Dir so, trobar vers, entendre razo. Poetry and music in medieval Romance lyric*

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§ Fino a che punto, nella lirica romanza del medioevo, l'idea di un'originaria simbiosi tra parola e musica è storicamente fondata? Prendendo in considerazione documenti e testi letterari e non, il saggio intende sostenere l'ipotesi che un aspetto fondamentale del rapporto tra poesia e musica sia rimasto invariato dalle origini della lirica romanza fino alla fine del Trecento: l'indipendenza delle due forme d'arte nel processo creativo, e conseguentemente il prevalere di una divisione delle competenze e dei ruoli tra poeti e musicisti.

§ To what extent, in medieval Romance lyric, is the idea of an original symbiosis between word and music historically grounded? Taking into account medieval documents and texts, both literary and non-literary, this essay explores the interpretive hypothesis that one fundamental aspect of the relationship between poetry and music remained unchanged from the origins of Romance lyric through to the end of the fourteenth century: the independence of the two forms of art in the creative process, and consequently the prevalence of a division of competence and role between poets and musicians.

Tacea la notte placida
e bella in ciel sereno
la luna il viso argenteo
mostrava lieto e pieno...
Quando suonar per l'aere,
infino allor sì muto,
dolci s'udiro e flebili
gli accordi d'un liuto,
e versi melanconici
un trovator cantò.[1]

IN the opening aria of the second scene of Giuseppe Verdi's *Il trovatore*, Leonora thus tells of her fatal encounter with Manrico, the dark and unknown hero («bruno e di stemma ignudo») who binds himself to her eternally through his song. The year is 1853, but the character of Manrique, the troubadour, had already met with resounding success in Antonio García Gutiérrez's drama *El trovador*. First staged in 1836, this play marked the beginning of Spanish Romantic theater and remains today the most renowned example of that genre. We are in the midst of the nineteenth century's nationalistic reassessment and re-appropriation of the Middle Ages, which saw the figure of the troubadour, a representation of the ideal symbiosis between word and music, as the embodiment of the Apollonian and Dionysian union central to Nietzsche's philosophical thought. It is no coincidence that shortly thereafter García Gutiérrez's and Verdi's troubadour was claimed as an exalted mythological figure in *Tristan und Isolde* (1868). Wagner's opera, a symbol of German Romanticism, presents the poet-singer hero as the protagonist in one of the most celebrated medieval legends, portrayed through the composer's new form of absolute art that strove to break down boundaries between different languages, most especially between poetry and music.

But, as we know, the Romantic vision of the Middle Ages would cross the threshold of the following century, lingering on in widely diffused cultural models beyond the critical review called for by the new epistemological horizons that arose in French historiography (the *Annales* school), philology, and literary studies. In terms of the latter, I refer to the novelty primarily associated with Joseph Bédier, to the turning point represented by his criticism of Romantic and populist theories regarding the origins of the *fabliaux* and *chansons de geste*. Bédier's work addressed the legend of Tristan and Isolde, seen in its literary form as independent from its Celtic origins. In short, Bédier insisted on the importance of adhering to the documents, a point of view that should be considered in relation to his reservations regarding

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[1] *Il trovatore*. Dramma in quattro parti da *El trovador* di A. García Gutiérrez, libretto di S. Cammarano, musica di G. Verdi, Edizioni del Teatro Regio, Torino 2005.

Lachmann's reconstructive method, reservations destined to leave their mark on the operative choices of philology and on textual editing.[2] In contrast, one must also recognize that outside of scholarly circles, the Romantic re-appropriation of the Middle Ages persisted into the second half of the twentieth century – that is, beyond the application of the concepts of 'herme-neutics' and 'otherness' to medieval studies.[3] Even up to the present day, the Middle Ages continued to be evoked as an epoch that appears distant and obscure while simultaneously seeming near and relevant in its archaic nature, a bearer of essential values.

On the one hand, we can thus observe a rift between common sentiment and avant-garde epistemology in the perception of medieval culture from the first half of the twentieth century on. At the same time, we can also ask what impact the Romantic and post-Romantic idealization of the Middle Ages may have had, or may still have, on certain aspects of philological and literary scholarship, if and where the anti-idealistic perspective has had difficulty taking hold. I am thinking particularly of the abuse of the concepts of orality and 'performance' and of the notion of 'popular'. Looking at the problem on which I would like to focus here – the relationship between poetry and music in medieval Romance lyric – the question can be reformulated in relation to the figure of the poet, until now considered to be a poet-musician, at least during the first phase of production and in the French and Occitan area (troubadours and trouvères). We may ask ourselves, then, to what extent the idea of an original symbiosis between word and music is historically grounded and force ourselves to examine this relationship objectively, taking into account medieval documents and texts, both literary and non-literary. Thus, in this essay I explore a different interpretive hypothesis, namely that in Romance lyric one fundamental aspect of the relationship between poetry and music remained unchanged from its origins through to the end of the four-teenth century: the independence of the two forms of art in the creative process, and consequently the prevalence of a division of competence and role between poets and musicians.

I would like to begin my examination from the theoretical understanding of the relationship between poetry and music in the work of two key Italian and French authors, Dante Alighieri and Guillaume de Machaut. We know that in his discussion of the art of poetic composition (*ars cantionis*) in the *De vulgari eloquentia* Dante attributes to music the function of a science

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[2] I refer, naturally, to the turning point in philological studies created by J. Bédier's objections to the reconstructive, stemmatic method (see BÉDIER 1928). It will suffice here to recall G. Contini's writing on Bédier's antidogmatic stance, in which he speaks of a «critica dissolutiva dei dogmatismi primari» (CONTINI 1974, p. 361). A. Corbellari has dedicated a chapter to Bédier's studies on the legend of Tristan and Isolde in his book (CORBELLARI 1997, pp. 155-300). The assumptions and historico-cultural context of Bédier's new approach are discussed in L. Leonardi's study LEONARDI 2009.

[3] See JAUSS 1989, pp. 3-50, esp. paragraph 3, pp. 9-14. Gadamer's hermeneutics is placed in dialogue with the textual criticism by SEGRE 1998.

(*scientia musicae*) in relation to the song's proportions (*cantus divisio*), which the poet must consider if he wishes to plan the stanza's formal structure correctly. Using this structure as a base, the poet then constructs his poem through the appropriate disposition of verses and rhyme (*habitudo partium*). Dante's vision is one indebted to Boethius's hierarchy of musical activity: the theoretical realm of the *musicus*, cognizant of proportional laws; the productive realm of the poet, who creates the verses (*fingit carmina*); and the performative role of the singers and instrumentalists, who bring the poetic work to life (*artificium probant*). This analysis of verbal creation is a functional one, and is therefore not concerned with aspects related to execution per se. The passage in which Dante declares that a *canzone* can be recited either by its author or by another, *vel ab autore vel ab alio quicumque sit*, with or without music, *sive cum soni modulatione proferatur sive non*, makes this clear. He thus distinguishes between the activity of the poet and that of the performer, between *cantio* and *modulatio*, the melody on which the *cantio* can be intoned, known also as *sonus, thonus, nota,* or *melos*.[4]

> Circa hoc considerandum est quod cantio dupliciter accipi potest. Uno modo, secundum quod fabricatur ab auctore suo; et sic est actio; et secundum istum modum Virgilius, primo Eneidorum, dicit *Arma virumque cano*. Alio modo, secundum quod fabricata profertur, **vel ab auctore, vel ab alio quicunque sit, sive cum soni modulatione proferatur, sive non**; et sic est passio. Nam tunc agitur: modo vero agere videtur in alium; et sic, tunc alicuius actio, modo quoque passio alicuius videtur. Et quia prius agitur ipsa quam agat, magis – immo prorsus – denominari videtur ab eo quod agitur et est actio alicuius, quam ab eo quod agit in alios. Signum autem huius est quod nunquam dicimus, «*Hec est cantio Petri*» eo quod ipsam proferat, sed eo quod fabricaverit illam. Preterea disserendum est utrum **cantio** dicatur fabricatio verborum armonizatorum, vel ipsa **modulatio**. Ad quod dicimus, quod nunquam modulatio dicitur cantio, sed **sonus**, vel **tonus**, vel **nota**, vel **melos**. Nullus enim tibicen, vel organista, vel citharedus, melodiam suam cantionem vocat nisi in quantum nupta est alicui cantioni; sed armonizantes verba opera sua cantiones vocant; et etiam talia verba in cartulis absque prolatore iacentia cantiones vocamus. (II viii 4-6)

