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Ethical Distance and Political Resonance in the *Eclogues* of Dante

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When he received Giovanni del Virgilio's epistolary poem – either during the second half of 1319, at the end of that year or else at the beginning of 1320¹ – Dante was already in Ravenna, writing the last part of the *Paradiso*.² Everything suggests he had finally discovered the *locus amoenus* which would allow him to work on his verses (*Ecl.*, IV. 70–3), surrounded by a group of admirers with the same inclinations and tastes (*Ecl.*, IV. 57–62) and honoured by the Lord of the city (*Ecl.*, III. 80), himself a lover of poetry. The reception of Del Virgilio's verse epistle, and the exchange that followed, interrupted, at least for a time, the composition of Dante's epic poem. Invited to answer the Bolognese writer's challenge, he did so in his own terms and according to his own agenda, giving birth to his only work of Latin poetry.³ In studying this correspondence, scholarship has mainly focused on the relationship between Italian and Latin; questions concerning style;⁴ the latent tension between Dante, Albertino Mussato and the emerging new culture of the time; and, consequently, on the theme of poetic coronation.⁵

It is worth pointing out that in this correspondence, and especially in the opening epistle, Giovanni del Virgilio does not suggest he wanted Dante to 'rewrite' his *Commedia* in Latin, nor to abandon his project.⁶ His intention was rather to urge him to compose poetry in Latin addressed to scholars,⁷ who could then have honoured him with the poet's laurel crown – Mussato had received it in 1315, and the unspoken shadow of this particular coronation hangs over this correspondence.⁸ Additionally, Del Virgilio considers that the poet should have chosen a topic from contemporary history (*Ecl.*, I. 26–9).

The focus of my critical attention in the present essay, now that Del Virgilio's objectives have been clarified, will be to establish the poetical

and ethical role played by Dante in the cultural landscape of the mid-fourteenth century – a period characterised by a singular *querelle* between the ancients and the moderns.⁹ In addition, I will review the interaction between the Latin verse correspondence with Giovanni del Virgilio, with selected passages from the *Commedia*, to show how Dante extends and refines his reflections on the contemporary political scene within the bucolic exchange. The essay reveals that Dante's establishment of an ethical distance between himself and his Bolognese university interlocutor combines long-meditated political reflection with an innovative poetic programme – one that looks far beyond matters of language and style in his discussion of what kind of poetry truly merits a laurel crown.

Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio: ethical distance and poetic authority

To begin with the exchange's opening poem, Giovanni del Virgilio's *Eclogue* I, the invitation from the Bolognese professor indicates that some contemporary scholars at least did not really recognise or accept Dante's undermining of the rhetorical divisions between literary genres/styles, with the related choices concerning readership and public, which had been codified in the medieval *Artes*, following classical models.¹⁰ This is clearly indicated in Dante's answering verses, when he bursts into a rhetorical dialogue which vehemently reasserts the existence of an erudite class writing in the vernacular. Del Virgilio's definitive response expresses his disagreement with this: 'Clerks scorn the | vernaculars' (17–18).¹¹ In reality, the *questione della lingua* conceals a deeper concern: what should be the qualities of the modern poet? Not only do both poets' positions appear irreconcilable in the manner in which they are expressed, but they also reveal a reciprocal misunderstanding between the profoundly innovative nature of Dante's poetry on the one hand and the new poetics of the *preumanesimo padovano* – of which Del Virgilio is clearly the representative – on the other.¹²

Moreover, the grammarian's position is rather ambiguous. Though he is aware of the originality of Dante's verses,¹³ this awareness seems limited to the most superficial, linguistic and stylistic aspects; he argues that these innovations would prevent the learned from appreciating the whole complex ideological framework of Dante's epic poem. At the same time this conception of the *Commedia* as an all-embracing work, in human, spiritual and poetic terms, is precisely what limits Dante, in turn, in his understanding of the innovative elements present on the Paduan scene; he therefore fails to grasp what this circle has to offer.

Conscious of the gap between them, Del Virgilio takes an initiative whose aim seems to be the reduction, if not the abolition, of this distance. He uses poetic/linguistic arguments which reveal, however, that he misrepresents Dante's position. The reasons put forward by Giovanni del Virgilio, 'in temerity the goose', to try to convince the Florentine poet, 'the clear-toned | swan' (56–7),¹⁴ recall the main points of Dante's *nuova poetica*, but in a negative way. According to Del Virgilio, the underlying ideology of the *Commedia* is too elevated for readers of the vernacular. These cannot and do not understand it – the proof being that his verses are the object of trivial popularisation¹⁵ – and this simply because Italian is not the language of knowledge, but merely that of the common people.¹⁶ In addition, the classical poets did not write in the vernacular,¹⁷ and Dante himself had never addressed any verses to 'pale scholars'.¹⁸ An even more personal touch via the use of flattery, a call to glory and the prospect of a possible poetic coronation – themes to which Dante was certainly sensitive – are placed in such a context that they fail to resonate with the Florentine poet.¹⁹

It is thus obvious that the Bolognese professor's epistolary poem shows no understanding of Dante's poetic/authorial and ethical/redemptive itinerary, thus reducing his initiative to a mere linguistic/stylistic choice.²⁰ Dante responds positively to Del Virgilio's invitation to write verses in Latin by adopting the classical language himself; however, his choice of the Virgilian bucolic model – as opposed to the genre classified as 'epic', 'tragic' or 'historical' – illustrates his refusal of a *milieu* and a cultural project which Del Virgilio was trying to impose on him.²¹ What may appear as linguistic and stylistic distancing on Dante's part assumes a new significance when he is seen to be motivated by a proud authorial claim. In effect he is asserting a new poetics based on a common language and a humble style, or *polistile*, answering the multifaceted requirements of a conception of poetry which aims to be ethical, knowledgeable and generally all-encompassing, whether it be in the vernacular or in Latin. Dante thus adopts a clear stance, contributing to the most heated poetic debate of the time, in replying to Giovanni's/Mopsus's contempt – "Hast thou not marked the scorn wherewith he greets | The speech of Comedy which women's chat | Stales on the lip, which the Castalian sisters | Blush to receive?" (76–9).²² The latter can do nothing but accept it.²³

