On the latest stemmas of the *Commedia* (2007-2017)

A lab report [1]

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Résumé : In the decade between 2007 and 2017, the text of Dante's Commedia underwent a large and substantial revision : this process was triggered by a deep rethinking of the tradition which - in 2001 - led to the revolutionary edition by Federico Sanguineti. This essay examines the new stemmatic configurations proposed by the latest publishers, with particular attention to those of Paolo Trovato and his group.

Mots-clés : Dante's philology ; *Commedia* ; critical editions.

1

Italian twentieth-century critical editions of Dante's *Commedia* are closely connected with the calendar. Both the anniversary of the Poet's birth and the anniversary of his death coincided with two editions that were to leave a mark on textual studies of Dante later on : in 1921 Giuseppe Vandelli, after twenty years of work on the manuscripts, established the 'official' text for the Società Dantesca Italiana [2] ; later on, between 1966 and 1967 (two years after the date of the centenary) Giorgio Petrocchi had four volumes published for the Edizione Nazionale [3]. These choices are emblematic, but

1. The following text represents, with a few modifications, my talk at the *Conserver, éditer, transmettre : la « Divine Comédie »* workshop in Paris, organised by DYPAC (Université de Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines) and the IEA (Institut d'études avancées de Paris), 21st June 2017. For the abbreviated references (Lat. *sigla*) to the manuscripts of the *Commedia*, I always refer to Sanguineti 2001, p. XIII-XLII. A couple of works published after 2017 (i.e. the period covered by this paper) are placed between square brackets in the footnotes. I am grateful to Elisabetta Perissinotto for her suggestions about translation work and to Susan Baddeley who revised this essay.

2. Dante 1921, p. 481-836 ; on Vandelli as an editor of the *Commedia* see Abardo 1995.

3. Dante 1966-1967.

most of all they have been the opportunity to boost Dante philology, stimulating an intense methodological debate and, more generally, drawing the attention of scholars to the text and its tradition.

Michele Barbi's work in relation to the 1921 edition was fundamental : since the end of the previous century he had been refining the *loci critici* system (first followed, then abandoned by Vandelli) ; in those years we also find Mario Casella's study on the tradition : in 1924 he drew up the first *stemma* of the *Commedia* [4].

In the 1966-67 edition Petrocchi coined the definition of *antica vulgata* (referring to all the mss copied before 1355) and the first evidence of interest in the Northern tradition of the *Commedia*, before and after the poem's edition [5]. These moments of intense scholarship around the twenties and the sixties of the last century were a very fruitful season indeed for the studies on the *Commedia*, from both a methodological and an editorial point of view.

The years 1995 and 1996 represent a crucial stage : in this time span, two works, in particular, engaged scholars in an intense debate. On the one hand, in 1995, a new critical edition by Antonio Lanza, which relied on a single *bon manuscrit*, [6] sparked a discussion on the convenience of pursuing a proper witness classification ; on the other hand, a cutting-edge article published in 1996 (but written in 1994) by Federico Sanguineti saw a large-scale classification of the tradition. He drew up a deeply innovative *stemma*, favouring the Northern tradition (β) and only including U (= Urb) [7].

In 2001, after these preparatory studies, Sanguineti published a new Lachmannian edition, based for the very first time on a non-Florentine manuscript, which allowed a better restoration of the text, despite showing Emilia-Romagna linguistic features. This 2001 edition by Sanguineti [8] caused a stir – not unpredictably – and elicited a large amount of sceptical opinions about the *stemma* and the version chosen as a basis [9] ; at the same time, however, the remarkable innovation itself was a stimulus towards new reflections : proof of this renovation was a conference held in April 2003 in Ferrara (*La tradizione della « Commedia » oggi. Problemi filologici, stratigrafia linguistica, aspetti prosodici*) and a clear assessment of the editions of texts that had been proposed in the twenty-first century, « da Casella a Sanguineti », published by Marco Veglia in the same year [10].

4. Casella 1924 (see the *stemma* p. 23) ; this study communicates the results of research on the tradition ; in the previous years it had led to the edition of the text (Dante 1923, with a brief introduction).

5. The fundamental theoretical basis for the *antica vulgata* which would be chosen by Petrocchi 1955 and Petrocchi 1957 ; on the Northern tradition, see the first period studies (Petrocchi 1966 and Petrocchi 1967), up to the nineties (Petrocchi 1995) ; a brief profile of Petrocchi as a Dante philologist can be found in Bellomo 1999.

6. Dante 1995 ; very negative assessment by Trovato 1996 and Abardo 2001a, p. 288-290 ; less categorical by Esposito 1996 and Marti 1996 ; positive, on the contrary, by Cursietti 1997.

7. Sanguineti 1994 (1996), then Sanguineti 1998 ; later on, for a revised version of the stemma, see Sanguineti 2012, p. 358.

8. Dante 2001 ; Sanguineti's edition was electronically revised : see Shaw 2010 (and Trovato 2010a, p. 205-207, for commentary notes).

9. Abardo 2001b, Mengaldo 2001, Longoni 2002 and Segre 2002, on strictly philological works ; other, more informal, contributions are signalled by Sanguineti 2005, pp. x-xii.

