The Dialogue between Dante and Cino da Pistoia: Friendship, Exile, Love

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I examine the dialogue between Dante and his friend, the poet and jurist Cino da Pistoia. The relationship between them can be reassessed around the corpus of texts they exchange with each other. I demonstrate that, although the exchange of texts ends at a certain point in their relationship, the dialogue continues on an intertextual level. The themes involved in the dialogue are multiple, but I identify friendship, exile, and love as the most central. The aim of this thesis is to provide a comprehensive and detailed discussion of the main phases the dialogue is composed of, by focusing on the ways in which the relationship between Dante and Cino takes shape over the years and in relation to their biographic and poetic development, and how and to what extent there is a mutual influence in their relationship and an outcome in their poetic evolution. This work not only sheds light on the relationship between Dante and Cino, but it also offers a new perspective on the interpretation of the *Commedia*, read through the lens of the previous exchange between the poets. I argue that some important ideas in the *Commedia* have already been worked out in the relationship, and thus this relationship is very important in helping Dante to reach some of the positions claimed in the poem. In order to do this, I examine the main phases of the dialogue, by combining close reading to the analysis of the historical, cultural, and so the dialogue, which is still ongoing, has an important role in the understanding of the entire relationship and, furthermore, of the *Commedia*.

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LIST OF EDITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Dante's works are cited from the following editions:

Chiavacci Leonardi A. M. (ed.). 2016. *Commedia*. *Inferno* (Milan: Mondadori)

Chiavacci Leonardi A. M. (ed.). 2016. *Commedia*. *Paradiso* (Milan: Mondadori)

Chiavacci Leonardi A. M. (ed.). 2016. *Commedia*. *Purgatorio* (Milan: Mondadori)

Giunta C., Gorni G., Tavoni M. (eds). 2011. *Opere, I. Rime, Vita nova, De vulgari eloquentia* (Milan: Mondadori)

Fioravanti G. and others (eds). 2014. *Opere*, *II. Convivio, Monarchia, Epistole, Egloghe* (Milan: Mondadori)

Cino's works are cited from the following edition:

Marti M. (ed.). 1969. 'Rime', in *Poeti del dolce stil nuovo* (Florence: Le Monnier), pp. 423-923

The Bible is quoted in Latin from the Vulgate, ed. Vulgata Clementina: <http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/00_10_10-_Vulgata_Clementina.html>; <http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/00_20_05-_Novum_Testamentum.html>

The following abbreviations are used for frequently cited texts:

Dve   Dante, *De vulgari eloquentia*

Inf.   Dante, *Inferno*

Par.   Dante, *Paradiso*

Purg.   Dante, *Purgatorio*

Vn   Dante, *Vita nova*

1. Context and background: intertwined trajectories

During a period datable between the 1290s and the early 1300s, Dante Alighieri composed the following sonnet:

I' ho veduto già senza radice
legno ch'è per omor tanto gagliardo,
che que' che vide nel fiume lombardo
cader suo figlio, fronde fuor n'elice;

ma frutto no, però che 'l contradice
natura, ch'al difetto fa riguardo,
perché conosce che saria bugiardo
sapor non fatto da vera notrice.

Giovane donna a cotal guisa verde
talor per gli occhi sì a dentro è gita
che tardi poi è stata la partita.

Periglio è grande in donna sì vestita:
però l'affronto de la gente verde
parmi che la tua caccia non seguer dé.
(CXXVII *a*, 1-14)

This sonnet belongs to the earliest phase of Dante's intellectual and poetic relationship with his contemporary, Guittoncino di ser Francesco dei Sigibuldi, better known as Cino da Pistoia (1265 or 1270–1336). This is situated at the beginning of an intellectual and poetic friendship that would evolve over the years, shaping the works of both poets.[1]

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[1] All of quotations from and references to the exchange of texts between Dante and Cino da Pistoia are taken from the following edition: Da Pistoia, Cino, Marti M. (ed.). 1969. 'Rime', in *Poeti del dolce stil nuovo* (Florence: Le Monnier), pp. 423-923. Furthermore, for the study and investigation of the exchange of texts between Dante and Cino, I consulted the following editions and comments: Da Pistoia, Cino, Zaccagnini G. (ed.). 1925. *Le Rime di Cino da Pistoia* (Geneva: Olschki); Cino da Pistoia: Di Benedetto L. F. (ed.). 1939. 'Rime di Cino da Pistoia', in *Rimatori del Dolce Stil Novo* (Bari: Laterza), pp. 113-237; Alighieri, Dante, Contini G. (ed.). 1946. *Rime* (Turin: Einaudi); Alighieri, Dante, Barbi M., Maggini F. (eds). 1956. *Rime della 'Vita Nuova' e della giovinezza* (Florence: Le Monnier); Alighieri, Dante, Barbi M., Pernicone V. (eds). 1969. *Rime della maturità e dell'esilio* (Florence: Le Monnier); Alighieri, Dante, De Robertis D. (ed.). 2005. *Rime* (Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo); Da Pistoia, Cino, Berisso M. (ed.). 2006. 'Cino da Pistoia', in *Poesie dello stilnovo* (Milan:

Dante and Cino inhabited the same cultural and historical context: late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Tuscany, where both were prominent figures. Dante is primarily celebrated for his literary and poetic achievements, particularly in lyric poetry, and as a leading exponent of what would later be known as the 'stil novo' movement, culminating in his *Vita nova*. He also gained recognition for his philosophical perspectives, as evident in his unfinished treatise, the *Convivio*, and for his linguistic and literary inquiries in the *De vulgari eloquentia*. Additionally, Dante was actively involved in the political sphere of Florence, aligning himself with the White Guelphs, the faction opposed to Papal influence in the city. He held various public offices, including that of prior (a high-ranking government official), and participated in diplomatic missions.

Cino, on the other hand, was esteemed primarily for his poetic talent. Dante himself acknowledges Cino's excellence in amorous lyric poetry in the *De vulgari eloquentia*. However, Cino was also distinguished by his career as a jurist, lawyer, and professor of law. His *Lectura in codicem* (1312–1314), a commentary on the first nine books of Justinian's *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, was a significant contribution to the study of Roman law. Beyond poetry, another major point of connection between Dante and Cino was their political engagement. While they found themselves on opposing sides – Dante as a White Guelph and Cino as a Black Guelph, a faction more aligned with Papal authority – both experienced the turbulence, conflict, and political upheaval of the time. Ultimately, both were forced into exile.

The precise time and place of their first meeting remain uncertain, but similar historical details are not relevant in the context of this thesis. Indeed, my research focuses on the poetic exchange, which unfolds through a series of texts Dante and Cino composed in response to each other.[2] Love and the beloved woman, common traits among poets of the 'stil novo', are central and recurring themes in their poetic dialogue. While Cino dedicates much of his work to Selvaggia – who may either be a literary convention (*senhal*) or a historical figure, Selvaggia dei Vergiolesi – his

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Rizzoli), pp. 208-342; Alighieri, Dante, Barolini T., Gragnolati E. (eds). 2009. *Rime giovanili e della 'Vita Nuova'* (Milan: BUR Rizzoli); Da Pistoia, Cino, Pirovano D. (ed.). 2012. 'Cino da Pistoia', in *Poeti del dolce stil novo* (Rome: Salerno), pp. 367-760; Alighieri, Dante, Grimaldi M. (ed.). 2015. *Le rime della 'Vita Nuova' e altre rime del tempo della 'Vita Nuova'* (Rome: Salerno); Alighieri, Dante, Giunta C. (ed.). 2018. *Rime* (Milan: Mondadori); Alighieri, Dante, Grimaldi M. (ed.). 2019. *Le rime della maturità e dell'esilio* (Rome: Salerno).

[2] I specify the reasons behind the selection of the texts examined in this thesis in section 4 of the introduction.

dialogue with Dante centres on Beatrice. Cino underscores Beatrice's centrality multiple times in his exchanges with Dante.

Dante's and Cino's lives followed parallel trajectories, both poetically and politically. Their exiles occurred in close succession: in 1302, when the Black Guelphs took control of Florence, Dante was exiled due to his political affiliations. The following year, in 1303, Cino was also forced to leave Pistoia due to political instability. It was during these years of civic exile that their poetic dialogue likely intensified.[3] Themes of distance, exclusion, and the impossibility of communication due to an inhospitable environment became prominent in their exchanges. However, in 1306, Cino's exile ended following a political shift in Pistoia, allowing him to return home. Dante, on the other hand, was never able to return to Florence.

Cino's friendship with Dante, in some ways, took the place of Dante's earlier relationship with Guido Cavalcanti (*c*. 1258-1300), as their philosophical and literary paths had begun to diverge.[4] It is plausible that Dante and Cino's bond strengthened during their respective exiles. Throughout their correspondence, they challenged each other's ideas, particularly concerning the ethical implications and poetic treatment of love. From the outset, a clear distinction can be observed between their perspectives on this theme, a divergence that became increasingly pronounced over time.

After 1306, Dante became increasingly preoccupied with what would become his magnum opus, the *Commedia*. Meanwhile, Cino continued to write poetry but primarily devoted himself to his legal career. Politically, Cino shifted his allegiance towards the Ghibelline faction, which supported the Holy Roman Empire in opposition to Papal authority. He saw the arrival of Emperor Henry VII as the pinnacle of his political aspirations, serving as an advisor to Ludovico of Savoy in Florence and working at the Roman tribunal. However, Henry VII's death in 1313 dashed these hopes, leading Cino to withdraw from politics and poetry. He obtained a doctorate in law in Bologna in 1314 and dedicated himself to legal scholarship and teaching, which ultimately brought him great renown. Cino's shift in political alignment may have contributed to the breakdown of his poetic dialogue with Dante, who no longer responded to him directly.

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[3] For the chronology of the exchange of texts I examine, refer to chapter 3 (section 3.1.2).
[4] For the relationship between Dante, Cino, and Cavalcanti, see chapter 3 (section 3.2.2).

Despite the cessation of their formal correspondence, I argue that echoes of their exchange and poetic friendship can still be traced in Dante's *Commedia*. This issue, which I explore in greater detail in chapter 4, is significant in understanding their intellectual relationship. Furthermore, following Dante's death, Cino composed a funeral *canzone*, *Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte*, as a tribute to his extraordinary friend. In this work, Cino recalls key moments of Dante's life, offering a final homage to their shared past. This *canzone*, I suggest, serves as the definitive closure of their dialogue. Though various complexities led to the end of their direct correspondence, Cino's final words to Dante reflect a profound sense of praise, admiration, gratitude, and affection – bringing a formal conclusion to their intellectual and poetic relationship.[5]

2. Summary

The relationship between Dante Alighieri and Cino da Pistoia represents an important and fundamental element to understand, in a comprehensive and broad way, crucial aspects of the poets' lives and poetics.[6] The relationship that binds Dante and Cino is

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[5] For an extensive treatment of Dante's life, see, among others: Santagata, Marco. 2012. *Dante. Il romanzo della sua vita* (Milan: Mondadori); Inglese, Giorgio. 2015. *Vita di Dante. Una biografia possibile* (Rome: Carocci); Brilli, Elisa; Milani, Giuliano. 2021. *Vite nuove. Biografia e autobiografia di Dante* (Rome: Carocci); Pellegrini, Paolo. 2021. *Dante Alighieri. Una vita* (Turin: Einaudi). Regarding Cino's life, I highlight the following bibliography: Chiappelli, Luigi. 1881. *Vita e opere giuridiche di Cino da Pistoia con molti documenti inediti* (Pistoia: Tipografia Cino dei fratelli Bracali); Zaccagnini, Guido. 1918. *Cino da Pistoia. Studio biografico* (Pistoia: Libreria editrice D. Pagnini); Marti, Mario. 1970. 'Cino da Pistoia', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al.*, 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), II, pp. 6-9; Carrai, Stefano; Maffei, Paola. 2018. 'Cino da Pistoia', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 92 <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cino-sinibuldi_(Dizionario-Biografico)/>.

[6] For further knowledge on Cino's works and poetics, consider the following bibliography: Biscaro, Gerolamo. 1928. 'Cino da Pistoia e Dante', *Nuovi studi medievali*, I, pp. 492-499; Bertoni, Giulio. 1937. 'La poesia di Cino da Pistoia', *Bullettino storico pistoiese*, XXXIX/1-3, pp. 17-29; Barbi, Michele. 1941. 'Cino fu di parte "bianca"?', in *Problemi di critica dantesca, Seconda serie (1920-1937)*, ed. by Michele Barbi (Florence: Sansoni), pp. 421-434; De Robertis, Domenico. 1951. 'Cino e i poeti bolognesi', *Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana*, CXXVIII, pp. 273-312; Corti, Maria. 1952. 'Il linguaggio poetico di Cino da Pistoia', *Cultura neolatina*, XII, pp. 185-223; 1952. 'Cino da Pistoia e la crisi del linguaggio poetico', *Convivium*, I, pp. 1-35; 1952. 'Cino e Cavalcanti o le due rive della poesia', *Studi medievali*, XVIII, pp. 55-107; 1952. 'Il "caso" Frescobaldi (Per una storia della poesia di Cino da Pistoia)', *Studi Urbinati*, XXVI, pp. 31-63; Roncaglia, Aurelio. 1976. 'Cino tra Dante e Petrarca', in *Cino da Pistoia. Colloquio* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei), pp. 7-32; Maffei, Domenico. 1987. 'Il pensiero di Cino da Pistoia sulla donazione di Costantino: le sue fonti e il dissenso finale da Dante', in *Letture classensi. 16*, curated by Aldo Vallone (Ravenna: Longo), pp. 119-127; Keen, Catherine. 2000. 'Images of exile: distance and memory in the poetic of Cino da Pistoia', *Italian Studies*, LV, pp. 21-36; Gagliardi, Antonio. 2001. *Cino da Pistoia: le poetiche dell'anima* (Alessandria: Edizioni Dell'Orso); Marrani, Giuseppe. 2009. 'Cino da Pistoia: profilo di un lussurioso', *Per leggere*, IX/17, pp. 33-54; Berisso, Marco. 2016. 'Approssimazioni alla metrica di Cino da Pistoia (e a Cino prestilnovista)', in *Cino da Pistoia nella storia della poesia italiana*, ed. by Rossend Arqués Corominas and Silvia Tranfaglia (Florence: Cesati), pp. 15-26.

important to both of them, in terms of how they develop their own poetry and ideals through a dialogue that spans their lives. As I have already underscored, this is made possible by a correspondence of texts that they exchange over years. This literary space gives the two poets the chance to discuss several themes and topics, which represent *quaestiones* of primary importance in their works. As a matter of fact, Cino takes on the role of privileged interlocutor for Dante, because he is the addressee of multiple texts which allow us to define and elucidate the development of both authors on the topics they deal with. This exchange of texts can be considered the means by which ideas are discussed with a peer, who is a poet, but also a friend. Cino, indeed, acquires an authority not only from being a renowned poet of his time – as Dante himself asserts in the *De vulgari eloquentia* (*Dve* II vi 6) – but also because he is a publicly acknowledged lawyer and he is involved in political militancy.

The figure of Beatrice is central and pivotal from the beginning of the correspondence between Dante and Cino. It is no doubt that Cino is able, at a very early stage of Dante's poetic career, to deeply understand the cypher of Beatrice in Dante's life and works. By beginning this analysis with the *canzone Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*, that Cino writes for the death of Beatrice, we can identify the form that this relationship between the poets will take. Indeed, the theme of love is essential from the initial contact between Dante and Cino and takes on different connotations over the years. The perspective of the poets on some of the discussed topics will grow distant as time passes. However, they will continue to engage with each other's evolving ideas. Exile is another key theme in the dialogue between Dante and Cino – they share this condition simultaneously, until Cino's return to Pistoia. In these years they continue their poetic exchange with the *tenzone* and the theme of exile becomes an important topic in their discussion. The personal and poetic friendship which connects Dante and Cino constitutes the condition that enables their dialogue to happen. For this reason, understanding the nature of their friendship, by considering the historic context that Dante and Cino inhabit, is fundamental to fully comprehending the nature of their relationship, its deeper meaning and its outcomes.

The phases of this personal and poetic relationship are organised around a corpus of texts that the poets exchange and, more generally, around the interactions these poets have. Their poetic exchange represents a fruitful space for poets to confront and explore multiple topics and ideas – for instance, the loss of the beloved, grief, love,

and exile. Therefore, their interaction plays an important role in determining their development as poets and exploring this development provides an opportunity to analyse the shaping of their poetics in a multifaceted way. The high esteem for Cino is witnessed in Dante's description of him in the *De vulgari eloquentia*: Cino is depicted as a poet of exemplary skill and he is situated in a canon which has Dante at the top of the poetic tradition (*Dve* II vi 6).[7] But despite the development of their relationship, in literary and biographic terms, Dante does not make any direct reference to Cino in the *Commedia*. Indeed, the examination of these aspects leads us to address this discrepancy in the *Commedia*.

The dialogue between Dante and other contemporary poets is a widely studied topic, but the relationship between Dante and Cino, in particular, has only been explored episodically.[8] For Dante, dialoguing and making comparisons with poets contemporary to him is particularly significant in the *Commedia*; moreover, the passages of the poem that provide a retrospective gaze to his past works are numerous. The relationship between Dante and Cino may be considered within the dialogic or even dialectic tendency that Dante has over the span of his life and production, which begins in the late 1200s and reaches its peak with the *Commedia*.[9] Therefore, the dialogue that Dante has with Cino, one of his closest friends and fellow poets, is fruitful in understanding Dante's poetic identity. The *Purgatorio* is the cantica where this process takes place the most and allows Dante to conduct several metapoetic reflections. He traces his biographic and poetic identity, by comparing his own work with poets of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Given that Cino is considered one

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[7] The corpus of texts I analyse is composed of the consolatory *canzone* Cino writes for the death of Beatrice, the sonnets exchanged between the poets, the *Epistola* III, the passages of the *De vulgari eloquentia* where Cino is mentioned, and the *canzone* written by Cino for the death of Dante. I will explore them all in the related chapters of this thesis. The rationale for the exclusion of specific texts is outlined in section 4 ('Research questions, methodology, and critical terminology') of the current chapter.

[8] Mirko Tavoni directly acknowledges the lack of comprehensive work related to the relationship between Dante and Cino, with specific attention to Cino's 'absence' in the *Commedia*: 'E c'è l'assenza di Cino dalla *Commedia* (manca ancora in ogni caso una ricercar specifica sul punto, che vada oltre l'omissione del nome), dove pure sarebbe più che lecito aspettarsi qualcosa che dia ragione al posto che occupa nel *De vulgari eloquentia*'. Cfr. Tavoni, Mirko. 2017. 'L'esilio dantesco fra testi e documenti (sul "De vulgari eloquentia", Bologna e il "paradigma critico della contingenza")', *Medioevo Letterario d'Italia. Rivista internazionale di filologia, linguistica e letteratura*, 14, pp. 23-33 (p. 27).

[9] The dialogue between Dante and contemporary poets was useful to him in terms of building his poetic identity. This is evident especially in some passages of the *Purgatorio*, when he traces all of the phases of his previous poetic career by dialoguing with poets and poetic personalities contemporary to him. Among these we can identify the encounters with Casella (*Purgatorio* II), Sordello da Goito (*Purgatorio* VI-VIII), Forese Donati (*Purgatorio* XXIII-XXIV), Bonagiunta Orbicciani (*Purgatorio* XXIV) as well as Guido Guinizzelli and Arnaut Daniel (*Purgatorio* XXVI).

of the greatest proponents of the 'stil novo', Cino's absence in the *Commedia*, and specifically, this section within the *Purgatorio* in which Dante's major contemporary poetic personalities are referenced, is surprising and deserving of exploration.[10]

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the ways in which the relationship between the two friends, Dante and Cino, can be re-read in terms of their mutual influence on each other and, ultimately, to examine this influence's outcome in the *Commedia*; indeed, I primarily focus on the presence of the reminiscence of the exchange within Dante's poem. In this thesis I fill in a gap in scholarship by discussing the processes through which Dante's and Cino's poetry shaped and developed over the course of their dialogue, and exerted a reciprocal influence, exploring how the bond between the two poets had an influence on the composition of the *Commedia* and, finally, I demonstrate that a dialogue occurs even in the later stages of the poets' careers.

The dialogue between Dante and contemporary poets allows us to have a better understanding of the context in which Dante's work developed and was refined; therefore, it provides the opportunity to trace the evolution of Cino's thoughts and poetics, through this dialogue with his friend. One of the aims of my thesis is to offer both poets equal attention, by giving value not only to their individual works but to their relationship, especially by analysing it through the filter of their dialogue. Moreover, studying the works of the poet intentionally left unmentioned in Dante's masterpiece is an interesting and original way to provide a more complete perspective of Dante's *Commedia*.[11] The work is conducted by focusing on how Dante's works influenced Cino's works and vice versa – this provides a dual and mutually-informed view of the relationship between the poets.

The apparent exclusion of Cino in the *Commedia* is particularly hard to interpret. Although Cino is still alive, I do not find the assertion convincing that Dante does not mention Cino directly in the *Commedia* because of his desire for narrative realism. Indeed, Dante adopts different and effective narrative or technical devices in his poem

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[10] Cfr. *Dve*, I x 4: 'cinus Pistoriensis et amicus eius' [Cino da Pistoia and his friend]; I xiii 3; I xvii 3; II ii 9; II v 4; II vi 6.

[11] I address the issue of the lacuna, even if I employ it as a starting point for my analysis to identify, instead, a presence of the memory of the exchange with Cino in the *Commedia*. On the meaning, significance and function of absence (in terms of textual *lacunae*, narrative gaps, and stylistic vagueness) in literature, please see the following bibliography: Walsh, Timothy. 1998. *The Dark Matter of Words: Absence, Unknowing, and Emptiness in Literature* (Carbondale, IL: SIU Press); Gardini, Nicola. 2014. *Lacuna: saggio sul non detto* (Turin: Einaudi); for a work specifically on the 'poetics of unsaid' in Dante's *Commedia*, see Ellerbrock, Karl Philipp. 2021. *Die Poetik des Ungesagten in Dantes 'Commedia'* (München-Paderborn: Fink-Brill).

to mention or refer to people who are still alive. There are a number of examples which are evidence that if Dante needs to mention someone, he does it.[12] Therefore, it would be too simplistic to solve the problem of this lacuna by attributing it to such a banal reason.

3. Literature review

The dialogue between Dante and Cino is situated within and has been studied especially in the broader context of the relationship between Dante and his contemporaries. This topic is of importance, and it is structural to Dante's works; indeed, it involves a focus on the metapoetic and metaliterary outcomes of the role in the *Commedia* of poets contemporary to Dante. In this respect, two of the main contributors are Gianfranco Contini and Teodolinda Barolini, as far as tracing Dante's biographic and poetic identity is concerned, especially with reference to the most important poets of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[13] With specific regard to the relationship between Dante and Cino, critics have focused on either the single stages of the exchange of texts, on the end of the direct correspondence and, ultimately, on the absence of a direct reference to Cino in the *Commedia*. Therefore, one of the main reasons that sparked my interest in the topic analysed in this thesis, is this unexpected silence. But beyond this major 'problem', the relationship between Dante and Cino is particularly interesting, as it assumes unique features and characteristics, as I further elucidate in this work; for instance, the relationship between Cino and Dante provides insight into their poetic evolution, as it allows us to trace the points of development from the years of the *Vita nova* up to the latest stages of both poets' careers. Critical works on the relationship tend to be quite episodic or focused on particular moments of the exchange. Despite the fact that so far a comprehensive work that investigates all of the stages of this relationship does not exist, there are multiple critical contributions, which address some of the most important issues of the dialogue.

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[12] An example is the indirect reference to Guido Cavalcanti in *Inferno* X (vv. 58-63).

[13] Contini, Gianfranco. 1976. *Un'idea di Dante. Saggi danteschi* (Turin: Einaudi); Barolini, Teodolinda. 1984. *Dante's poets. Textuality and truth in the 'Comedy'* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press). For an examination of the Italian literary scene in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, see Bowe, David. 2020. *Poetry in dialogue in the Duecento and Dante* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). For an examination of Dante's relationship with the vernacular lyric tradition of his time, see Kay, Tristan. 2016. *Dante's Lyric Redemption. Eros, Salvation, Vernacular Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

The main questions that scholars outline are how to assess and define the stages of the exchange, the divergence of views which ends up with an end of the formal exchange, and how we may 'solve' the debated issue on Dante's choice to not mention Cino directly in the *Commedia*.[14] One of the most influential contributions to the apparent absence of Cino in the *Commedia* is Robert Hollander's *Dante and Cino da Pistoia*. In this essay, Hollander argues not only that Cino functions as a source for Dante's *Commedia*, but also, that Dante's initial thought was to mention Cino at the height of cantos XVII and XVIII of the *Paradiso*.[15] He begins his essay by addressing the well-known line from *Inferno* X (v. 63) that generated a lively debate among critics: 'forse cui Guido vostro ebbe a disdegno'. The intent of this digression is to point out that a useful hint to interpret this passage can be detected in a sonnet between Guido Cavalcanti and Cino, *Qua' son le cose vostre ch'io vi tolgo*, in which the poet defends himself from the accusation of being a poetic thief, 'ladro' (v. 2). We do not know if the sonnet is preceded or followed by another sonnet originally sent by Cavalcanti, but it is worth noting that the comparison or even the juxtaposition of Cino and Cavalcanti is key to the relationship between Cino and Dante. Hollander follows Gorni's argument, that assumes that Dante, in *Inferno* X, employs Cino's sonnet addressed to Cavalcanti as a matrix or reference to reinforce his discourse against

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[14] I present a selection of foundational works on the relationship between Dante and Cino, aside from those explicitly cited in the literature review. This selection represents key contributions to the topic. However, throughout the thesis, I reference additional significant sources to further deepen the understanding of this relationship: Pellegrini, Flaminio. 1898. 'A proposito d'una tenzone tra Dante e Cino da Pistoia', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, XXXI, pp. 311-319; De Robertis, Domenico. 1950. 'Cino e le "imitazioni" dalle rime di Dante', *Studi danteschi*, XXIX, pp. 103-177; Pézard, André. 1960. '"De passione in passionem"', *L'Alighieri. Rassegna dantesca*, I, pp. 14-26; Picone, Michelangelo. 2004. 'Dante e Cino: una lunga amicizia. Prima parte: i tempi della "Vita Nova"', *Dante. Rivista internazionale di studi su Dante Alighieri*, I, pp. 39-53; Marrani, Giuseppe. 2009. 'Ai margini della "Vita Nova": ancora per Cino "imitatore" di Dante', in *La lirica romanza del medioevo: storia, tradizioni, interpretazioni*, ed. by Furio Brugnolo and Francesca Gambino (Padua: Unipress), pp. 757-776; Pinto, Raffaele. 2009. 'La poetica dell'esilio e la tenzone con Cino', *Tenzone. Revista de la Asociación Complutense de Dantología*, X, pp. 41-73; Pasquini, Emilio. 2010. 'Appunti sul carteggio Dante-Cino', in *Le 'Rime' di Dante*, ed. by Claudia Berra and Paolo Borsa (Milan: Cisalpino - Istituto Editoriale Universitario), pp. 1-15; Livraghi, Leyla. 2012. 'Dante (e Cino) 1302-1306', *Tenzone. Revista de la Asociación Complutense de Dantología*, XII, pp. 55-98; Fenzi, Enrico. 2016. 'Intorno alla prima corrispondenza tra Cino e Dante: la canzone per la morte di Beatrice e i sonetti "Perch'io non truovo chi meco ragioni" e "Dante, i' non odo in qual albergo soni"', pp. 75-97; and Ferrara, Sabrina. 2016. '"Io mi credea del tutto esser partito": il distacco di Dante da Cino', pp. 99-111, both in *Cino da Pistoia nella storia della poesia italiana*.

[15] Hollander, Robert. 1992. 'Dante and Cino da Pistoia', in *Dante Studies with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, CX, pp. 201-231 (p. 217).

Cavalcanti.[16] Following this line, Dante also has in mind the 'ladro', from Cino's sonnet, that he eventually uses as a source to depict the scenes with Vanni Fucci, another Pistoian, in *Inferno* XXIV, 138 and XXV, 1 (p. 211). Moreover, he states that Dante may have had that sonnet in mind, 'as he defines the *dolce stil novo* in *Purgatorio* XXIV, 52-54. That passage seems specifically mindful of Cino's way of describing his authorial independence from Cavalcantian poetic models' (p. 212). Hollander's aim is to show that it is undeniable that a certain memory of Cino and some of his poems were in Dante's mind when he wrote the *Commedia* (p. 210).

According to this interpretation, Cino is marking a distance from a Cavalcantian position, by instead placing himself on Dante's side and point of view; furthermore, 'Cino may have seemed more of an ally than even he intended to be' since 'by the time he is writing the *Commedia*, [Dante] has a far higher definition of "Amore" than Cino ever divined', and, finally, that 'it is possible that he [Dante] contrived to think of both of them as once having practiced a similar kind of poetry of praise' (p. 212). Hollander states that Dante in his 'school' of poets does not include Cavalcanti, but he does include Cino, which would be included in the phrase 'le vostre penne' (v. 58) of *Purgatorio* XXIV (p. 213). Indeed, he believes that after the rejection of Cavalcanti, Cino is, for Dante, 'his only real poetic ally' (p. 214). In his essay, the scholar reports on the detailed and meticulous work executed by Marti, whose work is particularly useful in identifying those textual parallels between certain poems by Cino and the *Commedia*.[17] He points out the recurrences of these references in the passages mentioned; although the purely philological aspect is essential and serves as a useful and objective tool, awareness of these elements provides a foundation for further analysis. This analysis will explore not only textual correspondences but also, and more importantly, thematic and conceptual influences.

More than depicting the chronology of the relationship between Dante and Cino, Hollander makes a step forward and expresses a theory which speculates on a possible presence of Cino in the *Commedia*. He hypothesises that there was a projected space or role for Cino in Dante's poem. Hollander identifies a reference to the relationship among Guido Cavalcanti, Dante, and Cino in *Inferno* X ('forse cui Guido vostro ebbe a disdegno', v. 63) and he interprets the 'cui' as referring to Beatrice, the object of

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[16] Gorni, Guglielmo. 1981. *Il nodo della lingua e il verbo d'amore. Studi su Dante e altri duecentisti* (Florence: Olschki).
[17] Marti. 1969, pp. 423-923.

praise (p. 216). The scholar argues that Beatrice is the one who was initially destined to have a prophetic role in the *Paradiso*, instead of Cacciaguida, and her discourse would contain a reference to Cino's *consolatoria* written to Dante on the occasion of Beatrice's death. Indeed, Hollander finds a reference to this in *Paradiso* XVII-XVIII:

> As Dante nears the end of his time in the heaven of Mars, Beatrice calls on him to turn toward her and behold her joy in the love of God. The poet now, for the only time in the poem, refers to her [Beatrice] as 'il mio conforto' (XVIII, 8). Cino, in the *consolatoria*, had heard Amor calling out for *conforto* on Dante's behalf. It is possible that the moment is remembered here.[18]

In addition, the word 'artista' in *Paradiso* XVIII (v. 51) may recall Cino's sonnet to Guido Cavalcanti, *Qua' son le cose vostre ch'io vi tolgo*, in which Cino states 'io non sono artista' at line 9 (p. 218).[19] In conclusion, Hollander assumes that between 1313 and 1317 Dante's original plan to include Cino in the *Paradiso*, in the central cantos, fades away because of Cino's withdrawal from the imperial cause (p. 218). Dante and Cino's political thoughts diverged to the point that Dante was averse to Cino's position, as he was in consort with Florence, Dante's enemy.[20] In the end, he suggests that another passage of the *Commedia* which deserves scrutiny in regard to the relationship between Dante and Cino is the episode of Matelda and the figure of Justinian in Paradise.[21]

Even though Hollander's essay provides interesting insights into the dialogue between Dante and Cino, I believe that it employs a debatable and problematic

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[18] Hollander, p. 217.

[19] Cfr. *Par*. XVIII, 51: 'qual era tra i cantor del cielo artista'. For further investigation on the topic, see Arqués Corominas, Rossend. 2016. 'L'ignoranza dell'artista. "Qua' son le cose vostre ch'io vi tolgo" di Cino da Pistoia', in *Cino da Pistoia nella storia della poesia italiana*, pp. 233-245.

[20] Hollander, pp. 218-219: 'We can be almost certain that, by the time of Dante's death, Cino's juridical behavior would have astonished and annoyed his former friend. In 1320 he lent himself to the Curia's prosecution of Ghibellines in the Marches. A year earlier he had been party to a consilium of jurists, ecclesiastics, and laymen called by the Inquisitor of Florence in order to condemn a Franciscan friar as a heretic. As Biscaro suggests, such trust on the part of the Inquisitor at least implies that Cino had spent some time among Florentine jurists and ecclesiastics earlier than September of 1319, when the consilium took place. If such was the case, it is at least possible and more likely probable that Dante, assiduous follower of the news from his homeland, would have known as much. We can only imagine the strength of his feelings when he learned that his fellow exile, fellow supporter of Henry VII, fellow champion of the splendor of Beatrice, was now in Florence and in consort with the enemy'.

[21] Hollander, p. 219.

methodology. In fact, Hollander's approach, instead of focusing on how to interpret the absence of a direct reference to Cino in the *Commedia*, is to speculate on the possible passages where Dante may have considered making a direct reference to Cino. In truth, even if it is possible to make hypotheses on this kind of lacuna, we must start the analysis from the actual text, and so from Dante's choice. I argue that one cannot fill in lacunas which are meant to be, instead one must respect them; therefore, I do not think that this is the most advantageous way to look at the relationship between Dante and Cino in the *Commedia*. On the contrary, even if Hollander's work serves as an innovative starting point for this type of discussion, my aim is to underline and analyse how Dante's relationship with Cino is still playing out in the *Commedia*, and that we have to talk about an ongoing influence, despite the fact that Cino is not directly mentioned or addressed in the *Commedia* by Dante.

Another strand of contributions concerns the idea that after the end of the formal exchange of texts, we may refer to this stage as marked by a final and *tout court* interruption of the dialogue. For instance, Sebastiano Italia defines 'interrotto' the dialogue between Dante and Cino. The methodology employed by Italia rests on assumptions that I take into account in my work, but that I look at from a different perspective: in fact, I argue that we can identify a continuation of the dialogue between Dante and Cino, specifically by looking at the *Commedia* and of Cino's *consolatoria* for the death of Dante. Italia, following Hollander, remarks on the importance of Cino's sonnet to Cavalcanti, *Qua' son le cose vostre ch'io vi tolgo*, as a key element to understand the role Dante gives to Cino in the *Commedia*. In the sonnet, Cino opposes Cavalcanti's accusation of the 'leggiadria' of his poetry.[22] As Hollander already stated, Italia believes that Dante refers to that confrontation between Cino and Guido when, in *Inferno* X, he depicts the scene with Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti, Guido's father. Indeed, there is a series of lexical references to Cino's sonnet, such as 'ingegno', 'disdegno', while 'leggiadre' appears in *Purgatorio* XXVI (v. 99). Therefore, according to Italia's argument, Guido's 'disdegno' was already anticipated by Cino and so, the 'altezza d'ingegno' (*Inf.* X, 59) that Dante attributes to himself, would recall the 'basso 'ngegno' (v. 12) of Cino's sonnet: 'È come se, a distanza di un

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[22] Italia, Sebastiano. 2018. 'Dante e Cino da Pistoia. Un dialogo interrotto?', in *La letteratura italiana e le arti*. Atti del XX Congresso dell'ADI - Associazione degli Italianisti, Napoli, 7-10 settembre 2016, ed. by Lorenzo Battistini, Vincenzo Caputo, Margherita De Blasi, Giuseppe Andrea Liberti, P. Palomba, V. Panarella, A. Stabile (Rome: ADI editore), pp. 1-7 (p. 3).

decennio circa, Dante stesse rendendo l'onore delle armi al suo sodale pistoiese, ingiustamente attaccato dall'oramai ex-amico Guido'.[23]

Again, Italia brings to attention *Inferno* XXIV-XXV and Vanni Fucci, as this episode may recall Cino's sonnet. According to this reading, Dante, by using Cino's lexicon to describe Vanni Fucci, is replying to Guido indirectly. In the end, in regard to the *Paradiso*, Italia suggests that the possible places where Dante thought to insert Cino consist of at least two references. On the one side, he follows Hollander's hypothesis, which is to have Cino in *Paradiso* XVIII, because for the first time in the *Commedia*, Dante calls his woman 'mio conforto' (v. 8), which may be a reference to Cino's *consolatoria*.[24] Secondly, the word 'artista' (*Par.* XVIII, 51) may be a reference to Cino's sonnet, that would have led to mentioning Cino in the *Paradiso*:

> Questa potrebbe essere una conferma ulteriore – è la tesi di Hollander – del fatto che Dante avesse in mente di collocare, in un probabile primo progetto del *Paradiso*, la figura di Cino, *poeta artifex*, sebbene ancora in vita, in una possibile corona di spiriti 'cantori' – ipotizzando così una sorta di canone poetico, al fine di poter condividere con lui in cielo quella corona poetica. Tuttavia, nell'economia finale della cantica – e dei rapporti tra i due sodali – qualcosa deve essere mutata al punto tale da spingere Dante a conferire questo ruolo al trisavolo, attribuendogli l'epiteto che avrebbe riservato per l'amico poeta: *artista*.[25]

Italia adds to this by looking at another point formulated by Domenico De Robertis and Furio Brugnolo, as they bring into focus *Purgatorio* XXVI.[26] According to this reading, a reference to Cino is hidden behind Arnaut's, who was identified as *cantor amoris* ('poet of love') in *langue d'oc*, as Cino was for vernacular Italian in Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia*.[27]

Brugnolo dwells upon a possible influence of Cino's work on Dante. He states that Dante, again, must have had Cino's *Qua' son le cose vostre ch'io vi tolgo* in mind

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[23] Italia. 2018, p. 4
[24] Italia. 2018, pp. 4-5.
[25] Italia. 2018, p. 6.
[26] Cfr. De Robertis. 1950; Brugnolo, Furio. 1993. 'Cino (e Onesto) dentro e fuori la "Commedia"', in *Omaggio a Gianfranco Folena* (Padua: Editoriale Programma), I, pp. 369-386.
[27] Italia. 2018, p. 7.

when he writes *Inferno* X (vv. 58-63), as well as the episode of Vanni Fucci in *Inferno* XXV; in *Purgatorio* XXIV (vv. 52-54) there could also be a reference to Cino's *Merzé di quel signor ch'è dentro a meve*.[28] Additionally, there may be a parallelism in terms of rhymes and a reference to Cino's *consolatoria* in *Inferno* V, as well as in other passages of the *cantica*. The scholar lists the most significant occurrences in which he detects a verbal agreement between Cino's poetry and the *Commedia*.[29] The question at the centre of Brugnolo's article is in which direction does the influence go, since the chronology of the sonnets that he analyses is not certain and as many parallelism detected in the *Inferno* are predominantly in cantos II and V.[30] Brugnolo affirms that:

> giacché se è vero che quei canti (i famosi primi sette canti, su cui tanto s'è scritto!) esercitarono subito, al loro apparire, una indiscutibile forza d'attrazione sui rimatori (e non solo sui rimatori) contemporanei, è anche vero che il loro linguaggio denuncia ancora una notevole dipendenza (in genere funzionalmente legata – e ciò vale in particolare proprio per i canti II e V, quello di Beatrice e quello di Francesca – a precise esigenze espressive di Dante) da moduli e stilemi della lirica cortese, stilnovista o meno; e basterebbero le filigrane cavalcantiane o guittoniane a confermarlo.[31]

Regarding *Purgatorio* XXIV, Brugnolo believes that Dante translated in Provençal a line from Cino, from *Se voi udiste la voce dolente* to perform a specific and dense allusive function. A reference to Cino would not be casual, especially at this moment in the *Purgatorio*, for its highly dense in terms of intertextuality. Brugnolo, in line with Aurelio Roncaglia, assumes that the place where Arnaut Daniel is mentioned would be the only one suitable to evoke the presence of Cino ambiguously, as both of them were mentioned in the *De vulgari eloquentia* as *cantores amoris*.[32]

Another direction is taken by Corrado Calenda, who claims that the attempts made so far are a partial answer to the question, because instead, Cino's absence is

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[28] Brugnolo. 1993, pp 374-375.
[29] Brugnolo. 1993, pp. 376-378.
[30] Brugnolo. 1993, p. 379.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Brugnolo. 1993, pp. 380-381.

necessary.[33] Calenda supports Brugnolo's thesis and indicates that in the *Commedia*, Dante is following what he did in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, thus considering Cino as the best poet on *venus* in vernacular Italian.[34] Following Enrico Fenzi's theory, Calenda states that the reason why Cino is not directly mentioned in the *Commedia* is that he is the only 'stil novo' poet still alive when Dante is writing, especially the cantos of the *Purgatorio* when Dante addresses poetic matters. Indeed, Cino would be implicitly included in canto XXVI, bus ascribed within the limit of dead poets and the 'rime d'amor usar dolci e leggiadre' (v. 99).[35] According to Calenda, after the sonnet *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, the distance between Dante and Cino ends their poetic friendship about love poetry. This allows us, continues Calenda, to read *Purgatorio* XXIV and XXVI in light of the end of this poetic friendship. In the end, once again, the centrality of the figure of Arnaut Daniel to understand Cino's position is taken into consideration.[36]

My thesis addresses the main questions of the ongoing debate. Building on these critical contributions, I offer an innovative and comprehensive analysis of the entire dialogue between Dante and Cino. This analysis includes assessing the formal end of the exchange in light of further developments of the poets' relationship. I address the issue of Cino's absence in the *Commedia* by focusing on the reminiscence of his dialogue with Dante. Finally, I prove that the true completion of their dialogue, which continues intertextually, is found in the *canzone* Cino writes for Dante's death.

4. Research questions, methodology, and critical terminology

The scholarship on the broader topic of the dialogue between Dante and contemporary poets and about the specific relationship between Dante and Cino, allows me to identify some research questions which are particularly advantageous in leading to a more comprehensive and complete approach to understanding this relationship. The main research questions are: in what ways does the relationship between Dante and Cino take shape over the years and in relation to their biographic and poetic development? How and to what extent is there a mutual influence in their relationship

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[33] Calenda, Corrado. 2020. 'Dante e Cino nella "Commedia": la fine di un'amicizia o la fine della poesia?', in *'E subito riprende / il viaggio'. Per Antonio Saccone*, ed. by Silvia Acocella, Francesco de Cristoforo, Virginia Di Martino and Giovanni Maffei (Avellino: Sinestesie), pp. 25-34 (p. 27).
[34] Calenda. 2020, p. 29-30.
[35] Calenda. 2020, p. 30.
[36] Calenda. 2020, pp. 32-34.

and an outcome in their poetic development? How can we understand the reasons behind the end of the formal exchange and, specifically, how can we interpret Dante's decision not to mention Cino in the *Commedia*, despite the closeness and affinity of the poets? Ultimately, how may this relationship be expressed in the *Commedia*? Hitherto, these questions have not been answered in a way which takes into consideration all of the phases and aspects of the relationship between Dante and Cino in their entirety. Finding an answer to these questions is important to pursuing the aim of this thesis, that is to provide a deep and complete understanding of the broader dialogue between Dante and Cino. Some of the phases of the relationship between Dante and Cino have been studied, but as noted earlier, I find it necessary to investigate this relationship in a way which is both analytical, but which also provides a broader, comprehensive, and thorough account of the relationship in terms of cultural, intellectual, historical, and social background. To answer all of these questions, in terms of methodology, I start by identifying a corpus of texts to analyse, which constitutes the material through which the poetic dialogue between Dante and Cino takes place. Furthermore, I determine the major phases in which we can divide the key moments of the relationship between Dante and Cino, and which map onto the way they are writing in relation to each other.

There is still some uncertainty over the chronology and dating of some of the texts exchanged, especially related to the first texts of the *tenzone*, which could plausibly be dated before or during the exile. Due to these uncertainties, I decided not to identify the phases of the relationship by considering chronology exclusively. Therefore, as some of these issues are ambiguous and unresolved, I find it valuable and beneficial to focus on the ideologic and thematic dimension that emerges in the texts, and to the cultural world both poets are inhabiting in different stages of their lives and careers. However, references to chronology are necessary to the order of the texts exchanged, therefore, I refer to the dating suggested by Emilio Pasquini, which follows Contini's.[37]

Before delving into the main chapters of the thesis, I begin by introducing the historical and thematic context, and so aspects that give theoretical grounding, a backdrop necessary to set the dialogue between Dante and Cino in its historical and cultural framework. For these reasons, the first section of the thesis is composed of the

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[37] Pasquini. 2010, p. 2. Cfr. Contini. 1946, p. 137.

introduction and a chapter about friendship in the Italy in the late Middle Ages. Despite the fact that the methodological approach of my thesis is mainly philological and based on close reading, it is crucial to contextualise the texts and aspects that are touched upon and faced in the thesis, in order to analyse some of the main themes which constitute another focus of my research. Friendship is a concept that unifies all of the phases of their relationship in different ways, as such, it is a rich area which gives a sense of why it is important to examine the dialogue between the poets. It is not only a matter of poetic exchange; it contributes to giving insight into the nature of the bond between them and its significance to both poets and their contemporaries, by providing a wider and richer historical, social, and cultural background to the specific poetic exchange of Dante and Cino.

To highlight this concept in a theoretical and historical framework, I find it beneficial to draw on some of Bruno Latour's critical categories.[38] In particular, I refer to the passage in which vernacular poetry is defined as a way to enable poets to create a form of diplomacy in the Middle Ages, which allows them to recreate their lost community – especially as a consequence of political exile.[39] In this sense, the relationship between Dante and Cino can be read partly under these critical categories: this way of acting elucidates how the relationship between the poets is structured in time and in relation to the place they inhabit, and provides some of the reasons why they find it beneficial to have their dialogue, by recreating a poetic community, by counteracting the effects of exile.[40]

When we deal with dialogue in literary terms, as well as polyphony, a fundamental critical reference we cannot avoid mentioning is Mikhail Bakhtin.[41] He states that, in the context of the modern novel, texts are an expression of a continuous dialogue among different voices. Bakhtin also underlines how texts are characterised by discussions between opposed voices, and how this mode can emerge even in texts that are apparently monologic. The critical paradigm provided by Bakhtin directly relates

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[38] I refer here to Keen, Catherine. 2020. '"Extracomunitario"? Networks and Brunetto Latini', *Romanic Review*, 111 (1), pp. 48-65 (pp. 49-50), that has the main focus on Latour, Bruno. 2013. *An Inquiry into the Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
[39] Keen. 2020, pp 49-51.
[40] Keen. 2020, p. 52.
[41] I refer here to Bowe, pp. 10-13, which concentrates mainly on Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist, trans. by Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press) and Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1984. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. by Caryl Emerson, intro. by Wayne C. Booth (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

to the concept of recreating a network of voices within the text itself, and in relation to other texts. We can affirm that even in medieval lyric poetry, a plurality of voices is a present and characterising feature, as this process, as expressed by Bakhtin, also happens, for their intrinsic dialogic nature, in the poems ascribed to the genre of the *tenzone* in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Moreover, these premises allow for the creation of a space to form a community despite historical contingencies.

However, even though the categories employed by Bakhtin can provide an interesting and challenging additional tool for a comprehensive understanding of the dialogue between Dante and Cino, some clarifications are necessary. Indeed, Bakhtin defines and applies this critical framework to the study of modern European culture, with specific regard to the novel, which is situated in terms of chronology and genre very distant from the Italian lyric poetry of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This means that a reference to Bakhtinian categories must be made consciously, with an awareness of the limitations of this reading. In Bakhtin's work, the idea of dialogism implies continuity in the interaction among voices, while in medieval lyric poetry, there are stricter stylistic and formal conventions that structure communication, and they are not employed as freely as in the modern novel. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, lyric poetry had a formal and functional nature which is very different from that of the modern novel. The idea of dialogue between heterogeneous parties might not be suitable for medieval lyric poetry. Bakhtinian categories identify polyphony as an intrinsic characteristic of the novel, in the sense that there is a complexity of voices, while in medieval lyric poetry, a concept of polyphony can be applied but must be understood differently. Indeed, it can signify the presence of more than one voice, but these voices are much less free to unfold in comparison to those in the novel. Lastly, in Bakhtin's framework, every voice has the same value and equal importance, whereas in medieval lyric poetry, a replying voice is usually absent or implicit.

Thus, in this regard, I turn to Claudio Giunta's study to apply the concept of dialogism and polyphony in a manner that is both comprehensive and contextually appropriate to Dante's and Cino's cultural and literary setting. From the 'stil novo' onwards, dialogue is intrinsically tied to a deep act of introspection and reflection on the interiority of the self.[42] This type of communication involves an interaction

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[42] Giunta, Claudio. 2021. 'Dialogo', in *La lirica italiana. Un lessico fondamentale (secoli XIII-XIV)*, ed. by Lorenzo Geri, Marco Grimaldi and Nicolò Maldina (Rome: Carocci), pp. 55-71 (p. 61).

between the lyric 'I' and their internal voices (such as feelings, abstract concepts, or personifications, and thus a hypostasis). In Dante's and his contemporaries' poetry, we can speak of a type of polyphony, in the sense that the lyric 'I' is now at the centre of a coral dimension and plurality of voices.[43] In conclusion, in this context, the dialogue becomes a means of dramatizing the poet's interiority and their emotional reflections, arising from a plurality of voices within the text.[44]

Further insight into the critical category of intertextuality is required, as it is an integral element of my research. The term 'intertextuality' was coined by Julia Kristeva. In her essay, *Word, Dialogue and Novel*, she acknowledges Bakhtin's work as

one of the first to replace the static hewing out of texts with a model where literary structure does not simply *exist* but is generated in relation to *another* structure. What allows a dynamic dimension to structuralism is his conception of 'literary word' as an *intersection of textual surfaces* rather than a *point* (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character) and the contemporary or earlier cultural context.[45]

By referring to Bakhtin, Kristeva underscores that texts are not isolated entities, but are interconnected with others, as each text is shaped by other texts, a phenomenon that generates new meanings arising from the original text. Indeed, she defines intertextuality as follows:

any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*.[46]

So, firstly, Kristeva claims that intertextuality is a concept that marks the relationship between texts, affirming that every text refers to or is shaped by other texts. However,

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[43] Giunta. 2021, pp. 62-64.
[44] Giunta. 2021, pp. 58-60.
[45] Kristeva, Julia. 1986. 'Word, Dialogue and Novel', in *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. by Toril Moi (New York: Columbia University Press), pp. 34-61 (pp. 35-36).
[46] Kristeva. 1986, p. 37.

the concept of intertextuality is not just a matter of tracking direct references or allusions; it consists in acknowledging how these relationships shape or have an impact on their meanings and on the broader cultural context in which the text is situated. Kristeva envisions two texts along which texts function:

> The word's status is thus defined *horizontally* (the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee) as well as *vertically* (the word in the text is oriented towards an anterior or synchronic literary corpus).[47]

This implies a sort of dialogic interaction between the texts. Indeed, intertextuality can be understood as a pre-existing dialogue embedded in a text. By following this critical interpretation, we can consider the texts involved as continuously interacting with the literary context in which they exist. This dialogic dynamic rooted in the concept implies that an active influence and dialogue between the texts is continuous and productive, as it generates new meanings. Having said that, while in my thesis I engage with the concept of intertextuality in the sense of identifying textual references and allusions, I also consider the texts as part of a broader dialogue with each other. This process fosters bringing texts to life, as it allows new meanings to emerge thanks to the dynamic interaction between authors, genres, and traditions.[48]

An additional clarification regarding terminology is necessary in relation to the concept of *tenzone*. *Tenzone* has two meanings in the context of medieval vernacular writing. On the one hand, it can refer to any kind of confrontational or dialogic

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[47] Ibid.

[48] In addition, for a broader account of intertextuality in literary theory, see: Bloom, Harold. 1973. *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press); Kristeva, Julia. 1984. *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. by Margaret Waller, intro. by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press); Polacco, Marina. 1998. *L'intertestualità* (Rome: Laterza); Allen, Graham. 2011. *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge). Some notable contributions on the application of intertextuality and reappropriations in Dante's works include: Pasquini, Emilio. 1993. *Intertestualità e intratestualità nella 'Commedia' dantesca. La tradizione del Novecento poetico* (Bologna: CUSL); Corti, Maria. 1995. 'Il binomio intertestualità e fonti: funzioni della storia nel sistema letterario', in *La scrittura e la storia. Problemi di storiografia letteraria*, ed. by Alberto Asor Rosa (Scandicci: La Nuova Italia), pp. 115-130; Brugnoli, Giorgio. 2001. 'Intertestualità dantesca', in *'Per correr miglior acque...'. Bilanci e prospettive degli studi danteschi alle soglie del nuovo millennio* (Rome: Salerno), 1, pp. 167-181; Barolini, Teodolinda. 2006. *Dante and the origins of Italian literary culture* (New York: Fordham University Press); Camilletti, Fabio; Gragnolati, Manuele; Lampart, Fabian. 2011. 'Metamorphosing Dante', in *Metamorphosing Dante: Appropriations, Manipulations, and Rewritings in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries*, ed. by Fabio Camilletti, Manuele Gragnolati and Fabian Lampart (Vienna-Berlin: Turia-Kant), pp. 9-18; Serianni, Luca. 2013. 'Echi danteschi nell'italiano letterario e non letterario', *Italica*, 90, 2, pp. 290-298.

conversation; on the other hand, it can specifically denote the exchange of texts in a direct correspondence between poets. The *tenzone* can be understood in its broader sense as a mode of argumentative writing, involving a conversation or dispute between two or more parties. In its second acceptation, the *tenzone* is a kind of acknowledged exchange, where a piece of poetry serves as a pretext for a reply. This can also be a form of dialogue that is not explicitly requested (*tenzone tacita*).[49] On that note, in my thesis, I employ the term in its broader sense, as a dialogue between parties. Among the exchanged texts there is, for instance, the *canzone Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*, which can be considered an example of 'tenzone virtuale',[50] as it is an unsolicited reply written by Cino to Dante, on the occasion of the death of Beatrice. Though, in my thesis, I make use of the term *tenzone* (singular) to refer to the group of texts that begins with Cino's first sonnet to Dante, *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, and ends with Cino's last sonnet to Dante, *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*.[51] I have chosen to employ this sense of the term because, even if the exchange between Dante and Cino unfolds over the years and is divided into more episodic moments, I consider this exchange as a unique act of conversation. Indeed, I interpret the end of the period of lyric exchange, which corresponds to the time when Dante begins writing the *Commedia*, as a moment when there is a transition from close dialogue to silent dialogue.

As I have already mentioned, after this first broader and grounding section, I analyse the main phases of which the relationship is composed, that are assessed around the texts I take into examination. The corpus that constitutes the exchange between Dante and Cino includes a series of texts that have been definitively identified as having certain authorship by Cino. Therefore, the criterion I employed for selecting these texts was based on the certainty with which they could be attributed to him. Below, I provide a detailed overview and explanation of the texts upon which I based my research and analysis. Among these, not only are the sonnets that form the *tenzone* between Dante and Cino included, but also Dante's third epistle, which accompanies the sonnet *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*. At both the beginning and the end of this exchange are two funeral *canzoni* written by Cino – the first was sent to Dante on the

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[49] Bowe, pp. 3-9.
[50] Picone, Michelangelo. 2003. 'I due Guidi: una tenzone virtuale', in *Percorsi della lirica duecentesca*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone (Florence: Cadmo), pp. 185-205 (pp. 186).
[51] These texts can be consulted in the appendix.

occasion of the death of Beatrice, and the second was dedicated to Dante after his own death. Moreover, I have chosen to include in the investigation another of Cino's sonnets, *Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia*, as it may be considered a complementary source for understanding the initial stage of the exchange between the poets.

The reason I focused my analysis exclusively on texts of certain attribution, and therefore I excluded those of uncertain authorship, is to provide a robust investigation of the topic, avoiding the uncertainties of attribution that might undermine the effectiveness of my research. The order of the texts I followed was that of the critical edition by Marti, which serves as the main point of reference for Cino's texts.[52] At the end of this thesis, I also provide an appendix containing the texts I analyse, numbered according to Marti's edition. In addition, for primary sources where the original text is in Latin, both the Latin text and its English translation are provided. For primary sources in Italian, no translation is offered, and secondary sources are retained only in their original language.

The different phases of Dante and Cino's relationship, which are outlined and analysed in the following chapters, are closely interconnected; understanding their early stages is therefore key to grasping their later development. The themes of love, exile, and friendship constitute the main thematic strands of the correspondence. Exile is a watershed moment in Cino and Dante's lives, but also, in the stages of their dialogue. Truthfully, I find it more conducive to focus on the thematic axis that best elucidates the phases of the relationship I have chosen to divide the thesis into. This approach is opportune due to the ambiguities related to the chronology of the exchange between Dante and Cino. Therefore, chronology is an aspect which only becomes structural from the second half of the thesis, as there are still no certainties related to when the first part of the *tenzone* was written – whether it was before or after Cino's and Dante's exile.

The first phase includes Cino's consolatory *canzone*, *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo,* and the first sonnets of the *tenzone*: these texts are crucially important in understanding the first phase of the relationship. With his *canzone*, Cino's first intention is to comfort his friend for the loss of the beloved, but also to suggest a way to accept and then overcome that grief, because of the special nature of Beatrice. This is the reason why I consider the consolatory *canzone* he writes for the death of Beatrice

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[52] Marti. 1969, pp. 423-923.

as the real starting point of the relationship between the poets, as this event represents, for all of Dante's writing, a crucial moment. Beatrice's death plays a fundamental role in the early works and, re-read and reframed with a new meaning, it appears in the later phase of his career. The fact that Beatrice's death is presented as a foundational moment in Dante's life, works, and career, and that Cino, in this moment of Dante's life, has such significant role, is the key that leads to a unique relationship between the poets. In addition, in this first phase there are the first sonnets of the *tenzone*. In *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice* Cino asks Dante what he should do because Love invites him to fall in love again, assuming that the new woman will be 'beatrice' (v. 4), source of beatitude. Dante responds with the sonnet *I' ho veduto già senza radice*: he employs the metaphor of the trunk recently cut, which could continue germinating but which is not able to produce fruit, to encourage Cino to distrust the love for a new woman. These sonnets are characterised by particular modes of the 'stil novo', to use the notion that critics would later apply, and of the *Vita nova*, and therefore help to illuminate this stage of the relationship.

The second phase corresponds to the second part of the *tenzone* and to the passages in which Dante mentions Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia*. At least part of this phase happens in the years when the poets share the condition of exile. This last part of the *tenzone* includes the following sonnets: in *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni* Dante expresses the harsh condition of the 'loco […] rio' (v. 7) that he is living and seeks comfort in his friend. The sonnet is followed by Cino's *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*, in which Cino comforts Dante and spurs him to remain faithful with his thoughts towards a unique woman. But eventually, Cino exposes his belief that it is possible for the desire of love ('disio amoroso', v. 2), at this point distinguished by a lack of hope ('speme', v. 2), to be oriented to a new person, but he also asks Dante to share his point of view, in *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona*. Dante's reply is articulated in a sonnet (*Io sono stato con Amore insieme*) and an epistle which accompanies it (*Epistola* III), and he clarifies his position on the topic previously mentioned. The following pair of sonnets is mediated by the Marquis Moroello Malaspina, who is the formal addressee of *Cercando di trovar minera in oro*; here Cino depicts his sorrow due to a sorrowful love, despite his desire for a virtuous love. Dante, in the name of Moroello Malaspina, replies once again, with *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro*, addressing the unstable nature of Cino's love. In the last pair of sonnets of the *tenzone*,

the theme of exile becomes prominent. In *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, Dante addresses again the unstable and fickle love Cino is experiencing and underlines his reluctance to agree with him. Cino's reply, *Poi ch'io fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*, instead, defends Cino by identifying the cause of this instability in the condition of exile. The *Epistola* III, which is a complementary text to Dante's *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, contains a *post quem* term referring to exile; therefore, from these texts onwards we may confidently assume that the exchange takes place when both Dante and Cino share the condition of *exul inmeritus* ('undeservedly in exile', *Ep.* III 1).

The third phase of the relationship between Dante and Cino takes place after Cino's return to Pistoia, when the dialogue through texts comes to a formal end; this results in the absence of a direct mention of Cino in the *Commedia*. Building on the evidence from the first and second phase, I provide evidence to help us understand Dante's choice not to include Cino in the poem. Despite the absence of a direct reference, the relationship still plays a significant role and continues to have an outcome, in different ways, in the works of both Dante and Cino. Finally, I analyse what I consider to be the epilogue of the dialogue, which corresponds to the consolatory *canzone* that Cino writes for the death of Dante, *Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte*.

Due to the similar nature between the first two phases – which are focused on all of the texts of the poetic exchange between Dante and Cino – I mainly conduct an analysis of the texts examined, along with the main contributions of the existing scholarship. The analysis of the third phase is pursued with a different methodology, as the dialogue becomes implicit, because there are no texts exchanged in the third phase. This is conducted by interpretations and influences and will be grounded in textual evidence. Intertextuality becomes the means through which the dialogue continues to happen, even after Dante's death, as it appears from the analysis of *Su per la costa*. The main chapters of the thesis follow a philological method which makes close reading, along with the study of the secondary literature, the structural basis of the thesis. Hence, it consists of an examination of several sources, which are a selection of texts exchanged between Dante and Cino, in order to show the pivotal moments of their dialogue; this helps us to understand Cino and Dante's poetic development in the different phases of their careers, through the key points of their relationship. Furthermore, the other purpose is to offer an account of the secondary literature analysed, and to see what the existing scholarship on the topic provides.

Going back again to the research questions that sparked my interest in the writing this thesis, I want to underline that even though the absence of a direct reference to Cino in the *Commedia* is what first began this thesis, this is not the primary object of my research. As a matter of fact, it is not just the ultimate phase, which is important but all of the texts, sources, issues, aspects, concepts, and their development that contribute to the relationship between Dante and Cino. Analysing the initial dialogue between the poets during the early chronological stage, progressing through the years of the exile, and then investigating Dante's *Commedia* and Cino's later career, is crucial. Indeed, it provides the opportunity to delineate and account for each phase, exposing how Dante's and Cino's ideas originate, evolve, and develop. This examination offers insight into their respective thoughts, poetics, and intellectual development. This way of conducting the research is fruitful and important because it sheds light, in a deepened and comprehensive way, on the passages of both poets' works, read through the lens of their dialogue.

It is essential to underline that the relationship between Dante and Cino has tended to be explained in dialectic or contrastive terms. For example, John Took suggests the increasing distance between Dante and Cino, defining Cino's poetics as 'poetics of horizontality' (a dimension which basically relates to the profane), which contrasts with Dante's 'verticality' (a dimension related to the sacred).[53] Took stresses the idea that Cino represents the poet of the 'stil novo' par excellence, as he is an imitator of Cavalcanti, Guinizzelli, and Dante.[54] The scholar goes on to identify a structural incompatibility between Dante and Cino, as far as their view of the world is concerned: again, while Cino may seem to remain firmly attached to horizontality, Dante's line, like Cavalcanti's, is of 'ascendency-consciousness':[55]

> Cino, for all his acquiescence in the programme laid out before him and for all his eagerness to proclaim wherever possible his stilnovistic credentials, was an inexplicable presence to Dante, a wanderer in the far-off land of horizontality.[56]

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[53] Took, John. 1998. 'The still centre of concern and communicability: Dante, Cino and their non-correspondence', *Journal of the Institute of Romance Studies*, VI, pp. 43-59 (p. 55).
[54] Ibid.
[55] Took, p. 58.
[56] Ibid.

However, despite the temptation to read the correlation between Dante and Cino in this contrastive way alone, the risk of this Manichean way of reading the relationship between the poets limits our understanding of the complex dialogue between them, specifically at this later moment of both poet's lives and careers. In particular, these categories of horizontality (meaning the profane) and verticality (the sacred) hardly capture what is really happening in this poetic dialogue. Actually, these two aspects, the sacred and the profane, come across as complementary and play a role in shaping both authors' poetics. For this reason, I believe that this hierarchical distinction of Dante having spiritual insight, while Cino is stuck in earthly insights, is not exhaustive at all. Indeed, the category of 'sacred' in the late Middle Ages is intrinsic to literary production, which tends to identify a superior and allegorical meaning in every element of reality. Hence, the attempt to make a sharp distinction between sacred poetry and profane poetry is a modern form of categorisation which does not pertain to the Middle Ages.[57]

5. Overview of the thesis

The initial part of the thesis is composed first of a thematic chapter on friendship, read through the lens of the relationship between Dante and Cino ('Friendship in Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Italy: Social Ties, Networks, and Dialogue'). This chapter, along with the introduction, aims to provide a foundation of the thesis, in terms of methodology, themes and content, by focusing on the multifaced and broad theme of friendship, specifically in Tuscany and Italy of the late Middle Ages. I provide the grounding necessary to define the framework and the context in which the relationship between the poets, in its numerous aspects, moulds, shapes, and develops. Afterwards, I address the issue related to the dialogic dimension enabled by the bond of friendship. Indeed, the presence of a network between the voice of the authors and of the other voices emerging from the texts, has a crucial importance, not only in terms of providing a textual space to dialogue, but in terms of how that space becomes important in order to re-establish a space of dialogue and/or communication which has been lost (for instance, because of the exile). I then build upon the theme of exile, which becomes a sort of matrix of a certain type of poetry, which seems that Dante

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[57] Leonardi, Matteo. 2021. 'Sacro', in *La lirica italiana. Un lessico fondamentale (secoli XIII-XIV)* (Rome: Carocci), pp. 261-271 (p. 261).

and Cino exchange, not only in relation to the *tenzone*, but also for the civic-political, amorous, and religious exclusion which derives from it, and which has its solution in the poetic and personal exchange.