For Del Virgilio, poetry is a purely aristocratic form. For Dante it remains what he had expressed in the *Convivio*: a 'vivanda' [courses] (to be accompanied with 'barley bread')²⁴ offered to those who do not constitute a learned class 'by profession'. This is at least the case in the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*, and thanks to the polysemy characteristic of

the *Commedia*. It is well known that the *Paradiso* is a different matter, as only those able to taste the ‘pane delli angeli’ [bread of angels] (*Cvo*, I. i. 7) are able to understand this part of the work. In any case, what remains fundamental is the concept of an aesthetic union in which the ‘parola ornata’ [ornamented speech] (*Inf.*, II. 67) reminiscent of Virgil carries meaning. Poetic discourse, however steeped in rhetoric,²⁵ has the role of transmitting content, truth and knowledge – thus assuming a social, moral and spiritual function through the figure of the poet, who is a vessel of the word of God, *scriba Dei*. This is the only way of bridging the gap between eloquence and ethics. These considerations shed light on Dante’s reservations concerning those authors he saw as limited to a purely aesthetic approach, reusing classical genres without improving them. In his eyes, these writers tend to be reduced to mere imitators who adapt ancient forms to contemporary subjects, probably purely on the basis of circumstance and with no ethical depth.

This position, added to the strong element of provocation contained in Del Virgilio’s verses, is the cause of the explicit attack on the contemporary absence of poetry made by Dante under the bucolic guise of Tityrus, in *Ecl.*, II. 50–2: “O Melibœus, [...] scarce | One vigil-keeping Mopsus hath the muse | Known to maintain”.²⁶ The lines originate from the ignorance declared by Melibœus (usually identified as Dino Perini, a young Florentine resident in Ravenna), a situation which is useful to Dante’s discourse. The young shepherd’s lack of skill, which obliges him to ask Tityrus/Dante to take him under his wing, gives Tityrus the opportunity to answer, highlighting the demanding training required to become a true poet. The latter is here symbolised by Mopsus (Del Virgilio), who is congratulated for the long nights spent studying with the Muses – “Mopsus still | Year in year out himself hath dedicate | To the Aonian mountains” (36–8)²⁷ – and also for his pallor, characteristic of the learned.²⁸

Although he uses the same terms in his reply, Dante does not consider himself equal to the scholars to whom Del Virgilio alludes – Del Virgilio himself, certainly, but also those who would have crowned Dante if he had followed their recommendations. By contrast, Dante’s reply clearly underlines his difference. If the eulogy to Mopsus/Del Virgilio can be seen, at least in part, as a rhetorical prerequisite, it does not escape the reader that the peculiarities that define Mopsus as a poet – sleepless nights and weariness – are the same as those which Dante, with some very minor variations, attributes to himself in the *Commedia*.²⁹

So far, it would seem that a form of ‘poetic’ assimilation between Mopsus/Del Virgilio and Tityrus/Dante can be found. Yet, in reality, this system of references constitutes a subtle antiphrasis. I believe the

evidence for this is to be found, precisely, in lines 35–6: “others vie | To master lore litigious”.³⁰ These words, which may appear almost casual in the eulogy of Mopsus/Giovanni, in fact constitute, on the contrary, the very foundation of Dante’s thought. In the *Convivio*, in a direct assault on the contemporary *literati* (the learned, specifically those educated in Latin culture), the poet had clearly asserted that ‘they do not deserve to be called educated, since they do not acquire education for its own sake, but only as a means to gain money and status’; their characteristic craving for money and honours ‘removes every trace of nobility of mind, which is the deepest source of man’s desire for this food’.³¹ In the third book of the treatise, his reference to ‘lawyers, doctors and almost all religious, who study not in order to become wise but in order to acquire money or rank’ illustrates the coherence of Dante’s thinking as reasserted in the bucolic verses.³² Sociologically, these non-*literati* correspond to the legal and medical faculties of the secular medieval universities, while the mention of a religious public clearly refers to the professors of the *Studia* run by the mendicant orders.³³

Dante’s blame is thus aimed, at least partially, at the scholars associated with both secular and religious institutions, taken as the chief representatives of official culture. Clearly Del Virgilio himself was a product of these institutions. And yet, as a possible result of the sincere admiration he expresses towards the Florentine poet, he is excluded from Dante’s fierce criticism.³⁴ However, this is not the case for the scholars Del Virgilio considers as his models. It is thus quite possible to recognise in the statement “others vie | To master lore litigious” (35–6) the judge Lovati and probably also the notary Mussato, both of whom were implicitly presented by the Bolognese professor as paradigms of the erudite poet. Thus a disagreement which appears on one level to be merely stylistic and literary in nature is in fact related to a far more profound ethical issue present in all of Dante’s work: his attack on all those learned people who, while boasting of their poetry, spend far more of their time in the pursuit of profitable activities, particularly in the field of law.³⁵ It is precisely this view that allows Dante to invert Del Virgilio’s reference to the ‘pallor’ of those he admires, using the same term to contest the validity of the Bolognese writer’s reference to these people as ‘real’ poets.

Dante thus appropriates the figure of Tityrus/Virgil, and identifies himself with the ancient Roman poet in his *Commedia* – a new *Aeneid* – and in his eclogues – an innovative and audacious imitation. In so doing, he asserts his difference and distances himself from the ‘neo-Latin’ world of Bologna and Padua. The latter, in his eyes, is interested only in stylistic

imitation of the ancients. What Dante has to offer instead is a form of poetry, or maybe of ‘humanism’, which, while making the most of knowledge of the classics, is also able to appropriate them and give them a new meaning, in contrast to the learned humanism *di scuola* championed by Del Virgilio.

In this sense, the *Commedia* is an *imitatio* of the *Aeneid* in the most authentic sense of the word: it gives new life to its values and adapts the Latin model to a new context, both Christian and vernacular. The profound and reciprocal misunderstanding between Dante and Del Virgilio is confirmed by their exchange. The Bolognese master never fully grasps Dante’s linguistic choices nor, more importantly, the originality of his poetry.³⁶ In effect, he remains blind to the extraordinary innovation of Dante’s verses,³⁷ especially those of the *Paradiso*, which distance this work not only from any known rhetorical structure, but also from any of the traditional genres that his Florentine interlocutor, clearly, did not wish to follow.³⁸

This incomprehension is reflected in Del Virgilio’s reluctance to place Dante in the canon of learned poets – a distinction for which the Florentine poet yearned (as he reveals in *Inf.*, IV. 101–2).³⁹ Though the Bolognese professor is a very attentive reader of the *Commedia*, the fact remains that he does not appreciate the profound meaning of Dante’s self-classification as sixth among the poets of antiquity in *Inferno* IV, but especially as first among his contemporaries, on the basis of the elevated nature of his poetry. It is this independence, gained through ‘long study’ (*Inf.*, I. 83) and creative polysemic assimilation, which is acknowledged by Virgil – the greatest of the ancient poets mentioned in the *Commedia*. Such independence serves to distinguish Dante from all the poets of his own time.

