1. The story is set in Florence, in 1515 (or maybe 1516); it takes place, to be more precise, just outside Porta San Gallo, one of the gates to the city, in a locality called “Il Pio.” The countryside began in those days at the city walls, and an isolated house stood in that neighborhood beyond the gate. Its owner, Filippo Strozzi, a rich and rather powerful man in Florence, had come up with an original idea. In that house, away from the city and indiscreet eyes, he provided lodgings to a group of courtesans, for his own pleasure and entertainment, and that of his company of friends. We know the names of some of these women: Camilla called ‘la Pisana,’ Alessandra called ‘la Fiorentina,’ Beatrice, Brigida. They all lived in that house. When they were not receiving the visits of Strozzi and his cronies, they managed household affairs, kept track of expenses, and performed the tasks necessary for the proper functioning of a sort of family. They took care of each other when they were ill. They helped one another with their hair, clothes, make-up, and other accoutrements of beauty. They almost never went out. It is almost impossible for us to imagine such a way of life. Yet these women imagined it and lived it “as if” it were possible and real. In order to do this, they wrote.

We certainly do not want to glamorize their situation, which to some may have already sounded like an idea for a film. This is not a refined salon we are talking about, nor are these the so-called “honest” courtesans (those of the most elevated and acceptable standing, the Gaspara Stampas, Veronica Francos, or Tullia d’Aragonas). These women were virtual prisoners, and their male friends were busy and negligent of their needs. These women lived a precarious lifestyle, but aspired nevertheless to a sort of intellectual redemption by recreating an “elevated” world in writing. In this way, they pursued a myth, a perhaps already impoverished one, but one which shone brightly in their imaginations: the world of the Court and its poetry. The fact of these women’s aspiration seems extraordinary to me.

2. Letters issued from the solitary home of these women, messages in bottles. Almost always addressed to “favorite” friends, they deal with common matters: love, separation, jealousy. The letters observed, in effect, a crystallized
and abstract lyrical norm like that which can be found in the poetry of Petrarch or the Petrarchists, a fact more disconcerting (and even pathetic) when we consider their rhetorical situation, one of complete isolation. The case of our correspondents thus stands at the opposite pole from that of the Petrarchian norm.

This in itself could be interesting. But we are talking about lyric poetry, and in particular the *canzonieri* and other verse collections — their structure, their evolution in the sixteenth century, and their audience. So the moment has come to read some passages from these letters. Things should be much clearer afterwards.

I will quote only one example, but there are many. It is a letter from Camilla to Francesco del Nero, her usual correspondent (and brother-in-law to Niccolò Macchiavelli), who alternated in this capacity with Filippo Strozzi. Camilla, who, moreover, was Francesco’s favorite, wrote:

E credimi che non iscrivo adesso per chiacchiera, ché non ho persona al mondo che più ami e di ch’io sia piú tutta sua che vostra, e porto sigillato nel cuore ogni benefizio che da voi ricevo, né mai sarò sazia di amarvi e ringraziarvi a tutte l’ore, e benedico el giorno e la prima causa che mi vi fece noti, ché tutto quel bene che ho l’ho da voi, e nella amicizia vostra mi vego nobilitata ed essaltata. / Voi adunque siate la mia corona, la mia gloria, e un vero paradiso non finto, dove io ritruovo ogni delizia, ogni bene e tutto quel ch’io posso desiderare. [...] E, dite, dove potrei io trovare accumulate tante virtù, dove tante gentilezze, e dove, dico, tanto favore? Voi m’avete tolto il gusto d’ogni altro. E se bene el vedervi m’è tolto, la impressione sta ferma, l’amor costante, el desiderio fervente, né mai uman forza può far ch’io non v’ami, e vedròvi, se io dovessi morire (14: 58-59).

