchato  
 p. 160 Toch, chi pichia, chi batte a raccolta?  
 p. 161 O viatori in questo tumult iace  
 p. 162 Quasi era il giorno ala notte accostato  
 p. 163 La fede fu formata ad una cena  
 p. 164 Quando un mi loda e tu poco mi vanti  
 p. 165 Cantava il concubin de la gallina  
 p. 166 Io ti mando madonna un cestellino  
 p. 167 Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando in dono  
 p. 168 Madonna anchor so(n) vivo e non è ciancia  
 p. 169 Madonna el non bisogna ch'io ti scriva  
 p. 170 Madon(n)a ala franciosa so(n) vestito  
 p. 171 Due lire ethrurie in Francia so(n) citate  
 p. 172 Madonna io so(n) da molti visitato  
 p. 173 Co(n) ben faremo ogni giorno mi meni  
 p. 174 Togliete l'arme pur soldati in mano  
 p. 175 Nepote entrasti pur nela matricola  
 p. 176 Gli altri son rossi in ciel tu se' qui nero  
 p. 177 Timotheo charo il nostro antiquo amore  
 p. 178 Palmier maggio fiorisce sta sul noce  
 p. 179 Se costei fusse riccha come noi  
 p. 180 Tu m'hai pur chiuso gli usci dale lacche  
 p. 181 Signor mio char la tor di Sancta Croce  
 p. 182 Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
 p. 183 Dolente a morte monsignor ti lasso  
 p. 184 Hieronimo e son fatti i tuoi presenti  
 p. 185 Manda a tor presto la tua cotognata  
 p. 186 Sugho de pomi fatto in gielatia  
 p. 187 A te par di haver toccho il ciel col dito  
 p. 188 Quando tu vai Madonna ai templi sancti  
 p. 189 Io ti rimando a pie' senza alphana  
 p. 190 Bramante tu voi far quel che Dio fé  
 p. 191 Sonando Orptheo cu(m) venti soldi in mano  
 p. 192 Tutto per la paura alhor mi scossi  
 p. 193 Non son per le montagne tanti abeti  
 p. 194 Cu(m) semplice parole Iosuè  
 p. 195 Quel che scritto da te qua non si crede  
 p. 196 Per non portarne in corpo la scemente  
 p. 197 Se amor la sua balestra al mondo schoccha  
 p. 198 Se quel che disse io so e non sa molto  
 p. 199 Fece Dio l'homo, e somigliolo a lui  
 p. 200 Tre hebbe in corte già el nostro Signore  
 p. 201 Quel gallo mozzo ch'<h>a sì pocha cresta  
 p. 202 Largho brigata datigli la strada

p. 203 Signor bone novelle, il mio roncinò  
 p. 204 Caval mio che fai tu? Ch'io fo? Io stento  
 p. 205 Ressuscita<i> perch'io non era morto  
 p. 206 Ecchomi vivo salvo, e migliorato  
 p. 207 Barbara il volgho ch'è poco discreto  
 p. 208 Io aspettavo de portarne a Reggio  
 p. 209 Mar, laghi, fiumi rivi, stagni, e valle  
 p. 210 S'io rendo gratie a la tua signoria  
 p. 211 La poesia par cosa da mangiare  
 p. 212 L'habito che ciascun s'è estremo vede  
 p. 213 Tu curi che Firenze habbi del grano  
 p. 214 Non più del tuo tornar dubito niente  
 p. 215 Co(n) duo di quei che ne volse Argho cento  
 p. 216 Come è il tuo servo tal serà il presente  
 p. 217 Ch'el s'empia be<n> la cena del Chiaperi  
 p. 218 Felice un parvoletto in pudicitia  
 p. 219 Il volgho ride di quel ch'io non rido  
 p. 220 Ben poi Signor questo dono tenir charo  
 p. 221 Accumulasti pur robba e denari  
 p. 222 Questi son pater nostri d'un colore  
 p. 223 Potrebbe pur la tua magnificentia  
 p. 224 Il mio Freghoso in corpo huma(n) mi apparve  
 p. 225 Tu pensi ch'io non t'ami e se' in errore  
 p. 226 S'io el dissi già non ho per questo errato  
 p. 227 Signore io so che a tutti i tuoi pecchati  
 p. 228 Io vidi stamatina Antonio coco  
 p. 229 Che farai tu cor mio se ben tho charo  
 p. 230 Venuto quel che fé nascer ciascuno  
 p. 231 Scrollami e ferri a l'uno e l'altro piede  
 p. 232 Senza i tuoi dui ducati gionsi a Reggio  
 p. 233 Dela prosu(n)ption n'ha chi ne vuole  
 p. 234 Nel tempo quando il sole ha lo splendore  
 p. 235 Io ho Cosmico mio tanto piacere  
 p. 236 Tante virtù triacha d'herbolatto  
 p. 237 Magnanimo signor eccho un di tre  
 p. 238 Ecco duo gra(n) leg\g/isti, stian da lato  
 p. 239 La excelsa fama di Metello, e Caio  
 p. 240 Grasso di foco, e cimatura d'ossa  
 p. 241 Un ladro, un losco, un sarto, et un munaro  
 p. 242 Due zuche vote, et un cervel balzano  
 p. 243 Cinque bacchanti, e la Dea dele biade  
 p. 244 Che dirà questo volgho mantuano  
 p. 245 Non è miracol se i pipion son fieri  
 p. 246 In sula terza doppo a le due hore  
 p. 247 Sappi signor che al nostro mulatieri  
 p. 248 Duo foderi de salti incatenati  
 p. 249 Se per due spade for d'una vagina  
 p. 250 Il nome di cui servo amor mi diede  
 p. 251 Quella che porta un burchio sulle spalle  
 p. 252 Bel corpo ha del buglion 'n una barchetta  
 p. 253 Vedrai tratto il peto uno schiop\p/etto  
 p. 254 Ficcha Gaian col madre tosto il velo  
 p. 255 Mandarami il cimer d'un fungho nero  
 p. 256 Mandami cor de ricci volti arosto  
 p. 257 Mandami un mazolin di favacello  
 p. 258 Mandara(m)mi il giubon del mio somieri



p. 259 Mandara(m)mi un piatel di gelatina  
 p. 260 Per celebrar allegro e più sicuro  
 p. 261 Eccho signor Anton Maria Guarnieri  
 p. 262 Io ho fattor del quinternetto mio  
 p. 263 Io non son più magnifico fattore  
 p. 264 Magnifico fattore a passo passo  
 p. 265 Questo tu hai ragion mi dà speranze  
 p. 266 Chi volesse imitare il Salvatore  
 p. 267 Vecchia è la mula mia, tu vecchio e putto  
 p. 268 Io son pur una degna creatura  
 p. 269 Qualonque in questo hospitio mette il piede  
 p. 270 Meglio madonna fai che un sordo il sordo  
 p. 271 Pensai che 'l ciel già me vi havesse eletta  
 p. 272 Eccho chi stato t'è disubidiente  
 p. 273 Hor oltre ecco che 'l papa è incoronato  
 p. 274 Che direte cicale il papa è fatto  
 p. 275 Mitriato il papa non stie' molto poi  
 p. 276 Che fu che è che serà il tempo passa  
 p. 277 Questo felice invicto duca sesto  
 p. 278 O il duca nostro fa i gran cavamenti  
 p. 279 Vive il giusto pastor co(n) suoi armenti  
 p. 280 Che nove? Opitme sono, et che si dice?  
 p. 281 Di' signor a tua posta il mondo è mio  
 p. 282 Ben poi dir signor mio ho ne le mani  
 p. 283 Eccho tornato il tempo di Ottaviano  
 p. 284 Una beata donna ha parturito  
 p. 285 Da Leon vengho e là si fa banchetto  
 p. 286 Di Francia torno, e la vidi in effetto  
 p. 287 Qua si piglia ogni dì Napoli, e il re  
 p. 288 Che si dice hor per Italia? Niente  
 p. 289 Le bugie batton oro, e quel si spende  
 p. 290 Tu ridi Italia un altro il tempo spensa  
 p. 291 Marzoccho io penso al tuo tempo futuro  
 p. 292 La Italia è posta in fren dala paura  
 p. 293 Italia, le tue cose van segrete  
 p. 294 Sicurami ch io vadi a fronte nuda  
 p. 295 Come sta oggi Italia? In sule gale  
 p. 296 Forza m'è discoprire un gran segreto  
 p. 297 Ad ogn'hora de il dì di mano in mano  
 p. 298 Vinegia ha fatto un capitan d'armata  
 p. 299 Che fai signore illustre ogn'hom ti vole  
 p. 300 Il saccho è tanto pien hormai ch'el crepa  
 p. 301 Già del fin sona il nuntio la trombetta  
 p. 302 O capo de pastor triste novelle  
 p. 303 Lingue tacete il re di Francia è qui  
 p. 304 Ve' che è fiorita al Mor la nobil pianta  
 p. 305 Non moro più ch'el nome t'è mutato  
 p. 306 Il Moro è fatto pur Duca di certo  
 p. 307 Mentre che il Moro volse al mondo tacque  
 p. 308 Se il primo dì facevi quel che adesso  
 p. 309 Rendi Alexandro Aschanio al Duca novo  
 p. 310 Più non si grida se non Francia, e Carlo  
 p. 311 O infortunata Alpheia cità marina  
 p. 312 Cra cra cra cra cra \cra/ il corbo gracchia  
 p. 313 Gli campi stan cosi vie la vie loro  
 p. 314 Nulla del ver signor qua no(n) se intende