In Dante’s view, as already mentioned, the new literary movement of the day – as represented, for example, by the Paduan initiative⁴⁰ – consisted of nothing more than a sterile reproduction of old forms or models. By contrast, Dante’s effort to gain knowledge of, and appropriate, the classics, particularly Virgil, led him to a form of authorial reinvention which can be seen in the *Commedia*. In his eyes, his own difference from the modern cultural project then developing could not be greater: while Del Virgilio is trying to come closer to the neo-Latinists, Dante is moving in the opposite direction. Del Virgilio then joins the lyric game with a bucolic answer containing his proposal for Dante’s coronation. However, this still shows his lack of understanding. In his poem he makes a repeated call to Tityrus/Dante to come and visit Mopsus: “Hither | come!” (68–9, 73),⁴¹ and issues a threat to turn to Mussato, explicitly opposing the latter to Dante.

Faced with Tityrus/Dante's refusal, Mopsus/Giovanni will now turn to the Paduan, metaphorically represented by 'Phrygian | Muso' (91–2),⁴² in order to quench his thirst.

Del Virgilio and Dante thus seem engaged in a real *querelle des anciens et des modernes ante litteram*, at least a century before the dispute between the rigorous humanists and the defenders of the vernacular.⁴³ Yet this anachronistic comparison is misleading, in the sense that both parties to the *Eclogues* are convinced that they are the true representatives of modernity. This is certainly true in Dante's case – not only as regards the astonishing inventiveness of his *Commedia*, but also, less consciously, for his scrupulous revival of the bucolic genre, a real 'classical innovation' of the Middle Ages.⁴⁴ His insistent claim for the *Commedia*'s originality in terms of language and ethical underpinning does not prevent him from also bringing a breath of fresh air to literature in Latin, with his return to the bucolic genre.⁴⁵ Undoubtedly, Dante was also conscious of the stylistic originality of his reply to Del Virgilio; equally undoubtedly, he shapes it so as to defend his own poetic contribution in the vernacular. As for Del Virgilio, he is so immersed in the new, 'neo-Latin' offerings that he considers them the *spiritus novus* of his time.

The *Eclogues*'s political dimension: past echoes and contemporary concerns

Believing his first answer had already exhausted the topic, Dante does not respond to Del Virgilio's provocation. In the following epistle (*Ecl.* IV), which constitutes the final text in their correspondence, he changes register. Taking inspiration from Del Virgilio's verses,⁴⁶ he shifts the reasons for his refusal to the political situation – a matter already alluded to in his previous reply (*Ecl.* II).⁴⁷

In 1319, the year in which Del Virgilio most likely sent his first verse epistle (*Ecl.* I), Dante was 54 years old. He had abandoned the active political stage a few years before, following the last 'political' epistle he addressed to the Cardinals, who were meeting in conclave in Carpentras following Clement V's death on 20 April 1314. Dante seems to have found in Ravenna 'l'ultimo rifugio', a peaceful place of refuge conducive to his composition of the *Paradiso*.⁴⁸ Del Virgilio's invitation inspired in him a real *ars poetica in factis*, and gave him an opportunity to clarify his position in relation to the cultural context of the time. Moreover, the invitation incited him to look at the political situation once again. On the one hand, this modified his supposed lack of interest in politics during the

last years of his life. On the other, it brought back to him distant echoes of a past that had remained dormant without being completely forgotten.

In the first part of his exchange with Del Virgilio (that is, in *Egloga* II), the reference to the inhospitality of Guelf Bologna – expressed in classical terms by the absence of the divinity in the city (*Ecl.*, II. 41) – is in effect a clear allusion to the capital sentence hanging over the poet's head, and consequently to the danger that the place represented for him. That Bologna constituted a real danger for Dante, and that he perceived it as such, is clearly apparent in the allusion he makes to the local context in this first poetic reply. This can probably be explained by his personal and political situation. A few years before he had finally settled in peaceful Ravenna, finding calm there until the moment in 1319 when Del Virgilio's epistle suddenly reached him, powerfully stirring up the past. These two distinct moments,⁴⁹ the contemporary reality and the remembrance of the past, are highlighted by Mopsus/Del Virgilio himself – both when he reassures Tityrus/Dante concerning the potential dangers of Bologna⁵⁰ and when he mentions the probable reluctance of Iolaus/Guido da Polenta to allow the poet to leave Ravenna.⁵¹

Tityrus/Dante firmly shifts the conversation onto political matters. In his next verse letter he focuses on the figure of Polyphemus, putting his words into the mouth of his bucolic *alter ego*, Alpheisiboeus. Among the numerous conjectures made in the attempt to find a historical identification for the Cyclops, the most likely person would now appear to be Fulcieri da Calboli. He served as *capitano del popolo* in Bologna in the years 1299–1300 and then again from June to December 1321, and had already been appointed in March of that year.⁵² This identification seems plausible precisely because of the alarm it provoked in the mind of the exiled poet. In general the political climate in Bologna was dominated at the time by a rigorous Black Guelfism, no matter which specific individual was in charge. In consequence, the city would naturally have been hostile to a White exile.⁵³ More specifically, however, Fulcieri was a man with strong links to Florence; he had been *podestà* there in 1303, distinguishing himself for his Guelf intransigence and ruthlessness against the Whites. Consequently, Fulcieri must have crossed Dante's path, if only indirectly, during the first years of his exile.

In autumn 1302 the *Universitas partis Alborum* [Association of the Party of the Whites], together with the poet, left Arezzo to settle in Forlì. Here it was hosted by Scarpetta degli Ordelauffi, the city's Ghibelline lord. Scarpetta became *capitano* of the exiled Whites after the death of

Alessandro dei Guidi di Romena; he was also a political enemy of the Guelfs' De' Calboli, who had been exiled from Forlì in 1294. It was in Forlì that the expedition was organised against the castle of Pulicciano near Borgo San Lorenzo, possession of which meant control of the Mugello valley. Scarpetta led the White exiles, while the *podestà* Fulcieri headed the Florentines from 'within the city', the *intrinseci*.

