Transferring Paremias. Cultural, Linguistic, and Literary Transitions of Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases by Vincenzo Brusantino, Pompeo Sarnelli, and John Florio

Daniela D'Eugenio
The Graduate Center, City University of New York
TRANSFERRING PAREMIAS.
CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC, AND LITERARY TRANSITIONS
OF PROVERBS AND PROVERBIAL PHRASES
BY VINCENZO BRUSANTINO, POMPEO SARNELLI, AND JOHN FLORIO

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Daniela D’Eugenio

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Comparative Literature
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
The City University of New York

2017
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05/12/2017 Hermann W. Haller
Date Chair of Examining Committee

05/12/2017 Giancarlo Lombardi
Date Executive Officer

Supervisory Committee:
Hermann W. Haller
Monica Calabritto
Clare Carroll
Nicoletta Maraschio

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
ABSTRACT

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ADVISER: Hermann W. Haller

This dissertation demonstrates how literary paremias, i.e. proverbs and proverbial phrases, constitute a rich archive of considerable historical, cultural, and linguistic significance. As discursive phenomena, paremias are usually studied in the context of oral traditions, but this study examines them in terms of what they reveal about the literary works in which they appear. Specifically, it analyzes the context in which they are employed and, through them, it extracts the author’s perspectives, references to and borrowings from previous works, responses to the social and cultural conditions of the time, and effects on the narrative. The exploration of paremias in literary texts and their references to biblical forms, to collections of Latin and Greek adages or *sententiae*, as well as to Italian and European Medieval and Early Modern texts offer new insight into an ongoing scholarly discussion of the value and role of paremias. As such, it challenges and enriches the concept of paremias, ultimately proposing new definitions and ways of interpretation that surpass limited cultural and linguistic boundaries.
The study combines a literary and linguistic analysis of Italian proverbs and proverbial phrases in four early modern texts: Vincenzo Brusantini’s *Le cento novelle* (1554), Pompeo Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata* (1684), and John Florio’s *Firste Fruites* (1578) and *Second Frutes* (1591). It investigates paremias as both linguistic tools, featuring rhetorical and stylistic elements, and as literary tools, able to affect the structure of a literary work. It aims to show how the three authors “translated” their paremias in ways that are directly related to the literary context, structure and purpose of their works, thus manipulating paremias and influencing their linguistic and rhetorical substance. The original perspective of the project allows the study of paremiac material across centuries (from 1554 to 1684), across space (from Ferrara to Naples to England), across genres (from a chivalric poem, to a language manual, to a collection of fables), and across languages (all of the three authors decided to move out of their native languages or dialects). By way of contextual analyses, paremias emerge with their idiosyncrasies: as they adapt to the genre that “hosts” them, they convey moral messages, which, despite being universal, acquire a significance specific to the context. The three authors shape the form and the content of their paremias so that they could speak in the language of the public that they were addressing.

This research shows how paremias transcend genres, languages, and cultures and how they can expand the boundaries of Italian language and literature as they circulate among writers, texts, and contexts. Despite intra-cultural and inter-cultural similarities, the reciprocal relationship between paremias and contexts determines changes and modifications in the morphological, syntactical, and lexical structure of paremias, as well as in the meanings they convey. Rather than being immobile structures of the language, they are instead dynamic entities, adapting to the exigencies of the text, the author, and the society, and at the same time influencing the text, the public, and the society with their message.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to start my acknowledgments with the person who has guided me through these years, my advisor, Prof. Hermann Haller. Since the first time I met him in Florence, he has constantly, and generously, offered me opportunities to grow as a person and as a scholar. I could have not imagined a better mentor and a more omniscient linguist to work with. His books and seminars provided me with a precise and logical methodology to follow and his interests led me toward John Florio and Pompeo Sarnelli. What I most thank him for is his ability to let me find the way to linguistic problems and to their solution; from this, I learned how to move through the texts and the words and raise pertinent questions to answer with scientific consciousness.

Next, I am grateful to the members of my committee for their attentive reading of my dissertation. I share with Prof. Monica Calabritto many good memories of my initial years of Ph.D. work, of long conversations on Renaissance authors, and of successful academic events organized together. I thank Prof. Clare Carroll for her seminars on the history of the book and archival studies as they were fundamental to my future research and gave me many opportunities to study and work with paleography. After a decennial acquaintance with Prof. Nicoletta Maraschio, I know that her seminars at the University of Florence shaped my research and my passion for history of Italian language.

Thank you to all the other faculty members of the program in Comparative Literature, who helped me in various ways in these years, and especially to Prof. Paolo Fasoli and Prof. Giancarlo Lombardi, who have walked beside me since the beginning, and to Prof. Bettina Lerner for her tremendous help in the last year of my Ph.D.
I am grateful to Prof. Tina Matarrese for her suggestion on Brusantino’s style and language, and to Prof. Rosanna Pettinelli for introducing me to the author with her two articles on Le cento novelle and for giving me useful feedback on my thoughts on the work.

Two other professors have influenced and encouraged my passion for paremias, for almost a decade and in recent years, respectively. Prof. Piero Fiorelli introduced me to Salviati and Serdonati at the Accademia della Crusca in 2010 and ever since he has shared with me his immense knowledge and his rigorous method of inquiry with the intellectual magnitude of a true Accademico della Crusca. For a shorter period but with equal profundity, Prof. Paolo Cherchi, whom I met in Chicago in 2016, introduced me to a more literary approach to proverbs and proverbial phrases and granted me the pleasure of long conversations on paremias and literature at large.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Paolo Rondinelli for our paremiac conversations, and Dr. Antonio Vinciguerra for introducing me to Emmanuele Rocco’s dictionary, allowing me to look through his drafts of the letters F-Z of this dictionary, and giving me valuable prompts on Neapolitan literature and on dictionaries of the dialect.

I am deeply grateful to the Renaissance Society of America, in the person of Dr. Carla Zecher, and the Newberry Library, specifically Dr. Bradford Hunt, Kristin Emery, and Jessica Weller, for granting me a short-term fellowship in Summer 2016, which enabled me to conclude my chapter on Sarnelli. I likewise would like to thank the Renaissance Studies Certificate Program at the Graduate Center, which selected me for the Renaissance and Early Modern Travel and Research Grant in Spring 2017, and allowed me to return to the Newberry Library and work on my chapter on Florio.

I thank my students at Queens College, where I had the opportunity to teach a course on “Literature of Proverbs and Literature with Proverbs,” and my students at Hunter College, where I was able to teach a survey class with a focus on laughter. Sharing the results of my
research with them allowed me to see texts with fresh eyes as well as test the validity of my terminology and contextual analysis.

I am immensely grateful to the library assistants in the Special Collection and the General Collection at the Newberry Library as well as to the staff at the Accademia della Crusca. Here, I repeatedly took advantage of the incredible resources of the Accademia della Crusca’s collection and I was fortunate enough to engage with many of its affiliates. Among them, a special thank goes to Dr. Elisabetta Benucci for her constant presence in my academic life and also for her critical edition of Giuseppe Giusti’s Proverbi.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the anonymous reviewers of the British journal International Studies in Humor for their invaluable suggestions on a forthcoming article on Sarnelli’s humorous paremias, which was partly merged into the third chapter of my dissertation.

I thank all my colleagues and friends who made this voyage less burdensome and more enjoyable; I constantly learned (and will learn) from them.

Finally, thank you to those two people without whom I would not be the person I am. Everything I have accomplished in these years is only because they have supported me in the innumerable ways of which they are capable, every single moment.
To C. & L. because they taught me that

*col tempo e con la paglia si maturano le sorbe,*

and I love them
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GENERAL NOTES

The following initials will be employed for all quotations from the correspondent texts:

AI: L’Angelica innamorata
CC: Lo cunto de li cunti
CN: Le cento novelle
Dec.: Decameron
FF: Firste Fruites
GDLI: Grande Dizionario della lingua italiana (Battaglia and Squarotti)
GR: Giardino di ricreatione
SF: Second Frutes
OI: Orlando innamorato
OF: Orlando furioso
P: Posilecheata

Voc. Cr. 1612: Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca (1612)

For the transcription of Brusantino’s and Florio’s text, of which a modern critical edition is not available, the punctuation is modernized and the alternation between [u] and [v] is normalized. Moreover, majuscules and all diacritical signs are introduced where needed, and abbreviations and contractions are eliminated. A diplomatic transcription of their paremias is available in the “Index of paremias.”

In all instances, paremias (proverbs, proverbial phrases, and wellerisms) are in italics.
GLOSSARY OF MOST RELEVANT TERMS

Allological: (adj) An allusive (or metaphorical) meaning beyond the first level or word-by-word significance

Aphorism: A concise expression of truth; see maxim

Apophthegm: A famous person’s memorable, anecdotal, and sententious saying (ex. Socrate’s “Know thyself”)

Diachronic: (adj) Language variation through time (language evolution); opposed to synchronic, which is the language at a particular period

Diamesic: (adj) Language variation depending on the medium of communication (written and spoken language; language of the new media, etc.)

Diastratic: (adj) Language variation depending on social classes, gender, and education (popular Italian; standard Italian, etc.)

Diatopic: (adj) Language variation depending on geographical areas (dialects; regional Italians; koinai, see koinè)

Emic: (adj) Anthropological approach of research and analysis that aims to capture the distinguishing and distinctive features of social and cultural groups; when applied to paremias, it means that they are studied beyond their mere linguistic elements

 Emotional: (adj) That function of the language that aims to trigger an emotion in the receiver of an utterance (in Florio’s Fruite Fruites and Second Frutes)

Ethic: (adj) Approach of research and analysis that searches for universal concepts to apply to each culture
Etiology: The discipline or methodology that searches for the origins, causes, or explanations of a given entity (in Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata*)

Figurative: **See allological**

Gnome: **See maxim**

Koinè: The language that becomes the standard in the circumscribed area where it is spoken and written

Maxim: A moral saying without any metaphorical meaning, commonly used by a community, which advises on life (ex. “Bevi poco, e mangia assai, dormi in palco e vivrai”)

Paremiology: A calque from the Greek word *παροιμία* to indicate a sequence of terms with figurative meaning. It includes:

1. **Proverb**: a sequence of terms composed of two parallel hemistiches, linked by a rhyme, an assonance, or a consonance, and by a topic and comment structure; it frequently conveys a moral message, distributes wise recommendations, or simply describes aspects of human life (ex. “Chi cerca trova e chi dorme sognà”)

2. **Proverbial phrase**: a sequence of terms characterized by a non-conjugated verb; it is defined by a figurative meaning, but is devoid of moral and ethical intentions (ex. “Avere piu parole che un leggio”)

3. **Wellerism**: a subcategory of proverbial phrases characterized by a fixed structure: “come disse/come diceva,” followed by a proper or common name and by a famous saying or sentence with paremiac meaning (ex. “Come disse il lupo all’asino: Pazienza”)

The following disciplines deal with paremias:

a. **Paremiography**: the discipline that pertains to collecting paremias
b. **Paremiology**: the discipline that pertains to the study and critical analysis of paremias

c. **Geoparemiology**: the discipline that studies paremias in a geographical context with a specific attention to dialects and regional varieties

**Paremiac**: (adj) That is relative to paremias

**Phatic**: (adj) That function of the language that aims to establish a contact with the emitter of an utterance, usually with a question or a request for attention (in Florio’s *Fruite Fruites* and *Second Frutes*)

**Phonetics**: The discipline that studies the theoretical representations of phones or sounds

**Sententia**: A statement characterized by expressive conciseness and moral perspectives

**Synchronic**: See *diachronic*
[…] al giuoco de’ Proverbi, nel quale ciascuno ha da dire un proverbio
e dipoi si fa interpretare ciò che con tal proverbio si sia voluto intendere […]

Girolamo Bargagli, *Dialogo de’ giuochi che nelle vegghie sanesi si usano di fare*, 164, par. 156
Girolamo Bargagli, in his book *Dialogo de’ giuochi che nelle vegghie sanesi si usano di fare* (1572), recounts a pleasant and playful conversation during a nightly vigil between members of the Intronati Academy in Siena on the origins, typologies, and rules of games. Among the others, he mentions a game, usually proposed to entertain and please members of a convivial group, which requires that one of the participants recite a proverb while the others discern its meaning. The game rests upon the ambiguity that characterizes the meaning of a decontextualized proverb. Thus, the participants need to interject themselves into the game and guess, among the potential available ones, the message that the proverb conveys in the mind of its utterer and in the specific context of the game: “[…] al giuoco de’ Proverbi, nel quale ciascuno ha da dire un proverbio e dipoi si fa interpretare ciò che con tal proverbio si sia voluto intendere […],” or in the game of proverbs when everyone has to share a proverb and then the others have to interpret what he wanted to say (Bargagli 1982, 164, par. 156).

Why is Bargagli’s reference quoted in a study titled “Transferring Paremias”? “Paremias” is a recently acquired word defining a group of sequences of terms, which include proverbs and proverbial phrases, and a relatively small subset of proverbial phrases called wellerisms.¹ It identifies a series of terms whose meaning requires an interpretational or

¹ In this study, “paremia” (Franceschi 1999) is used to indicate any proverbial utterance, including proverbs and proverbial phrases (aphorisms, maxims, and apophthegms are excluded); when referring to a specific paremia is needed, the proper name of the paremiac utterance is used as it is established by its constitutive aspects (for more information, see paragraph 1.2). Proverbial phrases imply a sequence of terms similar to proverbs but without a conjugated verb (for instance, *Entrar nel pecoreccio*, from John Florio’s *Giardino di ricreazione*, which means to begin a reasoning, later resulting in such an entanglement that it is not possible to find a way out). The category of proverbial phrases includes wellerisms, which present the structure “As (one) said” followed by a paremiac expression, or vice versa. For instance, Florio lists the wellerism, “A le mani, disse colui, che non ne haveva” (*Giardino di ricreazione*) (for a broader definition of wellerism, see paragraph 1.3).
The meaning of proverbs, proverbial phrases, and wellerisms, is indeed non-compositional, given that the sum of the meaning of each single term of the sequence is not equivalent to the meaning of the entire sequence. Consequently, to understand the meaning of the entire sequence, it is not possible to rest on its literal meaning but it is necessary to consider a transition to a non-literal or figurative level of interpretation. Paremias convey messages that are the result of an abstraction by a word-by-word and immediate reading of their constituent terms.

Under these circumstances, Bargagli captures an essential question of this current study: What is the meaning of a paremia? Is there just one meaning or are there many of them? How and why do receivers of a paremia associate that paremia with a specific meaning? What role does the context play in interpreting paremias? The interpretation required by the participants of the social game in Bargagli’s text highlights how the message of a paremia cannot be taken for granted, despite the general belief that its meaning is generated and fixed by tradition. Paremias are malleable, adapt to diverse situations and contexts, convey multiple meanings, and describe reality with a spectrum of references, images, and messages. What then clarifies their message? What aspects of paremias guide the reader towards a specific interpretation of their meaning? This study will attempt to answer these questions by combining a linguistic and a critical analysis of paremias that feature in literary texts. It will explain their meanings, as well as their references to and borrowings from previous works, their responses to the social and cultural conditions of the time, their effects on the narrative, and their representation of the author’s perspectives. It will focus on written instances of paremias, while well aware that the following investigation could be also

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2 Paremias and other sequences of terms are considered dead metaphors, which means that the metaphorical process does not create a new concept or supply aesthetical purposes. They are rather conventionalized and codified, and substitute for a concept in a shorter way (Casadei 1996, 74-75). They, however, share with live metaphors the expression of a “fascio” of properties, a group of properties that the receiver needs to decode and understand (Cacciari 1991, 12).
applied to spoken and non-literary instances of proverbs and proverbial phrases where the oral component plays a prominent role.

The analysis of paremias in this research will extend beyond mere linguistic examination, to include literary contexts and analyze the reciprocal relationship between paremias and narratives: as in, how the narrative affects paremias and, in turn, how paremias affect the narrative. Therefore, it will clarify the concept of multiple meanings attached to a paremia, along with the crucial role of the context in defining, understanding, and interpreting paremias.

Linguistic examination usually focuses on the language used to construct paremias, describing it diachronically and synchronically and evaluating morphological aspects, lexical choices, prosodic elements, variations and modes of use, and local and regional variants. It deals mostly with spoken utterances of paremias as cultural and anthropological products of a community, which, while transitioning from one generation to the other, give voice to everyday life, express moral maxims, and reveal ironic assessments in a short and frequently witty form. Literary investigation, on the other hand, mostly engages in critical evaluation of the paremias’ origins and sources, revealing the author’s reflections on social matters and literature, as well as references to previous authors, works, or collections of paremias. Yet, what happens when paremias are featured within a literary work? If analyzed linguistically, paremias employed in a narrative are typically decontextualized, resulting in a loss of meaningful context, as well as of possible hidden meanings. Instead, when placed in a literary context, they acquire more significance so that their typical features can be identified. Additionally, the literary context reveals important data on the author’s mentality, social position, and literary standing within society and literature. At the same time, the linguistic analysis supports the literary investigation in at least three important aspects. First, it offers a clear-cut yet broad terminology, which, in this study, draws from Temistocle Franceschi and
his original perspective on analysis of spoken utterances of paremias. Since his theory places proverbs and proverbial phrases inside the same group of paremias, the analyses of all paremias share similar tools and methods: they all relate to the context for an appropriate understanding of their meanings, as well as for an emergence of their individual characteristics. Second, linguistics manages to explain possible changes, modifications, and additions to paremias due to stylistic and rhetorical reasons or due to the specific literary context in which they appear. It also shows the author’s virtuosity in innovating and manipulating paremias; for instance, to charge their message with comedy or irony, or with biting criticism. Lastly, linguistics allows for a description of transitions from one language or style to another, such as dialect, so that idiosyncrasies and specific aspects of each linguistic and rhetorical code can be compared and contrasted. In this way, the combination of linguistic and literary tools of analysis gives new substance to the way paremias are looked at in literary works.

Four early modern texts are taken into consideration, namely Vincenzo Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle* (1554), Pompeo Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata* (1684), and John Florio’s *Firste Fruites* (1578) and *Second Frutes* (1591). Their paremias are studied and analyzed as they transfer from one cultural, linguistic, or literary dimension to another. The comparison of paremias in three different genres, such as chivalric poem, language manual, and fable, and three different stylistic modes, namely poetry, didactic conversation, and fairy-tale narrative, illustrates and highlights how paremias and their respective messages adapt to the contexts and take on a specific significance in those same contexts. In choosing the three authors, the aim is to present a wide-ranging analysis of paremias from a geographical, sociolinguistic, and diachronic perspective, as well as to demonstrate cultural idiosyncrasies and intra-cultural similarities. Many other authors could have been chosen in the theoretical and
analytical frame of this research, yet the three selected represent special and significant examples of employing paremias in written language and in literature.

Brusantino, Sarnelli, and Florio wrote between the mid-sixteenth century and the late seventeenth century in Ferrara (Brusantino), Naples (Sarnelli), and London (Florio). All of them decided to move out of their native languages or dialects and deliberately chose the language they aimed to adopt in their works, and thus in their paremias. Despite being dismissed as passive imitators of earlier important works or authors of Italian literature (Boccaccio for Brusantino, Basile for Sarnelli, and a wide range of Italian works for Florio), or incapable of writing in the language they chose (Sarnelli and Florio), they characterized their own works with a touch of individuality. From the periphery, they looked to the center manipulating and integrating it in original and personal ways, which clearly distinguish them from canonical tradition and provide evidence with which to reevaluate their place in literature. The order the three authors are presented in this research respects their peripheral positions, despite their chronology: starting with Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle*, proceeding to Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata*, and concluding with Florio’s *Firste Fruites* and *Second Frutes*, as they progressively distance from the center, respectively Florence and Italy, and language, specifically Florentine vernacular and the idioms of the Italian peninsula.

For *Le cento novelle*, Brusantino’s center is one of the cornerstone texts of Italian literature, namely the *Decameron*. As a Ferrarese-born author, Brusantino adopts the Florentine used two centuries before in Boccaccio’s novellas, whose original language is generally not modified. He also employs the thirteenth-century Florentine in his additions, where, however, a few instances of Paduan koine emerges. Despite following the original text almost faithfully, Brusantino remolds the *Decameron*’s metric structure and its moral

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3 They however betray their origin or their linguistic orientation. Brusantino inserts or unconsciously leaves Ferrarese morphological elements in the *Decameron*’s text and in his paremias; Sarnelli writes in a less Baroque Neapolitan than Basile and shows his greater attention to diastratic variation; Florio shows his acquaintance with the regional languages from the north of Italy in his *Firste Fruites.*
perspectives to meet the request of his public and combines different traditions in order to create a hybrid text that is in between a collection of short stories and a chivalric poem. The result is a personal and ethical interpretation of the *Decameron* where initial allegories and paremias—the majority of which he invented—are the result of an ethical reading of Boccaccio’s work compliant with a new social setting. Through allegories and paremias, Brusantino twists the original message of Boccaccio’s stories and makes them express a specific ethical message, which is apt for a society that was just starting to feel the effects of the Catholic reformation but was not yet experiencing the full Tridentine atmosphere.

Sarnelli, a native of Apulia and hence an outsider to the Neapolitan area, chooses the Neapolitan dialect, geographically more central than the peripheral “pugliese,” and declares it superior to other available and more prestigious languages and dialects. He does so by placing Neapolitan in the newly experimented genre of the fable, as his predecessor Giambattista Basile had done in his *Lo cunto de li cunti*; this allows him an immense degree of experimentation and innovation. Some of his paremias are *ex novo* creations in Neapolitan whereas others are translations in Neapolitan from originals in Italian. Nonetheless, all of them are products, outcomes, and direct derivations of that specific linguistic and cultural ambience to which they continuously refer and that Sarnelli wishes to reproduce. Sarnelli’s language reveals the strength, expressiveness, dynamics, and potential capacities of the Neapolitan language. Simultaneously, his paremias translate the comic accumulation, the pompous rhetoric, the hilarious multiplication of reality, and the “linguistic freedom” distinctive of the Baroque ideology, and at the same time counterbalance the Tuscan tradition.

Florio, an English-born immigrant to Soglio in Italian-speaking Switzerland, is exposed to the Italian language during his early life and becomes an acclaimed teacher, translator, and linguist. Wishing to spread Italian culture in a foreign context, he frequently
refers to Italian, the language of his origins, in his works. Thus, he looks at the center from a linguistic and geographical periphery, imitates it, supports it in the language-learning process (dictionaries and bilingual manuals), and promotes it with translations. In his *Firste Fruites* and *Second Frutes*, he succeeds in writing two manuals appropriate for Anglophone speakers where proverbs and proverbial phrases constitute an innovative way to transmit both the culture and language of the country he is never able to visit. His manuals are the product of a man living outside the national boundaries yet conscious of the cultural, linguistic, and communicative validity of paremias in teaching languages to foreigners and in keeping alive the emotions associated with the memory of one’s own language and country.

In these works, paremias may introduce moral content and transmit a simplified and easily recognizable concluding message, thus serving as pedagogical tools. In Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle*, a paremia introduces Chichibio’s story: *Muta spesso l’accorto in gran piacere L’ire, e gli sdegni ne le voglie altiere* (CN, VI.4). The paremia emphasizes Chichibio’s shrewdness in changing Currado Gianfigliazzi’s haughty and enraged disposition into a great delight. Its pedagogical message concerns the frequent and successful ability of perspicacious minds to turn a dangerous situation into a pleasant and advantageous one thanks to their quick, prompt, and intelligent perspective. Ultimately, it emphasizes the superiority of a clever person over a lofty one. As it is placed at the beginning of the novella, it also sets the tone for the entire story and directs the reader to the moral perspective that Brusantino aims to highlight. 4 Not unlikely, Sarnelli’s paremia at the end of the fifth *cunto*, *Lo vizio dello lupo tanto dura Che pilo pò mutare, e no’ natura* (P, cunto 5), summarizes the moral message of the fable and makes it effectively available to readers and listeners.

Paremias convey a specific message and express a moral or pedagogical perspective in a more effective way than an expression that is not a paremia and that might use a

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4 For more information on the different roles of paremias in a literary text, see Cerquiglini and Cerquiglini.
periphrasis in order to communicate the same point. For instance, in Florio’s *Firste Fruites*, the proverbial phrase *Con il tempo, e con la paglia, le nespole si matura* is used to point out that patience makes a good result happen in an appropriate situation (FF, Ch. 14). In the specific context, a man in love with a woman who is perfect for him, is advised to wait until love blossoms. The meaning that the paremia conveys is immediately recognized, and a moral consideration of the event is delivered.

Paremias may also be “narrative propellers” since they produce or advance the narrative. For instance, in Sarnelli’s introduction to *Posilecheata*, when Marchionno tries to eat a conger eel that has not been served during the dinner, Petruccio, bothered by his behavior, silences him by means of a proverbial phrase: “Io no’ approvo chillo proverbejo: *Carne giovane e pesce viechio*, pocca sti pescetielle me piaceno” (P, Intr.). The paremia is released on the spot and immediately effective. It succeeds in freeing Petruccio from an embarrassing situation and in diverting Marchionno’s attention to something else. Indeed, Marchionno drops the subject with a pleasant smile, and a new conversation starts.

When paremias are variational means, since the author introduces morphologic, lexical, or syntactical variations, their message twists and the narrative is affected. This feature may make paremias emotional devices, as the variation usually aims to emphasize, increase, or transform the effect that the expression has on its audience and in that specific context. An example might be Sarnelli’s *L’ommo se lega pe le corna e li vuoj e pe le parole* (P, cunto 4), where Belluccia ironically plays with the image of the horns associated with the cuckolded man, which is in this case a brother betrayed by his own sister.

This research allows for the association of literary and linguistic perspectives by way of considering paremias as a “transition.” This is a dynamic concept that functions as a movement across different linguistic and literary codes, broader than the traditional meaning attributed to translation. As Susan Sontag phrases it, “to translate means many things: to
circulate, to transport, to disseminate, to explain, to make (more) accessible.”

Even though transition acquires different meanings, it is still an overarching mode able to demonstrate the three authors’ use of paremias and their way to “translate,” meant as “transfer,” them as they circulate among writers, texts, and contexts. The analysis of their paremias reveal that the three authors’ works are not simple imitations or formal and substantive adaptations (imitatio), but rather emulations (aemulatio), according to the classical sequence interpretatio-imitatio-aemulatio. The three authors interpreted an already established concept or a genre in a personal way and for their own specific purposes, without engaging in a “competitive struggle” with their antecedents (Javitch 1985, 215) but renewing them instead (Pappalardo, 26-27). Their works are consciously infused with personal innovations and design to create an alternative and improved new product, thereby satisfying their view of literature and the requests of the public and society. Brusantino’s, Sarnelli’s, and Florio’s transition is a powerful rhetorical tool as it surpasses or renovates their models and establish a voice in the panorama of the genre that they produce.

In Brusantino’s Le cento novelle, it is a transition from the prose of the short stories in Boccaccio’s Decameron to the verse of a chivalric poem. In Sarnelli’s Posilecheata, it involves the interpretation and fairy-tale portrayal of a culture whose identity rests on the use of the Neapolitan dialect and on the emergence of the Baroque spirit of the time. In Florio’s Firste Fruites and Second Frutes, the transition shapes a translation from Italian to English and aims to fulfill a specific pedagogical and rhetorical purpose, not only for English speakers but also for Italians living in England. Since Brusantino, Florio, and Sarnelli used paremias in different ways, for different purposes, and across diverse codes, their works

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6 For more information on the three concepts in the classical world, see Arno Reif, “Interpretatio, imitatio, aemulatio,” Studi di estetica. 7.3 (1993): 41-54. For imitation in the Greek and Latin world, see Richard McKeon, “Literary Criticism and the Concept of Imitation in Antiquity,” Modern Philology. 34.1 (1936): 1-35. For a comprehensive analysis of translation between grammar and rhetoric in the Latin world, see Copeland, 9-36.
allow for a broad concept of transition, for a study of the implications of the use of paremias in literature, and for an investigation of the ways paremias change when used in different contexts.

Paremias play an important role in this process: they reiterate themselves from one generation to another, and they represent tradition and imitation in a dialectic correspondence, while they also reinvent their meaning and their use in a situation chosen and created by the writer. Context takes on a vital and defining role, since it allows paremias to explicate and convey their messages and their different levels of significance. The message of a paremia is heavily shaped by the surrounding context, namely the web of preceding and subsequent sentences that are close to the paremia, as well as by the the larger context, which includes genre, literary motives, structure and purpose of the work, moral and didactic purposes, reading community, and author’s intention. Additionally, the meanings of a paremia can be magnified, or reduced, or they may face a change, which its isolated interpretation outside its immediate contexts of appearance cannot capture. This happens because three levels of signification identify paremias: a literal meaning, a conventionalized meaning, and a contextual meaning. They attest to the process of creating paremias from a specific situation, their conventionalization, and their later use in literary, social, cultural, written, and spoken contexts.

For instance, the image of a cat stretching its paw to touch lard is a literal and visual translation of the paremia, *Tanto va la gatta al lavoro ch’ella ci lascia la zampa*. Agricultural and pre-industrial society determined this level of meaning resulting from popular creativity. As the paremia shifted to a more conventionalized meaning and underwent an abstraction, repetition and continuous usage associated a moral message to the paremia and ultimately released the paremia from the original context that created it. In the above paremia, the conventionalized meaning would be that whoever dares too much pays the consequences of
his own actions. The only reason for the utterance to be accepted as a recognizable structure is its memorability and the community’s consequent application, primarily in spoken utterances. In the final phase of the process, as it is used in a specific context, the paremia transfers its conventionalized meaning into a contextual one and makes its message effective and meaningful in accordance with the context itself. The paremia progressively transfers from oral utterances to written accounts and consequently, more contexts are created and more meanings are made available. Thus, the contextual meaning is the one out of the three that needs a physical context (either spoken or written) in order to fully express itself since it is a specific (or contextual) translation of the conventionalized meaning.

Traditionally, paremias are considered a set of words whose rhetoric, phonetic, and stylistic aspects, as well as syntactic order have been fixed by tradition, ultimately causing their ossification in a structure that does not leave much room for variants. However, transition of paremias attests that they are used across languages and across genres and do change to adjust to the context, ultimately expressing the potentialities of both that language and that culture. This study shows how different authors and different contexts can generate different meanings and achieve different objectives, and consequently how paremias send out complex and varied messages. It includes a linguistic analysis of paremias (Bakhtin’s “compositional structure”) with specific attention to authorial differences and idiosyncrasies (Bakhtin’s “style”) and to the meaning that paremias convey according to their context (Bakhtin’s “thematic content”) (Bakhtin 1986, 60). Even though, as Michelangelo Picone argues, paremias are “affabulazioni pregresse” and still carry signs of their origins (Picone 2003, 302), they also acquire as many contextual lives as the contexts in which they are applied, so that they convey both universal and atemporal teachings, and individualized and specific precepts. The contextual analysis of paremias actualizes their conventionalized meaning, which allows for the proverbial polysemy to emerge.
In the first chapter of this study, while defining paremias theoretically and analyzing their component terms, most examples will be drawn from Brusantino, Sarnelli, and Florio, who are analyzed in the subsequent three chapters dedicated to them. These examples will clarify the importance of contextual analysis, and show how paremiac variation is allowed and how it may twist the contextual meaning of paremias. Besides these examples, in the other chapters, paremias contained in other collections will be quoted to show the variants that a paremia could feature, to indicate the original Tuscan for dialectal paremias, and to use their explanations. The most mentioned collections will be those by Polidorus Vergilii, Lionardo Salviati, Orlando Pescetti, Agnolo Monosini, Tomaso Buoni, and Francesco Serdonati. The conventionalized meaning usually associated with a paremia will be indicated by resorting to historical dictionaries of the Italian language (Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca in 1612 and Battaglia’s Grande dizionario della lingua italiana) and etymological dictionaries (Battisti’s and Alessio’s Dizionario etimologico italiano, Cortelazzo’s and Zolli’s Dizionario etimologico della lingua italiana, and Nocentini’s and Parenti’s L’etimologico: vocabolario della lingua italiana). In addition, two contemporary collections of paremias by Lapucci will be a reference: Per modo di dire; dizionario dei modi di dire della lingua italiana and Dizionario dei proverbi italiani.

“Transferring paremias” means to give substance to a web of mobilities in cultures, languages, and literatures, and to a mutual exchange between terms and contexts. It thus means to voice the innumerable shapes that proverbs and proverbial phrases can assume and the countless messages that they continue to send out to us today. “From use comes abuse,” a Spanish paremia says (Flonta 2001b, x); the more a paremia is used and the more a moral concept is translated by means of a paremia, the more the paremia is subject to manipulation due to its constant reuse in different contexts and situations.
Proverbs and proverbial phrases usually take their original from places and persons, but then there is something of action that attends the proverb, which often being concealed requires a note or illustration, the circumstances of the fact being too many for the proverb to contain.

Giovanni Torriano, *Piazza univerale di proverbi italiani*, 3
CHAPTER ONE

PAREMIAS: HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL TRANSITIONS

1.1 A Historical Overview of Collections of Paremiyas and of “Literature of and with Proverbs”

The label “literature of and with proverbs” comes from Alfonso D’Agostino’s chapter “Letteratura di proverbi e letteratura con proverbi nell’Italia medievale,” where he offers an overview of the presence of paremiyas in medieval poetry and prose, and shows how in many works when the narrative tension coincides with moralizing tones, authors resort to a sententious style and to paremiyas (D’Agostino A. 2009). This paragraph, which continues D’Agostino’s chapter, peruses the most important and well-known examples of Italian literature based on paremiyas while, at the same time, devoting space to crucial classical and humanist collections of paremiyas in Latin.\(^7\) The evaluation of cornerstones in the field of paremiography\(^8\) provides a historical background for the three authors that are considered in this study, and clarifies debts and borrowings among both subsequent collections of paremiyas and texts featuring paremiyas.

As Theodor Flonta argues in the introduction to his 2001 Dictionary of English and Romance Languages Equivalent Proverbs, paremiyas have existed since societies began forming and giving themselves rules for communal living (Flonta 2001b, ix-xi). However, we have only been able to keep track of paremiyas since human beings began recording them in written and durable forms; namely, the Sumerian civilization that passed some of its paremiyas

\(^7\) Collections of paremiyas in other languages are not included in this discussion in order to confine the analysis to possible antecedents of the three authors’ works.

\(^8\) Paremiography concerns writing, researching, and gathering paremiyas, whereas paremiology entails a historical, morphological, and semantic analysis of them.
through cuneiform writing. If in ancient Greece, frequently paremias and maxims were
drawn from comedies and orations and then collected, the Roman world knew a true
explosion of collections of paremias and *sententiae.* Along with Appius Claudius Caecus
(340-273 BC), who was celebrated as a sententious poet, Quintus Ennius (239-169 BC) wrote
a collection of *sententiae* titled *Protrepticus.* The most famous author of *sententiae* and
paremias, remembered for his *Carmen de moribus* and mostly his *Disticha Catonis,* was
Dionysius Cato (third-fourth century A.D.). His works were still appreciated in the Middle
Ages for their moralizing intent, their severely pedagogical tone, their sententious, caustic,
and solemn discourse, and their rhythmic structure. Collections of famous *sententiae* and
expressions used as sources of maxims, proverbs, and proverbial phrases included Valerius
Maximus’s *Dicta et Facta Memorabilia* (first century A.D.) and Sextus Julius Frontinus’s
*Strategemata* (40-103 A.D.). In literature, Latin comedies were filled with paremias and
*sententiae,* which contributed to the expressiveness of the texts, as well as to the comic
depiction of life and society, as were Titus Maccius Plauto’s (285-185 BC) and Publius
Terentius’s (186-59 BC) comic texts. Paremias were also inserted in other genres where
authors aimed to offer moral or everyday recommendations, as it happens in Publius
Vergilius Maro’s *Georgics* (29 BC), which was enriched with many paremias on agricultural
techniques and pieces of advice on peasant life.

In medieval times and in subsequent centuries up to contemporary times, a
fundamental source for paremias has been religious texts, where proverbs and proverbial
phrases, along with maxims and sayings, were heavily present. In the *Old Testament,*

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9 For a thorough overview of paremias throughout the centuries starting from Sumerian paremias, see Lapucci 2006, ix-xxiv.
10 *Sententiae* are moral sayings usually including adages, maxims, aphorisms, and apophthegms.
11 On Greek and Latin collections of paremias and presence of paremias in literature, see Tosi, IX-
XXIV.
Solomon’s Proverbs collected exclusively paremias, while the Preacher (Ecclesiasticus) and the books of Wisdom, Psalms, and Job listed both paremias and sententious sayings. In the New Testament, paremias conspicuously filled the gospels according to Matthew and John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Letters, and John’s Apocalypse. Besides paremias in religious works, there were also collections that gathered pearls of common wisdom as well as paremias related to everyday life and common people. Proverbia super natura feminarum, circulating in the twelfth century and written in Venetian dialect, gathered paremias on the nature of women that were organized in quatrains of alexandrine verses. Il dialogo di Salomone and Marcofo, which dates back to the eleventh century but was circulating widely only in the thirteenth century, contrasted Solomon’s wisdom, made of erudite paremias, with Marcolfo’s wisdom coming from the concrete experience of people in rural Europe.

Solomon’s paremias were also the subject of a thirteenth-century collection of paremias by Girardo Patechio da Cremona, Splanamento de li Proverbii de Salamone, which gathered distiches of alexandrine verses for a total of 607 lines. It contained a translation in Cremonese dialect of paremias from Solomon’s collection, organized in sections and interspersed with paremias from the Ecclesiasticus, Proverbia super natura feminarum, and Disticha Catonis.

Paremias mostly appeared in genres that were originally linked to an oral execution, such as short stories and chivalric poems. The first important example of paremias featured in a collection of short stories is Boccaccio’s Decamerone (1350), where proverbs, proverbial phrases, sayings, and sententiae were employed in places “privilegiati e riservati dalla dottrina della dispositio alla consumata moralità delle sentenze,” either to start a narration or

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12 The Prologue affirms that paremias will make the wise even wiser and the educated man perspicacius (Bernini, I.5-6).
13 In the seventeenth century, Giulio Cesare Croce drew inspiration from this model of a discussion in paremias for his cycle of stories on Bertoldo and Bertoldino, including Le sottilissime astuzie di Bertoldo and Le piacevoli e ridicolose semplicità di Bertoldino, both published in 1606.
to comment on a specific event in a comic, ironic, or moralizing way (Chiecchi, 145). The *Decameron*’s paremias frequently refer to the vast circulation of popular sayings and emphasize that the populace is the true repository of wisdom and common knowledge. For example, Maestro Alberto’s novella is introduced by a paremia said to be common among people: “Acciò che per voi non si possa quello proverbio intendere che comunemente si dice per tutto, cioè che *le femmine in ogni cosa sempre pigliano il peggio*” (Dec., I.10.8). Similarly, in Frate Alberto’s novella, Boccaccio introduces a proverb as follows: “Usano i volgari un così fatto proverbio: *Chi è reo e buono è tenuto, può fare il male e non è creduto*” (Dec., IV.2.5). Giuseppe Chiecchi argues that this does not mean that Boccaccio adhered to a popular linguistic program, but rather attests to the rhetorical mediation of paremias in terms of allusion to a specific event, which, in this study’s terminology, is the importance of context in deciding to use a paremia and in selecting the most appropriate one. Boccaccio started a trend that would run through all major collections of short stories up to the end of the sixteenth century, where characters who are simple or not as educated as noble characters shape an oral ambience or contribute to create a specific atmosphere. Among these collections, the most important ones are Franco Sacchetti’s *Trecentonovelle* (fourteenth century), Ser Giovanni Fiorentino’s *Il Pecorone* (1378-85), Masuccio Salernitano’s *Il Novellino* (1476), Sabadino degli Arienti’s *Porretane* (1483), Pietro Fortini’s *Le giornate delle novelle de’ novizi* (1530-40) and *Le piacevoli ed amorose notti de’ novizi* (1555-61), Anton Francesco Grazzini’s, or else Lasca, *Le cene* (1549), Girolamo Parabosco’s *I Diporti* (1551), Gianfrancesco Straparola’s *Le piacevoli notti* (1550-53), Matteo Bandello’s *Novelle* (1554; 1573), Giraldo Cintio’s *Ecatommiti* (1565), and Scipione Bargagli’s *I trattenimenti* (1587).

