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«Nobiltà dello stile» and «grandezza e rarità del pensiero»: Petrarch and the Petrarchists in the Apostolo Zeno's *Giornale de' letterati italiani* (1710-1718)
[preprint version]

Abstract. Following the path of Ludovico Antonio Muratori and Giovan Mario Crescimbeni, the 'Giornale de' letterati d'Italia' supervised by Apostolo Zeno aimed at a canonization of the lyrical tradition from Petrarch to Tasso to restore the nobility and credibility of Italian poetry after the *eccessi* of the Baroque. Analysing how the journal dealt with recently published books on Petrarch and its imitators, the paper aims to illustrate an important episode of their early 18th-century reception, which was to have a major influence in the development of criticism of Italian lyric poetry.

1. Introduction

The 'Giornale de' letterati italiani' was founded by Apostolo Zeno, Scipione Maffei and Antonio Vallisneri in 1710, and was published quarterly in Venice by the printer Hertz, who was able to distribute it all over Italy.¹ It was published regularly in Venice, in forty tomes, until 1727, and then sporadically, in 1733, 1739, and 1740. Between 1710 and 1718 the Journal was supervised by Zeno, who also handled directly, with his brother Pier Caterino, the literary and historical subjects, while Maffei coordinated the legal contributions, and Vallisneri the medical.²

The journal was the product of a Northern-Italy erudite élite, rooted in Veneto but closely linked with the scholars active in Emilia and Tuscany, and with the literary and ecclesiastical authorities in Rome.³ Following the tradition of erudite journalism, it propagated information about the most important recent books in all kind of disciplines. The journal provided synthesis that aimed toward objectivity: the critical point lay in the choice of the works to be digested more than on explicit claims about their value.⁴ In this sense limiting its range of interests to Italian publications was itself a basic form of criticism, justified as a response to the widespread lack of knowledge about the activities of Italian scholars, and by the wish to sustain the on-going reform of Italian culture.⁵

The term 'literature', as was common in the 18th century, covered the whole range of culture: the main part of the journal (especially after the departure of Apostolo Zeno for Vienna, in 1718) was dedicated to sciences.⁶ But the debate on poetry and language was no less important: the task of renovating the whole Italian culture could not be accomplished without dealing also with the decadence of the 'belle lettere'.⁷ Therefore, the thirty or so issues published in the eight years of Apostolo Zeno's supervision represent a privileged viewpoint on the reception of the lyric poetry tradition in early 18th-century culture.⁸

The 19th-century reception of Petrarchism as the 'chronic disease' of Italian culture would turned upside down the judgement of the Arcadian age:⁹ nonetheless, some of the issues dealt with in the early 18th-century discussions anticipated certain patterns that were to structure the modern understanding of that phenomenon.¹⁰ Therefore, this essay will consider what the Journal published about Medieval and Renaissance lyric poetry in the years of Zeno's supervision: the extended period represents an emblematic and influential experience in this context, and will permit us to deepen our awareness of how critical

reflection on Petrarchism was conducted in a crucial moment for the constitution of the modern history of Italian literature.

2. The Journal between erudition, literary history and the ‘Orsi-Bouhours quarrel’

The introduction of the first issue praised the French journal *Mémoires de Trévoux* for its contribution to learning and religion, and added that the only point it was missing ‘for its full perfection’ was a proper engagement in studying ‘Italian literature and its history’, since its judgement on this subject was based ‘on valueless perspectives, or on the trust of people who lacked any knowledge of our best authors’:

Una sola cosa per l’intiera sua perfezione pare da desiderarsi, ed è che alcuno di que’ pregiatissimi Soggetti si compiacesse d’impiegar qualche tempo nell’istruirsi a fondo della Letteratura Italiana e dell’Istoria di essa: conciosiaché mal corrispondono alla purgatezza del rimanente i loro giudizi del gusto Italiano nell’Eloquenza e nella Poesia, formati e sopra cose di nessun prezzo, e su la fede d’alcuni che la minima notizia non ebbero degli ottimi nostri Autori.¹¹

If they knew Italian culture, continued the author (Scipione Maffei), the Jesuits that edited the *Mémoires* would have seen that ‘the balance’ they ‘so charitably wish’ to Italians had been born in Italy along with its vernacular poetry, had gained perfection in the 14th century and never really left the country, not even in periods of decadence such as the 15th and 17th centuries:

Vedrebbero allora che quel buon senso ch’essi con tanta carità ci vanno augurando nacque fra noi al nascere di nostra Lingua, e già nel Secolo del 1300 a perfezione era giunto; vedrebbero ch’egli non mancò in Italia giammai, benché nel XV Secolo alquanto meno si coltivasse, e benché nel XVII in alcuna Provincia patisse disastro; e vedrebbero finalmente ch’egli fiorisce ancora oggigiorno quanto in altro tempo mai fosse, come il Giornale ch’ora intraprendesi darà loro facilmente a vedere.¹²

The journal assumed the task of showing Europe how the ‘buon senso’ was still flourishing in Italy. As we see, the influence of French culture, and at the same time, competition with it, marked the journal’s attitude and program from its very beginning.¹³

Louis XIV’s French classicists had developed a cultural politics aiming to present their culture as the fulfilment of Italian Renaissance, finally ratifying the superiority of the ‘moderns’ upon the ‘ancients’.¹⁴ On the contrary, Italian modern poetry appeared to them as dominated by artifice and bad taste: the very opposite of the values of rational clarity they searched in literature. Before the end of 17th century, Italian scholars identified Father Dominique Bohours’ book *La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d’esprit* (Paris: Veuve Mabre-Cramoisy, 1687) as the synthesis and the symbol of such an attack, and dedicated themselves to its deconstruction.¹⁵ In the introduction cited above we can easily recognise the figure of the French Jesuit behind the sketch of people ‘lacking any knowledge of our best authors’. Bouhours was indeed explicitly accused of inadequate proficiency in the study of the best Italian poets in the next issue of the *Giornale*, that included a review of

the Italian ‘official’ reply to his text, the *Considerazioni sopra un famoso libro Franzese intitolato ‘La Manière de bien penser’* by Giovan Gioseffo Orsi (Bologna, Pisarri: 1703; but 1704). Summarising Orsi’s arguments, the reviewer explained that he had defended Tasso and Bonarelli and left aside ‘others though famous’, because they had not been criticised by Bouhours, ‘who maybe did not know many excellent imitators of Petrarch, and maybe not even the Master of Lyrical Poetry himself’.¹⁶ The name of Petrarch, besides, had already been implicitly evoked by Maffei when he stated that Italian language and taste attained their perfection in the 14th century. Since its very foundation, as we see, the journal’s claim against the charge of the decadence of Italian culture could not help recalling the father of Italian lyrical poetry.

After a long review of Orsi’s ‘Considerazioni’ against Bouhours, an even longer account was dedicated to the ‘literary disputes’ about it.¹⁷ The journal – not surprisingly – fully sustained Orsi’s position, stating that his whole work stood out for an ‘excellent judgment’ and a ‘remarkable temperance’.¹⁸ An apparently neutral résumé of the objections to Orsi was followed by punctual replies in favour of him. The nationalistic background of the operation ensured that, paradoxically enough, the journalist attacked not the French Jesuits of Trévoux – who according to him rightly attempted to defend their homeland – but instead Francesco Montani of Pesaro, who by publishing anonymously a pamphlet against Orsi’s dialogues had betrayed the Italian cause.¹⁹

The reasons for a ‘struggle between nations’ frankly overtook literary ones, putting aside apparent differences.²⁰ Orsi’s strategy to defend Italian honour – tacitly endorsed, or at least not questioned by the Journal – stood basically on the long-established principle of ‘autorizzamento’: the exhibition of *loci paralleli* from Latin authors or from Petrarch to defend the verses Bouhours found baroque and artificial aimed to demonstrate both the ignorance of the Frenchman and the irrefutable ‘pedigree’ of the Italian poets. Such a criterion was anything but up-to-date: Muratori’s reflection on ‘buon gusto’, carefully digested by the Journal in the first two tomes, had largely passed by this traditional form of criticism.²¹ But in the context of the controversy, they could still go along almost peacefully. Together with the historical pattern fixed by Crescimbeni’s *L’istoria della volgar poesia* (Roma: Chracas, 1698), they represented three different (but not incompatible) ways to achieve the same aim: the redeeming of Italian literature and tradition against French presumption.