Their conflict thus turned into a sort of civil war between the two most powerful families of Forlì.⁵⁴ The Florentines led by Fulcieri were the victors in March 1303, and Fulcieri's cruelty to the losers gained him a place in history.⁵⁵ This is precisely how Dante chose to present him in *Purg.*, XIV. 58–64, through Guido del Duca's discourse. Indeed, the reprisals against the Whites who had remained in Florence after the victory of the Mugello are described in this passage with such violence and darkness that they clash with the elegiac tone of the *Purgatorio*. Yet it is this very contrast that makes the comments ring true.⁵⁶

As with many episodes from this earlier period, these events must have marked the poet deeply. In 1321, after more than 15 years, he finds himself facing newly awakened memories of these months, probably channelled into the figure of the horrendous Polyphemus, devourer of Acis. In the depiction of the Dantean Cyclops, the *Egloghe's* editors identify the influence of two episodes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* involving Polyphemus as protagonist: the story of Acis and Galatea and the story of Achaemenides.⁵⁷ It might be useful to note here, as Gabriella Albanese has done, that linguistic clues also link Ovid's descriptions to the verses of *Purgatorio* dedicated to Fulcieri.⁵⁸ For instance, the image of the bodies of the Florentine Whites being sold alive to Forlì's *podestà* ('Vende la carne loro essendo viva', 61) seems to echo *Met.*, XIII. 865 and *Met.*, XIV. 192–6, 208–9,⁵⁹ yet one may also recognise in them *Aeneid*, III. 626–7.⁶⁰ Indeed, Fulcieri's entire description – which focuses on the loss of humanity that transforms him into an 'antica belva' [old cattle] (62), 'sanguinoso' [all bloodied] (64) and living in a 'trista selva' [wicked wood] (64) – goes beyond Ovid's descriptions. It rather recalls the savagery of Virgil's Cyclops, a creature more beast than man (*Aeneid*, III. 588–654).⁶¹ If Fulcieri is not presented as a cannibal in the *Commedia*, in contrast to the bucolic Polyphemus,⁶² he still appears as a bloodthirsty monster.

Although it is difficult objectively to establish a direct link between the purgatorial canto and *Egloga* IV, it is possible in the light of these comparisons to imagine, over and above the bucolic metaphor, that at the time of writing of the *Purgatorio* Dante had in mind Ovid and

Virgil's descriptions of Polyphemos and adapted them to describe Fulcieri. Years later, when he revived the bucolic genre with reference to the particular political situation of a Bologna dominated by the figure of the infamous Fulcieri, Dante remembered the character he had created in his vernacular poem; he thus gave birth to a new, revived Polyphemos.

From this perspective, I am convinced by Petoletti's hypothesis that 'l'idea di introdurre Polifemo possa avere contribuito a far spostare la scena bucolica in Sicilia' [the idea of introducing Polyphemos may have contributed to the relocation of the bucolic setting to Sicily].⁶³ Similarly it seems likely that Fulcieri's nomination as *capitano del popolo* in Bologna, precisely at the time of this correspondence, had rekindled Dante's already vivid memory of the man and his deeds. Though this gives shape to the successful composition of his bucolic verses, it might also have reinforced his refusal of Del Virgilio's proposal, inciting him to reaffirm his choice of the 'dewy fields of Pelorus' (i.e. Ravenna) as a *locus amoenus*. The literary distance Dante reaffirms at the beginning of the correspondence concerning the linguistic, poetic and ethical conception of the *Commedia* finds itself transferred and confirmed, this time in relation to the political sphere.

This is also seen in his second answer, which, thematically, follows the order of the historical events of the exchange. Precisely because he wanted to highlight his distance from contemporary political affairs, Dante uses the bucolic fiction he had initially introduced for purely poetic reasons and imbues it with a different meaning, relocating his fiction to Sicily. This new background gives him the opportunity to introduce the dark figure of Polyphemos, in order once more to reaffirm his detachment from the struggles taking place between the factions. It is also significant that, at the very same period, Dante was composing the triptych involving Cacciaguida (*Paradiso* XV–XVII). Here his posture of disdainful isolation is well summed up in the famous expression 'averti fatta parte per te stesso' [become a party unto yourself] (*Par.*, XVII. 69), clearly underlining Dante's own convictions.

However, apart from considerations related to danger and personal safety involved in the never-ending fight between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines – and in spite of Dante's detachment from their struggles – what clearly emerges from his bucolic verses is a fundamentally ethical distance from political involvements. To Dante these are now things of the past; an aspect to which he might also be alluding in the bucolic verses with his reference to Tityrus's great age. From now

on Dante will limit his global ethical and political thought to his all-embracing epic poem, far from any passing ‘city lay’ (“civile [...] carmen”, *Ecl.*, III. 27–8).

His position here is closely linked to his poetics and explains, at least in part, his silent refusal to become involved in the composition of a poem on a contemporary historical subject, especially any of those suggested by Del Virgilio. In fact, of the four topics suggested,⁶⁴ two (Henry VII’s deeds and the conflicts between the Paduans and Cangrande) had already been dealt with by Mussato,⁶⁵ creating another situation of comparison between the Paduan poet laureate and the Florentine Dante. The bucolic fiction thus becomes for Dante an ideal setting in which he can reassert his own ethical position, in terms of both poetics and politics, as well as his own distance from a world that seems to him ever more remote, at a time when he is increasingly focused on reaching the ‘città celeste’ [heavenly city].