p. 315 Di là dal Teverone il gallo canta  
 p. 316 Il Re di Francia è in Roma, in Roma, e dove?  
 p. 317 Hor son pacificati il papa, e il re  
 p. 318 Fatto il papa col re lo accordo sancto  
 p. 319 Disse Alphonso a Ferrando figliol mio  
 p. 320 Carlo petito è in castel capoano  
 p. 321 Italia piangi misera dolente  
 p. 322 San Marco non si fida, el biscion teme  
 p. 323 La lepre teme e 'l coniglio ha paura  
 p. 324 Passò il re Francho Italia al tuo dispetto  
 p. 325 Storcesi il crudel angue, e l'occhio gira  
 p. 326 Il Re di Spagna solda, e Maximiano  
 p. 327 Il gallo, Marco, la biscia, e il leone  
 p. 328 La tromba suona, timidi soldati  
 p. 329 Ciascun fermo si sta dentro ala sbarra  
 p. 330 Che voi far pace Ludovico io sento  
 p. 331 Recusa il papa, e lo imperio non vole  
 p. 332 Morto suo padre tornò il figlio in vita  
 p. 333 Pur si se questa pace sia in bon'hora  
 p. 334 Pur torno Italia al duca di Milano  
 p. 335 Marzoccho el me ne increscie patientia  
 p. 336 Attienti Pisa hor che libera sei  
 p. 337 Che fai tu Ludovico ogn'hom ti mira  
 p. 338 Il ferro se rifreddo in sul'anchugge  
 p. 339 Eccho il Re de' Romani, e il Re de' Galli  
 p. 340 Morto è Ferrando Alphonso, e Ferrandino  
 p. 341 Quanto di Maximian sia l'acqua, e il foco  
 p. 342 Io vidi l'altro dì dentro a Leone  
 p. 343 Io vedo Italia in guerre in sangue e fame  
 p. 344 Firenze i fatti tuoi peggio ogn'hor vanno  
 p. 345 La Italia è in otio, e l'uno al'altro  
 attende  
 p. 346 Dove è Marte fra(n)cioso? Tra le dame  
 p. 347 Voi non volete reavedervi anc\h/ora  
 p. 348 Di Gallia vengho et ho veduto là  
 p. 349 Po far il ciel che ha la crudel che vole  
 p. 350 La malitiosa volpe fé pensiero  
 p. 351 Anc\h/or nel zuffo tien Marco Bibiena  
 p. 352 Perdi pur quanto vòì popul pisano  
 p. 353 Tra la volpe, e tra il lupo sta la cerva  
 p. 354 Nobil città di Alpheia a che partito  
 p. 355 A l'oglio sancto è Pisa, et ha giurato  
 p. 356 Pisa anc\h/or se tu viva habiti cura  
 p. 357 Di voi mi duole o poveri pisani  
 p. 358 Se già tu subiugasti isole molte  
 p. 359 Tu credevi paparti come un pane  
 p. 360 Il Re de gli animali alato monstro  
 p. 361 Standossi il gallo dentro al suo pollaro  
 p. 362 Che dirai tu de Italia? Dirò male  
 p. 363 Hercole al suo mantello aggiunge panno  
 p. 364 Pover Marzoccho come ti sta il core?  
 p. 365 O città nido mio Pistoia vecchia  
 p. 366 Marzoccho mio se a tuo modo ti guidi  
 p. 367 Tu credi per haver morto il vitello  
 p. 368 Che fa il Re francho? Ferma ben lo scanno  
 p. 369 Ruina de christian tu falso prete



p. 370 Il super<b>o leon forsi hor si pente  
 p. 371 Uccise il sol Phiton crudele e fiero  
 p. 372 Io vengho da Leon e vidi là  
 p. 373 Italia il turcho vien tien gli occhi aperti  
 p. 374 Italici il re francho s'apparecchia  
 p. 375 In quel donde cascor tante farfalle  
 p. 376 O Duca Ludovico il novo gallo  
 p. 377 L'hidra ha de intorno sì gra(n) fiamma  
 accesa  
 p. 378 Eccho il Re franco a te duca mio quarte  
 p. 379 Guarda là in quel bichier, che vedi tu?  
 p. 380 Nona ha sonato il duca di Milano  
 p. 381 Sonato nona, a vespro andò Valentia  
 p. 382 Persa Alexandria, Novara, e Tortona  
 p. 383 Italici Signor lo exemplo è degno  
 p. 384 Per mezo già la Italia si divide  
 p. 385 Duca Hercol come stai adesso? Male  
 p. 386 Questo imperator vien m'è in odio troppo  
 p. 387 Il Duca Valentin veduto i danni  
 p. 388 Io ti mando un capitol fatto adesso

Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS  $\alpha$ .H.6.1, 15th cent.

Previous pressmarks: MS X.\*.34; Cod. Ital. 836.

f. 57v 'Antonio Pistoia contra B(er)nardo Belinzone  
 il qual se laudava'  
 Tocch: chi bate? Aprite el g'è Amphione  
 f. 60r A Roma che se vende? Le parole  
 f. 61r 'In [Comisc] Cosmicu(m) Patavinu(m) carmina  
 maledica'  
 Per te contende il laccio, il ceppo il fuoco  
 'Idem in Co\s/micum'  
 f. 61r-v Quest'anno in San Iovan(n)i Laterano  
 f. 61v 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 Cosmico il si avvicina il giorno extremo  
 f. 62r 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 Se ben te alliego così spesso Dante  
 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 Cosmico l'haver visto e lecto Dante  
 f. 62v 'Idem in Cosmicu(m)  
 Perch(é) voi che di te se faci stima  
 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 ff. 62v-63r Tu credi haver di lauro una [corona]  
 grela(n)da  
 f. 63r 'Idem in Cosmicu(m)  
 Quando Cosmico i' son a fronte a fronte  
 f. 63r-v 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 Parmi vedere che in ordine si metta  
 ff. 63v-64r 'Idem in Cosmicu(m)  
 Io sento fabricar tanti sonetti  
 f. 64r 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 Per amonirte Cosmico te scrivo  
 f. 64r-v 'Idem in Cosmicum'  
 Voi che nei sancti templi haviti cura  
 f. 64v 'Idem in Cosmicum'

- f. 65r Non ve admirati se pocchi fanciulli  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- f. 65r-v Io vo pel campo volteggiando intorno  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- f. 65v Parmi sentire che fuor la fama extenda  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- ff. 65v-66r Cosmico il crede ognun che habia dismesso  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- f. 66r Sier Nicolò di la comar non tante  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- f. 66r-v Cosmico non pensar per tuo conforto  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- ff. 66v-67r Cosmico intendo che tu voi te stesso  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- f. 67r De sonetti ch'io t'ho fin hor mandati  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- f. 67r-v A me di te parlando intravien quello  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- f. 67v Io pur descrivo ogni tuo mal costume  
'Idem in Cosmicum'
- f. 68v Cosmico riposar la pen(n)a intendo  
'Antonius Pistoia'
- ff. 68v-69r Io credo in quel che su i tre tavolieri  
'Eiusdem Antonii'
- f. 69r Mar, laghi, fiumi, rivi, stagni et valle  
'Eiusdem Antonii'
- f. 69r-v Non son per le montagne tanti abeti  
'Eiusdem Antonii'
- f. 69v Una donna fu già che pregò Idio  
'Eiusdem Antonii'
- ff. 69v-70r Tu non hai habitacul campo o vigna  
'Eiusdem Antonii'
- f. 70r S'io dico gram mercé senza pagarte  
'Eiusdem Antonii'
- f. 71r Che fai, che pensi? Destate columbo  
'Antonius Pistoia'
- f. 81v Cantava il concubin di la gallina  
'Antonius Pistoia'
- f. 82r Tuto per la paura alhor mi scossi  
'Idem Antonius Pist(oia)'
- f. 83v El tuo caval da quatro gambe infermo  
'Antonius Pistoia'
- ff. 83v-84r Vieni a un pescator disse il Messia  
'Antonius Pistoia'
- f. 84r Codro non sentì mai sî gram torm(en)to  
'Antonius Pistoia'
- f. 84r-v Ognun mi dice tu sei magro e secco  
'Idem Ant(onius)'
- f. 118v Ecco la maestà dil gram pretore  
'Iacobus Corsi'
- f. 121r Signor i dormo in un lecto a vetura  
A la pianta caduta taglia taglia  
(Additional foliation: f. 63v, f. 66r, ff. 74v-76r, f. 77r, ff. 87v-88r, ff. 89v-90v, f. 124r, f. 127r).



Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS  $\alpha$ .W.2.11, 15th-16th cent.  
 Previous pressmarks: MS VI.C.34; MS 228; MS Lat. 228.