Such an attempt at putting together conflicting positions and methods was not determined just for tactical reasons: rather, it was at the core of the Journal’s attempt to renew and finally reunite the Italian *res publica litterarum*.²² The quarrels between Orsi and Fontanini on one side, and the Arcadia schism on the other would have shortly put under threat such an illusion even inside the editorial board of the journal: but the very first issues still displayed an effort to present the Italian scholars’ front as tight and compact.²³

Despite the wide and ecumenical outlook of this project, the editorial board of the *Giornale* was first of all the expression of a Northern Italian cultural *élite* highly influenced by Benedictine 17th-century erudition.²⁴ This kind of sensibility plainly appeared in the opening statement of the ‘Novelle letterarie’ of tome five (1711).²⁵ Citing a passage of Father Louis-Ellies Du Pin’s *Nouvelle bibliothèque des auteurs ecclésiastiques* (Paris: Pralard, 1686-1691), the journalist blamed the present tendency to prefer modern vernacular ‘trifles’ to

‘solid erudition’, so provoking the loss of the ‘infinite profit’ that may be gained with the publication of ‘unpublished works of the highest value’ or of annotated editions of ancient authors:

Saravvi tal città che abbonderà di rarissimi antichi Manoscritti, e che si pregerà di Soggetti eccellenti nella critica e nelle lingue, e con tutto ciò non vi si stamperanno che Operette volgari e Sonetti. La cecità nostra in questa parte è incredibile e portentosa, poiché tralasciando il danno che ne proviene agli studi, confinati perciò nelle bagattelle, e tralasciando la gloria che volontariamente cediamo alle altre Provincie, egli è manifesto che ci venghiamo in questo modo a privare d’un utile infinito che potrebbe ritrarsene, così dal pubblicare cose inedite di sommo pregio, come dal fare edizioni d’Autori antichi, accresciute, e illustrate, e collazionate con tanti preziosi codici che nelle librerie inutilmente marciscono.²⁶

Philologically accurate editions, whether of unpublished works or of annotated classical texts, were the most desirable outcome of the scholars’ efforts, and a basic feature to regain Italian supremacy in European culture. The need to boost such endeavours was not the least of the Journal’s concerns. The judgment on modern writers’ editions, as we will see, was established on these same criteria, enhancing above all publication of the unpublished, biographical reconstructions based on new documents, and annotations to texts. The more general aim of such an attitude was the (re)construction of a tradition, a tradition established more on the material base of books and documents than on the spiritual connections between abstract ideas.

This same stance emerges in a subtle but explicit way in the long digest of the works ‘concerning the history of vernacular poetry’ of Giovan Mario Crescimbeni.²⁷ A substantial introductory note stated that his essential contribution to the knowledge of the ‘qualities of our language and of our poetry’ and to the ‘promotion of the good use’ of it was not only due to ‘the famous Assembly of Arcadia’ he founded and coordinated, but above all to his books.²⁸ Crescimbeni’s ‘erudite’ publications were thus lined up with the Journal’s battles: a new understanding of the Italian poetic tradition appeared to be a fundamental step for the reform of culture.²⁹ Among Crescimbeni’s works, what best met the journalist’s taste and gained the most explicit praise was the fifth book of the ‘Commentari’. It was ‘the most intriguing and the most useful’ work, because it included ‘the report of the efforts made concerning the works of many vernacular poets’ – that is, an outline of lessons, annotations and commentaries ‘that made us know the beauties of our poetry’.³⁰

The recourse to late 16th-century commentaries and academic lessons was highly appreciated and strongly advised for modern editions of past authors.³¹ An example is the digest of the *opera omnia* of one of the most important poets of the Arcadian canon, Giovanni della Casa (Firenze: Manni, 1707).³² Reviewing the book, the journalist praised the reference to past commentary exploited by the modern editor, and argued that these were not ‘the only outstanding efforts elaborated by distinguished men upon Casa’s rhymes’.³³ He acquainted the reader with about ten more sources (mostly expositions and academic lectures) on the subject, stating that ‘if a collection of the complete works of Monsignor della Casa was ever thought of again – as it seems to be in the desire of some amateurs of

fine literature – it could exploit, if not all of them, at least some of the following [documents], which would be of great help to demonstrate the eminence [of this opus]’.³⁴

3. Petrarch and the rights of criticism

Between the Journal’s references, the Modenese Ludovico Antonio Muratori’s influence cannot be overestimated.³⁵ His production in the poetic field was carefully described: the first tome extensively summarized his ‘Progetto della nuova Repubblica Letteraria d’Italia’ (1703) and the writings that had discussed it;³⁶ the second and third respectively reviewed his *Della Perfetta Poesia Italiana* (Modena: Soliani, 1706)³⁷ and the essays that dealt with it;³⁸ the eighth digested his new edition of Petrarch’s *Canzoniere*.³⁹

Muratori’s Petrarch edition is a key point for the critic on the *Canzoniere* in 18th century.⁴⁰ Thus, it is worth seeing how the work was received by the Journal, to see whether or not its pioneering proposals were understood and enhanced. A first brief notice on the edition to come was given in the ‘Novelle letterarie’ of the second tome.⁴¹ It was presented as a philologically accurate work, with new textual variants from two manuscripts from the Biblioteca Estense compared with the author’s originals from Ubaldini’s edition (Roma: Grignani, 1642), and the annotations of Alessandro Tassoni (Modena: Cassiani, 1609) and Girolamo Muzio (Venezia: Dusinelli, 1582), in addition to Muratori’s. One remark of the journalist touched on what would be a major problem in presenting Muratori’s work, his criticism of many of Petrarch’s poems ‘that was going to stir up a hornets’ nest’:

Seguitano le *Considerazioni* del Sig. Muratori intorno alle virtù Poetiche del Petrarca, senza però tacersi quel tanto che talvolta sembra meno lodevole nelle medesime: colla qual impresa ben vedesi ch’egli più che mai farà per istuzzicare, come suol dirsi, il vespaio.⁴²

The same theme was resumed in the extended review: this was clearly perceived as the most problematic point, that above all deserved and needed a defence. The journalist lingered again on Muratori’s (and Tassoni’s) detection of ‘imperfections’ in Petrarch’s writings, claiming that the author’s task was surely not the questioning of the poet’s authority – even if he had indeed censored many of his poems:

Egli bene spesso mostra che le opposizioni del Tassoni al Petrarca non sono di molto peso: tanto è lontano che egli abbia voluto scriver quest’Opera per dir male di questo poeta; anzi, non molto dopo protesta esser più desideroso di lodarlo ‘da per tutto’ che di biasimarlo, ‘ancorché’ dic’egli ‘poche volte’: il che non so se gli verrà fatto buono dagli amatori del Petrarca, essendo vero che i componimenti ove il Sig. Muratori si ferma con la censura sono in assai maggior numero di quelli ove secondo lui non apparisce difetto.⁴³

The reviewer found it appropriate to reiterate the issue one more time in the conclusion of his paper, highlighting that Muratori’s attitude in judging Petrarch was sincere and unbiased – and so, in turn, demanded an unbiased reading, so to understand how his notes were ‘useful and praiseworthy’ for the comprehension and imitation of the Master:

chi leggerà attentamente queste *Osservazioni*, e senz’alcuna passione o prevenzione contraria, le giudicherà utili e lodevoli, e riporrà il loro Autore nel numero di quelli che

meglio si sono affaticati per illustrare i componimenti di questo Poeta e per agevolarne agli studiosi la più lodevole imitazione.⁴⁴