10. Veglia 2003.

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The discussions that emerged from the first 2001 Sanguineti edition were made public in 2007. Two important documents were published in this year : the *Inferno* by Giorgio Inglese (and an essay in which he discussed his own *stemma*) [11] and the miscellaneous volume *Nuove prospettive sulla tradizione della « Commedia ». Una guida filologico-linguistica al poema dantesco* [= *NP*] edited by Paolo Trovato, reporting the discussions at the 2003 Ferrara Conference. In addition, in 2007 Luca Serianni intervened on the linguistic features of the poem, focusing on formal aspects of the editions [12].

From this year on, research on the *Commedia* has grown exponentially, and now concerns many different fields. Several brand-new works have been published (often followed by further discussions, particularly about methodological issues) [13] ; in addition, philological research has stimulated works in codicology and palaeography [14], hence a greater degree of accuracy was brought to the descriptions of manuscripts. New witnesses were discovered, while much effort was put into studying the ones which were less understood or known [15].

This intense research was understandably aimed basically at the classification of the witnesses and at the methodological issues connected with the editing process : further details follow in this article. What I would like to underline is that such an intense scrutiny of the tradition shed light onto contiguous areas, not directly related with publishing, but closely connected with the transmission system of the *Commedia*. Two topics – even though they do not bear directly on mainstream studies – must be kept in mind : the first being the typographical tradition of the *Commedia* between the 15th and the 16th centuries, described both generally [16] and in some specific aspects, such as the text Bembo prepared for the Aldine Press in 1502 [17] ; and the second is the role played by Boccaccio in the diffusion of Dante's poetry. Two new studies of the famous metric epistle *Ytaliae iam certus honos* [18] gave new material for discussion ; Boccaccio's *Esposizioni* have furthermore been examined in order to discover connections between this commentary and the copy or copies of the *Commedia* used by Boccaccio during his work [19].

However, textual research, as already mentioned, has been the trending field in the decade : the years between 2007 and 2017 saw the publication of nearly 60 essays

11. Dante 2007-2016 ; Inglese 2007.

12. Serianni 2007 ; for further notable questions, see note 36.

13. Works that can be mentioned are, among others, Canova 2010 ; Coluccia 2012 ; Viel 2011 ; Zaccarello 2016.

14. See Bertelli 2007 for an examination of the *littera antiqua* manuscripts ; Bertelli 2011 and Bertelli 2016 for the 14th century ones kept in Florence. I indicate here only the general studies ; specific research is not mentioned.

15. See Tonello 2016c on codices from the Kraus Collection in New York, beside manuscripts previously owned by the counts Meli Lupi di Soragna, now in Milan.

16. See Mecca 2010 and Mecca 2013b for an in-depth textual analysis of the ancient editions of the *Commedia* ; in both works a *stemma* is drawn up.

17. Tonello 2016a studied the text transmitted in Bembo's autograph (Vat. 3197) and its relationship to its sources : besides well-known models (Vat and Landino's tradition) Tonello reports three more manuscripts (Lond. Add. 19587, Est. it. 1513 and Vat. 10272) whose text could have been included in Bembo's *editio*.

18. Trovato, Tonello, Bertelli, Fiorentini 2013 (with a new edition of the poem, p. 86-11) ; see Piacentini 2014 for a different position.

19. Feola 2008 ; Tempestini 2016, p. 104-107 ; Tonello 2016d.

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concerning the tradition of the poem [20]. The debate among scholars increased over the years [21] : this process has led to new stemmatic reordering proposals (including case studies on single witnesses) [22], large-scale collations [23], and many new findings from a methodological point of view.

I shall now present a schematic report about the most important issues, that can be summed up in five points :

1.- *Classification of the more recent manuscripts and contamination.* Notoriously, *antica vulgata* criteria reflected a mistrust towards the possibility of classifying late codices : such a bias was enforced by common thought that all witnesses later than Boccaccio's *editio* were irreparably contaminated, and that contamination had spread so far in the subsequent tradition as to completely misrepresent the true genealogical relationship between manuscripts. Studies in recent years seem to consider this problem as less serious : on the one hand, Boccaccio's intervention could have been less extensive than was believed (see infra ch. 3) ; on the other hand, thanks to a better knowledge of the tradition and of copying practices in medieval workshops, extensively contaminated witnesses – previously considered unsuitable for the *stemma* [24] – have been classified [25].

2.- *Indicative errors in drawing up the stemma.* Evaluation of useful transcription errors in order to identify families has been the focus of an intense debate : a different assessment of innovations in the tradition (monogenesis *vs* polygenesis) can lead to a completely different *stemma*. Scholars focused on *loci critici* as a starting point : what had been formerly proposed by Barbi has been found to be reliable (particularly for the Florentine tradition, which was the *corpus* originally considered by Barbi) [26]. Integrative lists have been proposed : some of them have provided good results [27], others have been rejected [28].