Paremias were used extensively in fourteenth-, fifteenth-, and sixteenth-century *cantari novellistici* (long poems recited mostly in Florence in front of a public of common
people), and in chivalric poems. Examples are: Luigi Pulci’s *Morgante* (1483), which abounds with Florentine paremias, popular idiomatic expressions, and maxims; Matthews Maria Boiardo’s *Orlando innamorato* (1483; 1495), whose paladins, especially Astolfo and Orlando, tended to receive a zany depiction; Cieco da Ferrara’s *Mambriano* (1509), where a novella is said to generate the paremia, *L’è fatto il becco a l’oca*; Cassio da Narni’s *Morte del Danese* (1521); Ludovico Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* (1516; 1521; 1532), whose paremias served as moral openings and closing remarks both in cantos and in single octaves (Soletti, 142-43); and Vincenzo Brusantino’s *L’Angelica innamorata* (1550). In Brusantino’s poem, as well as in Cieco da Ferrara’s and Cassio da Narni’s, paremias as well as allegorical and formulaic openings were inserted at the beginning of each canto to summarize their moral content, and ultimately initiated a tendency that would, for instance, touch Brusantino in his *Le cento novelle* and would also expand to other genres, *in primis* fables.

By the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, the quantity of available collections of paremias, sayings, and apotophsems, in Latin and in vernacular, was remarkable. It included not only works from the classical world but also medieval collections of paremias, which represented useful sources to draw specimens of proverbs and proverbial phrases and to transfer them into appropriate individual contexts. In many instances, paremias appeared in collections devoted to sharp remarks, pungent anecdotes and quotes, and famous sentences, mostly dominated by pungent and effective witticism, such as Poggio

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16 The novella is in canto II.42-115 and recounts how Cassandro uses a duck as a Trojan horse to introduce himself inside the garden where the woman he loves, Alcenia, is secluded to avoid the actualization of a prophecy. The last stanza of the canto shows the derivation of the paremia from the story itself: “Così Alcenia, la quale stette rinchiusa Tanti anni, ebbe d’Amor grazia non poca, Dove nacque il proverbio che ancora s’usa Fra noi. E non pur sol quando si gioca, Ma quando un’opra è del tutto conclusa.” Aloyse Cynthio de gli Fabritii mentions the paremia (Cynthio, c. LXVII).

17 In the seventeenth century, this tradition continues with eroticomic poems. On the topic, see Malavasi in Pignatti and Crimi 2014, 395-427.

18 As Paolo Rondinelli shows, humanistic paremias include, other than actual proverbs, also sayings, metaphors, idiomatic expressions, fixed phrases, witty and facetious remarks (Rondinelli 2011, 142-
Among the others, three collections of Latin paremias stand out: Lorenzo Lippi’s *Liber Proverbiorum*, which was already circulating in the 1470s at Lorenzo de’ Medici’s court, *Proverbiorum collectanea* by Niccolò Angeli written between 1497 and 1498, and Polidorus Vergilii’s *Proverbiorum libellus*, released in 1498. Lippi’s collection gathered one hundred brief *sententiae*, mostly to use in public discourses, which were collected primarily from ancient sources, notwithstanding that material from contemporary works was integrated. Humanist Vergilius collected 305 Latin proverbs in his *Liber proverbiorum* and provided them with literary references and contextual uses as an erudite and simply intellectual and rhetorical exercise. The great number of manuscripts and the appreciation that contemporary scholars and authors have expressed for the two collections, attest to the great interest in paremiography a few decades before Erasmus von Rotterdam’s *Adagia* at the onset of the sixteenth century.

Besides lists of paremias, paremiographers also experimented with alternative forms to organize proverbs and proverbial phrases, mostly considering the rhythm associated with
them. In the Bonaparte collection at the Newberry Library (VAULT Case MS 95.1), a manuscript that was probably realized between 1425 and 1475 constitutes a perfect example of how paremias could be presented in verse. The document lists proverbs organized in twenty-four stanzas of four distiches of octosyllabic verses (and a few seven-syllable and nine-syllable lines) that employed the AFBFCFDDEF scheme. Each distich contains a paremia or the first part of a paremia that extends to the following distich. Many of the expressions contained in the stanzas are maxims or didactic sayings that express a useful message or admonition. A possible explanation is that the use of this rhymed list might be connected to educational purposes: paremias were organized in octaves so that pupils could memorize them easily and at the same time learn language and content. The fact that paremias were inserted in such a structure also illustrates that they were acknowledged as having rhetorical functions, and that they could easily fit a prosaic work as well as a poetic one. In a way, this specimen anticipates Brusantino’s rewriting of the Decameron in octaves, where Boccaccio’s paremias become an integral part of the octaves of the chivalric poem.

In 1500, Erasmus von Rotterdam published one of the most well-known collections of Latin paremias in Europe, which influenced collections of paremias in subsequent centuries: *Adagiorum Collectanea* (also known as *Adagia*), later titled *Adagiorum Chiliades* in 1508.22 In 1536, after twenty-six reprints, the last edition was released, greatly expanded for a total of five chiliades of paremias and around 250 sententiae. It was an amount unequalled in the classical age as well as in the Renaissance, whose most commonly cited Greek and Latin authors were Homer, Aristophanes, Aristotle, Gellius, Catullus, Sophocles, Euripides,
Horace, Plutarch, Plautus, Pindar, Quintilian, Terence, and Tibullius, to name a few. In other words, Adagia was a summa of “tutto il tesoro morale dell’antichità,”23 which the author wished to make available and accessible. Despite not being the first collection of Latin paremias, Adagia is undoubtedly the first list of classical paremias gathered in a comparative approach and provided with comments. The collection, though, lacks organizational criteria: paremias do not follow an alphabetical order, and they are collected alongside maxims, phrases, metaphors, mottos, and even single words, which suggests that the work represented a lifelong process of gathering them. An explanation follows each paremia and usually provides an indication of its literal meaning and figurative use, alongside Erasmus’ personal interpretations and reminiscences. In some instances, it may also contain a concise list of occurrences or a detailed description of the sources, offer information about the ancient world, and even resemble a treatise where the author expresses his political, moral, and social thoughts.

Erasmus’s Adagia offered sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors and scholars a structure to imitate, as well as a Latin source to use and research in national as well as local traditions and languages.24 The structure of his work, the thorough selection of paremias, sayings, and maxims, and the literary and vernacular sources unequivocally played a major role in the way authors around Europe assembled their compendia or considered the potential of integrating paremias in their own works. Consequently, in the 1500s and by the beginning of the 1600s, an increasingly large interest in anecdotes, paremias, apophthegms, maxims (especially witty and comic ones) grew, and many collections of paremias were published.

24 For a thorough discussion of Italian (and Latin) paremiography and collections of Italian paremias in and outside Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Pignatti 2010, 253-383. Erasmus’s paremias were also employed in other fields, such as art. One of the most well-preserved examples of use of Erasmus’s paremias in an artistic context is Palazzo Besta in Teglio, Valtellina, where selected proverbs from his Adagia are associated with a fresco representing scenes from Ariosto’s Orlando furioso to moralize the poem and make it available to the public (for more information, see Federica Caneparo, “Di molte figure adornato” L’Orlando furioso nei cicli pittorici tra Cinque e Seicento. Milano: Officina libraria, 2015: 93-152).
In particular, five paremiographers stand out for the size of their collections: Lionardo Salviati, Orlando Pescetti, Agnolo Monosini, Tomaso Buoni, and Francesco Serdonati.

Salviati supervised the first systematic and large collection of Italian vernacular proverbs and proverbial phrases (Fiorelli 1999, 221). A small codex (Cl. I 394), now kept in the Biblioteca Ariostea in Ferrara, gathers 3,131 Tuscan paremias, organized alphabetically and expanded by five different people from 1588 to 1589 up to and after the publication of the Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca in 1612.25 Organized alphabetically, Salviati’s paremias do not present any explanation or comment and seem to be listed for a future use in a lexicographic enterprise, an idea that is also confirmed by a pre-1612 copy of the manuscript (Cl. II 25) in a less elegant and fashionable handwriting. Expanding the paremias collected by Salviati, Orlando Pescetti published the collection Proverbi italiani (1598), where the list of almost 6,550 proverbs and proverbial phrases answers to a pure paremiographic need to gather expressions without any rationalizing methodology or erudite classification (Pignatti 2010, 255).26 Its shorter version for children who needed to learn grammar, titled Proverbi italiani e latini per uso de i fanciulli, che imparan la grammatica (1602), is a bilingual collection of paremias. Each paremia in vernacular is provided with a Latin correspondent that conveys the same meaning. The collection was probably meant to provide students with a structure that could be analyzed syntactically in order to ultimately help them to reinforce and perfect their organizational skills (Messina Fajardo, 9).27 With Pescetti, Latin becomes a means to the vernacular, as the collection appeals to a larger and

25 For more information on the philological and paleographic aspects of the manuscript, see Daniela D’Eugenio, “Lionardo Salviati and the collection of Proverbi toscani: Philological Issues with Codex Cl. I 394,” Forum Italicum. 48.3 (2014): 495-521.

26 Pescetti lists his paremias without arranging them alphabetically: paremias starting with the same verb or the same structure or synonymic paremias are juxtaposed, often presenting the explanation, “Vale lo stesso [del precedente].”

27 The same happens in Spanish. For instance, Fernando Arce de Benavente compiled a list of paremias translated from Spanish to Latin and introduced by a fable in order to motivate his students and foster their grammatical awareness and knowledge of Latin (Messina Fajardo).
less educated population, and paremiography shifts into a utilitarian discipline (Pignatti 2010, 262).  

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Monosini released his _Flos Italicae Linguae Libri novem_ (Venezia, 1604), which is a collection of roughly 4,000 paremias and _sententiae_ with etymological excursuses. The collection answers to both paremiographic and paremiologic purposes, because it looks at paremias to collect and at their origins and provenance, and simultaneously at morphologic, syntactical, and lexical choices. By collecting paremias as expressions of the people of Florence, Monosini not only praised the Florentine vernacular and its greater prestige over the other Tuscan vernaculars, but he also introduced diastastically and diamesically charged forms typical of the spoken language, alongside with literary references. Proverbs, proverbial phrases, sayings, plays of words, riddles, and other linguistic expressions conveying comedy and popular expressiveness represent his exaltation of the everyday Florentine language, of its creativity and creation of synonymies, and of its traditional patrimony of _ribobili_ and cultural aspects (Pignatti 2010, 106; Fiorelli 1993, 193). Followed by their equivalent in Greek and Latin, they positively distinguish Florentine from the classical languages and place it above all the others. The fact that Monosini uses Latin demonstrates how he did not aim to reach Italians but rather foreigners, for whom Latin was the _lingua franca_, because he wished to show the possibility for the Florentine vernacular to become a national language (Pignatti 2010, 83).  

In the same year as Monosini’s _Flos_, Tomaso Buoni released his _Nuovo thesoro de’ proverbi italiani, ove con brieve espositione si mostra l’origine; et l’uso accomodato loro; con espositione delle cose naturali, dell’istorie, et favole_ (1604), a collection of paremias  

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28 The same use of paremiography, yet for a different purpose, appears in Benedetto Varchi’s _Hercolano_, published posthumously in 1570. Even though not a collection of paremias but a linguistic treatise on the model of Socratic discussions, the work gathers a considerable number of paremias, adequately commented. Varchi employs them to explain grammatical aspects of the Florentine language, and thus, for him paremias are a means to support his linguistic ideas. Through them, he provides instances of the spoken Florentine vernacular that he aimed to promote and disseminate, while simultaneously offering an indirect description of the culture of the city of Florence (Varchi).
organized in huge thematic sections. Especially in the second part, where Buoni provides detailed moral and pedagogical explanations, paremias become the intermediary for the transmission of universal aspects that are useful to all humanity. They are not only ornaments of the language, but also crucial elements of any public and private reasoning. Boni was the first one to make an attempt to differentiate, at least in the title if not consistently throughout the entire section, between various types of paremias: for instance, the titles of the various sections are *Proverbii tolti dagli animali; Proverbi tolti dalla moltitudine delle cose dell’universo; Sentenze proverbiose; Modi di dire proverbiosi per similitudine; Detti traslati.*

Detailed explanations are also present in Francesco Serdonati’s collection, which is preserved in manuscript volumes in Rome at the Biblioteca Vaticana, and in Florence at the Biblioteca Nazionale, the Biblioteca Laurenziana, and the Accademia della Crusca. Assembled just before 1610, Serdonati’s work collects more than 25,000 proverbs and proverbial phrases, which make it an extraordinary and unparalleled collection in the field of Italian paremiography. The literary and historical references for almost every collected paremia and the number of synonymic variants provided for some entries makes Serdonati’s collection distinctive because variants frequently attest to minimal morphological variation, especially for proverbs. This is one aspect of Serdonati’s collection that anticipates the Baroque taste for accumulation.29

Parallel to collections of paremias in Italian, there also exist collections of proverb and proverbial phrases showing regional aspects or dialect elements. Coming from the area of Venice is a collection of paremias, published in 1535 (or maybe earlier), *Le dieci tavole dei proverbi* purported to make more easily readable paremias that had been earlier organized in ten big plaques without a clear order of classification. Manlio Cortelazzo, the modern editor of the collection, argues that the list of paremias aims to counteract the Tuscan tradition both

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29 For more information, see all Ferrato’s publications in Bibliography, and Fiorelli 1999.
in language and in content, which are undoubtedly Venetian or from an area culturally connected to Venice (Cortelazzo 1995, 4). A considerable number of paremias refer to a Tuscan tradition, though, meaning that they are a Venetian translation of original paremias in Tuscan that are listed by Alunno in his *Fabbrica del mondo* as well as in Salviati’s and Serdonati’s collections. This aspect will be later perused and analyzed in the chapter devoted to Pompeo Sarnelli, who likewise translated some of Alunno’s paremias in Neapolitan.

Two collections of paremias transcribed by Vincent Lean at the British Museum in London and released by Gaetano Romagnoli in 1865 in the volume *Due opuscoli rarissimi del secolo XVI* likewise contain regional or dialect elements. The first one, titled *Proverbia. Attiladi novi et belli, quali l’huomo non se ne debbe mai fidare et aggiontovi altri ventotto proverbi* and published in Venice in 1586, is written in a northern dialect, most likely Milanese, and gathers paremias that aim to express admonitions on what a man should not do in order to not be repentant. As seen earlier in this study, the disposition of the text in rhymed distiches testifies to the presence of poetic patterns in the collected paremias. The second printed account, titled *Li nomi et cognomi di tutte le provintie et città et più particolarmente di tutte quelle dell’Italia composta per Darinel Ritio detto il Piasentino* (1585), contains paremias with six, eight, ten, and twelve members, which show how paremias could be augmented when a specific structure is requested for specific objectives.

Aiming to fulfill a pedagogical purpose outside Italy to foreign students or lovers of the Italian language, it is worth mentioning that two works are direct filiations of Florio’s

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30 A small selection of paremias testifies to the linguistic and culture debt to Northern Italy: “Crédestu che ’l no ghe si altri asini in Pavana;?” “Chi va al Portello e no se inzampa puol andar segur in Franza;” “Da Malamoco a Pavia ce sé cento mia;” “Spua pan” (used for fish with thorns); “Trenta mones e un abbat no po fa chegà un asen a mal so grat” (typical expression in Bergamo).

31 In the appendix of his *Etimologia e proverbio nell’Italia del XVII secolo*, Pignatti includes the work in a paragraph devoted to ethnographic paremias (Pignatti 2010, 327).

32 Many of them feature a final rhyme (modelled on the phonetic and morphological features of the Milanese dialect, as, for example, “confin” and “vesin,” “fuogo” and “cuogo”), or an assonance, and sometimes, a word can be distorted for the sake of making the paremia rhyme (*Vin in bena e spina de scarpena*).
collection of paremias titled *Giardino di ricreatione*: Charles Merbury’s *Proverbi vulgari, raccolti di diversi luoghi d’Italia, et la maggior parte dalle proprie bocche de gl’Italiani stessi* (1581), and Giovanni Torriano’s *Piazza universale di proverbi italiani* (1666). The first one aims to offer members of high society an instrument with which to embellish their own conversations, as well as to allow a better knowledge of the target culture (Speroni 1943). The second collection, which faithfully adheres to the seventeenth-century exigence to totalize human knowledge, instead aimed to reach merchants and the bourgeoisie who needed Italian to communicate with potential clients and to expand their business (Speroni 1957).

The presence of paremias in calligraphic copybooks from the sixteenth century to the eighteenth century is another clear example of didactic use of paremias. Usually, the sentences provided as examples to imitate for calligraphic purposes offered explanations on the process of writing; rules on the measure, inclination, and realization of the letters; suggestions on how to make the letters look beautiful, clear, and polished; and comments on linguistic aspects. The examples were not mere graphic demonstrations, but also conveyed a message which the learner would have internalized while looking at the handwriting and attempting to reproduce it. At times, calligraphers quoted excerpts from Aristotle and other classical philosophers, or used verses from Boccaccio, Ariosto, Tasso, and other writers who were supposedly well-known in the minds of the learners.

Paremias certainly fall into this category, and their use in a copybook devoted to the promotion of a legible, regular, and crafted handwriting is an interesting example of transition: they were used as vehicular tools towards the acquisition of the learning process and as means to improve graphic competence, while at the same time transmitting cultural aspects. On the one hand, paremias conveyed a moral message that the learner would have inevitably received and understood. In this way, the learner would have not been distracted by the process of figuring out the meaning of the expression but could have concentrated on
the graphic aspect of the process. On the other hand, using a paremia could have meant to present it to the community of learners and passively augment their knowledge on popular wisdom and their awareness on moral or ethical messages. Since those paremias were not used in a meaningful context, learners were exposed only to their conventionalized meaning, given that no other contextual elements would have supplied a clarification. Thus, paremias that transited from a verbal code to a graphic one ultimately almost became emblems.33

On the other side of the spectrum, Aloyse Cynthio de gli Fabritii’s *Libro della origine delli volgari proverbi* (1526) shows how contexts can be shaped based on existing proverbs and proverbial phrases. Cynthio collected forty-six paremias by organizing them in ABACBC tercets and dedicating three *cantiche* to each paremia. Since the paremias were already given, Cynthio chose the most appropriate characters and events in accordance with their

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33 Ari Wesseling comments that emblems and paremias share one aspect, their metaphorical interpretation and the combination of images (paremias “are usually informed by imagery”) (Wesseling, 7). He argues that the connection to the initial image associated with the concrete situation that created the paremia remains throughout the different levels of the life of a paremia, but it fades away as it transits towards a metaphorical interpretation of its meaning. Similarly, emblems combine a visual aspect (the image) with a written one (the motto) in a biunivocal correspondence, which facilitates the memorization of the text and explicates the message it conveys. This correspondence is further explained with a commentary, aiming at unwrapping hidden messages or at providing examples. Sometimes, mottos can assume the form of a proverb or a proverbial phrase. An example for all can be Andrea Alciati’s *emblem CXLVIII*, where the motto, “Qui non capit Christus, rapit fiscus,” is a proverb conveying the message that in the past taxes collected what was left after paying the Church (Lapucci 2006, C2478-79: *Quel che lascia Cristo se lo piglia il fisco* and *Quel che non si dà a Cristo si dà al fisco*; Schwamenthal, *Chi non dà a Cristo, dà al fisco*). However, the subsequent comment transfers the conventionalized meaning of the proverb to just one of its facets, focusing on the negativity and unreliability of princes and indirectly conveying the message that not trusting them is better. By means of a metaphor, the comment says that the tight hand of the greedy prince squeezes the humid asparagi that he had previously wet, thus expressing how princes, who first donate, then take everything back with collateral damage. The image associated to the proverb depicts the commentary and not the proverb itself, as it shows an aristocratic person squeezing an object that releases much water. Therefore, the proverb plays the role of a complementary element to the image, which remains the focus, and transfers its contextual visual message to a more conventionalized meaning expressed in words. For a visual representation of paremias, Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s 1559 canvas, titled *Netherlandish Proverbs*, is an outstanding example. As in lists where paremias are linked to one another by means of their message, in Bruegel’s piece the message of each single paremia or combined paremias allows the viewers to understand the images alone and as a system together. This ultimately helps the viewer to grasp the meaning *in toto*, along with making it more accessible and memorable. For more information about emblems in France and England, see Daniel Russell, *The Emblem and Device in France*. Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1985, and Peter Daly, Leslie Duer, Mary Silcox, and Anthony Raspa, eds. *The English Emblem Tradition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. On the relationship between paremiology and emblems, see also Mafuta Ma in Franceschi 2011, 289-95.
conventionalized message. His linguistic virtuosity allows him to create ironic and comedic scenes while narrating stories and providing a context for the paremias. Because of the presence of eroticism—if not pornography—and harshly sarcastic elements (especially against the Church and its members), the book was added to the *Index of forbidden books* and condemned to almost complete oblivion until the twentieth century.

The famous letter (1557) by Antonio Bonagiunti Vignali (or Vignali di Bonagiunta), known as Arsiccio Intronato, stands out as an example of employment of paremias not only as pure rhetorical and stylistic exercises but also as tools able to transmit meaningful messages even when no context is provided. Vignali’s paremias only offer their conventionalized meaning, which can be ambiguous, given the lack of an explicit context and the infinite possibilities of application of the paremias’ conventionalized meaning. However, the historical context and the author’s social and political standpoint clarifies it (Pignatti and Crimi 2014, 269-72). Since he writes a letter to a “gentilissima Madonna,” who happens to symbolize the city of Siena, the list of paremias aims to address Vignali’s hometown in an ironic way by indirectly expressing the author’s negative attitude towards its citizens and by expressing moral teachings on everyday life. Paremias in his work appear to be organized according to their meaning, as an act of mnemonic reference, or because one paremia logically depends on the other, or because the two of them share the same structure.

It is interesting to evaluate the presence of paremias in the first edition of the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, which lists a considerable number of proverbs and proverbial phrases in its entries. The consistent presence of paremias in the *Vocabolario*, even starting from its same title (*Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca, con tre indici delle voci, locuzioni e proverbi latini, e greci, posti per entro l’opera*), reflects the Crusca’s interest in spoken and popular language and in forms of expression that did not belong

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34 A similar enterprise exists in Spanish too by Blasco de Garay, who wrote *Cartas en refranes* in the 1500s.
exclusively to sophisticated literature. The compilers of the dictionary seemed to follow a method of classification that distinguished between proverbs, proverbial phrases, proverbial locutions, precepts, and sayings. As reported by Bastiano de’ Rossi in his diary, each compiler had to “far menzione ne’ Prolegomeni del proverbio minutissimamente, e quindi accennare che sia proverbio, che sentenzia proverbiale, che precetto, detto, o locuzion proverbiale” (Aresti, 295; Guidotti, 313; Parodi S., 337). The same criterion of classification persisted in the preface of the dictionary, where the academics emphasized how they gathered both facetious and serious proverbs alongside sayings and proverbial phrases (Parodi S., 344). Alessandro Aresti, however, argues that, in fact, proverbs and proverbial phrases are not distinguished and that the label “proverbialmente” was applied to those expressions belonging to the one or to the other group (Aresti, 298-99).

The major sources for the paremias in the Vocabolario appear to be Agnolo Monosini’s Flos and Salviati’s collection. In the preface to the readers, Monosini’s Flos is mentioned as the collection to which the reader should refer to find etymological explanations for all those paremias that are not devoted a thorough explanation of their origins and meanings in the dictionary (Voc. Crusca, 4v). Given his authority, Monosini is quoted in his own fields of expertise, namely Greek and Latin etymology and paremiology.  

Aresti mentions 240 explicit references to Monosini’s work in the dictionary (in Tomasin, 296), whereas Pignatti argues that the total references are 243, of which 40 percent are devoted to etymology and 60 percent to paremias (Pignatti 2010, 152). More recently, Marco Biffi demonstrated how Flos is mentioned 250 times in 214 entries (in Tomasin, 317-22).  

35 For a description of the relationship between Monosini and the Accademia della Crusca, see Pignatti 2010, 43-50, where he reports a cruscante’s note asking Monosini to list, when possible, proverbs and proverbial phrases in Latin.  
36 For exchanges between Monosini’s Flos and the Vocabolario, with special attention to borrowings that are not explicitly indicated, see Pignatti 2010, 169-88. Maurizio Vitale specifies that Monosini’s collection was used in the first three impressions of the dictionary but was eventually eliminated from the list of approved writers in its fourth edition (1729-38), because considered too popular, especially in its fourth book (Vitale 1986, 310).
Even though not mentioned in the list of reference books, Salviati’s collection is equally exploited in the _Vocabolario_: 53 percent of his paremias, specifically 279 out of 527, feature in the dictionary with minor discrepancies in punctuation, some lexical choices, order of the members, and occasional transformation of what is originally a proverbial phrase into a proverb (Biffi, 291-93). The presence of such a conspicuous number of Salviati’s paremias in the dictionary does not surprise since Salviati’s manuscript appears to be an alphabetical repository of paremias, extremely useful when looking for an instance of paremia to place in a dictionary.

At the end of the seventeenth century, just a few years after the publication of the third edition of the Accademia’s dictionary (1691), Francesco Lena published his _Proverbi italiani e latini_ (1694), which was the biggest bilingual collection of the century, with more than ten thousand paremias. The purpose of this collection seems to find an explanation in Lena’s letter to the reader, in which he appeals to his readers’ consciousness in pointing out any possible misunderstanding or mistake in the paremias of his collection. The justification he offers is that the proverb is “un detto, che diversamente suona in diversi paesi, anzi varia tra gli autori della stessa nazione,” and therefore it is impossible to gather all instances of a paremia (Lena, 8). Lena’s assertion that paremias change dramatically even in the same geographical area testifies to the idea that paremias are not fixed but rather offer an array of possible forms and meanings, or better, an array of contextual meanings. Pedagogical purposes are therefore absent in this collection, as well as are intellectual disquisitions on distinctive aspects of paremias. Lena’s paremias are cultural and social repositories that are shared by a community of speakers and that depict the community’s knowledge and wisdom.

In the nineteenth century, two collections of paremias stand out for their objective that is very much in line with the romantic tendency to discover popular origins, and consequently

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37 Before gathering this collection, Lena had compiled a _Saggio di proverbi e detti sentenziosi italiani e latini_ (1674).
gather and propose the greatest number of paremias.\textsuperscript{38} Proverbi was gathered by Giuseppe Giusti and published in 1853 and 1871 under Gino Capponi’s supervision as Proverbi Toscani.\textsuperscript{39} It gathers nearly 3,000 paremias in alphabetical order, which Capponi changed into a thematic organization. Paremias are rarely explained, except for a few instances at the end of the list, where detailed descriptions of some proverbs and proverbial phrases illustrate their meanings, uses, and literary references. Giusti’s paremias belong to everyday language, and as such, gather useful teachings and suggestions available to everyone.

A few decades later, in 1883, Gustavo Strafforello published an extensive and encyclopedic work on paremias, titled La sapienza del mondo, in two volumes. This dictionary contains a catalogue of collections of paremias in Italian, dialect, Latin, and foreign languages translated into Italian (Strafforello, xiii-xxv). Paremias are sometimes provided with an explanation and examples, and are gathered in accordance to a lexical criterion; thus, they appear under an entry (noun, verb, or adverb) that is generally the central term of the proverb, yet they do not follow an alphabetical principle inside each section.

The 1800s also experienced the publication of collections of regional paremias and aphorisms as a way to preserve the cultural aspects of a local community for future generations. One example is the 1890 Dizionario dei frizzetti fiorentini, gathered by Giuseppe Frizzi. Frizzo is technically a clever remark or motto, usually associated with Florentine or Tuscan people, who are renowned for their sharp witticism. Under entries in alphabetical

\textsuperscript{38} For a list of publications on paremias in the nineteenth and twentieth century, also in dialect, see Bonser and Stephens, 252-99.

\textsuperscript{39} Elisabetta Benucci edited the most recent critical edition of Giusti’s paremias (2011), both on paper and electronically (Giusti). This edition gathers Giusti’s original paremias without Capponi’s additions and new structure. Her choice of the title Proverbi follows Giusti’s notes on his documents (Giusti, 11) and rejects the title Proverbi toscani used in all previous editions (Giusti, 87-88). The title “toscani” in many collections of paremias results from the presence of a more or less considerable section of paremias that are specifically Tuscan, but nonetheless are inserted into a list of Italian paremias (see also Benucci in Franceschi 2011, 219-40). Piero Fiorelli’s 2014 publication Voci di lingua parlata similarly contains proverbs, proverbial phrases, and sayings, coming from his lexicographical analysis of Giusti’s collection.
order, the dictionary collects puns, word plays, mottos, sayings, proverbial phrases, and proverbs, and provides them with an explanation, contextual uses, and literary references, as well as synonymic expressions. The dictionary’s entries also include equivalent paremias in other vernaculars or dialects and in other national languages.

In the twentieth century, if paremiographers continued the trend of gathering local paremias, then paremiologists persisted in speculating over the constituent characteristics of paremias and attempted to delimit the field and clarify the dichotomy between proverbs, proverbial phrases, and wellerisms vis-à-vis all the other sequences of terms. The difficulty in finding a clear-cut definition for all of them lies in the fact that their shared features do not differ for significant aspects but rather for their degree of intensity and their often-untraceable origins. Only in recent years has Temistocle Franceschi offered an effective terminology and managed to describe the nature and linguistic properties of paremias successfully by way of considering them as products of the language first, and then products of a culture and community of speakers.40 Before exploring the results of Franceschi’s research, which is adopted in this study, an overview of the historical changes that occurred in the interpretation of paremias helps to evaluate the different elements that paremiographers and paremiologists considered distinctive of proverbs and proverbial phrases. It also clarifies the process that brought Franceschi and his collaborators to present their innovative considerations on paremiology.

1.2 Definitions of Paremias: An Overview

The initial paragraph of the first and still most comprehensive study on proverbs in the English-speaking world, Archer Taylor’s *The Proverb*, published in 1931, raises an

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40 Among the innumerable articles written and books curated by Franceschi, the most utilized ones in this study are Franceschi 1978; Franceschi 1994; Franceschi 1999, 1-22; and Franceschi 2011.
important question in paremiology: How can proverbs be defined? What are the distinctive aspects that distinguish proverbs from other elements of speech and language? Taylor argues that,

[t]he definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking; and should we fortunately combine in a single definition all the essential elements and give each the proper emphasis, we should not even then have a touchstone. An incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not. Hence no definition will enable us to identify positively a sentence as proverbial (Taylor 1931, 3).

Similarly, Italian paremiographer Alberto Mario Cirese highlights the indefiniteness of the field:

La prima difficoltà in cui ci si imbatte studiando i proverbi è proprio quello di stabilire (sia pure in linea preliminare ma con un minimo di precisione) di che cosa ci si stia occupando o di che cosa ci si debba occupare (Cirese 1972, 1).

Providing an exhaustive and clear-cut definition of proverbs is not an easy task given the precariousness of their nature. Proverbs entail a variety of aspects, many of which are specifically cultural and folkloristic. Therefore, they are not easily recognizable by those outside the community and the context in which they were created. Additionally, the category of proverbs often includes sequences of terms that share a few similarities with them but stand out for their different structure and articulation of meaning. Frequently, scholars use the available terminology differently, so that, as Cirese argues, it is difficult to set the boundaries of the field and of the variety of expressions it includes.

The “Scuola Geoparemiologica Italiana,” which Temistocle Franceschi established in the 1980s to promote the study and analysis of Italian proverbs geographically, recently adopted the term *paremia* (to substitute for the word *proverbio*, derived from the Latin *proverbium*) to label proverbs and all the other expressions that share the same distinctive
features. The word παροιμία combines the suffix παρα-, meaning “similar to, akin,” and the noun οίμη, which indicates a song or an oral account appointed to instruct. Generally, in the Greek world, παροιμίαι were not distinguished from similar expressions, such as maxims (moral utterances without any metaphorical meaning, commonly used by a community), apophthegms (a famous person’s memorable, anecdotal, and sententious saying), or aphorisms (rules of life). All paremias were generally associated with the popular and oral transmission of knowledge and wisdom and were not considered suitable for elevated works of rhetoric (Kindstrand, 71).

Aristotle was the first to provide examples of παροιμίαι and to analyze them, as a paremiologist, in his Rhetoric. He distinguished between examples and enthymemes, and evaluated their role in rhetorical discourse and syllogistic reasoning (Rhetoric, 1393a-b). Enthymemes, i.e. rhetorical arguments (as opposed to demonstrative ones), include references to past events as well as pure inventions, the latter of which incorporates similes and fables. Fables are said to be particularly fruitful in deliberative or decisional discourses because they can be invented infinitely. Examples, enthymemes, similes, and fables contribute to the orator’s objective to persuade his public and effectively direct it to a specific reaction; at the same time, they give a solemn and sententious character to the orator’s performance.

For a thorough review of the etymology and meanings of the word, see Rondinelli 2011, 160-68, and Rondinelli in Franceschi 2011, 167-78. The word paremia, for instance, exists in Spanish, and the academic world created it to establish order among all the available terms for proverbs, including proverbio and refrán. Luisa Messina Fajardo uses these words in her definitions of the two disciplines related to paremias: “La Paremiografía es la disciplina que se ocupa del estudio de las recopilaciones (refraneros) que recogen las paremias, tanto cultas quanto populares, en orden alfabético, temático o por palabra clave. La Paremiología, por su parte, es la disciplina que examina las unidades lingüísticas estables de carácter sentencioso: su ojecto de estudio son las paremias (cultas y populares)” (Messina Fajardo, 1).

Therefore, παροιμία is a “dicho útil” (Romero, 221). There is also another etymology, attributed to Diogenianus, which links παροιμία to ὁμοίως, meaning “the same way” (Romero, 219). This etymology emphasizes the allegorical and metaphorical process necessary to understand the message of a paremia, being the metaphor a trope that establishes connections of similarity. The very first one to use παροιμία was Aeschylus in his tragedy Agamemnon, though without any critical analysis (Romero, 219).

The never-found work by Aristotle titled Παροιμίαι attests to his interest in paremias.

A syllogism is a form of reasoning composed of a premise, a middle stage, and a conclusion, which represents the passage from generals to particulars.
Enthymemes also include maxims, which are universal and well-known statements that appeal to general concepts and convey a moral or ethical message (Rhetoric, 1394a-1395b).

According to Aristotle, paremias are abbreviated comparisons with another dimension, yet the comparison is not expressed, as happens in similes. Since they connect two distant worlds that do not apparently share much, paremias belong to the category of metaphors; the metaphorical process allows a section of their meaning to be associated with an external entity and deliver a successful message (Rhetoric, 1413a). Thus, paremias entail a “translation of their meaning” since they undergo a figurative process of transition, which makes the discourse pleasant whether they are used in rhetorical discourses or to convey a moral message. As metaphors, paremias enhance the discourse and make it similar to an ambiguous expression or aenigma. Similar to jokes, which need to be both clever and understandable, metaphors and paremias can be employed to embellish the literary discourse, make it effective and poignant, transmit a precise message, and, at the same time, attract the reader. For instance, Brusantino’s paremia, *Ingegno et arte spesso ne bisogna Ne li casi amorosi a dir menzogna* (CN, VII.3), wittily refers to Fra Rinaldo’s ingenious answer to escape the perilous consequences of his sexual affair. The context of the story helps clarifying the message of the paremia: intelligence and practical skills are the best combination in love matters, and considering those love matters that the story describes, are the only plausible answer to escape danger. The paremia is metaphorically attractive and pushes the reader to continue reading the story aware of the message that the story transmits.

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46 In his reasoning, Aristotle employs a few *paroimiai* since they constitute a well-suited support and testimony for a concept. For example, the proverbial phrase, *Do not do well to an old person* highlights how it is better not to befriend an elderly (Rhetoric, 1376a); or *Shame is in the eye* explains how people are ashamed of things that happen publicly (Rhetoric, 1384a).

47 This is a translation of Fernando García Romero, who talks about “translación [...] de sentido” (Romero, 220).

48 For a comprehensive discussion on paremias in the Greek world, their pedagogical use, and their relation to society, religion, and urban life, see Di Capua 1946, 27-43.

49 For more information on paremias in the classical age, in particular Aristotle and Quintilian, see Poccetti in Vallini, 61-85.
In Latin, two words were available to indicate the Greek παρομία: proverbium and adagium. The etymology of proverbium highlights the presence of words: verbum pro verbo means a word taking the place of another word. Thus, a proverb essentially transmits another meaning. Its structure expresses a specific meaning by way of replacing a concept that could be conveyed by a different (but less effective) sequence of words. The definition also transmits the idea of a spoken utterance, since it is a verbum, or a spoken word. If the word proverbium became quite common after Cicero, adagium was destined not to find a fertile ground of use, even though it was quite widespread in the Middle Ages and in the early modern period. Its etymology, which traces back to ad agendum aptum (“good at doing”), emphasized the moral and ethical component as well as the practical aspects of the message conveyed by adages and was therefore perfectly suitable for the religious and moral atmosphere of medieval and Renaissance times (Kelso, 412).

In his De oratore, Cicero includes paremias in that group of words or phrases that, as witty remarks and jokes, are able to convey ridicule (specifically “ridiculum in dicto,” as opposed to “ridiculum in re”) and manage to defeat the adversary orator (De oratore, II.60.244). The “ridiculum in dicto” (mockery generated by words) comes from a biting expression, whereas the “ridiculum in re” (mockery generated by events) includes anecdotes showing human behavior and reflecting upon it. Only those expressions that are “peracutum et breve” (extremely ingenious and short) and characterized by “dicacitas” (nipping sharpness) can be a successful means for rhetorical purposes. Consequently, it could be inferred that successful paremias should consist of these same aspects in order to be pleasant and rhetorically effective (De oratore, II.54.218).

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50 The difference between an adage and a proverb lies in the fact that adages are related to a person who pronounced them in a specific circumstance, whereas proverbs are anonymous and have a universal appeal (Cherchi 2010b, 42).
When defining paremias, Quintilian followed Aristotle and adapted his ideas to the rhetorical context of his *Institutio oratoria*. In Book 5, Chapter 11, he defines παροιμία, as “genus illud, quod est velut fabella brevior, et per allegoriam accipitur”51 (Institutio oratoria, V.11.21). Paremias are compendiums of fairy-tales52 and undergo an allegorical or metaphorical process of interpretation,53 which makes them *figurae*, or tropes.54 In Book 6, Chapter 3, he adds that “proverbia oportune aptata, ut homini nequam lapso et ut adlevaretur roganti «tollat te qui non novit»;”55 thus, he emphasizes the witty and laughable aspect of paremias (Institutio oratoria, VI.3.98). When talking about *urbanitas*, which is a certain witty flavor necessary in appealing conversation, he argues that paremias adapt to situations and elegantly contribute to style by adding a humorous tone to the expression. This means that paremias need to be suitable for the context and to the *urbanitas* that they seek to achieve. And a humorous and witty tone is the best ornament in spoken discourses and orations since paremias can resemble mottos, attract listeners, and persuade the listeners to the orator’s own thoughts (Di Capua 1946, 81).56 One of Sarnelli’s paremias sounds like a motto as in the apex of the discussion on the value of the Neapolitan language vis-à-vis Northern dialects, one of the characters says, *Lengua che no’ la ’ntienne, e tu la caca* (P, Letter). He is apparently referring to the expulsion of the Lombard dialect from the lowest part of the body because of

51 “That class which may be regarded as an abridged fable and is understood allegorically.”
52 Also in Kelso, 413.
53 Brevity seems to equate paremias and metaphors, if Quintilian himself defines the metaphor as a “similitudo brevior” (Institutio oratoria, VIII.6.4), and paremias are condensed sequences of terms.
54 Franceschi also uses the word “figura” to indicate the image/message that a paremia conveys. The “figura paremiaca” is the initial image/message offered by the paremia, which might not be transparent or immediate to understand, but is usually rhetorically shaped in order to be effective in the mind of the receiver. It is by means of analogy that the final message is perceived and understood (Franceschi 1997, 133).
55 “A neat application of proverbs may also be effective, as when one man replied to another, a worthless fellow, who had fallen down and asked to be helped to his feet, «Let someone pick you up who does not know you».”
56 For a detailed analysis of the use of paremias in schools and their pedagogical application during the Roman empire, see Di Capua 1946, 89-101.
its incomprehensibility. By uttering the paremia, he arouses the readers’ interest and, at the same time, make the author’s opinion clear for them.

When Quintilian discusses contextual use of *sententiae*, he includes *gnomai* and aphorisms (Institutio oratoria, VIII.5)\(^{57}\) and highlights how *sententiae* are placed in context and therefore change accordingly in order to make the general effect of the text much stronger. This ultimately reveals the contingency of context upon the structure of *sententiae* and similar sequences of terms.\(^{58}\)

In the early modern period, many paremiographers started collecting proverbs, proverbial phrases, and sometimes wellerisms, and, at the same time, as paremiologists, provided their own definitions of paremia. Erasmus offers a cultural description of *paroemia* in his *Adagia*. In the section titled “Quid sit paroemia,” he states that a paremia is a “celebre dictum, scita quapiam novitate insigne”\(^{59}\) (Adagia, 1703, 2-13). This definition underscores the witty novelty that a saying or a *dictum* (once again a reference to something said or

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\(^{57}\) Kelso distinguishes proverbs from *gnomai*, recognizing a literary provenance for the latter and a popular one for the former. Also, *gnomai* are the result of a long work of polishing and reflection, whereas proverbs result from a spontaneous and oral utterance raised to the level of a well-recognized structure by repetitive use and general acceptance (Kelso, 412-13). Fajardo borrows these concepts and combines them in her definition of paremias as belonging to the realm of shared wisdom and as “estructuras lingüísticas que se caracterizan por poser una función gnómica y una estructura propia, así como por recurrir a recursos estilísticos” (Messina Fajardo, 1).