The Journal had already offered a similar reflection on the topic in the ‘Novelle letterarie’ of the sixth tome, when announcing the publishing of the book. These lines had been written – if not by Muratori himself – by someone that sharply and openly supported him, and constituted the first apology, right after the printing, of his work on the *Canzoniere*. ‘However strange such a severe examination may seem to Petrarch’s worshippers’, it attacked caustically, ‘they should consider whether it has been conducted with righteousness and fairness’, only to detect ‘the beauties and the glitches’ of this ‘excellent example’ of poetry – a poetry composed, nonetheless, by ‘a man’, exposed as everyone else ‘to imperfections’:

per quanto possa parere strano a i veneratori del Petrarca il severo esame che se ne fa dal Sig. Muratori, eglino però hanno esattamente e senza passione a riflettere se quell’esame sia fatto su le norme del giusto, e debbono anzi ricevere a buon grado l’intenzione retta di lui, che non per altro si è dato a ricercar le bellezze e i difetti di questo Poeta, il quale ciò non ostante sarà sempre un ottimo ed eccellente esemplare, se non acciocché quegli che si pongono ad imitarlo e studiarlo si fermino con lo studio e con l’imitazione in quelle cose che lo rendono incomparabile, e meno si lambicchino il cervello sopra di quelle che pur ci fanno conoscere che il Petrarca era uomo, cioè soggetto ad imperfezioni, e che egli scriveva in un tempo e in una lingua in cui ancora e’ non avea chi imitare.⁴⁵

What is for us the most original and ground-breaking point in Muratori’s method – the recourse to critical judgment, instead of tradition, to value the writing of the most eminent Italian poet – was perhaps too subtle to be directly picked up by most of the readers (even consenting ones, as it is proved by Orsi’s unpublished apology of the book).⁴⁶ The problem of judgment with arguments not openly stated by the annotator did not go unnoticed by the Journal, but it was quickly solved by making reference to the theoretical part of *Della perfetta poesia italiana* (already digested in tome two), where the author had largely explained his method.⁴⁷

What seemed more urgent, even to those who approved and enhanced what Muratori was trying to do, was not to discuss the theoretical foundation of literary criticism, but to justify his right to criticize Petrarch’s poems as driven by the pedagogical wish to contribute to better imitation. Such an effort to explain that Muratori did not intend to challenge the pre-eminence of Petrarch is consistent with the Journal’s program: the generation of scholars such as Crescimbeni, Zeno, and Muratori himself had sketched for the first time a linear and coherent path in Italian history that directly linked modern poetry to its 14th- and 16th-century origins. This freshly shaped history of Italian literature allowed both the claim of Italian ‘primogeniture’ in the rebirth of *humanae litterae*, and the possibility of giving it continuity into modern times. As Petrarch was the recognized forefather of this rebirth, any attempt to question his authority would have had repercussions on the whole construction. It was, therefore, important to make clear – as Muratori himself tried to do in the foreword to his edition – that his objections to Petrarch’s poems aimed to guarantee a stronger and

better imitation: they were thus justified, consistently enough, as a way to reinforce Petrarch's authority.

On the other hand, as usual in the Journal's digests dealing with past authors, the main part of the review was dedicated to the poet's biography, sometimes integrating Muratori's with (minor) corrections and new information.⁴⁸ In addition a few remarks concerned the layout of the annotated text and the completeness of the annotation. The journalist mentioned that the first reason why Muratori had reprinted the *Canzoniere* was that he had been given a copy of the rarest version of the *Considerazioni* of Alessandro Tassoni, 'reviewed and expanded from the author himself after the printing'.⁴⁹ The journalist regretted that Tassoni's additions were not clearly distinguished from the others, and that Muratori had just reproduced the Tassoni's selection of Girolamo Muzio's notes instead of reporting all of them, since their source (the *Battaglie per difesa dell'italica lingua*, published in 1582) was nowadays hard to find.⁵⁰

Such an extreme scrupulousness, far from being mere pedantry, was completely coherent with the Journal's program and values. This attention to biographical and philological features, rooted through Muratori in the Maurine tradition and not neglectful of some Renaissance examples, was the outcome of a specific perception of the connections between the past (to be discovered with a factual and carefully documented historical analysis) and the present.⁵¹ The 'variorum' form of annotation, inspired by the humanists' tradition, gave the sense of the on-going chain of scholars – a selected community extending in both space and time – that had been working on the text. Such a tradition, carefully reconstructed and meticulously represented on the page, was the way both to canonise the text and to authorise modern critical activity on it.

Nonetheless, for Muratori – as well as for the reviewer who reported the statement with implicit agreement – the connection with such a tradition was active and not at all obliging. Tassoni had written an 'opera di buona critica', thus worth re-printing, while those who had preceded him had not, because they limited themselves to 'grammar and erudition', without indicating the 'beauties and flaws' of Petrarch's poems. The chain of tradition was a basic medium to guarantee the status of the opus, and was necessary at first for its comprehension, but the interpreter had the right and the duty to value and judge it.⁵²

The rights of critique were discussed again some years later, in the review of another book involving judgment on Petrarch. Tomes twenty-six and twenty-seven contained a long digest of a work that is today almost completely forgotten: the second volume of the *Saggi de' letterati esercizi de' Filergiti di Forlì* (Forlì: Selva, 1714).⁵³ The review opened with effusive praise of the Academy of the Filergiti, implicitly compared with institutions such as the Crusca and the Arcadia.⁵⁴ A very long summary was then dedicated to the first part of the book: a collection of twenty-four lessons on imitation proposed by the 'prince' of the Academy, Fabrizio Antonio Monsignani. The next issue gave space to the rest of the essay: ten papers that dealt with one Petrarch sonnet each, and the reprint of a hundred and seven sonnets 'transportati al morale' (that is, re-written as texts of moral philosophy) by the secretary of the Academy, Ottavio Petrigiani.⁵⁵

The discussion on Petrarch's poems is probably the most novel and interesting part of the book.⁵⁶ The outline was fixed: a *pars destruens* entrusted to a member of the Academy, who tried to demonstrate the errors committed by the poet, and the reply of Petrigiani, where

Petrarch's choices were explained and interpreted to show the poem's excellence. The poems to be discussed were the Sonnets 109-118 of the ancient editions, that corresponded respectively to *R.v.f.* 140, 141, 143-148, 151 and 150. The choice showed openly the purely rhetorical nature of the exercise: those who had the task of attacking Petrarch did not choose a poem they actually found poorly written, but had to criticise a text they were given, assigned from a pre-fixed series. This dialectic and otiose feature gained the journalist's praise – in a statement that may be the clearest description of literary criticism (of its scope and tools) that we can find in the *Journal*.⁵⁷ Censures and apologies, argued the journalist, were 'always unfair' because partial, while literary criticism had above all to be unbiased. Thus, the disinterested nature of the dialectic exercise performed by the *Filergiti* guaranteed the absence of passions that could misdirect the judgment, thus allowing access to the poetry's kernel, its inner and hidden truth:

Non sappiamo se maggiore sia la disgrazia degli Scrittori più celebri per esser di continuo soggette l'Opere loro alla censura degli uomini, anche nelle cose dove sono più degni di lode, o pur la loro fortuna per esser queste difese anche nelle cose dove sono potuti ingannarsi. Certo è che in ciò che riguarda e la censura e la difesa la critica è sempre ingiusta, perché serve più a far conoscere la passione che il vero, e più tosto che instruire, confonde, e partorisce più del profitto l'errore. Quando però avviene che si esami un componimento a puro oggetto di letterario esercizio, e affinché se ne scuopra interamente il midollo per utile o insegnamento di chi vuole imitarlo, non si può abbastanza commendarne l'esame, massimamente ove questo esca di mano a persone dotte e intendenti.⁵⁸

4. Publishing and judging the Petrarchists

These writings taken together form a kind of coherent map of the main interests of the *Giornale* concerning Italian poetry. First and foremost, as already outlined, was the theme most considered in the context of the debate between Italians and French about the excellence of the respective traditions. The rejection of the 17th-century Baroque, typical of the *Arcadia* program, was adopted through Muratori and Orsi as a way to reaffirm the excellence of the noblest Italian tradition that was born with Petrarch and had reached its apex with Tasso.⁵⁹ The defence of Tasso against charges of rhetorical affectation had been the first move of an Italian scholar closely linked to the *Journal*, Giusto Fontanini, who composed *L'Aminta di Torquato Tasso difeso e illustrato* (Roma: Zenobi and Placo, 1700). The discussion on Tasso's verses had therefore continued to be one of the most debated topics in the whole development of the Orsi-Bouhours quarrel. The apology for the author of *Gerusalemme liberata* quickly shifted toward a wider consideration of the full lyric tradition, so providing the basis – following Crescimbeni's inputs – for what would become the history of Italian literature.⁶⁰

This polemical and apologetic posture was far from neutral, and had major consequences for the larger reflection on literary tradition. Even the key concepts of 'âge d'or' and of 'grand siècle', though at their origin typical of Renaissance eulogies, were readopted under the influence of the model of the 'classic age' of Louis XIV,⁶¹ creating a model of the development of Italian literature based on a sequence of centuries, a sequence that seemed to follow a sinusoidal trend, articulated on centuries of glory (the 14th, 16th, and 18th) and of decadence (the 15th and 17th).