- f. 179r 'Data a Nicolò Ariosto iudice di matti'  
 Ser Nicolò del ferrarese sangue
- ff. 179r-v 'Data a Magnaferro'  
 Quando io ben penso a tua strana natura
- ff. 179v-180r 'Data a Nicolò Ariosto più mato cha  
 matissimo'  
 Io te admonì p(er) dui soneti mei
- f. 180r-v 'Data al gra(n) ladrone'  
 Io sento dire che tu pregi Madama
- f. 180v-181r 'Data al conte de gnic gnac'  
 Ciascu(n) mi dice pur ch'io segua il  
 scrivere
- f. 181r-v 'Data a l'osello sturuzo'  
 Da pria io te chiamai Ser Nicolò
- f. 181v 'Data al pater patriae'  
 Populo non dormir più levate su
- ff. 181v-182r 'Data al divoratore de la cità de Ferrara'  
 O tu che mosso sei tanto terribile
- f. 182r-v 'Data a Nicolò de li Ariosto mato de li xii  
 savii'  
 O tu che saper brami chi sia q(ue)llo
- ff. 182v-183r 'Data al gran sbretireo'  
 Di te tacere havea deliberato
- f. 183r-v 'Data al volto invidia ladro insaciabile'  
 Misera patria piena de desgratia
- ff. 183v-184r 'Sonneto cominatorio compilato p(er) Nicolò  
 padre de la patria conte paladino e  
 c(on)t(ra) il detractore'  
 La poesia p(er) certo è troppo ardita
- f. 184r-v 'Sonetto compilato p(er) Nicolò Ariosto ala  
 illu(strissi)ma Madama Duchesa de Ferrara'  
 Illustrissima mia cara Madama
- f. 184v 'Dolce et amorevele racoglienza facta alo  
 illu(strissi)mo S(ignor) n(ostro) nel suo  
 ritorno p(er) Nicolò Ariosto'  
 Signor mio car vui siati il benvenuto
- f. 185r 'Humana et gratiosa risposta facto al dicto  
 Nicolò p(er) lo p(re)libato illu(strissi)mo  
 Sig(nor) no(stro)'  
 Nui ve habian Nicolò ben cognosciuto
- f. 185r-v 'Al gran flagello'  
 Tu credi forse ch'io habia a starme in  
 stroppe
- ff. 185v-186r 'Data ala magnaterra'  
 Mille salute co(n) comindatione
- f. 186r-v 'Data al peladore di gatti salvadegi de  
 Magnaferro'  
 Il vilan -: Toche - N(icol)ò -: Squarzo(n)  
 S(ignor) -: Messer! Nicolò -: Gua(r)da chi  
 è q(ue)llo
- f. 186v-187r 'Dalida moglier et Magnafer(r)o lo amonise'  
 Magnifico marito mio dolcissimo

f. 187r-v Gloria in excelsis Deo, in terra la pace  
 f. 187v Modena se lamenta e dice oimè  
 f. 188r 'Ad Io(hanem) Hieronimu(m) ..  
 Il gram calculator de lo alphabetto  
 f. 188v 'Dialogus'  
 Daria sorella il fia' me viem men  
 f. 345r 'Antonius Pistoia'  
 Che fa San Marco? Guarda ove lampeggia

Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS γ.F.6.15 (Codice Campori 187),  
 16th cent. \*

f. 42v Amor vol pur ch'i l'ami et io no(n) posso  
 f. 87r-v Po' che di Vener fu l'alma et sup(er)ba

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Ital.560, 15th cent.\*

ff. 91v-95v <L>a nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
 (The *disperata* is transcribed anonymously).  
 f. 122r <Ch>e fai che pensi destati colombo

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Ital.1047, 16th cent.

ff. 38v-42v La nuda terra se ha già posto el manto  
 (The *disperata* is transcribed anonymously).

Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parmense 201, 15th-16th cent.

ff. 204r-207r 'Desperatio Tibaldei'  
 La nuda terra s'<h>a già meso el manto  
 f. 207r 'Eiusdem'  
 Vane canzon(n)e mia disprata e mesta

Pesaro, Biblioteca Oliveriana, MS 54, 16th cent.

ff. 44r-49r La nuda terra che ha già messo il manto  
 f. 49r-v Va' canzon mia disperata e mesta  
 (The *disperata* and the sonnet are  
 transcribed anonymously).  
 f. 77r 'Cum Antonius pistoriensis a magni fratre  
 Teucriiis de rebus quereretur fertur hoc  
 respondisse rithmo: die quarto maij 1490'  
 Che fa San Marcho? Guarda ove lampeggia

Pesaro, Biblioteca Oliveriana, MS 1897, Fasc. I, g<sup>bi</sup>a, no. 6,  
 18th-19th cent.

ff. [1r-4v] La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
 (Additional foliation: ff. 11r-14v. The



disperata is transcribed anonymously).

Pesaro, Biblioteca Oliveriana, MS 1897, Fasc. I, g<sup>b1\*</sup>, no. 18, 18th-19th cent.

f. [1r] O mia canzon, va disperata e mesta  
(Additional foliation: f. 28r. The sonnet is transcribed anonymously).

Piacenza, Archivio di Stato, Notai e Cancellieri della Comunità, Notaio Marco Antonio Gatti, volume contenente gli atti dal 1489 al 1493.

Not foliated 'MCCCCLXXXIII  
Retrovandosse a parlare Antonio da Pistoia  
cum el fratello del turcho et domandandolo  
de le potentie de Italia risposo in dialogo  
ut infra'  
Che fa Sam Marcho? Guarda ove lampegia  
'MCCCCLXXXI'  
Marzocho io penso il tuo tempo futuro

Pistoia, Biblioteca Comunale Forteguerriana, MS B.176, 16th cent.

f. 158r Cosmico no(n) pensar per tuo conforto  
(Additional foliation: f. 389r).

Pistoia, Biblioteca Comunale Forteguerriana, MS D.313 (Codice Tonti), 16th cent.

f. 140v 'Del Pistoia'  
Che fa il re franco? Ferma ben lo scan(n)o  
f. 141r 'Del Pistoia'  
Le fiorentine fra l'altre toscane  
f. 141v 'Del Pistoia'  
Lassiamo andar che per uno scudieri  
f. 142r 'Del Pistoia'  
Tu lustri più che no(n) fa l'or filato  
f. 142v 'Del Pistoia'  
Una donna ne va tutta contrita  
f. 143r 'Del Pistoia'  
Rimandovi i denar ch'io accattai  
f. 143v 'Del Pistoia'  
Quella a cui mai no(n) gli par cosa nuova  
f. 144r 'Del Pistoia'  
Quella che volentier fugge l'honore  
f. 144v 'Del Pistoia'  
Pur sei condotto a quello ultimo stratio  
f. 145r 'Del Pistoia'  
Tien pur m(esser) Damian destra la via  
f. 146r 'Del Pistoia'  
Ogni arte in sé si può chiamar gentile

- f. 146v 'Del Pistoia'  
S'io l' dissi già no(n) ho per questo errato
- f. 147r 'Del Pistoia'  
Quando un mi loda e tu poco mi vantì
- f. 147v 'Del Pistoia'  
Rimandoti la moglie del farsetto
- f. 148r 'Del Pistoia'  
Quasi era il giorno a la notte accostato
- f. 148v 'Del Pistoia'  
Palmier maggio fiorisce sta in sul noce
- f. 149r 'Del Pistoia'  
O grande scriba in le maggior faccende
- f. 149v 'Del Pistoia'  
O medico mio car, pur pianamente
- f. 150r 'Del Pistoia'  
Questi son paternostri d'un colore
- f. 150v 'Del Pistoia'  
Quando tu vai madon(n)a a' templi santi
- f. 151r 'Del Pistoia'  
Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando in dono
- f. 151v 'Del Pistoia'  
Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo
- f. 152r 'Del Pistoia'  
Quella che Esopo d'assai fé convito
- f. 152v 'Del Pistoia'  
Quanto madon(n)a mia sia stato charo
- f. 153r 'Del Pistoia'  
Ossi di lucci, et stecchi di granata
- f. 153v 'Del Pistoia'  
Quest'altro il fé natura in tarteria
- f. 154r 'Del Pistoia'  
Monsignor salve, toi chi mi saluta?
- f. 154v 'Del Pistoia'  
O Dio t'havessi pur dato l'anello
- f. 155r 'Del Pistoia'  
Morì la fede insieme co(n) amore
- f. 155v 'Del Pistoia'  
L'entrata che ti rende il culiseo
- f. 209r 'Del Pistoia'  
Italici il re franco si apparecchia
- f. 209v 'Del Pistoia'  
Ecco il re de' romani e 'l re de' galli
- f. 210r 'Del Pistoia'  
O città nido mio Pistoia anticha
- f. 210v 'Del Pistoia'  
Tagliato a pezzi il velluto da Siena
- f. 211r 'Del Pistoia'  
Madon(n)a alla franciosa io son vestito
- f. 211v 'Del Pistoia'  
Colui che questo Christo ha fabbricato
- f. 212r 'Del Pistoia'  
Manderami il giubbon del mio somieri
- f. 212v 'Del Pistoia'  
Ecco la maiestà del gran pretore
- f. 213r 'Del Pistoia'  
Ognun mi dice pur fammi un sonetto



- f. 216v 'Del Pistoia'  
Dov'è Marte francioso? Fra le dame
- f. 217r 'Del Pistoia'  
Mar, laghi, stagni, fiumi, ripe, et valle
- f. 217v 'Del Pistoia'  
Quando di Vener fu l'alma superba
- f. 218r 'Del Pistoia'  
Veddi l'altrieri andando in beccaria
- f. 218v Del Pistoia  
Poteva esser più ria malvagia, et fella
- f. 219v 'Del Pistoia'  
Questi signor fan come piace a' loro
- f. 220r 'Del Pistoia'  
Quel fraticel che schiuma la pignatta
- f. 220v 'Del Pistoia'  
Nel foltissimo bosco del frigniano
- f. 221r 'Del Pistoia'  
Madon(n)a anchor son vivo, et no(n) è  
ciancia
- f. 221v 'Del Pistoia'  
Madonna no(n) bisogna ch'io vi scriva
- f. 222r 'Del Pistoia'  
Signore io dormo in un letto a vettura
- f. 222v 'Del Pistoia'  
Io viddi intrando in casa una mattina
- f. 223r Nel foltissimo bosco del frignano  
(The sonnet bears no heading as it was first  
transcribed on f. 220v)
- f. 223v 'Del Pistoia'  
Nel bosco ombroso di monte fichale
- f. 227r 'Del Pistoia'  
Manderami un piattel di gelatina  
(Additional foliation: ff. 143v-148r, ff.  
149r-158v, ff. 211r-215r, ff. 218v-220v, ff.  
221v-225v, f. 229r).