3.- *The archetype itself.* The archetype of the *Commedia* (as in Casella's hypothesis from in 1923) did not appear in Petrocchi's *stemma* : he placed an ambiguous O at the top of the genealogical tree. But the existence of an archetype has been repea-

20. Excluding articles published in *NP*.

21. A lively exchange of opinion about the subarchetype β between Sanguineti 2009 and Trovato 2009 ; see Trovato 2015 and Mecca 2016, a more acrimonious but stimulating debate about method.

22. E.g., for Triv 1097 see Cicchella 2014-2015.

23. Bertelli 2011, p. 131-322 and Bertelli 2016, p. 201-449 (the research *corpus* is the MSS. preserved in Florentine libraries on Barbi's and Petrocchi's *loci*) ; Sanguineti 2009 and Sanguineti 2010 (on single verses) ; Mandola 2016 (on *Paradiso*'s loci) ; Mecca 2017a (on 509 manuscripts of the *Purgatorio*).

24. An exemplary case is that of the 15th century MSS. One was taken by Petrocchi 1995, p. 347-364, as an example of a manuscript too contaminated to be classified : Tonello 2013a went back to the codex and, having detected a case of contamination by juxtaposition, proposed (using Barbi's *loci*) that it belonged to the Tuscan-Florentine tradition.

25. Thorough research on contamination by juxtaposition can be found in Tonello, Trovato 2011 : this work suggests that, out of 350 manuscripts collated, 53 (nearly 15 %) were contaminated by juxtaposition, most of them being situated between 1350 and 1400, during the period of maximum production. Tonello 2012b, afterwards, focused on the relationships between four manuscripts copied by the « scribe of Pr » and identified at least 3 different ancestors, alternating according to occasional combinations. See also Tonello 2016b.

26. Barbi's canon has been widely discussed by Brandoli 2007 ; noteworthy remarks about *loci* in Zaccarello 2016, p. 481-487.

27. Inglese 2007.

28. Recently proposed hypothesis by Spagnolo 2010 and Spagnolo 2011 has been argued by Mecca 2012b ; see also infra 2.

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tedly proved by Sanguineti, Inglese and Trovato [29]. The attempt to demonstrate an archetype led to a particular situation : the archetype of the poem is identified by few errors, most of which are polygenetic, and mostly concentrated in the third *cantica* [30]. Other scholars have complained about a certain evanescence of the archetype, whatever it may be due to (interference of an ancient tradition subdivided into *canti* and *cantiche* [31] on the integral one, succeeding Dante's death ; conjectural corrections ; contamination at all levels of the *stemma*). As a result, a thorough theoretical reflection on the nature of the archetype allowed to distinguish between the historical object and a text reconstructed with the neolachmannian method [32].

4.- *Mechanical textual reconstruction.* Together with the next one (5), this was the point that created the greatest divisions amongst scholars as to method. Sanguineti's trust in a rigorous textual reconstruction, « *a norma di stemma* », has been questioned many times. The uncertainty about each node in the *stemma* (from the archetype, and downwards) spread doubt about the possibility of using indiscriminately the "majority principle" (Italian *legge della maggioranza*). It was therefore felt necessary to carry out an evaluation of the single problematic variants from time to time, not relying on traditional stemmatic acquisitions, and therefore applying rigorous internal criticism (as Vandelli did for the1921 edition) [33].

5.- *Linguistic texture and the base witness.* Until Sanguineti's edition, formal reconstruction had been pursued, going back to the most ancient Florentine dated codex (Triv) that both Petrocchi and Lanza relied on. This codex seemed to guarantee good linguistic reliability, even though it was copied by a Tuscan copyist coming from the southern countryside (Francesco di Ser Nardo, born in Barberino in Val di Pesa) about fifteen years after Dante's death (1337) [34]. Sanguineti made a revolutionary choice, using as base-text an Emilia-Romagna manuscript (U = Urb), restored from non-Florentine linguistic forms. He nevertheless resumed the debate on linguistic texture of the poem, starting from an accurate article by Luca Serianni in 2007. The linguistic reliability and the authority of Triv have been disputed by Trovato, who tested it on the basis of some northern codices [35]. Inglese, on the contrary, defended Triv, using it for his edition [36]. Angelo Eugenio Mecca stated his opinion, accepting to consider

29. About these three stemmas, see infra 2-3 ; Lanza must also be mentioned : even without a *stemma*, he still proposes the presence of an archetype (Dante 1995, p. xi note 1).

30. Inglese 2006, p. 151-154 and Inglese 2008, p. 68 ; Trovato 2007, p. 641. A summary on the question of an archetype can be found in Canova 2010, p. 70-74 and in Viel 2012, p. 995-996 ; important notes on method in Zaccarello 2016, p. 487-492.

31. Viel 2012 highlighted this aspect significantly. See also Mecca 2013a, p. 277-283, 311 ; Zaccarello 2016, p. 489.

32. Inglese 2009, p. 411-412 (and then Inglese 2012b, p. 161-162) operated a significant distinction between « prototype » (historically meaning, « a source [non autograph, or partially autograph] of the entire tradition° ») and « archetype » (« an unknown source from which stem, in a vertical line, all the recognised groups of witnesses ») ; on this hypotheis see Trovato 2013, p. 187 note 3, echoing Trovato 2005.