> [And on this point it must be taken into account that *cantio* has a double meaning: one usage refers to something created by an author, so that there is action – and this is the sense in which Virgil uses the word in the first book of the *Aeneid*, when he writes '*arma virumque cano*'; the other refers to the occasions on which this creation is performed, either by the author or by someone else, whoever it may be, with or without musical accompaniment – and in this sense it is passive. For on such occasions the *canzone* itself acts upon someone or something, whereas in the former case it is acted upon; and so in one case it appears as an action carried out by someone, in the other as an action perceived by someone. And because it is acted upon before it acts in its turn, the argument

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[4] I have discussed the principal concepts of Dante's analysis of *ars cantionis* in his *De vulgari eloquentia* in an earlier essay (LANNUTTI 2000). For the text of the *De vulgari eloquentia* and of the *Convivio*, I refer respetively to the edition with Italian translation and commentary by M. Tavoni in DANTE ALIGHIERI 2011, and the critical edition by C. Vasoli and D. De Robertis in DANTE ALIGHIERI 1988. English translations for the *De vulgari eloquentia* are taken from DANTE ALIGHIERI 1996; for the *Convivio* from DANTE ALIGHIERI 1990.

seems plausible, indeed convincing, that it takes its name from the fact that it is acted upon, and is somebody's action, rather than from the fact that it acts upon others. The proof of these is the fact that we never say 'that's Peter's song' when referring to something Peter has performed, but only to something he has written. Furthermore, we must now discuss whether the word *canzone* should be used to refer to a composition made up of words arranged with due regard to harmony or simply to a piece of music. To which I answer that a piece of music as such is never given the name *canzone*, but is rather called 'sound' or 'tone,' or 'note,' or 'melody.' For no player of a wind or keyboard or stringed instrument ever calls his melody a *canzone*, except when it is wedded to a real *canzone*; but those who harmonise words call their works *canzoni*, and even when we see such words written down on the page, in the absence of any performer, we call them *canzoni*.]

The same position is summarized in a celebrated passage from the *Convivio*, in which Dante places music, understood as the science of proportions, alongside grammar and rhetoric, the former an art in the *quadrivium* concerning *sapientia* or *cognitio rerum*, and the latter two arts of the trivium related to *eloquentia*, in other words, knowledge of the forms of discourse. In no case does the poet's creative act also encompass musical composition.

O uomini, che vedere non potete la sentenza di questa canzone, non la rifiutate però; ma ponete mente la sua bellezza, ch'è grande sì per construzione, la quale si pertiene a li gramatici, sì per l'ordine del sermone, che si pertiene a li rettorici, sì per lo numero delle sue parti, che si pertiene a li musici. Le quali cose in essa si possono belle vedere, per chi ben guarda. (II xi 9)

[You men who cannot perceive the meaning of this canzone, do not therefore reject it; rather consider its beauty, which is great by virtue of its composition, which is the concern of the grammarians, by virtue of the order of its discourse, which is the concern of the rhetoricians, and by the virtue of the rhythm of its parts, which is the concern of the musicians. These things can be perceived within it as beautiful by anyone who looks closely.]

One can presume that the incomplete *De vulgari eloquentia* had only a very limited circulation, as evidenced by the meager number of extant sources;[5] but Guillaume de Machaut expresses a similar point of view in the celebrated Prologue, constituted by two formally distinct parts: a set of four *ballades* and a passage of octosyllabic couplets, in which he develops his theory of poetic composition and reflects on the subject and purpose of his work. In the Prologue, Nature goes to Guillaume and commissions him to compose «nouviaus dis amoureus» (new compositions on amorous subjects), sending the poet three of her children, «Scens, Retorique et Musique». Below I quote the text of the first *ballade*:[6]

Je, Nature, par qui tout est fourmé
Quanqu'a ça jus et seur terre et en mer,

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[5] Cfr. DANTE ALIGHIERI 1968, pp. xvii-xviii; as well as the *Nota al testo* in the edition by Tavoni (DANTE ALIGHIERI 2011, pp. 1117-1118).

[6] The text of the *Prologue* is cited following the edition by HOEPFFNER 1908-21, vol. I, pp. 1-12.

Vien ci a toy, Guillaume, qui fourmé
T'ay a part, pour faire par toy fourmer
Nouviaus dis amoureus plaisans.
Pour ce te bail ci trois de mes enfans
Qui t'en donront la pratique,
Et, se tu n'ies d'euls trois bien congnoissans,
Nommé sont **Scens, Retorique et Musique**.

Par **Scens** aras ton engin enfourmé
De tout ce que tu vorras confourmer;
Retorique n'ara riens enfermé
Que ne t'en voit en metre et en rimer;
Et **Musique** te donra chans,
Tant que vorras, divers et deduisans.
Einsi ti fait seront frique,
N'a ce faire ne pues estre faillans,
Car tu as Scens, Retorique et Musique.

Ti fait seront plus qu'autre renommé,
Qu'il n'i ara riens qui face a blasmer,
Et si seront de toutes gens amé,
Soutis, loyaus, jolis et sans amer.
Pour ce vueil que soies engrans
D'en faire assez, petis, moiens et grans.
Or fay tost, si t'i aplique!
Tu ne m'en dois pas estre refusans,
Qui te bail Scens, Retorique et Musique,

Jacqueline Cerquiglini has clarified the meaning of *Scens*, literally «sense, knowledge, wisdom, judgment».[7] *Scens* is a kind of guiding intelligence that regards above all the formal, proportional structure, and which therefore we can correlate with Dante's *cantus divisio*. As for the other two sisters, *Retorique* will support Guillaume in the art of versification and rhyme. For this, too, we can find a parallel in Dante's *habitudo partium* (if we recall the passage from the *Convivio* in which Dante declares that «l'ordine del sermone si pertiene a li rettorici»). *Musique* offers him, in turn, *chans divers et deduisant* (diverse and pleasing melodies) on which to intone his poetic compositions, demonstrating equivalence not with music as a science of proportions but to its sounding realization, Dante's *modulatio*.

The difference between Dante and Machaut lies in the fact that Machaut is a musician capable of setting his poetic compositions himself, an act integrated from the very beginning into the author's written production,

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[7] CERQUIGLINI 1985, pp. 17-18: «"Scens, Retorique et Musique" concernent donc la forme de la poésie. Ceci ne surprend en rien pour ce qui est de Rhéthorique et de Musique, mais permet de donner une place, dont l'importance n'a pas été signalée, au terme *scens* dans la poétique de Guillaume. Cette place jette une lumière nouvelle sur la discussion du terme dans la poétique antérieures. *Scens* est l'outil qui dispose l'esprit du poéte à la composition, c'est-à-dire qui lui donne à la fois une forme et qui l'instruit dans l'art de composer».

conceived as an *opera omnia*.[8] Nevertheless, we can think that Machaut's approach to the relationship between poetry and music in the creative process is similar to that described by Dante, as demonstrated also by the fact that Machaut's compositions, even in those forms that normally receive musical treatment (*ballades*, *rondeaux* and *virelais*), are often not endowed with notation, confirming that musical setting was not obligatory.[9] Nothing new, therefore: poetry precedes music, and it is therefore independent, even if its formal elements depend on a *ratio*, or a theoretical knowledge that for Dante is musical in nature (*cantus divisio*). Poetic works are not necessarily set to music, even when their structure is predisposed to musical treatment, as is the case with *ballades*, *rondeaux* and *virelais* and with *cantio*. For Dante this latter term denotes not only the form of the *canzone* as understood most narrowly, but also any other type of poem that adheres to harmonic structural proportions, including the sonnet, a genre for which no medieval musical settings remain. I cite here a passage that follows the excerpt transcribed above:

> et ideo cantio nil aliud esse videtur quam actio completa dictantis verba modulationi armonizata. Quapropter, **tam cantiones quas nunc tractamus, quam ballatas et sonitus**, et omnia cuiuscunquemodi verba scilicet armonizata vulgariter et regulariter, **cantiones** esse dicemus. (II viii 6)

> [And so it seems clear that the *canzone* is nothing else than the self-contained action of one who writes harmonious words to be set to music; and so I shall assert that not only the *canzoni* we are discussing here, but also *ballate* and sonnets and all arrangements of words, of whatever kind, that are based on harmony, whether in the vernacular or in the regulated language, should be called *canzoni*.]

This same conception, that considers poetry as music in itself, is still alive in Eustache Deschamps' *L'art de dictier* (1392), where poetry is described as a text with its own proportional harmony (*musique naturele*, *chansons naturele*), that may or may not be associated with a musical intonation

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[8] On the manuscript transmission of Machaut's works, see EARP 1983, EARP 1989, EARP 1995 (chapter 3); see also HUOT 1987, pp. 242-301.