Moreover, the renewed acknowledgement of the Italian Renaissance as the golden age of literature was closely linked not only with an apology for Italy's past culture but also with its present awakening after the Baroque parenthesis. This apologetic bias constituted an ambiguous but productive feature when judging Petrarch's 16th-century imitators. It integrated (and complicated) the Journal's erudite impartial approach with modern urgencies, and it fashioned a form of criticism that claimed a tight affinity with its object. A similar setting prompted a sympathetic outlook on authors, enhancing their (supposedly) common values, and in the meantime, introducing categories largely in debt, for dialectical reasons, to a concurrent tradition, that of the French rationalistic classicism.⁶²

This implied the definition of a canon of authors able both to redeem the Italian tradition and to offer a model for modern literature. The importance of modern editions of ancient lyric poets was explicitly linked, in the first issue of the Journal, to the quarrel against 'the French and other foreign nations', who believed 'that Italians are only keen on exaggerations, sophistications, wordplays, and platitudes alike':

Quando i Francesi ed altre nazioni forastiere si fanno ad esaminare il gusto degl'Italiani in quella spezie di Poesia che Lirica comunemente appelliamo, credono che a questi altro non piaccia se non Gonfiezze, Raffinamenti, Scherzi di parole e simili inezie, le quali per verità non meno che altrove furono nell'Italia, ma solo per qualche tempo nel secolo oltrepastato, in riputazione ed in uso. Per questa cagione eglino considerano il Marini, l'Achillini e simil turba di gente come que' soli che tengano ancora nella nostra Poesia il principato ed il credito, e pensano col discoprire la debolezza di questi di renderci tutti del nostro cattivo gusto convinti.⁶³

The present times, continued the journalist, had seen the publishing of many books that 'clearly showed that the lyrical poetry practiced here, as well as the other genres of poetry, is made of a truly stronger alloy, and may resist the harder tests'.⁶⁴ He was going to digest seven editions of good poetry, aiming to show how the 'good taste' was strongly rooted in Italian history and had not been abandoned in contemporary literature.⁶⁵

Between 1710 and 1718 we find about twenty editions of ancient poets and four anthologies fully digested in the journal or mentioned in the 'Novelle letterarie'. Most of them were published in Bologna, by the same printer Pisarri who had published Orsi's response to Bouhours: Buonaccorso da Montemagno (Pisarri, 1709), Agostino Staccoli (Pisarri, 1709), Giovanni Guidiccioni (Barbiroli, 1709), Angelo di Costanzo (Barbiroli, 1709 and Pisarri, 1712), Giovan Girolamo de' Rossi (Pisarri, 1711), Luigi Tansillo (Pisarri, 1711), Antonfrancesco Raineri (Pisarri, 1712) and Francesco Maria Molza (Pisarri, 1713). All of them appeared as imitators of Petrarch, and all of them except Buonaccorso and Staccoli were 16th-century poets. The Journal covered the whole series of ancient vernacular lyric poems edited by the milieu of the 'Colonia Renia' and the 'Accademia degli Abbandonati' under the direction of Eustachio Manfredi.⁶⁶ It was undoubtedly the most important venture in the field of 16th-century lyric poetry in these years. The soul of the Journal, Apostolo Zeno, had some part in it: the digest of Guidiccioni's edition explicitly cited as a source an important manuscript received from Zeno by the editor.⁶⁷

The operation, by the way, reflected a certain affinity with the trend prompted by the Journal. They were small size editions with plain, un-annotated texts: not yet the glorious

'editio variorum' hoped for, but still a first attempt to circulate the good models of Renaissance poetry. The most important edition published by Pisarri, however, was the first part of the *Scelta di Sonetti, e Canzoni de' più eccellenti rimatori d'ogni secolo* (1709), praised by the Journal as 'the most copious, the best ordered, the most perfect' collection ever published, where 'the quantity of the poems did not undermine their quality'.⁶⁸ The accurately selected texts were disposed in a chronological order – a choice openly appreciated by the reviewer (almost certainly Apostolo Zeno). In this way, he stated, 'you may see what Italian poetry had been in any time not through a report or by a speculation, but by experience and practice'.⁶⁹ It is clear how such a book could be considered in line with the project of rethinking Italian tradition that the Journal openly promoted: Zeno defined the anthology a sort of 'perceptible history' of Italian literature, able to 'show the dissimilarity' of literary tastes in the different periods.⁷⁰

The Journal gave also a particular attention to a second important pole for lyric poetry printing, Florence. Here, under the imprint of academics such as Anton Maria Salvini and Giovan Battista Baldinotti, had been published the *opera omnia* of Giovanni della Casa (Manni, 1707) mentioned above,⁷¹ the poems of Giusto de' Conti (Guiducci and Franchi, 1715) and those of Buonaccorso da Montemagno sr. and jr. (Manni, 1718), for the first time distinguished as two different persons.⁷² It was a more restricted number of poets: the Florentines offered a meaningful selection of Petrarch's imitators, published in annotated editions. Della Casa, himself a Florentine, was one of the most important (if not the most important) authors in the Arcadia canon. Buonaccorso da Montemagno the elder and Giusto de' Conti were believed – as was argued by the journalist – to be almost contemporaries of Petrarch, and therefore considered among the very first to follow the Master's path.

In the Journal we may also trace the first steps of the venture of the brothers Gaetano and Giannantonio Volpi with the printer Giuseppe Comino in Padua, who from the 1720's would become one of the most important promoters of the publication of 16th-century authors in Italy. Curiously enough we already find a brief notice of Giannantonio Volpi in the first issue's 'Novelle letterarie', mentioned as a doctor in laws from Bergamo who was about to publish an annotated edition of Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius.⁷³ Some years later, in the 'Novelle letterarie' of tome twenty-eight, the establishment of a new printing-house in Padova was announced, coordinated by the Volpi brothers, who were about to publish the *opera omnia* of Andrea Navagero, a friend and collaborator of Pietro Bembo and Aldo Manuzio.⁷⁴ The edition, assured the journalist, was going to be 'most beautiful, and as correct as possible'.⁷⁵ The next issue of the Journal digested the work.⁷⁶ The reviewer highlighted how the choice of such a scholar – a cultivated and elegant Latin writer, and a Venetian aristocrat that combined within himself civic engagement, Christian piety, and a noble cult for friendship – was indeed a telling one, which indicated the route the printers wanted to pursue.⁷⁷