[And believe me I am not writing now to make small talk. I have no one in the world whom I love more and of whom I am more his than yours, and I carry sealed in my heart every kindness which I receive from you, nor will I ever have enough of loving you and of thanking you every moment of that day, and I bless the day and the first thing that caused us to notice each other, because all the good things which I have, I have gotten from you, and in your friendship I see myself ennobled and exalted. / May you be therefore my crown, my glory, and a true paradise, not make-believe, where I find every delight, every good thing and all that I could desire. [...] And, tell me, where could I ever find accumulated together so many virtues, where so much kindness, and where, tell me, so much favor? You have made me lose interest in all others. And even if I am deprived of seeing you, the impression remains, the steadfast love, the fervent desire, nor could human forces ever make me stop loving you, and I will see you, if I should die in doing so.]

The letter is a curious mixture of the language of everyday use (“You have made me lose interest in all others”) and of elements of the lyric style, with generic citations (the crown, virtue, death, the heart, kindness, delight, glory, etc.) as well as direct borrowings or actual copyings from Petrarch or from Petrarchism (of especial note, the expressions taken from Petrarch’s *Rerum
From the 'Auctor' to the Authors

3. These letters bring out something which is more than simple intellectual curiosity. They seem to be a living historical metaphor; and that is exactly how they should be interpreted. It has been said that to impose a lyrical, and in any case stylistic, canon on the sixteenth century becomes a sort of domination, an imperialism exercised from on high (from the auctoritas of Petrarch, later appropriated by Pietro Bembo) and directed downwards (to the Petrarchist poets in general, who had become the clerics in this new hierarchy). It may be true. For example, it may seem terrible to us living in the twentieth century that these women should accept from their masters not only confinement but their language as well. But – putting ourselves back in the sixteenth century – we should not forget the other aspect of this intellectual and social question. It was precisely thanks to that grammar, those rules, and the cultural circuit, that it was possible for subjects, until then outcast and mute, to gain access to the written word. To insist upon the metaphor: in that isolated house outside Florence this culture introduced mythic dimensions, and gave these women the possibility (some will say only the illusion) of ‘elevated’ and noble communication. The metaphor aside, it is an aspect which we should keep in mind when we speak of the Renaissance lyric, which is the effect of a historical transformation that resulted from the dissolution of the culture of the Court and its passage from the hands of the Humanist aristocracy to those of the urban bourgeoisie. This process produced mythology as well as nostalgia. But it produced something more, as we will see.

4. Let’s turn to Venice now. In 1529 (the year before the princeps of his Rime, and four years after the Prose della volgar lingua), Pietro Bembo answered Niccolò Astemio, who did not believe in the sincerity of the love of Francesco Petrarca for Laura and considered it merely a literary fiction:

Se il Petrarca non v’ha potuto persuadere egli di essere stato veramente innamorato di Madonna Laura, con tanti suoi belli e cari scritti volgari, e specialmente col primo suo sonetto, nel quale non è verisimile che egli fingersse a sua vergogna: e con tanti altri latini, ne’ quali egli fa testimonio di ciò, io non presumerò già di poterlovi persuader io.
[If Petrarch was incapable of persuading you that he was truly in love with Madonna Laura, with so many of his precious and beautiful works in the vernacular, and especially with his first sonnet, in which it is improbable that he was faking his shame, and with many other Latin texts, in which he bore witness to that, I will not then presume to be able to persuade you myself.]

It is clear that Bembo did not only guarantee the truth of that love (from two centuries earlier). He did something more: he affirmed the capacity of the poetic text ‘in and of itself’ to give indisputable demonstration of the fact. The poetry, the vernacular ‘canzoniere’, does not only refer to the history of that exemplary experience; it is at the same time the strongest proof of it. It is in itself the history. It does not demonstrate the truth: it is, without a doubt, the truth.7