[9] Cfr. GALLO 1979[2] pp. 42-46; GALLO 1985, on p. 40, «In fact Guillame de Machaut, the composer of many monodic settings, in whom the literary and musical traditions of the *trouvères* still survived, was one of the very few who are equally gifted with literary and musical skills, though it remains difficult to analyse precisely how he saw the relationship between the two. As a poet, he does not seem to have felt that music was necessary to complete a work, and by far the greater art of his poetry was intended solely to be read. This was so not only in the case of the long poems but also of the brief ones: of the 274 *ballades, rondeaux* and *virelais* which make up the *Louange des dames*, only nineteen were set to music.» In the following century, in the Marquis of Santillana's portrait of Jordi de sant Jordi, the Valencian poet active in the first quarter of the fifteenth century in the court of Alfonso the Magnanimous, we find evidence that poets possessing the musical skills necessary to set their own compositions continued to be rare. Santillana places Jordi de sant Jordi among the best Catalan poets, along with Ausiàs March and Andreu Febrer, describing him as an excellent musician («compuso asaz fermosas cosas, las quales él mesmo asonava ca fue músico exçellente», cfr. SANTILLANA 1997, p. 22).

(*musique artificiele*).[10] The word *artificiele* is, however, related to a vision of music as *artificium*, i.e. an artistic creation that is molded by the composer's technique and skill. It is a vision probably determined by the consolidation, during the fourteenth century, of an 'individual' music in which the idea of authorship, fully expressed by Machaut's *opera omnia*, is increasingly present. Deschamps in fact takes care to specify that *musique artificiele* could be performed also without words (*sans parole*). In this regard, Deschamps' conception of the relationship between poetry and music differs from Dante's, and above all from that revealed by the Occitan treatises on lyric poetry, where music is mentioned only as a way of performing poetic texts (LANNUTTI 2000 pp. 10-13):

> Et est de ces deux [musiques] ainsi comme un marriage en coniunction de science, par les chans qui sont plus anobliz et mieulx seans par la parole et faconde des diz qu'elle ne seroit seule de soy. Et semblablement les **chansons natureles** sont delectables et embellies par la melodie et les teneurs, trebles et contreteneurs du chant de la musique artificiele. Et neanmoins est chascune de ces deux plaisant a ouir par soy; et se puet l'une chanter par voiz et par art, **sanz parole**; et aussis les diz des chansons se puent souventefoiz recorder en pluseurs lieux ou ilz sont moult voulentiers ois, ou le chant de la musique artificiele n'aroit pas tousiours lieu. (DESCHAMPS 1994, pp. 64-65)

> [And it is as if these two [musics] were wedded in a union of knowledge: the melodies are rendered finer and more fitting by the words and by the eloquence than they would be on their own. Similarly, the natural songs are made more beautiful by the melody and the tenors, tripla and contratenors of the song of music. But nevertheless, each is pleasing to hear on its own; and thus one can be sung using the voice and art without words, and, similarly, the words of songs can often be recited in various places where they are most willingly heard, where the song of artificial would not always take place.]

Dante, Machaut and Deschamps are the heirs of a secular poetic tradition that began in the courts of southern France in the second half of the eleventh century. It is hardly necessary to point out that Dante himself is fully aware of this. We need only recall the citations of works by the troubadours in his *De vulgari eloquentia* and his references to Arnaut Daniel in the *Commedia*.[11] But several centuries removed, what remains and what has changed in the relationship between poetry and music? Is Dante's *cantio*, like Machaut's *nouviaus dis amoureus* and Deschamps' *chansons natureles*, different from the *canso* of the troubadours in terms of the interplay between *Scens*, *Retorique* and *Musique*? The answer can be found first of all in the manuscript tradition belonging to French and Occitan lyric, which is often notated, particularly in Old French sources.

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[10] PLUMLEY 2003, pp. 231-248; PLUMLEY 2004.

[11] On this subject, see BELTRAMI 2004, ASPERTI 2004 and *Dante e la poesia provenzale*, discussion taken directly from *Le culture di Dante* 2004, pp. 105-123; BAROLINI 1993; FOLENA 2002.

The idea of a symbiosis between poetry and music in a lyric composition implies, at least in principle, that each text remains bound to its setting. We might perhaps find a point of comparison in the songs of contemporary authors. Leaving aside the issue of rewritings, translations and adaptations that are always possible, today as in the Middle Ages, no one would expect to hear a song by Georges Brassens or Bob Dylan with a melody which differs from the one normally associated with it.[12] In contrast, an examination of poems surviving in multiple sources, whether Occitan or Old French, reveals that at least in these repertories, alongside cases of complete concordance (verified most often when the sources belong to a single family), it is not unusual to find the same song, for example one by Folquet de Marseilla or by Thibaut de Champagne, associated with radically divergent melodies. I do not think it is fair to argue that we are dealing with the effects of a particularly active manuscript tradition that led to such easy variation of the musical text as to render it unrecognizable. Rather, I believe that the phenomenon, which is fairly sporadic, must be placed in dialogue with the concrete possibility, or admissibility, that a single composition could be performed with different musical solutions. In this manuscript tradition, which reflects real performance practices, the identity of the verbal text appears to be released from the music, from the method of its execution.[13] This allows us to hypothesize that cases where a single melody was applied to multiple poetic compositions, even structurally different ones, do not necessarily imply an original musical connection that must then be proven. Instead, it presents us with the inverse and complementary possibility that in the realm of performance practice and in the manuscript tradition, a single melody could be used for multiple texts.[14]

It goes without saying that this point of view damages the image of the troubadour as an *unus auctor*, who composes music and word together, as Aurelio Roncaglia describes in his celebrated essay entitled *Sul "divorzio tra musica e poesia" nel Duecento italiano*, to which I will return shortly,[15] but not because it negates the possibility that a poet might have the skills neces-

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[12] John Corigliano's song cycle using Bob Dylan's texts including *Blowin in the Wind* and *Mr. Tambourine Man*, with no use of Dylan's melodies, is an example of today's reuse and adaptation. See the New York Times article by Allan Kozin (3 december 2000:

 <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/03/12/arts/singing-dylan-s-words-to-a-different-tune.html>).

[13] I have already exposed my point of view on text/music relationship in the production and transmission of troubadours' and trouvères' songs in a previous article, where I also discuss the positions of Hendrich Van der Werf and Elizabeth Aubrey. See LANNUTTI 2007 (esp. pp. 190-198). See also LANNUTTI 2011b (esp. pp. 162-168).

[14] Several studies deal with the problem of metric and melodic imitation Romance lyric. See MARSHALL 1980; ASPERTI 1991; also see the various essays by J. Schulze, starting with SCHULZE 1989, up through SCHULZE 2004; the book by BILLY *et al.* 2003; and finally my own essay LANNUTTI 2008.

[15]: «La grande maggioranza dei trovatori provenzali componevano insieme parole e musica; la grande maggioranza dei poeti aulici italiani componevano solo testi verbali, lasciando un loro eventuale (non obbligatorio) rivestimento melodico a musici professionisti» (RONCAGLIA 1978 pp. 389-390).

sary to set and then sing his own compositions. In fact, some troubadours' declarations about their own work demonstrate the opposite (for example Guillem de Poitou, *BdT* 183, 11, vv. 39-42 «que·l motz son faitz tug per egau / comunalmens, / e·l son, et ieu meteis m'en lau, / bos e valens»; Marcabru, BdT 293,35, v. 2 «Fetz Marcabru los motz e·l so»), even though they exclude true performance itself. However, these declarations are rare and seem to be limited to the Occitan area, for analogous ones are not found in the equally musical repertoire of the trouvères (LANNUTTI 2005, esp. p. 163). Rather, the image of the troubadour as an *unus auctor* is damaged as the above discussion reveals that the melody, despite having an autonomous value, has the function of enhancing the text, with inevitable repercussions regarding the issue of authorship. That fact that a single composition may be associated with multiple melodies in the manuscript sources suggests that the authorial attributions apply only to the poetic text and not to the melody, a point of view shared by the most recent editor of Colin Muset's musical settings, Christopher Callahan, regarding the Old French repertoire. Callahan has discussed the problem of musical authorship, attributing the responsibility of creating structural and thematic correspondence between the melody and the poetic text to the notators.[16] This idea is also confirmed on another level by rubrics instructing the scribe which melody to assign to which poem. I cite, for example, the rubric «Forkes de mersaille sor Poitevin» (in which *sor* is an error for *son*), assigned in the French *chansonnier* C (= ζ) to Rigaut de Berbezilh's *chanson Tuit demandon qu' es devengud' amors* (*BdT* 421,10). In this *chansonnier*, which is equipped with staves but not notation, the rubric illustrates the desire to employ not a specific melody, or the original melody, but a melody for which at most one characteristic is indicated – the origin or perhaps the typology.[17]