Notes

1. On the dating of this correspondence, see Dante Alighieri, *Epistole, Ecloghe, Questio de situ et forma aque et terre*, ed. Manlio Pastore Stocchi (Rome–Padua: Antenore, 2012), 148. The editor sets the beginning of the exchange between the end of 1319 and the earlier part of 1320, and the rest of the correspondence through the rest of 1320; he suggests the last eclogue by Dante was written in 1321. Gabriella Albanese offers more precise dates, choosing the second half of 1319 for Del Virgilio’s first epistle and setting Dante’s answer, together with Del Virgilio’s following reply, in 1321: ‘Introduzione’, in *Egloghe*, ed. Gabriella Albanese, in Dante Alighieri, *Opere*, ed. Marco Santagata, 2 vols (Milan: Mondadori, 2011–14), II (2014), 1595–6. The latest editor of the *Eclogues*, Marco Petoletti, follows his two predecessors, suggesting late 1319 for the first letter from Giovanni del Virgilio and leaving open the date of Dante’s first answer, then dating the first *Eclogue* by Del Virgilio to spring–summer 1320 and the final, concluding answer from Dante to late spring 1321: ‘Nota introduttiva’, in *Egloge*, ed. Marco Petoletti, in Dante Alighieri, *Le opere. V. Epistole, Egloge, Questio de aqua et terra*, ed. Marco Baglio, Luca Azzetta, Marco Petoletti and Michele Rinaldi (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2016), 493–500. From now on I shall indicate these texts as *Ecl.* and follow the traditional numbering. Marco Santagata agrees with a chronology occurring between the end of 1319 and the beginning of 1320: *Dante. Il romanzo della sua vita* (Milan: Mondadori, 2012), 301.
2. Dante’s movements between Verona, Mantua and Ravenna during this last period of his life remain obscure; the period between 1318 and 1320, when the poet settled in Ravenna, then governed by Guido Novello, remains particularly problematic. See Eugenio Chiarini and Pier Vincenzo Mengaldo, ‘Ravenna’, in *Enciclopedia Dantesca (ED)*, ed. Umberto Bosco, 6 vols (Rome: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana, 1984 [1st edn 1970–8]), IV, 857–66; Giuseppe Billanovich, ‘Tra Dante e Petrarca’, *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica* 8 (1965): 1–44; Giuseppe Indizio, ‘Le tappe venete dell’esilio di Dante’, in Giuseppe Indizio, *Problemi di biografia dantesca* (Ravenna: Longo, 2013), 93–114, esp. 108–13. Santagata believes Dante arrived in Verona around the middle of 1316, and left around the middle of 1318 or in 1319: Santagata, *Dante*, 296, 300. Inglese is less definite about the chronology; however, he estimates that Dante arrived in Ravenna between 20 January 1320 and the summer of that year, when he received Del Virgilio’s epistle: Inglese, *Vita di Dante. Una biografia possibile* (Rome: Carocci, 2015), 139–42. Information on Giovanni del Virgilio

- is scarce: see Guido Martellotti, 'Giovanni del Virgilio', in *ED*, III, 193–4; Emilio Pasquini, 'Giovanni del Virgilio', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 90 vols (Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1960–2017), 38 (1990), 404–9; Giuseppe Indizio, 'Giovanni del Virgilio maestro e dantista minore', in Indizio, *Problemi*, 449–69.
3. For the correspondence, preserved in nine manuscripts and in particular in Boccaccio's famous 'Zibaldone Laurenziano' (Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Florence, MS Pluteo XXIX 8), see Giuseppe Billanovich, 'Giovanni Del Virgilio, Pietro da Moglio, Francesco da Fiano', *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica* 6 (1963): 203–94; Guido Martellotti, 'Egloghe', in *ED*, II, 644–6; Luciano Gargan, 'Dante e Giovanni del Virgilio: le Egloghe', in Luciano Gargan, *Dante, la sua biblioteca e lo studio di Bologna* (Rome-Padua: Antenore, 2014), 112–41; Giuliano Tanturli, 'La corrispondenza poetica di Giovanni del Virgilio e Dante fra storia della tradizione e critica del testo', *Studi Medievali* 52 (2010): 809–45; and Gabriella Albanese, 'Tradizione e ricezione del Dante bucolico nell'Umanesimo. Nuove acquisizioni sui manoscritti della corrispondenza poetica con Giovanni del Virgilio', *Nuova Rivista di Letteratura Italiana* 14 (2011): 9–80.
 4. For the theory of styles and the 'cosiddetto pre-umanesimo' [so-called pre-humanism] relative to this epistolary exchange, see Claudia Villa, 'Il problema dello stile umile e il sorriso di Dante', in Claudia Villa, *La protervia di Beatrice. Studi per la biblioteca di Dante* (Florence: SISMEG-Galluzzo, 2009), 215–32 (219).
 5. On poetic coronation in the *Commedia* as well as in Petrarch and Boccaccio, see Aldo Rossi, 'Dante, Boccaccio e la laurea poetica', *Paragone* n.s. 12 (1962): 3–41; Michelangelo Picone, 'L'amato alloro: Dante fra Petrarca e Boccaccio', in Michelangelo Picone, *Scritti danteschi*, ed. Antonio Lanza (Ravenna: Longo, 2017), 649–69; and Michelangelo Picone, 'Il tema dell'incoronazione poetica in Dante, Petrarca e Boccaccio', *L'Alighieri* 25 (2005): 5–26. On the theme of the coronation and its intricacies in *Paradiso* and in the *Eclogues*, with Mussato and his Paduan circle in the background, see Corrado Bologna, 'Dante e il latte delle Muse', in *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, ed. Sergio Luzzato and Gabriele Pedullà, 2 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), I, 145–55. For poetic coronations prior to Petrarch's, see Francesco Paolo Terlizzi, 'Le incoronazioni poetiche', in *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, I, 141–4. For an interesting, two-sided interpretation of Mussato's crowning as both poetic and imperial, see Gabriella Albanese, 'De gestis Henrici VII cesaris: Mussato, Dante e il mito dell'incoronazione poetica', in *Enrico VII, Dante e Pisa a 700 anni dalla morte dell'imperatore e dalla 'Monarchia' (1313–1323). Atti del convegno internazionale (Pisa-San Miniato, 24–26 ottobre 2013)*, ed. Giuseppe Petralia and Marco Santagata (Ravenna: Longo, 2016), 161–202 (193–202). More generally see Nadia Cannata and Maddalena Signorini, 'Per trionfare o Cesare o poeta. La corona d'alloro e le insegne del poeta moderno', in *Dai pochi ai molti. Studi in onore di Roberto Antonelli*, ed. Paolo Cannettieri and Arianna Punzi (Rome: Viella, 2014), 3–37 (10–18 on Dante).
 6. Bologna argues otherwise, 149.
 7. See *Ecl.*, I. 23–4, and *Ecloghe* (Petoletti), 493. Dante addressed his epic poem, and his works more generally, to a varied and disparate readership: for more detailed discussion of this point see Sabrina Ferrara, *La parola dell'esilio. Autore e lettori nell'opera di Dante dopo l'esilio* (Florence: Cesati, 2016).
 8. Marino Zabbia, 'Albertino Mussato', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 67 (2012), 520–4; Ronald G. Witt, 'Un poeta laureato: Albertino Mussato', in *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, I, 134–9; Ronald G. Witt, *The Two Latin Cultures and the Foundation of Renaissance Humanism in Medieval Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 463–5.
 9. To describe Dante's role as 'ethical' refers not only to the moral aspect of his poetry, but also to the complex system of conceptual stratification – juridical, theological, redemptive and so forth – that pervades it.
 10. Most famously, for instance, via Horace's *Ars poetica*.
 11. *Ecl.*, I. 15. I will not insist here on the association between vernacular writing and women readers evoked by Tityrus/Dante in the dialogue with Meliboeus in *Ecl.*, II. 52–4, as this would deserve more substantial development. The question has been partially treated by Luigi Spagnolo, 'La lingua delle muliercule: ideologia preumanistica e questioni di autenticità nel Dante latino', *La lingua italiana* 11 (2015): 37–65. However, the author considers the *Eclogues* a forgery by the Bolognese orator. For the English translations of the *Eclogues*, see *Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio*, trans. Philip H. Wicksteed and Edmund G. Gardner (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1970); the line numbers of the English translation are given in brackets