\(^{58}\) Quintilian argues that *sententiae* can be simple, such as *Princeps, qui vult omnia scire, necesse habet multa ignoscere* (“The prince who would know all, must needs ignore much”) (Institutio oratoria, VIII.5.3), or present the explication of a reason or motivation, as, for instance, *Nam in omni certamine, qui opulentior est, etiamsi accipit iniuriam, tamen, quia plus potest, facere videtur* (“For in every struggle, the stronger seems not to suffer wrong, even when this is actually the case, but to inflict it, simply in virtue of his superior power”) (Institutio oratoria, VIII.5.4). Some *sententiae* show parallelisms, such as in *Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit* (“Complaisance wins us friends, truth enmity”) coming from Terence’s *Andria*, 1.1.41 (Institutio oratoria, VIII.5.4), or oppositions, such as *Mors misera non est, aditus ad mortem est mise* (“Death is not bitter, but the approach to death”) (Institutio oratoria, VIII.5.5). They may also be embedded in a direct statement, meaning that their structure can be modified by and adapted to the context in which they are inserted: examples include, *Tam deest avaro, quod habet, quam quod non habet* (“The miser lacks that which he has no less than what he has not”) (Institutio oratoria, VIII.5.6), and *Nihil habet, Caesar, nec fortuna tua maius quam ut possis, nec natura melius quam ut velis servare quam plurimos* (“Caesar, the splendour of your present fortune confers on you nothing greater than the power and nothing better than the will to save as many of your fellow-citizens as possible”) (Institutio oratoria, VIII.5.7).

\(^{59}\) “A famous saying, remarkable for a certain witty novelty.” Vergilii had already pointed that a distinctive feature of paremias is their passage from individual utterances to authorial utterances and their subsequent commonality among people and in different contexts (Vergilii, aii r).

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pronounced) requires in order to be called a paremia. It is also sufficiently broad to cover different typologies of expressions, such as proverbs, proverbial phrases, idioms, maxims, and mottos. Commenting upon their usefulness, Erasmus lists four elements that paremias promote: the love of knowledge (“ad philosophiam,” probably referring to cultural elements), the arts of rhetoric and persuasion (“ad persuadendum”), the decorum and grace of the narration (“ad decus et gratiam orationis”), and the understanding of good authors (“ad intelligendos optimos quosque auctores”). All these aspects are particularly fertile not only in an oral context but in a literary and written one as well. Paremias provide perspectives on cultural and social issues, force the narration to take a specific direction, make the narration sound more graciously constructed and thus elevate it, and reveal references to ancient or previous works and authors. When describing how novelty distinguishes paremias from expressions that are not paremias, Erasmus mentions that there might be evasive allusions (“allusio”), an uncommon phrasing (“eloquendi novitas”), humor, wit, or irony (“ridiculum”). However, the most fruitful way to determine a new significance in the meaning of the paremia is by allowing a metaphorical process, based on metaphors, allegories, or hyperboles (Adagia, Chapters III and IV: “Quibus ex rebus accredit novitas paroemiae;” “Quomodo paroemia differat ab iis, quae videntur illi confinia”).

Less than a century later, in London, John Florio provides a generic definition of paremia in his bilingual dictionary A Worlde of Wordes (1598), which is directed more to the actual and pragmatic spendibility of the term in spoken or written context than to a


speculation about the essence of paremias. Like Erasmus, “proverbio” includes different
typologies of paremias: “a proverb, an adage, a short wittie saying, a common saying, an old
said saw” (s.v. proverbio). In Italy, the almost contemporary Flos Italicae Linguae by Agnolo
Monosini offers a theoretical definition, which stems from Quintilian’s reference to the
figurative meaning of paremias as a classifying methodology:

Paroemia est proverbium, quodam figurae involucro aliud significans, atque ipsa
verba sonent. Per quam definitionem hoc nimirum expressum cupimus, ea tantum
proverbia paroemiae nomine esse appellanda, quae vel allegoria, vel metaphorā, vel
hyperbole et huiusmodi tropis insignita sint (Monosini, 96).62

The metaphorical interpretation of paremias necessary to entangle their figurative connotation
and their widespread appeal also appear in the introduction to Voc. Cr. 1612, where
“proverbio” is explained as “breve, e arguto detto, ricevuto comunemente, che, per lo più,
sotto parlar figurato, comprende avvertimenti attenenti al vivere umano. Lat. adagium,
proverbium.”63 Therefore, when interpreted, proverbs and proverbial phrases reveal their
useful message.64

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, paremiologists have been trying to delimit
the territory of inquiry by way of pointing out those aspects that unequivocally characterize
paremias: their preservation of an ancient popular memory, the atemporal pedagogical and
moral teachings that they convey over the centuries as “valuable ethical precepts” (Kelso,
415), and their condensed structure usually held together by metric elements. Some
paremiologists included linguistic elements as fundamental aspects for a comprehensive

62 “Paroemia is a proverb that, through the cover of a trope, means something different from its own
meaning. With this definition, we desire to make it undoubtedly clear that only those expressions
which are distinguished by an allegory, a metaphor, a hyperbole, or any kind of trope, should be
called paroemia.”
63 Niccolò Tommaseo and Bernardo Bellini uses the Voc. Cr. 1612’s definition in their Dizionario
della lingua italiana (s.v. proverbio). The Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca’s definition is
also present in GDLI, s.v. proverbio.
64 For more information on the presence of paremias in the dictionary, see Guidotti and Biffi.
understanding and a correct definition of paremias, and analyzed the logical and mental choices that direct the creation of paremias, and consequently their use and recognition by the human mind and the community.

In his article “The Wisdom of Many and the Wit of One,” Taylor, recalling Vergilii’s explanation, asserts that “[a] proverb is wise; it belongs to many people; it is ingenious in form and idea; and it was first invented by an individual and applied by him to a particular situation” (Mieder and Dundes 1981, 3-4). In his above-mentioned work The Proverb, he declares that a satisfying definition for proverb could be that it is “a saying current among the folk” (Taylor 1931, 3), or a sort of vox populi. He nonetheless specifies that such a definition does not account for many other elements that play a significant role in shaping a proverb, such as its epigrammatic structure that allows it to convey a message in a shortened way (Taylor 1931, 172).

On the other hand, it accounts for the human experience and practical common sense that proverbs, and all paremias, communicate; this ultimately confirms their essence as lessons of life drawn from the context that created them (Taylor 1931, 87-88).

As it happened in classical times, paremias are frequently associated with or considered a subgroup of sententiae. Francesco di Capua, in his 1946 book, Sentenze e proverbi nella tecnica oratoria e loro influenza sull’arte del periodare, uses the two terms

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65 Taylor also refers to the etymology of the Greek word ἀξιος, ov, ὁ, which means either saying and proverb or fable, to demonstrate the link between paremias and fables. In Matthew 21.16 (“Καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Ακούεις τι ὄντος λέγουσιν; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτῷ, Ναι, οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε, ὅτι ἐκ στόματος νηπίων καὶ θηλαζόντων, κατηρτίσα αἶνον?”) (“So they asked Jesus, «Do you hear what they are saying?» «Indeed, I do,» answered Jesus. «Haven’t you ever read this scripture? ‘You have trained children and babies to offer perfect praise’”), and Luke 18.43 (“Καὶ παρασημήμα τῶν Θεόν, καὶ ἠκολούθεντο αὐτῷ, δωδέκατά τῶν Ἰδιῶν, ἐδωκέν αἶνον τῷ Θεῷ”) (“Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God”), the word ἀξιος takes on the meaning of a laudatory praise to God. The three meanings share an important aspect: be it religious, fairy-tale, or paremiac, ἀξιος refers to a moral and ethical statement liable to convey a meaningful message in accordance with the context in which it appears and is used.

66 Shirley Arora questions the meaning of the adjective “current” in Taylor’s definition. She argues that the word means “generally accepted,” but the issue concerns the extension of the acceptance, which can be inside a small community or at an international level, as well as the process of creating a paremia from a non-paremia (Arora, 6).
mutually while at the same time distancing them from *periodo*. A *sentenza* (or paremia) is, indeed, a concise expression of truth, one that belongs to a community of people and forges them together by way of transmitting traditions as well as ethical and common values. Conversely, the *periodo* mostly aims to persuade or move, and consequently is employed in rhetorical discourses (Di Capua 1946, 7).67

Bice Mortara Garavelli also introduces the category of *sententia* in her *Manuale di retorica* and specifies that *sententiae* include paremias and aphorisms. She maintains that, while both are tropes of thought, paremias show a popular dimension that sometimes draws from traditional superstitions and prejudices (Garavelli, 247); aphorisms, instead, convey moral ideas or messages related to a specific discipline or field (Garavelli, 248). Along with maxims and mottos, paremias and aphorisms refer to moral and cultural elements, and, like mottos, express a concept in a quick, concise, and effective way. As for Erasmus, paremias are forms of allusion (“un dare a intendere”), or ways to appeal to the listener’s culture, knowledge, awareness of the world, and memory of the context (Garavelli, 257).68

Considering that allusion means to signify more than a term actually conveys, it follows that paremias are open to polysemy and different interpretations and that the context is crucial to express and understand them (Garavelli, 257-59). Moreover, given their indeterminacy and their cryptic message (or their way of saying by not saying), paremias, as well as allusions, are particularly prone to express satire, irony, and sarcasm depending on the situation that

67 Already in the sixteenth century, Bargagli wrote that “sentenze” do not present a metaphor or allegory as proverbs do, are mainly expressed in the third person singular, thus assuming a universal character, and are continuously invented (Bargagli, 163). For more criticism on *sententiae* and proverbs, see Chiechi, 119-24.

68 Similar to Mortara’s reasoning, Heinrich Lausberg states that allusions make historical, mythological, literary facts as well as everyday and common elements, blurred so that they trigger either detachment or comedy (Lausberg, 225-26, par. 404; 232, par. 419). In his definition, *sententia*, along with gnome, is a “*locus communis* formulato in una frase che si presenta con la pretesa di valere come norma riconosciuta della conoscenza del mondo e rilevante per la condotta di vita o come norma per la vita stessa” (Lausberg, 219-20, par. 398).
generated them. For instance, the aggressive and provocatory nature of a paremia is visible in the following example from Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata*: Petruccio, in order to put Marchionno’s dinner to an end, twists the traditional form of a paremia and says, *Non chiove, ca delluvia*. Its meaning is that Marchionno’s stomach is not content with rain but requests a downpour, namely a deluge, of food (P, Intr.). Unfortunately, the provocation is not effective and Marchionno pretends not to understand it as he peacefully continues to enjoy his plush meal.

Mario Cirese is the first paremiologist to introduce a stronger linguistic component in his analysis of paremias. He argues that recurrent aspects in paremias are brevity, broad use, pedagogical purpose, wit, figurative meaning, and an experience-based message oriented to everyday life (Cirese 1972, 3). He draws it from James Kelso’s definition in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, where Kelso states that, despite the inner difficulties in offering a formal definition for proverbs four elements can be teased out and attributed to any sequences of terms that can be classified as such. These elements are brevity or conciseness, sense, piquancy or salt, and popularity (Kelso, 412). Cirese seizes this terminology and elaborates upon these elements to structure the term’s definition. According to him, brevity, sense, and piquancy concern the inner properties of a proverb, which also include its linguistic representation. Among the inner qualities, then, brevity represents the linguistic association of terms that allows achieving coherence and conciseness simultaneously (“content”), whereas sense and piquancy represent the form that is given to the sequence of

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69 On allusion, variants, and contextual evolution of paremias, it is interesting the evaluation that Mieder gives of paremias featuring the word “windmill” in Wolfgang Mieder, “From «Windmills in One’s Head» to «Tilting at Windmills»: History and Meaning of a Proverbial Allusion to Cervantes’ Don Quixote,” *Proverbium*. 23 (2006): 343-418.

70 Paolo Toschi’s definition is similar as it combines popular conservatism (which allows the immediate comprehensibility of the paremia), didacticism, and brevity: “Breve, profondo, poetico, il proverbio trasmette alle nuove generazioni nella forma più semplice e adeguata a tutte le menti, l’accumulata esperienza dei padri” (Toschi, 194).

71 It is not clear what Kelso intends with “sense,” but it might concern the reference to moral elements and the presence of a pedagogical objective.
terms in order to convey a message (“form”) (Cirese 1972, 12). Popularity, on the other hand, concerns what he calls external properties, which include elements to which the proverb is subjected independently from its inner qualities, such as its acceptance and use in the community of speakers or users. The combination of both properties under certain rules guarantees the development of a proverb: the minimal requested association has at least one internal property and a single external one (Cirese 1972, 14). However, in many cases, proverbs show three properties: an internal one dealing with form, an internal one dealing with content, and an external one. Consequently, the most common combination would be brevity, sense, and popularity (Cirese 1972, 16). When a paremiologist analyzes proverbs, all properties should be addressed even though a hierarchy can be established: the external properties are secondary to the internal ones, while, inside the internal properties, the formal ones should be investigated first and the content-related ones after. Cirese looks at proverbs primarily as linguistic expressions to study in their textuality and organization and then in their content and message, and also as expressions dealing with material culture, folklore, and community of users.

Similarly, Giorgio Qualizza combines linguistic and cultural elements. He lists three constituent factors that characterize proverbs: brevity, generalization of a rule of behavior, and comprehensibility. First, brevity, meaning lack of redundancy, enables the proverb to express a normative meaning in an effective yet condensed way as a sort of “ragionamento concentrato” (Qualizza, 178). Second, when they generalize a way of behaving, proverbs mostly prevent from doing something wrong rather than inciting to do something good; in this sense, a typical structure is, “if…, then…,” expressing in the main sentence the consequences of a bad behavior described in the subordinate sentence (Qualizza, 179).

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72 Gianfranco Folena talks about “un massimo di brevità formale e di condensazione del significato, e nel contempo di pregnanza e latitudine semantica” (Folena 1986, 6).
73 James Obelkevich also adds that impersonality is a constituent aspect that provides proverbs with authority (Obelkevich, 44; 47).
Finally, comprehensibility means intelligibility of proverbs to the sociolinguistic group to which they are directed, thus a successful association of culture and language (Qualizza, 178).

In his introduction to the 1999 volume Proverbi locuzioni modi di dire nel dominio linguistico italiano, Salvatore Trovato argues that paremias are a “precipitato culturale,” embedded in the culture from which they originate. When studying them, the paremiologist should, however, incorporate linguistic interpretation within the investigation of the cultural context so that his analysis can comprise and combine these different, yet connected, features of paremias (Trovato S. 1999, viii). From a linguistic point of view, Trovato (Franceschi 2011) borrows Paola Benincà’s idea that the paremia’s meaning presents a “speculative” relation with the immediate textual context, meaning that its conventionalized meaning is adapted to the contextual situation based on its semantic coherence with the surrounding text (Renzi, Salvi, and Cardinaletti, Vol. 1, 163-64). Therefore, other expressions are not paremias because they share a much stronger relation with the context as they fill a void that would otherwise remain empty. As paraverbs, paremias express a concluded thought and represent an almost autonomous sentence within the context.74 Yet, the correlation between the paremia and the context is fundamental in order to understand the role that the paremia has within that context and to clarify the author’s perspective, as well as the message that the paremia is representing for the readers and the community at large.

When considering how a paremia is recognized inside a group, Mirko Grimaldi identifies this process as a passage from the sphere of the parole, meaning an individual fact,

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74 Salvatore Menza dedicates a monograph to paraverbal expressions: Il paraverbo: l’interiezione come sottoclasse del verbo. Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2006. He defines paraverbs as those words or sequences of terms that can create a minimum sentence with no or limited relation to the surrounding elements (29). He includes interjections, formulas of command, imperatives, and different typologies of phrases, such as disjointed, elliptical, pragmatic, prepositional, conjunctional, and verbal phrases. According to him, proverbs can be considered paraverbs, since they can constitute a significative sentence without introducing external elements, they cannot have a negation or a subordinative sentence, and they are invariable (70-76).
to the sphere of the *langue*, once a sequence of terms, which is not a paremia yet, becomes an expression of an entire community or beyond, and hence it becomes conventionalized (Grimaldi 1999, 32). When a speaker or writer uses a paremia that is embedded in the people’s conscience as a structure of the *langue*, he does not mention the entire sequence of terms but only its meaning, which is suitable and pertinent to a specific context (Grimaldi 1997, 540). For instance, when he quotes *Chi tardi arriva mal alloggia*, he does not refer to the entire structure, but just to its figurative representation applicable to the context where it features.

Joan Bybee proposes a similar, yet cognitively structured argument in her 2006 article “From Usage to Grammar: The Mind’s Response to Repetition.” The continuous experience of sequences of terms makes us understand what is conventionalized and what is not, and makes us aware of the meaning associated with a specific sequence of terms (Bybee 2006, 711). If transferred to paremias, it means that the human mind recognizes the chain of words of a paremia, analyzes it “as a unit rather than through its individual parts,” and immediately relates it to a meaning that was systemized either through repetition and continuous usage, or else written codification (Bybee 2006, 720). All “conventionalized word sequences,” including formulaic language, idioms, collocations, and even phrasal verbs, share an almost fixed syntax, a predictable morphology, and an “extended meaning,” which is frequently obtained by way of a metaphorical process (Cacciari 1986; 212-17; Cacciari 1989; Bybee 2006, 713). In the aforementioned proverb, *Chi tardi arriva mal alloggia*, a word-by-word interpretation would be that of a person unable to find a proper lodging in which to sleep because of his tardiness. This literal reading of the paremia would lead us astray and would anchor the paremia to its original context of definition and creation, which does not affect its meaning any longer or, if it does, it affects it minimally. Instead, the mind associates

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75 For a cognitive approach to idiomatic expressions, see Chapter 6 in Langlotz, 175-224.
the paremia with a specific meaning that goes above and beyond the meaning carried out by each single word. The conventionalized meaning immediately associated to this sequence is that one should not wait excessively before deciding or he might risk losing the advantages of a quick resolution.77 Paremias may show a character of unpredictability in their meaning since they are not isolated but are instead affected by surrounding words and related occurrences (Bybee 2006, 714). Moreover, the relationship between the paremia and its meanings is that between “un contenuto espresso in termini concreti e un insieme aperto di situazioni concrete” (Cristilli in Vallini, 185). Only by means of interpretation and later application to a meaningful context, may it be spoken or written, the sequence of terms acquires a specific message and speaks to the community of readers or speakers.

The most comprehensive and innovative definition of paremias and their contextual interpretation, which is followed in this study, is found in Temistocle Franceschi’s essay “Atlante paremiologico italiano e la geoparemiologia” (Franceschi 1999).78 Franceschi argues that paremias are not exclusively cultural products of popular wisdom, namely a “fatto sociale” (Bessi, 13), but also communicative and, most important, linguistic events liable to be studied in their phonetic, morphologic, and syntactic structure. Analysis of paremias, therefore, needs to combine folkloristic and anthropological research with linguistic investigation. Paremias are undoubtedly the object of study of psychology, history, folklore, and aesthetics. They aim to teach and send out a moral message, yet they are also characteristic sequences of terms of the language, and thus mainly linguistic elements.

77 Kwame Appiah connects paremiac recognition and interpretation with the Gricean mechanism of understanding, and indirectly to his conversational implicatures. It requires a communal ground and an exchange of beliefs in order for the receiver to understand the emitter’s intentions and for the receiver to recognize that purpose, being aware that the emitter is aware of his recognition (Appiah, 391). The literal meaning of the paremia is not eliminated but needs to be put aside, since its compositional meaning, or conventionalized meaning, might not coincide with the meaning(s) that the expression takes on when in the speech-act (Appiah, 396).

78 The article had been previously published in Paremia (Franceschi 1994). Nonetheless, the 1999 article will be the most quoted for its more sequential structure and the greater presence of examples. The 1994 publication is occasionally mentioned when a different concept appears. For more information, see also Miniati-Bucciarelli 1984, and Franceschi 2011.
They entail a passage from the extra-linguistic or “poetic” area, namely the folkloristic context, to the linguistic area, where they find their structure and the message normally associated with them (Franceschi 2008, 371):


According to him, paremia is a breve e conciso insieme allogogico (ossìa inteso a comunicare altro da sé) di struttura proverbiale, che in un determinato idioma è convenzionalmente usato in riferimento allusivo ad altro insieme semantico (con cui viene analogicamente correlato), per esprimere in modo indiretto, sintetico ed efficace un parere, un commento, un consiglio (Franceschi 1999, 10).

Therefore, proverbs and proverbial phrases are sequences of terms characterized by conciseness of structure, effectiveness of message, and allogogical or figurative interpretation. A three-step process shapes paremias from a real and localized situation to their development in a community of speakers, be it on a small or large scale, and their consequent use in an individualized and personalized spoken or literary context. Before the paremia is developed, the original meaning of the sentence is additional, or better, the sum of each of its components, and does not yet require a figurative interpretation, for it is indeed tightly bound to the situation or to the personality that created it (Jolles, 150). Subsequently, as the paremia develops, the meaning abstracts from the original circumstance to a conventionalized, figurative, and non-compositional level: tradition, unanimous acceptance, and continuous
repetition by the community fix the paremia’s meaning, which is made of a potential of infinite metaphorical meanings.\textsuperscript{79} Lastly, the actualization of the conventionalized meaning in a specific context brings the paremia to a defined context again; this meaning still maintains a relationship with the conventionalized meaning but explicates a message that is appropriate only and exclusively to that particular situation; in other words, a specific situation that actualizes the paremia’s polysemy of meanings. It follows that paremias surpass the rules of logic and employ the rules of analogy, so that they can be associated with a series of events and situations.\textsuperscript{80}

When outside a specific context, ambiguity as well as interpretative doubts distinguish paremias from other linguistic utterances and highlight their countless semantic references (Franceschi 1999, 9): “Il proverbio è per sua natura ambiguo, giacché si presta ad applicazioni i cui confini non sono predeterminabili” (Franceschi 2000, xxxviii). Instead, the circumstance and the surrounding elements in either a spoken or a written text provide the receiver of a paremia with elements that decrease the level of vagueness and facilitate the process of disentanglement of the its meanings. In other words, the situational context is the aspect that filters the array of potential meanings that a paremia can express and actualizes its “valore paremiologico,” namely the “gamma dei possibili riferimenti semantici d’un detto

\textsuperscript{79} Franceschi also asserts that, compared to non-metaphorical or direct communicative acts, paremias are indirect and are interpreted “per via assai più analogica (irrazionale o pararazionale) che logica” (Franceschi 1997, 130).

\textsuperscript{80} Franceschi opposes paremias to didactic sayings (“detti didattici,” or “detti didascalici,” or “aforismi popolari”) (Franceschi 1999, 14; Franceschi 2008, 370). Didactic sayings do not follow the rules of analogic representation since they do not express anything more than what they say. Therefore, they are monosemic and explicit, since their content is purely informative and pertains to common knowledge, and their meaning is immediate and coincides with the succession of terms that constitute them. For instance, \textit{L’acqua va al mare} (FF, Ch. 19) is an example of didactic saying, as well as \textit{Uovo d’un hora, pane d’un di, capretto d’un mese, vino di sei, carne d’un anno, pesce di dieci, donna di quindici, et amico di cento bisogna havere chi vuol ben godere} (SF, Ch. 4). On the contrary, paremias are polisemic, indirect, and implicit: their conventionalized meaning is mediated and just one of the many possible realizations.
proverbialmente sottesa alla lettura del testo” (Franceschi 1999, 8). In this way, paremias can be applicable to a vast array of human—and, it should be added, literary—situations, and be used in the sphere of concrete immediacy (Franceschi 2008, 375-76).

Franceschi’s title “paremias” suits this three-fold characterization of proverbs and proverbial phrases, and appears to be a fitting definition for any sequence of terms characterized by an act of interpretation and a non-compositional meaning that can be actualized in specific situations. Distancing a paremia from the original context and from ambiguity is a passage from particular to universal and to particular again in a dynamic and fluid interaction. The universal is the sphere where the conventionalized meaning is located, whereas the particular is first the original situation that created the paremia, and then the context where the meaning suitable for that paremia can be selected among the array of semantic possibilities in accordance with a context. This process seems to apply to the general inductive method of understanding that the human mind employs to decode input, as well as to the primordial mechanism of employing figurative language (Simone in Casadei 1996, 1). Since it is an unconscious process of the human mind (Franceschi 2008, 371), it can explain the conspicuous use of paremias and metaphorical or figurative language in human utterances.

To further prove his point, Franceschi describes the passage from a non-paremia to a paremia as a transition from a lexical code to a rhetorical code, which makes a non paremiac expression become a “segno retorico, ossia uno dei complessi segni linguistici che compongono il codice retorico comunitario” (Franceschi 1999, 5). He notes that the language is made of two different codes: a lexical code or lexicon (“vocabolario”), and a rhetorical code or dictionary (“dizionario”). The lexical code gathers all the terms of the language.

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81 Franceschi also defines the “valore paremiologico” as the “insieme di tutte le possibili significazioni traslate che per intuizione o convenzione l’enunciato può suggerire” (Franceschi 1997, 145).
Terms are phonematic sequences that represent monoverbal and unmotivated signifiers of linguistic signs. For instance, the verb “alloggiare” is a linguistic representation of the sign. This representation is made of phonemes and graphemes organized to constitute the word and is unmotivated since, according to Saussure’s theory, the association between sign and signifier is arbitrary. The rhetorical code, instead, gathers all the paremias, which are motivated and syntagmatic sequences representing pluriverbal signifiers of rhetorical signs. Inside the rhetorical code, the “codice paremiaco” (“the paremiac code”) represents those sequences of terms whose meaning is determined by a figurative process that the community needs to know to identify and understand it (Franceschi 1999, 7). For instance, the proverb mentioned above, *Chi tardi arriva mal alloggia* (FF, Ch. 5), is made of a sequence of terms, structured by a rhetorical system; its meaning is given by a figurative process that the human mind realizes and which renders the paremia effective. Franceschi admits that the rhetorical code is not necessary to communicate in a language, but it still exists and is frequently used for aesthetical purposes. Paremias, indeed, along with idiomatic expressions, reflect “il momento fantastico, poetico, dell’attività linguistica: quello che parla in modo indiretto— analogico, e sintetico—per figure o similitudini” (Franceschi 1999, 7).

When talking about the distinct levels of meanings for paremias, as in the conventionalized and the contextual meanings, Qualizza refers to them as “significato generale” and “significati particolari che pur nella loro particolarità conservano però l’essenziale del significato generale” (Qualizza, 191; original italics). Thus, on one side, paremias carry a meaning that is the result of a generalization from their original meaning. On the other, they show a variety of meanings, related to the potential variety of contexts.
available to the emitter of a paremia and depending on the combination of its conventionalized meaning and its specific context.\textsuperscript{82}

For instance, the previous example, \textit{Chi tardi arriva mal alloggia}, takes on a specific meaning given by the context of \textit{Firste Fruites} in which it appears:

Io voglio parlar a quella donna
Madonna, io vi amo cordialmente, io voria che io fosse vostro marito, io vi ameria e serviria fedelmente.
Io sono molto obligato a voi per il vostro ben volere.
Io vi ringratio per la vostra cortesia.
Ma non sapete come dice il proverbio?
Non certo: cosa dice?
\textit{Chi tardi arriva, mal alloggia}.
Come, dunche io arrivo tardi.
Si certo a dirvi la verità.
Dunche voi siete promessa.
Signor si longo tempo fa.
E a chi? Ditemi di gratia.
A un huomo (FF, Ch. 5).

In this conversation, the proverb refers to a man who wishes a woman’s hand but eventually discovers that she had been promised to another man. The conventionalized meaning is still present and maneuvers the direction in which the interpretation should go. However, the

\textsuperscript{82} The progressive adaptation of a paremia to more contextual instances is, according to Qualizza, a sign of its antiquity: the more ancient the paremia is, the more evolution it underwent, and the more cases it can be applied to; in other words, “i casi di applicabilità” are more various and in greater number (Qualizza, 180). Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett intends to demonstrate the same in her article “Toward a Theory of Proverb Meaning” (Mieder and Dundes 1981, 111-21): the paremia “expresses relative rather than absolute truths and is therefore responsive to the fact that absolute situations, in turn, can be evaluated in more than one way.” Thus, “it is not the meaning of the proverb per se that need be our central concern but the meaning of proverb performances” (Mieder and Dundes 1981, 119).
contextual meaning shapes and expands the conventionalized meaning in ways that the conventionalized meaning alone could have never expressed. The conventionalized meaning is abstract and does not refer to a sensible and tangible context; when a sensible context is present, instead, a range of hypothetical proverbs suitable for that context becomes available to the emitter. He will then choose among them the one that best expresses the situation and its conative function, which is the way he will influence the receiver and make him react to the paremia (Franceschi 1999, 11). This process entails a reciprocal relationship: the emitter immediately recalls a proverb that analogically represents the given context, while the receiver understands the meaning and role of the proverb in that context by way of resorting to rhetorical skills rather than logical ones.

Among the group of Franceschi’s collaborators in his project for the first worldwide Atlante paremiologico in Italian, Grimaldi offers insightful and original criticism on the topic of conventionalized meaning vis-à-vis contextual meaning (Grimaldi 1999). Grimaldi acknowledges the association between the meaning of paremias and their function in the discourse since “[il proverbio, nella realtà, viene sempre citato all’interno di una interazione discorsiva e in funzione di un determinato contesto del discorso” (Grimaldi 1999, 34). Consequently, linguists should look at language from a social perspective, rather than only as an abstract system of signs, and should become a constituent part of that linguistic and social world when investigating it. Grimaldi refers to William Labov, who introduced the concept of language analysis in a social context in his two volumes, The Social Stratification of English in New York City (1966) and Sociolinguistics Patterns (1972). In other words, an

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84 William Labov, Sociolinguistic patterns. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972. Here, Labov introduces the concept of the “Observer’s Paradox” (209-10), which Grimaldi mentions. Labov underlines how the observer would like to monitor people talking when they do not know that they are observed, something that it is difficult to achieve when the observer needs to collect a specific amount of data related to a topic and a questionnaire influences the interviewer. Labov also questions the label “sociolinguistics” since it inevitably connects social investigations with languages,
analysis of the social aspect of a language ("sociology of language") accounts for social
elements that influence and interact within and within that language.

Labov introduces the concept of an emic perspective of analysis, borrowing it from
Kenneth Pike’s *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human
Behavior* (1967), which Grimaldi adopts in turn in his investigation of paremias. Pike
models the opposition between ethic and emic on the linguistic opposition between phonetics
and phonemics. In scientific research on anthropological and behavioral issues, the ethic
approach refers to a search for universal concepts, ultimately valid for each culture, as much
as phonetics analyzes theoretical representations of phones. On the contrary, the emic
approach purports to capture the distinguishing and distinctive features of each individual
group, which are not predicted but discovered. It describes a community within the logic of
the cognitive system of that culture and implies an internal view that gives credit to the value
and role of circumstances. As much as phonemics looks at the contextual relationship
between opposing phonemes, the emic approach applied to linguistics aims to study the
language as a tool to explore communities and understand their vision of reality, describing it
with the same internal logic and knowledge that distinguish these communities (Grimaldi
1999, 26-27). 

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even though there are instances of social forms of communication without a language involved. He
thus prefers the label “sociology of language,” which refers to that area of sociolinguistics that “deals
with large-scale social factors, and their mutual interaction with language and dialect” (183).

85 Kenneth Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior*. The

86 Grimaldi’s approach finds its most appropriate consequences in the structure of the questionnaire
for the *Atlante paremiologico italiano*. Since paremias always feature inside a context, a question-
answer survey does not help the resurgence of a paremia that is not a translation in dialect of a
proposed paremia in Italian (Grimaldi 1999, 34). Grimaldi explains that the interviewer needs to
facilitate a spontaneous recollection of the paremias by means of mental associations, stimulating the
reflection over their use, their linguistic features, and their extra-linguistic components, and without
influencing the interviewed person heavily (Grimaldi 1999, 37).

87 Phonemics is the discipline that studies phonemes, or the contextual realization of a sound (for
instance, inside a word).

88 Giovanni Battista Bronzini advances a similar idea in his article “La logica del proverbio. Problemi
e prospettive di classificazione e analisi,” which is based on two methods of inquiry, namely the
This method of investigation, which Grimaldi proposes for spoken paremias, is also useful when analyzing written and literary instances. In written accounts, applying an emic approach means that paremias are analyzed in their contexts and in their distinctive features as they occur in literary works. In other words, different contexts can actualize the paremia’s semantic capacity, depending on the characters involved, the relationships among them, the situations and the events, the significance given to the paremia, and the role assigned to it inside the narration. The context becomes the lymph that brings life to the utterance and to the internal view that is necessary to grasp the “community” of paremias in the text. The emic analysis permits to evaluate how the presence of paremias is pertinent to the text, how the text affects them, and how they affect the content and purpose of the text, as well as the reader’s reaction to it. For instance, when Sarnelli uses the proverbial phrase *L’ommo se lega pe le corna e li vuoj e pe le parole*, he changes the traditional order of the two members of the paremia to sarcastically attack Jannuzzo’s simpleness and his being a cuckold (P, cunto 4). The change in the structure of the paremia and the consequent dissatisfied expectation convey irony and affects the text accordingly.

Grimaldi also speculates that the pragmatic application of paremias is crucial when irony is involved (Grimaldi 1997, 535). Since irony is inherently ambiguous and relies on detachment and critical distance (Mizzau), he argues that its correct interpretation depends on the context and the relationship between speakers, as well as on paralinguistic elements (Grimaldi 1997, 522). Additionally, consideration of the literary tools that allow for the success of an ironic utterance is fundamental. Among the others, Grimaldi lingers on antiphrasis, which allows overturning the literal meaning of a paremia to express a contrary or different message. A *pars destruens*, which leads to the refusal of the literal meaning, is followed by a *pars construens*, which implies the reconstruction of the appropriate meaning in accordance with the context (Grimaldi 1997, 530). When the representation associated with the contextual meaning of the paremia does not comply with the...
Paremias allow both for temporary variations and for long-term ones. Qualizza acknowledges that paremias are far from being fixed in their structure since they usually undergo a gradual and continuous change, which is almost imperceptible. In the record of changes that he lists for paremias, two are particularly interesting: “modificazione parziale del testo letterale e nessuna modificazione del significato” and “modificazione totale del testo letterale e nessuna modificazione del significato” (Qualizza, 188).

The first case, which presumes a partial modification of the text without affecting the meaning of the paremia, is the most frequent one and generates the greatest number of variants. One example might be the slight difference between a paremia used in Florio’s Second Frutes (A carne di lupo convien dar dente di cane) and the same paremia listed in Giardino di ricreatione (A carne di lupo, dente di cane). This modification does not affect the meaning and the message that the paremia transmits, but rather illustrates the flexibility of its constituent terms, which can be substituted with a synonym, omitted, or moved around. The second case modifies the text without any change of the meaning and illustrates what happens in Florio’s Fruits and in Sarnelli’s Posilecheata, namely the passage from one language to another. In these two cases, more than a modification of the original text of the paremia, there is a passage from one socio-linguistic level to another (Qualizza, 188). In Florio, the passage is from Italian to English (as with, for instance, Si puol cacciar chiodo con chiodo, translated literally in English as One nayle is driven out with another, which is perfectly understandable in an Anglophone context); in Sarnelli, it is from Italian to Neapolitan (as with, for instance, the Tuscan, Tre cose non sono stimate, forza di bastagio, consiglio di poverhuomo, et bellezza di puttana, which is rendered in Neapolitan, Tre cose non songo stemmate: forze da
vastaso, consiglio de poverommo, e bellezza de pottana, where the vocabulary and morphology make the paremia perfectly Neapolitan).

Another case that Qualizza lists explains the polysemic that paremias show when “nessuna modificazione del testo letterale e parziale modificazione del significato” happens (Qualizza, 188). Because, as seen above, all paremias are open to various interpretations as well as diverse contextual actualizations of their meaning, their meaning adapts to specific situations (for Qualizza, mostly spoken; in this study, literary) without any modification of the paremiac structure or on its constituent terms (Qualizza, 190-91). For instance, Brusantino’s paremia Bocca basciata non perde fortuna (Dec.: Bocca basciata non perde ventura) presents a minor synonymic variation but is actualized in the new context of Le cento novelle, where Alatiel’s story is the same but the way of composing the story, its message, and its reception are different (CN, II.7).

Franceschi argues that paremiac variants are frequent and due to a variety of factors, both anthropological and linguistic (Franceschi 1999). Since he is primarily studying spoken utterances of paremias, he includes community as well as familiar and personal reasons among the anthropological factors. Among the linguistic variations, he mentions phonologic, morpho-syntactic, and semantic modifications that occur when a term of the paremia is modified to convey a specific message or to translate the emitter’s creativity (Franceschi 1999, 16-17). When the differences are minimal, such as the presence or absence of an article or minor lexical changes, the paremia is considered a variant of the most common form. On the contrary, whenever the variant differs from the original form conspicuously, then the paremia is catalogued as an autonomous form.91

91 Wolfgang Mieder and Anna Tóthné Litovkina study paremias that twist a traditional and well-known paremia by means of replacing one or more of its constituent terms, an image, or a metaphor, yet maintaining the logic and the relationship between its components and the linguistic pattern (Mieder and Litovkina 1999, 1-6). They call these twisted paremias, “anti-proverbs,” which means “innovative alterations and reactions to traditional proverbs” (Mieder and Litovkina 1999, 3). Many of the examples they report show how speakers create and invent anti-proverbs as a parody of the
One of the most evident forms of variation concerns paremias in dialect. Franceschi and the aforementioned “Scuola Geoparemiologica” have been pioneers in starting a geographical analysis of spoken utterances of regional paremias. Franceschi started his research in the 1960s, aiming to investigate the geographical variability of paremias and their semantic applicability in the different Italian regions (Franceschi 2011, 35-50). The study of the geographical variation of paremias, based on geolinguistics or linguistic geography, attests to their variability as well as to the utterer’s creativity, and offers a close and detailed description of the cultural and social aspects of a community. Many of the articles written by Franceschi and the researchers of the “Centro Interuniversitario di Geoparemiologia” in Florence on the geographical variation of paremias are strictly connected to their linguistic and cultural idiosyncrasies. Since the research for the Atlante paremiologico results in mapping paremiac variations, it requires an emic evaluation of proverbs and proverbial phrases. This entails considering variations as productive tools for continuous innovation as well as regional preservation and maintenance of local cultural aspects. Analyzing paremias in dialect allows for a comparison with similar paremias in standard Italian, and an evaluation of those structures that appear to be drawn from the national culture, along with those that are indigenous and therefore autonomous creations of a community of speakers.

ambiguous didactic wisdom of traditional paremias, or to adapt a traditional paremia to a different societal and cultural context and ironically comment on it. When the pattern or structure of the original paremia is unknown, the receiver is not able to combine the “new” paremia, the anti-proverb, with the “old” one, and the message is lost (Mieder and Litovkina 1999, 5). It follows that the reference to a paremia that is clear in the speaker’s mind is necessary, and this helps make the entire “new” message stronger and more communicatively effective. One example might be Louis Safian’s, Man proposes, and the computer disposes, where the reference to the traditional paremia, Man proposes, God disposes is clear, and hence the ironic message of the anti-proverb is effective (Louis A. Safian, The Book of Updated Proverbs. New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1967: 137).

92 For a list of articles and monographs on regional accounts of paremias, see Di Natale’s, Massobrio’s, Rubano’s, Salvadori’s, Tateo’s, and Tognali’s articles in Franceschi 2011, and the bibliography in Franceschi 2011, 48-50 (especially articles by Franceschi, Grimaldi, Mancini, Melis, Miniati, Porto). See also Valeri in Vallini, 139-76.
1.3 Subcategories of Paremias: Proverbs, Proverbial Phrases, and Wellerisms

After providing an overview of definitions of paremias, analyzing their distinctive aspects, and explaining the different levels of meanings that they show, a consideration of the differences and similarities between diverse typologies of paremias is fundamental to define which ones are included in this study. As said above, since they belong to the category of paremias, proverbs and proverbial phrases (included in the latter wellerisms) share a figurative and non-compositional process of interpretation. They require a contextual situation in order to be actualized and fully express their contextual meaning and the message that the audience of a paremiac instance will receive and activate. They are products of a community and talk to that same community, yet their structure is evidently different and, consequently, so are their role in the context and the message they convey. As they surface in the speaker’s mind by way of an unconscious process of association between a given context and a communal memory, they express a meaning in a synthetic and analogic way (Franceschi 1999, 10).