Ravenna, Biblioteca Classense, MS 89, 16th cent. \*

- f. 68v 'De una sua camera'  
Signor(e) io dormo in un lecto ad victura  
(The sonnet, which is transcribed  
anonymously, is attributed to Antonio  
Pistoia in the library catalogue).  
'Iacobo Corso'  
Alla pianta caduta taglia taglia

Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, MS 2014, 19th cent. \*

- p. 42 'Del Pistoia'  
Che fa il re franco? Ferma ben lo scanno
- p. 43 'Del Pistoia'  
Le Fiorentine fra l'altre toscane
- p. 44 'Del Pistoia'  
Lassiamo andar che per uno scudieri
- p. 45 'Del Pistoia'

- Tu lustrì più che non fa l'or filato  
 p. 46 'Del Pistoia'  
 Una donna ne va tutta contrita  
 p. 47 'Del Pistoia'  
 Rimandovi i danar ch'io accattai  
 p. 48 'Del Pistoia'  
 Quello a cui mai non gli par cosa nuova  
 p. 49 'Del Pistoia'  
 Quella che volentier fugge l'honore  
 p. 50 'Del Pistoia'  
 Pur sei condotto a quello ultimo stratio  
 p. 51 'Del Pistoia'  
 Tien pur M(esser) Damian destra la via  
 p. 53 'Del Pistoia'  
 Ogni arte in sé si può chiamar gentile  
 p. 54 'Del Pistoia'  
 S'io 'l dissi già non ho per questo errato  
 p. 55 'Del Pistoia'  
 Quando un mi loda, e tu poco mi vanti  
 p. 56 'Del Pistoia'  
 Rimandoti la moglie del farsetto  
 pp. 57-58 'Del Pistoia'  
 Quasi era il giorno a la notte accostato  
 p. 58 'Del Pistoia'  
 Palmier, maggio fiorisce, sta in sul noce  
 p. 59 'Del Pistoia'  
 O grande scriba in le maggior faccende  
 p. 60 'Del Pistoia'  
 O medico mio car, pur pianamente  
 p. 61 'Del Pistoia'  
 Questi son paternostri d'un colore  
 p. 62 'Del Pistoia'  
 Quando tu vai, madonna, a' templi santi  
 p. 63 'Del Pistoia'  
 Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando in dono  
 p. 64 'Del Pistoia'  
 Pincaro io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
 p. 65 'Del Pistoia'  
 Quella che Esopo d'assai fé convito  
 p. 66 'Del Pistoia'  
 Quanto, madonna mia, sia stato charo  
 p. 67 'Del Pistoia'  
 Ossi di lucci, et stecchi di granata  
 p. 68 'Del Pistoia'  
 Quest'altro il fé natura in tarteria  
 p. 69 'Del Pistoia'  
 Monsignor salve, toi chi mi saluta?  
 p. 70 'Del Pistoia'  
 O Dio t'havessi pur dato l'anello  
 p. 71 'Del Pistoia'  
 Morì la fede insieme con l'amore  
 p. 72 'Del Pistoia'  
 L'entrata che ti rende il culiseo  
 p. 73 'Del Pistoia'  
 Italici il re franco si apparecchia  
 p. 74 'Del Pistoia'



- p. 75 Ecco il re de' romani e 'l re de galli  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 76 O città nido mio Pistoia vecchia  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 77 Tagliato a pezzi il velluto da Siena  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 78 Madonna alla franciosa io son vestito  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 79 Colui che questo Christo ha fabbricato  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 80 Manderami il giubbon del mio somieri  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 81 Ecco la maiestà del gran pretore  
'Sonetto d'Antonio detto il Pistoia'
- p. 82 Ognun mi dice tu sei magro e secco  
'Del medesimo'
- p. 83 Cenando Fedel mio iersera in corte  
'Del medesimo'
- p. 89 Novel Narciso in cui fu la vertute  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 90 Ognun mi dice pur fammi un sonetto  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 91 Dove è Marte francioso? Fra le dame  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 92 Mar, laghi, stagni, fiumi, ripe et valle  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 93 Quando di Vener fu l'alma superba  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 94 Veddi l'altr'ieri andando in beccaria  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 95 Poteva esser più ria malvagia et fella  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 96 Questi signor fan come piace a loro  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 97 Quel fraticel che schiuma la pignatta  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 98 Nel foltissimo bosco del frignano  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 99 Madonna anchor son vivo, et non è ciancia  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 100 Madonna non bisogna ch'io vi scriva  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 101 Signore, io dormo in un letto a vettura  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 102 Io viddi intrando in casa una mattina  
'Del Pistoia'
- p. 103 Nel bosco ombroso di monte fichale  
'Del Pistoia'
- Manderami un piattel di gelatina

Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emanuele II, MS  
Sessoriano 413, 15th-16th cent.

f. 26r  
f. 26v

Per te contende il laccio il ceppo e il foco  
Questo an(n)o i(n) San Giohanni Laterano

- f. 27r  
 f. 27r-v  
 f. 27v  
 ff. 27v-28r  
 f. 28r  
 f. 28v  
 ff. 28-29r  
 f. 29r  
 f. 29v  
  
 f. 30r  
  
 f. 30v  
 ff. 30v-31r  
 f. 31r  
 f. 31r-v  
 f. 31v  
 ff. 31v-32r  
 f. 32r  
 f. 32v  
 f. 70r  
  
 f. 70v  
  
  
  
 f. 71r  
  
 f. 71v  
  
 f. 72r  
 f. 171r  
  
 f. 171v  
  
 f. 172r  
  
 f. 172v  
  
 f. 173r  
  
 f. 174r
- Cosmico l'haver visto e lecto Dante  
 Perché voi che di te se faccia stima  
 Tu credi haver di lauro una girlanda  
 Cosmico il s'avicina al giorno extremo  
 Se ben te alego cusì spesso Dante  
 Quando Cosmico io son a fronte a fronte  
 Parmi veder che in ordine si metta  
 Io sento fabricare tanti sonetti  
 Per amonirte Cosmico io te scrivo  
 Voi che nei sancti tempï haveti cura  
 Non ve admirati se pochi fanciulli  
 Io vo pel campo volteggiando intorno  
 Parmi sentir che fuor la fama extenda  
 Cosmico el crede ognun che habi desmesso  
 Sier Nicolò de la comare no(n) tante  
 Cosmico no(n) pensar p(er) tuo conforto  
 Cosmico intendo che tu voi te stesso  
 De sonetti ch'io t'ho sino hor mandati  
 A me di te parlando intravien quello  
 Io pur ti scrivo ogni tuo mal costume  
 Cosmico riposar la pen<n>a intendo  
 'Idem Pistoriensis cioè risposta d(e)l  
 pistorese al m(agnifi)co cavalier(o)  
 m(esser) Antonio Cha(m)pofregoso'  
 Io ti rimando sedeci fritelle  
 'Sonetti di m(esser) Antonio da Pistoia:  
 primo per la natività di Hercole figliolo de  
 lo Ill(ustrissi)mo S(ign)or L(udovi)co nato  
 di zenaro, anno 1493'  
 Una donna beata ha partorito  
 'Ide(m) al s(ign)or Hier(oni)mo Tuttavilla  
 dove se lame(n)ta di amore'  
 Nel foltissimo boscho del frignano  
 L'altri fanno gran sonni, io fuo sonetti  
 'Idem ad Angiol di Firenze adi xv febraro  
 1493'  
 Questo imperante v(ost)ro duca sesto  
 Che pensi amante? A che penso? Al mio peggio  
 'Idem quando fu creato el papa 1493 adi 7  
 agosto'  
 Che direte cicale, el papa è fatto  
 Senza ale fu nel ciel senza thalari  
 O capo de pastor triste novelle  
 Che fai signore ill(ust)re ogni hom ti vole  
 Una donna beata ha parturito  
 (The sonnet is transcribed twice; see f.  
 70v)  
 Nel foltissimo boscho del frignano  
 (The sonnet is transcribed twice; see f.  
 70v)  
 Gli altri fanno gra(n) sonni io fuo sonetti  
 (The sonnet is transcribed twice: see f.  
 71r)  
 'A(ntonio) P(istoia)'  
 Da Lion vengho là si fa banchetto  
 Che farai tu cor mio s'io be(n) t'ho caro



Rome, Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, MS 44.C.22, Vol. Cors. 1092, 16th cent.

- f. 210r 'Sonetto d'Antonio il Pistoia'  
Ognun mi dice tu sei magro et secco
- f. 232r 'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
Cenando Fedel mio hiersera in corte
- f. 232v 'Del medesimo'  
Cosimo non pensar p(er) tuo conforto
- f. 233r 'Del med(esim)o'  
Questi son fichi, che'io ti mando i(n) dono
- f. 233v 'Del medesimo'  
Pincaro, io ho veduto un tuo capitolo
- f. 234r 'Del med(esim)o'  
Lasciamo andar che per uno scudieri

Seville, Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Colombina, MS 7.1.51, 16th cent. \*

- f. 33r Ch(e) cossa è amore? L'è un fanciulino da  
gioco
- f. 35r Nel boscho unbroso de monte fichale

Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Chigiano J.I.4, 15th cent.