33. On this point see at least Inglese 2007, p. 51-52 ; Inglese 2009, p. 413-414 ; Canova 2010, p. 70-74 ; Viel 2011, p. 515-517 ; Inglese 2012a, p. 130-131 ; Zaccarello 2016, p. 492-497.

34. On the language of Triv see Geymonat 2007 (with Serianni's notes in Serianni 2007, p. 149-150). On distinctive features between archaic and 14th century Florentine, see Frosini 2014-2015, p. 208-213.

35. Trovato 2009 (then Trovato 2012) – see the following note, too, on this aspect – proposed, first only to debate the linguistic point of view, a provisional edition of *Inferno* V using two northern manuscripts : U and Bol. For more recent tests see infra 5.

36. The noteworthy debate on *veste linguistica* of the *Commedia*, begun by Serianni 2007, occupied a crucial place in a study seminar in Florence in 2008 (« *La lingua degli autori [Chrétien, Dante, Lull]* ») :

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an ancient Florentine codex, but leaving Triv in favour of others (Fior. Pal. 319 and Parm), at first glance less linguistically conditioned by a particular geographic area [37].

As this brief summary shows, the topics and issues to be considered are various and involve many scholars, who often do not agree amongst themselves. Within these boundaries, the task I have been entrusted with is a very limited assignment : giving a report on the work of the last ten years (2007-2017) carried out by the small team I belong to, our main goal being a new edition of Dante's poem based on all codices containing at least one *cantica*. In the last decade, our team collated (more or less) 600 non-fragmentary surviving witnesses in 400 *loci critici* that Michele Barbi pointed out at the end of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, to Barbi's *loci* we added around 200 new places of variation [38]. The outcome of this research has partially been published in a *Nuove prospettive 2* [= *NP2*].

2

I would now like to recall some of the key concepts of 20th century Dante philology that our project had to deal with [39].

In 1965, Giorgio Petrocchi drew up a *stemma codicum* based exclusively on the 27 most ancient witnesses, namely the 27 extant manuscripts written before 1355. After this year, Petrocchi argued, the text established by Boccaccio would irreparably have corrupted all the following copies. Petrocchi's *stemma* splits into two branches that directly descend from an original O. Petrocchi called these two branches α and β. The first one – α – represents a large family of Tuscan-Florentine manuscripts, the greatest part produced by professional scribes. From the other one – β – descend three witnesses representing the northern tradition of the poem. In a secondary branch of α, i.e. in the family *a*, the scholar believed he could identify a very authoritative area of the tradition, and from this group he chose the base text for his edition, namely MS. Triv [40] (Fig.1).

36 years after Petrocchi's work, in 2001, Federico Sanguineti published a new edition of Dante's poem : after having collated about a third of the manuscripts according to Barbi's *loci*, Sanguineti drew up a very essencial *stemma*, considering seven witnesses [41] (Fig. 2).

Looking at Sanguineti's *stemma*, we can realize that the bipartition in α and β still stands. But, as a matter of fact, in Sanguineti's *stemma*, α and β do not descend from an original O but from an archetype (ω). Furthermore, in this case the northern branch β is entirely isolated and it is represented by U. Excluding the greater part

very important notes in Trovato 2009a (then, with additional remarks, Trovato 2010b) and in Inglese 2009 ; further technical notes in Trovato 2015b, briefly more in Trovato 2009c, p. 33-34.

37. Mecca 2017b [Dante 2018 recently proposed a partial edition of the *Paradiso* on Laur. 40.12 that is here considered the oldest manuscript certainly written by a Florentine].

38. Our team consigned its results in a Microsoft-Excel file (for internal use) ; an advanced management project is available in : Renello, Bonzanini 2013.

39. These very well-known *stemmas* have been published several times, even together (e.g. in Trovato 2007a ; Bellomo 2008, p. 226-235 ; Coluccia 2012 ; Trovato 2014, p. 299-333, with an English text). Here, I am just reminding the reader of them, for the sake of convenience.

40. Dante 1966-1967, I (table without text).

41. Dante 2001, p. lxv ; discussion on the first *stemma* in Sanguineti 1994.

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of the tradition, Sanguineti based his edition on U, but the strong northern *patina* of this manuscript forced him to put much effort into linguistic restoration.