Inside the group of paremias, the category that paremiologists analyze more thoroughly is proverbs, given their universal recognition, thanks mainly to prosodic and metrical elements. Proverbs are usually composed of a topic and comment structure, which frequently conveys a moral message, distributes wise recommendations, or simply describes aspects of human life. The “topic,” which is most of the times in a preeminent position, is the explicit and known part of the proverb, whereas the “comment,” which usually follows the topic, helps to shape a structure that can be memorized easily. The “comment” requires an interpretational process so that it is possible to decode the meaning and clarify the implicitness of the entire paremia (Taylor 1931, 135-64; Franceschi 1999, 13). For instance, in the aforementioned proverb *Chi tardi arriva mal alloggia* (FF, Ch. 5), the main topic, already known, is “chi tardi arriva” followed by the comment, “mal alloggia” which adds
more information to the topic and permits the interpretational process to progress. Proverbs are also determined by the presence of two parallel emistichs, linked by a rhyme, an assonance, or a consonance. For instance, Brusantino’s paremias, coming from Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, *Alle giovani i buon bocconi, e alle vecchie gli stranguglioni* (CN, V.10) and *Chi va al letto la sera senza cena Intera tutta notte si dimena* (CN, III.4) are two proverbs. Their metrical and syntactical structure, along with the ethical message they express (the first one declaring the differences between youngsters and the elderly in terms of what they can obtain from life, and the second addressing the consequences of an improper lifestyle), makes them undoubtedly proverbs.

In many instances, however, the label “proverbs” includes proverbial phrases due to a lack of a clear separation between them. Other than their belonging to the category of paremias and their non-compositional meaning, proverbs and proverbial phrases are different paremiac expressions, with a different structure and different purposes. Already Giusti was aware of the difference between a “proverbio,” which, according to him, is a precept or an instruction, and other sayings, such as *conoscere i polli, mettere il becco in molle, scorgere il pelo nell’ovo, stringere i panni addosso*, which need explanations and comments since they are rooted in a local dimension even more than proverbs. These structures are sequences of terms defined by a figurative meaning, but are devoid of moral and ethical intentions (as happens with proverbs); they rather describe reality and, from a linguistic perspective, they lack syntactic autonomy and strongly depend on the context for their status as paremias. Even though a clear-cut delimitation of the two groups is rather difficult to determine, an overview of the most important criticism on the topic and definitions of the two groups is provided in this paragraph to clarify their status and their isolate their characteristics.

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93 For examples of analysis of the structure topic/comment in different typologies of proverbs, including monophrastic and elliptic ones, see Melis.
Different sequences of terms have been grouped together to indicate expressions characterized by a conventionalized meaning. Critics use different titles for these structures, such as idiomatic expressions, sayings, locutions, proverbial expressions, or proverbial phrases; however, in this study the title “proverbial phrase” is adopted. Compared to “proverbial expression,” which refers to a sequence of words governed by rules of construction,⁹⁴ “proverbial phrase” encompasses even those nominal phrases whose head is a noun or an adjective, expressions containing a simile, and even individual entries. It also includes those expressions made of a verb and various complements, meaning that the expression is phrasal, and not only lexical. Moreover, “proverbial phrase” is preferable to “saying” because it underlines how a non-literal or figurative meaning characterizes the structure, as opposed to idiomatic meaning, which means that the expression is just typical of the language.

Taylor refers to them as “fixed, conventional phrases,” whose “purpose is to describe the situation, not to convey an ethical or moral lesson” (Taylor 1931, 129-30). In the chapter dedicated to them (Taylor 1931, 184-200), he uses the definition “proverbial phrase” and highlights how proverbial phrases may change their grammatical form according to person and time. He argues that in certain cases they are more common than proverbs, probably due to their variety and their greater flexibility to adapt to different contexts. Consequently, their structure modifies because of the syntactic and morphological ties they establish with the context in which they appear, which causes an endless number of variations (Mieder and Dundes 1981, 5). A proverbial phrase like *Dar di becco in ogni cosa*, which means “to stick one’s nose into everything,” allows for a great degree of transformation when inserted in a syntactic structure where it might agree with the number of the subject in the sentence.

⁹⁴ See Renzi, Salvi, and Cardinaletti, Vol. 1, 37; for a detailed analysis of the sentence and its components and types, see pp. 37-284.
Franceschi inserts proverbial phrases inside the paremiac code and uses the denomination “detto proverbiale” or “detto paremiaco” to gather a great variety of typologies, which include “motti proverbiali, locuzioni proverbiali, modi proverbiali” (Franceschi 2008, 365). In his *Dizionario dei modi di dire della lingua italiana*, Carlo Lapucci states that the boundaries between sayings, idioms, and proverbial phrases are so blurred that they are used interchangeably (Lapucci 1969, vi).

Charles Hockett defines idioms, which he uses to indicate proverbial phrases, as “a grammatical form—single morpheme\(^5\) or composite form—the meaning of which cannot be derived from its structure” (Hockett, 222). He emphasizes that the defining context of an idiomatic expression creates and determines the circumstances upon which the idiomaticity of a sequence of terms can be expressed (Hockett, 223).\(^6\) Non-idiomatic sequences of terms may become idiomatic when the contextual meaning becomes idiomatic because it is based on certain characteristics of the context. Those sequences of terms that present both a literal and compositional meaning and an idiomatic or conventionalized meaning can be interpreted literally, or they can assume idiomaticity exclusively based upon the situation in which they are used.\(^7\) This means that, within certain contexts, they can express a figurative and non-compositional meaning, as all paremias can, at least temporarily (Hockett, 223). Thus, the context is a good indicator of the literal or figurative meaning of an idiomatic expression and

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\(^5\) A morpheme is the minimal unit of morphology (the section of linguistics that studies the structure and form of words), provided with autonomous meaning, being it lexical or grammatical.

\(^6\) Also in Vietri 1985, 22-24 and Casadei 1996, 23-24. Casadei writes that homonymy connects the literal and the conventionalized meanings of an idiomatic expression as they show the same syntax and morphology, but refer to two different semantic spheres and to two different contextual situations (Casadei 1996, 14-16).

clarifies its ambiguity.\textsuperscript{98} For instance, Florio’s proverbial phrase \textit{A tal carne tal coltello} (SF, Ch. 3) and Sarnelli’s \textit{Scotolare sto sacco e bedere se nc’era porvere o farina} (P, cunto 5) can be interpreted literally, where the first paremia would mean that for a specific typology of meat a proper knife is needed and the second would mean that a sack is shaken to evaluate its content. However, in the two considered literary contexts, they are not taken literally but rather metaphorically: in \textit{Firste Fruites}, the first proverbial phrase refers to Pompilio’s appropriate answer to a provocation, whereas in \textit{Posilecheata}, the second proverbial phrase indicates the fairies’ decision to test Nunziella.\textsuperscript{99}

In her 1960 article “Premessa a un repertorio di frasi proverbiali,” Franca Ageno offers insight on what she calls proverbial phrases (Ageno 1960, 245, n. 12). In her opinion, a proverbial phrase “non enuncia né una regola né una verità generale o presentata come tale,” as happens with proverbs; still they do maintain a figurative meaning. Ageno further explains that proverbial phrases have neither a defined form nor the autonomy of a sentence (Ageno 1960, 244). Consequently, they can be subject to modifications and may produce an endless...

\textsuperscript{98} Annibale Elia, Emilio D’Agostino, and Maurizio Martinelli further distinguish between idiomatic expressions and expressions that are not idiomatic but feature a link between their components that is stronger than non-idiomatic expressions. They argue that in Italian sequences of terms can be: free sentences, characterized by syntactical rules (in other words, they are non-idiomatic expressions); sentences with “verbi supporto,” supportive verbs that act like auxiliaries of nouns, adjectives, and nominal clusters (for instance, “Max fa l’annuncio del suo matrimonio”); and idiomatic expressions. In expressions with supportive verbs, the links among its constituents are not as tight as those appearing in idiomatic expressions. Additionally, they do not need a figurative process, since the solely compositional process succeeds in extrapolating their meaning. On the contrary, an idiomatic expression like “Max è al verde” needs a figurative process to clarify that the message of the expression goes beyond its literal meaning.

\textsuperscript{99} Proverbs can sometimes be read literally or else interpreted metaphorically. One instance is Boccaccio’s and Brusantino’s proverb \textit{Chi va al letto la sera senza cena intera tutta notte si dimena}, which is taken in both its literal and non-compositional meaning. Monna Isabetta is really shaking the bed because she is engaging in sexual intercourse with a monk, and so she is alluding to her act, but in fact she pretends not to speak figuratively (Chiecchi, 137). The author purposely creates a context that supports the literal meaning of the paremia. The equivalence between the literal and the non-compositional reading of the paremia emphasizes the comedy stemming from the situation: the husband is unaware of what is happening in the next room and reads his wife’s paremia literally, acknowledging that she has been fasting along with him for a long period and hence is shaking the bed because she is hungry.
list of synsemantic\textsuperscript{100} or synonymic\textsuperscript{101} variations (Ageno 1960, 247). According to her, sequences such as \textit{dar la soia}, \textit{dar la quadra}, or \textit{dar il mattone}, where the terms are not figurative, are not proverbial phrases. However, it can be argued that a figurative meaning does not derive from the single terms themselves, but emerges from the entire sequence, and thus, a translated or figurative process is still applied. If the expression were not considered in its entirety, it would be impossible to capture its non-compositional meaning, so its effect on the narrative would be lost. Therefore, in this study, \textit{dar la soia}, \textit{dar la quadra}, and \textit{dar il mattone} are considered as examples of proverbial phrases.

The most comprehensive analysis of Italian idiomatic expressions, i.e. proverbial phrases, is Federica Casadei’s 1986 volume titled \textit{Metafore ed espressioni idiomatiche. Uno studio semantico sull’italiano}. She defines idioms as “espressioni polilessicali che abbinano un significato fisso a un significato convenzionale tipicamente non letterale” (Casadei 1986, 13-14). Therefore, idioms are sequences of terms, distinguished by a conventionalized and non-compositional meaning. She highlights that idiomatic expressions are characterized by “non letteralità” and “non predicibilità semantica” (Casadei 1995, 335), so their meaning might be completely unrelated to their single components and, if a connection exists, it is figurative, as happens with proverbs.

Linguistic aspects are not sufficient for a comprehensive analysis of idiomatic expressions if they are not paired with aspects related to the way the utterance is delivered and to the meaning that the utterance acquires when contextualized. Casadei calls this a dichotomy between “sentence meaning,” which is the compositional or literal meaning of the expression, and “utterance meaning,” which is what the utterance is meant to express in a specific context (Casadei 1996, 19; 57). In order to perceive its non-literal meaning, the

\textsuperscript{100} It means that paremias generate as many variations in semantics as many their contexts of application are.

\textsuperscript{101} A synonym is a word that means the same or nearly the same as another word.
receiver of an idiomatic expression needs to account for other aspects, which are not strictly connected to language. Since Casadei deals with spoken utterances, she mentions that pragmatics is necessary in order to decode idiomatic expressions, since it brings motivational reasons, stereotypical ideas, and emotive and psychological elements that semantics does not include (Casadei 1986, 23). Similarly, in written utterances, extra-linguistic elements concerning narrative aspects, stylistic and rhetorical factors, genre, and objectives of the work are crucial for an appropriate interpretation of idiomatic expressions, as it is for proverbs too.

In Casadei’s pool of idiomatic expressions, what she calls formulaic and stereotypical expressions are not considered in this study. Formulaic expressions are strictly related to a specific pragmatic context and include expressions with illocutionary (“Come va?;” “In bocca al lupo”) or performative value (such as certain legal formulae), recurrent formulae in certain communicative context (“distinti saluti”), and textual and conversational indicators (“per iniziare;” “a conclusion”). Stereotypical expressions are those that repetition by the community of speakers has fixed as clichés so that they constitute a unified block of terms that are conventionally associated, such as “efferato delitto,” or “bello come una rosa.” They differ from paremias because they do not actually require an allological interpretation, and their meaning, if not literal, mantains a stronger bond with the original and concrete situation that created them; therefore, a figurative process is not strictly necessary, even though their meaning is non-compositional (Casadei 1986; Elia, D’Agostino, and Martinelli; Vietri 1985). What is included in this study are those sequences of terms whose ties are stronger than those of a free combination of terms, and that have developed a conventionalized meaning over time and beyond their single components, such as, for instance, *Fare na lavatella de capo*

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102 Ageno calls formulaic expressions just “formulae” (Ageno 1960, 247).
senza sapone, which means to scold someone (P, Intro.), or Dar la baia, which means to make fun of someone (FF, Ch. 9).\textsuperscript{103}

In order to establish a link between sayings and proverbs, Tamara Cherdantseva proposes the example of the saying (the term she uses to indicate “proverbial phrases”), Acqua passata vis-à-vis the proverb Acqua passata non macina più (Cherdantseva, 341). She states that the proverb expresses a negative evaluation: what is lost in the past (acqua passata) loses its applicability in the present too (non macina più). In the saying, instead, a similar evaluation cannot be drawn, unless the sequence is inserted in a contextual situation that actualizes its meaning in a negative way. The only evaluation that emerges from the saying is an emotional one, namely a reference to the past. Therefore, Cherdantseva finds in emotionality, opposed to evaluation, the aspect that differentiates all sayings from proverbs. This emotional value expresses the degree of a quality or characteristic without offering an evaluation of the role or consequences of this quality or characteristic. Sayings do not moralize, but just show; they “photograph” a fact “emotionally” without expressing an opinion or assessment as proverbs do (Cherdantseva, 342).

A fascinating aspect of Andreas Langlotz’s research on idiomatic expressions,\textsuperscript{104} or else proverbial phrases, is his focus on creativity, which he calls idiomatic creativity or lexicogrammatical malleability (Langlotz, 8). Idiomatic expressions can face an alteration in syntax, morphology, and occasionally vocabulary (resulting primarily in synonymic variants); they can assume ambiguation (it exploits the semantic structure of the idiomatic expression without causing any formal change) or meaning adaptation (by means of

\textsuperscript{103} Ageno calls these expressions “composed locutions” (Ageno 1960, 245).

\textsuperscript{104} According to Langlotz, four aspects seem to characterize idiomatic expressions: institutionalisation, which is related to their conventionalized status inside a community of speakers; compositeness, since they are, as Langlotz writes, multi-word units; frozeness, due to the restricted variability of their lexical elements; non-compositionality, due to their figurative meaning, which is distinguished from their literal meaning with the consequence that the more discrepancy is between literal and idiomatic meaning, the more opaque the expression is (Langlotz, 4). Not surprisingly, he mentions three of these aspects (institutionalization; compositeness; non-compositionality) when providing a definition and a classification of proverbs.
specification, intensification, antinomy, etc…) (Langlotz, 177-78). Creativity is especially true when humor demands a negotiation of meaning for the sake of achieving a specific perlocutionary effect. Usually, a variation or modification underlines the additional meaning of the expression; the idiomatic variant that results is an occasional and temporary alternative sequence of terms, created for the sake of a specific context and restricted to that context. Consequently, extraction from that context causes a failure of the relation between play of words and context that is fundamental in humorous instances. Langlotz’s discussion confirms how context is crucial in the way it influences the effectiveness of an idiomatic expression in socio-pragmatic terms (in spoken utterances) and in stylistic terms (in written utterances).

The variations that are more frequent in the following chapters are: idiom variants, which are the result of a modification of the conventionalized meaning of an expression; occasional variants, which are extemporaneous variants used by a speaker or author; and pun-variants, which are idiomatic expressions modified in order to play with words or meanings (Langlotz, 177-78).

A consistent group of expressions in the category of paremias are wellerisms. In his 1947 essay, “Wellerismi italiani,” Raffaele Corso specifies that, before adopting the English

105 Similarly, Casadei groups variations in lexical modifications (cancellation or insertion of non-fundamental elements in the expression such as adverbs, adjectives, prepositions; synonyms in nominal and verbal elements) and morpho-syntactic modifications (morphologic variations of articles, nominal clusters; difference in tenses) (Casadei 1996, 94).

106 Simonetta Vietri confirms the variability of idiomatic expressions: even though they are more fixed than other sequences of terms, and even though some of them are lexically saturated, which means that they frequently appear with the same signifiers, they are passible of changes and modifications and show different degrees of flexibility in both vocabulary and syntax. Vietri lists a few examples of variability, such as verb tenses and modes, number and gender, adverbs, expansions of the nominal and verbal syntagms (Vietri 1985, 17-18; Vietri 1990, 137). The fact that certain transformational events (such as the use of the passive, topicalization, relative subordinates, dislocation) cannot be applied to idiomatic expressions does not make them an exception, since some of them cannot happen in non-idiomatic or non-paremiac expressions as well (Vietri 1985, 21; Vietri 1990, 136-38; Casadei 1996, 13). Since relationships between components of an idiomatic expression do not tie them together completely, transformational events mostly depend on the contextual situation where they appear (Vietri, 1985).

107 The name “wellerism” comes from Sam Weller, the main character in Dickens’s Pickwick Papers, who used to tell anecdotes, jokes, and witty remarks related to historical figures, well-known characters, or even invented people, having the structure as so and so said. In Italian, Corso (Corso)
terminology, Italian wellerisms had been confused with proverbs based on fables or conveying moral and practical suggestions.\textsuperscript{108} Because of it, they were frequently referred to as parables or anecdotal, moral, and comparative proverbs (Corso, 4). As paremias, wellerisms are distinguished by a figurative interpretation, notwithstanding the fact that this process might be more or less evident in accordance with the situational context. Corso claims that wellerisms can be either proverbs or proverbial phrases, whereas Ageno considers them a subgroup of proverbial phrases, a point of view that is adopted in this study (Ageno 1960, 244). One aspect guides this choice: wellerisms are characterized by a lack of pedagogical dimension, which is instead typical of proverbs.\textsuperscript{109} They, however, share with proverbs, and proverbial phrases, the fact that their conventionalized meaning needs to be contextualized in order to express specific semantic shades, including frequently humor (Speroni 1948, 54).\textsuperscript{110} An almost fixed formula characterizes wellerisms: “come disse/come diceva,” followed by a proper or common name and by a famous saying or sentence with paremiac meaning. Even though the polysemic of their meanings and their ambiguity is less than that possible with other paremias, wellerisms can nonetheless show a variety of meanings depending on the context. What differs from proverbs and proverbial phrases is

\textsuperscript{108} Ageno argues that a source for wellerisms, as well as proverbs and proverbial phrases, are fables and short stories, making them thus a literary lineage that fixed in the written medium what was originally spoken and attributed to characters like messer Dolcibene, Gonnella, or Piovano Arlotto (Ageno 1960, 253; also, Carnes 1988, 11-12). The connection between wellerisms and fables can originate in three ways: either a statement coming from the story reaches paremiac status, or an expression becomes paremiac while maintaining the motives of the story, or a paremia generates a story (for more information, see also Taylor 1931, 27-32; Bizzarri 1997, 24-25; and Nikolaeva).

\textsuperscript{109} Franceschi distinguishes wellerisms featuring a proverb, as, for instance, \textit{Come disse il tale. Chi mal arriva tardi alloggia}, from other wellerisms, and calls them welleristic proverbs. They do not share the humorous twist that normally features in wellerisms, and the introductory formula is only a later addition aiming to historicize the original part and give it authority (Franceschi 2008, 372-73; also, Taylor 1931, 220).

\textsuperscript{110} For more information on wellerisms, see Corso; Taylor 1934b; and Taylor 1952. For a brief explanation of five wellerisms in Italian and dialect, see Speroni 1948.
their purpose in the utterance in which they feature, since they usually carry a satirical, ironic, comic, or humorous twist\textsuperscript{111} as witty puns. Moreover, they show a “modulo popolaresco o addirittura burlesco,” much greater than other paremias.\textsuperscript{112}

In his chapter on wellerisms, Taylor introduces the word “wellerism” for the first time, defining it as a “very curious proverbial type […] well represented in English and American oral tradition,” also present in the classical world and especially flourishing in German and Scandinavian countries (Taylor 1931, 200). According to him, the life span and success of a wellerism is limited, except those wellerisms whose allusion is well known and, thus, need no commentary (Taylor 1931, 216). Only witty wellerisms or wellerisms with an appeal that went over the local community were later accepted into the educated and civil community (Franceschi 2008, 370, n. 68); the others were completely forgotten once the premises for their birth faded away, or they remained constrained inside “narrow confines” of use (Taylor 1931, 216). Consequently, tracing the origins of a wellerism is difficult, even more difficult than for a proverb, since its history is frequently obscure and strictly connected to oral and popular tradition.

Lapucci argues that wellerisms dwell on popular and witty ways of reasoning and on constant reference to creative examples to contextualize and judge reality (Lapucci 1978, ix). It is indeed true that some of the humor comes out of the incongruity of a serious assertion (the famous saying or sentence with paremiac meaning) placed in a scene (\textit{come disse/come diceva}) that would request a different saying; the result of this incongruity is then a pun and comic relief (Taylor 1931, 217; Lapucci, 1978, x; Mieder and Dundes 1981, 8; Mieder

\textsuperscript{111} For a thorough bibliography on wellerisms in many languages up to year 1994, see Mieder and Kingsbury, 1994.

\textsuperscript{112} See Giovanni Aquilecchia, “La proverbializzazione del personaggio narrativo nella letteratura italiana del Cinquecento,” in Malato 1989, 483-95, specifically 489.
This happens, for instance, in Florio’s Second Frutes, where Michele uses the wellerism, *Per fortuna c’è da fare, diceva colui che ferrava le oche* (SF, Ch. 6), to refer to his frequent commitments: the formality of the context and the popular aspect of the wellerism generates the clash and a humorous instance. Consequently, it allows the speaker to make a statement on social elements without being personally involved but rather detached (Mieder 1989, 225).

The presence of a comedic aspect in wellerisms is a crucial aspect for Charles Speroni too. In his 1953 book on *The Italian Wellerism to the End of the Seventeenth Century*, he defines wellerisms as a “special type of dialogued proverb” (Speroni 1953b, 1) and agrees on their pleasant rather than moralizing nature, which finds a demonstration in their greater presence in comic and burlesque literature, short stories, and comedies (Speroni 1953b, 3-6). Wellerisms reached their greatest success in the sixteenth century, when comic and carnivalesque genres fully developed and collections of paremias started to appear and feature a considerable number of them; additionally, short stories, already before the 1500s, frequently offered content useful to originate wellerisms. However, in collections of paremias subsequent to the seventeenth century, the number of wellerisms drastically reduced, probably because they were considered idioms (Speroni 1953b, 2; also n. 8). Only in

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113 A foolish statement or a banal and facetious reply, the ironic contrast between what is said and what one expects to be said, and an obscene remark, as well as use of dialect and mistilinguism, can all convey humor (Speroni 1953b, 7-8).

114 Similarly, Hugo Bizzarri describes wellerisms, or “dialogismos,” as “un pequeño y rápido diálogo sin el contexto narrativo” (Bizzarri 1997, 17).

115 However, Speroni argues that not all wellerisms are comedic: some of them are incomplete, which do not allow for a full unwrapping of their meaning, and some others might have been comical when they were first used but progressively lost their humorous appeal and significance (Speroni 1953b, 7-8).

116 So are Salviati’s, Serdonati’s, Pescetti’s, and Lena’s collections. For some of Serdonati’s wellerisms, see Ferrato’s edition of his paremias in Bibliography. For a concise historical overview and a list of all wellerisms in Serdonati’s collection, see Speroni 1949.
the nineteenth century, in Giusti’s 1853 edition of his *Proverbi* are wellerisms mentioned, even though in a very scarce number in the entire collection.\(^{117}\)

Speroni distinguishes four groups of sequences of terms that might resemble a wellerism, but are in fact “false wellerisms” (Speroni 1953b, 5)—a categorization that is particularly useful to analyze Florio’s wellerisms in his *Fruits* and in his *Giardino di ricreatione*. The first group of false wellerisms includes paremias that are paired to an unidentified person (“come disse colui,” “come disse quello,” “come diceva quell’uomo”), which would otherwise lead to creating wellerisms out of any paremia. The second group contains those wellerisms that feature the present indicative of the verb “dire” instead of the imperfect or past: the introductory formula “come dice,” according to Speroni, indicates that the wellerism belongs to a community and is perceived as a general statement and not as a concluded saying attributed to a specific person or character. The other two groups, which are not included in this research, incorporate sayings ascribed to an ancient moralist or a writer, more similar to an apophthegm.

***Wellerisms* are less likely than other paremias to be transplanted into another language and understood by another culture, since they might have references to characters or events known only by the people of a specific community. Additionally, “it is very difficult to appreciate or even to care for the local, and frequently incongruous and untranslatable, phrases that constitute many wellerisms” (Speroni 1953b, 6). As for proverbs and proverbial phrases, the community of users accepts the conventionalized meaning of a wellerism, and

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\(^{117}\) Speroni asserts that the only wellerism that Giusti lists is, *Ogni cosa è cosa, diceva quello che pisciava in Arno* (Speroni 1949). However, it appears that wellerisms are also used to explain paremias (both in the 1853 and 1871 editions of Giusti’s paremias): *V. E. può farmi piangere ma non cantare, diceva il musicista Marchesi al Generale Miollis; S’impiccano i ladrucci, e non i ladroni. Così diceva l’indiano al magno Alessandro, che di rubare se ne intendeva; Non mori sed pati, diceva Santa Teresa; Numquam minus solus quam cum solus; diceva il maggiore Africano di sé stesso; La sferza al cavallo, la cavezza all’asino. Diceva Isocrate di due suoi discepoli, che l’uno aveva bisogno di freno e l’altro di sproni; Chi non ci può star, se ne vada. Come disse lo spinoso alla serpe. There is also a false wellerism in Speroni’s terminology: *Adagio, perché ho fretta, diceva colui*. Additionally, in the 1871 edition, Giusti lists the following wellerism: *Dumolin medico francese, morendo diceva: Lascio dietro di me due gran medici, la dieta e l’acqua*.
only the contextual situation allows for the conventionalized meaning of a wellerism to be actualized and for the wellerism itself to express its meaning(s).

1.4 What Transition of Paremias Entails: Passage of Genre, Linguistic Translation, and Cultural Adaptation in Brusantino, Sarnelli, and Florio

An overview of traditional and more contemporary theoretical approaches to the concept of translation clarifies what “transferring paremias” means and what aspects should be taken into consideration when applying it to Brusantino’s, Sarnelli’s, and Florio’s works. This framework constitutes an anticipation of the textual analysis that is conducted in the following chapters and provides specific examples and detailed explanations of the implications of transition of paremias.

In this research, different terms are employed to indicate the passage of paremias from one context to another, such as transferal, transference (Catford), transaction, translation, transition, transposition (Jakobson), equivalence (Catford), and shift. The words “transaction,” “transferal/transference,” and “translation” are considered in their etymological meaning as “to drive through” (trans and agere) and “to bring over” (trans and ferre), and not as a simple passage from one language to another. Therefore, transition of paremias never refers to a word-by-word or faithful translation but rather to a transferal of different elements that make a work original and personal. In the three authors’ works, there is a movement between and through different contexts: their paremias transit through different linguistic, literary, and cultural codes. This ultimately results in a change in the expression, meaning, and value of paremias, and in a passage of their expression, meaning, and value over to a diverse linguistic, literary, and cultural space. To simplify the terminology associated with this concept, just transition and transferal (and related verbs) are adopted, and passage and
shift will be employed to explain how the transition of paremias work in the three analyzed authors; translation is used in a metaphorical way, unless it is an actual word-by-word translation, in which case the term is used in its traditional meaning.

Brusantino, even though he does not literally translate Boccaccio’s text, calls his *Le cento novelle* a translation of the *Decameron*, indirectly referring to a definition of translation as transferal or transition from one genre to another. Folena would call it a “traduzione poetica,” which happens when the signifiers are transferred into a different language and in a different system of forms and literary genres (Folena 1994, 23). This process offers the text in a new “translated” rhetorical structure, paremias included, transformed and adapted to a new contextual situation, and suitable for a different public than the original text. Additionally, the transition concerns moral aspects that the change of genre from a thirteenth-century collection of short stories to a sixteenth-century chivalric poem brings to the structure of the work. Brusantino transfers the message of each canto in the metaphorical content of an allegory and in the concise yet meaningful structure of a paremia. Allegories and paremias illustrate Brusantino’s specific attention to an ethical reading and interpretation of Boccaccio’s stories, since he chose them not in accordance with the message that Boccaccio aimed to present, but based on certain social values that Brusantino aimed to transmit to his community of readers. Many of the introductory paremias show how Brusantino aimed to punish or condemn some unethical deeds and characters, while Boccaccio chose to display a sympathetic attitude towards them and the human feelings that they were expressing. As paremias are used twice in *Le cento novelle*, they demonstrate how they can be subjected to morphological, lexical, and syntactic variations. In conclusion, Brusantino’s transition is prosodic, social, and linguistic.

In Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata*, paremias give voice to the Neapolitan culture, its people, its personality, and its ideas, revealing social and anthropological perspectives. Sarnelli draws
paremias from a variety of sources, in Greek, Latin, Spanish, and Tuscan, revealing his refined taste for knowledge and erudition and his extensive collection of books. Thus, the transition is linguistic, as paremias are made Neapolitan by way of referring to specific linguistic traits that characterize the area; cultural, for they represent the typical social aspects of the city of Naples and of the identity of its people; literary, as previous sources are adapted to the new context; and ideological, since accumulation of proverbs and proverbial phrases translates the final offshoots of the Baroque spirit, confirming Sarnelli’s taste for multiplication of reality, linguistic games, and playful function of paremias (Getto 2000, 276; 300). Sarnelli shows the incredible potentialities of the Neapolitan language and translates it in his paremias: many of Sarnelli’s proverbs and proverbial phrases are *hapax*, since they are created for a specific context, yet constantly referring to traditional structures and forms and to popular wisdom.

In Florio’s *Firste Fruites* and *Second Frutes*, transition of paremias is cross-cultural and cross-linguistic. Florio translates paremias from Italian to English to provide his Anglophone students an immediate referral to their native language and at the same time offer paremias to the Italian expats who were losing contact with and knowledge of their national culture and conversational abilities. In the two language manuals, transition takes on the traditional meaning of translation from one language to another, simultaneously revealing linguistic patterns as well as cultural and social uses. Florio’s translation reveals his pedagogical orientation and the evolution of his methodology throughout the two books. This includes literal translations, which could immediately transfer the structure and the linguistic aspects of the original Italian paremias, and cultural translations, which aimed to convey the content and the meaning of the Italian paremias with equivalent paremias in English. While embracing the idea of input flooding and meaningfulness of the context, Florio transfers the cultural, ethical, and pragmatic message that paremias convey by way of inserting them in
daily and literary conversations in which proverbs and proverbial phrases satisfy the request of transferal of language, content, and culture.\textsuperscript{118} Transition also involves the differences that are present between paremias in the two manuals and the same ones in \textit{Giardino di ricreatione}, where paremias are decontextualized and therefore avoid manipulation by the context and adjustment to the larger objectives of the two language books.

The dichotomy between a translation of the meaning and a literal translation, or else a rhetorical translation and a grammatical translation, dates to Cicero’s pronouncement “non verbum pro verbo” (\textit{De optimo genrere oratorum}, V.14)\textsuperscript{119} or Jerome’s motto “non verba sed sententias” (epistole 57.5). This non-literal translation entails keeping the sense but altering the form to suit the idioms of the resulting language (Copeland, 2). It implies manipulation of the original text to adapt it and bring its message over to the audience, society, or culture that will experience it. In spoken and written utterances, what can be transferred is the general message, and what results is a formal, not literal correspondence between the original text and the final text. An utterance is unique and the product of a specific moment and of a specific emitter. Consequently, translation cannot simply be a mere linguistic search, but should be comprised of how and where the utterance was produced and reproduce them in the new “how and where” resulting from the translation.

If in the Greek world, “translation” was almost absent in favor of the alternatives “μεταβιξω,” “μεταφράξω,” “μεταγράφω,” the Latin world used a great variety of terms to indicate passages of content from one dimension to the other, such as “convertere,” “vertere,” “translatare,” “transferre,” “transvertere,” and “reddere.” Both the Greek and the Latin terms

\textsuperscript{118} For general considerations of translation as a cultural transferal in early modern Europe, see Burke 2007, 7-38.
\textsuperscript{119} “[…] nec converti ut interpres, sed ut orator, sententiiis isdem et earum formis tamquam figuris, verbis ad nostrum consuetudinem aptis. In quibus non verbum pro verbo necesse habui reddere, sed genus omne verborum vinté que servavi” (“And I did not translate them as an interpreter, but as an orator, keeping the same ideas and the forms, or as one might say, the “figures” of thought, but in language which conforms to our usage. And in so doing, I did not hold it necessary to render word for word, but I preserved the general style of the language”).
did not recall a word-by-word translation but rather a translation that could transmit the idea, the general sense, and the “force” of the text to translate (Derrida, 180). Most of these terms etymologically pointed out the passage through and across two entities (“μετά-” or “trans-”) or the rendition resulting from it: in fact, a transition, a metamorphosis of the text, able to transmit content rather than just words (Folena 1994, 10).

As for transferal of language and cultural elements, two Latin words, “translatio” and “traductio,” were common. In his De oratore, Cicero employs both terms to classify two rhetorical devices (also in Folena 1994, 67-68). In book three, while discussing the metaphor as a means to refine the orator’s style, he states that “translatio” is a synonym for metaphor. Metaphors allow expressing a concept with a term that shows an affinity (“similitudo”) with the original term even though it refers to a different conceptual and cognitive area (“alienum verbum”): “Ergo hae translationes quasi mutationes sunt, cum quod non habeas aliunde sumas” (De oratore, III.38.156). “Traductio,” instead, is a synonym for metonymy since neither does it invent new words nor does it imply a metaphor (“translatum”), but it substitutes (“commutare”) for one term with another coming from the same conceptual and cognitive area (“proprio”) and able to illustrate the text. Cicero offers an example, which highlights the difference between the two rhetorical devices:

Ne illa quidem traductio atque immutatio in verbo quadam fabricationem habet sed in oratione: “Africa terribili tremit horrida terra tumultu.” Pro “Afris” est sumpta

“Africa” neque factum est verbum, ut “mare saxifragis undis,” neque translatum, ut

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120 In modern languages, for instance, English uses the word “translation” from “translatare,” whereas Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian make their verbs, respectively “tradurre,” “traduire,” “traducir,” “traduzir,” and “tradicu,” etymologically deriving from “traducere.”
121 “Consequently, the metaphors in which you take what you have not got from somewhere else are a sort of borrowing.”
“mullitur mare!,” sed ornandi causa proprium proprio commutatum (De oratore, III.42.167).\(^{122}\)

Metonymy/traductio requires the simple substitution of a word for aesthetical purposes but does not change the content or the meaning of the expression, as the metaphor/translatio does when substituting a word with another word expressing a different figurative concept.

André Lefèvere comments upon the etymological derivation of the modern words for translation. He mentions Antoine Berman’s argument that “translatare” means an exchange of signifieds without much attention to the signifiers, thus without considering the cultural and social implication that signifiers usually bring with them. Lefèvere comments that this translation is the symbol of faithful translation or word-by-word rendering of a text, which is, however, impossible to achieve. Contextual elements make a text unique, so that exchanging signifieds without including the “cultural, ideological and poetological overtones of the actual signifiers, is doomed to failure” (Lefèvere, 18). Consequently, “traducere,” though never used in the Latin world to indicate a translation, gives shape to the more contextualized scope of this passage. Etymologically, the word “traductio” (from “ducere”) emphasizes the individuality and originality of the process more than “translatum” (from “ferre”), and gives more space to the subjectivity of the translator (Folena 1994, 68). Lefèvere again refers to Berman, who argues that for the Latin grammarian Aulus Gellius, “traductio” meant “transported” rather than “translated;” and to transport meant to create a balance between the linguistic, the cultural, and the contextual aspects that intervened in translation. Consequently, translation did not only concern elocutio but also compositio (Lefèvere, 8);

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\(^{122}\) “Nor yet does the figure of substitution or metonymy involve an innovation in a word but in the entire sentence: «The rugged realm of Africa with dire disorder trembles.» Instead of «Africans,» they used «Africa;» nor is a word invented, as «The sea with its rockrupting waves» nor employed metaphorically, as «The sea is softened,» but for the sake of ornament one proper name is substituted for another.”
namely, not only words themselves but also their arrangement in the discourse and the effectiveness of their message.

In his 1813 essay “On the Different Methods of Translating,” Friedrich Schleiermacher asserts that a perfect correspondence between the linguistic use of the translator and that of the translated author is almost impossible. The famous Italian paremia, *Traduttore traditore*, captures the essence of the impossibility of a clear-cut translation. Not all the words have a perfect correspondence in another language, and terms in the target language might not cover the same semantic area of the original; additionally, these terms might add a semantic shade absent in the original, thus renovating the original text. In this sense, Schleiermacher distinguishes between the work of an interpreter and that of a translator. An interpreter usually works within a specific context, whose conventions are well known because fixed by law, usage, or business. A translator, instead, creates new contexts, and his translation is never a mechanical operation (Schleiermacher, 45). In describing the contact that the translator creates between the author and the reader, Schleiermacher argues that the translator can choose between two options. He can make the author move towards the reader and make him speak the target language in the same way, as though he knew this language himself (Schleiermacher, 49). Therefore, this is the case of a

123 Benedetto Croce proposed a drastic idea of translation in his volume, *Estetica come scienza dell’espressione e linguistica generale. Teoria e storia*. Bari: G. Laterza & figli, 1912. He argues that each event is unique and non-reproducible. Hence, translations are not achievable: a work shaped by aesthetics can be transformed into a logical one, but it is impossible to give another aesthetic shape to something that has already been shaped by aesthetics. Therefore, each translation either belittles and corrupts the original expression or creates a new expression, which is juxtaposed with but does not replace the original one. Consequently, even translations *ad verbum* are in fact mere comments on the original (71).

124 The proverbial phrase appears in Giusti as *Traduttori, traditori*. On the translator/traitor tradition, see Folena 1994.

125 Jakobson argues that translation from one language to another cannot be applied to simple code-units; in other words, the message conveyed by single components cannot be substituted by alternative single components in the target language. What can be changed in another language is the message, so as to achieve an equivalence of messages, beyond the perfect correspondence of terms between the two languages (Jakobson, 114). He specifies that, even though the target language may not feature the same grammatical devices of the original language, the translator can compensate for the lack of a structure by resorting to circumlocutions or periphrases, borrowing words, creating neologisms and calques, or using other lexical means (Jakobson, 115).
literal translation. Or, he might make the reader move towards the author by way of providing for the reader’s inability to understand the original language; in other words, by means of his translation, he aims to convey the same feelings and emotions that he felt by reading the original text. This translation thus transfers the meaning and message that the original text transmits; it is a “traducere” and a transition of concepts.

As they are embedded in the cultural and social system that created them, paremias cannot be translated as in a business transaction, but rather as in a transferal of meaning and message, where any rigid laws of the market disappear and the fluid laws of culture and society intervene. It might be said that some paremias are cross-cultural, meaning that regardless of the different linguistic codes, they are applicable to multiple cultures. However, what makes them “idiomatic” or distinctive of a language, as Charles Francis Hockett states, is their role in pragmatic or contextual situations, which is the framework that allows them to convey their meaning. As mentioned above, in Florio’s English translation of Italian paremias, a literal translation of a paremia would cause the reader to experience the linguistic and rhetorical structure of the original, but its meaning, and most of all, its understandability would be compromised. Conversely, a translation of the meaning will allow the translator to convey the meaning of the expression, even though its linguistic and rhetorical nuances would be lost in the target language (Hockett, 52).

As said above, a translation of the meaning of paremias needs to consider the context, which can show how they transit from one code to another and embed in the receiving code while preserving the specific elements of the original one.\textsuperscript{126} Upon this, it is possible to

\textsuperscript{126} Franco Nasi demonstrates the difficulty of translating a paremia in a poem by Roger McGough, whose English paremia is translated in Italian with a similar one, yet with a different rhyme scheme and referring to different ethical, social, and cultural elements. Nasi comments that paremias are problematic to translate because the images they convey are different from one culture to another and the form alone does not suffice in conveying the same imagery (Nasi, 72-74). A possible solution to this conundrum is to consider the contextual meaning of the paremia and find the best possible solution to express the implications that the paremia conveys in the specific context and, largely, in the text itself (Nasi, 74). On the topic of translation of paremias, see also Arthaber, XII; Corona, 5-8.
evaluate how both the initial and the final contexts influence the paremia, its comprehensibility, and its effectiveness. A study that provides an interesting perspective on the combination between transition and contextual analysis is Mikhail Bakhtin’s *Speech Genres and Other Later Essays*. In his chapter titled “The Problem of Speech Genres” (Bakhtin 1986, 60-102), Bakhtin addresses the idea of transition in terms of both language and genre by way of introducing speech genres as a system that allows the author’s individuality to emerge, literary devices to reinforce language, and written and oral utterances to relate to each other. This notion can frame the use of paremias in a specific contextual circumstance, communicative situation, or literary genre, and the communicative objective that they purport to cover.