5. Let’s now consider together the two personal examples, the ‘low’ one of the courtesan Camilla and the ‘high’ one of the soon-to-be-cardinal Bembo. They allow us to formulate two observations, fundamental to our understanding of the Renaissance lyric generally, and of the particular reason for its rapid diffusion and widespread acceptance and imitation. The first: the lyric and its language give access to a code. They themselves are a noble and ‘elevated’ code. The second: the poetry – that poetry – is the mirror of an exemplary life, it is true, and it has the miraculous capacity of making life true and noble. It is itself life. Moreover it is unchanging and endures throughout the centuries. Naturally it is necessary to possess the key, which is, in fact, imitation, and is available to all.8

6. Can we be surprised that our friend Camilla (who also composed verse, now lost) wrote more or less like Petrarch? Even without having read Umberto Eco, she had understood perfectly that the nobility of the medium extended to the ‘transmitter,’ and – extraordinarily – independently of the message. It is a limited case of the power of the word ‘in and of itself’ in a context, that of the early sixteenth century, which was moving towards a celebration of the written word.9 Certainly Camilla would not have had the right to written expression even a decade earlier. From the example then, many reflections arise which I will now enumerate, even if in a problematic and provisional manner. They will in my opinion to some extent change our view of lyric writing in the Renaissance.

7. Camilla’s letters permit us in fact to verify some historical facts. The perhaps most surprising thing for us is that the letters reveal no sense of inferiority, no fear of authority. Camilla has no problem mixing her appeals to Francesco, in the style of the love lyric, with medical bulletins on state of health of her friends Alessandra and Beatrice, who suffered from inevitable
professional illnesses. Let's try to put the fact into historical context. In between the lines of Camilla's writing, we can see — coming to us 'live' shall we say — that a series of canonic Petrarchan elements come to the fore and eventually win out over those which are more banal and commonplace. We can admit that this is rather striking. Everyday life loses importance in favor of the imagined life. This is precisely the process which will lead in only a few years time to Bembo's *Prose* (1525) and then to his *Rime* (1530), and one we will come to call the standardization of linguistic and lyric Petrarchism, and exclusion of its unauthorized elements.

8. Did Camilla know Petrarch? And was she, therefore, self-consciously citing him? The answer is certainly 'yes', in both cases. Let's begin with the second question. Semiology has taught us that a transmitter cannot exist without a receiver: in other words, that the code must be known by author and reader, and, if not, it is useless. Therefore, when Camilla says in another letter that she feels "un continuo morire senza morte" ("a continuous dying without death" 53: 152-53) she knows very well that she is paraphrasing lines 43-44 of RVF 331 (the *canzone* "Solea da la fontana di mia vita"), or at least that this phrase belongs to the repertoire of Petrarch or the Petrarchists; and she also knows that her receiver and interlocutor (Francesco Albizzi, a Florentine and friend of Giovanni dalle Bande Nere) will understand the allusion, given that he belongs to the same circle of those with average education, and thus can interpret the same code since he knows the key.

As for her first-hand knowledge of Petrarch, there is nothing more probable: in the decade 1501-1510, in Italy, nine different editions of the *Canzoniere* were printed (certainly more than are being published today); moreover, those precise years saw a boom in vernacular publishing. In the first decade of the century, Serafino Aquilano's poetry came out in some twenty-five editions (and amounted to twenty-five per cent of all published poetry books); Tebaldeo's had eight editions, Cariteo's four, Cornazzano's six, while the 'local' fortunes of Burchiello began to decline (to only two editions), as did those of the non-classical poets generally (see Pantani). Camilla, who has by now become a sort of special correspondent for us from the world of the semi-educated in the early sixteenth century, regularly registers this vogue in her citations: in a letter, for example, she cites two verses from Lorenzo's *Nencia* (3: 32). Moreover, in the decade 1511-1520 some 127 different books of poetry were printed, with Serafino Aquilano's numbers declining but still beating Petrarch's, eighteen editions to fifteen (with the latter, however, regaining some ground lost the previous decade — see Pantani). The publishing explosion of the decades to follow will wipe out the 'old' courtly lyric of the late fifteenth century, bring Petrarch to a total of 162 editions for the century (Dante will reach only 33), and will above all allow printing houses, those in Venice for example, to publish in their anthologies a myriad of new poets and
lyrics. In just forty years, from 1545 on, the presses of Giolito will publish a staggering amount of work, some two hundred and forty authors and something like eight thousand books of poetry; and in the course of the XV and XVI centuries more than five thousand editions of poetry books will be printed in Italy (most of them, of course, during the period from 1501 to the end of the century) (see Quondam, “Mercanzia” 82, and Fedi, La memoria 48-49). All of this we know today, after going through the statistics, our computers at the ready. The impression becomes one of an exploding literary universe. We must then try to understand why.