when, as in this case, they do not correspond to the Latin original. Translations are sometimes slightly modified for clarity.

12. The movement is defined as 'Paduan pre-humanism' by Guido Billanovich, 'Il preumanesimo padovano', in *Storia della cultura veneta*, II. *Il Trecento*, (Vicenza: Pozza, 1976), 19–110. However, I prefer to define this phenomenon, following Inglese, with the expression 'letteratura neo-latina' [neo-Latin literature] (Inglese, *Vita di Dante*, 141).
13. Del Virgilio himself recognises, at the beginning of his epistolary poem: 'Pyridum vox alma, novis qui cantibus orbem | mulces letifluum' (*Ecl.*, I. 1–2).
14. *Ecl.*, I. 50: 'Quos strepit arguto temerarius anser olori'.
15. *Ecl.*, I. 12–13: 'Que tamen in triviis nunquam digesta coaxat | comicomus nebulo, qui Flaccum pelleret orbe'.
16. *Ecl.*, I. 15: 'Carmine sed layco: clerus vulgaria tempnit'.
17. *Ecl.*, I. 17–19: 'Preterea nullus, quos inter es agmine sextus, | nec quem consequeris celo, sermone forensi | descripsit'.
18. *Ecl.*, I. 6–11: 'Tanta quid heu semper iactabis seria vulgo, | et nos pallentes nichil ex te vate legemus? | Ante quidem cythara pandum delphyna movebis, | Davus et ambigue Sphynigos problemata solvet, | Tartareum preceps quam gens ydiota figuret | et secreta poli vix experata Platoni' [6–12: Such weighty themes | why wilt thou still cast to the vulgar, while we pale | students shall read nought from thee as bard? Sooner | shalt thou stir the curving dolphin with the harp, and | Davus solve the riddles of equivocating Sphinx, than that | unlettered folk shall figure the precipice of Tartarus and | secrets of the pole scarce unsphered by Plato]; I. 21–2: 'Nec margaritas profliga prodigus apris, | nec preme Castalias indigna veste sorores' [24–5: Cast not in prodigality thy pearls before the swine, | nor load the Castalian sisters with a garb unworthy of them].
19. For the promised rewards: *Ecl.*, I. 23–4: 'At, precor, ore cie que te distinguere possint | carmine vatisono, sorti comunis utrique'; I. 33–4: 'Si te fama iuvat, parvo te limite septum | non contentus eris, nec vulgo iudice tolli'; I. 35–40: 'En ego iam primus, si dignum duxeris esse, | clericus Aonidum, vocalis verna Maronis, | promere gimnasiis te delectabor, ovantum | inclita Peneis redolentem tempora sertis, | ut prevectus equo sibi plaudit prece sonorus | festa trophea ducis populo pretendere leto'; and for further flattering comment, I. 45–6: 'Ni canis hec, alios ad te pendendo, poeta | omnibus ut solus dicas, indicta manebunt'.
20. If it is true, as Bellomo states, that Del Virgilio's verse epistle is the 'prima documentata reazione alla grande novità dantesca costituita dal poema' [the first documented reaction to the great novelty of the Dante's poem], his total incomprehension is no less obvious: see Saverio Bellomo, *Filologia e critica dantesca* (Brescia: La Scuola, 2008), 129.
21. Ronald G. Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients. The Origins of Humanism From Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 81–173, observes that Lovato and the circle of the Paduan 'humanists' do not seem to differentiate between epic and tragic genres (123–4). The most important historiographic work of the time, *De gestis Henrici VII cesaris* by Albertino Mussato, combines, at least in its second part, the tones of epic tragedy with objective historical observation. See Albanese, 'De gestis Henrici VII cesaris', 163, 192.
22. *Ecl.*, II. 52–4: "Comica nonne vides ipsum reprehendere verba, | tum quia femineo resonant ut trita labello, | tum quia Castalias pudet acceptare sorores?" Mopsus's disapproval seems to be an echo of Mussato's position on the tragic style, as the only one worthy of celebrating a noble subject: see *Ep. I, Ad collegium artistarum*, in Enzo Cecchini, 'Le epistole metriche del Mussato sulla poesia', in *Tradizione classica e letteratura umanistica per Alessandro Perosa*, ed. Roberto Cardini et al., 2 vols (Rome: Bulzoni, 1985), I, 95–119 (102–6).
23. *Ecl.*, II. 51: "Concedat Mopsus!".
24. *Cvo*, I. xiii. 12.
25. *DVE*, II. iv. 2.
26. *Ecl.*, II. 36–7: "O Melibee, decus vatum, quoque nomen in auras | fluxit, et insomnem vix Mopsus Musa peregit".
27. *Ecl.*, II. 28–30: "Montibus Aoniis Mopsus, Melibee, quot annis, | [...] | se dedit et sacri nemo-ris perpalluit umbra".
28. On learned pallor, commentators refer not only to *Purg.*, XXXI. 140–1, but also to 'nos pallentes' in *Ecl.*, I. 7, the term used by Del Virgilio to indicate the learned poets. See the notes to *Ecloghe* (Pastore Stocchi), 172; *Egloghe* (Albanese), 1623–32; *Egloge* (Petoletti), 550–1.
29. In *Par.*, XXV. 3, pallor is replaced by thinness.