I have already discussed elsewhere the idea of music as a means of enhancing the verbal text, and proposed a revision of the historiographic assessment underlined by Aurelio Roncaglia, starting with the essay cited above. The idea

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[16] CALLAHAN 2008, on p. 35 «Dans le deux cas que nous avons discutés, les mélodies montrent une sensibilité frappante à la forme et au contenu poétique, menant a conclure à un rapport indéniable, dans les oeuvres de Colin, entre le contour mélodique et la façon dont son personnage poétique se présente. Mais de là à conclure que c'est Colin qui est responsable de ce rapport, il y a un pas que l'on doit hésiter à franchir. Il convient plutôt d'attribuer cette conscience, cette attitude compositionnelle, à la masse anonyme des chantres et scribes de l'époque»; p. 37: «Dans quelle mesure est-il donc possible de savoir si tel air est réélment de Thibaut, de Gace, de Colin? Étant donné les témoignages contradictoires d'une part et la pratique encore mal comprise de la contrafacture d'autre part, tout ce que nous pouvons affirmer avec certitude, c'est que telle source associe telle mélodie – e celles-ci peuvent être bien disparates – à tel poème. En ce qui concerne Colin Muset, il faut se rendre à l'evidence: les mélodies en elles-mêmes se prêtent bien moins volentiers que les textes à l'identification du poète. Dans la mesure seulement où on les considère de pair, il est possible de reconnaître une volonté et un dessein organizateurs. Mais étant donné le poète que nous essayons de cerner, qui se cache derrière un sobriquet relevant de l'universalité, il faut reconnaitre dans ce dessein la marque d'une conscience collective et non pas celle d'un individue».

[17] Cfr. *«Intavulare»* 1999, p. 72. On the expression «son potevin» see also LANNUTTI 2011b, pp. 166-167, and CARAPEZZA 2012.

of a 'divorce' between music and poetry in the early Italian tradition, which Roncaglia expounds upon, was first proposed by Vincenzo De Bartholomaeis and revisited by Gianfranco Contini, the first to invoke the term 'divorce', and was later adopted by Gianfranco Folena.[18] I have also already pointed out that Roncaglia does not speak of an absolute 'divorce', but rather argues only that melodic settings for poems in the Italian vernacular were usually left to 'professional musicians', while the troubadours were capable of composing settings themselves because of their education (LANNUTTI 2005, pp. 160-161). I would like to take this opportunity to revisit the question in light of the objections to my analysis recently raised by Paolo Gresti (GRESTI 2010). I look first at two of his principal arguments. According to Gresti, on the one hand «*i* dati in nostro possesso sembrano raccontarci una storia che va proprio nella direzione del 'divorzio' annunciato da Roncaglia» («*ciò* che va sottolineato, credo» Gresti later continues to say, «è che nella tradizione italiana viene meno lo stretto legame tra parole e musica *nell'atto creativo*» [author's italics] (p. 140). On the other hand, «*rimane* sostanzialmente inspiegato il silenzio della tradizione manoscritta italiana riguardo alla musica (e mi pare non si tenga nel dovuto conto quanto già detto: cioè che nella lirica galloromanza ci sono svariate testimonianze di poeti-musici, per quella italiana no)» (p. 142).

In order to talk about divorce according to the meaning Roncaglia and Gresti confer on the term (that the troubadours composed poetry and music together, «insieme parole e musica», while the poets of the Sicilian school entrusted the composition of the melodies to professional musicians, «a musici professionisti»), we must accept the idea that in troubadour poems the text and the musical setting respond to criteria concerning coherence and cohesion. In other words, we must recognize a «stretto legame tra parole e musica *nell'atto creativo*», to use Gresti's words. In my opinion, though, this is fundamentally contradicted by one key element – the very fact that the music used for the first stanza was adopted, without exception, for all subsequent stanzas irrespective of textual differences, for example, differences in syntactic partitioning or in rhythm (in effect, the application of a single melody to an entire poem implies adaptations that are similar to those required when applying a pre-existing melody to a new text). I am instead convinced that in any case the eventual creation of a musical setting – I say eventual because the use of pre-existing melodies was anything but rare, especially for certain genres –[19] followed the composition of the poetic text, from which it was thus entirely independent. Furthermore, it is of little

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[18] RONCAGLIA 1978; DE BARTHOLOMEIS 1943, on p. 121; CONTINI 1970, (the essay, actually from 1951, uses the term «divorce» for the first time on p. 176, Folena 1965, on p. 280. See LANNUTTI 2005, pp. 157-168.

[19] For example the *sirventes*, cfr. la *Doctrina de compondre dictats*: «e specialment se fa en so novell, e maiorment en ço de cançó [...] e potz seguir las rimas contrasemblantz del cantar de que pendras lo so, o atressi lo potz far en altres rimes» (MARSHALL 1972 p. 95); or the *Leys d'Amors*: «Sirventes es dictatz que·s servish al may de vers o de chanso en doas cauzas: la una cant al compas de las coblas; l'autra cant al so» (FEDI 1997, p. 215).

importance to the ultimate assessment of the relationship between text and music if the setting was composed by the author of the verbal text or by someone else («vel ab auctore vel ab alio quicumque sit», as Dante writes). If it is true that some troubadours were personally able to provide musical settings for their poetry, my impression is that with the passing of time, and perhaps also with the increasing number of composers dedicated to setting vernacular poetry, there was a growing specialization of roles. I believe that in the time of Thibaut de Champagne or the poets of Arras, or of Uc de Saint Circ and Sordello, which is also the time when poetry in the Italian vernacular began to be produced, a division of labor develops (or developed) in France just as in Italy. If this were not the situation, we would be unable to explain the absence of references to music, beyond those that are purely conventional, and references to the musical activity of poets in the Old French repertoire, which boasts the largest number of extant melodies. All things considered, as a poet who represents himself as a professional minstrel capable of accompanying himself on the vielle, Colin Muset constitutes an exception, although it is also true that the minstrel is a figure tied to the thematic register of the *bonne vie*, which Colin frequently employs. Regarding the mention of troubadours' musical skills in the *vidas* (to which I presume Gresti is referring when he talks of «svariate testimonianze di poeti-musici»), even granting them the maximum possible authority, which I am not convinced we should,[20] I make only one observation. The manuscript tradition of Italian lyric poetry offers nothing comparable – we have no account, whether true or false, of single Sicilian or Tuscan poets. We have only the isolated testimony of Salimbene da Parma, who, speaking of Federico II, one of the first authors of poetry in the Italian vernacular, writes: «legere, scribere et cantare sciebat et cantilenas et cantiones invenire» (Salimbene de Adam 1966, p. 508).

There are other problems posed by the manuscript tradition, which, as we know, is chronologically and geographically removed from the poetic production itself. The absence of melodies in the majority of the Romance *chansonniers* can be explained only if we allow that music was a means of making poetry resound and exalting its proportional structure. Furthermore, the notated sources are primarily localized to the literary centers of northern France, cradle of the new polyphonic genres, above all the motet, and the most important innovations in musical language. In these literary environments, it is not surprising that an organic and musical tradition of French and Occitan lyric would have been reborn during the first half of the thirteenth century. It is this tradition that incorporates contributions of musician-singer-scribes, whom we believe to be responsible for adapting melodies to texts, and not just

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[20] We must not undervalue the function of the *vidas* and *razos* and the purpose that integrating narrative historicizing texts into Occitan *chansonniers* served for the 'ideological orientations' that determined their genesis. See Meneghetti, 1992, p. 178. Meneghetti emphasizes how the *vidas* and *razos* «sono in larghissima parte destituiti di fondamento», and how they tend to «dare un'immagine dell'esistenza dei cantori della *fin'amor* e dell'ambiente in cui essi vivono del tutto armonizzata con i gusti del pubblico duecentesco, con i suoi orientamenti ideologici».

to those of the Old French repertoire. Let us not forget that of the four sources of troubadour song with musical notation (G, R, X, and W), two, X and W, are part of northern French *chansonniers* (X is found in the French *chansonnier* U, the oldest account of French and Occitan lyric, and W in the impressive *Chansonnier du Roi*). What we are dealing with is an absolute novelty, given that the notation of melodies for non-liturgical works was, from the 10th century until now, exclusively reserved for Latin poetry. We should thus not be surprised if in other geographical areas, *in primis* in Italy, the preparation of vernacular lyric anthologies did not normally involve transcribing melodies. Looking at the troubadour tradition, if it is true that *chansonnier* G was compiled in Italy, it is also true that the source is an exception, and that its musical *varia lectio*, concordant with X and W, suggests a connection with northern France. This connection is confirmed by the fact that a relative of the French *chansonnier* U (= Occitan X), referred to by the sigla H, was integrated into another old Italian source of Occitan lyric, the so-called Estense *chansonnier* (the hand responsible for copying H corresponds with the hand responsible for the first section of the Occitan source) (LANNUTTI 2011b, pp. 165-166).