In the second chapter ('The First Phase of the Relationship: the *consolatoria* for the Death of Beatrice and the First Part of the *tenzone*'), I focus on the years in which the exchange of texts between Dante and Cino begins. Indeed, it opens a channel of communication through which a relationship of confidence and empathy among the poets is made. Cino is able to detect and identify the issues and topics in which Dante is interested in and engaged with in the period following the death of his beloved Beatrice. I show that Cino is able to translate this sensitivity into a *canzone* which creates the path of a poetic dialogue destined to last for years, a dialogue which makes love – along with grief, loss, and exile – its thematic nucleus. In terms of sources, I emphasise that Cino's *consolatoria* thrives on two matrices: the antique and the Christian consolatory tradition. The presence of reminiscences of Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae* in Dante is certain. This work played a significant role in helping Dante face the grief that derived from a watershed event in his life. The loss of the beloved becomes a key point in Dante's works; the image of a far-away love is not an innovation. In Cino's c*onsolatio* there is special attention given to the death of Beatrice. The loss of the beloved is a topos, common from troubadours onwards, so it does not consist in an innovation *per se*: what represents a point of originality in Dante is how he responds to that loss, in a way which is spiritually true and appropriate.

The third chapter ('The Second Phase of the Relationship: the Second Part of the *tenzone* and the *De vulgari eloquentia*') is about the second part of the *tenzone* and the passages of the *De vulgari eloquentia* in which Cino is mentioned in numerous occasions as a poet of exemplary skill. This second phase corresponds, from a certain point onwards, to a period when the relationship between the poets grows closer, especially thanks to the shared condition of exile. The *tenzone* between Dante and Cino continues and this represents a fundamental source to understand more about their biographic and poetic bond. I examine the last eight sonnets – one of them extended by Dante in the *Epistola* III – which compose the second and last part of the *tenzone*. All of the texts of the *tenzone* are analysed in this chapter, focusing especially on the themes of alienation, loss of the beloved and distance from the beloved and from the homeland. By analysing this section of the *tenzone*, I argue that Cino and Dante's

thoughts, especially around love, are changing. Most of the *tenzone* surely takes place during the years in which both poets live in exile. The painful and harsh experience which derives from the status of being an exile corresponds to the peak of the friendship but, at the same time, becomes the moment in which the poets have the chance and poetic space – through the *tenzone* – to discuss and confront different topics, with different perspectives. Analysing every sonnet of the *tenzone* allows us to have a sense of how Dante's and Cino's poetics, both individually and mutually, change over the years. These are the years in which Dante writes the *De vulgari eloquentia*, in which Cino is described by Dante as a model of *cantor amoris* ('poet of love'), while Dante defines himself as *cantor rectitudinis* ('poet of righteousness', *Dve* II ii 9). Dante reserves an important place for Cino, including him in the literary canon he defines at this time.

In the fourth chapter ('The Third Phase of the Relationship: the *Commedia*'), I directly face the problem of the 'absence' of a direct reference to Cino in the *Commedia*. The last period of the relationship coincides with the time that Dante is writing the *Commedia* and with the end of Cino's political exile, so with his return to Pistoia. Therefore, it deals with issues which are the most intriguing but also problematic: this is the stage in which the tension and the distance become evident in the years of exile and cause a formal break in the dialogue from Dante. Despite this, the relationship between the two still continues and, it is likely that dismissing Cino in the *Commedia* is a precise choice that Dante makes. In any case, even if a lack of a direct reference to Cino must be taken into consideration, I shed light on the ways in which the presence of Cino and, especially, a memory of the previous exchange between Dante and Cino, can be detected and defined in the *Commedia*. At last, in the fifth and final chapter ('Epilogue: Cino's *consolatoria* for the Death of Dante'), the main point of consideration is the commemorative epicedium, the *canzone* Cino writes on the occasion of Dante's death. I chose to consider this the last element of the examination, because with it, Cino seals and ends, the dialogue with Dante.

In the conclusion of the thesis, I recap what has been achieved through this work, in terms of texts, topics, secondary literature examined, along with an account of the different methodologies used; I take stock of the key points uncovered, exposing what emerged from my work, giving an original reading of both Dante and Cino's works, understood through the lens of their relationship. The scope of this section is to point

out what my work has led to, but also to show what falls beyond the remit of the thesis, suggesting further areas for investigation.

In summary, the relationship between Dante and Cino can be reassessed around the corpus of texts they exchange with each other; my aim is to define a historical account of the relationship and think about the major themes which are critical to both poets (such as friendship, exile, and love). Analysing the texts of the exchange allows us to recognise different thematic-chronological periods, that correspond to the main chapters of the thesis. Tracing the relationship from pre-exile to Dante's death aims to emphasise the differences in these stages of the relationship, in terms of poetics and ideals. This methodological choice allows me to give a critical framework and enables me, not only to focus on the single works the poets produced or exchanged with each other, but also to think about Dante and Cino as two active interlocutors, with equal importance and weight, who mutually influence each other. To conduct this historical reconstruction and analysis, I place close reading at the heart of my investigation, by focusing on the main resources (the texts of the exchange and secondary literature), organised through the different historical stages of the relationship, combined with an analysis of the major themes which are critical to both poets: this allows me to think about the relationship between Dante and Cino as an evolving process shaped around the different stages of both their biographic and poetic lives.

CHAPTER 1.

Friendship in Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Italy:
Social Ties, Networks, and Dialogue

The following chapter aims to elucidate how the friendship which binds Dante and Cino works as a useful lens that enables us to look at the broader relationship between the poets in a more comprehensive, extensive, and complex way. I argue that the concept of dialogism is closely intertwined with the notion of friendship, as each serves both as a prerequisite and a consequence for the existence of the other, constituting a reciprocally reinforcing relationship. This chapter is grounded in both the reconstruction of the contemporary social, cultural, and political context in which Dante and Cino lived, and the analysis of the key sources that shaped their intellectual formation – particularly their understanding of friendship – as they are essential to understanding the dialogic nature of the poetic exchange. I argue that Dante and Cino's concept of friendship is shaped by a synthesis of classical and Christian sources, which collectively contributed to the formation of a shared understanding of this theme. Crucially, I illuminate how Aristotle and Cicero, on one hand, and the Bible, on the other, establish the key intellectual coordinates for the development of this concept in Dante's time. These foundational sources were further refined and cultivated by figures such as Augustine, Boethius, and Aelred of Rievaulx, all of whom I examine in this broader analysis. Ultimately, my study advances this theoretical framework by applying it to the relationship between Dante and Cino, demonstrating in a distinctive way how the concept of friendship emerges through their dialogue.

Therefore, before reflecting on how friendship shapes Dante and Cino's poetic relationship, it is necessary to clarify the concept of friendship as understood within the context the poets inhabit and in which they develop their thoughts and ideals. The theme of friendship in Dante and Cino's works cannot be abstracted from the social, cultural, and political reality they lived in. Thinking in terms of key themes which play an important role in the relationship between Dante and Cino enables us to understand their bond and these themes shed light on peculiar aspects of their relationship. Even though my research has a strong philological basis and approach – as the analysis begins by focusing on the texts the poets exchanged – reflecting on the theme of

friendship provides the chance to contextualise the relationship in a broader and more complete way.

The focus is not to lay out a history of friendship *per se*, but to elucidate how this concept helps us to understand the relationship between the poets and how this relationship is conveyed by them and by their contemporaries.[1] The final object is to identify what is present in the context of Dante's works, in terms of classical and Christian sources, and how they helped to shape his idea of friendship. Therefore, the idea of friendship, which both Dante and Cino inherit and internalise, is the result of a centuries-old, consistent, and layered tradition, which is produced by classical sources, on the one hand, and Christian sources, on the other hand. After acknowledging the presence of these sources, Dante showcases an idea of friendship that is the outcome of a long literary and cultural tradition, but which is also a result of his individual understanding.

In my analysis, Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics*) and Cicero (*De Amicitia*) represent the most influential classical sources on the topic, while the Bible offers significant references for the Christian sources.[2] Later, philosophical speculations on the topic of friendship continued and were developed in the Middle Ages, some examples being the works of Augustine (*Confessiones*), Boethius (*De consolatione philosophiae*) and Aelred of Rievaulx (*Spiritual Friendship*), which are valuable points of reference in this conceptual area. Due to these circumstances, Dante's idea of friendship develops and unfolds in many different ways and modalities. First is the idea of friendship among peers, where, depending on whether the friendship is political, legal, or social, it becomes the means by which poetic and literary relationships or networks develop.

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[1] For a comprehensive history of friendship in Dante's works, see Modesto, Filippa. 2015. *Dante's Idea of Friendship. The Transformation of a Classical Concept* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press).

[2] It is unlikely that Dante read Aristotle's *Ethics* as a whole. To have a more comprehensive and complete sense of the presence and reception of Aristotle in the Middle Ages and in Dante, see Gilson, Simon A. 2013. 'Dante and Christian Aristotelianism', in *Reviewing Dante's Theology*. 2 vols, ed. by Claire E. Honess and Matthew Treherne (Oxford-Bern: Peter Lang), I, pp. 65-109. In his essay, Gilson questions the presence of Aristotle through Aquinas as the main source for Dante's theological concerns by contrasting a way of reading which was popular until the 80s, and instead suggests looking at the Dante-Aquinas relationship through the lens of the 'broader nexus of questions concerning the impact of the Aristotelian revival upon scholastic theology, Dante's contact with, and relationships to, this heritage, and the wider implications of his treatment of related matters in his poetry' (p. 65). According to Gilson, the several differences between Dante and Aquinas, along with the possibility that many similarities may refer to scholastic concepts rather than directly to Aristotle, provide reasons to consider a reduced significance of Aristotle's *Ethics* in Dante's work (p. 77). On Dante's knowledge of Cicero's *De Amicitia*, see Modesto. 2015, in particular the chapter 'Cicero's "De Amicitia" and Dante's "Convivio"', pp. 43-57.

For these relationships to happen, dialogue is an essential element. Dialogue, especially with contemporaries, may manifest in different modes of interaction, and Dante's dialogue with Cino takes on many aspects of what we mean by both dialogue and friendship.

Dante's dialogue with Cino is, firstly, a dialogue between peers who are friends, fellow poets who share the condition of exile, thus creating a political and legal bond. In this sense, all of the relationships that Dante has are informed by a (more or less generic) idea of friendship, regardless of their nature – real, legal, political, poetic, or fictional – not only with personalities contemporary to him but even with characters from the past (Virgil, Beatrice, and characters he meets in the *Commedia*). Hence, friendship can be read as a framework within which reconduct many of the relational occurrences that Dante experiences in his life and/or in the fiction of his works. As Filippa Modesto highlights throughout *Dante's Idea of Friendship. The transformation of a Classical Concept*, Dante's idea of friendship is strongly tied to the notions of dialogue and love. By reading the relationship between Dante and Cino through this meaningful triangulation, the need to deepen this sphere more becomes evident, especially when analysing the texts which constitute the basis of the relationship between Dante and Cino. This threefold concept is present from the beginning of their contact, which corresponds to the consolatory *canzone* written for the death of Beatrice, *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*. In this case, friendship is the condition which enables Cino to structure his *consolatoria* in a way which presumes a relationship of friendship at its basis: therefore, friendship is the *conditio sine qua non* of which this text can be addressed to Dante. In this text, all of these spheres – friendship, love, and dialogue – are present, coexist and help us to understand the relationship between Dante and Cino. In *Avegna ched el m'aggia* we 'hear' Beatrice's voice through direct speech for the first time in a text, moreover in an early stage of Dante's career and Dante and Cino's relationship. I argue that it is no coincidence that intertextual and thematic references to these aspects present in the *consolatoria* are found in the *Commedia* and, specifically, in the first part of Dante's *Inferno*: 'amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare'.[3] In this respect, my argument is reinforced by Modesto's claim that the second canto of the *Inferno* encapsulates this threefold

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[3] *Inf*. II, 72. These are the words pronounced by Beatrice to Virgil in Hell, when she asks him to guide Dante towards salvation. In chapter 4, I explore the importance of Beatrice's direct speech.

sphere of friendship, love, and dialogue. To this end, if we look at the *Commedia*, which coincides with the last phase of Dante and Cino's friendship, what Cicero states in *De Amicitia* becomes interesting and fruitful in elucidating why friendship may come to an end and dissolve, as it is extremely rare that a friendship lasts forever.[4] As Cicero states, friendship may end because it is no longer beneficial to both sides and if friends do not share the same political view;[5] or, above all, if one commits

an immoral deed in the name of friendship [as it] means forsaking the friendship itself, because in committing a dishonourable deed, one is forsaking the virtue upon which the friendship itself was founded and thus asking the friend to dismiss the very foundation upon which the friendship was built.[6]

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[4] Modesto, p. 49.

[5] *De Amicitia* X 33-34: 'Quamquam ille quidem nihil difficilius esse dicebat, quam amicitiam usque ad extremum vitae diem permanere. Nam vel ut non idem expediret, incidere saepe, vel ut de re publica non idem sentiretur; mutari etiam mores hominum saepe dicebat, alias adversis rebus, alias aetate ingravescente. Atque earum rerum exemplum ex similitudine capiebat ineuntis aetatis, quod summi puerorum amores saepe una cum praetexta toga ponerentur. Sin autem ad adulescentiam perduxissent, dirimi tamen interdum contentione vel uxoriae condicionis vel commodi alicuius, quod idem adipisci uterque non posset. Quod si qui longius in amicitia provecti essent, tamen saepe labefactari, si in honoris contentionem incidissent; pestem enim nullam maiorem esse amicitiis quam in plerisque pecuniae cupiditatem, in optimis quibusque honoris certamen et gloriae; ex quo inimicitias maximas saepe inter amicissimos exstitisse' [Now he, indeed, used to say that nothing was harder than for a friendship to continue to the very end of life; for it often happened either that the friendship ceased to be mutually advantageous, or the parties to it did not entertain the same political views; and that frequently, too, the dispositions of men were changed, sometimes by adversity and sometimes by the increasing burdens of age. And then he would draw an illustration of this principle from the analogy of early life. 'For', said he, 'the most ardent attachments of boyhood are often laid aside with the boyish dress; but if continued to the time of manhood, they are broken off, sometimes by rivalry in courtship or sometimes by a contest for some advantage, in which both of the parties to the friendship cannot be successful at the same time. But should the friendship continue for a longer time, yet it is often overthrown when a struggle for office happens to arise; for while, with the generality of men, the greatest bane of friendship is the lust for money, with the most worthy men it is the strife for preferment and glory, and from this source frequently have sprung the deadliest enmities between the dearest friends].

[6] *De Amicitia* XIII 44: 'Haec igitur prima lex amicitiae sanciatur, ut ab amicis honesta petamus, amicorum causa honesta faciamus, ne exspectemus quidem, dum rogemur; studium semper adsit, cunctatio absit; consilium vero dare audeamus libere. Plurimum in amicitia amicorum bene suadentium valeat auctoritas, eaque et adhibeatur ad monendum non modo aperte sed etiam acriter, si res postulabit, et adhibitae pareatur' [Therefore let this be ordained as the first law of friendship: Ask of friends only what is honourable; do for friends only what is honourable and without even waiting to be asked; let zeal be ever present, but hesitation absent; dare to give true advice with all frankness; in friendship let the influence of friends who are wise counsellors be paramount, and let that influence be employed in advising, not only with frankness, but, if the occasion demands, even with sternness, and let the advice be followed when given].

1.1 Dialogism enabled by friendship

Dialogue with Dante's contemporaries is a topic to keep in mind as it aids in providing context to understand the macro-theme of friendship. On several occasions, Contini argues that friendship is much more than just a theme of the 'dolce stil novo', but rather is a defining character of this poetic tendency. Contini also claims that, in the specific case of the relationship between Dante and Cino, the historic and cultural circumstances are the minimum and necessary prerequisites for this kind of exchange to occur.[7] The theme of friendship, indeed, is recurrent in Dante's works, especially in his lyric poetry – Modesto, following Barolini, makes the bond between friendship and poetry clear.[8] Dialogic dimension is present in the work of the 'stilnovisti', in general, from the late thirteenth century. For these reasons, the relationship between Dante and Cino situates itself within the other relationship networks that Dante has.

Two categories of 'dialogicità' are identified by Giunta: 'dialogicità interna' is a reflection of the 'I' and consists in dialoguing within texts, with real or fictional characters; on the other hand, the 'dialogicità reale' is the objectification of the interlocutor.[9] Plurality and variety of interlocutors and characters represent the main characteristic of the generation of poets Dante and Cino belong to.[10] In this context, alterity of voices is a peculiar trait of this kind of poetry.[11] In this regard, a reference must be made to Bowe's *Poetry in dialogue in the Duecento and Dante*, which highlights the crucial role of dialogue – especially poetic dialogue – in the works of Guittone D'Arezzo, Guido Guinizzelli, Guido Cavalcanti, and Dante. There are multiple dialogic processes and among them, Bowe identifies at least four connotations. The first one consists of dialogue existing among texts, or through texts (as in the *tenzoni*), the second one involves staged dialogues, the third one contains the intertextual exchanges, and the fourth one involves the 'dialogic coexistence of

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[7] See Contini, Gianfranco. 1960. *Poeti del Duecento*, vol. II (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi), p. 443. Contini states that 'la persona del nuovo trovatore, lungi dall'affermarsi, si dissolva nel coro dell'amicizia; e quest'amicizia, oltre a essere la possibilità generale di quella tale poesia, sia assunta addirittura in veste di motivo poetico iniziale'; see also 1976. 'Introduzione alle Rime di Dante', in *Un'idea di Dante. Saggi danteschi*, ed. by Gianfranco Contini (Turin: Einaudi), pp. 3-20: 'Assoluta separazione dal reale, che si converte in amicizia, questo è il contenuto autentico della lirica; e l'amicizia è l'elemento patetico definitorio dello Stil Novo' (pp. 8-9).

[8] Cfr. Modesto, pp. 8-9; cfr. Barolini-Gragnolati, pp. 181-195.

[9] Giunta. 2021, p. 57.

[10] In section 3 of the introduction, I define my choices for employing the critical references mentioned in this chapter.

[11] Giunta. 2021, p. 57.

multiple forms of a poetic subjectivity and literary "voice"'.[12] Therefore, the dialogic dimension is read as a central and dynamic process in Italian poetry of the thirteenth and fourteenth century.

Regarding the concept of dialogue, Bowe employs the critical category of 'dialogism' that derives from Bakhtin,[13] a Russian literary critic and philosopher of the twentieth century, who made this category central in some of his works, despite the fact that he does not use this specific term.[14] Bakhtin dwells upon the dialogic relationship between the voice of the author and the various 'voices' coming from the text, by referring to the expression 'polyphonic text'[15] – characters are part of a process by which they express their own voice (in the sense of point of view) and this is what makes a difference if compared to the style of monologic texts.[16] By using Bakhtinian categories, Bowe draws attention to the idea that the authors he analyses, including Dante, display the presence of a network between the voice of the author and the other voices emerging from the texts and how these voices play a role for what he regards as 'the implications to any author figure who can "manipulate the other [of a character/voice in their text] not only as other, but as *self*"'.[17] In Bowe's analysis of the dialogic dimension, the poetic genre of the *tenzone* is particularly fitting in this discourse for its intrinsic purpose and for its structure. Furthermore, the *tenzone* is distinguished by its social role as well, in terms of creating a literary space for aggregation as a response to the historic period of which consisted of conflicts and political instabilities that characterised the Italian peninsula in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[18] The *tenzone* is a poetic dispute which has its origins in Provençal literature. It became a popular genre in Italian literature and poetry from the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, especially because of the variety and originality of topics, when compared with monologic lyric.[19] Especially in the thirteenth and

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[12] Bowe, p. 3.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Bakhtin. 1981; 1984. Cfr. section 4 of the introduction.

[15] Bakhtin. 1984, p. 7.

[16] 'Dialogism', in *Oxford Reference* <https://oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095715799> [accessed 15 June 2024].

[17] Bowe, p. 10.

[18] Bowe, p. 205.

[19] See Gally, Michèle. 1986. 'Disputer d'amour: les Arreageois et le "jeu-parti"', *Romania*, 107, pp. 55-76; 1999. 'Entre sens et non-sens: approaches comparatives de la "tenso" d'oc et du "jeu-parti" arrageois', in *Il genere della 'tenzone' nelle letterature romanze delle origini (atti del convegno internazionale Losanna 13-15 novembre 1997*, ed. by Matteo Pedroni and Antonio Stäuble (Ravenna: Longo), pp. 223-235; Monson, Don A. 1999. 'The Troubadours at Play: Irony, Parody and Burlesque',

fourteenth centuries, the content of these *tenzoni* touched upon complex issues and themes: theories of love, scientific matters, law, politics, and theology.[20] Plurality and choral dimension are peculiar to the poetry of the 'stil novo'. From this generations of poets onwards, poems became full of characters and different, multiple voices. In this way, lyric poetry was inhabited by many characters, figures, and voices.[21]

Apart from these critical references which may help define what we mean by dialogism in its multiple and general adaptations, I find it necessary to apply this category of dialogism to the relationship between Dante and Cino. In particular, dialogism helps to identify the role that Beatrice plays, not only in Dante's works but in his exchange with Cino, beginning with Cino's *consolatoria* for the death of Beatrice. Indeed, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, in his *canzone*, Cino gives Beatrice, for the first time in the history of literature, direct speech.[22] For the aforementioned reasons, it seems plausible to state that the prerequisite for writing the *consolatoria*, addressed to a friend, must be the presence of a real friendship between Cino and Dante. In this sense, the threefold sphere of love, friendship and dialogue is activated.

In the *Vita nova*, belonging to the same period of Cino's *Avegna ched el m'aggia*, both love (for Beatrice) and friendship (for Cavalcanti, who is called 'primo amico') are topics Dante addresses.[23] Modesto states that the intention of the *Vita nova* is to lead from death to a new life, through a 'reconceptualization of love as a disinterested affection', and 'Dante is also moving towards the classical and Christian concept of friendship as a disinterested love valued and sought after because of this love itself'.[24] Moreover, Modesto underlines that in Dante's cultural universe, love and friendship are tightly intertwined and there is a close bond between poetry and friendship. Indeed, this link is shown by the relationship between the act of writing and the act of

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in *The Troubadours: An Introduction*, ed. by Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 197-211; Bec, Pierre. 2000. *La Joute poétique: de la tenson médiévale aux debates chantés traditionnels* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres). On the *tenzone* see Giunta, Claudio. 2002. *Due saggi sulla tenzone* (Rome-Padua: Antenore).
[20] Giunta. 2021, pp. 55-56.
[21] Giunta. 2021, p. 64.
[22] Cino is the one who gives direct speech to Beatrice in a way that nobody else does until she appears in the *Commedia*, which is historically and narratively later. I develop this argument in chapter 4.
[23] Guido Cavalcanti is defined by Dante as his first friend. Indeed, in the *Vita nova* Guido is addressed as 'primo delli miei amici' (II 1) and 'primo amico' (XV 3; XV 6; XVI 10; XIX 10). In addition, this definition emerges clearly in the sonnet *Guido, i' vorrei che tu Lapo ed io*.
[24] Modesto, p. 82.

speaking.[25] This aspect of dialoguing and speaking, again, is particular to friendship and of relationships with others. I believe that Cino is aware of this link between these aspects and this may be the reason he chooses to let Beatrice speak, with direct speech, in the consolatory poem he writes about the death of Beatrice. I suggest that this dialogue with Cino has an impact on Dante's poetics (and vice versa) because, unlike monologic poetry, dialogic poetry implies a series of features which already encapsulate a desire of growth and confrontation, which aims to develop and, perhaps, set apart. The triangulation among love, friendship and speech/dialogue seen in Cino's *consolatoria,* acquires a crucial importance beginning with the *Vita nova* and continues playing a role in Dante's poetic development.[26]

1.2 A matter of reciprocity: friendship as premise for dialogue

Another point which deserves to be further explored is the idea of friendship between Dante and some of his (male) contemporaries or (male) characters – such as Cino or Virgil. With specific regard to Dante's friendship with Virgil, which emerges from *Inferno* II, and in line with what I have already discussed regarding Beatrice's direct speech, friendship may be read as the condition that allows Beatrice to speak. Therefore, until later in the *Commedia* when Beatrice speaks in her own right, there is a dynamic where friendship becomes the condition within which the relationship between the lover and the beloved is articulated.[27] Due to this circumstance, underlining this aspect seems fundamental, at this early stage of the relationship between Dante and Cino. Moreover, it is interesting to underline that there is, again, the coexistence of the themes of friendship (between Dante and Virgil), love (for the beloved Beatrice), and dialogue (Beatrice's direct speech): when Beatrice is finally given the ability to speak for herself, in *Purgatorio* XXX, Dante's instinct is to turn to his friend Virgil, who has disappeared in that moment. This may imply that the condition necessary for Beatrice to speak is the fact that Virgil has departed, as there is no longer a need for a male poet friend who facilitates or enables the beloved's voice to come forward.[28]

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[25] Modesto, p. 82 and p. 85.
[26] For instance, it is central at the very beginning of the *Commedia*, in *Inferno* II.
[27] *Purg*. XXX, from line 55.
[28] I explore this aspect in chapter 4.

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To support these arguments, Aristotle's definition of friendship is useful for understanding the relationship between Dante and Cino. Despite the fact that Aristotle's role as the main source for Dante has been downsized, the *Nicomachean Ethics* remains one of the main sources for Dante when it comes to defining the concept of friendship (books VIII and IX).[29] Specifically, Aristotle states that reciprocity is essential for friendship to exist.[30] Friendship has its core in a rational choice, as one chooses, rationally, to become friends with someone and to maintain and feed that bond, consciously. Therefore, the most complete form of friendship is friendship among good people, and if one of them becomes morally superior, that friendship must be dissolved.[31] Moreover, in Aristotle's view, the friend is a form of another self, an extension of self.[32] As a consequence, similarity is another essential feature which allows friendship to occur. For these reasons, I believe that, for instance in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, Dante refers to himself as Cino's friend ('amicus eius') to restate, implicitly, this similarity between them. Dante's intention may be to underline the common points which bind him to Cino, as opposed to dissimilarity or distance. Sharing values, thoughts, and spaces is essential for a friendship to take place.[33]

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[29] See Gilson. 2013.

[30] Modesto, pp. 24-25. *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII 3: 'There are therefore three kinds of friendship, equal in number to the things that are lovable; for with respect to each there is a mutual and recognized love, and those who love each other wish well to each other in that respect in which they love one another'; VIII 4, 'For the sake of pleasure or utility, then, even bad men may be friends of each other, or good men of bad, or one who is neither good nor bad may be a friend to any sort of person, but for their own sake clearly only good men can be friends; for bad men do not delight in each other unless some advantage come of the relation. […] The friendship of the good too and this alone is proof against slander; for it is not easy to trust any one talk about a man who has long been tested by oneself; and it is among good men that trust and the feeling that "he would never wrong me" and all the other things that are demanded in true friendship are found'; VIII 14: 'Differences arise also in friendships based on superiority; for each expects to get more out of them, but when this happens the friendship is dissolved. Not only does the better man think he ought to get more, since more should be assigned to a good man, but the more useful similarly expects this; they say a useless man should not get as much as they should, since it becomes an act of public service and not a friendship if the proceeds of the friendship do not answer to the worth of the benefits conferred. For they think that, as in a commercial partnership those who put more in get more out, so it should be in friendship. But the man who is in a state of need and inferiority makes the opposite claim; they think it is the part of a good friend to help those who are in need; what, they say, is the use of being the friend of a good man or a powerful man, if one is to get nothing out of it? At all events it seems that each party is justified in his claim, and that each should get more out of the friendship than the other-not more of the same thing, however, but the superior more honour and the inferior more gain; for honour is the prize of virtue and of beneficence, while gain is the assistance required by inferiority'.

[31] Modesto, pp. 27-29.

[32] Modesto, p. 32.

[33] *Nicomachean Ethics* IX 8: 'Therefore the good man should be a lover of self (for he will both himself profit by doing noble acts, and will benefit his fellows), but the wicked man should not; for he will hurt both himself and his neighbours, following as he does evil passions. For the wicked man, what he does clashes with what he ought to do, but what the good man ought to do he does; for reason in each of its possessors chooses what is best for itself, and the good man obeys his reason'; IX 9: 'It is also disputed

After having stated the features of friendship which are found in Aristotle's *Ethics*, it is worth dwelling on Aquinas's commentary on it, to understand how Aristotle's definition of friendship was read and interpreted through a Christian lens. Aquinas stresses that friendship is mutually beneficial and therefore, reciprocity is a key for friendship to last. He also highlights that friendship may dissolve, as men change and thus may stop being pleasant or useful to each other. Friendship that has the aim of good or pleasure is destined to last; therefore, this type of friendship is less likely to break because the friends involved in this type of bond share the same amount of virtue. Friendship, continues Aquinas, is more useful in times of difficulty and adversity.[34]

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whether the happy man will need friends or not. It is said that those who are supremely happy and self-sufficient have no need of friends; for they have the things that are good, and therefore being self-sufficient they need nothing further, while a friend, being another self, furnishes what a man cannot provide by his own effort; whence the saying "When fortune is kind, what need of friends?" But it seems strange, when one assigns all good things to the happy man, not to assign friends, who are thought the greatest of external goods. And if it is more characteristic of a friend to do well by another than to be well done by, and to confer benefits is characteristic of the good man and of virtue, and it is nobler to do well by friends than by strangers, the good man will need people to do well by. This is why the question is asked whether we need friends more in prosperity or in adversity, on the assumption that not only does a man in adversity need people to confer benefits on him, but also those who are prospering need people to do well by. Surely it is strange, too, to make the supremely happy man a solitary; for no one would choose the whole world on condition of being alone, since man is a political creature and one whose nature is to live with others. Therefore even the happy man lives with others; for he has the things that are by nature good. And plainly it is better to spend his days with friends and good men than with strangers or any chance persons. Therefore the happy man needs friends'.

[34] Aquinas, *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* VIII 3: 'ostendit huiusmodi amicitias facile esse dissolubiles. Sunt enim propter aliquid, quod accidit hominibus qui amantur, in quo homines non permanent semper sibi similes; sicut non semper idem homo est delectabilis vel utilis. Quando igitur illi qui amabantur desinunt esse delectabiles vel utiles, amici eorum quiescunt ab amando […] talis amicitia rationabiliter est diu permansiva et non facile transiens, quia in ea coniunguntur omnia quaecumque requiruntur ad amicos. Omnis enim amicitia est propter bonum vel propter delectationem […] praedicta amicitia est perfecta, et secundum tempus quia est diuturna, et secundum reliqua quae dicta sunt. Et perficitur secundum omnia quae sunt in aliis amicitiis et similis sit uterque amicorum ab altero; quod requiritur ad amicitiam, propter hoc scilicet quod sunt similes in virtute' [[Aristotle] shows that friendships of this kind are easily dissolved. They are for the sake of something that is incidental to the persons loved and in this men do not always remain the same. The same man, for instance, is not always pleasant or useful. Therefore, when those who are loved cease to be pleasant or useful, their friends stop loving them […] it is reasonable for such friendship to be long lasting and not readily transient, because it contains absolutely everything necessary for friends. Every friendship is for the sake of good or pleasure. […] this friendship is perfect both in regard to duration because it is lasting, and in regard to the other conditions. It contains everything found in the other kinds of friendship; and friends perform like services for each other – a thing that is necessary for friendship because friends are alike in virtue]; IX 9: 'Et quia in amicitiis aequalium manifestum est, quod amicitia conservatur per hoc quod aequivalens redditur, manifestat primo qualiter possit conservari amicitia, quae est dissimilium personarum adinvicem, quod magis dubium esse videbatur […] Dicit ergo primo quod dubitari potest utrum homo habeat opus amicis magis in bonis fortunis vel infortuniis. Manifestum est enim, quod in utraque fortuna requiruntur amici. In infortuniis enim homo habet opus amicis, qui ei ferant auxilia contra infortunia. In bonis autem fortunis homines habent opus amicis, quibus convivant et quibus benefaciant' [But it is better for a man to be good to friends than strangers, other things being equal, because he does this with more pleasure and alacrity. Consequently, since a happy person is virtuous he needs friends whom he can benefit […] [Aristotle] deduces a doubt from the premises: whether a man

1.3 The legal and political dimensions of friendship

If literary and cultural sources have a significant impact on shaping Dante's and Cino's ideas of friendship, the contemporary reality they inhabit must also be taken into account to provide a complete framework of the cultural and historical background which feeds the way in which the poets interconnect with each other and with their peers. The theme of friendship in the Italian *comuni* of the thirteenth century, read through the lens of political bonds or antagonisms, is analysed by Elizabeth Coggeshall, who finds a recurrent scheme or 'model of friendly antagonism' which underlies these relationships between friends belonging to different political factions.[35] The language of friendship, then, becomes prominent in poetry, especially in the *tenzone*, in which the term 'amico' is used by authors to address the interlocutor, despite the real relationship between them.[36] What I find interesting is that the lexicon of friendship becomes functional and the means to build a discussion or, even, a confrontation with somebody else. Therefore, friendship can be read, in this context, as the antonym of dialogue or debate. Friendship is the prerequisite for a (poetic) dialogue to take place.

As noted earlier, the genre of the *tenzone* becomes particularly popular between the thirteenth and fourteenth century. This is probably due to its nature of being a space where poets can dialogue or debate with peers. According to Coggeshall, starting an exchange with another poet or group has the aim of obtaining validation from fellows and peers, to be recognised by them.[37] This exchange of texts gives prestige and honour to the other:

> The reciprocation of the original challenge stands as a recognition of the partner's honor, the reply turning the challenge into a dialogue and converting the aggression of civic dispute into the honorable and mutually beneficial exchange of symbolic capital within the literary field.[38]

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has need of friends more in adversity than in prosperity. He seems to need friends in both circumstances, for the unfortunate man needs friends to help him, and the fortunate man needs friends he can help].

[35] Coggeshall, Elizabeth A. 2020. 'Jousting with Verse: The Poetics of Friendship in Duecento "Comuni"', *Italian Culture*, 38 (2), p. 114.

[36] Coggeshall. 2020, p. 99.

[37] Coggeshall. 2020, pp. 100-106.

[38] Coggeshall. 2020, p. 106.

Friendship becomes strategic in this sense, as it allows both interlocutors to enact a long and articulated engagement with each other, despite the fact that they could belong to different factions or different philosophies. Also, this confrontation may result in a closer relationship between poets.[39] Even though antagonism underlies and structures the bond between the poets, this does not clash with the literary intention of finding validation from the other interlocutor, through a poetic exchange.

Given Cino's status as a lawyer and his career trajectory, analysing civic or legal relationships, is fruitful in terms of understanding how this type of friendship implies a 'contractual' or strategic relationship. The second part of the *tenzone*, which can be dated back to the years in which the poets shared the condition of exile, incorporates ideas related to a 'legal' friendship. Exile is one of the other experiences that bind Dante and Cino, which renders efficaciously the idea of how friendship cuts across factional divides and identities (e.g., political identity and civic identity).[40] In the Middle Ages, engaging with a *tenzone* involved competition – as it emerged from debates in medieval France as well.[41] In this sense, friendship becomes an act which expresses belonging to a fraternity or community of people who accept and understand a code of expression and the rules by which you engage in debate and dialogue with another. Therefore, this may not be considered a proper and real friendship *tout court*, but it means one is a part of a community of like-minded people; it is a strategic belonging and in order to be a part of it you need to know and follow the rules as well as meet the conditions of entry.[42]

Given exile is as an experience that ties Dante and Cino together at a certain time of their lives, Catherine Keen's *'Extracomunitario'? Networks and Brunetto Latini* is a helpful source since it elucidates the idea of networks created during exile due to literary exchange.[43] Keen outlines what is meant by 'literature of exile', referring to Dante's *Convivio* and a work of Dante's teacher and mentor, Brunetto Latini's *Rettorica*. Indeed, in his oeuvre, Brunetto employs the vernacular in order to create a community which is set against the political reality of exile. Both vernacularity and

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[39] Coggeshall. 2020, p. 109.

[40] I discuss specifically how and to what extent the condition of exile plays a role, both on the biographic and poetic level, in the relationship between Dante and Cino in chapter 3.

[41] For a further exploration of the topic, see Cayley, Emma. 2006 *Debate and Dialogue. Alain Chartier in his Cultural Context* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), specifically the chapter '"Je vous demande par la force du jeu". The Literary, Legal, and Intellectual Antecedents of Late Medieval Debate', pp. 12-51.

[42] Keen. 2020.

[43] Ibid.

friendship are concepts that cut across exile. These two works, the *Rettorica* and the *Convivio*, are two examples of literature of exile, which can be interpreted as an attempt to establish a literary and diplomatic connection between themselves and their own homeland ('patria'). The final aim of literature of exile is to rebuild an identity from the poem's own literary production, hence its language. Referring to Latour's categories, one of the 'modes of existence' – a kind of way to 'survive' – engages with the domain of diplomacy and political negotiation to maintain a relationship with the other. In this context, diplomacy becomes the key to establish a new type of encounter during exile: the vernacular language becomes a diplomatic encounter. The poetic act in exile becomes a meeting point for different discourses.[44]

Brunetto Latini, like those who were forced to leave Italy and head to France, finds himself turning to this 'mode of existence' as a necessary component that allows him to give new meaning to his personal and poetic identity. He does this by recreating a network ('worknets', as Latour labels them in order to stress that they are constituted by work, movement, flow, and change), through the force of the diplomacy of his oeuvre. In the same way of Brunetto Latini's *Rettorica*, Dante's *Convivio* explicitly inserts an aim to create a network. Vernacularity is the most immediate form that allows this process to take place, and contrasts with exclusion, the harshest effect of banishment.[45] The material culture gives testimony to Brunetto Latini's aim, as he had fortune in Tuscany in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Brunetto, as an outsider, returns to be integrated in Florentine and Tuscan society.[46]

As I mentioned earlier, exile is an austere condition that both Dante and Cino experience for political reasons, partly at the same time. Indeed, between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Italy, and especially Tuscany, was characterised by violence in the form of a series of political and social conflicts, wars, and tension. This brutality which Dante experiences is due to the political instability of Florence; Dante is able to render this violence in his works and transform it into poetic expression.[47] The condition he is inhabiting, the condition of the *exul inmeritus* ('undeservedly in exile'), a Latin expression he uses to address himself in a letter he sends to Cino, becomes, in

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[44] Keen. 2020, p. 49.
[45] Keen. 2020, pp. 50-56.
[46] For a comprehensive treatment of this topic, see Keen. 2020.
[47] The topic of violence at Dante's time, with special regard on how violence is represented and discussed in the *Commedia* is widely analysed and discussed in Deen Schildgen, Brenda. 2021. *Dante and Violence: Domestic, Civic, and Cosmic* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press).

a way, Dante's identity, his personal and poetic cypher. During this time Italy is torn apart by a series of conflicts and wars, which results in social and political fragmentation. Hence, there becomes a need for poets, especially those who are condemned to exile, to rebuild their biographic identity through poetry. Again, as both Keen's article and Latour's works stress, vernacular poetry operates as a form of diplomacy in the Middle Ages, a true political act, in the sense of creating a new community tied together by a linguistic bond.[48] Through vernacular multilingualism, the tension created by the estrangement from one's homeland ideally decreases due to the dense network of exchanges generated among authors united by the same condition. Exiles from different backgrounds may find, through their shared condition, the premise to start strong relationships, despite political divergence.[49]

In Dante's early post-exile literature, he explicitly highlights the influence that the experience of exile, felt as a whole life-changing condition, has on his authorship. As Laurence Hooper states, in the *Convivio*, Dante expresses the concept of *epochē* – a philosophical suspension of judgement – which must be read as a result of the undefined identity of the exiled. This lack of judgment reveals to the reader the true essence of feeling like an outsider. In *Convivio* I, Dante uses the metaphor of the impoverished poet as a storm-tossed ship, which finds its roots in the Italian lyric tradition – especially of Guittone d'Arezzo and Brunetto Latini.[50] The reference to this metaphor allows Dante to stay connected to this tradition until the beginning of his exile. Hence, he can effectively communicate the nature of this condition, since it establishes nuances ranging from the existential, to the theological, and also to the metaliterary. Furthermore, this cross-reference makes the reader access an exilic space, corresponding to that of Dante's authorship, through the experience of the *epochē*. The connection between peregrination and *epochē*, already explicitly stated in the *Convivio*, will find its fullest expression in the *Commedia*.[51]

Exile as a life experience is a fertile ground for both Dante's and Cino's poetic production; in the case of the two poets, this experience becomes a generative matrix

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[48] Latour. 2013.

[49] Cfr. Milani, Giuliano. 2015. 'Esili difficili: i bandi politici dell'età di Dante', in *Letture classensi. 44. Dante e l'esilio*, ed. by Johannes Bartuschat (Ravenna: Longo), pp. 31-46 (pp. 42-45).

[50] *Convivio*, I iii 5: 'Veramente io sono stato legno sanza vela e sanza governo, portato a diversi porti e foci e liti dal vento secco che vapora la dolorosa povertade'.

[51] Hooper, Laurence. 2012. 'Dante's "Convivio", Book 1: Metaphor, Exile, "Epochē"', *MLN*, 127 (5), S86-S104.

for most of their work, and the peculiarity of their subjective experience of past events translates into a life experience, albeit with two different modalities. Exclusion from the city and the alienation derived from this can be read in at least three ways: civic/political, amorous, and religious. Hence, this deep feeling of psychological alienation can be considered polysemic, and it facilitates the building of two specific authorial and poetic identities.

1.4 Friendship in Dante and Cino's poetics

The theme of friendship in Dante has been broadly studied because it is employed widely and deeply in his works.[52] The idea of friendship necessarily involves the presence of a dialogue with others. Friendship encapsulates the idea of 'dialogicità', within which the exchange between Dante and his friends – especially those who have a specific role in his life – take place.[53] The relationships between Dante and his fellow poets were, during his career, fruitful in terms of creating his poetic identity and, more generally, for his poetic, moral and philosophical development.

To understand Cino's relationship with Dante we must also look at Dante's relationship with others. Forese Donati is another example of a friendship that is meaningful to Dante, exemplified by the *tenzone* they exchanged and for the encounter Dante-pilgrim has with him (*Purgatorio* XXIII-XXIV), which represents a case of palinode. The friendship that Dante has with Cino plays a significant role in defining and shaping Dante's poetics, but this relationship cannot be understood deeply and comprehensively if we do not contextualise it along with the numerous other examples of friendship that Dante makes in his life as well as in the *fictio* of his works. Close dialogue with friends is a constant trait in Dante, so the dialogue with Cino is not a unique occurrence in Dante's works; on the contrary, Dante makes the dialogue with others and, above all, with friends, the cypher of his poetic development. Despite this

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[52] For an account of the ways in which friendship, in its multiple facets, is employed in Dante, see the following bibliography: Mazzei, Vincenzo. 1987. *Dante e i suoi amici nella 'Divina Commedia'* (Milan: Nuovi Autori); Mazzaro, Jerome. 1991. 'From "fin amour" to friendship: Dante's transformation', in *The olde daunce. Love, friendship, sex, and marriage in the Medieval world*, ed. by Robert R. Edwards and Stephen Spector (Albany: State University of New York Press), pp. 121-137; Armour, Peter. 2011. 'Friends and patrons', in *Dante in Oxford. The Paget Toynbee Lectures*, ed. by Tristan Kay, Martin McLaughlin and Michelangelo Zaccarello (Oxford: Legenda), pp. 102-130; Raffa, Guy P. 2012. 'A Beautiful Friendship: Dante and Vergil in the "Commedia"', *Modern Language Notes*, CXXVII, pp. 72-80; Barolini, Teodolinda. 2015. *'Amicus eius': Dante and the Semantics of Friendship* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press); Modesto. 2015; Coggeshall, Elizabeth A. 2023. *On Amistà: Negotiating Friendship in Dante's Italy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press).
[53] On the concept of 'dialogicità' see Giunta. 2021, p. 57.

fact, among these many (fictional and real) friends of Dante, Cino's role is privileged because he is chosen among all of Dante's other friends to be Dante's favourite interlocutor.

At the same time, this bond of friendship does not imply a total agreement with the other – on the contrary, this close bond with the other implies a process of growth. This discussion and, sometimes, confrontation and disagreement, creates and develops a new space of thought, while keeping the bond alive and prolific. Even the idea of friendship which emerges from the *Commedia* has these features. Dante has a friendly relationship with many people, some examples being, his friendship with Virgil, which serves particular functions, and Dante's friendships with people in hell.[54] Therefore, Dante employs this bond with other people or characters to grow through disagreement and form spaces – even if Dante marks a detachment between him and his friends, the bond between them remains an active interaction which still shapes Dante's thoughts and poetry.

With specific regard to Dante's relationship with Cino, the concept of friendship could be read as an aspect which unites all of the phases of their relationship. Their exchange is not just a poetic exchange but involves a real relationship which should not be dealt with anachronistically, as it is rooted in the real life of these poets. Dante and Cino are not tied together by a poetic exchange alone: this exchange is underlined by a biographic friendship thanks to which this close relationship, and thus dialogue, is possible. Moreover, exploring the theme of friendship in the dialogue between Dante and Cino is beneficial, as it highlights that this concept should not be viewed anachronistically. Instead, it shows that that friendship holds significant meaning for Dante and his contemporaries. In this work my aim is not to demonstrate that the relationship between Dante and Cino is unique; rather, due to the cultural, and social context of their time, Dante and his contemporaries have the chance to engage with many personalities, thanks to the exchange of texts. Despite this, Dante's dialogue and relationship with Cino provide an opportunity to discuss a series of issues, themes and aspects which remain fruitful and fertile along their careers.

Looking at the classical and medieval sources which must be considered influential in both Dante and Cino's poetic and cultural development, a common ground that ties

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[54] See Mazzei. 1987; Sebastio, Leonardo. 1995. 'Da "Guido i' vorrei" alla "Commedia". Un tema dantesco: l'amicizia', *Critica Letteraria*, 23, LXXXVI-LXXXVII (1-2), pp. 347-363; Raffa. 2012.

them is the interplay of these two types of sources, which renders the idea of reconciling earthly love and sacred love. It is crucial to look at the major sources that shaped, influenced, and informed Dante's notion of friendship. It is also important to stress that when it comes to friendship, this concept is not just meant in a literary sense, but it is rooted and grounded in real life, in real relationships with others. Therefore, Dante's idea of friendship is shaped through a mixture of literary, philosophical, and biographic features. This aspect is touched upon even in one of the poet's most influential sources, Cicero's *De Amicitia*. Cicero partly aligns with Aristotle's notion of friendship; in that he stresses that virtue is necessary for both friends and is what leads to friendship. According to Cicero, friends are attracted to each other because of each other's virtue, which becomes an altruistic act for the other.[55] Taking this perspective into account, I do not find it plausible that, at least until the years of the *De vulgari eloquentia* and the *Convivio*, Dante wants to stress a dissimilarity instead of a similarity when he refers to Cino. Similarity is, again, an essential trait which makes friendship happen; hence, a tight proximity is intrinsic in the notion of a friend (again, I think of the expression 'amicus eius' of the *De vulgari eloquentia*). Lastly, Cicero explains the reasons why friendship can dissolve. Among these, he mentions when political dissent occurs or when a friend's moral conduct diminishes.[56]

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[55] Modesto, pp. 45-46.

[56] Modesto, p. 49. *De Amicitia* V 19-20: 'Sic enim mihi perspicere videor, ita natos esse nos ut inter omnes esset societas quaedam, maior autem ut quisque proxime accederet. Itaque cives potiores quam peregrini, propinqui quam alieni; cum his enim amicitiam natura ipsa peperit; sed ea non satis habet firmitatis. Namque hoc praestat amicitia propinquitati, quod ex propinquitate benevolentia tolli potest, ex amicitia non potest; sublata enim benevolentia amicitiae nomen tollitur, propinquitatis manet. Quanta autem vis amicitiae sit, ex hoc intellegi maxime potest, quod ex infinita societate generis humani, quam conciliavit ipsa natura, ita contracta res est et adducta in angustum ut omnis caritas aut inter duos aut inter paucos iungeretur' [For it seems clear to me that we were so created that between us all there exists a certain tie which strengthens with our proximity to each other. Therefore, fellow countrymen are preferred to foreigners and relatives to strangers, for with them Nature herself engenders friendship, but it is one that is lacking in constancy. For friendship excels relationship in this, that goodwill may be eliminated from relationship while from friendship it cannot; since, if you remove goodwill from friendship the very name of friendship is gone; if you remove it from relationship, the name of relation-ship still remains. Moreover, how great the power of friendship is may most clearly be recognized from the fact that, in comparison with the infinite ties uniting the human race and fashioned by Nature herself, this thing called friendship has been so narrowed that the bonds of affection always united two persons only, or, at most, a few]; XXI, 76: 'Est etiam quaedam calamitas in amicitiis dimittendis non numquam necessaria; iam enim a sapientium familiaritatibus ad vulgares amicitias oratio nostra delabitur. Erumpunt saepe vitia amicorum tum in ipsos amicos, tum in alienos, quorum tamen ad amicos redundet infamia' [Furthermore, there is a sort of disaster in connexion with breaking off friendships – for now our discussion descends from the intimacies of the wise to friendships of the ordinary kind – which is sometimes unavoidable. There are often in friends outbreaks of vice which affect sometimes their actual friends, sometimes strangers, yet so that the infamy of the evil flows over on to the friends]; XXII, 82-84: 'Sed plerique perverse, ne dicam impudenter, habere talem amicum volunt, quales ipsi esse non possunt, quaeque ipsi non tribuunt amicis, haec ab iis desiderant. Par est autem primum ipsum esse

The reality of the Middle Ages is distant from modern and contemporary cultural schemes, thus it is necessary to identify and state the fundamental elements which characterised this historic period. This allows us to avoid the risk of reading the works of Dante, Cino, and their contemporaries with an anachronistic lens. Regarding the notion of friendship, philosophy becomes the means by which identifying the link between love and friendship is possible: 'Love strengthens the bond of friendship and bridges the gap between the human and the divine'.[57] With Augustine, Christian friendship was defined as a value which can take place only in the presence of God, through *caritas* ('charity'), which will become the cypher of Christian friendship.[58] An intermediary figure who sits between the classical and Christian era is Boethius.[59] In this regard, it is fruitful to focus on how the value of friendship is read and defined in the Middle Ages. In order to do so, Aelred of Rievaulx's *Spiritual Friendship* is a useful point of reference. Even though Aelred's text is monastic-focused, it allows us

virum bonum, tum alterum similem sui quaerere. In talibus ea, quam iam dudum tractamus, stabilitas amicitiae confirmari potest, cum homines benevolentia coniuncti primum cupiditatibus iis quibus ceteri serviunt imperabunt, deinde aequitate iustitiaque gaudebunt, omniaque alter pro altero suscipiet, neque quicquam umquam nisi honestum et rectum alter ab altero postulabit, neque solum colent inter se ac diligent sed etiam verebuntur. Nam maximum ornamentum amicitiae tollit qui ex ea tollit verecundiam. Itaque in iis perniciosus est error qui existimant libidinum peccatorumque omnium patere in amicitia licentiam; virtutum amicitia adiutrix a natura data est, non vitiorum comes, ut, quoniam solitaria non posset virtus ad ea, quae summa sunt, pervenire, coniuncta et consociata cum altera perveniret. Quae si quos inter societas aut est aut fuit aut futura est, eorum est habendus ad summum naturae bonum optumus beatissimusque comitatus. Haec est, inquam, societas, in qua omnia insunt, quae putant homines expetenda, honestas, gloria, tranquillitas animi atque iucunditas, ut et, cum haec adsint, beata vita sit et sine his esse non possit' [But most men unreasonably, not to say shamelessly, want a friend to be such as they cannot be themselves and require from friends what they themselves do not bestow. But the fair thing is, first of all, to be a good man yourself and then to seek another like yourself. It is among such men that this stability of friendship, of which I have been treating for some time, may be made secure; and when united by ties of goodwill, they will first of all subdue those passions to which other men are slaves; and, next, they will delight in what is equitable and accords with law, and will go to all lengths for each other; they will not demand from each other anything unless it is honourable and just, and they will not only cherish and love, but they will also revere, each other. For he who takes reverence from friendship, takes away its brightest jewel. Therefore a fatal mistake is made by those who think that friendship opens wide the door to every passion and to every sin. Friendship was given to us by nature as the handmaid of virtue, not as a comrade of vice; because virtue cannot attain her highest aims unattended, but only in union and fellowship with another. Such a partnership as this, whether it is, or was, or is yet to be, should be considered the best and happiest comradeship along the road to nature's highest good. In such a partnership, I say, abide all things that men deem worthy of pursuit – honour and fame and delightful tranquillity of mind; so that when these blessings are at hand life is happy, and without them, it cannot be happy].

[57] Modesto, p. 60.
[58] Modesto, pp. 63-64. *Confessions* IV iv: 'quamquam ne tum quidem sic, uti est vera amicitia, quia non est vera, nisi cum eam tu agglutinas inter haerentes sibi caritate diffusa in cordibus nostris per spiritum sanctum, qui datus est nobis' [true friendship should be indeed: for true it cannot be, unless thou solderest it betwixt such parties as cleave together, by that love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us].
[59] Modesto, p. 59.

to understand religious and cultural aspects of the thirteenth century and, again, it provides insights into the relationship between the sacred and the profane. The oeuvre is a Christian counterpart to Cicero's *De Amicitia* and it is about a quest for spiritual friendship, applied to a monastic context, to ask what the purpose of friendship is in spiritual life. Some argued that if you were a monk or in a religious community you should not have friendships because you should be devoted to God and humanity on an equal basis. Having a friendship on earth which is too strong could prevent one from serving all of one's spiritual functions. This is thus an interesting source to understand how friendship and its moral value were perceived in the period that Dante and Cino inhabit. In particular, Aelred thinks that favouritism is dangerous within the monastic community.[60] Even though the text was quite widely circulated in Europe, I

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[60] Aelred of Rievaulx: 'Primo ponendum est solidum quoddam ipsius spiritalis amoris fundamentum, in quo eius sunt collocanda principia; ut sic recta quis linea ad eius altiora conscendens, ne fundamentum neglegat vel excedat, maximam cautelam adhibeat. Fundamentum illud Dei amor est; ad quem omnia, quae vel amor suggerit vel affectus; omnia, quae vel occulte aliquis spiritus, vel palam quilibet suadet amicus referenda sunt, diligenter que inspiciendum, ut quidquid astruitur fundamento conveniat, et quidquid illud excedere deprehenditur, ad eius formam revocandum, et secundum eius qualitatem omnimodis corrigendum non dubites. […] Stabilis enim debet esse amicitia, et quamdam aeternitatis speciem praeferre, semper perseverans in affectu' [First one must lay a solid foundation for spiritual love, on which its principles should be built. Thus anyone rising on a straight line to its higher stories should use the greatest caution not to neglect or stray from the foundation. That foundation is the love of God, to which everyone must be referred – everything whether suggested by love or by affection; everything, whether pleaded secretly by some spirit or openly by some friend. One must carefully consider whether whatever is added fits the foundation and whether whatever is seen to exceed it is trimmed to suit its shape. One must not hesitate to correct all the details on its model. […] *For friendship should be steadfast*, and by being *unwearied in affection*, it should present an image of eternity] (p. 89); 'Cernitis ergo quatuor gradus, quibus ad amicitiae perfectionem conscenditur; quorum primus est electio, secundus probatio, tertius admissio, quartus rerum divinarum et humanarum cum quadam caritate et benevolentia summa consensio' [You notice then the four steps that lead to the perfection of friendship. The first is choice, the second testing, the third acceptance, and the fourth the highest *agreement in things divine and human with* a certain *charity and good will*] (p. 90); 'Ipse Dominus ac salvator noster verae nobis amicitiae formam praescripsit: "Diliges, inquiens, proximum tuum sicut te ipsum" (Matth. XXII, 39). En speculum: diligis te ipsum. Ita plane, si Deum diligis; si nempe talis es, qualem in amicitiam eligendum descripsimus. Aliquam, rogo, a te ipso, huius tuae dilectionis mercedem iudicas exigendam? Minime profecto; sed quod per se sibi quisque carus est. Nisi igitur et tu hunc ipsum in alium transferas affectum, gratis amicum diligens, eo quod per se carus tibi videatur amicus, quid vera sapiat amicitia non poteris' [Our Lord and Savior himself traced the image of true friendship for us when he said, '*love your neighbor as yourself*'. Here is the mirror: love yourself. Yes, clearly, if you love God and are someone suitable for friendship, like those we described earlier. Now tell me: do you conclude that some reward should be exacted from yourself? Not at all, because by nature, all are dear to themselves. Therefore, unless you transfer this affection to another, freely loving a friend simply because that person seems to you to be a dear friend by nature, you cannot taste true friendship] (p. 104); 'Plerosque omni affectu complectimur, quos tamen ad amicitiae secreta non admittimus, quae maxime in omnium secretorum et consiliorum nostrorum revelatione consistit. Unde Dominus in Evangelio: "Iam non dicam vos servos, sed amicos" (Ioan. XV, 15); causam que subiungens qua amici nomine digni haberentur: "Quia omnia, inquit, quae audivi a patre meo nota feci vobis" (Ioan. XV, 15). Et alias: "Vos amici meis estis, si feceritis quae praecipio vobis" (Ioan. XV, 14)' [With all affection I

cannot state that it was read by Dante or Cino, but I can assume, at least, that this oeuvre provides useful elements which are indicative of how friendship was perceived in the Middle Ages. In any case, the text and the oeuvre help to define the concept of friendship in the cultural and spiritual world Dante and Cino inherit and inhabit. Aelred is challenging himself to think about what this notion means in a Christian context, questioning how interpersonal friendships can still occur if we love God above all else. This text provides insight into how the medieval idea of friendship was perceived. In addition, these Christian sources from the Middle Ages offer a more concrete and less ideal point of view on the concept of friendship and how it was commonly perceived at the time.

Among Christian sources that must be identified, the Bible is an important source. There are a number of passages that effectively render the idea of friendship: Luke 14. 10 and John 15. 12-17 – this last passage constitutes a parenthesis focused on friendship within the last supper.[61] Intimacy is an aspect that is particular to friendship. Being friends with Jesus creates an intimacy with him, as he shares the secrets of his heart. Proximity and communion derive from friendship. God is secret, is beyond reality and Christ is the key to arrive at this secret. Love and intimacy go through dialogue, communicating together, being in a relationship. This is why the relationship of friendship avoids slavery.

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embrace many whom I do not admit into the intimacies of friendship, which consists especially in communicating all my secrets and aspirations. The Lord says in the Gospel, '*I will no longer call you servants, buy friends*'. Then, adding the reason for which friends are considered worthy of the of the name, he says, '*because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father*'. And elsewhere, '*you are my friends if you do what I command you*'] (p. 108).

[61] Luke 14. 10: 'Sed cum vocatus fueris, vade, recumbe in novissimo loco, ut, cum venerit qui te invitavit, dicat tibi: "Amice, ascende superius"' [Rather, when you are invited, go and take the lowest place so that when the host comes to you he may say, 'My friend, move up to a higher position'. Then you will enjoy the esteem of your companions at the table]; John 15. 12-17: 'Hoc est praeceptum meum, ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos; maiorem hac dilectionem nemo habet, ut animam suam quis ponat pro amicis suis. Vos amici mei estis, si feceritis, quae ego praecipio vobis. Iam non dico vos servos, quia servus nescit quid facit dominus eius; vos autem dixi amicos, quia omnia, quae audivi a Patre meo, nota feci vobis. Non vos me elegistis, sed ego elegi vos et posui vos, ut vos eatis et fructum afferatis, et fructus vester maneat, ut quodcumque petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, det vobis. Haec mando vobis, ut diligatis invicem' [This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another].

It is acknowledged that Dante did not read the Bible commentaries, but preachers of his time had access to some of the commentaries and preached in Florence.[62] This kind of popular preaching may give a sense of the influence and reception of the above-mentioned Bible passages. Analysing the preachers of Dante's time is useful to understanding the extent that these passages were well-known in Florence. This type of analysis allows one to think about the wider audience, as it is an important form of mediation in terms of theological culture but also classical culture.[63] In the essay *A Classicising Friar in Dante's Florence: Servasanto da Faenza, Dante and the Ethics of Friendship*, Nicolò Maldina focuses on the reception of the Classics in Dante, through the works of Servasanto da Faenza, a preacher active in the convent of Santa Croce in Florence at the end of thirteenth century.[64] In particular, in his sermons, Servasanto focuses on the Gospel of Luke, while keeping Cicero's *De Amicitia* as a fixed point of reference. Servasanto dwells upon the friendship between St.

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[62] For further insights on this issue, refer to: Barblan, Giovanni. 1988. *Dante e la Bibbia* (Florence: Olschki); Hawkins, Peter S. 1999. *Dante's Testaments: Essays in Scriptural Imagination* (Stanford: Stanford University Press); 2007. 'Dante and the Bible', in *The Cambridge Companion to Dante*, ed. by Rachel Jacoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 120-135.

[63] We know that quite frequently this topic was preached in Florence. I verified which sermons were preached in Florence in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, starting from the verses I take into account (Luke 14. 10 and John 15. 12-17). By looking at Schneyer, Johannes B. 1969-90. *Repertorium der Lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit von 1150-1350*. 11 vols (Münster: Aschendorff), which covers only preaching in Latin, I found the following occurrences: *Amice, ascende superius* (Luc. 14. 10) – Proposita verba diriguntur ad vere et perfecte se humiliantem … talis est dilectus meus et iste est amicus meus. Rogemus… [Florenz, Laurent, Plut. XIX. 29 p. 134-163 (XIV saec.)]; *Amice, ascende superius* (Luc. 14.10) – Magna consolatio est homini, quando videt se a convicinis et amicis honorari et diligi… miraculum episcopi et alia de eius legenda. [Florenz, Naz. B. 2. 1026 (XIV saec.)]; *Hoc est praeceptum meum* (Joh. 15. 11) – Si quis vult discere subtilem scientiam, quod habeat subtilem magistrum et in illa scientia perfectum… intelligat praeceptum, papas sequatur exemplum. [Florenz, Naz. B. 2. 1026 (XIV saec.)]; *Ego elegi vos* (Joh. 15. 19) – Salvator noster verba proposita dicit Dei scil. Simoni et Judae, et omnibus, quia quod uni dico, omnibus dico… non sine magno mysterio, procede ut vis. Rogemus… [Florenz, Naz. B. 2. 1026 (XIV saec.)]; *Ego elegi vos* (Joh. 15. 19) – Salvator noster verba proposita dicit Dei scil. Simoni et Judae, et omnibus, quia quod uni dico, omnibus dico… non sine magno mysterio, procede ut vis. Rogemus… [Florenz, Naz. B. 2. 1026 (XIV saec.)]; *Vos amici mei estis* (Joh. 15. 14) – *Suscita amicum tuum* (Prov. 6. 3) – In verbis secundo propositis informatur praedicator...ut in perpetuum cum ipso in gloria mereamur coronari [Florenz, Naz. II. XI. 17 (XIV saec.)]; *Hoc est praeceptum meum* (Joh. 15. 11) – Consuetudo huius mundi est, ut civitatibus et congregationibus et etiam religiosis leges imponantur; *Hoc est praeceptum meum* (Joh. 15. 11) – DJ mittens apostolus in exercitum contra diabolum, in quo necessaria est concordia. Instead, preaching in the vernacular during Dante's time, the most important source is Jordan of Pisa's corpus, which I examined in the following bibliography: Delcorno, Carlo. 1975. *Giordano da Pisa e l'antica predicazione in volgare* (Florence: Olschki); Jordan of Pisa. 1997. *Prediche inedite (dal ms. Laurenziano, Acquisti e Doni 290)*, ed. by Cecilia Iannella (Pisa: ETS); 1974. *Quaresimale fiorentino, 1305-1306*, ed. by Carlo Delcorno (Florence: Sansoni). However, no extensive results emerged regarding the biblical verses I analysed.

[64] Maldina, Nicolò. 2019. 'A Classicising Friar in Dante's Florence: Servasanto da Faenza, Dante and the Ethics of Friendship', in *Ethics, Politics and Justice in Dante*, ed. by Giulia Gaimari and Catherine Keen (London: UCL Press), pp. 30-45.