9. The phenomenon is so broad and ‘modern’ in its achievements that it cannot be sufficiently explained by the traditional and rather banal critical slogans (imitation, repetition, domination, etc.). The process was at one time called, sometimes confusedly, Mannerism; but I would rather call it, using more modern terms, “democratization” or expansion; or, as I have summarized in my title, passage from the idea of an ‘Auctor’ (unique, imitable but unreachable, a true secular Bible of poetry) to ‘authors’ uncapitalized, such as the two hundred and forty poets published in Venice by Giolito. The space in which the lyric flourished was no longer the Court (by now decadent); the form now entered different urban and bourgeois circles, passing through the place that supplied the imprimatur and the intellectual authorization – no longer the Prince but the printing house. Industry, not craftsmanship, now shaped the possibilities of literary production. If the Humanist poet, who learned the essential elements of lyric poetry in his artistic self-education, could say, ‘I, too, am a poet,’ the Bembian lyric poet could make of that affirmation a system: ‘We, too, are poets.’ In other words, this period marks the end of the Humanist concept of culture: an ancien régime dies and a ‘third estate’ is born.

10. One must acknowledge that Petrarch had greatly facilitated such matters. His poetry lent itself better than most to reuse. It was composed of fragments that one could reunite at will like a puzzle. It came from the distant past, yet always remained the same and could serve the future. All of the poets of the high Renaissance were conscious, in their mania for refoundation, of speaking not so much to their friends in their restricted court society, as to all those who spoke that language wherever they might have been, and therefore also for posterity. Theirs was a totally Renaissance idea of an eternal language, remaining fixed and constant while History decays, a language and a poetry from the past that would remain the same in the future, even as the concepts of the State and the Court fell apart – a historical transformation which would indeed come to pass, at least in Italy.

If we examine this socio-literary phenomenon through the facts and not through our post-Romantic ideologies, we can see that the Petrarchan lyric
tradition is – contrary to what we have always believed – a long, often dramatic search for identity in a moment of crisis. If, therefore, the language of Petrarch and the practise of poetry became the modern classical canon, that came about in an unexpected manner: it is the symptom of a vitality, of an obstinate desire to participate, to bear witness to one’s own presence, rather than the sanctioning of an accepted slavery. To return to our initial metaphor, it is the sign of a tenacious desire for a way of communicating that can even reach beyond the walls of the marginalized house of those women.

Precisely for this reason, for a Renaissance lyric poet, and therefore also for anyone who participated in that culture, the problem was to be recognizable, not to be original (see Fedi, La memoria, 23-80). Paradoxically, if Camilla had written in an extremely original Florentine or Pisan dialect, with strong and distinguishing characteristics, she would interest us less; certainly she would have had little chance to communicate with the outside world. It is for this reason that the voices of Berni, of Niccolò Franco, of Ruzante, of the various ‘Pasquini’ and on the anti-Petrarchan side, of Aretino, have remained, in effect, original but unheard.

