

**‘A me stesso di me pietate vène’**  
**Lyric Subjectivity in Guido Cavalcanti’s *Rime***

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This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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**Title:** 'A me stesso di me pietate vène'. Lyric subjectivity in Guido Cavalcanti's *Rime*.

**Abstract:**

This thesis examines articulations of subjectivity in the love-lyric *corpus* of Guido Cavalcanti (c.1258-1300). That Cavalcanti has a central role in the development of the modern lyric subjectivity is widely accepted in scholarship. The present study aims to deepen current understanding of Cavalcanti's poetry by analysing ways in which the subject of the enunciation is articulated in the *Rime*. This research adopts a traditional critical approach (i.e. philological, lexicographic, and semasiological) in conversation with linguistics, narratology, and literary theory. The main textual strategies which contribute to the expression of subjectivity in the cavalcantian *corpus* are analysed in the context of the Duecento Italian love-lyric tradition. Chapter 1 historicises and maps the main debates concerning the issue of subjectivity in medieval texts which prove significant for reflecting upon the cavalcantian subject and defines the thesis' methodological framework. Chapter 2 and 3 discuss the most significant results of a comprehensive indexing and analysis of deictics. It provides an examination of the ways in which subjectivity is encoded in the *Rime*, as related to the main coordinates of the discourse (person, time, space). Chapter 4 examines Cavalcanti's use of apostrophe and the direction of the poetic message as strategies to redefine the lover-beloved polarity of the lyric tradition. Chapter 5 analyses voices that are "other" to the traditional one of the poet-lover in the *Rime* and their contribution to the articulation of a specific subjectivity in the lyric discourse.

**Keywords:** Guido Cavalcanti, Italian poetry, lyric subjectivity, deixis, medieval literature, Dante, Guido Guinizzelli



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I dedicate this thesis to my mother and my father.





## INTRODUCTION

This thesis describes how lyric subjectivity is articulated in Guido Cavalcanti's *Rime*,<sup>1</sup> exploring, in the first instance, how the first-person position is staged in the love lyrics of the Cavalcantian corpus. In introducing *Alle origini dell'io lirico*, a collection of essays published to celebrate Cavalcanti on the seventh centenary of his death, Roberto Antonelli emphasises that Cavalcanti 'va [...] ricordato, poiché è con lui che inizia la lirica moderna in senso stretto, in quanto indagine poetica, autocosciente, dell'*homo interior*'.<sup>2</sup> The collection, inaugurating a series of volumes linked by the common theme of the lyric 'I', aims to investigate and discuss the origins of modern lyric subjectivity by focussing on Cavalcanti's poetry.<sup>3</sup> This short quotation, by bringing into focus Cavalcanti's importance for the lyric canon, urges us to further reflect upon the *Rime*, and to explore the reasons behind their enduring legacy.<sup>4</sup>

My investigation stems from the intention to contribute to this ongoing research. While there is an established narrative concerning Cavalcanti's importance to the canon, which anoints the *Rime* as 'uno snodo essenziale della tradizione lirica fino e oltre Petrarca',<sup>5</sup> Cavalcanti scholarship still lacks a comprehensive enquiry into Cavalcantian subjectivity which could contribute to our current understanding of the poet's significance. As I will discuss, important studies have been produced on Cavalcanti's sources, on intertextual relationships between Cavalcanti and the lyric tradition, and on issues of style and language, but very few contributions have directly addressed the issue of subjectivity in the *Rime*.<sup>6</sup> These more recent studies have generally discussed subjectivity as related to some thematic choices characterising Cavalcanti's fictionalisation of the traditional love dynamics

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<sup>1</sup> All quotations from and references to Cavalcanti's corpus are taken from Guido Cavalcanti, *Rime*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Giorgio Inglese (Rome: Carocci, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Roberto Antonelli, 'Cavalcanti o dell'interiorità', in *Alle origini dell'io lirico. Cavalcanti o dell'interiorità*, ed. by Roberto Antonelli (Rome: Viella, 2001), pp. 1-22 (p. 3). This critical interpretation of Guido's poetry is accepted in Cavalcanti scholarship, as Roberto Rea's 'Introduction' to the latest edition of the *Rime* testifies. Rea follows on from Antonelli's pivotal observations when holding that 'pochi poeti hanno rivoluzionato la storia della nostra tradizione come Guido Cavalcanti' (Rea, 'Introduzione', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, pp. 13-32 (p. 13)). The scholar talks about Cavalcanti's poetry in terms of an outright breach with the Courtly tradition pursued by means of an internalisation of the lyric discourse.

<sup>3</sup> Antonelli, 'Premessa', in *Alle origini dell'io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. v-vi (p. vi).

<sup>4</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>5</sup> Antonelli, 'Premessa', in Roberto Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta. Uno studio sul lessico lirico* (Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2008), pp. 11-12 (p. 11).

<sup>6</sup> These sources will be presented and examined in the thesis. As I will also discuss it is Antonelli who first addresses directly the issue of subjectivity in Cavalcanti's poetry – even if important remarks on this issue had already been made in previous works by other scholars.

and to the poet's consequent use of an innovative vocabulary to represent the *Io* and his<sup>7</sup> condition.<sup>8</sup> These fundamental studies do not entirely answer a central question I aim to address: how is subjectivity encoded and verbalised in the *Rime*? My object in this thesis is to tackle this critical vacuum by identifying and examining the main linguistic and rhetorical strategies that contribute to characterising the Cavalcantian model(s) of subjectivity. My methodology combines a more traditional approach with categories borrowed from Narratology and Linguistics, which I propose offer us new tools to consider the issue of subjectivity in the *Rime*, inviting fresh perspectives on the centrally important question I seek to engage with.

To discuss subjectivity in the *Rime* first implies acknowledging central elements related to the poetry of Cavalcanti, such as its material transmission, reception, and characterising features. For this reason, in this Introduction I will expound some fundamental, interconnected aspects contributing to the canonisation of Cavalcanti's poetry whose discussion constitutes an essential premise to the analyses of the following Chapters. I will retrace some of the essential episodes of Cavalcanti's reception. As directly related to this aspect, I will touch upon issues of material culture and the *Rime*'s manuscript tradition. Before providing a summary of each Chapter's content, I will discuss Cavalcanti's representation of the phenomenology of love as expressed in his *Rime*. This exposition will be contextualised within the spread of medical and scientific treatises in the Western world and their internalisation in the production of love lyric, with specific attention to the reuse of these sources in the Italian love lyric. It is only through the parameters of this phenomenology that the particular contours of Cavalcantian subjectivity come to the fore.

As Domenico De Robertis observes, 'Non c'è forse esempio, nella storia delle nostre lettere, tanto più ai loro inizi, di fortuna pari a quella di cui ha goduto Guido Cavalcanti già da vivo [...]'.<sup>9</sup> This

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<sup>7</sup> While I acknowledge that the medieval love lyric includes a significant number of underrepresented and often neglected feminine poetic voices, as a general convention, and for the purposes of clarity only, I will make use of the masculine pronoun 'he' when talking about subjectivity in Cavalcanti and in the other poets quoted in this thesis, as I will be discussing a kind of poetry where the 'I' is by definition masculine, and where it establishes its masculinity through dialogue with the desired "other", the lady. I will switch to the neutral 'it' in Chapter I, when I will discuss the subject in philosophical and linguistic terms, following on from the convention adopted by the works I reference.

<sup>8</sup> Antonelli further expands his claims by discussing the Cavalcantian representation of the traditional dialectic *Io-Tu*. The scholar looks at Cavalcanti as a precursor in the fundamental process of polarisation which, culminating with Dante's and Petrarch's elision of their beloved lady, transforms the love lyric from a fictitious dialogue aimed at attaining the desired "other" to a solipsistic, overtly narcissistic meditation revolving around the *Io*. By postulating the necessity of the subject's death when confronted with the event of love, an aspect I will consider later in this Introduction, Cavalcanti polarises the traditional dialectic in an unprecedented way. As Antonelli maintains '[l]'estremizzazione del rapporto Io-altro [...] libera e assolutizza la parola, la lingua, e "crea" le condizioni della lirica moderna' (Antonelli, 'Cavalcanti o dell'interiorità', in *Alle origini dell'Io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 9). The resulting focus on the subject and his condition in the *Rime* is sustained by an original use of the traditional lexis of the love lyric. This aspect which has been variously emphasised by scholars, has been recently examined in Roberto Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*.

<sup>9</sup> De Robertis, 'Introduzione', in Guido Cavalcanti, *Rime. Con le Rime di Iacopo Cavalcanti*, ed. by Domenico De Robertis (Turin: Einaudi, 1986), pp. XI-XXIV (p. XIII).

*fortuna* is testified to by Cavalcanti's exceptionally vivid poetic correspondence,<sup>10</sup> by the dedications to Cavalcanti in Dante's *Vita Nuova*<sup>11</sup> and Iacopo da Pistoia's *Questio de felicitate*,<sup>12</sup> by Cavalcanti's 'lives', or the brief pseudo-biographical accounts appearing in chronicles and in the commentaries on Dante's *Commedia*,<sup>13</sup> and by the extraordinary quantity of glosses on Cavalcanti's doctrinal *canzone*, 'Donna me prega'.<sup>14</sup>

This unique, immediate reception is the first element to reckon with in engaging with the poetry of the *Rime*. It is a phenomenon which appears often almost inextricable from the construction of Guido's persona that, in turn, is partly affected by some of his readers' intention to establish their own literary identity or exploit the figure of Cavalcanti for specific purposes. As Zygmunt Barański maintains, in suggesting that Cavalcanti had already achieved the status of *auctor* during his lifetime, this *auctoritas* as well as Cavalcanti's *fortuna* are affirmed by means of a series of, at times divergent, portrayals. 'It would not seem to be an exaggeration to suggest that, generally speaking, Guido

<sup>10</sup> As Zygmunt Barański observes, Cavalcanti's 'poetry seems to exist in an almost constant dialogue with the writings of his fellow-poets, who, in their turn, appear to have felt the need to address their compositions to Guido' (Zygmunt Barański, 'Guido Cavalcanti and His First Readers', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori. Proceedings of the International Symposium for the Seventh Centennial of His Death. New York (November 10-11, 2000)*, ed. by Maria Luisa Ardizzone (Florence: Cadmo, 2003), pp. 149-176 (p. 155). Among Cavalcanti's correspondents are: Guittone, Dante, Cino, Dino Compagni, Guido Orlandi, Niccola Muscia, Gianni Alfani, Bernardo da Bologna, Lapo Farinata degli Uberti, Nuccio da Siena. On correspondence poetry in the *Duecento* see Armando Balduino, 'Cavalcanti contro Dante e Cino', in *Bufere e molli aurette. Polemiche letterarie dallo Stilnovo alla 'Voce'*, ed. by Maria Grazia Pensa (Milan: Guerini e Associati, 1996), pp. 1-19; Claudio Giunta, *Due saggi sulla tenzone* (Rome: Antenore, 2002); and Id., *Versi a un destinatario* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002).

<sup>11</sup> Dante Alighieri, *Vita nuova, le Rime della Vita nuova e altre Rime del tempo della Vita nuova*, ed. by Donato Pirovano and Marco Grimaldi, Nuova edizione commentata delle Opere di Dante, I.I (Rome: Salerno, 2015). All further references to Dante's *libello* are from this edition and are given parenthetically in the body of the text. The critical literature on Cavalcanti and Dante is now extensive, as the dialogue between the two poets is 'tanto complesso quanto mutevole' as well as extremely difficult to frame (Rea, 'Introduzione', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, pp. 13-23 (p. 21)). Dante's canonisation of Cavalcanti as well as his own self-canonisation largely influenced the discussion of the relationship between the two poets and their poetics, an issue which has been recently defined by Enrico Fenzi as 'un nodo decisivo della nostra cultura occidentale' (Enrico Fenzi, 'Guido Cavalcanti, o della perdita', in *Les Deux Guidi: Guinizzelli et Cavalcanti. Mourir d'aimer et autres ruptures*, ed. by Marina Gagliano, Philippe Guérin, and Raffaella Zanni (Paris: Sorbonne Nouvelle Presses, 2016), pp. 237-250 (p. 239)). In particular, the scholarly debate on the relationship between Cavalcanti's 'Donna me prega' and the *Vita Nuova* is very rich. Dante's *libello* has often been interpreted as a response to and a "defeat" of the poetry of the *primo amico*. For a problematisation of this argument, see Giuliano Tanturli, 'Guido Cavalcanti contro Dante', in *Le tradizioni del testo: studi di letteratura italiana offerti a Domenico De Robertis*, ed. by Franco Gavazzeni and Guglielmo Gorni (Milan; Naples: Ricciardi, 1993), pp. 3-13; Enrico Malato, *Dante e Guido Cavalcanti. Il dissidio per la 'Vita nuova' e il «disdegno» di Guido* (Rome: Salerno, 1997); Nicolò Pasero, 'Dante in Cavalcanti. Ancora sui rapporti tra *Vita nuova* e *Donna me prega*', *Medioevo romanzo*, 22 (1998), 388-414. See Malato, *Dante e Guido Cavalcanti*, p. 17, note 8, for the fundamental bibliography on this convoluted issue.

<sup>12</sup> Paul Oskar Kristeller, 'A Philosophical Treatise from Bologna dedicated to Guido Cavalcanti: Magister Jacobus de Pistorio and his "Questio de Felicitate"', in *Medioevo e rinascimento. Studi in onore di Bruno Nardi*, 2 vols (Florence: Sansoni, 1955), I, pp. 425-463.

<sup>13</sup> This particular aspect is contextualised and framed in a broader discussion of Cavalcanti's early reception in Barański, 'Guido Cavalcanti and His First Readers', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone.

<sup>14</sup> Two illustrious surviving commentaries are those by Dino Del Garbo and by the pseudo-Egidio Romano. For an edition of the first commentaries on 'Donna me prega', see Enrico Fenzi, *La canzone d'amore di Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi antichi commenti* (Genoa: Il Melangolo, 1999). For Del Garbo's gloss see Guido Favati, 'La glossa latina di Dino Del Garbo a "Donna me prega" del Cavalcanti', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Lettere, Storia e Filosofia. Serie II*, 21/1-2 (1952), 70-103. For sixteenth-century commentaries on 'Donna me prega' see Giancarlo Alfano, "'Guido filosofo'. I commenti cinquecenteschi a *Donna me prega* nel loro contesto culturale', *Filologia e Critica*, 35/1 (2010), 3-43.

Cavalcanti's fourteenth-century *fortuna* appears to be encapsulated and resolved in two contrasting yet closely connected portraits',<sup>15</sup> Barański observes. Dante's indirect condemnation of Cavalcanti through the punishment of his father, Cavalcante de Cavalcanti, trapped in the sixth circle of Hell,<sup>16</sup> as well as Boccaccio's portrayal of the shrewd, witty, and aloof Cavalcanti who cleverly escapes unwelcome Florentines<sup>17</sup> are united by the fact that they 'owe their existence to the artistic and intellectual preoccupations of their respective authors'.<sup>18</sup> Dante's and Boccaccio's depictions of Guido greatly influenced the making of Cavalcanti's literary identity and the canonisation of his poetry.

These episodes are not merely limited to Cavalcanti's immediate readership, as an analogous aim of self-affirmation appears to lie behind one of the most famous episodes of twentieth-century Cavalcantian reception. Ezra Pound's depictions of Cavalcanti, as 'a spirit more imperious and less subtle than Dante, more passionate, less likely to give ear to sophistries',<sup>19</sup> seems to stem from an autobiographical evaluation of his figure. Pound's interest in Cavalcanti is programmatic, as Richard Sieburth highlights,<sup>20</sup> suggesting that we are to understand Pound's archaism as an alleged modernist

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<sup>15</sup> Barański, 'Guido Cavalcanti and His First Readers', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, p. 149. See also, by the same author, Id., 'Guido Cavalcanti *auctoritas*', in *Guido Cavalcanti laico e le origini della poesia europea nel 7° centenario della morte. Poesia, filosofia, scienza e ricezione. Atti del convegno internazionale. Barcellona, 16-20 ottobre 2001*, ed. by Rossend Arqués (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2004), pp. 163-180.

<sup>16</sup> See *Inf. X*, 52-72. All references to the *Commedia* are taken from Dante Alighieri, *La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata*, ed. by Giorgio Petrocchi, 4 vols (Florence: Le Lettere, 1994<sup>2</sup>). All further references to Dante's *Commedia* are from this edition and are given parenthetically in the body of the text.

<sup>17</sup> 'Tralle quali brigate n'era una di messer Betto Brunelleschi, nella quale messer Betto e' compagni s'eran molto ingegnati di tirare Guido di messer Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti, e non senza cagione: per ciò che, oltre a quello che egli fu un de' migliori loici che avesse il mondo e ottimo filosofo naturale (delle quali cose poco la brigata curava), si fu egli leggiadrissimo e costumato e parlante uom molto e ogni cosa che far volle e a gentile uom pertinente seppe meglio che altro uom fare; e con questo era ricchissimo, e a chiedere a lingua sapeva onorare cui nell'animo gli capeva che il valesse.' (Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, ed. by Vittore Branca (Turin: Einaudi, 1987), VI. 9, 7-8).

<sup>18</sup> Barański, 'Guido Cavalcanti and His First Readers', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, p. 150.

<sup>19</sup> Ezra Pound, *The Spirit of Romance* (New York: New Directions, 1953), p. 110. Other claims of Cavalcanti's superiority over Dante are in *Ivi*. As Pound later writes, emphasising the poetic superiority of Cavalcanti over both Dante and Petrarch on the basis of Cavalcanti's alleged "modernity": 'In all of which he [Cavalcanti] shows himself much more 'modern' than his young friend Dante Alighieri, *qui était diablement dans les idées reçues*, and whose shock is probably recorded in the passage of *Inferno X* where he finds Guido's father and father-in-law paying for their mental exertion', adding, a few pages later, 'The difference between Guido and Petrarch is not a mere difference in degree, it is a difference in kind. [...] There are certain things Petrarch does not know, cannot know. [...] The gulf between Petrarch's capacity and Guido's is the great gulf, not of degree, but of kind. In Guido the 'figure', the strong metamorphic or 'picturesque' expression is there with purpose to convey or to interpret a definite meaning. In Petrarch it is ornament, the prettiest ornament he could find, but not an irreplaceable ornament, or one that he couldn't have used just about as well somewhere else. In fact he very often does use it, and them, somewhere, and nearly everywhere, else, all over the place' (Ezra Pound, 'Cavalcanti', in Id., *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. by T. S. Eliot (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), pp. 149-200 (p. 149; pp. 153-154). In introducing the English translation of Cavalcanti's *oeuvre*, Pound had earlier claimed: 'Than Guido Cavalcanti, no psychologist of the emotions is more keen in his understanding, more precise in his expression; we have in him no rhetoric, but always a true description, whether it be of pain itself, or of the apathy that comes when the emotions and possibilities of emotions are exhausted, or of that stranger state when the feeling by its intensity surpasses our power of bearing, and we seem to stand aside and watch it surging across some thing or being with whom we are no longer identified' (Ezra Pound, *Sonnets and Ballate of Guido Cavalcanti* (London: Stephen Swift and Co., 1912), pp. 2-3).

<sup>20</sup> Richard Sieburth, 'Channeling Guido. Ezra Pound's Cavalcanti's Translations', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 210-226 (p. 211). On the work behind Pound's translation of Cavalcanti and on the reception of Pound's Cavalcanti see Lorenzo Fabiani, 'Tra i libri di Ezra Pound. La bibliografia "nascosta" nei saggi su Cavalcanti',

strategy, intended ‘as an attempt to violently estrange language from its current linguistic norms by displacing it into an anachronistic – or indeed an a-chronistic dialect.’<sup>21</sup>

The reception of Cavalcanti’s poetry and its broader evaluation in relation to the poetic canon has also been affected by the exceptional exegetic *fortuna* of ‘Donna me prega’, which not only contributed to the affirmation of Cavalcanti’s *auctoritas* but also partly overshadowed his importance as a poet in favour of his fame as a philosopher.<sup>22</sup> In this regard, Domenico de Robertis observes:

[...] a parte l’esemplarità tecnica illustrata da Dante nel *De vulgari eloquentia*, [‘Donna me prega’] ebbe un’eccezionale fortuna esegetica, protrattasi ben addentro nel Cinquecento, quale non toccò né a Dante lirico (che d’altronde provvide personalmente, con *Vita Nuova* e *Convivio*, alla propria esegesi) né per molto tempo a Petrarca, e fu il terreno o il pretesto di un ripetuto confronto d’idee e di posizioni di pensiero.<sup>23</sup>

This conspicuous interest in Cavalcanti’s *canzone filosofica* and the doctrinal contents of the lyric, contributed to a shared and widespread view of Guido as ‘loico’, as a ‘filosofo naturale’,<sup>24</sup> or even as a ‘physicus’,<sup>25</sup> at times obscuring his poetic value.<sup>26</sup> One might ask if such a reception could have

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*Il lettore di provincia*, XLVII, 146/1 (2016), 164-174. For a *status quaestionis* on North American scholarship on Cavalcanti in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries see Id., ‘Ezra Pound e gli studi su Cavalcanti in America’, *Critica del Testo*, XVIII/2 (2015), 67-84.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>22</sup> For a recent reconsideration of the relationship between poetry and philosophy in Cavalcanti’s work see Roberto Rea ‘Unus philosophus alter poeta. Un’ipotesi per Cavalcanti e Dante’, in *Dante. Fra il settecentocinquantesimo della nascita (2015) e il settecentenario della morte (2021). Atti delle Celebrazioni in Senato, del Forum e del Convegno internazionale di Roma: maggio-ottobre 2015*, ed. by Enrico Malato and Andrea Mazzucchi, 2 vols (Rome: Salerno, 2015), II, pp. 351-381. On the complex dialogue between scientific culture and literature in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries see Natascia Tonelli, *Fisiologia della passione. Poesia d’amore e medicina da Cavalcanti a Boccaccio* (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2015). For the specific case of Cavalcanti see ‘Lirica d’amore e scienza. “De Guidone de Cavalcantibus physico”’, in *Ibid.*, pp. 3-70.

<sup>23</sup> De Robertis, ‘Introduzione’, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. XIII.

<sup>24</sup> These epithets appear in Boccaccio’s *novella*. See my note 17. Giovanni Villani also mentions Cavalcanti as a ‘filosofo’: ‘Ma questa parte vi stesste meno a’ confine, che furono revocati per lo ‘nfermo luogo, e tornonne malato Guido Cavalcanti, onde morì, e di lui fue grande damaggio, perciò ch’era come filosofo, virtudioso uomo in più cose, se non ch’era troppo tenero e stizzoso.’ (Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica*, ed. by Giuseppe Porta, 3 vols (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo – Guanda, 1991), II, IX, XLIII, p. 70.

<sup>25</sup> This appellation is used by Filippo Villani, who writes ‘Guido alterius Guidonis filius ex nobili stirpe de Cavalcantibus, liberalium artium peritissimus, Danti contemporaneus, illique familiarissimus, fuit homo sane diligens et speculativus, atque auctoritatis non contemnendae in *physicus*, si opinioni patris Epicurum secuti parum modicum annuisset, morigeratus, alias gravis, et omni dignus laude et honore in rhetoricis delectatus studiis, eandem artem ad rithmorum vulgarium compositionem eleganter traduxit, secundum siquidem locum in vulgaribus odibus post Dantem tenuisse perperiti artis hujusmodi voluere, nisi Petrarcha illi praepuisset eundem. Hic de amore, qui in sensualitate potius quam in ratione versatur, ejusque natura, motibus, et affectu subtilissime disputando elegantissimam et mirabilem *edidit cantilenam*, in qua *physicae inaudita hactenus ingeniosissime et copiose tractavit*; cuius mirabilem intellectum miratis Dinus de Garbo *physicus*, de quo supra habui mentionem, et Aegidius Romanus insignis *physicus* commentare dignati sunt [my emphasis]’ (Filippo Villani, *Le vite d’uomini illustri fiorentini*, ed. by Giammaria Mazzucchelli (Florence: Sansone Coen, 1847), p. 57. As Tonelli emphasises, ‘fin dall’inizio del secolo dodicesimo *physicus* [è] cominciato a valere “dottore in medicina”, *medicus*’ (Tonelli, *Fisiologia della passione*, p. 8).

<sup>26</sup> Boccaccio’s *novella*, a fragment of which I quoted in note 16 and whose influence has been mentioned above, is particularly exemplary on this point. For other famous depictions of Cavalcanti see Barański, ‘Guido Cavalcanti and His First Readers’, in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone.

influenced the manuscript transmission of Cavalcanti's corpus. In this regard, I shall mention the words of Angelo Poliziano who, in the epistle accompanying the *Raccolta Aragonese*, in which Cavalcanti figures as one of the poets represented, praises Cavalcanti's poetic abilities by picturing him as:

[...] nelle invenzioni acutissimo, magnifico, ammirabile, gravissimo nelle sentenzie, copioso, e rilevato nell'ordine, composto, saggio e avveduto, le quali tutte sue beate virtù d'un vago, dolce e peregrino stile, come di preziosa veste sono adorne.<sup>27</sup>

However, Poliziano seems to confirm the widespread depiction of Cavalcanti as a philosopher in eulogising 'Donna me prega' as a 'mirabilissima canzone' which stands out 'sopra tutte l'altre [...] opere' of Cavalcanti.<sup>28</sup>

The manuscript transmission of the *Rime* further participates in complicating interpretations of Cavalcanti's poetry. Guido Favati provided the first organic discussion of the tradition of the *Rime*.<sup>29</sup> Favati's philological survey increased the total number of relevant manuscripts to around one hundred.<sup>30</sup> Of this body of material corpora, only forty manuscripts contain one Cavalcanti's text, and in thirty-one of them, the text copied is, in fact, 'Donna me prega', whose exceptional exegetic *fortuna* has been mentioned above. As these examples demonstrate, the tradition and transmission of the *Rime* relies on a limited number of *codices*, whose features will be discussed momentarily.

First, it is important to emphasise that Cavalcanti is "left out" from the most important *canzonieri* of the first generation of Italian poetry: the *Vaticano Latino 3793*,<sup>31</sup> the *Palatino 418*,<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Lorenzo De' Medici, *Opere*, ed. by Attilio Simoni (Bari: Laterza, 1913), p. 6. The letter has been attributed to Poliziano's hand by Michele Barbi. See Michele Barbi, *La Raccolta Aragonese*, in Id., *Studi sul Canzoniere di Dante* (Florence: Sansoni, 1965), pp. 217-326. See also Domenico De Robertis, 'La Raccolta Aragonese primogenita', *Studi Danteschi*, 47 (1970), 239-258; repr. in Id., *Editi e rari* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1978), pp. 50-65.

<sup>28</sup> *Ivi*. Lorenzo De' Medici seems also to express a sort of regret with regard to Cavalcanti's interest in philosophy, when he writes 'se in più spazioso campo si fusse esercitato, avrebbe senza dubbio i primi onori occupati' (*Ivi*).

<sup>29</sup> Guido Cavalcanti. *Rime*, ed. by Guido Favati (Milan; Naples, Ricciardi, 1957). For Favati's full survey, see *Ibid.*, 'Introduzione'; and 'La tradizione manoscritta del Canzoniere cavalcantiano', pp. 3-21; 22-118. For a concise discussion of Cavalcanti's manuscript transmission see: De Robertis, 'Nota al testo', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, pp. 241-250.

<sup>30</sup> Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1957, pp. 3-10; 117-118.

<sup>31</sup> Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *MS Vat. Lat. 3793*. This manuscript was compiled in Florence between the end of the thirteenth and the early fourteenth century, probably by a single copyist. It collects around a thousand of texts, organized in 25 quires, which trace a precise historiographic evolution of the Italian lyric: from the Sicilian school to the Tuscan poets. On the structure of the *Vat. Lat. 3793* see: Roberto Antonelli, 'Struttura materiale e disegno storiografico del canzoniere Vaticano', in Lino Leonardi (ed.), *I Canzonieri della lirica italiana delle origini*, 4 vols (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2000-2001), I, pp. 3-23.

<sup>32</sup> Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, *MS Palatino 418* (ex *B.R. 217*). The Palatino was compiled between Florence and Pistoia at the end of the thirteenth century. It contains about 170 texts, whose organization is less organic than that of the *Vat. Lat. 3793*. In fact, the MS juxtaposes texts of Sicilian poets and of the so called "siculo-toscani". On its internal structure see, in particular, Giancarlo Savino, 'Il canzoniere Palatino: una raccolta disordinata', in Id., *I Canzonieri della lirica italiana delle origini*, ed. Leonardi, IV: pp. 301-315. See also Paola Allegretti Gorni, 'Poeti antichi italiani nelle carte del Palatino', in *La poesia italiana prima di Dante. Atti del Colloquio internazionale di italianistica (Università degli Studi di Roma Tre, 10-12 giugno 2015)* ed. by Franco Suitner (Ravenna: Longo, 2017), pp. 15-28. On the last two sections of the *Palatino*, see: Marco Berisso, 'I fascicoli IX-X dell'ex-Palatino 418: gli autori, la metrica, l'ambiente culturale', *Medioevo Letterario d'Italia*, 9 (2012), 19-33.

and the *Laurenziano Rediano 9*.<sup>33</sup> ‘Viene a mancare proprio il carattere della contemporaneità’, De Robertis observes when commenting on this specific aspect of the *Rime*’s transmission.<sup>34</sup> This “silence” is broken by two exceptions: the *ballata* ‘Fresca rosa novella’ (I), and the sonnet ‘Biltà di donna’ (III),<sup>35</sup> ‘entrambi con (e probabilmente per) evidenti tratti di arcaicità’, as De Robertis proposes.<sup>36</sup> These two lyrics are the only texts of the corpus which are transmitted by pre-fourteenth century manuscripts: the *Palatino 418* and the *Laurenziano Rediano 9*, both transcribed at the end of thirteenth century.<sup>37</sup>

The manuscript tradition of the Cavalcantian *corpus* relies almost entirely on the following generation of manuscripts. Among these *codices*, the *Chigiano L.V.III.305*,<sup>38</sup> deserves special mention. Compiled in Florence halfway through the fourteenth century approximately, the manuscript itself contains 41 out of the 52 texts of which the cavalcantian *corpus* is constituted; 10 out of the 14 texts of Cavalcanti’s correspondents; and 2 ballads of Cavalcanti’s brother, Iacopo. The texts transmitted by the manuscript are accurately divided according to their metric form, and presented following a major division: ballads in one section, and sonnets and *canzoni* in another one.<sup>39</sup> The “anthology” transmitted by the *Chigiano L.V.III.305* testifies to the progressive assembling of an

<sup>33</sup> Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, *MS Laurenziano Rediano 9*. Probably compiled in Pisa in the last years of the thirteenth century, the *Rediano 9* focusses on Guittone d’Arezzo, whose lyrics occupy more than half of the manuscript. For detailed discussions of its structure, contents, and sources, see Lino Leonardi, ‘Il Canzoniere Laurenziano. Struttura, contenuto e fonti di una raccolta d’autore’, in Id. (ed.), *I Canzonieri della lirica italiana delle origini*, ed. Leonardi, IV: pp. 153-214.

<sup>34</sup> De Robertis, ‘Introduzione’, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, pp. XI-XXIV (p. XVIII).

<sup>35</sup> The *ballata* is transmitted in *MS Palatino 418*, fol. 70<sup>r</sup>. ‘Biltà di donna e di saccente core’ is transmitted in *MS Laurenziano Rediano 9*, fols 57<sup>r</sup>-57<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> De Robertis, ‘Introduzione’, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. XIX. De Robertis also comments on Favati’s choice to place these two texts at the opening of his edition of the *Rime*: ‘[la ballata] è chiamata a inaugurare la raccolta delle rime di Guido (coi tre sonetti seguenti rappresenterebbe una fase, come dire, aurorale, [...])’ of Cavalcanti’s poetry (De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 3). On the same lines see other recent comments by Marcello Ciccuto and Roberto Rea (Marcello Ciccuto, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, ed. by Marcello Ciccuto, with an Introduction by Maria Corti (Milan: BUR, 1978), p. 76; Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 4). Giuseppe Marrani and Natascia Tonelli comment on Favati’s editorial choice by emphasising the archaic traits of this text: ‘la primaverile ballatina cavalcantiana, intessuta di soli settenari (salvo il verso guida, che è endecasillabo, ma con rima al mezzo settenaria), è chiamata a reggere la posizione d’esordio quasi rappresentasse il grado zero di originalità e d’introspezione, l’aurora insomma della poesia di Guido, abitata da arcaismi e occitaniche formule di scuola che tengono a spensierata distanza il più maturo e compiuto Cavalcanti, che vogliamo crudelmente oscurato da sbigottimento e immedicabile angoscia d’amore’ (Giuseppe Marrani e Natascia Tonelli, ‘Postfazione’, in Cavalcanti, *Rime. Con le rime di Iacopo Cavalcanti*, ed. by Domenico De Robertis, with an Afterword by Giuseppe Marrani and Natascia Tonelli (Milan: Ledizioni, 2012), pp. III-VIII (p. VI).

<sup>37</sup> To these two material witnesses, we shall add the quire *Podestà e Capitani 375* (Bologna, Archivio di stato, *Podestà e Capitani 375*), containing the congedo of ‘Donna me prega’ and the *Memoriale notarile 110* (Bologna, Archivio di Stato, *Memoriale 110 dell’anno 1305*), containing two fragments of the ballata ‘in un boschetto trova’ pastorella (vv. 1-2; 21-26).

<sup>38</sup> Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *MS Chigiano L. VIII.305*.

<sup>39</sup> For a discussion of the *Chigiano L.VIII.305*, see Giovanni Borriero, *Intavulare. Tavole di canzonieri romanzi*, 3 vols (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2006), 3.1: *Canzonieri Italiani. Ch (Chig. L. VIII. 305)*; and Id., ‘“Quantum illos proximius imitemur, tantum rectius poetemur”. Note sul Chigiano L.VIII.305 e sulle “antologie d’autore”’, *Anticomoderno*, 3 (1997), 259-286.

important textual tradition which will be included, almost entirely, in the *Raccolta Aragonesa* first, and in the *Raccolta Giuntina* of 1527 later.<sup>40</sup>

Another crucial manuscript for the transmission of Cavalcanti's *Rime* is the *Vat. Lat. 3214*.<sup>41</sup> Belonging to Pietro Bembo, it was transcribed in 1523, commissioned by Giulio Camillo Delminio, following the example of an ancient manuscript that, in turn, represented a model for the *Raccolta Bartoliniana*.<sup>42</sup> As De Robertis emphasises by commenting on the rich collection of *tenzoni* characterising this manuscript, the *Vat. Lat. 3214* is 'il più importante 'relation ms' dell'intera tradizione delle rime antiche'.<sup>43</sup>

The entire *corpus* of the *Rime* can be assembled with these two *codices*: the *Chigiano L.V.III.305* and the *Vat. Lat. 3214*, both falling under the X family, according to the grouping established by Favati.<sup>44</sup> However, the *Vat. Lat. 3214* can be considered a point of convergence between this family and another fundamental branch composing the tradition of the *Rime*, also known as K.<sup>45</sup> In fact, the K tradition consists of a number of texts that are not present in the *Chigiano L.V.III.305*, but are contained in the *Vat. Lat. 3214*. These texts are, in turn, transmitted by a number of "northern" manuscripts, such as the *Escorialense e.III.23*,<sup>46</sup> a Venetian code transcribed in the first half of the fourteenth century.<sup>47</sup> To these two families, one shall also recall a third one, composed by illustrious manuscripts, such Nicolò de Rossi's *Barberiniano*,<sup>48</sup> the *Codice Martelli 12*,<sup>49</sup> and the *Riccardiano 1050*,<sup>50</sup> Antonio Pucci's autograph collection of poems.

In summary, some of the most important *codices* and clusters for the transmission of the *Rime* have been identified, as well as the "belatedness" characterising the material tradition of the *Rime*. We shall now also point to the fact that Cavalcanti's *corpus* 'è assolutamente refrattario all'individuazione e all'ordinamento di una storia', as De Robertis points out.<sup>51</sup> In fact, the *corpus* has not been organised by its author as a macrotext. Guido Favati's critical edition of the *Rime* itself,

<sup>40</sup> See Favati, 'Il gruppo α e i suoi affini', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1957, pp. 22-52.

<sup>41</sup> *MS Vat. Lat. 3214*.

<sup>42</sup> The text from which Bartolini copied several poems into the *Raccolta Bartoliniana* is close but not the same as the *Vat. Lat. 3214*. For a discussion of the sources of the *Raccolta Bartoliniana* was compiled, see Michele Barbi, 'La Raccolta Bartoliniana e le sue fonti', in Id., *Studi sul Canzoniere di Dante. Con nuove indagini sulle raccolte manoscritte e a stampa di antiche rime italiana* (Florence: Sansoni, 1915). See also Francesco Massera, 'Su la genesi della raccolta Bartoliniana (Contributo alla storia degli antichi canzonieri italiani)', *ZRPh*, XXVI (1902), 1-30.

<sup>43</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 247.

<sup>44</sup> For a detailed discussion of the 'X family', see, Favati, 'La Famiglia X', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1957, pp. 22-51.

<sup>45</sup> On the 'K family', see De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, pp. 247-249.

<sup>46</sup> Madrid, Biblioteca Escorial, *MS e. III. 23*. See Domenico De Robertis, *Il Canzoniere Escorialense e la tradizione "veneziana" delle rime dello Stil Novo* (Turin: Loescher, 1954).

<sup>47</sup> See Favati, 'L'Escorialense e i suoi affini', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1957, pp. 81-118.

<sup>48</sup> Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, *MS Barberiniano lat. 3953*.

<sup>49</sup> Florence, Biblioteca privata dei conti Martelli, *MS Mart. Bass. I, n. 12*.

<sup>50</sup> Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, *MS Rb 1050*.

<sup>51</sup> De Robertis, 'Introduzione', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. XXI. Guglielmo Gorni attempted to identify a sequence of nine sonnet, transmitted by the *Vat. Lat. 3214*, suggesting that the sylloge of lyrics in the manuscript reflects an authorial choice to be attributed to Cavalcanti himself. For a discussion of Gorni's hypothesis, see my Chapter I, pp. 15-16.



upon which all the most recent editions of the *Rime* are based, openly traces a ‘percorso ideale’,<sup>52</sup>. It does this by meeting the need to find a criterion to order the otherwise dispersed texts of the Cavalcantian corpus, and thus, participating (even though involuntarily) in a particular reading of the *corpus*.

These philological elements just discussed emphasise a problematic situation for what concerns the analysis of subjectivity as related to the Cavalcantian corpus. On the one hand, a lack of authorial ordering ostracises any discussions on the relationship between lyric ‘I’ and authorial subjectivity, as I further discuss in Chapter I (pp. 14-16). On the other hand, the chronological (and geographical) peculiarities characterising the material transmission of the *Rime*, as suggested by Avalle, would testify to and by a mark of Cavalcanti’s poetic and ideological break with the tradition;<sup>53</sup> or, as De Robertis puts it, a sort of ‘incompatibilità con la vecchia scuola, la diversità, il carattere di alta dottrina’.<sup>54</sup> This ‘alta dottrina’ mentioned by De Robertis alludes to the importance of various sources of Cavalcanti’s poetry, and especially the philosophical and scientific ones that determine a ‘stacco conoscitivo’ of Cavalcanti’s poetry when compared with that of his predecessors, as Antonelli suggests.<sup>55</sup>

Cavalcanti’s alleged “break with the tradition” alluded to by scholars, gains importance only in the light of some exegetical premises concerning the medieval physiology of the love process, its internalisation in the love poetry of the *Duecento*, and Cavalcanti’s poetic representation of love as fictionalised in his lyric corpus. In the remaining part of this Introduction, I shall expand upon these points which constitute a fundamental aspect to take into account when interpreting the love lyrics of the *Rime*.

Having been first established by the Sicilian School of poetry, the focus of love lyric progressively shifted from the outer reality of social dynamics, central in the poetry of the

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<sup>52</sup> Favati, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1957, p. 121.

<sup>53</sup> D’Arco Silvio Avalle, ‘I canzonieri: definizione di genere e problemi di edizione’, in Id., *La doppia verità: fenomenologia ecdotica e lingua letteraria nel Medioevo romanzo* (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2002), pp. 155-173.

<sup>54</sup> De Robertis, ‘Introduzione’, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. xx.

<sup>55</sup> Antonelli, ‘Cavalcanti o dell’interiorità’, in *Alle origini dell’Io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 16. As I will discuss in the next Chapters, religious sources also play a fundamental role in the language of the *Rime*. The first substantial contribution to the study of the presence of biblical intertexts in Cavalcanti’s poetry is De Robertis’ commentary on Cavalcanti’s *Rime* (Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986). Insightful discussions of Cavalcanti’s reuse of biblical sources are Domenico De Robertis, ‘Il caso di Cavalcanti’, in *Dante e la Bibbia. Atti del convegno internazionale promosso da «Bibbia» (Firenze, 26-28 settembre 1986)*, ed. by Giovanni Barblan (Florence, Olschki, 1988), pp. 341-350; Letterio Cassata, in Cavalcanti, *Rime. Edizione critica, commento, concordanza*, ed. by Letterio Cassata (Anzio: De Rubeis, 1993); Domenico De Robertis, ‘Un altro Cavalcanti?’, in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, pp. 13-27; Ronald L. Martinez, ‘Cavalcanti “Man of Sorrows” and Dante’, in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 187-212; Roberto Rea, ‘Cavalcanti e l’invenzione del lettore’, in *Les deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 157-168.

Troubadours, to the inner psycho-physical responses connected to love.<sup>56</sup> Poets fictionalised these processes drawing with a certain freedom to medical theories and to the Aristotelian *scientia de anima*. The texts and sources describing these complex processes have been made available to the Western world through Arabic mediation, becoming the foundation of scientific, medical and philosophical cultures. The introduction of these sources in Italy took place within the Sicilian court of Frederick II, as a result of the sovereign's broader project aimed at nationalising the culture of his kingdom.<sup>57</sup> The cultural and political project of Frederick II established the conditions for a lively and fertile encounter of different cultures that played a crucial role in the production of Italian love lyric in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>58</sup> The *magna curia* became the cradle of Italian poetry, as testified by Dante himself, in his *De vulgari eloquentia*.<sup>59</sup>

The phenomenology of love, as it is fictionalized in the lyric production of the early Italian poets is based on a complex stratification of theories about sensory knowledge, was directly connected with physiology. The origin of love was believed to be in the operations of the eye in direct vision, and its accomplishment was the result of a further intellectual abstraction of the beloved's image, caused by a physical interiorisation of her sensitive appearance.<sup>60</sup> While this process was often described in conflicting theories, the origin of love was unanimously attributed to the visual act, which connects sensitive faculties to imaginative ones.

Throughout the Middle Ages, there were two dominant theories of vision, based on different conceptions of the way the eye perceives the images of objects: one derived from Plato's theorisations, and the other from Aristotle's.<sup>61</sup> Whether the Platonic or the Aristotelian theory was

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<sup>56</sup> On this transition, see Paolo Borsa, 'L'immagine del cuore e l'immagine della mente. Dal Notaro alla *Vita nuova* attraverso i due Guidi', in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 75-92 (pp. 75-76).

<sup>57</sup> On the biography of Frederick II, a traditional study is Ernst Kantorowicz, *Frederick the Second*, trans. by E. O. Lorimer (London: Constable and Co., 1957). For a more recent biography see Wolfgang Stürmer, *Friedrich II* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999-2000).

<sup>58</sup> Fundamental points of reference about the culture developed at the court of Frederick II, are: Charles H. Haskins, 'Science at the Court of the Emperor Frederick II', *The American Historical Review*, 27.4 (1922), 669-694; Antonino De Stefano, *La cultura alla corte di Federico II imperatore* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1950<sup>2</sup>); Roland de Vaux, 'La première entrée d' Averroès chez les Latins', *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, 22-II (1933), 193-245; Fernand van Steenberghen, *Aristotle in the West* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1970<sup>2</sup>). For a recent and comprehensive introductory study, see Fulvio Delle Donne, *La porta del sapere. Cultura alla corte di Federico II di Svevia* (Rome: Carocci, 2019).

<sup>59</sup> As Dante suggests: 'Siquidem illustres heroes, Fredericus Cesar et benignitus eius Manfredus, nobilitatem ac rectitudinem sue forme pandentes, donec fortuna permisit, humana secuti sunt, brutalia dedignant. Propter quod corde nobiles atque gratiarum dotati inherere tantorum principum maiestati conati sunt, ita ut eorum tempore quicquid excellentes animi Latinorum enitebantur primitus in tantorum coronatorum aula prodibat' (Dante Alighieri, *De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. by Enrico Fenzi, Nuova edizione commentata delle Opere di Dante, III (Rome: Salerno, 2012) I, 12, 2-3).

<sup>60</sup> This abbreviated account is intended for the purposes of the present Introduction. For a comprehensive history of optics see David Lindberg, *Theories of vision from Al Kindi to Kepler* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976). For an account of medieval optical theories see Simon A. Gilson, *Medieval optics and theories of light in the work of Dante* (Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 2000). See also the monographic issue *Micrologus*, VI (1998).

<sup>61</sup> In the *Timaeus*, available throughout the Middle Ages in Chalcidius's translation, Plato (347 B.C.) expressed the main precepts of his extramissive theory, according to which we are capable of seeing by means of the rays sent out by our

accepted, the sensible object was believed to penetrate the viewer's body by means of the invisible spirits of the eyes, which were in charge of the visual act.<sup>62</sup> Upon reaching the eyes, images of sensible objects were transported from the pupils to the heart, the hegemonic seat of the senses, through the internal circulation carried by the *pneuma*, commonly referred to as a hot breath that circulates throughout the body to maintain the vital functions.<sup>63</sup> As Heather Webb points out, 'the medieval heart was a very different organ from the one we know today [...] a heavily trafficked space, host to myriad entities that we would now divide into the categories of physical, spiritual and psychological'.<sup>64</sup>

By being impressed upon the heart, images assumed a form independent of the original object. Through a further elaboration of the sensitive matter, they were carried from the heart to the anterior cell of the brain, where the post-sensory faculties were located, such as imagination, cogitation, and memory.<sup>65</sup> *Phantasia*, or imagination, the faculty linked to sight, received the unified impression of sensible forms and made them available to the intellect.<sup>66</sup> The intellectualised image was also defined as phantasm, thereby alluding to the phantasmatic abstraction of sensible objects for the *phantasia*.

Following on from the complex process described by these theories, the origin of love was in the lover's incessant thinking about the beloved's image, first impressed upon his heart and then stored in his brain, her phantasm. The phantasmatic character of love has been investigated by Giorgio

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eyes, which produce sight by seizing objects. On the contrary, according to Aristotle (348 B.C.), visual perception follows an intromissive process: in the presence of a source of light, images of sensible objects were conveyed to the visual organ (see J. H. Waszink (ed.), 'Timaeus a Calcidio translatus commentarioque instructus', in *Plato latinus*, ed. by Raymundus Klibansky, 8 vols, (London: The Warburg Institute; 1962) IV; and Aristotle, 'De Anima', in Id., *The Complete works of Aristotle: the revised Oxford translation*, ed. by Jonathan Barnes, 2 vols (Princeton-Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1984), I, pp. 641-692). For a comparative discussion of the Platonic and the Aristotelian models see Gilson, *Medieval optics*, pp. 10-13.

<sup>62</sup> 'Images of forms were, in fact, thought to be capable of traveling great distances' (Heather Webb, *The Medieval Heart* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 62).

<sup>63</sup> The notion of *pneuma* or spirit is already present in Aristotle's *De generatione animalium*. See Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, I, pp. 1111-1218. It was Galen who developed this concept by distinguishing the presence of three different spirits on the basis of the specific organs where they reside. For a detailed examination of Galen's contribution to knowledge of the eye's anatomy see Gilson, *Medieval optics*, pp. 6-7. For the alliance Galen established between natural philosophy and medicine, see Federica Anichini, *Voices of the Body. Liminal Grammar in Guido Cavalcanti's Rime* (München: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009), pp. 42-45. As Anichini observes, 'pneuma' has a complex range of meanings, for since medieval Latin it underwent high semantic oscillation, being employed in a wide range of different contexts (p. 87). Chapter IV.1 of Anichini's work attempts to map the diachronic modification of this concept (pp. 87-96). On pneumatic circulation in Cavalcanti's poetry see Raffaella Zanni, 'Dire les humeurs en vers au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: la poésie de Cavalcanti', *Compar(a)ison* (2016), 37-52.

<sup>64</sup> Webb, *The Medieval Heart*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>65</sup> For a detailed discussion of this process see Agamben, 'La parola e il fantasma. La teoria del fantasma nella poesia d'amore del '200', in Id., *Stanze*, pp. 71-155.

<sup>66</sup> A detailed description of this process is in Mark A. Smith, 'What is the History of Medieval Optics Really about?', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 148/2 (2004), 180-194. For a discussion of the diachronic development of the thematisation of this process in medieval Italian love lyric, see Paolo Borsa, 'L'immagine nel cuore e l'immagine nella mente: dal Notaro alla *Vita nuova* attraverso i due Guidi', in *Les deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 75-92.

Agamben. In reconstructing the Medieval Theory of the Phantasm and its reuses in the love poetry of the *Duecento*, Agamben identifies the narcissistic quality of the medieval love process and its association with the myths of Narcissus and Pygmalion. As Agamben emphasises:

come allegoria d'amore, tanto la storia di Narciso che quella di Pigmalione alludono esemplarmente al carattere fantasmatico di un processo inteso essenzialmente all'ossessivo vagheggiamento di un'immagine, secondo uno schema psicologico per cui ogni autentico innamoramento è sempre un "amare per ombra" o "per figura", ogni profonda intenzione erotica è sempre rivolta idolatricamente a un'*ymage*.<sup>67</sup>

The reception and interiorization of these sources is visible in the lyrics composed by the poets of the Sicilian School, whose lyrics often tematise the love process, understood as an experience of the self.<sup>68</sup> An example of the diffusion of concepts from natural philosophy and scientific culture is the famous *tenzone* between the poets Iacopo Mostacci, Giacomo da Lentini and Pier delle Vigne. Answering Mostacci, the Notaro wrote:

Amor è uno disio che ven da core  
Per abondanza di gran piacimento,  
e li occhi imprima generan l'amore,  
e lo core li dà nutrimento.<sup>69</sup> (1.19c, 1-4)

In this opening quatrain Giacomo Da Lentini sets up the key concepts of the theory of love. As clearly stated, love originates through the eyes ('e li occhi imprima generan l'amore' (3)). The heart is the privileged seat of this process, as the subject, through the imaginative faculty, impresses the phantasm of his beloved on its matter. The 'piacimento', or the pleasure bred by this image,<sup>70</sup> is a consequence of the 'disio', or the subject's desire for the mental image of the lady and his incessant contemplation of her *phantasma*.<sup>71</sup> As stressed by scholars,<sup>72</sup> a fundamental hypotext of da Lentini's

<sup>67</sup> Agamben, *Stanze*, p. 98.

<sup>68</sup> By comparing Giacomo da Lentini's 'Madonna, dir vo voglio' to its Provençal source – Folquet de Marselha's 'A vos, midonç, voill retrair' en cantan', Elena Lombardi emphasises that, while Folquet expresses a feudal idea of the nature of love, the Notaro shows a greater interest in shaping the paradox of love and death in a more scientific way. Lombardi attributes the origin of this discrepancy to the aforementioned spread of Aristotelianism at the court of Frederick II. See Elena Lombardi, 'Tradizione e riscrittura: dal Folchetto al Notaio', *The Italianist*, 24 (2004), 5-19.

<sup>69</sup> Giacomo Da Lentini, 'Amor è uno disio che ven da core', in *I Poeti della Scuola siciliana*, ed. by Roberto Antonelli, Costanzo di Girolamo, and Rosario Coluccia, 3 vols (Milan: Mondadori, 2008), I: *Giacomo da Lentini*, pp. 404-11.

<sup>70</sup> As Bruno Nardi points out, according to Aristotelian and Galenic theories, 'dal cuore [...] e dallo spirito vitale, il quale è strumento delle virtù che emanano dall'anima, proviene anche [...] quella che nel medioevo si disse *piacimento* o *piacenza* in senso soggettivo [...], e cioè piacere e diletto che prova l'anima di fronte alla bellezza, [...] quello che desta nel cuore il desiderio amoroso. L'immagine di donna bella, cioè l'*intenzione* entrata in noi per mezzo della vista, provoca il sentimento del piacere e quindi, se questo è grande, l'amore' (Bruno Nardi, *Dante e la cultura medievale* (Bari: Laterza, 1949), pp. 12-13). For a discussion of the Sicilian School poets' reuse of scientific sources see Manuela Allegretto, 'Figura amoris', *Cultura neolatina*, 40 (1980), 231-242.

<sup>71</sup> See my footnote 65.

<sup>72</sup> See Allegretto, 'Figura amoris'; Enrico Musacchio 'Passione d'amore e scienza ottica in un sonetto di Giacomo da Lentini', *Letteratura Italiana Antica*, IV (2003), 337-369; Bienvenido Morros Mestres, 'Medicina y literatura en Giacomo

sonnet is Andreas Capellanus' *De amore*, a XII century treatise on love.<sup>73</sup> In this text, Andreas Capellanus, described the phenomenology of love as follows: 'Amor est passio quaedam innata procedens ex visione et immoderata cogitatione formae alterius sexus'.<sup>74</sup>

Additional traces of this debate are found later, within the cultural context that gravitates around the *Studium* of Bologna. In its faculty of medicine, established around the second half of the thirteenth century, medical science found a theoretical connection with natural philosophy, and this particular association contributed to the further diffusion of the "new" Aristotle within Western culture.<sup>75</sup> The scientific theories that entered the universities – later developed in the current of thought known as radical Aristotelianism, which reached its peak in Paris – soon constituted a threat to Christian doctrine, which could not accept some of their assumptions.<sup>76</sup>

Guido Guinizelli's 'Al cor gentil reppaira sempre amore',<sup>77</sup> constitutes a meaningful example of the permeation of these new sources, as well as of their further poetical reworking. As Webb writes, 'Guinizelli's description of natural processes is highly technical', observing that the poet 'puts theories of mineralogy to work in order to liken the noble heart and the transformation it undergoes to the formation of a precious stone'.<sup>78</sup> By emphasising a parallelism between Guinizelli's description and a passage of Albert the Great's *Book of Minerals*, Webb also discusses the poets' growing custom of reworking these new theories. Bonagiunta Orbicciani's sonnet 'Voi, ch'avete mutato la mainera',<sup>79</sup> written in answer to Guinizelli's, by criticising the obscurity of the philosophical language of the poem ('e non si può trovar chi ben ispogna' (10)), testifies to the erudite sources of Guinizelli as well as to their origin in the university context ('ancor che 'l senno vegna da Bologna' (13)).

As seen in the lyric production of the Sicilian School, the experience of love described by many *Duecento* poets is largely indebted to the aforementioned philosophical foundation. In this

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da Lentini', in *La poesia di Giacomo da Lentini. Scienze filosofia nel XIII secolo in Sicilia e nel Mediterraneo occidentale*, ed. by Rossend Arqués (Palermo: Sicania, 2000), pp. 105-36.

<sup>73</sup> Andreas Capellanus, *The Art of Courtly Love*, trans. by John Jay Parry (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941).

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>75</sup> Fundamental references on the spread of these sources in Bologna are, for example: Bruno Nardi, 'L'averroismo Bolognese nel secolo XIII e Taddeo Alderotto', *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 4 (1949), 11-22; Nancy Siraisi, *Taddeo Alderotti and his Pupils. Two generations of Italian Medical Learning* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Jole Agrimi and Chiara Crisciani, *Edocere medicos Medicina scolastica nei secoli XIII-XV* (Milan: Guerini; Naples: Istituto italiano per gli studi filosofici, 1988).

<sup>76</sup> For a concise account of the introduction into medieval Western culture of Aristotle and his commentators, as well as of the consequent condemnation of Radical Aristotelianism in Paris in 1277, see Anichini, *Voices of the body*, pp. 31-60.

<sup>77</sup> Guido Guinizelli, 'Al cor gentil reppaira sempre amore', in Id., *Rime*, ed. by Luciano Rossi (Turin: Einaudi, 2002), pp. 30-38.

<sup>78</sup> Webb, *The Medieval Heart*, p. 64.

<sup>79</sup> Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 481.

regard, I shall focus our attention on the description of the phenomenology of love in Guinizzelli's 'Lo vostro bel saluto e 'l gentil sguardo':

Lo vostro bel saluto e 'l gentil *sguardo*  
 Che fate quando v'encontro, *m'ancide*:  
*Amor m'assale* e già non à reguardo  
 s'elli face peccato over merzede<sup>80</sup> (I, 1-4)  
 [my emphasis]

The sequence 'sguardo' (1), 'ancide' (2), 'Amor m'assale' (3), retraces the main phases of the love process as presented above. The emphasis on the 'sguardo' (1) underlines the importance of vision as the catalyst of this process; 'ancide' (2) refers to the painful interiorisation of the sensible image of the beloved; finally, by stating 'Amor m'assale' (3), the poet declares that he is "assaulted" by Love, meaning that his incessant thinking of the lover's phantasm overwhelms him.

As suggested by scholars, part of Guido's education presumably took place in Bologna,<sup>81</sup> whose faculty of arts and medicine, Tonelli emphasises, 'prevedeva identità di *curriculum* negli anni formativi dei filosofi e dei medici' (11).<sup>82</sup> The result of this was an intense and militant debate on the theoretical connections between natural philosophy and medical culture.<sup>83</sup> Much like his predecessors, Cavalcanti made use of these sources available at the time, all to poetic ends. However, as mentioned above, the presence of these hypotexts in his poetry is more central and more pervasive than in other early Italian poets, testifying to 'il legame forte, diretto, [...] fra Cavalcanti e gli ambienti scientifici e, forse averroisti bolognesi', as Tonelli suggests.<sup>84</sup> The importance of these sources and of the various debates they fostered within Cavalcanti scholarship, as well as Cavalcanti's own involvement into the philosophical and scientific discussion of the time, are made manifest in his poetic manifesto 'Donna me prega'.

<sup>80</sup> Guinizzelli, 'Lo vostro bel saluto e 'l gentil sguardo', in Id., *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, pp. 41-43.

<sup>81</sup> As Tonelli observes: 'a Bologna [...] con ogni probabilità [si formò] anche Guido (e dove altrimenti avrebbe dovuto recarsi a studiar filosofia un giovane ricchissimo intellettuale guelfo di Firenze? certo, anche a Parigi; ma a Bologna erano i maestri fiorentini come Taddeo Alderotti, a Bologna gli allievi - eventualmente poi a loro volta maestri in città, come Dino e Torrigiano - a formare una folta *natio Tuscorum*), come il coetaneo concittadino del Garbo e forse il più giovane Dante, sarà approdato per un percorso di studi nella *facultas delle arti* [...]' (Tonelli, 'Lirica d'amore e scienza', in Id., *Fisiologia della passione*, p. 11). On the Averroistic radicalisation of medical culture in Bologna, a topic of central interest for the discussion of Cavalcanti's poetry, as I shall discuss in the rest of this Introduction, see in particular Nardi, 'L'averroismo bolognese nel secolo XIII e Taddeo Alderotto. Cavalcanti's connection with the *Studium* of Bologna is discussed in: Maria Corti, *Dante a un nuovo crocevia* (Florence: Le Lettere; Sansoni, 1981), pp. 9-31.

<sup>82</sup> Tonelli, 'Lirica d'amore e scienza', in Id., *Fisiologia della passione*, p. 11.

<sup>83</sup> The synergy alluded to by Tonelli is discussed by Nancy Siraisi, who emphasises the existence of an 'institutionally integrated faculty of arts and medicine' characterizing the Bologna stadium (Nancy Siraisi, *Taddeo Alderotti and his pupils*, p. 150. On the same topic, see also Agrimi and Crisciani, *Edocere medicos*, pp. 123-138. For a discussion of the militant, scientific debate on love involving the *magistri* at the time of Cavalcanti, see Tonelli, 'Lirica d'amore e scienza', in Id., *Fisiologia della passione*, pp. 25 - 31.

<sup>84</sup> Tonelli, *Fisiologia della passione*, p. 10. For Tonelli's discussion of 'Donna me prega', see *Ibid.*, pp. 36-70.

The canzone, a ‘*tour de force* metrico’,<sup>85</sup> as Giorgio Inglese describes it by commenting it on the stylistic point of view, is a philosophical treatise on love, articulated as answers to eight questions. These are exposed in the first *stanza* of the poem (lines 10-14) and are methodically discussed throughout the text (two theses each *stanza*).<sup>86</sup> Love, is described in terms of passion residing in the sensitive soul (‘in quella parte – dove sta memora’(15)).<sup>87</sup> Its power, elicited by the visual act,<sup>88</sup> can bring about devastating effects, to the extent that it often leads the subject to death (‘Di sua potenza segue spesso morte’ (35)).