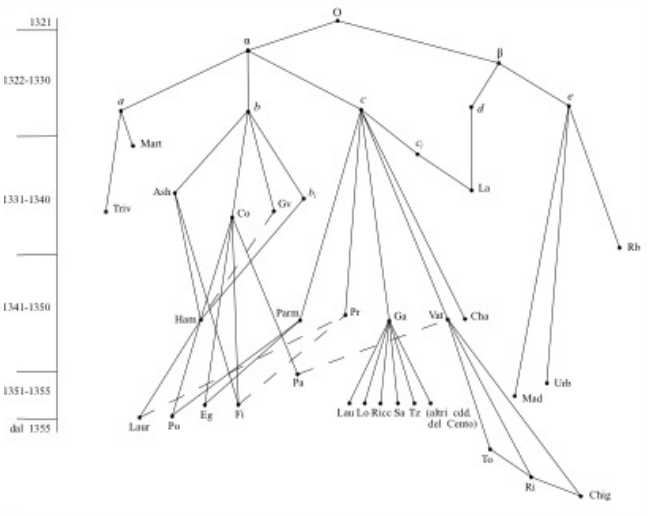


Figure 1 – Petrocchi's stemma

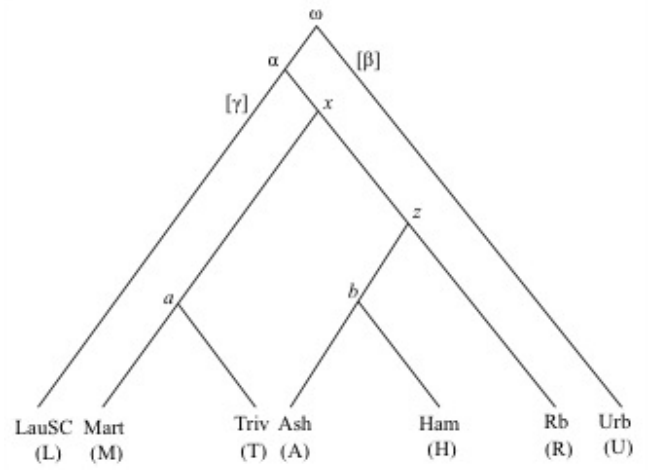


Figure 2 – Sanguineti's stemma

Finally, in 2007, Inglese chose a classification system based on errors (identified by a canon of 214 *loci*) but also on statistical emphasis among witnesses when they share the same trivialization. He proposed a very stripped-down *stemma*, gathering some of the manuscripts from the ancient *vulgata* into an archetype ω [42] (Fig. 3).

42. Inglese 2007, p. 68.

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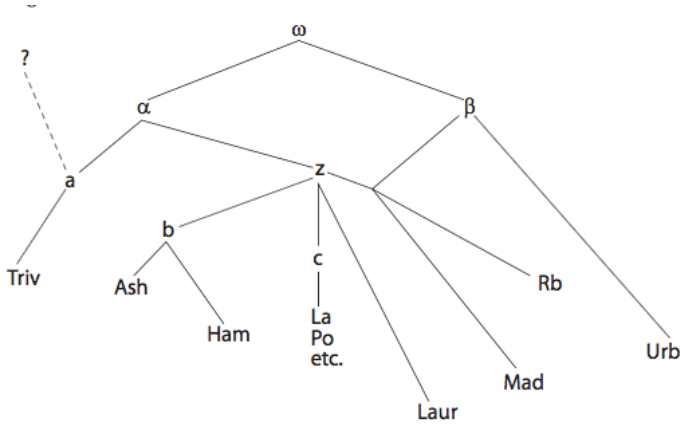


Figure 3 – Inglese's stemma

As noted, Inglese's *stemma* is an attempt to rationalize what had been proposed by Petrocchi, the number of witnesses (particularly the Tuscan ones) being reduced. Inglese outlines a description in which the status of Triv (chosen as a standard text) is enhanced, being itself one of the branches descending from α. At a glance, we can notice that in every *stemma* we have seen until now (even in Trovato's : see 4) the structure is – even supposing many contamination areas – essentially bipartite. Recently there have been scholars proposing three-branch classifications. On the one hand, Luigi Spagnolo's classification [43] gave extreme importance to MS Fior. Pal. 319 (being itself a third independent branch), but this choice did not convince scholars, who rejected it unanimously [44]. On the other hand, Mecca's new hypothesis could be more plausible and convincing : he built a tripartite *stemma*, adding a new branch σ (from the Lombard-Venetian area) [45] ; as far as I know, this hypothesis has not currently been debated by scholars.

3

These previous references were generic but useful ; I shall now show how the revision of the whole tradition allowed to formulate new hypotheses, all substantially different from the previous ones.

The issue of the northern tradition can be summarized in a few words. As Trovato's *stemma* published in 2007 shows, β is the branch that, until now, did not see substantial changes and still remains much less crowded than the opposite branch α. As

43. Spagnolo 2010 and Spagnolo 2011.

44. Mecca (2012b) was the first to underline the low reliability of Spagnolo's *loci* ; Tonello (2013d), afterwards, placed Fior. Pal. 319 within a subfamily of a_0, that is the family of a (Mart Triv). Sanguineti also expressed similar reservations (2014, p. 107-108).

45. Mecca 2013a, p. 309-311 ; further observations in Mecca 2014-2015 (on branch σ) and in Mecca 2017c.

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Sanguineti had previously observed in 2001, β loses two ancient witnesses (Rb and Mad) but acquires three later ones : F, Ubn and E [46] (Fig. 4)