Bakhtin divides speech genres between primary or simple speech genres and secondary or complex speech genres (Bakhtin 1986, 61-62). Secondary speech genres usually develop in written form due to social, scientific, and literary functions. While developing their structure, they “absorb and digest various primary (simple) genres that have taken form in unmediated speech communication” (Bakhtin 1986, 62). The primary genres, however, are not simply engulfed into the secondary ones without any change; they are modified in accordance with the distinctive elements of the secondary genre(s). Consequently, when inserted into a secondary speech genre, they are embedded in the content, message, and linguistic features of the containing genre and differentiate themselves from similar utterances. Even though Bakhtin mostly talks about oral utterances, written utterances undergo the same process: a new contextual situation creates a new frame and new qualities emerge (Bakhtin 1986, 73).

According to Bakhtin, speech genres include a variety of elements, from scientific statements to all literary genres (Bakhtin 1986, 60-61). Paremias are placed at one extreme of

Montella in Vallini, 117-37; Berman 2003, 13-14; Lepschy 1981; Lepschy 2009; and the already mentioned Schleiermacher, 43-63.
a continuum of genres (where at the other extreme, multivolume novels appear), and can be considered a primary speech genre. Indeed, the conventionalized meaning of a paremia is altered when the paremia is inserted into a secondary speech genre. The paremias’ structure, functions, and meanings are modified by the larger genre that host them, by its inner rules of existence, and by the messages linked to specific contexts. The paremias lose their link to the immediate reality that created them, and they comply with the hosting context in a “dialogic relationship,” which explains how a text (paremias included) deprived of its own context would lose the contextual information that makes it unique (Bakhtin 1986, 115). Since they are “outside-text inside the text” (fuori-testo nel testo), paremias are able to create a confined, complete, and meaningful text inside the bigger text that contains them (Albanese 2013, 7). It is a “contamination,” a “sort of participation without belonging, a taking part in without being part of, without having membership in a set,” as Jacques Derrida states (Derrida, 59). Unless they are used in a collection of paremias, thus unrelated to any context, paremias are participating entities. However, “participation” as well as “dialogic relationship” mean that the connection between paremias and context is biunivocal. While undergoing changes when inserted in a context, paremias penetrate into the genre that contains them and provide it, or better the context, with additional meanings. Paremias are affected by the context and simultaneously affect the context as they potentiate or decrease its finality in a paragraph or in the entire work.

Brusantino’s, Sarnelli’s, and Florio’s paremias are all “digested” by three different typologies of literary works, which are a chivalric poem, a collection of short stories, and a language manual. When inserted into the poetic structure of the Le cento novelle, paremias change their syntactic and rhythmic organization without losing their distinctive features and their message. As they adjust to the new given genre, they submit to the fixed rules of octaves of hendecasyllables. Different genres that shape and are shaped by paremias occur in
Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata*. Here, a pseudo-linguistic treatise, a popular discourse, and fables “digest” paremias, which are consequently shaped and modelled by the diverse characteristic aspects and purposes of these genres. Accumulation of proverbs and funny sayings attests to linguistic and cultural creativity and inventiveness of the popular language, ultimately creating a frame for the Neapolitan dimension of the entire collection. Genre plays a major role in Florio’s manuals too, dictating the pedagogical twist in his use of paremias. Florio’s paremias are, indeed, not only cultural elements but also linguistic elements, carriers of grammatical, morphological, and syntactical rules in both Italian and English. They are instead structures of the language when they are listed in *Giardino di ricreatione*, where any pedagogical objective disappears and paremias transmit innumerable decontextualized meanings.

If translation, as Kwame Appiah argues, produces “a new text that matters to a community the way another text matters to another” (Appiah, 397), Brusantino’s, Sarnelli’s, and Florio’s paremias matter to specific communities, which find in those paremias the expression of their own identity or of an external attractive identity in a specific historical, social, and linguistic moment (Appiah, 399). Understanding paremias, especially in written accounts, is possible because the emitter and the community share the same culture and language (such as in Sarnelli’s collection of fables), because the emitter makes the paremias understandable for a community that refers to different values (such as in Florio’s language manuals), or because the paremias themselves are employed as clarifying means of interpretation (as in Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle*).
Difatto troverai qui, oltre un tesoro di lingua viva e schiettissima, una raccolta d’utili insegnamenti a portata di tutti, un manuale di prudenza per ogni caso spettante alla vita pubblica e privata

Giuseppe Giusti, *Lettera proemiale ad Andrea Francioni (Proverbi)*, 92
CHAPTER TWO

VINCENZO BRUSANTINO’S *LE CENTO NOVELLE*:

PAREMIA IN A SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ETHICAL INTERPRETATION

OF BOCCACCIO’S *DECAMERON*

2.1 Brusantino’s “Translation” of the Decameron

Vincenzo Brusantino, a Ferrara native (also known as Vincenzo Brusantini and Vincenzo Brugiantini\(^{127}\)), is a forgotten example of a sixteenth-century author. In his time, he was dismissed as an unrefined writer and an imitator of previous masterpieces of Italian literature.\(^{128}\) A close friend of Aretino, he spent some time in Venice, where he established a

\(^{127}\) Since Brusantino signs his name in three autographed letters (see note 128 for the collocations and content of these letters), this spelling is preferred. The linguistic reason behind the other two alternatives also confirms this choice: Brusantini is a genitive patronymic, which usually follows the given name but is not used after “messere” or “messer,” and Brugiantini is the Florentine version of Brusantino (“brusare,” which is the Paduan alternative to “bruciare,” becomes “brugiare” in Florentine vernacular). In the three autographed letters, the first name is spelled either Vicenzo or Vicentio.

\(^{128}\) Brusantino’s biography was almost completely unknown until Pettinelli researched it. For more information, see Pettinelli 2004a, 69-71 (who proposes the date of death in 1556, n. 17) and DBI (which instead proposes the date of death in 1570). The Biblioteca Ariostea (Archivio Pasi, Busta 5. Fasc. 320; Cl. I 222; Cl. I scat. 22) and the Archivio di Stato (Archivio famigliare Muzzarelli Brusantino) in Ferrara hold a few folders concerning the Brusantino family (Pettinelli 2004a, 71). Vincenzo Brusantino is mentioned in genealogical trees, in trials, and in contracts about changes of ownership. There is, however, a 1544 autographed letter in the collection “Raccolta Autografa Cittadella” (563), sent to the judge of the town of Ferrara, Giovanni Paolo Machiavelli, concerning a credit that Brusantino has with the town and which he asks the judge to disperse by giving portions to different townspeople, including a Reverend and an estate manager. The Biblioteca Estense Universitaria in Modena keeps an undated and unsigned letter to Ercole II d’Este (It. 883=alfa G.1.1543), which deals with Brusantino’s copyright on his *L’Angelica innamorata*, defined as the result of “alcuni romanzi mess[i] insieme.” In this letter, Brusantino asks the Duke for a special privilege to preserve his rights for twelve years so that nobody would be able to either print or to sell his work without his agreement. He also asks the Duke to apply a fine of five hundred gold scudi for each transgressor. Finally, the Archivio di Stato di Modena preserves an autographed letter dated January 8, 1551 (ASMo, Archivio Segreto Estense, Archivio per materie, Letterati, b. 11), sent to the ducal secretary in Ferrara, Bartolomeo Spero, who received one of Brusantino’s books, probably *L’Angelica innamorata*. As for Brusantino’s printed works, there are no modern editions of either *L’Angelica innamorata* or *Le cento novelle*. The last edition of *L’Angelica innamorata* dates to 1837 by Giuseppe Antonelli’s Venetian printing press, whereas only the 1554 *princeps of Le cento novelle* is available to consult.

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connection with the printing house of Francesco Marcolini, editor of many of Aretino’s works and future editor of Brusantino’s two literary enterprises.\(^\text{129}\) Unable to find a court at which to thrive, Brusantino wandered through different places until he returned to his home city. In 1538, he obtained citizenship in Reggio from the council of noblemen of the city (Pettinelli 2004a, 70) and the middle 1500s were his most prolific time characterized by the publication of a chivalric poem, a rewriting of Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, and a few poems,\(^\text{130}\) along with his epistolary exchange with Pietro Aretino.\(^\text{131}\) In December 1550, he wrote and published *L’Angelica inamorata*, which he dedicated to his Ferrarese protector, Ercole II d’Este and which Marcolini reprinted for the second time in 1553.\(^\text{132}\) Brusantino defines the thirty-seven cantos of *L’Angelica inamorata* as a continuation of the story written by Ariosto in his *Orlando furioso*—a poem whose conclusion remained unresolved.\(^\text{133}\) In 1554,\(^\text{129}\) For a detailed analysis of Marcolini’s production and publications from 1534 to 1559, see Quondam, especially 78-86 and 113-16, and Pettinelli 2004b, 167-74. For Brusantino’s editions, see Servolini Particularly remarkable are Marcolini’s two own publications: *Le sorti di Francesco Marcolino da Forlì intitolate giardino di pensieri*. Venezia: Marcolini, 1540, and *Le ingegnose sorti composte per Francesco Marcolini da Forlì intitolate giardino di pensieri*. Venezia: Marcolini, 1550. Pettinelli demonstrates that Brusantino’s initial paremias may have an antecedent in the *terzine* of Marcolini’s *Sorti* (Pettinelli 2004b, 177-78).\(^\text{130}\) Brusantino’s rhymes are contained in the volume *Il tempio della divina signora donna Giovanna d’Aragona, fabbricato da tutti i più gentili spiriti e in tutte le lingue principali del mondo*, which Girolamo Ruscelli commissioned humanist Bona de Boliris to write in 1551 and which was later published in 1554. Some of his petrarchist rhymes are published in *Rime scelte de’ poeti ferraresi antichi e moderni. Aggiuntevi nel fine alcune brevi notizie istoriche intorno ad essi*. Ferrara: Per gli eredi di Bernardino Pomatelli, 1813: 113-16.\(^\text{131}\) In one letter to Aretino on December 22, 1550 written from his property called Brusantina, Brusantino praises their friendship, which is an example of transmigration between their two souls, and affirms looking forward to going back to Venice where he could enjoy illuminating conversations with Aretino. Meanwhile, he sends him fennel as a testament of his gratitude since he could not yet find wild geese. This is the only letter by Brusantino published in Paolo Procaccioli, *Lettere scritte a Pietro Aretino. Tomo II, libro II*. Roma: Salerno Editrice, 2004: 338-39 (letter n. 360).\(^\text{132}\) The integral text of Brusantino’s *L’Angelica inamorata* was included in the third volume (1853) of Francesco Zanotto’s *Parnaso italiano: raccolta delle opere dei poeti italiani dai primi secoli ai tempi moderni*, printed in Venice by Giuseppe Antonelli in 1832-55.\(^\text{133}\) For instance, in *L’Angelica inamorata*, Ruggiero dies violently, poisoned and then killed by Gano; Medoro drowns; and Angelica falls in love with any knight in a sort of Dantesque “contrappasso” under Alcina’s spell. Angelica then, experiences the knights’ abandon before satisfying her sexual desires, and, finally, chooses Sacripante as her partner. Elements and topics from both Boiardo’s *Orlando Innamorato* and Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* are reworked and harmonized in order to make them suitable for the demands of Brusantino’s social context and to comply with his own perspective.
Brusantino engages in another project of reworking and adapting available material when he writes his *Le cento novelle da messer Brugiantino dette in ottava rima. Et tutte hanno la allegoria, con il proverbio a proposito della novella*, dedicated to the Duke of Parma and Piacenza, Ottavio Farnese (1524-86). Le cento novelle is the first integral rewriting of Boccaccio’s collection and an adaptation of Boccaccio’s text into a chivalric poem in octaves of hendecasyllables. This adaptation includes the addition of an initial allegory and a paremia for each novella, which reflect a new ethical perspective introduced by Brusantino in Boccaccio’s text.

Brusantino’s poem, *L’Angelica innamorata*, was recognized more than other earlier chivalric poems, which were imitating or trying to surpass Boiardo’s *Orlando innamorato* or Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso*. These others include Cassio da Narni’s *La morte del Danese* (1521), Francesco Tromba’s *La draga d’Orlando* (1525-27), and Francesco Ludovici’s *Trionfi di Carlo* (1535), which were damned to complete oblivion. References to *L’Angelica innamorata* are scant, though. It is mentioned only in accounts of chivalric poems after *Orlando furioso* or in anthologies of sixteenth-century continuations of Ariosto’s masterpiece, where it is frequently accused of incoherence and unrefined style. Likewise, references to Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle* are very rare, since this rewriting of Boccaccio’s *Decameron* was considered a worthless literary exercise and a minor work, merely a sterile and impersonal copy of the original text without any innovative additions.

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134 In this study, the aforementioned copy of *Le cento novelle* is the one preserved at the Boston Public Library (G. 3453. 7, now G. 16. 66). The copy, in quarto, consists of 552 numbered pages, with two blank pages at the beginning and two at the end, and 8 non-numbered pages containing the “Tavola di tutte le novelle, che nelle dieci Giornate del Decamerone si contengono.” Marcolini’s emblem in big format with the motto “Veritas filia temporis” included in the external oval and surrounded by the sentence, “La verità figliuola è del gran tempo,” is on the first page. For more information on Marcolini’s emblem, see Servolini, 89-90, and Quondam, 107.
Prior to the twentieth century, just a few anthologists mentioned Brusantino’s two works. Giusto Fontanini\textsuperscript{135} reports neither \textit{L’Angelica innamorata} nor \textit{Le cento novelle}, despite describing epic poems and modern collection of stories, including some rewritings of Boccaccio’s \textit{Decameron}. A few years later, Lodovico Antonio Muratori mentions Brusantino and analyzes a passage from canto XVII of \textit{L’Angelica innamorata}, with a specific focus on members of the Este family.\textsuperscript{136} If Nicola Francesco Haym,\textsuperscript{137} Gordon Percel,\textsuperscript{138} and Giovanni Maria Crescimbeni\textsuperscript{139} list both works, Francesco Saverio Quadrio\textsuperscript{140} only reports that \textit{Le cento novelle} is rare. After Giammaria Mazzucchelli\textsuperscript{141} and Girolamo Tiraboschi’s references


\textsuperscript{137} In his \textit{Notizia de’ libri rari nella lingua italiana Divisa in Quattro Parti principali; cioè, istoria, poesia, prose, arti e scienze}. Londra: Tonson e Watts, 1726, Haym mentions \textit{L’Angelica innamorata} in the section \textit{Poemi epici} (118) and \textit{Le cento novelle} in the section \textit{Poemi di vario genere} (121), adding that they are written in octaves and very rare to find. In his later \textit{Biblioteca italiana; o sia Notizia de’ libri rari italiani divisa in quattro parti; cioè istoria, poesia, prose, arti e scienze}. Milano, Appresso G. Galeazzi, 1771-73, he lists \textit{Le cento novelle} under the name Vincenzo Brugiantino (215) and \textit{L’Angelica innamorata} under the name Vincenzo Brusantino (210), yet he specifies that the two identities coincide.

\textsuperscript{138} Gordon Percel, \textit{Bibliothèque des romans, avec des remarques critiques sur leur choix et leurs différentes éditions}. Amsterdam: chez la Veuve De Poilras à la Vérité sans fard, 1734. It contains the same entries of the 1726 edition of Haym’s \textit{Notizia} (190 on \textit{L’Angelica innamorata}, and 291 on \textit{Le cento novelle}), with the only difference being that the comment on the rarity of \textit{Le cento novelle} is in the French language.


\textsuperscript{140} Francesco Saverio Quadrio, \textit{Della storia e della ragione d’ogni poesia dell’Abate Francesco Saverio Quadrio Dove le cose all’Epica appartenenti sono comprese alla Serenissima Altezza di Francesco III Duca di Modana, Reggio, Mirandola etc}. Bologna: per Ferdinando Pisarri, all’insegna di S. Antonio, 1739-52: 352. In Vol. 4 (1749) in the section \textit{Novellatori in prosa italiana}, he also adds that in his 1553 edition, Marcolini added a short description of the topic at the beginning of each canto (561, in the chapter \textit{Dove gli scrittori s’annoverano de’ giusti romanzi di cavallera, che hanno per fondamento di verità le origini de’ Franchi}, which concerns poems devoted to Angelica).

\textsuperscript{141} In the third volume (1763, 2234-36) of his \textit{Gli scrittori d’Italia cioè notizie storiche e critiche intorno alle vite e agli scritti dei letterati italiani del Conte Giammaria Mazzucchelli bresciano}. Brescia, Presso a G. Bossini, 1753-63, Mazzucchelli provides a list of references to works mentioning Brusantino, including Antonio Libanori’s \textit{Ferrara d’oro imbrunito} (1665-74), Girolamo Baruffaldi’s \textit{De Poetis ferrariensisibus dissertatio} (1723), and Ferrante Borsetti’s \textit{Historia almi Ferrariae gymnastii} (1735). Mazzucchelli also mentions a manuscript copy of Alessandro Zilioli’s \textit{Historia delle vite de’ poeti italiani}, where in cc. 358-60, Brusantino should be quoted.
in their anthologies, Luigi Ughi briefly mentions Brusantino’s two publications and his poems. Giulio Ferrario dedicates a section of his overview of chivalric poems and romances to *L’Angelica inamorata*, highlighting the banality of its plot and the ridiculousness of certain events. Similarly, Francesco Flamini describes Brusantino’s chivalric poem as unpoetically feeble and as an inelegant poem (Flamini, 144-45), whereas Francesco Foffano points out its plainness in style and awkwardness in the development of its events (Foffano, 132-33).

It is only in modern times that scholars began to show more interest in *Le cento novelle* and in the editorial and interpretative aspects that it involves. In 2010, Maiko Favaro published an article with the captivating title, “Il *Decameron* in veste di poema: *Le cento novelle* di Vincenzo Brusantino (1554).” Here, he calls attention to Brusantino’s predilection for chivalric poems, which probably derives from his connection with the Ferrarese court—a court reknowned for being entrenched in the proliferation and diffusion of the “romanzi di cavalleria”—or from his friendship with Aretino. Rosanna Pettinelli has recently engaged in a critical study of Brusantino’s work in her 2004 book *Forme e percorsi dei romanzi di cavalleria: da Boiardo a Brusantino*. One chapter, entitled “Vicende editoriali attorno alle *Cento novelle da messer Vincenzo Brugiantino dette in ottava rima*,” outlines the publication history of the *Decameron*’s editions, focusing on the role played by the editor Francesco Marcolini in Brusantino’s commission of *Le cento novelle*. Although she admits that Brusantino simplifies the corollary elements of the original text (i.e. the poem and the introduction) and changes the meaning of some stories, Pettinelli recognizes Brusantino’s act of ethical rewriting. In another chapter, “Fra Boccaccio e Ariosto. Modi di ricezione

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142 Girolamo Tiraboschi mentions Brusantino very briefly in the third part of the seventh volume of his *Storia della letteratura italiana*. Napoli: A spese di Giovanni Muccis (1781, 96).


dell’oralità nelle *Cento novelle* di Vincenzo Brusantino,” Pettinelli argues that Brusantino enriches Boccaccio’s text with oral elements, such as the octave—the meter of the troubadours’ and chilvaric poetic production as well as a popular poetic form—and, most of all, with the initial allegories and paremias, which imbue the content of the stories with ethical tones. Francesco Marcolini, who had been fulfilling the demands of his contemporary public since 1534 with texts primarily written in the vernacular, was particularly eager to print marginal poetic works that experimented with new forms and genres, while at the same time conveying moral messages. Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle* fit this description and delivered a sense of novelty in such a canonized text as Boccaccio’s *Decameron*.

**The Specificity of Brusantino’s “Le cento novelle”**

*Le cento novelle* belongs to the realm of endolinguistic versions of the *Decameron*, which means that it is an example of an interpretation of Boccaccio’s text within the same linguistic code, the Italian language, or better the Florentine vernacular employed by Boccaccio.¹⁴⁵ Yet, this “translation” happens diachronically as it “translates” a text that was written two centuries before and whose style is enriched with scant, yet recognizable, regional linguistic elements from the sixteenth-century Ferrarese area. It also enacts a transition across two different genres, shifting from the prose of the original work to the poetry of the chilvaric poem. As such, it fulfills the desires of a different society and transforms Boccaccio’s *Decameron* into a more popularized text that is able to attract a wider public than the original work, designated to be read by a quality public. Brusantino’s personal additions to and interpretation of the *Decameron* constitute a remarkable achievement in adapting Boccaccio’s collection to the chivalric octaves while at the same time reproducing

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the original text almost entirely faithfully. The most evident of his additions, allegories and paremias placed at the beginning of each canto, confirms the emphasis on the content of the work as they explain, unwrap, and state the themes of each single novella. As such, they constitute the most important features to understand the purpose of Brusantino’s “translation” (CN, 3).

Brusantino’s work bears a rematic title, which means that it focuses on the “comment” (the one hundred stories) rather than on the “topic” (Decameron); along with Cento, it was the most common alternative to Decameron in the sixteenth-century editions of Boccaccio’s collection of short stories (Bragantini 2005, 345). Such a title shifts the focus to the content of the collection rather than highlighting its temporal aspect, namely the ten days during which the onesta brigata recounts stories (which is the etymological meaning of the word Decameron). The one hundred novellas follow the same order of the stories in the Decameron and they are divided into ten days just as in the original text. A few introductory octaves, separated from the first novella of the day, and some conclusive octaves immediately following the reaction of the brigata to the last recounted story, open and close each day and appear to be shorter versions than the introduction and conclusion to each novella in the Decameron. Brusantino alludes very briefly to Boccaccio’s lengthy introduction and does not include the “orrido cominciamento” of the plague in Florence, probably because its popular memory was lost to time.146 As he also leaves aside some of Boccaccio’s details, his stories result shorter than those found in the Decameron. At the end of each day, however, the same members of Boccaccio’s brigata recite the same songs, although the original madrigals are worked into sonnets.147

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146 See Pettinelli 2004c, 196. The reference to the plague is also absent in Groto’s 1588 revision of the Decameron.
147 In general, in Le cento novelle, the Decameron’s events of the frame are condensed and limited, without any apparent regularity, to an octave at the end of a novella or an octave at the beginning of the subsequent one. There are also a few longer sections, such as the end of each day starting after the
Recurrent elements determine the beginning and the end of each day as well as the beginning and the end of each canto in a more evident way than in the Decameron. A defined structure and paratextual elements, specifically images (when present), allegories, and paremias, aimed to achieve three goals: attract the reader’s eye and attention; guide him visually and thematically through the exploration of Le cento novelle; and define certain elements considered crucial to the interpretation of the text. Gérard Genette describes this space as a transaction where the author determines how the text should be read and received and where the readers decide to accept Brusantino’s innovations or to walk out of the text (Genette, 261-62). Thus, they make the intention of Brusantino’s transformation explicit, and they contribute to the coherence of the final literary product by shaping the message of the work as well as its reception. An image introduces the ten days as well as the first canto of each day and a caption opens and summarizes the content of all of the one hundred cantos, with minor changes from the captions in the Decameron. An allegory in prose and a

tenth novella, the introduction to Day IV, and the beginning of Day VI with the dispute between Liciisca and Tindaro

The initial images of each day depict scenes of social life related to the brigata’s activities, whereas the initial images of the first canto of each day (as well as I.2) represent a scene or simultaneous scenes, usually the central ones, from the novella. Favaro argues that many of the illustrations come from the Decameron’s editions by Giolito and some from L’Angelica innamorata (Favaro, 102, especially n.1 and 2). For a comprehensive and detailed analysis of engravings in the fifteenth and sixteenth-century editions of the Decameron, see Fabia Borroni Salvadori, “L’incisione al servizio del Boccaccio nei secolo XV e XVI,” Annali della Scuola normale superiore di Pisa. Serie III. VII.2 (1972): 595-734, and Pettinelli 2004b, 173.

The introduction of images derives from a trend that concerns both the Decameron and Orlando furioso (for a bibliography on the illustrated versions of Boccaccio’s Decameron, see Favaro, 102, n. 2). For Orlando furioso, it is worth mentioning that many of its editions feature engravings at the beginning of each canto. This is the case in the 1536 edition by Nicolò di Aristotile, called Zoppino; the 1542 edition by Ludovico Dolce and Gabriel Giolito de’ Ferrart; the 1553 edition by Andrea Valvassori, called Guadagnino; and the 1556 edition by Girolamo Ruscelli and Vincenzo Valgrisi. In the Zoppino and Giolito editions, the image is placed at the beginning of the cantos between the title and the allegory, whereas in the Valgrisi edition, the image extends to the entire page (for more information, see the website designed by Lina Bolzoni and her group of scholars at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, entitled L’Orlando furioso e la sua traduzione in immagini: http://www.orlandofurioso.org/).

Brusantino alters the tense (from past indicative to present indicative) or the mode of a verb (from past participle to gerund; from indicative to subjunctive) or the valence or the pronominal aspect of a verb. He adds an adjective (in I.2 the addition of the adjective “molti” before “chierici” emphasizes the corruption of the religious members); he changes the position of certain clusters and substitutes or
paremia in distiches of rhymed hendecasyllables, announced by the words *allegoria* and *proverbio* in capital letter, follow the caption for each canto. For instance, the reknowned novella of Griselda and her husband Gualtieri, the Marquis of Saluzzo (X.10) is introduced by the following initial allegory and paremia:

**Allegoria**

Per il Marchese di Saluzzo si tolle il pazzo che volendo talvolta far esperienza de le cose fuora di ordine con gran maraviglia fa stupire ogniuno de il saffio esperimentato, soportando con lunga pacienza, al fie con bona sorte ritorna in bono stato.

**Proverbio**

De cose fuor di mondo e di credenza

Non deve l’huom mai farne esperienza

The allegory and the paremias are distinguished typographically: the allegory is written in a small font, whereas the paremia is enclosed inside a rectangle (except for a few cases) and its font is bigger. This formatting makes the paremia the central and most evident element in the text and the one leading the way to the subsequent text in octaves. For a public, as it will be shown later, looking for extra-textual elements to make the original text more readable and deletes some of them (in IV.2 Boccaccio’s “della casa” becomes “da una finestra”); and he modifies a singular into a plural or viceversa (such as in VIII.3 where Boccaccio’s “a’ suoi compagni” becomes “a un suo compagno”). Additionally, Brusantino substitutes a word with a similar one (“‘ncantamento” becomes “incantesmo” in IX.10) or a different one (“allato” becomes “addosso” in IV.8); he makes morphological and phonetic modifications and restores some etymological spellings while, at the same time, introducing more modern words (“corsaro” substitutes “corsale” and “Corfù” substitutes “Gurfo” in II.4). Sometimes, Brusantino makes mistakes; we can note, for example: the spelling of Rinaldo d’Esti’s name in II.2 (in Boccaccio, Rinaldo d’Asti); a *saut du même au même* in II.7 and V.10; the change of Boccaccio’s Beltramo into Guglielmo in III.9; the indirect pronoun “le” transformed into a masculine one in IV.5 or IX.7; “adoppiato” becoming “alloppiato” in IV.10, and “contadini” becoming “cittadini” in VI.10. He also introduces Florentine elements, such as “iscampa” in II.4. The comparison between the initial caption of the *Decameron* and *Le cento novelle* for I.1 provides an example of the minor modifications which Brusantino introduces: *Decameron*: “Masetto da Lamporecchio si fa mutolo e diviene ortolano d’un monistero di donne, le quali tutte concorrono a giacersi con lui;” *Le cento novelle*: “Masetto da Lamporecchio, si fa mutolo, e diviene ortolano di un monaster di donne, le quali tute corrono a giacersi con lui.”
understandable, images and characters of paremias supply a guide to the exploration of the text.
FIGURE 1: Le cento novelle
Front Page and Initial Paremia and Allegory for Novella X.10
Boston Public Library, G.16.66
Courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library, Rare Books
Source: https://archive.org/details/lecentonovelleda00brus
A list of all of the epithets for women used during the day\textsuperscript{151} and of the initial paremias of the ten cantos appear at the end of each day.\textsuperscript{152} Here, a sentence introduces paremias and summarizes the plot of each story in a more succinct way than the caption introducing the actual stories. Brusantino uses the final list of paremias to index the stories and provide them with unity and coherence, and in so doing he assigns paremias a greater role than the captions. The stories do not exclusively need a reference to their actual content in order to be identified, as it is necessary in the Decameron, since the message provided by the associated paremia suffices to express their overall message. Listing paremias at the end of each day answers to the ethical tone that Brusantino wants to achieve with Le cento novelle: these lists offer a summary of the moral content of the entire day, and they help the reader to remain conscious of the moral underpinnings of Brusantino’s text throughout the entire reading process. At the end of all of the cantos, Brusantino also places a “Tavola di tutte le novelle che nelle dieci giornate del Decamerone si contengono,” which presents the initial captions for both each day, almost identical to the original. Because of this structure, each day of Le cento novelle appears as a separate and autonomous nucleus confined between the caption that introduces the day and the final list of paremias and epithets. Moreover, the individual cantos are set apart from each other by means of the initial allegory and paremia, which guide the reader into giving particular attention to the specific meaning and message of the story apart from the general topic of the day.\textsuperscript{153}

\textsuperscript{151} Many of the epithets are feminine plural adjectives, but there are also adverbial clusters. Employed for the female readers of Brusantino’s stories, they commend the praiseworthy qualities of women. Their number varies according to the day, but they do not exceed thirteen and, except for a few repetitions, they are different from one day to another. This list seems to recall the list of epithets for male characters that Brusantino uses in L’Angelica innamorata (for more information on its origin, see Perocco, 297-98).

\textsuperscript{152} The Index of paremias lists all the paremias at the beginning of each canto and the correspondent paremias in the list at the end of each day.

\textsuperscript{153} The layout of the different components of the text connects Le cento novelle to L’Angelica innamorata. Each canto of L’Angelica innamorata features a caption in octave (“ottava d’argomento”), which succinctly describes its topic (a feature that distinguishes it from Cieco da Ferrara’s Mambriano), and is similar to the caption that introduces the topic of each story in Le cento
Moreover, despite featuring no allegories and paremias, the first octaves of all cantos in *L’Angelica innamorata* contain moral references to various topics, such as the power of love, fortune, human cleverness, virtue, glory, and honor, and death. In Marcolini’s second edition of *L’Angelica innamorata* in 1553, initial allegories accompanied the text of the cantos, aiming to explicate allegorical nuances and guide the reader through them. Marcolini’s paratextual element was undoubtedly transposed into *Le cento novelle* the year after. Thus, in both works, the paratextual elements as well as the initial part of the cantos assumes a specific role in preparing the reader for the events that will be recounted. They also show him how those events recall an ethical code and how the message they convey can be inserted into the bigger picture of the canto.
After an introductory sonnet and the dedication letter, both of which honor Ottavio Farnese, a prohemio opens Brusantino’s chivalric Decameron and introduces the one hundred novellas. Brusantino’s proem includes the presentation of the subject, the invocation, and a summarized description of the characters and their decision to move to Fiesole, as stated in Boccaccio’s introduction. The initial octave provides a first indication of the specific aspects of Brusantino’s personal interpretation of Boccaccio’s Decameron:

Le famose novelle, e i dolci amori,
Gli arguti motti, e l’astute persone
Canto, che merita[n] pregiati honori,
Ne le giornate del Decamerone,
A voi, ch’i Duci, i Re, gli Imperadori
Ceden di lotte scettri, e di corone;
Invittissimo Duca Ottavio dono
Quanto dar posso, e debitor vi sono (CN, 5).

The elimination of the subject pronoun for the verb “canto” in the third line seems to acquire a specific meaning in the context of Brusantino’s rewriting. Brusantino is conscious of Boccaccio’s authorial voice, which provides him with a definite structure and content, hence the omission of the personal pronoun. Brusantino’s position is a peripheral one in the tradition of collections of short stories and with regard to Boccaccio’s followers. For Brusantino, a Ferrarese author of a chivalric poem, Boccaccio and Florence constitute a center that he can only observe from the exterior; this explains why he replaces Boccaccio’s adverb “qui” with “in Firenze” (CN, 8).

From these first lines, Le cento novelle’s three thematic units also emerge: sweet love, witty mottos, and clever people, all of which deserve praise in the days of the Decameron,

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154 On the oral (“cantate”) origins of the novella, see Segre in Malato 1989, 47-57.
and consequently Brusantino’s own text. It seems that the Ferrarese author, following Boccaccio’s intent, aims to show the multifaceted aspects of love, hence the use of the plural “amori,” yet he means to discuss only those aspects that offer delight (“dolci amori”). Boccaccio, instead, in his proem refers to the entire spectrum of love matters, including both pleasant and unfortunate instances:

\[ \text{Nelle quali novelle piacevoli e aspri casi d’amore e altri fortunati avvenimenti si vereranno così ne’ moderni tempi avvenuti come negli antichi (Dec., Proemio, 14).} \]

As textual references will later show, Brusantino condemns those acts of love that jeopardize the integrity of institutions like the family and the Church, and societal wellbeing, such as jealousy, lasciviousness, and deceit. Introductory paremias celebrate love that is not adulterous and is not undermining perfect religious conduct. From here comes Brusantino’s ethical interpretation of the *Decameron*, where ethics stand for a set of accepted rules able to preserve the perfect functioning of the society, the family, and Church members. According to his ethics, generally, adultery is not permissible unless one is driven to it by a strong reason, and religious men and women should respect and follow their vow of chastity and total devotion to God. Brusantino also seems not to celebrate the shrewdness of the mind and the clever and effective use of words. These two qualities always seem to bring Boccaccio’s characters to a good resolution as they help them to avoid dangerous or indecent situations that arise due to the disrespect that one of them shows to the other(s). Evidently, this aspect of human personality and behavior did not fit within Brusantino’s literary and ethical horizons.
2.2 Rewriting the *Decameron* in Octaves and with Paremias: An Overview

In order to understand how the changes that Brusantino introduced in his text could have been received by his audience, it is necessary to evaluate the tradition of poetic or prosaic rewritings of Boccaccio’s collections of stories and couple it with the tradition of editions of Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso*. This shows how Brusantino was not the first author to introduce paremias, as well as allegories, at the beginning of stories or cantos, but how he was the first one to collect and combine different traditions in an original and innovative way. How *Le cento novelle* was doomed to failure is not a direct consequence of this experiment, which presented all the necessary elements to succeed, but rather of Brusantino’s mediocre virtuosity and lack of originality, probably due to a less refined humanistic aesthetic, which was reflected in a frequent convoluted style far from reproducing Ariosto’s elegant and flawless “ottava d’oro” (De Sanctis and Croce).

That the *Decameron* was likely to be rewritten or reinterpreted into a poetic structure finds its testimony in many examples of poetic renditions in vernacular\(^{155}\) of its episodes or of single novellas transformed into recited poems in verse.\(^{156}\) One of the first examples are *cantari novellistici*, which were written to be performed mostly in the sixteenth century (though their tradition spans the late 14\(^{th}\) through 17\(^{th}\) centuries).\(^{157}\) The *Decameron*’s

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\(^{155}\) The tradition of Latin translations of Boccaccio’s stories is likewise strong, both in prose and in poetry, such as Leonardo Bruni’s translation (1437) of Tancredi and Ghismonda’s novella (Dec., IV.1) and Enea Silvio Piccolomini’s, later Pope Pius II, *Historia de duobus amantibus* (1444). For an insight on the Latin “fortuna spicciolata” of the *Decameron*, see Parma 2003 and Parma 2005.

\(^{156}\) There are also examples of rewritings in prose of single novellas from the *Decameron*, known as *novelle spicciolate*. One of them is Antonio Manetti’s *Il grasso legnaiuolo* (1550s), whose main character draws inspiration from Boccaccio’s Calandrino. This same *cantare* was later rendered in verse by Bernardo Giambullari and Bartolomeo Davanzati (both from the second half of the fifteenth century). For more information on the vernacular “fortuna spicciolata” of the *Decameron*, see Parma 2003 and Parma 2005. For *novelle spicciolate* in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see: Bragantini 1987; Tartaro in Malato 1989, 431-43; Bragantini in Malato 1989, 445-67; Borsellino in Malato 1989, 469-82.

\(^{157}\) For a list of the available *cantari novellistici* and their manuscript or printed tradition, see Parma 2006, 322-64, and Rada. For a critical edition of these texts, see Benucci, Manetti, and Zabagli, XXXX. For more information on *cantari novellistici*, their structure, and their derivation from the *Decameron*, see Varanini in Malato 1989, 407-30.
novellas were rendered in octaves, the meter that Boccaccio had used in his two epic poems, *Filostrato* (1337) and *Teseida* (1340-41), where he gave the octaves literary value.\(^{158}\) *Cantari novellistici* were simplified and popular versions of Boccaccio’s stories that were transformed into more accessible texts for the immediate consumption of a non-aristocratic public.\(^{159}\) They were a form of “letteratura d’intrattenimento” in courts (Matarrese 2004, 19; Pettinelli 2004b, 166).\(^{160}\) Michela Parma calls them “riscritture-riassunti” (Parma 2003, 213) and Domenico De Robertis refers to them as a “riappropriazione” of the original text, which generates as many different texts as there are different executions in public (Benucci, Manetti, and Zabagli, xiii). Thus, the connection between the novella and the *cantare* is not a direct one, but rather a conversion, a transferal between genres, and a substitution of a text with another text, where the original prose finds a new life in the octaves of the new version, while at the same time preserving an evident presence of the original text (De Robertis, 21).

The way a rather difficult text such as the *Decameron* could be made available to a public of almost illiterate people was to create a melodic structure based on rhymes. The *ottava rima* was the best choice: it was easy to listen to and to memorize; at the same time, it conveyed meaningful text and could translate the refined prose and concepts of Boccaccio’s stories into a more understandable, immediate, and effective form (Benucci, Manetti, and


\(^{159}\) Relying on the troubadoric tradition of chansons performed in public, *cantari* were mainly recited in squares or church porches and in front of a public who lacked a refined literary knowledge (Favaro, 100-01).

\(^{160}\) *Cantari novellistici* reproduced the original text very faithfully but not verbatim, as they freely elaborated upon it by way of emphasizing certain aspects of the narration, especially salacious and stereotypical ones, and abbreviating the reference to other events or the psychological description of characters, particularly those belonging to lower societal strata. Specific emphasis was given to dialogues, which allowed for more vivacity and at the same time offered space for new ideas and personal innovations by the author. Theatrical elements were also widely present as they allowed for imitating the spoken language and translating the *Decameron*’s expressionism (Parma 2006, 203-05). *Cantari novellistici* might also insert events and episodes that focused on religious and moralizing aspects or might prolong the speech of one of the characters or his verbal interactions with the others.
Zabagli, xxxi). Typical elements of oral literature attracted the attention of the public and made the text recognizable: specifically, images, idiomatic expressions, word games, repetitions of formulae, and paremias. They expressed the relationship that the performer of cantari established with his public on a popular level and demonstrated how he could succeed in transmitting meaningful content (Villoresi, 38-39; Matarrese 2004, 40).

Among the most famous vernacular renditions in octaves of Boccaccio’s text, of which there are eighteen in total, are Masetto da Lamporecchio (novella III.1) and Lusignacca (novella V.4). Both of these renditions rely on comic and rather straightforward stories of human desire and sexual satisfaction despite religious or social ties. For tragic or serious stories, Guiscardo e Gismonda (novella IV.1), Nastagio degli Onesti (novella V.8), and Griselda (novella X.10) stand out. Of story II.10, two different cantari novellistici are available: La storia di messer Ricciardo da Chinzica and the Novella di Paganino e di messer Ricciardo, both realized between 1500 and 1515. In general, the success of these cantari was determined by a combination of pedagogical objectives and entertainment, as demonstrated by the percentage of cantari adapted from Days II, III, V, VI, and X. The Decameron’s novellas were selected either because they already had a known tradition of adaptations, or because their stories were likely to please the public with comic and sexually oriented elements, examples of feminine cleverness, or a strong sense of morality (Parma 2003, 220).

As oral products, cantari novellistici abounded with moral insertions and paremias and, not differently from Brusantino’s Le cento novelle, combined a poetic structure with the search for ethical and moral perspectives that could be useful to the readers. A few cantari are even strictly interconnected with a paremia and vice versa. For instance, La historia nova

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161 The tradition of two of the Decameron’s novellas, II.5 and IX.6, is in terza rima since they are inserted into the aforementioned Aloyse Cynthio de gli Fabritii’s Libro della origine delli volgari proverbi (1526).