The third important objection Gresti raises regards the assessment of the *De vulgari eloquentia*'s reliability with respect to the evolution of the relationship between music and poetry over more than two centuries of Romance lyric poetry: «Dante scrive il *De vulgari eloquentia* quando già la stagione trobadorica si era esaurita: egli usa una terminologia che gli viene dalla tradizione – né poteva fare altrimenti –, ma per descrivere una situazione, quella italiana, probabilmente assai diversa, ormai, da quelle precedenti».[21] Unlike Gresti, I do not think that Dante formulated his *ars cantionis* by drawing passively on terminology taken from poetic tradition.[22] Rather, I believe that his treatment

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[21] GRESTI 2010, p. 142. I refrain from commenting on another of Gresti's objections, related to the interpretation of unaccented supernumerary syllables in the written tradition of Italian poetry up through Petrarch, citing my recent contribution on this subject: LANNUTTI 2009. There, I suggest that unaccented supernumerary vowels can be compared to euphonic vowels, arguing that their use responds to practical needs and can be understood as analogous to the use of liquescent neumes in musical notation, which served to facilitate the pronunciation of phonetic groups, such as combinations of consonants. I note only that I do not think this *hypothesis* is damaged by the fact that the presence of these vowels «è capillare in V, meno frequente tanto nel Banco Rari 217 quanto nel Laurenziano Redi 9» (ib.), given that as in the tradition of writing music, the range of possible solutions for notating the phenomenon depends on the graphic habits of individual scribes. Regarding my other *hypothesis*, that the use of supernumerary vowels may stand in for the normal absence of musical notation differently in the written tradition of Italian lyric than in the French and Occitan tradition, I agree with Gresti («Ma è evidente, soprattutto, che l'assenza di molte vocali, soprattutto in posizione finale, in lingua d'*oc* e in lingua d'*oïl* è dovuta alla fonetica di quelle lingue, non alla presenza della notazione musicale»): in the Tuscan language, the number of forms involving syncope or apocope and the number of fully alternative forms is certainly much greater, but we must consider that an alternance between fully forms and forms involving syncope is possible also in French and Occitan poetic language.

[22] And furthermore, of what tradition are we speaking? If Gresti is thinking of the theoretical writing on Occitan poetry (but was Dante even familiar with it?), it is necessary to recognize that in those treatises musical setting is also treated as decidedly secondary in comparison with the verbal text. If, instead, he is thinking of the lexicon employed by authors, it is important to

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is profoundly original, with no point of comparison among any other known vernacular treatise on poetry in terms of its acumen, conceptual coherence, and choice of lexicon (and how could it otherwise?). We are not dealing with a nominalistic question. It is not the terminology but the conceptual system on which the Dantean *canzone* is founded, a system also present in Machaut, that belongs to a much older tradition of thought, to a theoretical conception that goes back to Boethius's *De istitutione musica*, as I have already shown. It is this older tradition that Dante strives to express through his choice of subjects and lexical solutions (LANNUTTI 2000, pp. 1-9). Indeed, we might ask ourselves if this intellectual tradition, which organizes the different 'musical' activities hierarchically (theoretical analysis, poetic creation, and performance), should not also be borne in mind when evaluating the specific terminology used by the troubadours, starting from the most celebrated of the troubadour texts which pose the question of a link between *motz* and *so*, with signs of unmistakable interest in theoretical reflection – Jaufré Rudel's *Non sap chantar qui so non di*. I offer here a literal translation of the first stanza: «He who does not utter a sound does not know how to sing, nor does he who cannot make words know how to compose a poetic text, nor does he who cannot understand reason in and of itself know how rhyme functions. It is in this way that my song begins: the more you listen to it, the more value it will have».

> Non sap chantar qui so non di
> ni vers trobar qui motz no fa,
> ni conois de rima co·s va   3
> si razo non enten en si.
> Mas lo mieus chans comens'aissi:
> com plus l'auziretz, mais valra. a a   6

In the earliest critical editions, the word *razo* gave rise to two different interpretations. Stimming, the first to offer a critical edition of Jaufrè Rudel's complete works, translates it as «Theorie», retaining the lemma pertaining to form (*ratio* as proportional structure). Jeanroy, in contrast, translates it as «sens», referring to the content (*ratio* as material, basic themes).[23] In subsequent editions the second interpretation prevails decisively, but Stimming's translation may merit reconsideration in light of the *chanson*'s final

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highlight the multiplicity and instability of meaning found in the complex of technical (metapoetic) terms, which still awaits systematic study.

[23] STIMMING 1873 (text on pp. 53-56, trans. on pp. 66-67): «Nicht kann singen, wer keine Melodie sagt, noch ein Lied dichten, wer keine Verse macht, noch weiss er mit Reimen Bescheid, wenn er nicht die Theorie versteht; aber mein Sang fängt hier an; je mehr Ihr ihn hören werdet, um so mehr wird er werth sein»; G. Paris does not translate the term, PARIS 1893; JEANROY 1915, pp. 16-18: «Il ne sait pas chanter, celui qui n'exécute pas de mélodie, ni trouver de "vers", celui qui ne fait pas de couplets, et il ne sait ce que c'est qu'une poésie, s'il n'en comprend pas le sens en lui-même. Ainsi commence mon chant: plus vous l'entendrez, plus il vous plaira, a. a». For up-to-date information on editions of the chanson, see *Repertorio informatizzato dell'antica letteratura trobadorica e occitana*, coordinated by C. Di Girolamo (www.rialto.unina.it).

section.[24] The meaning of the lemmas *vers, chantar* and *auzir* cannot be different than that which they assume in the final stanza and in the congedo, where they likely refer respectively to the poetic work, its sung dissemination, and its reception. I translate the end of the *chanson*, vv. 35-38, as follows: «if messer Bertrando of Quercy and the Count of Toulouse listen to it (*auzir vers*), being a beautiful song, they will turn it into sung material (literally something which one sings: *chantar vers*)». In other words, they will guarantee its circulation as song, which corresponds to the recognition of its value.

> Bos es lo vers, qu'anc no·i falhi
> e tot so que·i es ben esta;
> e sel que de mi l'apenra   33
> gart se no·l franha ni·l pessi.
> Car si l'auzon en Caersi
> en Bertrans e·l coms en Tolza, a a   36
>
> bos es lo vers, e faran hi
> calque re don hom chantara. a a

It seems to me that this portion of the text clarifies the meaning of the last two verses of the first stanza, where the poet intends to explain the choice of an exposition centered on a metapoetic reflection. It is for this reason, Jaufré tells us, that my poem begins in this way, to demonstrate that only through the act of listening and thus through sung performance can the value of my song by fully perceived, justifying at the same time the *captatio benevolentiae* entrusted to the congedo.[25] The final stanza and the congedo insist on the song's beauty (vv. 31 and 37 begin in anaphora with the same expression, *bos es lo vers* 'the song is beautiful'), which comes primarily from the poet's art, from his technical skill (v. 31 compares beauty itself with the absence of imperfection: 'the song is beautiful, seeing as I have not made any mistakes'; we might also recall the passage in the *Convivio* where the *canzone*'s *bellezza* is described as being irrespective of its *sentenza*). Above all, the poem's final section expresses concern that the coherence and unity of the *vers* be pre-

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[24] In the later editions with translation I have been able to consult, Stimming's interpretation has no followers. A few editions suggest a literal translation that maintains the term's ambiguity (RIQUER 1975, vol. I, p. 167, PICKENS 1978, p. 215), while the majority adopt Jeanroy's interpretation (RUDEL 1946, p. 41; RUDEL – VENTADORN, 1949, p. 113; SANSONE 1984, vol. I, p. 87, which seems to want to mediate between the two positions: «Non sa cantar chi non crea melodia, né fare versi senza ordinar parole, non sapendo le regole di rima, se la ragione non intende in sé. Perció comincia il mio canto così: più l'udirete e più varrà, a.a.»; CHIARINI 1985, p. 59; RUDEL 1992, p. 61). However, this interpretation presupposes that we understand the lemma «rima» as meaning «work», basically synonymous with *vers* (Jeanroy translates it as «poésie», see also Chiarini's translation «e non conosce il senso di una canzone chi non ne intende intimamente la 'ragione'»). It should be noted, though, that in the language of the troubadours, *rima* refers to compositional technique (*cara rima, leu rima, rima vil'e plana, rima sotil, rima estrampa*, ecc.), as does the compresence of the lemma *vers* (Gavaudan, BdT 178, 8, vv. 1-2 «Lo vers dech far en tal rima / mascl'e femel que ben rim»; Guiraut de Calanso, BdT 243, 9, vv. 3-4 «ges per aisso no m'estanc / d'un vers far en bella rima»).