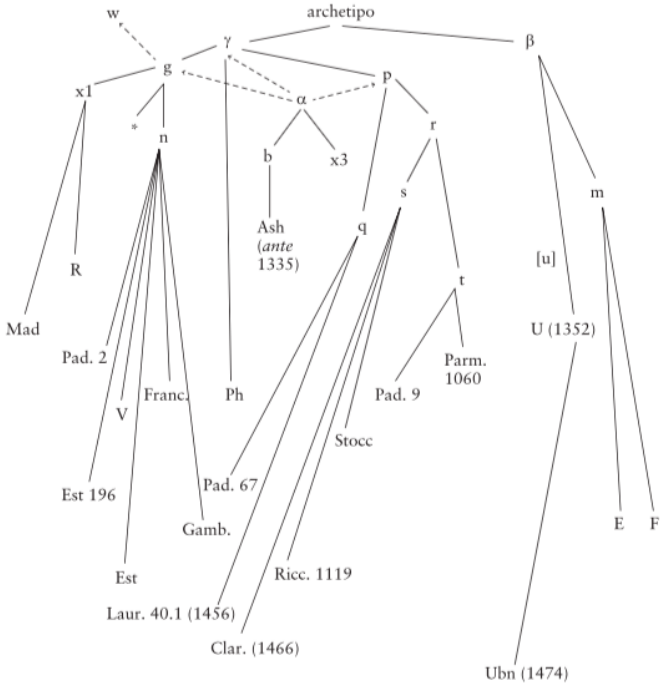


Figure 4 – Trovato's stemma (2007)

Unlike β, α has been the subject of a great deal of discussion. As a matter of fact, as we can see in the tradition drawn up by Trovato, α has been put at a lower level compared to the position it had in Petrocchi's *stemma*.

I would like to leave for a moment this question and, conversely, I would like to focus on the Tuscan-Florentine family with the only aim of observing how this part of the tradition has reacted to the addition of the more recent manuscripts.

It is possible to summarize the principal achievements related to the 'old'branch α by highlighting four main topics : 1) scribal traditions and their later by-products ; 2) the 'Boccaccio tradition' ; 3) the typographical tradition ; 4) Petrocchi's *a* family.

46. Trovato 2007b p. 702. In this reproduction, MS. Ph has been added under the lost ancestor γ. Ph which was left out due to a typographical mistake (about this accident, see Trovato 2010b, p. 83 n. 23, Trovato 2014, p. 330 and Trovato 2015a, p. 38) ; the correct *stemma* with a few other changes (a dotted line connecting α and p and the elimination of Pal from g) was printed in Trovato 2007b, p. 265, Tonello 2013b, p. 27 and Trovato 2014, p. 329. The position of Ph was discussed by Inglese 2010 who argues that this MS. mixed the text of an α MS. (close to Ash Ham Laur *c*, i.e. *z* in Inglese 2007 *stemma*) with a « non-α » one. Inglese's opinion about Ph was later rejected by Trovato 2013, p. 191-192 ; in this essay, exploiting a larger collation, Trovato was able to refine the classification of Ph by positioning it inside group g (p. 204).

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1) *Scribal traditions and their later by-products.* Our collation absolutely confirmed the existence and the consistence of great scribal groups such as the « Cento » or the « Vat » family. Furthermore, the investigation on the whole tradition discovered many late witnesses that certainly descend from these families. This fact unequivocally shows that these branches of the first Florentine production were still alive during the late 14th century and during the following century too [47].

2) *The « Boccaccio tradition ».* Despite Petrocchi's opinion, the more recent manuscripts now added to the collation allow us to identify a certain stability in this part of the tradition. For this reason, I would propose to split the discussion on Boccaccio's innovations into two further parts :

2.a) *Before Boccaccio.* Looking upstream, Boccaccio's own copies seem now to be less 'editorial' than scholars assumed in the past : in fact, their composite nature appears to be due to the textual contamination of the scribal tradition that produced Boccaccio's models. So, in this part of the Florentine tradition, and precisely in the so-called « Vat group » (*Vat*), contamination had already occurred [48]. Angelo Eugenio Mecca carefully investigated the « Vat group » and he observed an evident textual *mouvance* in the seven extant manuscripts of this family ; despite this fact, he was however able to detect the model that was the most similar to Boccaccio's copies. In fact, as Mecca proved, Boccaccio's manuscripts share many readings of three *vat* witnesses that are very similar but not identical among themselves : Laur. 40.13, Marc. Zan. 55 and Barb. 3644 [49]. Boccaccio's role in the contamination of the tradition is much less extensive : he received an already-contaminated text, and he added a metric and stylistic editing review, based on his own conjectures [50].

2.b) *After Boccaccio.* Looking downstream, the influence of Boccaccio's text on the following tradition appears now to be very limited. As a matter of fact, between the late 14th century and the end of the 15th century, only about ten witnesses repeat exactly Boccaccio's textual features and about ten others show similar readings, even though they are not entirely similar. It follows therefore that a very low percentage of late witnesses had clearly been influenced by Boccaccio's text [51].

3) *Petrocchi's* a *family.* As I mentioned earlier, in 1965 Petrocchi included in his *stemma* a subfamily, placed immediately under α, that was notable for the correctness of its text. Petrocchi called this family *a.* According to this scholar, who used only the most ancient manuscripts, *a* was composed of two witnesses : Triv, dated to 1337 and Mart, consisting in a set of readings that Luca Martini in 1515 collected from a lost

47. [Results of research on the Tuscan-Florentine tradition have recently been published in Tonello 2018].