- f. 301v O il Duca n(ost)ro fa i gran cavamenti

Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Barb. Lat. 3800, 16th cent. \*

- f. 4v 'Del Pistoia'  
Amor vuol pur ch'io v'ami, et io no(n) posso
- f. 13r 'Del Pistoia'  
Signor io dormo n'un letto a vettura
- f. 34r 'Del Pistoia'  
Cenando Fedel mio hiersera in corte

Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS It.IX.363(7386), 15th cent.

- f. 10r 'Soneti facti da diverse persone per la  
venuta dil Re di Franza in Italia ne  
l'an(n)o 1494'  
Italia le tue cosse van secrete
- f. 11r 'In Florentiam'  
Marzocho io penso el tuo tempo futuro
- f. 11v Le bugie butano oro e quel si spende
- f. 13r 'Soneto'  
Da Lion vengo e lì si fa bancheto
- f. 14r 'Strazola'  
'Aliud alio modo'

f. 50v Da Lion vengo e lì si fa bancheto  
 Ave rabi col baso de la pace  
 f. 72v 'De conditio(n)e urbis Rome'  
 A Roma, che se vendon? Le parole  
 f. 73r 'Dialogus de Italie potentatibus'  
 Che fa San Marco? Varda ove è la merza  
 f. 74r 'Dialogus ex Lombardie partibus transmissus  
 1492'  
 O, o il Ducha nostro fa i gran cavamenti

Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS It.IX.113(6745), 16th cent.

ff. 32v-33r 'D'Antonio detto il Pistoia'  
 Ognun mi dice, tu sei magro, et secco  
 f. 33v 'Del Pistoia son(et)ti'  
 Cenando Fedel mio hiersera i(n) corte  
 f. 34r 'Del medesimo'  
 Cosmico non pensar p(er) tuo conforto  
 (Only the first seven lines were transcribed  
 and they were later crossed out with a  
 stroke of the pen).  
 'Del medesimo'  
 Questi son fichi, ch'io ti mando i(n) dono  
 f. 34v 'Del med(es)imo'  
 Pincaro, io ho veduto un tuo capitolo  
 ff. 34v-35r Del med(es)imo  
 Lasciamo andar che p(er) uno scuderio

Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS It.XI.66(6730), 16th cent.

f. 284v L'habito che ciascun sì extremo vede  
 f. 301r 'El Pistoia'  
 Qual cosa o Dio qual cosa è quella cosa  
 'Idem'  
 Io ti mando madonna un cestellino  
 Questi son fichi ch'io ti mando i(n) dono  
 f. 301v 'Idem'  
 Madonna i' son da molti visitato  
 Homo non è felice signor mio  
 Manderami il giubon del mio somieri  
 f. 302r Il sacco è tanto pien hormai che 'l crepa  
 Ave di pietà fonte alma Maria

Verona, Biblioteca Civica, MS 1657, 1494.

f. 8r 'In Italia(m) \_exclamatio\_'  
 Italia le tue cose van secrete  
 f. 8v 'In Florentinos deploratio'  
 Marzocho io penso al tempo tuo futuro  
 f. 10r 'Epigramm(a) cuiusdam fugitivi ex Lugdunensi  
 civitate confugientis. Ad urbem Roma(m)



f. 13r an(n)o 1494 die primo Maii'  
 Da Lion vengo, là si fa banchetto  
 'Epigram(m)a in nugatores datum die xv  
 Iunii 1494.'  
 Le lingue batton oro e quel \si/ spende

### Early-printed editions

[Anonymous], *Barzelleta stramboti soneti de amore de diversi auctori* ([s.n.]).  
 Copy consulted: Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, E.6.5.3.  
 Cass. II, no. 35.

f. [2v] 'Soneto'  
 Cenando Fidel me iarsira in corte  
 ff. [2v-3r] 'Soneto'  
 Doi feroci animali stano in rivera

[Anonymous], *Frottole nove d'amore con alquanti sonetti et dialoghi* ([s.n.]). \*  
 Copy consulted: Seville, Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Colombina, 13.2.16(24).

sig. A2v-[A3r] 'Soneto'  
 Che cosa è amor? Un fanciulin da gioco

Anonymous, [*Poems*] ([s.n.]). \*  
 Copy consulted: Seville, Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Colombina, 4.1.15 (5).

f. 1v 'Sonetto de Vitellozo'  
 O fero ho ferto no(n) qual ge(m)ma et oro  
 ff. [2v-3r] 'Sonetto'  
 Doi rapazi animali stano in riviera

[Anonymous], *Frotula ala bergamascha co(n) alchuni sonetti* ([s.l.]: Felis Bergamascho, [s.a.]).  
 Copy consulted: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Misc.2175.(6).

sig. [A3r] 'Sonetto'  
 Mar lachi stagni fiumi rivi e vale  
 sig. [A3r-v] 'Sonetto'  
 Io vidi entrando in casa una maitina  
 sig. [A3v-A4r] 'Sonetto'  
 Cenando Fidel mio iersera a corte  
 sig. [A4r] 'Sonetto'  
 Madonna e son be(n) vivo e no(n) v'è zanza  
 sig. [A4r-v] 'Soneto'  
 Qua si sona una zucha a co(n)cistoro  
 sig. [A4v] 'Sonetto'

## Do fodri de salti incatenati

[Anonymous], *La disperata. Sventurato pelegrino. Littera d'amore. Sonetti* ([s.n., 1510?]).

Copy consulted: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Rés.Yd.621.

ff. [1v-3r] 'La Disperata'  
 La nuda terra s'[h]a già misso el ma(n)to  
 f. [3r] Vane canzon mia disperata e mesta  
 (Both the *disperata* and the sonnet are transcribed anonymously).

[Anonymous], *Collectanee de cose facetissime e piene de riso* (Goga Magoga [Milan: Joannes Angelus Scinzenzeler, 1515?]).

Copy consulted: Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, Triv.L.159.

sig. [d3v-d4r] 'Soneto del Pistoia'  
 Signore e dormo in uno lecto a victura

Aquilano, Serafino, *Opere* (Florence: Filippo Giunta, 1516). Copy consulted: London, The British Library, G. 10635.

ff. 110v-113v 'Disperata Terza'  
 La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
 ff. 113v-114r 'Sonetto co(n)forme alla medesima materia'  
 Vanne canzona mia disprata, et mesta

Aquilano, Serafino, *Opere* (Florence: Bernardo Zucchetto, 1517). Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 11426.a.95.

ff. 90v-94r 'Disperata Seconda'  
 La nuda terra s'ha già messo il ma(n)to

Aquilano, Serafino, *Opere* (Venice: Melchiorre Sessa, 1526). Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 1071.g.19.

ff. 115v-118v 'Disperata III'  
 La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
 ff. 118v-119r 'Sonetto conforme alla medesima materia'  
 Vanne canzona mia disprata, et mesta

Aquilano, Serafino, *Opere* (Venice: Giovanni Andrea Valvassori, 1539).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 1070.f.15.

sig. P3v-[P6v] 'Disperata III'  
 La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
 sig. [P6v-P7r] 'Sonetto conforme alla medesima materia'  
 Vanne canzona mia disprata, et mesta



Aquilano, Serafino, *Opera* (Venice: Pietro dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1540).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 11427.b.72(1).

sig. P3v-[P6v] 'Disperata III'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
sig. [P6v-P7r] 'Sonetto co(n)forme a la medesima materia'  
Vanne canzona mia disparta, e mesta

Aquilano, Serafino, *Opera* (Venice: Bartolomeo Imperadore & Francesco, 1544).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 1071.d.14.

sig. P3v-[P6v] 'Disperata III'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
sig. [P6v-P7r] 'Sonetto conforme a la medesima materia'  
Vanne canzona mia disparta, e mesta

Aquilano, Serafino, *Opere* (Venice: Nicolò de Bascarini, 1548).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 11429.df.35.

ff. 110v-113v 'Disperata Terza'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
ff. 113v-114r 'Sonetto conforme alla medesima materia'  
Vanne canzone mia disprata, e mesta

Aquilano, Serafino, *Opera* (Venice: Agostino Bindoni, 1550).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 1071.d.15.

sig. P3v-[P6v] 'Disperata III'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
sig. [P6v-P7r] 'Sonetto conforme a la medesima materia'  
Vanne canzona mia disparta, e mesta

Bellincioni, Bernardo, *Rime*, edited by Francesco Tanzi (Milan: Filippo di Mantegazzi, 1493).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, G.11003.

sig. a2r-v 'Sonetto fatto al signore Duca di Milano  
contra a detractori del nobile poeta  
laureato Bernardo Belinzone cittadino  
fiorentino per Antonio Vinci da Pistoia'  
Ruppe la parcha una più dolce cetra  
sig. [p2v] 'S(onetto) moralissimo'  
Pellago di tempeste, un mar d'affanni

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1506).