Bartholomew and Christ and introduces the concept of friendship.[65] Maldina then refers back to Beatrice's words in *Inferno* II, 61 ('l'amico mio, e non de la ventura'): he shows that, as Beatrice is the one who allows, along with Saint Lucy and the Virgin, Dante to undertake his journey in the Afterlife, this means that the friendship with Beatrice implies friendship with God.[66]

There are significant differences between classical and Christian notions of friendship. These differences can be identified 'within the interplay between reason and faith, philosophy and theology';[67] moreover, *caritas* ('charity') and faith in Christ are the fundamental characteristics of Christian friendship, as it is 'an activity by means of which an individual is first drawn towards another individual from a love of

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[65] Maldina, p. 31.
[66] Maldina, p. 38. About John 15. 12-17, commentaries from Church Fathers may provide a more comprehensive understanding on the topic of friendship. I am referring, for instance, to the passages which follow: Ambrose, *De officiis* III xxii 136: 'Ipse nos Deus amicos ex servulis facit, sicut ipse ait: "Iam vos amici mei estis, si feceritis quae ego praecipio vobis" (Ioan. XV, 14). Dedit formam amicitiae quam sequamur, ut faciamus amici voluntatem, ut aperiamus secreta nostra amico quaecumque in pectore habemus, et illius arcana non ignoremus. Ostendamus illi nos pectus nostrum, et ille nobis aperiat suum. "Ideo", inquit, "vos dixi amicos, quia omnia quaecumque audivi a Patre meo, nota feci vobis" (Ioan. XV, 14). Nihil ergo occultat amicus, si verus est: effundit animum suum, sicut effundebat mysteria Patris Dominus Iesus' [God himself makes us his friends, though we are really the very lowliest of his servants. He says Himself: 'Now you are my friends, if you do what I command you'. He has given us the pattern of friendship we should follow: we are to do whatever our friend wishes, open up to our friend every last secret we have in our heart, and not be unaware of his innermost thoughts either. We must show him our heart, and he must open his heart to us. 'I have called you friends', Jesus says, 'because everything I have heard from my Father I have made known to you'. A friend hides nothing, then, if he is true: he pours out his heart, just as the Lord Jesus poured out the mysteries of the Father]; Augustine, *In Evangelium Joannis Tractatus CXXIV* LXXXV: 'Cum Dominus Iesus commendasset caritatem quam exhibuit nobis moriendo pro nobis, atque dixisset: "Maiorem hac dilectionem nemo habet, ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis: Vos, inquit, amici mei estis, si feceritis quae ego praecipio vobis". Magna dignatio! cum servus bonus esse non possit, nisi praecepta domini sui fecerit; hinc amicos suos voluit intelligi, unde servi boni possunt probari. Sed, ut dixi, ista dignatio est, ut dominus quos novit servos suos, dignetur dicere amicos suos. Nam ut sciatis ad servorum officium pertinere praecepta domini sui facere, alio loco servos utique obiurgat dicens: "Quid autem vocatis me, Domine, Domine, et non facitis quae dico?" Cum ergo dicitis, inquit, Domine; iussa faciendo, quid dicatis ostendite. Nonne servo obedienti ipse dicturus est: "Euge, serve bone, quia in paucis fuisti fidelis, supra multa te constituam; intra in gaudium Domini tui?" Potest igitur esse servus et amicus, qui servus est bonus' [When the Lord Jesus had commended the love which He manifested toward us in dying for us, and had said, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends', He added, 'Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you'. What great condescension! when one cannot even be a good servant unless he do his lord's commandments; the very means, which only prove men to be good servants, He wished to be those whereby His friends should be known. But the condescension, as I have termed it, is this, that the Lord condescends to call those His friends whom He knows to be His servants. For, to let us know that it is the duty of servants to yield obedience to their master's commands, He actually in another place reproaches those who are servants, by saying, 'And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?' Accordingly, when ye say Lord, prove what you say by doing my commandments. Is it not to the obedient servant that He is yet one day to say, 'Well done, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?' One, therefore, who is a good servant, can be both servant and friend].
[67] Modesto, p. 73.

the good present in him and then ultimately drawn to God, who is the source of all good'.[68]

Conclusion

In conclusion, the aim of this chapter was to elucidate the concept of friendship which helped shape Dante's poetic relationships. I clarified what is meant by friendship, looking at both the classical and Christian sources which constitute a cultural paradigm, and the context the poets inhabit and in which they develop their ideas, thoughts, and ideals. The theme of friendship in Dante cannot be abstracted from the social, cultural, and political reality he experienced and lived in. Thinking in terms of key themes which play an important role in the relationship between Dante and Cino enabled me to think about the bond between them, and to cast light on the aspects which are unique to their relationship. In this thesis, the aspects of reciprocity and the reasons for ending a friendship may be fruitful in terms of further understanding the relationship between Dante and Cino and the way this ultimately emerges in the *Commedia*.

Both Classical and Christian sources play a decisive role in the development of Dante's works. Therefore, the idea of friendship, which both Dante and Cino inherit and internalise, is the result of a polyhedric tradition. Dialogue becomes the means through which this relationship may happen. By bringing together social ties and networks, with the classical and Christian sources that helped shape Dante's and Cino's formation, we can develop a much fuller understanding of the poets' idea of friendship.

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[68] Modesto, p. 74.

CHAPTER 2.

The First Phase of the Relationship:
the *consolatoria* for the Death of Beatrice
and the First Part of the *tenzone*

The aim of this chapter is to outline the initial phase of the relationship between Dante Alighieri and Cino da Pistoia, beginning with a study of the earliest texts they composed in response to one another.[1] I explore how the exchange between Dante and Cino encompasses a broad range of themes, including death, love, the dichotomy between sacred and profane love, consolation, and the use of 'beatrice' as a common noun. The exchange allows them to construct a vocabulary for discussing these issues, in parallel with the development of their poetic styles and methods. By exploring how these themes unfold in their dialogue, I demonstrate that they not only integrate but also redefine the various traditions they engage with. I focus on the key aspects of the first phase of the exchange, illustrating how the discussions and literary contributions made in this period shape their intellectual and poetic practices. I shed light on how Dante's poetic development finds a unique literary space in Cino's work, and I argue that Cino plays an active role in shaping Dante's poetic development. This phase of their relationship marks an experimental moment, where both poets draw on a layered tradition and engage in a dialogue of deep intellectual and poetic significance. My analysis reveals how this exchange influences both poets and provides new insights into their respective works. This exploration uncovers the originality of their engagement, underscoring the impact of their dialogue on their poetics.

In terms of methodology, at the heart of my investigation is a combination of close reading and critical analysis of the themes and key features emerging from the texts. This methodological choice enables me to think about the relationship between Dante and Cino as an evolving process, which is shaped around different phases of both authors' biographic and poetic lives. Accordingly, I put the texts at the centre of the analysis, taking them as a starting point to develop further considerations on the topics, themes and concepts that play a crucial role in this dialogue. Despite uncertainties

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[1] The texts under discussion are *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo* (Cino), *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice* (Dante), and *I' ho veduto già senza radice* (Dante).

regarding the chronology of the first poems, there are thematic and conceptual features, emerging from the first texts of the *tenzone*, that demonstrate that Dante and Cino belong, at this stage, to a world which is culturally, intellectually and, above all, poetically akin.[2] Therefore, this second chapter endeavours to describe the features and characteristics of the intellectual world Dante and Cino inhabited, understood through the earliest texts of their exchange. This choice is particularly fruitful in demonstrating that at least two phases of the exchange can be clearly identified.

2.1 Texts examined

In this thesis, I consider the consolatory *canzone* that Cino writes on the death of Beatrice – *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo* – a text that begins the dialogue between Dante and Cino. In truth, the sonnet *Naturalmente chere ogni amadore* is an antecedent to the *consolatoria*, but the authorship of this sonnet remains uncertain.[3] For this reason, I choose to focus on the first text that we can be certain is an exchange between Dante and Cino, in order to provide a solid investigation on the topic, by avoiding uncertainties of attribution that could reduce the efficacy of my research.[4] After the first contact, Cino begins the *tenzone* with the sonnet *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*: this can be considered a sort of extension, an appendix to the consolatory poem, in terms of tone and the themes applied. Indeed, the themes at the centre of the

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[2] Despite the fact that the chronological order of the poems is widely accepted, there is still discord regarding the collocation of the following sonnets: *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice* (Cino), *I' ho veduto già senza radice* (Dante), *Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia* (Cino), *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni* (Dante), and *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni* (Cino).

[3] The beginning of the relationship between Dante and Cino is conventionally recognised in the *canzone* written by Cino for the death of Beatrice, *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*. According to some scholars, the sonnet *Naturalmente chere ogni amadore*, in reply to Dante's *A ciascun'alma presa e gentil core* (*Vn* III 10-12), would be the first explicit poetic exchange between the two. If it is true that it was written in 1283, Cino writes the sonnet at a very young age, as he was born in *c*. 1270. In any case, we cannot deny that the sonnet *Naturalmente chere ogni amadore* is attributed to Cino in part of the tradition. The Chigiano L VIII 305 codex (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana) – the codex in which the majority of Cino's poems have been transmitted – attributes this sonnet to Cino, while the Codex Magliabelchiano VII 1060 attributes it to Terino da Castelfiorentino. See Pazzaglia, Mario. 1970. 'Naturalmente chere ogni amadore', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), IV, p. 19. Among others, Pinto, following Picone, reinforces the thesis according to which the sonnet *Naturalmente chere* must be dated later, and so attributed to an older Cino (*c*. 1287). See Pinto, Raffaele. 2016. '"Naturalmente chere ogne amadore" e il dialogo fra Cino, Dante e Guido', in *Cino da Pistoia nella storia della poesia italiana*, pp. 61-74. For further critical reference, see Ruggiero, Federico. 2016. 'Per la paternità di "Naturalmente chere ogni amadore": questioni antiche e nuovi rilievi', *Carte romanze*, IV/1, pp. 181-208; Rigo, Paolo. 2017. 'Il sonetto conteso: la storia di "Naturalmente chere ogne amadore" tra testo, contesto e finzione', *Cuadernos de Filología Italiana*, XXIV, pp. 115-130.

[4] I consider these reasons valid even for other texts of doubtful authorship that may be attributed to Cino. I discuss this extensively in chapter 5.

poem are the same themes that underlie the *consolatoria*: consolation, grief, loss of the beloved; even the tone recreates a similar atmosphere. I argue that Cino's intention for this sonnet is to create a *continuum* to the major themes touched upon in the *consolatio* and, therefore, also in the *Vita nova*. I assume that the first sonnets of the *tenzone* set and follow the path traced by the *consolatoria*, by employing the same empathetic and thematic scheme.

Cino's *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice* receives the very first response from Dante with his *I' ho veduto già senza radice*. After these first sonnets, the *tenzone* seems to pause and, probably, a consistent amount of time passes before Dante responds.[5] In addition, another three sonnets may be considered as a part of the dialogue between Dante and Cino, even if they are not, in effect, considered to be a part of the *tenzone*. The first of these, *Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia*, is evidently addressed to Dante, while the other two sonnets, *Novelle non di veritate ignude* and *Amico, s'egualmente mi ricange*, have uncertain addressees.[6] Having said that, my choice is not only to analyse the first two sonnets of the *tenzone*, but also *Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia*, as it may be considered a complementary source to understanding the first stage of the exchange. Indeed, *Dante, i' ho preso* aligns with the tone and themes discussed in *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice* and *I' ho veduto già senza radice*.

2.2 Key features

Now that I have clarified the cultural and poetic areas that Cino and Dante occupied, in respect of the first part of their relationship and careers, it is fruitful to identify the major themes inherent in the first part of their exchange. The dialogue is situated coherently in the poetic milieu started with Guido Cavalcanti, that Cino, Dante, but also Guido Guinizzelli, and other major poets of the time, represent. This poetic tendency is characterised by considering love and the beloved woman as the central topic; this aspect originally dates back to courtly love poetry, in terms of style, themes, and conventions. Among these features, for instance, the idea of *amor de lonh*, of the far-away love, that deprives the lover of her attention, is part of a code inherited from

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[5] For a possible chronology of the *tenzone*, see Pasquini. 2010.
[6] See Contini. 1960, pp. 649; Marti. 1969, pp. 689-692 and pp. 699-700; Pasquini. 2010, p. 3; Ruggiero, Federico. 2021. 'A proposito di Cino "detrattore" di Dante', *Per Leggere. I Generi della Lettura*, XXVI/41, pp. 107-133.

the courtly tradition, a generative matrix of this poetic current.[7] This idea develops until it reaches the poetics of the 'stil novo', a label that critics would later apply, taking it from Dante's definition in *Purgatorio* XXIV (57).[8] The expression became popular to describe the poetic current of the community to which Dante and Cino belong. Despite the limiting nature of this label, it is useful for identifying the most frequently used themes that this poetic style promotes, and thus the ways in which different poets adapted them in their individual works, as well as in their exchanges with each other.

Another thematic and semantic area which is definitive in Dante and Cino's poetic works is death. As Cino deeply understands the role that Beatrice's death had for his friend, Cino sets the *incipit* of the dialogue with Dante around grief, as a way to console his friend. The death of Beatrice represents, for Dante's entire oeuvre, a crucial watershed; this fact plays a fundamental role in his early works, but also, re-read and reframed with a new meaning, in the later phase of his career. Death is a constant in Cino's work as well, and this emerges from many of his sonnets – especially through the original figure of the woman dressed in mourning clothes – which focus on the dichotomy between Love and Death or Life and Death. The fact that Cino sets the

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[7] The pioneer of the topos of *amor de lonh* is Jaufré Rudel (*c.* 1125-1148), one of the most important proponents at the very beginning of troubadour lyric. His poetry is also influenced by his personal life, indeed one of his most famous love-songs took inspiration from the journey towards the Holy Land, as he took part in a Crusade, and he died during it. Cfr. Zingarelli, Nicola. 1936. 'Rudel, Jaufré', in *Enciclopedia Treccani* <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/jaufre-rudel/>; cfr. Harvey, Ruth. 1999. 'Courtly culture in medieval Occitania', in *The troubadours: an introduction*, ed. by Sarah Kay and Simon Gaunt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 8-27 (p. 9). In his *Lanquan li jorn*, Jaufré Rudel introduces the topic of love towards a woman (a princess) never or only once seen, 'thereby prefiguring Dante's love for Beatrice and the Italian tradition'. This topic of the far-away love would have been defined as the quintessence of courtly love. Cfr. Nichols, Stephen G. 1999. 'The early troubadours: Guilhem IX to Bernart de Ventadorn', in *The troubadours: an introduction*, ed. by Sarah Kay Sarah and Simon Gaunt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 66-82 (p. 67). The difference is that Dante does see Beatrice, and more than just once, as the *Vita nova* describes. Dante's love for Beatrice is, initially, based on her presence (indeed on his receiving her greeting) but it becomes a sort of *amor de lonh* after her death, when she is not just put on a pedestal but put on the highest and most unreachable pedestal possible, in Heaven. For further reference to courtly culture in the French context, see Dronke, Peter. 1965. *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press); Moore, John. 1979. '"Courtly Love": A Problem of Terminology', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 40, pp. 621-632; Jaeger, Stephen. 1985. *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939-1210* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press); Hult, David. 1996. 'Gaston Paris and the Invention of Courtly Love', in *Medievalism and the Modernist Temper*, ed. by R. Howard Bloch and Stephen G. Nichols (Baltimore, MD & London: Johns Hopkins University Press), pp. 193-224; Kay, Sarah. 2000. 'Courts, Clerks, and Courtly Love', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, ed. by Roberta L. Krueger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 81-96.
[8] The introduction of this label to describe this poetic current dates back to Francesco De Sanctis's work: 1870. *Storia della letteratura italiana* (Naples: Antonio Morano).

tenzone around Beatrice's death, a fundamental event in Dante's life and career, and gives this event such a significant role, are the key features that create a unique bond between the poets.

Among other themes which are present in Cino's and Dante's works, is the dichotomy between sacred love and profane love, which plays a major structural role in the composition of the dialogue between them. The contrast between *eros* and *ethos* is present in the first phase of the exchange. This contrast will constitute one of the lenses through which we can read the divergence that will create distance between Dante and Cino and that will lead to an end of the exchange. The nucleus joining love and death is a thematic core, as well as the theme of consolation.

2.3 Consolation

A key moment in the relationship between Dante and Cino is represented by the consolatory *canzone* that Cino writes for the death of Beatrice: *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*. The *canzone* is written immediately after Beatrice's death, a moment which already represents a change of register in terms of modes with which Dante conceives the theme of love in poetry. If we refer to the terms of the *Vita nova* (XXVI 4), Dante is at a poetic stage, the 'stile della loda', which has its completion and realisation in the death of Beatrice. In this poetic conception, a validation from the beloved woman is no longer yearned for, because this accomplishment is already enclosed in the praise itself.[9] Therefore, at this level of Dante's career, Cino must have been aware of this change or development in how Dante conceived love. Indeed, Cino demonstrates that he deeply understands this and, in the *consolatoria*, imagines and projects the lady in Paradise. The relationship between Dante and Cino, in its early stages, operates within a lyric framework, which belongs to the cultural and poetic context both authors occupy. Since the dialogue between Dante and Cino begins shortly after the death of Beatrice, Dante has already passed one of the turning points in his biography and poetic career. This turning point allows him to create poetry without the presence of the beloved on earth, poetry that deals with the absence of the

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[9] Grimaldi, Marco. 2020. 'Rime', in *Dante*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Justin Steinberg (Rome: Carocci), pp. 21-36 (p. 29).

woman.[10] In the *Vita nova*, Dante's lyric poetry does not remain ascribed to the erotic sphere only: his poetry goes beyond it until it reaches an allegorical or moral key.[11]

We can consider this *canzone* the first segment of the exchange, which corresponds to Cino's wish to create a dialogue with Dante. Love, the most important theme of the 'stil novo', remains the central topic of the exchange between Dante and Cino, and the impetus to begin a dialogue. We can consider this text one of the most profound moments of the poets' relationship; indeed, this represents an intuition worthy of genius of the destiny and role Beatrice will have in *Paradiso*, as Cino is probably the one who gives Dante the ability to overcome the loss of Beatrice.[12]

Even if the consolatory *canzone* is not the first contact that Dante and Cino have, perhaps indicated by the intimate and personal tone which could indicate a previous connection, this is the first time Dante's concerns are addressed directly by Cino. The origins of relationship between Dante and Cino are visible from the end of the 1280s. For example, Marco Santagata argues that the first encounter between Cino and Dante happens in 1286-87 in Bologna, when Cino is a young student of law. This is the same period and place where Dante meets Guido Guinizzelli, and thus it is a particularly stimulating and enriching time for Dante.[13] According to the chronology suggested by Pasquini, which follows Contini's, the first part of the *tenzone* between Dante and Cino belongs to the period before 1302 when Dante is still in Florence and Cino is in Pistoia.[14] The poetic correspondence is most often started by Cino. In the first of these sonnets sent by Cino, *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, Cino asks Dante what he should do ('Che farò, Dante?', v. 12), because Love invites him to fall in love again, assuming that the new woman will be 'beatrice' (v. 4). Dante responds with *I' ho veduto già senza radice* and discourages Cino from pursuing love for the new woman.[15] Analysing *Avegna ched el m'aggia* and its link with Dante's works provides an interesting and useful perspective on the relationship between the poets at this

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[10] Leonardi, Lino. 2020. 'Dante e la tradizione lirica', in *Dante*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Justin Steinberg (Rome: Carocci), pp. 345-361 (p. 349).

[11] Leonardi. 2020, p. 351.

[12] Picone. 2004. pp. 39-53.

[13] See Santagata. 2012, p. 74.

[14] Cfr. Pasquini. 2010, p. 2; cfr. Contini. 1946, p. 137.

[15] Furthermore, three other sonnets written by Cino, which are plausibly addressed to Dante, may be dated before 1302: *Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia*, in which Cino shows the pain of the woman who is grieving for a beloved person, *Novelle non di veritate ignude*, and *Amico, s'egualmente mi ricange*, which are probably addressed to Dante. See Marti. 1969, pp. 689-692.

moment of their careers. But before examining Cino's text in relation to Dante's works, it is beneficial to provide an introduction to *consolatoria* as a genre.

2.3.1 The consolatory genre

According to Ernst Robert Curtius's definition, in the context of the ancient system of rhetoric, a consolatory oration or treatise is a 'sub-species of epideictic oratory'.[16] Cino's *consolatio* thrives on two matrices: the antique and the Christian consolatory traditions. It is interesting that, although Cino respects the tradition which addresses the consolatory poem to the person who is in grief immediately after losing a loved one, he deviates from the aspects of the tradition that are not suitable for the objective he wants to convey.

I start by analysing the aspects of Cino's consolatory poem that follow the tradition, adhering to the antique and the Christian topoi. From the ancient consolatory genre, especially the Latin tradition, Cino reuses the stoic theme of *aegritudo* (a state of emotional or physical distress), but condemns it as a negative sentiment that adversely affects and so undermines the emotional balance of human beings. On the other hand, Cino maintains the Christian consolatory genre's use of the idea of (transitory) pain into the afterlife, hence a reading forecasting death as liberation and achievement of heavenly bliss.[17] Usually, the *consolatio* has pedagogic-didactic purposes to teach the reader how to handle pain, in a way which is socially acceptable: Cino goes beyond the conventional and social dimension, because he directly speaks to his one and only addressee, Dante, and voluntarily neglects those aspects pertaining to the boundaries of the literary genre that do not fit within his *canzone*. In Cino's poem the invitation to avoid getting caught up in the pain of loss, loses the formal indication of social acceptance, and it is not a hollow exhortation, but instead, it is a real and sincere suggestion, because Dante already knows the outcome that Beatrice's death creates: that grief contains, within itself, in its power, the possibility for Dante to reunite with his beloved, not only because it is foreseen by Christian doctrine, but also because it is possible in a poetic sense. The assumption of Beatrice into Heaven necessarily implies a movement from Dante towards the woman. The classical topos of time as an instrument able to soothe pain is modified and adapted by Cino to the situation that

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[16] Curtius, Ernst Robert. 1953. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), p. 80.
[17] Fenzi. 2016, p. 83.

Dante is living: time is not a horizontal dimension that implies waiting, but this space of expectation is destroyed because Dante can annihilate it in his mind, because the character Beatrice is a product of his intellect.[18]

The presence of Boethian reminiscences in Dante is certain; the most important oeuvre of the late antique author Severinus Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, has a consistent influence, above all, on Dante's *Convivio* and on the *Commedia*. The importance of Boethius's *Consolatio* is not limited to the ethical-philosophical sphere, but operates as a literary model; Dante's declared intention is to identify a formal model, by being able to narrate his own sorrow.[19] In addition, Boethius represents a model for Dante with the allegorical representation of Lady Philosophy, the self-commentary and the motif of speaking about himself in defence of his reputation.[20] The knowledge of Boethius's book, and so the influence on Dante's production, can be dated to the years immediately after Beatrice's death; thus, it had an influence on the *Vita nova*. The loss of Beatrice would have led Dante to conceive a work such as the *Vita nova*, relying on the ancient model of Boethius: indeed, the *Consolatio philosophiae* is autobiographic and it is a *prosimetrum*.[21] The themes of consolation and comfort become fundamental for Dante to convey some of his precepts. The motif of the death of Beatrice is crucial again here, in that Dante achieves a decisive transition that will make him find consolation in Philosophy. The attempt to overcome the amorous *impasse* is again characterised by internal dissensions, evident in the comment on the *canzone Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete*, in which Dante is at the mercy both of the painful, vivid and devoted memory of Beatrice – that is still very hard and unsurmountable – and the love felt for the new woman.[22] The influence of the *Consolatio* has an effect also on the structure of the *Vita nova*: as is the case in the first two books of Boethius's *Consolatio*, the comment in prose now precedes the poems.[23] In the *Convivio* Dante states that he has his first encounter with Boethius around the period of Beatrice's death (and so in the period when he was writing the

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[18] Fenzi. 2016, pp. 83-88.
[19] Lombardo, Luca. 2013. *Boezio in Dante. La 'Consolatio philosophiae' nello scrittoio del poeta* (Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari), p. 529 and p. 530, note 3.
[20] Lombardo, p. 565. Cfr. *Convivio*, I ii.
[21] Lombardo, pp. 540-541.
[22] Ledda, Giuseppe. 2008. *Dante* (Bologna: Il Mulino), pp. 31-33. Cfr. *Convivio*, II xii 1: 'dico che, come per me fu perduto lo primo diletto della mia anima […], io rimasi di tanta tristizia punto, che conforto non mi valeva alcuno'.
[23] Lombardo, pp. 547-548.

Vita nova).[24] Boethius's *Consolatio* has a significant role in helping Dante face his grief by relying on Boethius's work because it offers a way to process grief, which originated from a pivotal event in Dante's life.

2.3.2 Cino's *consolatoria* for the death of Beatrice

The *canzone Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo* is composed of five stanzas with a mix of hendecasyllables and seven-syllable lines, followed by a *congedo* of six hendecasyllables. In the first stanza, Cino immediately expresses his consolatory intention and from the very first lines the *punctum dolens* of the poem emerges, as it concerns the problem of the temporal collocation of the *canzone* – 'Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo' (v. 1), 'non è ancor sì trapassato il tempo' (v. 4). Indeed, even though the motif of delay is a topos of the consolatory tradition, there is disagreement among scholars regarding when it was composed.[25] On the one hand, some scholars argue that the *canzone* is written no more than a few months after the death of Beatrice (8 June 1290), and so before the composition of the *Vita nova*; on the other hand, there are those who argue that Cino writes it long after the death of Beatrice, so only after having read Dante's *Vita nova*. The most important proponent of the idea that this poem was written not long after the death of Beatrice is Michelangelo Picone. The scholar interprets the delay that Cino acknowledges as a matter of months, not years, because 'non è ancor sì trapassato il tempo' (v. 4); therefore, the *canzone* could not be dated later than the end of 1292, but in any case, this line of reasoning places its composition before Dante started composing the *Vita nova*. Having said that, Picone does acknowledge the likelihood that before composing his *canzone* Cino read some of Dante's poems written about Beatrice's death, which later would have composed the *Vita nova*, but not the entire framework and content of the 'libello'.[26]

Cino's consolatory *canzone* has two evocative functions, recalling both Dante's poems dedicated to Beatrice's death: in terms of the theme and the content, there is a clear reference to *Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core*, while the metrics and the style reflect the scheme of *Donna pietosa e di novella etate*.[27] Picone considers this the start of the *tenzone* between Dante and Cino; this exchange is one of many that Dante had

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[24] Lombardo, p. 565.
[25] De Robertis. 2005, p. 428.
[26] *Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core* and *Donna pietosa e di novella etate*. See Picone. 2004, pp. 47-48.
[27] *Vita nova*, XXXI 8-17; XXIII, 17-28. See Picone. 2004, p. 47.

with other poets, but the difference is that Cino understands what Dante lived unlike anyone else: he does not aim to build an insurmountable limit for his love story but instead the loss of Beatrice represents a passage from earthly love to divine/spiritual love.[28] Following this line of argumentation, Cino had an extraordinarily insightful intuition into the direction in which Dante took the figure of the beloved, including her transfiguration into an angel-like woman. As a consequence, this may demonstrate that Cino is the one who gave the younger Dante the ability to overcome the loss of Beatrice, in a lyric perspective, by suggesting the idea of a 'dimensione metastorica del suo amore'.[29] According to this interpretation, this represents one of the most profound and evident moments of mutual influence between the poets, as Cino acquires a series of images and ideas referring to the death of the beloved, and he offers Dante other ideas to convey a new perspective on this theme.[30]

Furthermore, Picone suggests that until this moment, Dante hypothesised that Beatrice could only move in one direction, towards him, as she comes back to Dante's memory. Instead, the *Vita nova* overturns this trajectory, so that Dante is the one who predicts the possibility of moving towards Beatrice in a metaphysical dimension, as will be stated in *Oltre la spera che più larga gira*, the last sonnet of the *Vita nova*, where Dante refers to himself as 'peregrino spirito'.[31] According to this, Dante adopted Cino's idea and applied it to the entire account of the *Vita nova*, as the *consolatio* was the only poem to give Dante a positive perspective, the only comfort he received.[32] For this reason, Cino's poem prompted a reframing of Beatrice's death within a positive perspective, to overcome the poet's grief.[33] Fenzi is among the supporters of the opposite thesis – the most popular – in which the *consolatio* was written many years after the loss of Beatrice and thus after the composition of the *Vita nova*.[34] According to Fenzi, it was composed around the middle of the 1290s (while De Robertis suggests it should be dated around the Holy Week of 1294), based on what Fenzi argues are

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[28] Picone continues his argument by stating that what seems a paradox is that Cino gives Dante these original and profound suggestions, but Cino will not be able to apply them for himself. According to this interpretation, Dante will blame Cino for this reason (in *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*), for not being capable of projecting his love into the sphere of *caritas* ('charity'), as he remains only within the sphere of *eros*. See Picone. 2004, pp. 47-48.

[29] Picone. 2004, p. 48.

[30] Ibid.

[31] *Oltre la spera che più larga* gira, v. 8. Cfr. *Vita nova*, XLI 5. See Picone. 2004, p. 49

[32] This is emphasised through a multiple *figura etymologica*: 'conforto' at vv. 12 and 38 and twice at v. 43; also 'confortar' at v. 3 and v. 56; and 'conforti' v. 76.

[33] See Picone. 2004, p. 49.

[34] Fenzi. 2016, pp. 75-97.

references to the *Vita nova* and the *Convivio*.[35] This timeframe corresponds to the years in which Dante was in Bologna, and thus when Dante's personal relationship with Cino probably became closer.[36] Cino's poem adheres to the concepts present in the last part of the *Vita nova*, especially with regard to the sonnets *Lasso! per forza di molti sospiri* and *Oltre la spera che più larga gira*: the first one signifies the peak of the poet's desperation and sadness, while the second one represents the definitive and most significant reason for Cino to write the consolatory *canzone*.[37]

Despite the contrast between these two opposing arguments, I have identified some interesting features that are common to both of them. Regardless of whether Cino only read Dante's two poems for Beatrice's death, and thus foreseeing *ex novo* the direction Dante would take, or he had access to the entire *Vita nova*, and therefore was the one who gave Dante the suggestion to overcome Beatrice's death, I can state that Cino had a special role in helping Dante pursue a specific ideological idea from that moment onwards. I find the second hypothesis more convincing: that Cino had access to the entire *Vita nova*, demonstrating that he was the only one among Dante's fellow poets to fully understand the meta-historical nature of the figure of Beatrice and especially of the poet's love for her. Furthermore, in his later works, Cino does not apply the same transcendent vision of the beloved woman. It seems that the reprimand Cino receives from Dante in *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito* alludes to this inability to apply what he had previously understood with regards to his own vision of love and poetry, conceiving a type of spiritual love. Cino in his sonnets does embrace the perspective Dante expressed in the poems for the loss of Beatrice and in other poems of the *Vita nova*, but he does not apply it to his own writing. This would justify the disappointment Dante felt towards his friend which will be stated again in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, as Cino remains ascribed to the category of *cantor amoris* ('poet of love'), while Dante reserves, for himself, the position of *cantor rectitudinis* ('poet of righteousness').[38] Cino demonstrated his unique ability to understand Dante's lesson but was unable to apply it to his own work. That does not diminish Cino's fundamental and irreplaceable influence on Dante, suggesting a positive interpretation

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[35] Fenzi. 2016, pp. 80-81; cfr. De Robertis. 2005, p. 431, notes 32-34.
[36] Fenzi. 2016, p. 82.
[37] Fenzi. 2016, p. 86.
[38] I deal with the presence and the role of Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia* in chapter 3.

of Beatrice's death that allowed Dante to develop his ideas about her and about divine love (in the *Commedia*).

The second stanza of *Avegna ched el m'aggia* is rich with direct references to Dante's *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*.[39] According to Mario Marti, this choice expresses Cino's belief that, with Beatrice's death, the highest aspiration of the blessed takes place, as stated in Dante's *canzone*.[40] In *Donne ch'avete*, a fundamental concept around Beatrice emerges: 'Madonna è disiata in sommo cielo' (v. 29). Divine perfection will only reach its completion with the assumption of Beatrice into Heaven: this implies that with her death and departure from the earthly world, Dante makes a decisive assertion that shapes his future works.[41] But lines 29-34 probably represent the most powerful moment in the *consolatio*, as in the *Vita nova*, Dante has mentioned only the journey of Beatrice towards Heaven, but not his own journey towards Beatrice:

Di che vi stringe 'l cor pianto ed angoscia,
che dovreste d'amor sopragioire,
ch'avete in ciel la mente e l'intelletto?
Li vostri spirti trapassâr da poscia
per sua virtù nel ciel; tal è 'l disire,
ch'Amor la sù li pinge per diletto.
 (CXXV, vv. 29-34)

What seems to emerge is that Cino is the one who suggests to Dante that his mind ('mente', v. 31) and intellect ('intelletto', v. 31) are already in Heaven with Beatrice, and so his 'spirits' ('vostri spirti', v. 32) have already overcome the human incapability of reaching divine reality. Cino here highlights the fact that Dante's divine journey

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[39] *Vita nova*, XIX 5-14, and so *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*. These references include, for instance, 'com'avea l'angiol detto' (v. 24), which recalls 'Angelo clama in divino intelletto / e dice' (*Donne ch'avete*, vv. 15-16); 'fare il cielo perfetto' (v. 25) is a clear reference to 'Lo cielo, che non have altro difetto' (*Donne* ch'avete, v. 19); 'Per nova cosa ogni santo la mira' (v. 26) recalls 'e ciascun santo ne grida merzede' (*Donne ch'avete*, v. 21). Furthermore, 'Per nova cosa ogni santo la mira' (v. 26) recalls 'Ogni intelletto di là su la mira' (*Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona*, v. 23. The *canzone* is commented in *Convivio*, III vi 4-6 and III xiii 2). See Marti. 1969 p. 722, note 4.

[40] The same concept expressed at line 41, 'perché Dio l'aggia locata fra i suoi', is then reworded at lines 57-61, 'Mirate nel piacer, dove dimora / la vostra donna ch'è in ciel coronata; / ond'è la vostra spene in paradiso / e tutta santa omai vostr'innamora, / contemplando nel ciel mente locata'. Unlike on the first two occasions, in the last reference to Beatrice's stay in Heaven, the sentence recreates allusions to the otherworldly sphere, expressed by the Latin nominal construction and by the lexical choice – e.g., 'contemplando', v. 61. See Marti. 1969, p. 722, note 5. See also De Robertis. 2005, p. 433, note 61.

[41] Rea, Roberto. 2011. 'Un'altra "rimenata" a Dante? Un'ipotesi per "Non è de lo 'ntelletto acolto" di Guido Cavalcanti', *Dante: Rivista internazionale di studi su Dante Alighieri*, VIII, pp. 183-200 (p. 194).

towards Beatrice started right after her death because of Beatrice's love and Dante projects his love into the sphere of *caritas* ('charity').[42] According to this reading, Cino suggests a new perspective for Dante to understand Beatrice's death, which is necessary for Dante to fulfil the passage to the real new life, that would lead him firstly to compose the poem in honour of Beatrice, which he mentions at the end of the *Vita nova* (XLII), but also that would be useful to structure that grand outline of the *Commedia*. In the *consolatoria*, we can detect a link to the last sonnet of the *Vita nova*, *Oltre la spera che più larga gira*, in terms of lexicon and concepts, as they share the same positive and vital atmosphere.[43] The most significant point of the *consolatio* is the section pertaining to Dante enjoying a superiority that elevates him above all others, providing him comfort.[44] As a matter of fact, Cino seems aware and certain that this condition is a precondition for Dante's 'spirti' (v. 32) and that it will allow him to follow Beatrice into Heaven. Cino indicates that the reunification between Dante and Beatrice has already happened.[45] Cino firmly highlights that Dante has control of his own lived experience, and thus, that the character of Beatrice exists because Dante created her, and according to this, he should be overjoyed ('sopragioire', v. 30) about this conquest, which is unchangeable.[46] This concept of ascendance towards Beatrice is reaffirmed in the last stanza:[47]

Mirate nel piacer, dove dimora
la vostra donna ch'è in ciel coronata;
ond'è la vostra spene in paradiso
   e tutta santa omai vostr'innamora,
contemplando nel ciel mente locata
lo core vostro, per cui sta diviso,
   ché pinto tiene in sé beato viso.

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[42] Picone. 2004, p. 50.

[43] *Vita nova*, XLI 10-13. See Picone. 2004, p. 51.

[44] Cino's *canzone* is full of intertextual references. The theme of comfort appears through the term 'conforto' (v. 43), and the words 'Amor' (v. 43) and 'Pietà' (v. 44) recall the first stanza ('Pietate e Amore', v. 2). But there are also other intertextual references to Dante's poetry; indeed, lines 54-56 – ''ver' l'alma vostra, che ancora spera / vederla in cielo e star ne le sue braccia: / donque spene confortar vi piaccia' – remind one of the last part of *Oltre la spera che più larga gira*, and so the conclusive part of Dante's book (*Vita nova*, XLII 3: 'E poi piaccia a colui che è sire de la cortesia, che la mia anima se ne possa gire a vedere la gloria de la sua donna') – even though the embrace mentioned in Cino ('star ne le sue braccia') is typical of his style. See Marti. 1969, p. 724.

[45] Fenzi. 2016, pp. 87-88.

[46] Fenzi. 2016, p. 88.

[47] Here is an explicit reference to the journey ('viaggio', v. 70), implying movement not just of Beatrice towards Dante but also of Dante towards Beatrice in *Paradiso* which he does more than once ('spesse volte', v. 70).

Secondo ch'era qua giù meraviglia,
così là su somiglia;
e tanto più quant'è me' conosciuta.
Come fu ricevuta
dagli angioli con dolce canto e riso,
gli spirti vostri rapportato l'hanno,
che spesse volte quel viaggio fanno.
 (CXXV, vv. 57-70)

With the consolatory *canzone*, Cino takes an active role in a crucial process of Dante's life after the *Vita nova*, a section which corresponds to the period in which Dante writes the so-called allegorical and doctrinal *canzoni*. Cino spurred Dante to be aware of his moral and poetic superiority, as demonstrated in the *Paradiso* when Dante's moral and poetic standing enables him to enter Heaven where he will meet the Evangelists and see Christ, whom he reaches thanks to Beatrice and the experience of love. In conclusion, I argue that Cino is the only one who has the sensitivity to fully understand the path that Dante will follow in the future.[48]

2.4 The first sonnets exchanged

In this section I focus on the first two sonnets of the *tenzone* exchanged between Dante and Cino – Cino's *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice* and Dante's *I' ho veduto già senza radice*. These texts must be considered the starting point of the investigation because the structuring and fundamental themes of the exchange clearly emerge in them, especially at the behest of Cino. Therefore, the aim of this section is to demonstrate how and when these key features and themes are present in the sonnets, but above all, how the coexistence of these aspects change the way we read Dante's poetic development, specifically the development of 'beatrice' as a concept, as a figure in his work. In order to show the significance of the themes touched upon in both Dante and Cino's sonnets, it is essential to detect and examine when these themes emerge in the texts and how they are used in the exchange.

Regarding the chronology of the first sonnets of the *tenzone*, there are divergent interpretations. On the one hand, there are reasons which situate the sonnets before 1301; on the other hand, it is plausible that the correspondence takes place during both poets' exile. De Robertis suggests that the first pair of sonnets should be dated to the

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[48] Cfr. Fenzi. 2016, p. 94.

years of exile; he justifies this interpretation by addressing Dante's need to replace the role that Cavalcanti had as Dante's interlocutor.[49] Despite this valuable observation, it does not seem necessary to situate these sonnets that late in time because other valuable elements suggest that, at least these two first sonnets, were written not long after the consolatory *canzone*, *Avegna ched el m'aggia*. The *Epistola III* is sent to Cino along with the sonnet *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, in response to *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona*. In this epistle, Dante defines himself using the expression 'exul inmeritus' ('undeservedly in exile'). This unequivocable expression leaves no misgivings regarding the chronological location of the second part of the *tenzone*. In contrast, there are uncertainties relating to the first texts of the *tenzone*, which could have been written before or during exile.

In light of this, I find it valuable and beneficial to focus not only on questions of chronology, as these are ambiguous and unresolved, but also on the ideological and thematic dimensions which emerge in the sonnets, as well as the cultural world that both poets lived in in this early stage of their lives and careers. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the works which fall within the framework of the lyric dimension, to understand the cultural and poetic world that the poets lived in and in which their exchange takes shape during this first phase. With this in mind, I will now focus on the first sonnets Dante and Cino exchanged. Cino's first sonnet, *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, is the first of the *tenzone*. Cino's aim with his sonnet is to continue in the style of the *consolatoria* and, therefore, of the *Vita nova*. Beyond questions of chronology, this sonnet occurs in the first phase of the relationship between Dante and Cino, when they reside in a specific and peculiar intellectual space. This intellectual dimension that they experience at this moment of their careers is reflected in the pivotal themes and features that emerge in the texts.

2.5 Content and context of the sonnets

In this section, I present a brief overview of the content of the sonnets examined, to understand the narrative and thematic context in which the dialogue begins and takes shape. Cino's first sonnet is extremely dense in ideas and themes which recall the courtly tradition and it encapsulates numerous concepts present in Dante's previous

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[49] De Robertis. 2005, p. 483.

work, especially the *Vita nova*. The first word which opens the *tenzone*, 'Novellamente' (v. 1), gives the reader an immediate idea of the poem's central topic: the presence of another love, a new amorous experience. Cino is experiencing another occasion where Amore spurs him towards other women, which prevents him from being constant with his feelings. Dante's sonnet *I' ho veduto già senza radice* is the first explicit answer to Cino. Dante's aim is to respond to Cino's request for help, displayed in *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*. The word 'verde' (vv. 9 and 13) is interpreted by Dante as a symbol of ephemeral love, destined not to last, because it is without roots ('senza radice', v. 1).[50] This sonnet builds upon references to some of the components of Cino's sonnet and around the semantic field of natural elements. In the second quatrain, Dante recalls the terms used by Cino in his sonnet – 'contradice' (v. 5), 'riguardo' (v. 6) – but in a transformed way, aligning them with the semantic field of deceit, placing 'bugiardo' (v. 7) in the rhyme position.

Cino's first sonnet starts *in medias res*: in the first quatrain he condenses all of the key elements of courtly tradition to recall a specific code and atmosphere that fits the general style of the 'stil novo'. Therefore, Cino's poem adheres to these precise poetics to find a channel of communication with Dante. Dante, in turn, opens his first response to Cino with a natural metaphor and then turns to classical mythological resources.[51] Dante's choice, then, is to set the dialogue around mythological subjects, to continue with Cino's use of the figure of the phoenix. It is clear that Dante acknowledges Cino's familiarity with this classical reference since both of the mythical episodes share a tragic end.[52]

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[50] Pernicone, Vincenzo. 1970. 'I' ho veduto già senza radice', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al.*, 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), III, p. 358.

[51] The immediate reference is to the myth of Phaeton ('que' che vide nel fiume lombardo / cader suo figlio', vv. 3-4). However, I examined the hypothesis that another classical reference, to the myth of Helice, can be detected in the text. See Bambozzi, Camilla. 2023. 'Allusività mitica e polisemia in "I' ho veduto già senza radice": il mito di Elice', *Per Leggere. I Generi della Lettura*, XXIII/44, pp. 77-91.

[52] Dante and Cino demonstrate their exceptionally vast and deep knowledge of Ovid, with special regard to the *Metamorphoses*, as both poets demonstrate familiarity with Ovidian works and texts. On this topic, see Livraghi, Leyla M. G. 2017. 'Due usi di Ovidio a confronto in Cino da Pistoia lirico ("Se mai leggesti versi de l'Ovidi" et "Amor, che viene armato a doppio dardo")', *Arzanà. Cahiers de littérature médiévale italienne*, 19, pp. 9-22; Van Peteghem, Julie. 2020. *Italian readers of Ovid from the origins to Petrarch. Responding to a versatile muse* (Boston-Leiden: Brill), p. 144. Specifically, on the reception and influence of the theme of exile encompassed in the works of Ovid, Dante, and Cino, but also, more broadly, in Medieval Italian literature, see the essential works of Catherine Keen: 2001. 'The language of exile in Dante', *Reading Medieval Studies*, XXVII, pp. 79-102; 2002. 'Cino da Pistoia and the Otherness of Exile', *Annali d'Italianistica*, XX, pp. 89-112; 2014. 'Ovid's Exile and Medieval Italian Literature: The Lyric Tradition', in *A Handbook to the Reception of Ovid*, ed. by John F. Miller, Carole E. Newlands (Oxford-New York: Wiley-Blackwell), pp. 144-160; 2019. 'Dante e la risposta

I suggest that Cino, in *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, is willing to demonstrate to his interlocutor, in the same way as he did with the *consolatoria*, that he understood Dante's lesson, placing at the centre of the poem a question which can be read as a literary pretext to create a dialogue. Dante's response, instead, does not aim to demonstrate anything to his friend, and the sonnet, at least at the beginning, is set in a different way: Dante employs the mythological tradition and the natural metaphor to frame his friend's issue. The metaphor is used by Dante to underline the ephemeral nature of the experience narrated by Cino, despite the promise made by Amore. The cut trunk can show its vital elements, exposing the leaves, but then it cannot germinate, it does not provide fruit – this is highlighted rhetorically by the *enjambement* between lines 5 and 6, 'contradice / natura'. The 'verde', used in Cino's sonnet, is emphasised by Dante by repeating the word twice in position of the rhyme and by placing it at the end of the sonnet. Dante associates green with the plant's sap, the vital part of the plant since it provides nourishment, but here it represents an element of deceit.

2.5.1 Lyric tradition

In terms of content, the first sonnet of the *tenzone*, *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice,* presents a traditional topical situation, which derives from the troubadour tradition, in which the lover – Cino himself – is at the mercy of Love ('Amore', v. 1). This spurs him to fall in love again, despite the unhealed fresh wounds from the previous love. The theme of the sonnet is shaped around a series of courtly love topoi. The inner conflict is evident, to the extent that it is expressed by a direct question addressed to Dante, his interlocutor, which sums up the tension between yielding to a new love experience and the will to avoid this new woman, and thus continuing to heal his wounds.[53] The analysis of Marco Grimaldi focuses on the romance tradition, its style, themes and topoi, present in the first pair of sonnets exchanged between Cino and Dante.[54] Grimaldi states that the topos of deceptive Love began with troubadour poetry. He argues that this tradition is even present in the antiphrastic variant Cino

ovidiana all'esilio', in *Miti figure metamorfosi. L'Ovidio di Dante*, ed. by Carlota Cattermole and Marcello Ciccuto (Florence: Le Lettere), pp. 111-138.

[53] Pernicone, Vincenzo. 1970. 'Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al.*, 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), IV, pp. 82-83.

[54] Grimaldi, Marco. 2020. 'Dante e la poesia romanza', in *Per Enrico Fenzi*, ed. by Paolo Borsa, Paolo Falzone, Luca Fiorentini, Sonia Gentili, Luca Marcozzi, Sabrina Stoppa, Natascia Tonelli (Florence: Le Lettere), pp. 205-214 (p. 205).

exerts when he suggests he has no intention of falling in Love's traps, as he acknowledges its deceptive nature.[55] The adverb 'Novellamente' (v. 1), with which the *tenzone* begins, represents a typical *incipit* of the troubadour tradition and of the Italian thirteenth century, used to celebrate a new love.[56] This means that from the very beginning, Cino places his sonnet within the framework of the themes and the style of thirteenth-century love poetry.

The first tercet of Dante's *I' ho veduto già senza radice*, as was the case in Cino's sonnet, alludes to a series of images related to the pain Cino feels ('Giovane donna a cotal guisa verde', v. 9). In this way, Dante sets his sonnet, in a similar way to Cino, in the style and canon of courtly poetry; for instance, using the word 'occhi' (v. 10), the sensitive organ that is the first organ involved in falling in love. As Giunta notes, this follows the courtly tradition, where, after a question related to how the lover should act in front of the spurs of Amore, the figure answers by indulging the request of Amore. In this case, instead, Dante's reaction openly contradicts this element of the tradition: Dante's advice is to keep away from this love.[57] Indeed, despite his ability to understand Cino's perspective, Dante's aversion to the situation Cino is presenting is evident in his sonnet. The adverse conjunction 'ma' (v. 5), which opens the second quatrain, reinforces a series of negative and contrasting words – e.g., 'no' (v. 5), 'contradice' (v. 5), 'difetto' (v. 6), 'bugiardo' (v. 7), 'non […] vera notrice' (v. 8). This means that both at a syntactic level and at conceptual/metaphoric level, Dante expresses his disapproval regarding the main question that Cino presented in his sonnet, and he does it by employing an unusually harsh tone for the style of the *tenzone*.[58] I still assume that the expression 'sì a dentro è gita' (v. 10), even with the identical rhymes of 'verde' (vv. 9 and 13), represents Dante's empathy towards Cino. But despite this fact, before showing this level of understanding, Dante makes clear the fallacious nature of this kind of love. Indeed, Dante knows that the longer this kind of infatuation lasts, the more painful its departure/departing is ('partita', v. 11). An

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[55] Grimaldi. 2020a, p. 206.

[56] Cfr. Giunta. 2018, p. 364, note 1. Giunta mentions also Bonagiunta Orbicciani's *Novellamente amore*. Cfr. Alighieri, Dante, Chiavacci Leonardi A. M. (ed.). 2016. *Commedia. Inferno* (Milan: Mondadori), p. 720, note 107.

[57] Giunta. 2018, pp. 367-368.

[58] The strict tone Dante uses is in line with the sharp position he wants to convey. This is also recognised by critics. For instance, De Robertis underscores that there is a 'mutamento di registro espressivo' (2005, p. 486), while Giunta states that 'il no pronunciato da Dante in questo sonetto responsivo è dunque poco intonato alle leggi non scritte del genere, poco "cortese"; ma a giustificarlo sembra essere un consiglio di prudenza o di buon senso' (2018, pp. 367-368).

entire line is used to restate Dante's position/belief – 'Periglio è grande in donna sì vestita' (v. 12). In this case, Dante understands Cino's stylistic choice to use clothing as a real element but shifts it to a symbolic level.

The lexical and thematic references to Dante's *Vita nova* confirm Cino's aspiration to be closer to Dante. This closeness is not that difficult for Cino to achieve, as he inhabits the same intellectual and poetic world as his fellow friend and poet ('stil novo'). It is no coincidence that critics from the nineteenth century placed Cino among the so called 'poeti stilnovisti', since Dante himself recognises him as one of the major poets of his time. Cino's adherence to the style and tone of Dante's *Vita nova* is present from the beginning of his dialogue with Dante. Giuseppe Marrani argues that Cino yearns to set himself, and thus his work, in a precise segment of the poetic season of the 'stil novo', which has the *Vita nova* as its nucleus.[59] Marrani demonstrates that Cino exposed this idea directly when he writes the sonnet *Graziosa Giovanna, onora e 'leggi*. This demonstrates Cino's ability to recall a precise episode in the *Vita nova*: the figure of Giovanna-Primavera anticipates the coming of Beatrice, creating a parallelism for which Giovanna stands for John the Baptist, who announced the coming of Christ.[60] Cino's wish to align himself with Dante and Guido Cavalcanti's poetry is done through this episode involving their beloved women, who are both fundamental in the construction of the *Vita nova*.[61] This demonstrates desire to create a dialogue between him and Dante but also, more broadly, with the poets of late-thirteenth century Tuscany. Specifically, he writes a sonnet which reminisces upon a structural episode of the *Vita nova*, the emblem of this poetic tendency.[62]

It seems probable that Cino's sonnet is conceived to condense and comprehend many of the features which are present in the *Vita nova* and, more broadly, are the key features of the poetic nature of the 'stil novo', which will reserve Cino a special place in the *De vulgari eloquentia*.[63] Cino is important to Dante's intellectual development, especially because Cino helps Dante to rethink the role of the beloved, by providing a poetic space to discuss, challenge and test ideas on love and other matters which are pivotal to Dante's poetry. For this reason, despite the fact that Guido Cavalcanti is

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[59] Marrani. 2009a, pp. 757-776.
[60] *Vita nova*, XXIV.
[61] Marrani. 2009a, p. 773.
[62] Marrani. 2009a, p. 776.
[63] I investigate the role of Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia* in chapter 3.

Dante's 'primo amico', and the formal addressee of the *Vita nova*, Cino is the sympathetic addressee:[64]

> Se Cavalcanti è il destinatario polemico della Vita Nova, Cino è quello simpatetico; se Cavalcanti è il primo amico di Dante, Cino è il vero amico, il fedele compagno di strada. Se l'amicizia fra Dante e Cavalcanti è destinata alla rottura drammatica e definitiva, l'amicizia di Dante con Cino è destinata a sopravvivere al di là della tragedia dell'esilio e al di là della stessa morte.[65]

Cino identifies some of the fundamental themes Dante develops in his career and he does so both by challenging Dante's ideas and by consoling him with the *consolatoria canzone*. For this reason, Cino plays a role in helping Dante understand the emotional side of loss: Cino focuses on the psychology of grief, by pursuing a re-evaluation of both grief and loss, as he helps Dante give this tragic event new meaning. This is one of the reasons why the relationship with Cino represents a moment of intellectual and poetic evolution for Dante.

2.5.2 The dichotomy between sacred love and profane love

From the beginning of the *tenzone* both Cino and Dante merge some of the most meaningful features of both poets' poetics in this moment of their careers. The first element is the coexistence of sacred and profane love which is peculiar and constant – it is not only limited to this specific exchange. It is a dichotomy that plays a significant role in the dialogue, but most importantly, it allows new light to be shed on the way we read Dante's poetic development. Cino's voice through the texts comes across as a voice external to Dante, which helps redefine the development of Beatrice as a figure in Dante's production at this stage of his career. Cino acts, not just as an interlocutor, but as someone who pulls out the most important traits which characterise this moment of Dante's poetic development. An essential aspect connected to the nucleus joining sacred love and profane love is the use of the common noun 'beatrice', as a conceptual core, which appears as a *unicum* in these years of Italian literature, at least until

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[64] *Vita nova*, XV 3; XV 6; XVI 10; XIX 10.
[65] Picone. 2004, p. 53.

Petrarch.[66] The presence of the term 'beatrice' allows Cino to continue the subject of the consolatory *canzone*, the first poem of the dialogue. In this case, the common noun 'beatrice' is used to encapsulate a broader concept, of a woman who is a 'giver of beatitude/blessing'.

The encounter with the personification of Amore, presented at the beginning of Cino's first sonnet – as it happens in the *Vita nova* – appears after an unspecified number of times, swearing ('giura', v. 1) and saying ('dice', v. 1) of a 'donna gentil' (v. 2). The logical order of 'giura' and 'dice' is inverted (*hysterion proteron*) – this rhetorical device may be used to allow the verb 'dice' to rhyme with 'beatrice'. Beyond this, there is another reason which could be present. It seems plausible that Cino, once again, wants to create a link between the verb 'dice', so the act of speaking, and the word 'beatrice', at least at the level of sound. The link between the dialogic dimension is also used by Cino in the *consolatoria* and, given that the sonnet *Novellamente Amor* is set on the wake of the *canzone Avegna ched el m'aggia*, it is possible to interpret this as the need to draw 'beatrice' towards the semantic sphere of speech. Because of this, I find it significant that the verb 'dice', even though it refers to 'Amore', rhymes with 'beatrice'. The verb 'dire' is a central term from the beginning of the dialogue between Dante and Cino, as this dialogic dimension is implied in the consolatory *canzone*. Cino, who begins the textual dialogue, identifies the concept of 'beatrice' as a *trait d'union*, a thematic and symbolic medium through which one can trace an empathetic and poetic connection with Dante. As Contini and Giunta underline, Cino is most likely the inventor of this common noun.[67] In this sense, Cino means that the 'donna gentil' (v. 2) will beatify his heart: 'ella sarà del meo cor beatrice' (v. 4). This can be interpreted, as De Robertis suggests, as a barely concealed *captatio benevolentiae* towards Dante.[68] Giunta indicates that in the *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini* there are no other occurrences of this word used in a common sense, as a concept.[69] Cino grasps that the poetic name of Dante's beloved is not just a simple *senhal*, as it is in the courtly tradition, but something higher: 'beatrice' is a

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[66] See the occurrences in the corpus *TLIO*: *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini* <http://tlio.ovi.cnr.it/TLIO/> [accessed 15 June 2024]. See Giunta. 2018, p. 364, note 4.
[67] Cfr. Contini. 1946, p. 139, note 4; cfr. Giunta. 2018, p. 364, note 4.
[68] De Robertis. 2005, p. 484, note 4.
[69] Giunta. 2018, p. 364, note 4.

source of beatitude.[70] The name – and so the peculiarity – of Beatrice undergoes a profound shift.

In Cino's *Novellamente Amor*, virtue ('vertù', v. 3) is conveyed by the woman's gaze until it reaches the heart of the lover and then it will be beatified. This beatification process, expressed through the word 'beatrice', is a direct reference to the 'gentilissima' of the *Vita nova*. Even the expression 'donna gentil' (v. 2) is extremely evocative, as it is the phrase around which the *Vita nova* is structured and, more broadly, Dante's early works are conceived. The way in which Cino lives this new experience of love reminds him of the traditional phenomenology of love, a structuring feature of this poetic tendency.[71] The only other occurrence is Dante's use of 'beatrice' as a common noun in the sonnet *Deh peregrini, che pensosi andate*.[72] Even this sonnet is related to the death of Beatrice; it describes a grief which is extended to the entire city of Florence, and it narrates the pilgrimage to Rome to see the Veil of Veronica, Christ's image. This sonnet has a strong Christological reference, creating an analogy between Beatrice and Christ.[73]

As I mentioned, from the beginning of the *tenzone*, Cino sets the dialogue with Dante around the dichotomy between sacred love and profane love, which becomes constitutive in this exchange. These two aspects are brought out in parallel and they can be activated in different moments within the dialogue. In this sense, the word 'beatrice' encompasses the most evident example of how Cino brings these two aspects together in the poems. As I pointed out, in the episode of *Vita nova* XXIV, Dante himself establishes an analogy between Beatrice and Christ, creating a strong Christological connection. Cino, in fact, seems to acknowledge this and plays with the double reading of the word 'beatrice'. The word 'beatrice' is here used in its literal and broader meaning ('who gives beatitude, who brings blessing'). On the one hand, Cino is probably referring to the Christological meaning of 'beatrice', which Dante had used as an analogy with the figure of Christ himself in *Deh peregrini*. On the other hand, this word necessarily brings with it a reference to Beatrice, Dante's beloved woman.

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[70] Pirovano, Donato. 2020. 'Vita nuova', in *Dante*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Justin Steinberg (Rome: Carocci), pp. 37-54 (p. 49).

[71] This use of the name as a common noun features prominently in later poetry, especially in the work of Petrarch. See Marti. 1969, pp. 689-692 and p. 730, note 2.

[72] *Vita nova*, XL 9-10. Giunta. 2018, p. 364, note 4.

[73] Chiarini, Eugenio. 1970. 'Deh peregrini che pensosi andate', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al.*, 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), II, pp. 339-341.

In recalling Beatrice, the woman, hidden under the common noun, Cino is highlighting the lyric dimension, which he and Dante continue to embrace in this moment of their relationship. The Christological dimension of Beatrice is brought out, as Cino activates both the sacred and the profane aspect of love through this term, by referring to both the spheres to which she belongs: Beatrice is already projected into Paradise, but she still remains within the lyric tradition.

In his first sonnet, Cino recalls the atmosphere of the last part of the *Vita nova*, carrying both aspects Dante himself defined as peculiar in this moment of his life: the lyric dimension and the new poetic of the 'stil novo'. As Cino demonstrates, he is aware of Dante's view on the figure of Beatrice in the *Vita nova*. Cino is able to pursue this by activating both dimensions of this word: at a phonic level it recalls Beatrice the woman, but it also conveys the idea of a source of beatitude, a figure which is abstracted from the single human being. Beatrice's death coincides with Dante's adherence to the poetics of the 'stile della loda', to use the notion that critics would later apply, which praised the woman without expecting anything in return, as now the laud and the outcome of this laud coincide. Therefore, Beatrice, after her death, does not only represent herself, but she also assumes a different role, as she becomes 'una forza cosmica che illumina e pervade il mondo intorno a sé'.[74] For this reason, the common noun 'beatrice', which Cino uses in the first sonnet addressed to Dante, already conveys this double meaning. On the one hand, the term activates the lyric dimension of poetry, but on the other hand, it carries a Christological or, at least, a sacred dimension.

2.5.3 Psychology of grief

The idea of 'beatrice' as a bringer of blessing also plays a part in the redefinition of grief. The theme of grief is an important component, not only to this section of the *tenzone* but, more broadly, to Cino's works.[75] After all, the dialogue present through the texts between Dante and Cino commences properly at the time of Beatrice's death and, because of this, Cino structures the texts around the theme of grief. This theme emerges as a generative nucleus and Cino's choice seems fruitful for a dialogue with

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[74] Grimaldi. 2020b, p. 29.
[75] In this regard, see Livraghi, Leyla. 2016. 'Il motivo della donna nero-velata in Cino ed epigoni', in *Cino da Pistoia nella storia della poesia italiana*, pp. 185-207 (pp. 191-192).

Dante, in this moment of his life and career. The psychology of grief also reminds the reader of the more general theme of the loss of the beloved.

By placing this theme at the centre from the beginning of the exchange, Cino refers back to one of the key subjects of the *consolatoria*. His first sonnet, indeed, may be considered an extension of the *consolatio*, in terms of themes, tone, style, and poetics. Cino consciously encompasses in his sonnet, *Novellamente Amor*, the same issues and pivotal elements of the *consolatoria* and of Dante's *Vita nova*. In the 'libello', the main text which conveys a new kind of poetics, is the *canzone Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core*, that expresses the acute suffering of the poet. Through the pain caused by death, now Dante, with his poetics, must get through and beyond this crucial event.[76] With the *canzone Deh peregrini che pensosi andate*, Dante officially takes up the role of 'testimone pubblico di Beatrice'.[77]

In the lyric tradition, consolatory *canzoni* for the dead beloved were generally conceived as the last display of love and feelings, which ended with a *planh*. Even though Dante follows this tradition in part, after the death of Beatrice, the 'poetica della lode' evolves and intertwines with the new poetics, with the elegiac tones of the earlier poems. As Donato Pirovano clarifies, in the second section of the *Vita nova*, Dante shows his new poetic perspective, which consist in embracing the 'stil novo'. This change in poetics is visible in the second part of the 'libello', which is characterised by new linguistic *facies*, which are the manifestation of this process of poetic renewal.[78] In this regard, Dante does not align with tradition and, instead, depicts the beloved's death not as the final point of his poetic development but the starting point of a new way of writing poetry, which develops without the presence of the love object. This step forward, which represents a crucial change in the Italian lyric tradition from this point onwards, is made possible because Dante had already conceived the poetics of the 'stil novo', even before the death of Beatrice.[79]

In *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, Cino alludes – as is traditional in the *tenzoni* – to facts known only to the two interlocutors, which may prevent the reader from understanding them.[80] As I highlighted, the presence of grief is a constant in Cino's oeuvre. In the sonnet, the word 'vita' (v. 10) is in the rhyme position and it is in stark

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[76] Pirovano. 2020, p. 43.
[77] Pirovano. 2020, p. 44.
[78] Pirovano. 2020, pp. 46-49.
[79] Leonardi. 2020, p. 349.
[80] Giunta. 2018, p. 363.

contrast to the scene of death and pain, recalled by the image of the lover hit by the arrow ('dardo', v. 6) and the word 'morte' (v. 7). The 'altra sua ferita' (v. 11), as it will more broadly be explained in the last tercet, reminds the reader of a different situation to the one the poet is living, as he mentions the presence of a different female figure. The rhetorical question, 'Che farò, Dante?' (v. 12), with which Cino asks Dante for a suggestion, does not leave space for doubt regarding the addressee of this sonnet. In addition, even though it follows the traditional formula, it is possible to interpret Cino's true affection towards Dante. Another contrast is presented to the reader: Amore invites Cino to lean towards this new love even though Cino is aware that this tension makes his identity 'break' ('altra parte' and 'mi disperde', v. 13).

The last part of Cino's sonnet recreates an atmosphere that is related to mourning. In Cino, the consequence of the loss of the beloved results in him replacing the first woman with another woman. The last line of the sonnet, 'che peggio che lo scur non mi sia 'l verde' (v. 14), is particularly difficult to interpret. According to Guido Zaccagnini's interpretation, the adverb the sonnet starts with – the root is the same as in 'novo', of line 3, but enforced – may consist of an allusion to a woman other than Selvaggia, Cino's beloved woman.[81] Zaccagnini interprets the last line as a comparison between Selvaggia ('lo scur', 14) and the new woman ('verde', v. 14). This is the reason why the scholar suggests the years between 1296 and 1299 as the period in which Cino composed this poem – he situates the composition of these texts at the time of the so-called 'Selvaggia abbrunata', when she is in mourning for the death of her husband.[82] I suggest it is a more allusive reference: it seems more coherent that Cino's wish is to adopt the schemes of a precise poetic manner, expressed through these elements. Therefore, it seems plausible that this corpus of elements is used by Cino to build his poetics – or his poetic identity – in a way which is akin to Dante's *Vita nova* and, more broadly, to the 'stil novo'.

In this case, it is not essential to know if Cino is referring here to Selvaggia or a hypothetical other woman, but it is important to underline Cino's wish to place himself, through this sonnet, on the same poetic current as the *Vita nova*. It is no coincidence that there is a chiasmus which links 'donna gentil' (noun-adjective, v. 2) to 'novo sguardo' (adjective-noun, v. 3). As I stated before, 'riguardo' (v. 2) and

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[81] Da Pistoia, Cino, Zaccagnini G. (ed.). 1925. *Le Rime di Cino da Pistoia* (Geneva: Olschki), p. 202.
[82] Zaccagnini, pp. 202-203 and 189.

'sguardo' (v. 3) rhyme with each other and they recall the scheme typical of courtly love. Despite the fact that what Cino is referring to could be rooted in a biographic fact, this is not necessarily an element that places this sonnet in the years prior to exile, as the reference could have been used by Cino only on a literary level.

The presence of the woman dressed in mourning clothes (this appears in other sonnets by Cino) is identified in the sonnet by Leyla Livraghi as a structural element.[83] Therefore, the woman with the black veil may be a personification of grief. The true essence of this image is in the representation of the personification of the pain that the memory of the suffering woman provokes in the soul of the poet, becoming comparable to an abstract identity.[84] This image is a trait of originality of Cino's poetry, which was popular and adopted in the following lyric production, in the epigons. Underlying the literary nature of the theme of the woman in dark clothes, even though a biographic root cannot be excluded completely, is the need to read her in a symbolic-literary way, rendering Cino's sorrow.[85]

The contrast between the old love and the new love, a traditional inner tension in the lover, is linked directly to the theme of the woman in dark clothes or, more broadly, to mourning – a theme which is constant in Cino's corpus of poems.[86] Grimaldi provides another argument in favour of this interpretation of the woman in dark clothes in Cino's sonnet. Grimaldi states that this image may also represent lust.[87] Nevertheless, regarding the colour green – 'verde' (v. 14), the last word of the sonnet – Grimaldi restates the difficulty in deciphering this element unequivocally. He mentions two main interpretations: firstly, green may represent a generic reference to a young woman, akin to the colour of a plant; furthermore, young women dressed in green clothes on festive occasions. In addition, green can have negative connotations, as seen in Isidore of Sevilles's *Etymologiae*.[88]

Dante utilises the technique of the *exemplum* to begin the *tenzone* with Cino, but he does it using mythological sources. The formulation at the beginning – 'I' ho veduto'

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[83] *Novelle non di veritate ignude*; *Amico s'egualmente mi ricange*; *Molte fiate Amor, quando mi desta*; *Spesso m'avvien ch'i' non posso far motto*; *Serrato è lo meo cor di dolor tanto*; *Per una merla che dintorno al volo* (see Grimaldi. 2020a, p. 207); see also Livraghi. 2016, pp. 191-192.