30. *Ecl.* II. 29: “satagunt alii causarum iura doceri”.
31. *Cvo*, I. ix. 3: ‘non si deono chiamare litterati, però che non acquistano la lettera per lo suo uso, ma in quanto per quella guadagnano denari e dignitate’; I. ix. 2: ‘da ogni nobilitate d’animo li rimuove, la quale massimamente desidera questo cibo’.
32. *Cvo*, III. xi. 10: ‘li legisti, medici e quasi tutti religiosi, che non per sapere studiano ma per acquistare moneta o dignitate’.
33. See *Cvo* (Fioravanti), 467 and *La filosofia in Italia al tempo di Dante*, ed. Carla Casagrande and Gianfranco Fioravanti (Bologna: il Mulino, 2016), 11–122.
34. *Ecl.*, II. 37. Del Virgilio himself, in his reply, will assume the lonely position attributed to him by Dante (*Ecl.*, III. 6). Without participating in the controversy against those who pursue profitable activities, he mentions, however, those people who dedicate themselves to activities other than literature (*Ecl.*, III. 7). It is interesting to note that, instead of the ‘technical’ expression ‘causarum iura doceri’ [‘to master lore litigious,’ i.e., to focus on juristic learning] used in *Ecl.* II. 29 (“satagunt alii causarum iura doceri”), the Bolognese master chooses the neutral ‘causis adigentibus’ [summoned by their affairs] (*Ecl.*, III. 7: ‘Irruerant alii causis adigentibus urbem’), which semantically brings back the substantive ‘causa’ to its more general meaning.
35. See the famous verses in *Par.*, IX. 133–5, XI. 4–5, and XII. 82–4. Dante’s position will be taken up again, on a stronger polemical note, by Boccaccio and Petrarch. For instance, about 20 years later, Petrarch writes about Lovato in *Rerum memorandarum libri*, 61. 1: ‘Lovatus patavinus fuit nuper poetarum omnium “quos nostra” vel patrum nostrorum “vidit etas” facillime princeps, nisi iuris civilis studium amplexus et novem Musis duodecim tabulas immiscuisset et animum ab eliconiis curis ad forensem strepitum deflexisset’ [Lovato of Padua would obviously be the first of all the modern poets ‘living in our’ (that is, of our fathers) ‘times’, if he had not dedicated himself to the civil law, and if he had not mixed the nine muses with the twelve tables, and if he had not directed his attention away from the Heliconian arts to the noise of the courts]: see Francesco Petrarca, *Rerum memorandarum libri*, ed. Marco Petoletti (Florence: Le Lettere, 2014).
36. Dante was perfectly aware of this and, in his answer, felt the need to highlight, precisely, the implications that the ‘comica verba’ had at all stylistic levels (*Ecl.*, II. 52–4).
37. Del Virgilio is aware of the modernity of Dante’s poetry – after *Ecl.*, I. 1 (‘novis [...] cantibus’) he will call his verses “carmina [...] | nova”, in *Ecl.* III. 68–9 – which deserves full admiration. However, it seems that he considers only Dante’s Latin *oeuvre* worthy of being taught (“Parrasii iuvenesque senes, et carmina leti | qui nova mirari cupiantque antiqua doceri”). On this point see *Eclogue* (Pastore Stocchi), 192; *Egloghe* (Albanese), 1747–8; *Egloge* (Petoletti), 592.
38. *Ecl.*, II. 61: “Nulli iuncta gregi nullis assuetaque caulis”; but see also *Par.*, II. 1–18.
39. *Ecl.*, I. 17–19: ‘Preterea nullus, quos inter es agmine sextus, | nec quem consequeris celo, sermone forensi | descripsit’. From Del Virgilio’s point of view, excluding Dante from the category of learned poets is not without further autobiographical (and political) consequences. This is clear when he alludes to the poet’s exile not only from his city, but also from the community of true *letterati*. Consequently his inclusion would also correspond to his social reintegration: see Bologna, 148.
40. Dante might have formed this opinion by reading Mussato’s texts, of which he almost certainly knew the *Ecerinis*. See Paolo Baldan, ‘Dante, Mussato e il Colle di Romano’, in *Nuovi studi ezzeliniani*, ed. Giorgio Cracco (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1992), 575–88. Dante does not perceive the methodological innovations of the new humanist school: its critical approach to antiquity, its searches for classical texts in libraries, its attempt to reconstruct the Latin language philologically and its opening to cultural exchanges, which will all become the basis of the new humanist era. On Dante and Mussato, see Ezio Raimondi, ‘Dante e il modello ezzeliniano’, in *Dante e la cultura veneta. Atti del Convegno di studi organizzato dalla Fondazione Giorgio Cini, in collaborazione con l’Istituto universitario di Venezia, l’Università di Padova, il Centro scaligero di studi danteschi e i Comuni di Venezia, Padova, Verona (30 marzo–5 aprile 1966)*, ed. Vittore Branca and Giorgio Padoan (Florence: Olschki, 1966), 51–69; Giorgio Padoan, ‘Tra Dante e Mussato’, *Quaderni veneti* 24 (1996): 27–45.
41. *Ecl.*, III. 67, 72: “Huc ades”.
42. *Ecl.*, III. 88–9: “Frigio Musone”. Martellotti already found Del Virgilio’s assertion quite unexpected in a context of *captatio benevolentiae*: Guido Martellotti, ‘Mussato, Albertino’, in *ED*, III 1066–8.