One might object that this solution was a compromise. Very true. But it is necessary to consider that for a writer of the sixteenth century, writing outside the ‘genres’ was unthinkable; the anti-Petrarchists themselves followed, after all, a precise formula of their own. And moreover, one must add that this permitted in difficult times the use of the written and the spoken word – always a dangerous impulse. And the proof is that in this new and volatile situation, an unprecedented thing happened: new groups interested in affirming a public identity appropriated the language of others (see Dionisotti, 191 ff.). Let us now consider the crucial implications of this phenomenon for our understanding of the Italian Renaissance.

11. We began with the example of a woman, and we have spoken almost exclusively of women writers. Surely we are treading on rather dangerous ground. The fact is that for decades we did not know how to approach the subject of women writers, a social fact quite new for the Renaissance. Until just over thirty years ago, women poets were given short and somewhat embarrassed chapters in the critical literature, as if they only amounted to a folkloristic curiosity or vague sociological phenomenon. This was also a time during which Renaissance lyric poetry was considered to be derivative and unimportant. I believe that the reason for this deafness or blindness consisted, above all, in the fact that new and different phenomena were being read with traditional glasses: it is not possible to deal with thousands of lyric compositions in the way one deals with a single, isolated and ‘original’ author. An intertextual approach is necessary. One must make comparisons.

Changing the visual angle and the instruments, we realize that the lyric medium permitted this small miracle too: the words written by a man,
Petrarch, about a hypothetical feminine image or symbol could be reversed and used quite well by women about men. In 1552 Stefano Colonna understood this perfectly and, paraphrasing Petrarch, wrote an entire Canzoniere from the point of view of Laura (publishing it, however, anonymously). But his work was a parody of a parody, an obviously serious one, and perhaps an intellectual exorcism as well. In the poetry actually written by women, there is something truly worthy of note: the male to whom the poetry was addressed lost symbolic value and became more real, less stereotyped. The proof of this fact consists in this: that in the ‘masculine’ collections of lyrics and rhymes of the sixteenth century, the female image is increasingly elided, while women’s lyric poetry renders increasingly more concrete and present the masculine image, identifying him by first and last name. (The opposite case occurs as well: Laura Terracina composed ‘masculine’ sonnets, that is, poems that purport to be written by a man. This is an extreme case of canonic mimesis, and a rare one). In my opinion, these different modes of symbolizing the individual object in Petrarchan poetry are a revolutionary fact, which it seems no one has yet sufficiently noted. We can deduce from it that this phase of expansion and ‘democratization’ of the Petrarchan lyric permitted the re-creation of a kind of lyric poetry that was in decline: the ‘masculine’ Petrarchism of the high Renaissance, which had begun to break up into poetic sequences less and less tied to the model of the lyric love story. That form, of course, formed the basis of the Rerum vulgarium fragmenta, the work of the father of all Western lyric poetry. So it is necessary, in conclusion, to make some observations which have already been sufficiently demonstrated, and which are certainly not part of our critical conventions or canons. And with this, the title of this essay could change to: “Writing Lyrics in the Italian Renaissance: from the ‘Auctor’ to the Authors, Male and Female.” Such a statement, in its last phrase, institutes a shift, almost a return to the beginnings of our inquiry.

12. I have formerly argued the claim that the genre of the canzoniere in the manner of Petrarch vanishes after Bembo, at around mid-century, and the “book of poems” takes its place. That is to say, from imitation we pass to citation, with very few exceptions. What I call the “book of poems” is characterized, in short, by the loss of a sentimental and structural center: from the narrative-symbolic sequence we pass to poetic nuclei in logical or analogical series, from hypotaxis to parataxis. Of the original structure only some purely external elements remain: the introductory sonnet or final poem, for example. The rest is broken up into isolated groupings: love poems, poems of praise, of correspondence, and of religious devotion (as in the Rime of Torquato Tasso, coming at the end of that process of disintegration). This is the obvious symptom of a crisis, the clearest and most conspicuous proof of which are the lyric anthologies containing the work of various authors (and dozens
of them were published from 1545 on). The most obvious symptom of crisis was the fact that, after Bembo, many of the greatest lyric poets of the Renaissance never published their complete canzonieri, which almost all went to press posthumously (Ariosto, Da Porto, Molza Guidicciioni, Della Casa, Bandello, Michelangelo, Marmitta, etc.).