48. Mecca 2012a studied the functioning of the *scriptorium* where Boccaccio allegedly acquired at least two codices (see Pomaro 1986) : the copy to be sent to Petrarch (Vat), and the lost ancestor of one of his own copies (probably To). Mecca, following Barbi's *loci*, found traces of contamination in *Vat capostipite* mingling Florentine tradition with a Pisan one (*b*, only referring to *Inferno*) probably mixed with scribal conjectures.

49. Mecca originally based his analysis on Barbi's *loci*, mainly referring to *Purgatorio* (Mecca 2013) ; he then collated all of the three Boccaccio autographs (Mecca 2014a).

50. A complete and in-depth analysis can be found in Mecca 2014b. The internal relationships between Boccaccio's copies are well-known today thanks also to Tempestini 2017.

51. Mecca 2012a and Mecca 2014a ; Tonello 2014 goes further in the investigation, aiming to rationalize the group *Vat* plus Boccaccio's tradition (*Bocc*) : since the contamination of the later manuscripts prevent classification through a traditional *stemma*, this large part of the tradition has been persuasively drawn up by a set of Venn diagrams (p. 103).

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manuscript that was probably copied in 1331. The very high position of *a* inside the *stemma*, the age of the two witnesses and their Florentine origin made them very authoritative in Petrocchi's eyes. Consequently, Petrocchi decided to use Triv as the base text for his work. In 2013, Elisabetta Tonello reconsidered the classification of *a* including later witnesses as well : she demonstrated that this family should be placed at a much lower level than in Petrocchi's *stemma*. As Tonello's *stemma* shows, the review of this part of the tradition sets group *a* inside a larger family named a_0. Moreover, if we observe group *a* inside a_0, we can notice that its position is far from being high : it occupies in fact the fourth level of this family, below a_0, a_1, a_s and a_u. The dotted line to the left of *a* refers to the extensive contaminations of the lost 1331 manuscript. If, as it seems, things are that way, the authority of *a* must be completely reassessed [52] (Fig. 5).

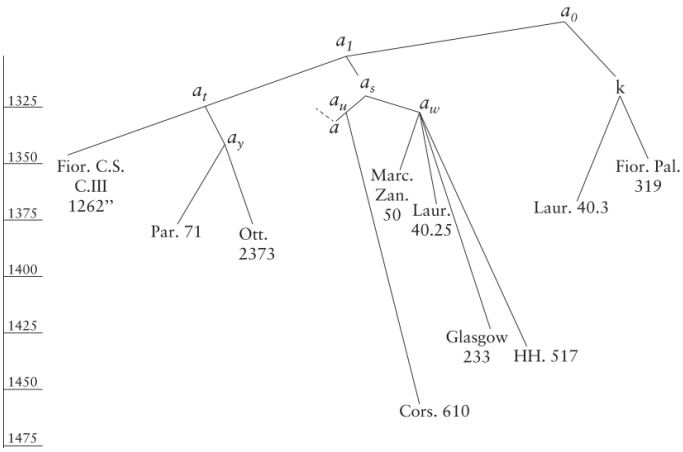


Figure 5 – Tonello's stemma (a_0)

4

So far, I have talked about the classification of α and its internal configuration that Dante scholars have repeatedly confirmed over the last century. The real problem, however, is its position inside the *stemma*.

Petrocchi, as we said, placed the ancestor of the Tuscan-Florentine family α on the same genealogical level as the northern β : both were, as expected, collocated at the first level as two independent branches descending from the same original O and without any intermediate stage.

The review of the classification proposed by Trovato in 2007, however, clearly changed the positioning of the high levels of the *Commedia*'s genealogy. In accordance with Sanguineti and Inglese, the tradition does not now depend on an ambiguous original O, but some errors allow us to hypothesize the presence of an archetype at the top

52. Tonello 2013d, p. 117 ; on Fior. Pal. 319, see also note 27.

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of the whole tradition [53]. The β branch directly descends from the archetype : the independence of the northern family is thus confirmed – albeit with some difference – as Petrocchi and Sanguineti had already supposed.

On the other side, the structure of the *stemma* has undergone substantial changes : in fact, now the Tuscan α does not occupy a position at the same level as β but it descends from a new northern ancestor which Trovato called γ. This family, γ, is composed, in addition to α, of at least two other groups (g and p) and by Ph [54].

The existence and the composition of g and p were proposed in this way by Trovato in 2007 but their classification could only be based on a few manuscripts because most of the late witnesses still had to be analyzed. It is evident that drawing a new shape of the *Commedia*'s *stemma* – once again bipartite – required a substantial effort in order to keep all the non-β grouped together. However, as the new collations clarified some provisional classifications, the nodes descending from γ have shifted their position.

Many questions arise, above all, concerning group *g*. In the 2007 *stemma*, group *g* was articulated into three branches : the first one was called *x1* and it was composed of Mad and R, two of Petrocchi's β witnesses that Sanguineti had already classified differently ; the second one was represented by an asterisk and it was composed of three manuscripts ; the last one, *n*, was a large constellation of six witnesses mainly datable from the end of 14$^{\text{th}}$ century.