Copy consulted: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Rari V.477.

sig. [I7v] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
 Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
 sig. [I7v] 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio'  
 Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., [*Orlando innamorato*] (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1511).  
 Copy consulted: London, The British Library, G.11053.

sig. [I7v] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
 Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
 sig. [I7v] 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio'  
 Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Milan: Leonardo Vegio, 1513).  
 Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 671.f.16.(1).

sig. [E4r] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
 Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
 sig. [E4r] 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio'  
 Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1513).  
 Edition consulted: Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, I11.96.(1).

sig. [I7v] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
 Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
 sig. [I7v] 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio'  
 Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato* (Milan: Rocho da Valle & Brothers, 1518).  
 Copy consulted: Milan, Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, Rari Castiglioni 90.

sig. [EE7v] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
 Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
 sig. [EE7v] 'Soneto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio'  
 Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Libri tre de Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino & Vincenzo di Paolo, 1521).  
 Edition unavailable for consultation - private collection.

Boiardo, Matteo M., [*Tutti li libri de Orlando innamorato*] ([Venice: Ales]sandro Bindoni, [1522?]).  
 Copy consulted: Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, I-N-1327.



sig. [K7v] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
sig. [K7v] 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio'  
Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el ve(n)to

Boiardo, Matteo M., [*Tutti li libri di Orlando innamorato*] (Venice: Francesco D'Alessandro Bindoni & Maffeo Pasini, 1525).  
Copy consulted: Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Maglia.22.B.8.11.

sig. [LL8r] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
sig. [LL8r] 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio'  
Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Libri tre de Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino, 1528).  
Copy consulted: Seville, Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Colombina, 4.6.41(1).

sig. A2r 'Sonetti d'Antonio Pistoia'  
Morte crudel superba invida e fera  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto co(n)solatorio d'Anto(nio) Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Ant(onio)'  
Fu più tranquillo e manusuet' il vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Tutti li libri d'Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Aurelio Pincio, 1532).  
Copy consulted: London, The British Library, G. 10968.

sig. [LL6r] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
sig. [LL6r] 'Sonetto del medesimo'  
Fu più tranquillo e mansueto el ve(n)to

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Libri tre di Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino, 1532/33).  
Copy consulted: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Rés. Yd.227.

sig. A2r 'Sonetti d'Antonio Pistoia'  
Morte crudel superba invida e fera  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto co(n)solatorio d'Anto(nio) Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Ant(onio)'  
Fu più tranquillo e mansuet' il vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Pietro dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1534).  
Copy consulted: London, The British Library, G. 11054.

sig. A2r 'Sonetti d'Antonio Pistoia'  
Morte crudel superba invida e fera  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto co(n)solatorio d'Anto(nio) Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Ant(onio)  
Fu più tranquillo e mansuet' il vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Pietro dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1539).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 1073.g.9.

sig. A2r 'Sonetti d'Antonio Pistoia'  
Morte crudel, superba, invida, e fera,  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto co(n)solatorio d'Anto(nio) Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose, e dive  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Ant(onio)  
Fu più tranquillo, e mansuet' il vento,

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Tutti li libri de Orlando inamorato* (Milan: [s.t.], 1539).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, G.11055.

sig. [I5r] 'Sonetto consolatorio de Antonio Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
sig. [I5r] 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Antonio'  
Fu più tranquillo e manuseto el vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Giovanni Antonio & Pietro dei Nicolini da Sabbio, 1544).

Copy consulted: London, The British Library, G.11058.

sig. A2r 'Sonetti d'Antonio Pistoia'  
Morte crudel superba invida e fera  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto co(n)solatorio d'Anto(nio) Pistoia'  
Cantate o nimphe gloriose e dive  
sig. A2r 'Sonetto laudatorio del medesimo Ant(onio)'  
Fu più tranquillo e mansuet' il vento

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Michele Bonelli, 1574).

Copy consulted: Birmingham, Central Library, 094,1574.1.

sig. [a7v] 'In laude dell'autore'  
Cantate o ninfe gloriose, e dive  
(At the end the sonnet bears the initials  
M. B. V. that is Michele Bonelli Venetiano).

Boiardo, Matteo M., *Orlando innamorato* (Venice: Michele Bonelli, 1576).

Copy consulted: Forlì, Biblioteca Comunale A. Saffi, P.XIX.80.



sig. [a7v] 'In laude dell'autore'  
 Cantate o ninfe gloriose, e dive  
 (At the end the sonnet bears the initials  
 M. B. V. that is Michele Bonelli Venetiano).

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Compendio de cose nove di Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori* ([s.n.]). \*  
 Copy consulted: Rome, Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, 131.D.25.

sig. [C3v] 'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
 Signori e dormo in un lecto a victura

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Compendio de cose nove di Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino, 1507). \*  
 Copy consulted: London, The British Library, G.10646.

sig. [C3v] 'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
 Signori e dormo in un lecto a victura

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Opera nuova de Vincentio Calmeta, Lorenzo Carbone, Orpheo mantuano et Venturino da Pesaro, et altri auctori* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1507).  
 Copy consulted: Modena, Biblioteca Estense, α.Z.7.29(3).

f. [11v] 'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
 Signor e dormo in un lecto a vitura  
 (Additional foliation: f. 106v).

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Compendio de cose nove de Vice(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Manfredo Bonelli, 1508). \*  
 Copy consulted: Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, RR.3.17.1.

sig. [C3v] 'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
 Signori e dormo in un lecto a victura

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Compendio de cose nove di Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Melchiorre Sessa, 1515). \*  
 Copy consulted: Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Nencini F.4.2.37.

sig. [C3v] 'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
 Signori e dormo in un lecto a victura

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Compendio de cose nove Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Alessandro Bindoni, 1515). \*  
 Copy consulted: Modena, Biblioteca Estense, α.Z.7.15.

sig. BB3v 'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
 Signori e dormo in un lecto a victura

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Compe(n)dio de cose nove de Vince(n)zo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1516). \*  
Copy consulted: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Misc. 2409.(1).

sig. [C3v]                    'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
Signori e dormo in un lecto a victura

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Compendio de cose nove Vincenzo Calmeta et altri auctori* (Venice: Joannes Tacuinus, 1517). \*  
Copy consulted: Rome, Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, Cors.131.D.6.2.

sig. BB3v                    'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
Signori e dormo in un lecto a victura

Calmeta, Vincenzo, *Vincenzo Calmeta poeta vulgare non manco facetto che elegante. In ditto opera se contiene: sonetti strambotti eccloghe capituli dialoghi et una predica d'amore cosa bellissima* (Chivasso: Francesco Garrone, 1529). \*  
Copy consulted: Pisa, Biblioteca Universitaria, S.R.A.1.50.  
Previous pressmark: D'Ancona 1.10.12.

sig. C3v                    'Sonetto del Pistoia'  
Signori e dormo in un letto a vittura

Cingoli, Bellizario da, *Sonetto de Bellizario da Cingoli nova trama. Con l'autoritâ de Salamone. Cosa nova* ([s.n.]). \*  
Copy consulted: Seville, Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Colombina, 13.2.16 (31).

ff. [3v-4r]                'Sonetti del Pistoia'  
Il tuo caval da quattro gambe infermo  
f. [4r]                    'Sonetto'  
Che cosa, è amor? Un fanciulin da gioco  
f. [4r-v]                'Sonetto'  
Frondino come va? Va mal signore

Cingoli, Bellizario da, *Sonetto de Bellizario da Cingoli nova trama. Con l'autoritâ de Salamone. Cosa nova* ([s.n., 1530?]). \*  
Copy consulted: London, British Library, 1071 c.32 (7).

ff. [3v-4r]                'Sonetti del Pistoia'  
Il tuo caval da quatro gambe infermo  
f. [4r-v]                'Sonetto'  
Che cosa, è amor? Un fanciulin da gioco  
f. [4v]                    'Sonetto'  
Frondino come va? Va mal signore

Finetti, Angelo M., *Sonetti bellissimi et ornatissimi dello egregio homo Angelo Maria Finetti sanese: co(m)posti in laude di una sua amata. Ancora co(n)tiene q(ue)sta op(er)a molti altri*



ornati sonetti di diversi altri autori. Opera nuova (Siena: Simeone di Nicolò Nardi & Giovanni di Alexandro, [s.a.]). \*  
Copy consulted: Seville, Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Colombina, 13.2.5(1).

sig. [c4v] 'Sonetto di Leonardo di S(er) Ambruogio  
alias Mescholino'  
Ognu(n) mi dice ch'i' so magro et secho

Pistoia, Antonio, *Sonetti novi del preclarissimo poeta misser Antonio decto el Pistoia* ([s.n., not before 1503]).  
Copy consulted: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Misc. 1906.11.

f. [1r] Madonna ancor son vivo e non n'è zanza  
Madonna el non bisogna ch'io vi scriva  
Cenando Fidel mio ersera in corte  
Dui feroci animali stanno in riviera  
f. [1v] Ferro o ferto qua non gemme et horo  
La scure, el culeo, el capestro, el cortello  
Se col tempo ogni cosa si matura  
Volendomi partir dala mia diva  
ff. [1v-2r] Charon che voi? Mena la barcha a riva  
f. [2r] Chi segue amor chi è toco del suo telo  
A tu veduto questi fotiventi  
Questo habito sì estre<m>o che ognun vede  
Pelago di tempesta e un mar d'affanni  
f. [2v] Ave Maria o virgo gloriosa

[Pistoia, Antonio], [Tragedia] ([s.n.]). \*  
Copy consulted: Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, Comm. 178/1  
The work commences with the second act, line no. 140.

pistoia, Antonio, *Tragedia* (Venice: Manfredo Bonelli, 1508).  
Copy consulted: London, The British Library, C.62.a.4.

pistoia, Antonio, *Tragedia* (Venice: Manfredo Bonelli, 1508).  
The frontispiece bears the device of Melchiorre Sessa Il Vecchio.  
Copy consulted: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Rari Ven. 703.