If we examine the case of the women poets, we encounter our first surprise. Out of nine ‘official’ and ‘greatest’ women poets (Laura Terracina, Gaspara Stampa, Veronica Franco, Tullia d’Aragona, Laura Battiferri, Chiara Matraini, Vittoria Colonna, Isabella di Morra, Veronica Gambara), a good six of them published their canzonieri (meaning structured collections by a single author) during their lifetimes, often in a number of editions. Gaspara Stampa failed to do so by only a few months: she died on April 23rd, 1554, and at the end of the same year her sister Cassandra published her volume. Isabella di Morra, murdered in 1546 by her brothers, did not have time. Therefore, actually only Veronica Gambara failed to publish her own verse; this fact, however, seems to be a social expression of her upper-class detachment, rather than a fully conscious cultural choice. A lady from Correggio, born in 1485 (hence the oldest of the group), she belongs to another generation and to a court circle of which she was the central figure. Her case, which is unique, thus confirms rather than contradicts the tendency we are examining.

Our analysis carries us toward a perhaps new perspective on the Renaissance lyric poetry. In the high Renaissance, beginning in 1538 (the date of the editio princeps of Vittoria Colonna’s love poetry, the first collection – to my knowledge – written entirely and exclusively by a woman) and ending with the years of their greatest publishing success (between 1560 and 1570), it is the women poets, and not the men, who give stability to Renaissance Petrarchism as a compact, powerful, consolidated lyrical practise. The canzoniere form, in crisis elsewhere, in the poetry of women remains stable, secure and popular, and is often inventively interwoven with different motifs (the spiritual theme, for example in Vittoria Colonna), and often uses non-canonical meters (tercets, octaves). The mere fact is thought-provoking. Using the canon established by others (Petrarch, Bembo), these women did what was perhaps the only thing possible: they used it as a means of affirmation and consolidation of their personal expression; and in order to do that they necessarily had to embody that expression in something enduring, visible and well-structured – a book, which bore the name of the woman poet on its cover, and became a kind of social redemption (for those who were courtesans) and an expression of a proud desire to create. In fact, writing verse was not an ephemeral task for them. In my opinion, even if their poetry was often of ‘middle’ tone (neither ‘high’ nor ‘low’), they succeeded through the ‘macro-text’ in imposing their own text, and in forestalling the eventual demise of the original concept of the canzoniere. It is an accepted fact that after 1560-70, in
the midst of the Counter-Reformation, many of the possibilities and openings for free expression were closed, and this experiment – as well as its alternate poetic possibilities – slowly died out.26

13. At this point, we might ask ourselves what happened to Camilla, the aspiring poet, writer of letters, and common courtesan. Hers is a story which ends badly, as sometimes happens. We know that after 1516 she moved to Rome – and this is an important date for history, since Florence was in decline politically as well as culturally, and Rome was a rich city full of prelates and opportunities for making money. We find Camilla there in 1526, in the “Ponte” district, officially registered as one of the four thousand nine hundred courtesans of the city (which then had fifty-five thousand inhabitants). She does not seem to have written any more, except for a letter in 1520. But her tracks were not completely lost. She is mentioned in fact, still together with her friend Alessandra Fiorentina, in the Ragionamento del Zoppino fatto Frate, e Lodovico, puttaniere, dove contieni la vita e genealogia di tutte le Cortigiane di Roma, a short, pseudo-Aretinian work of 1539, a sort of life and genealogy of the courtesans of Rome. It is a brutal reference. Camilla is catalogued as a thing of no use, one of the “old whores” (‘puttane vecchie’), who are “by now all worn out” (‘ormai troppo stantie’).27

Camilla’s end might perhaps inspire a reflection on the utility of poetry and its myths. But that would of course be another story.