The philosophical importance of the *canzone* was soon acknowledged, while parts of its content still remain debated by scholars. The ontology of love presented in the text, together with the technical vocabulary used to define it, immediately generated heated scientific discussions on the poem’s interpretation and on Cavalcanti’s cultural and ideological affiliation. Not only are traces of these discussions found in the early exegetical tradition of the *canzone*, but also in modern and contemporary scholarly commentaries and analyses.<sup>89</sup> This rich body of literature testifies to the complexity of Cavalcanti’s text as well as the difficulty of framing it into a specific theoretical discourse.

As a number of more recent studies demonstrate, at times by sweeping different paths and approaches, Cavalcanti’s ‘Donna me prega’ internalises and elaborates upon a rich cultural domain, in which philosophy and medical science with their numerous respective branches and schools of thought seamlessly converge. Bruno Nardi, by relying on the testimony of the Florentine physician Dino del Garbo, rooted Cavalcanti’s canzone in Averroism. This led to a lively scholarly *querelle* with Guido Favati.<sup>90</sup> The latter suggested reading Cavalcanti’s *canzone* in the light of Thomas Aquinas’ scholastic theory,<sup>91</sup> Nardi’s positions were soon supported by the discovery of a manuscript containing a treatise dedicated to the ‘amico carissimo Guidoni Cavalcantis’ by Magister Jacobus de

<sup>85</sup> Giorgio Inglese, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 147.

<sup>86</sup> For a concise presentation of the theses exposed in Cavalcanti’s *canzone*, see Maria Luisa Ardizzone, *Guido Cavalcanti. The Other Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), pp. 128-131.

<sup>87</sup> For a discussion of love as a passion as presented in ‘Donna me prega’ and as related to del Garbo’s commentary and the Cavalcanti’s internalisation of notions derived from natural philosophy and logic, see Ardizzone, ‘Love as Passion’, in Id., *Guido Cavalcanti. The Other Middle Ages*, pp. 71-102.

<sup>88</sup> On the connection between the process of imagination and vision, see Ardizzone, ‘Vision and Logic’, in Id., *Guido Cavalcanti. The Other Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), pp. 47-70

<sup>89</sup> For an essential bibliography of these debates, see Federica Anichini, *Voices of the Body. Liminal Grammar in Guido Cavalcanti’s Rime* (München: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009), pp. 11-29. For a recent reconsideration of these discussions see Paolo Falzone, ‘Sentimento d’angoscia e studio delle passioni in Cavalcanti’, in *Les deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 181-197.

<sup>90</sup> The debate engaged the two scholars between 1940 and 1955. The discussion was ignited by two essays by Bruno Nardi: ‘L’averroismo del “primo amico” di Dante’, first published in 1940, and ‘Di un nuovo commento alla canzone del Cavalcanti sull’amore’, of 1947. Both Nardi’s essays are now collected in Bruno Nardi, *Dante e la cultura medievale. Nuovi saggi di filosofia dantesca* (Bari: Laterza, 1949<sup>2</sup>), pp. 93-129; pp. 131-152.

<sup>91</sup> Guido Favati, ‘Noterella polemica sull’averroismo di Guido Cavalcanti’, *Rassegna di filosofia*, 3 (1954), 47-71.

Pistoia, entitled *Questio disputata de felicitate*.<sup>92</sup> This crucial document, as Paul Oscar Kristeller proposes, expresses the principles of Averroism, as well as testifying to the tight bond connecting philosophy and medieval love poetry.<sup>93</sup>

However, as important discussions, such as those provided by Maria Luisa Ardizzone, Federica Anichini,<sup>94</sup> Natascia Tonelli,<sup>95</sup> and Raffaella Zanni<sup>96</sup>, demonstrate, there are a number of scientific and medical *auctoritates*. These would include Arnaldo da Villanova<sup>97</sup> and Pietro Ispano<sup>98</sup> who, together with Dino del Garbo, play a central role in ‘Donna me prega’. Nardi’s famous and initially much debated interpretation of Cavalcanti’s *canzone* as an expression of the so-called ‘averroismo del primo amico di Dante’<sup>99</sup> has therefore been integrated by considering the importance of other *auctoritates* of Cavalcanti’s time. As Tonelli maintains and demonstrates, the technical vocabulary of the text testifies to ‘[g]li stretti rapporti di aderenza [...] fianco linguistica, a rasentare la vera e propria traduzione, con i trattati medici precedenti o coevi’.<sup>100</sup>

Within a discussion on the expression of subjectivity in Cavalcanti’s love lyrics, this concise excursus on the cultural, medical, and philosophical contexts within which Cavalcanti’s poetry was produced appears to be crucial for, at least, two reasons.

The first reason is that it shows readers and interpreters a way into the complexity of the Cavalcantian ontology of love. A crucial example is the ‘morte’ caused by Amore, alluded to by Cavalcanti in line 35 of his *canzone*. Debates around the nature of this death are not unanimous, with a number of interpretations suggesting an understanding of it as alluding to an “intellectual death” or, as Maria Corti puts it as ‘morte dell’equilibrio razionale e della contemplazione della bellezza a causa

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<sup>92</sup> Paul Oscar Kristeller, ‘A Philosophical Treatise from Bologna dedicated to Guido Cavalcanti. Magister Jacobus de Pistorio and his *Questio de Felicitate*’, in vv. eds, *Medioevo e Rinascimento. Studi in onore di Bruno Nardi*, 2 vols (Florence: Sansoni, 1955), 1, pp. 427-463. See also Fenzi, *La canzone d’amore di Guido Cavalcanti*, pp. 66-98.

<sup>93</sup> On this connection, see Bruno Nardi, *L’amore e i medici medievali. Saggi e note di critica dantesca* (Milan; Naples: Ricciardi, 1966), pp. 238-267.

<sup>94</sup> Maria Luisa Ardizzone and Federica Anichini extensively discuss Cavalcanti’s internalization of natural philosophy and logic and his reuse of these sources in ‘Donna me prega’ and in the rest of his *corpus*, alluded to by the two scholars as ‘rime minori’. See: Ardizzone, ‘Vision and Logic’, and ‘Love as Passion’, in Id., *Guido Cavalcanti. The Other Middle Ages*, pp. 47-70; pp. 71-102; Anichini focuses her discussion on the particular importance of Avicenna’s *Liber Canonicus*. See Anichini, ‘Human Love in Darkness’, in Id., *Voices of the Body*, pp. 31-59; Id., ‘Retorica del corpo nelle Rime di Guido Cavalcanti. Il tema del pianto’, *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 103-118.

<sup>95</sup> Tonelli, ‘Lirica d’amore e scienza. “De Guidone de Cavalcantibus physico”’, in Id., *Fisiologia della passione*, pp. 3-70.

<sup>96</sup> Raffaella Zanni, ‘Dire les humeurs en verse au XIIIe siècle. La poésie de Cavalcanti’, *COMPAR(A)ISON*, 1-2 (2011), 37-52.

<sup>97</sup> Arnaldo da Villanova, *Arnaldi de Villanova Opera medica omnia. III. Tractatus de amore heroico. Epistola de dosi Tyriacalium medicinarum*, ed. by Michael Rogers McVaugh (Barcelona: Publicacions i Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 1985).

<sup>98</sup> Pietro Ispano, *Tractatus Called Afterwards Summulae Logicales*, ed. by Lambertus Marie De Rijk (Utrecht-Assen: Van Gorcum, 1972)

<sup>99</sup> Nardi, ‘L’averroismo del primo amico di Dante’.

<sup>100</sup> Tonelli, ‘Premessa’, in Id., *Fisiologia della passione*, pp. XI-XVI (p. XI).



dell'opera distruttiva dei sensi',<sup>101</sup> whereas others scholars argue that this morte is 'affatto fisica',<sup>102</sup> and has to be interpreted as a degeneration caused by a specific disease, that of the *solicitude melancholica*.<sup>103</sup> More recently, Roberto Rea suggested to look at these two interpretations as 'non inconciliabili tra loro, ma distinte tappe di un medesimo processo degenerativo'.<sup>104</sup>

The second reason for its crucial nature is that it is clear that the relevance of Cavalcanti's reflections are not to be circumscribed to his doctrinal *canzone*; whereby, they have crucial reverberations on his love lyric production.<sup>105</sup> The Cavalcantian phenomenology of love is tightly connected to the poet's articulation and encoding of subjectivity in his lyric *corpus*. In the opening pages of the chapter 'Love as a Metaphor. The Discourse and the Method', Ardizzone introduces the definition "rhetoric of passion", alluding to a connection established by Cavalcanti between natural philosophy and the language of poetry. It is through this connection that Cavalcanti articulates a lyric subject in the text which is defined through the medieval psychology and physiology of love.<sup>106</sup> As Ardizzone emphasises, Guido creates a new space for poetry, by making it a means to reflect upon the subject.<sup>107</sup> This aspect strengthens the premises of the present study, prompting the undertaking of an in-depth analysis of Cavalcanti's love lyric and on the articulation of subjectivity in his corpus.

Cavalcanti's sonnet 'Tu m'hai sì piena di dolor la mente' emblematically displays the poet's reuse of these sources in his poetry. The text is an example of the porosity of Cavalcanti's poetry, of its receptiveness with regard to the medical, scientific, and of the philosophical culture of the time. It also demonstrates the poet's reuse of these sources for poetic purposes:

Tu m'hai sì piena di dolor la mente,  
che l'anima si briga di partire,  
e li sospir' che manda 'l cor dolente  
mostrano agli occhi che non può soffrire.     4

Amor, che lo tuo grande valor sente,  
dice: «E' mi duol che ti convien morire

<sup>101</sup> See, Maria Corti, 'La penna alla prima persona', in Id., *Scritti su Cavalcanti e Dante* (Turin: Einaudi, 2003), pp. 42-50 (p. 48). See also, Id., *La felicità mentale* (Turin: Einaudi, 1983), pp. 3-37.

<sup>102</sup> Tonelli, 'Lirica d'amore e scienza', in Id., *Fisiologia della passione*, p. 28.

<sup>103</sup> For a reconstruction of the medical debate on this particular illness, also known as *amor hereos* and the reuse of scientific literature by the *Duecento* poets and Cavalcanti, see Tonelli, 'Lirica d'amore e scienza', in Id., *Fisiologia della passione*. See also Agamben, 'I fantasmi di Eros', in Id., *Stanze*, pp. 3-35.

<sup>104</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 357.

<sup>105</sup> As De Robertis emphasises, Cavalcanti's philosophical and scientific research, as well as the use of a precise terminology 'non van disgiunti dal corrispondente impegno di traduzione e codificazione poetica [...] e dalla confluenza in questi ammirevoli e talvolta impervi enunciati della propria più viva esperienza poetica' (De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 94).

<sup>106</sup> Ardizzone, 'Love as a Metaphor. The Discourse and the Method', in Id., *Guido Cavalcanti. The Other Middle Ages*, p. 19.

<sup>107</sup> Ardizzone, 'Preface', in Id., *Guido Cavalcanti. The Other Middle Ages*, pp. IX-XI (p. X)

per questa fiera donna, ché nïente  
par che Pietate di te voglia udire». 8

I' vo come colui ch'è fuor di vita,  
che pare, a chi lo sguarda, ch'omo sia  
fatto di rame o di pietra o di legno, 11

che si conduca sol per maestria  
e porti ne lo core una ferita  
che sia, com' egli è morto, aperto segno. 14

The lyric is opened by an apostrophe to the 'Tu', addressed to an unresponsive, merciless lady ('[...] ché nïente | par che Pietate di te voglia udire' (7-8)<sup>108</sup> who appears to be responsible for the suffering experienced by the subject. As Rea observes, 'mente' is one of the most relevant lexical innovation of Cavalcanti's poetry.<sup>109</sup> It is with the *Rime* that the term, 'acquista una semantica autonoma' if compared to the love lyric canon,<sup>110</sup> taking on an exceptional centrality within the Cavalcantian representation of the love dynamics. *Mente* refers to the sensitive soul that, according to the Aristotelian and Averroistic psychopathology, is the privileged seat of the cognitive process.<sup>111</sup>

The abstracted image of the lady, her phantasm, has filled the subject's 'mente' (1) to such an extent that his faculties are obfuscated, obliterated, and fatally compromised. As the sonnet reads, 'l'anima si briga di partire' (2). As in the example of *mente*, the lexeme *anima* is resemantised by Cavalcanti; in this sonnet, it assumes a meaning radically different from its often-conventionalised and stereotyped use by his predecessors. Rea explains, in Cavalcanti's poetry, the soul 'acquista una sua specifica *autonomia*, che deriva dal riconoscimento [...] dell'amore come affezione dell'anima sensitiva [my emphasis]'.<sup>112</sup> In the *Rime*, the *anima* is one of the *personae* of the amorous drama, acting as an autonomous entity in the rhetoric of the text.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>108</sup> The identification of the 'Tu' with a lady is clarified in the sonnet itself, on line 7.

<sup>109</sup> 'Rarissimo presso i trovatori [...], presso i siciliani lo psiconimo compare per lo più nelle locuzioni tenere, porre o avere mente [...] fra le poche occorrenze in cui è adoperato in modo semanticamente pregnante per indicare la sede delle operazioni intellettive [...] o anche, più estesamente, la sede degli affetti e delle emozioni [...], si segnalano le rappresentazioni della mente occupata dal desiderio amoroso [...] di Giacomo da Lentini [e] Guido delle Colonne [...]. Nella lirica toscana lo psiconimo si afferma nell'ambito della rappresentazione dei tormenti della passione, ma quasi esclusivamente per affiancare il cuore in dittologie o mercati parallelismi [...]' (Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 337).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 338- 348. See also Zanni, 'Dire les humeurs', p. 46; Anichini, 'Retorica del corpo', in Ardizzone, *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, p. 113. For a detailed discussion of the meaning of this lexeme in the context of the Medieval philosophical culture, see Nardi, 'Filosofia dell'amore, nei rimatori italiani del Duecento e in Dante'; 'L'averroismo del "primo amico" di Dante'; 'Di un nuovo commento alla canzone di Cavalcanti sull'amore', in Id., *Dante e la cultura medievale*, pp. 1-91; 93-129; 131-152. See also Agamben, *Stanze*, pp. 105-145.

<sup>112</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 201.

<sup>113</sup> In this specific example, the 'anima' is about to leave the body ('si briga di partire' (2)). However, to further understand Cavalcanti's distinctive use of personification and prosopopoeia, it is relevant to emphasise that the soul is attributed a series of reactions, such as that of suffering (XII, 7; XV, 13; XVI, 4; XXXIII, 9; XLI, 14); of trembling (IX, 20; XIII, 13); of crying (IX, 3; XVII, 9; XXII, 8; XXVI, 18), or even of articulating the subject's sorrow (VI, 3; XXXV, 39). I will discuss Cavalcanti's use of these figures of speech in Chapter V.

In a similar manner to ‘mente’ and ‘anima’, ‘sospir’, a spiritual manifestation of the ‘Io’'s suffering, takes the form of the intensification of the pneumatic bodily circulation. It is incorporated by Cavalcanti in these lines following on from the medical *auctoritates* available at his time. As Anichini suggests, Guido Cavalcanti made his ideological stand and turned this notion into the trademark of his poetry.<sup>114</sup> Anichini was able to trace the origin the complex notions of *spirito* and *sospiro* and the diachronic transformations of their meaning, ‘[a]gainst the background of the stratification affecting the meaning of the word spirit in thirteenth-century culture.’<sup>115</sup> Spirits and sights in the *Rime* are treated in a medical key, just as other bodily entities whose independence from the ‘Io’ will be discussed in the following chapters of this work.<sup>116</sup>

As the few examples discussed above the ‘cor dolente’<sup>117</sup> of line 3, designates ‘il centro e la sede del desiderio’,<sup>118</sup> that, as we read in the sonnet ‘non può soffrire’ (4), cannot endure the suffering it is exposed to. The consequences of this condition are clearly uttered by the personified Amore: ‘[.] E’ mi duol che ti convien morire’ (6). This unavoidable death of the subject, which suggests a connection with the death mentioned in ‘Donna me prega’, is further detailed in the tercets. The ‘Io’ is represented as a walking automaton (‘I’ vo come colui ch’è fuor di vita’ (9)).<sup>119</sup> As Rea observes, ‘[...] la condizione descritta dall’automa semovente [...] arriva a postulare uno stato di cronica alienazione da sé [...]’.<sup>120</sup> The experience of love in the *Rime*, often (but not always, as I will discuss in Chapter II), coincides with an annihilation of the subject’s vital faculties.

Enrico Fenzi recently framed the Cavalcantian dramatisation of the love experience by using the term ‘disaventura’.<sup>121</sup> Fenzi’s discussion takes on from an analysis of Cavalcanti’s use of the lexeme in the *Rime*, proposing its emblematic role in representing the experience of the ‘Io’, whose ‘eventuale riconoscimento e dichiarazione del proprio amore coincid[e] *ipso facto* con un destino di morte (assunta, qui e altrove, nel senso di una condizione di estremo dolore)’.<sup>122</sup> As Fenzi specifies, the event of love in this example ‘[...] finisce presto per rivelarsi come pura esperienza della perdita:

<sup>114</sup> Anichini, *Voices of the body*, p. 97.

<sup>115</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>116</sup> For two emblematic examples of the reuse of the notion of spirit in Cavalcanti, see sonnet XXVIII. For a rereading of the sonnet in the light of the scientific sources available at Cavalcanti’s time, see Anichini, ‘Spirits in the Storm’, in *Id.*, *Voices of the body*, pp. 87-114.

<sup>117</sup> On the biblical sources of this *iunctura*, see Rea, ‘La mimesi del linguaggio biblico’, in *Id.*, *Cavalcanti poeta*, pp. 138-168 (pp. 157-162).

<sup>118</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 223.

<sup>119</sup> Cavalcanti’s sestets rework the ‘statua d’otono’ and, more broadly, the image of the alienated subject of Guido Guinizzelli’s ‘Lo vostro bel saluto e ’l gentil sguardo’ (Guinizzelli, ‘Lo vostro bel saluto e ’l gentil sguardo’, in *Id.*, *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, pp. 41-43). See Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, pp. 72-75, for a discussion of Cavalcanti’s intertexts.

<sup>120</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 72.

<sup>121</sup> Enrico Fenzi, ‘Interpretazioni Cavalcantiane’, in *Guido Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 119-146. See also, by the same author: ‘Guido Cavalcanti, o della perdita’, in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 237-250.

<sup>122</sup> Fenzi, ‘Interpretazioni Cavalcantiane’, in *Guido Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, p. 119. On the inevitable death of the subject in Cavalcanti’s poetry see also Roberto Antonelli, “‘Per forza convenia che tu morissi’”, in *Guido Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 203-216.

perdita del piacere, perdita dell'oggetto amato e perdita delle ragioni stesse dell'amore [...] e infine perdita di sé, e morte'.<sup>123</sup>

It is possible to reread sonnet VIII in the light of Fenzi's suggestion. After Amore declares the deathly fate of the 'Io', the subject is represented as a walking, alienated automaton. In commenting on the tercets, De Robertis claims, 'La condizione dell'automa cancella [...] ogni traccia di vita effettiva'.<sup>124</sup> The examples discussed above are only a select sample of the significant instances of Cavalcanti's internalisation of the culture of his time. The dynamics the sonnet describes, in addition to the terminology of which it makes use, are essential to my discussion of lyric subjectivity in the following Chapters.

Since notions such as 'lyric subjectivity' gained their meaning after Hegel and are indebted to the German and French Romantic tradition, in Chapter I of the thesis I will problematise their use when reading medieval texts by retracing the main debates that discuss subjectivity in the love lyric. By historicising and mapping the different approaches to this issue and the methodologies adopted to look at subjectivity in Cavalcanti's *Rime* and, more broadly, in literary texts, I will outline the methodology devised for my analysis.

Chapter II and III act as first, direct responses to Roberto Antonelli's observations which, in acknowledging Cavalcanti's 'primacy', also wonder how to explain stylistically the newness of his poetry. In these Chapters, I present and discuss the most significant results of a comprehensive indexing and analysis of deictics, those linguistic forms by means of which subjectivity is encoded into language. It provides an examination of the ways in which subjectivity is encoded in the *Rime*, as related to the main coordinates of the discourse (person, time, space), in comparison with a selected group of Cavalcanti's predecessors and contemporaries (namely Giacomo da Lentini, Guido Guinizzelli, Guittone D'Arezzo, Monte Andrea, Dante, Cino da Pistoia).

In Chapter IV I discuss the *Io*'s dialectic with the beloved, as another fundamental element to the establishment of the first-person position in the text. More specifically, I examine Cavalcanti's use of apostrophe and the direction of the poetic message as strategies to redefine the lover-beloved polarity of the lyric tradition.

The love discourse of the *Rime* is also characterised by a multiplicity of voices and interlocutors. In Chapter V I analyse Cavalcanti's use of rhetorical devices such as personification and prosopopoeia with the aim of discussing the contribution of these "other voices" to the articulation of the Cavalcantian subjectivity.

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<sup>123</sup> Fenzi, 'Interpretazioni Cavalcantiane', in *Guido Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 120-121.

<sup>124</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 29.

I  
MAPPING THEORIES OF SUBJECTIVITY

**INTRODUCTION**

A discussion of subjectivity in Cavalcanti's *Rime* has first of all to be situated in the rich context of the reflection on this notion in the medieval love lyric. Can we even discuss subjectivity when reading medieval texts? How has subjectivity been understood and examined in scholarship? How do recent discourses on subjectivity inform the present work, and how do I seek to contribute to ongoing dialogues on this notion, in looking at the subject of Cavalcanti's *Rime*? With this initial Chapter I seek to tackle these crucial questions, and to define the methodological approach adopted in the thesis.

It is important to acknowledge that discussing 'subjectivity' in medieval love lyric is potentially problematic, as current understandings of this notion are grounded in Hegelian reflections.<sup>1</sup> In its post-Cartesian and post-Hegelian, modern acceptance, the lyric 'I' is conceived as being the purest expression of a subject's interiority, that of the author, to the extent that 'la voix lyrique devient en effet la voix de l'intime [et] le sujet lyrique romantique [...] pourrait [...] être défini comme une instance d'énonciation produisant des énoncés poétiques dont le référent serait l'intimité même de l'auteur [...]'.<sup>2</sup> Modern lyric poetry is conceived as bearing the mark of both the empiric and transcendental subject, normally converging (even if not unproblematically) in the first-person pronoun 'I', around whose voice the text is organised. According to Hegel:

[...] in lyric it is the poet who expresses himself [...]. In that event, his heart itself, his individual subjective life as such is the proper content of the poem, so that what matters is only the soul of

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<sup>1</sup> As Dominique Rabaté holds, 'c'est au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle que l'adjectif lyrique prend son sens moderne, et en 1834 qu'apparaît le substantif dérivé, prenant acte de ce que la poésie romantique lui imprime comme ambition nouvelle' (Dominique Rabaté, 'Présentation', in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, ed. by Dominique Rabaté (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), pp. 5-10 (p. 5).

<sup>2</sup> Yves Vadé, 'L'émergence du sujet lyrique à l'époque romantique', in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, ed. by Rabaté, pp. 11-37 (p. 13; pp. 14-15). As Vadé later discusses, this definition is, however, problematic, as the category of 'sujet lyrique' in Romantic poetry is not to be easily captured in one unifying gesture. By illustrating the 'différentes postures d'énonciation assumées par le "je" du texte' (*Ibid.*, p. 36), the essay points to the instability of this figure, which results from 'sa double visée, d'un côté vers le plus intime (avec ses adhérences biographiques), de l'autre vers l'universel (le poète s'attribuant la mission d'être la voix de tous et de tout)' (*Ibid.*, p. 16). Having acknowledged this fickleness, the scholar suggests looking at the Romantic lyric subject as defined by a triangular relation (between author, reader, and fictional 'I': 'du "je" lyrique avec un "tu", allocutaire dont le lecteur est la figure privilégiée – avec un "tout" qui lui parle et dont il est lui-même l'allocutaire, ou dans lequel il tend à se fondre –, avec un "il" enfin qui lui confère son énergie et dont il pourrait n'être que le porte-parole' (*Ibid.*, pp. 17-18). These sets of relations are exemplified by Vadé as defined by these three formulas: "'je suis toi", "je suis tout", "je est un autre"' (*Ibid.*, p. 18). See also Dominique Combe, 'La référence dédoublée: le sujet lyrique entre fiction et autobiographie', in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, ed. by Rabaté, pp. 39-63.

feeling and not what the object of the feeling is. The momentary and most fleeting mood, the heart's jubilant cry, the quick passing flashes of carefree happiness and merriment, the outbursts of melancholy, dejection, and lament – in short the whole gamut of feeling is seized here in its momentary movements, or in its single fancies about all sorts of things, and made permanent by its expression.<sup>3</sup>

The specific *Zeitgeist* from which we observe a body of poetry at once as distant and as formative as the medieval one thus represents the initial difficulty in this complex operation.<sup>4</sup> One should also add that, with the advent of psychoanalysis, notions such as 'subjectivity' and 'Self', grounding and complementing that of the lyric 'I', have, since the last century, increasingly become the focus of intense debates. As Nick Mansfield puts it, 'subjectivity is a cultural theory in process'.<sup>5</sup> Not only does this remark stress the ongoing dialogues involved in this notion, but it also points towards the diverse approaches employed in discussing this issue over the last century.<sup>6</sup> This interdisciplinarity also involves scholarly analyses of subjectivity in medieval texts, especially with the advent of New Criticism and with the influence of Cultural Studies. On the one hand, the risk of acritically superimposing our sensitivities onto medieval ones is always central, as well the risk of creating anachronistic understanding of categories, philosophical concepts and modes of reading conceived in radically different historical, social and cultural frameworks. Likewise, being aware of the semantic elusiveness of this notion seems necessary in order to contextualise the many anthropological constants identifiable in medieval texts.

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<sup>3</sup> Georg W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics. Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. by Thomas Malcolm Knox, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), II, pp. 1114-1115. As Hegel subsequently maintains, 'A lyric poem therefore has a unity of a totally different kind from epic, namely the inwardness of mood or reflection which expatiates on itself, mirrors itself in the external world, sketches and describes itself, or is preoccupied otherwise with one or other object and, in virtue of this subjective interest, acquires the right of starting or breaking off more or less when it likes' (*Ibid.*, p. 1115). See Paul Zumthor, *Parler du Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1980), pp. 49-72, for a history of the relationship between medieval studies and Romanticism.

<sup>4</sup> Medieval love lyric has often been anointed as an auroral moment in the construction of the Western modern lyric canon. In introducing their volume on the Troubadours, Sarah Kay and Simon Gaunt state: 'The Troubadours [...] are part of the furniture of our cultural knowledge, an unforgettable heirloom in the European heritage. [...] The rise of courtliness, [...] in which the Troubadours played a determining role, helped to shape mainstream Western culture; while their commentaries as moralists, and as political and cultural critics, provide vital testimony to the attitudes which underlie and helped to form our own (Simon Gaunt and Sarah Key, 'Introduction', in *The Troubadours. An Introduction*, ed. by Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 1-7 (p. 1). See also István Frank, 'Il ruolo dei trovatori nella formazione della lirica moderna', in *La lirica*, ed. by Luciano Formisano (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990), pp. 93-118. Besides Antonelli's essay on Cavalcanti already mentioned, see, by the same author, 'Avere e non avere: dai trovatori a Petrarca', in *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa...: l' "io" e il "tu" nella lirica italiana*, ed. by Francesco Bruni (Venice: Marsilio, 2005), pp. 41-75; and Id., 'Giacomo da Lentini e l' "invenzione" della lirica italiana', *Critica del Testo*, 12 (2009), 1-24.

<sup>5</sup> Nick Mansfield, *Subjectivity. Theories of the Self from Freud to Haraway* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), p. vi.

<sup>6</sup> Rather than aiming at providing readers with a "theory of the subject", Mansfield's book focusses on outlining different (and always contrasting) models and approaches to the issue of subjectivity as well as sketching how this notion has been understood (and sometimes deconstructed) by some of the most influential global theories of the twentieth century.

Émile Benveniste provided one of the first and most influential accounts of the relationship between subjectivity and language.<sup>7</sup> In clearly elucidating the opposition between ‘sujet de l’*énoncé*’ (or syntactic subject) and ‘sujet de l’*énonciation*’ (or speaking subject),<sup>8</sup> Benveniste emphasises the centrality of subjectivity as one of the most pervasive functions of language. Subjectivity is an opaque notion since not only has it acquired growing centrality in discourses pertaining to the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities, but has also recently obtained a prominent place in linguistic theorising.<sup>9</sup> As such, especially when engaging with less recent scholarly works, drawing parallels between discussions of the encoding of subjectivity in literary texts requires understanding the nature of the specific notion of subjectivity discussed, as well as avoiding simplistic comparisons. To trace a ‘history of subjectivity’, to comprehensively discuss its several interpretations, and to take into account the manifold theories which foreground the subject as a fixed structure of meaning would fall beyond the scope of the present work.

This opening Chapter will rather act as an entry into the discussions of the whole thesis. After presenting the leading trends of the discussion of subjectivity in medieval texts, I will address various approaches to the issue of ‘subjectivity’ which have been useful, provocative, or stimulating when devising the methodology for the present analysis and, more broadly, for reflecting upon subjectivity in Cavalcanti’s *Rime*. Since there is not one way of understanding and conceiving ‘subjectivity’, I am more concerned with ‘questions’ posed by scholars than with ultimate answers. For this reason, frequent reference will be made to scholarly works discussing Old French and Occitan poetry, as well as the early modern and modern lyric. Such an inclusive reflection will lead to the outlining of a methodology that will ground my analysis of subjectivity in Cavalcanti’s *Rime*.

### **I.1 PAUL ZUMTHOR AND THE DEMYSTIFICATION OF SUBJECTIVITY**

One of the most longstanding topics of debate within the scholarly discussion of the medieval love lyric concerns whether the lyric ‘I’ of this poetry is to be read as a mere grammatical device or as the mark of an actual subjective presence, of an articulating individual self, within these texts. This

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<sup>7</sup> Émile Benveniste, ‘De la subjectivité dans le langage’, in Id., *Problèmes de linguistique générale* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), pp. 258-266. Previous fundamental studies are Karl Bühler in *Sprachtheorie: die Darstellungsfunktion der Sprache* (Jena: Fischer, 1934), further references will be to the English translation: Karl Bühler, *Theory of Language: The Representational Function of Language*, trans. by Donald Fraser Goodwin (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1990); and Roman Jakobson, *Shifters, Verbal Categories, and the Russian Verb* (Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Russian Language Project, 1957).

<sup>8</sup> Following on from the example of recent readings of medieval texts which borrow interpretative categories from Narratology and Linguistic, I will anglicise terms such as *énoncé*, *énonciation*, *énonciateur*, and *locuteur*, as follow: *énoncé* → ‘utterance’, *énonciation* → ‘enunciation’, *énonciateur* → ‘enunciator’, *locuteur* → ‘locutor’. See, for example, Sophie Marnette, ‘The French *théorie de l’*énonciation** and the study of speech and thought presentation’, *Language and Literature Copyright* 10/3 (2001), 243–262.

<sup>9</sup> For a study of the two main and most influential lines of research on subjectivity (and subjectification) in linguistic theory, see Athanasiadou Angeliki, Costas Canakis and Bert Cornillie, eds, *Subjectification. Various Paths to Subjectivity* (Berlin; New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2006).

poetry is characterised as revolving around the *discours amoureux* of an ‘I’ who, customarily, is at the same time the grammatical and rhetorical lynchpin of the poetic discourse. Besides dealing with a matter such as love, which we would nowadays reckon as highly intimate and individual, from a formal point of view, the language and motifs of such a poetry are highly formalised and stereotyped. Nonetheless, as Sarah Kay stresses, poets to be ascribed to this sub-genre make claims about the authenticity of their individual experiences, ‘the identity between the song and the feeling which it expresses’ and, consequently, ‘the identity between the lover and the poet’ to the extent that it is this alleged ‘sincerity’ that grants the poem its value.<sup>10</sup> This general aspect endures overall, even though the degrees and poetic codes of this standardisation change over the centuries, and even though the medieval love lyric is a poetry of different places and of many cultural, social, and political environments.

Some of the most influential reflections on subjectivity in the medieval love lyric owe much to the seminal thoughts and concepts presented by Paul Zumthor throughout his academic career,<sup>11</sup> especially for the way they have provocatively fostered a composite scholarly discussion.<sup>12</sup> In

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<sup>10</sup> Sarah Kay analyses the so-called ‘sincerity-topos’ in Troubadour poetry, claiming that its invention dates back to Bernart de Ventadorn. See Sarah Kay, *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 139. On this rhetorical device see: Roger Dragonetti, *La technique poétique des trouvères dans la chanson courtoise. Contribution à l’étude de la rhétorique médiévale* (Brugge: De Tempel, 1960), p. 192; Maria Luisa Meneghetti, *Il pubblico dei trovatori. Ricezione e uso dei testi lirici cortesi fino al XIV secolo* (Modena: Mucchi, 1984), pp. 121-175; Michel Zink, *La subjectivité littéraire. Autour du siècle de saint Louis* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1985), p. 52; p. 76. A key text which emblematises the ‘sincerity-topos’ is Bernart de Ventadorn’s ‘Pel doutz chan que•l rossinhols fai’ (Bernart Von Ventadorn, *Seine Leider. Mit Einleitung und Glossar*, ed. by Carl Appel (Halle: Verlag Von Max Niemer, 1915), pp. 194-198).

<sup>11</sup> Even if the figure and the reflections of Zumthor are central to the understanding of the debate on lyric subjectivity in the medieval love lyric, they must not be considered as isolated from the wider debate which erupted in the 1950s and 1960s, questioning the notion of author and text, and submitting them to a radical examination. Zumthor’s positions are to be contextualised in this quarrel focussed on the figure of the Author which provoked questions, revisions and dissent in all domains of literary criticism, involving scholars such as Roger Dragonetti, Alexander Leupin and Bernard Cerquiglini, among many. See, in particular: Dragonetti, *La technique poétique*; Robert Guiette, *D’une poésie formelle en France au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Nizet, 1972); Alexandre Leupin, *Le Graal et la littérature Étude sur la Vulgate arthurienne en prose* (Lausanne: L’Âge d’Homme, 1982); Bernard Cerquiglini, *Éloge de la variante* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1989). This broader and complex debate is reconstructed by Virginie Greene, who examines Roland Barthes’s short essay ‘La mort de l’auteur’ and Michel Foucault’s reflections in his *The order of things* and ‘What is an author?’, as parts of and reactions to this broader debate. Greene suggests that the medievalists’ enquiry, in granting texts preeminence over authors, were ‘anticipating the general attack against the Author that erupted in the sixties’ (Virginie Greene, ‘What happened to Medievalists After the Death of the Author?’, in *The Medieval Author in Medieval French Literature*, ed. by Virginie Greene (New York; Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2006), pp. 205-227 (p. 210). Barthes’s and Foucault’s works quoted above are respectively: Roland Barthes, ‘La mort de l’auteur’, in Id., *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by Eric Marty (Paris: Seuil, 2002), III: 1968-1971, pp. 40-45; Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses : une archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966); Id., ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un auteur?’, *Bulletin de la Société de philosophie*, 63 (1969), 73-104; repr. as ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un auteur?’, in Id., *Dits et Écrits*, ed. by Daniel Defert, François Ewald, and Jacques Lagrange, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), I: 1954-1988: pp. 817-849.

<sup>12</sup> Although Zumthor’s work is focussed on the lyrics of the *trouvères*, the influence of his thoughts upon Troubadour and Italian love lyric scholarship is discernible in a number of studies I will discuss later in this chapter. However it is important to bear in mind, as Amelia E. Van Vleck specifies, that: ‘[t]o include Occitan poetry in the *poésie formelle* described by Guiette, Dragonetti and Zumthor, we would have to ignore a fundamental difference between the Troubadours and the *Trouvères*: originality and individuality were of prime importance to the Troubadours, whereas the



opening his *Essai de poésie médiévale*, explicitly aimed at discussing ‘l’émergence et la cristallisation, entre le VIII<sup>e</sup> et le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, des langues même qui [...] réalisèrent [les formes de parole et d’écriture]’,<sup>13</sup> Zumthor upholds the alterity of the Middle Ages, also maintaining that ‘la poésie médiévale relève d’un univers qui nous est devenu étranger.’<sup>14</sup> The scholar’s awareness of a gulf isolating medieval texts from modern modes of interpretation is grounded in a series of key factors, such as the highly formalised language mentioned above, as well as several rhetorical conventions shaping the literary production of those centuries.<sup>15</sup> The poetry of the Middle Ages is perceived as being ‘essentiellement “style”, dans le sens ancien de ce mot’ to the extent that, as Zumthor continues, ‘[l]e seul critère positif qui le constitue à nos yeux est sa structure formelle’, and it is precisely its adhesion to the tradition that bestows on the text its poetic status.<sup>16</sup>

In perfecting his account of *la circularité du chant*, according to which meaning circulates within the text and its tradition, without ever escaping from this self-referential loop, the scholar observes:

[...] une chanson ne possède donc pas en propre *une* composition: elle possède virtuellement autant que de variantes possibles. [...] la chanson apparaît ainsi comme un ensemble extrêmement complexe dont tous les éléments possèdent la double qualité de signifiant et de signifié, ce qui implique une circulation interne du sens dans le discours, comme si le message, dans le temps même où il s’achève, remontait à son point de départ. Processus descendant et ascendant sont simultanés, et ce double mouvement ne cesse que lorsque le poète se tait.<sup>17</sup>

The effect of this circularity, for Zumthor, is the objectivisation of the text.<sup>18</sup> It is for these reasons that Zumthor maintains the mere grammatical value of the first-person pronoun *je* in the trouvères’ poems, rejecting any “subjective” presence in this corpus of texts.<sup>19</sup>

The ‘relation référentielle que comporte l’usage du “pronom” je’, is further problematised in a later group of essays, gathered under the title *Autobiographie au moyen âge* and collected in the 1975 *Langue, texte, énigme*, a volume which complements several reflections already presented in the previous *Essai*.<sup>20</sup> The unique traits of the courtly lyric are considered in light of modern conceptions

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trouvères strophe primarily to refine convention.’ (Amelia E. Van Vleck, *Memory and Re-Creation in Troubadour Lyric* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), p. 4).

<sup>13</sup> Zumthor, *Essai de poésie médiévale* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1972), p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>15</sup> This observation is followed by Zumthor’s remarks on ‘l’absence presque complète, dans toutes les variétés de textes jusqu’au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, de notations sensorielles’ (*Ibid.*, p. 107).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192.

<sup>19</sup> ‘l’aspect subjectif de la chanson (le sens du je qui la chante) n’a pour nous d’existence que grammaticale. Or, la grammaire ressortit à l’aspect objectif du poème. En d’autres termes, la chanson est interprétable, par le critique moderne, en sa seule qualité d’objet’ (*Ibid.*, p. 192).

<sup>20</sup> As Zumthor recognises, our interpretation is necessarily conditioned ‘par un certain modèle culturel pour que, du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle à celui de Jean-Jacques, quelque chose n’ait pas radicalement changé’ (Zumthor, ‘Autobiographie au Moyen Âge, in Id., *Langue, texte, énigme* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975), pp. 165-180 (p. 165).

of autobiography. The ‘décentration du langage dans la pratique qui les produit’<sup>21</sup> alluded to by Zumthor, is the element that creates major ambiguities in considering the relationship between a medieval author and his text, to the extent that the scholar, again and more resolutely, emphasises: ‘le grand chant courtois est un mode de dire entièrement référé à un *je* qui, tout fixant le plan et les modalités du discours, n’a d’autre existence pour nous que grammaticale’, thus establishing the non-coexistence of intertextuality and subjectivity.<sup>22</sup>

The bodily presence of a poet in a text is instead manifested through the performative act of reading or reciting it, through the voice of the performer. However, the lyric’s recited performance neutralises and depersonalises the individual’s voice, which ‘s’étouffe dans le texte qu’elle compose, avec lequel elle compose, neutre, destructeur des identités initiales’.<sup>23</sup> According to Zumthor, far from being subjective, the voice traditionally produced in medieval poems is instead collective in nature. Although, when reciting, the enunciator is individual and visually perceivable, it also changes at every performance, to the extent that:

Si l’auteur (peut-être identique à l’un des récitants successifs) a fait d’un je le sujet de l’énoncé, ce je fonctionne comme une forme visuelle, dont l’actualisation varie selon des circonstances : il est peu vraisemblable que l’auditeur médiéval ait pu l’interpréter dans un sens autobiographique<sup>24</sup>

The only kind of subjectivity acknowledged by Zumthor is collective, and it is the one transmitted by the text itself, and by its tradition.

## 1.2 NEW APPROACHES TO INTERTEXTUALITY AND SUBJECTIVITY

Until the mid-twentieth century, readings of medieval texts mainly follow a mode of interpretation influentially defined by Kay as the ‘autobiographical assumption’.<sup>25</sup> This critical posture involves either the scholars’ more or less acritical association between the ‘I’ of the text and its supposed author, or, for cases when the identification proved problematic, the emergence of various solutions, such as Alfred Jeanroy’s criterion of ‘insincerity’.<sup>26</sup> Concurrently, Formalism produced several

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168. The relationship between this notion of “voice” and the medieval poetic practice is further discussed by Zumthor in several influential works published in the 1980s. See: Id., *Introduction à la poésie orale* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1983) and Id., *La lettre et la voix: de la littérature médiévale* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987). Zumthor aims to focus on the materiality of the oral performance, by offering important reflections on the relationship between voice and subjectivity.

<sup>25</sup> Kay, *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry*, p. 2. The so-called ‘autobiographical assumption’ is first discussed by Kay in an earlier essay entitled ‘Rhetoric and Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry’, in *The Troubadours and the Epic. Essays in memory of W. Mary Hackett*, ed. by Linda M. Paterson and Simon B. Gaunt (Warwick: Department of French, University of Warwick, 1987), pp. 102-142.

<sup>26</sup> Alfred Jeanroy, *La poésie lyrique des troubadours*, 2 vols (Toulouse-Paris: Privat, 1934), II, pp. 13-135.

studies focussed on philological, stylistic, lexical, thematic and historical analyses, which predominantly overlook the issue of subjectivity.

In the 1980s, new critical approaches to the issue of intertextuality in medieval poetry called into question many of the standpoints formulated by formalists, resulting in the publication of studies admitting possibilities of meaning that Zumthor's interpretation would have otherwise ostracised. Among the pioneers of this fresh understanding of intertextuality I shall mention Jörn Grüber and Maria Luisa Meneghetti who, as well as revising Zumthor's conception of literary tradition, gave new insights on the so-called *poésie formelle*.<sup>27</sup>

In his 1983 work, tellingly entitled *Die Dialektik des Trobar*, Grüber examines the issue of intertextuality in the Troubadours' corpus by drawing on the Hegelian notion of *Aufhebung*, and by considering Occitan lyrics according to the three categories of *der Worte* (language), *der Tones* (music) and *der Materie* (themes). The repetitiveness of the language of this corpus is problematised by the scholar. Grüber argues against the definition of 'poésie formelle', holding that Old French and Occitan poetry are not a disarticulated system with no history. He rather maintains that in many examples it is possible to identify a specific intertextual relation between texts, which represents the poets' reactions to the works of their contemporaries and predecessors, creating a vast dialectic of intertextual exchanges. According to Grüber, the poetry of the Troubadours was meant to be addressed to a small elite of readers, who were able to detect the many allusions concealed in it. These intertextual references were purposely created by poets as a means of surpassing each other's work. In a radical overturning of previous interpretations, Grüber considers intertextuality as a creative practice, criticising the label of *poésie formelle* and rather defining this poetry as *hermetische Lyrik* (ermetic lyric).<sup>28</sup>

Meneghetti's work stems from the increasing awareness of scholars' scarce attention to the productive and complex relationship of each Troubadour's text with its tradition, and thus from the aim of addressing '[la] poesia trobadorica come organismo "vivo"', and of privileging intertextuality as a dynamic process.<sup>29</sup> Meneghetti aims to shed light on the process of textual reception, stressing

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<sup>27</sup> Jörn Grüber, *Die Dialektik des Trobar. Untersuchungen zur Struktur und Entwicklung des occitanischen und französischen Minnesangs des 12. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1983); Meneghetti, *Il pubblico dei trovatori*.

<sup>28</sup> Grüber, *Die Dialektik des Trobar*, p. 256. In a recent consideration of the various theories of intertextual phenomena in medieval texts, Claudio Giunta, as well as acknowledging that 'nelle letterature romanze delle origini il confronto con la tradizione letteraria fosse più importante di quanto non lo sia oggi', also maintains that scholars have highly overestimated the metaliterary dimension of medieval poetry. Giunta argues that the 'poésie formelle' does not necessarily imply 'che la poesia del Medioevo altro non sia se non un interminabile rincorrersi di citazioni, echi e allusioni', also highlighting how this approach often leads scholars to exploit intertextuality to give texts meanings that are not always plausible (Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, pp. 34-35).

<sup>29</sup> Meneghetti, *Il pubblico dei trovatori*, p. 18. As Meneghetti stresses, 'la poesia dei trovatori si presenta come caratterizzata da un marcato atteggiamento endogenetico e automodellizzante. Infatti ogni testo lirico provenzale, pur strutturando entro di sé, com'è del resto ovvio, degli elementi nuovi ed «esterni», rinvia ad altre – se non, almeno in linea

the importance of medieval readers and interpreters in determining the transmission as well as the reworking of both the *Oïl* and *Oc* corpora. Meneghetti's analysis is expressly oriented 'dalla parte del destinatario', understood either as the actual addressee of a lyric or, more generally, as a hypothetical recipient able to re-work the poetic message.<sup>30</sup> To this purpose, Meneghetti undertakes a systematic analysis of the modes of reception of Troubadour poetry. After focussing on pivotal cultural contingencies (such as textual transmission, and performance), Meneghetti considers reception as related to the composition of the *vidas* and the *razos*.

The chronological proximity of Grüber's and Meneghetti's publications, as well as the immediate scholarly response that both these studies received, convey an idea of the reach of the discussion fostered by these new approaches to intertextuality. From these dialogues stemmed one pivotal work that more explicitly relates intertextuality to the issue of subjectivity. In *La subjectivité littéraire au Moyen Âge*, by challenging the fundamental points of the so-called "Immanent Criticism", Michel Zink builds a case for the appearance of 'ce qui marque le texte comme le point de vue d'une conscience',<sup>31</sup> in twelfth and thirteenth-century French texts. According to Zink, although revolving around the vicissitudes of an 'I', courtly lyric is limited in its expressiveness by several strict formalisations, not least those related to musical performance. Because of these elements, Zink agrees with Zumthor in stating the "insincerity" of this poetry, for 'la confidence [de la chanson courtoise] n'est qu'apparente, parce que la démarche du poème est systématiquement généralisatrice'.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, both *vidas* and *razos*, instead of providing readers with 'truthful' information, further increase the 'fictionality' of texts, thus overshadowing the 'I' of the poet, as 'l'anecdote du roman et la généralité du poème s'articulent l'une sur l'autre sans se pénétrer'.<sup>33</sup>

However, according to Zink, some specific texts dating back to the thirteenth century 'pren[nent] conscience qu'[ils disent] le monde à travers un point de vue, c'est à dire qu'il y a en [leur], non seulement une vérité et une fiction, mais aussi une nécessité et un arbitraire, et encore une médiation décisive du sujet [...]'.<sup>34</sup> As Zink maintains, the *dit* is the genre allowing the emergence of the subject's individual point of view, and the work of Rutebeuf epitomises this shift. In this particular kind of narrative poetry '[l]e récit des circonstances et des événements [...] définissent un moi

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di principio, a tutte le altre – realizzazioni testuali del sistema, con un'evidenza e un'intensità che non hanno, a mio parere, riscontro in nessun'altra letteratura dell'Occidente' (*Ivi*).

<sup>30</sup> '[...] in ogni situazione comunicativa, conviene distinguere – e si distingue, infatti – fra un destinatario propriamente detto, terminale di una trasmissione « progettata » specificamente per lui, e un ricevente, in una certa misura almeno, in grado di "appropriarsi", al di là delle stesse intenzioni dell'emittente, del messaggio, di trasformarlo e magari riutilizzarlo a nuovi fini comunicativi' (*Ibid.*, p. 35).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

particulier qui prétend se livrer dans une poésie, non plus lyrique, mais personnelle [...]’.<sup>35</sup> In other words, the *dit* offered writers an occasion to explore the self, thus becoming a poetry of the anecdote of the ‘I’, making the emergence of subjective points of view visible in the authors’ small or more evident textual diversions from the leading expressive code of the time. Zink’s analysis has not escaped scholarly criticism, not least for revealing a certain degree of confusion related to his understanding of subjectivity.<sup>36</sup> However, the importance of Zink’s work lies in its genuine insights in emancipating medieval texts from the assumption that they were the product of an overtly conventional mode of writing, merely ruled by formal and rhetorical conventions. In suggesting that the examination of deviations from a dominant code can be a way to pinpoint the emergence of individual subjectivities (be they textual or transcendental), Zink’s study paved the way for later studies interested in subjectivity as strictly tied to language and textuality.

### 1.3 LANGUAGE, DESIRE, AND SUBJECTIVITY

The influence of Marxist, Lacanian, and Foucauldian theories, and Feminist criticism, among many others, confronted scholars with new modes of reading medieval texts and new perspectives from which to address the issue of subjectivity, locating the “courtly” love lyric at the confluence of different systems, such as the bodily, the textual, the social, the philosophical. Because of the influence of these new approaches, the first-person position of medieval texts and its dependence upon fixed linguistic and rhetorical structures were suddenly understood to epitomise notions such as “decentering”, “displacement” and, more broadly, the tight bond between textuality and subjectivity, understood as a construct.<sup>37</sup>

Though often making their way along different paths, various studies developed under these manifold influences examine language and its structures as a key for unfolding expressions of subjectivity, and examine the ‘subject’ as a process, as *subject to* language, rather than as an independent, fixed entity. One of the most influential studies of these years, which has greatly contributed to the discussion of subjectivity in the last decades, is Sarah Kay’s *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry*.<sup>38</sup> Kay’s book emblematises the revolution brought on by the adoption of post-

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>36</sup> This specific point is raised by A.C. Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity. The Encoding of Subjectivity in Medieval Narratives and Lyrics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) pp. 31-34. See also Calin William, ‘The Invention of Literary Subjectivity (review)’, *Philosophy and Literature*, 24/2 (2000), 488-490 *Project MUSE* [doi:10.1353/phl.2000.0028](https://doi.org/10.1353/phl.2000.0028) [accessed 17 April 2019].

<sup>37</sup> On these new approaches see Alexandre Leupin, ‘The Middle Ages, the Other’, *Diacritics*, 13/2 (Fall 1983), 22–31.

<sup>38</sup> Kay, *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry*. Even if Kay’s study has been enormously impactful, I shall emphasise again that it stemmed from a composite and rich scholarly discussion, out of which several other powerful works have been written, all characterised by their focus on the relationship between language and subjectivity. To chart all the fundamental studies produced by these ongoing dialogues would fall outside of the scope of the present work. However, I shall recall a few examples which resonate in or echo Kay’s work. Intertextuality and Irony, as pivotal textual techniques discussed by Kay have been the object of important studies such as Laura Kendrick’s *The Game of Love* and Simon Gaunt’s

structuralist approaches to reading medieval texts. Kay understands subjectivity as ‘the elaboration of a first-person (subject) position in the rhetoric of courtly poetry’.<sup>39</sup> The scholar discusses subjectivity in Occitan poetry by adopting a Lacanian perspective, as well as drawing on politically oriented feminist theories. In recognising the importance of Zink’s intuition, according to which the subject in medieval literature is dependent upon antecedent texts and articulations of subjectivity that are to be found in subtle variations from customary expressive codes, Kay suggests considering the lyric ‘I’ of the Troubadours as haunted by, and constructed through the language and the desires of other subjects. As Kay holds, Jacques Lacan’s model of the formation of the individual effectively illustrates the subject’s mode of articulation in Occitan poetry.<sup>40</sup>

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*Troubadour and Irony* (see Laura Kendrick, *The Game of Love* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1988); Simon Gaunt, *Troubadour and Irony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)). As opposed to the courtly dominating and overarching institution, constantly attempting to affirm and consolidate its power, Kendrick looks at poets’ (and scribes’) use of Irony and wordplay as moved by the intention of challenging authority by means of writing, ‘the instrument through which the Church, along with the French and Anglo-Norman kings, was trying to impose its centred, hierarchizing moral and social order’ (Kendrick, *The Game of Love*, p. 15). The abundant variations in manuscript readings, described by Zumthor as *mouvance*, are taken as a support for Kendrick’s argument, for the interpretative ambiguity they create is read by the scholar as proof that scribes and poets were purposely playing facetious games. By creating textual ambiguities, Irony was put in play as an intentional program of resistance and subversion vis-à-vis political and cultural centralisation. Not only does Kendrick take into account the first Troubadours whose works have survived in writing, but the scholar also draws on the tradition of playful illuminations and marginalia. Grotesque ornaments characterising several manuscripts compiled in France are, in Kendrick’s view, a further visual proof of this broader wordplay to create indeterminacy of meaning, to obfuscate neat textual exegeses. Irony is understood by Kendrick as the leading principle of Troubadour creativity through its social and political meaning, which not only allows poets to subvert institutions, but ultimately also leads them to assert personal prowess by wielding words to attack and destroy opponents, and thus to acquire status. Similarly aimed at stressing the emergence of subjectivity in some Troubadour texts by paying attention to the rhetorical devices by means of which meaning is rendered as difficult to determine, *Troubadour and Irony* focusses on the presence of this trope in the corpora of five early Occitan poets - namely Marcabru, Bernard Marti, Peire d’Alverna, Raimbaut d’Aurenga and Giraut de Borneil. After defining the medieval concept of *ironia* by mapping its discussion in both classical and medieval rhetorical treatises, Gaunt holds this trope to be at work in courtly culture from its outset, generating the dialectic movement emphasised in the aforementioned works of Grüber and Meneghetti. The purpose of such an interplay created through this figure of speech, Gaunt argues, was the simultaneous affirmation of one poet to the detriment of others, as well as the outdoing of the predecessors. In showing the extent to which courtly language admits the coexistence of divergent meanings, Gaunt interprets Irony as a fundamental technique for an author’s affirmation, and therefore in the process of subjective construction. Gaunt’s scholarly work is a telling example of the multiplicity of readings allowed by this fresh approach to the medieval love lyric. Gaunt, in fact, further addresses the issue of intertextual play by focussing on cases when meaning is achieved by juxtaposing different registers (the Christian and the erotic), with the aim of articulating subjectivity as masculine through the text. Gender and genre are both at focus in this work (Simon Gaunt, *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). The mechanism of homosocial desire in courtly discourse, the construction of alterity, and the role of rhetoric and linguistic dexterity in the Troubadours’ negotiation of their status are contextualised within two cultural phenomena: the upsurge in Mariology as well as the increase in texts composed about female saints. According to Gaunt, vernacular hagiography plays an important role in the construction of a masculine discourse in the Occitan *canso*.

<sup>39</sup> Kay, *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry*, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> In the paper ‘Le stade du miroir’, Lacan states, the child’s original and unproblematic union with the Mother, that symbolically follows the infant’s identification with the unified image in the mirror, the ‘Ideal I’, is altered by the intrusion of a third figure: the Father (Jacques Lacan, ‘Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je telle qu’elle nous est révélée dans l’expérience psychanalytique’, in Id., *Écrits* (Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1966), pp. 93-100). For a concise account of this process, see Malcolm Bowie, ‘Inventing the ‘I’; ‘Language and the Unconscious’, in Id., *Lacan* (London: Fontana, 1991), pp. 17-43; pp. 44-87)). The entry of the Father, in disturbing the infant’s libidinal relation to the Mother, problematises this pre-existing binary structure and the child’s related perception of wholeness by shedding light on the illusory state of the ego-concept up till then, as well as emblematising the existence of a familiar and social network that

From Kay's perspective, the ontological status of the lyric 'I' results from a construction of several pre-existing and over-determining social conventions. These conventions, transposed into a textual analysis, Kay holds, constitute what Kristeva has named intertextuality, understood as 'a polyphony of voices account[ing] for [...] a subject in process/on trial, that unstable articulation of identity and loss leading to a new and plural identity'.<sup>41</sup> Following on from these observations, Kay suggests reading the 'I' in Troubadour lyrics as lingering between a generalised grammatical subject and a particularised historical self. By partly amending Zink's argument, Kay's work suggests the possibility of detecting in Troubadour poetry the actual existence of expressions of subjectivity located in textuality.

The starting point for Kay's analysis is the assumption that in Troubadour verse meaning is not always transparent, and the first-person position is involved in a certain level of indeterminacy. This is due to the text's rhetorical dexterity, its themes and its vocabulary, and is related to the text being bound up with socio-political and cultural issues. Kay looks at the main rhetorical devices exposing the subject to semantic indirection. Not only Irony, but also other tropes such as hyperbole, metaphor, metonymy, and allegory, all problematise the 'I' of the poem, by tying subjectivity to language and to pre-existing texts, as well as by casting its articulation as a process.<sup>42</sup> The relevance of such an analysis focussed on rhetorical strategies is further perceivable in the second part of Kay's book, where these strategies are further socially and politically contextualised and further addressed

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pre-exists the child. This moment of the child's growth corresponds to the birth of the Freudian unconscious, which was not present before, since the unproblematic union with the Mother prevented the child from experiencing and acknowledging repression. At this stage, with the rupture of the mirror's unity (understood as analogous to the Mother/Child symbolic bond), the child is necessarily compelled to route his demands of the Mother through the act of speech. Therefore, according to Lacan, the traumatic introduction of this third authoritative figure also marks the infant's access into the realm of Language, which in turn, 'avec sa structure, préexiste à l'entrée qu'y fait chaque sujet à un moment de son développement mental', to the extent that the subject 's'il peut paraître serf du langage', for language appears the only means to re-establish the lost unity with the Mother (Lacan, 'L'instance de la lettre dans l'inconscient ou la raison depuis Freud', in Id., *Écrits*, pp. 493-528 (p. 495)). These two phases in the formation of the individual are defined by Lacan *Imaginary* and *Symbolic*. For a definition of the three Lacanian realms, see Bowie, *Lacan*, pp. 103-133. For a further discussion on this process see Elizabeth Wright, *Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory in Practice* (London; New York: Methuen, 1984), pp. 121-136; and Terry Eagleton, 'Psychoanalysis', in Id. *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 132-168. The elaboration of the concept of 'unconscious' is considered one of the major contributions Freud gave to the modern thought. See Sigmund Freud, 'The Unconscious', in *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. by Anna Freud and James Strachey, 24 vols (London: Vintage, 2001), XIV, pp. 159-216; and Id., *The interpretation of dreams*, trans. by Joyce Crick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). On the relation between Freud's unconscious and Lacan's post-structuralist description of it, see Siegfried Zepf, 'The relations between language, consciousness, the preconscious, and the unconscious: Freud's approach conceptually updated', *The Scandinavian Psychoanalytic Review*, 34/1 (2011), 50-61.

<sup>41</sup> Kristeva, 'Nous deux' or a (Hi)story of Intertextuality', *Romanic Review*, 93 (2002), 7-13 (p. 9). Kristeva also defines intertextuality as 'a mosaic of quotations', to the extent that 'any text is the absorption and transformation of another'. From Kristeva's perspective, 'the notion of intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double' (*Ibid.*, p. 66).

<sup>42</sup> An emblematic example of the subject as "construction" is the poets' use of dialogues, intended as 'irregular interjections which interrupt the first-person voice, and which come perhaps from within the 'self', perhaps from outside it', which is discussed by Kay as a means to set the subject's position in the text as fragmented, as in the process of being (Kay, *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry*, p. 69).

as a subjective means of affirmation within a specific social group, to construct gender hierarchy and to express the will for social control.

The relevance of Kay's work to the present discussion does not lie in its main argument, according to which Troubadour poetry marks the birth of subjectivity. Indeed, other scholars (included Zink, as discussed above), propose identifying the birth of subjective writing in different moments or with different authors of the Western lyric canon – often discussing different notions of subjectivity. As an example of these often-contrasting points of view, more recently, Claudio Giunta has discussed the birth of subjective poetry by understanding subjectivity not just as a textual phenomenon but, more specifically, as the mark of the author's presence in the text. Giunta distinguishes texts in which the speaking voice is a mere textual instance, which has no traction with the figure and voice of the author, from texts in which 'il soggetto che parla – per quanto camuffato, per quanto la sua voce ci giunga filtrata da luoghi comuni – è il poeta'. As Giunta specifies, by arguing that in Italian literature, this pivotal shift is marked by Dante's *Vita Nuova*, '[L]a prima forma di lirica si avvicina al teatro, perché mette in scena personaggi ed eventi fittizi ed esemplari'.<sup>43</sup>

Kay's *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry* is a milestone because it emblematises the radical overturning of scholarship from the positions exemplified by Zumthor's thought. In intersecting several of the leading approaches to the issue, Kay's work brings to light the complexity of the debate on subjectivity on the medieval love lyric. As I will shortly expand upon, the approach adopted by Kay has specific relevance to the present discussion in privileging textual analyses as the means to investigate subjectivity.