In 2016, however, Tonello and Trovato (in a *plaquette* printed for a Congress with a provisional edition of *Inferno* XXXIV) discussed again the composition of *g* that Trovato considered too « evanescent » in their own previous formulation : in fact, in recent years, instead of *g* it seemed possible to glimpse two families respectively named *mad* and *bol* [55]. The first one (*mad*) would more or less coincide with the old 2007 *x1* group ; the other one would gather together some of the witnesses that in 2007 were represented with the asterisk ; besides these, *mad* contains some other new manuscripts [56].

Many uncertainties remain about the other group discovered in 2007, *p*, even though new witnesses have confirmed its existence. In 2013, in fact, relying on many manuscripts that up to this point had never been considered, it was possible to classify all the witnesses of *p* : this operation has been of paramount importance because, on the one hand, it finally traced a real shape of this group ; on the other hand it proposed an effective classification model for other areas which are still waiting for classification [57] (Fig. 6).

53. On archetype see also note 32.

54. The γ branch in Trovato's structure has been widely discussed by scholars : see Inglese 2007, p. 69-70 (Trovato 2007c answering) ; Inglese 2012a (on families *g* and *p*, p. 124-128) ; Mecca 2013a, p. 290-296 (Trovato 2015 answering).

55. On the *bol* family, see also Marchetti 2015.

56. Tonello, Trovato 2016, p. 7-10.

57. Trovato 2013, p. 204.

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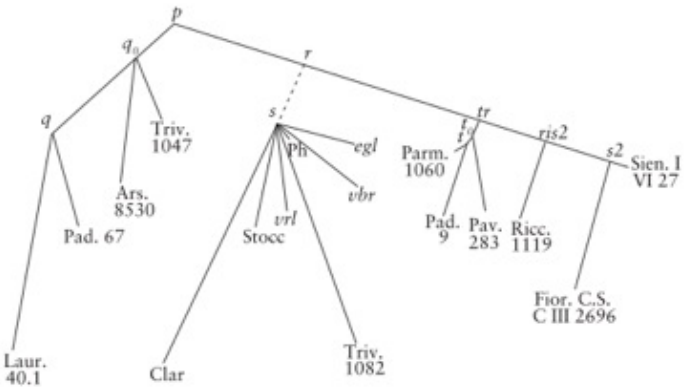


Figure 6 – Trovato's stemma *p*

If, as it seems, the existence and composition of *p* are certain, its position inside the *stemma* is uncertain. New data has emerged from a second *plaquette* published by Tonello and Trovato in 2017 with a trial edition of *Inferno* XXIII : according to the two scholars, *p* would in fact exhibit some characteristics that suggest a collocation closer to branch β than to branch γ where it had been set in 2007 [58]. So, *p* would be placed on a very high level of the *stemma*. As we can see in this simplified sketch, two collateral branches – respectively signed β and *p* – descend from a new hyperarchetype called β_0 [59] (Fig. 7).

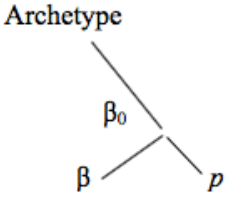


Figure 7 – Trovato's stemma β_0

5

Until now I have spoken exclusively about issues related to the classification of witnesses. In conclusion, a few words must be said about the problem of the choice of a base manuscript for a future edition. An example may be found in the 2016 and

58. Tonello, Trovato 2017, p. 7-11.

59. We must note that this configuration corresponds to branch ϵ of the *stemma* (otherwise very different) proposed by Mecca 2013a, p. 311.

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2017 *plaquettes*, in which we find the provisional edition of *Inferno* XXIII and XXXIV, with a commentary by Luisa Ferretti Cuomo [60].

If, as Trovato has long claimed, the Florentine α represents a subsequent arrangement of an ancient northern tradition, it follows that, even on the editorial side, it seems necessary to take distance from Petrocchi (who relied on Triv as a base text), Lanza and Inglese. Therefore, the base text should be chosen among northern witnesses referring to β.

In this perspective, it was decided to avoid manuscript U, that Sanguineti used in 2001. This manuscript, even though it is relatively old and, also according to Petrocchi, very authoritative, shows an overly northern linguistic *patina*. Consequently, MS. F was chosen [61]. Even though this manuscript is less ancient by a few decades than U, it has the undeniable advantages of a less marked northern *patina* and of a reasonable textual correctness.

Once the base text has been found, the text – fixed according to the *stemma* – will be corrected with a Tuscan check witness. Petrocchi's manuscript Triv was rejected : this celebrated codex written in 1337 by Francesco di Ser Nardo from Barberino has been considered too contaminated. Instead of Triv, the manuscript Parm, which is undoubtedly Florentine, was preferred. Its scribe (the notorious « Parm scribe ») must have been – at least at the beginning – one of those that Alphonse Dain used to name « *bons copistes* » [62]. It means that he was one of those scribes who copied faithfully his *exemplar*, without attempting any correction. This 'passive' attitude of the scribe would therefore seem to ensure the genuineness of his witnesses.

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60. Respectively Tonello, Trovato 2016 and 2017 and Ferretti Cuomo 2016 and 2017. Accessible online : www.academia.edu.

61. On the Florio manuscript (F), see Trovato 2017.

62. Dain 1964, p. 18-19.

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