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NOTES

1 The letters are contained in the ms. 2.3.432 of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence (formerly Magliabechiano 8.1402), prov. Strozzi, n. 1028. Many letters from this manuscript were edited in the 19th century by Ferrai, recently republished in a new and improved edition by Romano (all quotations are from the latter edition). For bibliography and textual notes on editions and manuscripts (other letters are in fact in three mss. now in the Archivio di Stato in Florence), see this edition (19-22 and 159-62).

2 “Benedetto sia ’l giorno, e ’l mese, et l’anno, / et la stagione, e ’l tempo, et l’ora, e ’l punto, / [...]”, etc.: Francesco Petrarca, from the Rerum vulgarium fragmenta 61.1 ff. (hereafter cited as RVF); “Ella sel ride, et non è pari il gioco: / tu paradiso, i’ senza cor un sass, / o sacro, aventuroso et dolce loco” (RVF 243.12-14); “S’una fede amorosa, un cor non finto, / un languir dolce, un desiar cortese; / [...]”, etc. (RVF 224.1 ff.).

3 See for instance RVF 291.8: “ma se ’l vo’ riveder, conven ch’io mora” (but obviously there are many possible citations about ‘morte’ and ‘morire’ throughout the Canzoniere). The illustrations of Petrarchan quotations could continue from other letters: “I will say no more, forgive me if I have written too much, for where love is lodged, there is no rule” (14); “as for my obligation to you it would first be possible to number the stars as never in the least part could I declare it” (16); “indeed I would first wish to die a thousand times a day, rather than ever a similar thing should occur to me” (27); “I beg Your Lordship to deign to remove me from this labyrinth” (ibidem); “since to be or to live without you I cannot; that since the day I parted from you I have felt and
always will feel a continuous dying without dying” (53: the only one from Rome, September 4, 1520); and so on. Letters from Camilla’s women friends are written even more conspicuously in
this style; their more inferior literary talent made their lyrical borrowings much more obvious, and their use of \textit{ars retorica} more perceptible and naive.

4 On this subject, see Mazzacurati, “Pietro Bembo: la grammatica” 195 ff., and “Pietro Bembo.”

5 See Quondam, “La letteratura;” “Nascita della grammatica;” “La letteratura in tipografia;” and
“Mercanzia.” On this subject, see also Fedi, \textit{La memoria passim}.

6 Cited in Baldacci xv.

7 See Fedi, \textit{La memoria} 72 ff.

8 On the historical idea and meanings of \textit{imitazione}, see Gmelin; Santangelo; Della Terza; and most
of all Greene, and Fedi, “La fondazione.”

9 See the essays mentioned in note 5, and Bologna 634 ff.

10 See, for example, in the same letter 14 cited above, at the end: “La Lessandra si raccomanda a te [sic] e così Beatrice, la quale sta senza febbre, ma tuttavia in letto” (60-61).

11 “Bello et dolce morire era allor quando, / morend’io, non moria mia vita in seme” (RVF 331.43-44).

12 Born in 1486, he died in 1556. He was a friend of Giovanni dalle Bande Nere and of Pietro
Aretino, who sent to him in 1526 a letter concerning the report of Giovanni’s last hours and death.

13 See Pantani. On Tebaldeo’s collections of lyric poetry, see the critical edition of his \textit{Rime}. For
information about the printing in the Renaissance, see also Cannata Salamone.

14 For a general discussion of this problem, see Quondam, \textit{Problemi}; and Mirollo.

15 On Giolito’s activity in Venice, see Bongi; Fedi, \textit{La memoria}, 47 ff.; and Quondam, “Mercanzia.”

16 For a general description of the state of the Italian literature in this period, see Dionisotti, 191 ff.

17 On this point, see especially Santagata, \textit{Dal sonetto}; and \textit{I frammenti}.

18 At this point we see the separation, typical of Italy, between spoken language and written lan-
guage, which took place precisely because of the vehicle of the lyrical poetry and precisely in the
Renaissance; we also see at this point the separation between poetry and prose, and the lyric
and realism, which caused fiction and the novel to arrive late, and with great difficulty, in Italy, with
respect to the other European cultures (Camilla herself places some real verses here and there
in her prose; and here it is truly a question of automatic writing).