#### 1.4 CAVALCANTI SCHOLARSHIP

The long-lasting influence of philological approaches, historicism, and the so-called 'critica stilistica' in Italy is reflected in Italian scholarly studies on the medieval love lyric. Psychoanalytical readings of medieval texts or, more broadly, ways of looking at the love lyric through the lens of postmodern literary theories are mostly exceptions,<sup>44</sup> which at times have been regarded with suspicion when not

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<sup>43</sup> Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, p. 428.

<sup>44</sup> There are illustrious exceptions to this general trend. Stefano Agosti provides a reading of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* informed by psychoanalysis and, more specifically, by Lacanian thought (Stefano Agosti, *Gli occhi e le chiome. Per una lettura psicoanalitica del Canzoniere di Petrarca* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1993). Agosti's approach, outlined in his *Cinque analisi* and *Grammatica della poesia*, focusses on the semantic and pre-semantic structures of poetic language (Id. *Cinque analisi: Il testo della poesia* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1982); Id., *Grammatica della poesia. Cinque studi* (Naples: Alfredo Guida, 2008)). Another reading of Petrarch's *RVF* which is focussed on the relation between signifier and signified – although not as overtly Lacan-oriented, is Giorgio Orelli, *Il suono dei sospiri. Sul Petrarca volgare* (Turin: Einaudi, 1990). Mario Mancini discusses the feudal metaphor as expressed in *fin'amor* as a way to grasp the inextricable bond between culture, history, and rhetoric in medieval texts. The sociologic and Marxist-oriented approach of Eric Köhler, whose works have been translated into Italian by Mancini himself in 1976, permeates Mancini's study on many levels (Mario Mancini, *Metafora feudale. Per una storia dei trovatori* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1993)). For Köhler's rereading of the Troubadour corpus through the lens of Marxist criticism see Eric Köhler, *Trobadorlyrik und höfischer Roman:*



targeted with critiques.<sup>45</sup> This traditionalism has influenced Cavalcanti scholarship, too. Analyses of the *Rime* have been mostly focussed on investigating their sources, on discussing intertextual phenomena, and on examining issues of language, style, and textual transmission. Cavalcanti scholarship's broader rootedness in traditional methodology, with exceptions revealing the growing openness of the field towards new approaches, is mirrored, for example, in two of the three volumes published in commemoration of the seventh centenary of Cavalcanti's death: *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori* and *Guido Cavalcanti laico*. Together with more traditional textual or philological analyses<sup>46</sup> or essays investigating intertextual phenomena connecting Cavalcanti and other poets of the lyric canon,<sup>47</sup> Cavalcanti's religious,<sup>48</sup> philosophical,<sup>49</sup> and medical sources,<sup>50</sup> or Guido's complex reception,<sup>51</sup> there are a few contributions in which the issue of subjectivity is obliquely

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*Aufsätze zur französischen und provenzalischen Literatur des Mittelalters* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1962); Id., 'Observations historiques et sociologiques sur la poésie des troubadours', *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, 7 (1964), 27-51; Id., 'Marcabru und die beiden "Schulen"', *Cultura Neolatina*, 30 (1970), 300-314. For a more recent discussion of Troubadour poetry from a Marxist perspective see William E. Burgwinkle, *Love for sale. Materialist readings of the troubadour razo corpus* (New York; London: Garland, 1997).

<sup>45</sup> Giorgio Agamben's *Stanze*, a rich study engaging with philosophy, modern linguistics, and psychoanalysis (among many disciplines) is perhaps the most emblematic example. In the third chapter of his work, Agamben rereads medieval love poetry from a philosophical and cultural point of view. Agamben reconstructs the "Theory of the Phantasm" as well as considering the implications of the bond between erotic desire, language, and the body (Giorgio Agamben, *Stanze. La parola e il fantasma nella cultura occidentale* (Turin: Einaudi, 1977), p. 154). Agamben's work has been harshly critiqued for its alleged lack of philological rigorousness. See, for example, Antonelli, 'Avere e non avere', in "'Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa...'", ed. by Bruni, p. 214, note 27.

<sup>46</sup> Fenzi, 'Interpretazioni cavalcantiane', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués; Maria Corti, 'La penna alla prima persona', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 217-224; Corrado Calenda, 'La poesia di Cavalcanti tra blocco della teoria e frantumazione dell'esperienza', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 225-236; Guglielmo Gorni, 'Le scelte metriche di Guido Cavalcanti', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 273-288; Aniello Fratta, 'Un enigma cavalcantiano. *Biltà di donna e di saccante core*, v.14', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués pp. 289-294; Guglielmo Gorni, 'Una silloge d'autore nelle rime del Cavalcanti', in *Alle origini dell'io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 23-40; Paolo Cherchi, 'Cavalcanti e la rappresentazione', in *Alle origini dell'io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 41-58.

<sup>47</sup> De Robertis, 'Un altro Cavalcanti?', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 13-25; Robert M. Durling, 'Guido Cavalcanti in the *Vita nova*', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 177-185; Donatella Stocchi Perucchio, 'The Knot of Cavalcanti in the *Commedia*. A Few Threads', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 213-240; Alessandro Carrera, "'Per gli occhi venne la battaglia in pria". Fenomenica dello sguardo tra Cavalcanti e Leopardi', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 241-262; Michelangelo Picone, 'I due Guidi. Une tenzone virtuale', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 5-26; Raffaele Pinto, 'La simiglianza come decostruzione/ricostruzione espressiva nel dialogo intertestuale fra Guido e Dante', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 27-48; Carlo López Cortezo, 'Strutture triangolari significanti nel canto X dell'*Inferno*' in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 237-254.

<sup>48</sup> Ronald L. Martinez, 'Cavalcanti "Man of Sorrows" and Dante', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 187-212.

<sup>49</sup> Alfonso Maierù, 'La logica nell'età di Cavalcanti', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 27-50; Rachel Jacoff, 'Rereading *Donna me prega*', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 75-82; Massimo Ciavolella, 'L'amore e la medicina medievale', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 93-102; Isabel González, '*Signa amoris* de dolor en la poesía de Cavalcanti', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 49-62; Antonio Gagliardi, '*Species intelligibilis*', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 147-162; Rossend Arqués, 'La doppia morte di Guido Cavalcanti. Il dualismo poetico tra pneumatologia e arabismo', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 181-202.

<sup>50</sup> Natascia Tonelli, 'Fisiologia dell'amore doloroso in Cavalcanti e in Dante. Fonti mediche ed enciclopediche', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 63-118.

<sup>51</sup> Barański, 'Guido Cavalcanti and His First Readers', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone; Id., 'Guido Cavalcanti *auctoritas*', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués; Mario Mancini, 'Cavalcanti e Pound', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed.

addressed through considerations of the connections between the body, the physiology of love and language,<sup>52</sup> or of motifs broadly connected to psychoanalytical criticism, such as the thematisation of the gaze in the *Rime*.<sup>53</sup>

To complete the *status questionis* on the scholarship on subjectivity in Cavalcanti's *Rime I* shall also recall that, as I mentioned in the Introduction, due to reasons related to its manuscript tradition, the Cavalcantian corpus makes it impossible to identify an internal chronology or any sort of authorial ordering. This feature stymied analyses of the relationship between lyric subjectivity, authorship and material culture which generated vibrant discussions in Guittone,<sup>54</sup> Dante<sup>55</sup> or

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by Arqués, pp. 295-310; Gabriella Gavagnin, 'Una versione inedita di Josep Carner di un sonetto di Guido Cavalcanti', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 311-320.

<sup>52</sup> Elena Lombardi, 'The Grammar of Vision in Guido Cavalcanti', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 83-92; Federica Anichini, 'Retorica del corpo nelle *Rime* di Guido Cavalcanti. Il tema del pianto', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 103-118; Robert Pogue Harrison, 'The Ghost of Guido Cavalcanti. Revisited', in *Guido Cavalcanti e i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, pp. 119-130. To look at one of these examples, Anichini rereads Cavalcanti's poetry in the light of Avicenna's *Liber canonis*. Discussing several passages of 'Donna me prega' in which the connection between the physiology of love, the body, and the text is addressed, Anichini suggests looking at Cavalcanti's poetic writing as mirroring the body's reaction to the event of love. Anichini investigates this correspondence by looking at the rhetorical level of the *Rime* and by considering specifically two effects of the love process: sighs and weeping, two "voices of the body" which are representative of Cavalcanti's poetry.

<sup>53</sup> Corrado Bologna, 'Fisiologia del Disamore', in *Alle origini dell'io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 59-88.

<sup>54</sup> Guittone is perhaps the earliest extant author in the Italian vernacular tradition to compile a sequence of sonnets linked together so as to create a semblance of the individual's experience of time, as attested in the *Laurenziano* codex, its main witness (Florence, Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana, MS Redi 9). As Lino Leonardi seeks to demonstrate, the 86 love sonnets are linked by a series of formal and narrative connections. Although the sequence in the *Laurenziano* manuscript is mostly a non-authorial reorganisation of Guittone's sonnets, as Leonardi holds, 'è assai probabile che tra le sue fonti ci fosse un volume organico di opera omnia organizzato da Guittone stesso [...] che dovette circolare anche sotto forma di raccolta autonoma' (See Lino Leonardi, 'Un canzoniere in sonetti: coerenza formale'; 'Un canzoniere in sonetti: coerenza narrativa', in Guittone D'Arezzo, *Canzoniere. I sonetti d'amore del Codice Laurenziano*, ed. by Lino Leonardi (Turin: Einaudi, 1994), pp. XXIV-XXXI (p. XXVI); pp. XXXII-XLII). For the structure of this manuscript, see Lino Leonardi, 'Il canzoniere Laurenziano. Struttura, contenuto e fonti di una raccolta d'autore', in *I canzonieri della lirica italiana delle origini*, ed. by Lino Leonardi, 7 vols (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2007), *IV: Studi critici*, pp. 155-214; for a philological discussion of the manuscript see Stefano Zamponi, 'Il canzoniere Laurenziano: il codice, le mani, i tempi di confezione', in *I canzonieri della lirica italiana delle origini*, ed. by Leonardi, *IV: Studi critici*, pp. 221-238. See also Michelangelo Picone, 'Guittone e i due tempi del Canzoniere', in *Guittone d'Arezzo nel settimo centenario della morte. Atti del Convegno internazionale di Arezzo (22-24 aprile 1994)*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone (Florence: Cesati, 1995), pp. 73-88. In a composite work on authorship and material culture, Olivia Holmes considers the same sequence of sonnets by Guittone discussed by Leonardi (Olivia Holmes, 'Guittone d'Arezzo', in Id., *Assembling the lyric Self. Authorship from Troubadour Song to Italian Poetry Book* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 47-69. Rather than aiming at discussing whether Guittone himself or a copyist authored the aforementioned *Canzoniere*, Holmes examines the *codex* as the constructor of Guittone as an author. The story of the first-person protagonist, who, through the insertion of the poet's name, identifies the speaker with the poet (Guittone), represents, in fact, an ideal autobiography, tracing the soul's transition from sin to grace, which is at the same time exemplary and individual. As Holmes asserts, this transition, in suggesting 'a theological reading of contemporary vernacular literature' (p. 68), represents subjectivity as 'achieved ironically by way of a well-established medieval literary itinerary – that of conversion – in which the individual's behavior is held up as exemplary, as a model to be imitated' (pp. 49-50).

<sup>55</sup> Although alternating prose and lyrics, Dante's *Vita Nuova* is a pivotal example to take account of. As is widely acknowledged, in his *libello*, Dante assembles some of his juvenile poems with some new ones and provides them with a structure by inserting them in a prose *cornice*. The complex process of rearranging pre-existing lyrics to insert them into a new 'little book' has been brought to light by Domenico De Robertis and more recently discussed by Teodolinda Barolini and Manuele Gragnolati (see Domenico De Robertis, *Il libro della Vita Nuova* (Florence: Sansoni, 1970); Dante Alighieri, *Rime*, ed. by Domenico De Robertis, 3 vols (Florence: Le Lettere, 2002); Dante Alighieri, *Rime*, ed. by Domenico De Robertis (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2005); Dante Alighieri, *Rime giovanili e della Vita Nuova*, ed. by Teodolinda Barolini and Manuele Gragnolati (Milan: BUR, 2009)). Gragnolati rereads the *Vita Nuova* as a 'modello

Petrarch<sup>56</sup> scholarship, among many others. In this school of criticism, subjectivity is understood and evaluated as the poet's construction of a specific authorial identity through the assembling of first-person, author-ordered sequences of lyrics. To place a poem within a larger macrotextual system, making it part of a narrative progression (by defining intratextual relationships between poems, for example), challenges and opposes the self-reflective and static temporariness of the lyric.<sup>57</sup> This operation has some performative implications in rendering the author's intention to articulate a specific subjectivity as presented through a sequence of texts, through the support of material culture.

Gorni's attempt to identify an author-ordered sylloge in the Cavalcantian corpus is emblematic of this impasse. In criticising the inadequacy of the ordering of the *Rime* established by

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ideale di sviluppo amoroso e poetico', in order to affirm Dante's 'percorso di poeta-amante come *exemplum* per gli altri poeti.' Despite the factitious nature of Dante's "story", what emerges as fundamental is the connection between the narrative progression of the *Vita Nuova*, the gradual substitution of Beatrice's physicality with her diaphanous image, and the stylistic refinement of Dante's poetry. This development, as Gragnolati holds, by inscribing the poetic movement the *Vita Nuova* within a narrative of erotic conversion (in compliance with Augustine's one), also allows Dante's lyric to reach its maximum expression, and Dante himself to construct his authorial figure (See Manuele Gragnolati, 'Identità d'autore. La performance della *Vita Nuova*', in Id., *Amor che move. Linguaggio del corpo e forma del desiderio in Dante, Pasolini e Morante* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 2013), pp. 17-34 (p. 18)). For a comparison between Guittone's and Dante's modes of conversion see Tristan Kay, 'Redefining the "matera amorosa". Dante's *Vita Nova* and Guittone's (anti-) courtly "Canzoniere"', *The Italianist*, 29 (2009), 369-399. For a discussion of Dante's construction of his own authorial identity through the composition of the *Vita Nuova* and a more complete bibliography see my Chapter IV, pp. 98-103

<sup>56</sup> For the essential bibliography on Petrarch's construction of his authorial identity with the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* see my Chapter IV, pp. 103-106. As an example of these discussions, I shall quote Marco Santagata who discusses the construction of Petrarch's authorial identity by analyzing the assembling of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. Santagata contextualises the *RVF*'s architecture within Petrarch's broader autobiographical project (also comprising his epistolary and the *Secretum*), and interprets it as the poet's attempt to convey, through the narrative progression suggested by the lyric sequence, his exemplary conversion from a sinful past to an increased ethical and moral self-awareness, which appear to be complementary to the portrayal of author he intended to consign to posterity. See Marco Santagata, *Dal sonetto al Canzoniere. Ricerche sulla preistoria e la costituzione di un genere* (Padua: Liviana, 1979); Id., *I frammenti dell'anima. Storia e racconto nel Canzoniere di Petrarca* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1993). Barolini discusses the self-construction of Petrarch's subjectivity by addressing the relation between Time and the Self and their dramatisation in Petrarch's work (see Teodolinda Barolini, 'The Making of a Lyric Sequence. Time and Narrative in Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*', in Id., *Dante and the Origins of Italian Literary Culture* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), pp. 193-223; Id., 'Self in the Labyrinth of Time. *Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*', in *Petrarch. A Critical Guide to the Complete Works*, ed. by Victoria Kirkham and Armando Maggi (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), pp. 33-57). In taking account of the material constructedness of Petrarch's text and in analyzing the way in which the poet handled and manipulated the *codices* in which he wrote, Barolini stresses the 'textual [...] thematic and rhetorical instability that Petrarch built into his textual net for gathering the evanescence of human life' (Barolini, 'Self in the Labyrinth of Time', p. 39). Barolini argues that in his *Canzoniere*, the Aretine purposely violates chronology and history in order to create a structure that resists structure, to build an overarching tension, 'for dramatizing radical ontological instability, the instability of being itself' (*Ibid.*, p. 38). According to Barolini, thus, such a structure emblematises and doubles the self's interiority and its insoluble fragmentation. Subjectivity and textuality are therefore strictly bonded and reflected in Petrarch's representation of time and temporality. The issue of time as related to the construction of subjectivity in Petrarch has been recently reconsidered by Manuele Gragnolati and Francesca Southerden, who revise canonical interpretations with a fresh, perceptive reading of *Rvf* 70. While this *canzone* has often been read by scholars in terms of palinody – as the poet's articulation of a new and 'correct' way of loving and writing – as well as an implicit consummation of the previous love lyric tradition, Gragnolati and Southerden focus on the tensions characterising the lyric. Subjectivity and desire are articulated in terms of a Möbius strip, and the text's dynamics are likened to a loop in which forward movement reveals itself to be a movement backwards that returns to the beginning endlessly (Manuele Gragnolati, Francesca Southerden, 'Petrarca e la forma del desiderio: tra metamorfosi e soggettività ibrida in *Rvf* 70 e 23', *Per Leggere*, 18. 35 (2018), 27-41.

<sup>57</sup> On this aspect see Jonathan Culler, 'The Lyric Present', in *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 2015), pp. 283-295.

Favati, Gorni argued that the sequence of nine sonnets collected in the *Vat. Lat. 3214* manuscript, transcribed in 164r-167r, had been authored by Cavalcanti himself.<sup>58</sup> The series of sonnets present strong connections from a stylistic point of view, such as the same rhymes or word-rhymes connecting the first and the last sonnets of the sylloge, ‘L’anima mia vilment’è sbigotita’ and ‘Noi siàn le triste penne isbogotite’ (‘sbigotita’/‘isbigotite’; ‘partita’/‘partite’; ‘sente’/‘sente’; ‘more’/‘morte’) as well as an evident thematic continuity.<sup>59</sup> As Gorni suggests, the “novena” is characterised by a strong anti-Dantean accent, which is epitomized by Cavalcanti parodic reuse of the number nine, Beatrice’s number. At the end of a persuasive analysis, Gorni argues ‘se tale serie presenta i segni di un’accorta organizzazione degli individui, collegati uno all’altro con una minuzia tale di nessi che depone a favore di una confezione *ad hoc* di tutta la compagine, [...] la “novena” di Va è ia serie di sonetti messa insieme dall’autore, un piccolo canzoniere tra le rime di Guido’.<sup>60</sup>

However, this enticing hypothesis has been disproved by other philologists, who demonstrate that Cavalcanti’s texts collected in the *Vat. Lat. 3214* manuscript depend on a miscellany manuscript tradition. Giuliano Tanturli points out that six out of the nine lyrics of the “novena” appear in a different order in the *Escorialense e.III.23*, one of the fundamental manuscripts for the transmission of the *Rime*, as discussed in the Introduction (pp. XVI-XVII).<sup>61</sup> Tanturli also observes that four out of the six sonnets transmitted by the *Escorialense e.III.23*, appear in the *Capitolare 445*,<sup>62</sup> with another order.<sup>63</sup> Tanturli therefore suggests that the “novena” discussed by Gorni is ‘costruita dal Vaticano o (meglio) da un suo antografo proprio rispondendo all’invito’<sup>64</sup> of Cavalcanti’s sonnet ‘Noi siàn le triste penne’. By means of these examples, the philologist argues that the sylloge was constructed by the scribe rather than by Cavalcanti himself.<sup>65</sup> Roberta Cappelli further strenghtens Tanturli’s counterhypothesis, by emphasising how, the same connections identified by Gorni, could be applied

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<sup>58</sup> Gorni, ‘Una silloge d’autore nelle rime del Cavalcanti’, in *Alle origini dell’Io Lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 23-39; repr. as ‘Una silloge d’autore nelle rime di Cavalcanti’, in Id., *Guido Cavalcanti. Dante e il suo «primo amico»* (Rome: Aracne, 2009), pp. 31-45. For an earlier critique of Favati’s ordering, see also Id., ‘Manetto tra Guido e Dante’, in *Seminario dantesco Internazionale. International Dante Seminar*, ed. by Zygmunt G. Baranski (Florence: Le Lettere, 1997), pp. 25-39; repr. as ‘Guido, i’vorrei che tu, Manetto ed io’, in Guglielmo Gorni, *Dante prima della Commedia* (Fiesole: Cadmo, 2001), pp. 43-58.

<sup>59</sup> Gorni, ‘Una silloge d’autore nelle rime del Cavalcanti’, in *Alle origini dell’Io Lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 28-33.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>61</sup> Giuliano Tanturli, ‘Cavalcanti o dell’interiorità. Tavola rotonda’, in *Alle origini dell’Io Lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 236-329 (p. 329).

<sup>62</sup> Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, *MS Cap<sup>l</sup> 445*.

<sup>63</sup> Tanturli, ‘Cavalcanti o dell’interiorità. Tavola rotonda’, in *Alle origini dell’Io Lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 328.

<sup>64</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>65</sup> However, the sequence of *Vat. Lat. 3214* provides us with an important testimony of how these sonnets were read and interpreted at the time of the compilation of the aforementioned manuscript. On the presence and role of scribes, compilers, illuminators and poets as participants in and readers of the literary tradition see Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book. The poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1987). On anthologies in the medieval Italian tradition see Marco Berisso, ‘Sillogi e serie. Leggere la tradizione della poesia lirica tra Due e Trecento’, in *La tradizione dei testi. Atti del convegno. Cortona, 21-23 settembre 2017*, ed. by Claudio Ciociola and Claudio Vela (Florence: Società dei Filologi della Letteratura Italiana, 2018), pp. 1-23.

to the different sylloge of the same sonnets transmitted in the Escorialense manuscript.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, Giuseppe Marrani conducted a further analysis of the philological tradition of the sonnets composing Gorni's "novena", demonstrating that each text relies on a separated branch of transmission, thus definitely proving the inconsistency of Gorni's argument.<sup>67</sup> As Marco Berisso recently suggested, while 'e fuori di dubbio che i nessi rilevati nella "novena" del *Vat. Lat. 3214* sono reali (come lo sono però anche quelli nell'Escorialense), [...] tutto questo non basta, evidentemente, per dimostrare che quel gruppo di sonetti proviene direttamente dallo scrittoio cavalcantiano'.<sup>68</sup>

It is with the volume that opens with Antonelli's essay quoted in the Introduction that the issue of lyric subjectivity in Cavalcanti's *Rime*, understood as the representation of the lyric subject's inner dimension, is addressed as the primary object of discussion. In Antonelli's work, the discussion of subjectivity comes forth through considerations regarding the verbalisation of subjective emotion and affect. Antonelli's interest in subjectivity as well as the scholar's approach have to be framed within an increased concern with this notion, as well as an upsurge in attention given to the broader theme of emotion and affect in medieval culture, characterising the last decades.<sup>69</sup> The issue of emotions and the word "emotion" itself have come to be a central preoccupation of medievalists, who have approached the issue from several points of view. They have addressed it in more general terms, by questioning the relationship of medieval sensibilities and culture.<sup>70</sup> They have emphasised specific aspects as related to this broader field of study, such as the relationship of bodily affections like tears, sighs and laughter with art<sup>71</sup> or the connections between emotion and gestures.<sup>72</sup> Questions related to the definition of "emotion" are still at the core of very lively discussions of different but often interrelated fields, such as Philology, Lexicology, Cognitive sciences, Cultural History and Linguistics. The last decades of European research, with the joint effect of cultural constructivism

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<sup>66</sup> Roberta Cappelli, *Sull'Escorialense (lat. e.III.23). Problemi e proposte di edizione* (Verona: Fiorini, 2006), pp. 40-42.

<sup>67</sup> Giuseppe Marrani, 'Macrosequenze d'autore (o presunte tali) alla verifica della tradizione. Dante, Cavalcanti, Cino da Pistoia', in *La tradizione della lirica nel Medioevo romanzo. Problemi di filologia formale. Atti del convegno internazionale (Firenze-Siena, 12-14 novembre 2009)*, ed. by Lino Leonardi (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2011), pp. 255-261.

<sup>68</sup> Berisso, 'Sillogi e serie. Leggere la tradizione della poesia lirica tra Due e Trecento', in *La tradizione dei testi*, ed. by Ciociola and Vela, p. 14.

<sup>69</sup> Roberto Antonelli, 'Identità e riconoscimento dell'Altro nella nascita della lirica romanza', *Le forme e la storia*, VIII (2015), 55-70.; Id., 'La questione dell'Io dal romanzo antico-francese alla lirica italiana', in *L'espressione dell'identità nella lirica romanza medievale*, ed. by Federico Saviotti e Giuseppe Mascherpa (Pavia: Pavia University Press, 2016), pp. 69-79.

<sup>70</sup> Damien Boquet and Nagy Piroška, *Medieval sensibilities. A History of Emotions in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018).

<sup>71</sup> Per Föörnegård, Erika Kilman, et al., eds, *Tears, sighs and laughter: expressions of emotions in the Middle Ages* (Stockholm: Kungl. Vitterhets historie och antikvitets akademien, 2017).

<sup>72</sup> Piroška Nagy, *Le don des larmes au Moyen Âge: un instrument spirituel en quête d'institution, Ve-XIIIe siècle* (Paris: A. Michel, 2000).

and the simultaneous “cognitive revolution” contributed to the emergence of what we now call the history of emotions. This has been shown by its established critical visibility and the richness and variety of the bibliography on this topic.<sup>73</sup>

This turn is fundamental in order to contextualise Antonelli’s understanding of subjectivity and his interpretation of Cavalcanti’s poetry. In Italian scholarship, and mainly under the guidance of Antonelli himself, the school of criticism just depicted has developed into a specific branch of studies in which subjectivity, as related to verbalisations of emotion and affectivity, is discussed by combining philological, lexicographic and semasiological approaches. Not only have studies of the expression of subjectivity in specific poets and poetic genres been produced; but the work of Antonelli and his *équipe* has also resulted in the construction of a database collecting and cataloguing the lyric lexis related to subjective emotions pertaining to the Italian love lyric from its origins to the sixteenth century.<sup>74</sup>

The most advanced contribution to scholarly understanding of Cavalcanti’s subjectivity to date is Roberto Rea’s *Cavalcanti poeta. Uno studio sul lessico lirico*.<sup>75</sup> In this volume, Rea’s analysis focusses on those lexemes of the Cavalcantian corpus ‘configuranti quella peculiare dimensione psicologica dell’Io lirico che è stata riconosciuta come sua sostanziale “invenzione”’.<sup>76</sup> Rea’s examination of the *Rime*’s lexis that revolves around the sphere of interiority aims to discuss and understand central words of the Cavalcantian vocabulary by comparing their semantic distinctness to their use in the love lyric tradition. Subjectivity is examined by Rea as expressed through an innovative use of lexis which articulates with unprecedented depth the inner dimension of the *Io*.

Rea’s work marks a fundamental step towards the definition of the Cavalcantian model of subjectivity, but does not exhaustively answer the questions I addressed in the introduction of this thesis: how is subjectivity articulated in the *Rime*? What are the fundamental structures of language contributing to the characterisation of the subject of enunciation, and how are these exploited in the *Rime* to encode subjectivity?

### **I.5 A.C. SPEARING’S ‘SUBJECTLESS SUBJECTIVITY’**

In order to contribute to these ongoing discussions, I will build upon these insightful dialogues by combining the more traditional lexicographic and semantic approach pioneered by Antonelli and

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<sup>73</sup> Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004); Susan Broomhall, *Authority, Gender and Emotions in Late Medieval and Early Modern England* (Basingstoke; Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Barbara Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling. A History of Emotions, 600-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

<sup>74</sup> Alessio Decaria and Lino Leonardi, eds., «*Ragionar d'amore*». *Il lessico delle emozioni nella lirica medievale* (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2015).

<sup>75</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Rea with discourses pertaining to the fields of Linguistics, Narratology, and Literary Theory. In adopting an interdisciplinary approach, I seek to trace alternative paths in the current exegesis of subjectivity in the *Rime*. This methodology is partly stimulated by the recent emergence of new approaches to the issue of subjectivity in medieval texts that, in different ways, radically overturn many of the previous works discussed, by challenging the entire idea that literary texts are necessarily to be looked at as bearing the mark of an individual consciousness.

A seminal contribution to the definition of my approach comes from the work of A.C. Spearing. In his latest book, entitled *Textual Subjectivity, The Encoding of Subjectivity in Medieval Narratives and Lyrics*, by reading some medieval English poems, Spearing aims at analysing ‘not how the poems express or represent individual subjectivities, whether of their writers or of fictional characters, but how subjectivity is encoded in them as a textual phenomenon’.<sup>77</sup> Spearing’s approach stems from the aim of challenging canonical readings of medieval texts which embraced more or less acritically the assumption according to which any text has to be regarded as the product of an utterer, of a speaking subject, what Benveniste defined as the ‘sujet de l’énonciation’. Spearing aims to challenge an interpretative stream which, as he argues, is the product of a phonocentric conception of language that, at least since Plato, understands writing as the representation of speech.<sup>78</sup> Although this assumption has not remained unquestioned, it has deeply influenced Western understanding of the relationship between the written sign and the spoken word.

In the wake of this conception, most traditional theories of narrative consider the identification of a narrator as the first and essential step for entering the text’s inner working. Spearing brings as emblematic examples a quote from a standard milieu in Narratology, Robert Scholes’ and Robert Kellogg’s *The Nature of Narrative*, where we read that ‘By definition, narrative art requires a story and a story-teller [my emphasis]’, a statement which in turn echoes Roland Barthes’ influential assertion: ‘there can be no narrative without a narrator’.<sup>79</sup> However, other scholars have opposed this conception – as in the case of Käte Hamburger’s work. In *The Logic of Literature*, the scholar argues for the possibility of a so-called “narratorless narrative” by comparing textual narration to painting (rather than to storytelling).<sup>80</sup> The analogy with pictorial art serves to Hamburger to exemplify that:

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<sup>77</sup> A. C. Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity*, p. 1.

<sup>78</sup> For an extensive discussion of the (often subtle) pervasiveness of this conception, see *Ibid.*, pp. 5-17.

<sup>79</sup> Robert Scholes and Robert L. Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966); Roland Barthes, ‘Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives’, in *Id.*, *Image-Music-Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 79-124. Both works are quoted in Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>80</sup> Käte Hamburger, *The Logic of Literature*, trans. by Marilynn J. Rose (London: Bloomington, 1973).

the narrative poet is not a statement-subject [for] he does not narrate about persons and things but rather he narrates these persons and things; the persons in a novel are narrated persons, just as figures of a painting are painted figures.<sup>81</sup>

One of the strongest attempts to oppose the mainstream of Narrative theory has perhaps been articulated by Ann Banfield, in her 1982 *Unspeakable Sentences*.<sup>82</sup> By relating narratology to the theory of language, Banfield denies ‘the need to think in post-Cartesian epistemological terms about the product of narration’, challenging traditional ways of understanding the issue of the encoding of subjectivity in medieval texts. The whole book seeks to demonstrate that the presence of a deictic field of enunciation in a text does not necessarily imply the presence of a single point of view (or observer), standing, in turn, for an individual subject.

However, these studies are often focussed on modern literature, and rarely anchor their arguments to medieval texts, failing to draw a more inclusive theory that would allow medievalists to free their analysis from stigmatised and biased modes of reading. Spearing’s attempt seeks to remedy this lack by looking at textual subjectivity in medieval texts ‘as a textual phenomenon in specific medieval English writing’.<sup>83</sup> As Spearing specifies:

My aim will be to read medieval writings with an eye to the subjectivization diffused throughout the text in linguistic phenomena such as deixis, without the preconceived expectation that these markers will form a unified pattern designating the text as (in Zink’s phrase) ‘the product of a particular consciousness’, or that the presence of any such pattern will be an index of the writer’s success. The medieval writings that we regard as literature are indeed permeated with subjectivity, but it is often what may be called, on the analogy of narratorless narrative, ‘subjectless subjectivity’.<sup>84</sup>

According to Spearing, medieval texts are often moved by multiple or diffused subjectivities, and to reduce them to a single point of view would consequently lessen our understanding of their complex and rich narrative functioning. As Spearing later goes as far as suggesting, ‘The ‘I’ of most medieval narratives does not represent a speaking individual, real or fictional, but is merely one element in the rhetoric of storytelling [...] to which we cannot apply Benveniste’s definition<sup>85</sup> of the speaking subject (‘sujet de l’*énonciation*’).

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135, quoted in Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity*, p. 136.

<sup>82</sup> Ann Banfield, *Unspeakable Sentences. Narration and representation in the language of fiction* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982).

<sup>83</sup> Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity*, p. 33.

<sup>84</sup> *Ivi.*

<sup>85</sup> Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity*, p. 119.



## **I.6 MY METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

Spearing's stance expressed by its notion of 'subjectless subjectivity' could appear rather extreme in its aim of challenging unproblematic readings of subjectivity in medieval texts. In presenting and considering this point of view, one must take into account that Spearing mostly adopts it to read narrative texts, which are often characterised by the presence of multiple, interlaced voices. As such, to look at these texts as bearing the mark of multiple textual subjectivities rather than as representing a single speaking individual (be it fictional or real) is undoubtedly less radical than applying the same parameter to the lyric, in which, as I discussed in the opening of this Chapter, the relationship between empiric and fictional subjects is often opaque and a separation between the two entities is not always discernible.

In my analysis of Cavalcanti's *Rime* I will make use of Spearing's approach, meaning that I will investigate and discuss lyric subjectivity in Cavalcanti's *Rime* by privileging its encoding in textual phenomena. However, I shall specify that the adoption of this approach will be in the service of a systematic and meticulous indexing and examination of the structures of language characterising the expression of subjectivity in the Cavalcantian corpus, rather than to claim that its texts lack a form of individual subjectivity linked to Benveniste's notion of the 'sujet de l'énonciation'. Spearing's methodology will rather be useful for producing an accurate description of the features marking the Cavalcantian subject(s), for I will not preemptively assume that the *Rime* necessarily invite construction as a unitary, monolithic self in their fictional realm. Rather, I will primarily seek to observe and describe the leading textual phenomena characterising the articulation of subjectivity in the Cavalcantian corpus.

My analyses will be conducted by making use of the most recent databases (such as *LirIo* and *TLIO*) in order to rigorously compare data from Cavalcanti with a selected group of his predecessors and contemporaries. The poets included in my comparison have been chosen on the basis of their relevance to and resonance in the poetry of Cavalcanti, as well as for their importance within the Italian love lyric scenario. The extension of a poet's corpora has also played an important role in this choice. Potentially relevant poets with only one or two surviving texts have been excluded. Their inclusion would not only have been problematic, but also it risked the conducting of comparisons and comments on frequencies and occurrences, as well as determining "trends" in cases where such a small body of work was available.

Giacomo da Lentini (c. 1210-1260) has been included in the comparison. This is based on the importance of the so-called "caposcuola" of the Sicilian School as a voice whose resonance in terms of lexis, imagery, and figures of speech has a productive impact in the poets of the following generations. The relevance of Guido Guinizzelli (c. 1230-1276) to my survey emerges when

considering the prolificacy of his presence in the poetry of Cavalcanti and of Cavalcanti's contemporaries, as widely acknowledged in scholarship.<sup>86</sup> Recent editions of Cavalcanti's *Rime*, such as De Robertis' and Rea's respective editions, brought to light the presence and the importance of other voices of the lyric canon. These are Guittone d'Arezzo's (c. 1235-1294) and Monte Andrea's (c. 1251-1300), two poets whose importance to the *Duecento* love lyric tradition can often be appreciated anamorphically, by considering the reactions they provoked and how, these reactions, contributed to model the poetries of their contemporaries. The inclusion of Dante does not need extended justifications. I shall, however, specify my comparison with his 'primo amico' seeks to discuss specific textual phenomena, rather than aiming primarily at shading light on their controversial friendship.<sup>87</sup> Cino da Pistoia (c. 1270- 1336) represents the *terminus ad quem* of my comparison. As an authoritative voice involved in the poetic debate of the time, as well as one of Cavalcanti's correspondents,<sup>88</sup> his corpus has been included in my surveys.

The computational results of the surveys will be the object of textual, semantic and semasiological examinations. I will use semantic fields, semiotics, and cultural analyses to describe and discuss these poets' different articulations of subjectivity and to compare them to Cavalcanti's.

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<sup>86</sup> See the fundamental: Paolo Borsa, *La nuova poesia di Guido Guinizzelli* (Fiesole: Cadmo, 2007). Dante famously anoints Guinizzelli as 'il padre mio | e de li altri miei' in the *Commedia* (*Purg.*, xxvi, 97-98). While Dante's mention famously discloses his broader intention to canonise his poetry and the one of his predecessors and contemporaries and to place them in a carefully crafted framework, the enduring presence of Guinizzelli has been in fact, extensively recognised in the poetry of other *Duecento* poets who came after him. For an insightful discussion of the intertextual relationship between Guinizzelli and Cavalcanti, see: Lino Leonardi, 'Guinizzelli e Cavalcanti', in *Da Guido Guinizzelli a Dante. Nuove prospettive sulla lirica del Duecento. Atti del convegno di Studi Padova-Monselice, 10-12 maggio 2002*, ed. by Furio Brugnolo and Gianfelice Peron (Padua: Il poligrafo, 2004), pp. 207-226.

<sup>87</sup> As mentioned in the Introduction, the bibliography on this topic is extensive, and debates are still ongoing. See my Introduction, p. xi footnote 11 for a basic bibliography on this matter.

<sup>88</sup> For the vibrantly debated *tenzone* between Cavalcanti and Cino see the following relevant recent discussion: Corrado Calenda, 'Un'accusa di plagio? Ancora sul rapporto Cavalcanti-Cino', in *Da Guido Guinizzelli a Dante*, ed. by Brugnolo and Peron, pp. 291-303; and Michelangelo Picone, 'Dante e Cino: una lunga amicizia. Prima parte: i tempi della *Vita nova*', *Dante. Rivista internazionale di studi su Dante Alighieri*, 1 (2004), 39-53.

II  
DEIXIS: PERSON

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter acts as an initial, direct response to observations made by Roberto Antonelli, who defines Cavalcanti as ‘il poeta dell’interiorità, [il] primo indagatore esclusivo e assoluto dell’io’, the initiator of the modern lyric ‘in senso stretto, in quanto indagine poetica, autocosciente, dell’*homo interior*’.<sup>1</sup> In acknowledging Cavalcanti’s novelty, Antonelli ponders: ‘in cosa si stacca [Cavalcanti]? E perché la sua qualità non è applicabile ad altri predecessori? E come espone e verbalizza tale sua qualità/finalità?’.<sup>2</sup>

Multiple aspects of Cavalcanti’s poetry contribute to his novelty, Antonelli explains, such as his detailed representation of the self experiencing the effects of love by means of his innovative use of language, imbued with philosophical and medical sources.<sup>3</sup> The emphasis upon the *Io*, Antonelli continues, comes forth through an unprecedented semantic density of certain keywords and, among many other aspects, is particularly evident in the level of attention paid to some grammatical forms connected to the self, especially pronouns, whose presence in Cavalcanti’s poetry is described by Antonelli as ‘densissima e significativa’.<sup>4</sup>

Antonelli’s reference to pronouns raises a broader and more pivotal issue that must be taken into account in discussing subjectivity in a poetic corpus, namely that of deictics – those grammatical signs that mark the position of the *Io* in a text. While Antonelli undoubtedly touches upon this crucial point, his calculations of pronouns in the *Rime* are relegated to a footnote, necessitating a deeper consideration of his results in relation to the whole Cavalcantian corpus and *vis-à-vis* the medieval love lyric tradition, supported by evidence from the most recent databases.

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<sup>1</sup> Antonelli, ‘Cavalcanti o dell’interiorità’, in *Alle origini dell’Io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 3. As has already emerged in the Introduction of my thesis, Antonelli’s statement largely summarises and expands mainstream twentieth-century scholarship on Cavalcanti’s poetry.

<sup>2</sup> Antonelli, ‘Cavalcanti o dell’interiorità’, in *Alle origini dell’Io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Antonelli discusses some examples of Cavalcanti’s re-semanticisation of the language of love lyric in *Ibid.*, pp. 8-16. As is now widely accepted in Cavalcanti scholarship, biblical sources have a central importance for the language and the imagery of the *Rime*, too. See my Introduction, note 39, for a synthetic bibliography of Cavalcanti’s reuse of these sources. For a comprehensive discussion of the lyric, philosophical and religious sources of the *Rime*’s lexis see Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, pp. 31-182. A brief overview of this topic and the other innovative linguistic, rhetorical and thematic aspects of the *Rime* is in Rea, ‘Introduzione’ in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, pp. 16-30. The importance of the medical and philosophical sources has been discussed in Natascia Tonelli, *Fisiologia della passione*, pp. 3-70.

<sup>4</sup> Antonelli, ‘Cavalcanti o dell’interiorità’, in *Alle origini dell’Io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 15.

The following enquiry expressly aims to do this, by discussing some of the most relevant results of a comprehensive indexing and analysis of deictics and the most significant linguistic forms by means of which subjectivity is encoded into the language of the *Rime*. After an initial theoretical overview in which I will discuss the importance of deixis for the analysis of subjectivity, the different categories of deixis, and the risks and problems that might arise from such an analytical approach, I will look closely at the Cavalcantian corpus. The overall objective of the next two Chapters (II and III), is to better understand the ways the *Io* is articulated in the *Rime* and to compare this data to a selected group of Cavalcanti's predecessors and contemporaries, to verify and discuss the reach of the *Rime*'s alleged newness.<sup>5</sup>

Except for specific cases which will be signalled and discussed when necessary, all surveys exclusively take into account the love lyrics of each poet's corpus. I will not factor in moral, religious, and political texts. Within the wide category of poetry broadly related to the theme of love, I will also exclude theoretical or doctrinal poems on the phenomenology of love and the *tenzoni*. As I will discuss in a moment, the articulation of subjectivity in these texts is dependent on a number of formal and conventional modules. It is for this reason that a direct comparison of subjectivity as articulated in these examples and in the love lyric poems would result problematic if not sufficiently contextualised. Notably, this would fall outside of the scope of the present analysis.

For a number of reasons that I shall clarify, Cavalcanti's doctrinal *canzone* 'Donna me prega', cannot either be seamlessly included in my survey of lyric subjectivity. As discussed in the Introduction, the text is of a crucial importance within Cavalcanti's production and constitutes a fundamental point of reference when delving into the complex of sources and *auctoritates* grounding the Cavalcantian phenomenology of love.

However, Cavalcanti's *canzone* adheres to a specific *genre*: that of the poetic treatise. The very incipit of the text clarifies this affinity, by accepting 'l'invito, e l'assunzione che ne deriva di una data materia' as De Robertis emphasises, also suggesting an immediate parallelism with Capellanus' *De amore*.<sup>6</sup> The *canzone* therefore 'trascende [...] la convenzionale questione d'amore in rima',<sup>7</sup> as De Robertis identifies. Natascia Tonelli, who more recently considered the importance of medical culture to 'Donna me prega', further comments on this aspect, asserting:

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<sup>5</sup> I will compare Cavalcanti's poetry to Giacomo da Lentini (*I Poeti della Scuola siciliana*, ed. by Antonelli, di Girolamo, and Coluccia, I: *Giacomo da Lentini*); Guido Guinizzelli (Guinizzelli, *Rime*, ed. by Rossi); Guittone d'Arezzo (Guittone d'Arezzo, *Le Rime*, ed. by Francesco Egidi (Bari: Laterza, 1940); Id., *Canzoniere. I sonetti d'amore del codice Laurenziano*, ed. by Lino Leonardi (Turin: Einaudi, 1994)); Monte Andrea (Monte Andrea da Fiorenza, *Le Rime*, ed. by Francesco Filippo Minetti (Florence: Accademia della Crusca, 1979)); Dante Alighieri (Dante Alighieri, *Vita nuova* ed. by Pirovano and Grimaldi; Id., *Rime*, ed. by Domenico De Robertis (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2005)); Cino da Pistoia (Cino da Pistoia, *Le Rime di Cino da Pistoia*, ed. by Guido Zaccagnini (Genève: Olschki, 1925)).

<sup>6</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 95.

<sup>7</sup> *Ivi*.

il *topos* della richiesta di spiegazione, di approfondimento su una data materia attrae ‘Donna me prega’ [...] nell’ambito della tradizione trattatistica, da subito distinguendola dalla convenzionale questione d’amore in rima, e in un certo senso ‘imponendo’ dal suo stesso interno, la tipologia di attenzione che primariamente le venne rivolta, quella del commento: come ad un trattato.<sup>8</sup>

The *canzone* cannot be uncritically included in a discussion on the encoding of subjectivity in Cavalcanti’s love lyrics. Although ‘Donna me prega’ is a text concerning love, the thematic affinity with the love poems of Cavalcanti does not suffice in overcoming an obstacle that is primarily rooted in a heterogeneity of *genre*. This aspect not only affect the text’s vocabulary, but also other different linguistic levels, such as its syntax, and even pragmatics.

For these reasons, ‘Donna me prega’ will not be substantially analysed in the thesis. I will, however, discuss the occurrences of person deixis in Cavalcanti’s philosophical *canzone*, and compare them to the major trends in the rest of the love lyric corpus.<sup>9</sup> As I seek to demonstrate, in light of the contextualisation of the *canzone* provided in the Introduction, such a comparison will provide interesting elements to reflect upon. This will then substantiate my overall analysis of person deixis in the love lyrics of the Cavalcantian corpus.

The exclusion of the *tenzoni* is based on a number of formal features and on the peculiar social function characterising these correspondence texts, which inevitably affect their contents and, consequently, the articulation of subjectivity. The tradition of the poetic exchange also known as *tenzoni*, as Claudio Giunta points out, is ‘un *genere poetico* che [...] si definisce [...] sulla base di una *funzione* [my emphasis].’<sup>10</sup> By discussing the manuscript tradition of these poetic exchanges, and analysing their formal characteristics, Giunta emphasises their belonging to a specific poetic and rhetoric mode. Differently from the love lyric poems, in which the subject addresses an interlocutor (be it imaginary or real) who does not reply, in the *tenzoni*, ‘il dialogo è reale’;<sup>11</sup> this is to the extent that we could agree on the fact that ‘la tenzone è prima di tutto un rapporto, una situazione retorica’,<sup>12</sup> as Giunta concludes.

I shall stress that while there is not a specific metric form that can be associated with the poetic mode of the *tenzone*,<sup>13</sup> nor a specific theme, these poetic exchanges abide by two fundamental parameters: (1) they present the same metric form, and; (2) they use the same rhymes<sup>14</sup> of the text(s)

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<sup>8</sup> Tonelli, *Fisiologia della passione*, p. 37-38.

<sup>9</sup> See my Chapter II, pp. 33-43.

<sup>10</sup> Claudio Giunta, *Due saggi sulla tenzone* (Rome-Padova: Antenore, 2002), p. VII.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>12</sup> *Ivi.*

<sup>13</sup> It is relevant to mention that the sonnet appears to be the metric form most used for these poetic exchanges.

<sup>14</sup> This feature is not present in the *tenzoni* of the Sicilian School’s poets. However, in the *Trecento* and *Quattrocento tenzoni*, it became a fixed rule (see Giunta, *Due saggi*, pp. 182-193).

to which they are replying. With the exception of few cases, these two macro-rules characterise the *tenzone* as a poetic mode, contributing to its ‘identità di genere’.<sup>15</sup> The manuscript tradition itself testifies in various way to the *tenzoni*’s belonging to a separate poetic mode. An example is the *Vat. Lat 3793*, where these correspondence texts are grouped in nineteenth folios and clearly demarcated from other poetic forms. While this manuscript represents one emblematic case, other insightful examples testify to the fact that since the time of their early transmission, the *tenzoni* were treated as belonging to a specific *genre*.<sup>16</sup>

These features inevitably influence the language and the style of the texts involved in a dialogic exchange. Considering the intrinsic and genuine communicative function of the *tenzoni*, as well as their characteristics just presented, there are at least two important observations that must be taken into account.

The first one concerns the dynamic between the fictional and historical subject in the *tenzoni*. In such a direct mode of writing, whose rhetoric function is primarily pragmatic and social, the ‘Io’ of the text cannot be a-critically compared to the ‘Io’ of a love lyric, in which the level of fictionality is, at least ideally, ostensibly higher. When we read ‘a me stesso’ in Cavalcanti’s vexed reply to Guido Orlandi, the well-known sonnet ‘Di vil matera mi conven parlare’ (L<sup>b</sup>, 3), we shall acknowledge that the personal pronoun refers to the historical Guido Cavalcanti. This even concedes that the poetic persona in the text is constructed following the author’s desire to comply to a specific self-representation of himself. The same occurrence of ‘a me stesso’ in Cavalcanti’s sonnet XVI (1) alludes to a lyric ‘I’ whose construction in the boundaries of the text, as we shall hypothesise and suggest, do not necessarily respond to the exact same criteria adopted by Cavalcanti in his response to Orlandi.<sup>17</sup>

The second remark is pertinent to the stylistic and formal elements characterising the *tenzoni*. Even in the presence of a *tenzone* on the theme of love, a comparative discussion with a love lyric belonging to the same corpus would prove problematic. These constraining features inevitably affect the content of the poem, as well as the articulation of the subject in the text.

The distinction that I have just established does not intend to neglect a fundamental aspect of medieval poetry, that is its intrinsic dialogism. As Giunta emphasises, ‘la tenzone non rappresenta se non il caso più evidente di una vocazione al dialogo che impronta di sé una parte molto più cospicua della poesia [medievale]’.<sup>18</sup> In fact, if understood broadly, this dialogism manifests itself in a number

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 123. Evidences from the material transmission prove that there is a small number of exceptions to these rules (see Giunta, p. 101).

<sup>16</sup> For other examples see Giunta, *Due saggi*, pp. 48-59.

<sup>17</sup> Such a comparison would no doubt yield interesting results but lies beyond the scope of this thesis.

<sup>18</sup> Giunta, *Due saggi*, p. VII. The dialogic nature of medieval poet is further explored by Giunta in his *Versi a un destinatario. Saggi sulla poesia italiana del Medioevo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002). For an insightful discussion on dialogic

of different ways. It could be understood in terms of what Michelangelo Picone define as a ‘tenzone virtuale’,<sup>19</sup> when describing the complex dialoguing of voices which is enacted in a text by means of intertextuality. It could also be interpreted as the dialogic co-existence of multiple forms of poetic subjectivity within the corpus of one poet.<sup>20</sup> These could not only be detected within those poetic *corpora* with identified internal chronology or by comparing the encoding of subjectivity in different works by the same author, but also by considering different articulations of subjectivity in the same *corpus*. Together, they give rise to a multiplicity of subjective voices not necessarily complying with one specific, “coherent” ‘Io’.

It is this last form of “dialogism” that my discussion will rather address, if and when such a multiplicity of voices will emerge. As detailed in Chapter I, the methodological approach adopted in this analysis does not assume that there is a monolithic form of subjectivity in the *Rime*. In seeking to identify and discuss the fundamental textual and rhetorical phenomena characterising the Cavalcantian articulation of subjectivity, my discussion aims to record and also observe the diverse ways of encoding subjectivity in the love lyrics of the *Rime*, including those poems less stereotypically Cavalcantian, such as the texts commonly defined as “archaic” as well as the lyrics of the corpus, in which love is not represented as a deathly power but rather depicted euphorically.<sup>21</sup> Some of the most relevant among these aspects are discussed later in this Chapter.

## II.1 DEIXIS: AN OVERVIEW

One of the main ways in which subjectivity is established in language is through grammatical forms or expressions classified under the category of ‘deixis’, a term from Ancient Greek that means “pointing” or “indicating”.<sup>22</sup> Deictics are elements of language that can only be decoded with

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process in Medieval poetry, see David Bowe, *Poetry in Dialogue in the Duecento and Dante* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). I am grateful to the author for having shared his manuscript with me.

<sup>19</sup> Michelangelo Picone, ‘I due Guidi: una tenzone virtuale’ in Id., *Percorsi della lirica duecentesca* (Florence: Cadmo, 2003), pp. 185-204.

<sup>20</sup> I have provided examples of these “multiple” and dialoguing forms of subjectivity, as well as of a number of studies discussing this aspect in Chapter I (pp. 14-17).

<sup>21</sup> I am referring, in particular, to a group of poems that, following on from Favati’s reordering of the corpus, are grouped in a compact sequence (XXII-XXVI). As I will further discuss in this Chapter, in these texts the representation of the love is euphoric. For this reason, in the light of traditional readings and interpretations of Cavalcanti’s poetry as staging a phenomenology of love directly connected to death, these texts have been labelled as “exceptional” by commentators such as Contini, De Robertis, and Rea.

<sup>22</sup> Although many of his positions are now outdated, Émile Benveniste’s work marked an essential point of departure for further considerations of this matter. With his work, Benveniste sets the foundations for the analysis of what he defines as the ‘indicateurs de la subjectivité’ [‘subjectivity markers’], paving the way for further studies of subjectivity set at the crossroads between Linguistics and Philosophy. In his essay ‘De la subjectivité dans le langage’, by arguing that human language is deeply marked by the expression of subjectivity, Benveniste discusses the existence and the main features of those signs by means of which the subject leaves its ‘inscription’ in the utterance. See in particular: Émile Benveniste, ‘La nature des pronoms’; ‘De la subjectivité dans le langage’, in Id., *Problèmes de linguistique générale* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), pp. 251-257; pp. 258-266. For a discussion on Benveniste’s notion on subjectivity and its further development in French and German philosophy, see John Lyons, ‘Deixis and subjectivity: *Loquor, ergo sum?*’, in *Speech, Place and*

reference to the extralinguistic domain, namely the context of the utterance in which they occur.<sup>23</sup> A distinguishing characteristic of these grammatical elements is the property of indexicality, i.e. the fact that they do not stand for a specific object or entity.<sup>24</sup> Symbolic reference, relativised to time, space, and person, is provided by the context and shifts concurrently with the circumstances of the speech event<sup>25</sup> – hence their ‘semantic deficiency’.<sup>26</sup> As a result, they have traditionally been defined using terms such as ‘indexicals’, ‘formes vides’ [empty signs] or ‘embrayeurs’ [shifters].<sup>27</sup>

These linguistic forms convey information regarding elements of the situational and/or discourse context, such as the speech participants, spatial location, and time reference.<sup>28</sup> Karl Bühler first addressed the issue of how deictics contribute to the identification of referents in relation to the

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*Action. Studies in Deixis and Related Topics*, ed. by Robert J. Jarvella and Wolfgang Klein (Chichester; New York; Brisbane; Toronto; Singapore: John Wiley & Sons LTD, 1982), pp. 101-124.

<sup>23</sup> This brief introduction is specifically intended as a basis for the following textual analysis of the *Rime* and by no means aims at being exhaustive, not least because the study of deixis is not exclusive to the field of Linguistics and its subdisciplines, but rather is interconnected with many other branches of study, such as Philosophy, Psychology and Anthropology. My general understanding of deixis (and its various subcategories) and the account given here is mainly based on: Stephen C. Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Laurence R. Horn and Gregory Ward, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 97-12; John Lyons, ‘Deixis, Space and Time’, in Id., *Semantics*, 2 vols (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University press, 1977), II, pp. 636-724; For the discussion on deictics in Italian my main sources is: Federica Da Milano, ‘Italian’, in *Manual of Deixis in Romance Languages*, ed. Konstanze Jungbluth and Federica Da Milano (Berlin; Boston (MA): De Gruyter, 2015), pp. 59-74. Traditional works on Italian deixis are: Anna-Maria De Cesare, ‘deittici’, in *Enciclopedia dell’Italiano* (2010) <[http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/deittici\\_%28Enciclopedia-dell%27Italiano%29/>](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/deittici_%28Enciclopedia-dell%27Italiano%29/>) [accessed 7 october 2019]; Laura Vanelli and Lorenzo Renzi, *La deissi*, in *Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione*, ed. by Lorenzo Renzi, Gianpaolo Salvi, and Anna Cardinaletti, 3 vols (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1988-1995), III, pp. 261-375; Laura Vanelli, *La deissi in italiano* (Padua: Unipress, 1992). Other sources for the different categories of deixis will be quoted and discussed in the relevant subsections of the present Chapter.

<sup>24</sup> As Levinson stresses, ‘the deictic system in language is embedded in a context-independent descriptive system’. As Levinson further adds ‘[o]n the one hand, symbolic reference is relativized to time, place, speaker, and so on, so that John will speak next is true now, not later, and on the other, indexical reference is mediated by symbolic meaning, so that this book can’t be used to point to this mug.’ (Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, p. 99).

<sup>25</sup> The linguistic anthropological understanding of indexicality is based on the work of the semiotician Charles Sanders Peirce (and on those theories which further developed his scientific achievements). See also the seminal essay by Michael Silverstein, ‘Shifters, Linguistic Categories, and Cultural Description’, in *Meaning in Anthropology*, ed. by Keith H. Basso and Henry A. Selby (Albuquerque (NM): University of New Mexico Press, 1976), pp. 11-55.

<sup>26</sup> Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, p. 101.

<sup>27</sup> The first definition is formulated by Peirce, and the other two by Émile Benveniste and Roman Jakobson respectively. See: Benveniste, ‘La nature des pronoms’, p. 254; and Roman Jakobson, ‘Les embrayeurs, les catégories verbales et le verbe russe’, in Id., *Essais de linguistique générale* (Paris: Minuit, 1963), pp. 176–96 (p. 179). It is relevant to clarify that Benveniste’s definition occurs within a specific discussion of pronouns. These forms, according to Benveniste, have ‘la fonction [...] de mettre le locuteur en relation constant et nécessaire avec son énonciation’, thus signalling the source of the speech act (Benveniste, ‘L’appareil formel de l’énonciation’, *Langages*, 17 (1970), 12-18 (p. 14)). This aspect is further stressed by Benveniste when discussing the main features of the personal pronoun *je* (‘La nature des pronoms’, p. 262). For a discussion of indexicality and the main challenges it poses, see Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward pp. 101-103, and Id., *Presumptive Meanings: The Theory of Generalized Conversational Implicature* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), pp. 268ff (quoted in Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, p. 101).

<sup>28</sup> For a discussion of these three categories see: Lyons, *Semantics*, II, pp. 636-724; Charles J. Fillmore, ‘Deixis I’, in Id., *Lectures on Deixis* (Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications, 1997), pp. 59-75; Stephen C. Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in Id., *Pragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 54-96 (pp. 68-84); Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, pp. 112-118.





distance on the basis of a binary demonstrative system, to express proximity or distance with reference to the *origo*.<sup>35</sup> It is important to note that from a pragmatic point of view, as Federica Da Milano points out by returning to Lyons' category of 'empathetic deixis',<sup>36</sup> 'demonstratives that codify the feature of proximity (spatial closeness or distance from the *origo*) can also codify emotional and symbolic closeness or distance.'<sup>37</sup> In fact, oppositions developed to categorise space may be transferred to other spaces, such as social space, the space of the text and that of the discourse. The category of textual deixis or discourse deixis will be particularly relevant for the analysis of Cavalcanti's *Rime*, as I will further discuss. According to Maria-Elisabeth Conte:

La deissi testuale è quella forma di deissi con la quale un parlante fa, nel discorso, riferimento al discorso stesso, al discorso in atto, ossia a parti (a segmenti o momenti) dell'ongoing discourse (in particolare: o al pre-testo, o al post-testo o, nel logicamente problematico caso dall'autoriferimento, a quella stessa enunciazione, nella quale l'espressione deittica ricorre).<sup>38</sup>

Many expressions that convey spatial information, such as the pronouns 'questo' [this] and 'quello' [that] or the adverb 'qui' [here], also encode temporality and it is for this reason that spatial and temporal deixis are often discussed in combination.<sup>39</sup> In Italian, temporal deixis is expressed by verbal tenses (the present tense being among the most important, as it refers to the time of the utterance),<sup>40</sup> adverbs (such as 'ora' [now]), adverbial expressions, and temporal adjectives.

## II.2 DEIXIS AND THE LYRIC

The study of deictics in lyric has received less attention than in other genres, as I have discussed in the previous Chapter (pp. 17-20), where the methodology for the thesis was outlined. Italian

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*Linguistic Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018). On demonstratives see Holger Diessel, *Demonstratives: Form, function and grammaticalization* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1999).

<sup>35</sup> Some regional varieties, such as Tuscan, display a ternary demonstrative system, structured on the opposition between the demonstratives 'questo', 'codesto', and 'quello', to verbalise proximity or distance of an object or an entity from the positions occupied both by the speaking subject and by those who are addressed. While 'questo' and 'quello' respectively indicate proximity to and distance from the speaker, the medial demonstrative 'codesto' indicates nearness to the addressee. See Silvia Calamai, 'toscani, dialetti', in *Enciclopedia dell'Italiano* (2011) [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/dialetti-toscani\\_%28Enciclopedia-dell%27Italiano%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/dialetti-toscani_%28Enciclopedia-dell%27Italiano%29/), and Greta Brodin, *Termini dimostrativi toscani. Studio storico di morfologia sintassi e semantica* (Lund: Gleerup, 1970).

<sup>36</sup> Lyons, 'Deixis, Space and Time', p. 677.

<sup>37</sup> Da Milano, 'Italiano', p. 61. Oppositions developed to categorise space may be transferred to other spaces, such as social space, the space of the text and that of the discourse. These phenomena have been classified as Social, Textual and Discourse deixis. For a general discussion of these other deictic categories see Charles J. Fillmore, 'Deixis II', in *Lectures on Deixis*, pp. 103-125; Levinson, 'Deixis', in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, pp. 85-93. For a specific discussion on Discourse and Textual deixis see Maria-Elisabeth Conte, *Condizioni di coerenza. Ricerche di linguistica testuale* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 1992), pp. 11-27; Levinson, 'Deixis', in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, pp. 119-121.