[84] Livraghi. 2016, p. 192.

[85] Livraghi. 2016, pp. 186-191.

[86] Grimaldi. 2020a, p. 207.

[87] This interpretation is endorsed by Grimaldi when referring to Cino's sonnet *Per una merla*. In this sonnet Cino uses the expression 'nere penne' (referred to the bird). Grimaldi follows Marrani's interpretation (see Grimaldi. 2020a, p. 207 and Marrani. 2009b).

[88] Grimaldi. 2020a, p. 208.

(v. 1) – is typical of morality treatises (e.g., 'sicut ego vidi', 'ut ego vidi').[89] Giunta makes a reference to André Pézard's interpretation of this choice of a woman in green: Pézard associates with the episode in Arthurian literature, *Huth Merlin*, when a young lady enters King Arthur's court and makes Merlin fall in love with her; she then unveils Merlin's secrets of magic and buries him. The reference to Breton literature does not seem unlikely, so it adheres to Le Goff's statement that for medieval people, green is associated with a seductive image and thus may be dangerous.[90]

In this regard, I find it useful to call attention to another sonnet by Cino, which is addressed to Dante, because it provides a further source to understand Cino's poetic practice at this stage of his relationship with Dante. As a matter of fact, the theme of grief is not only recalled but comes across as structural in the sonnet *Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia*. In this sonnet, Cino expresses his suffering due to grief which his beloved woman is experiencing, and it encapsulates a consistent number of words related to the semantic field of pain and grief. The rhymes 'doglia', 'spoglia' and 'voglia' (vv. 1, 4, and 5) are also present in *Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core*.[91] Moreover, this sonnet contains an hyperbole that reaches its peak at the end of the poem, with the word 'martiri' (v. 13).[92] It is typical of the 'stil novo' poetics to create a parallelism, or at least a link, between sentiments and pieces of clothing.[93] As I mentioned earlier, the theme of grief continues to be a structural element in this sonnet. The metaphor of mourning clothing continues to play out, and it is even reinforced: for instance, by the repetition of words related to pain, through a *figura etymologica* that appears throughout the sonnet: 'doglia' (v. 1), 'doler' (v. 6), 'dolore' (v. 8), 'Dolente' (v. 9), 'duol' (v. 11). The term 'dolore' *et similia* is also in alliteration with another group of words that have the same root (another *figura etymologica*): 'disiosa' (v. 5), 'desiri' (v. 11), 'disioso' (v. 13). The verb 'lagrimar' (v. 2) probably expresses the highest moment of the pain. Line 3 – 'ché 'l vel tinto ch'i' vidi e 'l drappo scuro' – directly recalls Cino's other sonnet addressed to Dante, *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*. Furthermore, 'e lo cor m'arde in disiosa voglia' (v. 5) recalls one of the main features of courtly love.

[89] Giunta. 2018, p. 368.
[90] Giunta. 2018, pp. 370-371.
[91] De Robertis. 2005, p. 489. Cfr. *Vita nova*, XXXI 8-17.
[92] De Robertis. 2005, p. 492, note 12.
[93] Marti. 1969, p. 699.

2.5.4 Classical myths and Christian tradition

Another passage about death in which the bond between sacred love and profane love is present is in Cino's first sonnet, *Novellamente Amor*. Here Cino concludes his sonnet with the figure of the phoenix ('fenice', v. 8) in rhyme with 'beatrice'. It is likely that Cino knew this Christological tradition associated with the phoenix, which was popular and famous.[94] The phoenix was a bird sacred to Egyptians, which died every 500 years to be reborn from its ashes. In the Italian lyric tradition of the Duecento, the phoenix symbolises the lover.[95] This tradition dates back to the first century and it is enforced through the following centuries with its frequent re-use.[96] Once again, Cino is able to combine the presence of the scared and the profane, using a Christological image in an erotic context. The mythological theme is a useful source for Cino in terms of conveying new meanings through traditional classical images.

As Giunta underlines, the topos of lover-phoenix was particularly popular in thirteenth-century Italian lyric and in the troubadour tradition – in particular, it is used by Rigaut de Berbezilh from whom Cino recalls the verb 'contraffare'. Cino uses this symbol again in *Anzi ch'Amore*.[97] Tension between opposites or distant elements is usually used by Cino in some of his poems; this is not the only occasion where the presence of Amore brings with it the concept of Death (e.g., *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona*). Even the image of the phoenix symbolises two opposites, death and life, since it can rise from its own ashes. Marti reads this passage as an immediate capitulation of Cino because he does not foresee anything worse than death, in the sense that he may as well surrender to this tension towards his new love. He means that this love experience is predicted to be so painful that it would be the same as if he died, as he is not able to rise again as the phoenix does.[98]

The image of the phoenix had a rich reception in Western tradition and had been linked with a Christological meaning for centuries. In his sonnet, Cino uses the image of the phoenix to express his incapability to be reborn as the bird is. This image in courtly poetry becomes a symbol of the lover who burns for love, and who is ready to

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[94] Besca, Marianna Martina. 2010. 'La fenice infernale: una nota sul bestiario cristiano e parodia sacra nella bolgia dei ladri ("Inf." XXIV, 97-111)', *L'Alighieri. Rassegna dantesca*, pp. 133-152 (p. 142).
[95] Padoan, Giorgio. 1970. 'Fenice', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), II, p. 837.
[96] Besca, p. 142.
[97] Giunta. 2018, p. 365, note 8.
[98] Marti. 1969, p. 730, note 4.

face the sufferings that the choice of giving all of himself to love implies. Cino's action is destined to fail from the beginning, as he has the awareness that he is not able to be reborn as the phoenix is. In another sonnet – *Anzi ch'Amore ne la mente guidi* – Cino uses the image of the phoenix to express this sense of failure, of men not having the same ability as the creature, once again linking the sacred and profane. Livraghi argues that Cino's choice to use the image of the phoenix, expresses the desire to detach from the lyric tradition.[99] This interpretation may be enforced by the fact that in Christian bestiaries the phoenix is an animal that symbolises Christ's Resurrection.[100]

Classical references are also used by Dante in his responsive sonnet. Indeed, the line 'que' che vide nel fiume Lombardo / cader suo figlio' (vv. 3-4) contains a reference to the myth of Phaeton. The myth describes Phaeton, the son of Apollo, trying to overcome human limits by asking his father if he can drive the chariot of the sun. Apollo, even though he is reluctant, agrees to Phaeton's request. Unfortunately, and inevitably, Phaeton loses control of the chariot and he destroys the sky and the earth. For this reason, Jupiter is obliged to end this disruption and strikes Phaeton with lighting, causing Phaeton to crash into a river. Grimaldi highlights that the myth of the phoenix – used by Cino in the previous sonnet – and the myth of Phaeton – used by Dante to open the sonnet in response to Cino's – are connected because they represent two occasions in which the main character was unable to control his actions because of the power they possessed. According to this reading, Dante may have linked the myths of the phoenix and Phaeton in order to express a love which can be only destructive.[101]

Conclusion

Cino and Dante employ Classical and Christian culture and situate themselves within the tradition of lyric poetry, in order to play with different sources belonging to different traditions. The dialogue between the poets becomes a space of experimentation, in which they are able to stretch, stress, and test many elements. Their exchange allowed the two poets to experiment with several ideas, such as death, love,

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[99] Livraghi. 2012, pp. 67-68.
[100] Ledda, Giuseppe. 2012. 'Per lo studio del bestiario dantesco. In margine a "Gli animali fantastici nel poema dantesco" di Guido Battelli', *Bollettino Dantesco. Per il Settimo Centenario*, I, pp. 88-102 (p. 93).
[101] Grimaldi. 2020a, p. 211.

the dichotomy between sacred love and profane love, consolation, the use of 'beatrice' as a common noun, and thus, they built a vocabulary to discuss these themes and their own poetic methods and style. The issues touched upon in the exchange can be read as 'moves' as Dante and Cino shape their dialogue by looking at a layered and multifaceted inherited tradition. The two poets defined a set of rules: they followed and integrated various traditions, but they also reshaped the game. In this chapter, I make the elements that are crucial to this stage of Dante and Cino's poetic exchange clear, and by understanding them I show how these important steps have implications for their poetic and intellectual practice. Dante's poetic development is also shaped by the exchange he has with poets contemporary to him. But Cino provided Dante a literary space which no other poet did. Indeed, Cino sets the premises for a dialogue which enables us to detect fundamental and pivotal moments of their poetics, by looking at these practices in light of the relationship between Dante and Cino.

CHAPTER 3.

The Second Phase of the Relationship:
the Second Part of the *tenzone* and the *De vulgari eloquentia*

This third chapter focuses on the second stage of the relationship between Dante and Cino, which corresponds to the exchange of the last sonnets of the *tenzone*. This phase, dated between 1303 and 1306, coincides with both poets' exile, placing them in a shared condition of being outsiders, as suggested by the opening of Dante's third epistle. The correspondence between Dante and Cino in this second phase is characterised by a broad range of ideas. Love, in its various dimensions, unquestionably stands out as the predominant theme, although the concepts of exile and lyric subjectivity also emerge as key issues in their poetic exchange. The texts written in this period seem to continue the path established in the previous stage, following the motifs extensively treated in Dante's *Vita nova*. I argue that in this context, both Cino and Dante employ some of the same structures associated with the theme of consolation, blending the sacred and the profane in their conceptualisation of love. For Dante, Cino assumes a role that can be seen as replacing the position previously held by Cavalcanti, becoming the primary interlocutor with whom Dante engages in discussions of love poetry.

However, I also demonstrate that Cino's significance extends beyond this. Dante is transitioning from the *Vita nova* to the intellectual space of the *Convivio*, in which he seeks to define himself as a *philosophans*. In particular, when discussing the question of whether the soul can pass from one passion to another and exploring the relationship between love and free will, Cino plays a pivotal role in shaping Dante's intellectual development. I argue that by labelling Cino as *cantor amoris* ('poet of love') in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, Dante not only acknowledges his friend's importance, but also strategically places him in a position that allows Dante to emphasise the philosophical dimension of his own poetry. The conclusion of this phase is marked by a growing divergence of views between Dante and Cino, a division that has been developing over several years. While the most apparent difference concerns their views on love, this incompatibility extends into other areas of their relationship, particularly in relation to poetic matters. The originality of this chapter lies in the integrated examination of both the literary and intellectual aspects of Dante and Cino's exchange. By situating their

dialogue within the broader context of their respective works, I believe that Cino plays an essential and active role in Dante's intellectual and poetic evolution.

In brief, the aim is to outline the most important and crucial topics touched upon in the exchange between Dante and Cino at this moment of their relationship, and the modes with which the poets, through their dialogue, shape each other's perspectives and roles as poets. I pursue this by focusing on the development of both Dante and Cino's poetics; the analysis of the texts exchanged in this period shows the presence of a substantial change in Dante's and Cino's views on poetry, love, and philosophy – the *tenzone* is an invaluable source which allows us to trace and reframe the poetic evolution of both authors.

As a matter of fact, this stage of their dialogue deals with many topics that define both Dante's and Cino's poetics, hence the *tenzone* is extremely rich and productive in terms of themes and features which are of utmost importance to Dante's and Cino's poetry and lives. The literary space gives the poet a chance to discuss, challenge or reaffirm some of their concepts and beliefs. Examining this section of the exchange does not only provide us with an idea of what phase the poets were in in that specific moment of their life and career, but it also shows a shared need to question some of the essential topics and arguments, which ultimately are rediscussed and defined within their relationship.

Both poets clearly identify in each other an authoritative and reliable figure with which to build and restate major concepts emerging from their works. It is true that Cino is the one who begins the dialogue with Dante, as he evidently finds, in his friend, the highest *auctoritas* with whom discussing and challenging major elements of his poetics is fruitful. But, at the same time, Dante develops and nurtures a dialogue which gives him room to define, reshape and then affirm, not just his personal and poetic beliefs, but also his status as a poet of rectitude.[1] In this regard, Cino becomes the privileged interlocutor and also a pivotal figure, especially recognised in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, in relation to whom Dante can define himself in his renewed poetic and philosophical identity. In spite of the strong closeness that is shown in their exchange of texts, the formal correspondence between the poets comes to an end. This stage of the *tenzone* is fundamental for understanding the entire dialogue between Dante and Cino. The *tenzone* takes place immediately before a turning point in both

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[1] Dante defines himself *cantor rectitudinis* in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, II ii 9.

Dante and Cino's careers: on the one hand, Dante will dedicate all of his energy to the *Commedia*, while Cino, after his return to Pistoia, will focus on his legal career.

3.1 Texts examined

As I have already specified, to investigate this phase of the relationship between Dante and Cino it is necessary not only to examine the last sonnets of the *tenzone*, but also other texts which are, in a broader sense, a form of dialogue with Cino. Indeed, Dante mentions Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, which is an additional and valuable source to understand the nature of their relationship. Furthermore, Dante accompanies *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* with an epistle (III), containing supplementary components to further explain the content of the sonnet. In consequence, I consider all of these works a part of the broader dialogue between the poets.

The second stage of their relationship consists mostly in the years when Dante and Cino share the condition of exile and the period immediately prior. Therefore, the texts examined in this chapter include: *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni* (Dante to Cino), *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni* (Cino to Dante), *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* (Cino to Dante), *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* (Dante to Cino; this sonnet is accompanied by the *Epistola* III). I also include a pair of sonnets exchanged indirectly between Dante and Cino, through the intermediary Moroello Malaspina: *Cercando di trovar minera in oro* (Cino to Moroello Malaspina) and *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro* (Dante to Cino, in the name of Moroello Malaspina). Finally, the last pair of sonnets of the *tenzone* includes *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito* (Dante to Cino) and Cino's *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito* (Cino to Dante).

As I mentioned earlier, these are also the years when Dante writes the *De vulgari eloquentia*, in which Cino is mentioned on numerous occasions, as Dante's friend and, above all, as a poet of exemplary skill.[2] I consider these passages in which Cino is mentioned by Dante extremely important, as they can help us understand the relationship between the poets. Hence, these passages of the *De vulgari eloquentia* are also analysed in this chapter. In the treatise, Dante reserves for Cino the role of *cantor amoris* ('poet of love'), praised for his poetic skills, while Dante addresses himself as *cantor rectitudinis* ('poet of righteousness'). In the treatise, Cino represents an important element for Dante to define a poetic canon, which concludes with Dante's

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[2] *De vulgari eloquentia*, I x 4; I xiii 3; I xvii 3; II ii 9; II v 4; II vi 6.

self-recognition at the top of this tradition. Dante's last direct mention of Cino shows how the figure of Cino is both complementary and contrasting which helps Dante define his poetic identity at this stage of his life and poetry.

3.1.1 Themes and key features

The relationship between the poets during the second stage undergoes a significant change and development. The dialogue between Dante and Cino, through the *tenzone*, continues to play out. The main themes emerging from this last part of the *tenzone* are the following: incommunicability, alienation, loss of the beloved woman (a troubadour topos which has a meaningful role in Dante's and Cino's early works), and distance from the beloved woman and from the homeland (should it be intended in literal terms or in metaphorical terms). Furthermore, the question of the legitimacy of loving other women is central, as well as the sincerity and truthfulness of the lyric 'I'.

From this section of the *tenzone* onwards we clearly identify that Cino and Dante's thoughts and concepts, especially about the matter of love, change and start to grow apart as time passes: Dante moves towards a new idea of love, which will be replaced by Philosophy (in the *Convivio*), while Cino is still attached to previous concepts that imply that love should remain the central topic of vernacular poetry. This poetic exchange is evidence of how both Dante and Cino develop and evolve in their thoughts on poetry.[3] The exchange leads them towards metaliterary and metapoetic reflections. It is, perhaps, for this reason that Cino is identified by Dante as one of his best interlocutors, as Cino is the one who understands and discusses Dante's reflections on love poetry. Cino's fickleness in terms of love is a central and recurrent topic in the exchange with Dante. Indeed, Cino's 'volgibile cor'[4] is what Dante identifies as a limit or, even, a mistake he must correct. This aspect is increasingly discussed in the last moments of the *tenzone*, especially in the last sonnet with which Dante concludes the formal exchange with his friend: *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*.

3.1.2 Chronology

Chronology, at least until the first part of the *tenzone*, remains uncertain and becomes reliable only after the pair of sonnets *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* (Cino) and

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[3] Livraghi. 2012, p. 65.
[4] *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro*, v. 3.

Io sono stato con Amore insieme (Dante), which is accompanied by the *Epistola* III.[5] In fact, the epistle contains a *terminus post quem* which leaves no doubts on when the second part of the *tenzone* is written: Dante's reference to himself as 'exul inmeritus' ('undeservedly in exile') is an clear reference to his condition of exile, which he experiences from 1302.[6] It is plausible that a certain amount of time elapses between the first sonnets of the *tenzone* and the ones analysed in this chapter,[7] due to the presence of different elements and themes present in the exchange.[8]

As the chronology of Dante's *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni* (Dante) and Cino's *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni* (Cino) is uncertain, internal elements of the poems have been considered evidence to suggest when this pair of sonnets was written. In *Dante, i' non so*, Cino comforts Dante and spurs him to remain faithful towards a unique woman. It is in the last three lines of *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni* that Cino highlights the importance of Dante's faith towards this love: 'd'opra non star, se di fé non se' sciolto'.[9]

The faith to which Cino refers is the amorous faith towards the unique beloved woman. Hence, even in the *tenzone*, so in a moment after the composition of the consolatory *canzone*, Cino continues to embed what he internalised from reading the *Vita nova*. This demonstrates how much Dante's 'libello' influences Cino; this may represent more proof that Cino understands, from the beginning of the relationship with Dante, the true essence of Beatrice's role in Dante's oeuvre and in his life. In the name of the main principles enclosed within the *Vita nova*, Cino incites Dante to keep loyal and faithful to Beatrice. The remedy to face and tackle the sorrow is expressed in the following tercets:

> Dunque, s'al ben ciascun ostello è tolto
> nel mondo, in ogni parte ove ti giri,
> vuoli tu anco far dispiacer molto?
> Diletto frate mio, di pene involto,
> merzé per quella donna che tu miri,
> d'opra non star, se di fé non se' sciolto.[10]
> (CXXVI, vv. 9-14)

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[5] See Livraghi. 2012 for an *excursus* on the main positions on this aspect.
[6] *Epistola* III 1.
[7] I analysed the first part of the *tenzone* in chapter 2.
[8] Pasquini. 2010, pp. 2-3.
[9] *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*, v. 14.
[10] *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*, vv. 9-14.

While Dante laments the conditions of the place he was inhabiting in *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*, Cino invites him to persevere in behaving virtuously.

Specifically, an expression Dante uses in *Perch'io non trovo* – 'loco […] rio' (v. 7) – which is related to the place he is at while writing – may be significant. Dante states that the condition of being in a hostile place is what prevents him from writing a response to Cino earlier.[11] The sonnets recall the popular theme of a complaint about current conditions, typical of moral poetry; but, in this case, there is also a reference to a specific hostile place.[12] Giunta underlines that in this sonnet there is a variation, if compared to moral poetry. According to this interpretation, the sonnet does not contain a generic invective against the corruption of current times, but a *j'accuse* against a place, devoid of virtues.[13]

The first to highlight the problem of chronology was Zaccagnini in 1925. He denies the hypothesis that this pair of sonnets (Dante's *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni* and Cino's *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*) could be dated to the years of the 'rime allegoriche' (*c*. 1294-97) – as suggested by Vincenzo Di Benedetto.[14] Indeed, Zaccagnini argues that the sonnets belong to the years of exile shared by the poets (1303-1306), and thus Dante and Cino are actually referring to political tensions in Pistoia at the end of the thirteenth and beginning of fourteenth century. Furthermore, in contrast with Alberto Corbellini's supposition, Zaccagnini reads 'donna che tu miri' (v. 13) of *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni* as a reference to a spiritual Beatrice, and thus a moment situated years after her death. This can be confirmed by Cino's words, which suggest that Dante must maintain his faith ('fé', v. 14) towards the woman. On the contrary, Contini follows up on Corbellini's hypothesis, which, relying on Michele Barbi's order, affirms that Dante's sonnet should be dated right after Beatrice's death, and that it may have been the cause of the long silence between Cino's previous sonnet and Dante's *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*. Furthermore, Corbellini suggests that his interpretation is justified by another sonnet of Cino's, *Se tu sapessi ben com'io aspetto*, where he expresses his sorrow for not receiving a response from a friend.[15]

[11] Contini. 1946, p. 142.
[12] Giunta. 2018, p. 373.
[13] Giunta. 2018, p. 373, note 2.
[14] Pazzaglia, Mario. 1970. 'Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), IV, pp. 403-404.
[15] Zaccagnini, p. 210.

Even Nicola Zingarelli, Francesco Torraca, and Daniele Mattalia adopt Contini's point of view, as they situate the pair of sonnets in the years of exile.[16] Even though the title 'messer Cin'[17] may allude to a later moment, when Cino was entitled 'giureconsulto' (during exile) and the expression 'regno de' dimoni'[18] could be interpreted as a reference to the *Inferno*, these textual elements do not constitute enough evidence to determine the exact chronology.[19] Indeed, Cino had already referred to himself as '*dominus*' in a document dated to 1297.[20] According to Pasquini's chronological reconstruction, these two sonnets should be dated to the period corresponding to the first years of exile of both Cino and Dante. His argument analyses a number of textual references that seem to denote Dante's and Cino's stay in unfamiliar places or, at least, in places which are distant from the homeland.[21]

To try to solve this problem, De Robertis underlines that Dante's sonnet, *Perch'io non trovo*, may refer to the situation described in the lines 'Lasso! non donne qui, non genti accorte / veggio, a cui mi lamenti del mio male' (vv. 67-68) of the *canzone* 'montanina', *Amor, da che convien pur ch'io mi doglia*, which is certainly written during Dante's exile.[22] De Robertis suggests a link between the woman that Dante, as Cino states, is looking at ('quella donna che tu miri')[23] and the last stanza of Cino's consolatory *canzone* for the death of Beatrice. He even supports the idea that Cino's sonnet, *Se tu sapessi ben com'io aspetto*, is addressed to his friend, Dante.[24] Marti conjectures the same and he does not exclude the possibility that the pair of sonnets was written during exile.[25] Giunta states that consolation and comfort are typical motifs in exile poetry; the theme of the quest for comfort in each other was a constant motif in correspondence between exiles since classic literature. Despite this, he affirms we cannot exclude that Cino's *Se tu sapessi ben com'io aspetto* and *Novelle di veritate*

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[16] Ibid.
[17] *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*, v. 12.
[18] *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*, v. 8.
[19] Zaccagnini, p. 210.
[20] Pernicone, Vincenzo. 1970. 'Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), II, p. 310.
[21] Pasquini. 2010, p. 2.
[22] Dante dedicates the *canzone* 'montanina' to Moroello Malaspina (to whom the *Epistola* IV is also addressed), explaining that Dante's renewed passion for a woman subjects him, once again, to the domination of Love. He writes the *canzone* during his exile in Casentino, returning to the themes of the 'stil novo'.
[23] *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*, v. 13.
[24] De Robertis. 2005, p. 492.
[25] Marti. 1969, p. 726, note 3. See also De Robertis's comments, as he quotes Barbi and Pernicone, who refer to *Purg*. XXIV, 79-81. Cfr. De Robertis. 2005, p. 493, note 7.

ignude were addressed to Dante, hence a considerable amount of time may have passed between these sonnets and Dante's response with *Perch'io non trovo*.[26]

In any case, in the first pair of sonnets analysed in this chapter, space, and time are certainly described as unfavourable and averse. The hostile condition which is mentioned in the texts can be read literally or metaphorically. The metaphorical interpretation is used by Marti, as he speaks of a 'solitudine spirituale'.[27] Despite this, Marti still believes that the hostile place cannot refer to Florence and that we must consider these sonnets as belonging to the exile.[28] Marrani bases his arguments on material evidence to suggest that the pair of sonnets may be situated in a moment when Dante was far away from Florence, so to the years of exile or even, maybe, not long after the *Vita nova*.[29]

The expression 'pensamenti boni' (v. 4) in *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni* is another element which may help in determining the chronology. The adjective which qualifies the nature of these 'pensamenti' (v. 4) is 'boni' (v. 4), which contrasts with the physical and spiritual place where Dante is ('loco […] rio', v. 7). The word 'loco' may be a reference to Florence, therefore it may have been written before Dante's exile, while others argue that it may refer to an unfamiliar place, so a place of exile. In addition, it could even be referring to a spiritual *locus*, so a condition internally perceived, which would easily match the unpleasant – internal and external – experience.[30] Furthermore, Dante refers to Florence with a severe and harsh tone only after he is exiled, not before.[31] The expression 'chi meco ragioni' (v. 1) can be intepreted as 'ragiona d'amor' (v. 3) of *Gentil pensero che parla di voi* (*Vn* XXXVIII 8-10). If we accept this interpretation, the expression refers to reasoning about love, thus it implies that 'pensamenti boni' (v. 4) refers to erotic matters, as well.[32] As a consequence, Dante may be referring to a moment to which he and Cino previously belonged that is now coming to an end.[33] Adhering to this view, this can be read as the

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[26] Giunta. 2018, p. 372.
[27] Marti. 1969, p. 726, note 1.
[28] Marti. 1969, pp. 726-727, note 4.
[29] Marrani, Giuseppe. 2021. 'Dante, Cino e i Malaspina: questioni nuove e vecchie', in *Dante e la Toscana Occidentale*, ed. by Alberto Casadei, Paolo Pontari, in collaboration with Matteo Cambi (Pisa: Pisa University Press), pp. 401-412 (pp. 403-404).
[30] Contini interprets 'boni' as 'virtuosi', while Di Benedetto understands it as 'amorosi'. See Contini. 1946, p. 143.
[31] Giunta. 2018, p. 374, notes 7-8.
[32] De Robertis. 2005, p. 493, notes 1-2 and 4.
[33] De Robertis. 2005, p. 493, note 13.

first formal detachment from Cino, or, at least, an awareness of their diverging points of view. Discussing love as a concept comes across as a real desire for Dante ('conviemmi sodisfare al gran disio / ch'i' ho di dire i pensamenti boni', vv. 3-4). An intermediate position is Giunta's hypothesis: he suggests reading the expression 'pensamenti boni' (v. 4) as corresponding to 'pensier bono' (v. 65) of *Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona*, and thus, interprets 'loco' as a place, not of exile, but still somewhere far away from Florence, an isolated place, far from civility.[34] Fenzi gives an interpretation of 'pensamenti boni' which differs from all of the previous ones – especially Contini's, who understood the expression as relating to thoughts about love. According to Fenzi, the first quatrain of the sonnet *Perch'io non trovo* constitutes a tautology or a redundancy, and so he suggests reading 'pensamenti boni' as if Dante is saying he is about to talk of matters which are not necessarily about love, albeit they arise from love. This is corroborated if we take into consideration two of Dante's 'doctrinal' poems (*Le dolci rime d'amor ch'i' solia* and *Poscia ch'Amor del tutto m'ha lasciato*) and by looking at Cino's response where he seems to have immediately understood the ethical-didactic intention of the 'pensamenti boni' that Dante refers to.[35]

The beginning of Dante's *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*, which refers to Amore ('signor', v. 2), aligns with the code and language of the amorous tradition, when Amore becomes the cypher of civility.[36] Livraghi claims that Dante is referring to a generic condition of alienation, of social and historical changes, which makes erotic poetry unsuitable for current times.[37] She even states that a lack of references to Cino's exile may suggest that the sonnet was written right before Cino's exile (around 1302), or maybe later, as lines 9 and 10 recall the 'montanina' – but in this *canzone*, despite the contrastive and isolating circumstances, Dante finds someone to express his love to.[38] According to Raffaele Pinto, the 'loco' refers to a place of exile, a literally hostile place which makes erotic poetry not suitable for the context Dante is in. For this reason, the reference to the decadence of the world may be justified, as this makes

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[34] Furthermore, there would be Cino's *Ciò ch'i' veggio di qua m'è mortal duolo*, which refers to 'selvaggia gente' (v. 2) and to a land in which Cino is an exile and nobody understands him. See Giunta. 2018, pp. 373-374 and 374, notes 1-8.
[35] *Le dolci rime d'amor ch'i' solia* (*Rime*, LXXXII, commented in *Convivio* IV), and *Poscia ch'Amor del tutto m'ha lasciato* (*Rime*, LXXXIII); cfr. Fenzi. 2016, pp. 91-92.
[36] Livraghi. 2012, p. 72.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Livraghi. 2012, p. 73.

love poetry impracticable.[39] Pinto even notices a polemic intention towards Cino, who instead seems to be attached to erotic poetry despite the unfitting condition he inhabits. On the other hand, Cino's reply may imply that, on the contrary, love poetry is useful to resist an unfavourable condition.[40]

Despite the importance of the debates regarding the time in which the pair of sonnets, *Perch'io non trovo* and *Dante, i' non so*, is exchanged, I now want to focus on the divergence of some concepts – especially love poetry – which emerge properly in the *tenzone* from this point onwards. Dante seems to communicate that his poetry is negatively influenced by his surroundings or, in general, by the present condition of his life, whereas Cino, as I have noted, maintains that love poetry serves as a meaningful response to these challenging circumstances. Dante and Cino, from this point onwards, express a distance, a sense of alienation, while they reflect on erotic matters and poetry. This exchange of texts results in metapoetic reflections that the two poets carry out extensively. Specifically, Dante and Cino discuss how a certain type of poetry may be produced by expressing two different concepts. Dante, in his sonnet, immediately brings himself close to Cino, as he refers to Cino and himself as poets of a certain type of 'diri'.[41] But at the same time, Dante modifies his concepts and readapts them to the situation he is in. On the other hand, Cino maintains a faithful connection to his previous type of poetry and spurs Dante to do the same. Through the word 'fé',[42] Cino restates his poetic beliefs and claims that remaining faithful to poetry is key to surviving an adverse situation. In conclusion to this section, since the chronology of the poems remains problematic, I find it more fruitful to speak of a generic condition that the poets are living, which brings with it a sense of alienation, isolation and distance.

3.2 In the wake of the consolatory *canzone* and the 'stil novo'

The first phase of the relationship between Cino and Dante can be inscribed within the style which will be labelled by critics as 'stil novo'. Indeed, both the *canzone consolatoria* and the first sonnets of the *tenzone* belong to and fit in that poetic

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[39] Pinto. 2009, p. 52.
[40] Ibid.
[41] *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*, v. 13.
[42] *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*, v. 14.

milieu.[43] The second phase of the relationship between Dante and Cino initially continued in that direction, but then some substantial changes emerged. For these reasons, the closeness between the poets – in terms of poetic perspectives – is challenged and different points of view are developed. To outline this complex phase in a way which is not simplistic, I find it essential to analyse each part of their exchange and how each stage can be interpreted, not only by looking at Dante and Cino's individual careers, but also by considering these elements as part of a wider frame, that encompasses the specific dialogue between them. Therefore, this highlights the will and the need of both poets to have a unique discussion with each other. This line of interpretation allows me to examine how Dante and Cino's poetics were shaped over time and, most of all, how their different types of poetics were shaped in relation to each other.

The second phase of the relationship between Dante and Cino comprises the crucial part of their exchange, as it becomes an explicit way for Dante to shape his poetic, erotic and philosophical ideas, that are developing and being defined in these years. For the first time, Dante takes the lead in the poetic exchange by writing *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*, and situates the poem within the tone of Cino's aim to comfort his friend.[44] Dante explains that he cannot find anyone with whom to reason, as a consequence of his stay in a place in which it is hard to find people inclined towards good. The last tercet of this sonnet explicitly addresses Cino and seems to allude to Dante's awareness that Cino's writing still represents the poetics of the 'stil novo':

> Oh, messer Cin, come 'l tempo è rivolto
> a danno nostro e de li nostri diri,
> da po' che 'l ben è sì poco ricolto!
> (CXXVI *a*, vv. 12-14)

Cino replies with *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni* and confirms that he feels the same as Dante, and he extends this feeling to any place:

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[43] I refer to Cino's *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, Dante's *I' ho veduto già senza radice*, and Cino's *Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia*. Cfr. chapter 2.
[44] Cino demonstrates this purpose with the consolatory *canzone Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo* and with the sonnet *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*.

Dunque, s'al ben ciascun ostello è tolto
nel mondo, in ogni parte ove ti giri,
vuoli tu anco far dispiacer molto?
(CXXVI, vv. 9-11)

3.2.1 The language of consolation as a crossover between earthly love and sacred love

Among the aspects that constitute continuity with the first phase of the relationship is the use of consolatory language. The peculiar aspect of the sonnets *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni* and *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni* that emerges is the presence of motifs which are key points that are already found in Cino's consolatory *canzone*. It is important to keep this idea in mind when understanding the tone of the second stage of the exchange. As I have already pointed out, in this stage Dante begins the exchange by writing to Cino – as it appears at lines 5-6 ('Null'altra cosa appo voi m'accagioni / del lungo e del noioso tacer mio'), where Dante apologises for the delay in responding. Dante immediately moulds this passage in a sombre and melancholic tone, as indicated in the first line, 'Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni' (v. 1), in which the inability of communication is shown and is exemplified by the lack of an interlocutor who is able to discuss and reason regarding amorous matters. Indeed, the theme of love is explicitly alluded to at line 2 as 'signor' refers to Amore. The theme of love is one of the themes treated the most in his exchange with Cino. Sharing this inability to communicate is expressively stated by Dante when he places in rhyming position 'voi ed io' (v. 2) and 'nostro'- 'nostri' (v. 13). By doing this, Dante alludes to, syntactically and ideally, the destiny he shares with his friend. Cino, in another sonnet written during his exile – *Ciò ch'i' veggio di qua m'è mortal duolo* – expresses his choice of isolating and turning in on himself, escaping and hiding from the 'selvaggia gente' (v. 2).[45] This acceptance of Amore, assimilated to a god-like figure, implies a worship towards him, which evokes the devotion demonstrated by a Christian towards God.[46] This closeness or even overlap of the amorous and divine lexicon and semantic field is a common trait between Cino's c*onsolatio* and his responsive sonnet *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*. In the responsive sonnet, Cino follows the path traced by Dante, through lexical, thematic, and tonal reminiscences.

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[45] *Ciò ch'i' veggio di qua m'è mortal duolo*, vv. 2-4: '[…] fra selvaggia gente, / la qual i' fuggo, e sto celatamente / perché mi trovi Amor col penser solo'. See Giunta. 2018, p. 374, notes 7-8.
[46] Giunta. 2018, p. 373, note 2.

The consolatory intention endures with a tone which suggests that Cino is continuing to comfort Dante, by using the style of moral and philosophical poetry; he places, at the centre of the question, the contrast ('contraro', v. 4) between good and bad. Cino identifies the solution by responding to this suffering by following the attraction towards good. Faith is the virtue that will save him from this condition: 'se di fé non se' sciolto' (v. 14).

The fourth line of Cino's *Dante, i' non so* – 'che dal contraro son nati li troni' – is open to interpretation. 'Troni' could indicate, according to Michele Barbi and Francesco Maggini, a metaphor to the huge clamour of fame, juxtaposed with the sound at line 1 (the verb 'soni'), while De Robertis interprets them as thunderbolts ('saette'), as they metaphorically represent the bad.[47] Furthermore, according to Marti, the image represents the thrones and so, by extension, the reign that recalls 'regno de' dimoni' (v. 8).[48] If this last view is considered valid, it means that there is a reference to Scripture (Isaiah 14. 13); this reading is corroborated by the fact that the theme of the world upside down – that instead of following the good, it follows the bad – is constant in the works of moralists.[49] The element of the 'trono', as Barnes states, is present even in the 'montanina'.[50] References to the divine sphere are explicit and numerous; for example, at line 7, 'Iddio' is illuminated through its unequivocal form – it is not only Amore that is mentioned. And again, Cino speaks about the realm of demons – 'regno de' dimoni' (v. 8): from this expression we can postulate many interpretations, especially if we take into consideration the term 'opra' (v. 14), because at this chronological point this could be a reference to the *Commedia in fieri*.[51] Even though the expression 'regno de' dimoni' suggests an allusion to the first cantos of the *Commedia*, it is more probable that it is a reference to the catabasis of Christ, narrated in the extracanonical Gospel of Nicodemus.[52] In the last tercet there is a group of words that are reminiscent of the semantic field of the divine, and they create a mixture and overlapping of erotic and divine elements:. 'quella donna' (v. 13) that Dante is looking at ('miri', v. 13), to which Cino is referring, is in all probability a 'Beatrice già

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[47] Barbi-Maggini; cfr. De Robertis. 2005, p. 494, note 4.
[48] Marti. 1969, p. 729, note 3.
[49] Giunta. 2018, p. 377, note 4.
[50] Barnes, John C. 2006. 'Moroello "vapor": metafora meteorica e visione dantesca del marchese di Giovagallo', *Dante Studies with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, CXXIV, pp. 35-56 (p. 46).
[51] This is valid if we assume that the sonnet dates to the first years of the fourteenth century and so to the first years of exile for Dante and Cino.
[52] Giunta. 2018, p. 378, notes 7-8.

trasfigurata'.[53] This interpretation is reinforced by the reference to Cino's consolatory *canzone* – at vv. 57-58, 'Mirate nel piacer, dove dimora / la vostra donna ch'è in ciel coronata' – and again by the allusive and lexical texture that permeates the sonnet, recalling the semantic field of faith. For instance, the word 'merzé' (v. 13) is a clear reference to God, and thus to God's Grace.[54] Cino here, in the very last lines, is suggesting a positive perspective and invites Dante to not abandon faith ('fé', v. 14), despite the pains ('pene', v. 12) he must suffer.

I detect the presence of a climax, a thickening of an intertextual link to Scripture and Christological references, and divine references in general, in the last tercet. A clear reference to Scripture is also noted by Pinto and he interprets it as Cino reminding his reader of the fundamental variation between Beatrice ('quella donna', v. 13), which represents theology, and the 'donna gentile' of the *Convivio*, which represents Philosophy.[55] Pinto reads a polemic intention in Cino's sonnet, as Cino may want to indicate the religious nature of the love for Beatrice, which Dante puts aside to allow Philosophy to prevail. According to this reading, Pinto suggests that the reason why Dante mentions Cino, and not, for instance, Guinizzelli or Cavalcanti, in the *De vulgari eloquentia* as the best *cantor amoris* ('poet of love'), is because Cino has always been faithful to the values of love poetry.[56]

Another important element which may directly recall the *consolatoria* is underlined by Fenzi. He supports the idea that the exhortation towards Dante to remain faithful to the object of his contemplation has many elements which refer to *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*, restating the nature of Beatrice that Cino demonstrated he fully understood in the *canzone*.[57] Hence, continues Fenzi, Cino suggests that Dante does not step back from his poetic duties, despite the civilly and morally degraded situation he is living. Cino may have spurred Dante in this way, as Dante's poetry is recognised as having a moral superiority.[58] The Christological interpretation that Fenzi recognises

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[53] Contini. 1946, p. 144, note 13. As a consequence, we can deduce that Beatrice is also contemplated, if we rely on the consequentiality of action suggested by Cino in the *consolatio*: after a few lines the verb 'contemplando' appears (v. 61).

[54] De Robertis. 2005, p. 492 and p. 495, note 13.

[55] Cfr. Pinto. 2009, pp. 52-53.

[56] Pinto. 2009, p. 51.

[57] Fenzi. 2016, p. 93.

[58] Fenzi. 2016, p. 94: 'Lo sollecita dunque a non arretrare dinanzi ai suoi nuovi compiti, in una situazione civile e morale degradata, in nome della superiorità morale e poetica e della forza della sua voce che ormai l'apparenta agli evangelisti e a Cristo medesimo, ai quali è giunto attraverso Beatrice e alla eccezionale esperienza d'amore che in lei si riassume'.

may be reinforced by reading 'regno de' dimoni' as an allusion to the catabasis of Christ in Hell, mentioned earlier.[59] Another term which may suggest a Christological allusion is 'fio' (v. 6), which could refer to the deal which creates a bond between the Christian to God, as it literally means 'salary'. Marti understands this as a reference to the metaphoric salary as a gift from God (life and Grace) – and if one does not follow this line traced by God, an offence against God is the result.[60]

3.2.2 Dante, Cino, and Cavalcanti

The theme of friendship is valuable in understanding the nature of the relationship that binds Dante and Cino. Even though friendship is examined in broader terms, this theme is brought to the centre of the analysis of this section in a different and more specific way.[61] Indeed, it is important, in terms of completeness, to give an account of the role that Guido Cavalcanti, Dante's 'primo amico', has in relation to Dante.[62] Most of all, it is important to focus on how the presence of Cavalcanti for Dante serves as a benchmark to help define the relationship between Dante and Cino. There are points of similarity but also of difference between the relationship Dante has with Cavalcanti and the one he has with Cino. The role of Cavalcanti in relation to Dante and Cino has been widely studied, but so far scholars have focused on the role that Cavalcanti had in shaping Dante's poetics.[63]

I argue that, in Dante's imagination, Cino could be considered a complementary figure to Cavalcanti, which was even more important in terms of the development of

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[59] Fenzi. 2016, p. 94. As I have already pointed out, the expression 'regno de' dimoni' is an element which generated a debate in the scholarship. For Contini, it does not necessarily refer to the *Inferno* but generically to a world of vice (1946, p. 144, note 8). This is the same interpretation followed by Marti, as well as for 'di pene involto' (1969, p. 728, note 5 and p. 729, note 3). The last part of *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni* persuaded some scholars to read an allusion to Beatrice and the *Commedia*; this feature – which cannot be proved – would suggests that Cino is one of the first readers of the first cantos of the *Inferno* (cfr. Pasquini. 2010, p. 4). Following this interpretation, it would be plausible to read even 'opra' as a reference to an actual piece of work.

[60] Cfr. Giunta. 2018, p. 378, note 6; cfr. Marti. 1969, p. 728, note 4.

[61] Cfr. chapter 1.

[62] *Vita nova*, XIV 6; XXV 10; XXX 3.

[63] For a comprehensive study of the complex and convoluted relationship between Dante and Guido Cavalcanti, see the following bibliography: Tanturli, Giuliano. 1993. 'Guido Cavalcanti contro Dante', in *Le tradizioni del testo: studi di letteratura italiana offerti a Domenico De Robertis*, ed. by Franco Gavazzeni and Guglielmo Gorni (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi), pp. 3-13; Balduino, Armando. 1996. 'Cavalcanti contro Dante e Cino', in *Bufere e molli aurette: polemiche letterarie dallo Stilnovo alla 'Voce'*, ed. by Maria Grazia Pensa (Milan: Guerini), pp. 1-19; Malato, Enrico. 1997. *Dante e Guido Cavalcanti. Il dissidio per la 'Vita nuova' e il 'disdegno' di Guido* (Rome: Salerno); Pasero, Nicolò. 1998. 'Dante in Cavalcanti. Ancora sui rapporti tra "Vita nuova" e "Donna me prega"', *Medioevo romanzo*, 22, pp. 388-414.

Dante's thoughts in relation to poetry and philosophy. Looking at Cino's *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*, may be a valuable choice to understand the principal features of the poetic triangulation among Dante, Cino and Cavalcanti. The last tercet of Cino's sonnet contains the cornerstone of the poem, which also provides a supplementary hint about how to comprehend Dante's ideals in this particular moment of his career. In particular, the last word used by Cino, 'sciolto' (v. 14),[64] may hide a precise evocative value, by contrast, towards a poem that Dante addresses to his 'primo amico', Guido Cavalcanti. The complex relationship between Dante and Cavalcanti is an additional and integrative element to understand how Cino's role may have filled in the gaps that the friendship between Dante and Cavalcanti had, which at this point in Dante's life, had come to an end.

Cavalcanti's sonnet, *Certo non è de lo 'ntelletto acolto*, is beneficial to understanding the dynamics of the poetic relationship between Dante, Cino and Cavalcanti. The sonnet portrays a situation where the addressee is caught in an embarrassing predicament, leading to accusations of dishonesty. The tone shifts from irritation to regret, ultimately reflecting on the tormented situation of love, because of the woman's persistent disdain. If we accept that the addressee of Cavalcanti's sonnet, *Certo non è de lo 'ntelletto acolto*, is Dante, a comparison can be made among what is stated in Cavalcanti's sonnet and the last tercet of Cino's sonnet *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*.[65] In fact, Roberto Rea identifies this triangulation (Cavalcanti-Dante-Cino), which is helpful to define the differences between Beatrice's assumption into Heaven which is narrated in both Cino and Cavalcanti. The same word, 'sciolto' (v. 14), that Cino employs, is also used in the rhyme position (v. 5) in *Certo non è de lo 'ntelletto acolto*:

> Sarebbe forse che t'avesse sciolto
> Amor da quella ch'è nel tondo sesto?
> o che vi·razzo t'avesse richesto
> a por te lieto ov'i' son tristo molto?[66]

[64] It is also confirmed by Rea that the use of the participle 'sciolto' in position of rhyme is extremely rare in poets from the thirteenth century onwards, and it only occurs in this amorous meaning. See Rea. 2011, p. 196, note 1.

[65] Cfr. Cavalcanti, Guido, Rea R., Inglese G. (eds). 2011. *Rime* (Rome: Carocci), pp. 226-229.

[66] *Certo non è de lo 'ntelletto acolto*, vv. 5-8.

In this case, it may be possible to interpret Cavalcanti's lines 5 and 6 as an accusation towards Dante's unfaithfulness to the beloved woman.[67] Following this interpretation, faith may refer to faith towards the

> gentilissima assunta in cielo, l'eterno ideale amoroso cui egli a partire dalla *Vita Nova* ha consacrato la propria vita e la propria poesia, come Cino gli ha già ricordato nella consolatoria per la morte della medesima Beatrice.[68]

I find it plausible to reinterpret this kind of faith in another way. By reading Cavalcanti's words, we can interpret the passage as an allusion to the Beatrice of the *Vita nova* and, therefore, to a precise form of poetics. This may also be demonstrated by the expression 'tondo sesto' (v. 6), interpreted as 'a circle finished, perfect', which may be a direct reference to Dante's *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*.[69] Therefore, if 'tondo sesto' corresponds to Dante's 'Lo cielo, che non have altro difetto' (v. 19) of *Donne ch'avete*, Cavalcanti may refer here to the error/lack of which Dante is accused, as he broke his unconditional faith towards Beatrice.[70] If the addressee of the sonnet is Dante, Cavalcanti employs a harsh and accusatory tone against him, while Cino still uses the same tone of the *consolatio*, reaffirming what was stated in that *canzone*, so that the character Beatrice cannot be abandoned by Dante because she is complete in herself in him, who conceived her. The fact that Cino is concerned about Dante being released ('sciolto', v. 5) from his faith towards the beloved woman does not contradict Cino's recommendation. Instead, it is an exhortation for Dante not to lose the awareness that Beatice is already within him, and that reaching her is within his power and thus, necessary. The substantial difference with Cavalcanti lies here. Cino expresses his concern but maintains a comforting attitude, and moreover this concern already includes a solution.

Another sonnet written by Cino is useful to delineate a precise profile of the triangulation between Dante, Cino, and Cavalcanti. Cino's *Qua' son le cose vostre ch'io vi tolgo* has Cavalcanti as its formal addressee. Apparently, Cavalcanti may have written a piece of work (probably a sonnet) in which he accused Cino of plagiarism.[71]

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[67] Rea. 2011, p. 192.
[68] Rea. 2011, p. 195.
[69] *Vita nova*, XIX 5-14. Rea. 2011, pp. 192-193.
[70] Rea. 2011, p. 194.
[71] Arqués Corominas, p. 234.

Cino seems to be aware of his artistic-poetic value and refuses to call himself an 'artista' (v. 9). The interpretation of Rossend Arqués Corominas suggests that Cino's need to defend himself could be a response highlighting the different way he and Cavalcanti consider their poetics in relation to love. Here the controversial point may be related to poetic concepts and the principles that the poets want to convey. Therefore, Cino is positioning himself in line with Dante, and in opposition to Cavalcanti, in poetic and intellectual terms – even if Cino maintains the same style, lexicon and form of Cavalcanti, he is expressing different concepts.[72] Cino consciously refuses to be called 'artista', probably because he is employing Aristotelian terms, so he could mean the 'letterato formato nella facoltà delle arti'.[73] According to this view, Cino is affirming, instead, his use of the same poetic language as Cavalcanti and others but he applies it to a different point of view. Cino may be referring to a vision of love which has an important element in common with Dante: the divine origin of the feminine essence, which can lead the man towards his realisation.[74] This interpretation of a fundamental difference between Dante and Cino on the one side, and Cavalcanti on the other side, is confirmed by Picone, through his analysis of Cino's *Qua' son le cose vostre ch'io vi tolgo*.[75] Cino makes use of the contrast and detachment that arose between Dante and Cavalcanti, to align himself with Dante's ideals.

3.3 From love poetry to philosophy

In this section I focus on the main themes and features of the pair of sonnets of the *tenzone* which can be dated to after Dante's exile and, probably, after Cino's exile: Cino's *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* and Dante's *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*. This pair of sonnets touches upon philosophical matters that Cino asks Dante to discuss. At the same time, Dante seems to find in Cino the most suitable interlocutor with which to face these issues; this exchange enables Dante to raise himself to the status of *philosophans*. In the sonnet *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* Cino claims that his desire of love ('disio amoroso', v. 2), which is now without hope ('speme', v. 2), must be oriented towards a new person. Regarding this, Cino asks Dante to share his own point of view on the issue. The meaning of some passages of Cino's sonnet

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[72] Arqués Corominas, p. 245.
[73] Arqués Corominas, p. 238.
[74] Arqués Corominas, p. 242.
[75] Picone. 2004, p. 42.

remains obscure, but this does not prevent Dante from answering the issues presented by Cino.[76] The structure of Cino's sonnet recalls the structure of the *exempla*: the first part is theoretical, then it follows a personal experience.[77] The first two quatrains of Cino's sonnet constitute an entire sentence, expressing the core issue of the poem; the topos of Love which enters the person through the eyes is evoked, along with the metaphor of a seed ('seme', v. 3) as something planted in the interiority of the self ('che dentro si ragiona', v. 4). Line 8 concludes with the main clause, asserting that the desire of love can be transferred to another person ('si può ben trasformar d'altra persona', v. 8).

3.3.1 The question of whether the soul can pass from one passion to another passion

Dante's response to Cino is composed of two texts: the sonnet *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* and the *Epistola* III. In the epistle, Dante confirms Cino's concept and enforces his argument by adding to the personal experience he had (stated in the sonnet) the argument of authority (referring to Ovid's *Metamorphosis* and the *Remedia fortuitorum* of the Pseudo-Seneca) and of reason.[78] The main topic discussed here is the inescapability from Amore, whose power overcomes free will.[79] This discourse falls under the theme of the *fol amor*, as an unbeatable force.[80] In the first quatrain, Dante makes a chronological reference which directly recalls the *Vita nova*, stating that his first meeting with Amore was around his ninth year of life and tells the reader how Love is capable of dragging you anywhere ('affrena e sprona', v. 3), while the lover alternates laughing and weeping ('si ride e geme', v. 4), continuing the set of contrasts started by Cino.[81] Dante confirms the impossibility of resisting this force with reason or virtue ('ragione o virtù', v. 5). This belief is confirmed by the fact that free will ('liber arbitrio', v. 10) has never won against this invincible entity. Hence, if

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[76] According to Contini's interpretation, this obscurity is due to the limits of Cino's attempts to approach philosophical poetry of such complexity (1946, p. 193, notes 1-8).

[77] Giunta. 2018, p. 509.

[78] Contini. 1946, p. 192.

[79] *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, v. 10: 'liber arbitrio'. Cfr. Contini. 1946, p. 192: 'Dante conferma, in un bel frammento di poesia dell'ineluttabile, la fatalità d'Amore, contro cui non vale arbitrio, e che appunto potrà solo mutare oggetto, irresistibile anche nella variazione'; cfr. Marti. 1969, p. 736, note 3: 'È affermata, dunque, l'ineluttabilità del sentimento d'amore, e la sua fatalità; in modo ancor più fermo […] nei due versi che seguono, ove la palestra d'Amore è l'ideale regno di gentilezza e cortesia'.

[80] Livraghi. 2012, p. 77.

[81] *Vita nova*, II 2: 'Ella era in questa vita già stata tanto, che ne lo suo tempo lo cielo stellato era mosso verso la parte d'oriente de le dodici parti l'una d'un grado, sì che quasi dal principio del suo anno nono apparve a me, ed io la vidi quasi da la fine del mio nono'. See Marti. 1969, p. 736.

this 'piacer' (v. 13) affects the lover through the will of Love, it is not possible to avoid this kind of involvement. The expression 'liber arbitrio', defined with these words, is employed by Dante for the first time in *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* (v. 10). In this circumstance, the concept of free will is related to the theme of love. Dante's sonnet presents a dichotomy between Christian precepts and courtly tradition: the Christian belief teaches that free will is able to overcome the spur of Love. On the other hand, in this sonnet Dante adheres to the courtly concept of love, as a force which cannot be overcome.[82] At this stage of Dante's poetic career, Dante states that love is a force to which one must surrender as it is not capable of defeating it.[83]

I believe that the choice to explicitly recall the *Vita nova* is a precise statement of poetics at this stage, as the 'libello' is a significant and unavoidable reference for both authors' poetic and ideological development. Many scholars have noticed a connection between *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* and the *Convivio* – for instance, Contini finds it plausible that what is stated at lines 5 and 6 is the same thing claimed by Dante, which relates to the shift from a dead beloved to an alive beloved.[84] Livraghi underlines that, even though both texts – the sonnet and the *Convivio* – touch upon the same argument, they present a different point of view. In the sonnet, Dante finds the passage from one passion to another passion legitimate, as his aim is to justify a sensitive love, which Cino specifically addresses. On the other hand, in the *Convivio*, Dante's aim is to justify the passage from a sensitive love to a spiritual love. But both works have the same final aim for Dante: to legitimate himself as a philosopher.[85] These are the years in which Dante, through Cino's response and the *Convivio*, even if in different ways, is trying to justify and validate his choice of passing to another love ('donna gentile') after the death of Beatrice and to define himself as a philosopher. Both texts are part of this programme of self-legitimation that Dante pursues in these years.

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[82] Giunta. 2018, p. 513-514.
[83] I provide a thorough examination of this broad and complex subject in relation to the dialogue between Dante and Cino in chapter 4. I deal with the correlation between love and free will and its development in Dante, from the *tenzone* with Cino until the end of the *Commedia*.
[84] Contini. 1946, p. 193, notes 1-8. Cfr. *Convivio*, II viii 5: 'A questa questione si può leggiermente rispondere che lo effetto di costoro è amore, come detto è; [e] però che salvare nol possono se non in quelli subietti che sono sottoposti alla loro circulazione, esso transmutano di quella parte che è fuori di loro podestade in quella che v'è dentro, cioè dell'anima partita d'esta vita in quella che è in essa: sì come la natura umana transmuta, nella forma umana, la sua conservazione di padre in figlio, perché non può in esso padre perpetualmente co[ta]l suo effetto conservare'.
[85] Livraghi. 2012, pp. 79-80.

The type of affection expressed in the *Epistola* III by Dante towards Cino is the same that endures in their correspondence. But here, Dante, perhaps with subtle irony, remarks on Cino's indolence when speaking about questions regarding Amore. In *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* Cino discusses an issue which is crucial to Dante's life and poetics after the death of Beatrice: if it is permitted to abandon the love towards one woman for another. The *Epistola* III expresses the same aspects which are in the *Convivio*: the need to expand on what was affirmed in *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* and in the letter, may be due to the fact that poetry is, in a way, the space of fiction, while philosophical prose provides clarity to the content of poetry. Hence, in this case, Dante is re-stating the philosophical justification behind his choice to love the 'donna gentile' and thus, the passage from the *Vita nova* – through an act of palinode – to what was stated in the *Convivio*.[86] The epistle comes across as an intermediate point between these two stages of Dante's ideology.

Io sono stato con amore insieme brings with it two elements of Dante's poetic development in the years 1301-1307: the lyric element (for images and language) and the philosophical element.[87] Philosophical arguments intertwine with the lyric thread, contaminating the canonical sphere of lyric poetry and making explicit the need for Dante to go beyond the limits of the lyric tradition.[88] It is not only the sonnet *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* in itself, but also the fact that Dante sends this text to Cino that are conducive to defining this complex moment of Dante's poetics. It is a phase which is between the lyric experience which has, in the *Vita nova*, its highest point of reference; a moment when Dante is particularly keen on deepening his philosophical and doctrinal knowledge.[89] The presence of these two aspects, the lyric element and the philosophical element, is visible through the prose and it can also be observed by focusing on the use of rationalistic argument, which is added to the personal experience (the same that was narrated in the *Vita nova*). Therefore, I find it plausible that Cino is provoking Dante in order to stimulate a further explanation on the topic, as he was

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[86] Pinto. 2009, p. 49-54.

[87] Livraghi, Leyla. 2015. 'Eros e dottrina nel sonetto dantesco "Io sono stato con Amore insieme"', in *AlmaDante. Seminario dantesco 2013*, ed. by Giuseppe Ledda and Filippo Zanini (Bologna: Aspasia), pp. 67-85 (p. 75).

[88] Livraghi. 2015, p. 76.

[89] Calenda, Corrado. 2014. 'L'amore e gli amori; la donna e le donne; "costanza de la ragione" e "vanitade de li occhi". Significato e valore di un percorso non lineare', in *Ortodossia ed eterodossia in Dante Alighieri. Atti del convegno di Madrid, 5-7 novembre 2012*, ed. by Carlota Cattermole, Celia de Aldama and Chiara Giordano, pres. by Juan Varela-Portas de Orduña (Madrid: Ediciones de la Discreta), pp. 489-505 (p. 494).

expecting a different response to what he could have implicitly found in the *Vita nova*. The *Vita nova*, again, remains a point of reference which enables the poets to structure a discussion around these topics. Furthermore, Cino may have already been aware of a change in Dante's perspective, at least his approach to philosophy, and thus, Cino gave him a literary space to discuss this and to place himself as a philosopher, a *cantor rectitudinis*. In this sense, the presence of Cino at this point in Dante's career and later on, while writing the *De vulgari eloquentia*, may be both as an interlocutor and an anti-model of poetry: Dante does not diminish the role of Cino as a poet of love but, by identifying him as *cantor amoris* in the *De vulgari eloquentia,* gives him superiority over the other contemporary poets of love; however, at the same time, Dante places Cino in contrast to Dante himself, specifically because of this distance between their philosophical ideas.

Philosophical matters are pivotal to the discussion between Dante and Cino, in the sonnet *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona*, which is followed by Dante's response, through both the sonnet *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* and the *Epistola* III. In particular, in the epistle, Dante discusses Cino's question 'utrum de passione in passionem possit anima transformari' ('whether the soul can move from one passion to another').[90] The fact that Cino is both a fellow exile and an authoritative figure, may be the reason why Dante chose him as interlocutor.[91] In defining Cino as a poet of love, Dante does not diminish his role, but by placing him as *cantor amoris* in the *De vulgari eloquentia* gives him superiority in comparison with the other contemporary poets of love and, at the same time, helps Dante define himself as a poet of philosophy.

3.3.2 *Cantor amoris* and *cantor rectitudinis*

In regard to the definitions that Dante applies to Cino, *cantor amoris* ('poet of love'), and to himself, *cantor rectitudinis* ('poet of righteousness'), I find it fruitful to analyse the meaning of *rectitudo*. In medieval literary theory, any work of literature is ascribed

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[90] *Epistola* III 2: 'Eructuavit incendium tue dilectionis verbum confidentie vehementis ad me, in quo consuluisti, carissime, utrum de passione in passionem possit anima transformari: de passione in passionem dico secundum eandem potentiam et obiecta diversa numero sed non specie' [The warmth of your affection has addressed to me an expression of signal confidence, wherein, my dearest friend, you put the question whether the soul can pass from passion to passion; that is to say, from one passion to another, the nature of the passion remaining the same, but the objects being different, not in kind, but in identity].

[91] Graziosi, Elisabetta. 1997. 'Dante a Cino: sul cuore di un giurista', in *Letture classensi. 26. Esercizi di lettura sopra il 'Dante minore'*, ed. by Emilio Pasquini (Ravenna: Longo), pp. 55-91 (p. 90).

to the philosophical category of 'ethics', so that the ethical element is an essential trait for an author of these times. As Claire Honess explains, by stating that virtue should appear at the top of subjects that poetry considers, Dante is following this tradition and so

> if all literature is ethical, then it stands to reason that the best literature will be that which is most moral, which most effectively dispenses praise and blame with the aim of inspiring good behaviour or virtue.[92]

Therefore, the concept, applied by Dante in the treatise, highlights that the ethical dimension is structural and intrinsic in literature of the Middle Ages. Having said that, this definition, according to which every piece of late-medieval literature is intrinsically connected to the ethical dimension, reinforces the idea that Cino's role is not simply to allow Dante the ability to turn away from erotic matters. On the contrary, instead of being purely dialectic, Cino's role seems complementary and functions as a component which is essential for Dante to claim that his poetry is eminently philosophical. Hence, by placing himself in the category of *cantor rectitudinis*, Dante aims to underline, once again, the ethical dimension of his poetry and, most of all, its philosophical dimension. In line with what is presented in the *Epistola* III, Dante's intention is to place himself and his poetry at the top of a canon, which has its highest point in a poetry which deals with philosophical matters, above erotic matters. Dante, through the example of his friend Cino, underlines the closeness and integration of erotic matters within this philosophical horizon, by labelling these two kinds of poetry behind the concepts of *virtus* and *rectitudo*.

The variety of themes and aspects touched upon in Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia* makes this work an important and essential source to encapsulate and understand some crucial moments of Dante's poetic evolution. The unfinished treatise in Latin was developed in the early stage of Dante's exile and is linked to the *Convivio* as it was written contemporaneously. It explores linguistic and rhetorical topics, by discussing the origins of language and its history, as well as providing a discourse on vernacular language. Hence, this work has a specific metalinguistic and metapoetic component

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[92] Honess, Claire. 2007. '"Salus, venus, virtus": Poetry, politics, and ethics from the "De vulgari eloquentia" to the "Commedia"', *The Italianist*, XXVII, 2, pp. 185-205 (pp. 185-186).

and is a reflection on Dante's activity as a poet and writer as well as on his experience as an intellectual. All these aspects provide interesting and fruitful turning points which are pivotal to deepen some aspects of Dante's views at this stage of his life and career. Among the most significant sections of the *De vulgari eloquentia* to this argument are Dante's definitions of the three most important subjects on which poetry can be focused, and which Dante considers the highest examples of poetry written in the 'illustrious' language.[93] In this way he creates a canon of poets, which are emblematic of the three main themes he mentions: he bases his analyses on the Aristotelian concept by which the soul has three dimensions: vegetative, animal, and rational (*Dve* II ii 6). These three dimensions correspond to the three highest goals that man pursues, and for each of them Dante provides an example of how they have been dealt with in the highest forms of vernacular poetry: *salus* ('wellbeing') is rendered in poetry as 'armorum probitas' ('prowess in arms'), *venus* ('love') in 'amoris accensio' ('ardour in love'), and *virtus* ('virtue') in 'directio voluntatis' ('control of one's own will').[94] Along with mentioning examples from the Occitan tradition – Bertran de Born on arms, Arnaut Daniel on love and Girault de Borneil on integrity – Dante reserves the last two places for Italian poets: Cino da Pistoia is recognised as the highest example of poetry about love, while Dante recognises himself as the poet of rectitude defining himself as *amicus eius* ('his friend'), which can be read as a part of the humility topos but also, a sign of the strong affinity that connects the poets in these years. In chapter VI of the second book of the *De vulgari eloquentia*, Cino is mentioned once again, right before Dante, as an example of the illustrious *canzoni* in the vernacular, with the *consolatio* he wrote for Beatrice's death, *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*, followed this time by Dante himself, with the *canzone Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona*.[95]

These two sections of Dante's treatise provide a meaningful means to elucidate not only some aspects of Dante's metalinguistic reflections on vernacular language and poetry at this stage of his career, but also testify that Cino da Pistoia is, among Dante's

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[93] Cfr. *De vulgari eloquentia*, II ii 7-10; II vi 5-7. In the second book of the *De vulgari eloquentia*, a catalogue of poets is employed by Dante to elucidate the three subjects that are dealt with in the 'volgare illustre' (*Dve* II ii 7-10).

[94] Cfr. Tavoni, Mirko. 2020. '"De vulgari eloquentia"', in *Dante*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Justin Steinberg (Rome: Carocci), pp. 79-94 (pp. 85-86); Mengaldo, Pier Vincenzo. 1970. 'De vulgari Eloquentia', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al.*, 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), II, pp. 399-415.

[95] *De vulgari eloquentia*, II vi 5-7.

contemporaries, a crucially important figure in terms of Dante's poetic development and poetic identity, from his early career and through the years of exile. Indeed, these passages in which Cino appears, as Dante's friend and, above all, as a poet of exemplary skill, are important because they provide another valuable element for better understanding the relationship between the poets. In both of these occasions, Cino enables Dante to define a poetic canon, which concludes with Dante's self-recognition at the pinnacle of this tradition.

As I mentioned earlier, Dante's hierarchy of exemplary poets labels Cino as *cantor amoris*, which may seem to limit him to lyric poetry. Through the concepts of *rectitudo*, Dante stresses the philosophical and moral aspect of his own poetry. It is hardly possible not to notice that in this passage of the *De vulgari eloquentia* there is an apparent dichotomy between Cino and Dante, in terms of poetic matters. As I have already mentioned, Dante's positioning in relation to Cino should not be read as an act which aims just to create a distance between him and his fellow poet. Instead, this hierarchy represents a way for Dante to reinforce his identity as a poet, who specifically deals with philosophical matters, through the presence and authority of Cino. The *De vulgari eloquentia* is particularly significant to his poetic and philosophical identity in terms of conducting a metapoetic discourse. Cino's position in the canon, right before Dante's, is used to corroborate Dante's own poetry, by Cino's authority as a poet, as a jurist and as an esteemed contemporary interlocutor, and thus he creates a space for Dante in the philosophical arena.