The Journal's report of the Volpi's enterprise showed more than a simple affinity: it revealed a direct link with the editors that allowed the *Giornale* to anticipate a preview of their publications in the 'Novelle letterarie' of tome thirty, after having praised the publishing of Luigi Alamanni's *La coltivazione* and Giovanni Ruccellai's *Le api* (Padova: Comino, 1718).⁷⁸ The Volpi brothers would collect the inheritance of the Pisarri editions

of the years 1709-1713, showing a similar wish to disseminate 16th-century literature: but their annotated release, edited with strict philological attention, showed the influence of the model supported and promoted (among others, within the same milieu) by the Journal. The Volpi editions marked an important step toward the canonisation of 16th-century Petrarchism that would fulfil the premises put by Crescimbeni and Muratori on historiographical and theoretical grounds.⁷⁹ Along with the annotated 'opera omnia' of Bembo and della Casa promoted in a context strongly linked with that of the Journal and published in Venice in 1728-29, they would promote the 18th-century canonisation of some of the more important authors of the Italian Renaissance.⁸⁰

The ensemble of the Journal's digests traces a coherent overview, where the 16th century generally appears as the age of perfection for vernacular poetry, and the 15th (even more than the 17th) that of the worst decadence. Agostino Staccoli from Urbino, who lived in the second half of the Quattrocento, 'had flourished [...] at the peak of barbarity'.⁸¹ For the little-known poems of Giovan Girolamo de' Rossi, instead, it was enough 'to think that they were composed in the heart of the 16th century to believe they were good'.⁸² Nonetheless, the appreciation for 'the golden age of Leo X' and of Petrarchism was not unconditional. Reviewing the edition of the poems of Petronio Barbati from Foligno (born about 1500, died in 1554), the author was praised for having been guided more by a 'free and fertile fantasy' than by a 'scrupulous imitation' – the latter being an 'almost universal custom in that age, where few had been able to move a step out of the footprints of someone else':

Scrive egli su lo stile del Petrarca e de' buoni autori, ma non in guisa che di quando in quando non corra una strada del tutto sua. Vi si scorge un ingegno che si lascia guidare, ma con giudizio, più da sé stesso che dagli altri, e più da una fantasia libera e feconda che da una scrupolosa imitazione, costume quasi universale ai poeti di quell'età, pochi de' quali hanno saputo muovere un passo che su le altrui vestigie non fosse.⁸³

To merit full praise a poet had to be elegant, serious, and original: this was not the case for many of the 16th-century imitators of Petrarch. Within the Renaissance tradition a more restricted canon was identified that largely corresponded with the one proposed by Crescimbeni: a canon that leant towards the second half of the Cinquecento more than towards its beginning. Poets like Tansillo and di Costanzo (beside, of course, della Casa) were the ones praised with greater and more explicit enthusiasm.

Angelo di Costanzo (1507? - 1591) was declared 'one of the most excellent genii of the 16th century'.⁸⁴ His poems were described and interpreted with words mindful of Crescimbeni's *Bellezze della volgar poesia* that summarised the ideal model of poetry the Journal wanted to promote. He 'combined the nobility of the style with the prominence and the refinement of the thought'⁸⁵ and he had not been one of those 'who stuck so religiously to Petrarch' that they were only able 'to think or say what he had already thought or said'.⁸⁶ The elegance and the technical ability upon which the analysis often enthused could not, in Zeno's intention, substitute or overshadow the importance of the matter of the poems, substantiated with moral philosophy. Poetry had to give – in classical Horatian terms – pleasure and convenience, 'utile' and 'dulce': and even the lyric love poems had to demonstrate a sound and in some way original form of thinking. Similar terms were used for Giovanni Guidiccioni (1500-1541), explaining that he had sometimes been obscure because he most

enjoyed ‘thinking deeply’ about what he was writing, and aimed at driving his readers toward further reflections.⁸⁷

Luigi Tansillo (1510-1568) earned one of the longest reviews in the series of the ‘Rimatori italiani antichi’.⁸⁸ The book was presented as a ‘little, but golden and precious’ collection of poems of someone who reached the level ‘of the most famous poets’ with his sonnets, and outdid them all with his *canzoni*.⁸⁹ Even if the journalist contested Stigliani’s *boutade* that Tansillo was better than Petrarch (‘all these eulogies [...] will not make us admire the copy more than the original’), his judgment on his production was, by all means, favourable.⁹⁰ An important part of the argument was meant to demonstrate that the obscene poem ‘il Vendemmiatore’ was not at all representative of his production, but was indeed an offspring of his youth (‘parto giovanile’) that the mature poet sincerely regretted. All his other poems, even the love ones, were instead the output of a very temperate writing (‘una castigatissima penna’): the poet’s declaration to pope Paolo IV, that his rhymes had been sometimes frivolous but his life had always been honourable, was for the journalist to be believed.⁹¹ Literary excellence had to be associated with spotless morality and an exemplary active life: he tried hard to show that Tansillo was ‘not less valorous than learned’.⁹²

For Zeno – as for Muratori – the link between morality and rhetoric (between life and writing) had a basic contribution in literary judgment. The promotion of aesthetic qualities tangled with ethical values was a key issue for the redemption of a literary tradition charged with triviality, and the idea of a moral superiority of the Italian Renaissance culture, regained by the moderns against the superficiality of a large part of the 17th-century literature, was often raised in the Journal.

When it was possible, moreover, it was used to counter the French accusations. An example was a newly published French translation of the 17th-century treatise by Emanuele Tesauro, *La filosofia morale* (Bruxelles: Foppens, 1713), that raised the irony of the journalist: ‘In a time, when some of our books have already lost the reputation they used to have when we were children, we have to see them translated into foreign languages’.⁹³ For him, however, the question to be raised was not primarily about the opportunity to revive an out-dated baroque essay (that indeed continued to have a certain popularity even in Italy), but that of the moral poverty inextricably linked to its style ‘metaforico e concettoso’, inadequate to carry the comparison with the elegant and thoughtful 16th-century prose:

Regalo assai migliore avrebbe fatto il Padre Croset ai Cavalieri di Malta, se avesse tradotto il *Cortegiano* del Castiglione, il *Galateo* del Casa, la *Vita politica* e il *Soliloquio* del nostro Paruta, o l’*Educazione cristiana* di Silvio Antoniano: opere sode, nelle quali con la necessaria gravità si tratta della vita morale e civile propria e degna di un qualsisia Cavaliere.⁹⁴

For us it may be surprising to find the book on the Christian education of pupils written by the Filippo Neri’s disciple Silvio Antoniano on the instance of Carlo Borromeo,⁹⁵ mentioned together with the works of the Venetian diplomat Paolo Paruta⁹⁶ and with such classic Renaissance works as the *Cortegiano* and the *Galateo*. Here is not the place to discuss in full the complex framework of this series of ‘works of sound doctrine, where the moral and civil life is debated with the appropriate gravity’. It will be enough to notice how the series sketched a short canon of 16th-century prose, from its courtly beginning until its post-Tridentine ending. For Zeno (if he was the author) these works represented, however

different they could appear, a successful combination of style and matter, where the excellence of the form plainly corresponded to the importance of the subject. The same accord – achieved in an exemplary way by the Renaissance prose – was sought in 16th-century lyric poetry, to offer an adequate model for modern writers.

If compared with the modern reception of Renaissance literature, the latter seems to be the major point of difference. The scepticism for ‘superstitious imitation’ and the mistrust of Petrarchism as a form of ‘mass literature’ have some important early 18th-century classicist antecedents. What is really hard to find in the Arcadian age, on the contrary, is the conception of Renaissance culture as the expression of a corrupt and vacuous society, only devoted to the formal beauty of arts. The paradigm of the moral indignity of that world, firstly introduced by Rousseau and Herder and then fully developed after the Napoleonic age, would strongly influence studies on Petrarchism right into the 20th century.⁹⁷ The recourse to 18th-century sources, as the examples of scholars like Carlo Dionisotti and Amedeo Quondam show, has been a major tool to overtake the Risorgimento’s prejudices and gain a more comprehensive overview of the age of Classicism.⁹⁸ Following their lesson, 18th-century books and editions are still an essential tool for studying 16th-century poetry. Nevertheless, in recent times it has become more evident that some bias affected even the proclaimed neutrality of the erudite milieu of the *primo Settecento*. This growing awareness is showing that some of the still unresolved critical questions about the lyric poetry inspired by Petrarch have deep roots, far deeper than De Sanctis’ censures. A full reconstruction of the genealogy of the modern judgment on Petrarchism (from 18th century to modern times) has not yet been written. This could be a survey of some interest, for a better understanding of how modern Italian literature has wanted to shape her identity through a peculiar rewriting of her Renaissance origins.