<sup>38</sup> Conte, *Condizioni di coerenza*, p. 17.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66. Laura Vanelli, 'Alcune espressioni temporali nell'Italiano antico', in *La parola al testo. Scritti per Bice Mortara Garavelli*, ed. by Gian Luigi Beccaria and Carla Marengo, 2 vols (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2002), I, pp. 563-479.

<sup>40</sup> For a discussion of the forms of temporalities expressed by different tenses in Italian see Da Milano, 'Italian', in *Manual of Deixis in Romance Languages*, ed. Jungbluth and Da Milano pp. 63-65.

scholarship confirms this trend. Works considering the nexus of subjectivity and deixis in the Italian lyric tradition are very few and mostly focussed on discussing modern texts, even though they have often brought to light insightful scholarly results which could be well applied to medieval and early modern literature.<sup>41</sup> Broadly speaking, this situation is symptomatic of a series of methodological complexities that might arise when adopting linguistic studies in interpreting literary texts. The potentially problematic nature of the study of deixis in literary texts results from the fact that the field of research of deixis forms part of pragmatics. These kinds of discussions of deixis must acknowledge that their analyses are generally based on studies whose primary focus is oral communication. As a consequence, the rigid or acritical employment of tools and categories borrowed from this field could raise interpretative problems and theoretical issues. Moreover, the discussion of subjectivity and deixis is further complicated by the fact that it has several connections with philosophical and linguistic discourses, such as those focussed on exploring the concept of *agency*.<sup>42</sup>

With regard to the study of lyric deixis in particular, the scarcity of studies mirrors additional issues specifically related to this genre itself and, more specifically, to the fact that the lyric is conceived as evoking an internalised discourse. Moreover, as Levinson points out, ‘the class of indexical expression is not [...] clearly demarcated’<sup>43</sup> and evaluations of deixis must take into account its slippery relation to anaphora and to anaphoric references. While deictics point to a referent in the extra-textual context, anaphora sets up a relationship with the linguistic context instead. This distinction could easily raise problems especially if, as in the case of Cavalcanti, we are discussing a corpus of lyrics which have not been ordered by their author and for which no ordering of any sort can be determined according to any chronological criteria related to the material transmission of the *Rime*. This lack of information and the impossibility of determining the existence and the internal dynamics of a macrotext could indeed make the determination of the deictic value of some elements of language problematic. Every evaluation will thus be made carefully, and interpretations will seek to open up possibilities, rather than close down meaning.

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<sup>41</sup> Among the most important studies of deixis and the lyric which have informed my understanding of this approach see Enrico Testa, ‘Deissi della leggerezza e segni dell’attesa’, *Autografo*, VIII/19 (1990), 13-18; Id., ‘*Sur la corde de la voix: funzioni della deissi nel testo poetico*’, in *Linguistica, pragmatica e testo letterario*, ed. by Umberto Rapallo (Genoa: Il Melangolo, 1996), pp. 113-146; Id., *Per interposta persona. Lingua e poesia nel secondo novecento* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1999); Id., *Una costanza sfigurata. Lo statuto del soggetto nella poesia di Sanguineti* (Novara: Interlinea, 2011); Id., “‘Lo scalpiccio operoso delle labbra’”. *Forme dell’enuciiazione nella scrittura poetica novecentesca*’, in *Sul filo del testo. In equilibrio tra enunciato e enunciazione*, ed. by Massimo Palermo and Silvia Pieroni (Pisa: Pacini, 2015), pp. 31-48; Paolo Zublena, ‘L’infinito qui. Deissi spaziale e antropologia dello spazio nella poesia di Leopardi’, in *La Prospettiva antropologica nel pensiero e nella poesia di Giacomo Leopardi*. Atti del XII Convegno internazionale di studi leopardiani (*Recanati 23-26 settembre 2008*), ed. by Chiara Gaiardoni (Florence: Olschki, 2010), pp. 356-376; Francesca Southerden, *Landscapes of Desire in the Poetry of Vittorio Sereni* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>42</sup> For a clear discussion of some of these problems, see Heather Dubrow, ‘Introduction: Delimitations, Definitions, Disciplines’, in *Deixis in the Early Modern English Lyric. Unsettling Spatial Anchors Like “Here”, “This”, “Come”* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 1-21.

<sup>43</sup> Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, p. 103.

I shall now investigate how subjectivity is encoded in the *Rime* with reference to the main coordinates of the discourse (person, space, and time). All computational analyses will also be evaluated qualitatively and semantically, either on the basis of the most important stylistic and linguistic surveys available, or using further, original observations of Cavalcanti's language. The survey of the frequency of person markers will be further assessed and contextualised through analyses of the *Rime*'s lexis, syntax, and rhetoric as well as of other elements related to person deixis and its expression. With the aim of producing cogent and articulate examinations of the distinguishing features of the Cavalcantian subject(s), and at times perhaps challenging some of the leading interpretations of the *Rime*, I will not necessarily assume that the Cavalcantian corpus constructs a unitary, monolithic self. As will emerge from the various analyses of these Chapters, there are a few pieces of textual evidence emphasising that subjectivity in the *Rime* is not strictly articulated according to a homogenous pattern. These examples will be discussed and contextualised in the corpus.

To better frame the discussion that will follow, it is necessary to recall that, in its most canonical examples, Cavalcanti's *Rime* fictionalise the subject's experience of the dynamics of love in terms of a loss, to put it in Fenzi's words. As Fenzi explains, the *Io*'s encounter with the beloved could be described as an 'esperienza della perdita' understood as a 'perdita del piacere, perdita dell'oggetto amato e perdita delle ragioni stesse dell'amore, e infine perdita di sé e morte'.<sup>44</sup> The event of love could be understood as a clash resulting from the perfect superiority of the beloved lady *vis-à-vis* the inadequacy of the subject's intellectual faculties, or what Maria Corti defines as 'dualismo'.<sup>45</sup> This failure, causing the subject to fall into a condition of death-in-life, is often fictionalised in terms of an alienated introspection of the *Io*, as well as the theatrical representation of his inner dimension.<sup>46</sup> It is for this reason that the Cavalcantian phenomenology of love is rather characterised by a focus on the 'fatti interni',<sup>47</sup> as Contini puts it, on the *Io*'s inner dimension, rather than on the external, historicisable circumstances of the love encounter, as discussed in the Introduction.<sup>48</sup> As I shall demonstrate, these premises allow us to better appreciate the distinguishing

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<sup>44</sup> Fenzi, 'Interpretazioni cavalcantiane', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, p. 121.

<sup>45</sup> This concept is defined by Maria Corti in a series of fundamental essays on Cavalcanti's poetry. See in particular Maria Corti, 'La fisionomia stilistica di Guido Cavalcanti', *Atti dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei. Rendiconti morali. Serie VIII*, V/11-12 (1950), 530-552; Id., 'Dualismo e immaginazione visiva in Guido Cavalcanti', *Convivium*, 5 (1951), 641-666; Id., 'Introduzione', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1978, pp. 5-27; Id., *La felicità mentale. Nuove prospettive per Cavalcanti e Dante* (Turin: Einaudi, 1983).

<sup>46</sup> See my Introduction, pp. XVIII-XXVIII where I discuss the Cavalcantian love phenomenology and Chapter V where I discuss the insertion of 'other voices' in the lyric dictate of the *Rime*.

<sup>47</sup> Gianfranco Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 448.

<sup>48</sup> See my Introduction, pp. XVII-XIX. As Rea maintains, 'la lirica cavalcantiana sfugge non solo ad una storia complessiva, o se si vuole macrotestuale [...], ma anche ad ogni occasione del mondo circostante, a partire da quelle fittizie della convenzione cortese' (Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 31). However, it is important to mention that the *Rime* do not revolve

elements characterising the Cavalcantian subject which will emerge in the course of the following analysis.

### II.3 DEIXIS: PERSON

Having retraced the distinguishing traits of Cavalcanti love's phenomenology, Antonelli's observations can now be better contextualised and discussed. Antonelli highlights the occurrence of a high number of personal markers ('io', 'mi', 'me') in the *Rime*, also prompting the necessity of discussing their relationship with linguistic forms related to the *Tu*:

Oltre alla frequenza d'uso di *Io* (100 occorrenze, di media almeno due per ogni componimento) e connessi (*me / mi* oltre 150, *mio*, oltre 60), pur in sé già significativa, varrebbe la pena d'investigare le relazioni con *tu / te* (circa 90 occorrenze, *tuo* oltre 20, *voi* oltre 20, *vostro* oltre 20) [...].<sup>49</sup>

These data are significant for the purposes of the present analysis only in relation to the number of occurrences in the whole Cavalcantian corpus, and, most importantly, only if they are compared to data regarding other poets of the Italian lyric tradition. In the chart below, I have tabulated frequencies of the occurrences of the main subjective markers as related to the first-person position in the corpora of a selected number of Cavalcanti's predecessors and contemporaries. I have obtained the percentages of the grammatical forms displayed in the table by comparing the total occurrences and the number of occurrences of the single grammatical form in the corpora of each author:

	'io'	'mi'	'me'	'mio'/'nostro'	total
<b>Giacomo da Lentini</b>	2.2%	3.05 %	0.2 %	1.16 %	6.61%
<b>Guido Guinizzelli</b>	1.39%	1.82 %	0.16 %	0.77 %	4.14%
<b>Guittone (<i>sonetti</i>)</b>	1.42%	1.8 %	0.29 %	0.88 %	4.39%
<b>Guittone (<i>canzoni</i>)</b>	1.38%	1.76%	0.32%	1%	4.46%
<b>Cavalcanti</b>	1.46%	1.88 %	0.31 %	1.06 %	4.71%
<b>Cavalcanti (without <i>DMP</i>)</b>	1.45%	1.88%	0.3%	1.05%	4.68%
<b>Dante (<i>Vita Nuova</i>)</b>	1.47%	1.60 %	0.28 %	0.99 %	4.34%
<b>Dante (<i>Rime</i>)</b>	1.49%	1.79 %	0.22 %	1.04 %	4.54%
<b>Cino da Pistoia</b>	1.44%	1.65 %	0.3 %	1.02 %	4.41%

A comparison with other *Duecento* poets reveals substantial similarities between the frequency of the first-person pronoun 'io' in the *Rime* and in the other, selected *corpora*. While

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entirely around this dramatic dynamic, as several texts also display a less dysphoric depiction of the love encounter, such as the sequence of lyrics XXII-XXVI.

<sup>49</sup> Antonelli, 'Cavalcanti o dell'interiorità', in *Alle origini dell'Io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 15.

Cavalcanti displays a rate of 1.46%,<sup>50</sup> the percentages for Guinizzelli and Dante are 1.39% and 1.47%/1.49% respectively. Giacomo da Lentini has an exceptionally high rate of 2.2%, which is likely to be attributable to linguistic features of da Lentini's regional Italian. In fact, the *corpora* of some of his contemporaries with significantly large corpora to be taken into account, such as Guido delle Colonne (1.66%) and Rinaldo d'Aquino (1.91%), present similarly high percentages.<sup>51</sup>

The frequencies of the other person markers show a heterogeneous situation. With regard to the object pronoun and the clitic form 'mi', the Notaro again has a noticeably higher percentage than the others. Cavalcanti's frequency is comparable to Guinizzelli's, and somewhat higher than Dante's. The results relating to the form 'me' are less variable, with all corpora ranging between 0.16% and 0.32%. The possessives 'mio'/'nostro' are different again, with Guinizzelli displaying low frequencies while Giacomo da Lentini, Guittone, Cavalcanti, Dante, and Cino all fluctuate around similar percentages. It is clear that a calculation of this sort is not sufficient to answer the central questions posed by Antonelli. Overall, the survey shows that these quantitative results need to be considered from a semantic and qualitative point of view.

It is first important to verify whether an analysis of this sort may produce more significant results when applied separately to different metrical forms (*sonetto, canzone, ballata*). Similar considerations are prompted by Antonelli himself who, in a detailed discussion of the importance of Giacomo da Lentini for the Italian lyric tradition, observes that the use of the sonnet form frequently results in greater introspection in the Notaro's corpus.<sup>52</sup> Although structurally connected to the *canzone*, the sonnet mirrors the urgency to find a close, dense metric form to express the vicissitudes of the self.<sup>53</sup> As Antonelli explains:

Il nuovo genere [del sonetto] consente l'esposizione e lo sviluppo di un pensiero, ma soprattutto impone necessariamente la concentrazione su un tema, non su una casistica o su una situazione diegetica: il Soggetto necessariamente parla di sé ed essendo il discorso d'amore l'oggetto privilegiato del discorso, il Soggetto si propone per la prima volta (implicitamente o meno, comunque oggettivamente) come Io lirico. La lirica fuoriesce dal discorso situazionale e penetra e si propone come registrazione dell'interiorità dell'Io [...].<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> The calculation of Cavalcanti's corpus has excluded first-person pronouns when they indicate entities or individuals different to the traditional poet-lover. The shift in the first-person position of the text is discussed in Chapters III, IV, and V of the thesis.

<sup>51</sup> To the best of my knowledge, there are no specific studies discussing the high occurrence of the first-person pronoun in the poets of the Sicilian School. For a study on the language of the Sicilian School's poets, see Maria Corti, *La lingua poetica avanti lo Stilnovo. Studi sul lessico e sulla sintassi*, ed. by Giancarlo Breschi e Angelo Stella (Florence, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2005).

<sup>52</sup> Roberto Antonelli, 'Giacomo da Lentini e l'invenzione della lirica italiana', *Critica del testo*, 12/1 (2009), 1-24 (pp. 12-13).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Antonelli maintains that the innovative metric form of the sonnet, structured on a limited pattern of rhymes, imposes a focus on a single motif and forces it to be examined with unprecedented depth. He claims that Giacomo da Lentini played a founding role in the further development of the lyric tradition and states: ‘il sonetto non è (solo) un’invenzione retorica [...]: rappresenta l’esigenza di trovare un nuovo contenitore, un nuovo genere per un discorso poetico nuovo’.<sup>55</sup>

If we merely focus on the linguistic point of view, the frequency of personal markers in Giacomo da Lentini’s *sonetti* and in the *canzoni* may appear misleading, as the frequency of subjective marker is higher in the *canzoni* than in the *sonetti*. The following chart displays the result of the calculation of subjective markers with regard to specific metrical forms, which allow us to appreciate the quantitative results related to the two different metrical forms:

	‘io’	‘mi’	‘me’	‘mio’	total
<i>Canzoni</i>	2.84%	3.3%	0.19%	1.26%	7.59%
<i>Sonetti</i>	0.9%	1.81%	0.52%	1.16%	4.39%

We can observe the innovation discussed by Antonelli by comparing da Lentini’s use of the ‘io’ markers with those grammatical forms connected to the beloved (‘tu’/‘voi’, ‘ti’/‘vi’, ‘tuo’/‘vostro’). The table below reflects the linguistic consequence of a distinguishing feature that is obvious in any perusal of da Lentini’s corpus. While the *canzoni* are characterised by an allocutive mode by means of which the beloved is directly addressed in the text, in the sonnets, the lady is instead mentioned indirectly. The sonnets mark a moment for reflecting on the effects of love upon the *Io*.<sup>56</sup> This different rhetorical gambit can be seen by considering the different percentages of grammatical forms related to the second-person position in the *canzoni* and in the *sonetti*, as displayed in the following table:

	‘tu’/‘voi’	‘Donna’/ other vocatives	‘vi’	‘vostro’	total
<i>Canzoni</i>	1.75%	0.93%	1.94%	0.38%	5%
<i>Sonetti</i>	0.45%	0.32%	0.06%	0.26%	1.09%

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>56</sup> The tendency towards introspection discussed by Antonelli in commenting on da Lentini’s use of different metrical forms is not to be considered a distinguishing feature of all the Notaro’s sonnets, as other sonnets of the corpus are more “traditional”, displaying an apostrophe to the lady, as in the case of 1.20, ‘Lo giglio quand’è colto tost’è passo’ and 1.24, ‘Donna, vostri sembianti mi mostraro’, in which the second-person markers occur very frequently.

As we can see clearly from the above, the introspection alluded to by Antonelli is manifested in a radical decrease of percentages related to the ‘tu’ markers (1.09% in the *sonetti* as opposed to the 5% of the *canzoni*), which signal an unprecedented focus on the self rather than on the beloved.

In these respects, Cavalcanti’s corpus presents far more complex results than da Lentini’s and, as we will see, the presence and use of personal deixis is more difficult to set into fixed categories. As displayed by the table (pp. 44), in Cavalcanti the focus on the *Io* does not appear as markedly associated with a specific metrical form as in da Lentini’s poetic production.<sup>57</sup> If we compare the ‘io’ markers, the *ballate* display the highest percentage of subjective markers, even though, as seen with the Notaro, any valuable consideration must compare these frequencies with the grammatical forms of the second-person pronouns ‘tu’/‘voi’. Seeking to highlight some of the most salient aspects characterising the lyric subject of the *Rime*, the following discussion will take a close look at a number of lyrics which exemplify some emblematic ways of articulating subjectivity in the Cavalcantian corpus.

Paradoxically, we may highlight a second group of poems identified as “archaic”<sup>58</sup> and a group of poems that, following on from Favati’s reordering of the corpus, are grouped in a compact sequence (XXII-XXVI), arguably to emphasise their “oddity”, when compared with the rest of the lyric corpus. These convey both the eclecticism and the richness of the expression of subjectivity in the Cavalcantian love lyric corpus, with regard to the occurrence of personal deixis. Notably, they also convey the high degree of stereotipisation to which the corpus has been subjected, includes those poems identified as “archaic” and a group of poems. In fact, the stylistic features of this second group of texts, and in particular their lexis, have often been described as “exceptional”.<sup>59</sup> These critical readings emphasise these texts’ “unconventionally euphoric” representation of the love dynamics, also revealing a conventionalised interpretation of Cavalcanti’s poetry as characterised by a strictly dysphoric depiction of the process of love and its effects on the ‘Io’.

As mentioned in the Introduction (pp.), ‘Fresca rosa novella’ is one of these texts. Due to reasons that I have partly mentioned in my Introduction (pp. XIII) and that will become clearer in the course of this discussion, the *ballata* is considered “less” Cavalcantian than other texts of the *Rime*.

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<sup>57</sup> The table on p. 44 displays the results of a comprehensive survey of the presence of first- and second-person markers in Cavalcanti’s *Rime*. As shown by the subdivision of the sections, for second-person markers (both singular and plural) I have differentiated results when grammatical forms refer to the lady or to other individuals addressed by the *Io*.

<sup>58</sup> See my Introduction, p. xv.

<sup>59</sup> See, among the many, Rea, who comments on the lexis of these lyrics, emphasising their exceptional or even extraordinary occurrence within the Cavalcantian corpus. The occurrence of ‘allegrezza’, in xxv, 23 and xxvi, 4 is described by emphasising ‘[l]a straordinarietà del sentimento’, and the use of ‘piacere’, defined as ‘eccezionale’ (Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 192; 384).





The use of person markers in ‘Fresca rosa novella’ is unique when compared to the sonnets of the corpus. Despite the fact that in the *Rime*, the sonnet is the metrical form in which the beloved is more frequently directly addressed, it is relevant to notice that these illocutions are generally used to accuse the lady for the deathly effects she produces on the subject, rather than to praise her (as in XII, XVII, XX, XXI). Percentages of second-person pronouns must also be evaluated semantically, as in the *Rime* ‘tu’ markers appear to be employed to focus the discourse on the subject and his condition, as in this famous sonnet I have discussed in the Introduction:

Tu m’hai sì piena di dolor la mente,  
che l’anima si briga di partire,  
e li sospir’ che manda ’l cor dolente  
mostrano agli occhi che non può soffrire. 4

Amor, che lo tuo grande valor sente,  
dice: «E’ mi duol che ti convien morire  
per questa fiera donna, ché nïente  
par che Pietate di te voglia udire». 8

I’ vo come colui ch’è fuor di vita,  
che pare, a chi lo guarda, ch’omo sia  
fatto di rame o di pietra o di legno, 11

che si conduca sol per maestria  
e porti ne lo core una ferita  
che sia, com’ egli è morto, aperto segno. (VIII) 14

The ‘io’ addresses the ‘tu’, ‘con inconsueta aggressione’, as Contini observes.<sup>64</sup> As Rea points out in commenting on the address to the lady, the incipital apostrophe ‘conferisce all’annuncio dell’imminente collasso delle facoltà interiori [...] un carattere di estrema accusa’.<sup>65</sup> While the ‘tu’ placed at the opening of the lyric would initially suggest that the lady is the centre of the lyric discourse, a reading of the entire lyric reveals that the lady is the mere origin of the dynamics described. The focus of the sonnet is the alienated *Io*, whose representation is modelled on the subject like a brass statue of Guinizelli.<sup>66</sup> The stylistic choice to mirror the opening of the octet and the

<sup>64</sup> Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 499.

<sup>65</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 72.

<sup>66</sup> The intertextual references to Guinizelli’s ‘Lo bel saluto’ have been extensively discussed in scholarship (see, for example, Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 499). De Robertis describes the Cavalcantian representation of the walking automaton as an ‘interpretazione della «statua d’ottone» di Guinizelli’ (De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 29). Cavalcanti also borrows material from Guittone and Guido delle Colonne, as Rea observes (Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, pp. 72-75). For a discussion of the metamorphoses of this motif in the lyric tradition see Paolo Rigo, ‘«Io vo come colui ch’è fuor di vita». Un topos letterario del Duecento’, in *La poesia in Italia prima di Dante*, ed. by Franco Suitner (Ravenna: Longo, 2017), pp. 115-129.

sextet through the parallelism of ‘Tu’ (1) and ‘I’ (9) ‘configura non solo un’opposizione’ Rea further observes, ‘ma anche un’irriducibile distanza [dell’*Io*] rispetto al *Tu* che apre le quartine’.<sup>67</sup>

The *canzoni* polarise the lack of attention to the beloved just, as seen in sonnet VIII, by displaying a complete absence of grammatical forms related to the ‘tu’/‘voi’, as the table displays. In fact, second-person pronouns in the *canzoni* are often used to refer to individuals or entities different from the traditional ‘other’ of the love lyric tradition, as in this passage from ‘Io non pensava che lo cor giammai’ (IX):

Amor, ch’ha le bellezze sue vedute,  
mi sbigottisce sì, che sofferire  
non può lo cor sentendola venire,  
ché sospirando dice: «Io ti dispero, 36  
però che trasse del su’ dolce riso,  
una saetta aguta,  
ch’ha passato ’l tuo core e ’l mio diviso. 39  
Tu sai, quando venisti, ch’io ti dissi,  
poi che l’avèi veduta,  
per forza convenia che tu morissi». 42

Canzon, tu sai che de’ libri d’amore  
io t’asemplai quando madonna vidi:  
ora ti piaccia ch’io di te mi fidi  
e vadi ’n guis’ a lei ch’ella t’ascolti; 46  
e prego umilmente a lei tu guidi  
li spiriti fuggiti del mio core,  
per soverchio de lo su’ valore  
eran distrutti, se non fosser vòlti, 50  
e vanno soli, senza compagnia  
e son pien’ di paura. (IX, 33-52)

[my emphasis]

In this fragment, after describing the encounter with the lady, the subject details her effects upon him through the mediating, deathly agency of *Amore*. In the *congedo* (43-52), the address is to the text itself, which is solicited to go to the beloved lady. The passage quoted above epitomises the use of second-person pronouns to indicate entities different from the traditional *Tu* (the lady): first the subject himself (lines 36, 39, 40, 42) and then the personified *canzone* (lines 43, 45, 46, 47). In lines 33-42 *Amore* speaks and, through direct discourse, addresses the *Io*, who becomes a ‘tu’ in a shift of the discourse’s perspective, to sentence him to death. In the following stanza, the ‘tu’ (43) is identified

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<sup>67</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 74.

with the text itself and is implored by the *Io* to act as a go-between and reach the beloved on his behalf. If compared to the dynamics characterising the sonnets, a further form of indirection is at play in ‘Io non pensava’. Nowhere in this *canzone* is the *donna* addressed directly. The encounter with her is rather mentioned as the triggering event causing the suffering of the *Io*, and the focus is thus even more on the subject, the real centre of the entire discourse.

The *ballate* exemplify another, similar mode of using second-person pronouns to focus the attention on the self. As displayed in the table, the *Rime’s ballate* present a rather high frequency of second-person grammatical forms referring to individuals or entities “other” from the traditional *Tu*, the beloved. I will take a close look at *ballata* XIX to better discuss why this element is important to the articulation of the Cavalcantian subject:

<i>I’ prego voi</i> che di dolor parlate che, per vertute di nova pietate, non disdegniate – la <i>mia</i> pena udire	3
Davante agli occhi <i>miei</i> vegg’ <i>io</i> lo core e l’anima dolente che s’ancide, che mor d’un colp che li diede Amore ed in quel punto che <i>madonna</i> vide.	7
Lo su’gentile spirito che ride, questi è colui che <i>mi</i> fa sentire, lo qual <i>mi</i> dice: «E’ ti convien morire».	10
Se <i>voi</i> sentiste come ’l cor si dole, dentro al <i>vostro</i> cor <i>voi</i> tremereste: ch’elli mi dice sì dolci parole, che sospirando pietà chiamereste.	14
E solamente <i>voi</i> lo ’ntendereste: ch’altro cor non poria pensar né dire quant’è ’l dolor che <i>mi</i> conven soffrire.	17
Lagrima ascendon de la mente <i>mia</i> , sì tosto come <i>questa donna</i> sente, che van facendo per li occhi una via per la qul passa spirito dolente,	21
che entra per la <i>mia</i> sì debil mente ch’oltra non puote color scoprire che ’l maginar vi si possa finire. (XIX)	24

[me emphasis]

The text displays the use of the vocative to address a group of individuals, who are repeatedly called to be attentive to the subject’s sorrow (‘mia pena’ (3)). Through the anaphora of the second-person plural pronoun ‘voi’ (1, 11, 12, 15) and the possessive ‘vostro’ (12), the *ballata* focusses unambiguously on the *Io*, as stressed by the obsessive recurrence of person deictics (1, 3, 4, 9, 10, 13,

17, 18, 22). As seen in *canzone* IX, references to the traditional beloved reveal that she is a side entity of the lyric discourse, only mentioned as a source of the suffering rather than an interlocutor (7, 19).

The hypertrophic presence of grammatical forms marking the *Io*'s position in the text is emblematised in 'Poi che di doglia cor' (XI):

Poi che di doglia cor conven ch' *i*' porti  
e senta di piacere ardente foco  
e di virtù *mi* traggi' a sì vil loco,  
dirò com'ho perduto ogni valore. 4  
E dico che' *miei* spiriti son morti,  
e 'l cor, che tanto ha guerra e vita poco;  
e se non fosse che 'l morir *m'*è gioco,  
fare'ne di pietà pianger Amore. 8  
Ma, per lo folle tempo che *m'*ha giunto,  
*mi* cangio di *mia* ferma oppinione  
in altrui condizione,  
sì ch' *io* non mostro quant' *io* sento affanno  
là 'nd' *eo* ricevo inganno:  
che dentro da lo cor *mi* pass' Amanza  
che se ne porta tutta la *mia* possanza. (XI) 15  
[my emphasis]

The *canzone* revolves entirely around the *Io*, his suffering and the impossibility of verbalising it. The implications of such a self-referential discourse will be discussed in depth in Chapter IV, where the analysis will focus on the traditional apostrophe to the beloved of the love lyric and on the metamorphosis of that illocutive mode in the *Rime*. For the present discussion, I shall stress the incontrovertible dominance of the *Io*, which is markedly perceivable even visually. The percentage of subjective markers (including verbs) constitute 22.3% of the whole *canzone*, as opposed to a complete lack of 'tu' markers.

I have mentioned above that, as a philosophical *canzone*, 'Donna me prega' (XXVII) is problematically assimilable to the love lyrics of the *Rime*. As opposed to Cavalcanti's erotic corpus, in 'Donna me prega' the relationship between the transcendental subject and the empirical self is noticeably different. As Corrado Calenda observes, the use of the first-person pronoun in Cavalcanti's *canzone* 'non propone [...] ambigue identificazioni con il protagonista dell'enunciato'<sup>68</sup>, thus prompting a coincidence of the author and the subject who speaks in the text. In the love lyrics of the *Rime*, the first-person pronoun is rather imbued with a certain level of fictionality, and its relationship

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<sup>68</sup> Corrado Calenda, 'La poesia di Cavalcanti tra blocco della teoria e frantumazione dell'esperienza', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, p. 226. I shall disagree with Calenda, however, in his reading of 'Donna me prega' as the linchpin text of Cavalcanti's corpus, the point of reference of the poet's entire lyric production. I do agree with Fenzi instead when, in recognising the importance of Cavalcanti's philosophical *canzone* to the general exegesis of the Cavalcantian love experience, he also observes that the other texts of the corpus 'non sempre [sono interpretabili] utilizzando le chiavi che la canzone offre', also emphasising the risks related to an overly strict approach (Fenzi, 'Interpretazioni cavalcantiane', in *Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 128-129).



lo qual spiritel spiriti piove,  
ché di ciascuno spirit' ha la chiave,  
per forza d'uno spirito che 'l vede. (XXVIII) 14

The sonnet revolves entirely around the word 'spirito', a term which is repeated fifteen times throughout the lyric. Rea reads this as a 'rigorosa trasposizione in termini spirituali delle operazioni psicologiche e fisiologiche relative alla passione.'<sup>72</sup> The meticulous systematicity by means of which the physiology of love is presented, results in an 'articolazione essenzialmente sintagmatica, e una sorta di automatismo'<sup>73</sup> of the poetic writing, as De Robertis points out, making the sonnet as an 'elegante parodia' 'of 'Donna me prega', as Contini suggests.<sup>74</sup>

The few exceptions discussed testify both to Cavalcanti's eclecticism and to a series of traits characterising the articulation of subjectivity as related to person deixis. The quantitative analysis has shown an almost undisputed dominance of the *Io*, which is conveyed through different stylistic strategies. This unique expression of narcissism is particularly evident when compared with the use of second-person markers in the corpus. Whether in the singular or plural forms, these are employed (1) to accuse the lady for her deathly effects upon the lover, focussing the poetic discourse upon the *Io* or (2) to address other entities or individuals called to partake in the subject's suffering. The 'other' of Cavalcanti's poetry appears to be mainly a vector to further focus the attention of the discourse upon the subject.<sup>75</sup>

#### II.4 PERSON DEIXIS: A SEMANTIC EVALUATION OF THE *RIME*

I will now integrate the quantitative analysis and substantiate the survey with a semantic discussion of other elements of language and style related to person deixis contributing to typifying the Cavalcantian subject in particular. How is the *Io* characterised in the *Rime*? While Cavalcanti scholarship still lacks a comprehensive linguistic examination of the *Rime*, as well as a specific study on subjectivity, germane remarks about the subject can be drawn from works which either have attempted to provide a general framework of Cavalcanti's poetry or have focussed on specific linguistic aspects of the *Rime*. I shall mention some of them and corroborate their analysis with further original observations.

The *Rime*'s vocabulary plays a fundamental role in the representation of the *Io*. A common remark emerging almost unanimously from stylistic and linguistic analyses of the *Rime* is

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<sup>72</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 162.

<sup>73</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 108.

<sup>74</sup> Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 530.

<sup>75</sup> The function of the direction of the poetic message in Cavalcanti's *Rime* will be the object of specific discussion in Chapter IV.

Cavalcanti's extremely selective lexicon. This proclivity has been labelled by scholars as a form of lexical "aristocracy",<sup>76</sup> which is most visibly reflected in the corpus' redundant vocabulary.<sup>77</sup> This aspect first emerged in Favati's 'Tecnica ed arte nella poesia cavalcantiana', a discussion of the expression of emotion and emotionality in the *Rime*. Favati discusses Cavalcanti's selection of the traditional language of the love lyric to express the subject's psychological condition, taking into account the *Io*'s death, his bewilderment, and his alienation.<sup>78</sup> These semantic fields are emphasised, Favati claims, by the author's selective use of lexis, syntax and rhetorical devices.

Not only does the representation of the *Io* condition result from a process of lexical selection, but it is also substantiated by a re-semanticisation of traditional vocabulary. This process is often the outcome of the internalisation of lyric, philosophical, and religious sources, as I previously discussed in the Introduction. Antonelli and Rea discuss in detail Cavalcanti's mode of borrowing material from the lyric tradition and re-semanticising it in order to provide the lexis of the *Rime* with a new, poignant meaning.<sup>79</sup> This process has a direct effect on the thematisation of the subject's love suffering, a traditional motif which in the *Rime* is represented with unprecedented intensity. Within the *Rime*'s distinguishing, broader semantic field of suffering, I shall mention the example of the condition of *angoscia* [anguish, sorrow] as the most idiomatic trait defining the Cavalcantian subject. Antonelli observes how in the *Rime* the subject's *angoscia* is charged with a 'valore assoluto', appearing intrinsic to the subject's condition and as being emancipated from any external contingencies.<sup>80</sup> In his broader survey of the lexemes covering the semantic sphere of interiority ['interiorità'], Rea builds on Antonelli's observations. Cavalcanti's *angoscia* is a lexeme charged with 'un'inedità centralità' in the corpus.<sup>81</sup> As Rea observes, Guinizzelli's use of the verb *angosciare*<sup>82</sup> and the adjective *angoscioso*,<sup>83</sup> combined with echoes of the scriptural representation of *angustia*,<sup>84</sup> results in an

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<sup>76</sup> Favati defines it 'aristocrazia di linguaggio' (Guido Favati, 'Tecnica ed arte nella poesia cavalcantiana', *Studi petrarcheschi*, III (1950), 117-142, p. 124.

<sup>77</sup> Maria Corti, 'Fisionomia stilistica'; Id., 'Dualismo e immaginazione visiva'. As Antonelli observes 'spariscono [...] o vengono drasticamente ridotte [...] intere famiglie semantiche' (Antonelli, 'Cavalcanti o dell'interiorità', in *Alle origini dell'io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 13-15).

<sup>78</sup> Favati, 'Tecnica ed arte'.

<sup>79</sup> Antonelli, 'Cavalcanti o dell'interiorità', in *Alle origini dell'io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 6-16. As I mentioned above, this aspect, with reference to the lexemes connected to the sphere of the subject's inner dimension, represents the focus of Rea's work (Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*).

<sup>80</sup> Antonelli, 'Cavalcanti o dell'interiorità', in *Alle origini dell'io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p.7.

<sup>81</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 195.

<sup>82</sup> 'tanto m'angoscia 'l profondo pensare | che sembro vivo e morto e v'ho nascoso' (4.7-8) (Guinizzelli, 'Ch'eo cor avesse, mi potea laudare', in Id., *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, pp. 49-50).

<sup>83</sup> 'Si sono angostioso e pieni di doglia | e di molti sospiri e di rancura' (8.1-2) (Guinizzelli, 'Si sono angostioso e pieni di doglia', in Id., *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, pp. 58-59).

<sup>84</sup> See Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, pp. 196-198 for a discussion of the biblical sources for Cavalcanti's *angoscia*.





[...] a rendere all'interno di un solo testo l'immagine della progressiva e fatale sconfitta'<sup>90</sup> of the subject. This stylistic feature has been further commented on by Corrado Calenda, who notices their use to 'potenzia[re] l'evidenziazione rappresentativa delle *personae* della [...] scena'.<sup>91</sup>

The Cavalcantian corpus boasts a high number of diminutives (such as *deboletti*, *spiritei*, *fiochetto*, among many others). The use of diminutives has been interpreted as emphasising the affective involvement of the *Io* in the poetic message.<sup>92</sup> The relationship between the use of diminutives (and, more broadly, of lexis) and the expression of subjectivity has been discussed by Catherine Kerbrat-Orecchioni.<sup>93</sup> The scholar argues that diminutives, together with other elements of lexis, can behave deictically, in revealing the subject's involvement in the enunciation. Kerbrat-Orecchioni groups diminutives under the broader class of 'affectives', those adjectives which 'énoncent, en même temps qu'une propriété de l'objet qu'ils déterminent, une réaction émotionnelle du sujet'.<sup>94</sup> Diminutives could be interpreted as another stylistic tool to foreground the weakened representation of the subject and the commiserative tone of his voice. Their use has been interpreted not only as stressing the affective involvement of the *Io* in the poetic message, but also as a technique to expose the *Io*'s vulnerability, as Favati suggests when defining their function as part of employment a 'linguaggio affettivo [...] vezzeggiativo e commiserante' of the *Rime*.<sup>95</sup>

The *Rime*'s *fictio rhetorica* also functions as a way of representing the Cavalcantian pervasive but depleted Self. The devastating effects of the beloved often result in the subject's fragmentation into his personified hypostases. These dismembered body parts are also frequently provided with the ability to speak, to deputise for the *Io* when he finds himself in a condition of death-in-life. Corrado Calenda had defined personification as the 'chiave figurale del Cavalcanti'.<sup>96</sup> The subject is frequently represented as dismembered, and his fragments characterised as independent entities, as in this famous sonnet (VII):

L'anima mia vilment'è sbigotita

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<sup>90</sup> Corti, 'Introduzione', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1978, p. 13.

<sup>91</sup> Corrado Calenda, *Per altezza d'ingegno. Saggio sulla poesia di Guido Cavalcanti* (Naples: Liguori, 1977), p. 65.

<sup>92</sup> Corti, 'Fisionomia stilistica', pp. 546-547; Favati, 'Tecnica ed arte', p. 122.

<sup>93</sup> Catherine Kerbrat-Orecchioni, *L'Énonciation de la subjectivité dans le langage* (Paris: A. Colin, 1980).

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128. Kerbrat-Orecchioni classifies adjectives on the basis of their "level of subjectivity", dividing them into affective and evaluative adjectives. 'Évaluatives' include two subcategories of adjectives. The non-axiological ones simply 'impliquent une évaluation qualitative ou quantitative de l'objet dénoté par le substantive qu'ils déterminent' (*Ibid.*, p. 150), while axiological adjectives carry a higher level of subjectivity because, in addition, they also express a positive or negative judgement of the denoted object, thus implying a higher level of subjective involvement in the text.

<sup>95</sup> Favati, 'Tecnica ed arte', p. 122. Favati points out that the terms of endearment accentuate the emotive message of Cavalcanti's poetry and that, consequently, diminutives contribute to arousing a sense of pity towards the subject himself.

<sup>96</sup> Mario Marti, *Poeti del Dolce stil nuovo*, p. 516.

de la battaglia ch'e[ll]ave dal core:  
che s'ella sente pur un poco Amore  
più presso a lui che non sòle, ella more. 4

Sta come quella che non ha valore,  
ch'è per temenza da lo cor partita;  
e chi vedesse com' ell'è fuggita  
diria per certo «Questi non ha vita». 8

Per li ochi venne la battaglia in pria,  
che ruppe ogni valore immantenente,  
sì che del colpo fu strutta la mente. 11

Qualunqu'è quei che più allegrezza sente,  
se vedesse li spiriti fuggir via,  
di grande sua pietate piangeria. (VII) 14

This lyric is emblematic as it focusses on the devastating effects of love upon the lyric *persona*, to the extent that De Robertis, highlighting the accuracy of Cavalcanti's description, defines the poem as a 'bollettino della «battaglia» che ha per campo il cuore'.<sup>97</sup> The subject's perturbing passion is described in terms of a warlike conflict, and the metaphor hyperbolically conveys the struggle experienced by the lyric 'I'. The lover is moved by a powerful desire that perplexes all of his vital functions, bringing him to a condition close to death. As the very first line of the sonnet emphasises, the dimension represented in the text is the subject's interiority. 'L'anima [...] sbigotita' (1), the dismayed soul of the lyric self, is the real protagonist of the entire poem, as noted by Rea.<sup>98</sup> The subject's synecdochic representation both expresses his fragmented and weakening condition, and further contributes to refracting its images and to exaggerating his hypertrophic subjectivity.

Rhythm and syntax both contribute to this general depiction of the *Io*. As Corti notices, Cavalcanti makes use of a high number of mono- and dissyllabic words, which convey a sense of fragmentation to the lyric dictate and mimic the aphasia debilitating the subject in the event of love.<sup>99</sup> The subject's *sbigottimento*, his sense of despair and seeking for attention, are also sharpened by a constant emphasis on the conative function, as Ciccuto stresses, through repeated apostrophes, interrogative clauses or deprecations,<sup>100</sup> as in these examples:

Deh, spiriti miei, quando mi vedete  
con tanta pena, come non mandate

<sup>97</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 25.

<sup>98</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 68.

<sup>99</sup> Corti, 'Fisionomia stilistica', p. 550. See also Calenda, *Per altezza d'ingegno*, p. 25.

<sup>100</sup> Marcello Ciccuto, 'Rime di Guido Cavalcanti', in *Letteratura italiana. Le Opere*, 4 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 1992), I: *Dalle Origini al Cinquecento*, pp. 107-120 (p. 115).

fuor della mente parole adornate  
di pianto, dolorose e sbigottite? (VI, 1-4)

[...] «Non guardi tu questa pietate  
Ch'è posta invece di persona morta  
Per dimandar merzede?»  
E non si n'è madonna ancor accorta! (IX, 25-28)

Perché non fuoro a me gli occhi dispeni  
o tolti, sì che de la lor veduta  
non fosse nella mente mia venuta  
a dir: «Ascolta se nel cor mi senti»?  
Ch'una paura di novi tormenti  
m'aparve allor, sì crudel e aguta,  
che l'anima chiamò: «Donna, or ci aiuta,  
che gli occhi ed i' non rimagnàn dolenti! (XII, 1-8)

## CONCLUSION

Overall, lexis, syntax and the other stylistic features of the *Rime* discussed above revolve coherently around the fundamental themes of the Cavalcantian corpus: death, suffering, sorrow and despair. All the linguistic and semantic elements taken into account in this analysis contribute to a typified articulation of subjectivity. The obsessive focus on the *Io* expressed through the use of subjective markers and of second-person pronouns, the adjectives to characterise the subject, the rhetorical level of Cavalcanti's poetry, syntax, and rhythm, coherently participate in representing a subject which is at the same time pervasive, omnipresent, and extremely weakened. Some of the pivotal issues which have emerged throughout this analysis, such as the dialectic *Io-Tu* as fictionalised in the *Rime*, or the introduction of other voices intruding into the subject's lyric discourse will be the object of specific analyses in the following Chapters (IV and V). First, however, I shall complete the present survey by examining how the subject of Cavalcanti's *Rime* is articulated with regard to the two other main categories of deixis: space and time.

II  
DEIXIS: PERSON

	'io'	'mi'	'me'	'mio'	'tu'/'voi'		'te'		'ti'/'vi'		'tuo'/'vostro'	
					DONNA	OTHERS	DONNA	OTHERS	DONNA	OTHERS	DONNA	OTHERS
<b><i>Sonetti</i></b> 4.13% ('io') 1.51% ('tu')	1.29%	1.60%	0.26%	0.98%	0.47%	0.15%	-	.	0.52%	0.10%	0.52%	-
<b><i>Canzoni</i></b> 3.75% ('io')	1.48%	1.38%	0.20%	0.69%	-	0.29%	-	-	-	0.20%	-	0.10%
<b><i>Canzoni</i></b> (without <i>DMP</i> ) 3.71% ('io') 0.57% (others)	1.46%	1.38%	0.18%	0.69%	-	0.29%				0.19%		0.09%
<b><i>Ballate</i></b> 5.05% ('io') 0.42% ('tu')	1.40%	2.20%	0.32%	1.13%	0,21%	0.70%	0.05%	0.11%	0.16%	0.43%	0.32%	0.11%



### III DEIXIS: SPACE AND TIME

#### INTRODUCTION

Spatial and temporal deictics are germane to subjectivity and its articulation. They provide information regarding the positioning of the subject of the enunciation and ways in which space and time are codified and defined in the lyric discourse. In this Chapter I will look specifically at the articulation of subjectivity in the *Rime* with regard to these two coordinates, aiming at corroborating the discussion of the previous Chapter. How are spatiality and temporality encoded in the Cavalcantian love discourse? How do these two coordinates contribute to the articulation of the Cavalcantian subject? These are two of the central questions my discussion aims to address. After outlining trends and modes of thematising spatiality and temporality in the love lyric tradition, I will focus on the high number of proximal demonstratives used to qualify the lady in the *Rime* – an unprecedented stylistic feature in the love lyric tradition. By taking into account customary uses of the *congedo*, I will discuss Cavalcanti's unconventional employment of this liminal, metatextual portion of the lyric. In actualising a form of displaced subjectivity, the *congedo* epitomises the Cavalcantian model of subjectivity. As I will argue, the subject of the *Rime* only defines the space and time of his discourse through vicarious entities which, in deputising for him, define Cavalcantian subjectivity as relegated to the undetermined dimension of the subject's interiority and to the boundaries of the text.

#### III.1 SUBJECTIVITY AND THE DEMONSTRATIVE *QUESTA*

Reflections on space and time in the medieval love lyric are potentially complicated by the fact that, as Claudio Giunta observes, 'il corteggiamento [...] dei poeti più antichi non ha bisogno di coordinate spaziali'.<sup>1</sup> A similar statement would also hold true for time coordinates. A survey of the corpus of the Italian love lyric reveals a general lack of spatial and temporal determiners. However, as discussed in the previous Chapter, spatial markers often encode information about time and temporality. It is for this reason that, in the light of this general trend, the present discussion will have an initial focus on spatial markers and reflections on temporality will be connected to the codification of space in the lyric.

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<sup>1</sup> Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, p. 436.

In the love lyric, spatial coordinates are often employed to mark the positioning of the lady with reference to the subject. Deictic allusions to distance or proximity frequently enact issues overtly thematised in the text, such as the lover-beloved dialectic. Distal determiners (chiefly *là* [there]; *ivi* [yonder]; *quella* [that]) occur with greater frequency and are mainly employed to mark and emphasise the existing distance between the lady and the *Io*. An example is the first quatrain of this sonnet by Guittone:

Lasso!, non sete *là* dov'eo tormento  
Piangendo e sospirando, amor, per voi,  
che bene vi parrea più, per un cento,  
ch'eo non vo dico, innamorato poi.<sup>2</sup> (45, 1-4)  
[my emphasis]

In this lyric, the adverb 'là' (1) stresses the remote position of the subject with reference to his beloved. As Lino Leonardi holds, 'questo dialogo [...] si sta svolgendo a distanza, permette cioè l'*allocutio* ma non il *contactus*'.<sup>3</sup>

This is unsurprising given that the central theme of the love lyric is the unfulfilled and unfulfillable desire it expresses and that the object of love is by definition unattainable. Whereas in the *Trouvères* and Troubadours, social disparity is one of the most traditional obstacles to the achievement of the lover's erotic goal, the transferral of courtly conventions into Italian culture results in the internalisation of this impasse. These dynamics are often transformed into an unbridgeable spatial gap separating the lover and his beloved, whether that gap is merely geographical or is the result of other factors, such as the death of the beloved, as in the emblematic examples of Dante and Petrarca.<sup>4</sup>

In this broader context, Cavalcanti's corpus reveals an exceptionally high number of occurrences of the determiner *questa* [this] to qualify the *donna*. The relevance of this stylistic feature is enhanced by the fact that, as an examination of the *LirIO* database shows, the use of a proximal demonstrative to refer to the lady is not recorded in pre-Cavalcantian love poetry, nor in Cavalcanti's contemporary poets, with the exception of two occurrences in Iacopo Cavalcanti ('di *questa* donna mia che merzé fende' (VI, 6); 'che *questa* bella donna con disdegni' (VI, 10)).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Guittone, 'Lasso!, non sete là dov'eo tormento', in Id., *Canzoniere*, ed. by Leonardi, pp. 134-136.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134. For the motif of the distant beloved in Guittone's poetry and its relationship with the poetry of the Troubadours and of the Sicilian School see Leonardi 'Introduzione', in Guittone, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Leonardi, pp. XIII-LIX (pp. XLVII-XLIX).

<sup>4</sup> On this topic see Roberto Antonelli, 'Avere e non avere', in "*Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa*", ed. by Bruni; and Marco Santagata, *Amate e amanti. Figure della lirica amorosa fra Dante e Petrarca* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1999).

<sup>5</sup> Iacopo Cavalcanti, 'Amore, gli occhi di costei mi fanno', in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, pp. 236-237. The same survey reveals that poets more often qualify their ladies by means of the possessive 'mia' or through some traditional adjectives (such as 'bella' or 'fina'). Guittone often uses the demonstrative 'quella', either to mark the traditional distance separating the lover and the beloved or with a derogatory meaning, in those lyrics focussed on describing the negative effects of the



Below I have tabulated all occurrences of *questa* to qualify the lady of the Cavalcantian corpus:

IV, 1	Chi è <i>questa</i> che vèn, ch'ogn'om la mira
VIII, 7	per <i>questa</i> bella donna, ché nïente
IX, 15	Di <i>questa</i> donna non si può contare
XV, 3	di <i>questa</i> bella donna, e 'l su' valore
XVII, 1	S'io prego <i>questa</i> donna che Pietate
XIX, 19	sì tosto come <i>questa</i> donna sente
XXVI, 13	Là dove <i>questa</i> bella donna appare
XXIX, 14	che <i>questa</i> donna nel partir li gitta
XXX, 30	la qual mi fece <i>questa</i> foresetta
XLIV <sup>b</sup> , 7	dice che <i>questa</i> gentiletta e bella
XLVI, 18	di <i>questa</i> pasturella gio' pigliare

[my emphasis]

I shall clarify that not all the occurrences of *questa* in the *Rime*, listed above, are deictic in a strict sense.<sup>6</sup> An expression such as the pronoun *questa* can be said to have a deictic or 'exophoric' use when it denotes a referent in the immediate physical spatio-temporal, extra-textual context.<sup>7</sup> When reference is instead made to the prior textual context, and the expression is used to denote coreferential relations, it is said to have an anaphoric or 'endophoric' use.<sup>8</sup> However, as Levinson points out, the relationship between the two functions is far more complex and this distinction often proves too simplistic, since there are several cases in which an expression is technically anaphoric but also carries a deictic value. Cavalcanti's *ballata* XIX exemplifies this complexity:

Lagrima ascendon de la mente mia,  
sì tosto come *questa* donna sente,  
che van facendo per li occhi una via  
per la qual passa spirito dolente,

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beloved on the lover, as in 'Deo!, como pote adimorar piacere' (VI, 3) and 'Lasso!, en che mal punto ed en che fella' (LVI, 3) (Guittone, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Leonardi, pp. 18-19; pp. 168-170). On the use of deixis to codify emotional closeness to or distance from the referent see Lyons, 'Deixis, Space and Time', in Id., *Semantics*, p. 677 (see Chapter II, note 19).

<sup>6</sup> More specifically, a strict deictic value could be determined for the 'questa' of XV, 3; XVII, 1. The 'questa' in sonnet IV, 1 could be interpreted as antecedent to the relative clause ('Chi è questa che vèn, ch'ogn'om la mira (1)). The 'questa' of VIII, 7; IX, 15; XIX, 19; XXVI, 13; XXIX, 14; XXX, 30; XLIV, 7; XLVI, 18 are technically anaphoric, as they reference a mention of the lady made earlier in the same text. Nonetheless, all these anaphoric mentions are charged with a very powerful presentative function, too. I have included texts XXX, XLIV and XLVI even though I previously stated that I would discard the *tenzoni* and texts pertaining to genres different to the love lyric (such as the *pastourelle*), to display the exceptional occurrence of the demonstrative in the Cavalcantian corpus.

<sup>7</sup> On the deictic value of demonstratives see Holger Diessel, *Demonstratives. Form, function and grammaticalization* (Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing, 1999).

<sup>8</sup> Levinson, 'Deixis', in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, pp. 107-111. For a pragmatic distinction between deixis and anaphora see Lyons, 'Deixis, Space and Time', in Id., *Semantics*, pp. 669-676. As Konstanze Jungbluth and Federica Da Milano point out, the transition between the notions of deixis and anaphora is provided by textual as well as discourse deixis, as it 'involves the use of the deictic procedure to point to part of a pre- or post-mentioned textual or memory representation' (Jungbluth and Da Milano, 'Introduction', in *Manual of Deixis in Romance Languages*, ed. by Jungbluth and Da Milano, pp. 1-13 (p. 8)).

ch'entra per la mia sì debil mente  
ch'oltra non puote color scoprire  
che 'l 'maginar vi si possa finire. (XIX, 18-24)

[my emphasis]

Quoted above is the third stanza of the *ballata* where the *Io* describes the devastating effects that the beloved has upon him. The recollection of the visual encounter with the lady is described a few lines earlier:

Davante agli occhi miei vegg' io lo core  
e l'anima dolente che s'ancide,  
che mor d'un colpo che li diede Amore  
ed in quel punto che *madonna* vide. (XIX, 4-7)

[my emphasis]

It is difficult to maintain that the demonstrative used to qualify the *donna* is solely endophoric because, while the 'questa' does co-reference an element of the previous stanza ('madonna', (7)), it is also charged with a powerful presentative function.

Cavalcanti's use of *questa* requires further consideration. As has emerged from the survey above, not only does *questa* have no occurrences in the pre-Cavalcantian Italian tradition and, by contrast Cavalcanti uses it with significant frequency; but the use of the proximal demonstrative is also remarkable when considered in the context of the *Rime*'s dearth of descriptive elements to depict the *donna*. Rather like what was observed for predicatives of the *Io*, the Cavalcantian lady is characterised using a limited and recursive series of adjectives or participles with adjectival function. These usually detail her moral virtues rather than her bodily presence.

It must be noted that this descriptive choice is not unique to Cavalcanti's poetry. The sacralisation of the more sexualised Occitan lady must be understood against the background of the broader stilnovistic construction of the so-called *donna-angelo*, a process connected to the lyric representation of love as an ontological experience.<sup>9</sup> However, with the exception of the few lyrics that scholars have called "archaic", as previously discussed, and of those texts of the corpus modelled

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<sup>9</sup> Guido Guinizzelli has a pivotal role in the process of the rarefication of the lady and her depiction as an angel. For a discussion of Guinizzelli's innovative use of simile in comparison to the Italian love lyric tradition see Paolo Borsa, 'Il «laido errore»', in Id., *La nuova poesia di Guido Guinizzelli* (Florence: Cadmo, 2007), pp. 61-102; a less recent essay on the broader phenomenon of the 'donna-angelo' in the Italian tradition is Aurelio Roncaglia, 'Ritorno e rettifiche alle tesi vossleriane sui fondamenti filosofici del dolce stil novo', *Beiträge zur Romanischen Philologie*, IV (1965), 115-122. For discussions of the bodily presence of the lady in Italian *Duecento* poetry, see Estelle Zunino, 'Le corps absent dans la poésie de Guido Guinizzelli et Guido Cavalcanti', in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 123-138; Donato Pirovano. "Chi è questa che vèn?" Guinizzelli, Cavalcanti e la figura femminile', in *Les deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 95-96. Pirovano follows Mario Marti, who, as well as stressing the centrality of the lady as an actual desired pole in the discourse of the *Duecento* poets, also observes that, 'più che un personaggio autonomo, concreto, obbiettivo [la donna] è una immagine nella quale il poeta cala la propria concezione della vita formulata nel sentimento amoroso' (Mario Marti, *Storia dello Stil nuovo* (Lecce: Milella, 1973), p. 145).

upon the Occitan *pastourelle*,<sup>10</sup> Cavalcanti famously moves radically away from this “rarefication” of the lady, to the extent that Rea talks about an ‘eclissi della donna’.<sup>11</sup> Traditional mentions of the lady’s *bocca* [mouth] or her *cera* [complexion] do not occur in the *Rime*; in fact, references to the bodily presence of the beloved are limited to her piercing eyes (IX, 12, 23; XIII, 1; XVI, 10; XXI, 9; XXX, 24, 36), which are rarely benevolent (XXII, 10; XXIV, 10; XXV, 11; XXVI, 26; XXIX, 4), but mostly deathly. On the one hand, this stylistic choice emphasises the central, fatal moment of the visual encounter with the lady. On the other, it also deprives the beloved’s bodily presence of concrete density, displacing her outside the domain of the lyric.<sup>12</sup>

Alongside this lack of corporeal detail, descriptions of the *donna* in the *Rime* are characterised by a repeated use of negative formulas, as if to highlight the impossibility of verbalising her ineffable presence in words, as in these examples:<sup>13</sup>

I, 30: tanto adorna parete, | ch' eo *non* saccio contare

II, 5: In questo mondo *non* ha creatura | sì piena di bieltà né di piacere

IX, 15: Di questa donna *non* si può contare: | ché di tante bellezze adorna vène, | che mente di qua giù *no* la sostiene

XXV, 16: e *non* si pò di lei giudicar fòre | altro che dir: «Quest' è novo splendore».

XXVI, 6: Cosa m'aven, quand'i' le son presente, | ch'i' *no* la posso a lo 'ntelletto dire: | veder mi par de la sua labbia uscire | una sì bella donna, che la mente | comprender *no* la può [...]

XXVIII, 5: Sentir *non* pò di lu' spirito vile

[my emphasis]

These stylistic elements, all of which serve to lend a transcendental aura to the lady, seem incompatible with the almost obsessive use of *questa*. Why does Cavalcanti choose to qualify his *donna* with the demonstrative *questa* rather than using the distancing *quella*, when his lady is so ineffable and ungraspable?

Rea comments upon this feature, proposing that:

I dimostrativi attualizzano l'oggetto d'amore, sanciscono l'effettiva presenza del *phantasma* nella psiche, attribuendogli quasi percettibilità fisica (cosa tanto più sorprendente se si considera che la figura della donna nella lirica cavalcantiana è tutt'altro che reale).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> In these texts (I, II, XXX, XLVI) the representation of the lady’s bodily presence has an uncommon centrality if compared to the rest of the corpus. We find proper nouns, several references to the lady’s physical attributes (‘cera gioiosa’ (I, 23), ‘bel vis’ (II, 8), ‘cavei [...] biondetti e ricciutelli’ (XLVI, 3)) as well as the expression ‘a cordelletta istretta’ (XXX, 32) – a mention of the *donna*’s body, which is unprecedented in thirteenth and fourteenth-century texts. For a discussion of the relations of this imagery with the Occitan tradition of the *pastourelle* see De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 116.

<sup>11</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 39.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-37.

<sup>13</sup> Calenda holds that the frequent occurrence of the ‘non’ in the corpus mirrors ‘un’attitudine alla negazione di matrice concettuale e ideologica’ (Calenda, *Per altezza d'ingegno*, p. 36).

<sup>14</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 102.

Rea places Cavalcanti's use of the proximal demonstrative within the context of a broader phenomenon that previous scholars described as the coexistence of both a metaphysical and a realistic, concrete vocabulary in the *Rime*.<sup>15</sup> As a consequence of the internalisation of the customary courtly dynamics, Cavalcanti expunges the lexis connected to the "external", historicisable aspects of the love encounter, instead preferring a more abstract vocabulary, related to the subject's inner dimension. In contrast to this feature, Maria Corti observes, Cavalcanti, 'sia nella fase drammatica sia in quella contemplativa e riflessa, ha tratti di una concretezza di visione, penetra in modo [...] vivo e con sguardo [...] preciso le immagini delle proprie apparizioni'.<sup>16</sup> Following on from these remarks, Rea explains this phenomenon as being the result of Cavalcanti's intention to dramatise the *Io*'s interiority by means of providing the subject's inner dimension with material, tangible consistency. The use of the proximal demonstrative, according to Rea, is intended to lend a physical presence to the phantasmatic projection of the lady that inhabits the subject's psyche.

I will argue that this styleme cannot be simply attributed to Cavalcanti's "expressionistic" lexicon. I will build upon these observations and suggest that the use of *questa* plays a key role in the definition of the lover-beloved polarity in the *Rime* and, therefore, in the articulation of Cavalcanti's lyric subjectivity. The use of *questa* demands further reflection because, I will propose, in establishing spatial, temporal, and affective relationships it participates in a series of cognitive and linguistic events. More specifically, I will suggest that the demonstrative confines the feminine figure within the subject's *mente*, emphasising her only possible existence as a phantasmatic projection, and thus depriving her of the 'percettibilità fisica' alluded to by Rea. As a result, the function of *questa* fails to perform its customary function: rather than securing an anchorage to the extra-textual domain and providing its referent with corporeal perceptibility, the demonstrative voids the referent and, in transforming it into a mere signifier, emblematises the distance separating the subject and his desired beloved. *Questa* emblematises some pivotal aspects of the Cavalcantian dynamics of love, and its function and effect have a central bearing on the expression of subjectivity.

This dialectic is exemplified in one of the most frequently anthologised sonnets of the *Rime*:

Chi è questa che vèn, ch'ogn'om la mira,  
che fa tremar di chiaritate l'ære

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<sup>15</sup> The label 'metaphysical language' has been coined by Corti, who describes the verbalisation of emotion and affect in the Cavalcantian corpus as 'di natura metafisica' (Corti, 'Dualismo e immaginazione visiva', p. 644). For an extensive discussion of the coexistence of metaphysical and expressionistic vocabularies in the *Rime* and for the useful and complete bibliography on this topic see Rea, 'Implicazioni lessicali e semantiche'; 'Lessico della corporeità e lessico della trascendenza', in Id., *Cavalcanti poeta*, pp. 41-61; pp. 97-110.