3.4 *Exul inmeritus*: being an outsider

A more extensive explanation of the concept affirmed by Dante in the sonnet *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, is further elucidated in the *Epistola* III. At the beginning of the epistle, the *salutatio* 'Exulanti Pistoriensi Florentinus exul inmeritus' ('To the Exile from Pistoja a Florentine undeservedly in exile') remarks on the condition of exile that involves both interlocutors. The adjective 'inmeritus' highlights the injustice for which Dante has been undeservedly exiled. The difference between the expression *exul* ('exiled person') and *exulans* ('one who is exiled' or 'living in exile') may suggest that Cino has just been exiled (in this case the epistle may be written in 1303).[96] The

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[96] Ferrara. 2016b, p. 45. As I discussed, exile is a harsh condition shared, partly in the same years, between 1303 and 1306. For a problematisation and contextualisation of exile, specifically in relation to Dante and Cino, see chapter 1.

condition of exile, in these terms, may be read by Dante as an opportunity to expand his fame of poet and *literatus* beyond the limits of Florence, placing himself beyond geographic and historic barriers. But in order to reach this universal fame, he refers back, through what is stated in the sonnet, to the years of the *Vita nova*. Cino becomes another element of validation, and his role in this project is active; he is selected as the addressee of the epistle because of his multiple talents – as an excellent poet of love and a jurist – which make him the best person with whom to discuss poetic, political, and philosophical questions.[97] The presence of Cino, a successful and accomplished intellectual, is employed by Dante to counter the accusation of restoring his status, as he was accused of being unstable in terms of Love.[98] Cino is an interlocutor that is authoritative and empowers the content Dante conveys through both the sonnet and the letter, which, compared to the sonnet, has a more precise focus on philosophical content.

The affection expressed in the *Epistola* III by Dante towards Cino is the same that endures in their correspondence. This is evident in the last sonnet *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, in response to Cino's *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*, where the theme of exile becomes prominent. The period in which the *tenzone* takes place corresponds to an important moment of formation for both writers: Cino coherently enforces his identity around the figure of exile, permanently distant from the beloved, while Dante redefines his new vision of love, philosophy, and poetry by contrasting himself with his fellow poet. The dialogue with Cino becomes a chosen encounter to build awareness of new concepts. Regarding exile, Cino constantly rewords his experience through poetry, while Dante will resolve this condition only in the *Commedia*.[99]

3.4.1 The semantics of exile and the poetics of exclusion
The semantics of exile, in both its juridical meaning and in its metaphorical meaning, is an important source for Cino's poetic works. Similar to Dante, Cino's biographic experience of exile is the starting point of his vast production, based on his identity as a figure of exile. Despite this harsh condition of deprivation he experiences in exile,

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[97] Ferrara, Sabrina. 2016. *La parola dell'esilio. Autore e lettori nelle opere di Dante in esilio* (Florence: Cesati), p. 48.
[98] Graziosi, pp. 83-84.
[99] I provide a further explanation on this in chapter 4.

Cino is able to rebuild his citizen-identity through his condition of outsider, even when he has returned to Pistoia. Most of the references to exile are related to the distance that separates the lover from the beloved Selvaggia, and not to civic belonging. Through this, Cino establishes a direct connection with the traditional Occitanic and then Sicilian topos of *amor de lonh*. For Cino, embodying the role of exile becomes a narrative technique that he never dismisses. This is perhaps because civil exile is, for Cino, just the first, the most superficial and material level of this condition, and it is only after his exile that he expresses the true meaning of this condition: a separation from the beloved woman. Exclusion is the common ground that Dante and Cino share, which is reflected in their lexical and linguistic choices. Cino's involvement with the theme of memory and exclusion provides him with the opportunity to constantly re-plot the coordinates of physical distance, both in a political and an amorous sense. The fact that Cino's exclusion is not only felt from his city, Pistoia, but also from Bologna and Naples, underlines an exilic obsession with distance and loss. Despite this alienation, Cino is always able to categorise and taxonomize his condition, building an identity through it.[100]

The 'lontananza' from the beloved is one of the central themes in Cino's entire poetic production. Cino's use of vernacular lyric aims to convey a sense of alienation and dissidence that transgresses the norms of civic or professional discourse. In fact, the most common image he uses is the foreigner or exile, a condition that goes beyond literal banishment.[101] For Cino, the love for Selvaggia remains a fixed point around which the pieces of that fragmented identity are re-composed.[102] According to this reading, the condition of exile is explicitly denounced; in Cino exile becomes also an amorous exile.[103] In Cino, the woman is the emblem of that distance, which is measured by the (physical or metaphorical) space between him and her. The condition of the outsider is, at the same time, rejected and inhabited by Cino. The idea of a city from which Dante and Cino have been exiled defines a geographic place – which is stable in Dante but is less so in Cino – and a circumscribed time. A new a-spatial and a-temporal dimension is shaped because they are both deprived of their civic

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[100] See Keen. 2002.

[101] Hooper, Laurence. 2016. 'Exile and Petrarch's Reinvention of Authorship', *Renaissance Quarterly*, LVIX (4), pp. 1217-1256.

[102] Pazzaglia, Mario. 1970. 'Poi ch'i' fu', Dante, dal mio natal sito', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), IV, p. 577.

[103] De Robertis. 2005, p. 511.

coordinates. But this enables them to create a certain type of poetry. In Cino's case, the advantage is that he can endure this condition, which allows him to adapt his poetry to more levels: the most superficial and literal (civic), which is easily understandable; and the amorous, which will endure and become permanent, despite the actual circumstances.

The tension between exclusion and inclusion is the object of a centuries-old reflection, as it is a subject that endures and can be read as an example or source of inspiration for the poets. But in Dante's conception, there is a further passage, if compared to Cino: while in Cino, only the relationship between him and the beloved is the paradigm of poetry, in Dante the ultimate aim is to achieve an additional sense, which is the spiritual Christian peregrination. For instance, in Cino's sonnet *Ogn'allegro penser ch'alberga meco,* exclusion is conveyed through the *escamotage* of the inability to communicate. This linguistic censure is effectively comparing two languages; in fact, the 'tedesco' (German/Germanic, v. 4) and the 'greco' (Greek, v. 4) speak two intrinsically different languages because of their glottologic roots. Furthermore, these two languages are also very distant from the Italian language, as it is a Romance language, and the two populations cited are culturally distant from the Italian population. This implies that the power of vernacularity, of creating a network, inevitably dissolves. Through this triangle of languages belonging to three different matrixes, a linguistic repression occurs.

The impossibility of communication is the most difficult form of censure and estrangement that a poet can experience. Even in the *canzone Deh, quando rivedrò 'l dolce paese*, the incoherence between the civic exclusion that Cino perceives and his factual reality becomes clear. Cino returns to Pistoia after 1306 and so he is reintegrated in his original social, civic, and political context. Returning to his homeland corroborates his will to embrace the condition of exile. By doing this, Cino aligns with what Guido Cavalcanti already identified. This tendency has been denominated 'poetica dell'esclusione' by Calenda.[104] In this sense, Cino fits into the Tuscan lyric tradition, a tradition that compares the loss of the 'patria', the homeland, to the loss of the beloved.[105] In Dante, a prolific metaphor is the image of

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[104] Calenda, Corrado. 1991. '"Esilio" ed "esclusione" tra biografismo e mentalità collettiva: Brunetto Latini, Guittone d'Arezzo, Guido Cavalcanti', in *L'exil et l'exclusion dans la culture italienne*, ed. by Georges Ulysses (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence), pp. 41-48.
[105] Keen. 2002, pp. 91-92.

the journey, which appears in his early works is developed in the later works by assuming a variety of polysemic meanings, until it acquires the sense of a peregrination of all of humankind in the *Commedia*.

The difference between Dante's and Cino's concepts of exile is that Dante has a continuous obsession with Florence, while Cino's belonging is always moveable, as it is related to where his lady is. The theme of memory is a constant feature in their work because of this view of distance and exile. The distance Cino experiences is mostly physical, and his aim is to recreate what is stored in his memory, through an accurate portrait in his poetry. Even after his return to the Pistoian political and civic environment, Cino continues to employ his experience of exile to write amorous poetry. Exclusion and distance persist even though the actual political exile has ended. The lady, paradoxically, remains both close and far from the poet, who establishes a rhetorical tension through the topoi of distance and memory.[106] On the other hand, in Dante, exile is not just an existential and theological condition, but also psychological – as the exile is defined in relation to the city, this psychological condition becomes political in an etymological sense: it involves customs, codes, and political actions. In Dante, the language and the semantics of exile will reach their highest point and greatest resonance in the Christian poetics of the *Commedia* by constantly depicting the ideas of journeying and transitioning. Here it becomes the language which expresses the general human condition of pilgrim and exile, along with the spiritual world. Therefore, vernacularity becomes a *medium* to acquire a new dignity of existence through vernacular language. The linguistic particularity of the vernacular translates into a new modality with which to rebuild a new identity, through the dialogic dimension. Exile, in the context of poetry, literature, and more broadly, art, can be a way in which to re-build personal and even poetic identities, despite the social, political, historical, and cultural contexts of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italy. Poetry, in this context of political and linguistic fragmentation, is a unique way to create a network, a community, a space of communication and sharing, which goes beyond the limit of historic contingency.

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[106] Keen. 2000, pp. 21-36.

3.5 Poetic exchange through an intermediary

Another pair of sonnets can be included among the texts of the *tenzone*. The official interlocutor of this pair is Moroello Malaspina di Giovagallo, a friend whom Dante met during his time in Lunigiana and for whom Dante worked as a clerk.[107] This pair consists in Cino's sonnet to Moroello, *Cercando di trovar minera in oro*, which once more expresses the pain caused by love, and Dante's sonnet to Cino in the name of Moroello, *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro*, in which Cino is accused of being too unstable in terms of love. This part of the *tenzone* probably dates to a period which corresponds to both poets' exile, as there are direct references to these years in which Dante and Cino shared the condition of *exul*. Dante was likely connected to the Malaspina court during his exile, and one of the duties Dante had to perform was replying to the letters and sonnets received by his patron.[108] Therefore, this part of the correspondence is mediated by a third person, and this feature implies a series of considerations about how this element affects the content and the modes in which these two sonnets are composed. Even though it is not possible to establish with certainty that the sonnets were written during the years in which Dante and Cino shared the condition of exile (1303-1306) or if they were written slightly later, they certainly belong to the final phase of the exchange between the poets.[109]

In *Cercando di trovar minera in oro*, Cino deals with the pain and sorrow caused by a new love, probably a woman of the Malaspina family ('mala spina', v. 3). It is this new love that causes sorrow, even though the sonnet opens with the hope that Amore will finally rescue him. This sonnet touches on a topic that Cino already discussed with Dante, which is the presence of a new love that challenges his 'volgibile cor'. Dante replies and, after having praised Cino's poetic ability, rebukes him for his instability. This topic had already been a lively one during their exchange. On the one

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[107] Moroello Malaspina was a Black Guelph of Tuscany and Dante spent the early parts of his exile at his court in Lunigiana. De Robertis suggests that Dante's *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro* was written in the first months of 1306, when Dante was at Malaspinas' court in the same period as Cino (2005, p. 504). Dante will praise the Malaspina family in *Purgatorio* VIII, 121-132. For a complete examination of the identity of Moroello Malaspina, see Milani, Giuliano. 2020. 'La fedeltà di Dante a Moroello. L'epistola IV dalla prospettiva del destinatario', in *Le lettere di Dante. Ambienti culturali, contesti storici e circolazione dei saperi*, ed. by Antonio Montefusco and Giuliano Milani (Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter), pp. 243-264.

[108] Giunta. 2018, p. 530. Indeed, in the Middle Ages, an intellectual at the service of a patron is mostly there to send letters or sonnets of correspondence. Cfr. Giunta, Claudio. 2022. *Versi a un destinatario. Saggio sulla poesia italiana del Medioevo* (Bologna: Il Mulino), pp. 144-146.

[109] Pernicone, Vincenzo. 1970. 'Cercando di trovar minera in oro', in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana), I, p. 913.

hand, Cino has always expressed his inconsistent stance in terms of where to direct his love, by restating, directly or implicitly, how much the force of love has power over one's will. For instance, in the first part of the *tenzone*, in *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, Cino experiences a new love, and Dante in *I' ho veduto già senza radice* already underlines the limits of this kind of love. Then, this topic becomes central in the later pair of sonnets, where Cino restates his position in *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona*; Dante's position is slightly different in the sonnet he writes in response, *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* and in the *Epistola* III, in which he deals with the topic of 'utrum de passione in passionem possit anima transformari' ('whether the soul can move from one passion to another'). In the sonnet and in the letter, which have an explicative aim, Dante is adhering to Cino's view on the changing nature of love, so that the two sonnets and the letter can be considered a mini-treatise on the topic. Indeed, Dante refers to his personal experience, beginning when he was nine, and affirms that no reason or free will has power against the spur of love.[110] After all, the contrast between love and reason does not appear here for the first time, but has been a lively topic in poetry from Guittone onwards.[111] The stark disagreement expressed by Dante in the sonnet *Degno fa voi* is hardly deniable, as he provides a clear analysis of the problematic nature of Cino's behaviour. In order to understand the reasons that drive Dante to make such a strong detachment from Cino's point of view, it is necessary to elucidate the causes of this contention.

3.5.1 Courtly codes and the sincerity of lyric poetry

At this point of the exchange, Moroello Malaspina, interposed between the poets, plays the role of a mediator. Cino is a highly dialogic poet, as he finds in this form of communication the key to define and state his personal and poetic creeds. Studying how and to what extent the presence of another person in the dialogue, even if indirect

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[110] *Epistola* III 5: 'Omnis namque potentia que post corruptionem unius actus non deperit, naturaliter reservatur in alium: ergo potentie sensitive, manente organo, per corruptionem unius actus non depereunt, et naturaliter reservantur in alium; cum igitur potentia concupiscibilis, que sedes amoris est, sit potentia sensitiva, manifestum est quod post corruptionem unius passionis qua in actum reducitur, in alium reservatur' [For every faculty which is not destroyed after the consummation of one act is naturally reserved for another. Consequently the faculties of sense, if the organ survives, are not destroyed by the consummation of one act, but are naturally reserved for another. Since, then, the appetitive faculty, which is the seat of love, is a faculty of sense, it is manifest that after the exhaustion of the passion by which it was brought into operation it is reserved for another].
[111] For a complete record of the occasions in which the question of reason is subjugated by passion, see Giunta, Claudio. 1998. *La poesia italiana nell'età di Dante. La linea Bonagiunta-Guinizzelli* (Bologna: Il Mulino), p. 254.

and temporary, may have affected this moment of the *tenzone*, is critical to understanding this phase of the relationship between Dante and Cino. Furthermore, the fact that this part of the *tenzone* takes place within the diplomatic constraints of a court, that it adheres to a series of codes of practice which are highly rooted in the life the poets were experiencing is important. Marrani's study of the correspondence between Dante and Cino clearly shows the relevance of Malaspina's court. He underscores that the courts are intrinsically tied to feudal culture, and so, to the poets of *langue d'oc*; in addition, they are a prominent site of encounter for exiled poets. This may be why Cino finds in this place the best space to deal with a series of topics and styles, which contribute to a poetic community.[112]

The time spent at Malaspina's court can be considered one of the moments in which Dante reflects on his role of intellect in relation to power. Indeed, Dante's stay at this court represents a key moment in terms of redefining his political ideals and future literary projects.[113] Therefore, it can be read as an attempt to recreate an alternative and provisional space that is set in opposition to his homeland, Florence.[114] The connections between courts and poets in exile are critical to understanding how Dante and Cino's poetry, in particular, develops in these years. Usually, the context of the court becomes the meeting point for poets in exile, creating a sharing of different dynamics. For instance, what emerges here is the presence of a third person in the correspondence between Dante and Cino which is probably Moroello Malaspina; this creates a poetry that is codified. This part of the *tenzone* allows me to focus on the relationship between courts and exile, especially how this space enables an interaction between people in a new community which takes place because of the condition of exile.

The poetic matters that Dante and Cino discuss intertwine with the historic reality they lived, which leads Cino, in *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*, to appropriate Dante's definition of the status of the *exile*, but in a new way, to justify his unstable love. According to Livraghi, the pair of sonnets sent to Moroello Malaspina represents a form of courtly poetic exchange which would not be suitable for a communal context. Dante's point of view on what Cino is asserting is strongly stated in the last lines of his sonnets, when he questions Cino's truthfulness – and, by extension, the truthfulness

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[112] Marrani. 2021, p. 411.
[113] Milani, 2020, p. 254.
[114] Milani. 2020, p. 256.

of his poetic beliefs.[115] This is shown by a series of words and, in general, by a lexicon in both Dante's and Cino's sonnets, which refer to a traditional and, perhaps, archaic tone, and to the courtly lexicon.[116] This pair of sonnets represents the 'ultima applicazione del tradizionale "corteggiamento"'.[117] This type of courtship was still allowed and accepted in this context.[118] Therefore, an important and crucial passage in defining Dante's position is represented by the years at Malaspina's court, a phase which will lead to a change in Dante's study of the relationship between reason and love. Hence, the exchange with Cino can be read as the outward and visible evidence of that intermediate stage that will lead to the ultimate definition of the question in the *Commedia*.[119] Thanks to the exchange with Cino, it is possible to identify the turning point of Dante's examination of the topics of reason and love. Furthermore, we can observe that the presence of Cino is a fundamental element in this path, as he actively and consciously interprets one of the most critical points of his interlocutor. I argue that we can read Cino's *Cercando di trovar* as a declaration of courtly poetics, ethics, and codes, which, by contrast, Dante challenges and, ultimately, corrects.

Courtly culture is tied to Occitan poetry and is directly recalled in this part of the *tenzone*. Here, it is essential to focus on how Cino and Dante consider and deal with the presence of this type of literature and culture, and courtly ethics in general. We find a disagreement between the poets in this pair of sonnets. Cino's loyalty to an ideal of love, which is partly rooted in courtly traditions, is well-acknowledged, especially in relation to the pains and sorrows that he associates with love. In contrast, Dante is redefining or rectifying a poetic need, which is related to the courtly space they occupy in a different way and with different purposes. This implies a confrontation between the poets, even if in a dialogic way, which allows Dante to recalibrate his position

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[115] Livraghi, Leyla. 2021, 'Dante, Cino, i Malaspina: note sparse di un dialogo poetico e politico', in *Dante e la Toscana occidentale: tra Lucca e Sarzana (1306-1308)*, ed. by Alberto Casadei, Paolo Pontari, in collab. with Matteo Cambi (Pisa: Pisa University Press), pp. 515-522 (p. 517).

[116] Marti. 1969, pp. 740-741.

[117] De Robertis. 2005, p. 505.

[118] De Robertis. 2005, p. 505, note 1.

[119] Tonelli, Natascia. 2016. *Fisiologia della passione. Poesia d'amore e medicina da Cavalcanti a Boccaccio* (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo), pp. 90-91 and p. 92: 'La riflessione sulla passione dallo scambio epistolare e poetico con Cino all'estrema prova lirica della Montanina con la sua lettera d'accompagnamento al Malaspina, alla rappresentazione dell'Antinferno lussurioso, il tutto all'insegna della fisiologia amorosa di stampo cavalcantiano, informa di sé la conclusione-ideazione del libro delle canzoni, in stretta connessione con l'abbandono di *Convivio* e *De vulgari eloquentia* e la ripartenza della *Commedia* con il V dell'*Inferno*'.

regarding courtly and Occitan literature. This is further confirmed by the fact that these are the years that are very close to the writing of the *Commedia*'s first cantos.

With this exchange of poems, there are different levels in which the dialogue between Dante and Cino is happening. Dante is writing a discourse on poetics, through the mediation of a third person, implying a particular poetic mode. The questions of poetics and poetic modes intertwine with the central topic of the sonnets, which is the relationship between love and reason. In *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro* Dante includes an extensive series of 'Occitanisms' – the sonnet contains a series of rare rhymes and a rare lexicon[120]. According to Gilda Caïti-Russo, this stylistic choice falls within the broader aim of affirming Dante's own poetics; Dante is dealing with poetic matters and, more generically, Dante is carrying out a metaliterary reflection.[121] At the moment when Dante employs these Occitanic terms, he is engaging in a discourse on poetics and literature. It is a deliberate choice to raise the question of the literary tradition, as Dante does in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, in which Cino is linked, by contrast or in parallel, to Arnaut Daniel, depicted as the most skilled and virtuous representer of Occitan literature – Arnaut Daniel and Cino are, respectively, for Occitan and Italian poetry, the most skilled and talented *cantores amoris* ('poets of love'). In the treatise Dante is showing the presence of a hierarchy of values among the different topics that different types of poetry can deal with. For instance, the content of the poetry of the *cantores amoris* (like Arnaut and Cino) is at a lower level than the *cantores rectitudinis* ('poets of righteousness', Giraut de Bornelh and Dante himself). Nevertheless, all of the types of poetry mentioned in the treatise have an equal amount of virtue.[122] Having this in mind, in *Degno fa voi* we find Dante's

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[120] Contini. 1946, p. 197 and De Robertis. 2005, p. 507. Specifically, the rhyme in -oia. With regard to lexicon, Giunta underlines the use of a series of new words, which are similar to the ones Dante will use in the *Paradiso* (e.g., 'inmiarsi' and 'intuarsi') to refer to the rareness of the experience. Cfr. Giunta. 2018, p. 524.

[121] Caïti-Russo, Gilda. 2006. 'Il marchese Moroello Malaspina, testimone ideale di un dibattito tra Dante e Cino sull'eredità trobadorica', *Dante Studies with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, CXXIV, pp. 137-148.

[122] *De vulgari eloquentia*, II ii 9. Arnaut Daniel (*c*. 1150-*c*. 1210) was a Provençal troubadour born in the Dordogne. He is included among the greatest exponents of *trobar clus*, a form of obscure, difficult, and hermetic poetry of which Marcabru is considered the founder. Arnaut Daniel's poetry represents the utmost and extreme expression of formalistic commitment, an essential trait already belonging to William IX of Aquitaine, the first troubadour. Dante's admiration for the Provençal poet is evident in the *De vulgari eloquentia* (II ii) and in the *Rime Petrose*, where Dante imitates the metric form invented by Arnaut. However, it is especially in the *Purgatorio* that Dante's debt to Arnaut becomes explicit. In canto XXVI, Dante pays homage to the Provençal poet by having Arnaut, as a character, recite three tercets in his native language – an exceptional occurrence of a foreign language employed within the poem. Cfr. Alighieri, Dante, Chiavacci Leonardi A. M. (ed.). 2016. *Commedia. Purgatorio* (Milan:

intention to rebuke Cino because of a missed adherence between the quality of the content of Cino's poetry, a model of the poet of love, and the ways in which he deals with discussing these topics at the later stage of the *tenzone*.

In any case, the exchange between Dante and Cino enabled the poets to examine various ideas in ways that may not have happened otherwise. Cino is making a particular contribution to this discussion and the dialogue comes across as a unique part of Dante's development in regard to the themes discussed. Therefore, it is fundamental to underscore the importance of Cino in Dante's redefinition of his thought over crucial topics in his life and career. As I made clear, Dante finds it fruitful to have contacts with many people and makes the dialogic dimension crucial to his poetic development. But it is important to clarify the peculiarity of the role Cino has in these terms. Cino, by starting a poetic exchange with Dante, finds a role in the poetic development of his friend and benefits from Dante's authority and reputation, as the writer of the *Vita nova*. This emerges from the beginning of their contact, and the 'libello' remains a constant point of reference even in the last part of the *tenzone*. Dante is chosen by Cino, at first, probably for the poetics Dante defines in the *Vita nova*, which already encapsulated all of the pleasant but also challenging passages a man undergoes when dealing with matters of love. But eventually, even Dante benefits from this exchange with Cino. Indeed, Cino becomes an authoritative counterpart who provides Dante with the chance to engage with discussions in a way he never did with anyone else. Dante builds, in contrast with the *auctoritas* of Cino, the development of his thought thanks to this correspondence. This allows him to retrace the key moments and turning points of his poetics. Cino is the most suitable interlocutor to do this with because he is a dialogic poet, whose process for conceiving poetry occurs through discussions with a circle of poets.

Turning back to this specific section of the *tenzone* – which includes *Cercando di trovar minera in oro* and *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro* – it seems that Cino and Dante are using a code of courtly love practices within their exchange. This code follows the traditional models, but allows Dante to challenge accepted ideas of love found within the courtly love tradition. On the one hand, Cino follows these in the formal style of his poetry and also its content; on the other hand, Dante still refers to

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Mondadori), pp. 786-787, notes 139 and 140-147; cfr. Viscardi, Antonio. 1970. 'Arnaldo Daniello', in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al.*, 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana), I, pp. 383-386.

these codes but only in a formal way, by using a series of words and a lexicon which have a direct reference to Occitan and Provençal literature. Both poets, even if in different ways, are using the same code of language.

In order to understand the cultural and poetic context Dante and Cino inhabit and are familiar with, it is worth looking at how the concept of 'reality' is perceived and rendered in the courtly tradition. In the Middle Ages, the boundary between what is true and what is false, in literary terms, differs from modern conceptions. Moral rectitude is, most of the time, the common aim by which it is possible to pursue the sincerity needed to make poetry way to reach truth and to convey sincerity.[123] In courtly poetry, reality is a consistent concept, but it can coincide with the ideal. This means that the poet does not only stand for himself and for what he is, but also for what he must be. Furthermore, in the Middle Ages it was common for a poet to receive a commission, especially in courts. With Sicilian-Tuscan poetry, the role of the poet at court changes radically. In thirteenth-century Tuscany the 'I' of the poet plays a social and communal role, more than an individual role. Writing through an interposed person is a duty of the poet at court. This is mostly because the poet remains the only one who is able to express feelings properly. It is with the generation of Dante and the poets of the 'stil novo' that a sharp distinction between a reality of self, of interiority, and a reality of the world arises. Therefore, the poet, in this sense, represents not just his own individuality, but a collective and universal self.[124]

Having said that, a poetic insincerity does not come from a divergence between what the poet lives and what the poet represents, but rather, it comes from the moral rectitude he conveys. Being a poet connected to a court – even if temporarily – implies a certain kind of detachment in the writing of the poet, especially if the poet's role involves correspondence in the name of a patron. This aspect challenges a feature which is peculiar to medieval lyric poetry from the 'stilnovisti' onwards. In the literature of the Middle Ages, the distinction between true and false in literary terms is different to our modern understanding. For this reason, it is useful to reflect on the gap which exists between the truthfulness of the biographic experience the poet lives and what and how this is rendered through poetry. In medieval literature the biographic reality of the poet is usually a starting point for poetry, which is then reshaped based

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[123] Grimaldi. 2020a, p. 231.
[124] Grimaldi. 2020a, p. 230.

on the reflections of lyric subjectivity. In this regard, it is worth lingering on the relationship between the real and biographic impulses the poet feels and their rendering, even though the mediation of the poet's philosophical perspective. I believe that this question is central in this part of the *tenzone* and it may be one of the crucial points for which Dante rebukes Cino. Dante's awareness that Cino does not remain faithful to the codes imposed by lyric poetry, which consist in translating the truth and the reality into poetry, plays a peculiar role at this stage of the exchange. Precisely, in *Cercando di trovar minera in oro*, Cino exploits a condition he probably lived, but he uses it as a pretext to write this sonnet to Dante. Already when Dante mentions Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, as I previously underlined, his intention was to present himself as a poet and a philosopher, by positioning himself above Cino in the canon of poets he defines.[125] Once again, the exchange with Cino gives the poets the opportunity to discuss important poetic topics, which Dante will ultimately define in the last phase of his career. Here Dante, as it emerges from the last lines of the sonnet *Degno fa voi*, is rebuking Cino for his poetic insincerity. Dante is re-tracing and re-defining his position on many topics within his poetics – which, for instance, had already been dealt with in the *Vita nova* – thanks to the contrast with and the figure of Cino. It is possible to identify changes from his past experiences, some of which he discussed with Cino.

Moral rectitude remains the communal aim by which courtly poetry renders sincerity, which makes poetry convey truthfulness. With the generation of the 'stilnovisti', to which both Dante and Cino belong, there is a development of this concept, as the love lyric will redefine a new representation of reality, by distinguishing a reality of self, of interiority, over a mere biographic reality.[126] This notion is useful in terms of understanding one point that emerges at the end of Dante's sonnet, when he questions Cino's honesty. I do not believe Dante is necessarily interested in questioning the reality of the circumstances Cino is referring to, but rather, he is interested in the kind of lyric truth which emerges from Cino's text. It seems, indeed, that Cino is taking advantage of a situation he lived, but only with the aim of manipulating it in order to give strength to his own view on love, and to take advantage of Dante's position as an author who has already undergone all of the

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[125] *De vulgari eloquentia*, II ii 7-10.
[126] Grimaldi, Marco. 2021. 'Realtà', in *La lirica italiana. Un lessico fondamentale (secoli XIII-XIV)*, ed. by Lorenzo Geri, Marco Grimaldi and Nicolò Maldina (Rome: Carocci), pp. 229-243.

tension Cino is describing. It may be true that Cino's instability could have had a truthful experience behind it, but I think Dante's disagreement addresses the fact that Cino's sonnet did not originate from a desire to write about his sorrowful love, but rather to restate his position on the topic discussed.

When it comes to speaking in person about someone else – as in the case with the presence of Moroello – the primary aim is to make poetry meet its practical-communicational function. Despite this, it is important to highlight that a difference occurs when writing deals with matters of love rather than politics. In this type of correspondence, the 'truthfulness' of what is said in poetry is questioned due to a necessary detachment from the interposed person and the actual poet of the poem.[127] Despite this, Dante manages to overcome this poetic *impasse* by addressing, not just Cino's instability, but also his failure to adhere to the truthfulness of the poetic 'I'. Dante, indeed, speaks in the name of Moroello but by referring to a feeling and a philosophical point of view that he developed starting from a real feeling of his lyric 'I'. In fact, he speaks for another person addressing a reality he lived, but at the same time, this reality is not a pretext like the fact narrated by Cino may have been. Cino, instead, pursues – wrongly, according to Dante – a different kind of scheme: he is using his personal experience as a pretext to conduct the discussion on a topic he wanted to tackle with Dante.

The presence of a third person in the exchange necessarily widens the gap between the truthfulness of the facts narrated in the sonnet (as they are meant to represent the experience of the real addressee) and the truthfulness of the lyric 'I' (as it belongs to another person). This aspect may be a useful tool to reflect on the worth and importance of the truthfulness of the matter dealt with in the sonnets. The fact that this poetry happens in the context of the court diminishes the adherence between the biographic reality and the lyric reality. In a courtly environment poetry should have a practical and communicative function, which has a public and communal role. This detachment may be detected in Cino's sonnet *Cercando di trovar*. Cino may have detached too much from lyric truth, which is the principle of lyric poetry. Indeed, he referred to a biographic fact related to his instability only as a pretext to write the sonnet. Therefore, Cino is not pursuing the ideal of moral rectitude which is fundamental for this kind of poetry to be considered sincere or truthful. It seems that

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[127] Giunta. 2022, p. 146.

the strongest detachment of Dante to Cino is present here, but not just because of the matters discussed, which imply the presence in Cino of a 'volgibile cor'. What is more important is that there is also scepticism towards the way that Cino is using poetry as a means to discuss the topics he wants/needs to challenge with Dante. It seems that Cino has overturned the principles of the lyric which deal with amorous matters.

In courtly contexts, the involvement of an interposed person may diminish the truthfulness of poetic expression. The poet must transpose his lyric 'I' in the narrated situation to render the truthfulness he wants to achieve, he must identify with that person in order to be 'sincere', which is a fundamental value in Occitan and Italian poetry, especially in the thirteenth century.[128] Giunta underlines this aspect of being sincere as a poet, as someone who must convey authentic feelings in his poetry.[129] I argue that Dante is rebuking Cino not only for his 'wrong' conduct in terms of love, but mostly for how Cino is rendering the situation he experienced in poetry. I believe that the point here is not just remarking on Cino's biographic (if it is real) inconsistency of love, but the way he uses this condition to bend his poetic truthfulness in order to reach this kind of poetry. Courtly ethics do not involve the presence of an unstable lover.[130] It is true that courtly ethics have a series of codes to follow, but adherence to truthfulness must not be abandoned. This may be one of the decisive points that marks a consistent distance between Dante and Cino.

3.5.2 Lyric subjectivity

Scholarship identifies subjectivity in complex and interesting ways from troubadour to courtly lyric poetry. A dialogue between the reader and the lyric 'I' takes place to convey the interiority of the self.[131] Therefore, subjectivity is a lively question which is present, but this theme emerges more explicitly as an issue, as I anticipated in the previous section, in the sonnets *Cercando di trovar minera in oro* and *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro*. In this regard, I find it beneficial to provide a brief theoretical framework on the topic.

Sarah Kay, in *Subjectivity in Troubadour poetry*, provides a definition of subjectivity. By subjectivity, she means 'above all the elaboration of first-person

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[128] Giunta. 2022, pp. 147-148.
[129] Giunta. 2018, p. 370.
[130] Giunta. 2018, p. 371.
[131] Mercenaro, Simone. 2017. 'Soggettività ed emotività nella poesia realistica medievale: dai trovatori al Duecento italiano', *Revista de Cancioneros Impresos y Manuscritos*, VI, pp. 40-71 (p. 41).

(subject) position in the rhetoric of courtly poetry'.[132] Kay's work is specifically about troubadour poetry, but it is helpful to deepen our understanding of how individuality is developed and conveyed by a subject, a lyric 'I', in the rhetoric of the courtly tradition.[133] According to this idea, the subject is not just a 'grammatical position, but as articulating a self';[134] therefore,

> [t]he development of an autonomous, knowledgeable subject (what was thought of as the 'modern' subject until 'postmodernism' came along) is attested by a confident distinction between self and other, subject and object.[135]

Nevertheless, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the genre of lyric poetry is characterised by subjectivity and individuality but, actually, the classical and medieval definition of genre is related to its metrical form and variety.[136] The genre is then marked by the discovery of the lyric 'I', which becomes an alternative to the 'real' world.[137] The questions of subjectivity and lyric 'I' are well established in scholarship on the medieval lyric. In this perspective, it is worthwhile looking at the work of an author who is geographically and culturally close to Dante, and whose work challenges subjectivity: Guido Cavalcanti. Bowe's monograph, *Poetry in Dialogue in the Duecento and Dante*, breaks down the idea of the 'I' in postmodern ways. According to Bowe, polyphony is what makes Cavalcanti's subjectivity different to what occurred before it in the lyric tradition – he claims that this polyphony that emerges from the text, unfolds within the interiority of the self.[138] Giunta also agrees, stating that 'la polifonia è una conquista della generazione di Dante'.[139] Therefore, from Cavalcanti's poetry a fragmented subjectivity arises, which necessarily disrupts the perfect adherence between the subjectivity of the author and his 'internalized

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[132] Kay, Sarah. 1990. *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 1.
[133] Kay. 1990, p. 18-37.
[134] Kay. 1990, p. 213.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Geri, Lorenzo. 2021. 'Io', in *La lirica italiana. Un lessico fondamentale (secoli XIII-XIV)*, ed. by Lorenzo Geri, Marco Grimaldi and Nicolò Maldina (Rome: Carocci), pp. 119-132 (p. 119).
[137] Antonelli, Roberto. 2018. 'La doppia faccia dell'amore', *Critica del testo*, XXI/3, pp. 69-96 (p. 82).
[138] Bowe, p. 82.
[139] Giunta. 2021, p. 63. For clarification on the use of the terms 'polyphony' and 'polyphonic' in the context of Dante, see section 4 of the introduction.

personifications', so that 'the boundary between external and internal is blurred'.[140] These voices that arise from the text are facets of the same 'I', which is an expression of the subjectivity of the self.[141]

3.5.3 Amorous physiology and Cino's 'volgibile cor'

In *Cercando di trovar minera in oro* Cino laments an unrequited love for a woman from the Malaspina family and depicts himself as miserable and sorrowful. This sorrow would be the result of Cino's 'volgibile cor', of the instability of his love. Critics have underlined the issue, which is undeniably noted by Dante, of Cino's inconsistency love. But what I also find striking is the fact that, at this point of both poets' careers, Cino acts as a fixed interlocutor for Dante for matters concerning this kind of discourse on love. Therefore, due to this constant and continuous dialogue (or even contrast) with Cino, Dante has the chance to continually develop his position in relation to a concept which will be redefined in the *Commedia*.[142] Building on Cino's constant position, he restates and corroborates his own view, by taking advantage of his authoritative interlocutor, who plays the part of the *alter ego* or counterpart to his own thoughts. Natascia Tonelli underlines that the same motif of degenerated love (which subjugates love to desire) builds on medieval scientific understandings. Dante himself deals with these matters, with particular attention, in the years he spends at Malaspina's court. This will mark the fundamental traits which Dante will then state in the *Commedia*.[143]

The Cavalcantian concept of the physiology of love is still present in the *Convivio* and the *De vulgari eloquentia*, but it will not find a place in the *Commedia*.[144] This major aspect of the correlation between love and reason comes across as structural in the exchange between Dante and Cino, as the poets discuss the topic multiple times over the years. A comparison with the poetry of Guido Cavalcanti must be examined because it is a reference point, not only for this kind of discourse, but also in relation to the broader topic of friendship. Indeed, the relationship Dante has with Cino does not represent an isolated occurrence – especially when it comes to discussing matters of love – but it is part of a network of exchanges which he has with some of his friends

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[140] Bowe, p. 108.
[141] Bowe, p. 110.
[142] I develop this argument in chapter 4.
[143] Tonelli. 2016, pp. 91-92. Cfr. chapter 4.
[144] Tonelli. 2016, p. 92.

and fellow poets.[145] Therefore, keeping in mind the relationship Dante has with Cavalcanti, his 'primo amico', is fruitful in understanding, by contrast, the relationship Dante has with Cino. The influence of Cavalcanti on Dante is undeniable, especially regarding the philosophical and physiological aspects of love. However, the philosophical and scientific precepts Dante presents in the *Vita nova* are already different from his predecessor Cavalcanti, specifically regarding the role of reason in the amorous sphere.[146]

In *Degno fa voi* Dante highlights the discrepancy between Cino's instability and the sweetness of his poetry; Dante's position against this type of instability is also addressed in the *Convivio*. At the same time, Cino seems aware of this remark and thus writes his sonnet in alignment with what Dante expressed: passing from Beatrice to the 'donna gentile'.[147] Carlo Calenda identifies a phase in Dante's works, between the *Vita nova* and the *Commedia*, which, according to his interpretation, represents a moment of tension, a difficult point in the path that will lead Dante to the beatified Beatrice. For instance, he finds that already in the *Vita nova*, both the aspects of the turmoil provoked by the presence of a new love and its passing are present in the 'libello', and will be followed years later by a philosophical explanation in the *Convivio*, in which everything will be placed beyond the limits of material love.[148] Even the motif of the 'substitution' is tackled in the *Vita nova*, but always in the presence of the 'gentilissima': Dante has a lucid awareness of the nature of this love as he recognises the physiological symptoms and thus he evokes the role of 'reason' under the limits of which he wants to ascribe this love.[149] Therefore, it seems that once

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[145] Cfr. chapter 1 and chapter 3.

[146] For further clarification on this, see Tonelli. 2016, p. 89.

[147] See Contini. 1946, p. 197. *Convivio*, III i 11: 'Dico che pensai che da molti, di retro da me, forse sarei stato ripreso di levezza d'animo, udendo me essere dal primo amore mutato; per che, a tòrre via questa riprensione, nullo migliore argomento era che dire quale era quella donna che m'avea mutato'.

[148] Calenda, Corrado. 1995. 'Dante e la psicopatologia amorosa', in *Dante e la scienza*, ed. by Patrick Boyde and Vittorio Russo (Ravenna: Longo), pp. 223-232 (pp. 223-224). Calenda is here referring to the episodes of the *Vita nova* of the 'donna pietosa' and of chapter XXXIX, as well as to the explanation Dante gives in *Convivio*, II viii 4-5. Another reference to the *Convivio* (II xii 5) is related to an expression Dante employs, which refers to the man who, by looking for silver, finds gold: 'E sì come essere suole che l'uomo va cercando argento e fuori della 'ntenzione truova oro, lo quale occulta cagione presenta; non forse sanza divino imperio, io, che cercava di consolar me, trovai non solamente alle mie lagrime rimedio, ma vocabuli d'autori e di scienze e di libri: li quali considerando, giudicava bene che la filosofia, che era donna di questi autori, di queste scienze e di questi libri, fosse somma cosa'. See also De Robertis. 2005, p. 504.

[149] Calenda. 1995, p. 225. *Vita nova*, IV 2: 'Ed io, accorgendomi del malvagio domandare che mi faceano, per la volontade d'Amore, lo quale mi comandava secondo lo consiglio de la ragione, rispondea loro che Amore era quelli che così m'avea governato'.

again the *Vita nova* comes across as a constant and continuous point of reference in the relationship between Dante and Cino.

Many of the key questions Dante deals with in the *Vita nova* are objects of discussion that Cino brings out in their exchange. Dante, who is now, at this point of the *tenzone*, chronologically detached from the years of the *Vita nova*, is reassessing his point of view, expressing his current perspective through the text exchanged with Cino. In this sense, the *Vita nova* encompasses all of the changes love can undergo, and these changes originate from physiological causes. The presence of reason is once again brought into the field as it is identified as necessary to follow, in order to pursue Amore in the right way. This is why Cino may have chosen these aspects to discuss with Dante, as he was perceived by his friend as a 'specialist' in the field, since he had already dealt with these topics. In the sonnet *Degno fa voi*, Dante justifies, in pseudo-scientific terms, the importance of being constant in love, as this is the path that will lead to Beatrice.[150] Despite this, Dante's position on the relationship between love and reason changes over the years and the development of his point of view is trackable in the correspondence with Cino. The phase of the *tenzone* beginning with Cino's *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona*, and with Dante ultimately defining the 'wrong' way to conduct love, may represent an intermediate point between the *Vita nova* and the *Commedia*.[151]

In Cino, the references to the physiological causes of this love are used to justify his conduct, as a cause for his attitude to arise. Dante, instead, refers to the same area of the physiological causes of love by redefining it as a form of awareness and not as a justification. Until this phase of the exchange, Dante generally adheres to Cino's position in terms of understanding the physiological effects that love provokes – I refer specifically to the triad of texts composed by *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona*, *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* and the *Epistola* III. But afterwards, as it appears in *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro*, Dante still considers scientific causes as a theoretical foundation but goes beyond this, stating that they do not represent a limit which may justify abandoning the 'right' way of Amore. Dante pursues this so that, from this moment onwards, he gets closer to the final point of view he will state later in his works, about the relationship between reason and love. Indeed, the phenomenology of

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[150] Calenda. 1995, pp. 226-228.
[151] Calenda. 1995, p. 231.

love is not delegitimising one's responsibility, but instead, it leads to an awareness of the condition the lover experiences, in order to resist it with the means of reason.

3.6 The end of the formal exchange

The last pair of sonnets of the *tenzone* are Dante's *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito* and Cino's *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*.[152] The central theme of these two sonnets recalls the previous pair exchanged – *Cercando di trovar minera in oro* and *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro*. *Io mi credea* constitutes the last direct piece of work Dante addresses to Cino. This phase of the relationship marks the turning point of the exchange between Cino and Dante and the most critical moment of their entire dialogue. It is crucially important in terms of understanding the entire relationship between the poets. Furthermore, it is essential to giving a comprehensive and final analysis of the direct correspondence between Dante and Cino.

This phase has interested critics because it generates a series of questions related to the reasons why Dante will not answer Cino directly anymore, not just in the *tenzone* but also in his entire career and life. If in the second phase of the exchange, Dante's and Cino's perspectives and points of view gradually began to grow distant, at this later stage the distance becomes undeniable because Dante consciously chooses not to continue the exchange with Cino. Some of the reasons behind this detachment emerge from the texts. In the sonnet *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, Dante clearly states his position, by underscoring Cino's tendency to reiterate a 'wrong' position. Specifically, Dante's disapproval seems to refer to the content of Cino's sonnets, which does not match Cino's poetic and technical abilities ('dolci detti', v. 14). Cino's distinguished skills as a poet are here confirmed but, according to Dante, these are not coherent with the content conveyed in his sonnet.

Regarding the content of the sonnets, in Dante's *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, Dante feels the urge to continue the line traced with the previous pair of sonnets, that is, Cino's fickleness and instability towards love. Dante employs an image of navigation – 'si conviene omai altro cammino / a la mia nave più lungi dal lito' (vv. 3-4) – probably to underline a substantial distance that separates him from Cino's point of view, and thus referring to the poetry which initially created a close bond to the Pistoian (the 'nostre rime', v. 2). Cino's poetic ability is confirmed in the last words

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[152] On this, see Livraghi. 2012; Ferrara. 2016a.

of Dante's sonnet ('dolci detti', v. 14), which recall the previous sonnet *Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro*, in which Cino's voice was defined as 'dolce e latina' (v. 2). Nevertheless, in *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito* Dante underlines a detachment between form and content in Cino's poetry, referring to a classical topos (*facta dictis exaequare*, 'to match deeds with words'), particularly popular in the Middle Ages.[153] In the last tercet, a sentence is enclosed which Dante donates to his friend Cino, by inviting him to correct his light unstable heart, as well as his poetry, with virtue ('sì che s'accordi i fatti a' dolci detti', v. 14). In other terms, Dante addresses an inconsistency that is, according to Dante, the biggest issue in Cino's poetry. Dante may allude to an incongruity which makes him appreciate and praise Cino's poetic skills but dismiss the content treated in the sonnet, as Cino is again justifying his tendency to find comfort in the beauty of other women, when his beloved is distant. Cino's reply, *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*, contains a *terminus post quem* term – 'fatto per greve essilio pellegrino' (v. 2) – which allows us to date this pair of sonnets to both poets' shared exile (1303-1306), or even later, after Cino's exile (from 1306). Cino's justification is supported by a physical distance which holds him back from the 'piacer più fino' (v. 3), the beloved. This 'piacer' is immediately contraposed to the 'Piacer infinito' (v. 4), the divine, in the following line, in position of rhyme. This choice highlights a contradiction between sacred love and profane love, by reminding us of some of the previous phases of the *tenzone*. Also in this case, the last tercet encapsulates the core of the *vexata quaestio*: Cino talks about the multiple beauties of other women that remind him of the one and unique beauty of his beloved. This represents, argues Cino, a reflection of his true love. In consequence, according to his point of view, his love is still unique and directed to only one woman.

Principally in the last pair of sonnets exchanged, the poets are implicitly positioning themselves with those labels given by Dante to himself and Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia*.[154] In the treatise, Dante creates a distinction between himself and Cino, but this does not exclude their commonalities. In *Io mi credea* Dante explicitly tells Cino to correct his view on love; Cino continues to interpret the role Dante gives to him with the label 'poet of love'. It is plausible that Cino is aware of a detachment between form and content in his poetry, in the sense that he is consciously tied to a certain

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[153] For instance, in the *Roman de la Rose* and the *Fiore*. See Giunta. 2018, p. 529, note 14.
[154] *De vulgari eloquentia*, II ii 9.

concept of love that he does not want to leave behind. It is undeniable that this moment of the correspondence between Dante and Cino is marked by a detachment or a will of differentiation from Dante. It is inevitable that Dante is underlining at least a difference between his own point of view and Cino's in terms of their poetic concepts, especially about love. Cino is still a model of poetic excellence in terms of love poetry, but at the same time he embodies a 'mistake' which Dante detects in his poetry.

The element of exile plays a crucial role not just in the poets' works and careers *per se*, but also in terms of how this condition affects the exchange between them. Despite problems of chronology, the last phase of the *tenzone* may be confidently dated to the years 1303 to1306. Sabrina Ferrara's work is useful to contextualise this part of the *tenzone* in relation to the reality the poets are living. Ferrara points out that Cino, at least since the time of the sonnet *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona*, was explicitly chosen by Dante as a privileged interlocutor because of his condition of exile, which conferred him authority and dignity. The scholar notices that in the pair of sonnets *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* and *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* the first signs of detachment are present. On the one hand, Dante progresses from the figure of *cantor amoris*, leaving this role only to Cino, and changes his status to *cantor rectitudinis* (as stated in the *De vulgari eloquentia*).[155] This change could also be caused by the intellectual tension Dante is living with in these years of exile while rebuilding a Florentine identity. Having said that, at the stage of *Io sono stato* there is a shadow, not of a proper detachment, but of a series of reconsiderations of Dante's own status as a poet and *philosophans*, contextualised within the frame of exile.[156]

3.6.1 Points of contact between the last stage of the *tenzone* and the *Convivio*

Dante's works, the *Vita nova* in particular, were points of reference for Cino to build his poetic relationship with Dante. From the later phase of the *tenzone*, apart from love, some philosophical questions are drawn to the centre of the discussion. Specifically, the theme of free will is central in the following sonnets, and encapsulates a theme

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[155] Ferrara. 2016a, pp. 100-101; 'Questo secondo gruppo di rime in esilio propone al lettore, in maniera – mi sembra – patente, l'evoluzione dell'esule fiorentino verso una direzione che lo farà allontanare da una poetica d'amore e dall'immagine di *poeta Amoris* per una figura in progress che prenderà le forme di *literatus*, di *cantor rectitudinis* e di filosofo nei due trattati in gestazione, consigliere politico nella *Monarchia* e, soprattutto, nella *Commedia*, *poeta Dantis*; insomma da una poetica fiorentina a una "poetica dell'esilio" secondo la felice espressione di Raffaele Pinto' (p. 101).
[156] Ferrara. 2016a, pp. 102-104.

which was already dealt with during the *tenzone*: Cino's *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* and Dante's *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, accompanied by the epistle III. But, compared to the epistle and *Io sono stato*, there is a difference in what Dante affirms in *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, where he defines his final position on the relationship between love and reason. To understand Dante's philosophical tendency at this point of his career, it is worth considering the *Convivio*. The writing of the *Convivio* overlaps with the second stage of the exchange between Dante and Cino. Due to the fact that the *Convivio* is an unfinished treatise and corresponds to a stage of Dante's career which is poetically and intellectually unsettled and turbulent, looking at some aspects enclosed in the *tenzone* could be useful to understand Dante's conception of love at this moment. Additionally, we are unsure if Cino had access to Dante's *Convivio*, due to its very limited circulation. The material culture and historical features provide some of the reasons for the treatise not being widely circulated and, instead, destined the treatise to a disorganised and arbitrary distribution.[157] Despite this, the *Convivio* is part of Dante's process in understanding his state as *philosophans* in the exile years. Indeed, Dante aims to be recognised as a moral poet and a poet of civic ethics, by being part of a process of poetic redefinition of philosophy in the vernacular.[158] Therefore, it is worth looking at what Cino understands of Dante's philosophical views on love at the time of the *tenzone*.

In the *Epistola* III, Dante shows a different perspective to what is stated in the last sonnet of the *tenzone*, as in *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito,* Dante abandons the concept that love can be represented by more than one woman. If, beforehand, Dante assumed a point of view which was different to Cino's but still compatible with his, now Dante explicitly invites Cino to review and correct his position. Contini underlines that in Dante's last words to Cino ('dolci detti', v. 14) there is a precise reference to the Pistoian adherence to the poetics of the 'stil novo'.[159] It is interesting to underscore that in the first part of the *tenzone* (and the correspondence in its entirety) the *Vita nova* is a constant reference in the dialogue between the two poets. On the other hand, the presence of common topics dealt with by Dante at this stage of the *tenzone* and in the *Convivio* can be found. The common points with the *Convivio* are

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[157] Simonelli, Maria. 1970. 'Convivio', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), II, pp. 193-204.
[158] Mazzucchi, Andrea. 2020. 'Convivio', in *Dante*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Justin Steinberg (Rome: Carocci), pp. 55-78 (p. 59).
[159] Contini. 1946, p. 203, note 2.

highlighted, for instance, by Marti, who detects in 'ché si conviene omai altro cammino / a la mia nave più lungi dal lito' (vv. 3-4) of *Io mi credea*, a reference to an expression of the *Convivio*, in which Dante states that he was 'legno sanza vela e sanza governo' (*Cv* I iii 5).[160] In this passage of the treatise, Dante reflects on his condition of exile, by employing the image of the boat tossed about by the waves and the wind.

The role of Dante as philosophical authority is well established by himself in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, in a passage where Cino is mentioned as well but as a love poet, and it is also affirmed in the *Convivio*. Dante refines his position as *philosophans* in these years. Marti's analysis continues by highlighting that, 'Selvaggia […] non raggiunge mai, rispetto alle altre donne […] l'ideale assolutezza di Beatrice',[161] and the 'dolci detti' is a repetition of the 'nostre rime' of line 2, as it restates a reference to the 'stil novo'.[162] Dante's reprimand in *Io mi credea* concludes with a bittersweet note, as he restates Cino's exemplary skills as a poet but exposes his incompatibility with the matter he puts at the centre of his poetry. This part of the exchange between Dante and Cino constitutes a moment of retrospection to a poetic phase which now belongs to the past. Instead, now the harsh backdrop of exile nostalgically permeates the mellow atmosphere of those memories. This part of the exchange can be read as a parenthesis of a poetic and personal history, which clashes with the distance and fragmentation of the present.[163] Dante is now looking ahead to new horizons.[164]

The allusion to Dante's later stage of life may suggest that this type of poetry, which Cino is strongly attached to, would be suitable to the past and so to an earlier stage of life; this is also stated in the prologue of the *Convivio*. The subject matter of the dialogue remains a matter of poetry.[165] Cino is now trying to grapple with the

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[160] Marti. 1969, p. 742.

[161] Marti. 1969, p. 742, note 3.

[162] Marti. 1969, p. 743, note 3.

[163] Pernicone, Vincenzo. 1970. 'Io mi credea del tutto esser partito', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), III, pp. 501-502.

[164] De Robertis suggests that with 'per l'alto mare aperto' Dante is alluding to his future ambitious works. See De Robertis. 2005, p. 509 and p. 510, note 14. The scholar also states that Dante may be thinking of the *Commedia* here, as the meaning of the expression will be the same in *Purgatorio* XXVI ('rime d'amor usar dolci e leggiadre', v. 99; 'Li dolci detti vostri', v. 112).

[165] Giunta. 2018 p. 528, note 4. *Convivio*, I i 16-17: 'E se nella presente opera, la quale è *Convivio* nominata e vo' che sia, più virilmente si trattasse che nella *Vita Nova*, non intendo però a quella in parte alcuna derogare, ma maggiormente giovare per questa quella; veggendo sì come ragionevolmente quella fervida e passionata, questa temperata e virile essere conviene. Ché altro si conviene e dire e operare ad una etade che ad altra; per che certi costumi sono idonei e laudabili ad una etade che sono sconci e biasimevoli ad altra, sì come di sotto, nel quarto trattato di questo libro, sarà propia ragione mostrata. E io in quella dinanzi, all'entrata della mia gioventute parlai, e in questa dipoi, quella già trapassata'.

philosophical questions Dante is challenging him to at this stage of his life, always in relation to the erotic and amorous sphere. However, even if in the first stage of their relationship Cino adheres to Dante's view on poetics and on love (at the time of the *Vita nova*), in the second phase he shows a conscious reticence in following Dante's corrections. Even though Cino understands the issues Dante is working through at this phase of his life and career, he consciously and deliberately chooses to pursue that path traced in the *Vita nova*. This does not only testify to Cino's persistent and constant attention to Dante's works and evolution of thought, but also Cino's wish to occupy a precise position in relation to love poetry. I hardly believe that Cino's lack, perceived by Dante, is just a matter of skill, but instead is a deliberate choice to adhere to the principles of the 'stil novo'.

3.6.2 A diversion of poetic views

The issue of Cino's fickle heart remains an open question and a peculiarity Dante recognises in his friend. It is plausible to recognise a difficulty in Dante when it comes to tackling these differing views that now detach him from Cino. Even though Dante inevitably claims that Cino's perspective is fundamentally flawed and must be corrected, he finds it hard to end the dialogue with Cino. This is visible in Dante's attempt, in *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, to mend Cino's way and by the use of expressions such as 'un pocolino' (v. 7) and 'stancato dito' (v. 8), to diminish the value of the concept of love emerging from Cino's sonnet.[166] The philosophical concepts that support Cino's ability to find in the beauty of many women the unique beauty of the true beloved is a classical topos.[167] By expressing this concept, Cino proposes an image of the beloved which is, at the same time, one and multiple.[168] According to Calenda, Dante is referring to the end of a poetic tendency.[169] Instead, I argue that poetry and friendship are never separate in the relationship between Dante and Cino. By this statement I mean that the premise for this poetic friendship is a compatible

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[166] This hypothesis is mainly supported by Corrado Calenda (2020, p. 31).
[167] Examples of this topos can be found in Santagata's notes 12-14 to Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* 16. Cfr. Petrarca, Francesco, Santagata M. (ed.). 2004. *Canzoniere* (Milan: Mondadori). See also Giunta. 2018, p. 532, note 14.
[168] The matter is an anticipation of a theme Petrarch will fully explore.
[169] Calenda. 2020, pp. 31-32.

view on poetry and the poetry of love, more specifically. This is evidenced by Dante's use of the expression 'amicus eius' when he is referring to Cino's poetic abilities.[170]

Conclusion

The correspondence between Dante and Cino in this second phase is rich in ideas and themes. Among them, love, in its multiple facets, is undoubtedly predominant, though the semantics of exile and lyric subjectivity are also significant elements at the heart of their poetic exchange. This is perhaps the liveliest phase of the formal exchange between the poets. We witness a reciprocal influence that touches on numerous aspects which are peculiar to the poetics of both writers. Dante and Cino have a mutual interest in providing each other with a space to discuss various issues. However, some features of Cino's poetics remain consistent over time, while Dante's poetic beliefs develop so much that the differing views of the poets lead to their friendship ending, at least on a formal, direct and explicit level. In fact, I believe that since the relationship between Dante and Cino is closely tied to both a biographic friendship and a poetic friendship, at this stage the exchange of texts comes to a conclusion because Dante no longer sees the adherence of these two aspects in the relationship with Cino. For this reason, when their poetic ideals are in disagreement their friendship also ends and so, the formal exchange does too.

Although the formal exchange of texts comes to an end, the dialogue between Dante and Cino now moves from a textual and intertextual field to an exclusively intertextual one. In fact, the echo of the relationship between Dante and Cino will emerge in some passages of the *Commedia*.[171] Therefore, notwithstanding the fact that this second phase of the relationship between Dante and Cino comes to an end, a new phase begins despite the absence of a direct textual exchange. Accordingly, the third phase of the dialogue unfolds in reminiscences, memory, and the poetic esteem of Dante towards Cino.

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[170] *De vulgari eloquentia*, I x 4; I xvii 3; II ii 9; II v 4; II vi 6.
[171] I develop this argument extensively in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4.
The Third Phase of the Relationship:
the *Commedia*

After 1306, the relationship between Dante and Cino is not made up of a text exchange anymore. As a matter of fact, Cino's sonnet *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito* ends the direct correspondence between the poets. The last phase of the relationship includes the years when Dante focuses his energy on writing the *Commedia*; on the other hand, once Cino returns to Pistoia, he dedicates himself to his legal career.

In this chapter, I argue that the substantial influence of Cino on Dante's *Commedia* is evident, particularly through the poetic exchange between the two poets. I offer an original perspective on the *Commedia*, examining it in light of the earlier phases of Dante and Cino's dialogue, and situating it within the intellectual and poetic framework established by their earlier exchange. I demonstrate that, despite the formal end of their textual exchange, the dialogue between Dante and Cino continues to unfold in the *Commedia* through intertextual references.

In my analysis, I identify three major thematic areas in which the influence of Dante and Cino's dialogue can be traced: the relationship between love and free will, the theme of exile, and the figure of Beatrice, particularly her voice. I argue that Dante's conceptualisation of love and free will in the *Commedia* is influenced by his earlier exchanges with Cino, which helped refine his ideas. The theme of exile in Dante's work, particularly in the context of his separation from Beatrice, is akin to the biblical journey of return to Eden. In this sense, Dante's journey through the afterlife can be seen as a return to Beatrice, reflecting a shared motif of emotional exclusion and longing that is central to both Dante and Cino's poetry. Additionally, I illustrate that Beatrice's authoritative role in the *Commedia*, especially through her voice, may have a strong connection with Cino's *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*. By examining these intertextual references, I argue that Cino plays a pivotal role in shaping Dante's poetic and philosophical development, offering new insights into the *Commedia*.

The relationship between the poets after 1306 is necessarily characterised by elements of difference that resulted from the division which grew between Dante and Cino over the years. But if on the one side, Cino presumably aims to continue having an exchange with his friend, on the other side, Dante decides not to reply to Cino.

Moreover, direct references to Cino in the *Commedia* are not present. However, the aim is to detect the passages in the *Commedia* in which the influence of the exchange between Dante and Cino can be identified, despite the fact that Cino does not get mentioned directly. The apparent absence of Cino is indeed a debated theme in the scholarship. So far, critical debate has focused on the supposed or assumed absence or omission of Cino in the *Commedia*. To solve this issue, some hypotheses providing a plausible explanation of this apparent absence were formulated in the past.[1]

This chapter builds on the study conducted and the findings presented in the previous chapters. The ultimate objective is to analyse the passages in the *Commedia* in which I identify a persistent and ongoing influence of the past stages of the exchange of Dante and Cino. Although Cino is important to Dante's poetic formation, his name is absent from Dante's most ambitious literary work. I focus on this unexpected silence in a different way to those before me; additionally, I look at how the relationship between the authors should be reassessed around this key divergence at the mid-point of their respective careers, and how the study of their relationship can be beneficial to reading Dante's *Commedia*. Taking in to account the size of the lacuna that my thesis addresses, considering the entirety of the relationship between Dante and Cino is an interesting and original way to give a more complete understanding of Dante's work, especially by developing a transversal perspective on thematic issues which are structural to the poem.

The exchange between Dante and Cino is functional to both poets to discuss various topics and concepts. Among the elements which were predominantly developed in their dialogue, there are: friendship, poetry, exile, love, free will, the figure of the beloved and of Beatrice. Therefore, I scrutinise Dante's *Commedia* in light of the earlier stages of the dialogue with Cino: this type of research is employed as a new perspective with which one can look at and interpret the *Commedia* in new ways. My aim is to show the modalities in which some important ideas in the *Commedia* have already been worked out in the relationship between the poets, and I argue that this relationship is very important in helping Dante to arrive at some of the positions claimed in the poem. I prove that the dialogue with Cino continues even in the *Commedia*, when there is no formal exchange.

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[1] For an overview of the main positions on the topic, see the introduction.

Despite the fact that the most important contributions that attempt to provide a solution or an explanation regarding the omission, or apparent omission, of Cino in the *Commedia* are taken into consideration, the purpose of this chapter does not align with the work that scholarship has done so far.[2] I identify a fruitful, worthwhile, and different perspective to tackle the *vexata quaestio* of the apparent omission of Cino. This consists in providing an investigation into the ways the concepts and the discussion brought to attention in the poetic exchange, function as antecedents of important and structural aspects that Dante develops, defines and/or redefines in the *Commedia*. I argue that even if the presence of Cino is not direct, the first question must be not whether and where Dante would have allocated a direct reference to Cino in the *Commedia*, but in which way does Dante use the omission of Cino and his silent presence to the benefit of the *Commedia* in its complexity. The hypothesis of the influence of the exchange with Cino in the *Commedia* is an integral and essential tool to understand the poem fully, as it is a significant source to comprehensively understand the *Commedia*.

An additional clarification must be made regarding chronology as, in the broader terms of the relationship between Dante and Cino, it is important to define the first two stages of the exchange from the final stage, when Dante starts writing the *Commedia*. Thus, in the previous stages, chronology is important because the *tenzone* happens over a span of years.[3] In this third stage of the exchange, the important aspect to address is how the ideas Dante and Cino discussed in the previous stages are evolving in the text.

4.1 Tracing the stages of the relationship between Dante and Cino

The *Commedia* is the oeuvre in which Dante brings together many of his past (biographic and poetic) experiences. During the writing of the *Commedia*, several aspects of his life are taken into consideration, corrected, or reaffirmed by Dante, or at least they take on different connotations or roles in the entirety of his poem. Many of these events are reinterpreted in light of Dante's present and what he wants his *Commedia* to convey. The *Commedia*, in the last stage of Dante's career, is the outcome of a series of vicissitudes, which characterise his life and works. The

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[2] For a detailed account on these contributions, see the introduction.

[3] I discuss the problem of the chronology of the exchange of texts between Dante and Cino in chapter 3.

Commedia is indeed the result of a complex reworking of the reality lived by Dante, historically and in terms of his poetics. Thus, many events Dante experiences in life have an influence on his *Commedia*, whether directly or indirectly. In this perspective, the relationship with Cino is a dialogue which can offer precise elements for further research of in-depth analysis, as these elements may have influenced how Dante dealt with some experiences of his past. The relationship with Cino is certainly not the only perspective to take into consideration, although the dialogue with his peer is, for Dante, a rare occasion to challenge themes and concepts which are important to him, that have been significant to him throughout his life.

Yet, in this thesis I have examined the relationship between Dante and Cino by dwelling upon the pieces of work they actually exchanged or that explicitly contain a direct reference to the interlocutor. The last stage of the relationship I identify is different, as the dialogue between Dante and Cino does not build on a direct exchange of texts anymore. However, I demonstrate that Cino's presence in Dante – as well as the presence of Dante in Cino – takes on an important role for the *Commedia*. Looking at the previous stages of Dante and Cino's relationship is at the centre of my study, as it provides a useful angle to examine Dante's *Commedia*. This is the reason why in this section I analyse passages of Dante's poem in light of the events, discussions and reflections which characterised the previous relationship between Dante and Cino. This work allows me to draw attention to those episodes of the *Commedia* in which I find a clear influence of Cino's work or, more broadly, of their relationship. These include those episodes in which a direct influence in the *Commedia* – for instance, as a form of intertextuality – or an indirect influence – like the reuse of themes which were at the centre of the discussion between the poets in the earlier stage of their relationship – shape some passages of the poem. Accordingly, some episodes, themes or situations narrated in the *Commedia* are already anticipated in the previous stages of this poetic relationship. In this section of the thesis, I identify ways in which some of those important ideas in the *Commedia* had already been worked out in the formal exchange between Dante and Cino, and I argue that the relationship between the poets is decisive, or at least very important, in helping Dante to define some of his later positions.