Pistoia, Antonio, *Tragedia* ([Florence]: Francesco Benvenuto, [not before 1515]).  
Copy consulted: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Rari 800.(6).

Pistoia, Antonio, *Tragedia* (Venice: Melchiorre Sessa, 1516).  
Copy consulted: Chicago, The Joseph Regenstein Library, PQ 4617 C18F5 1516.

Pistoia, Antonio, *Operetta nova de doi nobilissimi ama(n)ti Philostrato et Pamphila* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1518).  
Copy consulted: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Rari 776.(23) & Rari V.697.(1) (different issues).

Pistoia, Antonio, *Operetta nova de doi nobilissimi amanti Philostrato et Pamphila* (Milan: Giovanni da Castiglione, 1519).  
Copy consulted: Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, Triv. M.686/2.

Pistoia, Antonio, *Tragedia* ([Florence]: Francesco di Giovanni Benvenuto, [c. 1520]). \*  
Copy consulted: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Mortara adds.II.16.

Pistoia, Antonio, *Operetta nova de doi nobilissimi amanti Philostrato et Pamphila* (Milan: Rocho da Valle & Brothers, 1520).  
Copy consulted: Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Palat. D.4.7.33.

Sardini, Simone, *Cerbero i(n)voco composto per Simone Sardini Senese vocato Saviozo. El co(n)trario di Cerbero che comi(n)cia: Certo Iesù intendo di chiamare. La disperata composta da Antonio de Tibaldi ferrarese.* ([Florence: Lorenzo de' Morgiani, 1495?]). \*  
Copy consulted: London, The British Library, IA.27942.

ff. [3r-4v] 'La disperata'  
La nuda terra s'<h>a già messo il ma(n)to  
f. [4v] Van(n)e canzo(n) mia disperata et mesta

Sardini, Simone, *Cerbero invoco composto per Simone Sardini Senese vocato Saviozo. El contrario di Cerbero che comincia: Certo Iesù intendo di chiamare. La disperata composta da Antonio de Tibaldi ferrarese* ([Florence: Lorenzo de' Morgiani, c. 1498-1500]).  
Copy consulted: Bologna, Casa Carducci, 4.d.118.

sig. [a3r-a4v] 'La disperata'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il ma(n)to  
sig. [a4v] Vanne canzo(n) mia disperata et mesta

[Sardini, Simone], [Cerbero invoco. Contro a Cerbero. La Disperata. Spechio di Narcisso] ([Rome: Johann Besicken, c. 1505]).  
Copy consulted: Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, Vol.Inc.1700.

ff. 2v-4r 'La Disperata'  
La nuda terra s'<h>a già messo 'l ma(n)to  
f. 4r Vanne canzon mia disperata e mesta  
(The disperata and the sonnet are transcribed anonymously).



Serdini, Simone, *Cerbero invoco composto per Simone Sardini Senese vocato Saviozo. El contrario di Cerbero che comincia: Certo Iesù intendo chiamare. La disperata composta da Antonio de Tibaldi ferrarese* (Turin: Franciscus de Silva, [c. 1510]). \*  
Copy consulted: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Rés. Yd. 617.

sig. [a3r-a4v]            'La disperata'  
La nuda terra s'<h>a già messo il ma(n)to  
sig. [a4v]                Va(n)ne canzon mia disperata et mesta

Serdini, Simone, *Cerbero invoco composto p(er) Simone Sardini Senese vocato Saviozo. El contrario di Cerbero che comincia: Certo Iesù inte(n)do di chiamare. La disperata composta da Antonio de Tibaldi ferrarese* ([Florence: c. 1510?]). \*  
Copy consulted: Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 903.

sig. [a3r-a4r]            'La disperata'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il ma(n)to

Serdini, Simone, *Cerbero invoco co(m)posto p(er) Simone Sardini senese co(n) el co(n)trario di Cerbero. Intendo di chiamare la disperata composta da Antonio di Tibaldi Ferrarese* ([Venice: Agostino Bindoni, 1520?]).  
Copy consulted: London, The British Library, C.20.c.22 (11-12).

ff. [1r-2v]                'La disperata o vero nuda terra'  
La nuda terra s'<h>a già messo il ma(n)to  
f. [2v]                    Vanne canzon mia disperata et mesta  
(Additional foliation: ff. 141r-142v).

Serdini, Simone, *Cerbaro invoco. Et contra Cerbaro, con la disperata de M(esser) Antonio Tibaldeo* ([Florence: 1520?]). \*  
Copy consulted: London, The British Library, 11422.d.31.

sig. [A3r-A4v]            'Disperata de M(esser) A(ntonio) T(ebaldeo)'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
sig. [A4v]                Van(n)e canzon mia disperata e mesta

Serdini, Simone, *Cerbero invoco* (Florence: Appresso alle Scalee di Badia, [c. 1560-1600]). \*  
Copy consulted: Rome, Biblioteca Universitaria Alessandrina, Misc. XIII.a.37, no. 16.

f. 87r                    Vanne canzona mia disperata, e mesta  
(The sonnet is transcribed anonymously)

Serdini, Simone, *Cerbero invoco* (Florence: Appresso alla Badia, 1569).  
Copy consulted: Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Lk

Sammelbd 64 (5).

sig. [a4v] Vanne canzona mia disperata, e mesta  
(The sonnet is transcribed anonymously)

Terdocci, Faustino da, et al., *Barzeleta de Messer Faustino da Terdocio in laude dela pecunia, et la autorità de Salomone in frotola de Belizario da Cinguli con alquanti sonetti artificiosi. Opera nova* (Venice: Nicolò Zoppino, [c. 1520?]).  
Copy consulted: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Misc. 2419. (1)

sig. [B3v] 'Sonetti del Pistoia'  
Il tuo caval da quatro gambe infermo  
sig. [B3v-B4r] 'Sonetto'  
Che cosa, è amor? Un fanciulin da gioco  
sig. [B4r] 'Sonetto'  
Fronchino come va? Va mal signore

Torti, Cesare, [*Poesie*] ([Florence: Piero Pacini, 1490?]).  
Copy consulted: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. II.Q.VI.79.

sig. [e7r-e10r] 'Antonius Thibaldeus Ferariensis poeta lauro  
insignitus'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
sig. [e10r-v] Vanne canzon mia disperata et mesta

Torti, Cesare, [*Poesie*] (Florence: Francesco Bonaccorsi, [1490?]).  
Copy consulted: London, The British Library, C.8.g.12.

sig. [f5r-f8v] 'Antonius Thibaldeus Ferariensis poeta lauro  
insignitus'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
sig. [f8v] Vanne canzon mia disperata et mesta

Torti, Cesare, *Opera nova de Cesar Torto escula(n)o et Augustino da Urbino et Nicolò Filibcne [sic] senese et Bernardo Illicino medico et philosopho* (Venice: Giorgio dei Rusconi, 1508).  
Copy consulted: Seville, Institución Colombina, Biblioteca Colombina, 4.6.2.

sigs. [ll3v]-mm2v 'Antonius Thibaldeus Ferariensis poeta lauro  
insignitus'  
La nuda terra s'ha già messo il manto  
sig. mm2v-[mm3r] Vanne canzon mia disperata et mesta



## Archival documents

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Cl.I.408, f. 5v, 15th-16th cent.

29.04.1502: a note concerning the death of Antonio Pistoia in Ferrara.

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Cl.I.222 (Appunti Luigi N. Cittadella), Scatola 7, Famiglie OC-P, 17th-18th cent.

Not foliated: a genealogical tree in two parts of the Pistoia family plus a note undersigned by Emilia Ferrari Pistoia.

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Cl.I.322, 18th cent. ff. [1r-23v]: miscellaneous information with a genealogical tree and a coat of arms relating to the Pistoia and Cammelli families from 1471 to 1717.

Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, MS Cl.I.753, 18th cent.\*  
'Elenco di tutti li giustiziati estratto dai libri ducali'.

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Rossi C.351<sup>b1\*</sup>, 18th cent.

'Alberi genealogici delle famiglie nobili, e civili della città di Pistoia disposti secondo il loro ordine alfabetico, e ricavati dal Priorista del Cav(aliere) Franchi. Opera di Tommaso Caramelli, cittadino pistoiese'.

f. 44r-v: a genealogical tree in two parts of the Cammelli family from Pistoia.

London, The British Library, MS 22,324, 16th century.  
Annals of Ferrara 1471-1483.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, B.XXXI.3, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1497-1499, Busta 1235, f. 545r.

22.12.1498: letter from Siviero dei Sivieri, Ferrara, to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.8, Lettere da Mantova, 1499, Busta 2453, f. 165r, f. 166r.

19.02.1499: letter from Antonio Pistoia, Mantua, penned by a scribe, to Francesco Gonzaga.

18.06.1499: letter from Antonio Pistoia, Mantua, to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 11.02.1499-28.10.1499, Busta 2993, Registro 10, f. 33v, no. 105, f. 38r, no. 118..

15.07.1499: letter from Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, Mantua, to

Francesco Rangone.

08.08.1499: letter from Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, Mantua, to Francesco Rangone.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXII.3, Modena-Reggio, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1477-1499, Busta 1289, f. 624r.

25.07.1499: letter from Francesco Rangone, Reggio Emilia, to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.6, Lettere Originali dei Gonzaga, 1499, Busta 2113, f. 313r, f. 314r.

15.10.1499: post scripta from Giovanni Gonzaga, Milan, to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Ordinari Misti, 26.12.1499-01.06.1500, Busta 2909, Registro 165, f. 61v.