<sup>16</sup> Corti, 'Fisionomia stilistica', p. 550.

e mena seco Amor, sì che parlare  
null' omo pote, ma ciascun sospira? 4

O Deo, che sembra quando li occhi gira!  
dical' Amor, ch'i' nol savria contare:  
cotanto d'umiltà donna mi pare,  
ch'ogn'altra ver' di lei i' la chiam' ira. 8

Non si poria contar la sua piagenza,  
ch'a le' s'inchin' ogni gentil vertute,  
e la Beltate per sua dea la mostra. 11

Non fu sì alta già la mente nostra  
e non si pose 'n noi tanta salute,  
che propiamente n'aviàn canoscenza. (IV) 14

The opening lines of this lyric depict an abrupt feminine apparition. The intensity of this epiphany is bolstered by an intertextual reference to *Song of Songs* 6, 9 ('Quae est ista quae progreditur?')<sup>17</sup>, a verse used to celebrate the Annunciation.<sup>18</sup> Through recall of the Scriptures, the *donna* is charged with a miraculous feature which the evidential function of the demonstrative further emphasises. The epiphanic manifestation of the feminine figure is foregrounded further through the use of the pronoun 'la', a chain of relative clauses ('che vèn' (1); 'ch'ogn'om la mira' (1); 'che fa tremar di chiaritate l'âre | e mena seco amor' (2-3)), and the deictic verb of movement 'vèn' (1).<sup>19</sup>

To further understand Cavalcanti's reuse of Scriptures as related to the use of 'questa', and his own eulogisation of the lady as connected with the love lyric tradition, I shall consider the other main

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<sup>17</sup> *Biblia Sacra Vulgatae Editionis*, ed. by A. Colunga eL. Turrado (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1995). All further references to the Bible are from this edition.

<sup>18</sup> The long lyric poem of the *Song of Songs* is a nuptial *canto* included in the biblical corpus. As is well known, its exegesis is particularly complex. Its imagery is extended in explicitly theological and religious directions. This aspect, together with the allegorical features of the text, allows several, often contrasting readings of the poem. For an account on the multiplicity of these interpretations see Ann E. Matter, *The voice of my beloved: The Song of Songs in Medieval Western Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992). For the importance of this text to love lyric tradition, see Peter Dronke, 'The Song of Songs and Medieval Love-Lyric', in *The Bible and Medieval Culture*, ed. by Willem Lourdaux and Daniël Verhelst (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979), pp. 236-262; Emilio Pasquini and Antonio Enzo Quaglio, *Lo Stilnovo e la poesia religiosa* (Rome; Bari: Laterza, 1981), pp. 74-95. As I mentioned in the Introduction, with regard to Cavalcanti's reuse of religious intertexts, the most useful point of reference is De Robertis' commentary on the *Rime* (Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986). For other fundamental sources see my Introduction, note 39. For the presence of the *Canticles* in Cavalcanti's poetry, see Lino Pertile, *La puttana e il gigante. Dal Cantico dei Cantici al Paradiso Terrestre di Dante* (Ravenna: Longo, 1998), p. 33; Paola Nasti, 'Nozze e vedovanza: dinamiche dell'appropriazione biblica in Dante e Cavalcanti', *Tenzzone. rivista de la Asociación Complutense de Dantología*, 7 (2007), 71-110 <https://webs.ucm.es/info/italiano/acd/tenzone/> [accessed 7 December 2019].

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of the verb "to come", see Charles J. Fillmore, 'Coming and going', in *Lectures on Deixis*, pp. 77-102. On the use of the present tense see Jonathan Culler, 'The Lyric Present', in *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 2015), pp. 283-295.

intertext of ‘Chi è questa che vèn’. Cavalcanti’s lyric also evokes Guido Guinizzelli’s ‘Io voglio del ver la mia donna laudare’:<sup>20</sup>

Io voglio del ver la mia donna laudare  
ed asembrarli la rosa e lo giglio:  
piú che stella diana splende e pare,  
e ciò ch’è lassú bello a lei somiglio. 4

Verde river’ a lei rasebro e l’âre,  
tutti color’ di fior’, giano e vermiglio,  
oro ed azzurro e ricche gioi per dare:  
medesmo Amor per lei rafina meglio. 8

Passa per via adorna, e sí gentile  
ch’abassa orgoglio a cui dona salute,  
e fa’l de nostra fé se non la crede; 11

e’ no lle pò apressare om che sia vile;  
ancor ve dirò c’a maggior vertute:  
null’om pò mal pensar fin che la vede.<sup>21</sup> 14

The lady in this poem is celebrated through a comparison with nature. As seen in Cavalcanti’s sonnet, Guinizzelli employs the *Song of Songs* to praise his lady and lend her a miraculous aura. Unlike Cavalcanti, however, Guinizzelli exploits the *Song of Songs*’ analogic model of comparison. As Contini notes in commenting on Guinizzelli’s sonnet, ‘la poetica dell’analogia fra oggetto amato e forme naturali s’ispira manifestamente al Cantico dei Cantici’.<sup>22</sup> Modelling his praise on the example of this biblical text, the poet *equates* his lady’s virtues to several natural elements (such as ‘la rosa e lo giglio’ (2)). In doing so, he establishes her supernatural presence.<sup>23</sup>

Estelle Zunino, commenting on Guinizzelli’s use of simile to praise his beloved, maintains that in this lyric:

La laus mulieris devient le lieu de réunion de tous les éléments naturels [...] afin de donner selon un système analogique comparatif [...] une idée de cette beauté extraordinaire. Il s’agit là d’un processus

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<sup>20</sup> In discussing Cavalcanti’s intertextual references to Guinizzelli’s sonnet, Contini talks about a ‘concorrenza nella loda’ (Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 495). Contini observes that, as does Guinizzelli’s text, Cavalcanti’s ‘Chi è questa che vèn’ has the rhymes *-are* and *-ute*, as well as the four rhyme-words ‘âre’, ‘pare’, ‘vertute’, ‘salute’.

<sup>21</sup> Guinizzelli, ‘Io voglio del ver la mia donna laudare’, in Id., *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, pp. 51-53.

<sup>22</sup> Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 472

<sup>23</sup> On this innovative feature of Guinizzelli’s *loda*, aimed at actualising a theologisation of his lady which proved crucial to the love lyric tradition, and on the *tenzoni* it triggered, see Paolo Borsa, ‘Il «laido errore»’.

d'actualisation où la comparaison devient instrument de la connaissance et qui vise à rendre la dame présente.<sup>24</sup>

According to Zunino, Guinizzelli's intention to depict his lady as sacred, using a rhetorical device typical of Scriptures, results in the simultaneous eulogisation and theologisation of the *donna*, by means of which, as Zunino stresses, through the use of similes, the lady is made present.

Cavalcanti's sonnet does not achieve an analogous result. The lyric opens with an overarching question that stretches across the entire first quatrain. While it is initially presented as a pending issue, it is finally declared to be unanswerable. As De Robertis observes, 'l'interrogazione iniziale [...] introduce a una serie regolare di negazioni, nelle terzine [...] anche formalmente esposte'.<sup>25</sup> The epiphany can only be expressed negatively, obliquely, by detailing the description of its effects upon the surrounding space (the trembling of the air (2)) and upon those who witness it (aphasia (3); sigh (4)).<sup>26</sup> The chain of negations establishes the cognitive impossibility of conceiving the power of the *donna*, of accomplishing the intellectual process, and of putting her presence into words.

This incapacity, as well as the fleeting presence of Cavalcanti's beloved, have emerged in analyses that have focused on describing the temporality expressed in this sonnet. In fact, the use of the demonstrative also provides readers with information regarding the time and temporality of the love phenomenology. Manuele Gragnolati and Francesca Southerden observe that the temporality of 'Chi è questa che vèn' is difficult to thematise.<sup>27</sup> The epiphany is compressed between the 'vèn' (1) – a verb with strong deictic implications –<sup>28</sup> and the 'quando' (5), which marks the movement of the lady's piercing eyes. Favati suggests that the caesuras that fragment the opening lines of the sonnet serve to further emphasise the moment of the apparition, claiming that this device 'serve come elemento tecnico per elevare il tono psicologico-evocativo della [...] rappresentazione'.<sup>29</sup> Following this explosive moment, Gragnolati and Southerden observe, the event 'è subito seguito da una certa

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<sup>24</sup> Estelle Zunino, 'Le corps absent dans la poésie de Guido Guinizzelli et Guido Cavalcanti', in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 123-138 (p. 130).

<sup>25</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 16.

<sup>26</sup> As Rea points out, the trembling of the air mirrors the subject's *tremore* which usually affects the lover when he visually encounters the beloved. It could therefore be considered as another effect of the epiphany (Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 57).

<sup>27</sup> The issue of temporality in the sonnet form has been recently discussed by Manuele Gragnolati and Francesca Southerden. They compare representations of the lady's epiphany in sonnets by Cavalcanti, Dante, and Petrarch and observe the different form of temporalities and desires that the lyrics express (Manuele Gragnolati and Francesca Southerden, 'Dalla perdita al possesso. Forme di temporalità non lineare nelle liriche di Cavalcanti, Dante e Petrarca', *Chroniques web Italienne*, 32/1 (2017), 136-154.

<sup>28</sup> See my note 19.

<sup>29</sup> Favati, 'Tecnica ed arte', p. 127.

brutalità che caratterizza l'esperienza dell'amante',<sup>30</sup> epitomised by the following negative formulas.

As the two scholars conclude:

[...] la donna rimane fuori portata e la temporalità della lirica registra la sua inafferrabilità, ricreando il carattere estremamente effimero e incompiuto dell'incontro con lei. [...] In definitiva la storia che racconta la lirica è dunque quella di una perdita anticipata e inevitabile.<sup>31</sup>

After the abrupt, powerful apparition, quickly completed in the space of five lines, the sonnet is stuck in the incontrovertible, obsessive immobility of loss, confirmed by the use of 'non fu' (12) and 'non si pose' (13), indicating a condition *ab aeterno*, as De Robertis puts it.<sup>32</sup>

The epiphany of the *canzone* 'Io non pensava che lo cor giammai' (IX) is connected to 'Chi è questa che vèn' by a series of stylistic features, such as the use of the demonstrative and the present tense to render the lady's apparition.<sup>33</sup> Reflecting upon a more complex metric structure, which often accommodates narrative progression rather than capturing a single event, will allow us to formulate further observations on the use of 'questa' as related to the negotiation of the lover-beloved dialectic in the *Rime* and the articulation of subjectivity. De Robertis defines 'Io non pensava' as Cavalcanti's 'canzone storica della [...] "morte"'.<sup>34</sup> This definition is due to the fact that, in this lyric, the source of the subject's suffering has a specific temporal and "historical" collocation:

*Io non pensava* che lo cor giammai  
avesse di sospir' tormento tanto,  
che dell'anima mia nascesse pianto  
mostrando per lo viso agli occhi morte. 4  
Non *sentìo* pace né riposo alquanto  
poscia ch'Amore e madonna *trovai*,  
lo qual mi *disse*: «Tu non camperai,  
ché troppo è lo valor di costei forte». 8  
La mia virtù si *partìo* sconsolata  
poi che *lassò* lo core  
a la battaglia ove madonna è stata: 11  
la qual degli occhi suoi *venne* a ferire  
in tal guisa, ch'Amore  
*ruppe* tutti miei spiriti a fuggire. (IX, 1-14) 14  
[my emphasis]

<sup>30</sup> Gragnolati and Southerden, 'Dalla perdita al possesso', p. 140. For a reading of Cavalcanti's sonnet which takes into account the issues of time and temporality, see also Robert Pogue Harrison, 'The Ghost of Guido Cavalcanti', in Id., *The Body of Beatrice* (Baltimore; Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press, 1988), pp. 69-92.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>32</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 18.

<sup>33</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, pp. 79-80.

<sup>34</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 30.



The lyric begins by reporting that a deathly encounter with the lady that has occurred, and by detailing the devastating effects of that event on the subject. As De Robertis points out, the imperfect tense at the opening of the *canzone* ('Io non pensava' (1)) does not have a continuative meaning, as it 'designa il tempo in cui s'è compiuta la [...] morte [del soggetto]'.<sup>35</sup> The other main verbs of the stanza are in the preterite tense, thus explicitly setting the fatal moment of the encounter in a past dimension.

The second stanza seems to attempt to visualise the epiphanic encounter just mentioned:

Di questa donna non si può contare:  
ché di tante bellezze adorna vène,  
che mente di qua giù no la sostiene  
sì che la veggia lo 'ntelletto nostro. 18  
Tant' è gentil, che, quand' eo penso bene,  
l'anima sento per lo cor tremare,  
sì come quella che non pò durare  
davanti al gran valor ch'è i llei dimostro. 22  
Per gli occhi fere la sua claritate,  
sì che quale mi vede  
dice: «Non guardi tu? Quest'è Pietate  
ch'è posta invece di persona morta  
per dimandar merzede».  
E non si n'è madonna ancor accorta! (IX, 15-28) 28  
[my emphasis]

Tenses abruptly shift from past to present. The declaration of the lady's ineffability ('di questa donna non si può contare' (15)) and of the inadequacy of human intellectual faculties ('che mente di qua giù no la sostiene' (17)) both preempts and encloses the description of her coming ('che di tante bellezze adorna vène' (16)). As De Robertis points out, the 'vène' (16), 'mantiene vivo il senso dell'evento'.<sup>36</sup> As Rea also suggests, the verb of movement in the present tense 'corrisponde al guinizzelliano *passa per via*, aggiungendovi una semantica di condizione abituale'.<sup>37</sup> The effect of immediacy and of repetition is further strengthened by the demonstrative 'questa' and by its strong presentative function.<sup>38</sup> Embedded in a past narrative tense, the epiphany represented in the second stanza of the *canzone* takes the form of an obsessively reiterated event, with undeniable consequences for the subject. Gragnolati's and Southerden's observations take on further meaning when interpreting this *canzone*. The dynamics are analogous to those seen in 'Chi è questa che vèn', but the shift of tenses further marks the power of the lady and the unavoidable loss which follows. Even though the more complex articulation of the *canzone* would normally accommodate a narrative progression, the

<sup>35</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 31.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>37</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 79.

<sup>38</sup> *Ivi.*

description of the epiphany breaks the flow of the narration, marking a stasis and intensifying the sense of loss.

What is the function of the proximal demonstrative, when the lady is established as irretrievably intangible as in these lyrics? In conveying a sense of immediacy, in marking an empty referent, in simulating a performed movement of desire and failed appropriation and, finally, in reducing the traditional praise to a gesture of speechless pointing, I shall suggest that the emptiness of this deictic emphasises the phantasmatic existence of the lady and epitomises the Cavalcantian representation of the love dynamics. To this purpose, I shall recall Fenzi's description of Cavalcanti's experience of love quoted in the Introduction of this thesis (pp. XVII-XIX). As Fenzi puts it, in the *Rime* 'l'amore [...] finisce presto per rivelarsi come pura esperienza della perdita: perdita del piacere, perdita dell'oggetto amato e perdita delle ragioni stesse dell'amore [...], e infine perdita di sé, e morte'.<sup>39</sup>

These dynamics of self-loss can be seen in the closing lines of the second stanza quoted above, (IX, 25-28) where the subject is replaced by the personified 'Pietà'. As Cassata explains, 'Pietà s'è sostituita [...] all'annichilita identità (*persona morta*) di Guido';<sup>40</sup> and as De Robertis further suggests, 'la morte in cui egli [il soggetto] è trasformato diventa un'immagine di pietà'.<sup>41</sup> A form of self-loss is emblematised by the annihilation of the subject ('*persona morta*'), as the *Io* appears to an external onlooker ('*si che quale mi vede*' [my emphasis] (24)).<sup>42</sup> One could tentatively argue that a form of self-loss is also signalled by the adoption of a collective or an impersonal point of view that characterises both sonnet IV and *canzone* IX. While expressions such as 'ogn'omo' (1), 'null'omo' (4), 'ciascun' (4), 'che sembra' (5), 'non si poria' (9), 'la mente nostra' (12), 'n noi' (13), 'n'aviàn' (14) are certainly used with the intention of highlighting the universality of the lady's effects, the recourse to the collective point of view depersonalises the *Io* in articulating a collective subjectivity.

To conclude, the determinative *questa* seems to be involved in a specific dynamic of manipulation of absence, loss, and re-iteration in Cavalcanti's love dynamics. It emblematises issues related to desired spatial, temporal, and affective proximity. 'Questa' evokes specific power dynamics, epitomising Cavalcanti's re-enactment of the courtly dialectic. The inability to conceive and to verbalise the presence of the *donna* prevents the deictic from anchoring the referent to the extra-textual domain. As the referent is intellectually and, consequently, verbally ungraspable, the deictic insists on this failure. The ostensive function of the demonstrative saturates its referent and testifies to its resistance. It appears to serve to insist on its "emptiness", on the negativity intrinsic to

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<sup>39</sup> Fenzi, 'Interpretazioni cavalcantiane', in *Guido Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, pp. 120-121.

<sup>40</sup> Cassata, in Cavalcanti, 1993, p. 75.

<sup>41</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 33.

<sup>42</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 80.

this class of signs.<sup>43</sup> *Questa* is then reduced to a mere gesture of pointing. The use of a proximal determiner, in participating in these dynamics, intensifies the unattainability of the desired object, by presenting it at the same time as increasingly close and irretrievably distant.

### III.2 OTHER SPACE AND TIME REFERENCES IN THE *RIME*

Apart from the exceptional frequency of *questa*, there is otherwise a relative lack of spatial determiners in the *Rime*. These markers are condensed in a small number of texts in the corpus in which reference to space and spatiality is required by the convention of the genre. By examining two relevant examples from the corpus I will further discuss Cavalcanti's use of spatial markers to cast and re-cast his own lover-beloved dialectic of unattainability and to articulate a displaced model of subjectivity. I will suggest that the here and now of the poet-lover's enunciation is never defined and that allusions to the extra-textual domain of the discourse, especially with reference to the beloved, are never made, except through the *Io*'s deputised entities. It is for these reasons that the Cavalcantian model of subjectivity is defined by a space and a time which are utterly self-referential, and thus, as I will contend, located in textuality. This will emerge more clearly in the concluding section of the Chapter, where a comparison with Dante will be conducted.

'Era in pensier d'amore' (XXX), a *ballata* inspired by the Occitan *pastourelle*, is one of the exceptions mentioned above. As Michelangelo Picone holds, the *pastourelle* is a "hybrid genre" in that it combines the *canzo*'s ennobling idea of *fin'amor* with a popular register.<sup>44</sup> This liminality, Picone explains, allows the projection 'dell'avventura interiore dell'io lirico nello spazio della narratività'.<sup>45</sup> It sets the love dynamics in a less aulic dimension which enables the subject to physically possess the object of love. This genre contamination can also be seen in Cavalcanti's *ballata*. 'Era in penser' thematises several elements unusual in the Cavalcantian corpus. These include the setting 'fuori dal chiostro urbano e [...] delle proprie ossessioni',<sup>46</sup> and, most importantly, the involvement of two ladies in the dialogue.<sup>47</sup> In addition to these exceptional aspects, I shall propose that in this text, even these more realistic details are internalised in Cavalcanti's *ballata*, so that the entire setting ultimately manifests as deprived of its alleged realism.

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<sup>43</sup> As Giorgio Agamben points out, *deixis*, because of its property of harking back to the speaking act, can bring to the page the depth of this negativity, by simulating the emergence of the Voice ('la *deixis* [...] mostra [...] l'istanza stessa del discorso, il suo aver luogo' (Giorgio Agamben, *Il linguaggio e la morte. Un seminario sul luogo della negatività* (Turin: Einaudi, 1982), p. 35).

<sup>44</sup> Michelangelo Picone, 'Dalla *Pastorella* alle donne dello schermo', in Id., *"Vita nuova" e tradizione romanza* (Padua: Liviana, 1979), pp. 73-98 (p. 73).

<sup>45</sup> Picone 'Dalla *Pastorella* alle donne dello schermo', p. 74.

<sup>46</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 113.

<sup>47</sup> From the stylistic point of view, the exceptional features of this text, which stages an actual encounter with a feminine "other", are visible in the high frequency of the second-person pronoun 'tu' and related grammatical forms, and in the adjectivation (on this specific matter, and, more specifically, on 'a cordellata istretta' (line 32), see my note 10).

This aspect has partly already emerged in Picone's analysis of the *ballata*. The scholar notes the fact that Cavalcanti abandons several important features that are central to this genre, such as '[...] le precisazioni geografiche delle dimensioni del "qui" e del "là"',<sup>48</sup> that is any reference to the spatial, extra-textual dimension of the encounter with the 'foresette'. The refrain reads as follows:

Era in penser d'amor quand'i' trovai  
due foresette nove.  
L'una cantava: «E' piove  
gioco d'amore in noi». (XXX, 1-4)

The *ballata* opens with a specification of the subject's disposition, described as 'in pensier d'amore' (1). As is typical of this genre, the *Io* is absorbed in thinking of his desired beloved.<sup>49</sup> The setting of the *ballata* appears to shift from the subject's interiority ('Era *in pensier* d'amor' [my emphasis] (1)) to the external dimension of the encounter ('[...] quand'i' trovai | due foresette nove' (1-2)). However, rather than contributing to an "exit" from the inner dimension of the *Io*, the vision of the *foresette* proves to be another occasion for a relapse into it and a focus on the subject's suffering, as these lines reveal:

Poi che *mi vider* così sbigottito,  
disse l'una, che rise:  
«Guarda come conquise  
Forza d'amor costui!» (XXX, 17-20)

[..]

disse «'L tuo colpo, che nel cor *si vede*,  
fu tratto d'occhi di troppo valore,  
che dentro vi lasciaro uno splendore  
ch'i' nol posso mirare.  
*Dimmi se ricordare*  
Di quegli occhi ti puoi». (XXX, 23-28)  
[my emphasis]

Due to the *foresetta*'s request, the attention of the lyric discourse shifts from the subject's visible pain to his inner condition, as a consequence of the encounter with a lady in Toulouse (lines 29-36). As Ciccuto observes, 'un dialogo manierato tra il poeta e le *foresette* gli permette [a Cavalcanti] di presentare il consueto registro delle figurazioni interiori con accresciuta aderenza ai moti psicologici dell'uno e delle altre'.<sup>50</sup> Not only is the focus of the lyric on the *Io*, but also, the encounter with the

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<sup>48</sup> Picone, 'Dalla *Pastorella* alle donne dello schermo', p. 89.

<sup>49</sup> 'Lo stato d'animo è tipico del protagonista delle pastorelle, spesso dichiarantesi, come Guido potrebbe, "pencis si com suis sovent" [...]' (De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 114).

<sup>50</sup> Ciccuto, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1978, p. 125.

two women displaces the imagery of the *ballata* to another encounter, that with the Tolousaine, so that ‘il colloquio sfocia in narrazione d’altra esperienza’, as De Robertis adds.<sup>51</sup>

Toponyms, proper nouns, and spatial determiners only occur to mark distance from this lady, both temporally and spatially:

i’ dissi: «E’ *mi ricorda* che ’n *Tolosa*  
donna m’apparve a cordelletta istretta,  
Amor la qual chiamava l’*Amandetta*; (XXX, 31-33)

[...]

Vanne a *Tolosa*, ballatetta mia,  
ed entra quietamente a la *Dorata*,  
ed *ivi* chiama che per cortesia  
d’alcuna bella donna sie menata  
dinanzi a *quella* di cui t’ho pregata;  
e s’ella ti riceve,  
dille con voce leve:  
«Per merzé vegno a voi». (XXX, 45-52)

[my emphasis]

As the last stanza of the *ballata* quoted above displays, spatial references are used when the *Io* has to determine his relationship with his desired *Tu*. ‘*Ivi*’ (48) and ‘*quella*’ (50), two distal deictics, establish the unbridgeable distance from the lady who causes the subject’s suffering. As De Robertis proposes, ‘il poeta ha ricondotto quest’ennesima esperienza ai modi e ai luoghi [...] di una precisa storia e *geografia* letteraria’ [my emphasis],<sup>52</sup> a specific geography which anchors the *Io* of the enunciation to the extra-textual (and extra-inner) domain only to situate him as distant from his *Tu*. Despite the fact that the encounter with the *foresette* contains references to the historical dimension, it is relevant to emphasise that these references are only used to set up a specific dialectic with *another* lady, thus recasting a dynamic of unattainability seen elsewhere in the Cavalcantian corpus. In this regard, one might even question whether an actual shift from the *Io*’s ‘penser’ to the outer reality of the dialogue with the two ladies has occurred, since the focus perhaps suggests that the entire scene takes place within the subject’s inner dimension.

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<sup>51</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 113. See also Picone, ‘Dalla *Pastorella* alle donne dello schermo’, p. 89. It is relevant to stress, as also observed by Picone, that the encounter with the Toulousain lady, was fictionalised in sonnet XXIX such that the actual woman met in Toulouse was an *imago* for the poet’s beloved. This element is worth stressing because, as typically occurs in the *Rime*, a real, tangible *occasione* has its significance in recalling something else, in casting and recasting a polarity of distance (both spatial and temporal, as in this case) as well as of unattainability.

<sup>52</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 113.

An analogous use of a traditional lyric motif recurs in the *ballata* ‘Perch’i’ no spero di tornar giammai’ (XXXV) — this text may contain the highest number of spatial determiners in the Cavalcantian corpus. As I will suggest, differently from ‘Era in penser’, the model of subjectivity staged in this lyric tries to perform an “exit” from the interior domain of the lover’s personified faculties, as the *Io* imagines reaching a position of proximity to his lady. However, as I will also observe by commenting on the use of spatial markers in this *canzone*, not only is the supposed transition from the inner dimension to an engagement with external events staged through a displacement of the *Io* of the text, but also, looking more closely at this same transition, an actual shift to the extra-textual domain of the *canzone* is not actualised by the lyric’s *congedo*. This aspect, as I shall propose and further expand, suggests that we consider Cavalcantian subjectivity as thoroughly weak and eminently textual.

The lyric is particularly dense and so merits quotation at length:

Perch’i’ no spero di tornar giammai,  
ballatetta, in Toscana,  
va’ tu, leggera e piana,  
dritt’ a la donna mia,  
che per sua cortesia  
ti farà molto onore. 6

Tu porterai novelle di sospiri  
piene di dogli’ e di molta paura;  
ma guarda che persona non ti miri  
che sia nemica di gentil natura: 10  
ché certo per la mia disavventura  
tu saresti contesa,  
tanto da lei ripresa  
che mi sarebbe angoscia,  
dopo, la morte, poscia,  
pianto e novel dolore. 16

Tu senti, ballatetta, che la morte  
mi stringe sì, che vita m’abbandona;  
e senti come ’l cor si sbatte forte  
per quel che ciascun spirito ragiona. 20  
Tanto è distrutta già la mia persona,  
ch’i’ non posso soffrire:  
se tu mi vuoi servire,  
mena l’anima teco  
(molto di ciò ti prego)  
quando uscirà del core. 26

Deh, ballatetta mia, a la tu’ amistate  
quest’anima che trema raccomandando:  
menala teco, nella sua pietate,  
a quella bella donna a cu’ ti mando. 30  
Deh, ballatetta, dille sospirando,

quando le se' presente:  
«Questa vostra servente  
vien pe' ristar con voi,  
partita da colui  
che fu servo d'Amore». 36

Tu, voce sbigottita e deboletta  
ch'esci piangendo de lo cor dolente,  
coll'anima e con questa ballatetta  
va' ragionando della strutta mente. 40

Voi troverete una donna piacente,  
di sì dolce intelletto  
che vi sarà diletto  
starle davanti ognora.  
Anim', e tu l'adora  
sempre, nel su' valore. (XXXV) 46

Following on from the work of Contini, scholars have unanimously rejected previous autobiographical interpretations of the *ballata*, according to which the text makes reference to Cavalcanti's exclusion order from Florence and his exile in Sarzana.<sup>53</sup> For a long time, the text has been read and associated with exile lyrics, in which the topos of *amor de lonh* and the distance from the beloved lady, serve to express the poet's banishment from his city, which had become much more widespread among the communal poets of central Italy.<sup>54</sup>

The Rudelian topos of the "distant love" was reworked and first introduced into the Italian tradition by Giacomo da Lentini. An example is the Notaro's well-known *canzone* 'Troppo son dimorato', which thematises the *Io*'s love for his distant beloved lady.<sup>55</sup> As Catherine Keen discusses, thirteenth-century Tuscan poets imbue this motif with political and civic significance, especially after the battle of Montaperti, to metaphorically express their forced exclusion from the city.<sup>56</sup> In

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<sup>53</sup> 'L'interpretazione naturalistica, secondo la quale Guido alluderebbe al presentimento della fine durante l'esilio di Sarzana, dove infatti si ammalò mortalmente, non ha serio fondamento. Il tutto ha mera figura d'ipotesi poetica, e nulla è documentario fuori dell'occasione d'un viaggio fuor di Toscana, che può essere quello in Francia' (Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 541). See also Gianfranco Contini, *Letteratura italiana delle Origini* (Florence: Sansoni, 1970), pp. 169-170.

<sup>54</sup> For a study of the urban imaginings in vernacular lyric verse of thirteenth and fourteenth-century Italian poets, and of their idealised perception and representation of city life, see Catherine Keen, 'Boundaries and Belonging: Imagining Urban Identity in Medieval Italy', in *Imagining the City*, ed. by Christian Emden, Catherine Keen, and David R. Midgley, 2 vols (Oxford; New York: Peter Lang, 2006), II, pp. 65-85.

<sup>55</sup> Giacomo da Lentini, 'Troppo son dimorato', in *I poeti della Scuola Siciliana*, I: *Giacomo da Lentini*, pp. 217-234. On Giacomo da Lentini's reworking of this troubadour motif, see Aniello Fratta, 'Giacomo ad Lentini e l'amore lontano: la canzone *S'io doglio no è meraviglia*', in *La poesia di Giacomo da Lentini. Scienza e filosofia nel XIII secolo in Sicilia e nel Mediterraneo occidentale. Atti del convegno tenutosi all'Università Autonoma di Barcellona (16-18, 23-24 ottobre 1997)*, ed. by Rossend Arqués (Palermo: Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, 2000), pp. 243-252.

<sup>56</sup> Catherine Keen, "'Va', mia canzone'. Textual Transmission and the *Congedo* in Medieval Exile Lyrics', *Italian Studies*, 64/2 (2009), 183-197. See Keen's article for a study of the *congedo* in medieval exile lyrics.

illustrating the stages of this ‘processo di feconda intersezione tra erotica e politica’,<sup>57</sup> Raffaella Zanni observes:

la rappresentazione cortese di una condizione di amore lontano (e di un amante sostanzialmente *esiliato* dalla vista dell’amata) è funzionale [...] alla *mise en scène* di ben altro allontanamento : quello del cittadino bandito dalla propria città. Il corpo erotico di *Midons* della tradizione cortese (maschilizzato al pari del signore feudale a cui il vassallo è sottoposto) si fa quindi corpo politico, femminilizzandosi in *donna-città*, dalla quale il poeta è – temporaneamente – allontanato.<sup>58</sup>

Cavalcanti’s *ballata* is rather generically classified as a ‘ballata di lontananza’.<sup>59</sup> In this lyric the theme of distance is made explicit from the very incipit of the lyric and, as the opening stanza outlines, the ‘lontananza’ from Toscana (and the *donna*) is unbridgeable (‘Perch’i’ *no spero* di tornar *giammai*’ [my emphasis]). The separation is further, hyperbolically dramatised as the whole text is ‘costruito come un grande “envoi”, messaggio fatto a persona’,<sup>60</sup> as De Robertis emphasises.

The *envoi* or *congedo* is used rarely by the Sicilian poets but is increasingly employed by the communal poets of central Italy, as Catherine Keen observes.<sup>61</sup> As the closing stanza of a *ballata* or a *canzone*, the *congedo* is a textual unit that performs several functions.<sup>62</sup> One of the more frequent of these functions is that it hosts the poet’s apostrophe to his own text to reach his audience, thereby serving to bridge the spatial gap between the poet and his addressee(s), as in this telling example from Re Enzo:

v  
Va, canzonetta mia,  
e saluta Messere,  
dilli lo mal ch’i’ aggio:  
quelli che m’à ’n bailia  
sì distretto mi tene,  
ch’eo viver non por[r]aggio;  
salutami Toscana,  
quella ched è sovrana,  
in cui regna tutta cortesia;

<sup>57</sup> Raffaella Zanni, ‘Dalla lontananza all’esilio nella lirica italiana del XIII secolo’, *Arzaná. Cahiers de littérature médiévale italienne*, 16-17 (2013), 325-363 (p. 328).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 341-342. On the feminisation of the city in Guittone, Dante, and Cino, see Catherine Keen, ‘Sex and the Medieval City. Viewing the Body Political from Exile in Early Italian Verse’, in *Troubled Vision. Gender, Sexuality and Sight in Medieval text and image*, ed. by Emma Campbell and Robert Mills (New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 155-171.

<sup>59</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 194; De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 135.

<sup>60</sup> *Ivi.* A later example of this unconventional use of the *congedo* is the *ballata* ‘Inn-abito di saggia messaggera’ attributed to Dante, in which the whole text is addressed as a go-between for the poet and his lady. (Dante, ‘Inn-abito di saggia messaggera’, in *Id.*, *Rime*, 2005, pp. 515-518).

<sup>61</sup> Catherine Keen, ‘“Va”, mia canzone’, p. 184.

<sup>62</sup> For a study of the standard *formulae* in the medieval *congedo* see Leandro Biadene, ‘La forma metrica del commiato nella canzone italiana dei secoli XII e XIV’, in *Miscellanea di filologia e linguistica in memoria di Napoleone Caix e Ugo Angelo Canello*, ed. by Graziadio Isaia Ascoli and others (Florence: Le Monnier, 1886), pp. 357-372 (quoted in Keen, ‘“Va”, mia canzone’, p. 184).



e vanne in Pugl[i]a piana,  
la magna Capitana,  
là dov'è lo mio core nott'e dia.<sup>63</sup>

In these lines, the addressed *canzone* is personified and transformed into a self-sufficient entity, whose journey across Italy is described in detail. As Elena Lombardi observes, the “predecessor” of this rhetorical device was developed by the second generation of troubadours.<sup>64</sup> In a broader discussion that explores the link between women and textuality and, more specifically, discusses issues of gender and authorial identity in relation to the female personifications of texts, Lombardi observes that in Occitan *tornadas*, ‘poets often address the figure of the messenger or performer who is entrusted with the song’, even if more often ‘the *canso* (or *vers*) takes on the passive role of being carried to the destination’.<sup>65</sup> Even when the text is not explicitly personified, it is granted a certain independence from its composer, as in Guilhelm IX’s ‘Pos vezem de novel’:

VII  
Del vers vos dic que mais ne vau  
qui be l’enten, e n’a plus lau:  
que·ls motz son faitz tug per egau  
comunalmens,  
e·l son, et ieu meteus m’en lau,  
bo·s e valens.

VIII  
A Narbona, mas ieu no·i vau,  
sia·l prezens  
mos vers, e vueill que d’aquest lau  
me sia guirens.

IX  
Mon Esteve, mas ieu no·i vau,  
sia·l prezens  
mos vers, e vueill que d’aquest lau  
me sia guirens.<sup>66</sup>

The two four-line *tornadas* redundantly highlight the vicarious role of the *canso*. The interjection ‘mas jeu no·i vau’, as Judith A. Peraino observes, emphasises the absence of the poet, ‘leaving the song alone to do the necessary work of guaranteeing his presence and praise in the minds of his song’s audience’.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Re Enzo, ‘Va, canzonetta mia’, in *Rime della scuola siciliana*, ed. by Bruno Panvini, 2 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1962–1964), I, pp. 215–217.

<sup>64</sup> For a discussion of the use of the *congedo* in troubadour poetry see Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, pp. 174–175.

<sup>65</sup> Elena Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader in the Age of Dante* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 90.

<sup>66</sup> Guglielmo IX d’Aquitania, *Poesie*, ed. by Nicolò Pasero (Modena: S.T.E.M., 1973), pp. 187–210.

<sup>67</sup> Judith A. Peraino, ‘The Turn of Voice’ in Id., *Giving Voice to Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 33–75 (p. 44).

Surveying the corpus of the early Italian lyric tradition reveals that the rhetorical device of personification is increasingly used in the *congedo*. The anthropomorphised text, as an autonomous appendix of the poet, is apostrophised to reach the beloved and deliver the poet's missive, as seen in Re Enzo's fragment, or in this famous *envoi* by Giacomo da Lentini (l.2):

Canzonetta novella,  
và canta nuova cosa;  
lèvati da maitino  
davanti a la più bella,  
fiore d'ogn'amorosa,  
bionda piu ch'auro fino:  
«Lo vostro amor, ch'è caro,  
donatelo al notaro  
ch'è nato da Lentino».<sup>68</sup> (l.2. 55-63)

Many scholars have underlined one pivotal aspect of these final portions of the lyric, namely their metatextual nature. In discussing the distinguishing features of the *tornada* and *envoi*, Chantal Phan argues that these textual units represent a collision (*entrechoque*) between two domains, the fictional domain within the lyric, indicated by the lover (the lyric 'I', the lady) and the real domain exterior to the lyric, represented by names of poets, *jongleurs*, recipients and places. As Catherine Keen observes:

In Tuscan lyric tradition, the distinctive rhetorical function of the *congedo* as a formula of closure was often exploited as a point of entry into the poem for the poet's historical persona, providing a bridge between the closed interior world of the lyric and the external realities of the historical environments that he and his audience inhabited.<sup>69</sup>

This encounter between the fictional and the extra-literary domain can be seen in both the Sicilian *congedi* quoted above. In advising his 'canzonetta' on its journey, Re Enzo provides a rich and detailed topography, while the example from da Lentini unusually ends with the poet's signature.

The central nature of this feature becomes increasingly clear with the Italian communal poets. As Keen puts it, once the *congedo* began to be used for political purposes, and propelled not exclusively by fictional and poetic requirements, it acquired a pivotal role in:

the process of transmission, of the complex interactions between the poet and audience[,] offer[ing] a moment for reflection on the communicative act, in which both author and audience become aware of shifting from the fictional space of the lyric back to the world in which its words are read or spoken.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Giacomo da Lentini, 'Meravigliosamente', in *I poeti della Scuola Siciliana*, I: *Giacomo da Lentini*, pp. 39-65.

<sup>69</sup> Catherine Keen, 'Florence and Faction in Dante's Lyric Poetry. Framing the Experience of Exile', in *Se mai continga. Exile, Politics and Theology in Dante*, ed. by Claire E. Honess and Matthew Treherne (Ravenna, Longo, 2013), pp. 63-83 (pp. 64-65).

<sup>70</sup> Keen, "'Va', mia canzone'", p. 184.

More generally, as Lombardi points out, the metatextuality of the *congedo* consists in the fact that it is essentially ‘a liminal place, [...] the *space* where author and reader meet’ [my emphasis].<sup>71</sup>

Metatextuality is perhaps the most distinguishing feature of Cavalcanti’s ‘Perch’i’ no spero’, characterising the entire *ballata*. As mentioned above, the entire poem is personified, and functions as a self-sufficient *congedo*. The *Io*’s apostrophe to his ‘ballatetta’ opens the lyric and is reiterated throughout the text by means of the anaphoric repetition of the personal pronoun ‘tu’ (lines 3, 7, 12, 17, 23, 37) and the affective appellatives. Despite the fact that all these elements apparently contribute to stressing the conative function of the poetic message, Calenda describes the function and effect of this apostrophe as characterised by a ‘depressione della funzione-destinatario’.<sup>72</sup> He observes that ‘indirizzando le parole alle parole stesse, Cavalcanti contrae vertiginosamente il già ridotto, bipolare canale di trasmissione della sua poesia’.<sup>73</sup> In Cavalcanti’s *ballata* the personified text functions as an anomalous, expanded *congedo* and acts as the privileged interlocutor for the *Io*. ‘Perch’i’ no spero’ is a discourse *to* and *on* the text.

The closure that Calenda mentions becomes even more radical if one follows the evolution of the apostrophe. In the final stanza of the lyric, the *Io*’s address shifts from the *ballatetta* to the poet’s *voce*:

Tu, voce sbigottita e deboletta  
ch’esci piangendo de lo cor dolente,  
coll’anima e con questa ballatetta  
va’ ragionando della strutta mente. (XXXV, 37-40)

The voice, bewildered (*sbigottita*) and weak (*deboletta*), is entreated by the subject to go and reach his beloved, together with the poet’s soul and the *ballata* itself. While there appears to be a shift in the addressee, De Robertis actually describes this as a ‘geniale “variatio”’.<sup>74</sup> The scholar stresses that this chain of addressees implies the ‘identificazione della ballata con la [...] voce [dell’*Io*]’.<sup>75</sup> This new interlocutor, the poet’s voice, further closes the communicative channel of the poem, and seals its self-referential message. The subject addresses his own text, as the embodiment of his poetic voice, and then the voice itself, as both the source and the vocalisation of the written sign, in an apparently

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<sup>71</sup> Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader*, p. 89.

<sup>72</sup> Calenda, *Per altezza d’ingegno*, p. 53.

<sup>73</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>74</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 138.

<sup>75</sup> *Ivi*.

inverted sequence which testifies to the convolutedness of the process of writing as well as to the inextricable nexus connecting poetry, the body, and the written word.<sup>76</sup>

The voice, as the last remains of a devastated self, features frequently as a theme in the *Rime*, as in the *fronte* of sonnet XIII:

Voi che per li occhi mi passaste 'l core  
e destaste la mente che dormia,  
guardate a l'angosciosa vita mia,  
che sospirando la distrugge Amore.

E' vèn tagliando di sì gran valore,  
che' deboletti spiriti van via:  
riman figura sol en signoria  
e voce alquanta, *che parla dolore*. (XIII, 1-8)  
[my emphasis]

The visual encounter with the beloved ('voi che per li occhi' (1)) causes the devastation of the subject, whose spirits abandon him ('che' deboletti spiriti van via' (6)). The *Io* is left with 'la figura esteriore e la voce, ovvero la testimonianza della poesia', as De Robertis suggests.<sup>77</sup> It is through the materiality of the written sign, through the personified text, that the dying subject, reduced to his *flatus vocis*, reacquires a corporeal substance.

Nowhere is this embodiment better epitomised than in 'Perch'i' no spero'.<sup>78</sup> The *ballata* is the *Rime*'s example *par excellence* in which the poetic word is charged with representing and enshrining the subject's voice, as well as his *figura*, and in which 'the personified [poem] bears traces of being a written text, the message, as well as the messenger' as Lombardi puts it.<sup>79</sup> Cavalcanti's

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<sup>76</sup> In his seminal work *Stanzas*, Giorgio Agamben discusses the connection between language and desire for a model of subjectivity that found its maximum expression in medieval love poetry, constituting a fundamental cornerstone to the whole of Western culture. By taking into account the conceptual debts of medieval literature to Aristotelianism, Agamben demonstrates the existence of a bond between the body, Eros and language. As Agamben argues, 'l'eredità che la lirica amorosa del '200 ha trasmesso alla cultura europea non è, perciò, tanto una certa concezione dell'amore, quanto il nesso Eros-linguaggio poetico' (Agamben, *Stanze*, p. 154). After Aristotle, Agamben observes, 'il carattere "semantico" del linguaggio umano è [...] spiegato [...] con la presenza di un'immagine mentale o fantasma' (*Ibid.*, p. 147). Like falling in love, the linguistic act follows a cognitive process, insofar as language owes its chief function to the intellectualised images impressed upon the heart's matter. In the light of the relationship between language and written signs (considering the latter as a derivative of the former), Agamben's work allows to consider love poetry as a direct and yet possibly as the most intimate outcome of the lover's desire. Poetry, like the process of love, originates through the contemplation of an inner phantasm and is connected with the pneumatic circulation since, before being a written sign, it is primarily an act of enunciation, made by a special kind of *pneuma*: breath in the form of voice. As Agamben adds, 'lo spazio del poema [si situa] al limite estremo fra corporeo e incorporeo' (*Ibid.*, p. 151). The medieval model of subjectivity described by Agamben is thoroughly intersubjective and connected to language and textuality: it is in fact through a bodily process that the subject first grasps the presence of others, yet through the body the internality of subjectivity is brought into openness, by means of the pneumatic circulation, responsible for the internalisation of images from the external word and for the production of language, too.

<sup>77</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 35.

<sup>78</sup> The text has also recently been described by Lombardi as 'the triumph of female personified textuality' (Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader*, p. 100).

<sup>79</sup> Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader*, p. 96.

*ballatetta*, as an anthropomorphised, semi-autonomous entity is, in fact, able to *feel* the suffering normally experienced by the *Io*:

Tu *senti* ballatetta, che la morte  
mi stringe sì, che vita m'abbandona;  
e *senti* come 'l cor sbatte forte  
per quell che ciascun spirito ragiona. (XXXV, 17-20)  
[my emphasis]

The use of the verb *sentire* is a marked stylistic choice. In the Cavalcantian corpus it is almost exclusively used to refer to the *Io* himself or to his disembodied hypostases, as in these representative examples:<sup>80</sup>

IX, 20: l'anima *sento* per lo cor tremare  
XXV, 4: Questo novo plager che 'l meo cor *sente*  
XXXI, 5: ch'i' *sento* lo sospir tremar nel core  
XXXIII, 3: però ch'i' *sento* nel cor un pensero  
XXXIII, 9: De la gran doglia che l'anima *sente*  
[my emphasis]

The interpretation that considers the *ballata* an embodiment of the subject's residual voice, acting as a representative of the *Io* or as one of his dismembered hypostases, is further supported by another stylistic element. The diminutive 'ballatetta' is Cavalcanti's own original epithet, with no occurrences found in the pre-Cavalcantian tradition. This *hapax* has been interpreted as modelled upon the more traditional 'canzonetta', an appellative widely used by Italian love lyric poets.<sup>81</sup> However, as the discussion in Chapter II revealed, diminutives in the *Rime* are bestowed with an affective value, and are exclusively used to denote the poet's dismembered body parts. Examples are to be found in the *congedo* of 'Perch'i' no spero', where the diminutive denotes the poet's voice ('Tu, voce sbigottita e *deboletta*' (37) [my emphasis]) and in these examples:

XIII, 6: E' vèn tagliando di sì gran valore, | che' *deboletti* spiriti van via:  
XXI, 3: quando ti rispondea *fiochetto* e piano  
XXXI, 7: un *gentiletto* spirito d' amore  
[my emphasis]

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<sup>80</sup> Almost all 35 occurrences of the verb *sentire* in the Cavalcantian corpus refer to the subject or to his dismembered hypostases. In a few exceptions the verb refers to *Amore* (VIII,5; IX,35) or a group of bystanders (VII,12; XII,12; XIV,5). The relationship between these individuals and the subject will be discussed in Chapter IV and V, where I will argue that they are mere projections of the subject, appearing in the text to testify to a suffering which, otherwise, having lost the possibility of an intersubjective mirroring with the beloved, would let the *Io* fall into a complete solipsism.

<sup>81</sup> The appellative 'canzonetta' is already widespread among the poets of the Sicilian School, as a survey of the *LirIo* database reveals.

The use of diminutives to denote the *Io* (XXI,3), his voice (XXXI,7; XXXV,37), and his spirits (XIII,6) further suggests that we consider the *ballata* as the reification of the poet's *flatus vocis*, as an embodiment of the dying subject, charged with the task of acting as one of his various representative substitutes.

Having clarified the highly self-referential features of Cavalcanti's 'Perch'i' no spero', I shall return to Keen's and Lombardi's arguments discussed above, according to which the *congedo* is a *space* where an encounter occurs between the lyric/fictional dimension and the extra-textual/outer domain.<sup>82</sup> Is this "collision" realised by Cavalcanti's *ballata*? How do the unique rhetorical and enunciative features of this lyric contribute to the articulation of subjectivity? To answer these questions, and to argue why 'Perch'i' no spero' emblematises a model of subjectivity central to Cavalcanti's *Rime*, the other spatial markers of the *ballata* must be examined.

The opening mentions of 'Toscana' (2) and the distant 'donna' (4) establish an opposition based on geographical distance between the *Io*, Tuscany, and the *Tu*, as well as retracing a traditional dynamic of erotic unattainability analogous to that which we saw in 'Era in penser d'amore'. These initial references situate the subject in a remote, secluded space, only defined negatively in terms of distance from the pole(s) of his desire. The spatial coordinates of the refrain mainly appear to establish a polarity which, as seen in other texts of the corpus, epitomises '[un] tema ben confacentesi alla tipica 'desolazione' cavalcantiana', as De Robertis suggests.<sup>83</sup>

A spatial determiner occurs again in the closing lines of the *ballata*:

Deh, ballatetta, dille sospirando,  
quando le sè presente:  
«*Questa* vostra servente  
vien pe·ristar con voi,  
partita da colui  
che fu servo d'Amore».  
(XXXV, 31- 36) [my emphasis]

The assertion quoted above is articulated by the 'ballatetta', an entity who is deputising for the subject. The powerful statement of presence, 'questa vostra servente' (33), is uttered by the personified text, which also defines its positioning with reference to the lyric recipient (33) and the *Io* poet-lover (34). Not only does the spatial deictic *questa* convey proximity to the text's recipient, the beloved, but it also expresses immediacy with reference to the moment of the enunciation. The *ballatetta* voices her presence in front of the beloved lady.

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<sup>82</sup> Keen, "Va', mia canzone", p. 184; Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader*, p. 89.

<sup>83</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 135.

The use of the spatial determiner in this passage could be described by using a specific category of deixis, classified by Karl Bühler as ‘Deixis am Phantasma’ (“deixis in the imagination”).<sup>84</sup> As discussed in Chapter II (pp. 23-24), deictic expressions are normally egocentric, since the *origo* is defined by the speaker’s location at the time of the utterance. In the ‘Deixis am Phantasma’, the speaker instead imagines herself to be displaced to somewhere else and, in this speaker displacement, the deictic *origo* is shifted by a series of transpositions.<sup>85</sup> As Mazzoleni puts it, the *Deixis am Phantasma* provides the locutor with ‘la possibilità di fare riferimento deittico avendo come punto zero per le coordinate la proiezione dell’immagine tattile del corpo del parlante in un luogo esterno al campo percettivo al momento dell’enunciazione’.<sup>86</sup> This phenomenon, also defined by Lyons as ‘deictic projection’,<sup>87</sup> is not unanimously accepted by linguists, even if it has been frequently exploited by narratologists to describe those situations in which a locutor other than the speaker becomes the deictic centre.<sup>88</sup> I will make use of this Bühlerian category in the present analysis. As I will contend, it proves useful to describe the ‘displaced’ subjectivity articulated by means of deputising entities in ‘Perch’i’ no spero’ and elsewhere in the Cavalcantian corpus.

In Cavalcanti’s example, the weakened, dying *Io* (or *origo* #1) is displaced and, through another entity (his ‘voce’, reified in the travelling ‘ballatetta’, or *origo* #2), imagines that he is directly addressing the beloved, seeking to personally reach the text’s addressee. The use of spatial determiners as exemplified in the closing lines of ‘Perch’i’ no spero’ is significant for the present discussion, for several reasons. The example just discussed is in fact one of the very few in the *Rime* in which an entity utters a strong statement of presence, situating itself in the *hic et nunc* of the enunciation. However, the encounter of the textual dimension with the extra-textual domain discussed by Keen and Lombardi is not actualised in this *congedo*, as the words of the entity that is supposed to deputise for the subject do not provide us with specific information regarding the historicisable space, as in Re Enzo’s and da Lentini’s examples. The “exit” from the inner dimension is only imagined, and the lyric discourse relapses into the *mente* of the *Io*, a domain which corresponds to the letter of the text.

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<sup>84</sup> See II, note 15.

<sup>85</sup> Bühler, *Theory of Language*, pp. 173-192.

<sup>86</sup> Marco Mazzoleni, ‘Locativi deittici, *Dexis am Phantasma*, sistemi di orientamento’, *Lingua e Stile*, XX (1985), 217-246 (p. 226).

<sup>87</sup> Lyons, ‘Deixis, Space and Time’, in Id., *Semantics*, p. 690.

<sup>88</sup> Scholars have problematised the categorisation of the ‘Deixis am Phantasma’ as an actual speaking deictic. Other boundary problems regarding the theorisation of this type of deictic *origo* regard the fact that not all languages are organised according to a single *origo*, as many systems use more than one deictic centre (see Levinson, ‘Deixis’, in *The handbook of pragmatics*, ed. by Horn and Ward, p. 111). For a general discussion of these problems and of the debates related to them see William F. Hanks, ‘Explorations in the Deictic Field’, *Current Anthropology*, 46/2 (2005), 191-220.

This textual device, we might observe, finds few other occurrences in the *Rime*. The end of *canzone* IX reads:

Canzon, tu sai che de' libri d'amore  
io t'asemplai quando madonna vidi:  
ora ti piaccia ch'io di te mi fidi  
e vadi 'n guis' a lei ch'ella t'ascolti; 46  
e prego umilmente a lei tu guidi  
li spiriti fuggiti del mio core,  
per soverchio de lo su' valore  
eran distrutti, se non fosser vòlti, 50  
e vanno soli, senza compagnia  
e son pien' di paura.  
Però li mena per fidata via 53  
e poi le dì quando le sè presente:  
«*Questi* sono in figura  
d'un che si more sbigottitamente.» (IX, 43-56) 56  
[my emphasis]

As in 'Perch'i'no spero', the *Io* imagines himself spatially close to the *donna* (the recipient of his love lyric) by exploiting a vicarious entity: his 'spiriti fuggiti' and their voice.

Analogous uses of prosopopoeia are not uncommon in the pre-Cavalcantian lyric tradition. Not only are texts personified so as to allow their author to interact indirectly with his audience but also, as Lombardi observes, 'texts [...] often 'speak' on behalf of their author'.<sup>89</sup> These mobile, travelling poems are charged with the task of uttering a message on behalf of their authors, similarly to 'Perch'io no spero'. However, it is Dante's corpus with its uses of this rhetorical device and of the 'Deixis am Phantasma' that is most relevant to my argument. In the next and final section of this Chapter I will examine Dante's use of spatial markers in 'Amor, da che convien pur ch'io doglia', also known as the "montanina" *canzone*.<sup>90</sup> By comparing Dante's and Cavalcanti's articulations of the first-person position in these lyrics as well as their use of the 'Deixis am phantasma' and their thematisation of the motif of *lontananza*, I will illustrate the radically different models of subjectivity these two poems articulate.<sup>91</sup> The comparison will serve to draw some conclusions about modes of encoding subjectivity in the *Rime* in relation to the coordinates of space and time.

<sup>89</sup> Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader*, p. 89. As Lombardi also points out, 'the second main feature of the female text is orality', in contrast to the courtly lady who is typically silent as well as still (*Ibid.*, p. 96).

<sup>90</sup> Dante Alighieri, 'Amor, da che convien pur ch'io doglia', in Id., *Rime*, 2005, pp. 198-212. For a comparative discussion of the connections between the "montanina", Dante's 'Tre donne intorno al cor mi son venute', and *Paradiso* XXV, see Keen, 'Florence and Faction in Dante's Lyric Poetry'.

<sup>91</sup> There are many connections with Cavalcanti's poetry in these stanzas, such as the high occurrence of *verba videndi*, the image of the walking automaton ('[...] fo come colui | che nel podere altrui | va co' suo' piedi al loco ov'egli è morto'



The composition of ‘Amor, da che convien pur ch’io doglia’ has been established by scholarship as taking place during Dante’s “casentinese” exile, on the basis of some references included in the *congedo* as well as an epistle that traditionally accompanies the text, in which Dante apparently dedicates the lyric to one of his patrons in exile, the Marquis Moroello Malaspina.<sup>92</sup> The *canzone* opens with the subject’s apostrophe to Amore, who is requested to help the *Io* to adequately express his sorrowful love (‘dammi savere a pianger come voglia’ (4)). The first four stanzas of the lyric describe the violent, agonising assault of Love upon the *Io*. This situation is brought about by the poet’s desire for an unresponsive woman (‘questa rea’ (13)). The subject voices his suffering on account of this lady and describes his obsessive thoughts about her hostile image (‘La nemica figura’ (31)) which is impressed upon his mind, to the extent that he is almost driven to death:

Qual io divegno sì feruto, Amore,  
sailo tu, non io  
che rimani a vedere *me senza vita* (46-48)  
[my emphasis]

The fifth stanza and the *congedo* are particularly relevant to the present discussion:

Così m’ha’ concio, Amore, in mezzo l’alpi,  
ne la valle del fiume  
lungo ’l qual sempre sopra me sè forte:                   63  
qui vivo e morto come vuoi mi palpi  
mercé del fiero lume  
che folgorando fa via alla morte.                           66  
Lasso!, non donne qui, non genti accorte  
veggio a cui mi lamenti del mio male:  
s’a costei non ne cale,  
non spero mai d’altrui aver soccorso.                   70  
E questa sbandeggiata di tua corte,

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(38-40)) and the mention of the bystanders who witness the subject’s death (‘parmi udir parole | dicer «Vie via vedrai morir costui»’ (41-42)). The comparison between the two lyrics is further prompted by some recent observations by Natascia Tonelli and by Enrico Fenzi. Tonelli discusses Dante’s dysphoric representation of love in this *canzone* as related to other texts of the poet’s corpus (such as the sonnet written to Cino ‘Io sono stato con Amore insieme’ and *Inferno* v), by talking about a ‘ritorno ad un certo Cavalcanti’ of Dante (Natascia Tonelli, ‘Amor, da che convien pur ch’io mi doglia’, in Dante Alighieri, *Le Quindici Canzoni. Lette da diversi*, ed. by Giuliano Tanturli and others, 2 vols (Lecce: Pensa MultiMedia, 2012), II: 8-15, pp. 255-283 (pp. 267-280)). Tonelli’s essay expands previous observations formulated in Tonelli, ‘La canzone montanina di Dante Alighieri (Rime 15): nodi problematici di un commento’, *Per leggere*, 19 (2010), 7-36. See also Enrico Fenzi, ‘Ancora sulla epistola a Moroello e sulla «Montanina»’, in Id., *Le canzoni di Dante. Interpretazioni e letture* (Florence: Le Lettere, 2017), pp. 547-577 (pp. 569-570). For an examination of the connections between Dante’s *canzone* and the Italian lyric tradition see Guido Capovilla, ‘Presenze duecentesche nella montanina’, in Id., *Dante e i pre-danteschi. Alcuni sondaggi* (Padua: Unipress, 2009), pp. 91-111. For a discussion of the reception of Dante’s *canzone* see Fenzi, ‘La «Montanina» e i suoi lettori’, in Id., *Le canzoni di Dante*, pp. 579-620.

<sup>92</sup> The identification of the dedicatee with Moroello Malaspina is provided by the rubric in the single manuscript where the letter survives (see Dante Alighieri, *La canzone ‘montanina’*, ed. by Paola Allegretti (Verbania: Tararà, 2001), p. 11). For a recent discussion of the dating of the *canzone* and a useful summary of previous hypotheses, see Dante Alighieri, *Epistole*, ed. by Claudia Villa, *Opere*, II (Milan: Mondadori, 2014), pp. 1417-1529; pp. 1529-1450. The relationship between the *canzone* and the epistle is discussed in Tonelli, ‘Amor, da che convien’, in Dante, *Le Quindici Canzoni.*, ed. by Tanturli and others.

signor, non cura colpo di tuo strale:  
fatt'ha d'orgoglio al petto schermo tale,  
ch'ogni saetta li spunta suo corso;  
per che l'armato cor da nulla è morso. 75

O montanina mia canzon, tu, vai:  
forse vedrai Fiorenza, la mia terra,  
che fuor di sé mi serra,  
vota d'amore e nuda di pietate. 79

Se vi vai dentro, va' dicendo: «Omai  
non vi può far lo mio fattor più guerra:  
là ond'io vegno una catena il serra  
tal, che se piega vostra crudeltate,  
non ha di ritornar qui libertate». (61-84) 84

It is the closing part of the *canzone* quoted above that explicitly mentions Dante's exiled condition, actualising a shift from the psychological to the physical, historicisable reality.<sup>93</sup> The geographical markers in this passage ('in mezzo a l'alpi' (61); 'nella valle del fiume' (62), 'corte' (71)), adding 'an element of historical specificity to the lyric, by invoking a physical space',<sup>94</sup> contrast with the abstract character of the previous stanzas. Fenzi describes this passage of the text as 'il momento più propriamente narrativo, che fornisce le essenziali coordinate spaziali e temporali' of the discourse.<sup>95</sup> As Tonelli observes, these topographical elements 'contribuiscono a definire il *qui e ora* della stesura del testo, e, combinandosi poi con i più espliciti versi del congedo, condensano i dati essenziali ad individuarne l'autore [my emphasis]'.<sup>96</sup> Lines 64 and 67 ('*qui vivo e morto come vuoi mi palpi*'; 'non donne *qui*, non genti accorte' [my emphasis]), as well as bolstering the subject's lamentation caused by the absence of an interlocutor, also situate him spatially and temporally, in the extra-textual dimension of the *canzone*.<sup>97</sup> The *congedo* further strengthens the polarity that places the hostile place of the exiled subject in opposition to Florence, the subject's homeland, from which he is forever banned.