162 For more information on Nastagio degli Onesti’s cantare, and some auxiliary notes on the poetic reduction of Guiscardo and Gismonda’s novella, see Parma 2006.
che insegna alle donne come se a metere el diavolo in nelo inferno is based upon Boccaccio’s story III.10, where Rustico’s sentence “rimettere il diavolo in inferno” is said to become paremiac by word of mouth and by repetition (Dec., III.10.35). III.10 was in turn inspired by or at least drew inspiration from a cantare called Canzone dell’indovinello, whose central section corresponds with Boccaccio’s novella: here, the husband calls “indovinello” what Rustico proverbially calls “diavolo” in the Decameron, and the events warn about the dangers of naïveté. Another cantare, Cantare del cercare Maria per Ravenna, specifically originates from a proverbial phrase, upon whose meaning an entire story is constructed and whose meaning the story unwraps and explains. The cantare recounts the events of a young boy who has fallen in love with a young girl forced to marry an old man. Upon feigning to be a servant, the young boy can enter the woman’s house, fulfill his desires, and finally kill the old husband and live a happy life with his beloved. The protagonist of the story conveys the moral message of the cantare—older men should avoid marrying younger women because harm can follow.163

In the sixteenth century, alongside “riduzioni in rima,” various integral editions (in prose) of the Decameron were printed. Between 1531 and 1545, the Decameron, and with it Orlando furioso, saw the greatest number of editions and underwent major additions as

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163 It is noteworthy that the proverbial phrase, Cercare Maria per Ravenna, opens and concludes the cantare as a sort of circular structure that initially provides an indication of the act of reading (III.5-8: “A color che di te fanno concetto, piglin questo proverbio per ricchezza, come Maria per Ravenna è trovata da un che contra ragion l’ha cercata”) and in the end functions as a wrapping device as well as a memento of the paremia’s message (LXXX.6-8: “Al bon proverbio ciascun ponga mente, di Maria per Ravenna il bel tenore. Finita è questa storia al vostro onore”). In his collection, Serdonati lists the proverbial phrase and explains its origins, starting from an account of a witch in Ravenna named Maria who was kidnapped by the devil and never found again, despite a thorough search. Similarly, the third edition of the Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca (s.v. cercare) mentions the proverbial phrase, although it interprets Maria as the Latin word “maria,” the plural of “sea.” The meaning, therefore, would be to look for the sea in Ravenna, a city that does not connect at all to the Adriatic Sea. Thus, the conventionalized meaning of the proverbial phrase relates to something that is particularly difficult to find or that is looked for in vain, in other words to look for something impossible. Romagnoli, in his edition of the cantare, refers to a different meaning: that of looking for one’s own faults, or to look for something that one wishes for but has not found. This second interpretation is more appropriate for the moral message of the story, and relates to the old husband’s final punishment of death. In sum, if one engages in an impossible enterprise, he pays the consequences of his actions (Romagnoli).
editors wished to experiment with new forms of presentation (Richardson, 92-93). One of their main concerns was to make Boccaccio’s text available to non-Tuscans, and so they included a wide range of glosses, linguistic glosses, annotations of difficult passages, and paremias. Explanations of paremias aimed to reduce the ambiguity deriving from the different connotations that proverbs and proverbial phrases could acquire and, with them, the moral messages that the text conveyed. These “edits” were present in a few of the editions of Boccaccio’s collection printed in the 1540s and 1550s by the Venetian printing press of Giolito. Examples of this include: Giovanni Giolito’s 1538 edition, curated by Antonio Brucioli,164 Ludovico Dolce’s 1541 Venetian edition by Curzio Traiano Navò,165 Gabriele Giolito’s 1542 edition curated by Antonio Brucioli,166 and Gabriele Giolito’s 1546 and 1547 editions of the Decameron curated by Francesco Sansovino.167 (later reprinted in 1548 and...
1550). Paremias and allegories are also present in the 1549 edition of the *Decameron* curated by Sansovino, with Venetian editor Giovanni Griffio, and in Girolamo Ruscelli’s and Vicenzo Valgrisi’s 1552 edition. They are especially prominent in the edition by Giolito and Dolce in 1552, which could have constituted the basis for *Le cento novelle*’s layout and typology of paratextual elements due to its emphasis on initial allegories and paremias.

Additionally, according to Pettinelli, Brusantino’s textual and linguistic choices, especially for expressionistic purposes, seem to align with Dolce’s edition (Pettinelli 2004b, 168-72; Pettinelli 2004c, 188-94).

Initial paremias and allegories as tools to reveal the moral stances of a text and to make it more intelligible appear in some of the most important editions of *Orlando furioso* too, which, not surprisingly, are printed by the same printing houses that were engaging in

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168 Francesco Sansovino, ed., *Il Decamerone di m. Giovanni Boccaccio di nuovo emendato secondo gli antichi esemplari. Con la diversità di molti testi posta nel margine, e nel fine con gli epitheti dell’autore, con la esposizione di tutti i proverbii et luoghi difficili et con la dichiaratione delle historie delle quali il Boccaccio ha tolto il soggetto di far le novelle, e i nomi così de gli huomini come delle donne, che nell’opera presente si contengono, con tavole et altre cose notabili & molto utili alli studiosi della lingua volgare.* Venezia: Griffio, 1549. This text purported to explain the *Decamerone* at all levels: textual, moral, and etymological. It features a brief moral statement for each story, probably from the allegories that Dolce introduced in his 1535 edition of *Orlando furioso* published by Pasini and Bindoni’s printing press in Venice.

169 Girolamo Ruscelli, ed., *Il Decamerone di m. Giouan Boccaccio, nuovamente alla sua intera perfettione, non meno nella scrittura, che nelle parole ridotto, per Girolamo Ruscelli. Con le dichiarationi, annotationi, et avvertimenti del medesimo, sopra tutti i luoghi difficili, regole, modi, & ornamenti della lingua volgare, et con figure nuove & bellissime, che interamente dimostrano i luoghi, ne’ quali si riducevano ogni giornata a novellare. Et con un vocabolario generale nel fine del libro.* Venezia: Valgrisi, 1552. This edition proposed a supposedly philologically correct text with marginal notes on grammatical issues and textual criticism.

new editions of the Decameron.\textsuperscript{171} In considering Le cento novelle, the crucial edition of Orlando furioso is the one curated by Gabriele Giolito and Ludovico Dolce in 1542. It is the edition most reprinted over a twenty-year span, and the one of which Dolce emphasized the moral tone and utility as well as didactic intent by way of adding initial allegories (Javitch 1991, 31-36; Richardson, 97).\textsuperscript{172} If this does not suffice to draw a link between Dolce’s intent in his allegories and Brusantino’s, the two works also share the authors’ willingness to make more acceptable unethical aspects that society would have not approved easily. Dolce’s intent is to expose the many possible interpretations of the Furioso’s text and he expresses them in an allegory or in a didactic saying. The meaning is then internalized and the allegory or saying is able to direct the reader in his exploration of the text, which might otherwise remain undisclosed to untrained eyes.\textsuperscript{173} Brusantino uses the same method in Boccaccio’s stories that potentially violated ethical norms of communal life. Dolce’s exposition of proverbs and

\textsuperscript{171} The Bindoni and Pasini 1535 edition of Ariosto’s poem (later reprinted in 1540) presented a “Dechiarazione di alcuni vocaboli e luoghi difficili” compiled by Dolce, which made this edition easier to use and disseminate even among non-experts. In the 1544 Giolito edition, Dolce added extra-textual elements meant to explain Orlando furioso in the best way possible. Other than new explanations, he introduced a list of paremias and observations that could be of help to every reader (Richardson, 98). Similar expositions of Ariosto’s text through allegories happen in the 1553 (and 1554) Venitian edition by Giovanni Andrea Valvassori, also called Guadagnino (Orlando Furioso di M. Ludovico Ariosto. Ornato di nuove figure, & allegorie in ciascun canto. Aggiuntovi nel fine l’esposizione de’ luoghi difficili). In these two editions, he emphasized the morality of the work and the lesson to learn (Javitch 1991, 36-39; Richardson, 118), and by means of allegories, he attempted to present general moral truths (Javitch 1991, 35). The later 1556 Valgrisi edition curated by Ruscelli (Orlando furioso, di M. Lodovico Ariosto, tutto ricorretto, & di nuove Figure adornato. Al quale di nuovo sono aggiunte le Annotationi, gli Avvertimenti, & le Dichiaration di Girolamo Ruscelli, la Vita dell’autore descritta dal Signor Giovambattista Pigna, gli scontri de’ luoghi mutati dall’autore dopo la prima impressione, la dichiaratione di tutte le favole, il Vocabolario di tutte le parole oscure, et altre cose utili et necessarie) shared many elements with the 1552 Giolito edition of the Decameron and included an initial “argomento” in verse, allusions to classical myths, allegories, and a final glossary of difficult to understand terms (Javitch 1991, 39-41).

\textsuperscript{172} Ludovico Dolce, ed., Orlando Furioso di M. Ludovico Ariosto novissimamente alla sua integrita ridotto & ornato di varie figure. Con alcune stanze del S. Aluigi Gonzaga in lode del medesimo. Aggiuntovi per ciascun canto alcune allegorie et nel fine una breve esposizione et tavola di tutto quello, che nell’opera si contiene. Venezia: Gabriele Giolito, 1542.

\textsuperscript{173} Daniel Javitch comments upon the episode of Ricciardetto’s transvestism and seduction of Fiordispina in canto XXV. He notes that Dolce leaves out any of Ariosto’s sympathetic comments and rather focuses on other aspects of the canto that he could moralize and emphasize in his allegories (Javitch 1991, 33).
sententiae also recalls Brusantino’s final list of paremias as a Decalogue of honest teachings as well as a source of ethical material for conversations (Javitch 1991, 35).

From an editorial perspective as well as from a pedagogical standpoint, the fact that paremias and allegories introduce many sixteenth-century editions of both the Decameron and Orlando furioso looks like an attempt to assimilate two prestigious works directed to the same public. This public stands in the middle of two other typologies of public: on the one side, readers or listeners interested in simple plots and unsophisticated texts; on the other, more refined readers interested primarily in chivalric poems whose hero refers to classical sources. For these two groups of readers, allegories and paremias were unnecessary. The sixteenth-century public of the Decameron and Orlando furioso, instead, looked at paremias and allegories as crucial tools to transmit a moral and was eager to read about women and love in vernacular language and with possible ethical reflections of human lives. It also searched for a mixture of stories from everyday lives and stories with regal and noble references, whose style could integrate both a more popular and regional language into rhetorically shaped discourses, and whose prose could be intelligible and fluid, yet likely to present elements of more sophisticated forms. Francesco Bruni calls this public, a “pubblico mezzano” (Bruni, 37). Later rewriters of the Decameron, such as Brusantino, considered the public Boccaccio aimed to address and emphasized the text’s fluidity of style and ethical

174 A few examples are: Giangiorgio Trissino’s Italia liberata dai Goti (started in 1527, but published in 1547-48); Luigi Alemanni’s Avarchide (composed in 1548 and published posthumously in 1570); and Francesco Bolognetti’s Il Costante (ca. 1547-48). All of them aimed to substitute Ariosto’s contemporary “romanzesco” with the heroic atmosphere of the epics of Home and Virgil (Favaro, 100).

175 The aspect of exchange between the text and its public characterizes the Filocolo, from which the adjective “mezzana” comes: “A te bisogna di volare abasso, però che la bassezza t’è mezzana via” (Filocolo, V.97.7).
resonance in order to make his text available to a less cultivated and more practical audience, and to use it as a didactic instrument. 176

About the pedagogical purpose of Le cento novelle, Giuseppe Chiecchi argues that the remarkable presence of paremias in the Decameron derives from the collection’s appeal to the new social class, that of merchants, and Boccaccio’s intention to speak in their same language. Supposedly, Boccaccio employs that mercantile wisdom which included, among other narrative elements, paremias, “cosicché allo spazio narrativo riservato dal Boccaccio alla nuova società popolare e mercantile, corrisponde adeguatamente l’assunzione della cultura e della morale propria del popolo e dei mercanti […]” (Chiecchi, 146). 177 Brusantino goes beyond the social boundaries established for merchants and extended the merchantile wisdom to all social classes, from noble people to working-class people, in a sort of paremiographic democracy apt for the “middle public” to which he intended to speak. This should have opened up the Decameron to a more popular audience and to a wider reception, which unfortunately did not happen, as there was no reprinting of Le cento novelle after its princeps.

2.3 Le cento novelle: A Genre, Stylistic, and Social Transition of and from the Decameron

In the dedicatory letter to Le cento novelle, Brusantino states that “ho tradotto il Decamerone in ottava rima;” then in the second occurrence of the title of the work before the proem, he specifies, Le cento novelle di Messer Giovanni Boccaccio ridotte in ottava rima da Messer Vincenzo Brugiantino. The use of the word “tradurre” coupled with the verb “ridurre”

176 Daria Perocco argues that an explanation for Le cento novelle to be more appropriate for a median public rather than an elevated one might be that the Ferrarese author eliminated the frame, where the more elevated syntax and the most allusive textual elements are placed (Perocco, 296).
177 Mario Baratto talks about “connotazione borghese” in the Decameron (Baratto, 17; 25-34).
is an interesting one and raises the question of how Brusantino considers his rewriting of Boccaccio’s text. Both Latin verbs, “traducere” and “reducere” come from the verb “ducere,” to lead. The prefix “trans-,” as shown in Chapter 1, combined with the verb “ducere” conveys the idea of a passage through different entities, indeed a transformation. The prefix “re-,” on the other hand, indicates an opposing direction, meaning that something is transitioned to a condition or situation different and away from the original one.

*Le cento novelle* offers space for considerations on the notion of genre: first, because of the transformation of the *Decameron* from prose to poetry and from a collection of short stories to a chivalric poem; second, because of the combination of editorial and paratextual elements originating from different practices to disseminate Boccaccio’s collection and Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso*. Derrida’s question, “Can one identify a work of art, of whatever sort, but especially a work of discursive art, if it does not bear the mark of a genre, if it does not signal or mention it or make it remarkable in any way?,” finds its answer in the possibility to have “several genres, an intermixing of genres” (Derrida, 64-65), in other words a hybrid. Brusantino creates a hybrid text with multiple perspectives since boundaries between one definite genre and the other, as well as between one perspective and the other, are blurred. Brusantino considers his literary operation a transition, a passage from a work in prose to a chivalric poem in octaves, and a progressive distancing from it in order to release a new work. The result is a compound where the specifics of the two genres, the short stories and the chivalric poem, dialogue with each other under the overarching purpose of delivering an ethical *Decameron*. In *Le cento novelle*, more than in any other rewritings of Boccaccio’s work, the fundamental issue is not how a work belongs to a genre but more how it is pertinent to a plurality of genres and traditions (Paolo Bagni in Sportelli, 6) and how it blends them

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178 If, as Roberto Mercuri argues, Boccaccio is the epitome of hybridity in his life and in the structure of the *Decameron*, where all medieval genres merge and are recreated, the step toward a hybridization of his collection of short stories, such as Brusantino’s *Le cento novella*, is an easy one (Mercuri in Sportelli, 88-109).
together in order to achieve its narrative goals.179 Boccaccio’s collection is “guided” from one condition to another and this means that its distinctive features have first been modified and then applied to the new condition and to the new genre, yet without being completely dispersed. The ethical and metrical transformation renders the content more accessible, less immoral, and hence more beneficial in that it will educate readers pedagogically more and better.

In the selected genre as the arrival point on the *Decameron*’s transformation, Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle* is a direct product of the Este court, whose audience was eager to read “poemi epici cavallereschi” and had been fed with major chilvaric masterpieces and lesser known, yet not less remarkable, examples of the continuation of the story initiated by Boiardo and later expanded by Ariosto (Flamini, 141-68; Foffano, 116-205). Ferrara’s fascination and attraction to chivalric topics both in the “matière de Bretagne” and the “matière de France” resulted in a considerable presence of books in French in the libraries of the Este family, which then led the way to the flourishing Ferrarese production of *poemi* and *romanzi cavallereschi* in the sixteenth century (Villoresi, 26-27). Thus, Ferrara must have influenced Brusantino to select the chivalric poem and its octaves as the genre to superimpose on Boccaccio’s *Decameron* and to define the organization and structure of his own *Decameron* (Favaro, 97).180

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180 For more information on the chivalric tradition in Ferrara, see Pettinelli 1983. On the cultural, literary, and artistic vibrance of Ferrara, including its distinctive chivalric production, see Bruscalgi 1980.
Tullia D’Aragona’s criticism of Boccaccio’s text, reflecting a general trend at the time, might have also played a role in Brusantino’s choice. In the same time period when Brusantino was engaged in his *Le cento novelle*, D’Aragona was similarly rewriting in verse a moralizing and prosaic story. Her *Il Meschino, altramente detto il Guerrino*, posthumously published in 1560, freely elaborated upon Andrea da Barberino’s *Guerino dexto Meschino* (written around 1410, but printed in 1473). In her introductory letter to the readers, D’Aragona attacks Boccaccio’s *Decameron*: she does not appreciate the author’s selection of prose since it made it impossible for the collection of short stories to receive the greatest praise in the literary world. As she reproduces a Spanish translation of da Barberino’s original almost faithfully, she introduces the verse, which, according to her, facilitated memorization because of its own smoothness, grace, and beauty. The justification that she offers is that verse is more pleasing to the ears, leaves a greater sign in the soul, and is read much more desirously than prose (D’Aragona, xxv). Since writings in verse are memorable (Tomasi in Pignatti and Crimi 2014, 220), they are the perfect tool to attract the readers and, at the same time, convey ethical and useful teachings. Consequently, D’Aragona criticizes the lascivious and dishonest as well as immoral topics that Boccaccio introduced in his work and the fact that every member of society commits them without distinction. Her re-interpretation of da Barberino’s text is aimed at correcting these two issues and, as a result, at releasing to posterity a memorable chivalric poem entrenched with moral considerations. The religious elements of her (and da Barberino’s) story, such as the valor and virtue of the main character and the chastity of the recounted events would have made the chivalric poem a perfect moral reading for an honest public.

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181 On Andrea da Barberino’s *Guerin Meschino*, see Villorese, 77-79.
182 After all, in his *Prose della volgar lingua* (1525), Bembo had already shown how certain morphological aspects that are impossible in prose are permissible in poetry—mostly syncopes and final truncation. The same thing happens with syntactical restructurings, mostly inversions or the choice of subordinates, which ensure a more poetical structure (Bembo, 150).
When appropriating the *Decameron*, Brusantino makes a similar choice to D’Aragona’s as he deals with the same two aspects of Boccaccio’s text that she addresses: its prose, which is substituted with verse, and its content, which becomes more ethical. As for the metrical structure, which will be later perused, the prosaic text of the *Decameron* is changed into octaves of hendecasyllables (ABABABCC). The meter of the chivalric poem gives coherence to the text and harmonizes the stories with the initial allegories and paremias, which follow the same prosodic and metrical scheme. Boccaccio’s narrative structure does not force Brusantino to disrupt the unity established by the metric limits of the octave. In *Le cento novelle*, octaves always contain an autonomous section of the narrative, and the narration never goes beyond its poetic structure: every thought concludes within the last verse of the octave and the progression of the octaves guarantees the development of the narration. Because of the independent structure of octaves, paremias that appear at the end of an octave are confined in the structure of a distich or a single verse and they never surpass the octave’s poetic limits. In this position, paremias concentrate the ethical meaning of an octave in its final section. As such, the final rhymed paremiac distich appears to be a narrative and a moral closure (Roggia, 101).\(^{183}\)

On the contrary, when paremias are in a different position inside the

\(^{183}\)This aspect derived from the tradition of *cantari*, whose octaves and cantos were concluded in themselves and did not present fluid passages from one stanza to the next or from one canto to the other (De Robertis, 16). Both Boiardo and Ariosto, however, had separated partially from this tradition for different reasons. In *Orlando innamorato*, Boiardo mostly respected the limits provided by the octave and the limits of the verse, which resulted in a fragmented narrative that could be made dynamic by means of dogged and suspenseful images (Roggia, 30). Boiardo’s octave was meant to keep pace with the diegetic development of the narration and with its acceleration and pauses (Praloran, 15). Rarely exceeding the limit of the octave, the Ferrarese author aimed to create suspense and to break metrical expectations—something he repeatedly achieved with clusters and words from the last line of a stanza repeated in the first line or lines of the next one (Matarrese 2004, 142-55). In *Orlando furioso*, Ariosto consistently respected the relationship between rhythm and syntax, skillfully shaping his sentences inside the harmonic structure of his octaves, which guaranteed continuity between the development of events and the meter. However, he resorted to open octaves when the content required it, especially in the argumentative or narrative moments of the poem, such as dramatic, dynamic, or heroic scenes (Praloran, 21; 191-98; 206-07). Even when he did not use open octaves, Ariosto was nonetheless creating a narrative, lexical, and rhetoric continuum among subsequent stanzas (by means of recounted events, repeated words, and enjambements) that could guarantee the progression of the story (Cabani 1981; Cabani 1990, 9-259; Roggia, 43). In this way, he could expand the narration and render the excitement of a character or the pathos associated with an
octave, their structure can be unhooked from the version in the Decameron and insertions or syntactical changes may happen.

As for content, Brusantino does not need to restructure Boccaccio’s stories since they already possess the two fundamental elements for successful novellas: pleasantness and variety, and thus usefulness and benefit, as Francesco Bonciani declares in his Lezione sopra il comporre delle novelle (1574) (Ordine 1996, 99-135; Favaro, 100). They are the perfect example of an enjoyable text with a great selection of plots and themes, characters, and objectives, which, in turn, makes the stories conform to the classical motto of instructing and pleasing the audience. Boccaccio had already emphasized the usefulness of his own novellas when in the proem he had specified that the Decameron was “in soccorso e rifugio di quelle che amano” (Proemio, 13). In this way, the women’s love sufferings could be mitigated and sweetened by all the recounted stories, and, at the same time, their minds could be filled with useful teachings. Focusing on the practical and beneficial value of the Decameron acquires even more significance in Brusantino’s adaptation: indeed, he refashions Boccaccio’s stories morphing them into something ethically useful for the readers in order to comply with an increasingly moral, historical, cultural, and religious context, yet one still removed from a Tridentine atmosphere. This, according to D’Aragona, could mitigate the lasciviousness of Boccaccio’s stories and truly foreground the moral message of his novellas.

Brusantino’s ethical interpretation of the Decameron is, however, completely different from what will happen just a few decades after the publication of Le cento novelle. Beginning in the 1570s, the pervasive religious and moral atmosphere promoted by the Counter Reformation allowed for three moralized and “purged” versions of the Decameron to be published: Vincenzo Borghini and the Deputati’s edition in 1573, Lionardo Salviati’s Decameron “rassettato” in 1582, and Luigi Groto’s (also known as Cieco d’Adria) edition in
1588 and 1590. In these three editions, following the diktat of the Counter Reformation, the curators eliminated all of the indecent references to sexual matters, or, when present, changed their setting to far away lands. They also rewrote any anti-religious event or character description with an eye towards drawing attention to a more religious alternative. Borghini’s edition obtained a relevant political character in the Tuscan Grand Duchy. It was indeed the first edition of the Decameron, despite being a “rassettatura,” to be published in Florence after the last 1557 integral one in the Venitian press of Paulo Gerardo. As such it represented a counterpart to the plethora of Venitian editions of Boccaccio’s collection of stories (Mordenti, 255-56). Despite this, it did not enjoy great success and it was never republished after its first printing. Conversely, Salviati’s edition became the real edition of the Counter Reformation. It was a symbol of the new religious spirit in the second decade of the sixteenth century, and was therefore printed repeatedly in subsequent years, even after Luigi Groto’s edition was published. Among the three, Luigi Groto’s rewriting of the Decameron was the most unsuccessful. He removed any references to religious members or topics as well as references to immoral acts, and he replaced them with completely different plots and events, which made his work the furthest from the original and thus the least read.

According to Dionisotti, at the time when Brusantino was writing his Le cento novelle, a rewriting of the Decameron such as those carried out by Borghini, Salviati, and

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Groto would have been impossible and illogical (Dionisotti, 235). Between 1545 and 1555, literary enterprises did not yet attempt to adhere to the religious and political implications of the Counter Reformation since they were still exempt from Pious IV’s 1559 castigation of Boccaccio’s work and its 1564 condemnation “donec expurgetur” (until it is purged). *Le cento novelle* is written in the climate of the moral reformation that the Council of Trent was promoting and advocating in every aspect of life beginning in 1545. Brusantino, however, does not employ the new moral character of society as a weapon against Boccaccio’s text as do the other aforementioned writers.

Later textual examples will prove how Brusantino’s mentality is not far from Boccaccio’s conception of moral separation between the world of men and the world of religion and this is due to the mentality of the new bourgeoise (Baratto, 53). Brusantino recognizes the power and force of love and understands the immoral behavior of some members of the Church. However, a strong sense of ethics inspires him and makes him evaluate certain behaviors and events through his critical lens, resulting in the privileging of ethical aspects of the original text over unethical ones. In his perspective, ethical behaviors would guarantee a peaceful relationship between people and the observance of a code of behavior between members of society, especially those committed to marriage and to religion. Because of his position in between Boccaccio’s practical and mercantile society, and in his own society, Brusantino does not restructure the entire content of the stories and mostly accepts their components, but adopts a slightly critical eye for those excessive behaviors that would not comply with what is generally accepted to be correct and ethical attitudes in society. Many of the anti-religious and irreverent allusions are kept, and so are the erotic
scenes, but Brusantino frequently transfers Boccaccio’s message of the stories to a level that celebrates human ethical manners and pronounces a judicial opinion on unethical ones.\footnote{Expressing ethical evaluations over a given text is something with which Brusantino had already experimented when writing his L’Angelica innamorata, where every event happens through the lens of a “giudizio morale” (Leo, 10). Angelica deserves to be punished for her transgressions so that she can purify her mind from the immoral events of her life that occurred in the preceding poems. She can then start on a path towards redemption, guided by piteous and courteous acts. The need for regularity in religious practices might explain the pervasive presence of marriage in Brusantino’s L’Angelica innamorata, a practice that Ariosto had applied to only two couples of his poem due to unavoidable narrative and dynastic reasons. Conversely, in L’Angelica innamorata, marriage is restored as a way to regulate the life of the “cavalieri erranti” and provide a wise and focused conclusion to the love vicissitudes of couples. When marriage does not happen, as in the case of l’Infante, then the character undergoes a spiritual transformation thus becoming a monk, forgoing worldly goods, abandoning the woman destined to him, and privileging religious faith to romantic love.}

*Le cento novelle*’s initial allegories and paremias offer the chance to expose the unethical aspects of a story or of a character’s behavior, or to disapprove practices, in *primis* adultery, which should not happen inside the Church and between married couples. Any change that happens in the structure, content, or language of the stories and the choice of the introductory paratextual elements stem from Brusantino’s willingness to highlight the unethical behavior of a character—about whom Boccaccio had not expressed any judgement—or to show his satisfaction with the punishment that a character faces due to his lack of ethics. In order to be coherent in his choices (even though this does not happen overall), Brusantino eliminates Boccaccio’s metaphorical language, which is full of allusions and double meanings, and hence openly exposes the meaning of certain expressions along with criticizing certain behaviors.\footnote{For examples of these changes, see Pettinelli 2004b; Pettinelli 2004c; and Favaro, 102-09. Another aspect that differs from the *Decameron* is the reaction of the group of men and women to the recounted stories. Brusantino tends to soften the excessive and unrestrained laughter of the young girls after certain stories from the sixth and the seventh days. For instance, after story VII.8, Brusantino’s women have a good laugh and talk about the advice that the story offers, whereas in the *Decameron*, the women could not refrain from laughing and talking about Arriguccio Berlinghieri’s unfortunate end resulting from his wife’s adulterous behaviors. If these moments “constitute(s) the bond of community between narrators and listeners” (Mazzotta, 190), then Brusantino is referring to a public of readers who would have hardly accepted uproarious laughter from the feminine gender.} More than moralizing Boccaccio’s text, as the available criticism on *Le cento novelle* argues (Perocco; Favaro), Brusantino provides the *Decameron* with an ethical orientation and makes it a resource in language, figures, and circumstances to...
use during refined civil conversations and among a group of ethically oriented members of society (Pettinelli 2004b, 168). As he also opts for verses, he makes Boccaccio’s *Decameron* available to a wider audience eager to feel the experience of Boccaccio’s text remodeled in a new genre, yet with a pervasive stylistic and lexical connection to the original text.

The comparison of one section in the *Decameron*’s introduction and *Le cento novelle*’s proem demonstrates how Brusantino’s “translation” works and how he makes Boccaccio’s language poetic, while remaining very faithful to the text of the stories. It also shows how poetic manipulation of the original text is constantly in contact with its ethical interpretation, so that one guides the other and vice versa. When the group of young girls discusses the possibility to leave Florence and move to Fiesole to escape pestilence, Filomena comments on the mobility and unreliability of women:

*Decameron*

Noi siamo mobili, riottose, sospettose, pusillanimi e paurose, per le quali cose io dubito forte, se noi alcuna altra guida non prendiamo che la nostra, che questa compagnia non si dissolva troppo più tosto e con meno onor di noi che non ci bisognerebbe: e per ciò è buono a provederci avanti che cominciamo (Dec., Intro., 74-75)\(^{188}\)

*Le cento novelle*

Pusillanimi semo,\(^{189}\) lievi, e sole

Mobil, ritrose, e piene di sospetto,

Sì, che dubito forte, e ’l cor mi duole,

Che non se segua mal simil effetto,

\(^{188}\) All references to Boccaccio’s *Decameron* come from Vittore Branca’s 1980 edition (Boccaccio 1980).

\(^{189}\) In “semo,” there might be a trace of a Ferrarese conjugation of the verb “essere” (“essar” in Ferrarese dialect), Tuscanized with the final [o], if nowadays the first person plural in the present indicative of the same verb in Ferrarese dialect is “nu a sén” (Biolecati, Beniamino. *Lèzar e scrìvar: grammatica del dialetto ferrarese*. Ferrara: Alba, 1980).
E, che la compagnia come esser suole
Non ne disolva tosto per difetto,
però buono e ’l provedersi inante,
Che cominciar’ andar col piede errante (CN, 8).

The first aspect to note is the tight connection with Boccaccio’s original text, which is slightly modified to fit inside the rigid metrical structure of the chivalric octaves. At times, Brusantino inserts clusters or words that render the style more poetic, or else fulfil a rhyme or the required number of syllables in a hendecasyllable. Other than rendering Boccaccio’s “sospettose” with the periphrastic “piene di sospetto,” Brusantino expands the original “dubito forte” with the poetic image of a painful heart, “’l cor mi duole.” He also substitutes for the original “riottose” with “ritrose” in order to emphasize the timidness of women. In the last two lines, the more poetic “inante” (as compared to Boccaccio’s “avanti”) rhymes with “piede errante.” “Errare” is a distinctive Ariostean verb, repeatedly used by the author of Orlando furioso in the dual meaning of wandering and making mistakes. This refers to the paladins that wander looking to fulfill their secular (mostly erotic) wishes instead of glory and honor in the war field, and therefore commit mistakes and deviate from their main purpose—the liberation of the saint sepulcher in Jerusalem from the infidels. Likewise, the seven young women of Boccaccio’s brigata risk making mistakes if they wander freely without the guide of a man’s mind and body. Even though the preservation of morality was one of the crucial characteristics for the brigata in the Decameron too, in Le cento novelle, the women’s poor decision to leave Florence alone carries an ethical aspect since it is believed to lead them towards choices that could hurt their own reputation in society.

190 For more information on the secularized quête of Ariosto’s paladins and on their deviances from tradition, see Sergio Zatti, The quest for epic: from Ariosto to Tasso. Transl. Dennis Looney and Sally Hill. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006. In particular, the chapters entitled “The Furioso between Epos and Romance” (13-37) and “The Quest: Considerations on the Form of the Furioso” (38-59) are of specific relevance to this discussion. See also Sergio Zatti, “L’eredità del Furioso” in L’ombra del Tasso: epica e romanzo nel Cinquecento. Milano: Mondadori, 1996: 4-14.
The same attention to the ethical behavior of his characters appears in Brusantino’s description of the three young men when they enter the church of Santa Maria Novella:

*Decameron*

Mentre tralle donne erano così fatti ragionamenti, e ecco entrar nella chiesa tre giovani, non per ciò tanto che meno di venticinque anni fosse l’età di colui che più giovane era di loro (Dec., Intro., 78)

*Le cento novelle*

Mentre facendo tai ragionamenti
Le donne ne la chiesa fur entrat
Tre giovani leggiadri, almi, e prudenti
Di valor gravi, e di sembianti ornati [...] (CN, 8)

Brusantino combines the stylistic elements of Boccaccio’s already poetic language with his pervasive tendency to conform to ethical standards. Three adjectives absent in the *Decameron* depict Dioneo, Filostrato, and Panfilo in Brusantino’s text: graceful, noble, and prudent. The second of the list, “almi,” is distinctive of poetry, but also transmits the idea of the purity of their soul. The three men are valiant and self-restrained, and so they constitute the perfect ethical group in the villa outside Florence.

As these two examples show, ethics, metrical patterns, and Boccaccio’s original text engage in a constant relationship, which makes *Le cento novelle* both a manipulation of the *Decameron* and a manipulation away from it. Brusantino’s work is heavily based upon its original but also differs from it in linguistic expression (poetry), paratextual elements, overall interpretation, audience, and consequently reception. Paremias, written in distiches of rhymed hendecasyllable, added at the beginning of each canto and typographically highlighted in the page, succeed in helping the readers receive a canonical text from Boccaccio in the way Brusantino wished them to read it. Paremias send out a strong and clear ethical message,
which belongs to the same oral language that Brusantino’s readers speak (Matarrese 2004, 40-41; Pettinelli 2004c, 182). Inspired by the above-mentioned editions of the *Decameron* and *Orlando furioso*, initial paremias, along with allegories, constitute the tools that Brusantino employed in order to reveal the different levels of interpretation and the different messages of Boccaccio’s text. These were Brusantino’s objectives when introducing paremias at the beginning of or inside of a novella, and when “translating” the paremias found in Boccaccio’s text. He wished to transform Boccaccio’s *Decameron* into a text with general ethical appeal and with public usefulness. Thus, his paremias represent the structure, the purpose, and the intention of the entire work.

### 2.4 *Le cento novelle*’s Initial Allegories and Paremias: Brusantino’s Ethical Perspective

More than achieving a competence outside of the text, “un ponte verso l’utilizzo esterno del testo,” as is the case in the more linguistic-oriented editions of the *Decameron*, Brucioli’s and Sansovino’s *in primis*, Brusantino’s rewriting of Boccaccio’s collection aims to guarantee “l’accertamento della sua lettura,” a “correct” reading of the text through the ethical instrument of allegories and paremias (Bragantini 2005, 345). Nothing ironic or laughable is present in Brusantino’s use of paremias, as it was instead for *cantari*, for some chivalric poems such as *Morgante* and *Orlando innamorato*, or for parodic rewritings of chivalric poems in vernacular and in local dialects. For an analysis of parodic and ironic use of paremias, see Matarrese 2004, 176-82. Nothing is seen of the desecrating laughter and cynic destruction of the ideal world of valiant knights that characterizes his friend Aretino’s rewriting of *Orlando furioso*, *L’Orlandino* (1540). Brusantino’s allegories

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191 For an analysis of parodic and ironic use of paremias, see Matarrese 2004, 176-82.
and paremias are instead the voice of the author reading the *Decameron* within an ethical perspective for the benefit of the readers and with a precise pedagogical purpose.

Initial allegories and paremias introduce the one hundred stories and are guidelines for reading them and interpreting their message, as they direct the reader through the complex web of the text. The allegories aim at fulfilling a didactic intent: more than a tool to facilitate memorization, they explain the symbols of the stories, eviscerate the meaning of the novellas, and make it available for the public. All of them are introduced by the preposition “per,” meaning “by means of, through,” followed by the name of the character that allegorically reflects a type or an entity. The prepositional cluster aims to establish a connection between the character and the story and to underline their reciprocal participation and exchange. After it, the verb is most frequently impersonal or passive (for instance, “si tassa,” “si mette,” “si nota,” “si tole,” and “viene tolta,” with a predominance of “si tole”). This explains how, through the characters, the readers can extrapolate a deeper allegorical meaning, which always finds a perfect connection in the subsequent paremia, not only in content and ethical attitude, but in vocabulary too (Pettinelli 2004b, 175).

The one hundred paremias fulfill a similar pedagogical purpose to the correspondent allegories. Contrary to what the role of a final paremia may be in a text, specifically that of summarizing the entire concept of the canto and making it memorable in a succinct way (as will be shown with Sarnelli’s fables), initial paremias constitute a *captatio benevolentiae*, placed there to attract the readers’ attention. They provide a summary of the stories substituting the *Decameron*’s initial captions, and they extract and fix in a memorable structure the *exemplum* that is behind each story. They also provide “indicazioni di lettura,” as they shape the way the reader encounters the text by means of showing which aspects should be considered central in its interpretation and which are secondary. Given that

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193 “Tassare” is a synonym for “tacciare” (Voc. 1612, s.v. *tassare*).
paremias have a diegetic function, they explicate the ethical component of the stories and, at the same time, are explicated by the content of the ten stories of each day, since the novella proves their truthfulness and their applicability to its context (Bragantini 2014, 8). They fulfill the poem’s objectives, of providing moral teachings and disseminating wisdom and useful lessons of life, while at the same time amusing the readers by way of capturing the essence of a story and fixing it in a caustic structure (Perocco, 297). The mutual relationship between the stories’ content and introductory paremias makes them, as Pettinelli says, “una morale da legarsi, nella memoria, alle singole novelle” (Pettinelli 2004c, 183-84). Their structure indeed facilitates their memorization as they are all made of distiches of rhymed hendecasyllables and, as such, respect the meter of the subsequent octaves.

Paremias also work as bridges between their content and the allegories, as well as between the Decameron and Le cento novelle. The dialogue between Boccaccio’s text and

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194 This is also true in the Decameron, where many paremias are placed at the beginning of novellas and open a range of possibilities that the novella then develops, confirms, or disapproves (for instance, I.10, II.1, II.9, IV.2, VIII.7, VIII.8, IX.9).
195 There is one example of suffixal rhyme in the paremia introducing novella III.4 (“lentamente”-“mente”), a harsh and difficult rhyme in novella I.4’s paremia (“scocche”-“sciocche”), inclusive rhymes in V.8 (“empio”-“scempio”), VIII.4 (“scaltro”-“altro”), and VIII.8 (“parme”-“arme”), and two instances of rich rhymes in VIII.1 (“castitade”-“falsitade”) and VIII.6 (“aviditade”-“simplicitade”). Sometimes, the rhyming words are repeated: for example, the introductory paremias for two novellas belonging to the same day on tragic tales of love, IV.1 and IV.7, present the same rhyme, even though the position of the two words, “sorte” and “morte,” is inverted. Also, the adjective associated with luck is in both cases “rea,” which refers to the bad or wicked luck that the topic of the day explores. Similarly, novellas III.9, IV.3, and VII.6 present the same rhyme between “cor(e) altiero” and “vero.” It is interesting to note how presumptuousness of the heart and truth appear in novellas from different days, specifically Day III, in stories where a person either has painfully acquired something or has lost it and then regained it; Day IV, in love stories ending tragically; and Day VII, regarding tricks that wives play on their husbands. More traditional rhymes are used, such as “core” in II.3 and V.1, which rhymes with “favore” and “amore,” and the rhymes obtained with the infinitive of the verb, such as in IX.1 “comandare” and “negare.” There are also non-categorized rhymes, meaning that Brusantino makes words belonging to different grammatical categories rhyme. For instance, in I.10, “lui” and “altrui;” in II.6, “oltraggio” and “saggio;” in III.4, “facilmente” and “mente;” in IV.5, “talhora” and “ristora;” in V.4 and VII.9, “vale” (third person singular of the verb “valere”) and “male;” in VI.1 “gire” and “desire;” in VII.1, “quello” and “cervello;” in VIII.2, “deve” and “greve;” in IX.3, “appresso” and “istesso.” Sometimes rhymes and lexical choices demonstrate Brusantino’s scarce aesthetic attention to melodic beauty and semantics. For instance, the final word of the second distich of the paremia at the beginning of VI.6 is “prova.” The fact that the verb “provar” features at the beginning of the same verse does not seem guided by a wish to make the hendecasyllable sound better: “Ingegno spesso, e alta virtude giova provar cosa impossibile con prova.”
Brusantino’s rewriting is constant as a way to confirm the original meaning or adapt it to Brusantino’s perspective. This dialogue also concerns the textual level, as paremias engage in a persistent relationship with the Decameron’s already available topics and content. For instance, when an introductory paremia is already present in the Decameron at the beginning of a novella, by adding the initial paremia Brusantino may confirm the meaning expressed by the paremia in the text and the consequent development of its meaning in the novella, or may emphasize another aspect of the story. One example might be novella II.9. Here, Brusantino does not include the proverbial phrase that introduces Boccaccio’s story on the adventures of Bernabò of Genoa, his wife, and Ambrogio: Lo ’ngannatore rimane a piè dello ’ngannato (Dec., II.9.3), which demonstrates how many times the deceiver is in turn deceived and receives an adequate punishment for the bad actions he committed. The meaning of Boccaccio’s introductory paremia is not lost, though, since it is rephrased by the paremia that Brusantino places at the beginning of the novella:

Resta l’ingannator del mal accinto

Da l’ingannato spesso oppresso, e vinto

[Dec. II.9: “Bernabò da Genova, da Ambrogiovolo ingannato, perde il suo e comanda che la moglie innocente sia uccisa; ella scampa e in abito d’uomo serve il soldano; ritrova lo ’ngannatore e Bernabò conduce in Alessandria, dove, lo ’ngannatore punito, ripreso abito femminile, col marito ricchi si tornano a Genova”]

As Brusantino’s paremia substitutes for the introductory paremia of Boccaccio’s story, it makes its meaning more evident and central to the entire structure of the story; it also extracts it from the text and places it in a central position as a title and an explanatory tool of the subsequent story.