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¹ Brendan Dooley, ‘The *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia* (1710-40): Journalism and “Modern” Culture in the Early Eighteenth-Century Veneto’, *Studi Veneti*, 6 (1982), 229-70 (pp. 248-49). See also Id., *Science, Politics, and Society in Eighteenth-Century Veneto. The Giornale de’ letterati and its World* (New York-London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1991); *Il ‘Giornale de’ letterati d’Italia’ trecento anni dopo. Scienza, storia, arte, identità (1710-2010)*, Atti del convegno (Padova, Venezia, Verona, 17-19 novembre 2010), ed. by Enza del Tedesco (Pisa-Roma: Fabrizio Serra, 2012); *Indici del «Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia»*, ed. by Michela Fantato, foreword by Corrado Viola (Pisa-Roma: Fabrizio Serra, 2012).

² Giuseppe Ricuperati, ‘Giornali e società nell’Italia dell’Ancien Régime’, in Valerio Castronovo, Giuseppe Ricuperati, Carlo Capra, *La stampa italiana dal Cinquecento all’Ottocento* (Bari: Laterza, 1976), pp. 117-64 (p. 129, with a complete list of names and tasks of the editorial board and of the collaborators).

³ Andrea Battistini, ‘La cultura del primo Settecento’. *Storia generale della letteratura italiana*, ed. by Nicola Borsellino and Walter Pedullà, vol. VII, *Il secolo riformatore. Poesia e ragione nel Settecento* (Milano: Motta, 2004), pp. 28-115.

⁴ See Scipione Maffei, *Letterati d’Italia. Introduzione al «Giornale» (1710)*, ed. by Francesca Brunetti, with an essay by Cesare De Michelis (Venezia: Marsilio, 2009).

⁵ From a wider point of view, as argues Dooley, ‘The *Giornale*’, p. 230, ‘the *Giornale* represented a final attempt to counterbalance the intellectual hegemony of centralized transalpine nation-states by creating an independent unity within Italian letters’; see also Françoise Waquet, ‘*Per la gloria e onore dell’Italia*». *Sur le contexte idéologique du «Giornale»*, in *Il ‘Giornale de’ letterati d’Italia’ trecento anni dopo*, pp. 13-20.

⁶ Ricuperati, p. 146.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁸ Michele Mari, *La critica letteraria nel Settecento* (Milano: Ledizioni, 2013), pp. 9-35. See also Giuseppe Nicoletti, ‘Agli esordi del petrarchismo arcadico: appunti per un capitolo di storia letteraria fra Sei e

Settecento', in *Il Petrarchismo nel Settecento e nell'Ottocento*, ed. by Sandro Gentili and Luigi Trenti (Roma: Bulzoni, 2006), 31-66.

⁹ See Arturo Graf, *Attraverso il Cinquecento* (Torino-Firenze: Loescher, 1888).

¹⁰ See Amedeo Quondam, 'Sul Petrarchismo. Dieci anni dopo', in *Petrarca, l'Italia, l'Europa. Sulla varia fortuna di Petrarca*, Atti del Convegno di studi (Bari, 20-22 maggio 2015), ed. by Elisa Tinelli, foreword by Davide Canfora (Bari: Edizioni di Pagina), 243-58 and Simone Albonico, 'Appunti su "forma" e "materia" nella poesia di Pietro Bembo e del suo tempo', in *Lirica in Italia 1494-1530. Esperienze ecdotiche e percorsi storiografici*, Atti del Convegno (Friburgo, 8-9 giugno 2016), ed. by Uberto Motta and Giacomo Vagni (Bologna: Emil, 2017), 73-100.

¹¹ *Il Giornale de' letterati italiani*, 1 (1710), 13-67 (pp. 24-27).

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Waquet, p. 18.

¹⁴ Cesare de Michelis, 'All'origine del "Giornale de' letterati d'Italia"', in *Il 'Giornale de' letterati d'Italia' trecento anni dopo*, 21-28 (pp. 23-24). See also *La Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, ed. by Anne-Marie Lecoq, preceded by 'Les abeilles et les araignées', essay by Marc Fumaroli, with an afterword by Jean-Robert Armogathe (Paris: Gallimard, 2001).

¹⁵ See Maria Grazia Accorsi, Elisabetta Graziosi, 'Da Bologna all'Europa: la polemica Orsi-Bouhours', *La Rassegna della letteratura italiana*, 93 (1989), 84-136; Corrado Viola, *Tradizioni letterarie a confronto. Italia e Francia nella polemica Orsi-Bouhours* (Verona: Fiorini, 2001) and Id., *Osservazioni sul canone nell'età dell'Arcadia e Tradizioni letterarie a confronto nella polemica Orsi-Bohours* (Verona: QuiEdit, 2009), 39-57.

¹⁶ 'Non si ragiona di altri benché celebri, che in gran numero ha avuti la Nazione Italiana, perché altri non sono stati criticati dal P[adre] B[ouhours], il quale per avventura non aveva cognizione di tanti eccellenti imitatori del Petrarca, e né pur quasi dello stesso Maestro della Lirica Poesia', *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 2 (1710), p. 151 (see also pp. 121-22).

¹⁷ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 2 (1710), 116-61 and 3 (1710), 77-194

¹⁸ 'In tutta l'Opera spicca un sommo giudizio, e una singolare moderazione: cosa assai difficile a praticarsi, particolarmente da chi scrive in materia di contese letterarie'; *ibid.*, p. 161.

¹⁹ *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, 3 (1710), pp. 79-80. The book against which the Journal argued was [Francesco Montani], *Lettera toccante le Considerazioni sopra la maniera di ben pensare scritta da un accademico *** al signor conte di *** l'anno 1705* (Venezia: Basejo, 1709). An account was also given of the *Lettere di diversi autori in proposito delle Considerazioni del marchese Giovan Gioseffo Orsi sopra il famoso libro franzese...* (Bologna: Pisarri, 1707), where we find a lot of scholars involved with the Journal, such as Apostolo Zeno, Ludovico A. Muratori, Eustachio Manfredi, Anton Maria Salvini (see Viola, *Tradizioni*, p. x).

²⁰ For Voltaire's definition of the Orsi-Bohours quarrel as a 'querelle des anciens et des modernes', which had turned to a 'querelle entre nations', see Viola, *Tradizioni*, p. xi-xii.

²¹ Viola, *Tradizioni*, pp. 394-95. The *Riflessioni sopra il Buon Gusto intorno le Scienze e le Arti* di Lamindo Pritanio (Venezia: Pavino, 1708) were reviewed in *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), 283-316; Lodovico A. Muratori, *Della perfetta poesia italiana...*, 2 voll. (Modena: Soliani, 1706) in tome 2 (1710), 162-90.

²² Ricuperati, pp. 125-26.

²³ Silvia Tatti, 'Il Giornale e Roma: lo scisma d'Arcadia', in *Il 'Giornale de' letterati d'Italia' trecento anni dopo*, 311-20.

²⁴ Paolo Golinelli, "'Nemo solus satis sapit". Dal "Giornale de' letterati" del Bacchini al "Giornale de' letterati d'Italia"', in *Il 'Giornale de' letterati d'Italia' trecento anni dopo*, 145-54 (p. 152).

²⁵ The 'Novelle letterarie', in the final part of each issue, reported briefly the news of the books freshly published or in print.

²⁶ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 5 (1711), pp. 382-83. We find similar terms in Muratori's early scripts: see Corrado Viola, *Canoni d'Arcadia. Muratori Maffei Lemene Ceva Quadrio* (Pisa: ETS, 2009), p. 35.

²⁷ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 6 (1711), 174-261; the review was completed, after the printing of the last books of the 'Commentari', in tome 11 (1712), 269-89.