Dante's *congedo* provides an example of "Deixis am Phantasma". The poet apostrophises his text and urges it to undertake a journey on his behalf, as was customary in the love lyric tradition.

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<sup>93</sup> For a discussion of the thematic and formal shift between the previous stanzas and the *congedo* see Guglielmo Gorni, 'La canzone «montanina». Amor, dacché convien pur ch'io mi doglia (CXVI)', in *Lecture classensi*, 24 (1995), 129-150. Gorni suggests looking at Dante's *canzone* as composed in two phases. This aspect is also discussed by Allegretti, in Dante, *La canzone 'montanina'*, p. 34. See also Fenzi, 'La «Montanina» e i suoi lettori', in Id., *Le canzoni di Dante*, pp. 618-620. For a recent discussion of the connections between Dante's use of the *congedo* and the Ovidian topos of the exiled poet, see Catherine Keen, 'Dante e la risposta ovidiana all'esilio', in *Miti figure metamorfosi. L'Ovidio di Dante*, ed. by Carlotta Cattermole and Marcello Ciccutto (Florence: Le lettere, 2019), pp. 111-138. See also Michelangelo Picone, 'Città ed esilio nella lirica toscana', in Id., *Percorsi della lirica Duecentesca. Dai Siciliani alla Vita nova* (Florence: Cadmo, 2003), pp. 69-104; Mario Citroni, 'Le raccomandazioni del poeta. Apostrofe al libro e contatto col destinatario', *Maia*, 38 (1986), 111-146.

<sup>94</sup> Keen, 'Florence and Faction in Dante's Lyric Poetry', p. 76.

<sup>95</sup> Fenzi, 'Ancora sulla epistola', in Id., *Le canzoni di Dante*, p. 570.

<sup>96</sup> Tonelli, 'La canzone montanina', p. 32.

<sup>97</sup> 'né il destinatario già ideale della *Vita Nuova* [...] né [quello] più generico (ci troviamo fra le montagne, fuori dalle mura della civiltà fiorentina)' (Tonelli, 'La canzone montanina', p. 33).

During this journey, this go-between might see Firenze, the poet's city ('che fuor di sé [lo] serra' (78)). In the event that the *canzone* reaches the city, it is imagined as uttering the following words:

Se vi vai dentro, va' dicendo: «Omai  
non vi può fare il mio fattor più guerra:  
là ond'io vegno una catena il serra  
tal, che se piega vostra crudeltate,  
non ha di ritornar *qui* libertate.» (80-84)  
[my emphasis]

Imagining himself to be displaced in the travelling text, Dante provides specific spatial coordinates. The 'là' in line 82 indicates the poet's place of exile, the location of the *canzone*'s departure. The 'io' (82) and the 'qui' (84) mark the position of the *canzone*, which is imagined as having reached Florence. These markers establish an opposition between the location of the poet and that of his *canzone*, as well as the independence of the "montanina" from its author. Through the 'qui', the personified text utters a strong declaration of presence. Not only is the *canzone* the subject of the enunciation, but also, through the spatial deictic, the text places itself in the *hic et nunc* of the discourse.

Despite the alleged *cavalcantismo* of Dante's text,<sup>98</sup> it is important to note that the model of subjectivity found in Dante's "montanina" is rather different to that observed in Cavalcanti's *ballata*. As the discussion of spatial reference in Dante's text has revealed, the poet-lover is represented as a strong entity who, in lamenting his exiled situation, clearly places himself in the space and time of the utterance:

Così m'ha' concio, Amore, in mezzo l'alpi,  
nella valle del fiume  
lungo 'l qual sempre sopra me sè forte:  
*qui* vivo e morto come vuoi mi palpi  
mercé del fiero lume  
che folgorando fa via a la morte.  
Lasso!, non donne *qui*, non genti accorte  
veggio, a cui mi lamenti del mio male (61-68)  
[my emphasis]

The two uses of 'qui' in lines 64 and 67 anchor the enunciation of the *Io* to the extra-textual domain: that of the inhospitable place to which he has been exiled.

This type of strong anchoring is lacking in Cavalcanti's *ballata* where, as we have discussed, the self-referential dimension of the poetic discourse and the weakened representation of the *Io* turns the embodied text into the only form through which, by a process of displacement, the subject is able

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<sup>98</sup> See my note 91.

to situate himself with reference to his interlocutor, to define the space and time of the enunciation. With the exception of the words that are imaginatively uttered by the *ballata*, the subject of Cavalcanti's text appears to be wholly wrapped up in his inner dimension. The different models of subjectivity articulated in Dante's and Cavalcanti's texts are radically distanced by the fact that Dante's poem is accompanied by an epistle addressed to Moroello Malaspina (full text in the appendix of this Chapter).<sup>99</sup> Acting as a *razo* for the poem, to borrow Contini's words,<sup>100</sup> the missive disambiguates the relationship between the empirical and the transcendental subjects of the *canzone*, making them converge unequivocally in the figure of Dante. As a consequence, the *canzone's* *Io* is not only a defined textual instance but also an individual of the extra-textual domain, corresponding to the figure of the author's text.<sup>101</sup>

The relationship between the *canzone* and the epistle has been at the core of a complex discussion.<sup>102</sup> Nonetheless, it is accepted in scholarship that Dante originally attached the epistle to the *canzone*. What further distances the comparison between Dante's and Cavalcanti's lyrics is that Dante's missive 'contestualizza e narrativizza quello che nella lirica è elaborazione tecnica e stilistica', as Natascia Tonelli emphasises.<sup>103</sup> As Tonelli further observes, by touching upon a key point of the relationship between the two texts:

I due testi così uniti o realmente aderiscono e rappresentano una situazione non necessariamente realistica, vera e autobiografica dai contorni precisi (quelli accennati da Boccaccio, per intenderci, o comunque analoghi e banalmente riducibili) ma con un qualche, variamente valutabile grado di prossimità alla realtà (riducendo all'osso: nuova passione amorosa), o comunque fingono, inscenano [...] una situazione di assoluta verosimiglianza, che non produce contraddizione reciproca fra i due testi. Una semplice 'lettura letterale' di quanto dicono epistola e canzone ci porta infatti obbligatoriamente ad un primo livello di comprensione [...]: Dante, lasciata la poi sospirata corte, si trova "nell'alpi del Casentino", lungo l'Arno, probabilmente in qualche impervio castello dei Guidi di Dovadola. Dove, se vogliamo dar credito a Boccaccio, la passione nuovamente lo prende [...].<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> As demonstrated by Gorni and Allegretti, who are followed by Tonelli, the epistle precedes the *canzone*, acting as its premise (Gorni, 'La canzone «montanina»', pp. 129-150; Allegretti, in Dante, *La canzone 'montanina'*, ed. by Allegretti, pp. 60-73; Tonelli, 'La canzone montanina', pp. 14-16).

<sup>100</sup> Dante Alighieri, *Rime*, ed. by Gianfranco Contini (Turin: Einaudi, 1965), p. 206.

<sup>101</sup> To further emphasise the differences between the two texts (and the two models of subjectivity), it is relevant to note that in Cavalcanti's *ballata* the (albeit generical) reference to the geographical dimension occurs at the very beginning of the text, while in the *congedo* there are no gestures towards the extra-textual dimension. In Dante's "montanina" it is in the *congedo* that the anchorage to the extra-textual domain is performed, by mentioning the geography connected to the biography of the poet himself.

<sup>102</sup> In particular, scholars have pointed to the fact that (1) the missive's interpretation still appears partly obscure; (2) its contents are not fully coherent with what is written in the lyric; (3) and it seems to raise some discrepancies between the *canzone's* addressee, in Florence, and that of the epistle: Malaspina, in Lunigiana (see Tonelli, 'La canzone montanina', pp. 8-11).

<sup>103</sup> Tonelli, 'Amor, da che convien', in Dante, *Le Quindici Canzoni.*, ed. by Tantarli and others, p. 267.

<sup>104</sup> Tonelli, 'La canzone montanina', pp. 14-15.

The love suffering experienced and lamented by the *Io* in Dante's *canzone* does not affect the articulation of the subject of the utterance, who clearly defines the space and time coordinates of the enunciation. Dante's employment of the 'Deixis am Phantasma' is a rhetorical strategy through which, as seen in the several examples of the lyric tradition discussed above, the poet accomplishes his desired return to the city from which he is exiled.

The use of the same rhetorical device in Cavalcanti's *ballata* results in the verbalisation of a very different form of subjectivity. As I have observed, the shuttered, deathly *Io* situates himself only by setting relations of distance with regard to his own land and beloved lady, thus retracing a dynamic of distance and unattainability in Cavalcanti's corpus. It is only by means of the form of displacement realised by the 'Deixis am Phantasma' and thus through the voice of the subject's deputised entities, that the poet-lover is able to situate himself in proximity to its privileged addressee, the lady. This enunciative situation, the *Io*'s need of deputised entities, suggests that we read this mode of subjectivity as extremely weak.

I shall emphasise the importance of this indirect articulation of subjectivity by observing that, as has emerged by surveying the Cavalcantian corpus, the only occurrence of the adverb 'qui' – perhaps one of the most powerful statements of presence – is uttered by some entities which act vicariously for the dying subject:

Noi siàn le triste penne isbigotite,  
le cesoiuzze e 'l coltellin dolente,  
ch'avemo scritte dolorosamente  
quelle parole che vo' avete udite. 4

Or vi diciàn perché noi siàn partite  
e siàn venute a voi *qui* di presente:  
la man che ci movea dice che sente  
cose dubbiose nel core apparite; 8

le quali hanno destrutto sì costui  
ed hannol posto sì presso a la morte,  
ch'altro non n'è rimasto che sospiri. 11

Or vi preghian quanto possian più forte  
che non sdegniate di tenerci noi,  
tanto ch'un poco di pietà vi miri. (XVIII) 14

[my emphasis]

In this sonnet, the tools of writing act as substitutes for a subject who is ‘destrutto’ (9) and ‘posto [...] presso a la morte’ (10), as he finds himself unable to utter any word (‘ch’altro non n’è rimasto che sospiri’ (11)). Chapter V will explore the stylistic traits that characterise the voice of these objects, in a broader discussion that will attempt to define the relationships between the many voices staged in Cavalcanti’s *Rime* and their bearing on the voice of the traditional *Io*. For the purposes of the present analysis I shall now recall the connection, highlighted above, between the subject’s remains, his *flatus vocis*, the materiality of the written sign and the embodied text who deputise for him in ‘Perch’i’ no spero’.

Commenting upon ‘Noi sian le triste penne’, De Robertis observes that objects, ‘separati dal loro autore “non sono altro” “che le parole” dette e che non si ha più la forza di dire, quanto rimane della totale e ben cavalcantiana [...] alienazione e distruzione’.<sup>105</sup> The *voice*, understood as what remains ‘in ultima istanza, nel totale annientamento apportato da Amore’ is a *leitmotif* in the *Rime*.<sup>106</sup> Sonnet XVIII realises a further (and unprecedented) metonymic representation of the dying *Io* and his remaining voice. The subject in this lyric is not represented by a personified text, as seen in *canzone* IX or in *ballata* xxxv, but rather, is represented vicariously by the writing tools that vocalise and embody the text he has composed. In ‘Noi sian le triste penne’, the highly weakened *Io*, deprived of the faculty of speaking, utters a statement of presence through the voice of the tools of writing, engendering a displaced, vicarious form of subjectivity: ‘Or vi diciàn perché *noi* sian partite | e sian venute a voi *qui* di presente’ (5) [my emphasis].

## CONCLUSION

The present discussion was prompted by the aim of examining and discussing the spatial and temporal coordinates that define the Cavalcantian subjectivity. In complementing the analysis of the previous Chapter, I have sought to provide a description of the model of subjectivity encoded in the love lyrics of the *Rime*. The enquiry was crafted as an initial response to Antonelli’s statement, which describes Cavalcanti as the poet of the inner dimension, the initiator of modern lyric ‘in senso stretto, in quanto indagine poetica, autocosciente, dell’*homo interior*’.<sup>107</sup>

A close look at the frame of enunciation displays Cavalcanti’s distinctive use of space and time coordinates. As has emerged from my analysis, these markers are used to re-enact the traditional lover-beloved polarity of unattainability, situating the subject in the undetermined, abstract space of the inner dimension. The love-discourse of the representation of interiority in the *Rime*, De Robertis maintains, ‘si svolge e organizza secondo la sua intima «ragione» [...] che, in quanto spazio, dà luogo

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<sup>105</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 59.

<sup>106</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>107</sup> Antonelli, ‘Cavalcanti o dell’interiorità’, in *Alle origini dell’Io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 3.

a nuovo spazio'.<sup>108</sup> In contrast to this vagueness, spatial and temporal markers of finiteness are uttered by vicarious entities, called to deputise for a subject who is 'destrutto' (XVIII, 9) and reduced to his voice.

As a result, time is also affected and conveyed as 'un immobile presente', De Roberti adds, which could be interpreted as the time of the subject's *dramma interiore*.<sup>109</sup> This immobility is enacted by a paradoxical mechanism of immovable repetition, a dynamic better epitomised by the use of the determiner *questa* as referred to the beloved lady. On the one hand, the demonstrative, standing for the desired woman, reifies an empty space of unmitigated negativity. On the other, a macrotextual look at the corpus reveals that this effect is also sharpened by the repetition of formulas such as 'questa donna' or 'questa mia donna'. As a consequence of these stylistic traits, 'la parola si accampa come spazio essa stessa [...] in una zona dove non resiste più il tempo, e tutto è sospeso fuorché l'intensità dell'angoscia', as Favati holds.<sup>110</sup> Cavalcantian subjectivity is located in textuality as the text reifies and gives substance to the dismayed subject and his inner dimension (also marking his closure within, and relegation to this dimension), through the materiality of the written word. The 'questi' (IX, 55), the 'questa' (XXXV, 29), and the 'qui' (XVIII, 6) may refer to the place occupied by the *canzone*, the *ballatetta*, and the tools of writing, which have reached their addressee, but they can also reference the text itself in its materiality.<sup>111</sup>

In light of the elements discussed in the last two Chapters, if we are to establish a connection between the Cavalcantian subjectivity and modernity, as prompted by the words of Antonelli himself, I would suggest that a possible point of contact could be appreciated by reflecting on the Mallarmean 'disparition élocutoire du poète, qui cède l'initiative aux mots'.<sup>112</sup> These famous words are taken from a seminal and celebrated article based on a lecture the poet gave in Oxford and Cambridge. The quotation, summarises Mallarmé's theoretical claims regarding the relation between the poet and his text, and the position of the subject as related to language and the lyric. This relation is described in terms of the poet's disappearance from the text as a withdrawal of the lyric subject in favour of poetry itself. Stefano Agosti comments on Mallarmé's passage, and, more specifically, on his speculative formulation of the poetic process, by stating 'il brano esplicita a tutte lettere quello che è il «jeu de la

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<sup>108</sup> Domenico De Robertis, 'Cino e Cavalcanti o le due rive della poesia', *Studi Medievali*, 18 (1952), 55-107 (p. 74).

<sup>109</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>110</sup> Guido Favati, *Inchiesta sul Dolce Stil Nuovo* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1975), p. 339.

<sup>111</sup> '«Questi sono in figura | d'un che si more sbigottitamente».' (IX, 5); '«Questa vostra servente | vien pe-ristar con voi | partita da colui | che fu servo d'Amore».' (xxxv, 33-36); 'Or vi diciàn perché noi siàn partite | e siàn venute a voi qui di presente' (XVIII, 5-6).

<sup>112</sup> 'L'œuvre pure implique la disparition élocutoire du poète, qui cède l'initiative aux mots, par le heurt de leur inégalité mobilisés ; ils s'allument de reflets réciproques comme une virtuelle traînée de feux sur des pierreries, remplaçant la respiration perceptible en l'ancien souffle lyrique ou la direction personnelle enthousiaste de la phrase.' (Stéphane Mallarmé, 'Crise de vers', in Id., *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by Bertrand Marchal, 2 vols (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2003), II, pp. 204-213 (p. 211)).

parole» volto ad effettuare la trasposizione: l'iniziativa passa [...] dal soggetto [...] alle parole, vale a dire alla materia verbale'.<sup>113</sup>

The parallel between Cavalcanti and Mallarmé could certainly be seen as a daring one. However, I do not aim to suggest that we find a similar “suppression” of the lyric subject (understood as the empiric, historical self) in Cavalcanti's poetry. Nor do I aim to allude to Cavalcanti's absolutisation of language in his poetry – two aspects that, as scholars argue, Mallarmé only announces in terms of poetics rather than putting them into practice in his poetry.<sup>114</sup> The distance between these two forms of lyric subjectivity could be grasped once we recall that even in its moment of maximum *disparition*, the Cavalcantian subject does not dissolve itself into language, but rather makes use of the tools of writing, and of their materiality, to perpetrate its voice, as emerged while commenting Cavalcanti's sonnet XVIII.

Nevertheless, besides these irreconcilable differences, the blurred analogy I am proposing might allow us to draw a new understanding of the centrality and resonance that Cavalcanti and some of his lyrics such as ‘Noi siàn le triste penne’ have in the twentieth century. It does not seem a mere coincidence that the sonnet, the text of the corpus in which the most visible *disparition* of the subject is performed, has been one of the most anthologised and commented upon of the Cavalcantian texts within recent decades. Italo Calvino emphasises that Cavalcanti was ‘il primo a considerare gli strumenti e i gesti della propria attività come il vero soggetto dell'opera’.<sup>115</sup> We shall acknowledge that Calvino's interpretation of the sonnet testifies to a retroactive construction of Cavalcanti as “modern”, grounded on a specific interpretative paradigm which characterises Calvino's time; notably, in this Cavalcantian text, there is a vacancy of the ‘Io’, which represents an exceptional, unique example as considered within the medieval Italian love lyric scenario.

The Cavalcantian subject, as has emerged from the surveys of Chapters II and III, appears at once pervasive and unprecedently flimsy. The self-referential ubiquitousness is conveyed through the use of first- and second-person markers, to focus attention on the *Io*, and through the refracted representation of the self through his dismembered hypostases, while the weakness is emblematised, as discussed above, by the use of the ‘Deixis am Phantasma’, and also by the semantic characterisation of the *Io* examined in Chapter II.

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<sup>113</sup> Stefano Agosti, “‘Je dis: une fleur!’”. L'idea della natura e dell'arte in Mallarmé, in Id., *Critica della testualità. Strutture e articolazioni del senso nell'opera letteraria* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994), pp. 167-178 (pp. 171-172). See also Eric Benoit, ‘Mallarmé et le sujet absolu’, in *Le sujet lyrique en question*, ed. by Dominique Rabaté, Joëlle de Sermet, and Yves Vadé (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 1996), pp. 141-150.

<sup>114</sup> See, in particular, Dominique Rabaté, ‘Énonciation poétique, énonciation lyrique’, in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, ed. by Rabaté, pp. 65-70.

<sup>115</sup> Italo Calvino, ‘La penna in prima persona (per i disegni di Saul Steinberg)’, in Id., *Una pietra sopra. Discorsi di letteratura e società* (Turin: Einaudi, 1980), pp. 294-300 (p. 294). Originally published in a French translation as ‘La plume à la première personne’, Jean Thibaudeau trans., in *Derrière le miroir*, 224 (May, 1977).



The following Chapters will examine and discuss two other fundamental elements characterising the Cavalcantian articulation of subjectivity which have emerged in these two Chapters. Chapter IV will take into account Cavalcanti's use of apostrophe and the direction of the poetic message as strategies to redefine the lover-beloved polarity of the lyric tradition. Chapter V will then analyse voices that are "other" to the traditional voice of the poet-lover in the *Rime* and their contribution to the articulation of a specific subjectivity in the lyric discourse.



e signoreggia la vertù che vole,	33
vaga di sé medesima andar mi fane colà dov'ella è vera	
come simil a simil correr sòle.	36
Ben conosco che va la neve al sole; ma più non posso: fo come colui che nel podere altrui	
va co' suo' piedi al loco ov'egli è morto.	40
Quando son presso, parmi udir parole dicer: «Vie via vedrai morir costui».	
Allor mi volgo per vedere a cui mi raccomandandi, e 'ntanto sono scorto dagli occhi che m'uccidono a gran torto.	45
Qual io divegno sì feruto, Amore sailo tu, non io	
che rimani a veder me senza vita;	48
e se l'anima torna poscia al core, ignoranza e oblio	
stat'è con lei mentre ch'ell'è partita.	51
Com'io risurgo, e miro la ferita che mi disfece quand'io fui percosso, confortar non mi posso	
sì ch'io non triemi tutto di paura;	55
e mostra poi la faccia scolorita qual fu quel trono che mi giunse addosso; che se con dolce riso è stato mosso, lunga fiata poi rimane oscura, perché lo spirito non si rassicura	60
Così m'ha' concio, Amore, in mezzo l'alpi, nella valle del fiume	
lungo 'l qual sempre sopra me sé forte:	63
qui vivo e morto come vuoi mi palpi mercé del fiero lume	
che folgorando fa via alla morte.	66
Laso!, non donne qui, non genti accorte veggio a cui mi lamenti del mio male: s'a costei non ne cale,	

non spero mai d'altrui aver soccorso. 70

E questa sbandeggiata tua di corte,  
signor, non cura colpo di tuo strale:  
fatt'ha d'orgoglio a petto schermo tale,  
ch'ogni saetta li spunta suo corso;  
per che l'armato cor da nulla è morso. 75

O montanina mia canzon, tu, vai:  
forse vedrai Fiorenza, la mia terra,  
che fuor si sé mi serra,  
vota d'amore e nuda di pietate. 79

*Scribit Dantes domino Moroello marchioni Malaspine.*

1 Ne lateant dominum vincula servi sui quam affectus gratuitas dominantis, et ne alia relata pro aliis que falsarum opinionum seminaria frequentius esse solent negligentem predicent carceratum, ad conspectum Magnificentie vestre presentis oraculi seriem placuit destinare. 2 Igitur michi a limine suspirate postea curie seperato in qua, velut sepe sub admiratione vidistis, fas fuit sequi libertatis offitia, cum primum pedes iuxta Sarni fluenta securus et incautus defigerem, subito heu mulier ceu fulgur descendens apparuit nescio quomodo, meis auspitiis undique moribus et forma conformis. 3 O quam in eius apparitione ostupui! sed stupor subsequenti tonitruo terrore cessavit. Nam sicut diurnis coruscationibus illico succedunt tonitrua, sic inspecta flam[m]a pulcritudinis huius Amor terribilis et imperiosus me tenuit. Atque hic ferox tamquam dominus pulsus a patria post longum exilium sola in sua repatrians, quicquid eius contrarium fuerat intra me vel occidit vel expulit vel ligavit. 4 Occidit ergo propositum illud laudabile quo a mulieribus suis cantibus abstinebam, ac meditationes asiduas quibus tam celestia quam terrestria intuebar quasi suspectas impie relegavit; et denique, ne contra se amplius anima rebellaret, liberum meum ligavit arbitrium, ut non quo ego sed quo ille vult me verti oporteat. 5 Regnat itaque Amor in me nulla refragante virtute; qualiterque me regat inferius extra sinum presentium requiratis.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Dante, *Rime*, 2005, pp. 198-212.



## IV APOSTROPHE

### INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapters I discussed how subjectivity is articulated in the *Rime*, with reference to the main coordinates of the discourse. I addressed the issue of subjectivity through the categories of person, temporal, and spatial deixis. In this Chapter, I will look at subjectivity by examining ways in which the traditional dialectic lover-beloved is fictionalised and metamorphosed in the Cavalcantian corpus. The polarity *Io-Tu* will be considered by analysing the use and function of apostrophe, the most traditional trope by means of which this tension is created.

In the medieval love lyric, the beloved is a pivotal figure, who defines the subject of the text. Although common dynamics of courtly love lyrics have been presented, and exhaustively discussed in previous sections of this work, at the risk of repetition, it may be helpful to rehearse a few of them here very briefly. The love lyric discourse, in its most traditional form, is identifiable as the verbalisation of a male lover's desire directed towards his beloved. This desired pole is, by definition, unattainable, and it is this unsatisfied tension which constitutes the vicious circle which grounds the complex dynamics of love poetry in an unresolved paradox. Medieval love lyric is a discourse *in absentia*, directed towards an unreachable other. The trope of apostrophe then invokes this absent beloved within the fictional space of the love discourse.

As has progressively emerged in previous Chapters, the Cavalcantian subject is characterised by a distinctive relationship with the traditional *Tu*. The innovative use of apostrophe in Cavalcanti is emphasised in scholarship, even if it is only more recently that its specific relationship with the traditional lover-beloved dialectic and the construction of the lyric persona have been discussed in more depth. More specifically, scholars have examined Cavalcanti's internalisation of the *Lamentations*' allocutive mode to redefine the traditional apostrophe to the lady.<sup>1</sup> As I will discuss, Roberto Rea recently suggested that the reuse of the Jeremian plea leads Cavalcanti to the 'invenzione del lettore', or to the definition of an audience for his poetry – anticipating Dante's and Petrarch's

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<sup>1</sup> Domenico De Robertis, 'Il caso di Cavalcanti', in *Dante e la Bibbia*, ed. by Barblan; Ronald L. Martinez, 'Cavalcanti "Man of Sorrows"', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone; Roberto Rea, 'La mimesi del linguaggio biblico', in Id., *Cavalcanti poeta*, pp. 138-168; Id. 'Cavalcanti e l'invenzione del lettore', in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 157-168.

analogous operations<sup>2</sup> in the *Vita Nuova* and in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* respectively.<sup>3</sup> With the present discussion, I will contend, in partial disagreement with Rea's argument, that Cavalcanti's apostrophes define the *Rime*'s poetic message as directed inwards, rather than towards an audience. Cavalcanti's use of *Lamentations*, as I will suggest by comparing with the function of Jeremiah's plea in the works of the three authors, serves to articulate a precise model of subjectivity, and as such, is parodic in nature.

In order to prove this, I will first discuss the centrality of apostrophe in the genre of the lyric, its use in the medieval love discourse, and its importance for the articulation of the first-person position in the text. I will do so with the support of recent discussions of the diachronic development of the function and the direction of apostrophes in the medieval love lyric and in Cavalcanti's *Rime*. The Cavalcantian apostrophes of the beloved will first be discussed with particular attention to the lover-beloved dialectic they contribute to establishing. The function of *Lamentations* in the reformulation of the Cavalcantian apostrophes will be compared to Dante's and Petrarch's use of the same model for their apostrophes – two examples mentioned by Rea in his discussion. I will emphasise that Cavalcanti's reuse of this intertext complies with a request for attention that does not exit the fictionality of the lyric, and the close self-referential dimension of the *Io*'s interiority. I will engage with these various dialogues by addressing the following questions: Who are the individuals addressed in the *Rime*? How does Cavalcanti's use of Jeremiah's plea differ from Dante's and Petrarch's? What type of subjectivity does Cavalcanti articulate in the *Rime*, through the use of *Lamentations*?

#### IV.1 ORIGINS AND RITUALISTIC ASPECTS OF APOSTROPHE

Apostrophe is a rhetorical mode endemic to poetry which appears to belong *tout court* to this genre. Eric Gans analyses the expressive conventions of this trope and, in stating that apostrophe is central to the lyric, suggests that the origins of the allocutive mode lie in religious rites.<sup>4</sup> As Gans argues 'ce qui dans le rite donne naissance à la poésie lyrique est sans doute une prière ou invocation adressée à une divinité qui d'une manière ou d'une autre la somme d'être présente'.<sup>5</sup> The scholar suggests that the fictitious dialogue enacted in the lyric transplants into a profane context the rhetoric of a prayer where a believer (the lover) addresses a divinity (the beloved lady).

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<sup>2</sup> Rea, 'Cavalcanti e l'invenzione del lettore', in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni.

<sup>3</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Marco Santagata (Milan: Mondadori, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Eric Gans, 'Naissance du Moi lyrique. Du féminin au masculin', *Poétique*, 46 (1981), 129-139.

<sup>5</sup> Gans, 'Naissance du Moi lyrique', p. 129.



More recently, Claudio Giunta has criticised this thesis. Taking inspiration from Giovanni Nencioni's 'Antropologia poetica?',<sup>6</sup> Giunta argues that the connection between love poetry and the trope of apostrophe is grounded in the praxis of everyday life. Giunta believes that Gans' suggestion is enlightening, in that it stresses the connection between the ritualistic rhetorical mode of a prayer and that of lyric. However, Giunta believes, the connection between the two domains does not exceed specific rhetorical borrowings. '[L]a retorica sacra,' he concludes, 'dev'essere considerata come una fonte di ispirazione per ciò che è il linguaggio', while the praxis behind the trope of apostrophe is more deeply rooted in the sphere of social communication.<sup>7</sup>

The ritualistic aspect of apostrophe and its broader importance to the economy of the lyric is discussed by Jonathan Culler in his *Theory of the Lyric*, where he develops and expands previous seminal contributions on this topic.<sup>8</sup> In his well-known essay printed in *The Pursuit of Signs*, Culler notes that apostrophe tropes 'not on the meaning of a word but on the circuit or situation of communication itself [...] mark[ing] a deflection of the message' in a way that 'may complicate or disrupt the circuit of communication'.<sup>9</sup> As well as suggesting that it is this feature that has stymied a systematic examination of apostrophe, Culler stresses the centrality of apostrophe in establishing the lyric's fictionality. Under the influence of Northrop Frye's famous formulation, which builds upon Stuart Mill's observation, that 'lyric is pre-eminently the utterance that is overheard', Culler's account of apostrophe bestows great importance on what he calls 'triangulated address', or this trope's characteristic indirection.<sup>10</sup> In addressing an entity within the fictional domain of the lyric, the subject is performing a specific gesture which is directed onwards, towards an audience. This performative gesture constitutes the lyric subject's main, indirect means of expression. As such, a fundamental function of apostrophe is that of establishing a relationship with an audience, obliquely addressed through this indirection. Based on the notion of 'turning aside' (*apo-strephēin*) or digressing from direct speech, apostrophe manipulates the poetic message in order to establish a distinct I-You polarity with auditors or readers. As Culler holds, 'in an operation that sounds tautological, the vocative of apostrophe is a device which the poetic subject uses to establish with the object a relationship which helps to constitute the subject itself as poetic, even vatic'.<sup>11</sup> Apostrophe formulates the problem of subjectivity as the self's relationship with an "other" by articulating a dialectic tension with a 'You', one which even exceeds the fictionality of the lyric and reaches an audience.

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<sup>6</sup> Giovanni Nencioni, 'Antropologia poetica?', *Strumenti critici*, 19 (1972), 243-258.

<sup>7</sup> Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, pp. 407-408.

<sup>8</sup> Culler, *Theory of the Lyric*, pp. 186-243. For Culler's seminal early work on this topic see: Culler, 'Apostrophe', in Id., *The Pursuit of Signs. Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 135-154.

<sup>9</sup> Culler, 'Apostrophe', p. 135.

<sup>10</sup> Id., *Theory of the Lyric*, p. 186. See also Id., 'Apostrophe', pp. 137-138.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216.

A similar conclusion emerges, if obliquely, from an observation expressed by De Robertis, who, commenting on the *Vat. Lat.* 3793 manuscript, holds:

L'immagine che la letteratura poetica qual è esemplificata, mettiamo, nei mille componimenti del canzoniere Vaticano sembra rendere, è quella di una grande, corale dichiarazione d'intenti, di una successione di affermazioni ed esclamazioni di presenza, quasi la dichiarazione delle proprie generalità, io Giacomo notaio, io Federico imperatore, io Bonagiunta da Lucca, io Monte Andrea da Firenze: una sorta di presupposizione d'esistenza e d'esperienza [...] su cui verificare la propria e uniformare le proprie relazioni con uomini e cose: anteriore, si direbbe, a una conoscenza e per lo meno a una ricognizione o interrogazione della propria parte nel mondo, in quanto già assegnata e riconosciuta, a norma di valori e di modelli di rappresentazione (natura o società) già stabiliti.<sup>12</sup>

To better grasp the significance of De Robertis' comment I shall specify that the great majority of the poems collected in the Vatican manuscript are addressed to a recipient, be it the beloved lady, or some empiric, historicisable readers.<sup>13</sup> In observing how recognisably the *Io(s)* of the poets are expressed in the *canzoniere* (be they empiric or transcendental), De Robertis' remark indirectly emphasises the power of apostrophe as well as the impact of the trope's indirection in the articulation of subjectivity.

#### IV.2 APOSTROPHE, THE *GUIZERDON*, AND LYRIC SUBJECTIVITY

In medieval love lyric, apostrophe is traditionally used by the poet-lover to modulate a request to the beloved for an (explicitly or more allusively erotic) reward for the amorous vassalage, the so-called the *guizerdon* or *guiderdone*. The trope's centrality emerges when considering that the condition of the lover, his representation in the text, depends entirely on the outcome of this request. An emblematic example of these dynamics is the Notaro's 'Guiderdone aspetto avere':<sup>14</sup>

Guiderdone aspetto avere  
da voi, donna, cui servire  
no m'enoia;  
ancor che mi siate altera  
sempre spero avere intera 5  
d'amor gioia.  
Non vivo in disperanza,  
ancor che mi disfidi  
la vostra disdegnanza,  
ca spesse volte vidi, ed è provato, 10  
omo di poco affare

<sup>12</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. xx.

<sup>13</sup> Surveying the manuscript testifies that these texts constitute the 68% of the total.

<sup>14</sup> Giacomo da Lentini, 'Guiderdone aspetto avere', in *I poeti della Scuola Siciliana*, I: *Giacomo da Lentini*, pp. 67-86.

pervenire in gran loco:  
se lo sape avanzare,  
multiplicar lo poco—ch'à 'quistato. (1.3,1-14)

In the very opening of this *canzone*, the lover addresses the beloved, asking for the ‘guiderdone’ (1) he has gained by means of his love service, and also voicing the hope that the beloved would not be ‘altera’ (4-6). The text, as Antonelli comments, ‘per l’esplicita centralità tematica [diventerà] un punto di riferimento fondamentale per i rimatori contemporanei e posteriori: la questione del servizio amoroso attraversa i Siciliani e i Siculo-toscani, fino ai fiorentini prestilnovisti’<sup>15</sup> and will be polemically referenced by Guittone in ‘Amore tanto altamente’.<sup>16</sup>

This matter of the beloved’s reward, and its relationship to the poetics and establishment of lyric subjectivity is at the core of a poetic debate in the courtly tradition itself, one which has been recently much discussed by scholars.<sup>17</sup> The debate involves Raimbaut d’Aurenga, Bernart de Ventadorn, and Chrétien de Troyes, and revolves around these poets’ different conceptions of love. In the well-known *canço* ‘Can vei la lauzeta mover’, Bernart complains about the indifference of his beloved. He voices his intention to depart from her, to renounce ‘joi’, and thus to end the poetic ‘chantar’. As Antonelli points out, ‘Bernart assume [...] la difficoltà di riconoscere (“conquistare”) l’altro, e le alterne vicende conseguenti, come motivo centrale’.<sup>18</sup> The poet problematises the self-relationality of his poetry and the predicaments resulting from such a narcissistic love discourse.

Raimbaut, on the other hand, in ‘No chant per auzel ni per flor’, offers his unconditional trust, love and loyalty to his lady regardless of her reciprocation, evoking the model of Tristan. In closing his poem, he invokes the figure of ‘Carestia’, asking for assistance:

Carestia, esgauzimen  
m’aporta d’aicel repaire,  
on est midonz, qu’m ten gauzen  
plus ‘ieu eis non sai retraire.<sup>19</sup>

As Antonelli specifies, it is still unclear whether Bernart’s text was composed as a response to Raimbaut, or the other way round. What philologists have established is that the composition of

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>16</sup> Guittone d’Arezzo, *Le Rime*, ed. by Egidi, pp. 47-49.

<sup>17</sup> The argument has been reconstructed by the philologists Maurice Delbouille and Aurelio Roncaglia in: Maurice Delbouille, ‘Les “senhals” littéraires désignant Raimbaut d’Orange et la chronologie de ces témoignages’, *Cultura neolatina*, XVII (1957), 49-73; Aurelio Roncaglia, ‘Carestia’, *Cultura neolatina*, XVIII (1958), pp. 121-137. For a complete bibliography on this debate see Antonelli, ‘Avere e non avere’, in “*Vaghe stelle dell’Orsa*”, ed. by Bruni, pp. 69-70.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>19</sup> Raimbaut d’Aurenga, ‘No chant per auzel ni per flor’, in Walter T. Pattison, ed., *The Life and Works of the Troubadour Raimbaut d’Orange* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1952), xxvii (32).

Chrétien de Troyes' 'D'Amors qui m'a tolu a moi'<sup>20</sup> follows the two poems by Bernart and Raimbaut, acting as a response to them. Chrétien, like Raimbaut before him, affirms his unconditional devotion to the service of love, specifying that he does not need to use love potions ('Onques del bevraje ne bui, | don Tristans fu anpoisonez, | mes plus me fet amer qui le lui | fins cuers et bone volantez' (28-29)).

Antonelli's discussion demonstrates the pervasive afterlife of this debate in the Italian lyric tradition. As he points out, the issue of love's reciprocation, and the different positions epitomised by Bernart, Raimbaut and Chrétien, are central to later Italian poets. This centrality is due to the fact that this debate 'rappresenta il punto-chiave per la comprensione del rapporto con il Tu nella lirica cortese, in quanto indicativo della concezione dell'Io lirico e della relativa controparte, la donna amata'.<sup>21</sup> As Antonelli's analysis brings to light, the symbolic figure of Tristan and the debate between the three poets has a role that is 'attivo, genetico'<sup>22</sup> in the love lyric tradition. According to Antonelli, as long as there remains the poet's request for an intersubjective exchange with the beloved based on the longing for an erotic form of possession:

siamo in presenza di una lirica in cui due soggetti, per quanto possa esser sublimato il rapporto con il Tu, ovvero la donna amata, sono entrambi protagonisti, o quantomeno esistenti, pur se ovviamente quel che sempre risulta in primo piano è l'Io agente e poeta e se alla donna viene conferita metaforicamente un'equiparazione al signore feudale, e dunque una posizione gerarchicamente superiore, lontana.<sup>23</sup>

According to Antonelli, the birth of the modern lyric subjectivity, occurs when the object of the lyric diegesis is no longer the beloved, but the subject himself. This process is attained through a polarisation to the maximum degree of the lover-beloved dialectic. '[L]a lirica moderna europea nasce [...] narcisistica e maschile', writes Antonelli, 'l'abolizione del corpo femminile [...] è infatti assunta quale condizione necessaria del perpetuo possesso di un Oggetto altrimenti irraggiungibile e inconoscibile'.<sup>24</sup> The 'abolition' mentioned by Antonelli consists in the elimination of a dialogic pole, in a way that preserves and crystallises the desiring tension of the self.

### IV.3 CLAUDIO GIUNTA AND THE SO-CALLED "FUNZIONE DESTINATARIO"

Antonelli's observations find validation in several works which have discussed the issue of subjectivity as related to different rhetorical devices. Among these, Giunta, in a study aimed at

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<sup>20</sup> Chrétien de Troyes, 'D'Amors qui m'a tolu a moi', in Id., *Les Chansons courtoises de Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. by Marie-Claire Zai (Berne: Peter Lang, 1974), pp. 75-101.

<sup>21</sup> Antonelli, 'Avere e non avere', in "*Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa*", ed. by Bruni, p. 47-48.

<sup>22</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>24</sup> Id., "'Per forza convenia che tu morissi'", in *Guido Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, p. 204.

discussing the centrality of the dialogical mode to medieval poetry, devotes a section of his discussion to the evolution of the direction of the lyric address in the Italian love poets spanning the Sicilian School to the sixteenth century.<sup>25</sup>

It is important to recall that while the modern lyric is associated with introspection, medieval love poetry is traditionally constructed as a discourse directed at an addressee (the object of love), with specific aims and content. This distinction is between two channels of lyric subjectivity, oriented either towards the *Io* or the lady, and so ‘rispettivamente due funzioni del linguaggio: quella introspettiva e quella conativa’.<sup>26</sup>

The shift from one mode to the other is most dramatic in the interval of time extending from Giacomo da Lentini to Petrarch. As Giunta shows, in the Sicilian School the proportion of texts addressed to the beloved is considerably higher than in the fourteenth century. With the poets of the Sicilian School, the conative function prevails over the introspective function. With Giacomo da Lentini in particular, however, the situation is more complex, as I discussed in Chapter II (pp. 29-31). In his work we find a significant difference in the ratio of introspective to conative lyric addresses, related to metrical form.<sup>27</sup> Of fifteen *canzoni*, only two are ascribable to the category of “introspective text”, while his sonnets are equally divided between conative and introspective functions. As Giunta’s survey demonstrates, at this early date the *canzone* is still indissolubly connected with the allocutive gesture of addressing the beloved lady, while the more compact sonnet form seems more suited to introspective reflection.<sup>28</sup> In the works of Tuscan and Emilian poets like Bonagiunta, Guinizzelli, Chiaro, Monte, or Rustico, there is more of a balance between the two functions. With the poets of the so-called *Stilnovo*, as Giunta classifies them, ‘sono i testi soggettivo-narrativi ad essere preponderanti’.<sup>29</sup> Giunta also specifies that ‘questo vantaggio quantitativo, ancora contenuto in Cino, in Dante e in Cavalcanti [...] diventa schiacciante a mano a mano che si scende nella cronologia’.<sup>30</sup> The scholar anoints Petrarch as the initiator of the introspective lyric. While in both Cavalcanti’s and

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<sup>25</sup> As the scholar specifies, the texts considered are those of poets active from ‘il periodo compreso tra gli esordi della lirica italiana e il petrarchismo, con l’aggiunta di qualche esempio più tardo, di primo Cinquecento, per vedere come vanno le cose fra gli imitatori ‘ortodossi’ di Petrarca’ (Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, p. 410).

<sup>26</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>27</sup> This aspect has already emerged in the discussion of my Chapter II, where I quoted Antonelli’s study of subjectivity in Giacomo da Lentini, and surveyed the presence of first- and second-person markers in the Notaro’s *canzoni* and *sonetti*. See my Chapter II, pp. 29-31.

<sup>28</sup> The apostrophe to the lady is widely used at the outset of the medieval love lyric tradition, Giunta observes, also explaining this phenomenon as influenced by the courtly tradition (Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, p. 397). On the use of apostrophe in Giacomo da Lentini as related to the lyric representation of the phenomenology of love see Valentina Atturo, “‘Non mi parete femina incarnata’”. Fisiologia spiritale e interiorizzazione ‘angosciosa’ in Giacomo da Lentini’, in *La expresión de las emociones en la lírica románica medieval*, ed. by Mercedes Brea (Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2015), pp. 109-142.

<sup>29</sup> Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, p. 418.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 419.

Dante's corpora the relationship between introspective and conative texts is about 2/1, in Petrarch's lyric corpus appears to be 7/1.<sup>31</sup>

The most relevant reflection of Giunta's essay for the present discussion is the following:

Se teniamo conto del fatto che quelli che abbiamo chiamato i nuovi destinatari della poesia post-stilnovista e post-petrarchesca (cioè le donne, i cuori gentili, l'Amore, le membra, gli elementi naturali, i monili ecc.) non sono altro che prolungamenti dell'io e sue maschere, che il moto è introspettivo anche se, con un artificio di linguaggio, simula di andare verso l'esterno, e che dunque il genere più prossimo è quello dei testi introspettivo-narrativi, se teniamo conto anche di questo fatto, la sproporzione tra le due serie [pre- e post-stilnovistica] diventa ancora più vistosa.<sup>32</sup>

Several questions arise from this passage which are related as they appear to constitute opposite ends of the same issue. Giunta's distinction between an address to a 'donna amata', and an address that is recursive, or that simply points back to the 'io e sue maschere', is worth probing especially (but not exclusively) in the case of Cavalcanti's poetry. First: do we have to take as always true that the lady of the love lyric is 'other' than the *Io*?<sup>33</sup> What prevents us from reading the dynamics of love lyric as a narcissistic discourse of the subject, mediated by a fiction of address to an alleged other? Can we consider the apostrophe to the beloved in the same way as the apostrophe to 'le donne, i cuori gentili, l'Amore, le membra, gli elementi naturali, i monili ecc.'?

I will examine the entities addressed in the Cavalcantian corpus and the modes of addressing them, in order to reassess the drastic change in proportions detailed by Giunta. As well as problematising Giunta's observation, I will contend that in Cavalcanti's *Rime* the distinction between the entities addressed is nullified. It is in Cavalcanti's poetry that we discover a radical transformation in the direction, as well as in the nature, of the lyric address. The entities addressed in the *Rime*, as I have already suggested, are mere projections of the *Io*. The love discourse of the *Rime* is utterly narcissistic, even when the attention of other individuals appears to be invoked in the corpus.

#### IV.4 CAVALCANTI AND THE COLLAPSING OF THE LOVE DISCOURSE

In seeking to answer the questions I have singled out in opening this Chapter and to engage with Giunta's study, I shall briefly recall a few central elements characterising the Cavalcantian lady and

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<sup>31</sup> *Ivi*. See Giunta's table 'Destinatari della poesia' in *Ibid.*, pp. 420-421 for all the exact percentages of Giunta's calculation.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 421-422.

<sup>33</sup> For Antonelli the desire for physical possession is what underpins the reality of address in older lyric: 'finché esiste la richiesta [del soggetto] di uno scambio interpersonale basato [...] sull'aver il corpo della donna [...] siamo in presenza di una lirica in cui due soggetti, per quanto possa essere sublimato il rapporto con il Tu [...] sono [...] quantomeno esistenti'. The *Tu*, for Antonelli, is articulated as an 'other' in the same moment that the *Io* articulates a request which involves this other individual's response (Antonelli, 'Avere e non avere', in "*Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa*", ed. by Bruni, p. 48).

the *Io*'s relationship to her. As has emerged in the previous Chapters, where the results of a quantitative survey were discussed, the visual encounter with the beloved is central to the devastating physiology of love fictionalised in the *Rime*. Apart from her deathly gaze, the corporeal figure of the *donna* has little or no importance to the dynamics of love portrayed in Cavalcanti's corpus. The lady affects the subject negatively because of her evanescence, as her deathly effects upon the *Io* result from her incontrovertible unattainability.

As a result, as Antonelli puts it, 'Cavalcanti abolisce di fatto la donna come polo dialogico della possibilità [...] la donna [...] semplicemente sparisce; verificatane l'inconoscibilità, non rimane [...] che la rappresentazione dell'Io [...]'.<sup>34</sup> The *Rime* discard the enactment of the customary *Io-donna* dynamics, where the feminine beloved is understood as the interlocutor of an intersubjective exchange aimed at attaining erotic possession. This aspect is so radical that Rea, following on from Antonelli's observations, maintains that 'la lirica cavalcantiana giunge a postulare la definitiva eclissi della donna, che sopravvive unicamente nella mente del soggetto come pura proiezione fantasmatica dello stesso desiderio',<sup>35</sup> thus denying any participation of the lady in the love process, but that of a catalyser.<sup>36</sup> How is the Cavalcantian request nullified? What are the consequences of the consequent change of the discourse's perspective? How is the Cavalcantian love discourse articulated if the beloved lady is no longer the main dialogic pole of the love tension?

An examination of Cavalcanti's corpus reveals that direct, traditional apostrophes to the lady constitute exceptions. There are very few examples in the *Rime* in which apostrophe is used in a traditional way to beg the lady for mercy, or to praise her virtues. Significantly, texts in which this traditional rhetorical mode is used are those classified as "archaic", such as the *ballata* 'Fresca rosa novella' (I) or the connected sonnet 'Avete 'n vo' li fior' e la verdura' (II). Both these texts are opened by an illocution to the lady, which, as in the case of the *ballata*, stretches throughout the refrain and is then continually emphasised by the anaphora of the second-person pronoun 'voi'. The praise culminates with a request for benevolence, with accents quite distinct from the gravity which characterises other lyrics in the corpus – although there is already a hint of the inadequacy of the *Io*'s inferiority:

Oltra natura umana  
vostra fina piageza  
fece Dio, per essenza

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<sup>34</sup> Antonelli, "Per forza convenia che tu morissi", in *Guido Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, p. 214.

<sup>35</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 39.

<sup>36</sup> As Rea remarks in his introduction of Cavalcanti's *Rime*, 'la donna cavalcantiana non partecipa [...] alla vicenda amorosa' (Rea, *Introduzione*, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 23). Similar observations are developed in Id., *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 39 and Id., 'Cavalcanti e l'invenzione del lettore', in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 159-160.

che voi foste sovrana: 35  
per che vostra parvenza  
ver' me non sia lontana:  
or non mi sia villana  
la dolce provedenza! 39  
E se vi pare oltraggio  
ch'ad amarvi sia dato,  
non sia da voi blasmato:  
ché solo amor mi sforza,  
contra cui non val forza – né misura. (I, 32-44) 44

There are only a few other examples in the corpus in which the beloved is addressed with a request for *mercé* or *pietà*. These are even fewer if one excludes, as Rea suggests, the “archaic” texts of the corpus (discussed in Chapter II) and if ‘si escludono dal novero le rappresentazioni [...] legate a situazioni di genere come la pastorella e il simile incontro extra moenia con le foresette’.<sup>37</sup>

It is furthermore significant that in the *Rime*, even when apostrophe seems to work in a more traditional way, striving to attain the lady’s *guiderdone*, Cavalcanti refashions the request in his own distinguishing way.<sup>38</sup> In these few examples, ‘la richiesta viene formulata o strutturata in modo tale da produrre un vero e proprio effetti di distorsione sul suo stesso contenuto’.<sup>39</sup> Nowhere is this more evident than in sonnet XV:

Se Mercé fosse amica a’ miei disiri,  
e ’l movimento suo fosse dal core  
di questa bella donna, e ’l su’ valore  
Mostrasse la vertute a’ mie’ martiri, 4

d’angosciosi dilette i miei sospiri,  
che nascono della mente ov’è Amore  
e vanno sol ragionando dolore  
e non trovano persona che li miri, 8

girano agli occhi con tanta vertute,  
che ’l forte e ’l duro lagrimar ch’e’ fanno  
ritornerebbe in allegrezza e ’n gioia. 11

Ma sì è al cor dolente tanta noia  
e all’anima trista è tanto danno  
che per disdegno uom non dà lor salute. (XV) 14

<sup>37</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 37.

<sup>38</sup> As Antonelli points out, Cavalcanti’s use of words such as ‘mercede, mercede e merzé [...] non riguarda il rapporto di scambio tipico della poesia precedente: non è richiesta di *guiderdone* ma di *pietà* [...]’ (Antonelli, ‘Cavalcanti o dell’interiorità’, in *Alle origini dell’Io lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, p. 10). On the Cavalcantian innovative plea for ‘*pietà*’ rather than the traditional request for the *guiderdone*, see also Antonelli, ‘Avere e non avere’, in “*Vaghe stelle dell’Orsa*”, ed. by Bruni, pp. 68-69.

<sup>39</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 38.



The singularity of this plea lies in the multiple rhetorical techniques mediating and repealing its performative gesture. The customary allocution is here embedded within a conditional clause in the poem's incipit. The conditions expressed in the protasis, which occupies the first eleven lines of the lyric ('Se Mercé fosse amica' (1); 'e 'l movimento suo fosse dal core' (2); 'e 'l su' valore | mostrasse la vertute' (3-4)) prove unfeasible, as the closing sentence – beginning with the adversative 'Ma' – proclaims. The request, then, expressed in the hypothetical subjunctive proves ultimately unable to escape from a dimension of unreality. As Rea points out '[s]i assiste così al capovolgimento di uno dei temi fondanti dell'ideologia dell'amore cortese, che viene soverchiato dall'insopprimibile bisogno di rivelare la propria pena'.<sup>40</sup>

The Cavalcantian corpus does not include further texts, apart from those cited above, in which the lady is addressed directly. The *donna* is more frequently referred to by the third-person pronoun, as an indirect referent of the poetic discourse. In this larger group of texts, allusions to the lady do not customarily offer praise or make requests, but rather indicate the source of the subject's suffering.<sup>41</sup> As Rea points out, this focus on the inner dimension, and this discarding of the figure of the lady, gives rise to a basic problem: 'se viene meno non solo l'oggetto (la richiesta di ricompensa amorosa) ma anche il destinatario canonico della poesia (la donna amata), il discorso lirico rischia di perdere, assieme alle sue coordinate essenziali, anche la sua stessa giustificazione'.<sup>42</sup>

What are the poetic implications of such an impasse? Nowhere are the limits and the consequences of these dynamics better epitomised than in *canzone* XI. In this text the solipsistic condition of the alienated subject, deprived of an escape from his inner dimension, emerges in the poetic writing as well:

Poi che di doglia cor conven ch'i' porti  
e senta di piacere ardente foco  
e di virtù mi traggi' a sì vil loco,  
dirò com'ho perduto ogni valore. 4  
E dico che' miei spiriti son morti,  
e 'l cor, che tanto ha guerra e vita poco;  
e se non fosse che 'l morir m'è gioco,  
fare'ne di pietà pianger Amore. 8  
Ma, per lo folle tempo che m'ha giunto,  
mi cangio di mia ferma oppinione  
in altrui condizione,  
sì ch'io non mostro quant'io sento affanno  
là 'nd'eo ricevo inganno:  
che dentro da lo cor mi pass'Amanza  
che se ne porta tutta la mia possanza. (XI) 15

<sup>40</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 104.

<sup>41</sup> This aspect of Cavalcanti's apostrophes to the lady has been partly in Chapter II.

<sup>42</sup> Rea, 'Cavalcanti e l'invenzione del lettore', in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, p. 161.

Cavalcanti's one-stanza *canzone* is quoted by Dante, in his *De vulgari eloquentia*, as an example of 'gradus constructionis excellentissimus', of both syntax and diction.<sup>43</sup> Its metric form and its convoluted syntax both epitomise the subject's impasse in the experience of love and the verbalisation of its phenomenology. The lyric opens with a causative clause, which declares the permanently grieving condition of the subject ('Poi che di doglia conven ch'i' porti' (1)), and his resolution to narrate the source of his condition ('dirò com'ho perduto ogni valore' (4)). This purpose is then restated at the opening of the second *pie*de ('E dico che' miei spiriti son morti' (5)). However, as De Robertis points out, this repetition emblematises 'la fine di ogni dicibilità',<sup>44</sup> which the abrupt ending of the *canzone* suggests as well.

De Robertis' observation follows on from a reading of Cavalcanti's poem by Giuliano Tantarli, which argues that the adversative clause opening the *sirima* is opposed to the prior claim regarding the impossibility of *dire*. Tantarli suggests correcting the readings of Contini,<sup>45</sup> Marti,<sup>46</sup> and Ciccuto,<sup>47</sup> which all agree in taking these lines as the *Io*'s decision to dissemble his suffering, to assume an unprecedented 'contegno' [composure].<sup>48</sup> Tantarli, rather, interprets lines 10-11, 'mi cangio di mia ferma oppinione | in altrui condizione', as the subject's declaration of his alienated status. This line, as Tantarli suggests, denounces the subject's mental and physical dispossession, meaning 'esco dalla (salda) coscienza di me, non sono più io, [...] pervengo in un diverso stato, nello stato di un altro, sono un'altra persona'.<sup>49</sup>

Because of this condition, the subject, deprived of his cognitive and vital faculties, is impeded in his intention. As Tantarli explains, 'l'innamoramento è [...] presentato come invasamento o possessione [...] che riduce la persona a strumento dello spirito maligno che vi abita, svuotandola delle sue prerogative, quindi, nel caso specifico, inibendone il proposito poetico'.<sup>50</sup> Cavalcanti's choice of writing a one-stanza *canzone* reflects a desire to emblematises the subject's alienation, which involves his inability to write poetry. The self-referentiality of the Cavalcantian discourse and its

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<sup>43</sup> Dante Alighieri, *De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. by Enrico Fenzi, *Nuova edizione commentata delle Opere di Dante*, III (Rome: Salerno, 2012), II, vi, 6.

<sup>44</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 41.

<sup>45</sup> Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 504.

<sup>46</sup> Marti, *Poeti del dolce stil nuovo*, p. 150.

<sup>47</sup> Ciccuto, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1978, pp. 90-91.

<sup>48</sup> In Contini's paraphrase: 'Ma, posta la stoltezza che mi ha sopraggiunto [...], al contegno dettato dalla mia salda convinzione sostituisco quello dovuto alle suggestioni altrui (e cioè di uomo sereno)' (Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 504).

<sup>49</sup> Giuliano Tantarli, 'La terza canzone del Cavalcanti. "Poi che di doglia cor conven ch'i' porti"', *Studi di Filologia italiana. Bollettino annuale dell'Accademia della Crusca*, 42 (1984), 5-26; repr. as 'La terza canzone del Cavalcanti. "Poi che di doglia cor conven ch'i' porti"', in Id., *La cultura letteraria a Firenze tra Medioevo e Umanesimo. Scritti 1976-2016*, ed. by Francesco Bausi (Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, 2017), pp. 171-192 (pp. 176).

<sup>50</sup> Tantarli, 'La terza canzone del Cavalcanti', pp. 176-177.

consequent collapsing, find in ‘Poi che di doglia’ their formal and argumentative epitome. This narcissistic condition does not simply testify to a conception of love and of poetry ‘assolutamente egocentrica e priva della possibilità del rispecchiamento in altri da sé’.<sup>51</sup> It even denies any further possibility of poetry by describing the subject’s death (‘ché dentro da lo cor mi pass’ Amanza | che se ne porta tutta la mia possanza’ (14-15)).

The closed circuit represented in this *canzone* implies the necessity of finding a solution, in order to avoid the ‘fine del canto’ alluded to by Antonelli and Rea. As discussed in Chapter II, both Ciccuto and Calenda observe that a syntactic analysis of the Cavalcantian corpus reveals a constant emphasis on the conative function. This is pursued by means of insistent apostrophes, interrogative clauses and deprecations.<sup>52</sup> The ubiquity of the conative function in Cavalcanti’s work is foregrounded by Rea. In highlighting the poetic implications of the impasse just discussed, Rea also observes that Cavalcanti does not renounce the traditional allocutive gesture of the love lyric, but rather directs his poetic discourse to a new addressee.<sup>53</sup> This is due to the internalisation of an allocutive mode, aimed at obtaining pity, a mode which is based on the model *par excellence* of the demand for compassion: Jeremiah’s *Lamentations*.

It is now well acknowledged, especially after De Robertis’ edition of the *Rime*,<sup>54</sup> and after Ronald L. Martinez’s works,<sup>55</sup> that the Scriptures play a central role in Cavalcanti’s poetry. Two verses, both apostrophes from Jeremiah, play a central role, even among the many other biblical sources present or alluded to in the Cavalcantian corpus:

*Lam.* 1, 12: O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam, advertite et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus.

*Lam.* 1, 18: Audite, obsecro, universi populi, et videte dolorem meum [...].

The *ripresa* of *ballata* XIX is a clear example of Cavalcanti’s reuse of these two fragments:

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<sup>51</sup> Tonelli, ‘Lirica d’amore e scienza’, in Id., *Fisiologia della passione*, p. 66.

<sup>52</sup> Ciccuto, ‘*Rime* di Guido Cavalcanti’, in *Letteratura italiana. Le Opere*, I: *Dalle Origini al Cinquecento*, p. 115.

<sup>53</sup> Rea, ‘Cavalcanti e l’invenzione del lettore’, in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, p. 161.

<sup>54</sup> Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986. See also De Robertis, ‘Il caso di Cavalcanti’, in *Dante e la Bibbia*, ed. by Barblan.

<sup>55</sup> As mentioned above, Martinez has discussed Cavalcanti’s use of *Lamentations* in Martinez, ‘Cavalcanti “Man of Sorrows”’, in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone. However, Martinez has extensively examined the reuse of the same intertext in Dante. See in particular: Martinez, ‘Lament and lamentations in *Purgatorio* and the case of Dante’s Statius’, *Dante Studies with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, CXV (1997), 45-88; Id., ‘Mourning Beatrice: the rhetoric of threnody in the *Vita nuova*’, *Modern Language Notes*, CXIII/1 (1998), 1-29; Id., ‘Dante between hope and despair. The traditions of *Lamentations* in the *Divine Comedy*’, *Logos. A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture*, V/3 (2002), 45-76; Id., ‘Dante’s Forese, the Book of Job, and the Office of the Dead: a note on *Purgatorio* 23’, *Dante Studies with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, CXX (2002), 1-16; Id., ‘Dante’s Jeremiads: the fall of Jerusalem and the burden of the new Pharisees, the Capetians, and Florence’, in *Dante for the new millennium*, ed. by Teodolinda Barolini and H. Wayne Storey (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), pp. 301-319.