When comparing paremias at the beginning of each novella with paremias in the final list for each day, one observes an interesting aspect of paremiac transition. As the index of paremias at the end shows, in many cases the two paremias differ. Probably, Brusantino had someone compile the final list of paremias in pages left blank at the end of each day. This
person, while reading and copying, would then have corrected some apparent mistakes and changed morphological or syntactical aspects of the initial paremias according to his own taste. Had it been Brusantino, he would have adjusted the initial paremias, at least in those cases where a mistake is present. Pettinelli, however, argues that it is difficult to identify this person, since the oscillation of choices could mean uncertainty in embracing a specific linguistic rule or, on the opposite, a complete refusal of the same rules (Pettinelli 2004c, 187).

More specifically, variants in the final list of paremias concern articles, truncations, apocopations, separations of words composed of two terms (“talhor” vs “tal’hor”), etymological spellings (in primis the Latin [-ti-] rendered at times [-z-] and other times [-ci-]), diphtongization (“buona” vs “bona”), or sonorization (“segondo” vs “se Designs” in II.7). In other instances, the paremia in the final list rectified the grammatical mistake that Brusantino had left in the text of the initial paremia, such as in I.3 where it substitutes for the dative of the initial paremia “al disputare” with the more appropriate infinitive “il disputare.” Changes or additions may be also motivated by ipermetry or ipometry of the original verse in the initial paremia, such as in II.6 and IV.2.

In the paremia that introduces novella VIII.3, “pazzia” is spelled “pacia,” suggesting that the person copying the paremias could have been Ferrarese or been trying to imitate Brusantino’s original vernacular:

Initial Paremia

Semplicitade mai non mutò via

Che non mostrasse a i gesti alta pazzia

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196 The truncation eliminates the final vowel of a word in accordance with predictable phonological rules; for instance, amar < amare.
197 The apocopation shortens a word of a syllable pié < piede.
198 Diphtongization describes the process of a single vowel becoming two. In this example, it concerns the letter [o] from Latin BÓNUM > buono.
199 Sonorization is the process of an unsound consonant that becomes sound; for instance, t > d, c > g, p > b.
200 For other examples, see Pettinelli 2004c, 186-87.
Paremia in the Final List

Semplicitade mai non mutò via

Che non mostrasse a i gesti alta pacia

It can be argued that the print shop made some of these changes. Probably, Brusantino’s editor, Marcolini, decided to add the feature of a final list of paremias to the text, and to take care of it personally. This would not be surprising, given that Marcolini added similar features to other editions he curated, as, for instance, the aforementioned brief descriptions of the topic of each canto in his 1553 edition of Brusantino’s _L’Angelica innamorata_. However, there is no conclusive evidence for this speculation.

Between the initial paremia and the one in the final list, there are also instances concerning lexical change, though they do not seem to follow a precise pattern. Sometimes a singular or plural marks the difference between initial paremias and the final list, such as “agii” in the final list for III.1 and “lascivie” at the beginning of VII.2. In II.10, the young women who in the initial paremia were chosen by the old man as friends and wives, are just wives in the final paremia. In III.8, the word “danno” in the final paremia substitutes for “duolo,” which also appears in IV.10 instead of the initial paremia’s “miseria;” in IV.9, “altiere voglie” and “superchie doglie” replace “superbe voglie” and “fierce doglie” in the initial paremia. In novella VI.5, the more poetic “pria” takes the place of “prima,” and in X.6, the adjective “grande” describing “cortesia” is eliminated in favor of the adverb “spesso” in the final paremia. In one instance, I.2, the final paremia introduces the word “peccato,” probably because the copyist interpreted the “opra rea da religion” in the initial paremia as a sin. Similarly, for the initial paremias of VIII.1, changing the verb “dona” in “vende” to describe how Guasparruolo’s wife trades her chastity for money means to highlight her unethical behavior. In X.4, the ascendant enumeration of adjectives to describe Gentile de’ Carisendi’s heart from falling in love to being courteous, “un cor inamorato, alto, e cortese,”
changes to “l’inamorato cor saggio, e cortese” in the final paremia, which focuses on the qualities of a noble heart already in love.

For what concerns syntax, in some instances, paremias in the final list are more prosaic, as can be observed in novella I.9:

Initial Paremia

Move talhor vergogna un cor cortese,
E inducel spesso a gloriose imprese

Paremia in the Final List

Talhor move vergogna un cor cortese
E induce quello à gloriose imprese

The paremia in the final list features the syntactical shift of the adverb “talhor,” which is moved to the beginning: this makes the first hemistich plainer than the original one, which contained a more elevated and more suitable tone for poetry. Additionally, “induce quello” replaces “inducel,” which follows the Tobler-Mussafia rule—according to which, in medieval vernaculars sentences could not start with an unsound pronoun, which consequently became enclitic—, very frequently attested in Boccaccio too (Manni, 300-01) as well as in Boiardo (Matarrese 2004, 91). As such, it makes the second hemistich more narrative than poetic.

As shown in the first chapter of this study, the historical process of the creation of a paremia consists of three phases: paremias originate from a specific situation, are generalized towards a conventionalized meaning that is usually accepted and recognized by the community, and are later applied to different spoken or written contexts. Brusantino operates in an opposite way: he owns a context (Boccaccio’s stories) but aims to extrapolate a specific message from that context; thus, he creates paremias that could express that contextual meaning appropriately. Since the initial paremias are decontextualized in respect to the stories, i.e. placed outside the narrative, their literal meaning and contextual meaning
coincide. However, since they are placed in a specific literary space, namely after the summary provided by the caption and the interpretation conveyed by the allegory and before the first octave of the text, they possess a tight link to the narrative and refer to core moments or characters in the stories. Potentially, their conventionalized meaning could be applied to a plethora of contexts, thus generating different contextualized meanings; however, in *Le cento novelle*, the contextualized meaning finds its more appropriate setting in Brusantino’s stories. The initial paremia introduces the content of the novella and, subsequently, the novella actualizes the paremia’s contextualized meaning. Only after reading the story, can the meaning of the paremia be fully understood, and can the reader appreciate the message expressed at the beginning.

Brusantino chose his initial paremias with a specific objective in mind, which reflects his own perspective on characters, events, and attitudes. Before analyzing them, it is useful to evaluate what changes Brusantino made to the text of Boccaccio’s stories, which are in turn mirrored in the message that the introductory paremias aim to express. Favaro argues that Brusantino changed the *Decameron* in order to emphasize the moral elements already present in the stories and castigate vices in a harsher way than Boccaccio did (Favaro, 103). Consequently, his text offers a greater distinction between virtues and vices, eliminating those gray areas that Boccaccio introduced as ways to reflect on human behavior (Perocco, 300; Favaro, 104). Favaro also comments that many of these changes are dictated by Brusantino’s autobiographical and personal experiences related to his relationship with Ercole II’s court, and his life as a high-ranking courtier who was not recognized for his own merits and was forced to wander in search for a better location. This is why, according to him, in *Le cento novelle*, “istanza autobiografica e istanza moralizzatrice si rinforzano l’una l’altra” (Favaro, 107).
However, it can be argued that Brusantino’s alterations of the original text, and subsequently the paremias that he creates, relate to ethics. Brusantino generally does not try to delete all the immoral and anti-religious instances of the original text (as would happen with the subsequent “rassettature del Decameron”) since they are scandalous or not accepted by religion. Brusantino’s changes and paremias refer more to societal norms of conduct, according to which adultery, breaking the vow of chastity, lack of devotion, and ridicule of someone’s behavior contradict ethical precepts that are intimately recognized as fundamental for the well-being in society—a society that does not necessarily need to be embedded in religion.

Already with the initial paremias, Brusantino addresses ethical and unethical aspects of human behavior determining semantic fields that pertain to specific categories. Leaving apart fortune, which can have both positive and negative outcomes, the unethical sphere includes: hypocrisy and avarice (already pointed out by Favaro, 105), greed, ambition, deceit and consequent shame, scorn, simplicity and credulity, ignorance, cowardice, wantonness, immoderate desire, jealousy, and envy. The ethical aspects, instead, though fewer in number, concern: virtue, talent, industry, generosity and magnanimity, courtesy, nobility, honesty, faith, valor, and perspicacity. They occur in any aspects of individual and social life, and determine the ethical or unethical direction of feelings and situations and the development of the story according to Brusantino’s perspective. Frequently, the initial paremia expresses the author’s orientation and his feelings on the subject, thus marking the readers’ experience in that direction; therefore, the author’s ideas are transferred in the words of the allegorical explanation and of the paremia, and in turn, this message is transferred to the mind of the readers and “translates” into their interpretation of the story. Brusantino’s perspective is also

Pettinelli calls it a “catalogo di virtù e vizi,” which, however, catalogs paremias according to moral schemes and not in accordance with an ethical interpretation of the text. For classification of these paremias based on their content, see Pettinelli 2004b, 176-77 and relative notes.
transferred from the paremias to the novellas, where he adapts the content of the text to the message of the initial allegories and paremias. Except for a few cases of clear slips and carelessness, Brusantino usually reinforces the appraisal of one aspect or the blame of another, so that the direction established by the two paratextual elements is confirmed in the words and actions of the actual text of the story. The pedagogical purpose of the initial allegories and paremias are directly linked to these aspects, and so is the useful message with which Brusantino wishes to reach people and to “make the text [Boccaccio’s Decameron] more ethically assimilable” (Javitch 1991, 33).

For instance, while Boccaccio justifies wives who cheat on their husbands when they are neglected or younger than their partners, and while Boccaccio recognizes the mind’s capacity to take advantage of a potentially profitable circumstance, Brusantino highlights any faults in what should be a supposedly good ethical behavior that, if not respected, brings about the complete disintegration of the institution of the family. In the allegory, he points out this fault, and in the paremia, he warns his readers of the bad or unavoidable consequences that an unethical behavior may bring. With religious members far from being exemplary models to follow, Boccaccio looks more at the physical exigencies of men and women, and does not clearly condemn them unless the story appears in a day devoted to tragic novellas. He also intersperses his novellas with an ironic and humorous tone to ridicule priests, nuns, and monks. Conversely, Brusantino does not add any ironic charge, and so his stories even out to show his disapproval of such behaviors and their consequences on society and on the individual. At times, he might insert minor comic and ironic elements in some descriptive scenes, especially those where sexual and physical actions are present. They contribute to making Le cento novelle regain part of that “game of laughter” (Mazzotta) and ironic verve that characterize Boccaccio’s text, and that Branca reads as a renewal and personal interpretation of traditional and canonized topoi (Boccaccio 1980, 337). At the same
time, they popularize the text and make it accessible to a wider public. It is, indeed, in these specific moments that Brusantino could satisfy the requests of his “public mezzano” and guarantee his immediate pleasure and amusement.

Even though, contrary to what his successors would do in their rewritings, Brusantino preserves certain salacious, irreverent, and improper references, their message however assumes different tints, for it is inserted in a frame that tends to bring everything to a level of acceptability. Programmatically, Brusantino directs the moral of the stories toward this frame: one can enjoy the reading, one can laugh over it, as the members of the brigata do, and one can quietly wink at certain human qualities and behavior, but one should always keep in mind the general message of the story as expressed in the initial allegories and paremias, and be aware of the consequences of ethical thoughts and actions. Through the experiences of Boccaccio’s characters, helped by paremias invented for that specific context, the didactic catharsis is achieved: readers can perceive the usefulness of the stories and the ethical message of paremias, and can learn from it.

Celebrated Love

On the topic of love, Brusantino seems to accept the genuine feeling of innocence that emerges among young people, both women and men, and the unavoidable and constantly present physical need that all individuals experience (Baratto, 102). In this sense, it is logical why the novella delle papere, which introduces the fourth day of the Decameron and shows the irresistible natural force of love even between those who have never been exposed to it, is maintained and not even modified.

Love appears to be a noble feeling for Brusantino when it is devoted to a good cause that falls within the ethical etiquettes of society, specifically courtly society. This is, for instance, visible in novella V.9, where the anguish that Federigo degli Alberighi experiences...
because of Monna Giovanna’s obstinacy not to love him brings him to extreme choices. Federigo’s attempts to capture Monna Giovanna’s attention and to satisfy every desire of hers pushes him to sacrifice his best companion, the falcon, for a dish that both she and Federigo can enjoy. Considering the honorable task of serving one’s lover in every possible way, Federigo’s gesture is considered a courteous and esteemed deed, as the initial paremia in *Le cento novelle* argues:

*Proverbio*

Non deve a l’alta et honorata impresa

Un magnanimo cor mancar di spesa (CN, 283)

[Dec. V.9: “Federigo degli Alberighi ama e non è amato, e in cortesia spendendo si consuma e rimangli un sol falcone, il quale, non avendo altro, dà a mangiare alla sua donna venutagli a casa; la qual, ciò sappiendo, mutata d’animo, il prende per marito e fallo ricco”]

Because of Federigo’s elevated feeling of love, and of his magnanimous heart that did not mind expenses, fortune transforms what seemed a very unfortunate case, that of Monna Giovanna’s son dying, into solace and, finally, love. Their story is an example of love oriented toward the soul’s satisfaction, far from any immediate physical gratification, and hence it is ethically admissible and, most of all, useful on a bigger societal scale.

Courteous love can also be vindictive when it is not corresponded and still accepted: since not to love back someone who has devoted his love to a person is unethical, revenge may result within ethically acceptable values. The initial paremia of novella V.8 expresses that it is adequate to scare a cruel and insensitive heart with likewise brutal acts if love does not manage to move it:

*Proverbio*

S’Amor non pol, a un cor ingrato, et empio

Giovaralli timore e crudel scempio (CN, 279)
[Dec. V.8: “Nastagio degli Onesti, amando una de’ Traversari, spende le sue ricchezze senza essere amato; vassene pregato da’ suoi a Chiassi; quivi vede cacciare a un cavaliere una giovane e ucciderla e divorarla da due cani; invita i parenti suoi e quella donna amata da lui a un desinare, la quale vede questa medesima giovane sbranare e temendo di simile avvenimento prende per marito Nastagio”]

Nastagio degli Onesti’s use of the fantastic representation of the afterlife of unloving hearts is therefore the right compensation for his loved one’s determination to refute his feelings toward her. Both Federigo and Nastagio are courteous men whose behavior should be ethically imitated by whoever is in love, the latter as an example of total abnegation in love, and the former as a model of correct punishment for negation of love.\(^{202}\)

A powerful example of Brusantino’s acknowledgement of love, despite its being potentially unethical, is novella VI.7. Brusantino introduces Madonna Filippa’s story with the two usual paratextual elements:

**Allegoria**

Per Madonna Filippa chiamata in giudizio si dinota la bona innamorata che, quantunque habbia offeso, pur fidata in sue buone ragioni et amici del fallo riuscisse con buona prova

**Proverbio**

Spesso trova beltà con sentimento

Del fallo sua la scusa in un momento

[Dec. VI.7: “Madonna Filippa dal marito con un suo amante trovata, chiamata in giudizio, con una pronta e piacevol risposta sé libera e fa lo statuto modificare”]

Brusantino is here praising the cleverness of the woman, who, despite admitting her wrongdoings in marriage, is nonetheless conscious of her good reasons, and manages to make all the other friends favor her behavior and “accept” her fault. The paremia confirms the swift movement of the mind to escape a dangerous situation: Madonna Filippa is a beautiful

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\(^{202}\) On the tradition of non-corresponded love, see Baricci in Marchiaro and Zamponi, 437-51.
woman, and beauty, coupled with a certain sensitivity, can find a solution to a mistake at once. Thus, relying on her physical appearance and on the power of her words, she even demands for statutes to be more objective and consider the physical exigencies of both sexes. Not differently from Boccaccio, who was shedding an extremely good light on Madonna Filippa, disapproving of her husband’s simple and narrow-minded behavior, Brusantino focuses on the woman’s good quality, because “disonesta è […] la donna che si vende, non la donna che ama” (Baratto, 59).\textsuperscript{203} Madonna Filippa loves her husband, and she has devoted herself to him satisfying his physical needs, but she cannot waste her excess of sexual desire and “give it to the dogs” (Dec., VI.7.17); as such, her requests are ethical, since they do not disrupt the institution of the family.

The adjective “bona” in the allegory expresses Brusantino’s position: he is neither condemning Madonna Filippa nor praising her. He is in a neutral position, and while he might not accept her behavior fully, especially considering his judgement of similar acts in other novellas, he still recognizes the validity of her love. Madonna Filippa’s passion might not be directed to the person to whom it should be devoted, her husband, but is real, human, and deep. Brusantino also acknowledges Filippa’s quick-wittedness (in the paremia, “in un momento”) and consequently, her verbal and rhetorical skills, which enable her to escape death, in line with the topic of the sixth day that focuses on characters who avoid attack or embarrassment through a clever remark. In Madonna Filippa’s story, which might be considered immoral or incongruent in the eyes of those who read Le cento novelle as a product of the Counter-Reformation, Brusantino celebrates the power that beauty coupled

with talent and wit has on turning events to one’s own advantage. If Boccaccio expresses female empowerment and the right to sexual satisfaction, Brusantino recognizes the naturalness and spontaneity of love. This demonstrates how Brusantino was not indifferent to women or a misogynist, as might appear in the initial allegories and paremias of other novellas. Brusantino, indeed, could recognize the value and strength of women when love was appropriately and ethically employed to satisfy natural desires.

Novella II.10 features a similar acknowledgement of love repeatedly confirmed by paremias disseminated in the text and at its conclusion. As they establish a connection with Brusantino’s initial allegory and paremia, all the other paremias contribute to the long-lasting effectiveness of the message of the novella and constitute a circular movement from beginning to end. They purport to praise passionate love and natural desires, and, at the same time, blame boastfulness and jealousy. In the initial paremia, Brusantino recommends against marriages between old men and young women, and indirectly confronts his public with the consequences of such a union. Similarly, the allegory gives voice to the incongruence of the elderly who aim to keep up with lascivious youth:

Allegoria

Per Paganino vien tolto lo sfrenato disio; per la moglie di Ricciardo viene tolta la lascivia, la quale sempre voria star nel vano suo diletto; per Ricciardo si tole la vecchiezza che mostra li espressi falli a volersi porre a prova con la lasciva gioventude

Proverbio

Debbe il vecchio fuggir con fiere voglie
Di farsi gioven’ donna amica e moglie

[Dec. II.10: “Paganino da Monaco ruba la moglie a messer Ricciardo di Chinzica; il quale, sappiando dove ella è, va, e diventa amico di Paganino; raddomandagliele, e egli, dove ella voglia, gliele concede; ella non vuol con lui tornare e, morto messer Ricciardo, moglie di Paganin diventa”]

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In the text of the novella, Brusantino anticipates the mention of jealousy, so that Bartolomea’s reaction, namely her decision to remain with her kidnapper, can be better understood and partly excused. In the *Decameron*, Boccaccio uses the word “jealousy” for the first time when Paganino da Monaco kidnaps Bartolomea, and Ricciardo di Chinzica is said to be “si geloso che temeva dell’aere stesso” (Dec., II.10.14). Brusantino, instead, refers to it much earlier in the text, when the husband teaches his wife all the festivities that prevent them from consumating their marriage as he “apparia sempre pieno di affanno, e gelosia” (CN, 117). Consequently, the readers’ awareness of the inappropriateness of the marriage between Ricciardo and Bartolomea deepens. Additionally, the message of the initial paremia fits even more perfectly with the meaning of an embedded paremia about the bad thief who does not respect festivities, and with the concluding paremia.

In the body of the text, a paremia identifies Ricciardo’s despair for the loss of his wife, as she refuses to go back to him due to the lack of sexual satisfaction she was experiencing during their marriage—a despair that Paganino will nurture passionately. In the *Decameron*, Ricciardo replies to anyone asking about his conjugal situation with a proverbial phrase: *Il mal furo non vuol festa* (Dec., II.10.42).204 Branca argues that the paremia, which Boccaccio created expressly for this novella, contains an ironic allusion to the law and the court of which Ricciardo was a representative (“foro” < “furo,” where the closure of the accented vowel in [u] would be the result of a supposedly Pisan pronunciation). According to this interpretation, the paremia would transfer the result of Ricciardo’s intimate reflection over his own behavior to a bureaucratic level, and translates it into a metaphorical situation where the court does not want to celebrate with a party (Boccaccio 1980, 367-68).205 When living together, Ricciardo preferred the law to his wife, meaning that he was compliant with any form of religious and civil festivities, mostly fasts and vigils, which would not allow

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204 For further reference on the novella and the paremia, see Chiecchi, 139.
205 On this paremia as the result of a mental reasoning, see Rondinelli in Marchiaro and Zamponi, 306.
Bartolomea to satisfy her physical needs. By saying that the court is not inclined to celebrate, Ricciardo is ratifying the failure of his attempts to be a judicious husband and, at large, the failure of all practices in the tribunal. In other words, the most sophisticated techniques cannot win the heart of a woman under the power of her old husband’s jealousy and excessive attention to regulations.

Another interpretation of the paremia (Boccaccio 1980, 314, n. 2) reads “foro” as a hole, and thus, given that the storyteller of the day is Dioneo, the paremia would have a comic allusion to the female sexual organs. However, the most recent analyses of the paremia argue that in fact, “furo” comes from the Latin “fur,” which was used in medieval times to indicate a thief. In this meaning, the paremia probably recalls Ricciardo’s wrong idea that he could have satisfied his wife to the full, despite his age, and in so doing robbed her of the pleasures of marriage (Boccaccio 1980, 314). It could also refer to Paganino’s subtracting Bartolomea, and so the fact that the thief does not wish festivities would recall Paganino’s constant availability to satisfy Bartolomea’s desires, regardless of religious or moral views (Bartoli, 129-30). 206 Even though there is no other attestation of this paremia, it can be immediately recognized as a paremia for its condensed structure, for its moral and ethical message, and most of all for its potential interpretative and conventionalized meaning that could be applied to different contexts.

In Le cento novelle, a lexical addition makes the paremia lose some of its straightforwardness while at the same time acquiring a specific relevance to the text of Brusantino’s novella:

Ritornò a Pisa da Martello spento

Diceva a chel salutavan egli meschino

206 Bartoli also reviews all the possible interpretations of the paremia deriving from the different forms of the word “foro,” providing a convincing demonstration of the incongruence of a Pisan obscene and expressive form in “furo.”
Leavin apart the typographical error in “loro” for “foro,” the paremia is lengthened since Brusantino, in order to obtain a hendecasyllable, introduces the word “vigilia.” Brusantino is saying that Ricciardo’s theft is total, and includes both the proper festivities and the vigils too. This could have two possible meanings: that Ricciardo refused Bartolomea anything that she could possibly ask for; or that Paganino is so eager to satisfy Bartolomea’s needs that he looks at neither festivities nor their vigils. Considering the introductory paremia, it can be argued that Brusantino could have read the paremia in both these interpretations, as Ricciardo’s theft of Bartolomea’s age, desires, and demands, and as Paganino’s willingness to please her.

Boccaccio’s *Decameron* concludes the story with a paremia, inserted into Dioneo’s final considerations. Brusantino renders it with two rhymed hemistiches:

*Decameron*

[...] mi pare che ser Bernabò disputando con Ambruogiuolo *cavalcasse la capra inverso il chino* (Dec., II.10.43).

*Le cento novelle*

Ser Bernardo con Ambrogiuol meschino

*Cavalcò mal la capra inverso il chino* (CN, 120).

Recalling the false judgment of a character from the previous novella (II.9), Dioneo compares Ricciardo with Bernabò, who, trying to dispute with Ambrogiuolo (Dec., II.9.11-22), did not make the right choice when deciding to bet that his wife would be faithful to him. The paremia, *Cavalcare la capra verso il chino*, means to be wrong or to act in unreasonable ways, not differently from someone who tries to mount a goat down the slope of a hill and will have an uncomfortable ride due to the goat’s nature to jump (GDLI, *s.v. capra*). As he
blames Ricciardo for his choice to marry a younger woman, Dioneo also states that Ricciardo should accept the consequences of his not being able to keep up with his wife’s energy and vitality. More so if the ride is “mal,” the adverb that Brusantino adds to the original paremia: it emphasizes how much Ricciardo was a fool if he thought that he could have won over young Bartolomea by displaying jealousy and pretending to be better than his age would demonstrate.

**Condemned Love**

Brusantino blames love that is obtained in a deceitful or unnatural way, since the human mind takes paths that could disrupt people’s well-being and the ethical order in society. In these instances, Brusantino alters Boccaccio’s text by way of determining a different end for the stories, and expressing his position in the initial allegory and paremia: love that aims to deceive a person, that does not comply with given ethical rules about family, individuals, and friends, and that goes against the laws of the Church cannot but be rejected and condemned. These typologies of love (contrary to the interpretation that Boccaccio offers in the *Decameron*) do not express the positive aspects of human feelings, but rather the wicked use of the mind to obtain or fulfill unethical and societally disruptive desires.

A condemnation of love happens in novella III.1, where Brusantino’s Masetto da Lamporecchio, feigning deafness in order to be employed as the gardener of a monastery of nuns, does not experience the same positive conclusion of Boccaccio’s text. The initial allegory emphasizes the dishonesty of Masuccio’s acts: lasciviousness can lead the human soul to commit corrupt and unethical actions never thought of before. Since the allegory states that lasciviousness tries to fool chastity, Brusantino scolds not only Masetto, but the nuns too, since they should have been conscious of the temptations that the flesh generates. In fact, the paremia emphasizes that if one needs to preserve chastity for a good reason, as the
nuns should have, then the comfort of a young man ready to lead one down the wrong path is to be avoided:

Allegoria

Per Masetto da Lamporecchio vien tolta la lascivia, quale sotto più forme cerca di ingannar la castità, che spesso havendo l’agio risveglia l’animo a far cose dishonete, non pensate mai

Proverbio

Se castità servar si dee a ragione

Fuggir li agii bisogna, e occasione

[Dec. III.1: “Masetto da Lamporecchio si fa mutolo e diviene ortolano d’un monistero di donne, le quali tutte concorrono a giacerti con lui”]

Perocco argues that the allegory is an example of how Brusantino may insert an inappropriate interpretation at the beginning of his novellas, with no visible connections to the story, only for the sake of expressing a strong morality (Perocco, 296). However, it is rather arguable that Brusantino’s allegories focus on an aspect that might not be the most evident or important one, at least according to Boccaccio’s text, and furthers it to the point that it becomes the central element to analyze, interpret, and judge. Differently from Boccaccio, who was celebrating Masetto’s genius in achieving his goal, regardless of its nature, Brusantino shifts the interpretation of the novella to the reflection on what ethics is and what is not. He is expressing his judgement on a behavior that no one in society should exhibit so that he could teach a lesson to his readers. Ethics and didactics combine to perpetrate a punishment that indirectly expresses an act of moralization on the background of religious teachings.
FIGURE 3: Le cento novelle
Introductory Allegory and Paremia for Novella III.1
Boston Public Library, G.16.6
Courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library, Rare Books
Source: https://archive.org/details/lecentonovelleda00brus
This novella is one of the few that features an exploitation of sexual tensions combined with a certain comedic attitude, which should guarantee popular appeal and wide attraction to the text. Throughout Brusantino’s novella, physical desire ignites both Masetto and the nuns in greater ways than in the original, where, for instance, “le monachette” were far from becoming “vaghe in tal piacere” (CN, 130). It is interesting to point out that Brusantino develops more explicit sexual content by using the metaphorical vocabulary that Boccaccio employs in other novellas devoted to physical needs satisfied by love. This vocabulary was also typically associated with sexual and erotic scenes in comic, parodic, and dialect literature. The description of Masetto’s nudity, and on its effects on the Abbess’s vulnerable flesh shows it:

E scoperta mostrava quella chiave
Che era de monache otto contrapeso
Che la camisia al vento faceva specchio
De le anguinaglie ignude al petenecchio
[…]
Riguardando madonna quello uccello
Che a le monache sue cantava in gabbia
Cade nel apetito dolce e bello
Che eran l’altre cadute in tanta rabbia (CN, 130).

The semantic area shaped by clearly allusive words such as “chiave,” “petenecchio,” “uccello,” makes the Abbess’s act more reproachable than it is in the Decameron, where Boccaccio was laughing at the seclusion to which the Abbess forces Masetto in order to enjoy him and his masculine virtues. In Le cento novelle, accepting to follow physical needs is a fall into an appetite (which is, however, sweet and pleasant), and thus an irrational feeling. Surprisingly, by the end of the novella, Brusantino does not condemn the Abbess and the
nuns for their choices and actions, which are clearly sinful in terms of Church regulations.

His attention goes to Masetto and his unethical decision of fulfilling his desire inside a monastery and in a deceitful way, for which he deserves to suffer. In the Decameron, Masetto, kept inside the monastery for years and raising many kids, leaves the nuns when he is old and rich, and content with the way he put his youth into service. In Brusantino’s Le cento novelle, instead, Masetto is rich when he leaves the monastery after the Abbess’s death but, as a sort of Dantean counterpass, he finishes his days in complete misery:

Ma che gli avenne al fine io seppi poi
Che in miseria finì li giorni suoi (CN, 131),

He does so, thus, without enjoying the wealth that Boccaccio’s Masetto gains from the convent; this is Brusantino’s lesson on love that is unethically directed to religious members.

The initial allegory and paremia for novella V.4 equally demonstrates that love, when it is uncontrolled, cannot be justified:

Allegoria

Per Ricciardo che è trovato da Litio da Valbuona è interpretato lo desir sfrenato, qual, tratto dal piacere, non riguarda a danno e dispiacere dove più da sorte che da ragione portato riuscisse di periglio

Proverbio

A lo sfrenato ardir spesso gli vale
Condur chi non gli pensa in molto male

[Dec. V.4: “Ricciardo Manardi è trovato da messer Lizio da Valbona con la figliuola, la quale egli sposa e col padre di lei rimane in buona pace”]

Ricciardo and Caterina’s love is castigated because it is not the uncoercible force that drives human nature to be affectionate to someone, but it is rather commanded simply by pleasure and by the desire to satisfy a physical impulse. This is such an irrational wish that could lead to some real damage, as dangerous as the situation in which Ricciardo and Caterina find
themselves. In the *Decameron*, the bodily and irrational appetite is shown from the first lines of the story, when Ricciardo is not only described as he burns with love, but as he struggles to hide his tumultuous feelings (Dec., V.4.6). Likewise, Brusantino’s Ricciardo barely represses his love for Caterina:

Di lei si accese, e tanto il cor flagella
Che occulta a pena ne tenea la mente (CN, 262).

Brusantino follows Boccaccio’s story almost completely, but changes a few aspects when describing the two lovers’ love. Caterina’s talk demanding Ricciardo to find a way to satisfy their love is longer than in the *Decameron*, and aims to show how an irrational force arouses Caterina and prevents her from seeing the unpredictable consequences of their decision.

Words are also very descriptive, increasing the sense of lack of restraint in the two lovers: Ricciardo is said to want to “sfogar tanto martire” and his plan makes Caterina grow “di più ardore […] e di doppia fiamma” (CN, 263). Brusantino even makes the description of the central scene of the novella less comic and more judgmental by means of a calculated use of words:

*Decameron*

[…] avendo la Caterina col destro braccio abbracciato sotto il collo Ricciardo e con la sinistra mano presolo per quella cosa che voi tra gli uomini più vi vergognate di nominare (Dec., V.4.30)

*Le cento novelle*

E stando ignudi a l’uno e a l’altro in braccio
La Caterina s’havea tolta in mano
Quella cosa che a voi vergogna e impaccio
Donne nomarla chiar vi par sì strano (CN, 264)\textsuperscript{207}

By adding bother (“impaccio”) to the original shame (“vergogna”), Brusantino makes the verbal reference to the masculine sexual organs much more burdensome than it is in the Decameron. This happens because of the unethical lasciviousness that the two lovers’ acts demonstrate.\textsuperscript{208}

On the topic of wantoness, Andreuccio da Perugia’s novella, II.5, is another good example of Brusantino’s appropriation and manipulation of the Decameron’s story. Boccaccio aims to emphasize how Andreuccio undergoes a progress of growth that allows him to shape survival skills and, most of all, understand the importance of taking advantage of fortuitous and lucky events for his own sake. Probably, this aspect of Andreuccio’s behavior appeared secondary to Brusantino, who considers Andreuccio a vicious man from an ethical perspective. Both the initial allegory and paremia focus on his lustful appetites: this evidently comes from Andreuccio’s thought that the Sicilian lady was in fact in love with him and so she invited him to her house (Favaro, 109). Love is a negative and unethical force as it leads to improper behaviors, for which the culprit needs to be punished. In this light, Andreuccio’s misfortunes and the dangerous events he faces appear justified, and his redemption can happen only through the intermission of the Latin fortuna, which guides the lives of many of Boccaccio’s characters (Branca 1986):

\textit{Allegoria}

Per Andreuccio si tassa l’huomo sciocco, che lascia i propri fatti suoi, et si lascia levare alle lascivie de appetiti, che lo tirano in perdita della robbia e della vita, dove rare volte senza buona fortuna non riesce.

\textsuperscript{207} The vocabulary and images that Brusantino uses to describe sexual and physical references in these novellas seem to derive from Aretino’s works, such as Sonetti lussuriosi. Instances of explicit description of sexuality might demonstrate the exchange of topics and vocabulary between the two writers.

\textsuperscript{208} Pettinelli argues that the final sententious distich of this novella in Le cento novelle recalls the chivalric tradition, as it can be found in Boiardo’s Orlando innamorato (Pettinelli 2004b, 177).
Proverbio

Cade lo sciocco espresso in grave errore

Se sconciamente vuol seguir Amore

[Dec. II.5: “Andreuccio da Perugia, venuto a Napoli a comperar cavalli, in una notte da tre gravi accidenti soprapreso, da tutti scampato con un rubino si torna a casa sua”]

In the paremia, the adverb “sconciamente,” which does not feature in Boccaccio’s Decameron, provides the reader with a clue about the way the novella should be read. Andreuccio follows love improperly because he is ready to accept the young woman’s invitations and to fantasize on its possible evolutions, when instead he should be more conscious and avoid situations that could endanger his own person and his properties. The adverb also emphasizes Andreuccio’s inappropriate sexual desires, a reference that is present in the allegory too. For the events guiding Andreuccio through the streets of Naples and confronting him with many adventures, Brusantino finds an explanation not, as Boccaccio did, in his naiveté, but rather in his disgraceful lasciviousness, which, coupled with his essence of a simpleton, makes him face burdensome and serious difficulties. Brusantino gives a personal interpretation to the events and main character of the novella, and to the theme of the second day in general: according to him, “misadventures that suddenly end happily” does not mean that, when fortune and cleverness are combined, the human being can succeed; this happens to Andreuccio, takes advantage of fortuitous occasions by relying on his newly acquired wisdom. Brusantino does not concede any space to Andreuccio’s new vision of life, and leaves the entire orchestration of events and decisions to luck: as the allegory specifies, Andreuccio experiences misfortune because of his lack of wisdom and common sense, and is able to emerge from great loss and peril exclusively with the aid of luck.

The changes that Brusantino makes inside the text are consistent with the ethical orientation he gives to the story. If in the Decameron, the old woman recognizes Andreuccio and greets him, and the young woman is shrewd enough to gain all the information without
having the old woman suspect anything, in *Le cento novelle*, the old woman is part of the
scheme that the young Sicilian woman devises, and so informs her of everything she could
extrapolate from Andreuccio’s words. Additionally, Brusantino uses a very harsh vocabulary
to describe the Sicilian woman, addressing her as a sly and wicked prostitute, and thus
anticipating the machinations with which she will entangle Andreuccio:

Era con questa giovene una vecchia
Che gli era di nascosto ruffiana
Et per mezzo di questa s’apparecchia
Tender la rete sua tanto sprana,
 Questa scontrò Andreucco, el mira e specchia
Lasciando poco longe la puttana
Corselo secretamente ad abbracciare
E cominciullo intenta accarezzare
[...]
E pienamente, poi che fu informata
De l’essere suo, de nomi, e parentado
Come scaltrita, e come scelerata
Mandò la vecchia sua fuora in contado (CN, 6[7]).

If Boccaccio succeeds in presenting the woman’s charming manners with Andreuccio once he
is in her house, Brusantino highlights her devious mind, as the comparison below shows:

**Boccaccio**

E così detto, da capo il rabbracciò e ancora teneramente lagrimango gli baciò la fronte
(Dec., II.5.24)

**Brusantino**

E così detto con nove maniere
Tornollo ad abbracciar d’Amor insana (CN, 69).

On the other side, Andreuccio does not exonerate himself from sexual appetites as he approaches the woman’s house and he is enflamed by erotic thoughts:

E de la caRa donna tutto aRdendo

In casa aRdito entRò senza taRdare (CN, 68).

The alliteration of the [r] reproduces the crackling of fire, something that an enamored heart experiences: not only is Andreuccio burning in the flames of love, but he is also ready to satisfy the young woman in every matter. In Brusantino’s realm, this behavior is unacceptable and is therefore condemned with continual misadventures.

Finally, in Brusantino’s range of unacceptable typologies of love, there is also homosexual love. In novella V.10 of the Decameron, the moral of Boccaccio’s story shows how both women and men have identical physical needs, and how they can reach a compromise to have them satisfied for the contentment of both parties. However, Brusantino does not comply with Boccaccio’s reading of the novella, and expresses his perspective in the initial allegory and paremnia:

Allegoria

Per la donna de Pietro da Venciolo si tole la lascivia, per Pietro il desiderio contra natura, il qual talmente nel suo error s’immerge che non cura al onor suo biasmo per seguitare il vitioso suo disio

Proverbio

Di vergogna non cura l’anima insane

Ne esce del fango mai come la Rana

[Dec. V.10: ‘Pietro di Vinciolo va a cenare altrove; la donna sua si fa venire un garzone, torna Pietro, ella il nasconde sotto una cesta di polli; Pietro dice essere stato trovato in casa d’Ercolana, con cui cenava, un giovane messovi dalla moglie; la donna biasima la moglie d’Ercolano; uno asino per isciagura pon piede in su
Pietro’s love is a desire against the traditional laws of nature, and thus it is unethical, even more so since he does not care about his honor and is inclined to trade it for the sake of fulfilling his passion. The harsh vocabulary in the allegory, including “error,” “biasmo,” and “vitioso,” indicate Brusantino’s rejection of same-sex love, which the paremia confirms.

The paremia is not Brusantino’s personal creation, since it comes from Boiardo’s Orlando innamorato, where in canto XIX in the second book a popular paremia appears in Brandimarte’s words on the essence of wicked men:

Disse nel suo pensier: “L’omo malvagio
Non se può stor al male onde è nutrito;
Né di settembre, né il mese di magio,
Né a l’aria fredda, né per la caldèna,
Se può dal fango mai distor la rana (OI, II.XIX.43).209

Brandimarte thinks that wicked men are similar to frogs that never come out of the mud, since they say that their own behavior is excused by other people’s bad behavior. As the frog hides in the thick mud with every climate and in every season, so the bad man loves his own vileness and cannot separate himself from the harm and badness with which he always engages; therefore, he is insensible to any reprimand or rebuke (GDLI, s.v. rana: La rana ama il pantano).

The second distich of Boiardo’s paremia, Ne escie del fango mai come la Rana, transferred in the context of Bocaccio’s story of Pietro di Vinciolo and his wife, acquires a specific contextual meaning. Pietro di Vinciolo’s homosexual tendencies are revealed when, one night, coming back home from a party, he finds out that his wife is about to engage in a

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209 For more information, see Matarrese 2004, 85. She demonstrates the popular origins of the paremia in the rhyme of the final distich of the octave, which is only apparently imperfect since the popular pronunciation of “rana” in the Romagna area would have been “rena.”
relationship with a young boy. While scolding his wife and reprimanding the behavior of a woman who was engaging in an adulterous relationship, he says,

> Or tu maladicevi così testé la moglie d’Ercolano e dicevi che arder si vorrebbe e che ella era vergogna di tutte voi: come non dicevi di te medesima? [...] Certo niuna altra cosa vi t’induceva se non che voi siete tutte così fatte, e con l’altrui colpe guatate di ricoprire i vostri falli: che venir possa fuoco da cielo che tutte v’arda, generazion pessima che voi siete!” (Dec., V.10.54)

Pietro’s referral to the typical feminine behavior to cover one’s bad deeds with someone else’s faults could be the textual source for Brusantino’s initial paremia: as much as the frog, Pietro’s wife and all women hide themselves in the mud of other women’s betrayals to feel protected by the generality of bad choices. However, given the tone of the allegory and the contextual analysis, it might be speculated that Brusantino’s choice of the paremia is rather directed to another aspect of the story: in the end, Pietro does not punish his wife, but consents to her relationship so that he can enjoy the presence of her boy himself. He, who wants to hide his real sexual orientation by means of taking advantage of his wife’s cheating, is not dissimilar to a frog in a bog.