4.2 Dante's *Commedia* and Cino's legal career

For both Dante and Cino, chronologically speaking, the third phase of their relationship, is set at a time characterised by numerous differences in respect to the other stages: Dante dedicates the entirety of his vigour and intellectual energy into writing the *Commedia*, while Cino increasingly directs his focus towards the advancement of his professional endeavours within the legal field. Indeed, the legal aspect is fundamental for Cino, primarily because it constitutes, along with his poetic ability, the other significant talent that endows him with a certain authority, even in the eyes of Dante himself.[4] On Dante's side, certainly, when we start talking about the *Commedia*, we talk about a very different poetic text to Dante's past works. Hitherto in this thesis, I have discussed matters mostly related to lyric poetry. However, we now move into a poetic moment characterised by new features, which result from an intellectual development that Dante undergoes and form part of the quiddity of his oeuvre. When writing the poem, Dante is in a poetic mode which is new in terms of what he has talked about before but also innovative in the world. The innovations include the mixture of linguistic registers, the narrative style and structure, the poetic choices, the characterisation, the lexicon (e.g., neologisms), the genre, and the intellectual project. Therefore, the third and last stage of the dialogue with Cino is situated in a moment of intense change in Dante's way of writing, so that many things become radically new.[5] One of the reasons why Cino was publicly recognised was his work as a lawyer, jurist, legal expert, and his interpretation of and commentaries on legal texts. So far in this thesis, I have focused on Cino's poetic development because this is the aspect of his work most explicitly addressed by Dante, who mentions Cino for his excellent poetic skills.[6] Although the legal aspect of Cino's life and career is not at the centre of the investigation carried out in this thesis, it is for reasons of completeness that I offer a summary of this element.[7]

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[4] For a further investigation on the role that Cino assumes in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, see chapter 3.

[5] Scott offers an in-depth and comprehensive examination of Dante's works. Specifically, I refer to chapter 10, 'The poet of the "Comedy"' (pp. 261-307), which is about the main poetic features and contributions of the *Commedia*. Cfr. Scott, John A. 2004. *Understanding Dante* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press). Furthermore, for an investigation of the development of Dante's poetic language, focusing on the most important innovations of his linguistic, stylistic and poetic outputs, see Corti, Maria. 1993. *Percorsi dell'invenzione. Il linguaggio poetico e Dante* (Turin: Einaudi).

[6] Dante recognises Cino's poetic abilities not only in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, but also in the *tenzone*, where he blames Cino for not aligning his talent in poetry to the matter of his sonnets. Cfr. chapter 3.

[7] I do not make a comparison between the ideas of Dante and Cino, but I dwell on comparing the method that leads me to discuss, in the following sections, other themes. On Cino's knowledge on law and his

Justice is one of the themes that Cino is particularly interested in, especially for his intellectual formation. Indeed, justice is a theme of central importance in both poets, especially at this stage of the authors' careers. In their poetic exchange, Dante and Cino have an in-depth discussion of matters such as love, exile, and the role of the beloved, but the theme of justice, which Dante knew was familiar to his interlocutor Cino, is never brought into focus. The legal side of Cino becomes predominant in the later phase of his career when he devotes himself to it. It is important to shed light on the fact that there are points of contact in the way Dante and Cino deal with the matter of justice at this later phase of the relationship.

The relationship between literature and law (in the Middle Ages), especially in Dante, is a wide-ranging complex topic, which has been much explored.[8] Therefore, even if in this thesis I do not explore this relationship in its entirety and I limit myself to providing indicative bibliographical information, I find it necessary to address and explore the ways in which some aspects of the spheres of law and justice could be considered a common ground between Dante and Cino. The late phase of Cino's career corresponds to the time when he supports the cause of emperor Henry VII and argues for the idea of a *Renovatio Imperii* ('Renewal of the Empire'). Indeed, this political view aligned, at least in the first instance, with Dante's wish to have the emperor as an effective ruler and leader for Italy.[9] From this point onward, Cino dedicates himself completely to his works on law, like the *Lectura in codicem* (1312-1314), the first commentary on the first nine books of Justinian's *Corpus Iuris Civilis*. In this work,

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legal career, see Chiappelli. 1881; Monti, Gennaro Maria. 1924. *Cino da Pistoia giurista: con bibliografia e tre appendici di documenti inediti* (Città di Castello: Il Solco); 1937. 'Altre indagini su Cino da Pistoia giurista e sulle sue '"Quaestiones"', in *Cino da Pistoia nel VI centenario della morte* (Pistoia: Alberto Pacinotti & C.), pp. 49-76; Astuti, Guido. 1976. 'Cino da Pistoia e la giurisprudenza del suo tempo', in *Colloquio Cino da Pistoia. Roma, 25 ottobre 1975* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei), pp. 129-153; Graziosi. 1997; Chiappelli, Luigi. 1999. *Cino da Pistoia giurista: gli scritti del 1881 e del 1910-1911*, pres. by Domenico Maffei (Pistoia: Società Pistoiese di Storia Patria); Ascheri, Mario. 2008. 'Cino da Pistoia giurista: le ragioni di un successo', *Atti del Convegno su Pistoia comunale nel contesto toscano ed europeo (secoli XII-XIV). Pistoia 12-14 maggio 2006*, pp. 99-110.

[8] On the theme of justice in Dante, see among others: Steinberg, Justin. 2013. *Dante and the limits of the law* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press); 2014. 'Dante's Justice? A reappraisal of the "contrapasso"', *L'Alighieri. Rassegna dantesca*, 55, n.s. XLIV, pp. 59-74; Barański, Zygmunt G.; Pertile, Lino (eds). 2015. *Dante in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Di Fonzo, Claudia. 2016. *Dante e la tradizione giuridica* (Rome: Carocci); Gaimari, Giulia; Keen, Catherine (eds). 2019. *Ethics, Politics and Justice in Dante* (London: UCL Press); Gaimari, Giulia. 2022. *Per amore di giustizia. Dante fra diritto, politica e teologia* (Ravenna: Longo); Di Fonzo, Claudia. 2023. *'Albedo iustitiae'. Il peccato ermafrodito e altre questioni di diritto e letteratura* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso).

[9] Carrai-Maffei. 2018.

he expresses his views against hierocracy, as Dante does in the *Monarchia*. But after the death of Henry VII, a turning point in Cino's perspective occurs, and he starts supporting, instead, the supremacy of spiritual power in his later work, the *Lectura Digesti Veteris*.[10] After graduating from Bologna, Cino continues his career in law until 1321, when he commits to the teaching of law and obtains wide fame.[11] In the years when he writes the *Digesto* (1330-1336), he explains his new ideals: now he believes in the supremacy of pontifical power.[12]

It is plausible that the first encounter between Dante and Cino occurred in 1287 in Bologna, which means that, at the time, Dante would have known Cino as an expert of law and justice after which another encounter could follow, at the court of Moroello Malaspina.[13] Even if the study of arts was necessary and preliminary to access the study of law at the University of Bologna, which implies that a certain relationship between these two fields was considered compatible, having both skills in poetic matters and in law was considered quite unique for a single person and, therefore, unusual for the time. Cino's studies of law have an influence on his own poetry, in which the lexicon of law and justice is mixed with the lexicon of love, used in lyric poetry.[14]

Regarding the relationship between poetry and law, it is widely recognised among scholars that a certain distancing between poetry and justice in the mid-fourteenth century may have become more prominent at Dante's times. As far as Dante's relationship with law and justice is concerned, there is not total agreement among scholars, especially about Dante's access to legal subjects.[15] Nevertheless, it is impossible to negate Dante's interest towards law and justice, even if he does not arrive at his ideas by pursuing a systematic or academic study of the topic.

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Marti. 1970; Carrai-Maffei. 2018.

[12] Gilli, Patrick. 2010. 'Nel nome di Giustiniano: diritto e letteratura', in *Atlante della letteratura italiana. I. Dalle origini al Rinascimento*, ed. by Sergio Luzzatto and Gabriele Pedullà, I vol. ed. by Amedeo De Vincentiis (Turin: Einaudi), pp. 97-101 (p. 99).

[13] Gilli, p. 97; Italia. 2018, p. 2, note 6. Italia mentions that the hypothesis dates back to Giorgio Petrocchi.

[14] Gilli, pp. 97-98.

[15] The poets at Frederick II's court perceived the relationship between poetry and law as close and intertwined; afterwards, the exegesis and the hermeneutics of law and poetry started to be considered as two distinct genres. See Gilli, p. 97. For an overview of the different positions among scholars, cfr. Terrusi, Leonardo. 2021. *'Onde convenne legge per fren porre'. Dante e il diritto* (Bari: Caccucci), especially the chapter 'Dante giurista?' (pp. 17-21).

Going back to the relationship between Dante and Cino, despite the uncertainties, it is undeniable that for both of them the theme of justice is fundamentally important. On the one hand, Cino studies law at university and becomes an excellent jurist, lawyer, and professor of law; on the other hand, Dante makes justice the supporting structure of the *Commedia*, and this is explicitly stated in *Paradiso* XIX, where the inscrutability of divine justice is put into focus:[16]

e quinci appar ch'ogne minor natura
è corto recettacolo a quel bene
che non ha fine e sé con sé misura.

Dunque vostra veduta, che convene
esser alcun de' raggi de la mente
di che tutte le cose son ripiene,

non pò da sua natura esser possente
tanto, che suo principio discerna
molto di là da quel che l'è parvente.

Però ne la giustizia sempiterna
la vista che riceve il vostro mondo,
com'occhio per lo mare, entro s'interna;

che, ben che da la proda veggia il fondo,
in pelago nol vede; e nondimeno
èli, ma cela lui l'esser profondo.
(*Par*. XIX, 49-63)

It is true that, as Franziska Meier, in line with Battistini, affirms: 'il problema della giustizia trattato nel canto XIX del *Paradiso* è uno di quelli che trascendono il luogo specifico in cui vengono affrontati per investire l'intera struttura della *Commedia*'.[17] Despite the different modes that Dante and Cino use to shape their ideas with respect to their knowledge of law and justice, it is probably that they shared some of the same sources in terms of texts and traditions. Even if Dante's study is informal, while Cino graduates from law, it seems that both had access to the Accursian *Gloss* which was

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[16] Cfr. Valterza, Lorenzo. 2011. 'Dante's Justinian, Cino's "Corpus". The hermeneutics of poetry and law', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, n.s., XXXVII, pp. 89-110; cfr. Meier, Franziska. 2022. '"Paradiso" XIX', in *Lectura Dantis Bononiensis. XII*, ed. by Giuseppe Ledda, a project by Emilio Pasquini (Bologna: Bologna University Press), pp. 13-27.
[17] Meier, p. 14.

completed in 1230 in Bologna. This may be considered a common source with which they interpreted Justinian's *Corpus*.[18] At the time of writing the *Monarchia*, Dante and Cino both share the perspective regarding the relationship between spiritual power and secular power. Claudia Di Fonzo demonstrates that the influence of Cino towards Dante's idea may be detected in the way Dante develops his perspective, which is expressed in the *Monarchia* and then perfected in *Purgatorio* XVI and XVII.[19] It is, indeed, highly plausible that Dante is aware and knows Cino's works on law and that Cino constitutes a secondary source for Dante's studies on the topic. Di Fonzo refers to the medieval allegorisation of the image of the two stars (*duo luminaria magna*) mentioned in *Genesis* (1: 14-19). In this context, the sun represents the Pope and the moon the emperor, and from this metaphor a dispute between those who support one of these two authorities over the other arises. In the *Monarchia*, Dante demonstrates the fallacy of this metaphor and overcomes it in canto XVI of the *Purgatorio* by proposing the image of the two suns and therefore, the act of mutual limitations of power.[20] Cino, in his *Lectura in codicem*, turns the image upside down and proposes the sun as the emperor and the moon as the Pope.[21] This may be the intermediate passage that spurs Dante to define the theory of the two suns in *Purgatorio* XVI.[22] As a consequence, we can hypothesise an intermediation of Cino's works between the writing of the *Monarchia* and *Purgatorio* XVI and beyond, with regard to matters of justice, law, and politics.

In the *Commedia*, justice is closely intertwined with free will, without which, there would not be justice in the afterlife. In *Purgatorio* XVI, Dante addresses the topic of free will, which he had already discussed in the *tenzone* with Cino.[23] Although Dante and Cino do not refer to topics related to law or justice directly, they engage with the theme of the lawfulness of a certain type of love that Cino claims and defends, which

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[18] Valterza, pp. 90 and 96.
[19] Di Fonzo. 2023, pp. 71-72.
[20] Di Fonzo. 2023, pp. 72 and 77. Cfr. *Purg.* XVI, 106-111; *Monarchia*, III i 5; III iv 2.
[21] Di Fonzo. 2023, p. 80.
[22] Di Fonzo. 2023, p. 86: 'Nella *Monarchia*, che fino alla morte di Arrigo dialoga e condivide con Cino il progetto politico della *renovatio imperii*, Dante dimostra l'inconsistenza formale della metafora dei due luminari e, probabilmente dopo aver considerato la possibilità del rovesciamento interpretativo dei due termini (*duo luminaria magna* – sole e luna), suggerito da Cino e da Giovanni di Parigi, riformula la questione nel canto [XVI] del *Purgatorio* scritto certamente dopo il 1313, proponendo una terza soluzione ovvero l'immagine dei due soli che con chiarezza identificano due giurisdizioni distinte con la funzione di reciproca limitazione del potere'.
[23] I return to this issue and I complete the analysis in the following section, in which I also provide a framework for the topic of free will. I already touched upon this theme in chapter 3.

is a constantly debated topic in their exchange. In the sonnet *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, Dante states that:

Però nel cerchio de la sua palestra
liber arbitrio già mai non fu franco,
sì che consiglio invan vi si balestra.
(CXXVIII *a*, 9-11)

Therefore, Dante supports the concept of a type of love which is too powerful to be resisted, and so this implies that the lover cannot be blamed for having followed or run into this fallacious and deceptive love. In *Purgatorio* XVI, Dante defines and has his last say on the topic of free will. He does this by mentioning some of the same expressions and words he employs in the sonnet addressed to Cino:

   Di picciol bene in pria sente *sapore*;
quivi *s'inganna*, e dietro ad esso corre,
se guida o fren non torce suo amore"
(*Purg*. XVI, 91-93; emphasis mine)

The tercet seems to refer and apply to the same situation that Cino presents to Dante in the sonnet *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, to which Dante replies for the first time to Cino, with *I' ho veduto già senza radice*.[24] In his sonnet, Dante indicates that the new love that Cino is following is a 'bugiardo / sapor' (vv. 7-8). Dante rebukes Cino and tries to rectify his behaviour, by warning his friend against this misleading love. In *Purgatorio* XVI Dante extends the scenario he dealt with in the *tenzone* with Cino, and with the words of Marco Lombardo states that men are free and so they are the cause of their own disgrace:

   Se così fosse, in voi fora distrutto
libero arbitrio, e non fora *giustizia*
per ben letizia, e per male aver lutto.

   Lo cielo i vostri movimenti inizia;
non dico tutti, ma, posto ch'i' 'l dica,
lume v'è dato a bene e a malizia,
   e *libero voler*; che, se fatica
ne le prime battaglie col ciel dura,

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[24] Cfr. chapter 2.

poi *vince tutto*, *se ben si notrica*.

A maggior forza e a miglior natura
liberi soggiacete; e quella cria
la mente in voi, che 'l ciel non ha in sua cura.

Però, se 'l mondo presente disvia,
in voi è la cagione, in voi si cheggia;
e io te ne sarò or vera spia.
(*Purg*. XVI, 70-84; emphasis mine)

Dante in this passage affirms, ultimately, his perspective on free will and then, by extension, on justice: 'non fora giustizia' (v. 71). Finally, 'libero voler […] vince tutto, se si notrica' (vv. 76-78). Dante is now applying the concept of free will in its generic terms as he did, by addressing only the topic of love in the *tenzone* with Cino, where Dante said that the 'bugiardo / sapor' was 'non fatto da vera notrice' (v. 7-8) Additionally, in *Purgatorio* XVI Dante uses the term 'fren' twice (vv. 93 and 94) to express the idea of someone who runs into a deceptive attraction; right after, he provides a solution, which consists in establishing a law meant to curb:

Onde convene legge per fren porre;
convenne rege aver che discernesse
de la vera citade almen la torre
(*Purg*. XVI, 94-96)

It is plausible that Dante is referring to a past stage of his life that has been discussed with Cino, even if it was only in terms of love, in a moment when his ideas where be shaped and were different to what he expresses through the figure of Marco Lombardo in the *Purgatorio*. The reminiscence of dialoguing with Cino may be enforced by the presence of the theory of the two suns, which appears in the following lines of the canto:

Soleva Roma, che 'l buon mondo feo,
due soli aver, che l'una a l'altra strada
facean vedere, e del mondo e di Deo.
(*Purg*. XVI, 106-108)
According to Di Fonzo's demonstration, the idea of the two suns, as I anticipated, has been developed by Dante by looking at the work in which Cino deals with the matter

and gives it a new reading, which aligns with Dante's view. Therefore, hypothetically, Cino may have been one of the intermediate sources for Dante when mentioning this theory in canto XVI. In his other works, Cino consciously employs the double semantic value of words which is used both in lyric poetry and in the sphere of law, such as 'vendetta' or 'giustizia'.[25] Therefore, we may detect a continuity of Dante's theories, in relation to what he had previously discussed with Cino, that now takes place in the *Commedia*, but in a re-defined way and in a more open and generalised context.

 In *Purgatorio* XVII, Virgil explains to Dante how Purgatory is structured and organised, but he omits to refer directly to the last three terraces and thus the last three sins:

> Altro ben è che non fa l'uom felice;
> non è felicità, non è buona
> essenza, d'ogne ben *frutto* e *radice*.
>
> L'amor ch'ad esso troppo s'abbandona
> di sovr' a noi si piange per tre cerchi;
> ma come tripartito si ragiona,
>
> tacciolo, acciò che tu per te ne cerchi
> (*Purg*. XVII, 133-139; emphasis mine)

The last three circles include the sins of the Avaricious and Prodigal, the Gluttonous and, finally, the Lustful. It is possible that Dante is using the words of 'frutto' and 'radice' (v. 135) again to express what he wanted to show to Cino in *I' ho veduto già senza radice*, where he mentions both the 'radice' (v. 1) and the 'frutto' (v. 5) to refer, to a type of love which is unfruitful: in the sonnet Dante aims to prove how deceptive is the nature of that love that spurs Cino as this 'contradice / natura' (vv. 5-6). This perspective would corroborate what is stated in *Purgatorio* XVII:

> 'Né creator né creatura mai',
> cominciò el, 'figliuol, fu sanza amore,
> o naturale o d'animo; e tu 'l sai.
>   *Lo naturale è sempre sanza errore*,

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[25] Di Fonzo. 2023, p. 94.

ma l'altro puote errar per malo obietto
o per troppo o per poco di vigore.
(*Purg*. XVII, 91-96; emphasis mine)

A reference to that dialogue with Cino may be detected here, because Dante and Cino put this topic at the centre of their *tenzone*. This hypothesis is supported by the lexicon used and the concepts developed. In addition, in *Purgatorio* XVIII, when Dante concludes this extended discourse on the matter of free will, he addresses its relationship to love. Here, Virgil explains to Dante that in order to align natural inclination with any other desire, men need to exert reason to overcome their natural impulses. This is the way which allows one to choose the good type of love:

Or perché a questa ogn'altra si raccoglia,
innata v'è la virtù che consiglia,
e de l'assenso de' tener la soglia.

Quest'è 'l principio là onde si piglia
ragion di meritare in voi, secondo
che *buoni e rei amori* accoglie e viglia.

Color che ragionando andaro al fondo,
s'accorser d'esta innata libertate;
però moralità lasciaro al mondo.

Onde, poniam che di necessitate
surga ogne amor che dentro a voi s'accende,
di ritenerlo è in voi la podestate.

La nobile virtù Beatrice intende
per lo *libero arbitrio*, e però guarda
che l'abbi a mente, s'a parlar ten prende'.
(*Purg*. XVIII, 61-75; emphasis mine)

In cantos XVI, XVII, and XVIII of the *Purgatorio*, Dante is systematically treating the theme of free will, which he discussed with Cino, but changes his view on the wider concept. I hypothesise that, at this point of the *Commedia*, the memory of that dialogue with Cino, both for his skills as a poet of love, but also his expertise of the law, may emerge in some passages of the text. The formulation of free will that Dante articulates in these cantos has a precedent, which is in the exchange with Cino. Dante is now using some of the same lexicon used in the *tenzone*, but with a new meaning. I identify

a density of references to his past exchange with Cino and to what was at the centre of their dialogue, at this point of the *Commedia*. The overlap in some passages of a lexicon that pertains to both the sphere of love and the sphere of law is an additional hint that supports adopting this perspective. Moreover, the theory of the two suns may be considered a further reference to the reading of Cino's works, as they constitute an intermediate stage in Dante's formula.[26] Dante sees a strong integration between law and poetry, while Cino deals with justice in the context of legal scholarship.

4.3 The influence of the exchange between Dante and Cino in the *Commedia*

I now delve into the heart of my investigation on the possible influence the previous exchange between Dante and Cino has on the *Commedia*. The figure of Beatrice, especially after her death, is crucially important to Dante's biographic and poetic life. The relationship with Cino, from its very first moments, is shaped under the sign of Beatrice: the consolatory *canzone*, *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*, has the thematic centre in the death of Beatrice, and it ends with the projection of Beatrice in Paradise.[27] As I have already illustrated, Cino understands, better than anyone, the nature of Dante's Beatrice in the *Vita nova*. Thereafter, as Cino begins the *tenzone* with Dante, he strongly suggests the utter importance, for the entirety of the exchange, of the figure of Beatrice.[28] The *tenzone* continues and touches upon many themes, but the constant element is Cino's concern regarding the sorrows that Amore causes, as a consequence of the infatuation towards other women or because of the kind of love he believes in.[29] The theme of love intertwines with the theme of free will, about which Dante takes a more definitive position as we approach the years in which he begins writing the *Commedia*. The analysis is also made for the theme of exile, a thread which is not just a common matter of discussion for Dante and Cino, especially in their *tenzone*, but is also a biographic and internal experience that both of them share and develop in particular and specific ways. Indeed, the *Commedia* contains several

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[26] I discuss possible further research developments on the topic of justice in light of the relationship between Dante and Cino in the conclusion.

[27] Cfr. chapter 2.

[28] For instance, the name of Beatrice is alluded to through the common adjective 'beatrice' in Cino's *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*: 'ella sarà del meo cor beatrice' (v. 4). See chapter 2 for a full development of this topic.

[29] I refer to the pair of sonnets *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* by Cino, and Dante's *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, which is accompanied and integrated by the *Epistola* III.

passages which I believe may have been influenced by the dialogue Dante had with Cino during their exchange of texts. In this sense, the dialogue with Cino provides a diachronic track of Dante's evolution of thoughts, as regards some themes that are important to his entire poetic career and development. These topics and themes will finally be crystallised in the *Commedia*.

Although there are uncertainties – mostly unsolvable – regarding the chronology of the first part of the dialogue between Dante and Cino, as well as the years in which Dante started to write the first cantos of the *Commedia*, it is undeniable that there is an overlapping of time between these two moments. In any case, these two moments must be chronologically close, and therefore an influence of the dialogue with Cino on the first cantos of the *Commedia* must be significant. However, it is possible that a certain degree of intertextuality is present even in the passages of the *Commedia*, which are historically and chronologically more distant. I argue that the previous exchange with Cino still plays an intertextual influence in the later stages of the writing of the *Commedia*. Following this path of tracing passages in which influence is evident can help to better understand some key episodes of the *Commedia*.

4.3.1 Love and free will

Observing the dialogue between Dante and Cino in its entirety allows us to understand the development of the idea of love that both poets shaped over the years of their exchange. Indeed, by looking at some passages of the sonnets of the *tenzone*, a comprehensive overview of the poets' evolution, in regard to their idea of love and lyric poetry can be traced. This also provides the chance to highlight the elements of divergence which, do not allow Dante and Cino's concepts to align anymore in the last stage of their relationship. I argue that the dialogue with Cino on the topic of love and love poetry helps Dante to define and reach a decisive view on the topic at the time of writing the *Commedia*. The discourse on the idea of love offers a new perspective on the premises that, afterwards, lead to Dante's ultimate view on topics such as free will in relation to love, but also, by extension, on his love for Beatrice. The question from which this reading starts is: would the apparition of Beatrice in the Earthly Paradise be the same without the premises developed through the dialogue with Cino in the exchange of texts? The realisation of Beatrice in the *Commedia*, as well as Dante's new idea on love and love poetry, is the result of a long poetic path that Dante develops

over the years. The first manifestation of Beatrice in the *Commedia* is in *Inferno* II, in which she speaks through Virgil's voice; eventually, the figure of Beatrice develops so that in *Purgatorio* XXX, for the first time, she speaks for herself. I argue that Beatrice, not only in the passages of the *Inferno* or in the *Purgatorio*, but also the idea of love for Beatrice, are partly in debt to the previous dialogue with Cino. In this perspective, the exchange helps set the premises of the development of Beatrice in the *Paradiso* and understand the idea of love in the entire *Commedia*.

In the first phase of the relationship between Dante and Cino, a convergence of ideas is detected. Inevitably, the concept of love is tied, in Dante's works, to the figure of Beatrice. Even though a closeness of positions occurs at the beginning of the correspondence, at this stage we can already discern the signs of a progressive division of perspectives. Through the *tenzone*, the theme of love is systematically brought to attention. By looking at the exchange, we can analyse the stages that mark an evolution of the trajectory regarding the idea of love that Dante, partly through the discussion with Cino, formulates, develops, and refines.[30] Cino, in all likelihood, follows and adheres to the nodal points of the *Vita nova*, and structures his *canzone consolatoria* according to an adherence to the style, concepts and ideas expressed by Dante, which will be applied, ultimately, in the *Commedia*:

Or dunque, di che il vostro cor sospira,
che rallegrar si dé del suo migliore?
Ché Dio, nostro signore,
volle di lei, com'avea l'angiol detto,
fare il cielo perfetto.
(CXXV, 21-25)

At this early stage of the exchange, Cino seems to embrace Dante's idea on the beloved, on Beatrice, which will be fully explored and defined in Dante's poem. The completeness of the love for Beatrice must be fulfilled in the contemplation after her death, in Paradise. Instead, with the *tenzone*, Cino's point of view becomes more personal, and he breaks from the rhetoric of the genre of the *consolatio*. The two poets, on the initiative of Cino, start discussing matters of love, which constitutes a recurrent

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[30] Cfr. chapters 2 and 3.

topic in the exchange and is rarely absent from their discussion.[31] With the *tenzone*, then, the poets diverge from the style and conventions of the consolatory style and start a lively exchange of ideas and thoughts. In *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, Cino asks Dante 'Che farò, Dante? Ch'Amor pur m'invita' (v. 12), and so the discussion pivots to the topic of love. Dante's reply, *I' ho veduto già senza radice*, exposes, with an unusual assertive tone for the style of the *tenzone*, his aversion towards Cino's view. The negative effects of love that replace the principal one are dismissed by Dante categorically, to the point that Dante invites Cino to be aware of and to distrust the false promises of Love. Indeed, the premises of a sharper alteration of views, which seems to increase as the correspondence intensifies, is already present in the first set of texts exchanged. In another sonnet, *Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia*, the theme of love interweaves with the theme of death, as it happens in the *consolatoria*, where Cino expresses his deep regret for the dead beloved. In *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*, Dante condemns the hostile nature of exile and blames this condition for his inability to write love poetry: 'Oh, messer Cin, come 'l tempo è rivolto / a danno nostro e de li nostri diri' (vv. 12-13). In *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*, Cino continues the line traced by Dante and extends this condition universally. Precisely by virtue of the love of the woman mentioned in the sonnet by Dante – 'merzé per quella donna che tu miri / d'opra non star, se di fé non se' sciolto' (vv. 13-14) – Cino exhorts Dante not to miss the opportunity to pursue righteous and virtuous behaviour, despite the harshness of the conditions of exile.

The focal point of the debate on love intensifies with the pair of sonnets *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* (Cino) and *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* (Dante). The question at the centre of the discussion regards the theme of free will: in this text there is the first occurrence of the expression 'liber arbitrio' (v. 10), which will appear more often in the *Commedia*.[32] Dante's sonnet presents a dichotomy between Christian precepts and courtly tradition: Christian belief teaches that free will is able to

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[31] For further information regarding how the concept of love is treated by Cino in the *tenzone*, see Traina, Maria Rita. 2014. 'Il "volgibile cor" di Cino da Pistoia: l'auto-ostentazione dell'antietica amorosa e la percezione dell'esperienza poetica individuale come narrazione', in *Ortodossia ed eterodossia in Dante Alighieri. Atti del convegno di Madrid, 5-7 novembre 2012*, ed. by Carlota Cattermole, Celia de Aldama and Chiara Giordano, pres. of Juan Varela-Portas de Orduña (Madrid: Ediciones de la Discreta), pp. 527-555.

[32] The word 'arbitrio' combined with the adjective 'liber(o)' is present a few times in Dante's work. Apart from the sonnet *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, cfr. *Purg.* XVI, 71: 'libero arbitrio'; *Purg.* XVIII, 74: 'lo libero arbitrio'; *Purg.* XXVII, 140: 'libero, dritto e sano è tuo arbitrio'.

overcome the spur of Love, while courtly tradition teaches that love is a force which cannot be defeated.[33] These two threads are intertwined in Dante's sonnet.

At this point in the *tenzone*, the dialogue takes on a different connotation and focuses on philosophical questions much more than in the past. Initially, Cino confines himself to discussing his infidelity and fickleness towards a unique love, and then, at a later stage of the relationship with Dante, he addresses the issue of love's mutability more systematically and in a more complex way. The content of Dante's *Io sono stato* is extended by the *Epistola* III, which explains the philosophical argument at the centre of his argument: how the object of a soul's desire can be transferred to another. In this case, by distancing himself from the assertiveness Dante displayed in previous occasions in the dialogue with Cino, we witness a change in Dante's attitude, a changing of thought, which is a sign of his constant refinement regarding the wider view on the topic of love. Therefore, in the letter, Dante justifies the tendency to change different objects of love. Dante will take on a different and more critical and peremptory vision on the topic in the sonnet *Cercando di trovar minera in oro*. Maria Rita Traina denotes that Cino's attitude brings into play his figure of the lover spurred by different women, different objects of his desire, as it becomes a trademark of his figure as a poet and of his style:[34] 'L'amore equivale, in definitiva, alla possibilità poetica'.[35] All of the facts Cino recounts as true, may be functional to a wider strategy, to the theorisation of his poetics, instead of a recounting of his past experiences. Cino's features as a lover and his poetry are hardly discernible when it comes to his love poetry; these two aspects are combined to form Cino's own poetic identity. Dante's convoluted and articulated path towards a definition of love is evidenced by Giuliano Milani, who underlines that in the years in which Dante is at the Malaspina court – during the years when Cino and Dante are both in exile – he is writing the *Convivio*, an oeuvre whose aim is meant, instead, to detach Dante from being subjugated to love.[36] The theme of love, in the exchange between Dante and Cino (although not only here) is directly connected to the theme of free will.

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[33] Giunta. 2018, p. 513-514. See also Tonelli, Natascia. 2007. '"Tre donne", il "Convivio" e la serie delle canzoni', in *Tre donne intorno al cor mi son venute*, ed. by Juan Varela-Portas de Orduña (Madrid: Departamento de Filología Italiana de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid - Asociación Complutense de Dantología), pp. 51-71.
[34] Traina, pp. 550-551.
[35] Traina, p. 552.
[36] Milani. 2020, p. 260.

But before I move on further, it is beneficial to provide a cultural framework of issues and intellectual questions that shape Dante's philosophical and intellectual formation, with specific regard to free will. The theme of free will is at the centre of philosophical and theological debate in the thirteenth century. Indeed, this concept is profoundly tied to the Christian doctrine of grace and sin, and it plays a pivotal role in the broader terms of individual moral responsibility.[37] In the Middle Ages, the discourse to which this concept pertains, therefore, is the theological domain: the teaching of free will was influenced by both classic and Christian philosophy. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle states that men are equipped with reason and are capable of rational judgment; this position is not too far from what will become the predominant idea in the Christian context, which mainly stems from *Genesis* and the Epistles of Saint Paul.[38] With Augustine, the topic is treated deeply and is of utter importance. He distinguishes between the type of freedom that humankind was given before original sin, and free will, which is a tendency towards good, even if the chance to direct oneself towards bad exists (*posse non peccari*, 'to be able not to sin'). In Scholastic thought, reason and will (in the sense of the Latin *voluntas*) are closely intertwined to the concept of free will.[39] Later in the medieval period, reason becomes tightly linked to freedom in the Dominican context and Franciscan thinkers emphasise the relationship between *liberum arbitrium* and will. During his life, Thomas Aquinas studies multiple positions regarding the link between reason, will, and freedom, before arriving at the statement in the *Summa Theologiae*: free will identifies with *voluntas*.[40] Therefore, Aquinas confirms a position that is in line with rationalism.[41] In the thirteenth century, an important topic in discussions of this issue is between those who support rationalism and those who support voluntarism; the latter influences most thinkers from the second half of the thirteenth century onwards.[42] Dante and Cino's

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[37] Korolec, J. B. 1982. 'Free Will and Free Choice', in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, Jan Pinborg and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 629-641 (p. 634). It is important to notice that Korolec suggests that, actually, the Latin expression 'liber arbitrium' may be rendered more precisely in English as 'freedom of decision' because the word 'will' corresponds to the Latin word 'voluntas' (p. 630).

[38] Korolec, p. 629.

[39] 'Libero arbitrio', in *Dizionario di filosofia Treccani* <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/libero-arbitrio_%28Dizionario-di-filosofia%29/> [accessed 15 June 2024].

[40] Korolec, pp. 634-635.

[41] 'Libero arbitrio', in *Dizionario di filosofia Treccani* <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/libero-arbitrio_%28Dizionario-di-filosofia%29/> [accessed 15 June 2024].

[42] Korolec, pp. 640-641. See also Porro, Pasquale. 2014. 'Trasformazioni medievali della libertà, 2. Libertà e determinismo nei dibattiti scolastici', in *Libero arbitrio. Storia di una controversia filosofica*, ed. by Mario De Caro, Massimo Mori and Emidio Spinelli (Rome: Carocci), pp. 191-221.

discussions, therefore, are situated in this specific tradition and they position themselves in respect to each other's and to a centuries-old debate. A useful resource may be the Franciscan *Quodlibeta*, which is a set of disputations that were publicly debated about certain topics of choice. Disputations of this kind take place in Florence during Dante's time; in these, many different topics were discussed in a dialogic format, including vibrant matters such as free will. From the thirteenth century, the popularity of this debating practice involves the university as well as the mendicant *studia* and becomes a significant phenomenon.[43] Dante takes advantage of these disputations, as they were aimed to lay people as well, 'nelle scuole delli religiosi e alle disputazioni delli filosofanti' (*Cv* II xii 7).[44]

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[43] Piron, Sylvain. 2006. 'Franciscan "Quodlibeta" in Southern "Studia" and at Paris, 1280-1300', in *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Christopher Schabel. 2 vols (Leiden: Brill), I, pp. 403-438 (p. 403). On the *Quodlibeta*, see also Glorieux, Palémon. 1935. *La Littérature Quodlibétique de 1260 à 1320*. 2 vols (Le Saulchoir à Kain: Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques); Schabel, Christopher (ed.). 2006-7. *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages*. 2 vols (Leiden: Brill).

[44] Piron, p. 34. Regarding the theme of free will, with specific relation to Dante and his works, see: Nardi, Bruno. 1944. 'Il libero arbitrio e la storiella dell'asino di Buridano', in *Nel mondo di Dante*, ed. by Bruno Nardi (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura), pp. 287-303; Bernabei, Bruno. 1970. 'Libero', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al.*, 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), III, pp. 640-641; Vanni Rovighi, Sofia. 1970. 'Arbitrio', in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al.*, 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana), I, pp. 345-348; Silvestrini, Flavio. 2007. 'Libero arbitrio e libertà in Dante', in *Prima di Machiavelli. Itinerari e linguaggi della politica tra il XIV e il XVI secolo*, ed. by Gabriele Carletti (Pescara: Edizioni Scientifiche Abruzzesi), pp. 73-86; Mocan, Mira. 2009. 'Canti XVI-XVII-XVIII. Amore, libero arbitrio e fantasia: una teoria gravitazionale', in *Esperimenti danteschi*, *Purgatorio*, ed. by Benedetta Quadrio (Genoa-Milan: Marietti), pp. 147-174; Girardi, Enzo Noé. 2011. 'Al centro del "Purgatorio": il tema del libero arbitrio', in *Il pensiero filosofico e teologico di Dante Alighieri*, ed. by Alessandro Ghisalberti (Milan: Vita e Pensiero), pp. 21-38; Bertuzzi, Roberta. 2013. 'Il dibattito sul libero arbitrio fra XIII e XIV secolo: la "nobile virtù" tra prescienza divina e problema del male', in *'Il mondo errante'. Dante fra letteratura, eresia e storia*, ed. by Marco Veglia, Lorenzo Paolini and Riccardo Parmeggiani (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo), pp. 81-98; Porro, Pasquale. 2014. 'Canto XVIII. Amore e libero arbitrio in Dante', in *Lectura Dantis Romana. Cento canti per cento anni. II. Purgatorio. 1.Canti I-XVII. 2. Canti XVIII-XXXIII*, ed. by Enrico Malato and Andrea Mazzucchi (Rome: Salerno), pp. 523-560; Planca, Enrico. 2015. 'La vita bella. Amore, ragione e libertà nei canti XVI, XVII e XVIII del "Purgatorio"', in *La via del Paradiso. Il bene, il male, la misericordia nella 'Divina Commedia'*, ed. by Enrico Planca (Castel Bolognese: Itaca), pp. 63-106; Italia, Sebastiano. 2023. 'Dante e la questione del libero arbitrio', *Arzanà. Cahiers de littérature médiévale italienne*, 23, pp. 43-64. On the cultural context of Florence at the time of Dante, see among others: Nardi, Bruno. 1942. *Dante e la cultura medievale* (Bari: Laterza); 1967. *Saggi di filosofia dantesca* (Florence: La Nuova Italia); Cappelletti, Leonardo. 2015. *Ne le scuole de li religiosi... Le dispute scolastiche sull'anima nella 'Commedia' di Dante* (San Donato a Livizzano: Aleph); Diacciati, Silvia; Faini, Enrico. 2017. 'Ricerche sulla formazione dei laici a Firenze nel tardo Duecento', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 652, pp. 205-237; Barański, Zygmunt G.; Cachey, Theodore J. Jr.; Lombardo, Luca (eds). 2019. *Dante e la cultura fiorentina. Bono Giamboni, Brunetto Latini e la formazione intellettuale dei laici* (Rome: Salerno); Bartuschat, Johannes; Brilli, Elisa; Carron, Delphine (eds). 2020. *The Dominicans and the Making of Florentine Cultural Identity (13th-14th centuries) / I domenicani e la costruzione dell'identità culturale di Firenze (XIII-XIV secolo)* (Florence: Firenze University Press); Dell'Oso, Lorenzo. 2022. 'Dante, Peter of Trabibus and the "Schools of the Religious Orders" in Florence', *Italian Studies*, 77, 3, pp. 211-229.

Going back to the *Commedia*, in *Purgatorio* XVIII, Virgil explains to Dante that the 'podestate' (v. 72) is capable of refraining from solicitation and temptation of a new love:

Onde, poniam che di necessitate
surga ogne amor che dentro a voi s'accende,
di ritenerlo è in voi la podestate.

La nobile virtù Beatrice intende
per lo libero arbitrio, e però guarda
che l'abbi a mente, s'a parlar ten prende'.
(*Purg*. XVIII, 70-75)

At the time of writing this canto it must be difficult for Dante to go against and deny the concept on the relationship between love and free will, which he seems to embrace and defend, for instance, in *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*. As Anna Maria Chiavacci Leonardi states:

Alla seconda domanda Virgilio risponderà infatti con l'idea cristiana, come più ampiamente si vedrà nel commento, che anche l'amore, come ogni umana passione, è sottoposto al libero arbitrio. Nel delicato momento in cui esso nasce nell'animo – momento questo non volontario, ma provocato dall'esterno – la *nobile virtù* propria dell'uomo, quella libertà di giudizio e di scelta che è opera insieme della ragione e della volontà, cioè delle facoltà che costituiscono l'anima intellettiva, può accoglierlo o rifiutarlo come buono o non buono. Ed esso sarà buono solo se in accordo a quella originaria aspirazione al vero bene posta da Dio nei cuori.[45]

The topic of free will is also at the heart of the *Purgatorio*, in canto XVI, and arises from the discussion with Marco Lombardo:

Alto sospir, che duolo strinse in 'uhi!',
mise fuor prima; e poi cominciò: 'Frate,
lo mondo è cieco, e tu vien ben da lui.

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[45] Chiavacci Leonardi. 2016b, pp. 515-516.

    Voi che vivete ogne cagion recate
pur suso al cielo, pur come se tutto
movesse seco di necessitate.

    Se così fosse, in voi fora distrutto
libero arbitrio, e non fora giustizia
per ben letizia, e per male aver lutto.
(*Purg*. XVI, 64-72)

This canto is central, not just thematically, but also in regard to the architecture of the whole poem. Here Dante transposes the definition of free will as 'liberum de voluntate iudicium' ('free judgment of the will').[46] Elisabetta Graziosi underlines an ideologic contamination between Dante and Cino, in relation to the subject of love and in *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* identifies a thematic connection between the elements discussed here in the sonnet and in *Purgatorio* XVI (free will), XVII (love), and XXXI (Beatrice's reprimand for replacing her love with another, after her death).[47] The problem appearing both in the sonnet (and the epistle) and the *Convivio*, of love passing from one object to another, is faced in two different ways; in the *Convivio* Dante corrects what was stated in the sonnet: the passage from one love to another is acceptable but only if the passage is towards love for knowledge (philosophy).[48] Graziosi finds in this difference evidence of the premises of a further development that Dante undergoes; this can be seen as one of the reasons why Dante has the need to discuss these aspects with Cino, an exile like him and an authoritative interlocutor. Cino, the addressee of this discourse, appears as another element of authority that Dante consults, for his distinguished poetic and juridic career. In this way, this phase

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[46] The definition is provided in the *Monarchia*, I xii 2: 'Propter quod sciendum quod principium primum nostre libertatis est libertas arbitrii, quam multi habent in ore, in intellectu vero pauci. Veniunt nanque usque ad hoc: ut dicant liberum arbitrium esse liberum de voluntate iudicium' [Therefore it must be borne in mind that the first principle of our freedom is free will, which many people talk about but few understand. For they go so far as to say that free will is free judgment in matters of volition]. For all of the occurrences in Dante's work where free will is discussed, see Vanni Rovighi. 1970. For instance, the concept of 'libero arbitrio', even if expressed with different words, appears in *Convivio*, III iv 6: 'E però è da sapere, secondo la sentenza del filosofo nel terzo dell'etica, che l'uomo è degno di loda e di vituperio solo in quelle cose che sono in sua podestà di fare o di non fare; ma in quelle nelle quali non ha podestà, non merita né vituperio né loda, però che l'uno e l'altro è da rendere ad altrui, avegna che le cose siano parte dell'uomo medesimo'. Nasti, Paola. 2017. '"Purgatorio" XVI', in *Lectura Dantis Bononiensis. VII*, ed. by Emilio Pasquini and Carlo Galli (Bologna: Bononia University Press), pp. 117-141 (pp. 119 and 125-6); cfr. Graziosi, p. 66.
[47] Graziosi, pp. 64-65.
[48] Graziosi, p. 73.

of the relationship is what will lead to his adjustment regarding love, first in the *Convivio*, and then in the *Commedia*.[49]

The analysis of the stages which shape, in part, Dante's ideas on the topic and nature of love and, consequently, on lyric poetry, lays the foundation for a further assertion on the topic, which is situated within the wider theme of free will. Conversely, at the stage when Dante writes *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, his judgement is different to *Purgatorio* XVI: in the sonnet, Dante makes clear that free will cannot overcome love.[50] This is argued both in poetry, in the sonnet:

Però nel cerchio de la sua palestra
liber arbitrio già mai non fu franco,
sì che consiglio invan vi si balestra.
(CXXVIII *a*, 9-11)

And in prose, in the *Epistola* III:

Redditur, ecce, sermo Calliopeus inferius, quo sententialiter canitur, quanquam transumptive more poetico signetur intentum, amorem huius posse torpescere atque denique interire, nec non huius, quod corruptio unius generatio sit alterius, in anima reformari.

(*Epistola* III 4)

[Behold, there is given below a discourse in the diction of Calliope, wherein the Muse declares in set phrase (though, as poets use, the meaning is conveyed under a figure) that love for one object may languish and finally die away, and that (inasmuch as the corruption of one thing is the begetting of another) love for a second may take shape in the soul]

Along with the writing of the *Convivio*, Dante's poetry comes under the influence of philosophy and natural sciences, and these teachings shape his idea on love and love poetry. This testifies that, between the writing of the *Convivio* and of the *Commedia*, Dante actively elaborates and rethinks his concept of these topics.[51] The achievement of philosophical and theological positions sets the final coordinates that Dante

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[49] Graziosi, pp. 90-91.
[50] Cfr. Ferrara. 2016a: 'Il sonetto riporta quindi a quell'atmosfera prettamente cortese benché in realtà abbia come cardine l'idea precedente la stagione del libello di un amore dominante al quale l'essere di cui si impossessa non può opporsi né con l'intelletto né con la volontà' (p. 103).
[51] Livraghi. 2015, p. 76.

actualises in the *Commedia*, which are addressed, in the first time in the poem, in canto V of the *Inferno*, with the figures of Francesca and Paolo, and the lustful. In this respect, Barolini recognises a discrepancy between the theorisations expressed in the exchange with Cino and the position Dante stands for in the *Commedia*. Indeed, in *Inferno* V, Dante abandons the deterministic idea that love is an inescapable force: 'Dante's treatment of lust is thus deeply sutured to the anti-deterministic theology of free will that sustains the *Commedia*' and, therefore, 'Love and reason are aligned, love and free will are aligned'.[52] This is what Francesca believes herself, and what appears in some of the most famous lines of the *Commedia*:

Amor, ch'a nullo amato amar perdona,
mi prese del costui piacer sì forte,
che, come vedi, ancor non m'abbandona.
(*Inf.* V, 103-105)

At this point, Dante refuses the idea, inherited from the courtly tradition, that free will and reason have no power against love and, instead, it is lust, and not love, that moved the souls of the first circle of Hell. It is indeed convincing that lyric poetry before the *Commedia* is a space of experimentation, in which Dante can challenge different – and, sometimes, incoherent and conflicting – positions and thoughts, before defining the ultimate theorisation on love in the *Commedia*.[53] The exchange with Cino functions, in part, as a space to test out different connotations on such topic. As Barolini specifies, the same philosophical issue on the correlation between love and free will – whether the soul can pass from one passion to another passion – which is discussed in the *tenzone*, is addressed in the *canzone Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete*, which 'dramatizes the lover's involuntary transition from love one to love two, and constitutes an early instalment in Dante's long and complex meditation on the will's freedom – or its lack thereof'.[54] In *Inferno* V, this topic is finally tackled and

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[52] Barolini, Teodolinda. 2018. '"Inferno" 5: What's Love Got to Do with It? Love and Free Will', in *Commento Baroliniano*, Digital Dante (New York, NY: Columbia University Libraries), par. 14 <https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/inferno/inferno-5/>.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Barolini, Teodolinda. 2022. '"Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete". A Dramatization of "utrum de passione in passionem possit anima transformari": Conflict, Compulsion, Consens', in *Interpretation and Visual Poetics in Medieval and Early Modern Texts*, ed. by Beatrice Arduini, Isabella Magni and Jelena Todorovic (Leiden-Boston: Brill), pp. 217-242 (p. 221).

defined, by stating that lust is of those who 'la ragion sommettono al talento' (*Inf.* V, 39).

Cino's role as interlocutor who is involved in this debated theme over years, offers a counterpart to Dante, allowing him to build his own argument: 'Cino seems to have mirrored or externalized Dante's fear about himself'.[55] This 'fear' of being spurred by multiple objects of love, which fails to undergo reason, is expressed in the wider topic of free will:

> Dante's thinking on love and compulsion is part of a vast system, related to the theology of free will that sustains the *Commedia* and *Paradiso* IV–V's extended investigation into the existence of absolute will: 'ché volontà, se non vuol, non s'ammorza' (for will, if it resists, is never extinguished: *Par.* IV, 76).[56]

In the *Commedia*, the theme of free will is directly addressed and brought to the centre of a discussion that endures throughout the whole poem. In the *Purgatorio*, with the figure of Marco Lombardo (*Purg.* XVI, 52-81) and then to Virgil's explanation (*Purg.* XVIII, 40-75), Dante presents the topic of free will, in totally opposite and antithetical terms to what he does in his previous works, such as in the *tenzone* with Cino. Notwithstanding, the last sonnet Dante writes to Cino, *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, encapsulates the final form Dante will revise, delineate, and explicate in the *Commedia*:

Io mi credea del tutto esser partito
da queste nostre rime, messer Cino,
ché si conviene omai altro cammino
a la mia nave più lungi dal lito;

ma perch'i' ho di voi più volte udito
che pigliar vi lasciate a ogni uncino,
piacemi di prestate un pocolino
a questa penna lo stancato dito.

Chi s'innamora sì come voi fate,

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[55] Barolini. 2022, p. 220.
[56] Barolini. 2022, p. 221.

or qua or là, e sé lega e dissolve,
mostra ch'Amor leggermente il saetti.

   Però, se leggier cor così vi volve,
priego che con vertù il correggiate,
sì che s'accordi i fatti a' dolci detti.
(CXXX *a*, 1-14)

In the last pair of sonnets of the *tenzone* between Dante and Cino, we detect the final detachment of Dante from Cino, at least in terms of a direct discussion. In this regard, Ferrara assumes this is the result of Dante's interest in philosophical poetry, and that Dante marks 'la svolta decisiva impressa alla propria esistenza e alla propria opera'.[57]

   I argue that the matter of contention is not only philosophical, but it is also, inextricably, a poetic matter. The last lines that Dante writes to Cino provide an explicit judgement which involves, not only Cino's entire and wider concept of love, applied to his life, but most of all, his poetry ('dolci detti', v. 14).[58] Dante merges two aspects of love: love must be lived according to the Christian precepts, but it also must become the object of a type of poetry that differs from the courtly and lyric idea of changeable love. This is the premise which is largely developed from *Inferno* V onwards, when Dante condemns not only Francesca and Paolo and all of the lustful in Hell, but also the courtly world they represent. It reaches its final development in *Purgatorio* XXVII, when Dante (with Virgil and Statius) comes through the wall of fire onto the terrace of lust, which will lead to the true and only object of love:

'[…] Or vedi, figlio:
tra Beatrice e te è questo muro'.
(*Purg*. XXVII, 35-36)

It is in the group of cantos XXIV-XXVI of the *Purgatorio* that Dante's metapoetic reflection on poetry reaches its pinnacle. Bonagiunta Orbicciani evokes the 'dolce stil novo' (*Purg*. XXIV, 57), a new way of creating poetry, which marks a gap between a poetry that looks at Guittone's style, and that has in Guinizzelli its anticipator and founder. At this point of the *Commedia*, on the terrace of lust, Dante-*personaggio* and Dante-author coincide, in the moment when the mortal sin and the 'literary' sin are

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[57] Ferrara. 2016a, p. 110.
[58] *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, v. 14.

atoned for in a single act, which seals both identities: the wall of fire purges the pilgrim from his sins – 'Poi dentro al foco innanzi mi si mise' (*Purg*. XXVII, 46) – and, at the same time, it allows a 'resurrection' of poetry – 'la morta poesì resurga' (*Purg*. I, 7). Having said that, in contrast to Cino's continuous promotion of his view on love and love poetry – in particular regarding the changing nature of love and its apparently invincible force – Dante clearly defines his own view. Dante's position, if not directly opposed, is at least far from his friend's. It is interesting to note that, from a chronological perspective, the exchange with Cino functions as a space of reflection and discussion. The continuous fluctuations of thought Dante expresses with his poetry compared with Cino's constant ideas help Dante to shape, definitively, his vision of love, in relation to free will. Dante will never deny Cino's poetic ability in love poetry, but he will correct Cino's view and encourage him to pursue virtuous behaviour. In *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, Dante concludes the sonnet, and so the entire exchange with Cino, by referring to 'dolci detti' (v. 14), the same syntagm that is used again only in *Purgatorio* XXVI, where Dante uses it as a reference to Guinizzelli's poetry. Dante's last words to Cino underline his ultimate judgement on him: Dante appreciates Cino's poetical skills but not his poetry's content anymore. In regard to *Purgatorio* XXIV-XXVI, Calenda puts forward the hypothesis that in these cantos one can detect the maximum evocation of Cino's poetry.[59] Calenda follows Roncaglia, who had already proposed the idea that Cino is evoked in *Purgatorio* XXVI, on the same terrace of Guinizzelli and Arnaut, and that Cino's indirect presence could be detected in the text:[60]

> quand'io odo nomar sé stesso il padre
> mio e de li altri miei miglior che mai
> rime d'amor usar dolci e leggiadre;
> (*Purg*. XXVI, 97-99)

Therefore, according to this interpretation, Dante could only recognise Cino's value in terms of being a lyric poet and nothing more. This reading would lead back to the *De vulgari eloquentia*, where Dante refers to Cino's poetry with the terms 'dulcius […] subtiliusque' ('more sweetly and subtly', *Dve* I x 4) which may remind us of 'rime

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[59] Calenda, Corrado. 1998. 'Ancora su Cino, la "Commedia" e lo "stilnovo" ("Purg." XXIV e XXVI)', in *Sotto il segno di Dante. Scritti in onore di Francesco Mazzoni*, ed. by Leonella Coglievina and Domenico De Robertis (Florence: Le Lettere), pp. 75-83.
[60] Roncaglia, p. 26. Cfr. Calenda. 1998, p. 77.

[…] dolci e leggiadre' (v. 99) of *Purgatorio* XXVI.[61] Following this line, Dante, by having used the context of *Purgatorio* XXIV (vv. 49-63), where he is in dialogue with Bonagiunta, changes his concept of love (and love poetry) and he passes from conceiving love as *venus* ('earthly love'*) –* which is risky and symbolised by Guinizzelli and Arnaut – to *caritas* ('divine love).[62] Therefore, Calenda does not detect the missed direct presence of Cino as a *damnatio memoriae*, but he reframes it as a means to understand a precise poetic view Dante that wants to convey. Cino is important to Dante's thinking in at least two ways: with his poetry, because the *tenzone* helps Dante to rethink and reapply the continuously changing concept on love, and on the other hand, Cino is also designated as the highest example of *poeta amoris* of Dante's time, and so is functional to Dante's wider declaration of poetics, which starts at an early stage of his career, and concludes with the *Commedia*. Cino has an active role in building some of the pivotal elements of Dante's poetics of love, by being both a valuable poet and a recognised interlocutor, which still has, even if indirectly, an important role for Dante in the *Commedia*.

4.3.2 Exile

Exile is an element that has an enormous impact on Dante's life and on his overall work, first and foremost with the *Commedia*. For him, exile is a social, legal, spiritual, and political idea.[63] Exile is a condition experienced widely in the thirteenth- and

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[61] Calenda. 1998, p. 78. Cfr. *De vulgari eloquentia*, I x 4: 'Tertia quoque, que Latinorum est, se duobus privilegiis attestatur preesse: primo quidem, quod dulcius qui subtiliusque poetati vulgariter sunt, hii familiares ac domestici sui sunt: puta Cinus Pistoriensis et amicus eius; secundo, quia magis videtur inniti gramatice, que comunis est, quod rationabiliter inspicientibus videtur gravissimum argumentum' [Finally, the third part, which belongs to the Italians, declares itself to be superior because it enjoys a twofold privilege: first, because those who have written vernacular poetry more sweetly and subtly, such as Cino da Pistoia and his friend, have been its intimates and faithful servants; and second, because they seem to be in the closest contact with the gramatica which is shared by all – and this, to those who consider the matter rationally, will appear a very weighty argument].
[62] Calenda. 1998, p. 81.
[63] For an extensive account on Dante's exile, see: Vanossi, Luigi. 1970. 'Essilio', in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. by Umberto Bosco *et al*., 5 + Appendix vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana), II, p. 744; De Marco, Giuseppe. 2002. 'L'esperienza di Dante "exul immeritus" quale autobiografia universale', *Annali d'Italianistica*, XX, pp. 21-54; Raffa, Guy P. 2002. 'Dante's Poetics of Exile', *Annali d'Italianistica*, 20, pp. 73-87; Honess, Claire E. 2006. *From Florence to the Heavenly City. The poetry of citizenship in Dante* (London: Legenda. Modern Humanities Research Association – Maney); Picone, Michelangelo. 2007. 'Esilio e "peregrinatio": dalla "Vita nova" alla canzone montanina", *Italianistica: Rivista Di Letteratura Italiana*, 36 (3), pp. 11-24; Hooper, Laurence E. 2011. 'Exile and Rhetorical Order in the "Vita Nova", *L'Alighieri. Rassegna dantesca*, 52, n.s., XXXVIII, pp. 5-27; Mercuri, Roberto. 2013. 'Dante e l'esilio', in *Écritures de l'exil dans l'Italie médiévale*, ed. by Anna Fontes Baratto and Marina Gagliano (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle), pp. 231-250; Honess, Claire E.; Treherne, Matthew (eds). 2013. *'Se mai continga...'. Exile, politics and theology in Dante* (Ravenna: Longo);

fourteenth-century Italian *comuni*, as well as its thematisation in literature, which can be summarised by the expression 'poetica dell'esclusione'.[64] Dante, at the time of the first epistles – such as the *Epistle* III addressed to Cino – and of the *De vulgari eloquentia*, still harboured hope of returning to his homeland, Florence. But eventually, as Claire Honess specifies, 'it is only as a poet that Dante can hope to return to Florence and to address his fellow-citizens'.[65] In this regard, Honess continues by stating that

> If, then, Dante wishes to return to Florence, his hope cannot be for an in-the-flesh return from political exile, for a re-opening to him of the city's gate, but rather for a return specifically and only *as a poet*; that is, through the words of his poetry, in whose every line is contains that 'attender certo | de la gloria futura' which he proclaims to St James in the Heaven of the Fixed Stars.[66]

Exile is also a structuring element in Cino's poetry – as well as in Dante – albeit in a different way. If for Dante the point from which the distance is measured is Florence, in Cino the point is not fixed, because it corresponds to the beloved woman, to the extent that this becomes a sense of internal exclusion, which is independent from his factual political exile.[67] At the time of the *Commedia*, we can detect in Dante the presence of another level of exile, other than its mere political meaning. Indeed, Dante's journey can be read as a route towards his beloved Beatrice. For this reason, it may be interesting to read Dante's exile as an exile from the beloved person, who is dead.[68] In the *Commedia* the exile gets resolved, as it corresponds to the return to a

Milani. 2015; Ferrara. 2016b; Hooper. 2016; Brilli, Elisa. 2020. 'Dante, Firenze e l'esilio', in *Dante*, ed. by Roberto Rea and Justin Steinberg (Rome: Carocci), pp. 199-217.

[64] Calenda. 1991, p. 47. In Calenda's expression, as Catherine Keen summarises, 'writers could refer to exile equally as a matter of autobiographic documentation, factual *esilio* or as a figure of internal and psychological *esclusione*'. Cfr. Keen. 2000, p. 21.

[65] Honess, Claire E. 2013. '"Ritornerò poeta...": Florence, exile, and hope', in *'Se mai continga...'. Exile, politics and theology in Dante*, ed. by Claire E. Honess and Matthew Treherne (Ravenna: Longo), pp. 85-103 (pp. 86-88).

[66] Honess. 2013, p. 102.

[67] Keen. 2020, p. 24

[68] This interpretation can be reinforced by looking at the way in which Petrarch will deal with the term 'essilio' for the occurrence of Laura's death. Cfr. Hooper. 2016, p. 1239: 'Exile lies at the heart of a key episode in the *Triumphi*: the dialogue with Laura in *Triumphus Mortis* 2. Here, Laura speaks at greater length than anywhere in the *Canzoniere* to give a description of her death and ascension that echoes Beatrice's rebuke of Dante in *Purgatorio* 30-31. Laura likens her soul's journey to Heaven to "someone

new *patria* and, also, to a return to Beatrice. Indeed, the previous attempts to find in the beauty of Beatrice, the beauty of other women, were only fallacious and unsuccessful attempts. As a matter of fact, by considering the *tenzone* with Cino, the loves experienced during exile represent only a feeble reflection of the first beloved. Moreover, as Picone argues, the homeland to which a return is desired 'non si identifica più con la città terrena', and so with Florence, indeed, 'assume sempre più i contorni (benché forse ancora inconsapevolmente) della città celeste, dove Dante potrà incontrare di nuovo la donna che sembrava essersi eclissata dalla sua produzione poetica successiva alla *Vita nova*'.[69]

The theme of exile is important to both Dante and Cino since it is such a fundamental experience that makes a significant impact. What I address in this section is a specific aspect of it: the use of the word 'essilio' is a common thread which is particularly strong in the *tenzone*, especially in regard to the idea of being exiled from a person, from the beloved.[70] The depart from and the return to Eden is an important moment in human history. In Dante, the journey to the afterlife can be considered a return to the beloved Beatrice. It is true that Beatrice is already dead and Dante is exiled but he ultimately returns to Eden – for Dante it is not an immediate return to Beatrice because she rebukes him. Behind this idea of political exile, there is the idea of being exiled from a person, from the beloved.[71] In the *tenzone* with Dante, Cino expresses the idea of an internal, an emotional exile, which leads to him finding delight in the beauty of other women.[72] Even in the relationship with Cino, exile, specifically, becomes a common theme for both poets, who continue to live very similar human experiences between 1303 and 1306. In fact, the two spent some of the same years in exile, before Cino returned to Pistoia.[73] In the last sonnet that Cino writes to Dante, *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*, Cino juxtaposes the terms 'essilio' and

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returning to his sweet dwelling out of exile": the only time Petrarch uses the term *exilio* in the vernacular to refer to someone other than himself. But Laura's use of exile still pertains to the poet, albeit not exclusively: it is the earthly state to which he will return when his vision comes to an end. […] The poet's condition here is equivalent to the *exilio* that Laura claims to have left behind in the roughly contemporaneous *Triumphus Mortis* 2 – in other words, exclusion from Heaven'.

[69] Picone. 2007, p. 47.

[70] Exile is also a strong and persistent element in Cino's poetics. For a comprehensive treatment of the theme of exile, both in Dante and Cino, I suggest the following bibliography: Keen. 2001; 2002; 2014; 2019.

[71] The return to Eden is a literary topos. Cfr. Chiavacci Leonardi. 2016b, pp. 819-826 and 847-852.

[72] Cfr. chapters 2 and 3.

[73] For an in-depth investigation on the theme of exile in the *tenzone* between Dante and Cino, see chapter 3.

'peregrino' (v. 2); albeit the two words have different meanings, exile and pilgrimage are here interestingly related. The word 'peregrino' derives from Latin (*peregrinus*), and it is usually employed by Dante to define someone who is not completely integrated in their community.[74] De Robertis claims that 'pellegrino', in the context of the sonnet *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*, means 'straniero nella patria';[75] Grimaldi, moreover, understands it as a condition that implies being far from one's patria.[76] In *Poi ch'i' fui*, Cino expresses the aversion he feels towards the place (literal or figurative) in which he is writing. This condition of distance from the beloved encourages him to continue pursuing his behaviour, since seeing a semblance of the beauty of his unique love in other women gives him pleasure.[77] As there is no response from Dante's side beyond this point of the *tenzone*, we must look at the *Commedia* to find how Dante ultimately replies to Cino's provocations, even if indirectly, by contrasting what Dante says with Cino's ideas.

If we scrutinise the texts of the *tenzone* between Dante and Cino, we can identify precise passages in which the condition of distance from one's place of origin is reported. Indeed, the poets state that this trouble derives from such hostile conditions, which have negative effects on their love poetry. In the sonnet *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*, Dante explains this difficulty is due to being in a 'loco [...] rio' (v. 7), which is implied as the cause of his poetic silence towards Cino:

Null'altra cosa appo voi m'accagioni
del lungo e del noioso tacer mio
se non il loco ov'i' son, ch'è sì rio,
che 'l ben non trova chi albergo li doni.
(CXXVI *a*, 5-8)

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[74] Keen. 2001, p. 83.
[75] De Robertis. 2005, p. 511, note 3.
[76] Grimaldi. 2019, p. 1237, note 2: 'come il lat. *peregrinus*, indica colui che si trova al di fuori della propria patria (cd. *V.n.*, XL 6: "è peregrino chiunque è fuori de la sua patria")'.
[77] This recalls the topic discussed already in Cino's *Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni*. Grimaldi suggests, also, to read this sonnet in parallel with the *consolatoria* (2019, p. 1045): 'La canz. invitava Dante a non disperarsi e ad accettare cristianamente e filosoficamente la morte di Beatrice; qui invece Cino usa l'autorità della "gentilissima" per esortare Dante all'azione. E il legame tra i due testi sembrerebbe dato proprio dalla 'fede' nella 'beata gioia, com' chiamava il nome' (*Avegna ched el m'aggia*, qui xxviii 8): se Dante non è ancora sciolto dalla "fé" in Beatrice, se è ancora colui il cui amore è totalmene santo ("e tutta santa omai vostr'innamora", *Avegna ched el m'aggia*, 60), deve essere in grado di agire, cioè di compiere il bene e di proclamarlo'. Here, through the word 'fè' (faith), Cino restates his poetic concept, according to which remaining faithful to poetry is the key to survive to the adverse situation he inhabits. Cino's point is that the place is unsuitable for talking about love.