43. Giacinto Margiotta, *Le Origini italiane de la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* (Rome: Editrice Studium, 1953); Vito R. Giustiniani, 'Gli umanisti e la querelle des anciens et des modernes', in *L'educazione e la formazione intellettuale nell'età dell'Umanesimo. Atti del II convegno internazionale, 1990*, ed. Luisa Rotondi Secchi Tarugi (Milan: Guerini, 1992), 63–71.
44. On the medieval tradition of the bucolic genre, see Francesco Macri-Leone, *La bucolica latina nella letteratura italiana del XIV secolo, con una introduzione sulla bucolica latina nel Medioevo* (Turin: Loescher, 1889), 5–42; Enrico Carrara, *La poesia pastorale* (Milan: Vallardi, 1906); Guido Martellotti, 'Dalla tenzone al carme bucolico', *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 7 (1964): 325–36; Guido Martellotti, 'La riscoperta dello stile bucolico (da Dante a Boccaccio)', in *Dante e la cultura veneta*, 335–46. On Virgil's reception in the Middle Ages, it is still useful to refer to the classic study by Domenico Comparetti, *Virgilio nel Medio Evo*, ed. Giorgio Pasquali (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1981; 1st edn, 1872).
45. The fact that Dante is very conscious of his own modernity already appears in *Purg.*, XXIV. 55–7, and *Purg.*, XXVI. 112–14. It is obvious that, for him, the concept of modernity itself is closely connected to vernacular poetry, and to the evolution of the poetry and art of his time (see *Purg.* XI), in direct contrast to the neo-Latin modernity represented by Del Virgilio and the Padua school. These brief observations are the fruit of stimulating exchanges with Johannes Bartuschat, whom I wish warmly to thank, during a conference that took place at the Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance de Tours, 20–22 June 2017, on *The Dynamics of the Relationship with the More Recent Past in Early Modern Europe: Between Rejection and Acknowledgement*, organised by Maria Clotilde Camboni and Chiara Lastraioli.
46. *Ecl.*, III. 72–6: "Huc ades, et nostros timeas neque, Tityre, saltus: | namque fidem celse concusso vertice pinus | glandifereque etiam quercusque arbusta dedere. | Non hic insidie, non hic iniuria, quantas | esse putas".
47. *Ecl.*, II. 41: "Sed timeam saltus et rura ignara deorum".
48. The expression derives from Corrado Ricci, *L'ultimo rifugio di Dante* (Milan: Hoepli, 1921; 1st edn 1891).
49. On political temporality in the *Egloghe*, see Sabrina Ferrara, 'Il senso del tempo nelle *Egloghe* di Dante', *Italianistica* 44.2 (2015): 199–218.
50. *Ecl.*, III. 72–6.
51. *Ecl.*, III. 80–3.
52. I will not repeat the debate here, but simply refer the reader to the analysis and bibliographies contained in the most recent editions: see *Eclogae* (Pastore Stocchi), 206–7; *Egloghe* (Albanese), 1775–8; *Egloghe* (Petoletti), 622–4. See also Gabriella Albanese and Paolo Pontari, 'Il notariato bolognese, le *Ecloghe* e il Polifemo dantesco. Nuove testimonianze manoscritte e una nuova lettura dell'ultima *Egloga*', *Studi danteschi* 81 (2016): 13–130; Margaret Worsham Musgrove, 'Cyclopean Latin: intertextual readings in Dante's *Eclogues* and Góngora's *Polifemo y Galatea*', *Classical and Modern Literature* 18.2 (1998): 125–36.
53. Martellotti offers a more global interpretation ('La riscoperta dello stile bucolico', 335–46); also *Eclogae* (Pastore Stocchi), 207.
54. Santagata, *Dante*, 151; Inglese, *Vita di Dante*, 72–4.
55. Dino Compagni, *Cronica*, ed. Davide Cappelletti (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 2000), II. 30; Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta (Parma: Guanda, 1990–1), VIII. 59.
56. Guido Mazzoni, 'Dante e il Polifemo bolognese (*Eclogae*, II, 73 segg.)', in Guido Mazzoni, *Almae lucas malae cruces. Studi danteschi* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1941), 349–72.
57. Ovid, *Met.*, XIII. 738–897, and XIV. 154–222: see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, II. Books IX–XV, English translation Frank J. Miller (Cambridge, MA–London: Harvard University Press, 1958). In the second episode Polyphemus is presented as the monster who eats Ulysses's companions alive after having been blinded. As for Acis, Ovid writes that he is killed by a rock thrown by the Cyclops.
58. See *Egloghe* (Albanese), 1776.
59. The Ovidian references run as follows: "Viscera viva traham" ['I'll tear his vitals out alive']; "O si quis referat mihi casus Ulixem | aut aliquem e sociis, in quem mea saeviat ira, | viscera cuius edam, cuius vivientia dextra | membra mea laniem, cuius mihi sanguis inundet | guttur et elisi trepidant sub dentibus artus" ['O that some chance would but bring Ulysses back to me, or some one of his friends, against whom my rage might vent itself, whose vitals I might devour, whose living body I might tear asunder with my hands, whose gore might flood my throat and whose mangled limbs might quiver between my teeth']; "Visceraque et carnes cumque albis

- ossa medullis | *semianimesque* artus avidam condebat in alvum” [‘he filled his greedy maw with their vitals and their flesh, their bones full of white marrow and their limbs still warm with life’].
60. Virgil, *Eclogues. Georgics. Aeneid, Books 1–6*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge, MA–London: Harvard University Press, 1999): “Vidi atro cum membra fluentia tabo | manderet, et tepidi tremerent sub dentibus artus” [‘I watched while he devoured their limbs, all dripping with black blood-clots, and the warm joints quivered beneath his teeth’].
 61. Translations of *Purg.* XIV from Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, ed. Allen Mandelbaum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).
 62. *Ecl.*, IV. 76–7: “Quis Poliphemon” ait “non horreat” Alpheus | “assuetum rictus humano sanguine tingui”.
 63. *Ecloghe* (Petoletti), 624. See also Lino Pertile, ‘Le Egloghe di Dante e l’antro di Polifemo’, in *Dante the Lyric and Ethical Poet. Dante lirico e etico*, ed. Zygmunt G. Barański and Martin McLaughlin (London: Legenda, 2010), 153–67 (157–64).
 64. *Ecl.*, I. 26: ‘Iovis armiger’ (Henry VII’s military intervention); I. 27: ‘Que lilia fregit arator’ (victory of Ugucione della Faggiuola over the Guelphs at Montecatini); I. 28: ‘Dente molosso’ (Paduan defeat by Cangrande della Scala); I. 29: ‘Ligurum montes et classes Parthenopeas’ (Robert of Anjou’s siege of Genoa, held by Marco Visconti’s Ghibellines).
 65. Respectively in *De gestis Henrici VII cesaris* and, implicitly, in the *Ecerinis*.