²⁸ 'Il Sig. Canonico Crescimbeni ha molto contribuito sì a far conoscere i pregi della nostra Lingua, e della nostra Poesia, sì a promoverne nell'Italia il buon uso. A tal effetto non tanto egli è concorso con lo stabilimento della celebre Radunanza degli Arcadi, della quale egli è perpetuo Custode, quanto co' propri componimenti in diversi tempi da lui pubblicati'; *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 6 (1711), p. 174.

²⁹ Tatti, pp. 318-20. Apostolo Zeno's letters show he himself had projected the writing of a history of Italian literature which he never accomplished: see Fabio Danelon, 'Scrivere per un nuovo pubblico (giornalismo e storiografia letteraria nel primo Settecento). Dopo il *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*: gli *Scrittori d'Italia* di Giammaria Mazzucchelli'. *Il 'Giornale de' letterati d'Italia' trecento anni dopo*, 247-57 (p. 254).

³⁰ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 6 (1711), pp. 181-82.

³¹ On 16th-century exegesis of lyric poetry see Pietro Petteruti Pellegrino, *La negligenza dei poeti. Indagini sull'esegesi lirica dei moderni nel Cinquecento* (Roma: Bulzoni, 2013) and *Il poeta e il suo pubblico. Lettura e commento dei testi lirici nel Cinquecento*. Convegno internazionale di studi (Ginevra, 15-17 maggio 2008), ed. by Massimo Danzi and Roberto Leporatti (Genève: Droz, 2012).

³² *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 4 (1710), 164-211.

³³ 'Queste però non sono le sole considerabili fatiche lavorate da uomini insigni sopra le Rime del Casa'; *ibid.*, p. 172.

³⁴ 'Se mai di tutte l'Opere di Monsig. della Casa nuovamente Raccolta si meditasse, come pare che in persona amatrice delle buone lettere ve n'abbia talento, si potrebbe fars'uso, se non di tutte, almeno di alcuna delle seguenti, che molto gioverebbono ad illustrarle'; *ibid.*

³⁵ Ricuperati, p. 134.

³⁶ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), 267-320.

³⁷ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 2 (1710), 162-90.

³⁸ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 3 (1710), 375-94.

³⁹ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 8 (1711), 177-98.

⁴⁰ See Mario Fubini, 'Le Osservazioni del Muratori al Petrarca e la critica letteraria nell'età dell'Arcadia', in *Dal Muratori al Baretti. Studi sulla critica e sulla cultura del Settecento* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1975), vol. I, pp. 49-173; Roberto Tissoni, *Il commento ai classici italiani nel Sette e nell'Ottocento (Dante e Petrarca). Edizione riveduta* (Padova: Antenore, 1993), pp. 11-30; Viola, *Tradizioni*, pp. 391-417; Rossella Bonfatti, *L'«erario» della modernità. Muratori tra etica ed estetica* (Bologna: Clueb, 2010).

⁴¹ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 2 (1710), pp. 506-07.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 507.

⁴³ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 8 (1711), p. 179.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 197-99.

⁴⁵ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 6 (1711), p. 513-14.

⁴⁶ Viola, *Tradizioni*, pp. 397-99.

⁴⁷ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 8 (1711), p. 181. Some of the philosophical premises of Muratori's reflection on 'buon gusto' were to find in the 'Introduction' to his *Riflessioni sopra il Buon Gusto intorno le Scienze e le Arti* (Venezia: Pavino, 1798), written by the Journal's collaborator Bernardo Trevisan and carefully summarised in *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), pp. 283-316.

⁴⁸ One of the very few remarks on the edition concerned indeed the writing of Petrarch's life – the journalist, though judging it as 'one of the most exact' ever written, contested the lack of footnotes for sources: 'Non può negarsi [...] che quella, la quale è stata qui compilata dal Sig. Muratori, non sia una delle più esatte, che abbiamo, come che a molti non piaccia il tralasciamento delle citazioni, e de' fonti, su' quali egli ha fondata di quando in quando la sua narrazione'; *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 8 (1711), p. 186.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 178-79.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-84. The printed sources cited by the journalist are: *Considerazioni sopra le Rime del Petrarca* d'Alessandro Tassoni... *Aggiuntavi nel fine una scelta dell'Annotazioni del Muzio ristrette, e parte esaminate* (Modena: Cassiani, 1609) and *Battaglie* di Hieronimo Mutio Giustinopolitano, *per difesa dell'italica lingua... Et alcune bellissime annotationi sopra il Petrarca* (Venezia: Dusinelli, 1582).

⁵¹ Viola, *Canoni*, pp. 54-56 and 78-79.

⁵² *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 8 (1711), pp. 178-79.

⁵³ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 26 (1716), 186-228 and 27 (1716), 324-54.

⁵⁴ 'Molte sono le Adunanze e le Accademie letterate d'Italia, ma la maggior parte di queste si perde o in esaminare certi problemi più plausibili per la novità che utili per l'argomento, o in recitare sonetti e altre poesie dove più si trovi di acume che di buon gusto. [...] Non è già per questo che alcune non ne abbia l'Italia le quali tendono a più alto segno, e trattano cose e più importanti e più gloriose al lor nome e alla loro nazione. In queste ora si cercano nuovi lumi per le scienze e per le buone arti, ora si studia di levare certi pregiudici che possono guastare la poesia e la eloquenza, ora si procura di mettere in chiaro le buone regole del nostro volgare idioma e di ritornarlo a quella perfezione e bellezza che tempo fa gli hanno dato i nostri migliori maestri e scrittori'; *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 26 (1716), pp. 186-87.

⁵⁵ The 'moralized' sonnets had already been published in *Saggio di letterati esercizi de gli accademici Filergiti di Forlì... raccolti da Ottaviano Petrinani* (Forlì: Selva, 1699), with the approval of Carlo Mario Maggi, whose literary line clearly inspired Petrinani; the journalist reported a letter of Maggi to Petrinani, where the Milanese stated that 'the dignity of the subject' was the only dignity that Petrarch's poems were lacking, and added: 'Questo è 'l giudizio che ne diede il Maggi, e a questo noi pure ci sottoscriviamo senz'alcun timore di allontanarci dal vero'; *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 27 (1716), pp. 351-53.

⁵⁶ This same part escaped to Graziosi, pp. 161-62, who recall the book and Petrinani's link with Maggi.

⁵⁷ The statement was probably in debt with a page of Muratori's dedicated to the first volume of the Filergiti's essays (Forlì: Selva, 1699): Muratori, *Della perfetta poesia*, IV, p. 186.