Even if there is no certainty regarding the chronology of this sonnet, it is plausible that it was written in the years in which Dante is already in exile or right before.[78] It is worth noting that the theme of being in a hostile place, hence the idea that writing love poetry in these circumstances is almost impossible, is due to the enmity of the place where one resides. This theme is recurrent in the dialogue between Dante and Cino. Dante concludes the sonnet as follows:

> Oh, messer Cin, come 'l tempo è rivolto
> a danno nostro e de li nostri diri,
> da po' che 'l ben è sì poco ricolto!
> (CXXVI *a*, 12-14)

Dante blames the contemporary condition in which he lives in preventing the poetry of Cino and Dante from appearing in all of their fullness and completeness. This condition implies that the poet is in a place hostile to love and, therefore, to love poetry. Dante, in *Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni*, describes an environment unfavourable to love. The focus here is on the discrepancy and non-alignment of the external environment, devoid of women (and therefore of 'the' woman), inhospitable for the 'pensamenti boni' (v. 4) and it also becomes unwelcoming for the 'nostri diri' (v. 13). In another occurrence, in the *Epistola* III – which accompanies the sonnet in reply to Cino, *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* – in the *salutatio*, Dante employs the formula 'Exulanti Pistoriensi Florentinus exul inmeritus per tempora diuturna salutem et perpetue caritatis ardorem' ('To the Exile from Pistoja a Florentine undeservedly in exile wishes health through long years and the continuance of fervent love').[79] Dante underlines the current situation: both poets are sharing a political exile. Despite this, the condition of exile can be extended and read beyond its literal meaning. Indeed, in Dante 'tutta la vita è un esilio, la patria non è un luogo geografico, è dov'è l'uomo'.[80]

The *tenzone* ends with Cino's sonnet *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*, which is not followed by a reply from Dante. In this sonnet, Cino affirms that he is 'fatto per greve essilio pellegrino' (v. 2) and that he is far away from the woman ('piacer più

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[78] Cfr. chapter 3.
[79] *Epistola* III 1.
[80] De Robertis. 2005, p. 501: 'tutta la vita è un esilio, la patria non è un luogo geografico, è dov'è l'uomo, "cui – come dirà di sé nel *De vulg. el.* I VI 3 – mundus est patria velut piscibus aequor"), e con la coerente citazione – "non siete di questo mondo" – del Vangelo di Giovanni (XV 19)'.

fino', v. 3), a creature formed by God.[81] With the term 'piacer', playing with polysemy, Cino refers to the woman, the only true love, which is the most valuable creature ever created by God, who is defined 'Piacer infinito' (v. 4):

> Poi ch'io fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito
> Per greve essilio fatto peregrino
> E lontanato dal piacer più fino
> Che mai formasse 'l Piacer infinito;
> (CXXX, 1-4)

In this sonnet, Cino follows a tendency present in his other poems, which refer to the poetics of exile or the poetics of distance, from the beloved.[82] For Cino, therefore, the ultimate meaning of his exile is ascribed, at least in regard to his own poetry, to the theme of distance from the woman he loves. The sonnet, indeed, concludes with the following tercet:

> ch'un piacer sempre me lega ed involve,
> il qual conven che, a simil di beltate,
> in molte donne sparte mi diletti.
> (CXXX, 12-14)

Cino is fully aware of the fact that the main love is one, unique: 'un piacer sempre me lega ed involve' (v. 12);[83] however, he feels compelled to satisfy and fulfil himself, to

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[81] A further interesting topic to explore is the fact that Petrarch employs the same expression, 'grave exiglio' (from the sonnet *Né mai pietosa madre al caro figlio*; *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* 285, v. 5) that Cino uses ('greve essilio', CXXX, v. 2) with the same meaning, when he speaks about Laura. The expression 'grave exiglio' is referred to as the 'irrecuperabilità che disgiunge l'innamorato da Laura, che è, orami, in cielo'. Cfr. De Marco, Giuseppe. 1996. *Mitografia dell'esule. Da Dante al Novecento* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane), p. 31. This theme of an interior exile, which in Petrarch refers to the distance from the dead beloved, has a precedent in Cino. I deduce that, thanks to the use of this expression in Petrarch, this theme of the distance of women is the condition that determines Cino's interior exile. In Dante, exile is a strongly polysemic element, but here it emerges precisely as that inner condition for which one finds oneself alone, exiled, wandering in a land that is desolate for lack of women, which is a line that connects Cino to Dante to Petrarch. In Dante, this has its climax in the Earthly Paradise. Petrarch can be considered an authoritative source for this discourse because he was a contemporary and an admirer of Cino.

[82] For a comprehensive overview of Cino's works on exile, cfr. Calenda. 1991 and Keen. 2000; 2002. As Domenico De Robertis (2005, p. 511) notices, in *Perch'io fui* 'la condizione dell'esilio è esplicitamente denunciata; l'esilio significa la lontananza dalla donna amata. Dopo il ritorno in patria sarà la donna, Selvaggia Vergiolesi, a lasciare la città assieme ai suoi, e in esilio troverà la morte; ma questo evento, di forte risonanza nella poesia di Cino, è separato dalla situazione presente; anche se il dolore del distacco avrà accenti non dissimili, come nella celebre canzone *La dolce vista e 'l bel sguardo soave*. Ma la sorpresa è questa anticipazione, ormai, di Petrarca. Una è l'amata, unica al mondo, continuata a cercare per ogni dove in ogni volto di donna (e anche oltre la morte): in ogni incontro, lampeggia e voi tocca il cuore la somiglianza de "la disiata […] forma vera" (*RVF* 16.14)'.

[83] For possible interpretations of line 12, consult the summaries in Grimaldi. 2019, p. 1239, note 12.

get pleasure from women whose beauty is similar to the first and main love; he finds in other women 'a simil di biltate' (v. 13).[84] The discussion around this topic is present in other sonnets of the *tenzone*. In fact, it is precisely in the pair *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* (Cino) and *Io sono stato con Amore insieme* (Dante), accompanied by the *Epistola* III, that the question of whether the soul can pass from one passion to another passion is discussed. In this case, Dante confirms that in certain occasions free will can be defeated by Love and, therefore, a fickle behaviour such as Cino's seems to be justified, at least at that stage of the exchange.[85] Through the sonnet *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*, Cino confirms his view on love: when one is distant from the beloved, it is impossible not to delight in women whose beauty can indeed be similar to the beauty of the main woman. This is the definition that Cino gives here regarding exile and being a pilgrim. The *tenzone* ends with Cino's awareness that his love is one, unique, but he recognises and claims the need to dabble with many women who resemble the beauty of the main woman.

In Dante's *Commedia*, the journey becomes a return to Beatrice, which corresponds to a return to Eden. This fact brings us back to the theme of exile which is not only recurrent in the *tenzone* between Dante and Cino, but it is a real and biographic background during some parts of their dialogue. In the *Purgatorio* the idea of exile is defined precisely.[86] For instance, in *Purgatorio* VI exile is a result not only of a personal tragedy, but of a civic disaster.[87] The starting point in Dante's journey is always the individual and personal experience of the exile. Notwithstanding, it is important to underline a fundamental difference: Cino finds the cypher of his exile in the distance from the beloved, identified with Selvaggia, who is still alive; on the contrary, Dante's beloved, Beatrice, is dead, so a return to her implies a projection into the afterlife. Dante and Cino share the way they treat the idea of being exiled from a person, which becomes an emotional or personal exile. It is interesting to note that when, from the point of view of the Dante of the *Commedia*, this return to Eden and

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[84] This topic is already popular from the troubadours: 'Nei trovatori è ben presente il motivo del concedersi ad altre donne perché non corrisposti […]. Ed è diffuso anche il personaggio del *faidit*, dell'esiliato che non sa e non può più amare' (Grimaldi. 2019, p. 1236).

[85] Cfr. section 4.3.1 on love and free will.

[86] As Giuseppe De Marco points out, according to Mario Luzi, the idea of exile mostly emerges in Purgatory. Cfr. De Marco. 1996, p. 24.

[87] Cfr. De Marco. 1996, pp. 24-25: 'l'esilio non viene considerato solo come sciagura personale, bensì in quanto conseguenza della sventura di tutta la città, poiché a causa delle lotte tra fazioni, i cittadini fiorentini alternativamente solevano essere sbanditi e richiamati, in conseguenza del fatto che Firenze ha "mutato" e "rinovate membre!"'.

therefore the return to Beatrice takes place, the outcome is not what Dante expects. When Dante returns to Beatrice, to that one love, Beatrice rebukes him for the fact that Dante did not remain faithful to her, but turned to women of similar beauty to her own:

> Quando di carne a spirto era salita
> e bellezza e virtù cresciuta m'era,
> fu' io a lui men cara e men gradita;
>
> e volse i passi suoi per via *non vera,*
> *imagini di ben seguendo false,*
> che nulla promession rendono intera.
>
> Né l'impetrare ispirazion mi valse,
> con le quali e in sogno e altrimenti
> lo rivocai; sì poco a lui ne calse!
>
> Tanto giù cadde, che tutti argomenti
> a la salute sua eran già corti,
> fuor che mostrarli le perdute genti.
> (*Purg*. XXX, 127-138; emphasis mine).

These are the words Beatrice employs in front of Dante: at the moment she died, she became 'men cara e men gradita' (v. 129), so much that Dante turned precisely to images that may recall the images of beauties similar to Beatrice's beauty, which are therefore 'imagini [...] false' (v. 131). In *Purgatorio* XXX there is also a reference to *Inferno* II, to the fact that Beatrice had to put an end to this moral perdition and save him, to ensure that Dante's path could be configured, from a Beatrician perspective, as a return to Eden. In the following canto, in *Purgatorio* XXXI, Dante bursts into tears and admits that what he had seen were images of a false pleasure. This is what Beatrice blames Dante for – when she died, she became less dear to Dante, so much so that he turned to false images that are a reminder of Beatrice's beauty:

> Piangendo dissi: 'Le presenti cose
> col falso lor piacer volser miei passi,
> tosto che 'l vostro viso si nascose'.
> (*Purg*. XXXI, 34-36)

As was already made clear in *Inferno* II, it is thanks to Beatrice that Dante can begin his journey towards Eden. After this passage, a reference to Beatrice's body, 'belle

membra' (v. 50) is made – the remembrance of her body did not suffice in keeping Dante faithful to her:

> Mai non t'appresentò natura o arte
> *piacer*, quanto le *belle membra* in ch'io
> rinchiusa fui, e che so' 'n terra sparte;
>
> e se 'l sommo *piacer* sì ti fallio
> per la mia morte, qual cosa mortale
> dovea poi trarre te nel suo disio?
>
> Ben ti dovevi, per lo primo strale
> de le cose fallaci, levar suso
> di retro a me che non era più tale.
>
> Non ti dovea gravar le penne in giuso,
> ad aspettar più colpo, o pargoletta
> o altra vanità con sì breve uso.
>
> Novo augelletto due o tre aspetta;
> ma dinanzi da li occhi d'i pennuti
> rete si spiega indarno o si saetta'.
> (*Purg*. XXXI, 49-63; emphasis mine).

Beatrice makes us of the term 'piacer' insistently when she rebukes Dante. She states that no earthly good should have discouraged Dante from pursuing his one, unique love – Beatrice is addressing, indirectly, a behaviour which is very similar to the one that Dante reproached Cino for; and Beatrice does this by using the same lexicon used in Cino's sonnet. This can be interpreted as a judgment towards what Dante had previously pursued and explicitly said.

I now focus specifically on the scene when Dante confesses that he turned to a 'falso […] piacer' (v. 35), and to the passage where Beatrice reproaches him (*Purg*. XXX, 55-81). I provide the passage in its entirety:[88]

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[88] Chiavacci Leonardi comments on the expression 'imagini […] false': 'l'uomo che pecca segue "false immagini di bene", cioè cose che gli appaiono falsamente come buone (ne sono simbolo *le serene* di XXXI 45), in quanto secondo la teologia scolastica è impossibile per l'uomo volere direttamente il male (cfr. XVI 92-3 e nota). Ma a questo inganno, in cui cadono i sensi, la ragione e la volontà hanno la possibilità di reagire, discernendo e scegliendo il bene, come è detto a XVIII 61-75'. Cfr. Chiavacci Leonardi. 2016b, p. 900, notes 130-1.

Piangendo dissi: 'Le presenti cose
col *falso lor piacer* volser miei passi,
tosto che 'l vostro viso si nascose'.

  Ed ella: 'Se tacessi o se negassi
ciò che confessi, non fora men nota
la colpa tua: da tal giudice sassi!

  Ma quando scoppia de la propria gota
l'accusa del peccato, in nostra corte
rivolge sé contra 'l taglio la rota.

  Tuttavia, perché mo vergogna porte
del tuo errore, e perché altra volta,
udendo le serene, sie più forte,

  pon giù il seme del piangere e ascolta:
sì udirai come in contraria parte
mover dovieti mia carne sepolta.

  Mai non t'appresentò natura o arte
piacer, quanto le *belle membra* in ch'io
rinchiusa fui, e che so' 'n terra sparte;

  e se 'l *sommo piacer* sì ti fallio
per la mia morte, qual cosa mortale
dovea poi trarre te nel suo disio?

  Ben ti dovevi, per lo primo strale
de le cose *fallaci*, levar suso
di retro a me che non era più tale.

  Non ti dovea gravar le penne in giuso,
ad aspettar più colpo, o pargoletta
o altra vanità con sì breve uso.

  Novo augelletto due o tre aspetta;
ma dinanzi da li occhi d'i pennuti
rete si spiega indarno o si saetta'.
(*Purg*. XXXI, 34-63; emphasis mine)

In this passage there are elements that remind us of the subject discussed several years
before, in the *tenzone* with Cino. By referring to the sonnet *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal*

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mio natal sito, we can detect a similarity in the use of the noun 'piacer'. Hollander points out an intensification of this noun in the second part of the *Commedia*, and it occurs most often (three times) in canto XXXI of the *Purgatorio*.[89] Likewise, the term 'piacer' recurs three times in Cino's *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito*. The discussion on Cino's fickleness and deviation from the main love is dealt with consistently in the *tenzone*. In particular, in this last sonnet of Cino's, the concept is reiterated – even though Cino is aware of having a unique love, he blames the unpleasantness of the place and, as a consequence, the condition he inhabits, as the reason for turning towards other women, which is a similar accusation to the one that Beatrice makes towards Dante in the Earthly Paradise. At other stages of the *tenzone*, Dante oscillates between accusing Cino of pursuing a deceptive love and supporting the idea that, in some circumstances, free will can be defeated by Love. The image of the deceptive love can be compared to the 'imagini di ben [...] false' (*Purg*. XXX, 131), which Dante decides to follow once Beatrice dies:[90] Dante finally admits that 'col falso lor piacer volser miei passi' (*Purg*. XXXI, 35) and follows those sirens ('serene', v. 45) that made him deviate from the right path. As a matter of fact, this juxtaposition of images had been used by Dante in the *tenzone* to show Cino that his behaviour was not morally correct.[91] In fact, this theme is brought into focus in the first pair of sonnets in the *tenzone*. Cino, in *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice*, introduces Dante to 'una donna gentil' (v. 2), whom he has defined as 'beatrice' (v. 4), a clear reference to Dante's beloved. By employing this term, Cino makes a reference to the salvific and holy nature of Dante's Beatrice, of that holy love. On the contrary, Dante in *I' ho veduto già senza radice*, in an assertive and unequivocal way, claims that the 'sapor' (v. 8) of that love is 'bugiardo' (v. 7), as it is 'non fatto da vera notrice' (v. 8) – this expression can be considered equivalent to the 'falso […] piacer' (v. 35) of *Purgatorio* XXXI:

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[89] Cfr. Alighieri, Dante, Hollander J., Hollander R. (eds). 2003. *Purgatorio* (New York: Doubleday), commentary on *Purgatorio* XXXI, lines 47-54: 'The verbal noun *piacer* is used only once in the first half of the poem (it describes Paolo's physical attractiveness at *Inf.* V,104). When it is found again (at *Purg*. XVIII, 21), it then occurs thirty-four times in the second half, twenty-one of these in the *Paradiso*. It is often used to denote the highest beauty of all, that of God. The word is used three times in this canto (vv. 35, 50, 52), its densest presence in the *Comedy*. The false beauty of Beatrice's rivals (verse 35) should have been countered by the highest beauty that he had found in her'.

[90] *Purg*. XXX, 131-132: 'e volse i passi suoi per via non vera, / imagini di ben seguendo false, / che nulla promission rendono intera'.

[91] Cfr. chapter 2, especially my analysis on the pair of sonnets *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice* and *I' ho veduto già senza radice*.

ma frutto no, però che 'l contradice
natura, ch'al difetto fa riguardo,
perché conosce che saria bugiardo
sapor non fatto da vera notrice.
(CXXVII *a*, 5-8; emphasis mine)

The question enclosed by the word 'piacer' (*Purg.* XXXI, 35) seems to be the point of connection between what is discussed in the *tenzone* and what Dante says in a decisive way with respect to its resolution in the *Commedia*. The theme of deceptive love Dante followed is exposed by Beatrice and provokes a deep sense of shame in Dante. The points of contact, therefore, are the word 'piacer', the question of 'donne sparte' (v. 14) – which emerged in Cino's *Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito* – and the resolution that Dante presents in *Purgatorio* XXX-XXXI, in Eden. According to Chiavacci Leonardi, this passage is the core of the protagonist's story; in regard to this she argues:

> *fallace,* ciò che è *falso piacere*: il testo insiste e ritorna su questo carattere distintivo delle *presenti cose*: esse non durano, ingannano, e ingannano perché non saziano la brama infinita dell'uomo. […] I due canti sono a loro volta incastonati […] tra le due sequenze allegoriche che presentano la storia della Chiesa nel mondo, venendo così la vicenda del protagonista nominato a costituire il cuore – come è di ogni singola vita umana – dell'intero dramma che si svolge nel tempo. L'accusa di Beatrice – vale a dire la confessione che attraverso di lei Dante fa della propria vita – ripete la traccia di quella già formulata nell'altro canto. […] quel carico di accuse e di lacrime. Questo fa della scena il centro drammatico, e il cuore ideale di tutta la cantica. […] ciò che lo vince è l'acutezza del doloroso sentimento non della propria pena, ma della propria colpa.[92]

This moment of the *Commedia* coincides with the resolution of all of these discussions, which can now only happen through shame and purification, which will correspond, in the end, to the arrival in Paradise. This sense of guilt and shame is fully lived and acknowledged by Dante in the Earthly Paradise. The encounter with Beatrice

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[92] Cfr. Chiavacci Leonardi. 2016b, pp. 906-907.

corresponds to Dante's 'nuovo e personale inferno'.[93] In the *Commedia* it is made clear that the death of Beatrice should have revealed the fickleness of earthly pleasures; instead, this event spurred Dante to follow other women.[94] What Dante discusses with Cino in the *tenzone* was only an earlier stage of this definition.

My analysis shows that one of the most important questions Dante and Cino deal with in the *tenzone*, eventually finds a resolution in the *Commedia* and, more precisely, in the Earthly Paradise. Eden is the place where many of the issues previously discussed with Cino are extensively worked through. In Dante and Cino there is a common preoccupation, but they resolve it differently. Eden is the place in which Dante clearly refuses a certain type of behaviour – that in the past he justified – by including Beatrice's rebuke. Certainly, the theological and philosophical reading of Beatrice's reproach, for which we can assume that Dante betrays the memory of Beatrice to himself devote to philosophy, committing an intellectual sin, must be mentioned and taken into consideration in the interpretation of the Earthly Paradise.

[93] Pertile, Lino. 1998. *La puttana e il gigante. Dal 'Cantico dei Cantici' al Paradiso Terrestre di Dante* (Ravenna: Longo), p. 114. This line of interpretation is remarked on by Barolini, as well: 'At this stage, in meeting with Beatrice at the top of Mount Purgatory, all seductions are on the table: whether they be flesh and blood or philosophical. The theme of whether one should be constant in love or whether variability in love is to be expected is one to which Dante is deeply drawn: he begins to treat this question in his earliest poetry and returns to it throughout his life. Indeed, the defensive maneuver of the *Convivio*, the use of allegory to refashion the donna gentile into Lady Philosophy, is one of Dante's responses to the charge of inconstancy – of errancy. (See the essay "Errancy", cited in Coordinated Reading.) This charge culminates in Beatrice's purgatorial rebuke. She settles the matter: constancy is required, even when the beloved has died. In requiring constancy toward a dead beloved, Beatrice validates an unconventional position that Dante had adopted as early as the *Vita Nuova*. This edict is stated in the sonnet *L'amaro lagrimar* (*Vita Nuova* 37) […] The position adopted in *L'amaro lagrimar* is not a conventional position for lovers in the previous lyric tradition. It became conventional after Dante, because it was adopted by Petrarch, and from Petrarch the convention of the dead beloved entered the mainstream of the European lyric tradition. […] What was wrong was his failure, after her death, to resist the siren song of the new, the new objects of desire that are false if for no other reason than that they are mortal, corruptible, confined to the present and doomed to die. […] Beatrice's precise language for this process is as follows. Since Dante had already witnessed in Beatrice the highest mortal beauty – the "sommo piacer" of *Purgatorio* 31.52 – he should not have been distracted by lesser beauty after losing her. Rather, her death should have functioned as a prophylactic against any further desiring of secondary goods'. Cfr. Barolini, Teodolinda. 2014. '"Purgatorio" 31: Errancy and Consolation', in *Commento Baroliniano*, Digital Dante (New York, NY: Columbia University Libraries) <https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/purgatorio/purgatorio-31/>.

[94] Cfr. Chiavacci Leonardi. 2016b, p. 906: 'Beatrice riprende ora il filo del ricordo. E nelle sue parole appare sempre più chiaramente che l'evento determinante di quella storia passata è stata la sua morte. Ricordato nel XXX, ripetuto qui da Dante (*tosto che 'l vostro viso si nascose*), ripreso da Beatrice come punto-chiave dello smarrimento dell'uomo – quella morte che gli avrebbe dovuto rivelare il senso profondo della caducità delle cose terrene, e lo rivolse invece a cercarne altre ancora – l'evento che occupa il centro della *Vita Nuova* (e sono passati giusto dieci anni da allora) si dimostra come il perno su cui si incardina la storia morale di Dante, nella sua doppia conseguenza: di smarrimento della via da una parte (*e volse i passi suoi per via non vera*) e di richiamo a ritrovarla, quasi come stella polare, dall'altra. Di lì nacque infatti – siamo sempre nella storia di una poesia, come si disse – l'idea e il compimento stesso del poema, che racconta, e lo è, la storia di una salvezza'.

However, if we examine these passages in light of the previous exchange between Dante and Cino, it suggests that these may also be characterised by a strong and precise reference to a 'sin' committed against a love for a human being, for a person.

4.3.3 The voice of Beatrice

As I previously mentioned, I consider the consolatory *canzone* that Cino writes for the death of Beatrice, the first significant element of the dialogue between Dante and Cino.[95] Even though it is part of the first stage of dialogue, the *consolatoria* is already a fundamental text to frame and understand the relationship. The topics and themes treated in this text are multiple. Although there is no certainty as to the exact chronology of Dante and Cino's earlier stages of contact, and so of the *consolatoria*, it is plausible that the first cantos of the *Commedia* and the exchange with Cino may have happened within a short period. In particular, the first cantos of the *Inferno* present a series of concepts and themes which suggest the presence of the direct influence of the *consolatoria* and of the exchange in its entirety.

The first occasion on which Beatrice speaks and communicates through direct speech in a text is in Cino's *consolatoria*, *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*. From the 'stil novo' onwards, the use of direct speech in poetry changes radically.[96] The monologue tends to become a dialogue which still involves the interiority of the self, but it objectifies the interlocutor in a real or imagined presence, and it creates new ways to make use of direct speech, for instance through a dramatisation of the dialogue.[97] According to Giunta, Dante is the most able to reinvent an original way to place different voices in dialogue with the lyric 'I', by using personifications, while Cino is mentioned among those who made the most out of the new technique of objectifying several characters in his poems.[98] This testifies to the fact that

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[95] Cfr. chapter 2.

[96] For an extensive and comprehensive understanding of the use of dialogue, specifically, in reference to direct speech in the lyric tradition and in Dante, I suggest the following bibliography: Mineo, Nicolò. 1988. 'Per un'analisi della struttura significante del dialogo nella "Divina Commedia"', in *Letture classensi. 17*, ed. by Nicolò Mineo (Ravenna: Longo), pp. 9-21; De Ventura, Paolo. 2007. *Dramma e dialogo nella 'Commedia' di Dante. Il linguaggio della mimesi per un resoconto dell'aldilà* (Naples: Liguori); Tramontana, Carmelo. 2020. *A più voci. Dialogo e poesia in Dante, Brunetto e Boccaccio* (Leonforte: Siké – Euno); Giunta. 2021.

[97] Giunta. 2021, pp. 61-64.

[98] In particular, Giunta mentions as significant examples *Donna pietosa*, *Tre donne intorno al cor mi son venute*, and *Due donne in cima della mente mia*; he also makes a reference to *Omo smarruto che pensoso vai* (2021, pp. 67-69).

experimentation of the use of direct speech in their poetry was frequent among the 'stilnovisti'.

   In his *canzone*, Cino projects Beatrice in Paradise and lets her speak for herself. Considering that Cino is proven to have had a wide and deep knowledge of Dante's *Vita nova*, it seems that the reading Cino gives regarding the event of the death of Beatrice is a coherent consequence of Dante's decision to praise his beloved in the future – this interpretation is even more plausible if we analyse the ending of the *Vita nova*, in which Dante mentions the 'mirabile visione' (*Vn* XLII 1) and anticipates that he will speak about Beatrice when his poetic skills are improved. In this case, the extraordinary capability of Cino to understand and interpret Dante's decision with so much precision and affinity is evident. On the other hand, Cino's text has elements of innovation and foresight, which are trackable in some passages of the *Commedia*. Above all, Cino is the one who gives direct speech to Beatrice, in a way that nobody else did until she appears in the *Commedia*, a text which is historically later than Cino's:

   Ella parla di voi con li beati,
e dice loro: 'Mentre ched io fui
nel mondo, ricevei onor da lui,
laudando me ne' suo' detti laudati'.
E priega Dio, lo signor verace,
che vi conforti sì come vi piace.
(CXXV, 71-76)

   At the stage in which the *consolatoria* is written, the figure of Beatrice has an active role for the first time, in the sense that Beatrice is still the object of the poem, but she self-defines through her own words: "'Mentre ched io fui / nel mondo, ricevei onor da lui, / laudando me ne' suo' detti laudati'" (vv. 72-74). In the *Commedia* friendship is a value necessary for dialogue to happen.[99] The aspects of friendship, love and dialogue are strongly connected. The idea of friendship between Dante and Cino in their exchange is the same condition which occurs between Dante and Virgil in *Inferno* II: friendship is that type of bond, which provides the condition to speak, as it happens to Beatrice. It is a dynamic where friendship becomes the condition within which the relationship between the lover and the beloved is articulated: it is fundamental, at the

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[99] I thematise friendship in chapter 1.

early stage of the relationship between Dante and Cino. It is also interesting to notice that when Beatrice speaks for the first time in Earthly Paradise, Dante's instinct is to turn to Virgil.[100] In this case as well, Beatrice defines herself but in a new way which legitimises her new role, a new authority, connotation, and identity she takes on from this passage of the *Commedia* onwards:

> '[…] Guardaci ben! Ben son, ben son beatrice.
> Come degnasti d'accedere al monte?
> non sapei tu che qui è l'uom felice?'.[101]
> (*Purg*. XXX, 73-75)

Virgil, Dante's friend, disappears at the exact same moment when Beatrice starts to speak. Beatrice's own voice requires the departure of Virgil, and the male poet friend, who facilitated or enabled the beloved's voice to come forward, is not needed anymore. Indeed, it is only in *Purgatorio* XXX that there is no intermediation through a male friend of Dante, but it is Beatrice who, as Dante's friend, allows the dialogue to take place in a non-mediated way.[102] The semantic field of speaking is pivotal to the second canto of the *Inferno*, where the theme of the word is also recalled.[103] The most illustrative example of this is when Beatrice declares that it is love that moves her and that allows her to speak, 'amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare':[104] the salvific action is here strongly linked to the act of speaking, to the power of words, permitted by God's will. The themes of speaking and of consolation are at the centre of canto XXX. Both themes were already pivotal in Cino's *consolatoria*, in which he is able to trace a profile of Beatrice through the depiction Dante provides of her in the *Vita nova*, and lets her speak, without mediation. Major attention is given to this idea by Barolini regarding the topic of the *Beatrix loquax*, a critical paradigm along which I situate my argument.[105]

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[100] *Purg*. XXX, 55-57; 73-75;103-145. For an in-depth analysis of the significance of the female voice and Beatrice's voice in *Purgatorio*, see Steinberg, Justin. 2007. '"Purgatorio" 30.55 and the question of the female voice', in *Accounting for Dante. Urban readers and writers in late Medieval Italy*, ed. by Justin Steinberg (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), pp. 171-179.

[101] *Purg*. XXX, 73-75.

[102] In *Inf*. II, 61 Beatrice introduces and defines herself in the name of her friendship with Dante: 'l'amico mio, e non de la ventura'.

[103] *Inf*. II, 43: '"S'i' ho ben la parola tua intesa"'; 53: 'e donna mi chiamò beata e bella'; 56-57: 'e cominciommi a dir soave e piana, / con angelica voce, in sua favella'.

[104] *Inf*. II, 72.

[105] Cfr. Barolini, Teodolinda. 2018. '"Inferno" 2: Beatrix Loquax and Consolation', in *Commento Baroliniano*, Digital Dante (New York, NY: Columbia University Libraries) <https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/inferno/inferno-2/>. I find Barolini's critical

The presence of Virgil inevitably changes the balance as, in the passage from *Avegna ched el m'aggia* to *Inferno* II, the relationship between Dante and Beatrice is mediated by him. This third element of the triangulation, if compared to the *consolatoria*, changes the roles: in the *consolatoria* Beatrice says she is, passively, the object of Dante's praise, while in *Inferno* II we understand from Virgil's words that she is now the one who will praise Virgil in front of God; additionally, in Cino's *canzone* Dante was being consoled, while in *Inferno* II Beatrice's desire is to be consoled. Ultimately, in Cino's *consolatoria* Beatrice's name is omitted and it only is only alluded to, in *Inferno* II Beatrice presents herself with a sentence which, syntactically, precedes the reason why she temporarily went to hell, and this emphasises her role: 'I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare' (*Inf*. II, 70). On the contrary, in *Purgatorio* XXX Beatrice's sentence to present herself is a single main clause, on which no other clauses depend, now that the third element of the mediation, Virgil, is not present anymore: 'Ben son, ben son Beatrice' (*Purg*. XXX, 73). Even though Beatrice, in Cino's *consolatoria*, is projected in Paradise, she is still depicted as a woman in the lyrics of courtly love or the 'stil novo', because she is defined by the words of the poet who praises her. In *Avegna ched el m'aggia*, Beatrice appears as a *trait d'union* between the woman from the 'stil novo' or from courtly literature, who does not speak, and the original way that she will appear in Dante's *Commedia* from *Purgatorio* XXX.

In *Inferno* II – 'Quando sarò dinanzi al segnor mio, / di te mi loderò sovente a lui' (vv. 73-74) – there is a kind of 'assurdità teologica',[106] a paradox in how Dante depicts this scene. Virgil is narrating his encounter with Beatrice, and he is reporting her direct speech. Among her words, Beatrice comforts Virgil by praising him in Heaven in the presence of God. In this sense, Dante is turning the common scene of the beloved woman, who claims that she has been praised, in the opposite way and he turns Cino's words around: in the *consolatoria*, Beatrice is still the object of praise, which is a fact at the centre of her short speech; in *Inferno* II, Beatrice is the one who will give praise to a male figure. That *conforto* that Beatrice prays to God for – 'E priega Dio, lo signor

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framework valid and insightful. In addition, in terms of the innovative enrichment Dante gives to feminine figures, it is worth dwelling on another fundamental contribution that Dante developed in regard to the figure of women, passing through the courtly tradition. Dante's greatness is also related to the fact that he recognised in a new way, the ability of mediation of divine knowledge from the beloved woman; in the *Vita nova*, Dante presents a new concept of love, as a function of the beloved woman.

[106] Chiavacci Leonardi. 2016a, p. 60, note 74.

verace, / che vi conforti sì come vi piace' (CXXV, vv. 75-76) – is the same she gives to Virgil in *Inferno* II, despite the theological paradox, as Virgil is condemned to be in limbo forever – 'Quando sarò dinanzi al segnor mio' (*Inf.* II, 73).

I argue that Cino's *consolatoria* is a sort of bridge between the *Vita nova* and the idea at the centre of the 'libello', of Beatrice being 'loda di Dio vera' (*Inf.* II, 103):[107] this definition is reiterated in Cino's *consolatoria* through Beatrice's speech, and it is reinforced by the *figura etymologica* – 'laudando' and 'laudati' (CXXV, v. 74). I believe that this text of Cino's is an antecedent and anticipates the passage between these two stages of Western literature, to which Dante makes an enormous contribution. As a matter of fact, women speaking in literature can be detected on several occasions before Dante in at least two examples, either when the author is a woman, or when a male poet makes a woman speak in a text, the female speaker is an objectified character in the narrative *fictio*, as an example of internal 'dialogicità'.[108] Indeed, there are important antecedents, many literary *loci*, in which the dialogue with a woman is used as a technique or as part of the text. This is especially true from the 'stilnovisti' onwards, who make the interlocutor an expression of self, to investigate

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[107] See Chiavacci Leonardi. 2016a, p. 65, note 103.

[108] Even if Dante's closest literary antecedent for the presence of the speaking Beatrice is Cino's *consolatoria*, it is worth mentioning the case of the *trobairitz* in regard to the role of women speaking in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. To have a broader and more extensive insight of the topic, I recommend the following bibliography: Dronke, Peter. 1984. *Women Writers of the Middle Ages. A Critical Study of Texts from Perpetua to Marguerite Porete* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Burns, E. Jane. 1985. 'The man behind the lady in troubadour lyric', *Romance Notes*, 25, pp. 254-270; Paden, William D. (ed.). 1989. *The Voice of the Trobairitz: Perspectives on the Women Troubadours* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press); Bruckner, Matilda T. 1992. 'Fictions of the Female Voice: The Women Troubadours', *Speculum*, vol. 67, no. 4, pp. 865-891; Bruckner, Matilda T.; Shepard, Laurie; Melhado White, Sarah. (eds). 1995. *Songs of the Women Troubadours* (London-New York: Routledge); Sankovitch, Tilde. 1999 'The "trobairitz"', in *The troubadours: an introduction*, ed. by Sarah Kay and Simon Gaunt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 113-126; Burns, E. Jane. 2002. 'Sewing like a Girl: Working Women in the Chansons de Toile', in *Medieval Woman's Song: Cross-Cultural Approaches*, ed. by Anne L. Klinck and Ann Marie Rasmussen (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), pp. 99-126; O'Sullivan, Daniel E. 2016. 'The Man Backing Down from the Lady in "Trobairitz Tensos"', in *Founding Feminisms in Medieval Studies: Essays in Honor of E. Jane Burns*, ed. by Laine E. Doggett and Daniel E. O'Sullivan (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer), pp. 45-60; Golden, Rachel May; Kong, Katherine (eds). 2021. *Gender and voice in medieval French literature and song*. 1 (Gainesville: University Press of Florida), especially the essay by Caudill, Tamara. 2021. 'It Takes Two: Considerations of Voice and Performance of the Male-Female "Tenso"', pp. 49-72. Another reference may be made to the 'pastorela'; but even though the Occitan lyric genre is distinguished by a dialogic structure, its characteristics are very different from those of other literary genres in which women speak. For instance, the feminine figures in medieval allegorical poems are portrayed as teachers, representing certain virtues and knowledge. For the genre of the 'pastorela', see Paden, William D. (ed.). 1987. *The Medieval Pastourelle*. 2 vols (New York: Garland); Antonelli, Roberto. 2013. 'Metamorfosi: la pastorella da Marcabruno a Lorenzo il Magnifico', in *Forme e funzioni della parodia nella letteratura medievale*, ed. by Johannes Bartuschat and Carmen Cardelle da Hartmann (Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo), pp. 133-157. On the concept of 'dialogicità interna', see Giunta. 2021, p. 57.

and give space to a subjective experience.[109] Keeping the focus on Dante, already in the *Vita nova*, he experiments with ways in which women are provided with direct speech, but not Beatrice. In *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*, Dante makes a move which is similar to Cino's *consolatoria*, in terms of tone and setting of the scene and narration.[110] In the *Vita nova* direct speech is employed by Dante to speak with himself, to express a dialogue with Amore or other personified figures, or even to report the common speeches of those people who commented on Dante's state of suffering. Dante gives Beatrice a voice only in the *Commedia*, when she is in Heaven. This is what Cino did, similarly, in his *consolatoria*. The death of Beatrice, as a matter of fact, seems to function as a necessary benchmark, a *conditio sine qua non* after which we can hear her voice in a text. Despite this, we will have to wait for the *Commedia* before we hear Beatrice's voice in Dante. But the first time when we hear female voice in the *Vita nova* is in chapter XVIII: 'A che fine ami tu questa tua donna, poi che tu non puoi sostenere la sua presenza? Dilloci, ché certo lo fine di cotale amore conviene che sia novissimo' (*Vn* XVIII 3). This first female speech has an important role in the 'libello', as it gives Dante the chance to explain what the praise style consists of:

> Allora dissi queste parole loro: 'Madonne, lo fine del mio amore fue già lo saluto di questa donna, forse di cui voi intendete, e in quello dimorava la beatitudine, ché era fine di tutti li miei desiderii. Ma poi che le piacque di negarlo a me, lo mio segnore Amore, la sua merzede, ha posto tutta la mia beatitudine in quello che non mi puote venire meno'.
> (*Vn* XVIII 4)

The chapter contains the semantic field of the word, as the verb 'parlare' is used, as well as its derivatives, multiple times. The women in dialogue with Dante open the way to the ultimate explanation of this principle: '"Noi ti preghiamo che tu ne dichi ove sta questa tua beatitudine". Ed io, rispondendo lei, dissi cotanto: "In quelle parole che lodano la donna mia"' (*Vn* XVIII 6). The core of the praise style is here explained by the dialogue between Dante and the women. Subsequently, in chapter XIX, Dante includes, in the prose of the 'libello', the *canzone Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*.

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[109] Giunta. 2021, p. 61.
[110] Cfr. *Vita nova*, XIX.

In this *canzone*, Dante projects Beatrice into Paradise, with the same scheme that will be used by Cino to construct his *consolatoria*:

   Angelo clama in divino intelletto
e dice: 'Sire, nel mondo si vede
maraviglia ne l'atto che procede
d'un'anima che 'nfin qua su risplende'.
Lo cielo, che non have altro difetto
che d'aver lei, al suo segnor la chiede,
e ciascun santo ne grida merzede.
Sola Pietà nostra parte difende,
che parla Dio, che di madonna intende:
'Diletti miei, or sofferite in pace
che vostra spene sia quanto me piace
là 'v'è alcun che perder lei s'attende,
e che dirà ne lo inferno: O mal nati,
io vidi la speranza de' beati'.
  Madonna è disiata in sommo cielo:
or voi di sua virtù farvi savere.
Dico, qual vuol gentil donna parere
vada con lei, che quando va per via,
gitta nei cor villani Amore un gelo,
per che onne lor pensero agghiaccia e pere;
e qual soffrisse di starla a vedere
diverria nobil cosa, o si morria.
E quando trova alcun che degno sia
di veder lei, quei prova sua vertute,
ché li avvien, ciò che li dona, in salute,
e sì l'umilia, ch'ogni offesa oblia.
Ancor l'ha Dio per maggior grazia dato
che non pò mal finir chi l'ha parlato.
   Dice di lei Amor: 'Cosa mortale
come esser pò sì adorna e sì pura?'.
Poi la reguarda, e fra se stesso giura
che Dio ne 'ntenda di far cosa nova.[111]

With *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*, Cino consoles Dante in his loss of Beatrice by looking back at *Donne ch'avete*, as it is the prelude to the death of Beatrice, and he writes it by reproducing the same scheme but with the addition of giving Beatrice a speaking role. Cino, in the *consolatoria*, depicts the same scenario for

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[111] *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*, vv. 15-46, in *Vita nova*, XIX 5-14.

Dante, with Beatrice who makes the 'cielo perfetto' (v. 125) with her presence. The pivotal and central element in the *Vita nova* is the death of Beatrice. The theme of the death of Beatrice is anticipated by the words of the women on the scene in chapter XXIII, while with *Donna pietosa e di novella etate* (*Vn* XXIII 17-28), the death of Beatrice is directly faced. But it is with *Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core* (*Vn* XXI 8-17) that we arrive at the named presence of Beatrice and the first dialogue Dante has with her when she is dead, the only condition which enables Dante to have a dialogue with her. This is validated by what Cino does in his *consolatoria*, as he is the only one who understands this Dante's intention to give space for Beatrice's voice. He anticipates the moment when Dante gives a voice to Beatrice in the *Commedia*.

However, in Cino's text, Beatrice is still at the mercy of the man who needs to be consoled. In Dante, in *Inferno* II, Beatrice is mediated by a character, so that we 'hear' her voice, her words, through the voice of Virgil. In this canto, Beatrice is in a process which will reach its final definition in *Purgatorio* XXX. In the second canto, Beatrice refers to her status as a woman praised (by Dante), while she is already defining herself through a new and striking identity, which will be confirmed in the *Commedia*, as a beatified soul who intercedes with the help of two other women saints and whose word-action is salvific to Dante's condition:

Lucevan li occhi suoi più che la stella;
e cominciommi a dir soave e piana,
con angelica voce, in sua favella:

'O anima cortese mantoana,
di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,
e durerà quanto 'l mondo lontana,

l'amico mio, e non de la ventura,
ne la diserta piaggia è impedito
sì nel cammin, che vòlt'è per paura;

e temo che non sia già sì smarrito,
ch'io mi sia tardi al soccorso levata,
per quel ch'i' ho di lui nel cielo udito.

Or movi, e con la tua parola ornata
e con ciò c'ha mestieri al suo campare,
l'aiuta sì ch'i' ne sia consolata.

I' son Beatrice che ti faccio andare;
vegno del loco ove tornar disio;
amor mi mosse, che mi fa parlare.

Quando sarò dinanzi al segnor mio,
di te mi loderò sovente a lui'.
(*Inf.* II, 55-74)

Barolini defines a critical paradigm, a critical hypothesis in regard to the role that Beatrice assumes in the *Commedia* since she can speak with her own voice: this is the idea of a *Beatrix loquax*. Barolini defines *Inferno* II as 'a space of non-action that creates the possibility of action'.[112] Again, in this canto there is a strong link between words and actions, as it is almost about a locutionary act, to use an expression that J. L. Austin would later coin.[113] This is even more striking if we consider it is a woman speaking and thus having a role of such relevance in Dante's poem. The *consolatoria* is a text which has not been investigated widely by scholars, even though it is crucial to our understanding of the relationship between Dante and Cino and, ultimately, to deduce if and to what extent Cino had an influence on Dante's work, especially the *Commedia*.[114] Cino, with his *canzone*, paves the way for a striking unprecedented act in the history of literature, which has its most striking and ground-breaking moment with Dante's *Commedia*. Indeed, the act of speaking as a woman is not an action which was present in courtly lyric or lyric of the 'stil novo':[115]

> Beatrice is characterized throughout *Inferno* 2 as a speaker, in a crucial inversion of the persona of the lyric lady. This inversion is all the more interesting because this canto introduces the modalities of the lyric into the *Commedia* and sutures Dante to his past as a lyric love poet and as writer of the *Vita Nuova*. By making Beatrice a speaker, Dante signals that in the Beatrice of the *Commedia* he is forging a new kind of female persona, an amalgam of the lyric lady with other more loquacious female literary

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[112] Barolini. 2018a, par. 3.
[113] Austin, John L. 1962. *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1955*, ed. by James O. Urmson (Oxford: Clarendon Press). On speech acts, see also Searle, John. 1970. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
[114] On the *consolatoria*, see Borsa, Paolo. 2014. 'Tra "Vita nova" e rime allegoriche: note sulla consolatoria di Cino da Pistoia per la morte di Beatrice', *Carte Romanze*, 2, pp. 301-312; Fenzi. 2016.
[115] Barolini. 2018a, par. 7.

figures, like Lady Philosophy in Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*. And, while in *Inferno* II, Beatrice's speech is mediated through Virgil, later in the *Commedia* her status as independent and authoritative *Beatrix loquax* will be fully explored.[116]

Language and words become speech acts in this canto, and show their power to persuade and to move.[117] Therefore, the act of Beatrice speaking is absolutely important, not only for the *Commedia*, but it marks a turning point in Western literature as well, because the act of speaking was never considered an act belonging to the praised woman. However, in *Inferno* II the process of this revolution is still not complete. Beatrice's speech is still mediated by a male figure, who functions as an intermediary element between Beatrice and Dante. The speeches by women (Beatrice, Saint Lucy, and the Virgin Mary) – which the reader of the *Commedia*, as well as Dante-*personaggio*, has to imagine having happened – still need the presence of a male character who enables this action to be completed. The voice Dante-*personaggio* hears is still, in *Inferno* II, the voice of Virgil, who reports Beatrice's speech verbatim. Here Dante seems to interpose a middle stage between his past works, especially the *Vita nova*, in which the woman is silent, and what will happen in canto XXX of the *Purgatorio*, when Dante-*personaggio*, along with the readers, hears Beatrice's voice, with no mediation, in its phonic nature. In this sense, the *Vita nova* may be interpreted as a 'failed' reciprocity, which instead, becomes a true reciprocity in the *Commedia*.

I find it plausible that Cino's *consolatoria* may have had an influence on this arc of narration which has its beginning in *Inferno* II and reaches its peak in *Purgatorio* XXX. In Cino's text there is no mediation, but it has no direct effect, except for potentially consoling Dante. Instead, in Dante's *Commedia*, already in the initial part of the poem, Beatrice's voice has an active role in provoking a movement, a change: first, Beatrice's voice acts to save Dante, sending Virgil to find him in the dark wood and then, by leading Dante through the Heavens of Paradise. The element of consolation seems to have a certain type of role until *Purgatorio* XXX since before the *Vita nova*, and had been symbolised by the figure of Beatrice.[118] As Barolini suggests, after the death of Beatrice, in particular if we refer to *Li occhi dolenti per*

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[116] Barolini. 2018a, par. 8.
[117] Barolini. 2018a, par. 9.
[118] See Barolini. 2018a, par. 10.

pietà del core,[119] Beatrice is imagined in Heaven and so her power to console Dante lies in the dead Beatrice for the first time:[120]

Poscia piangendo, sol nel mio lamento
chiamo Beatrice, e dico: 'Or se' tu morta?';
e mentre ch'io la chiamo, me conforta.[121]

Indeed, these texts of the *Vita nova* anticipate *Inferno* II, but with a substantial change: in *Inferno* II Beatrice is not only the object of praise – even though Beatrice's speech mentions the fact that she was praised by Dante – but now she is 'praised incarnate, defined as 'loda di Dio vera'', so she praises God 'ontologically, merely by existing'.[122] In his *consolatoria*, Cino takes a step forward, and follows the final part of the *Vita nova*: he does not suggest Dante consoles himself by imagining the woman alive, but he suggests that Dante consoles himself with the idea of the dead Beatrice, with her being in Paradise. I find it striking that Cino is, in practice, the only one among Dante's respondents to identify the core of the innovation Dante affirms in the final passages of the *Vita nova*. Cino addresses the point of innovation that Dante expresses for the first time in the last part of the 'libello' and makes it the centre of his consolatory *canzone*. It is interesting to underline that the element of consolation is not present during Dante's first encounter with Beatrice in *Purgatorio* XXX. This feature probably suggests that Beatrice's role in Earthly Paradise has nothing to do with what she represented in Dante's previous works.

According to this line of interpretation, direct speech is a way for Dante to create a bond between life and death, in the sense that asking rhetorical questions to the dead Beatrice, makes her alive due to a sort of optical illusion.[123] Then, it seems for these reasons, Cino is spurring Dante to find consolation in Beatrice in her present status, in her being in the afterlife. According to Barolini, in *Inferno* II Dante is creating a connection between the past Beatrice, whose figure is utterly constrained within the

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[119] *Vita nova*, XXXI 8-17, *Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core*, vv. 12-17: 'e dicerò di lei piangendo, poi / che si n'è gita in ciel subitamente, / e ha lasciato Amor meco dolente / Ita n'è Beatrice in l'alto cielo, / nel reame ove li angeli hanno pace, / e sta con loro, e voi, donne, ha lassate'.

[120] Barolini, Teodolinda. 2014. *Dante's Lyric Poetry: Poems of Youth and of the 'Vita Nuova'* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), p. 249: 'In *Li occhi dolenti* we see *consolatio* come to the fore in a new way: it is connected for the first time to the imaginative processes of the lover and to what he can do to obtain consolation for himself. *Consolatio* is now tied to the act of imagining his lady alive. […] the ability to imagine her alive to the point of talking to her opens the door to the possibilities of *consolatio*'.

[121] *Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core*, vv. 54-56.

[122] Barolini. 2018a, par. 11.

[123] Barolini. 2014, p. 248.

limits of the courtly lady or the lady of the 'stil novo', and a new Beatrice who speaks, acts and therefore plays an active role in the *Commedia*.[124] As I mentioned, the theme of direct speech is already present in *Li occhi dolenti*, even if we hear only Dante's voice and his questions to the dead Beatrice. In the *Paradiso* the word of Beatrice will be centrally present, but it will not be used to define her identify as delimited by the fact that she is the object of Dante's praise, as in Cino's *consolatoria*, but Beatrice's figure will take on a different value, to the point that her word, in *Paradiso* VII will be infallible: 'Secondo mio infallibile avviso' (v. 19).[125]

It is true that Cino does not manage to make the leap that consists of conceiving Beatrice as a woman who exerts her own power through her own words, and still depicts her as the object of men's desire. Instead, this is a concept that only Dante succeeds in achieving, by putting Beatrice in a position of power, to speak like only men did in the past. But, despite this, Cino's *consolatoria* is the first occurrence in literature in which Beatrice speaks and Cino is the one who, I argue, shows Dante an example of giving this power to Beatrice. In Cino's *consolatoria* we can identify not only the first moment of real contact and dialogue with Dante, but also a text that contains elements which will consistently influence Dante's own views and be significant to the writing of the *Commedia* many years later. Cino is arguably the first person who actualises, who carries out, what Dante had only theorised in the *Vita nova*. The theme of comfort was already in the sonnets to the 'donna gentile'; and most of all, in *Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core*, Dante anticipates what happens in *Inferno* II, as he is consoled by the dead woman. Essentially, Cino enacts what Dante wrote

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[124] Barolini. 2006, p. 373.

[125] For further investigation, see Barolini. 2006. According to the development of the role of Beatrice from the *Vita nova* to the *Commedia*, Barański claims that 'In the *Commedia*, Beatrice is no longer a rather nebulous, passively humble ("la sua faccia avesse tanto aspetto d'umilitade" [XXIII, 8]) beautiful woman known, whether dead or alive, only through her effects; she is instead a psychologically complex and authoritative individual who, tellingly, after being reduced to silence in the *libello*, discovers a powerful and personal voice. Indeed, her speech dominates *Purgatorio* XXX and XXXI' (Barański, Zygmunt G. 1995. 'The "New life" of "Comedy": the "Commedia" and the "Vita Nuova"', *Dante Studies with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, CXIII, pp. 1-29 (p. 8). Barolini supports the idea that the symbols represented by Beatrice diminish the portrayal of her unique personal identity (2006, p. 363). In the *Paradiso*, huge possibilities are opened up by the fact that Beatrice speaks, sometimes with an infallible voice, and thus she takes on the characteristics of the male theologian. Furthermore, the salvific function she plays in the poem is also important to this discourse. In a way the fact that Beatrice speaks, and in a very versatile way, is so fundamental to the *Paradiso*. For an examination that focuses on the essence and style of Beatrice's theological discourse, in relation to the way in which her character is defined in the *Commedia*, see Rowson, Abigail. 2018. 'Theologians as Persons in Dante's "Commedia"' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds), in particular chapter 4, 'Beatrice as Theologian'. See also Tramontana. 2020, especially the chapter entitled 'La parola di Beatrice: il dialogo nei canti del "Paradiso"', pp. 155-210.

about Beatrice in his *canzone*: 'me conforta' (v. 56). The mutual references made by Cino, in the *consolatoria* (towards the *Vita nova*), and Dante, in *Inferno* II (towards Cino's *consolatoria*) are acts of poetic friendship, which bear witness to a deep knowledge of and devotion to each other's oeuvre.

In *Purgatorio* XXX the scene is set in an opposite way from what Cino depicts in his *canzone*. Dante's tears in Cino's *consolatoria* are due to the desperation for the loss of Beatrice, while in canto XXX his tears are due to the departure of Virgil, which becomes a ground for Beatrice's reproach, reinforced by the *figura etymologica*:

'Dante, perché Virgilio se ne vada,
non pianger anco, non pianger ancora;
ché pianger ti conven per altra spada'.
(*Purg*. XXX, 55-57)

In the *canzone*, Dante's question to himself, is about how he will be able to see Beatrice, as she ascended to Heaven:

fra sé dicendo: 'Già sète in ciel gita,
beata gioia, com' chiamava il nome!
Lasso me, quando e come
veder vi potrò io visibilmente?'
(CXXV, 7-10)

I find it striking that in the *consolatoria* Cino does not refer to any of those verbs which were frequently employed in the *Vita nova*, such as 'parere' but, through Dante's speech, he highlights the dimension of sight, an unmediated sight, reinforced by the term 'Mirate' (v. 57). Dante asks himself how he can 'veder […] visibilmente' (v. 10) Beatrice, with his own eyes, now that she is dead. Cino consoles Dante with the argument that Beatrice's death aligns with God's plan, as her presence in Heaven made the 'cielo perfetto' (v. 25). Cino addresses the fact that Beatrice's departure is part of a divine project. Indeed, in *Li occhi dolenti*, he directs a question to the dead Beatrice, while, instead, Cino sets those boundaries which will be necessary as a precondition to the *Commedia*: Cino puts into action what Dante had only predicted in the *Vita nova*.

Beatrice's condition is, according to Cino, what should enable Dante to be consoled. In the *canzone* there is a cause-effect relationship between the fact that Beatrice is in

Paradise and the *raison d'être* of the consolation. In the Earthly Paradise, this causal effect vanishes as Beatrice has a different role, as she was the object of Dante's praise. Dante will still benefit from Beatrice in the *Commedia*, but her role is completely different: in the *canzone*, Beatrice is still ascribed to the courtly tradition, she is a lady whose identity is limited to the fact that she is praised; in the *Commedia*, Beatrice is still beneficial to Dante, but this advantage passes through her active role, through her being the one whose intercession made Dante's journey possible. Dante's desire to see Beatrice in Heaven is expressed in *Donna pietosa e di novella etate* when, for the first time, Dante's perspective is projected into the future:[126]

Poi mi partia, consumato ogne duolo;
e quand'io era solo,
dicea, guardando verso l'alto regno:
'Beato, anima bella, chi te vede!'[127]

But even if Dante is imagining the benefits he will receive from seeing Beatrice in the *Paradiso*, the last lines bring the scene back to its historical frame: 'Voi mi chiamaste allor, vostra merzede (v. 84)'.[128] Both in *Donna pietosa* and in *Li occhi dolenti*, Dante is in a tangible present on which the vision of Beatrice is inserted. It is only in the *Commedia* that Dante can see Beatrice with his own eyes. This occurrence has an antecedent in Cino's *canzone*, as in the circumstance Cino describes in the text, Dante must be in Paradise himself. If, on the one side, *Li occhi dolenti*, ends with a reference to the historical present Dante inhabits, the *consolatoria* ends with Beatrice's own words and with Cino's exhortation to pray 'Dio, lo signor verace' (v. 75), which may be in contrast with the 'immaginar fallace' (v. 65) of *Donna pietosa*.

The last scene presented by Cino seems to undermine the historical frame that was present in Dante's *Vita nova*, for instance in *Li occhi dolenti* when Dante says

Ita n'è Beatrice in l'alto cielo,
nel reame ove li angeli hanno pace,
e sta con loro, e voi, donne ha lassate[129]

and thus when he continues to address the presence of women being around him. It is

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[126] Barolini-Gragnolati, p. 371.
[127] *Donna pietosa e di novella etate*, vv. 81-83.
[128] Barolini-Gragnolati, p. 371.
[129] *Li occhi dolenti per pietà del core*, vv. 15-17.

only in Cino only the present condition is taken into account and contemplated, without an overlapping of temporal levels, as this is what he finds as the solution to give value to Beatrice's departure. In the Earthly Paradise, Beatrice reproaches Dante for his theological immaturity, as after her death he did not continue to reserve his love for her alone, but he directed it towards other women.[130] Paradoxically, this reproach could have been avoided if Dante had followed the suggestion that Cino expressed in the *consolatoria*, so that Dante's agonising condition would have been solved in the awareness given to the fact that 'perché Dio l'aggia locata fra i suoi, / ella tutt'ora dimora con voi' (vv. 41-42). Cino identifies the core of the condition which made Dante follow a path towards women other than Beatrice. This is recognised by Dante in *Purgatorio* XXXI: 'Piangendo dissi: "Le presenti cose / col falso lor piacer volser miei passi, / tosto che 'l vostro viso si nascose"' (vv. 34-36), therefore not much after Beatrice's death, Dante's backslide happens. This timeframe may coincide with Cino's expression 'non è ancor sì trapassato il tempo' (v. 4), meaning since Beatrice's death. The paradox is both that the solution to overcome Dante's backslide was already provided by Cino in the first stage of his poetic relationship with Dante, but also that the following exchange between the poets, through the *tenzone*, is mostly around the legitimatisation of having multiple loves.

What is surprisingly important is the fact that, unlike in *Li occhi dolenti*, where the consolation is made possible by imagining the dead woman alive, which constitutes the necessary condition for the entire episode narrated in the *Commedia* – an utterly brilliant solution which is presented in *Inferno* II – Cino's acumen is to suggest not to be consoled by imagining her alive, but to be consoled by the fact that she is dead and, additionally, that she is in Paradise.[131] In this sense, the *consolatoria* anticipates, or at least gives voice to Dante's intuition, which is the condition that allows Dante's voyage in the afterlife to happen. The key for Dante to respect Beatrice's will is to remain within the limits of the otherworldly dimension by properly processing his grief and respecting her current condition of being dead and in Paradise. This may be why Cino hardly refers to Beatrice's past condition, to her appearance when alive, but only

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[130] *Purg*. XXXI, 49-63.
[131] Barolini-Gragnolati, pp. 432-434.

with 'bella cera' (v. 49) in the *consolatoria*, which may recall 'bella persona' (v. 29) of *Li occhi dolenti*, but also 'belle membra' (v. 50) of *Purgatorio* XXXI.[132]

Conclusion

The importance of the question as to whether Dante thought about placing Cino in the *Commedia* has had a certain fascination among scholars. The issue regarding the possibility that Dante had in mind a specific passage to mention Cino in and that he eventually changed his mind, is a research question that is undoubtedly intriguing.[133] However, I believe that this type of research, which focuses on un unexpected absence, should be subordinated to a question of much more significant relevance: whether we can detect a *presence* of the exchange of texts Cino had with Dante in the years before writing of the *Commedia*. In this chapter, I argue that we can acknowledge the substantial presence of Cino, primarily in terms of the influence the poetic exchange between him and Dante had on the poem. Cino is the interlocutor who creates, for Dante, the occasion and space to challenge his thoughts on numerous topics, such as the correlation between love and free will, exile, and the role of Beatrice. I state that it is important to look at how, in a broader way, Cino's work, through the exchange with Dante, emerges in the *Commedia*, in multiple examples and levels, and how this is a complementary constituent for Dante. In various passages of the poem, the questions discussed in the *tenzone* emerge and take on their final conceptualisation. The sign of a poetic past made of statements, reasoning, second thoughts, which made the achievement of these final and perfected positions possible, is evident and tangible. The discussions Dante has with Cino are internalised and then they become functional

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[132] For reasons of completeness, it is necessary to signal that additional elements to the theme of free will in relation to love, in the years of Dante's exile and the time he spends at the Malaspina courts, are the *canzone* 'montanina' and the *Epistola* IV to Moroello. In the epistle, Dante states that Love enchained his free will. Cfr. *Epistola* IV 4: 'liberum meum ligavit arbitrium' [he fettered my free will]. For further reference, see Fenzi, Enrico. 2003. 'Ancora sull'"Epistola" a Moroello e sulla "montanina" di Dante ("Rime", 15)', *Tenzone. Revista de la Asociación Complutense de Dantología*, IV, pp. 43-84; Pasquini, Emilio. 2007. 'Un crocevia dell'esilio: la canzone "Montanina" e l'"Epistola" a Moroello', in *Studi dedicati a Gennaro Barbarisi*, ed. by Claudia Berra and Michele Mari (Milan: CUEM), pp. 13-29; Tonelli, Natascia. 2010. 'La canzone montanina di Dante Alighieri ("Rime", 15): nodi problematici di un commento', *Per Leggere. I Generi della Lettura*, 10, XIX, pp. 7-36; Mocan, Mira. 2012. 'Il libero arbitrio "sovrano"', in *L'arca della mente. Riccardo di San Vittore nella 'Commedia' di Dante*, ed. by Mira Mocan (Florence: Olschki), pp. 141-164; Tonelli, Natascia. 2012. '15. "Amor, da che convien pur ch'io mi doglia"', in *Dante Alighieri. Le quindici canzoni. Lette da diversi. II, 8-15 con appendice di 16 e 18*, premise by Giuliano Tanturli (Lecce: PensaMultimedia), pp. 255-283; Casadei, Alberto. 2019 'Osservazioni semantiche e cronologiche su "Epistola" IV e canzone "Montanina"', *Deutsches Dante-Jahrbuch*, 94, pp. 125-139.
[133] See the introduction.

to their re-working in the *Commedia*. The result of this complex work of revision that Dante does in his poem is then influenced by the dialogue with Cino. Rather than focusing only on the apparently negative epilogue of the *tenzone*, which is characterised by Dante's decision not to continue the exchange of texts, I believe it is fruitful to investigate the utility of that dialogue and how this generates a different vision that will be made explicit in the *Commedia*. Hitherto, Cino has been an important presence to Dante, not only with respect to the themes addressed in the exchanged texts, but also because Cino has been an authoritative figure.

These multiple examples are the reason why I dwell on the plausible debt Dante has towards his exchange with Cino, which is evident in multiple passages of the *Commedia*. The exchange with Cino inevitably has an important resonance in Dante's works and the position Dante undertakes compared to Cino seems to have helped Dante mark the limits and crystallise his definitive view of love and lyric poetry, in a long chronological arc. Certainly, Dante's reflections, in dialogue with Cino, have an impact in determining the ultimate direction he takes towards a position progressively more distant from Cino. But it is thanks to this poetic and metapoetic dialogue, that Dante makes his own conclusion. The dialogue with Cino is an exercise of rhetoric and argument: Cino presents the situations he writes about as real, biographic, and to work them out, he addresses his most talented and authoritative friend, Dante, who challenges and refines them until the later stage of their relationship. In this chapter, I demonstrated the influence of the dialogue between Dante and Cino in the *Commedia*; to clarify, this is not a generic influence but is instead, a memory of previous discussions, as these had a role in shaping Dante's thinking. In light of the previous exchange of texts, we can scrutinise the presence of a reminiscence of the previous disquisitions, and to what extent this had an impact on Dante's thinking.

CHAPTER 5.

Epilogue:

Cino's *consolatoria* for the Death of Dante

Dante's death certainly brings an end to the exchange with Cino. However, in this chapter I argue that even though the formal exchange is ended, the *intertextual* dialogue continues. Cino, indeed, pays homage to his friendship with Dante and, above all, to Dante's poetic talent through the writing of a consolatory *canzone* for his death, which encompasses several references to the *Commedia*, which was, at this point, complete. The novelty of my work is showing that Dante's death does not mark the end of the dialogue, as Cino's final text, *Su per la costa*, constitutes a further contribution to this textual exchange. Moreover, I illustrate that, at what I consider the very final moment of their relationship, Cino commemorates his friend by celebrating his poetic talent in relation to the theme of love. Although Cino engages with the *Commedia* through a rich network of references, he nevertheless reaffirms his adherence to the literary framework of the *Vita Nova* and the tradition of love poetry, as a *cantor amoris*.

The very last stage of the (intertextual) dialogue reaffirms that Cino's stance towards Dante has remained the same since the beginning of their exchange: the *Vita nova*, even at this point, seems to persist as the major reference for Cino. Dante and Cino build their dialogue around numerous topics and questions; notwithstanding, the predominant domain in which their dialogue is situated and continues is the domain of love, even after Dante's death. In addition, there is a coherence between Cino's *canzone* for the death of Beatrice (*Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*) and Cino's *canzone* for the death of Dante (*Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte*). On the one hand, this applies for Dante's role as a poet of love: in *Avegna ched el m'aggia* the praise style is a central element, as the woman in Paradise declares that she was praised by her lover Dante; in *Su per la costa*, there is a possible reference to canto XXIV of the *Purgatorio*, where the 'dolce stil novo' (v. 57) is mentioned, as Brugnolo notes.[1] Additionally, the figure of Beatrice is outlined in very similar ways in both *canzoni*,

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[1] Cfr. Brugnolo, Furio. 2004. 'Appendice a Cino (e Onesto) dentro e fuori la "Commedia". Ancora sull'intertesto di "Purgatorio" XXIV 49-63', in *Leggere Dante*, ed. by Lucia Battaglia Ricci (Ravenna: Longo), pp. 153-170 (pp. 167-168).

as I argue that she is, technically, Beatrice in the *Paradiso* but, actually, she seems to adhere to the principles of the 'stil novo' and, in a way, of the *Vita nova*.