[25] CHIARINI 1985, p. 62: «Il congedo riprende intenzionalmente l'autoelogio della strofa iniziale».

served (v. 34: 'that it does not become broken and splintered') if the two powerful men, appreciating its beauty, should promote its circulation through song.

All things considered, I believe we can say that in the first stanza Jaufré intends to tackle the subject of *ars cantionis* – that is, the primary elements of a poetic work, its formal structure and its verbal realization – and the subject of performance practice. In the first verse, he refers to performance: «He who does not know how to utter a sound, to follow a melody, does not know how to sing», that is, «in order to sing, it is necessary to be able to follow a melody». In the second verse, he refers to the appropriate use of (poetic) language when creating a poetic work: «nor does he know how to compose a poetic text, he who does not know how to create (with) words», meaning «in order to compose a poetic text, one must know how to use words». This interpretation is confirmed by the opposition between *dir,* a verb referring to the poem's execution, and *far,* a verb referring to its creation, which is parallel to the opposition between *chantar* (sing, perform) and *trobar* (compose a poetic text).[26] The following two verses consider the structure of the stanza: «nor does he know how the rhyme scheme should work, he who does not understand *ratio*, the first cause, the theory», where *en si* might also refer not to the subject but to *razo*. In other words, «to know the structure of a stanza, it is necessary to possess the appropriate theoretical knowledge». It thus seems to me that the same principles forming the basis of Dante's vision and presented allegorically in Machaut's prologue are also hidden in Jaufré Rudel's text, only here they are listed in inverse order with respect to their structural importance (and this is surely not coincidental, for Jaufré emphasizes that a poem's circulation as song serves as a means for establishing its value). Jaufré Rudel's *chantar, conoisser de rima co·s va* and *razo* correspond to the *De vulgari eloquentia*'s *modulatio, habitudo partium* and *cantus divisio* on the one hand, and to the meaning Machaut confers upon *Musique, Retorique* and *Scens* on the other. Similarly, the expression *far motz* has its parallel in the chapters Dante dedicates to the correct use of language in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, where he discusses *construzione*, which falls under the domain of the *gramatici*. This idea is also singled out in the passage cited above from the *Convivio*, along with rhetoric and *scientia musicae*, to demonstrate the *canzone*'s beauty. Therefore, it follows that a single theoretical conception of poetry may have characterized the entire medieval Romance lyric production, from the earliest troubadours to the fourteenth-century poets.

Jaufré Rudel lived in the second quarter of the 12th century. From that time up through the lives of Dante and then Machaut, musical language changed radically, developing ever more sophisticated rhythmic solutions,

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[26] From this point of view, interpreting *qui so non di* as a reference to the creation rather than the performance of music seems less plausible (see for example, Battaglia and Sansone). Cfr. RONCAGLIA 1968, p. 220: «*faire* si riferisce al momento della composizione poetica (*faire motz = trobar vers*), *dire* al momento della recitazione cantata» (cited from CHIARINI 1985, p. 60).

particularly in polyphonic contexts. This increased complexity undoubtedly entailed a different relationship with the text, a change that we can still clearly hear today listening to the work of the fourteenth-century polyphonists and that was already evident to those involved in the creation and performance of poetry and music at the time. However, music's new frontiers did not prevent the continuation of solo performance, through which comprehension of the words is guaranteed. We can infer the coexistence of these two kinds of performance, solo and polyphonic, from a comparison of certain passages in Dante's *Commedia*: the episode in *Purgatorio* II in which Casella sets Dante's *canzone*, *Amor che nella mente mi ragiona*; the passage in *Paradiso* XIV where the poet compares a hymn being sung to the sound of two string instruments (a viol and a harp) playing together polyphonically; and likely the close of *Purgatorio* IX as well, where Dante compares the voices of the souls thanking God for their salvation to the polyphonic singing of the *Te deum*, assuming we interpret *con organi* (with organs or in *organum*? instrument or polyphonic technique?) as a reference to a form of polyphony, with or without instruments, considering that in polyphony the melody used as basis of a composition could be performed by an instrument.[27] In the first example, listening to a solo, monodic melody allows the text to be comprehended fully. In the second and third examples, the overlapping human or instrumental voices prevent the words from being distinguished (*ch'or sì or no s'intendon le parole*, *sanza intender l'inno*).

> E io: «Se nuova legge non ti toglie
> memoria o uso a l'**amoroso canto**
> che mi solea quetar tutte mie doglie,   108
> di ciò ti piaccia consolare alquanto
> l'anima mia, che, con la sua persona
> venendo qui, è affannata tanto!».   111
> *Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona*
> cominciò elli allor sì dolcemente,
> che la dolcezza ancor dentro mi suona.   114
> Lo mio maestro e io e quella gente
> ch'eran con lui parevan sì contenti,
> come a nessun toccasse altro la mente.   117

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[27] Cfr. CAPPUCCIO 2007, p. 52: «L'intenzione dell'autore sembra relativa alla descrizione di un'esecuzione musicale che per la sua lontananza egli non riesce a percepire nell'interezza e nella consequenzialità del suo sviluppo, pur registrandone la grandiosità della potenza. Per rappresentare questo tipo di impressione acustica ricorre ad un esempio musicale, sia esso di tipo colto, la tecnica polifonica, o legato a una prassi esecutiva, l'accompagnamento dell'organo. È importante a questo punto sottolineare che tale accompagnamento, però, se non si limita al semplice appoggio di alcune consonanze ma interviene in maniera polifonica con l'aggiunta di altre note, rientra già nella tecnica dell'esecuzione a più voci per cui l'antinomia tra le due interpretazioni critiche è solo formale ma non di significato». Two recent articles, independently from each other, suggest that Dante's vers could allude to the praxis of *alternatim*, i. e. alternation between monody and polyphony, the polyphony eventually involving the organ: CASAGRANDE 2011; ROSSI 2012.

[And I, «If a new law does not take from your memory or practice of the songs of love which used to quiet in me all my longings, may it please you therewith to comfort my soul somewhat, which coming hither with its body so wearied». *Love that discourses in my mind,* he then began so sweetly that the sweetness still within me sounds. My master and I and that folk who were with him appeared content as if naught else touched the mind of any.][28]

Io mi rivolsi attento al primo tuono,	139
e '*Te Deum laudamus*' mi parea	
udire in voce mista al dolce suono.	
Tale imagine a punto mi rendea	142
ciò ch'io udiva, qual prender si suole	
quando a cantar **con organi** si stea;	
ch'or sì or no s'intendon le parole.	145

[I turned attentive to the first note, and *Te Deum laudamus* I seemed to hear in a voice mingled with the sweet music. What I heard gave me the same impression we sometimes get when people are singing with an organ [or, «singing in organum»], and now the words are clear and now are not.]

E come giga e arpa, in tempra tesa	
di molte corde, fa dolce tintinno	
a tal da cui **la nota non è intesa**,	120
così da' lumi che lì m'apparinno	
s'accogliea per la croce una melode	
che mi rapiva, **sanza intender l'inno**.	123

[And as viol and harp, strung with many cords in harmony, chime sweetly for one who does not catch the tune, so from the lights that appeared to me there a melody gathered through the cross which held me rapt, though I followed not the hymn.]

We are still at the beginning of the Trecento, before polyphony spread around Italy outside of ecclesiastical settings with the so-called Italian Ars Nova repertoire, whose notational system was also used for rhythmically complex monophonic compositions. In terms of the text/music relationship, Dante's descriptions, *or sì or no s'indendon le parole* and *sanza intender l'inno*, point to the difference of setting a text polyphonically, which cannot help but obstruct the full comprehension of the words' literal meaning.[29]

The use of a more refined and more complex musical language and the increasing presence of polyphony had undeniable repercussions on the system of lyric genres, not only Italian ones, beyond their impact on the relationship between text and music. Bearing witness to this is the increasing specialization of forms on the one hand, some of which came to be used specifically for the art of polyphony, and the creation or assumption of new formal structures on

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[28] English from C. S. Singleton's translation DANTE ALIGHIERI 1975.