- ⁵⁸ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 27 (1716), pp. 325-26.
- ⁵⁹ Viola, *Osservazioni*, pp. 11-13 and 34.
- ⁶⁰ Tatti, pp. 319-20.
- ⁶¹ Viola, *Tradizioni*, p. VIII.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, p. XII.
- ⁶³ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), pp. 179-80.
- ⁶⁴ 'Negli ultimi anni sonsi veduti molti libri d'insegnamento e di pratica, i quali dimostrano chiaramente, che la Lirica che tra noi si professa, non meno che gli altri generi di Poesia sono di assai miglior lega, e stanno a prova del più difficile esperimento' (*ibid.*).
- ⁶⁵ They were 'componimenti di alcuni Rimatori sì de' passati secoli, come del nostro, i quali col loro esempio servano insieme ad altri di eccitamento, ad altri di disinganno' (*ibid.*). The collection was entitled 'Alcuni Rimatori Italiani stampati ultimamente', and had a sequel, two years later, with the review of four more new books: *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), 179-221 and 11 (1712), 93-163. After Apostolo Zeno's departure for Vienna in 1718, the series continued with an important shift in the title ('Rimatori italiani ultimamente stampati, le cui opere sono citate nella Crusca'), that explicitly linked the choice of the books to digest with their presence in the Crusca Vocabulary: see *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 32 (1719), 227-369, 33.1 (1721), 230-377 and 33.2 (1722), 172-232 on Alamanni and Rucellai; 34 (1723), 38-81 on Giusto de' Conti; 35 (1724), 223-46 on Dante; 36 (1724), 206-29 on Buonaccorso da Montemagno sr. and jr.; 38.1 (1727), 132-60 on Chiabrera.
- ⁶⁶ Graziosi, pp. 96-105 and 207-25. On Manfredi see: Andrea Donnini, 'Eustachio Manfredi rimatore', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 178 (2001), 205-57. The notice of the publication of the poems of Manfredi himself (Bologna: Pisarri, 1713) and of Domenico Maria Mazza (Bologna: Pisarri, 1713) was given in the 'Novelle letterarie' of tome 17 (1714), pp. 407-09.
- ⁶⁷ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), p. 194.
- ⁶⁸ 'Confessandola tutti la più copiosa, la più ordinata, e la più perfetta di quante mai se ne fossero in alcun tempo vedute. In essa la quantità de' componimenti non pregiudica alla loro bontà'; *ibid.*, p. 217. On the *Scelta* see Amedeo Quondam, *Petrarchismo mediato. Per una critica della forma 'antologia'* (Roma: Bulzoni, 1974).
- ⁶⁹ 'Quello che v'ha di particolare in questa bella Scelta, si è l'ordine Cronologico ch'ella serba: cosicché non già per relazione o per congettura, ma per pratica ed uso si vede qual fosse l'Italiana Poesia di ogni tempo, e se n'ha, per così dire, un'Istoria sensibile' (*ibid.*).
- ⁷⁰ Zeno cited as very significant a passage where the editor sentenced that 'altro è importante a leggersi negli antichi, altro ne' moderni' (*ibid.*, p. 220).
- ⁷¹ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 4 (1711), 164-211. The work is also mentioned in the 'Novelle letterarie' of tomes 6 (1710), pp. 394-95 and 22 (1715), pp. 445-46.
- ⁷² The two editions were announced in the 'Novelle letterarie' of tome 22 (1715); for their reviews, see note [65](#). Furthermore, the Journal reviewed the editions of 16th-century minor poets Tommaso Baldinotti (Pisa: Bindi, 1702) and Petronio Barbati (Foligno: Campitelli, 1712), and the Anthologies 'Raccolta di Rime di Poeti Napoletani' (Napoli: Parrino, 1701) and 'Rime scelte de' poeti illustri de' nostri tempi' (Lucca: Frediani, 1709). In the 'Novelle letterarie' it was also given notice of 'il Coppetta' (Perugia: Ciani and Desideri, 1720), Ludovico Ariosto (London: Pickard, 1716) and Gabriello Chiabrera (Roma: Salvioni, 1718).
- ⁷³ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), pp. 449-50.
- ⁷⁴ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 28 (1717), pp. 437-38.
- ⁷⁵ 'Nella nuova stamperia [...] hanno principiato i direttori di essa a dar prova del loro ottimo gusto con la raccolta di tutte le Opere dell'insigne Andrea Navagero, Senatore Veneziano, sì latine, che italiane, le quali presentemente stanno sotto il torchio. Si può assicurare il pubblico, che la edizione sarà bellissima, e al maggior segno corretta' (*ibid.*).
- ⁷⁶ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 29 (1717), 86-122.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88 and 94-95. The reviewer highlighted Navagero's practice of vernacular poetry, and narrated 'a particolarità degna di osservazione': when he was the ambassador of Venice at the court of the Emperor Charles V, he became a friend of Juan Boscán, teaching him how to compose 'Sonetti, e altri componimenti alla foggia degl'Italiani': Boscán would have convinced Garcilaso de Vega to do the same, thus introducing Petrarchism in Spain (*ibid.*, pp. 100-01).
- ⁷⁸ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 29 (1718), pp. 426-27; for the reviews of Alamanni and Rucellai, see note [65](#).
- ⁷⁹ See Lorenzo Baldacchini, 'Comino, Giuseppe', in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 27 (Roma: Istituto per la enciclopedia italiana, 1982).
- ⁸⁰ See Amelia Juri, 'Anton Federigo Seghezzi editore delle "Opere" di Pietro Bembo (Venezia, Hertzhauser, 1729): prime osservazioni sul commento ai poeti rinascimentali nel Settecento' and Giacomo Vagni, 'I poeti del Cinquecento nelle prose di Parini e Bettinelli', in *Forme della critica letteraria nel Settecento*, Atti del Convegno (Losanna, 13-14 ottobre 2016), ed. by Gabriele Bucchi and Carlo Enrico Roggia (Ravenna: Longo, 2017), 33-46 and 65-77. Along with Casa and Bembo, we should also remember the *opera omnia* of Trissino

edited in the very same years by Scipione Maffei: *Tutte le opere di Giovan Giorgio Trissino gentiluomo vicentino non più raccolte* (Verona: Vallarsi, 1729).

⁸¹ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), p. 187; it was therefore stated that Staccoli had probably been the best 15th-century poet after Lorenzo il Magnifico, and that he had been working hard 'to be an imitator of Petrarch', without feeling ashamed 'to appear so' (ibid.).

⁸² 'Per quello che spetta al giudizio che possiamo dare di questi suoi componimenti poetici, basta generalmente considerarli nati nel fiore del XVI secolo per crederli buoni'; *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 11 (1712), p. 109.

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 154-55.

⁸⁴ 'Uno de' più eccellenti ingegni del secolo XVI'; *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 1 (1710), p. 204.

⁸⁵ 'Per aver congiunta alla nobiltà dello stile anche la grandezza e rarità del pensiero' (ibid., pp. 205-06).

⁸⁶ 'Lavora di suo, e per così dire, di pianta, e non è stato un di quegli, che stanno attaccati sì religiosamente al Petrarca, che non sappiano né pensare né dire se non quanto da questo sia stato detto o pensato' (ibid.).

⁸⁷ 'Basterà riflettere, che Mons. Guidiccione niente più apprezza, che pensar bene tutto quello che dice, e dirlo in maniera che più ne resti a pensar a chi legge'; *Giornale de' letterati*, 1 (1710), p. 195.

⁸⁸ *Giornale de' letterati*, 11 (1712), 110-54.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 110.

⁹⁰ 'Tutte queste lodi, e molte altre, che troviamo date alle poesie del Tansillo, non faranno nulladimeno, che da noi si apprezzi la copia, vie più che l'originale' (ibid., p. 113).

⁹¹ 'Fu [...] la carta | vana talor, la vita sempre onesta' (ibid., p. 131).

⁹² 'Era il Tansillo non meno valoroso, che letterato' (ibid., p. 137).

⁹³ Ibid., p. 398. The treatise was often reprinted in the 1670's and 1680's, but its fortune was still conspicuous even in the first years of the new century: see Denise Aricò, *Il Tesoro in Europa: Studi sulle traduzioni della Filosofia morale* (Bologna: CLUEB, 1987).

⁹⁴ *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, 17 (1714), pp. 398-99.

⁹⁵ Paolo Prodi, 'Antoniano, Silvio', *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 3 (Roma: Istituto per la Enciclopedia Italiana, 1961) and Elisabetta Patrizi, *Silvio Antoniano: un umanista ed educatore nell'età del rinnovamento cattolico (1540-1603)* (Macerata: EUM, 2010). The *editio princeps* had been printed in Verona by Delle Donne and Stringari in 1584.

⁹⁶ Gino Benzoni, 'Paruta, Paolo', *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 81 (Roma: Istituto per la Enciclopedia Italiana, 2014).

⁹⁷ Eugenio Garin, *La cultura del Rinascimento. Dietro il mito dell'età nuova* (Milano: Il Saggiatore, 2000), pp. 5-8.

⁹⁸ Franco Tomasi, Stefano Verdino, Carlo Vecce, *Il "tardo Rinascimento": tradizioni di genere e canone degli autori*, in *I cantieri dell'italianistica. Ricerca, didattica e organizzazione agli inizi del XXI secolo*, Atti del XVII congresso dell'ADI (Roma Sapienza, 18-21 settembre 2013), edited by Beatrice Alfonzetti, Guido Baldassarri and Franco Tomasi, Roma, Adi editore, 2014, Url = http://www.italianisti.it/Atti-di-Congresso?pg=cms&ext=p&cms_codsec=14&cms_codcms=581 [consulted: 04/25/2019].