23.03.1500: letter from Francesco Gonzaga, [Mantua], to the Podestà of Mantua.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 05.11.1500-13.10.1501, Busta 2993, Registro 12, f. 7v, no. 23.

17.11.1500: letter from Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, Mantua, to Antonio Pistoia.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXIX.3, Novellara, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1452-1706, Busta 1354.

The letters are not foliated.

29.10.1500: letter from Antonio Pistoia, Novellara, to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga.

28.11.1500: letter from Antonio Pistoia, Novellara, to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga.

10.01.1501: letter from Antonio Pistoia, Novellara, to Francesco Gonzaga.

10.01.1501: letter from Antonio Pistoia, Novellara, to Francesco Gonzaga.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga F.II.9, Copialettere Ordinari Misti, 23.10.1500-18.04.1501, Busta 2910, Registro 169, f. 54v.

18.01.1501: letter from Francesco Gonzaga, Mantua, to Antonio Pistoia.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 20.10.1501-29.07.1502, Busta 2993, Registro 13, ff. 80v-81r, no. 216.

13.06.1502: letter from Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, Mantua, to Nicolò Correggio.



Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXVII.2, Correggio, Lettere dei Signori di Correggio ai Gonzaga, 1500-1511, Busta 1314, f. 127r.

15.06.1502: letter from Nicolò Correggio, Ferrara, to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, E.XXXVII.3, Carteggio di Inviati e Diversi, 1367-1585, Busta 1321.

The letter is not foliated.

27.03.1505: letter from Marco Antonio Pistoia, Correggio, to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga.

Mantua, Archivio di Stato, Arch. Gonzaga, F.II.9, Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este, 14.01.1511-02.02.1512, Busta 2996, Registro 29, ff. 80v-81r, f. 81r-v

18.10.1511: letter from Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, Mantua, to Bernardino Prospero.

18.10.1511: letter from Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, Mantua, to Gianfrancesco Gianninello.

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### Conclusion

The poetry of Antonio Pistoia was, as we have seen, much sought after and appreciated by a wide and diverse audience. Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, one of the most celebrated and famous arts patrons of the time, and the noble army captain and lyric poet Nicolò da Correggio both owned manuscript collections of sonnets by Pistoia. Alessandro Bentivoglio enjoyed his verse and so did the major literati of the sixteenth century including Pietro Aretino, Ludovico Ariosto, Matteo Bandello, Baldesar Castiglione and Niccolò Franco. The *capitoli in terza rima* by the Florentine canon and satirist Francesco Berni were also deeply influenced by the poetic production of Pistoia who became a great source of inspiration for the so-called *berneschi*. Indeed in some sixteenth-century poems the association of Berni and Pistoia almost became a standard phrase.

Continuity and innovation were the hallmarks of his literary success. His native Tuscany provided him with a glorious and diversified cultural background: the great works by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, the *novelle* by Sacchetti, Sercambi and Sermini, the *facezie* by Poggio and the Piovano Arlotto, the special brand of Florentine trobar clus of Domenico di Giovanni called *Il Burchiello*, the epic adventures of *Morgante*, and the carnival songs by Poliziano and Lorenzo. All these, together with a Tuscan *gusto* for practical jokes (*natte*) and light-hearted narrative (*baie*), find ample resonance in his verse. His lines echo those by Cecco Angiolieri, Rustico Filippi and Pieraccio



Tedaldi: the jocular tradition is both revered, paid homage to, and taken one step forward in his sonnets. Pistoia is the first, long before the Veronese physician Girolamo Fracastoro and Nicolò Campani called Strascino, to make the *morbis gallicus* a suitable subject for a poetic composition. His stylistic choice of the *sonetto caudato*, also used before him, represents a departure from the traditional fourteen-line poem: this allows the poet a higher degree of freedom, and gives his sonnets an open-ended form with potential for expressive elements.

Francesco Tanzi, in his preface to the 1493 edition of Bellincioni's poetic corpus, wrote that prior to the arrival of the Florentine sonneteer at the Sforza court in Milan 'pochi qui erano chi sapesse che volesse dir sonetto', probably referring to the fact that the *frottola* and similar forms were more common. A similar impact may well be surmised for the town of Reggio Emilia and its surroundings, where Pistoia was present for a number of years. After all he was one of the very few Tuscan poets who, at the time, worked and lived in a part of Italy which was regarded as Lombardy. His poetry must have been of great importance to local versifiers as well as to courtiers at the Gonzaga and Este palaces. His *sonetti caudati* enjoyed a wide circulation both outside and inside the court milieu: on one occasion they were posted on the columns of the Doge's Palace in Venice and therefore made available to a large audience. The fact was duly recorded in the most important Ferrarese chronicle of the fifteenth century, written by the notary Ugo Caleffini. Such poems aroused curiosity and generated great interest: it is documented that il Prete da Correggio entrusted the nobleman

Giovanni Pietro Gonzaga with one of his sonnets penned 'in risposta del Pistoia'. The delivery instructions were carefully annotated in a *postscript* now in the State Archive of Mantua: the sonnet was not to be given directly to Pistoia but first to Isabella, the Marchioness of Mantua, who in turn was to pass it on to Pistoia: 'mandolo alla Ex(cellentia) Vostra acciò gli lo possa fare avere'. His poetry commanded respect and generated envy (hence the high number of *tenzoni* he engaged in). He was well known for his whip-lash tongue both during and after his lifetime and this partly explains why his name became much and far too easily associated with a series of invectives and tirades.

It is fair to say, however, that Pistoia stood out from the *turba iocosa* of courtiers and entertainers. Although his post as a tax collector, but in fact as the head of the local *gabella*, at Porta Santa Croce first and Porta San Pietro later, kept him away from court circles, at the same time it gave him a higher degree of freedom in penning verse and a different perspective altogether: his invectives and personal vituperation were at times daring to an extreme, exercises in which very few other poets engaged. The consequences could be serious and Pistoia knew that his life might be at risk. Both practical and literary choices therefore led the author to opt for difficult registers, cryptic language and unusual imagery. As we have seen, some of his poems are real conundrums fraught with obscure allusions and cross-references, special sound effects and paradoxical and grotesque wordplay. Was this type of poetry just a sophisticated verbal game simply aimed at enticing its potential readers and



at leaving them empty-handed? Recent scholarship has proved that this may not always be the case and I hope that my new reading of some of Pistoia's poems may change the way we approach them. Different factors such as the intermingling of real-life events and conventions of court poetry, the poet's penchant for obscenity and puns, the grammatical and semantic ambiguity of the sonnets: all these can and must be taken into consideration. The monumental study by Jean Toscan has opened up a whole new scenario that gives depth to this type of poetry, although it is important to treat his research with due caution. Ambiguity in expression, after all, was both a choice as well as a necessity, and not all ambiguity need necessarily be of a scurrilous or sexual nature.

Nineteenth-century scholarship was instrumental in bringing back to life the figure of Antonio Pistoia: it was thanks to the work of Antonio Cappelli, Severino Ferrari, Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti, Rodolfo Renier and Erasmo Pèrcopo that important manuscripts and archival documents were located and published for the first time and our poet became once again the focus of attention or should I say, on certain occasions, of careless attention. His year of birth, patronymic and surname were established and accepted without sufficient investigation and this state of affairs triggered a number of conclusions and connections with people and places which were at times far from being true, or even plausible, as I have shown in the course of my thesis. During my investigation I established, among other things, that his surname was Pistoia and not Cammelli, a family name which, though present in Pistoia, had only at best tenuous

and almost invariably dubious connections with our poet. It was also generally believed that his patronymic was Biondo, but even this piece of information, usually important to avoid the constant problem of homonymous individuals, is debatable as an archival annotation, previously unnoticed, gives his father's name as Bartolomio. He was not a courtier at the Sforza court in Milan, as many believed, but he was an employee of Duke Ercole I d'Este in Reggio Emilia from 1485 until the very beginning of 1500, although he was dismissed for a short period in 1497. The poet who died in Ferrara on 29 April 1502 had at least two sons: one who died of syphilis on 5 January 1501 and Marco Antonio, a poet in his own right, who lived in poverty and wrote to Isabella d'Este Gonzaga after his father's death to find some solace. In trying to shed new light on his life, it was necessary to test all the various known theories, double check all my sources and unearth new evidence. I hope that my study has highlighted how misleading some previous findings have been, although, in order to make my case I was obliged to subtract some alleged 'certainties' from Pistoia's biography, such as his year of birth, without, in this instance, being able to provide evidence for a new date. I feel reasonably confident, however, that further investigations may well provide us with more definitive answers.

My research in the field of textual tradition has proved successful. During my visit to libraries and archives I was able to locate eighteen new manuscript sources and twenty early printed editions. My codicological study of the Ambrosiana manuscript gave surprising results and it demonstrated that MS



H.223 inf. was not autograph, as everybody believed, merely on the assertion of Erasmo Pèrcopo who had never actually seen the manuscript. Nor was it written with reasonable certainty during Pistoia's life: it can in fact be dated between 1527 and 1553. This also means that, while the Ambrosiana manuscript remains the fullest collection of Pistoia's poems, it is not necessarily the best, nor the oldest, in terms of textual tradition.

I hope that my study has succeeded in rekindling interest in a poet who is, nowadays, often and unfairly dismissed as a minor figure but who was not so in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. My work is far from being complete but I do hope it will prove to be a sound starting point for further research and a source of inspiration for a new critical edition.

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