[29] Regarding the 'performative and musical reality' of the poetic texts Dante quotes, not only in the *Commedia* but also elsewhere, see DE VENTURA 2007, esp. the chapter dedicated to performative aspects in the *Commedia*, pp. 36-50, where he argues in detail that sung performance of these and other *canzoni* was likely.

the other (for example the *ballade* in France and the madrigal in Italy). In general, we can observe a clear tendency towards brevity, created by the use of less complex formal structures and a reduced number of stanzas.

Brevity and the functionality of the texts, due to being linked to music, are arguments usually called upon to sustain the literary superiority of works not destined to be sung – «poesia pura», to adopt Stefano La Via's definition (LA VIA 2006, pp. 136-137). This prejudicial point of view is deeply rooted in our cultural system, as Nino Pirrotta notes in an important essay on the relationship between early Italian lyric poetry and music.[30] It is also latent in one of the arguments Aurelio Roncaglia uses to support his thesis of a «"divorzio tra musica e poesia" nel Duecento italiano». He suggests that the poets of the Sicilian school developed greater formal creativity than their Occitan predecessors, tending towards complexity as compensation for the «rottura dell'unità nativa di poesia e musica», a sign of the evolution of lyric poetry that would lead to the Stilnovo, to Petrarch, and to Petrarchism.[31] At the same time, regarding the Italian Ars Nova repertoire, preeminent scholars have sustained the separation between the poetry set by polyphonists and the rest of the purely literary lyric tradition, sustaining as well the idea that the former is less elevated in character. Particularly in terms of later repertoire, the texts set are considered to be poetry for consumption, an idea confirmed by their frequent anonymity.[32]

However, can we really argue that the different relationship between word and music in polyphony and the brevity of the texts must correspond to their being of a lower literary quality? Can it indeed be said that with the advent of

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[30] PIRROTTA 1994 on p. 14: «Dall'Arcadia in poi grava sulla letteratura italiana l'ombra di un persistente pregiudizio che, facendo aurea eccezione per la poesia cantata di tipo trovadorico, tende a considerare come inferiore ogni poesia destinata ad associarsi alla musica. Non si offendano i miei colleghi filologi se io penso che anch'essi sono inconsciamente influenzati da tale pregiudizio, anche se nel caso dei 'siciliani' e dei loro ancor più illustri successori non si dovrebbe tanto parlare di 'poesia per musica' quanto piuttosto di 'musica per poesia'». P. De Ventura references Pirrotta's article to reopen the discussion of the idea of a 'divorce' in the chapter cited above from his book *Dramma e dialogo nella Commedia di Dante*.

[31] RONCAGLIA 1990, on p. 429: «Svolta: perché i caratteri nuovi introdotti dalla Scuola Siciliana – in particolare la rottura dell'unità nativa di poesia e musica (di *motz* e *sons*), con il compenso di una creatività formale tutta concentrata sull'aspetto verbale della composizione – sono alla base di tutta la tradizione sviluppatasi poi, dai Siciliani agli Stilnovisti, e da questi a Petrarca e al Petrarchismo (che restituisce la lezione dei trovatori a tutta l'Europa)». On the Pirrotta's and Roncaglia's differing points of view also see ANTONELLI 2010, where he reaffirms the validity of the idea of a 'divorce', although only in terms of a «processo di separazione» that «sembra comunque accentuarsi presso i Siciliani» (p. 221).

[32] See ZIINO 1995, p. 498: «Un confronto fra la tradizione musicale e quella 'letteraria' ha permesso ad Alberto F. Gallo di stabilire che il repertorio poetico-musicale arsnovistico più antico (madrigali e cacce di Piero, Giovanni da Cascia e Iacopo da Bologna) ci è stato tramandato principalmente da fonti musicali: questo significa che era considerato un genere non 'elevato', a sé stante e tale da essere trasmesso solo anonimamente. Riguardo alla produzione più recente, fondata principalmente sulla ballata polifonica di matrice fiorentina, c'è da osservare che i compositori non facevano particolare attenzione alla scelta delle poesie da mettere in musica, utilizzando anche testi senza un particolare valore poetico, purché diffusi e facilmente disponibili».

polyphony the direction of subordination is inverted in music's favor, and that in this respect we should thus recognize *poesia per musica* as a category of poetry for intended consumption, anonymous in a literal and figurative sense, composed to respond to the minimal needs of musicians who were indifferent to the texts' value? Or to put it another way: Can we take it for granted that *poesia per musica*, or musical poetry, truly existed as it has been preserved in the anthologies of Trecento lyric poetry (Sapegno, Corsi) and has been treated by musical and literary historians – a poetry composed to be used for poly-phonic setting?[33]

Reading Sacchetti's *canzoniere*, an invaluable autograph account, helps us to clarify one primary aspect.[34] It is well known that Sacchetti annotated his poems with rubrics indicating which texts received musical treatment, and specifying the composer of each setting. If we assume the existence of poetry created for musical use, we would expect these annotations to pertain, if not to all the *ballate* and madrigals, then at least to a large number of them. But in reality, the balance is rather unsatisfying: only about 30 poems out of 28 madrigals and 55 *ballate* seem to have drawn the attention of musicians. Therefore, Sacchetti created his madrigals and *ballate* irrespective of their potential to be set to music. Just as for Dante and for Machaut, and I believe also for Jaufré Rudel, the poetic text precedes the musical setting and is, at least in its origins, independent from it. Musical setting, meanwhile, fosters the reception and diffusion of a poetic work, bringing out its beauty, acting, in essence, as a resonating chamber. In fact, Sacchetti's scrupulous annotations suggest that a musical setting – a text's diffusion as song – was seen as recognition of its poetic value, much like the situation Jaufré Rudel's poem outlines. If we are unwilling to renounce the expression '*poesia per musica*', then, I believe it should be used not to indicate a repertoire that is secondary in the sense that is functional because of its ties to music. Rather, the term should be used to identify forms thoroughly integrated into the system of lyric genres that are well suited to be set musically using the new and more sophisticated compositional techniques of the fourteenth century.

I believe we can also argue for poetry's autonomy from music in the four-teenth-century tradition of so-called *poesia per musica* in the case of the madrigal. This genre constitutes the most important novelty in Italian Trecento system of generic classification, in spite of its exclusive association in musical codices with settings for multiple voices, which has lead us to consider it a polyphonic genre *par excellence*. Notwithstanding the image of the genre as 'popular', an image that derives from its description in early treatises, the madrigal is far from uncouth. It is, in fact, a genre that fully inhabits the realm of *poesia aulica*, calling prevalently on amorous themes and often describing a circumscribed event, a momentary situation, generally set *en plein air*, in

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[33] SAPEGNO 1952, which should be integrated with the anthology *Rimatori del tardo Trecento* 1967; CORSI 1969; CORSI 1970.

[34] The two most recent editions are SACCHETTI 1990; SACCHETTI 2007.

nature, as is the case with Petrarch's four madrigals. The other common thematic material used is political and moral, and it is not infrequent for texts to be associated with the celebration of an important figure or event. Moreover, the genre often makes use of allusive and elliptic language that in many cases requires literal deciphering (much of which still remains to be done), in addition to the frequent use of *senhal*s, acrostics, and symbols (heraldic symbolism).[35]

In his seminal essay on the 'ancient' madrigal, Guido Capovilla cautiously leans towards a theory of origin for the fourteenth-century genre that is closely bound to musical concerns. He proposes that the madrigal was a new form, born in connection with music-compositional circles from the combination of preexisting metric modules of two or three verses found in stanzas of *canzoni* and *ballate*.[36] To this argument, which excludes the possibility of direct derivation from preexisting genres and thus excludes a true pre-history of the genre, we may add the hypothesis of the influence of another uniquely Italian form, the sonnet. The most common syllabic structure for the madrigal, two *terzine* followed by a couplet acting as a ritornello, corresponds to the second section of a *sonetto ritornellato*, a variation of sonnet form, involving the addition of two final hendecasyllabic verses in *rima baciata*. Moreover, it is easy to find precedent for the majority of the more complex syllabic structures found in the madrigal – those mixing hendecasyllabic verses and *settenari* and those where the *terzina* is reiterated – in the numerous other variants of the sonnet, in short, in the experimentalism that resulted in the modification of this extremely successful form to the point of reinventing it, starting from the earliest Tuscan lyric production. We must also consider the possibility of an autonomous experimentalism, demonstrated by the increased variation in rhyme scheme, which even permits unrelated rhymes not allowed in the sonnet (and never adopted by Petrarch in his madrigals).