I' prego voi che di dolor parlate  
che, per vertute di nova pietate,  
non disdegniate – la mia pena udire. (XIX, 1-3)

In these lines, the subject's request internalises both verses of Jeremiah's. The second-person pronoun 'voi' (1), and the relative clause, identify the individuals addressed as those who 'conoscono la sofferenza d'amore' – as at *Lam.* 1,12. The presence of verse 1,18 is especially visible in the verb 'preg[are]', which sustains the entire plea and the demand to be heard ('non disdegniate – la mia pena udire' (3)). The syntagm 'la mia pena' references the 'dolor meus' of both verses.<sup>56</sup>

This type of apostrophe, directed to a group of individuals called on to partake of the subject's suffering can be found a number of times in the *Rime*, to the extent that – as De Robertis holds – these two fragments from *Lamentations* 'percorrono tutto il dolente discorso cavalcantiano, costituendo la prospettiva fissa della richiesta di attenzione e di partecipazione':<sup>57</sup>

Vedete ch'i' son un che vo piangendo  
e dimostrando – il giudizio d'Amore,  
e già non trovo sì pietoso core  
che, me guardando, – una volta sospiri. (X, 1-4)

Voi che per li occhi mi passaste 'l core  
e destaste la mente che dormia,  
guardate a l'angosciosa vita mia,  
che sospirando la distrugge Amore. (XIII, 1-4)

Canto, piacere, beninanza e riso  
me 'n son dogli' e sospiri:  
guardi ciascuno e miri  
che Morte m'è nel viso già salita! (XXXII, 11-14)

As further emphasised by Martinez, in discussing the reuse of *Lamentations* in the wider context of thirteenth-century devotional literature, these passages 'furnish a persisting leitmotif of Cavalcanti's verse, a key element in his fashioning of a lyric persona and voice'.<sup>58</sup> Martinez stresses the importance of Cavalcanti's reuse of *Lamentations*, observing that this aspect deserves further exploration with regard to the articulation of lyric subjectivity.

As Rea more recently suggested, by reinterpreting Jeremiah's plea as a request for attention aimed at arousing pity, Cavalcanti defines a new lyric addressee, reestablishing the lost pole of the *Io*'s love discourse. A new addressee 'subentra [...] a quell[a] di matrice cortese, invals[a] fino a quel

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<sup>56</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 63; Rea, 'Cavalcanti e l'invenzione del lettore', in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, p. 162.

<sup>57</sup> De Robertis, 'Il caso di Cavalcanti', in *Dante e la Bibbia*, ed. by Barblan, p. 343

<sup>58</sup> Martinez, 'Cavalcanti "Man of Sorrows"', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, p. 192

momento, “Io individuale – donna”. Vengono così di fatto rifondate le categorie dell’Io e del Tu che sono alla base dello stesso genere lirico’.<sup>59</sup>

Rea further develops his argument in a later essay in which he also aims to define the identity of the recipient of these Cavalcantian apostrophes. By means of the reuse of the Jeremian plea, Rea suggests, Cavalcanti establishes a relationship with a new addressee, thus contributing to the “invention” of the *lettori*, of an audience, as the title of Rea’s essay also suggests.<sup>60</sup> With this textual strategy, the poetic discourse, and its development, is freed from earlier courtly dynamics which are dependent upon the figure of the beloved. This operation is fundamental to the articulation of the Cavalcantian subject, and to its legitimisation over and against the prior tradition of love poetry. Rea observes ‘nella stessa misura in cui la richiesta [...] di partecipazione presuppone [...] il primato dell’io lirico, implica [...] il riconoscimento [del] pubblico (vale a dire i lettori), senza il quale la stessa autoaffermazione dell’Io non avrebbe senso’.<sup>61</sup> Rea concludes by maintaining that Cavalcanti’s poetic operation anticipates what Dante and Petrarch will later do in the *Vita Nuova* and the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*:

Dante nella *Vita nuova*, in modo tutt’altro che piano, invocherà «quello cominciamento di Geremia profeta» (XXX,1) in principio della sezione in morte di Beatrice [...], *per garantire la portata universale di quella perdita e della sua nuova poesia*. [A] sua volta, Petrarca, [...] saprà far fruttare appieno l’intuizione cavalcantiana e si affiderà proprio all’appello geremiano *per aprire il suo lungo dialogo con i lettori*: «Voi ch’ascoltate in rime sparse il suono».<sup>62</sup>  
[my emphasis]

Rea’s observations are perceptive in identifying the importance of *Lamentations* to the Cavalcantian re-fashioning of the traditional courtly dynamics and the articulation of subjectivity, as already emphasised by Martinez. Moreover, as stressed by Rea, Cavalcanti’s reuse of this source must have been significant to Dante and Petrarch, who reuse *Lamentations* in the *Vita Nuova* and in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*.

As I argue, however, Cavalcanti’s use of *Lamentations* is radically different from Dante’s and Petrarch’s. As I shall suggest through a comparison between the functions of Jeremiah’s plea in the works of the three authors, Cavalcanti’s reuse of Lamentation is parodic. The Jeremian pleas are not used, as Rea suggests, to convey the subject’s experience of an universalistic and exemplary sorrow

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<sup>59</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 178.

<sup>60</sup> Rea, ‘Cavalcanti e l’invenzione del lettore’, in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni. As Rea suggests, ‘The pleas for attention in the Cavalcantian corpus work to ‘invocare la partecipazione dei lettori a un dolore che possono riconoscere come proprio’ (*Ibid.*, p. 167).

<sup>61</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 178.

<sup>62</sup> Rea, ‘Cavalcanti e l’invenzione del lettore’, in *Les Deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 167-168.

and to ‘costruire il [...] rapporto con i lettori’.<sup>63</sup> The internalisation of the Jeremian plea, as Rea emphasises, undoubtedly recasts the traditional courtly request, thus preventing the Cavalcantian love-discourse from falling into a closed circuit which would result in the ‘la fine del canto’, as seen in *canzone* XI. However, as my analysis seeks to demonstrate, the Cavalcantian request for attention, differently from Dante’s and Petrarch’s, does not escape the close boundaries of the inner, fictional dimension to reach an audience. The plea in the *Rime* is addressed to a group of individuals whose function is internal to the fiction and is, as Martinez suggests, that of articulating the subject of the lyrics as a “Man of Sorrows”.<sup>64</sup> The function of *Lamentations* in Cavalcanti is parodic, as I suggest, because it forms part of a complex system of refractions, projections, and displacements of the *Io* by means of the insertion of voices, entities, and gazes in the text. I argue that Cavalcanti does not aim at articulating an ‘Io-universale’, as Rea suggests, as much as at emphasising the gravity of the *Io*’s condition. The new addressee is just a projection of the *Io* himself, the embodiment of the subject’s desire of finding reciprocation for his sorrow. These individuals are solely a function of the *Rime*’s distinguishing subjectivity.

#### IV.5 DANTE, THE *VITA NUOVA*, AND THE DEFINITION OF AN AUDIENCE

When comparing Cavalcanti’s, Dante’s, and Petrarch’s use of Jeremiah’s *Lamentations*, and their distinctive appeals to individuals ‘other’ to the lady, it is first important to take into consideration a difference: the *Vita Nuova* and the *Canzoniere* are both macrottexts. Through different textual strategies they both delineate a narrative. They recount a story, that of their authors. This is the result of an (at times extremely complex) process of self-editing on the part of their authors, and the same cannot be said of Cavalcanti’s *Rime*.<sup>65</sup>

In his *libello*, Dante assembles his juvenile poems, together with other new texts, and provides both with a narrative structure by situating them in a prose *cornice*. The complex process of rearranging pre-existing lyrics to insert them in a new ‘little book’ has been analysed by De Robertis and more recently discussed by Teodolinda Barolini and Manuele Gragnolati.<sup>66</sup> The scholars examine Dante’s alterations of his early poems, comparing them to the texts later included in the *Vita Nuova*. In this way, they expose the inner workings of Dante’s construction of an authorial figure. As Michelangelo Picone demonstrates, the *Vita Nuova* delineates Dante’s spiritual and poetic

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<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>64</sup> Martinez, ‘Cavalcanti “Man of Sorrows”’, in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone.

<sup>65</sup> See my Introduction pp. XII-XIII for a discussion of the *Rime*’s manuscript transmission.

<sup>66</sup> De Robertis, *Il libro della Vita Nuova*; Dante, *Rime*, 2002; Dante, *Rime*, 2005; Dante, *Rime giovanili e della Vita Nuova*, ed. by Barolini and Gragnolati.



molte fiatae più ch'io non vorria,  
lasso!, di pianger sì la donna mia,  
che sfogasser lo cor, piangendo lei,  
Voi udirete lor chiamar sovente  
la mia donna gentil, che si n'è gita  
al secol degno de la sua vertute;  
e dispregiar talora questa vita  
in persona dell'anima dolente  
abbandonata della sua salute. (*VN*, XXXII.5-6)

In the fiction of the *Vita Nuova*, this sonnet is composed by Dante on the request of an unnamed friend. The lament for Beatrice's death then takes the form of an honest dissimulation. References to *Lamentations* are apparent in the plea that other 'cor gentili' partake of the *Io*'s suffering ('Venite a 'ntender' (1)), a prayer which is repeated in line 9, and emphasised by the vocative in line 2 and the pronoun 'voi' opening the sestet. How do we interpret Dante's plea? What are the identity and role of the 'cor gentili' addressed in the *libello*?

Elena Lombardi has recently brought again to scholarly attention the much-debated issue of addressees and interlocutors in the *Vita Nuova*.<sup>70</sup> Lombardi argues that these many fictitious individuals are part of Dante's coherent programme, aimed at defining both a specific authorship and a specific readership, which also involves the interplay between prose and poetry. In other words, the implied interlocutors in Dante's text contribute to the definition of a real authorship for the *libello*. Following on from these reflections, I shall suggest looking at Dante's reuse of Jeremiah's *Lamentations* and the plea to the 'cor gentili' in the context of a more complex system of intertext and interlocutors which grounds the whole project of Dante's *libello*. The 'cor gentili' besought by Dante are not simply implied, fictitious addressees.

The reuse of *Lamentations*, as I propose, has to be read as having a primary significance outside the mere fiction of Dante's book, as one of the several elements that contributes to 'grant[ing] [...] the *libello* a distinct identity, not to say canonicity, which straightaway would distinguish it from established forms not just of Latin textuality, but also of vernacular writing'.<sup>71</sup> The address to the 'cor gentili' and the intertextual references to *Lamentations* provide a specific context for Dante's sorrow as recounted in paragraphs XXVIII-XXXII of the text. By comparing Dante's sorrow to that recounted by Jeremiah, the references convey the universal aspect of the protagonist's loss, as Rea has suggested, but they also mark a specific phase in the protagonist's spiritual journey and contribute to the affirmation of both a precise poetry, that of *amor-caritas*, and an authorial identity. This process

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<sup>70</sup> Lombardi, 'Addressees and Readers in Lyric Poetry', in *Imagining the Woman Reader*, pp. 38-78.

<sup>71</sup> Zygmunt Barański "'Lascio cotale trattato ad altro chiosatore'". Form, Literature, and Exegesis in Dante's *Vita nova*', in *Dantean Dialogues: Engaging with the Legacy of Amilcare Iannucci*, ed. by Maggie Kilgour and Elena Lombardi (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 1-40 (p. 10).



is concurrent to the definition of a specific readership which in the text is represented by the ‘cor gentili’ and outside the fiction by an elite group of readers who can understand Dante’s role in the context of the lyric tradition.

In order to discuss the relationship between the implied readers and the actual audience of the *libello*, and the importance of their interplay for the shaping of Dante’s authorial identity I shall mention one emblematic example of reception recently discussed by Justin Steinberg. Steinberg’s example is illuminating in displaying Dante’s awareness of the literary operation he was accomplishing with the *Vita Nuova*, as related to the construction of his own authorial identity through the definition of a readership able to “correctly” interpret his work.

A significant example of the importance and complexity of the *Vita Nuova*’s addressees is found in the *canzone* ‘Donne ch’avete intelletto d’amore’ (*VN*, XIX, 4-14). This passage emblematises how Dante’s address to a fictional interlocutor is never ‘naïve’, but always moved by a broader aim – that of establishing himself as an author. After Dante loses Beatrice’s *saluto* (*VN*, x.2), after the *gabbo* crisis (*VN*, XIV-XVI), and the vicious circle marked by the so-called *terna cavalcantiana*, Dante sets his poetry on a new footing. With the *poetica della loda*, (*VN*, XVIII-XIX) he aims to affirm a self-sufficient kind of love modelled upon *amor-caritas*. He presents this new poetic mode as the result of a dialogue with a group of ladies.

The figure of these women, and their role as fictional and implied addressees inside and outside Dante’s text, has been analysed by Steinberg. In a broader attempt to reconsider the creation of the *Duecento* lyric canon in the light of material culture, Steinberg takes account of how issues such as textual transmission relate to Dante’s attempt to construct an authorial identity. Such an approach is suggested by the *Vita Nuova* itself, says Steinberg, as its prose sections often explicitly mention issues related to the material circulation of its texts. As the scholar maintains, ‘the entire discussion of “Donne ch’avete” in the *Vita Nuova* is concerned with phenomena of textual interpretation and dissemination’.<sup>72</sup> Steinberg aims to demonstrate that Dante was extremely concerned with problems connected to textual circulation, and he focusses on a specific episode of the *libello*’s textual transmission – the second extant thirteenth-century transcription of ‘Donne ch’avete’, found in the *Vat. Lat 3793* manuscript.

A peculiar trait of the Vatican anthology is that its compiler purposely organises texts to create a dialogic and narrative arrangement, alternating male and female voices in the form of fictitious *tenzoni*. The transcription of ‘Donne ch’avete’ in the *Vat. Lat. 3793* is particularly interesting in this respect. In the ordering established in this manuscript, Dante’s poem is followed by a *canzone* with

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<sup>72</sup> Steinberg, *Accounting for Dante. Urban readers and Writers in Late Medieval Italy* (Notre Dame (IND): University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), p. 62.

the same rhymes as ‘Donne ch’avete’, entitled ‘Ben aggia l’amoroso e dolce chore’. This one-stanza poem, attributed to an author identified as ‘Amico di Dante’, is then plausibly written in the voice of the women addressed in ‘Donne ch’avete’. Discussing this fictitious *tenzone* by taking account of Dante’s later embedding of his *canzone* in the narrative of the *libello*, Steinberg maintains that the Amico di Dante’s response to ‘Donne ch’avete’ ‘reductively misreads the philosophical and experimental content of Dante’s *canzone*’.<sup>73</sup>

While for Dante his new addressees stand for a revolutionary way of loving, and thus of composing, love-poems, the ‘Amico’s’ impersonation of the *donne*’s female voice banalises Dante’s ideological operation and turns it into a playful dialogue.<sup>74</sup> Such a trivialisation of the message of ‘Donne ch’avete’ is intensified by the structure of the whole anthology, as Steinberg continues, and by its peculiarity of placing on an equal footing real interlocutors and invented voices.<sup>75</sup> Dante was aware of this reception of his lyric, Steinberg claims, and makes up for it when he inserts his *canzone* into the narrative of the *Vita Nuova*. ‘Donne che avete’, and the prose within which the lyric is embedded, ‘forms part of a complex response to the way in which the *canzone* was received and anthologised in manuscripts such as the Vat 3793’.<sup>76</sup>

When, in the *Vita Nuova*, the ladies beg Dante by saying ‘noi ti preghiamo che tu ne dichi dove sta la tua beatitudine [my emphasis]’ (*VN*, XVIII.6) they are paving the way for Dante’s definition of both his new poetic mode and his new implied audience. The dialogue with the ladies is not a simple exchange with a fictitious interlocutor internal to the narrative of the *libello*. Rather, the author indicates the correct way to read his poem, and discards “bad readers” such as the ‘Amico di Dante’. This literary operation is a way to define his new poetics, to exit the boundaries of the *Vita Nuova*’s narrative, and to touch on the issue of the real audience of his book and its reception. As the scholar holds:

I propose that Dante was both aware of the reception of his *canzone* in “Ben aggia” and that [...] by incorporating the apostrophized ladies of “Donne ch avete” into the narrative structure of the *Vita nova*, Dante stages a reception of his poetry that effectively replaces the real public of the Amico di Dante and the Amico’s own response in the female voice.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>75</sup> As Steinberg explains: ‘while there is a clear difference between a real political opponent and an invented female beloved, in the world of the Vatican anthology they are placed on an almost equal footing. In this way, through their association with fictional exchanges between lovers, contemporary political divisions are aestheticized in the Vatican anthology and, at least temporarily, reconciled’ (*Ibid.*, p. 72).

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

The insertion of Dante's *canzone* into a prose frame is a process of self-exegesis. Not only does the prose specify the direction of Dante's new poetic address, but it also provides readers with instructions on how to read Dante's spiritual and poetic development as fictionalised in the lyric.

Why is this episode relevant for understanding the figure of the 'cor gentili' addressed in the intertextual reference to Jeremiah's *Lamentations*? The case-study 'Donne ch'avete' demonstrates that, while apparently addressing a group of women in the fiction of the *Vita Nuova*, Dante is in fact staging a broader reception of his 'little book'. Similarly, the addressees called on to partake of Dante's suffering in 'Venite a 'ntender li sospiri miei' are not simply characters in a fiction. In other words, the 'indirection' discussed by Culler is here emblematically exploited.

The reuse of *Lamentations* – the quintessential Scriptural text that expresses a plea for compassion – is aimed at expressing a universally valid break with the history of poetics up to that point. It sets the stage for the announcement of Dante's new poetry and of Dante's conversion. Moreover, the 'cor gentili' are not simply implied addressees but, just like the women of 'Donne ch'avete', this group stands for a real audience. Dante's address to the 'cor gentili', by means of a Jeremian apostrophe, is to be considered part of a broader programme in which Dante defines his poetry against a past lyric tradition.

#### IV.6 PETRARCH'S *RERUM VULGARIUM FRAGMENTA*

Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* is a text no less complex than Dante's *Vita Nuova*. It, too, contains a plea to listeners modelled on Jeremiah's *Lamentations*, but in this case in its very first lines. Petrarch's *RVF* is, likewise, not simply a collection of 366 lyric poems, but a macrotext. Through the juxtaposition of its lyrics, and an interanimating 'ricamo perpetuo', the *Canzoniere* (as modern readers refer to it) recounts the interior vicissitudes of its author.<sup>78</sup> The lyrics collected in the *RVF* are organised to delimit movement both in space and in time. Santagata has analysed the complex relationship the *Canzoniere* has with the author's biography, suggesting classical and vernacular models as sources for the Aretine poet's collection.<sup>79</sup> The *RVF*'s architecture is part of Petrarch's broader autobiographical project (also comprising his epistolary and the *Secretum*), which

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<sup>78</sup> Francesco Petrarca, *Canzoniere: Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, ed. by Rosanna Bettarini, 2 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 2005), I, p. XIV.

<sup>79</sup> Essential works on the construction of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* are: Ernest Hatch Wilkins, *The making of the Canzoniere and other Petrarchan studies* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 1951); Domenico De Robertis, 'Il "Dante e Petrarca" di Giovanni Boccaccio', in *Il codice Chigiano L. V. 176 autografo di Giovanni Boccaccio*, ed. by Domenico De Robertis (Rome; Florence: Archivi Edizioni Fratelli Alinari, 1974), pp. 47-71; Marco Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima. Storia e racconto nel Canzoniere di Petrarca* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1993); H. Wayne Storey, 'Doubting Petrarch's Last Words: Erasure in Ms Vaticano Latino 3195', in *Petrarch and the Textual Origins of Interpretation*, ed. by Teodolinda Barolini and H. Wayne Storey (Leiden; Boston (MA): Brill, 2007), pp. 67-91; Arnaldo Soldani, 'Un'ipotesi sull'ordinamento finale del *Canzoniere*', *Studi petrarcheschi*, 19 (2006): 209-247.

Santagata interprets as the poet’s attempt to convey an exemplary conversion from a sinful past towards increased ethical and moral self-awareness.

Barolini considers the self-construction of Petrarch’s subjectivity by specifically addressing the relation between time and the self dramatised in Petrarch’s work.<sup>80</sup> In taking account of the material constructedness of Petrarch’s *RVF* and by analyzing the way in which the poet handles and manipulates the *codices* in which he wrote, Barolini points out the ‘textual [...] thematic and rhetorical instability that Petrarch built into his textual net for gathering the evanescence of human life’.<sup>81</sup> Barolini argues that in his *Canzoniere*, Petrarch purposely violates chronology and history in order to create a structure that resists structure, building an overarching tension that ‘dramatiz[es a] radical ontological instability, the instability of being itself’.<sup>82</sup> According to Barolini, such a structure emblematises and doubles the self’s interiority and its fragmentation.<sup>83</sup> All these elements emphasise Petrarch’s attempt to construct (or re-construct) a specific identity, which is both that of a lyric subject and that of the author, converging in the *Io* of the *Canzoniere*. For the purposes of the present discussion, I shall emphasise the urgency of this movement through a consideration of Petrarch’s use of *Lamentations*. As I shall contend, even if through a different rhetorical strategy, as seen in Dante’s *Vita Nuova*, Petrarch’s address modelled upon the *Lamentations* exceeds the domain of the fiction to reach the extra-textual dimension.

Many of these complexities are already present in the *Canzoniere*’s inaugural lyric – or rather, the inaugural lyric in the second redaction of the work:<sup>84</sup>

Voi ch’ascoltate in rime sparse il suono  
di quei sospiri ond’io nudriva ’l core  
in sul mio primo giovenile errore  
quand’era in parte altr’uom da quel ch’i’ sono, 4

del vario stile ch’io piango et ragiono  
fra le vane speranze e ’l van dolore,  
ove sia chi per prova intenda amore,  
spero trovar pietà, nonché perdono. 8

Ma ben veggio or sí come al popol tutto  
favola fui gran tempo, onde sovente  
di me medesimo meco mi vergogno; 11

<sup>80</sup> Barolini, ‘The Self in the Labyrinth of Time’, in *Petrarch. A Critical Guide*, ed. by Kirkham and Maggi.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>83</sup> *Ivi.*

<sup>84</sup> This lyric is at the beginning of the *RVF* from its second redaction. Its composition probably dates to 1350, ‘quando Petrarca ritorna su se stesso e comincia con pazienza e con furore a raccogliere’ his lyrics (Bettarini, in *Petrarca, Canzoniere*, ed. by Bettarini, p. 5). For the dating of this sonnet see Francisco Rico, “‘Rime Sparse’, ‘*Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*’”. Para el título y el primer soneto del “*Canzoniere*”, *Medioevo Romano*, III, (1976), 101-138. For the relationship between this sonnet and the sonnet which opened the *RVF* in the first redaction see Alfred Noyer-Weidner, ‘Sonetto I’, *Lectura Petrarce*, IV (1984), 327-353.

et del mio vaneggiar vergogna è 'l frutto,  
e 'l pentersi, e 'l conoscer chiaramente  
che quanto piace al mondo è breve sogno.<sup>85</sup> (I) 14

The opening apostrophe of the sonnet is modelled upon Jeremiah's plea, the same text that underpins Dante's and Cavalcanti's lyrics discussed above ('O vos omnes qui transitis per viam, attendite et videte' (1:12)). The appeal in Petrarch's poem is embedded in a convoluted sentence, which stretches the length of the entire octet. The elaborate syntax of the first lines obfuscates the exegesis of the opening 'Voi'. Lodovico Castelvetro observes that the plural pronoun 'non regge verbo', and Giulio Camillo Delminio also notices that the second person plural pronoun 'sta sospeso da verbo'.<sup>86</sup> Even more recent scholars agree that it is impossible to clearly identify the addressee of this first apostrophe.<sup>87</sup>

As Rosanna Bettarini puts it, the syntactic reticence of the opening allocution 'ambiguamente trattiene il rapporto tra il *Voi* (pubblico indistinto degli ascoltatori-lettori), il *chi* del v.7 (pubblico privilegiato del lettori-amanti e poeti d'amore) e l'*io-auctor* (spero, v.8)'.<sup>88</sup> Through a series of oppositions, then, the sonnet selects a privileged audience for itself from among the more general 'voi' – the *volgo* which, as Roberto Mercuri specifies, are contrasted to those individuals who are experienced in and who understand love, designated by the 'chi' in line 7.<sup>89</sup> Through the use of past and present tenses, another binary relation is staged, one which opposes the 'old' self who committed his 'primo giovenil errore' and the present one ('uom [...] ch' i' sono' (4)).

Petrarch's opening apostrophe is thus embedded in a metapoetic discourse which immediately breaks the fiction of the lyric. As Adelia Noferi points out, according to the fiction of this sonnet and the dynamics of time expressed by it, not only is the entire story the *RVF* recounts presented as a flashback but, also, 'l'azione dicotomizzante che separa la scrittura ed il soggetto della scrittura da quello di cui si parla e scrive, che per avventura è lo stesso «io» soggetto della scrittura, il quale si ribalta così immediatamente in oggetto [...] si costituisce come metalinguaggio'.<sup>90</sup> At the core of this opening lyric is not an audience, but the *Io*, which is presented at the same time as both the subject and object of the lyric discourse. Through an operation similar to the one discussed in Dante's *Vita*

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<sup>85</sup> Petrarca, 'Voi ch'ascoltate in rime sparse il suono', in Id., *Canzoniere*, ed. by Santagata, pp. 5-12.

<sup>86</sup> Both quotations are taken from Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Bettarini, p. 6.

<sup>87</sup> Noyer-Weidner, 'Sonetto I', p. 267.

<sup>88</sup> Bettarini, in Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Bettarini, p. 7. This ambivalence is also discussed in Roberto Mercuri, 'Genesi della tradizione letteraria italiana in Dante, Petrarca e Boccaccio', in *Letteratura italiana. Storia e geografia*, 3 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 1987), I: *L'Età medievale*, pp. 229-455 (pp. 359-360).

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 359-360.

<sup>90</sup> Adelia Noferi, *Frammenti per i Frammenti di Petrarca* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2001), p. 23.

*Nuova*, the opening apostrophe, modelled on Jeremiah's plea, is used to reach an extratextual, non-fictional audience.

Commenting on the syntax of the first quatrain, Alfred Noyer-Weidner observes that the opening apostrophe, 'voi ch'ascolate':

cede rapidamente il passo a prolegomeni argomentativi che rimandano senz'altro all'"io" poetante sotto due aspetti: presente l'"io" del poeta, ma presente, in senso empirico, anche se stilizzato, anche l'"io" dell'uomo, e riguardo a quest'ultimo si può ancora differenziare tra prima e ora, tra "era" da un lato e "sono" dall'altro.<sup>91</sup>

The scholar stresses Petrarch's process of turning the focus of the lyric from its addressee towards its subject/object: the self. This situation is bolstered by the phonic framework of the lyric, as Charles Kloop and Noyer-Weidner demonstrate.<sup>92</sup> Contini once pointed out that 'l'allitterazione è poco meno che assente nel *Canzoniere*',<sup>93</sup> but as Kloop and Noyer show, this opening sonnet marks an exception to that general rule. Kloop describes the use of sounds in 'Voi ch'avete' as determined by what he defines as the 'funzione espressiva' of alliteration. This is aimed at focussing the attention on the *Io* and his complex spiritual journey and is most pronounced in line 11: 'di me medesimo meco mi vergogno'. The shame of the subject for his sinful past is the cornerstone – the formal cause of the entire *Canzoniere*. It is from this moment of self-awareness that the spiritual journey begins. As Jacomuzzi points out, this metaliterary feature of the lyric, its progressive disclosure of the *RVF*'s primary object, 'tend[e] a rompere il cerchio del componimento, a cercare il [suo] fondamento in una storia reale, intesa come dato esplicitamente extratestuale, come autobiografia esibita e segnalata nelle sue circostanze cronologiche e psicologiche'.<sup>94</sup>

The metaliterary aspect of this sonnet, which collapses the fiction of the lyric, as well as the obsessive focus on the self, testify to Petrarch's overriding will to define both an empirical and a transcendental subject. This operation has to be considered in the light of the *RVF*'s complex editorial programme, aimed at giving a specific structure to the spiritual journey recounted. It is for these reasons that the apostrophe to the 'Voi' which opens the sonnet must be taken both as a fictitious plea to a public and as an expression of the author's desire for a specific audience, one able to correctly interpret the events and vicissitudes undergone by the *Canzoniere*'s *Io*.

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<sup>91</sup> Noyer-Weidner, 'Sonetto I', p.275.

<sup>92</sup> Charles Kloop, 'Allitterazione e rima nel sonetto proemiale ai *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*', *Lingua e stile*, XII (1977), 331-342; Noyer-Weidner, 'Sonetto I', pp. 279-281.

<sup>93</sup> Contini, *Letteratura italiana delle origini*, p. 633.

<sup>94</sup> Angelo Jacomuzzi, 'Il primo sonetto del «Canzoniere»', in *Letteratura e critica. Studi in onore di Natalino Sapegno*, ed. by Walter Binni and others (Rome: Bulzoni, 1974), pp. 41-58 (p. 44).

#### IV.7 CAVALCANTI'S CIRCULAR APOSTROPHES

As I have discussed, in the *Vita Nuova*, *Lamentations* works to set up a universal reach for Dante's loss, and, by defining a group of 'cor gentili' (2), the apostrophe of 'Venite a 'ntender' works in the other direction, to define a restricted readership for the book. The delineation of Dante's is part of his attempt to define an authorial identity and is not limited to this episode of the *libello*. Similar observations could be made about the *RVF*, and its opening apostrophe to a 'Voi'. Even if we take the address to the 'voi' as a mere literary device with no traction on the extra-textual domain, the metatextual reflection of the opening sonnet as well as the complexity of the *RVF*'s composition implies a desire for a specific reception, and so for a public. In both Dante's and Petrarch's macrottexts, the reuse of *Lamentations* paves the way for the affirmation of a precise spiritual development which is directly connected to the affirmation of a well-constructed authorial identity. Both texts actualise emblematically Culler's "triangulation" inside and outside the fiction of the lyric.

The internalisation of Jeremiah's plea in Cavalcanti does not appear as much aimed at defining a real readership, as at articulating a love discourse utterly focussed on the subject and on his representation. While I agree that, as Rea argues, 'la poesia cavalcantiana conquista, attraverso la ricerca geremiana di partecipazione, una nuova autonomia', I am not convinced that this autonomy finds in the 'costante dialogo con i lettori, la propria giustificazione'.<sup>95</sup> The plea for attention directed to a group of individuals works as an effective solution against the *fine del canto*, the end of poetry. By invoking an external validation for his own sorrow, the subject reinstates the traditional polarity of the love discourse. Through this particular form of invoked reciprocation, the self-referentiality and the collapsing of the poetic discourse are circumvented.

However, rather than a real audience, the individuals addressed in the Cavalcantian apostrophes could be seen as mere "functions" of the *Io* and, as I have suggested, as its projections. The same allocutive mode characterising several texts of the Cavalcantian corpus, where the address is directed to different individuals, suggests considering these invoked figures as different metamorphoses of the same interlocutor: the subject himself. These "others" are forms of the displacement of the subject who undergoes the 'perdita di sé' emblematised in the sestets of sonnet VII, in the image of the walking automaton, to reuse Fenzi's effective expression which I have often referenced in this work.

This connection between addressees emerges when considering that the attention of an alleged "other" invoked through the Jeremian plea is often used in the *Rime* to address entities which are constitutive of the *Io*, as in the quatrains of sonnet VI:

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<sup>95</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 29.

Deh, spiriti miei, quando mi vedete  
con tanta pena, come non mandate  
fuor della mente parole adornate  
di pianto, dolorose e sbigottite? 4

Deh, voi vedete che 'l core ha ferite  
di sguardo e di piacer e d'umiltate:  
deh, i'vi priego che voi 'l consolate  
che son da lui le sue vertù partite. (VI, 1-8) 8

As in the apostrophe of *ballata* XIX, the subject here invokes the attention and the pity of “others” who are entreated to see him, to acknowledge his sorrow. As De Robertis stresses, ‘il tema [del sonetto] è quello dell’*autocommiserazione* [my emphasis],<sup>96</sup> as the *spiriti* are vital functions of the subject himself, in charge of his bodily pneumatic circulation. The plea for commiseration, ‘rivolt[o] all’interno di sé, si traduce in una lunga, alienata, allocuzione ai propri spiriti’.<sup>97</sup> In commenting on the sonnet, Rea suggests that the subject’s annihilation ‘induce [...] a moltiplicare le richieste, coinvolgendo le altre ipostasi dell’io disgregato’.<sup>98</sup> This desperate multiplication of the subject’s requests could be extended to the plea to the ‘Voi’ of the apostrophes previously discussed. This supposition is grounded on Cavalcanti’s use of the same allocutive mode, modelled upon that of *Lamentations* which, as we have seen, is characterised by the emphasis on the conative message, the verb ‘vedere or ‘guardare’, and lexemes gravitating around the semantics of sorrow to characterise the *Io*. This same allocutive mode seen in sonnet VI, is used to address different “others” in the *Rime*, as these examples reveal:

VI, 1-4: Deh, spiriti miei, quando *mi vedete* | *con tanta pena*, come non mandate | fuor della mente  
parole adornate | di pianto, dolorose e sbigottite?

X, 1-4: *Vedete* ch’i’ son un che *vo piangendo* | e dimostrando – il giudizio d’Amore | e già non trovo  
sì *pietoso* core | che, me guardando, – una volta sospiri.

XIII, 1-4: Voi che per li occhi mi passaste ‘l core | e destaste la mente che dormia, | *guardate*  
l’*angosciosa* vita mia, | che sospirando la distrugge Amore.

XIX, 1-3: I’prego voi che di dolor parlate | che, per vertute di nova pietate, | non disdegniate – *la mia*  
*pena udire*.

[my emphasis]

<sup>96</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 22.

<sup>97</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 64.

<sup>98</sup> *Ivi*.



I suggest that all these entities could be seen as mere projections of the alienated subject, whose self-commiserative attitude is emblematically represented in the first quatrain of sonnet XVI:

*A me stesso di me pietate vène  
per la dolente angoscia ch'ì mi veggio:  
di molta debolezza quand' io seggio,  
l'anima sento ricoprir di pene. (XVI, 1-4)*  
[my emphasis]

As in all the examples previously examined, the feeling of pity is associated with the act of seeing and with the feeling of sorrow (4). The circular movement of the subject's plea is emphasised by the language and rhetorical structure of these opening lines. As Rea comments 'il moto di autocommiserazione iniziale è affidato ad un movimento sintattico solenne, con iperbato del pronome personale e predicato a fine frase'.<sup>99</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

If one accepts this interpretative hypothesis, Cavalcanti's specific use of apostrophes and of *Lamentations* has several implications for the questions set out at the beginning of this Chapter. If the *Io* only addresses his dismembered bodily parts or refractions of his own self, it is possible to affirm that the Cavalcantian plea for attention and the sorrow expressed by the subject are merely self-referential, even when the plea seems to be directed outside the close, inner dimension of the *Io*. These observations suggest correcting Giunta's argument in more than one point. First, in the specific example of Cavalcanti, the address to the 'donna amata' or to the 'io e sue maschere' are different modulations of the subject's same self-referential apostrophe to himself. Moreover, Giunta's hypothesis according to which Petrarch is the initiator of the introspective lyric should be pre-dated, as Cavalcanti's apostrophes are all directed inwards and uttered in a domain that does not exceed that of the subject's inner dimension. In fact, the conative function of the *Rime*'s poetic message serves merely to emphasise the subject's despair, rather than to reach a hypothetical *Tu*. Culler's triangulation is exploited by Cavalcanti to create a split of the first-person which replaces the traditional *Tu*, and to foreground the subject's dismay.

Cavalcanti's reuse of *Lamentations* is thus primarily to be understood in the context of this dramatising function. As observed by Martinez, the Jeremian allocutive mode 'furnish[es] a persisting leitmotif of Cavalcanti's verse [which] urgently direct[s] the attention of witnesses to a performance of erotic suffering'.<sup>100</sup> This particular use of *Lamentations*, especially if compared to Dante's and

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<sup>99</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 106.

<sup>100</sup> Martinez, 'Cavalcanti "Man of Sorrow"', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, p. 192.

Petrarch's examples, suggests looking at Cavalcanti's reuse of this intertext as having merely parodic aims – a type of reuse suggested elsewhere in the corpus, for other biblical intertexts. This aspect is also emphasised by another feature linked to the obsessive reiteration of the dynamics of suffering and the request for pity enacted by the Cavalcantian discourse. As has emerged in the previous Chapter, in which I made some observations concerning the temporality of the Cavalcantian love discourse, the dimension of time in the *Rime* is flattened to a constant repetition of the identical. This element deprives the reuse of the scriptural source of an edifying dimension, as in the emblematic case of Dante's *Vita Nuova*. The lack of a macrotext, ultimately, further confines the function of *Lamentations* to mere fictional purposes, thus relegating the reuse of this source to mere parodic purposes.<sup>101</sup> There is not, as seen in Dante and Petrarch, a movement towards a construction of authorial identity, there is no constructive use of the source inside and outside the fiction of the lyric, as in the *Rime* everything is reduced to the articulation of the subject and the representation of his suffering.

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<sup>101</sup> As Martinez suggests, Cavalcanti makes use of this text to represent theatrically the suffering of the *Io*, by emulating the suffering of Christ (Martinez, 'Cavalcanti "Man of Sorrows"', in *Guido Cavalcanti tra i suoi lettori*, ed. by Ardizzone, p. 192). Following on from Martinez's work, Paola Nasti discusses Cavalcanti's intertextual reuse of the *Song of Songs* in the incipit of 'Chi è questa che vèn' as parodic. As Nasti observes, 'se il Cantico era stato assunto dal Cavalcanti per significare le tensioni epistemologiche ed escatologiche della sua poesia amorosa, è tuttavia chiaro che, a differenza di quanto avveniva per la comunità di fedeli, la storia d'amore umano e divino celebrata dall'epitalamio biblico non sembrava rivelare al poeta nessuna via di salvezza, nessun percorso di conoscenza, nessuna gioia ultraterrena in cui sublimare la miseria dell'ignorante condizione umana [...]' (Paola Nasti, 'Nozze e vedovanze: dinamiche dell'appropriazione biblica in Dante e Cavalcanti', p. 83). Nasti argues, the sorrow of Cavalcanti's subject '[è] un martirio simulato, di un dolore non produttivo come quello del Salvatore' (*Ibid.*, p. 86).

## CHAPTER V VOICES OF THE *IO*

### INTRODUCTION

The previous Chapter was concerned with Cavalcanti's use of apostrophe, as a technique to redefine the basic mechanics of the courtly paradigm. As I suggested, although the traditional apostrophe to the beloved lady is nullified, the Cavalcantian poetic message preserves its conative function. In this Chapter, I will consider figures and voices appearing in the *Rime* that are "other" to the traditional one of the poet-lover and discuss their contribution to the articulation of lyric subjectivity. The analyses carried out in the previous sections of this work variously emphasised how the Cavalcantian subject undergoes a continuous process of dismemberment, displacement, and reformulation through different rhetorical and textual techniques. This Chapter discusses those rhetorical techniques whose function appears to multiply the figures and voices intersecting in the *Rime*, such as personification, prosopopoeia, and direct speech. Their centrality is widely acknowledged in scholarship. As I previously illustrated, despite the introspection characterising the Cavalcantian love discourse, its self-referential perspective often results in the dramatisation of the subject's inner dimension,<sup>1</sup> by means of which 'il poeta vitalizza tutte le entità (fisiche o psicologiche o fantastiche) interessate alla passione amorosa, facendole gli agenti di una rappresentazione volutamente drammatizzata'.<sup>2</sup> I will argue that the inclusion of figures and voices "other" to the traditional *Io* of the love lyric draws attention to crucial questions relating to the subject and its articulation. How do these entities contribute to the characterisation of a specific subjectivity in the lyric? Does the insertion of other figures or voices, different from the customary one of the poet-lover, imply the weakening of his traditional supremacy as the main locutor of the enunciation?

Personifications of the heart and eyes were already widely present in the poetry of the troubadours, and after them, in the corpora of Cavalcanti's Italian predecessors.<sup>3</sup> The central presence of personification is emphasised in influential works on the *fictio retorica* of the *Rime*. In discussing Cavalcanti's frequent use of personification, in Mario Marti's wake, Corrado Calenda recognises personification as the *Rime*'s key rhetorical device,<sup>4</sup> to the extent that the scholar defines it as 'la

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<sup>1</sup> Corti, 'Dualismo e immaginazione visiva', p. 648.

<sup>2</sup> Calenda, *Per altezza d'ingegno*, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> As Kay holds, this rhetorical device was very common in the Troubadours' lyric production between 1160 and 1170. For a detailed discussion of key texts of this period, see Sarah Kay, 'Allegory', in *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry*, pp. 50-83.

<sup>4</sup> Marti, *Poeti del Dolce stil nuovo*, p. 516.

figura di pensiero più ricorrente nel canzoniere'.<sup>5</sup> As Calenda further observes, '[...] le personificazioni cavalcantiane non si producono solo [...] dall'animazione di un sostantivo astratto', but are instead far more complex.<sup>6</sup> Besides traditional characters such as *Amore*, *Morte* or *Fortuna*,<sup>7</sup> Cavalcanti also personifies the subject's disembodied hypostases (the heart, the soul, the eyes), his sighs (*sospiri*, *spiriti*), his voice and, as I will discuss in this Chapter, the tools of writing.

Not only does Cavalcanti anthropomorphise these entities, but he also provides them with a *voice*. The poet's frequent use of prosopopoeia,<sup>8</sup> and thus the recurring *sermocinationes* are even more distinctive traits characterising the *Rime*.<sup>9</sup> Within a broader analysis aimed at detecting some persisting elements or archetypes deriving from popular culture in higher forms of literature, such as the love lyric, D'Arco Silvio Avalle observed the gradual disappearance of dialogic structures in the poets of the *Dolce Stil Novo*, while noting a high quotient of dialogism in Cavalcanti's and in Dante's corpora.<sup>10</sup> Avalle calculated the *tasso di dialogismo* [rate of dialogism] by counting the numerical and percentage ratio between the numbers of lines of direct discourse and the overall occurrences (meaning, lexical unities) in a corpus of selected texts.<sup>11</sup> According to these parameters the quotient of the *Vat. Lat. 3793* manuscript (excluding those sections dedicated to the 'Amico di Dante', 'poiché senz'altro eterogenee nei confronti del resto'),<sup>12</sup> used by Avalle for general comparisons as representative of the pre-stilnovistic lyric production, is 30 (533 units / 174.700 occurrences). While the result for Guinizzelli is 28 and that for Petrarch is 17, Cavalcanti's and Dante's corpora register

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<sup>5</sup> Calenda, *Per altezza d'ingegno* p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> I will include these entities in the broader category of personification, even if it would be more precise to define them as allegories. I will shortly discuss all these important distinctions in more detail.

<sup>8</sup> For a definition of prosopopoeia see Marco Berisso, 'Per una definizione di prosopopea. Dante, *Convivio* III, IX, 2', *Lingua e Stile* 26/1 (1991), 121-132. The distinguishing traits of prosopopoeia have been delineated by Marco Berisso. Starting from Dante's discussion of this rhetorical device in *VN* XXV, as well as highlighting 'il margine di libertà [...] rielaborativo [...] rispetto ai modelli teorici che i coevi trattatisti di retorica e quelli classici gli potevano fornire' (p.124), Berisso discusses two main influential sources for Dante's definition of prosopopoeia: one originating in Quintilian's thought and another in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. While these two texts contain some conceptual differences, both texts conceive prosopopoeia as the union of personification (*persona*) and speech (*sermo*), to the extent that Geoffrey of Vinsauf's association of this figure with the creation of *novae personae* 'perde di rilevanza [...] rispetto al fatto che la prosopopea rende parlanti le "res non loquentes"'. Having defined the main traits of this rhetorical device, Berisso also questions the relationship between prosopopoeia and allegory. In his own explication of allegory, Dante indeed comes back to some examples clearly pertaining to the realm of allegory, such as *Juno*, *Aeolus* and *Amore*. Hypothesising that the reason for the overlapping of figures in Dante is to be attributed to the canonicity of the entities mentioned, Berisso proposes outlining a methodological distinction rather than a classification based on abstraction. According to the scholar's suggestion, while prosopopoeia pertains to the realm of the *res inanimatae*, allegory includes all those examples in which mythological figures, vices, virtues and states of mind speak.

<sup>9</sup> Corti, 'Fisionomia stilistica', pp. 541-545.

<sup>10</sup> D'Arco Silvio Avalle, *Le maschere di Guglielmino. Strutture e motivi etnici nella cultura medievale* (Milan; Naples: Ricciardi, 1989).

<sup>11</sup> To avoid any misunderstanding, I shall specify that, with regard to the parameter of *battute*, a single unit is constituted by the portion of text within the inverted commas, regardless of the number of lines of direct discourse. For further clarifications see *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>12</sup> *Ivi*.

the notably higher rates of 39 and 53, respectively.<sup>13</sup> The voices staged in Cavalcanti's *Rime* can be rather traditional, such as that of Love, (VIII, 6-7; IX, 7-8; IX, 36-42; XIX, 10; XXXI, 20-24), of the so-called *fedeli d'amore* (v, 12-14; IX, 25-26; XXXIII, 14), of the lady (XII, 4; XLIII, 6-8), and of the soul (XII, 7-14); or more innovative, such as that of the personified lyric (IX-55-56; XXX, 52; XXXI, 28-31; XXXV, 33-36), as seen in the previous discussion.

Having acknowledged the exceptional frequency of dialogic structures in the *Rime*, I will address the questions I singled out in opening this Chapter by analysing some emblematic examples of the *Rime*. The discussion will proceed from stylistic and lexical examinations of elements contributing to the characterisation of the most relevant personified entities and of their voices, with an intertextual perspective. With the aim of formulating some hypotheses on the role of these entities in the articulation of the traditional subjectivity, this methodological approach will be in dialogue with works pertaining to or engaging with the field of French enunciation theory. More specifically, my analysis will mainly follow on from some reflections developed by Sophie Marnette throughout her longstanding and ongoing discussion of enunciators, locutors, and points of view in medieval French and English literature.<sup>14</sup> As I will contend, although Marnette's analysis discusses a number of narrative texts,<sup>15</sup> and my work is specifically focussed on a corpus of lyrics, the scholar's definition of "narrator", understood as 'l'instance textuelle qui raconte l'histoire et qui [...] est désignée par la 1<sup>ère</sup> pers.',<sup>16</sup> maintains its validity in reflecting upon the complexity of the poet-lover's voice in Cavalcanti's *Rime*. While the subject in the medieval love lyric designates himself with the first-person pronoun, as the locutor *par excellence* of the enunciation, the data just presented have demonstrated that his masculine, desiring voice is not the only one of the *Rime*. The intrusion of other voices through the use of direct speech is even more relevant if we consider that, following on from

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<sup>13</sup> I have updated Avallé's calculation with the support of the recently developed online database *LirIO*. Parameters for the single authors are the following: Guinizzelli 9 units | 3243 occurrences; Petrarch 97 units | 57088 occurrences; Dante 67 units | 17322 occurrences; Cavalcanti 35 units | 6761 occurrences. It is relevant to observe that a further calculation of the average number of lines of each unit highlights that Cavalcanti's *Rime* not only stands out for their frequent use of *sermocinationes*, but also for the length of their direct discourses. While the average for Dante's corpus is 2.8% (186 lines | 67 units), in Cavalcanti the percentage is 3.1% (110 lines | 35 units).

<sup>14</sup> Sophie Marnette, 'Énonciation et locuteurs dans les Lais de Marie de France', *Revue des littératures et des arts [En ligne]*, 19 (2018), <https://revues.univ-pau.fr/opcit/427>; Id., 'L'Énonciation féminine dans les lais médiévaux', *Le Discours et la langue*, 8/1 (2016), 97-120; Id., 'Oralité et locuteurs dans les lais médiévaux', *Diachroniques*, 3 (2013), 21-48; Id., *Speech and Thought Presentation in French: Concept and Strategies* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2005); Id., 'The French *théorie de l'énonciation* and the study of speech and thought presentation'; Id., *Narrateur et points de vue dans la littérature française médiévale. Une approche linguistique* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Marnette's *Narrateur et points de vue* discusses texts from the following subgenres: Vies de Saint, Chansons de Gestes, Romans en vers, Romans en prose, Chroniques and Divers. For the complete corpus, see *Ibid.*, pp. 23-27.

<sup>16</sup> Marnette, *Narrateur et points de vue*, p. 21 (based on Geoffrey N. Leech and Mick Short, *Style in Fiction. A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (London; New York: Longman, 1981), pp. 262). Spearing problematises the term narrator and its use by stressing that it 'may be neutral in itself but as actually used it strongly tends to imply the existence of such a self or character behind or in the narrative text' (Spearing, *Textual Subjectivity*, p. 174). Following on from Spearing and Marnette, I will consider voices of the *Rime* as textual instances and not as transcendental self.

Leech and Short, this syntactic structure is classified amongst those in which the narrator has little or no “apparent control” of what is said.<sup>17</sup> In fact, with direct discourse, words, rather than being reported, are directly uttered by characters.

Oswald Ducrot’s *Le Dire et le Dit* is a useful starting point for reflecting upon my questions.<sup>18</sup> In the last chapter of his 1984 work, by developing some reflections already presented in his earlier *Le Mots du Discours*,<sup>19</sup> Ducrot perfects and articulates a polyphonic theory of enunciation (‘théorie polyphonique de l’énonciation’). Aimed at criticising ‘l’unicité du sujet de l’énonciation’,<sup>20</sup> Ducrot draws on Bakhtin’s notion of ‘polyphony’,<sup>21</sup> maintaining that the utterance is the place of different subjects (and thus of different voices), and that this multiplicity is not limited to the uniqueness of the *sujet parlant* (or the empiric utterer/speaker) but is rather ascribable to a more complex system of voices and entities.<sup>22</sup> Besides the speaking subject, the physical person who produces the utterance, Ducrot distinguishes between the locutor(s), those responsible for the act of enunciation and designated as I,<sup>23</sup> and the enunciator(s), the point(s) of view or voice(s) expressed.<sup>24</sup>

Ducrot’s distinction appears pertinent when reflecting upon direct discourse, in which the main locutor conveys the exact words of another character, as in this example from Cavalcanti’s corpus:

Tu m’hai sì piena di dolor la mente,  
Che l’anima si briga di partire  
E li sospir’ che manda ’l cor dolente

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<sup>17</sup> Leech and Short, *Style in Fiction*, pp. 255-281. The table is reproduced and discussed in Marnette, *Narrateur et points de vue*, pp. 118-120.

<sup>18</sup> Oswald Ducrot, *Le Dire et le Dit* (Paris: Minuit, 1984), pp. 171-233. The following analysis of Ducrot’s reflections is based on Marnette, *Speech and Thought Presentation in French*, pp. 21-23 and Id., ‘The French *théorie de l’énonciation*’.

<sup>19</sup> Ducrot and others, eds, *Les Mots du discours* (Paris: Minuit, 1980).

<sup>20</sup> Ducrot, ‘Esquisse d’une théorie polyphonique de l’énonciation’, in Id., *Le Dire et le Dit*, pp. 171-233 (p. 189).

<sup>21</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion ‘polyphony’ is presented in his well-known *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, trans. by R. W. Rotsel (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1973). Since its formulation, Bakhtin’s polyphony has been developed by several theorists working at the crossroads of Psychoanalysis, Philosophy, Literature and Linguistics, such as Julia Kristeva, Tzvetan Todorov, and Jacqueline Authier-Revuz. See: Julia Kristeva, ‘Le mot, le dialogue et le roman’, in Id., *Séméiotiké. Recherches pour une sémanalyse* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1969), pp. 82-112; Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtine. Le principe dialogique* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1981); Jacqueline Authier-Revuz, ‘Hétérogénéité montrée et hétérogénéité constitutive: éléments pour une approche de l’autre dans le discours’, *DRLAV*, 2 (1982), 91-151; Id., *Ces mots qui ne vont pas de soi. Boucles réflexives et non-coïncidences du dire*, 2 vols (Paris: Larousse, 1995).

<sup>22</sup> Ducrot, *Le Dire et le Dit*, p. 171.

<sup>23</sup> Ducrot uses the plural *locuteurs* instead of *locuteur* to account for ‘l’existence, pour certains énonces, d’une pluralité de responsables donnés pour distincts et irréductibles’ (*Ibid.*, p. 193). As Ducrot later discusses, besides the case in which the locutor could be distinct from the empirical speaker, this phenomenon of plurality and polyphony is exemplified in Direct Discourse.

<sup>24</sup> ‘J’appelle «énonciateurs» ces êtres qui sont censés s’exprimer à travers l’énonciation, sans que pour autant on leur attribue des mots précis; s’ils «parlent», c’est seulement en ce sens que l’énonciation est vue comme exprimant leur point de vue, leur position, leur attitude, mais non pas, au sens matériel du terme, leurs paroles’ (*Ibid.*, p. 204). See Marnette, *Speech and Thought Presentation*, p. 246 for some examples illustrating the distinction between these three entities (i.e.: speaking subject, locutor, and enunciator).

Mostrano agli occhi ch'e' non può soffrire 4

Amore, che lo tuo gran valore sente,  
Dice: «E' mi duol che ti convien morire  
Per questa bella donna, ché niente  
Par che Pietate di te voglia udire». (VIII, 1-8) 8

In the quatrains of this sonnet there are two locutors: the poet-lover who denounces his suffering (1-4), and *Amore*, who in turn declares the ineluctability of the subject's fate (5-8). The personal pronouns *mi* in lines 1 and 6 refer to two different persons. In this lyric there are two locutors, two enunciators, and two different situations of enunciation (the second one introduced by the quoting verb *dire* (6)).

Within a broader discussion aimed at demonstrating the relevance of French enunciation theory when looking at Speech and Thought Presentation (beyond the French context), Marnette illustrates the strong continuity between Ducrot's reflections and the work of Dominique Maingueneau, who draws on Ducrot's theories and applies them to fictional texts to study the position of the narrator.<sup>25</sup> Maingueneau looks at the narrator as the entity put forward in the text, the guarantor of the enunciation. In other words, the narrator is the 'locutor' of the narrative, taking charge of the enunciation of the text. As Maingueneau also adds, when characters' discourses are presented in the direct mode, they in turn become locutors.<sup>26</sup> This process, Marnette observes, is a recursive one: a character can report the direct discourse of another character who consecutively becomes a locutor.<sup>27</sup>

Marnette suggests adding another category to describe the narrator/enunciator: the 'focalizer'.<sup>28</sup> This notion is based on Gérard Genette's *focalisation*,<sup>29</sup> or 'les perspectives à travers lesquelles le contenu du récit est filtré'.<sup>30</sup> As Marnette stresses, the acts of speaking and seeing (and, thus, narration and focalisation) are not necessarily to be ascribed to the same entity because, 'while a focalizer is necessarily an enunciator, the reverse is not true: an enunciator is not always a focalizer'.<sup>31</sup> Speaking and seeing (and, thus, voice and point of view) do not necessarily have to be attributed to the same entity in a fictional text. When reflecting on the articulation of subjectivity in

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<sup>25</sup> Dominique Maingueneau, *L'Analyse du discours* (Paris: Hachette, 1991); Id., *Éléments de linguistique pour le texte littéraire* (Paris: Dunod, 1993).

<sup>26</sup> Maingueneau, *Éléments de linguistique*, pp. 78-80, quoted in Marnette, *Speech and Thought Presentation*, pp. 31-33 and in Id., 'The French *théorie de l'énonciation*', pp. 257-259.

<sup>27</sup> Marnette, *Speech and Thought Presentation*, p. 28; Id., 'The French *théorie de l'énonciation*', p. 257.

<sup>28</sup> *Ivi*.

<sup>29</sup> Gérard Genette, *Figures III* (Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1972), pp. 203-206; pp. 206-211.

<sup>30</sup> Marnette, *Narrateur et points de vue*, p. 21.

<sup>31</sup> Id., *Speech and Thought Presentation*, p. 32; Id., 'The French *théorie de l'énonciation*', p. 257; Id., *Narrateur et points de vue*, p. 21.

a lyric corpus such as that of Cavalcanti, these considerations appear particularly relevant. David Bowe argues that Cavalcanti's *Rime* articulates a polyphonic model of subjectivity.<sup>32</sup> However, while many texts of the *Rime* stage multiple locutors, enunciators, and alleged focalisers, Marnette's approach can serve to prompt us to reflect upon these entities and voices as well as on their relationship with the customary one of the poet-lover and to understand the ways in which each entity contributes to the articulation of the traditional, dominant subjectivity of the love lyric, that of the *Io*.

### V.1 *AMORE*

*Amore* is an institutional figure of the erotic-lyric tradition, as the discourse of love appears to be almost always triune, as it is made up of lover, beloved and love. 'The first, ineffable trinity of Augustine's *De Trinitate*, as Lombardi holds, 'is [...] the one made by lover, the object of love and Love ('amans, et quod amatur, et Amor' *De Trinitate*, 8, 10, 14)'. As Lombardi continues, 'Love is the binding element, a statement that Augustine considers true for both divine and secular love.'<sup>33</sup> In the Italian love poetry of the *Duecento*, *Amore* often acts as a personified third-party in the process of love.

*Amore* is one of the entities most frequently involved in the fictional *personae* of the *Rime*, playing a central role in the articulation of the traditional subject of the enunciation, the poet-lover.<sup>34</sup> The triangulation commented on by Lombardi is uneasily thematised in Cavalcanti's *Rime*, where this allegorical figure sometimes performs the role of mediator between the lovers, sometimes embodies or doubles the figure of the lady or that of the lover, and perhaps at other times acts as the main interlocutor of the *Io*.

To quote some meaningful examples of the complex dynamics involving *Amore*, I shall mention sonnet IV and *canzone* IX. In these lyrics, *Amore* comes into view next to the beloved in the epiphanic moment of her apparition, so that the lady is depicted as the objectivation as well as the revelation of love:

IV, 1-4: Chi è questa che vèn, ch'ogn'om la mira | che fa tremar di chiaritate l'âre | *e mena seco Amor*,  
sì che parlare | null'omo pote, ma ciascun sospira?

IX, 5-6: Non sentio pace né riposo alquanto | *poscia ch'Amore e madonna trovai*

[my emphasis]

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<sup>32</sup> 'the methods by which Cavalcanti performs his subjectivity offer a striking example of a polyphony, both in the theoretical terms of this study and in the common sense of a plurality of voices' (David Bowe, 'Guido Cavalcanti. Dialogic Subjectivity', in Id., *Poetry in Dialogue in the Duecento and Dante*, pp. 102-143 (p. 102)).

<sup>33</sup> Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader*, p. 42.

<sup>34</sup> Paolo Possiedi, 'Personificazione e allegoria nelle Rime di Guido Cavalcanti', *Italica* 52/1 (1975), 37-49; Calenda, *Per altezza d'ingegno*, p. 18.



In other examples, as in the well-known *ballata* ‘Era in penser d’amor’ (XXX), the lady herself, with the powerful agency of her piercing gaze, actively contributes to the apparition<sup>35</sup> of *Amore*:

[...] «E’ mi ricorda che ’n Tolosa  
donna m’apparve a cordelletta istretta,                   32  
Amor la qual chiamava l’Amandetta;  
giunse sì presta e forte,  
che fin dentro, a la morte,  
mi colpì gli occhi suoi».                                       36

Molto cortesemente mi rispuose  
Quella che di me prima avëa riso  
Disse: «La donna che nel cor ti pose  
Co la forza d’amor tutto ’l su’ viso,                   40  
Dentro per li occhi ti mirò sì fiso,  
*ch’Amor fece apparire.*  
Se t’è greve ’l soffrire,  
Raccomàndati a lui». (XXX, 31-44)                   44

[my emphasis]

In this example, the gaze of the lady echoes the classical representations of Cupid, who ‘typically shoots his arrow through the heart of an unsuspecting victim, who then falls in love with the next person he or she sees’.<sup>36</sup> In medieval love poetry, the pagan god’s paraphernalia are often embodied in the eyes of the beloved, who, as in this *ballata*, inflicts upon the lover the fatal wound of love through her piercing eyes.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> *Apparire* is commonly used by Cavalcanti with the following meaning: § *TLIO*, 1: [dando rilievo al materializzarsi improvviso e inatteso di un’impressione visiva] acquisire forma e consistenza nello spazio coperto dal campo percettivo di qualcuno’. *Apparire* is a typically Cavalcantian verb, as confirmed by its high occurrence in the *Rime* (VI, 9; XXII,3; XVIII, 8; XXVI, 1, 12; XXVIII,6; XXX, 32, 42; XXXVII, 13 XL, 7). Lino Leonardi observes that Cavalcanti is probably influenced by Guinizzelli, and, as Rea adds, Guido might also have drawn on Scripture (Lino Leonardi, ‘Guinizzelli e Cavalcanti’, in *Da Guido Guinizzelli a Dante. Nuove prospettive sulla lirica del Duecento. Atti del convegno di studi Padova-Monselice. Maggio 2002*, ed. by Furio Brugnolo and Gianfelice Peron (Padua: Il Poligrafo, 2004), pp. 207-226 (p. 215)); and Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 94.