There are also three anti-Dantean sonnets that may be attributed to Cino, which were composed while Dante was writing the *Commedia*. Nevertheless, we must note that these sonnets are written in a totally different tone compared to the *canzone* written after 1321 for the death of Dante, *Su per la costa*, in which Cino emotionally remembers the art and human value of his close friend, showing the most sincere and genuine affection. It would be, at least, surprising that Cino wrote them as a consequence of his exclusion from the *Commedia*. Anyhow, these three sonnets are subsequent or at least datable to the years following the writing of most of the cantos of the *Commedia*, and they are clearly against the *Commedia*, as they criticise Dante and his work. To date, the question of attribution remains unresolved.[2] This possible divergence is inexplicable, especially if we compare the harshness of Cino's critical tone towards the 'libello' – as the *Commedia* is defined – that emerges from these texts, and the kind words towards Dante that are employed in the *canzone* for the death of Dante. Nevertheless, I briefly examine these three texts to provide a comprehensive view of them.

The sonnets are the following: *In verità questo libel di Dante*, *Infra gli altri difetti del libello*, and *Messer Boson, lo vostro Manoello*, to which their replies correspond: *Contien sua Comedia parole sante* by ser Giovanni di Meo Vitali, *Io pur m'accordo che 'l vostro coltello* by Bosone Novello da Gubbio, and *Manoel, che mettete 'n quell'avello*, written by an anonymous author on behalf of Bosone.[3] The severe tone with which the sonnets criticise the *Commedia* and some of Dante's choices for his poem do not coincide with the deep regret and heartfelt admiration that Cino purports to feel for Dante.[4] In the dialogue between Dante and Cino it is not only these sonnets

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[2] On the attribution of the three anti-Dantean sonnets and on their content, apart from the fundamental work Rossi, Luca Carlo. 1988. 'Una ricomposta tenzone (autentica?) fra Cino da Pistoia e Bosone da Gubbio', *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, XXXI, pp. 45-79, see Barolini. 1984; Brugnolo. 1993, pp. 369-386; Pasquini. 2010; Piccini, Daniele. 2010. 'Un sonetto dubbio tra Dante e Cino', in *Le 'Rime' di Dante*, ed. by Claudia Berra and Paolo Borsa (Milan: Cisalpino - Istituto Editoriale Universitario, pp. 17-40; Mercenaro, Simone. 2013. 'Polemica letteraria e ironia nella lirica italiana del Duecento. Il caso di Cino da Pistoia', in *Parodia y debate metaliterarios en la Edad Media*, ed. by Mercedes Brea López, Esther Corral Díaz, Miguel Ángel Pousada Cruz (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso), pp. 277-289; Ruggiero. 2021.

[3] Ruggiero. 2021, p. 108.

[4] As Pasquini claims: 'Cino, magari offeso per quel silenzio, i tre acri sonetti antidanteschi che alcuni codici gli attribuiscono (*In fra gli altri difetti del libello*, *In verità questo libel di Dante* e *Messer Boson, lo vostro Manuello*), pieni di futilità estranee al suo temperamento. E tanto più sono persuaso dell'apocrifia di quei tre modesti sonetti, perché di contro s'attesta la canzone *Su per la costa, Amor, de*

that are of uncertain attribution. In fact, the authorship of the sonnet *Naturalmente chere ogni amadore* is attributed to either Cino or Terino da Castelfiorentino. If it is a text by Cino, the sonnet would be his first response to Dante, in reply to *A ciascun'alma presa e gentil core*.[5] In order to avoid compromising the interpretation of the dialogue with references to texts of dubious attribution, I consider it more appropriate to limit the analysis to texts that are certainly attributed to Cino.[6]

I turn now to the main argument of this section. On the occasion of the death of Dante, Cino does not fail to reserve words of praise and affection for his deceased friend in *Su per la costa*. He expresses his condolences and positions himself as the first critic of Dante's work, recognising his poetic, literary, and cultural value.[7] Furthermore, Cino honours Dante through multiple examples. The first is undoubtedly the large and evident presence of direct references to the *Commedia*, noted by Roberto Mercuri for instance, in the first three lines:

> Cino parla con le stesse parole con cui Dante aveva dichiarato la sua inadeguatezza a scalare il monte del Purgatorio senza l'aiuto di Virgilio, conferendogli, così, il prestigioso ruolo di autorevole guida poetica, lo stesso che era stato attribuito da Dante a Virgilio (*Inferno* I, 79-87).[8]

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l'alto monte che Cino scrisse, sottraendosi agli studi e agli impegni giuridici, per la morte di Dante; e la scrisse con la mente e la memoria piene di echi e suggestioni della *Commedia*. Il che suona conferma di una lunga fedeltà senza ombre, che non poté espandersi nei confronti del poema come aveva potuto fare rispetto al Dante delle rime e della *Vita nova*, quando continua era la loro frequentazione: interrottasi nei primi anni dell'esilio, ripresa vivacemente nel biennio malaspiniano, precaria e quasi evanescente nel secondo decennio del secolo, quando Dante si era chiuso nella sua solitudine, eroicamente assorto nello sforzo di concludere il poema' (2010, pp. 14-15).

[5] *Vita nova*, III 10-12. Like the arguments surrounding attribution discussed in chapter 2, the doubts regarding the sonnet's attribution dissuade me from considering these texts a significant element of the dialogue between Dante and Cino. This choice was made to prevent a degree of uncertainty that could alter the overall interpretation of the dialogue.

[6] In the future, I may examine these attributions based on the insights and conclusions derived from the analysis of texts certainly authored by Dante and Cino, as presented in this thesis.

[7] Cfr. Fenzi. 2016, pp. 75-97. It is very interesting to notice that Fenzi defines Cino as the first critic of Dante's oeuvre: 'Molti anni dopo, del resto, questa dialettica *alto / basso* ancora torna nella canzone in morte di Dante, *Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte* vv. 18-19: "Nol veggendo di sotto da le nubi, / del suo aspetto si copre ognun basso", confermando il valore assoluto di quel primo schema di giudizio, sufficiente a fare di Cino il primo e, per l'epoca, il più acuto critico dell'opera dantesca. Ed è importante, infine, la conclusione dello stesso Brugnolo, per il quale la "profonda e simpatetica lettura dell'operetta dantesca" da parte di Cino è "confermata da un testo che meriterebbe di essere maggiormente considerato in questo contesto, e cioè la canzone consolatoria a Dante in morte di Beatrice, *Avegna ched el m'aggia*"' (p. 77-78).

[8] Mercuri, Roberto. 2014. 'La morte del poeta', in *Dai pochi ai molti. Studi in onore di Roberto Antonelli*, ed. by Paolo Canettieri and Arianna Punzi (Rome: Viella), II, pp. 1103-1107 (p. 1104).

Since there is already rigorous and detailed critical work on expressions that have a textual correspondence between *Su per la costa* and the *Commedia*, I do not extensively linger over the ways in which Dante's poem is directly evoked by Cino. It is essential to cite these contributions because they offer an account of Cino's influences on the *Commedia*.[9] They also prove that textual correspondence between Dante and Cino can be detected in the *Commedia*'s writing; even if there is difficulty in understanding the direction of this influence since there are not always chronological references that validate one reading or another.[10] Marti, in line with the interpretation of De Robertis, detects that Cino 's'abbandona a una sorta di partecipe "commemorazione" (D. De Robertis) dell'arte e dell'umanità di D. [Dante]' to the point that 'né la canzone in morte di lui può essere ipocrita frutto di occasionale opportunismo'.[11] Indeed, we can identify a connection to the consolatory *canzone* that Cino writes years before, on the occasion of Beatrice's death, *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*.[12] Moreover, the themes that *Su per la costa* presents are dear to Dante and, to a certain extent, had also been discussed in the exchange of texts he had with Cino when he was still alive. The *canzone*, which consists of three stanzas of thirteen lines each, begins with a question: Cino wonders how, now that the world is devoid of such 'ingegno' (v. 4), one can go 'Su per la costa […] de l'alto monte' (v. 1):

> Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte,
> drieto allo stil del nostro ragionare
> or chi potra montare,
> poi che son rotte l'ale d'ogni ingegno?
> I' penso ch'egli è secca quella fonte,
> ne la cui acqua si potea specchiare
> ciascun del suo errare,
> se ben volèn guardar nel dritto segno.
> (CLXIV, 1-8)

After an initial reference to Dante's poetic insight and to how the world has become lonely since it is deprived of a model, a spiritual guide, a 'fonte' (v. 5) in which one

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[9] Cfr. De Robertis. 1950, pp. 103-177; Brugnolo. 1993; 2004; Casadei, Alberto. 2012. 'Il "Paradiso" nei componimenti in morte di Dante', *Dante. Rivista internazionale di studi su Dante Alighieri*, IX, pp. 129-140; Mercuri. 2014. Furthermore, for an extensive treatment of the relationship between Cino and Onesto, see: De Robertis. 1951, pp. 273-312.
[10] Brugnolo. 1993, p. 379.
[11] Marti. 1970, p. 9.
[12] Ibid.

can look at themselves as in a mirror, Cino invokes God and asks him to welcome Dante into Beatrice's womb, who has always been 'd'amor coltivatrice' (v. 12):

Ah vero Dio, ch'a perdonar benegno
sei a ciascun che col pentir si colca,
quest'anima bivolca,
sempre stata e d'amor coltivatrice,
ricovera nel grembo di Beatrice.
(CLXIV, 9-13)

At the end of the first stanza, Cino dwells on this particular meaning to define Dante: he identifies the ultimate goal of his earthly stay in rejoining Beatrice in Heaven. With the allusion to the 'womb of Beatrice' (v. 13), as Mercuri points out, Cino recalls the 'grembo di Maria' (v. 37) of *Purgatorio* VIII; moreover, 'Cino qui sottolinea la riconversione, operata da Dante, dell'amore lirico e stilnovista nell'amore-*caritas*'.[13] Afterwards, Cino provides a definition of Dante by employing the label that Dante, in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, attributed to Cino. In fact, Cino, after beginning the *canzone* by referring to Dante's 'ingegno' (v. 4) in its broadest meaning, refers to Dante's commitment to cultivate and pursue love, and therefore, it is as if Cino defines Dante, in turn, as a *cantor amoris*, the poet of love par excellence.[14] In the second stanza, Cino continues to emphasise the role of Dante as the highest exemplum of love poetry, as a spiritual guide for those who seek answers about the nature and legitimacy of love, as Cino himself had done:[15]

Qual oggimai degli amorosi dubî
sarà a' nostri intelletti secur passo,
poi che caduto, ahi lasso,
è 'l ponte ov' e' passava i peregrini?
Nol vegg[end]o [di] sotto [da le] nubi,
del suo aspetto si copre ognun basso,
sì come 'l duro sasso
si copre d'erba e talora di spini.
Ah dolce lingua, che con t[u]oi latini
facéi contento ciascun che t'udia,
quanto doler si dia

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[13] Mercuri. 2014, p. 1105.
[14] For an extensive examination of the role of Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, see chapter 3.
[15] For a detailed analysis of the topic of love and free will in the exchange between Dante and Cino, see chapters 2 and 3.

ciascun che verso Amor la mente ha volta,
poi che Fortuna dal mondo t'ha tolta!
(CLXIV, 14-26)

As Marti points out in his commentary, the expression 'amorosi dubî' (v. 14) brings to
mind at least two passages of the *Commedia*: 'i pensier dubi' (v. 97) of *Paradiso*
XXVIII and the 'dubbiosi disiri' (v. 120) of *Inferno* V.[16] Dante himself described the
words Cino used in his poetry as 'dolci detti' (CXXX *a*, v. 14), using the same
expression of *Purgatorio* XXVI (v. 112), where Dante speaks to Guido Guinizzelli:

   E io a lui: 'Li *dolci detti* vostri,
che, quanto durerà l'uso moderno,
faranno cari ancora i loro incostri'.[17]
(*Purg*. XXVI, 112-114; emphasis mine)

On the seventh terrace of Purgatory, Dante encounters the lustful, among whom he
finds Guido Guinizzelli and Arnaut Daniel. In this canto, Dante shows his profound
admiration for Guinizzelli, the poet Dante defined as the creator of the 'dolce stil novo'
(*Purg*. XXIV, 57). In this scene, Guinizzelli is presented as the model of these 'dolci
detti' (*Purg*. XXVI, 112) and their fame will last as long as the vernacular is used.
Dante honours Guinizzelli as the initiator of the 'stil novo' and places him at the centre
of his understanding of poetry, which is crucial to the whole poem and its metaliterary
meaning.

   It is interesting to notice that, if we only take into consideration the texts that have
been proven to be attributed to Cino, in the context of the exchange between Dante
and Cino, it is evident that the textual dialogue begins with Cino's *consolatio* for
Beatrice's death and ends with the same type of *canzone*, but for the death of Dante.
In between these two extreme points of the dialogue there is not only the exchange of

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[16] Marti. 1969, p. 862, note 3.
[17] Cfr. notes 49-63 of *Purgatorio* XXIV in Bosco U., Reggio G. (eds). 1979. *Commedia. Purgatorio*
(Florence: Le Monnier): 'Bisogna anzitutto notare che dolce per Dante qualifica la poesia d'amore.
In *Pg* XXVI 97-99 *dolci e leggiadre* son dette le *rime d'amor* del Guinizzelli, e la connotazione è
ribadita poco oltre (*Li dolci detti vostri...*, 112): ma nella terza canzone del *Conv.* (*Le dolci rime*, 1-14)
è esplicitamente detto che alla poesia d'amore si addice uno stile "dolce" ("le dolci rime d'amor...") o
"soave" o "leno" (così anche lo chiama nel commento alla canzone, *Cv* IV ii 13), mentre alla poesia
dottrinale è proprio uno stile "aspr' e sottile". La dolcezza del nuovo stile (vedi anche *106-114 {Nota
Bosco}* a *Pg* II) consiste dunque in un determinato tono linguistico-stilistico, relativo, dice Dante nel
passo del *Conv.* ora citato, al "suono de lo dittato", al quale si contrappone, cambiata la materia, un
suono "aspro": per descrivere il fondo dell'Inferno occorrono, per esempio, *rime aspre e
chiocce* (*If* XXXII 1; e vedi *1-12 {Nota Bosco}* a *If* XXXII; ecc.)'.

texts between the poets, but both authors write the majority of their own corpus in this time. In particular, it is impossible not to mention the fact that in these years, Dante writes and concludes the *Commedia*, which constitutes the pinnacle of his poetic career. Since it was first circulated, the *Commedia* was seen as a model and as a 'meccanismo testuale fondamentalmente alto, tragico'.[18] This leads some writers contemporary to Dante to cite the *Commedia* directly and explicitly, through a series of references to the text.[19] Cino is one of these writers and with the consolatory *canzone* he celebrates 'esclusivamente il versante del poeta amoroso'.[20] Thereafter, it is essential to notice that Cino consistently situates Dante's poetic role within the limits of love poetry. Cino makes references to some of the fundamental themes dealt with in the *tenzone* with Dante and especially his argument on the legitimacy of love.[21] As a consequence, Cino identifies Dante, primarily and prominently, as the poet of the *Vita nova* and, more broadly, of love.[22]

In Cino's *Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona* and in Dante's *Io sono stato con Amore insieme*, as well as in the *Epistola* III, questions regarding love are widely discussed. In particular, in the aforementioned section of the *tenzone*, the poets discuss whether the soul can move on to experience a new passion for a person different from the soul's main love. Cino's proposal is initially approved by Dante, but he changes his mind on this point over the course of his life and career.[23] Love is not the only theme that emerges from the exchange with Cino, however it is one of the key themes

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[18] Berisso, Marco. 2019. 'La poesia comica nell'Italia medievale (prima e dopo la "Commedia")', in *Le forme del comico*, ed. by Simone Magherini, Anna Nozzoli and Gino Tellini (Florence: Società Editrice Fiorentina), pp. 3-14 (p. 10).

[19] It is widely acknowledged that the *Commedia* did not circulate as a whole. On the transmission, manuscript tradition, and circulation of the *Commedia* see, among others: Malato, Enrico. 2015. 'La tradizione del testo della "Commedia"', *Libri & documenti*, XLI, 2, pp. 143-151.

[20] Berisso. 2019, p. 10.

[21] Marti. 1969, p. 862, note 3: 'Non è irragionevole cogliere qui un'allusione alla corrispondenza in versi tra Cino e Dante, e particolarmente alla tenzoncina CXXVIII-CXXVIII *a*, sulla possibilità o necessità dei mutamenti in amore. Gli "amorosi dubî" ricordano "i pensier dubi" di *Par.* XXVIII 97; o anche i "dubbiosi desiri" di *Inf.* V 120'.

[22] This aligns with Marrani's interpretation of the whole *canzone*: 'Aprire il compianto in morte di Dante, del Dante ormai autore della *Commedia*, significava evidentemente per Cino commemorare innanzitutto quel luogo del poema in cui la poesia d'amore riceve la propria legittimazione, il passo in cui si allude alle sue stesse parole in difesa di quella originaria esperienza lirica a cui senz'altro si sentiva affiliato e che probabilmente rimane per il pistoiese la misura della prima eccellenza dell'amico fiorentino. L'imitazione del Dante identificabile quale cantore d'amore, dell'autore della *Vita Nova* e dai testi ad essa attigui […], l'imitazione di 'quel' Dante, l'unico Dante del resto che si poteva conoscere prima della *Commedia*, poteva insomma trovare, immediatamente dopo la prima divulgazione del poema, nonché l'esempio concreto della sequela ciniana, anche la sua definitiva conferma nell'epicedio del modello'. Cfr. Marrani, Giuseppe. 2004. *Con Dante dopo Dante. Studi sulla prima fortuna del Dante lirico* (Florence: Le Lettere), pp. 13-34 (p. 25).

[23] I offer a comprehensive examination of this in chapters 3 and 4.

of their dialogue. I have already argued that the sphere of *amor* and the sphere of *rectitudo* are not distinct categories and that, on the contrary, they are a part of a single and comprehensive conception in the historical-cultural moment in which Dante and Cino write.[24] Consequently, Cino has in mind this conception of the two spheres to which poetry can be applied. However, this feature of poetry and, in particular, of love poetry is placed as a defining element for his friend, Dante. Dante, in fact, is characterised through his own 'lingua' (CLXIV, v. 22), his own poetry:[25] Dante is defined by his language but specifically by the fact that he is a poet of love. In this way, we witness an operation of reflection between the definition that Dante gives to Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia* and the definition that Cino gives to Dante in *Su per la costa*.

The description that Cino offers in the *Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte* adheres to the characterisation of the *cantor amoris*. This deduction may align with Barolini's proposal, who argues that the reason behind the lack of direct references to Cino in the *Commedia* is the fact that he was an elegiac reflection of Dante himself, as Cino would be 'l'immagine speculare di Dante, una versione elegiaca della più dolce maniera dantesca'.[26] But leaving aside any attempt to understand why Cino is not referenced in the *Commedia*, we can return once again to the textual presence of Cino in Dante and to the textual presence of Dante in Cino, and how this unfolds in the last text of the textual dialogue. I suggest that this mirroring is also present in Cino's poem, where he performs a procedure similar to the one previously done by Dante in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, that is to praise his skills in relation to the sphere of love poetry. Therefore, Cino, especially in the second stanza 'traccia i rapporti con la poesia volgare, cercando di tenere Dante entro il perimetro dello Stilnovismo'.[27] Marrani's essay provides an important contribution to understanding this issue; at this stage of his career, Cino shows his ability to align himself with the language and style of the *Commedia*, but specific focus is given to the sphere of love poetry.[28] This implies that

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[24] See the introduction and chapter 3.

[25] Marti. 1969, pp. 862-863, note 6: 'Dante è qui identificato con la sua poesia, che egli più volte nel poema chiama "lingua"'. Marti refers, for instance, to *Inf*. XV, 86-87: 'e quant'io l'abbia in grado, mentr'io vivo / convien che ne la mia lingua si scerna'.

[26] Barolini, Teodolinda. 1993. *Il miglior fabbro: Dante e i poeti della 'Commedia'* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri), p. 114.

[27] Mercuri. 2014, p. 1106.

[28] Marrani. 2004, p. 24: 'E poi c'è la straordinaria capacità mimetica di Cino, che nella *canzone* sfoggia una certa facilità nell'adeguarsi al linguaggio della *Commedia* ben al di là delle citazioni puntuali (e ciò non contrasta, a mio avviso, con l'immagine di un Dante *magister amoris* che quella *canzone* intende

Cino's intention stems not from a lack of ability, but from an awareness, a conscious poetic decision. This decision was affirmed in the texts addressed to Dante when he was alive and is reaffirmed now that Dante is dead. *Su per la costa* can be considered a continuation of that ideal, almost a communicative paradox, as Dante is no longer alive. Therefore, it is a declaration of poetics and a form of self-definition that Cino acquires from his dialogue with Dante, which he then applies to his own model.[29]

The Beatrice spoken of in *Su per la costa* is a Beatrice in Paradise, as she was in *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*, but her characteristics are more similar than ever to those of the Beatrice of the *Vita nova*, the woman who is the object of the love of the 'stil novo'. She is a Beatrice in Paradise, whose potential for development and, possibly, emancipation can be predicted with respect to the prerogatives of women in the poetry of the 'stil novo', but it does not reach its full realisation. I argue that this Beatrice that appears in both the *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo* and *Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte* is a Beatrice for whom Cino may have received input from Dante – with the *Vita nova* and the *Commedia*. However, it is only with Dante that Beatrice reaches the fullness and complexity of a holy woman, who is, in turn, *agens*, who speaks and operates as an element of mediation. According to Marti, the Beatrice of *Su per la costa*, is the Beatrice of the *Paradiso*: 'ove "Beatrice" non è più certo quella della *Vita Nuova*, ma quella del *Paradiso*, cui ci riporta, per altro, l'immagine dell'"anima bivolca"'.[30] But instead, I believe that Cino's Beatrice, even if her appearance may resemble the Beatrice of Dante's Heaven, is profoundly the Beatrice of the *Vita nova*, of the 'stil novo'. Furthermore, even if references to those cantos of the *Commedia* in which the 'stil novo' is defined by Dante are present,[31] Cino continues framing Dante as a poet of love, above any of his other characteristics. It is the 'stil novo' that remains Cino's preferred channel of communication which, from Cino's side, has always been employed in the dialogue with Dante;[32] this

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rendere), riuscendo a seguire il maestro nel linguaggio dell'oscurità allegorica e allusiva, ad affiancarlo nel "ricreare e articolare il significato direttamente nell'immagine", in direzione di una "sorta di classicismo" caratteristico del suo stile più tardo (De Robertis. 1950, p. 177)'.

[29] Cfr. Marrani. 2004, p. 28.

[30] Marti. 1969, p. 862, note 2.

[31] Marti also underlines the reference to *Purgatorio* XXIV, 57 ('di qua dal dolce stil novo ch'i' odo!') and 62 ('non vede più da l'uno a l'altro stilo'). Cfr. Marti. 1969, p. 861, note 2.

[32] Marrani as well highlights that *Su per la costa* is mainly a text in which love is addressed: 'Quando ormai Dante aveva ricapitolato e trasposto in ben altra dimensione (e fin dalla narrazione del *Purgatorio*) la sua vicenda amorosa con Beatrice, Cino rivolge a Dio la preghiera di ricoverare l'anima del poeta nel grembo di lei, fuori insomma del tutto dalla finzione del poema (di quelle vicende non c'è cenno), o casomai proseguendo la finzione della *Vita Nova*, nell'auspicare il compimento di quell'unione

interpretation is further emphasised when we analyse the final moments of the intertextual dialogue between Dante and Cino, in light of the previous phases of it. The Heaven that Cino refers to in his consolatory *canzoni* – for the death of Beatrice and for the death of Dante – is not the Heaven that Dante portrays in the *Commedia*, but rather a space similar to the tones of the *Vita nova*, with frames that remain undefined and undetailed. The woman has simply been transposed to be praised in the name of a poetic tradition that, evidently for Cino, was the highest form of expression. The Beatrice Cino writes about has all of the potential to become Dante's Beatrice but rather, Cino keeps her in the realm of the 'stil novo' and of the *Vita nova*.

Cino remains faithful to the 'stil novo', of which he sees Dante as a model, an example. By framing Dante as a poet of love, Cino refers to that facet of Dante, to that poetic horizon that he firmly defends and within which he encapsulates Dante, despite the fact that Dante wrote the entire *Commedia* and gave Beatrice a different role than the one she had in the *Vita nova* era. In the consolatory *canzone* for Beatrice's death, Cino sensed innovations that Dante would later develop in an innovative, original and groundbreaking way. However, at the end of their textual relationship, Cino once again reaffirms his faithfulness to that poetic era that has the *Vita nova* at its centre. The *canzone* for Dante's death is full of references to the *Commedia*, but the desire to reiterate the importance of that past poetic stage, which sees Dante as a poet of eros, emerges. The erotic root is obviously not the only one that Dante attributes to Beatrice or to himself as a poet in the *Commedia*, but it becomes a part of a far greater complexity, which would have destined the *Commedia* to be the masterpiece it later became. Cino is carrying out a sort of recognition of Dante as a teacher and model of the 'stil novo', in a way which is not different from what Dante does in *Purgatorio* XXVI with Guido Guinizzelli. We may assume that Dante has always included Cino within the same label of *cantor amoris*. In the last sonnet addressed to Cino, *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, Dante exerts the phrase 'dolci detti' (v. 14) to refer to Cino's poetry; in *Purgatorio* XXVI the same words, 'dolci detti' (v. 112), are employed to define Guinizzelli's poetry. Due to the intense and dense degree of metaliterary reflections conducted in cantos XXIV-XXVI of the *Purgatorio*, I find it plausible to detect the presence of an allusion to Cino's poetry and the *tenzone*, as the

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paradisiaca augurata già, sulla scorta di *Oltre la spera*, in più luoghi della *consolatio* per la morte della *gentilissima* (vv. 9-10; 49-50; 57 sgg.)'. Cfr. Marrani. 2004, p. 20.

same words were used by Dante to confirm Cino's poetic qualities.[33] It is true that Cino is alive at the time Dante wrote the *Commedia* but perhaps, by using the term 'dolci detti', Dante hoped that this may act as a further invitation to ensure that the excellent form of Cino's poetry was aligned with its content, exactly in line with what Dante had told Cino in the sonnets of the *tenzone*. An evocation of Cino's poetry, if detected here, may be an elegiac reflection, which is implicitly encapsulated in canto XXVI.[34] On his side, Cino never misses the chance to present Dante as model for many aspects of poetry, especially of love. According to this reading, many aspects of Dante's poetry, from Cino's point of view, can be traced back to that sphere of love, that can, in turn, be traced back to the canons of the 'stil novo'. As Pirovano claims,

> Con la morte di Dante è venuto meno un modello altissimo di poeta e di guida morale. Nonostante la *Commedia* fosse terminata e già in parte, se non tutta, nota, Cino preferisce delineare un'immagine di Dante 'cantor amoris'.[35]

Beatrice is explicitly mentioned in Dante's consolatory *canzone Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte*, and she is an essential element in this text, since she assumes a role in relation to Dante – Beatrice represents the place to return to, she is the one who had been praised by Dante, and who, according to the *Avegna ched el m'aggia*, says in her own words that she had been the object of Dante's praise: 'laudando me ne' suo' detti laudati' (CXXV, v. 74). The last lines of Cino's *consolatoria* for the death of Beatrice contain what Dante anticipates at the end of the *Vita nova*, and it may have contributed to the appearance of Beatrice in *Inferno* II:[36]

> Disse: 'Beatrice, loda di Dio vera,
> ché non soccorri quei che t'amò tanto,
> ch'uscì per te de la volgare schiera? […]'
> (*Inf.* II, 103-105)

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[33] Brugnolo detects a possible reference in the first lines of Cino's *consolatoria* for the death of Dante and *Purg*. XXIV, 55-66. Cfr. Brugnolo. 2004, pp. 167-168.
[34] Barolini. 1993, p. 114.
[35] Pirovano. 2012, pp. 687-688.
[36] Cfr. chapter 4.

However, despite the fact that the *Commedia* is certainly in Cino's mind when he writes *Su per la costa*, in the *canzone* Beatrice remains confined to the archetype of the woman of the 'stil novo'. Cino, either voluntarily or unconsciously, is attracted by that world of the 'stil novo', that has always constituted not only the hallmark of his poetry but, specifically, his dialogue with Dante.[37] As I mentioned already, in the last sonnet that Dante writes to Cino, *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, Dante finishes it with the phrase 'dolci detti' (CXXX *a*, v. 14), the same phrase that is used in *Purgatorio* XXVI, as an expression that embodies the 'stil novo'. As a consequence, an arc that begins in *Io mi credea* and reaches its peak of definition in *Purgatorio* XXVI can be traced. In this sense, the *Vita nova* and the poetic tendency of the 'stil novo' can be seen as central to the dialogue between Dante and Cino. Following this interpretation, the words of *Inferno* II (vv. 103-105) can be read as a response to the scenario which Cino had foreseen in the consolatory *canzone* for Beatrice's death:

   Mirate nel piacer, dove dimora
la vostra donna ch'è in ciel coronata;
ond'è la vostra spene in paradiso
   e tutta santa omai vostr'innamora,
contemplando nel ciel mente locata.
(CXXV, 57-61)

Dante moves further from this scenario and develops it with such novelty and complexity by giving Beatrice a new role. In *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, the last sonnet that Dante writes in reply to Cino, Dante tells Cino not to follow his impulses and to instead return to the right path and ensure that his conduct is aligned with his 'dolci detti' (CXXX *a*, v. 14). In this instance, Dante tells Cino that there must be an alignment between his conduct and his poetry:

   Però, se leggier cor così vi volve,
priego che con vertù il correggiate,
sì che s'accordi i fatti a' dolci detti.
(CXXX *a*, 12-14)

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[37] Marrani. 2004, p. 23: 'Tornando a Cino e al suo epicedio dantesco, importava in conclusione mettere a fuoco l'immagine di Dante *cantor amoris* che quel testo, mi pare, fondamentalmente rende, o per lo meno suggerisce con una certa insistenza pur a *Commedia* ormai terminata se non certo già in gran parte nota e diffusa. Dubito che l'evidenza del rilievo sia tale da metter sulla strada dell'antidantismo ciniano, palese esclusivamente nel feroce astio che il pistoiese, se lui ne è l'artefice, manifesta sostanzialmente contro la *Commedia* (e a quel punto anche contro il suo autore)'.

Su per la costa, therefore, represents a synthesis of Cino's understanding of his model, Dante. In fact, it encloses the main topics the two poets discuss.[38] In this *canzone*, therefore, there are many condensed aspects which Dante and Cino shared in the textual dialogue. In addition to Beatrice's love and presence in relation to Dante, the theme of exile and, therefore, the political theme also emerges in the last stanza:

> Canzone mia, a la nuda Fiorenza
> oggima' di speranza, te n'andrai.
> Dì che ben pò trar guai,
> ch'omai ha ben di lungi al becco l'erba.
>   Ecco, la profezia che ciò sentenza
> or è compiuta, Fiorenza, e tu 'l sai:
> se tu conoscerai,
> il tuo gran danno piangi che t'acerba;
>   e quella savia Ravenna, che serba
> il tuo tesoro, allegra se ne goda,
> ch'è degna per gran loda.
> Così volesse Iddio che per vendetta
> fosse deserta l'iniqua tua setta!
> (CLXIV, 27-39)

The shared destiny of Dante and Cino as exiled people takes on the traits of criticism of Florence.[39]

The textual dialogue between Dante and Cino unfolds on multiple levels. Beyond direct communication with the interlocutor, the dialogue is strongly intertextual: textual and lexical repetitions, precise expressions and even concepts are discussed in profound and complex ways. In this sense, Dante's death does not end the dialogue, as Cino's last text *Su per la costa* is a further piece within this textual dialogue. This last *canzone* seals and exemplifies the dialogue between Dante and Cino in strong ways and becomes a tool to further understand both Cino's view of Dante and Dante's view of his friend, Cino.

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[38] Mercuri. 2014, p. 1107: 'Nella prima stanza centrali sono la morte di Dante e il suo destino oltremondano, mentre, nella seconda e terza stanza appaiono centrali, rispettivamente, il tema letterario e quello politico; dunque poesia e politica, il cui nesso, secondo Cino, connota la figura di Dante scrittore e intellettuale, il quale, all'inizio del viaggio in Paradiso, aveva denunciato con sdegno la vile micropsichìa dei suoi contemporanei affatto privi del desiderio di gloria poetica e politica'.

[39] Marti. 1969, p. 863, note 3: 'Firenze priva di speranza (le parti della città e dell'esule immerito qui si rovesciano, a tutto favore e merito dell'esule)'.

CONCLUSION

The key issue that sparked my interest in pursuing my research concerned the absence of a direct reference to Cino da Pistoia in Dante's most important and influential piece of work, the *Commedia*. However, during the development of the project, this question changed considerably: can we talk about a presence of Cino in the *Commedia*? This approach opened up to a series of other queries, which led me to build and shape the structure of my thesis; among these, I asked myself how the relationship between Dante and Cino forms and modulates in relation to their individual biographic and poetic development. Besides, the purpose of this thesis was not only to analyse in which way the relationship between the two friends Dante and Cino influenced the composition of the *Commedia*, but also how the entire relationship takes shape around some major aspects of both poets' oeuvre. Providing a comprehensive and broad account of the relationship between Dante and Cino, through their dialogue, is grounded in the analysis of the texts the poets exchanged, but also in the intertextual influence that, I argue, can be detected in the exchange that endures even when the direct dialogue ends. Indeed, even if from a certain point onwards, the text exchange ceases to happen, both Dante (in the *Commedia*) and Cino (in his consolatory *canzone* for the death of Dante) prove to have interiorised the discussion pursued in the poetic dialogue they had in the previous years and that they enacted in their later pieces of work.

When we speak about an absence in the *Commedia* we understand it in various ways, not just at a narrative level but at many other levels of interpretation as well. If we base our consideration on what Dante expresses about Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, completed shortly before the *Commedia*, we expect a major role of Cino in Dante's masterpiece. Instead, there is no direct reference to him in the *Commedia*. In order to outline the *status quaestionis* of this strand of research, I have started by building my research on the work of Robert Hollander (1992). The scholar expresses the hypothesis that Dante's original plan was perhaps to differently construct the major poetic role assigned to his beloved Beatrice, as a consequence, to mention Cino da Pistoia in *Paradiso* XVII-XVIII, because of the consolatory *canzone* that he wrote for the death of Beatrice. In this perspective, the initial role saved for Cino was due to the fact that he 'had come close to expressing the special nature of Dante's love for

Beatrice'.[1] Despite the importance and relevance of Hollander's essay, his argument differs from mine in important ways. In fact, I argue that, before attempting to suggest a hypothesis to solve the 'problem' of the absence of Cino in the *Commedia*, it is crucial to interpret that apparent absence in light of the previous phases of the relationship between Dante and Cino. Therefore, I demonstrated that the presence of Cino in the *Commedia* is detectable on an intertextual level and that the dialogue between Dante and Cino still continues in the poem.

With regard to methodology, the starting point of my research is the close reading and textual analysis. I have consciously grounded my research on the texts of the exchange between Dante and Cino I selected, and on the historical, cultural, and social period the poets experienced. This approach, which is both philological and historical, allowed me to build a solid and thorough examination, through which I could move onto the phase of the relationship in which there is no text exchange anymore. The passage to analysis of the phase in which there is no direct exchange but there is the presence of intertextual references and of a broader influence is made possible thanks to the findings emerged from the previous textual analysis.

In this thesis I focused on the fact that the relationship between the poets can be traced by looking at themes mostly discussed in the exchange of texts. Besides, I demonstrated that, even though the direct exchange comes to an end, the dialogue between Dante and Cino shifts onto the intertextual level. Furthermore, I explained and proved that some crucial ideas that the poets discussed openly in their exchange, have an outcome in some passages of Dante's *Commedia*. For this reason, I argue that the dialogue between Dante and Cino is extremely important to both poets in terms of their individual poetic construction. The exchange serves as a space of intellectual challenge, allowing the poets to confront each other on different yet pivotal topics for both of them, such as friendship, love, poetry, exile, free will, and Beatrice. My work contributes to the field of Dante studies, especially as regards the theme of Dante's metaliterary and metapoetic reflections, thanks to his relationship with poets contemporary to him. I do this by interpreting some important and structural passages of the *Commedia* in the context of the relationship Dante had with his friend Cino.

In chapter 1, I thematise friendship, which constitutes the premise and the basis through which the dialogue between Dante and Cino can effectively happen. I aimed

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[1] Hollander, p. 203.

to give account of the idea of friendship that the poets inherit and that has an outcome in their own individual poetic works. In order to do this, I started off by offering a terminological framing that is related to dialogism, employing the definition of this category offered by Bakhtin, Bowe, and Giunta, which I then applied to my reading of the relationship between Dante and Cino.[2] Besides, I highlighted the importance that friendship has in particular for the generation of the 'stilnovisti' which, as Contini claims, is the necessary premise which allows this exchange to take place.[3] In this context, the *tenzone* is particularly fitting as, especially in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, this genre develops, and it serves to deal with complex questions. Moreover, I completed the contextualisation by analysing the way in which the theme of friendship develops and unfolds in the Italian *comuni* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. I pursued this chapter by combining this historical account with the examination of the cultural legacy on the topic that Dante and Cino inherited. I argued that Dante and Cino's idea of friendship is shaped by the combination of a set of classical and Christian sources, which contributed to the formation of a common conception of this theme. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Cicero's *De Amicitia* on the one side, and the Bible on the other are the key texts to set the coordinates on which this concept develops at Dante's time. These sources have been perfected and cultivated by, for instance, Augustine (*Confessiones*), Boethius (*De consolatione philosophiae*), and Aelred of Rievaulx (*Spiritual Friendship*), which I take into consideration in this wide account. In the end, I applied this theoretical framework to the actual relationship between Dante and Cino and I analysed how friendship as a concept emerges through their dialogue.

Chapters 2 and 3 place close reading at the core of the analysis. In these chapters, I examine the exchange of texts between Dante and Cino, employing detailed textual analysis as the foundation of my work, and subsequently advancing critical interpretations regarding the various aspects addressed by the two poets. In chapter 2 I examined the text that I consider to be the real first start of the correspondence, the *canzone* that Cino writes to Dante on the occasion of the death of Beatrice (*Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*), as well as the first sonnets of the *tenzone*: Cino's *Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice* and Dante's *I' ho veduto già senza radice*. Indeed,

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[2] Cfr. Bakhtin. 1981; 1984; Bowe. 2020; Giunta. 2021.
[3] Cfr. Contini. 1960, p. 443; see also 1976, pp. 8-9.

I identify this group of texts as belonging to the first phase of the dialogue between the poets, which, I argue, creates a continuation of a stylistic and poetic attitude which owes a debt to Dante's *Vita nova*. Dante and Cino, by placing themselves in the tradition of lyric poetry, challenge different sets of themes, which include death, love, the dichotomy between sacred love and profane love, consolation, and Beatrice. I demonstrated that Cino has an active role in the development of Dante's poetics. In *Avegna ched el m'aggia* Cino was able to render the conceptualisation of the new type of lyric poetry Dante shows to have elaborated in the *Vita nova* with the 'stile della loda'. By projecting Beatrice in Heaven in his *consolatoria*, Cino demonstrated himself to be the only one, among Dante's friends and peers, to have understood the path Dante would follow in his forthcoming works. Especially this first phase of the relationship is a moment of experimentation in which the poets employ a rich set of knowledge and layers of communication, which are rooted in a polyhedric tradition that both poets share. By looking at this, I demonstrated how this exchange has an impact on the poets' poetic and intellectual practice.

The second phase of the dialogue that I identified is discussed in chapter 3. This corresponds to the second part of the *tenzone*; besides, I considered complementary to the interpretation and examination of this phase, the passages in which Dante mentions Cino in the *De vulgari eloquentia*. This phase is extremely rich for multiple reasons. The texts deal with a series of concepts, topics, and matters which are vital for both the exchange, but also for the individual literary outcomes of both poets. Due to the relevance of each of these themes, I decided to structure the chapter by addressing each of them and problematising them in light of the entire exchange of texts and of the individual pieces of work the poets produced in the same years. Indeed, the second phase is datable between 1303 and 1306, when both poets are in exile and it makes them share the same condition of outsiders. Initially, the first texts written in this phase seem to continue on the path traced in the previous stage, thus following the themes which are extensively treated in the *Vita nova*. Indeed, I argue that, in this context Cino and Dante employ some of the same schemes which pertain to the sphere of consolation, and they do that by merging the sacred and the profane in their definition of love. For Dante at this stage, Cino assumes a role that may be interpreted as replacing the role Cavalcanti had until the 'libello' and becomes the privileged one with whom Dante discusses love poetry. However, Cino becomes significant also for

Dante's intellectual and poetic development in the phase when Dante is transitioning from the stage of the *Vita nova* to the stage in which he writes the *Convivio* and thus wants to define himself as *philosophans*. Especially when dealing with the crucial question whether the soul can pass from one passion to another passion, and thus on the relationship between love and free will, Cino plays a crucial role for Dante's intellectual formation. By labelling Cino as *cantor amoris* in the *De vulgari eloquentia*, Dante employs his friend and places him in a position which lets Dante highlight the philosophical dimension of his own poetry.

The conclusion of this phase is marked by a divergence of views that has been established over several years between Dante and Cino. Apart from the diverging view on love, the incompatibility expands and involves other aspects discussed in their relationship, which is mostly related to poetic matters. Especially in the last sonnet Dante writes to Cino, *Io mi credea del tutto esser partito*, Dante does not see a correspondence between Cino's poetic ability and the context that Cino conveys with his poetry. I argue that the lack of adherence between these two aspects is what leads to the end of their biographic and poetic friendship. Despite the formal end of the exchange of texts, I showed in chapter 4 that the dialogue continues and develops only on the level of intertextuality at the time of the writing of the *Commedia*. I have identified this as the third phase, which is centred on demonstrating the ways in which we can detect intertextual references to the previous exchange with Cino. Therefore, I examine Dante's poem in relation to the previous stages of the dialogue with Cino. This represents an original and innovative perspective to interpret the *Commedia*. Namely, I determined three major areas in which we can analyse the presence of references to the ways in which Dante and Cino discussed some pivotal issues: the relationship between love and free will, the theme of exile, and the figure of Beatrice and her voice.

The theme of free will, especially in relation to love, is central in the *tenzone* with Cino and it represents a concept that Dante shapes and develops over the years. This will have its final definition in the *Commedia*, but this conceptualisation is the outcome of refinements of thought that partly emerge through the exchange with Cino. I argue that the final position that Dante states in the *Commedia* partly owes a debt to the discussion he had with Cino, as it helped him challenge and refine his own thoughts. The same reasoning can be done for the idea of exile as a return to Beatrice. The return

to the beloved from the exile (whether real or metaphorical) functions as a common point for the poets to shape their own poetics of exclusion and of an emotional and personal exile. Finally, the figure of Beatrice remains central in the dialogue between Dante and Cino: in the *Commedia*, Beatrice has a role of power which she exerts even through the act of speaking; this feature has only one antecedent in literature, which is Cino's *Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo*.

Lastly, in the fifth and final chapter I analyse the last piece of work which Cino writes for Dante: the *canzone consolatoria* for his death, *Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte*. Cino commemorates his friend by addressing his poetic talent in relation to love matters. At the very final moment of their relationship, Cino – even if he acknowledges the *Commedia* through a rich series of references – affirms once again his adherence to the stage of the *Vita nova* and of love poetry.

This thesis has been particularly concerned with the theme of dialogue. Through this leading focus, I have shown the impact that personal and poetic relationships can have on the intellectual formation of poets, like Dante and Cino. Exchange and friendship are two intrinsically linked concepts that are interdependent. Dialogue becomes the foundational element for an exchange that continues over time, evolving and moulding around the critical points of Dante and Cino's biographic and poetic experiences. Love remains the nucleus and pivot of this exchange, which significantly changes in nature, thus it generates spaces for reflection and intellectual growth. All of Dante's experiences will contribute to the final composition of the *Commedia*. In this regard, it is important to emphasise that the exchange with Cino encompasses multiple levels of the reality that Dante faces; indeed, it has a significant impact in literary terms, as it influences Dante's work and intellectual configuration. However, such intellectual and literary proliferation and vitality would likely not have been possible without a true and profound friendship, the *conditio sine qua non* for its existence.

Apart from underlining the outcomes of my research and what it led to, I also want to shed light on areas that extend beyond the scope of this thesis, and suggest potential avenues for future investigation. Indeed, there are future developments in the field, which have been made possible through my work, as it built the foundation for further gaps in research which can be filled in. My thesis offers a solid and comprehensive starting point which may lead scholars to speculate more extensively on the sonnets of

the *tenzone* which are still of uncertain authorship. In particular, these include three anti-Dantean sonnets, *In verità questo libel di Dante*, *Infra gli altri difetti del libello*, and *Messer Boson, lo vostro Manoello*, which seem to be out of line with what Cino states in the funeral *canzone* written for his friend Dante. However, the material evidence is not sufficient to determine with certainty if the authorship belongs to Cino. In this regard, my thesis may serve as a complementary element to support the interpretation of those sonnets, as they can be evaluated in light of all the outcomes of the different stages of the relationship between Dante and Cino that I outlined in my work. Indeed, the considerations and arguments that have emerged may open new possibilities for interpreting the authorship of those sonnets.

A further aspect which may be worth looking into in future research, in terms of understanding the possible ways in which Cino's works on law could have had an impact on Dante's *Commedia*, are the cantos of the *Paradiso* centred on Justinian. This character, as well as the wider theme of justice, may be an interesting source to understand the divergence of perspectives that lead Dante and Cino to differ, in a later phase of their lives, in terms of political views. Indeed, both were hoping for the intervention of the Emperor in Italy to resolve the violent and divided conditions of the time. With the death of Henry VII, Cino turns to a new conception of the relationship between spiritual and secular power, reaffirming the Church's authority over the Empire. According to Di Fonzo, the cause of the detachment from Cino, and thus not mentioning Cino directly in the *Commedia*, is the divergence of their political perspectives in this later stage.[4] *Paradiso* VI, in common with the sixth cantos of the *Inferno* and the *Paradiso*, is focused on political matters. Justinian in Dante holds such importance that he is the only character who speaks for the entirety of a canto, a form of perfect ventriloquism.[5] Justinian and his *Corpus Iuris Civilis* are the elements that Cino and Dante share in their views on justice, which Dante discusses in *Paradiso* XIX and XX. Despite this common ground, Dante and Cino approach the study of Justinian's *Corpus* in very different ways. Lorenzo Valterza specifies that 'Justinian's historic reform of law itself, in at least two important ways, a conversionary act' and that, 'the *Commedia*'s Justinian presents himself as a divinely inspired, and a perfected Roman law as the result'.[6] In his *Lectura*, Cino provides a systematic reading and

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[4] Di Fonzo. 2023, pp. 103-108.
[5] Valterza, p. 98.
[6] Valterza, p. 92.

interpretation of the *Corpus*, along with adapting this to the contemporary context he inhabits; he challenges the text with the exercise of reason, and avoids any type of established authority. In *Paradiso* VII, the terms 'giusto' *et similia* are frequently used in the text when Beatrice explains to Dante why Christ's Crucifixion was just, along with the term 'vendetta' (vv. 20 and 50), and the combination of these: 'giusta vendetta giustamente' (*Par*. VII, 20).[7]

Finally, the relationship between Dante and Cino can be fruitful and useful to delineate another type of relationship or even a new triangulation, between Dante, Cino, and Petrarch. In fact, Petrarch is the one that really and directly gives credit to Cino. Specifically, in the *canzone* 70 of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, *Lasso me, ch'i' non so in qual parte pieghi*, Petrarch does so openly and directly. In this, each stanza ends with the first line of a *canzone* of an important precursor. The last references include one to Dante and his *Così nel mio parlar voglio esser aspro* (v. 30), but the last example that Petrarch discusses, before himself (with a reference to *Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade*, v. 50), is Cino, with his renowned *La dolce vista e 'l bel sguardo soave* (v. 40). I find this choice of Petrarch a possible open and direct recognition of the authorial and poetic value of Cino, in contrast with the figure of Dante. This research path may contribute to a deeper understanding of some of Petrarch's choices.

My work on Dante and Cino has shown that this relationship not only enables the development of solid, innovative work in itself but also paves the way for important and interesting further developments in the field of Dantean and medieval studies, starting with Cino's relationship with his 'amicus', Dante.[8]

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[7] Valterza, pp. 98-99. Attempts to find traces of Cino in the *Paradiso* can be found, for instance, in Biscaro. 1928 and Hollander. 1992.

[8] *Dve*, I x 4.

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CXXV
Cino da Pistoia

    Avegna ched el m'aggia più per tempo
per voi richesto Pietate e Amore
per confortar la vostra grave vita,
    non è ancor sì trapassato il tempo
che 'l mio sermon non trovi il vostro core   5
piangendo star con l'anima smarrita,
    fra sé dicendo: 'Già sète in ciel gita,
beata gioia, com' chiamava il nome!
Lasso me, quando e come
veder vi potrò io visibilmente?';   10
sì ch'ancora a presente
vi posso fare di conforto aita.
Donque m'odite, poi ch'io parlo a posta
d'Amor, a li sospir' ponendo sosta.

    Noi provamo che 'n questo cieco mondo   15
ciascun si vive in angosciosa noia,
ché in onne avversità Ventura 'l tira.
    Beata l'alma che lassa tal pondo
e va nel ciel ov'è compiuta gioia,
gioioso 'l cor fòr di corrotto e d'ira!   20
    Or dunque, di che il vostro cor sospira,
che rallegrar si dé del suo migliore?
Ché Dio, nostro signore,
volle di lei, com'avea l'angiol detto,
fare il cielo perfetto.   25
Per nova cosa ogni santo la mira,
ed ella sta davanti a la Salute
ed inver' lei parla onne Virtute.

    Di che vi stringe 'l cor pianto ed angoscia,
che dovreste d'amor sopragioire,   30
ch'avete in ciel la mente e l'intelletto?
    Li vostri spirti trapassâr da poscia
per sua virtù nel ciel; tal è 'l disire,
ch'Amor la sù li pinge per diletto.
    O omo saggio, o Dio!, perché distretto   35
vi tien così l'affannoso pensero?
Per suo onor vi chero
ch'allegramente mente prendiate conforto,
né aggiate più cor morto,
né figura di morte in vostro aspetto: 40
perché Dio l'aggia locata fra i suoi,

ella tutt'ora dimora con voi.

    Conforto, già, conforto l'Amor chiama,
e Pietà priega: 'Per Dio, fate resto!':
Or inchinate a sì dolce preghiera;   45
    spogliatevi di questa veste grama,
da che voi siete per ragion richesto;
ché l'omo per dolor more e dispera.
    Com' voi vedresti poi la bella cera,
se vi cogliesse morte in disperanza?   50
Di sì grave pesanza
traete il vostro core omai per Dio,
che non sia così rio
ver' l'alma vostra, che ancora spera
vederla in cielo e star ne le sue braccia: 55
donque spene di confortar vi piaccia.

    Mirate nel piacer, dove dimora
la vostra donna ch'è in ciel coronata;
ond'è la vostra spene in paradiso
    e tutta santa omai vostr'innamora,   60
contemplando nel ciel mente locata
lo core vostro, per cui sta diviso,
    ché pinto tiene in sé beato viso.
Secondo ch'era qua giù meraviglia,
così là su somiglia;   65
e tanto più quant'è me' conosciuta.
Come fu ricevuta
dagli angioli con dolce canto e riso,
gli spirti vostri rapportato l'hanno,
che spesse volte quel viaggio fanno.   70

    Ella parla di voi con li beati,
e dice loro: 'Mentre ched io fui
nel mondo, ricevei onor da lui,
laudando me ne' suo' detti laudati'.
E priega Dio, lo signor verace,   75
che vi conforti sì come vi piace.

CXXVII
Cino da Pistoia

    Novellamente Amor mi giura e dice
d'una donna gentil, s'i' la riguardo,
che per vertù de lo su' novo sguardo
ella sarà del meo cor beatrice.   4

    Io, c'ho provato po' come disdice,
quando vede imbastito lo suo dardo,

ciò che promette, a morire mi do tardo,
ch'i' non potrò contraffar la fenice.   8
 S'io levo gli occhi, e del suo colpo perde
lo core mio quel poco che di vita
gli rimase d'un'altra sua ferita.   11

 Che farò, Dante? Ch'Amor pur m'invita,
e d'altra parte il tremor mi disperde
che peggio che lo scur non mi sia 'l verde.   14

CXXVII *a*
Dante Alighieri

 I' ho veduto già senza radice
legno ch'è per omor tanto gagliardo,
che que' che vide nel fiume lombardo
cader suo figlio, fronde fuor n'elice;   4

 ma frutto no, però che 'l contradice
natura, ch'al difetto fa riguardo,
perché conosce che saria bugiardo
sapor non fatto da vera notrice.   8

 Giovane donna a cotal guisa verde
talor per gli occhi sì a dentro è gita
che tardi poi è stata la partita.   11

 Periglio è grande in donna sì vestita:
però l'affronto de la gente verde
parmi che la tua caccia non seguer dé.   14

CXVII
Cino da Pistoia

 Dante, i' ho preso l'abito di doglia
e 'nnanzi altrui di lagrimar non curo,
ché 'l vel tinto ch'i' vidi e 'l drappo scuro
d'ogni allegrezza e d'ogni ben mi spoglia;   4

 e lo cor m'arde in disiosa voglia
di pur doler mentre 'n vita duro,
fatto di quel che *d*ótta ogn'uom sicuro,
sol che ciascun dolore in me s'accoglia.   8

 Dolente vo, pascendomi sospiri,
quanto posso 'nforzando 'l mi' lamento
per quella che si duol ne' miei desiri.   11

E però, se tu sai novo tormento,
mandalo al disioso dei martiri,
ché fie albergato di coral talento.   14

CXXVI *a*
Dante Alighieri

Perch'io non trovo chi meco ragioni
del signor a cui siete voi ed io,
conviemmi sodisfare al gran disio
ch'i' ho di dire i pensamenti boni.   4

Null'altra cosa appo voi m'accagioni
del lungo e del noioso tacer mio
se non il loco ov'i' son, ch'è sì rio,
che 'l ben non trova chi albergo li doni.   8

Donna non ci ha ch'Amor le venga al volto,
né omo ancora che per lui sospiri;
e chi 'l facesse qua sarebbe stolto.   11

Oh, messer Cin, come 'l tempo è rivolto
a danno nostro e de li nostri diri,
da po' che 'l ben è sì poco ricolto!   14

CXXVI
Cino da Pistoia

Dante, i' non so in qual albergo soni
lo ben, ch'è da ciascun messo in oblio;
è sì gran tempo che di qua fuggìo,
che del contraro son nati li troni;   4

e per le variate condizioni
chi 'l ben tacesse, non risponde al fio:
lo ben sa' tu che predicava Iddio
e nol tacea nel regno de' dimoni.   8

Dunque, s'al ben ciascun ostello è tolto
nel mondo, in ogni parte ove ti giri,
vuoli tu anco far dispiacer molto?   11

Diletto frate mio, di pene involto,
merzé per quella donna che tu miri,
d'opra non star, se di fé non se' sciolto.   14

CXXVIII
Cino da Pistoia

    Dante, quando per caso s'abbandona
lo disio amoroso de la speme
che nascer fanno gli occhi del bel seme
di quel piacer che dentro si ragiona,   4

    i' dico, poi se morte le perdona
e Amore tienla più de le due estreme,
che l'alma sola, la qual più non teme,
si può ben trasformar d'altra persona.   8

    E ciò mi fa dir quella ch'è maestra
di tutte cose, per quel ch'i' sent'anco
entrato, lasso, per la mia fenestra.   11

    Ma prima che m'uccida il nero e il bianco,
da te che sei stato dentro ed extra,
vorre' saper se 'l mi' creder è manco.   14

CXXVIII *a*
Dante Alighieri

    Io sono stato con Amore insieme
de la circulazion del sol mia nona,
e so com'egli affrena e come sprona,
e come sotto lui si ride e geme.   4

    Chi ragione o virtù contra gli sprieme
fa come que' che 'n la tempesta sona,
credendo far, colà dove si tona,
esser le guerre de' vapori sceme.   8

    Però nel cerchio de la sua palestra
liber arbitrio già mai non fu franco,
sì che consiglio invan vi si balestra.   11

    Ben può con nuovi spron' punger lo fianco,
e qual che sia 'l piacer ch'ora n'addestra,
seguitar si convien, se l'altro è stanco.   14

Epistola **III**

1 Exulanti Pistoriensi Florentinus exul inmeritus per tempora diuturna salutem et perpetue caritatis ardorem.

2 [1]. Eructuavit incendium tue dilectionis verbum confidentie vehementis ad me, in quo consuluisti, carissime, utrum de passione in passionem possit anima transformari: de passione in passionem dico secundum eandem potentiam et obiecta diversa numero sed non specie; quod quamvis ex ore tuo iustius prodire debuerat, nichilominus me illius auctorem facere voluisti, ut in declaratione rei nimium dubitate titulum mei nominis ampliares.

3 Hoc etenim, cum cognitum, quam acceptum quamque gratum extiterit, absque importuna diminutione verba non caperent: ideo, causa conticentie huius inspecta, ipse quod non exprimitur metiaris.

4 [2]. Redditur, ecce, sermo Calliopeus inferius, quo sententialiter canitur, quanquam transumptive more poetico signetur intentum, amorem huius posse torpescere atque denique interire, nec non huius, quod corruptio unius generatio sit alterius, in anima reformari.

5 [3]. Et fides huius, quanquam sit ab experientia persuasum, ratione potest et auctoritate muniri. Omnis namque potentia que post corruptionem unius actus non deperit, naturaliter reservatur in alium: ergo potentie sensitive, manente organo, per corruptionem unius actus non depereunt, et naturaliter reservantur in alium; cum igitur potentia concupiscibilis, que sedes amoris est, sit potentia sensitiva, manifestum est quod post corruptionem unius passionis qua in actum reducitur, in alium reservatur.

6 Maior et minor propositio sillogismi, quarum facilis patet introitus, tue diligentie relinquantur probande.

7 [4]. Auctoritatem vero Nasonis, quarto De Rerum Transformatione, que directe atque ad litteram propositum respicit, superest ut intueare; scilicet ubi ait, et quidem in fabula trium sororum contemtricium in semine Semeles, ad Solem loquens, qui nymphis aliis derelictis atque neglectis in quas prius exarserat, noviter Leucothoen diligebat: 'Quid nunc, Yperione nate', et reliqua.

8 [5]. Sub hoc, frater carissime, ad prudentiam, qua contra Rhamnusie spicula sis patiens, te exhortor. Perlege, deprecor, Fortuitorum Remedia, que ab inclitissimo phylosophorum Seneca nobis velut a patre filiis ministrantur, et illud de memoria sane tua non defluat: 'Si de mundo fuissetis, mundus quod suum erat diligeret'.

[To the Exile from Pistoja a Florentine undeservedly in exile wishes health through long years and the continuance of fervent love.

1 The warmth of your affection has addressed to me an expression of signal confidence, wherein, my dearest friend, you put the question whether the soul can pass from passion to passion; that is to say, from one passion to another, the nature of the passion remaining the same, but the objects being different, not in kind, but in identity. Although the answer would more properly have come from your own lips, you have nevertheless chosen to make me the arbiter, to the end that by the solution of this much debated question you may enhance the renown of my name.

2 How welcome, how grateful this was to me when I heard of it, words could not convey without falling lamentably short of the truth; wherefore you, being acquainted with the cause of my reticence, must yourself take the measure of what I have left unexpressed.

3 Behold, there is given below a discourse in the diction of Calliope, wherein the Muse declares in set phrase (though, as poets use, the meaning is conveyed under a figure) that love for one object may languish and finally die away, and that (inasmuch as the corruption of one thing is the begetting of another) love for a second may take shape in the soul.

4 And the truth of this, although it is proved by experience, may be confirmed by reason and authority. For every faculty which is not destroyed after the consummation of one act is naturally reserved for another. Consequently the faculties of sense, if the organ survives, are not destroyed by the consummation of one act, but are naturally reserved for another. Since, then, the appetitive faculty, which is the seat of love, is a faculty of sense, it is manifest that after the exhaustion of the passion by which it was brought into operation it is reserved for another.

5 The major and minor propositions of the syllogism, the entrance to which lies open without difficulty, may be left to your diligence for proof.

6 It remains to consider the authority of Ovid in the fourth book of the *Metamorphoses*, which bears directly and literally upon our proposition; 'namely, the passage wherein the author sayst' (in the story of the three sisters who were contemptuous of the son of Semele), addressing the Sun, who after he had deserted and neglected other nymphs of whom he had previously been enamoured, was newly in love with Leucothoë, 'What now, Son of Hyperion', and what follows.

7 In conclusion, dearest brother, I exhort you, so far as in you lies, to arm yourself with patience against the darts of Nemesis. Read, I beg you, the *Remedies against Fortune*, which are offered to us, as it were by a father to his sons, by that most famous philosopher Seneca; and especially let that saying not pass from your memory: 'If ye were of the world, the world would love his own.]

CXXIX
Cino da Pistoia to Moroello Malaspina

Cercando di trovar minera in oro
con quel valor cui gentilezza inchina,
punto m'ha 'l cor, marchese, mala spina,
in guisa che, versando il sangue, moro.   4

E più per quel ched i' non trovo ploro,
che per la vita natural che fina:
cotal pianeta, lasso, mi destina
che dov'io perdo volentier dimoro.   8

E più le pene mie vi farie cónte,
se non ched i' non vo' che troppa gioia
vo' concepiate di ciò che m'è noia.   11

Ben poria il mio signore, anzi ch'io moia,
far convertire in oro duro monte,
c'ha fatto già di marmo nascer fonte.   14

CXXIX *a*
Dante Alighieri to Cino da Pistoia, in name of Moroello Malaspina

Degno fa voi trovare ogni tesoro
la voce vostra sì dolce e latina,
ma volgibile cor ven disvicina,
ove stecco d'Amor mai non fe' foro.   4

Io, che trafitto sono in ogni poro
del prun che con sospir si medicina,
pur trovo la minera in cui s'affina
quella virtù per cui mi discoloro.   8

Non è colpa del sol se l'orba fronte
nol vede quando scende e quando poia,
ma de la condizion malvagia e croia.   11

S'i' vi vedesse uscir de gli occhi ploia
per prova fare a le parole cónte,
non mi porreste di sospetto in ponte.   14

CXXX *a*
Dante Alighieri

Io mi credea del tutto esser partito
da queste nostre rime, messer Cino,
ché si conviene omai altro cammino

a la mia nave più lungi dal lito;   4

   ma perch'i' ho di voi più volte udito
che pigliar vi lasciate a ogni uncino,
piacemi di prestate un pocolino
a questa penna lo stancato dito.   8

   Chi s'innamora sì come voi fate,
or qua or là, e sé lega e dissolve,
mostra ch'Amor leggermente il saetti.   11

   Però, se leggier cor così vi volve,
priego che con vertù il correggiate,
sì che s'accordi i fatti a' dolci detti.   14

CXXX
Cino da Pistoia

   Poi ch'i' fui, Dante, dal mio natal sito
fatto per greve essilio pellegrino,
e lontanato dal piacer più fino
che mai formasse il Piacer infinito,   4

   io son piangendo per lo mondo gito
sdegnato del morir come meschino;
e s'ho trovato a lui simil vicino,
dett'ho che questi m'ha lo cor ferito.   8

   Né da le prime braccia dispietate,
onde 'l fermato disperar m'assolve,
son mosso perch'aiuto non aspetti: 11

   ch'un piacer sempre me lega ed involve,
il qual conven che, a simil di beltate,
in molte donne sparte mi diletti.   14

CLXIV
Cino da Pistoia

   Su per la costa, Amor, de l'alto monte,
drieto allo stil del nostro ragionare
or chi potra montare,
poi che son rotte l'ale d'ogni ingegno?
   I' penso ch'egli è secca quella fonte,   5
ne la cui acqua si potea specchiare
ciascun del suo errare,
se ben volèn guardar nel dritto segno.
   Ah vero Dio, ch'a perdonar benegno

sei a ciascun che col pentir si colca,   10
quest'anima bivolca,
sempre stata e d'amor coltivatrice,
ricovera nel grembo di Beatrice.
    Qual oggimai degli amorosi dubî
sarà a' nostri intelletti secur passo,   15
poi che caduto, ahi lasso,
è 'l ponte ov' e' passava i peregrini?
    Nol vegg[end]o [di] sotto [da le] nubi,
del suo aspetto si copre ognun basso,
sì come 'l duro sasso   20
si copre d'erba e talora di spini.
    Ah dolce lingua, che con t[u]oi latini
facéi contento ciascun che t'udia,
quanto doler si dia
ciascun che verso Amor la mente ha volta,   25
poi che Fortuna dal mondo t'ha tolta!

    Canzone mia, a la nuda Fiorenza
oggima' di speranza, te n'andrai.
Dì che ben pò trar guai,
ch'omai ha ben di lungi al becco l'erba.   30
    Ecco, la profezia che ciò sentenza
or è compiuta, Fiorenza, e tu 'l sai:
se tu conoscerai,
il tuo gran danno piangi che t'acerba;
    e quella savia Ravenna, che serba   35
il tuo tesoro, allegra se ne goda,
ch'è degna per gran loda.
Così volesse Iddio che per vendetta
fosse deserta l'iniqua tua setta!