19 \textit{I Sonetti; le I Canzoni, et i I Triomphi} de M. Laura / in risposta di M. Francesco / Petrarcha / per
le sue rime in vita, / et dopo la morte di lei. About this ‘libri di rime’ and others of this kind, see
Fedi, “Sole”.

20 On the vanishing image of the woman (the ‘unique’ one of the \textit{canzoniere}, like Laura or
Fiammetta or Beatrice) in the books of lyrics during the XVI century, see Fedi, \textit{La memoria}
77-78 and 228-29; “‘L’imagine’” 46-73 (particularly 68-69). Some hints also in Gomi, “Ve-
ronica” 39-40. On the women poets in the Renaissance generally, see Ferguson, Quilligan and
Vickers. See also Rosenthal, “Veronica” 227-257 (with an extensive bibliography on this subject);
and \textit{The Honest Courtesan}. The \textit{Rime} of Veronica Franco are now published, with an important
foreword, in a new edition by Bianchi. See also Jones, (especially since my point of view is not as
sociological as hers). On women writers, primarily during the Jacobean Era in England, see
Lewalski (with bibliography). On an interesting image of a woman in the Renaissance, to whom
a book of rhymes was dedicated by various poets in 1561, see Jacobson Schutte (with a substantial
bibliography). On the topic generally, see Zancan (and the bibliography given in the footnotes of
the essay).

21 For the lyrics of Laura Terracina (the first edition of her \textit{Rime} was published in 1553), see Ferroni
and Quondam 329-39.


23 See Ersopamer; Gomi, “Il libro;” Fedi, \textit{La memoria} 75-76 and 261-263; and Boaglio.

24 The first edition of the \textit{Rime} of Veronica Gambara was published two centuries after her death, in
1759 (Veronica died in 1550), during the lifetime of the poetess there were only two or three
publications of single poems in miscellaneous collections. For the other editions of \textit{Rime}: Veronica
Franco, 1575 (died 1591), Tullia d’Aragona, 1547 (died 1556), Laura Battiferri, 1560 (died
1589), Chiara Matrani, 1555 (died probably in 1604), Vittoria Colonna, 1538 (died 1547), Gaspara Stampa, 1554 (died 1554, a few months before the edition), Laura Terracina 1553 (died probably in 1577). Isabella di Morra, who died in 1546, wrote only a few poems, and they were published in a miscellaneous volume in 1552 (Rime). On Chiara Matrani; perhaps the most recent discovery made by scholars in the field of Renaissance women poets, see Rabitti; and the critical edition of her Rime e Lettere.

25 Rime de la divina / Vittoria Colonna / Marchesa di / Pescara. / Novamente stampate / con privilegio. For the Rime of V. Colonna, see the critical edition.

26 On this point, see Dionisotti 182-204.

27 The Ragionamento is now edited by Cicognani (the citations at p. 48). For information about the life of Camilla, see also Romano 25 (and the bibliography here given).

WORKS CITED


Ferrai, Luigi Alberto. Lettere di cortigiane del secolo XVI. Firenze: Libreria di Dante, 1884.


*Sonetti; le / Canzoni, et i / Triomphi / de M. Laura / in risposta di M. Francesco / Petrarca / per le sue rime in vita, / et dopo la morte di lei. / Pervenuti alle mani del Magnifico M. Stephano Colonna, Gentil'huomo / Romano [...] // A San Luca al segno del Diamante. MDLIII // col.: In Vinegia per Comin da Trino / di Monferrato L’Anno / MDLII.*