<sup>36</sup> Dana L. Stewart, *The Arrow of Love. Optics, Gender and Subjectivity in Medieval Love Poetry* (Lewisburg [PA]: Bucknell University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 2003), p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> The aim to characterise the lady through this symbology becomes clearer in light of the courtly Love dynamic of subservience, wherein, as Stewart observes, ‘the beloved lady is always established as powerful and dominating’ (*Ivi.*) and the ‘lovers – ‘servants’ or ‘prisoners’ they called themselves – [...] seem to be always weeping and always on their knees before [her] inflexible cruelty’ (C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love. A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 1). Lewis also points out the line of descent that connects the dynamics of courtly love to those of the feudal system, by stating: ‘The sentiment, of course, is love, but love of a highly specialised sort, whose characteristics may be enumerated as Humility, Courtesy, Adultery, and the Religion of Love. The lover is always abject. Obedience to his lady’s lightest wish, however whimsical, and silent acquiescence in her rebukes, however unjust, are the only virtues he dares to claim. There is a service of love closely modelled on the service which a feudal vassal owes to his lord’ (2). For a more recent study of the customs of courtly love and of their relationship with the medieval idea of love’s martyrdom, see Simon Gaunt, *Love and Death in Medieval French and Occitan Courtly Literature: Martyrs to Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). This depiction of the god has an illustrious iconographic tradition, too, as Paolo Borsa notes in commenting on the illumination of fol. 64r in the *Memoriale Bolognese* (164), ‘nel quale lo

In sonnet XX this traditional symbology is used to represent *Amore* more directly. It is the god himself, residing in the eyes of the lady, who shoots the arrows:<sup>38</sup>

O tu, che porti nelli occhi sovente  
Amor tenendo tre saette in mano,  
questo mio spirito che vien di lontano  
ti raccomanda l'anima dolente, 4

la quale ha già feruta nella mente  
di due saette l'arciere soriano;  
a la terza apre l'arco, ma sì piano  
che non m'aggiunge essendoti presente: 8

perché saria dell'alma la salute,  
che quasi giace infra le membra, morta  
di due saette che fan tre ferute: 11

la prima dà piacere e disconforta,  
e la seconda disia la vertute  
della gran gioia che la terz'aporta. (XX) 14

In this lyric, the *innamoramento* is depicted through a reworking of the customary motif of the wound, to represent a radically dysphoric conception of the love process. After the first two arrows, delivering 'piacere' and 'sconforto' (12) and desire (13) respectively, the third one, which is supposed to bring joy and to save the wounded 'anima dolente', is symbolically never fired.

Several texts of the *Rime* thematise or elaborate upon these dynamics, displaying the complex and opaque relationship between *Amore*, the *Io*, and the beloved. In sonnet XLIX<sup>a</sup>, the presence of Guido Orlandi's lady is described as embodying *Amore*, so that the two figures are merged:

*La bella donna dove Amor si mostra*  
ch'è tanto di valor pieno ed adorno,  
tragge lo cor della persona vostra:  
e' prende vita in far co' lei soggiorno (XLIX<sup>a</sup>, 1-4)  
[my emphasis]

The opposition *Amore*/beloved vs. subject is not stable, as it appears undermined by the characterisation as well as the words of the god himself. While, as seen in the fragments commented above, *Amore* often enacts the phenomenology of love, collaborating with the beloved, the god also seems to act as intermediary between the lover and the beloved, when not explicitly taking the place

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sguardo di madonna, che colpisce al cuore l'amante, è rappresentato in forma di freccia [...] (Borsa, 'L'immagine nel cuore e l'immagine nella mente', in *Les deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, p. 86).

<sup>38</sup> Other examples of this representation of *Amore* in Cavalcanti's corpus are 'Io non pensava che lo cor giammai' (IX), and 'Io vidi li occhi dove Amor si mise' (XXIII), 'Dante, un sospiro messenger del core' (XL).

of the subject himself. In several examples from the *Rime*, Cavalcanti elaborates upon Guinizelli's rational explication of *Amore*, according to which the god naturally indwells the noble heart ('Amor per tal ragion sta 'n cor gentile' (21)).<sup>39</sup> In these Cavalcantian texts the subject position is extended into a 'self' where *Amore* acts in a way that blurs the boundaries between the *Io* and the god himself, either by gazing upon the *donna* or even by experiencing personally her transcendence:<sup>40</sup>

IX, 33: Amor ch'ha le bellezze sue vedute<sup>41</sup>

XLIV<sup>b</sup>, 6: Amor delle bellezze ch'ha vedute

VIII, 5: Amor, che lo tuo gran valore sente

[my emphasis]

A similar relationship between those involved in the dynamics of love is explicitly thematised in sonnet XXXVI,<sup>42</sup> where Love appears 'in figura morta' (3). *Figura*, meaning 'l'apparenza esteriore di qsa o qno in quanto percepibile dalla vista',<sup>43</sup> is a pivotal word in Cavalcanti's *Rime*. As Contini observes, besides some archaic occurrences meaning 'volto' ['face'], Cavalcanti uses *figura* to refer to the external figure of a subject, after the example of Guinizelli.<sup>44</sup> In Guinizelli's 'Lo vostro bel saluto e 'l gentil sguardo',<sup>45</sup> after the devastating visual encounter with the lady, the *Io*, emptied of his vital faculties, is left with only his external appearances intact ('ove vita né spirito non ricorre, | se non che la figura d'omo rende' (13-14)).<sup>46</sup> Drawing on this image, Cavalcanti makes use of *figura* to describe what remains of the subject after the encounter with the lady. The analogies paralleling

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<sup>39</sup> Guido Guinizelli, *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, pp. 18-21. Guinizelli's thesis on the nobility of gentle hearts is to be interpreted within an already consolidated tradition that finds its roots in different cultural environments, such as that of the Ghibelline jurists and troubadour poetry. Guinizelli reworks these suggestions and provides them with a rational foundation by integrating them with Aristotelian logic and physics. As Rossi holds, Guinizelli 'conferi[sce] una nuova e più meditata legittimazione teorica, per non dire «scientifica» [...], alla metafisica amorosa su cui si fondava la lirica volgare, non solo italiana' (Rossi, in Guinizelli, *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, p. XIV).

<sup>40</sup> For the presence of *Amore* as mediator in the Italian love lyric tradition, see Borsa, 'L'immagine nel cuore e l'immagine nella mente', in *Les deux Guidi*, ed. by Gagliano, Guérin, and Zanni, pp. 75-93.

<sup>41</sup> As Rea notes, in *canzone* IX, 'la trascendenza della donna è sperimentata da Amore in persona' (Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 73)

<sup>42</sup> Some philological evidence suggests that Dante is the recipient of this sonnet. De Robertis: 'il sonetto non porta [...] espresso cenno di essere rivolto a Dante; se non fosse lo stretto legame col carteggio fra lui e Guido, di cui è una specie di cerniera, la correzione con XLI in fatti di rime "mandate" o "ricolte", e la forte presenza di linguaggio e modi rappresentativi del *Fiore*, ossia l'interferenza (non limitata a questo caso) con una particolare area d'interesse dantesco' (De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 140). As Rea further observes 'ricondono allo stesso Dante lo schema metrico [...]; le corrispondenze con il sonetto 'A ciascun'alma' (cfr. note ai vv. 3 e 8) e, soprattutto, [...] l'episodio della perdita di sensi narrato in *Vita nova* 14 (cfr. nota al v. 9). Proprio all'improvviso smarrimento che colpisce Dante al pensiero della morte di Beatrice parrebbe infatti alludere maliziosamente Amore, quando, temendo per la sensibilità del destinatario, distoglie Guido dal proposito di inviargli rime sulla propria condizione dolorosa' (Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 200).

<sup>43</sup> *TLIO*, 'figura', § 1.1

<sup>44</sup> Contini, 'Cavalcanti in Dante', in Id., *Un'idea di Dante* (Turin: Einaudi, 1976), pp. 143-157 (pp. 151-152).

<sup>45</sup> Guinizelli, 'Lo vostro bel saluto e 'l gentil sguardo', in Id., *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, pp. 41-43.

<sup>46</sup> I will discuss the intertextual relevance of other sources from the Italian lyric tradition for this specific image in the next section of this Chapter.

representations of *Amore* in Cavalcanti's sonnet XXXVI and depictions of the "emptied" *Io* in the *Rime* emerge particularly clearly when considering sonnet XIII. After the 'deboletti spiriti' are blown away, of the subject 'riman figura sol en signoria | e voce alquanta, che parla dolore' (13-14) [my emphasis].<sup>47</sup> While, as seen in other examples, *Amore* cooperates with the beloved in generating the subject's death-in-life condition, the god at the same time experiences the same effects undergone by the *Io* after the visual encounter with the lady.

*Amore*'s doubling of the subject as creating a sort of opposition with the beloved further emerges when considering that, while *figura* designates annihilated vital faculties when referring to the poet-lover, when alluding to the lady, Cavalcanti uses *figura* to depict an image of vitality and overwhelming plenitude. The following fragments show the use of this key lexeme to characterise and mark the opposition dying-lover vs. powerful-beloved, who, in contrast with the emptiness of the *Io*, is metaphorically or explicitly *full* of virtues:<sup>48</sup>

II, 3: *risplende più che sol vostra figura*

V, 2: *vostra figura piena di valore*

[my emphasis]

*Amore* seems thus to objectify with both its voice and its presence the poet-lover's suffering, by translating into its figure, as well as by emblematising, the *Io*'s affections and his physical reactions to the beloved.

Cavalcanti's *Amore* also acts as a locutor and enunciator in the *Rime*. While all the examples analyzed above display Cavalcanti's reusing or reworking of *topoi* and images already widely canonised in the love lyric tradition, providing *Amore* with a voice is a quite uncommon rhetorical strategy in the poets up to Guido's time.<sup>49</sup> As Giunta notices, the apostrophe to *Amore* is a traditional topos of the love lyric.<sup>50</sup> The god is indeed frequently addressed by lovers complaining about the

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<sup>47</sup> In XXXIII, 8, ('che Morte non ti ponga 'n sua figura'), *figura* is even more explicitly connected with Death and with the subject's deathly appearance. In this lyric, the *Io* takes on the features of *Morte* itself. This image emblematises the lover's deathly condition, suggesting an overlapping or, better, a transubstantiation of Death and the *Io*. This situation is expanded in the tercets, where the self's Death-in-Life is associated with the departure of his spirits that, according to medieval physiology, were believed to maintain the subject's vital faculties. The well-known sonnet 'L'anima mia vilment' è sbigotita' (VII), as well as providing the reader with an accurate example of the physiology of the *innamoramento*, also illustrates the connection between the departure of the spirits and the lack of *valore*.

<sup>48</sup> As Rea points out, starting with the poets of the Sicilian School, *figura* is generally used to praise the lady (Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 438). In Cavalcanti's corpus, '*figura* is employed to emphasise the overwhelming power of the *donna*, and is, in fact, often associated with the adjective 'grande' (VIII, 5; IX, 8; IX, 22; IX, 49; XXX, 24; XLIX, 9).

<sup>49</sup> Surveying the corpora of the poets of the Sicilian School, reveals one example of *Amore*'s speech. In Giacomo da Lentini's *canzone* IX, *Amore* takes the floor to prompt the subject to reach *madonna*, who is far away: 'Amor mi move 'ntenza / e dicemi: «che ffai? / la tua donna si muor di te aspettando».' (Giacomo Da Lentini, 'Troppo son dimorato', in *I Poeti della Scuola Siciliana*, I: Giacomo da Lentini, pp. 217-234).

<sup>50</sup> Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, p. 412.

god's cruelty towards them. In these examples, the use of direct speech is at times employed to emphasise the *Io*'s traditional subservience to Love, as in this sonnet by Guittone:

Amor m'ha priso e incarnato tutto,  
e a lo core di sé fa posanza,  
e di ciascun membro tragge frutto,  
dapoì che priso à tanto di possanza. 4  
Doglia, onta, danno àme condotto  
e del mal meo mi fa 'ver disianza,  
e del ben di lei spietato m'è 'n tutto:  
sì meve e ciascun c'ama à 'n disdegnanza. 8  
Spessamente il chiam'e dico: «Amore,  
chi t'ha dato di me tal signoraggio,  
ch'ài conquiso meo senno e meo valore?» 11  
Eo prego che·tti facci meo messaggio  
e vada davante 'l tuo signore  
e d'esto conveniente lo fa' saggio.<sup>51</sup> (1) 14

As Lino Leonardi puts it, '[I]'apostrofe ad Amore (v. 9-11) introduce [...] il secondo registro, non più descrittivo, mostrando i due aspetti della prima persona, narratore ed insieme protagonista'.<sup>52</sup> Direct speech is employed by Guittone as a mimetic strategy to empower the fictionality of the lyric and to represent in a realistic way the despair of the poet-lover.

Nonetheless, in *Duecento* love lyric *Amore* does not speak very often. Exceptions are in Monte Andrea's corpus, where the depiction of the god is frequently deeply dysphoric, and the god is represented as an overwhelming and powerful subjugator. In Monte's poetry, Love's agency is characterised through a specific lexis, all pertaining to the semantic field of domination (as verbs such as *prendere*, *pigliare*, *vincere*, *conquistare*, *legare* or *distringere* confirm). Within this framework of subservience, Monte provides *Amore* with an individualised voice, as in sonnet 77, 'Sovr'ogn'altra è, Amor, la tua podestà'.<sup>53</sup> In this lyric, the god addresses the *Io*, exclaiming: '«Mio!»' (line 14). Even if just very briefly, the sonnet's enunciation shifts to a new locutor, in order to mimetically express, through an exclamative clause, the strength of Love's power.

When compared to these few examples, *Amore*'s speeches in Guido's corpus stand out for their frequency as well as for their length.<sup>54</sup> The iteration of Love's *sermocinationes* has been noted by Corrado Calenda who observes that, in the *Rime*, *Amore* 'partecipa attivamente al colloquio col poeta'.<sup>55</sup> Calenda also points out that the god 'scand[isce] con l'autorità della testimonianza, il ritmo

<sup>51</sup> Guittone, 'Amor m'ha priso e incarnato tutto', in Id., *Canzoniere*, ed. by Leonardi, pp. 2-5

<sup>52</sup> Leonardi, in Guittone, *Canzoniere*, ed. by Leonardi, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> Monte Andrea, 'Sovr'ogn'altra è, Amor, la tua podestà', in Id., *Le Rime*, ed. by Minetti, p. 227.

<sup>54</sup> By using Avallè's parameters, it is possible to affirm that *Amore*'s *sermocinationes* intrude into the poet-lover's enunciation five times in the Cavalcantian corpus, with an average length of 5.8 lines.

<sup>55</sup> Calenda, *Per altezza d'ingegno*, p. 19.

inevitabile delle fasi successive verso la morte'.<sup>56</sup> As these fragments exemplify, *Amore* speaks in the *Rime* to declare the Io's deathly destiny:

VIII, 5-9: Amor, che lo tuo grande valor sente, / dice: «*E' mi duol che ti convien morire / per questa fiera donna che niente | par che pietate di te voglia udire.*»

IX, 5-8: Non sentio pace né riposo alquanto | poscia ch'Amore e madonna trovai, | lo qual mi disse: «*Tu non camperai, | ché troppo è lo valor di costei forte.*»

IX, 33-42: Amor, c'ha le bellezze sue vedute, | mi sbigottisce sì, che sofferire | non può lo cor sentendola venire, | ché sospirando dice: «*Io ti dispero, | però che trasse del su' dolce riso | una saetta aguta, | ch'ha passato 'l tuo core e 'l mio diviso. | Tu sai, quando venisti, ch'io ti dissi, | poi che l'avéi veduta, | per forza convenia che tu morissi.*»

[my emphasis]

As emerges by looking at the fragments quoted above, the condemnation voiced by *Amore* is characterised by some recurring stylistic traits. Maria Corti draws attention to the sententious register ('tono sentenzioso') of *Amore*'s words, 'che risalta dal contrasto con lo sbigottimento o l'ansia del poeta'.<sup>57</sup> Corti also points out that *Amore*'s discourses are always preceded by one or more consecutive clauses that, as well as intensifying the stylistic tension of the lyric dictate, also clash with the solemn words of the god.<sup>58</sup>

This 'tono sentenzioso' is further emphasised by *Amore*'s frequent use of the verb *convenire*. In all of his speeches, the verb is used in the specific meaning 'essere necessario (in vista di un fine o in rispondenza a una causa), essere inevitabile, avvenire giocoforza [...]'.<sup>59</sup> 'Convenire' is always associated with the verb 'morire' or with other verbs connected to the deathly effects of the beloved, such as 'tremare'. This use of 'convenire' is furthermore relevant if we consider that, as Antonelli points out, the combination of the verbs *convenire* and *morire* is absent in the Italian love lyric tradition preceding Cavalcanti.<sup>60</sup> This trait both reinforces the customary *Amore-Morte* link (which

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>57</sup> Corti, 'Fisionomia stilistica', p. 452.

<sup>58</sup> *Ivi.*

<sup>59</sup> *TLIO*, 'convenire', § 4.4. As Corti stresses: 'Da notarsi nei discorsi di Amore la frequenza del verbo convenire nel tipico uso dell'italiano antico, quello cioè di una proposizione verbale (con valore di avverbio) giustapposta a una parziale: mi duol che ti conven morire = mi duole del fatto che morrai certo; che non convegna lui tremare= che non tremi; e' ti conven morire (XXVI 10) = morirai, devi morire' (Corti, 'Fisionomia stilistica', p. 452). An exception is *ballata* 1, where the verb is used with the more general meaning *TLIO* § 4: 'Essere adeguato e opportuno secondo convenzione, secondo etica o secondo diritto; essere buona norma, essere uso, essere decente, essere giusto (anche pronom.)' [meaning= appropriate].

<sup>60</sup> Antonelli's observation is to be contextualised within a wider reflection on the role of death in Cavalcanti's *Rime* and on Guido's pivotal influence on Dante's *Vita Nova* (Antonelli, 'Per forza convenia', in *Guido Cavalcanti laico*, ed. by Arqués, p. 46). As Antonelli maintains: 'nelle immediate vicinanze di Guido e Dante, non sarà senza significato che espressioni come quelle di *Vita nova* 14,3 siano reperibili poi soltanto in un sonetto rinterzato collocato fra le dubbie attribuzioni di Dante e soprattutto in altri stilnovisti minori come Gianni Alfani e Dino Frescobaldi dove, come poi in Cino e Petrarca, si recupera il gioco vario e mutevole della dialettica Amore/Morte e relativa fenomenologia e schermaglia amorosa, ciò che, meno in Cino ma definitivamente in Petrarca' (*Ibid.*, p. 47). Surveying the *LirIO* database reveals the

is also traditionally grounded on an etymological relation between the two lexemes) and proclaims the ineluctability of the subject's status.

As Favati observes, *Amore's* speeches suggest the god's participation in the subject's suffering, as some stylistic and linguistic elements emphasise.<sup>61</sup> In *canzone IX*, the god describes the effects of the lady's apparition by declaring: '[...] ha passato 'l tuo core e 'l mio diviso' ([my emphasis] (IX, 39)). The god's compassion for the *Io* (understood according to the etymological meaning of the word) and its liminal position in the process of love, are stressed through the consequential relation between the two entities, enacted by the use of the personal pronouns 'tuo' and 'mio' connected by the conjunction 'e'. Love's *sermocinationes* seem to betray an emotive absorption in the *Io's* vicissitudes, as the use of the verb *dolere* in sonnet VIII suggests ('[...] E' mi duol che ti convien morire' (6) [my emphasis]). In this example, as in other lyrics commented on above, not only 'la trascendenza della donna è sperimentata da Amore in persona',<sup>62</sup> but the god also voices sorrow for the fatal destiny of the *Io*. This situation is stressed by the verbs *sentire* (5) and *dolere* (6).

This interpretation seems further prompted by the two following examples in which *Amore* is imagined as potentially weeping or actually weeps, pitying the *Io*:

XI, 7-8: e se non fosse che 'l morir m' è gioco, | fare'ne di pietà pianger Amore

XII, 9: tu gli ha' lasciati sì, che vène Amore | a pianger sopra lor pietosamente  
[my emphasis]

The image of the weeping god both doubles the self-commiserating gesture of the subject and reifies and fulfils the *Io's* desire to be pitied, performing one of the customary functions of the lady – that of showing *Mercé*.

To frame the relationship of *Amore* with reference to the two other main protagonists of the dynamics of love is complex, as suggested by the often-conflicting examples commented on in this section of the Chapter. As I previously observed, the opposition between the god, the *Io*, and the lady is undermined by *Amore's* liminal and metamorphic presence in a way that problematises the formulation of definitive conclusions. A closer look at *Amore's* speeches reveals that, when the god becomes the locutor of the lyric discourse, its words perform a specific function in service of the articulation of the subject in the text. Although the deathly sentence uttered by *Amore* would suggest considering this figure as a sort of antagonist of the *Io*, closer in its function to the cruel beloved than

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presence of one single occurrence in the sonnet by Orlanduccio to Pallamidesse entitled 'Oi tu, che se' er[r]ante cavaliere' (Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, I, p. 473).

<sup>61</sup> Favati, 'Tecnica ed arte', p. 120.

<sup>62</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 73.

to the lover, the emotional involvement communicated through the god's speeches rather prompts us to interpret its presence as an embodiment of the *Io*'s desire to be pitied. By participating in the love process and, most importantly, by empathising with the suffering *Io*, the words of *Amore* suggest that even when the god is the locutor of the enunciation, the focaliser still remains the *Io*. The poetic dictate remains dominated by the lover's sorrowful perspective, as the god does not provide an external point of view in the process described. As I shall contend, the god, with its presence and voice, further dramatises the characterisation of the subject in the text, in both testifying to the *Io*'s inescapable fate and in acting as an "extension" of the lover, doubling the dramatic representation of his anguish.

## V.2 THE BYSTANDERS

The *Rime* often fictionalise the figures and voices of those whom I will tentatively designate as bystanders. As I will argue, by considering the stylistic and linguistic traits characterising the representation and the voice of these bystanders, for many reasons they perform a function analogous to that of *Amore* in the articulation of subjectivity, even though they maintain a less ambiguous relationship with the *Io*.

On closer inspection of the lyric tradition, "others" to the lover, the beloved, and Love tend to be used for emphasising some sort of superiority of the lover (i.e. moral, ethical, intellectual). In troubadour poetry, this position is often performed by the *lauzengiers*, or slanderers, whose role seems to be primarily that of 'constantly endangering the relation between the poet and the beloved'.<sup>63</sup> In the medieval Italian lyric, as has been extensively discussed, the very different socio-political setting eventually contributes to the progressive absorption and metamorphosis of some of the main *topoi* characterising the courtly fiction of the Occitan tradition. As scholars acknowledge, *lauzengiers* had already disappeared almost completely by the time of the Sicilian School.<sup>64</sup> However, Italian poets seem to exploit and further elaborate upon an analogous opposition that can be loosely identified as the one between the so-called *cuori gentili* and *villani*. While not explicitly malevolent, in the Italian lyric tradition, "others" are frequently used to draw comparisons and contrasts with the poet-lover, with aims ranging from affirming his belonging to an elite circle of *amanti*, to emphasising

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<sup>63</sup> Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader*, p. 42. For the role of the *lauzengiers* in French poetry see Roger Dragonetti, *La technique poétique des trouvères dans la chanson courtoise*, pp. 272-278; Sarah Kay, 'The Contradictions of Courtly Literature: The Evidence of the *lauzengiers*', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 26 (1996), 209-253.

<sup>64</sup> For the *lauzengiers* in early Italian poetry see Marcello Cocco, *Dai lauzengiers ai malparlieri: il tema del maldicente nella scuola poetica siciliana* (Cagliari: Universitas, 1990); for insightful comments on the evolution of this group of malevolent people in Dante and Guittone, see Giunta, *Versi a un destinatario*, pp. 118-119. For a further, specific discussion of Guittone's interaction with the *lauzengiers*, see *Ibid.*, p. 414.



the exceptionality of the *Io*'s portentous love and devotion to his lady, to stressing the subject's unprecedented martyrdom for love.<sup>65</sup>

An example of the intervention of "others" in the Italian tradition significant for reflecting on Cavalcanti's poetry is Giacomo da Lentini's *canzone* 9:

I Donna, eo languisco e no so qua speranza  
mi dà fidanza—ch'io non mi disfidi;  
e se merzé e pietanza in voi non trovo,  
perduta provo lo chiamar merzede;  
che tanto lungiamente ò costumato, 5  
palese ed in celato,  
pur di merzé cherere,  
ch'i' non ssaccio altro dire;  
e s'altri m'adomanda ched aggio eo,  
eo non so dir se non «Merzé, per Deo!».<sup>66</sup> (1.8) 10

These 'altri', identified by Antonelli as an unspecified group of people, in noticing and testifying to the subject's affliction, contribute to the lyric's vivid representation of the lover's suffering.<sup>67</sup>

Cavalcanti's bystanders appear to be similarly used for conveying a more dramatised representation of the *Io*'s condition. Cavalcanti reworks the more traditional oppositions previously described, as well as the Notaro's example just analysed, in order to characterise a group of individuals that frequently appears in the act of witnessing the beloved's devastating effects upon the lover. The distinguishing physiognomy and gesture of these individuals, as well as their frequent presence in the *Rime*, suggest looking at their agency as fundamental for the love dynamics of the *Rime*.

Even if their presence in the text is not always distinctly characterised, an attentive reading of the *Rime* would suggest that these "others" are epitomised by the fact that they *see* the *Io*:

V, 12: Quando mi *vider*, tutti con pietanza  
VII, 7: e *chi vedesse* com' ell' è fuggita  
VIII, 10: che pare, *a chi lo sguarda*, ch'omo sia  
IX, 24: sì che *quale mi vede*  
XV,4-8: e non trovan *persona* che li *miri*  
[my emphasis]

<sup>65</sup> According to Lombardi's interpretation, the opposition between lovers and *lauzengiers* in troubadour poetry is loosely recast by Italian poets, progressively becoming that between good and bad readers (Lombardi, *Imagining the Woman Reader*, pp. 42-45).

<sup>66</sup> Giacomo da Lentini, 'Donna, eo languisco e no so qua speranza', in *I Poeti della Scuola Siciliana*, I: *Giacomo da Lentini*, pp. 197-215.

<sup>67</sup> Antonelli, in *I Poeti della Scuola Siciliana*, I: *Giacomo da Lentini*, p. 205.

Indeed, all these fragments display the recurrent use of the verb *vedere* and its synonyms. What does being able to *vedere* mean? This capacity seems to be not only sensorial, as the first quatrain of the *Rime*'s sonnet II suggests:

Avete 'n vo' li fior' e la verdura  
e ciò che luce od è bello a vedere;  
risplende più che sol vostra figura:  
chi vo' non vede, ma' non pò valere. (II, 1-4)

These opening lines draw an implicit distinction between those who are and those who are not able to *see* the lady's virtues. As De Robertis specifies, *valere* means 'avere valore', and more specifically to be endowed with 'le qualità che dignificano l'amante, e in genere l'insieme delle virtù e dei pregi, amorosi e non [...]'.<sup>68</sup> The syllogism seems thus to imply that those who cannot see ('chi vo' non vede' (4)) are less virtuous than those who can actually appreciate the powerful presence of the beloved. It is not by chance that in his well-known *canzone dottrinale* 'Donna me prega' (XXVII) Cavalcanti opposes the 'conoscente' (5), defined by Contini as 'ascoltatore [...] competente'<sup>69</sup> (later referred to as 'persone che hanno intendimento' (74)), to the 'om di basso core' (6), 'incapace [...] di "conoscenza"', as De Robertis explains.<sup>70</sup>

The sort of intellectual elitism characterising the bystanders is mentioned in *ballata* X. In describing his death-in-life condition, the *Io* defines these onlookers as 'persone accorte':

e spesse volte avèn che mi saluta  
tanto di presso l'angosciosa Morte, 8  
che fa 'n quel punto le persone accorte,  
che dicono infra lor: «Quest'ha dolore,  
e già, secondo che ne par de fòre,  
dovrebbe dentro aver novi martiri». (X, 7-12) 12

Roberto Rea glosses *accorto* specifying that it means 'avveduto, assennato [...] che sa quello che fa, abile, esperto'.<sup>71</sup> Cavalcanti's use of this lexeme further stresses the difference between those who *can* see and *have* seen, as opposed to those who cannot. The connotation of *vedere* is thus not merely sensorial, but rather cognitive, as these examples emphasise. In fact, some textual examples suggest identifying these people as those who, similarly to the subject, are experiencing or have experienced suffering due to love:

<sup>68</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 10.

<sup>69</sup> Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 524.

<sup>70</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 96.

<sup>71</sup> *TLIO*, 'accorto', §1.1.

V, 10-11: [...] là 'v' i' trovai gente | *che ciascun si doleva d'Amor forte*

XII, 12-14: [...] la quale dice: «*Chi gran pena sente* | guardi costui, e vedrà 'l su' core, | *che morto 'l*  
*porta 'n man tagliato in croce* ».

[my emphasis]

The bystanders of the *Rime* also testify to the subject's condition with their voice. As seen with *Amore*, the use of direct speech to give voice to these “others” is quite rare in the pre-Cavalcantian love lyric tradition. Meaningful examples are in Monte's corpus. ‘Aimè lasso, perché a figura d'omo’,<sup>72</sup> a *canzone* which shares with Cavalcanti (and, in turn, with Cavalcanti's intertexts) the topos of the alienated lover, exemplifies the use of some onlookers' voices to emphasise the subject's despair. The entire *canzone* revolves around the *Io*'s sorrow, as one can perceive from its very incipit, where the poet-lover parallels his situation to that of a subject deprived of his human condition:

Aimè lasso, perché a figura d'omo  
fui fatto, poi in me non si retrova  
(ma sempre retro va!)  
tuto altro efetto c'ommo vero compie? (X, 1-4)

The following *stanzas* of Monte's *canzone* describe hyperbolically the subject's ‘disaventure’. The enumeration culminates with the intrusion of some onlookers' voices into the lyric enunciation, in *stanzas* 6 and 7. These people, described as ‘molti’, in the sixth *stanza* scold the subject for his *folia* and then, in the seventh *stanza*, try to give him solace:

111-116: Aimè lasso, per molti son ripreso | dicendo: «Folle, già ti pur amanti | di pene e dolor' manti,  
| con misertà che ti tiene è porta; | e ssai che non ti porta, | seguendo ciò, che mai fosse dilibro!»

133-134: Aimè lasso, che pur assai mi danno, | im parole, conforto, dicendo: «Folle, | perché ti pur  
afolle? | Se vertute a[h]i, alcun'à', per te s'atomba; | e mostri ch'a la tomba | ti gitti, intra li  
morti, anzi tempo».

As these passages suggest, the voice of Monte's bystanders is a textual technique used to represent mimetically the anguish of the *Io*.

The *sermocinationes* of Cavalcanti's bystanders, supplementing the characterisation of their presence, appear to be aimed at reaching an effect analogous to Monte's. It is relevant that a textual analysis of the voice of these individuals reveals a recurrent stylistic pattern:

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<sup>72</sup> Monte Andrea, ‘Aimè lasso, perché a figura d'omo’, in Id., *Le Rime*, ed. by Minetti, pp. 105-113.

V, 12-14: Quando mi *vider*, tutti con pietanza | *dissermi*: «Fatto sè di tal servente, | che mai non déi sperare altro che morte».

VII, 7-8: e chi *vedesse* com' ell' è fuggita | *diria* per certo: «Questi non ha vita».

IX, 23-28: sì che quale mi *vede* | *dice*: «Non guardi tu? Quest'è Pietate, | ch'è posta invece di persona morta | per dimandar merzede».

X, 9-12: [...] le persone accorte, | che *dicono* infra lor: «Quest'ha dolore, | e già, secondo che ne *par* de fòre, | dovrebbe dentro aver novi martiri».

[my emphasis]

All the instances of direct speech quoted above are characterised by two determining elements: the consecution of *vedere* and *dire*, and the bystanders' acknowledgment of the *Io*'s deathly condition.

As I have observed, *Amore* in the *Rime* acts by setting up unclear polarities with the lover and the beloved. The god at the same time declares the subject's death and voices his pity for the *Io*. In contrast to these uneasy dialectics, the position of the bystanders is less ambiguous. The appearance of these individuals in the lyric dimension, with their external, observing gaze upon the lover, bears witness to the subject's solipsistic and inescapable situation. However, their attentive stare is not impassive, as they appear to be moved by a certain emotive absorption towards the *Io*. When not openly suggested by words such as 'pietanza' (v, 12), this is more obliquely prompted by their acknowledgment of the subject's *sbigottimento*. For these reasons, with their presence and with their voices, the bystanders seem to comply with the Cavalcantian 'bisogno di testimonianza'.<sup>73</sup> As seen with *Amore*, an attentive examination of these enunciators, of the relationship they establish with the lover, and of the function they have in the articulation of subjectivity in the text, suggests that, even if from the linguistic point of view they act as enunciators and locutors, their intrusion does not mark an actual shift in the focalisation of the lyric, which maintains its fixed focus on the perspective set by the alienated *Io*. These bystanders seem to act in compliance with the subject's request for attention formulated in the Cavalcantian apostrophes discussed in Chapter IV. The shift is thus only apparent, as it is still the subject, by means of this textual technique, who tells readers how to look at his condition through an alleged impartial observer. Through deputised entities and their external gazes, the *Io* articulates himself in the dimension of the lyric.

### V.3 THE TOOLS OF WRITING

The enunciative situation of the last example I will discuss is different from those discussed previously in this Chapter, as in 'Noi siàn le triste penne isbigotite' (XVIII) the subjects of the enunciations are some *res inanimatae* which have completely substituted the traditional *Io* of the love

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<sup>73</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 74.

lyric. Differently from *Amore* and the bystanders, whose voices intrude the subject's enunciation, in this sonnet the locutor and enunciator is a (collective) subject who deputises for the subject. The voice resounding in this lyric is that of the writing tools,<sup>74</sup> who expressly perform a role as substitutes for the traditional lyric 'I':

Noi siàn le triste penne isbigotite,  
le cesoiuzze e 'l coltellin dolente,  
ch'avemo scritte dolorosamente  
quelle parole che vo' avete udite. 4

Or vi diciàn perché noi siàn partite  
e siàn venute a voi *qui* di presente:  
la man che ci movea dice che sente  
cose dubbiose nel core apparite; 8

le quali hanno destrutto sì costui  
ed hannol posto sì presso a la morte,  
ch'altro non n'è rimasto che sospiri. 11

Or vi preghiàn quanto possiàn più forte  
che non sdegniate di tenerci noi,  
tanto ch'un poco di pietà vi miri. (XVIII) 14  
[my emphasis]

As observed in the Chapter III, where the connection between poetic word, voice, and the dismayed body of the subject was discussed (p. 76), the protagonists of this *prosopopoeia* have replaced the dying poet-lover to plead with the audience for compassion. The plural pronoun 'noi', opening the first quatrain, inaugurates a marked declaration of presence ('sian' (1); 'avemo scritte' (3)) followed by a statement of intent. The objects' status as protagonists is strengthened by the anaphoric repetition of plural pronominal particles, by related conjugated forms, and by the presence of spatial and temporal deictics ('e siàn venute a voi *qui* di presente' (6)), all contributing both to neatly defining the *origo* of the discourse and, at the same time, relegating the poet-lover to the accusative case.

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<sup>74</sup> The exceptionality of these unprecedented protagonists has often been noted by commentators. Both Contini and De Robertis hypothesise the existence of a thematic analogy with the epigrams of the *Anthologia palatina* (Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, II, p. 511; De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 59) even though both scholars declare the difficulty of proving this hypothesis, as well as stressing Cavalcanti's 'autonoma scoperta immaginativa' (*Ivi.*). However, we find speaking objects both in ancient and medieval rhetorical treatises, as well as in comic poetry. With regard to this last genre, see Irene Falini, 'Gli "oggetti" della poesia comico-oscena del Medioevo italiano (con una proposta di lettura per il sonetto *Volesse Iddio che tti paresse il vino* di Lorenzo Moschi)', *Quaderni di Palazzo Serra*, 30 (2018), 35-50.

In this situation, the customary *Io* gives the impression of having abdicated his role of subject of the enunciation, as he is seen ‘nell’attività decentrata e quasi automatica’<sup>75</sup> of the objects. The poet-lover appears as fully substituted by the writing tools, to the extent that he comes into view only through a metonymy (‘la man che ci movea’ (7)), or as the actual object of the enunciation (‘costui’ (9)). Finally, the split between the love lyric’s traditional locutor and the one of this sonnet is emphasised by means of the verb *dire*, which is used to express two different subjects of the enunciation (‘la man [...] dice’ (7); ‘Or vi diciàn’ (5)).

These observations call attention to a focal issue: the *verba dicendi* stress the objects’ ability to speak, also emphasising the power of their voice. Not only does the oppositional parallelism with the hand of the poet-lover transform objects into real *personae*, but it also juxtaposes their voice with that of the customary locutor of the tradition. This text prompts readers to reflect upon some fundamental questions: given the declared vicarious role of writing tools, can we affirm they have their own voice? Does the presence of personal deictic imply the actual presence of these uncommon subjects and their voice, even in this particular instance in which the enunciation’s locutors are clearly “characters”? If so, what is the relationship between their voice and that of the poet-lover?

As influential philological analysis has shown, it might appear controversial to establish close and univocal relationships between this lyric and other poems of the *Rime* and, more specifically, to bestow on this sonnet some sort of summarising role of the entire Cavalcantian lyric experience.<sup>76</sup> Still, it seems relevant to reflect on some textual isotopies, on the motif of voice in the *Rime* as well as on the non-thematisation of the difference between voice and writing in medieval literature, in order to articulate some hypotheses on the status of these objects.

As observed in Chapter III, the *flatus vocis* or the written word are often thematised in the *Rime* as the residual remnants of the dismayed *Io*. With regard to this point, it is worth mentioning again the visual encounter with the alterity described in ‘Voi che per li occhi mi passaste ‘l core’ (XIII), which, as previously discussed, petrifies the *Io* (‘riman figura sol en segnorìa | e voce alquanta, che parla dolore’ (7-8)). After the spirits’ abandonment, what survives in the automaton (also represented in ‘Tu m’hai sì piena di dolor la mente’ (VIII)), is ‘soltanto la figura esteriore e la voce,

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<sup>75</sup> Calenda, *Per altezza d’ingegno*, p. 92.

<sup>76</sup> This interpretation has often been suggested. De Robertis maintains ‘il sonetto [...] potrebbe fare da epigrafe o da epilogo all’intero libro delle sue rime’ (De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 59). Guglielmo Gorni tried to provide this hypothesis with a philological grounding by arguing that the sequence of eight sonnets present in Vat. Lat. 3214, ending with ‘Noi siàn le triste penne’, was authored by Cavalcanti himself (Guglielmo Gorni, ‘Una silloge d’autore nelle rime del Cavalcanti’, in *Alle origini dell’Io Lirico*, ed. by Antonelli, pp. 23-39). Gorni’s hypothesis has been rejected by other philologists, who stress that the same sequence provides us with an important testimony of how these sonnets were read and interpreted at the time of the compilation of the manuscript. On anthologies in the medieval Italian tradition see Berisso, ‘Sillogi e serie. Leggere la tradizione della poesia lirica tra Due e Trecento’, in *La tradizione dei testi*, ed. by Ciociola and Vella.

ovvero la testimonianza della poesia'.<sup>77</sup> This voice, as I have suggested, embodied in the materiality of the written world, allows the weakened subject to reach his addressee, the beloved lady. The correspondence between voice and text is particularly visible if we consider Cavalcanti's reuse of the traditional *congedo*, by means of which the text was provided with the role of mouthpiece of an *Io* diminished to mere *flatus vocis*, and thus addressed and requested to act as the subject's representative and to reach the lady on his behalf.

In 'Noi siàn le triste penne', the transmutation of the customary apostrophe to the text into a prosopopoeia implicates the occurrence of the traditional imperatives used in the *congedo*, either in the present or the past form. Examples are 'sian venute' in line 6 (XVIII), which realises the exhortation in *canzone* IX 'e vada 'n guis' a lei ch'ella t'ascolti' (46); and 'or vi preghiàn' in line 12 (XVIII) that recalls the subject's plea to the *canzone* in line 47: 'e prego umilemente a lei tu guidi'.

The high occurrence of *verba dicendi* also characterises the apostrophe in the *congedo* of *canzone* IX, as well as in several other lyrics of the *Rime* (IX, 54: 'e poi le di' quando le se' presente'; xxxv, 7: 'Tu porterai novelle di sospiri'; xxxv, 31: 'Deh, ballatetta, dille sospirando'). This parallelism further emphasises the object's vicarious role in sonnet XVIII, with the only difference that, according to this interpretation, the voice of the writing tools vocalises and realises the imperatives usually directed to the text itself.

With regard to adjectives characterising quills, clippers, and the knife of the lyric, a macrotextual approach to the discussion provides further relevant elements for reflecting upon the questions posed at the opening of this subchapter, and thus on the model of subjectivity of 'Noi siàn le triste penne'. The adjective 'triste' (plural of 'tristo'), meaning 'afflitto, avvilito, sofferente',<sup>78</sup> canonised in the lyric tradition by Cavalcanti himself, has five occurrences in the *Rime*, and is normally used to qualify the poet's soul or to describe the condition of the *Io* himself:

VI, 12-13: Deh, i' vi priego che deggiate dire | a l'alma *trista*, che parli 'n dolore

XV, 12-13: Ma si è al cor dolente tanta noia | e all'anima *trista* è tanto danno

XVIII, 1-3: Noi siàn le *triste* penne isbigotite, | le cesoiuzze e 'l coltellin dolente, | ch'avemo scritte  
dolorosamente

XXII, 8: allor si mise nel morto colore | l'anima *trista* per voler trar guai

XLII, 8-9: a por te lieto ov' i' son *tristo* molto? | Di te mi dòn e di me: guata quanto

[my emphasis]

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<sup>77</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 35.

<sup>78</sup> Rea, *Cavalcanti poeta*, p. 431.

As these examples reveal, ‘il sentimento di tristezza è generalmente accompagnato dal dolore’.<sup>79</sup> This Cavalcantian styleme also appears in sonnet XVIII, where the knife is indeed ‘dolente’ (2). The adjective further resonates in the following line through the adverb ‘dolorosamente’ (3). Lexemes belonging to the semantic field of *dolore* (sorrow, pain) are frequently used in *Duecento* Italian love lyric and are thus not exclusive to Cavalcanti’s *Rime*. However, as Rea holds:

sembrano del tutto inediti gli usi del sostantivo dolore con i verbi parlare e ragionare [e] rientrano in tale ambito l’inedito uso dell’aggettivo doloroso in relazione alle parole di IV,4, l’uso di dolente per gli oggetti, nonché quello dell’avverbio in relazione al predicato ‘avemo scritte’ del successivo v.3.<sup>80</sup>

This use of the adjective appears relevant, as it allows us to hypothesise the existence of a metonymic relation connecting the *parole dolorose* (first written and then heard) and the objects, which in turn are at the same time the objectification of the written sign as well as its vocalisation.

This hypothesis, according to which there would be a metonymic or metaphoric connection between the subject, its hypostasis, the written word (a *simulacrum* of the *Io* as well as of its voice) and, finally, the writing tools, seems to be supported by an analysis of the verb *sbigottire* (and its variants, including the form *isbigottire* with the prosthetic *i-*). The verb, descending from the Provençal *esbair*, is reintroduced in the Italian lyric lexicon by Cavalcanti himself, who uses it in the *Rime* to characterise the following entities:

IX, 55,56: «Questi sono in figura | d’un che si more *sbigottitamente*»  
VII, 1: l’anima mia vilment’è *sbigottita*  
VI, 3-4: parole adornate | di pianto, dolorose e *sbigottite*  
XXXV, 37: Tu, voce *sbigottita* e deboletta  
XVIII, 1: Noi siàn le tristi penne *isbigottite*

[my emphasis]

As these examples display, *sbigottire* either as an adjective, an adverb, or a participle, is used to qualify the subject (IX), his dismembered hypostases (VII), the written word (VI), the *Io*’s voice (XXXV), and is equally employed to describe the tools of writing (XVIII). This further detail suggests the existing, thematised continuity between the subject’s voice, poetic writing, and the voice of the written sign itself uttered by the tools of writing. The objects of ‘Noi siàn le triste penne’, similarly to the *canzoni* and the *ballate* discussed here and in the previous Chapter (III), seem to be a vocalisation of the poetic world (by giving voice to ‘quelle parole che avete udite’ (XVIII, 4)).

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>80</sup> *Ivi.*



According to this hypothesis, the tools' voice could be interpreted as a synecdoche of the subject itself, and as a substitute of the poet-lover in bringing his message to his addressee.

Even though, from a linguistic point of view, the poet-lover does not have a marked place as a locutor in this sonnet and he rather appears as the object of the whole lyric's enunciation, it would sound hyperbolic to maintain that the sonnet lacks a form of subjectivity which encompasses that of quills, clippers, and knife, and to deny that there is an overarching subject that provides the reader with precise instructions on how to interpret the lyric. Along these lines is the interpretation of 'Noi siàn le triste penne' given by De Robertis, who states that the objects of sonnet XVIII 'non hanno autonomia espressiva [poiché] recitano una parte'.<sup>81</sup> At the same time, despite the fact that objects act according to the *Io*'s will, from a linguistic point of view objects are indeed the only locutors, enunciators and focalisers in the text. By performing a declared vicarious role, by acting as substitutes of the *Io*, objects bear proof of a deeply weakened subjectivity. Their performance suggests that, in this text, the customary role of the poet-lover, his primacy, is brought into discussion in a way that has no examples in the pre-Cavalcantian Italian tradition.

## CONCLUSION

An overall, comparative consideration of the figures and voices discussed and their function in the articulation of the traditional subjectivity in the text emphasises the existence of some identifiable common traits. The primary function of *Amore*, the bystanders, and the quills is that of bearing witness to the subject's death, of his psycho-physical dismay, of his incontrovertible deathly fate – all elements that, as the analysis of Chapters II and III discussed, constitute the *Io*'s characterising traits. In attesting to the subject's condition, the intrusion of these entities' voices in the lyric enunciation also implicitly testifies to a weakening of the traditional subjectivity which is not only thematic but also mirrored by the enunciative situation of the texts discussed.

In trying to gather and contrast the observations formulated in the present Chapter with reference to the categories of enunciator, locutor, and focaliser, all the distinguishing traits of the entities discussed suggest that, in all three cases, it is not possible to affirm that an actual, radical shift in the focalisation of the enunciation has occurred, even when they intrude into the lyric dictate with their voices. Despite the fact that a mere analysis of the enunciative situation in the texts discussed above would suggest that the creation of multiple positions of utterance coincides with an effective change of the lyric perspective, the focalisation of the lyric discourse still remains unmovably that of the *Io*. The function of these entities, I conclude, is to embody the subject's desire for a form of reciprocation, even as an acknowledgment of his condition, and to break the closed circuit of his inner

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<sup>81</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 61.

dimension, his solipsism. Finally, the presence of these figures, rather than marking an actual shift in the focalisation of the enunciation, seems to comply with a “strategy of truthfulness” developed in the *Rime*. The example of *Amore* is particularly emblematic for understanding the convolutedness of this strategy, for its role meets at the same time the *Io*’s need to be seen (external focaliser, as the bystanders), to be pitied (external focaliser, as the lady), and to be empathised with (internal focaliser, as the subject himself). Both the bystanders and Love seem thus fictitious focalisers, for they duplicate the point of view of the subject for reasons that pertain to the text’s veracity and expressiveness.

Reflecting on these figures in the light of the discussion of the Cavalcantian apostrophes of Chapter IV suggests looking at them as different embodiments of the desired pitying addressee invoked through the reworking of Jeremiah’s plea for attention. *Lamentations* I.12, ‘O vos omnes qui transitis per viam adtendite et videte si est *dolor* sicut *dolor* meus’ [my emphasis], the request to be seen, acknowledged, and pitied, characterises *Amore*, the bystanders and the tools of writing. The motif of the vision of the subject’s pain used to dramatise his condition re-elaborates and metamorphoses, again and through a different stylistic and rhetorical device, the allocutive mode of the *Rime*’s apostrophes. Not only does the subject address a new, pitying interlocutor through his apostrophes, but he also sets out some positions of utterance in order to articulate, in a further dramatised way, a model of subjectivity that is extremely weakened and at the same time pervasive, as he finds his dying *Io* refracted in the figure and in the voices of these entities. If, as mentioned in opening this Chapter, Cavalcantian subjectivity has been defined as ‘polyphonic’, I would suggest that this polyphony is, paradoxically and intrinsically, a *monotonal polyphony*, as the voices and the gazes set in the text are those of the alienated, solipsistic *Io*.

## CONCLUSION

The reading of sonnet XVIII, ‘Noi siàn le triste penne’, serves as the ideal epilogue for my study, which has sought to identify and to describe the main, distinguishing traits of the Cavalcantian lyric subject. The ‘geniale metonimia’,<sup>1</sup> as De Robertis defines it, according to which the writing tools vicariously represent the dismayed, dying *Io*, of whom only his *flatus vocis* remains, provides an extreme example of the striving for recognition which, as has emerged from my analysis in various ways, constitutes the idiosyncratic feature of the *Rime*’s subject. In sonnet XVIII, the representation of the traditional subject of the love lyric is relegated to the accusative case, as the poet-lover is the object rather than the subject of the enunciation. As such, he could be gazed on and described from an outer perspective, and his suffering acknowledged and testified to by an onlooker.

This theatrical, dramatised striving for a form of recognition is perhaps the unifying, distinctive trait of the Cavalcantian subject. The importance of this movement to the articulation of subjectivity comes to the fore when re-considering the main outcome of this study. In Chapter II, I particularly observed that, from the grammatical point of view, the articulation of a depleted subjectivity is conveyed almost paradoxically. The semantic weakening of the subject does not correspond to his supposed progressive disappearance from the text but rather manifests itself in a grammatical and rhetorical “explosion” of the *Io*, whose figure is multiplied and refracted in his dismembered hypostases, to cite a notable example of this technique.

The subject’s endeavours to get his condition acknowledged (or, better, acknowledged by his own self) are also reflected in the exploitation of the conative or testimonial functions of the poetic message. The many figures and voices characterising the *Rime*, as I observed in Chapters IV and V, appear to be mere projections of the *Io*. With their oral witness and/or their voices, these entities exist merely to testify to the subject’s condition, to establish or re-establish his position in the text. The Cavalcantian subject is only apparently relational. As Maria Corti foresaw, ‘dalla lunga conversazione dell’*Io* con sé stesso prende sapore l’avventura poetica cavalcantiana’.<sup>2</sup> The subject of the *Rime* is, at the same time, the first-, second-, and third- person of the enunciation, thus constituting the totalising universe of the enunciative domain. It is for this reason that in Chapter V I have used the category of *monologic polyphony* to define it.

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<sup>1</sup> De Robertis, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 1986, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Corti, ‘Dualismo e immaginazione visiva’, p. 642.

Here we approach a crux of the Cavalcantian subjectivity. The continual representation of the *Io*, be it synecdochic or expressed through figures or voices seemingly “other” from that of the poet-lover, conveys a portrait of the subject which, rather than being multifaceted, is always identical and static. The analytical gaze upon the subject depicts the *Io*’s unmovable condition and unescapable death. Time and space are nearly absent from the poetry of the *Rime*, as I particularly noted in Chapter III. This is in part a consequence of the particular manuscript transmission of the Cavalcantian corpus which, as I previously discussed, does not form a macrotext and, therefore, does not trace any extended narrative of the *Io*. In fact, having analysed the distinguishing stylistic traits of the *Rime*, one might also question whether Cavalcanti had the intention of constructing a macrotext at all. But also, the a-temporal and a-spatial poetry of the *Rime* is generated by the continuous and repetitive thematisation of the same dynamics, through recurrent thematic, linguistic, and rhetorical techniques.

As I have observed and discussed in this thesis, the *Rime* articulate a model of subjectivity which is unprecedentedly pervasive and hegemonic. To further appreciate the degree of newness of the Cavalcantian subjectivity we shall look again at the closing lines of Guinizzelli’s ‘Lo vostro bel saluto e ‘l gentil sguardo’ and compare them briefly with the tercets of Cavalcanti’s ‘Tu m’hai sì piena di dolor la mente’:<sup>3</sup>

Remagno como statua d’otono,  
 ove vita né spirto non ricorre,  
 se non che la figura d’omo rende 14

Guinizzell’s well-known lyric depicts the devastating effects of the encounter with the beloved upon the *Io*. The lady’s greeting and her gaze have deathly repercussions on the subject who, in the last tercet of the sonnet, is depicted as a brass statue. The simile emblematises the annihilation of vital faculties, which leaves the *Io* only with his external appearance (‘la figura d’omo’ (14)).

Cavalcanti’s internalisation and reworking of this famous tercet exemplifies the poet’s working towards the articulation of what I have defined as a model of pervasive subjectivity:

I’vo come colui ch’è fuor di vita  
 che pare, a chi lo sguarda, ch’omo sia  
 fatto di rame o di pietra o di legno 11  
 che si conduca sol per maestria  
 e porti ne lo core una ferita

<sup>3</sup> Guinizzelli, ‘Lo vostro bel saluto e ‘l gentil sguardo’, in Id., *Rime*, ed. by Rossi, pp. 41-43.

che sia, com'egli è morto, aperto segno. (VIII, 9-14) 14

Similarly to Guinizzelli, Cavalcanti's quatrains focus on the deathly effects of the beloved upon the subject (lines 1-8). A significant element to consider when comparing the two fragments is Cavalcanti's hyperbolisation of Guinizzelli's simile, which is expanded and redoubled, stretching over the entire sextet in Cavalcanti's lyric. The first-person pronoun opening the passage quoted above, emphasises the grammatical subject position occupied by the *Io*. Guinizzelli's comparison with the brass statue is reworked by Cavalcanti and brought to the extreme. The simile of the intertext is saturated and multiplied. Not only is this effect conveyed by Cavalcanti's tripling of the elements of the comparison, but furthermore, the ubiquity of the *Io* is dramatised by the use of the disjunctive conjunction 'o', which multiplies and refracts the images of the alienated subject ('[...] di rame o di pietra o di legno' [my emphasis] (11)). The incessant movement towards a form of grammatical recognition of the subject position is further manifested in the expression 'a chi lo sguarda', reflecting 'il consueto bisogno di testimonianza e compassione',<sup>4</sup> as Rea observes.

My examination of the main linguistic and rhetorical strategies characterising Cavalcantian subjectivity raises several questions, which will require further investigation. I will only illustrate a few of them here, with the hope that my study will open new and different paths of enquiry. Sonnet XVIII is also an emblematic example of Cavalcanti's complex reception. As emerges from Favati's discussion, the text has a limited manuscript tradition, appearing in only four (rather late) *codices*.<sup>5</sup> However, I shall emphasise again that, as opposed to this scant textual transmission, the lyric is now one of the most frequently anthologised of the Cavalcantian corpus.

As I suggested at the end of the discussion in Chapter III, if we are to explain scholarly mentions of Cavalcanti as "modern", or allude to his founding and seminal role in the construction of the modern lyric paradigm and the modern lyric subjectivity, we might profitably consider Mallarmé's 'disparition élocutoire du poète', who is replaced by the letter of the text. By rereading Cavalcanti's 'Noi siàn le triste penne' in the light of these Mallarmeian reflections on poetry and language one could better appreciate Calvino's reading of the sonnet, in which he not only enthusiastically notices the innovative rhetorical invention of Cavalcanti,<sup>6</sup> but also emphasises the fact that 'Cavalcanti apre con questi versi la poesia moderna'.<sup>7</sup> While the material transmission of the

<sup>4</sup> Rea, in Cavalcanti, *Rime*, 2011, p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> Favati, in Cavalcanti, *Le Rime*, ed. by Favati, p. 185.

<sup>6</sup> As I previously mentioned, Cavalcanti is anointed by Calvino as 'il primo a considerare gli strumenti e i gesti della propria attività come il vero soggetto dell'opera' (Calvino, 'La penna in prima persona', p. 294).

<sup>7</sup> *Ivi*.

text reflects the general indifference it raised in Cavalcanti's contemporaries and immediate successors, how are we to understand this emphatic interest in Cavalcanti in the twentieth century?<sup>8</sup>

The objectification (or reification) of the subject in the materiality of the text and in the tools of writing is connected to the Cavalcantian dismembered representation of the self, being its extreme consequence. This rhetorical gambit, by means of which the *Io* is portrayed as fragmented, acquires significance when compared with the several examples in modern poetry where the subject appears as displaced,<sup>9</sup> *morcelé*<sup>10</sup> or multiplied in the text.<sup>11</sup> This could be one of the paths to follow in order to formulate some hypotheses in response to my question. These isolated suggestions must be discussed through a meticulous examination of Cavalcanti's reception in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Italian literary and cultural traditions - research which has not yet been systematically undertaken.

Furthermore, I wish to mention again Ezra Pound, as a crucial figure in the translation and dissemination of Cavalcanti's poetry in Anglo-American culture. The reception of Cavalcanti in English and American literature, which has involved central figures such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti, W.B. Yeats, and T.S. Eliot, has been almost only considered as related to the figure of Dante or, in turn, to the reception of Pound's translations of Cavalcanti. However, there exist several dispersed pieces of evidence, such as in the work of poets of the San Francisco Renaissance,<sup>12</sup> suggesting that

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, Mario Luzi, 'Sulla poesia di Guido Cavalcanti', in Id., *L'inferno e il limbo* (Milan: SE, 1997), pp. 79-85.

<sup>9</sup> To quote one notable example of a displaced subject to reflect upon, I shall mention Leopardi's 'A se stesso' (Giacomo Leopardi, 'A se stesso', in Id., *Poesie e Prose*, ed. by Rolando Damiani e Mario Andrea Rigoni, 2 vols (Milan: Mondadori, 1987), I: *Poesie*, p. 102). For a reading of 'A se stesso', see Margaret Brose, 'Posthumous Poetics: Leopardi *A se stesso*', *Stanford Italian Review*, 7 (1987), 161-189. It is relevant to mention that in his *Zibaldone*, Leopardi describes his conditions as follows: 'Io sono, si perdoni la metafora, un sepolcro ambulante, che porto dentro di me un uomo morto, un cuore già sensibiliss. che più non sente ec.'<sup>3</sup> (Bologna. 3 Nov. 1825.)' (Leopardi, *Zibaldone di pensieri. Nuova edizione tematica Condotta sugli Indici leopardiani*, ed. by Fabiana Cacciapuoti (Rome: Donzelli, 2014), 4194,6).

<sup>10</sup> The notion of the *corps morcelé* (or fragmented body) has been formulated by Lacan in the early stages of his work and is first mentioned in the paper 'Le stade du miroir', which I have discussed in Chapter I (pp. 10-11). Antonin Artaud is perhaps one of the most emblematic poets to thematise and to reflect upon this notion. For a discussion on the so-called 'funzione Artaud', in twentieth-century and contemporary Italian poetry, see Andrea Cortellessa, 'Touch. Io è un corpo', in Id., *La fisica del senso. Saggi e interventi sui poeti italiani dal 1940 a oggi* (Rome: Fazi, 2005), pp. 61-86.

<sup>11</sup> Giorgio Caproni is one of the poets of the Italian lyric tradition of the last century to make extensive use of the rhetorical figure of *prosopopoeia*. As Angela Borghesi notes, by commenting on Caproni's poems 'O cari', 'i diversi "io" dell'autore, come gli spiriti cavalcantiani, tornano ad assediare [l'io]' (Angela Borghesi, 'A lezione di leggerezza. Caproni tra Dante e Guido', *Belfagor* 65/6 (2019) 667-688 (p. 678)). As Enrico Testa observes, these refracted figures of the subject testify to a 'una condizione caratterizzata dalla perdita di riconoscimento e di ogni criterio di identificazione' (Enrico Testa, "'Il conte di Kevenhüller" di Giorgio Caproni', in Id., *Per interposta persona*, pp. 79-98 (p. 86). See also, in the same volume, 'Antagonisti e trapassanti. Soggetto e personaggi in poesia', in Id., *Per interposta persona*, pp. 11-32.

<sup>12</sup> More specifically, I am referring to Robert Duncan, Jack Spicer, and Robin Blaser - a group of American poets from the Bay Area all involved with the poetic movement known as the San Francisco Renaissance. It is important to mention that these poets studied under the medievalist historian Ernst Kantorowicz while at UC Berkeley. As Kelly Holt demonstrates, Kantorowicz's teaching on the Middle Ages resounds in Spicer's and Duncan's still-unpublished correspondence, as well as in their *oeuvres* (Kelly Holt, 'Spicer's Poetic Correspondence. "A Pun the Letter Reflects"', in *After Spicer. Critical Essays*, ed. by John Emil Vincent (Middletown (CT): Wesleyan University Press, 2011), pp. 36-68). See, for example, Duncan's re-writing of Cavalcanti's 'Donna me prega' (Robert Duncan, 'I Tell of Love', in Id.,

## CONCLUSION

a thorough examination of Cavalcanti's presence in Anglo-American literature is needed both to tackle a critical vacuum and to further corroborate current understanding of the phenomenon of the reception of medieval Italian love lyric in Anglo-American literature. While this study has attempted to provide new tools for investigating Cavalcanti's articulation of subjectivity, it will be crucial to further examine Cavalcanti's legacy within and outside the Italian lyric tradition.

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*The Collected Early Poems and Plays*, ed. by Peter Quartermain (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2012), pp. 206-210).





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