For example, the tendency to reiterate the *terzine*, seen in Petrarch's madrigal 121, is typical of a group of sonnets by various authors, some anonymous, in the thirteenth-century Laurentian *canzoniere*, studied by d'Arco Silvio Avalle for its use of two abbreviations recalling liturgical chant, the slashed R and slashed V. The *canzoniere*'s scribes use these abbreviations to indicate different sections of the syllabic structure in sonnets and *ballate*.[37] Avalle highlights how the added sections are labeled with the abbreviation *Ri*

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[35] Some madrigals and other texts with acrostics and heraldic symbolism have been recently analysed in LANNUTTI 2015; LANNUTTI 2016.

[36] CAPOVILLA 1982, on pp. 166-167: «Non ci sono giunti, finora, dati reali che attestino una preistoria della forma in questione, né, d'altronde, sembra che si debba ipotizzare una lunga incubazione. Tranne qualche caso più avanti discusso, il madrigale non fa che allineare, in misura e ordine variabili, due elementi morfologici (terzetto e distico) che preesistono, separatamente o meno, in altre forme strofiche [...]. Ciò lascerebbe intendere che la forma madrigalistica sia sorta in seguito alla necessità, certo avvertita in primo luogo nell'ambito dei maestri intonatori, di disporre d'una struttura più concisa e lineare del sonetto e delle ballate [...]». On the morphology of the madrigal, also see ZENARI 2004.

[37] AVALLE 1991; *Concordanze* 1992, pp. clx-clxi.

or *Ritor* («ritornello») when the sonnet's base form is expanded. These two abbreviations are also found in the Palatino *canzoniere* and the Vatican *canzoniere*, both organized by genre like the Laurentian *canzoniere*. They linger, too, in the work of scribes active during the Trecento and beyond, found in manuscripts like Niccolò de' Rossi's *canzoniere* and Vat. Lat. 3214. What is surprising in the Palatino *canzoniere*, the oldest source, is the presence of two contiguous works (nn. 151 and 152) copied in the middle of a section of sonnets contained in the manuscript's final gathering. Lino Leonardi has recently suggested that these two works, which are divided into two tercets and two couplets, may be possible predecessors of the Trecento madrigal (LEONARDI 2010).

The first (*Certo non si convene*) appears with a rubric labeling it as a *questione* and attributing it to Gonella degli Antelminelli, a poet from Lucca («Questione di messer Gonella»). It follows the metric scheme abc, abc, Dd, EE. The syllabic structure of the second – ABA, BAB, cc, dd – has a stronger affinity with the most common madrigal form, and Leonardi's analysis demonstrates that this poem was associated with the first for purely formal reasons. It is classified by its rubric as a *frocta*, and is attributed to Ranieri de' Samaretani («Frocta di messer Ranieri de' Samaretani»), a Bolognese poet who was a contemporary of Guido Guinizelli. The *frocta*, which consists of two hendecasyllabic *terzine* followed by a *cauda* or ritornello of four seven-syllable verses (marked by the rubricator with a slashed V abbreviation), is presented as a second section of a *sonetto ritornellato*. Its similarity with a that form is all the more strong if we consider the fact that the *cauda* can also be subdivided into a couplet of two double seven-syllable verses, as it is in three sonnets by Chiaro Davanzanti contained in the Vatican *canzoniere* (V 599 *Poi so ch'io fallo per troppo volere*, V 600 *In ogni cosa vuol senno e misura*, V 602 *Com' forte vita e dolorosa, lasso!*). A certain affinity with examples of more complex, symbolic, and enigmatic moralizing-political madrigals is also demonstrated by the moralizing content of these poems and by their language, certainly ascribable to the tradition Avalle classifies as «dedalica» and «ermetica». I quote here from the edition found in CLPIO, which offers a translation of the text into modern Italian:[38]

> P 152 «Frocta di messer Ranieri de' Samaretani»
>
> Come 'n Samaria nato for di fe',
> ferm'e lo nome sovra quello c'agio
> cosi come ver' voi son dricto in fe'.
> Messere Polo, pero- del senno c'agio
> sono vi mando, -c'a' 'nvero Dio fe',
> e ki ricontra Lui, vantene c'a gio'.
> «Audit'e volte mante,
> ad anime ca mante

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[38] *Concordanze* 1992, pp. 284 e 847. The text has also been edited by MINETTI 1982.

> probate son parole,
> dicioke fo parole».

> Per quanto nato in Samaria lontano dalla fede, il nome che io ho è altrettanto saldo sopra quello quanto lo sono io in tema di fede nei vostri confronti. Messer Polo, per quel tanto che io so, vi mando un detto, visto che tu hai tanta fede in Dio, e chi si oppone a Lui, si vanti pure di avere il Paradiso! «Si è sentito dire più di una volta che da parte di non poche persone sono approvate parole, laddove non si tratta altro che di parole».

I would like to draw attention to vv. 4-5 of the *frocta*, to the phrase «però, del senno c'agio, / sono vi mando», where we find Machaut's *sens* as well as Jaufré Rudel's *so* and Dante's *sonus*, even if in this case *senno* indicates wisdom or knowledge broadly speaking and *sono*, through metonymy, indicates the poetic work, in accordance with the usage common in French and Occitan contexts, and in Italian too.[39] The word *sono*, «poetic work, sonnet», also alludes to the musical nature of medieval poetry that involves theoretical elements and performance, bringing us back to Casella's *amoroso canto*. The term thus bears witness to the possibility of sung execution for *canzoni*, and in this specific case even a *canzone* of the doctrinal type, which, we should note, Dante discounts in the *De vulgari eloquentia*. The episode involving Casella also allows us to glimpse a legacy of musical settings for which no trace remains, settings that may not have been habitually recorded in writing, or, more likely, did not enter the manuscript tradition. We glimpse a tradition that, at least with notation, is essentially foreign to Italy, with the exception of the elite and circumscribed Ars Nova repertoire, and to southern France, connected instead almost exclusively with northern France.

Demanding the autonomy of texts and poetic genres does not therefore negate the persistence throughout the Middle Ages of a *union* between poetry and music pertaining, in all likelihood, to the entire lyric repertoire, without geographic or cultural limits. Nor does it negate the importance of music not only as a resonating chamber for poetic texts, but, of course, as a form of art in its own right, as theorised also in a treatise on poetry by Deschamps at the end of the fourteenth century. Rather, it allows us to trace a continuous line from the earliest lyric production up through the entire fourteenth century and perhaps beyond, represented by a division of function and skill, even when a single author is at the same time poet and musician, as is the case of Guillaume de Machaut. From this point of view, the image of the poet-musician as author of works in which words and sounds pour out of a single creative act, he himself singer of his own compositions – an image so dear to the Romantic vision of the Middle Ages and to its successive ramifications – is essentially a

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[39] On the meaning of *sono*, «saggio» for Minetti and «detto» for Avalle, see Leonardi 2010, p. 5. Leonardi convincingly interprets «sonetto» as a reference to the sonnet and follows our text in the manuscript, which is itself also addressed to Polo Zoppo (of greater significance if one considers that the words *sì prova falso ale parole* in v. 7 of the sonnet recall the words *probate son parole* in v. 9 of the *frocta*).

mythic one. In fact, it is already present in medieval mythology itself, embodied above all in the figure of Tristan: a new Orpheus or King David the harper, a bewitching singer, synthesis of Apollo and Dionysus, interface between life and death, between man and God. I close with a passage from *Guiron le Courtois*, written around 1235. The first part of this widely circulated romance is centered on the figure of Tristan's enchanting father, Meliadus, from whom Tristan inherited his unparalleled talent for music and poetry:[40]

> Tant amoit corelement la roine qu'il en cuidoit bien mourir. Chançons trueve de ses amours que il vait chantant jour et nuit et ce estoit ce qui plus le reconfortoit en celuy afaire. Et qu'en diroie je? Longuement sueffre celuy mal qu'il ne l'ose faire savoir et au derrain trueve .i. dit de ses amours, plus merveilleus et plus soutil que nus n'avoit devant trouvé et seur celui dit trueve chant tel que on pooit chanter en harpe. Et ce estoit li hons du monde qui plus savoit de harpe a celui temps et qui mieux trouvoit chans et notes. Et celui dit qu'il trouva a celui tans par amour le reconfortoit moult.

> [He loved the queen so passionately that he believed he was dying. He composed songs about his love that he sang day and night, and it was in this that he found the greatest comfort. What can I say? He suffered for a long time in secret, and in the end he wrote a text about his love that was more marvelous and more refined than any he had written before, and on that text he composed a song that he could sing with harp. He was also the most skilled harp player on earth at that time, and he composed songs and melodies even better. And the text that he composed in that circumstance for love consoled him greatly.]

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[40] I take the passage of *Guiron* from the work of TRACHSLER 2001, p. 140.

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