Brusantino’s interpretation of the story is exclusively ethical, as it wipes out all of Boccaccio’s references to the power of love and to the wife’s upfront excuses of her behavior. In his world, the woman’s behavior is unethical because she does not respect the commitment of marriage and looks for ways to satisfy her sexual appetites, being even good for two husbands simultaneously (Dec., V.10.6).\(^{210}\) Brusantino scatters a few clues in the story to remind the reader of the woman’s behavior, as with, for instance, “la buona donna dal disio portata” (CN, 289), which does not find an equivalent in the *Decameron*. On the other side, Pietro’s soul is even more unethical because he follows an unnatural desire

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without hesitation, an unjustifiable love that cannot be contemplated in the horizon of possible expressions of human feelings.

Punished Jealousy

Among human feelings, jealousy is certainly the most despised shortcoming for Brusantino. Because of its nature, he makes jealousy receive the most extreme reactions and allows love to be expressed fully. An interesting analysis on the topic can be made between novellas III.6 and VII.5. Even though the two stories belong to two different days and thus pertain to two different topics, respectively, diligence to recover something lost or to obtain something, and tricks of women against husbands, Brusantino’s introductory paremias blame jealousy as the evil root that determines the course of events:

CN, III.6

Lieve è di astutia ingannar gelosia

Che il tutto crede, quando è in frenesia

[Dec. III.6: “Ricciardo Minutolo ama la moglie di Filippello Sighinolfi; la quale sentendo gelosa, col mostrare Filippello il di seguente con la moglie di lui dovere essere a un bagno, fa che ella vi va, e credendosi col marito essere stata si ritruova che con Ricciardo è dimorata”]

CN, VII.5

La troppo gelosia induce a tale

Che da se stessa se ne causa il male

[Dec. VII.5: “Un geloso in forma di prete confessa la moglie, al quale ella dà a vedere che ama un prete che viene a lei ogni notte; di che mentre che il geloso nasconditemente prende guardia all’uscio, la donna per lo tetto si fa venire un suo amante e con lui dimora”]

In both novellas, the person afflicted by the deceiving mind of another character is the jealous person, regardless of his gender. Catella, incredibly jealous of her husband to the point that “ogni uccel che per l’aria volava, che lo togliesse a lei selo credea” (CN, 151), is rightly so
the recipient of Ricciardo Minutolo’s trick, which allows him to benefit of her beauty. Likewise, the husband in novella VII.5, because of his extreme feelings of jealousy, gives his wife every right to make “il fistolo usci[re] da dosso al suo marito” and deceive him to teach him a lesson (Dec., VII.5.13).

The two initial paremias describe jealousy as a negative feeling that leads to inappropriate behaviors in society: when it is extreme or in frenzy, it is uncontrollable and makes someone believe everything, causing that person to be vulnerable and exposed to deceits. The two initial allegories support this idea, for jealousy is described as a driving, uncontrollable force that causes the mind to go “fuori de li dovuti termini” and believe in “cose impossibili” (III.6) as well as to consider “le cose vere per false” (VII.5). Even though in III.6, Ricciardo is an allegorical representative of the cunning man, his slyness is depicted as an easy one, since jealousy allows him to be successful. Thus, Brusantino’s initial paremia focuses more on jealousy and consequently places his deceit on a secondary level, even though Ricciardo’s deception forces Catella to forget jealousy and engage in the opposite behavior, namely, cheating on her husband. In VII.5, the wife embodies the fraudulent person, thus an unethical member of society, but the paremia highlights that it is her husband’s jealousy that causes sorrow and distress to her; thus, he deserves to be betrayed in his own house. In III.6, Brusantino does not consider adultery in either the allegory or the paremia, and the same happens in VII.5, where the deceit mentioned in the initial allegory refers to the trick of the woman pretending to have a lover before her husband disguised as a priest. In the ethical world that Brusantino aims to pull out of the Decameron, these two adulteries do not find a place, as they are replaced by the worst misbehavior that jealousy represents, both in social and individual terms.

Even though the word “jealousy” is not mentioned in the initial allegory and paremia, this feeling dominates story VII.4 as well. Love is praised, and so is Monna Ghita’s desire to
satisfy her bodily appetite with her lover. Boccaccio’s novella introduces the element of the husband’s jealousy, and points at it as the cause of Ghita’s decision and of Tofano’s final punishment, but it does not represent the central point of his story. Indeed, the last words of the novella, “E viva amore” (Dec., VII.4.31), establish a circular reference to the initial praise of love in all its facets (Dec., VII.4.3-4). On the contrary, in his introductory allegory and paremia, Brusantino focuses exclusively on the husband’s stupidity, which leads him to suffer bitter consequences because of his unjustified and insane jealousy. The allegory recognizes that the act the wife committed was offensive (“ingiurioso”). However, it also emphasizes that the husband, since he tried to avenge it by using slyness, namely closing his wife out of the house before public ridicule, receives all his faults back and is properly punished. Along the same lines, the paremia generalizes the immediate context of the novella with an ethical message about the foolish person who, upon realizing his own mistake, receives the harsh pains of an act of supposed shrewdness that causes harm instead:

Allegoria

Per Tofano, che chiude la moglie fuor di casa, si tole per lo scempio accorgitore, il quale de l’atto ingiurioso volendo vendicarsi da astutia, e doppia fraude accolto, ritorna in lui tutte le colpe

Proverbio

Accorto del suo error lo sciocco viene
Da doppia astutia oppresso in dure pene

[Dec. VII.4: “Tofano chiude una notte fuor di casa la moglie, la quale, non potendo per prieghi rientrare, fa vista di gittarsi in un pozzo e gittavi una gran pietra; Tofano esce di casa e corre là, e ella in casa se n’entra e serra lui di fuori e sgridandolo il vitupera”]

Boccaccio never uses the word “ingiuria” to indicate Monna Ghita’s behavior, but rather emphasizes that the only master of her decisions is Love: “La donna, alla quale Amore aveva già aguzzato co’ suoi consigli lo ’ngegno” (Dec., VII.4.16). In Brusantino’s text, instead, the
husband, because of his offensive behavior, deserves a double punishment, namely his wife’s brothers beating him up, and his being forced to acquiesce to all of his wife’s whims and pretend not to realize them. He is also worthy of deception because of his dumbness, which makes him think that he could combat his wife’s intelligence, when in fact, the dichotomy gives full advantage to the woman. As in the previous example, the adulterous act is not mentioned in either the allegory or the paremia, confirming Brusantino’s adversarial attitude against jealous people and his acknowledgement of the punishment they deserve, even a supposedly unethical one.

_Lascious Love and Religion_

Deceitful and lascivious love characterizes not only married couples but another important institution in society, the Church. Brusantino does not frame love among members of the Church under the lens of religious sin, as is the case, for instance, in Borghini’s and Salviati’s rewritings of the *Decameron*. The “errore” does not pertain to Church, but rather to society, since it is a deviance from a behavior that society recognizes as correct. The fact that a religious person commits it does not change its essence, since another person could easily do the same: it is wrong since rules of good and respectful behavior in society, and in smaller groups within it such as the Church, recommend not to admit it, and since, by breaking these rules, individuals and society at large will be affected.

Brusantino does not hesitate to express his disapproval of the main characters’ behavior in novella I.4, thus transforming substantially the perspective of the original text. If Boccaccio is looking at the monk and his superior humanely, since he was conscious that love is an insuperable force impossible to suppress, Brusantino is straightforward in his castigation. He decides to make the monk and the abbot repent for their sins, thus eliminating

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Boccaccio’s acceptance of the dark sides of the human mind and behavior, and introducing the right path of religious observance (Favaro, 108). Already in the allegory, Brusantino specifies that the abbot is a bad man, an aspect that is confirmed throughout the story; therefore, he prepares his readers for the character’s nature and anticipates the subsequent evolution and resolution of the story, distancing his own ethics from Boccaccio’s. Likewise, in the paremia, he emphasizes the abbot’s evil mind and indirectly comments on his lack of judgment, because it is a foolish move to blame someone for a bad action that one could potentially commit:

*Allegoria*

Per lo abate che volse punier il monaco caduto in peccato dinota l’huomo cattivo che vuole riprender l’altro dove che spesso accade che nel medesimo peccato coperto si ritrova peggio esser incorso

*Proverbio*

Nel riprender altri del mal insano

Il giuditio bisogna haver ben sano

[Dec. I.4: “Un monaco, caduto in peccato degno di gravissima punizione, onestamente rimproverando al suo abate quella medesima colpa, si libera dalla pena”]

Both the allegory and the paremia refer to the abbot’s actions throughout the story and his blaming the young monk for his mistake, when in fact, alone with the girl, he falls into the same temptation. However, if Boccaccio’s abbot simply follows the requests of his body on the spot, Brusantino’s abbot thinks about satisfying his sexual desires in advance, as he has already planned to enter the monk’s cell and possess the girl. In this way, Brusantino does not make the readers experience the empathy that Boccaccio’s abbot inspired; his abbot consciously decides from the beginning to commit a mistake and, thus, he does not deserve any compassion or excuse. Accordingly, at the end of the story, Boccaccio’s abbot and monk convene to keep the event between themselves and, supposedly, continue meeting the woman
Conversely, Brusantino’s abbot, conscious of his own mistakes, feels sorry and regrets them. Therefore, he makes an ethical choice and goes back to his religious duties, where love is directed only to God (CN, 28).

In III.10, Alibech’s and Rustico’s actions are unacceptable because uncontrolled desire and wantonness drive them. In the initial allegory and paremia, Brusantino does not account for Alibech’s naïvete and inexperience, and consequently her feelings are not considered as innocent as they are in the *Decameron*. On the other side, Rustico’s unrestrained desire deserves blame, since he falls into temptation and cannot refrain from it in the same way the two precedent monks that Alibech had encountered on her way to hermitage do:

*Allegoria*

Per Alibech dinota la semplice lascivia, per Rustico lo sfrenato disio, il quale tentato per la lascivia ad essersi data in preda et lei più che mai ne lo sfrenato disio compiacendosi, lo invita a li amorosi piaceri

*Proverbio*

Quanto lascivia più in disio si mesce

Tanto la voglia più aumenta e cresce

[Dec. III.10: “Alibech diviene romita, a cui Rustico monaco insegna rimettere il diavolo in Inferno: poi, quindi tolta, diventa moglie di Neerbale”]

Even though Alibech’s lasciviousness is defined as “semplice,” meaning not malicious and just driven by natural bodily appetites that are understandable in a young woman, she is as guilty as Rustico; both of them enjoyed the act of “rimettere il diavolo in inferno.” In the allegory, the use of the verb “tentare” to describe Rustico’s desire places his “mistake” in the religious realm, where indeed one of the pillars for a good hermit is to refrain from any attraction to the other sex. However, there is no mention of religious castigation: Rustico’s behavior affects society and individuals, and thus, his is a civil sin. The women’s laughter at
Alibech’s simpleness when she returns to his hometown is the direct consequence of Rustico’s societal mistake (Dec., III.10.32-35). Indeed, his behavior could unbalance an equilibrium that laid its foundation on respect of people and examples of ethical behavior for everyone.

As in the above-mentioned novellas, Brusantino lingers over certain details in describing the preliminaries of the love act, which Boccaccio had left to the imagination of his readers:

E mirando la forma di quel peso
Subitamente fu maravigliata
E disse, che cosa è ch’ivi hai si mossa
Che spingi inanzi così dura e grossa (CN, 180)
[…]
A incarcerar quel maledetto e rio
Che alcia la testa con si fier disio (CN, 181).

Even though the comedy of these events disappears in the big picture of the condemnation of the act per se, especially because the act involves a deceitful religious member, the comedy still offers a relief from Brusantino’s ethically charged narration.

In another instance, novella IV.2, Brusantino follows the structure of Boccaccio’s story, even though he emphasizes the punishment that Friar Alberto faces due to his illicit intercourses with Madonna Lisetta. Boccaccio is neutral in his judgement of the friar’s acts (the aim of the novella is indeed to lighten the somber atmosphere consequent to the story of Guiscardo and Ghismonda and to make the brigata laugh and become merry); his story almost transmits a sense of sadness over the friar’s final punishment, while at the same time laughing, yet without critical judgement, over Madonna Lisetta’s lack of intelligence. Even though he maintains the same tone throughout the story, Brusantino makes the allegory judge
Friar Alberto harshly for his unethical behavior and his deviant machinations to obtain Madonna Lisetta’s favors. Additionally, the paremia accuses Madonna Lisetta’s behavior and dumbness without restraint:

**Allegoria**

Per Frate Alberto, vien notato lo sfrenato desiderio, posto in un cor vile; per la donna, in la quale s’inamora, s’intende la persuasione di molte sciocche le quali, sotto estremi vanti de la lor fragile bellezza, si lasciano tirar ad opre triste, da genti vili, con biasimo de la lor vergogna

**Proverbio**

Danno, e vergogna convien che scocche

Da la persuasion di donne sciocche

[Dec. IV.2: “Frate Alberto dà a vedere a una donna che l’agnol Gabriello è di lei innamorato, in forma del quale più volte si giace con lei; poi, per paura de’ parenti di lei della casa gittatosi, in casa d’un povero uomo ricovera, il quale in forma d’uom salvatico il di seguente nella Piazza il mena, dove riconosciuto e da’ suoi frati preso, è incarcerato”]

The allegory presents the adjective “vile” twice to depict Friar Alberto’s coward heart that is inclined to lie and deceive only to indulge an unreasonable desire. On the other side of the spectrum, Madonna Lisetta, “donna zucca al vento” (Dec., IV.2.20), represents all the simpletons who believe everything and let wicked people fool them for the sake of having their beauty recognized. Brusantino refers to the passage in Boccaccio’s text that sees Madonna Lisetta boast her incredible, almost supernatural beauty (Dec., IV.2.20):

E disse hor ben la mia bellezza atterra

La celestiale ancor ben vi dicea

Se Dio mi aiuti, che di voi m’incresce

E vi perdono il mal che in ben riesce (CN, 201).
The result is that Madonna Lisetta, as a vain and characterless woman, is easy to persuade, and thus is driven to commit shameful actions and receive harm.

Brusantino confirms the message he expresses about the two characters of the story in the initial allegory and paremia, when he adds a proverbial phrase that is not present in the *Decameron*. While Friar Alberto, disguised as the Archangel Gabriel, and Madonna Lisetta are pleasing themselves, the woman can enjoy the taste of love with a handsome man, and at the same time experience the spirituality of the act. Because she is satisfying two desires at the same time, Brusantino introduces the paremia,

Gli fece far dui chiodi in una calda (CN, 202).

Similar to *Fare un viaggio e due servigi*, the proverbial phrase, placed at the end of the octave, ironically winks at Madonna Lisetta, who thinks to do something heavenly while she is on earth and engaged in the most physical act possible for human beings (GDLI, s.v. *chiodo*).

Brusantino’s novella ends with the same tragic conclusion that Boccaccio devised for his own. One aspect that changes is the way Friar Alberto dresses up when he is conducted in front of the crowd: if in the *Decameron*, he exits the peasant’s house as a “homo salvaticus,” in *Le cento novelle*, he disguises himself as a bear; but just a few lines below, the author contradicts himself, since he puts in Friar Alberto’s hands a huge stick (CN, 204). The final distich of Brusantino’s novella sounds more paremiac than Boccaccio’s conclusion:

*Decameron*

Così piaccia a Dio che a tutti gli altri possa intervenire (Dec., IV.2.58)

*Le cento novelle*

Che così piaccia a Dio che ciascun vegna

Ch’in pensar, e mal far al cor disegna (CN, 205).
Brusantino’s final lines look like an *ad hoc* creation for the novella: the consequences of Friar Alberto’s behavior should extend to all others who behave in the same way. If the initial paremnia is sending a message on the simplicity of Madonna Lisetta’s behavior, the final one focuses on Friar Alberto, whom the initial allegory had mentioned. God should be pleased if harm, sadness, and shame fall upon anyone who puts his heart in bad thinking and acting: this is the ethical message that Brusantino sends to his readers, extrapolating it from the context in the *Decameron* and extending it as a general truth to the advantage of the entire society.

Lasciviousness is condemned in novella IX.2 too. The story recounts the adventures of another religious member, the Abbess of a convent, whose illicit encounters are discovered when, leaving her cell in a hurry, she places on her head her lover’s drawers instead of her veil. Since the initial allegory, Brusantino disapproves the Abbess’s lust and her arrogance in believing that she would be excused for her misconduct, which in fact leaves her with a double shame. By means of the paremnia, Brusantino also points out the mistake that the Abbess committed and that she even favors for the sake of her own enjoyment:

*Allegoria*

Per la Abadessa che riprende la monaca, se intende la superba lascivia, la quale non acorta del suo proprio errore vol gastigare l’altro, e spesse volte accade che nel riprender viene scoperta de maggior eccesso, onde ne resta da doppia vergogna oppressa

*Proverbio*

Scoperto il Reo del suo proprio errore

A la fraude e al mal ne dà favore

[Dec. IX.2: “Levasi una badessa in fretta e al buio per trovare una sua monaca, a lei accusata, col suo amante nel letto; e essendo con lei un prete, credendosi il saltero de’ veli aver posto in capo, le brache del prete vi si pose; le quali vedendo l’accusata, e fattalane accorgere, fu deliberata e ebbe agio di starsi col suo amante”]
In Brusantino’s ethical perspective, nuns, who should constitute a model of coherent and respectful behavior for all other religious members, and most of all for all people, commit a societal mistake. Not differently from Boccaccio, Brusantino shows no form of condemnation toward the young nun Isabetta, whose love is human and perfectly understandable. Brusantino rather condemns Abbess Usimbelda, not for her religious sin, but for her deceit and fraud. Indeed, her double shame is her revealed secret and, even worse, her fraud and pretense of perfection.

Although following the Decameron rather faithfully, Brusantino changes the tone with which he recounts the events. On the one side, he emphasizes Isabetta’s beauty, showing an emphatic attitude while describing her; on the other, he adds more pathetic moments in the various stages of the relationship between her and her lover, from the moment when the young man falls in love with her, to the long time spent without acquiring the fruits of their feelings, and up to the moment when they express their passionate love (CN, 452). In this way, Brusantino highlights the naturalness and spontaneity of Isabetta’s feelings vis-à-vis the wickedness of the Abbess’s hiding her adulterous relationship and accusing her community. Brusantino also includes ironic moments, for instance when he describes the scene of the nuns calling the Abbess and accompanying her to Isabetta’s cell:

Dicendo [l’Abadessa] andava ove è la maledetta
Da Dio con l’altre che erano in furor
Da far trovare l’Isabetta in fallo
Con il caro suo amante in mezo al ballo (CN, 452)

The image of finding Isabetta and her lover in the middle of their dance recalls an ironic sexual reference. Here, the Abbess’s mind is ready to accuse the young nun, but, aware of the Abbess’s “fallo,” Brusantino is stressing the ethical incongruence of her behavior: being the
one more in fault than the others, she paradoxically judges them and thus attempts to deceive them and society at large.

At the end of the story, Brusantino seems to forget the message of the initial allegory and paremia, and preserves Boccaccio’s idea that love is a driving force in human life. The Decameron concludes with the Abbess’s final admission of guilt, and her authorization for everyone to continue having sexual relationships, with the statement, “venne impossibile essere il potersi dagli stimoli della carne difendere” (Dec., IX.2.18). Not only does Brusantino conclude his story with similar words; he even adds a reference to the impossibility of suppressing the stimuli of the flesh in a secure place, such as a convent:

E conchiudendo comenciò a parlare
Che era impossibile de poter tenerse
Da i stimoli de la carne, ne trovare
Loco sicuro ancora di abstenerse (CN, 453).

In these lines, there is no trace of shame: the nuns continue to live happily together, the Abbess resumes her sexual encounters “senza vergogna” just like Isabetta, and all the other celibate nuns, who did not have a lover, start to search for one. Once again, even in a novella with Church people, the naturalness of love prevails, despite a harsh condemnation of the unethical choice to betray religious regulations.

Religious Matters

When he comes to term with religious episodes that are not connected to love, Brusantino carries out the same methodology of adaptation of Boccaccio’s text to his ideology. He adopts a different politics according to the typology of unethical and blameful behavior that Boccaccio presents in his story, and the result of this act on individuals or the group of people involved in it. He may modify certain aspects of the story so that the text
complies with the initial allegory and paremia, or he may follow the original text but twist the meaning of the novella. In these cases, his adherence to Christian religion, which has a reflection on religious as well as societal ethics, guides his textual changes and innovations.

In novella I.3, Brusantino openly declares his opposition to religious discourses and his stance on religion. He harshly blames the person, Melchisedech giudeo, who was instead praised in the Decameron, and ironizes on the Hebrew religion. The introductory allegory and paremia for the story show the ethical direction of Brusantino’s interpretation of the story:

*Allegoria*

Per Melchisedech Giudeo vien tolto il cativo qual voria la miglior fede nascondere tra le due sette, dil che si vede quanto sia la più honorificata et di vigore, et quanto più Dio tegni cura et governo della christiana.

*Proverbio*

Il dubbio lassa al disputare di fede

Che sol fedel è quel che ’n Christo crede

In the two paratextual elements, Saladin is not even mentioned, since all the attention is devoted to Melchisedech. His figure, and the way he finds to escape the trap Saladin built for him, triggers a biased discussion on the excellence of the Christian religion, to which God’s preference goes. The paremia’s message confirms Brusantino’s position: if in doubt, leave any discussion of faith, since the uniquely faithful one believes in Christ. As in the idiomatic expression “fra due litiganti il terzo gode,” the Hebrew and the Islamic religions are considered sects; hence they do not even qualify in the classification, and only the third religion, the Christian one, prevails.

Brusantino’s lack of consideration for the Hebrew religion finds a counterpart in the text of the novella, where he stresses the negative aspects associated with it, making these
aspects more universal than the private dimension in Boccaccio’s text. For instance, when
Saladin thinks of a way to get Melchisedech in an uncomfortable situation, Boccaccio writes:

E pensossi costui [Melchisedech] avere a poterlo servire, quando volesse, ma sì era
avaro che di sua volontà non l’avrebbe mai fatto, e forza non gli voleva fare (Dec.,
I.3.7),

which makes Saladin’s consideration of Melchisedech’s nature a personal one, related to his
personality. On the contrary, Brusantino’s text,

Ma essendo quell hebreo misero e avaro

Che per cortesia mai faria niente [...] (CN, 25),

makes Melchisedech’s avarice a more general one, associated with his being a Hebrew and
therefore deriving from his religion. In a day devoted by tacit agreement to mottos and verbal
stratagems, Boccaccio praises Melchisedech’s brilliance at escaping an entangled
circumstance and describes the similarity of the three religions, and the impossibility and
inefficacy of defining a clear separation between them. On the contrary, Brusantino only
focuses on the religious aspect and on the absolute preeminence of the religion he practices.

Surprisingly, novella I.6, which undergoes drastic changes in the three most well
known rassettature of the Decameron because of its anti-religious tones, is left unchanged in
its structure and message in Le cento novelle. The initial allegory and paremia confirm that
Brusantino, as was Boccaccio’s intent, condemns religious hypocrisy, the evilest feeling ever,
against which even a biting motto from a simple person is legitimate:

Allegoria

L’uomo a cui viene opposto d’haver’errato nella fede, si toglie per la semplicità, il
frate che l’accusava di tassa per l’avaritia, la quale per hippocresia non si cura d’alcn
biasmo, pur c’habbia il suo intento
Proverbio

D’ogni religioso opra più ria

Non è presso di lui c’hippocrisia

[Dec. I.6: “Confonde un valente uomo con un bel detto la malvagia ipocresia de’ religiosi”]

As can be seen in other instances, Brusantino employs words that express his evaluation on the friar’s behavior: thus, his hypocrisy becomes “inferma” and “brodaia […] sua immensa” (CN, 32). Additionally, in order to expose the friar’s greed, Brusantino replaces certain veiled, yet more ironic, references to money in the Decameron with a clear and direct indication of the object. For instance, when Boccaccio writes that the man, in order to be excused from his blasphemy, tries to bribe the friar by giving him “una buona quantità della grascia di san Giovanni Boccadoro” (Dec., I.6.9), meaning the florins with the image of the saint, Brusantino explicitly admits that he offers him “per perdono oro e argento” (CN, 32); he thus augments the qualitative value of the bribe. For the same reason, he lingers over the simple man’s discourse, emphasizing his jeering tones:

Io vel dirò (disse colui) la mente
Mia sopra ciò che ben l’intederete
Veggio ogni giorno a tanta povra gente
Duoi gran caldai di broda che porgete
Che se sento per uno dio v’assente
Al’altro mondo haver v’affogharete
E questa è l’importanza che’n la broda
Non trovarete mai riva, né proda (CN, 33).

The final distich of this octave, absent in the Decameron, delivers the man’s strong mocking and ridiculing attitude: by using a poetic term such as “proda” to create a rhyme with “broda,” Brusantino matches the refined tones of poetic enterprises with the popular level of
the novella in his intent to popularize the *Decameron*’s text. The result is a clash between the
power of the man’s motto and the evidence of the friar’s scorn, which makes Brusantino’s
point of view much more powerful than Boccaccio’s.

In the realm of religion, Boccaccio also castigates those characters who pretend to be
excellent observants of its regulations, when they are in fact criminals. The best example of
this category is the first novella of the first day, where Brusantino highlights Ser
Ciappelletto’s hypocrisy so as to make it the crucial aspect of the novella, even more than it
already was in the *Decameron* (Favaro, 103-04). The increased focus of the story on
hypocrisy is transferred in the initial allegory and paremia. In the allegory, Brusantino
specifically mentions that hypocrisy is frequently used against kindness of heart, as with the
confessing Friar who is in the dark about Ciappelletto’s ruse and believes all his words.
However, as the initial paremia of novella IV.2 states, *Chi è reo e buono è tenuto, può fare il
male e non è creduto* (Dec., IV.2.5), not only is the hypocrisy not recognized, but it is even
taken for saintliness and celebrated. And Brusantino’s introductory paremia focuses exactly
on the consequences of bad use of the human mind, such as a hypocritical one:

*Allegoria*

Per Ser Ciappelletto vien tolta l’hippocrisia, la quale spesse volte inganna la bontade e
viene adoperata in così fatti casi che si piglia per Santa, come fu detto santo Ser
Ciappelletto

*Proverbio*

Credi a gli effetti, et non a le parole,

Che spesso ’l mal’, e’l ben inganar suole

[Dec. I.10: “Ser Cepparello con una falsa confessione inganna un santo frate e muorsì; e, essendo stato un
pessimo uomo in vita, è morto reputato per santo e chiamato san Ciappelletto”]

Despite not using the word “hippocrisia,” in the second hemistich of the distich, the paremia
mentions how bad deeds and words lead the human mind to be deceived, which is the
objective of a hypocrite. When acknowledging this, one should be extremely careful not to believe words, but only facts. Therefore, the paremia is a warning: be alert because words make anything possible and anyone believe in what facts cannot substantiate.

By transforming and elaborating various sections of the original text, Brusantino creates a different atmosphere in his story of Ciappelletto. In *Le cento novelle*, Ciappelletto says to the two brothers hosting him that he will commit one last sin before dying in order not to ruin their reputation. Subsequently, the effect of suspense and surprise that Boccaccio’s story conveys and that readers experience when Ciappelletto makes a paradoxical confession to the naïve priest, vanishes. The entire confession, based upon ambiguous terms and references in the *Decameron*, loses the rhetorical power it had there and simply confirms Ciappelletto’s wicked soul:

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{E s’al mio ultimo fine un peccato} \\
\text{Faro non spero haver né più né meno,} \\
\text{Ch’ad ogni modo n’ho già tanti oprato,} \\
\text{E fatte tant’ingiurie al ciel sereno (CN, 16).}
\end{align*} \]

In order to show Ciappelletto’s evil acts, his confession is filled with more theological elements, such as a reference to the sacrifice made by God through his son. This makes Brusantino’s discourse even more convincing to the Friar’s ears than it was in the original, and also shows the man’s ontological brutality. Additionally, Brusantino eliminates the reference to the “cotali insalutuzze d’erbucce” (Dec., I.1.41), whose diminuitive ironically points out the gluttonous affection Ciappelletto has for food, something that he is not declaring to the priest. In order to clarify the boundary between who is lying and who is the right devotee, Brusantino also crosses out some of the accusations that Ciappelletto directs at the priest, such as his reproach for saying that not devoting the established day to the

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212 Brusantino’s story lacks coherence, since he does not remember to change the two brothers’ surprise before Ciappelletto’s confession to the priest (Dec., I.1.78-79).
Christian festivity (Saturday after the vespers, and Sunday) is a minor sin (Dec., I.1.57-60), and for admitting that priests spit on the churches’ floor all the time (Dec., I.1.62-64). For all these reasons, Brusantino’s Ciappelletto is described in more judgmental terms than in the *Decameron*: indeed, Boccaccio uses his first name every time, whereas Brusantino describes him with adjectives such as “tristo,” “sclerato,” “falso,” and “ghiotto.” Brusantino also puts aside Boccaccio’s view on Ciappelletto’s brilliant mind and the power of his words, compliant with the topic of the day, and focuses just on his devilish and unethical machinations.

At the end of the story, Brusantino eliminates Panfilo’s considerations of the greatness of God, who can forgive anyone, even the most abominable people (Dec., I.1.90). In doing so, Brusantino replaces God’s central role in the *Decameron* and focuses only on the foolishness of the people, who, by sanctifying Ciappelletto, contribute to his undeserved fame.213 Consequently, Brusantino ends the novella as follows:

Ma pel giuditio suo pensar si deve
Dannato quello e non già in Paradiso,
onde se fosse salvo, troppo lieve
Saria la gratia a noi data e l’aviso
Come benignamente noi riceve
Se ’l cor nostro non è da Dio diviso,
Però dobbiamo sempre ricercarlo,
Bramandolo, e adorandol seguitarlo (CN, 10).

Similar to the initial paremia, which warned human beings to consider facts and not words because the latter can be deceiving, at the end of the novella, Brusantino reminds people of the consequences faced by not worshipping God continuously. In other words, one may

213 For a comprehensive analysis of the differences between Boccaccio’s novella and Brusantino’s canto and on aspects deriving from the Counter-Reformation atmosphere, see Perocco, 298-303.
receive God’s grace and love only if one’s heart is in harmony with God’s. Moreover, contrary to the initial allegory, which was just emphasizing the results of a lack of understanding of hypocritical actions, the final assertion harshly condemns Ser Ciappelletto to Hell because of “his judgement,” evidently his mind devoted to wicked acts. If he were to be saved and sent to Paradise, God would not be distributing his grace and generosity in a fair way, because an objective way would be to give it to those who continuously serve him. God, who was prone to accept Ser Ciappelletto among his peers in the Decameron, in Le cento novelle rewards only those who truly deserve it.

On the Sixth Day

On a different topic, the power of the word celebrated in the most Florentine day of all, Day VI, Brusantino shows a transformation of the stories’ message and content in line with his ethical perspective. The underlining point is that mottos are accepted if the circumstances require them; otherwise, they should be avoided since they tend to hurt the person’s sensibility. A comparison between Boccaccio’s captions for the novellas in Day VI and Brusantino’s paremias highlights the shift in perspective and how the Ferrarese author was interested in different aspects from those that assume a central and crucial role in the Decameron. More than verbal perspicuity, Brusantino analyzes the value of virtue and the importance of respect for the individual.

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214 Perocco asserts that the octave is an exhortation not to trust the divine benignity and to repent all sins in order to be saved (Perocco, 301). However, it seems that Brusantino is emphasizing the concept of divine justice for those who engage in a constant relationship with God and inviting them to do so, otherwise divine grace will not be granted.

Boccaccio’s captions for the day refer to the respectability of the motto (“onestamente” in I.9), to its swiftness (“sola parola,” “presta risposta,” “presta parola,” “presta e piacevol risposta” in VI.2, VI.3, VI.4, and VI.7) and of its effectiveness (“fa raveder,” “impone,” “sé campa,” “morde,” “vince,” “sé libera,” and “dice” in VI.2, VI.3, VI.4, VI.5, VI.6, VI.7, and VI.9). When Brusantino transports these novellas in Le cento novelle, he changes the focus and shifts it toward more ethical matters pertaining to religious dishonesty, lack of countenance, and shame. Of all the stories, only his novella VI.3 captures the essence of the Decameron’s day and of quick and effectual mottos in its initial paremia, L’animo accorto è sempre più abbondante Di effetti e de risposte in uno istante.

In the first novella of the day, Brusantino does not celebrate il “leggiadro motto” that Madonna Oretta uses to silence the knight’s inability to recount a story in an organized and compelling way. Brusantino rather focuses on the knight’s wrongdoings, as he specifies it in the introductory allegory and paremia:

**Allegoria**

Per il cavalier che dice a Horetta dirli una novella si tolle la insipidezza quale ha tal volta ardire di volersi pore a la virtude a paro, onde accortasi de la sua mala gratia resta beffata

**Proverbio**

Resti il vile e l’insipido di gire

Dove ne appar virtù e disire

[Dec. VI.1: “Un cavalier dice a madonna Oretta di portarla con una novella: e, mal compostamente dicendola, è da lei pregato che a piè la ponga”]

The message of the paremia sounds particularly harsh. In the Decameron, Boccaccio blames the knight, extending his judgment of his verbal skills to his valor in war and fights, when he says, “al qual forse non stava meglio la spada allato che ’l novellar nella lingua” (Dec., VI.1.9). This reference might explain Brusantino’s use of the adjective “vile,” which he uses
in many other cases in *Le cento novelle*, yet with characters who are far meaner than the knight of this story. Brusantino also blames him for his “insipidezza,” evidently given his bad qualities as a storyteller. The advice that Brusantino gives to any person who falls into this category is to avoid contact with people who show virtue, such as Madonna Oretta. Brusantino seems, however, to forget that Boccaccio’s knight is a very good listener, so he receives the refined blow that Madonna Oretta gives him, understands it, and even accepts it; indeed, he abandons the story he was recounting to start another one. In light of this, the use of the word “beffata” in the allegory sounds excessive.

Brusantino appears to read the knight’s behavior through the lens of ethical etiquettes, which were a less crucial component in Boccaccio’s novella. The Certaldese author emphasizes this throughout the text when he says that the knight recounts that story “assai svogliato,” and thus in a very unenthusiastic way that does not give justice to the story itself (Boccaccio 1980, 300). However, even though he hints at it, he does not aim to compare and contrast the knight’s and Madonna Oretta’s virtue (in which case, Madonna Oretta is the winner), but rather their rhetorical skills and the swiftness of their mind in finding a solution to an uncomfortable situation. Brusantino instead lays his entire story on the direct correlation between virtue and the ability to use mottos, and hence gives emphasis to the knight’s failure and humiliation.

Similarly, Brusantino gives novella VI.5 a more ethical perspective than in the *Decameron*. In Forese da Rabatta’s motto against Giotto’s ugliness, and in Giotto’s answer in the same exact tones, Boccaccio sees Giotto’s great capacity to defend himself from a gratuitous attack and the ability to “bite” his friend in the same coin. Through Giotto, Boccaccio aims to show how appearance is not an equivalent of mental perspicuity (Dec., VI.5.8), which Giotto demonstrates to Forese by means of his ingenious answer: “Il che messer Forese, udendo il suo error riconobbe, e vedesi di tal moneta pagato, quali erano state
le derrate vendute” (Dec., VI.5.16). Brusantino, instead, shifts the perspective exclusively onto Forese’s behavior and on his act of deriding Giotto, which deserves an equivalent blame, likewise based on ridiculing his physical ugliness. In both the initial allegory and paremia, Giotto and his swift mind are not mentioned, but the focus is on Forese’s unethical behavior:

**Allegoria**

Per Forese da Rabatta, s’intende lo schernitosi, quale non vedendo il proprio difetto schernisce l’altrui, onde nel medesimo effetto schernito dal schernitori resta maggiormente oppresso.

**Proverbio**

S’altrui schernir si vuol del mal espresso

Bisogna prima esaminar se stesso

[Dec. VI.5: “Messer Forese da Rabatta e maestro Giotto dipintore, venendo di Mugello, l’uno la sparuta apparenza dell’altro motteggiando morde”]

The paremia also focuses on the reflection that should accompany any decision. If one examined himself first, he would avoid blaming someone else for the same trait that can be related to him. Brusantino is saying that respect for the other should rule any human relationship, so that harm, shame, and blame could be avoided; in doing so, he eliminates much of the comic aspect and motto-related elements of Boccaccio’s original.217

In the *Decameron*’s novella VI.9, Boccaccio focuses on Guido Cavalcanti’s wits, which allows him to retort Betto and his companions’ blow in a harsh and silencing way. Guido is described as an Epicurean intellectual whose mental agility corresponds to his

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216 Manni states that this paremia reflects the habit and the mentality of the mercantile society at the time, along with many other examples of paremias regarding the world of merchants (Manni, 294).

physical agility, which Italo Calvino describes beautifully (Dec., VI.9.12).\textsuperscript{218} He is both a courteous man, since he is “costumato e parlante uom molto” (Dec., VI.9.8), and a brilliant mind, and hence the typical representative of “ingegno” and “industria.” Thanks to these two qualities, which both Branca and Baratto point out to be distinctive of many of Boccaccio’s characters (Baratto, 27; Branca 1986, 27), he manages to overcome a hindrance and places himself above those who planned to ridicule him for his speculative nature and excessive culture. Brusantino shifts the interpretation of the character from intellectually vibrant, intelligent, and gracious to only virtuous, and his virtue is considered as a tool to defeat the ignorance that pervasively fills the mind of his compatriots:

\textit{Allegoria}

Per Guido Cavalcanti si tolle la virtute, per gli cavaglieri fiorentini gli schernitori, quali al fine abbattute da la ragione restano impediti e simili alla morte

\textit{Proverbio}

Spesso opprime virtute l’ignoranza

Talmente che fa di morti stanza

\textit{[Dec. VI.9: “Guido Cavalcanti dice con un motto onestamente villania a certi cavalier fiorentini li quali soprapreso l’aveano’’]}

Brusantino’s Cavalcanti is first an allegorical representation of virtue, and then of reason, and his superiority makes his interlocutors look like dead people, even more dead than those people who are buried in cemeteries.

It is interesting to note that Brusantino eliminates the reference to Cavalcanti’s speculations aimed to demonstrate that God does not exist (Dec., VI.9.9) and changes the pun that Betto addresses against Cavalcanti. In the \textit{Decameron}, Betto was saying,

\textsuperscript{218} Italo Calvino, \textit{Lezioni americane: sei proposte per il prossimo millennio}. Milano: Garzanti, 1988: 12-16.
Guido, tu rifiuti d’esser di nostra brigata; ma ecco quando tu avrai trovato che Idio non sia, che avrai fatto? (Dec., VI.9.11),

and was therefore coherent with the people’s opinion about Cavalcanti’s philosophical membership to Epicureanism, mostly speculating over the absence of a supernatural entity. Differently, Brusantino’s Betto pronounces words directed toward a more lay and social matter:

Gli disser, tu rifiuti esser di nostri

E pascendo il cervel vano ti mostri (CN, 316).

Evidently, Brusantino found Boccaccio’s reference to the nonexistence of God too irreverent and decided to transform Betto’s words into a question punning Cavalcanti’s supposedly vain thoughts from a societal perspective, which is in line with the entire architecture of Le cento novelle. Brusantino does not question that Cavalcanti follows the Epicurean philosophy, but chooses not to make him reflect on the existence of God.

2.5 Le cento novelle’s Embedded Paremias: Adapting Boccaccio’s Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases to the Octave

In Le cento novelle, the transition of paremias does not only include the way initial paremias summarize the content of Boccaccio’s stories in ethical ways, but also concerns the passage that paremias embedded in the text undergo when put into verse. As already discussed, the structure of paremias is not fixed, as they can fluidly adjust to different genres and different purposes; therefore, their passage from the Decameron to Le cento novelle

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219 The title comes from Praloran, who, referring to Boiardo and Ariosto, says that they “adattano la loro lingua alla forma d’ottava” (Praloran, 11).
provides them with new life and new substance. When they are inserted into the given structure of octaves of hendecasyllables, they still contribute to the development of the story, clarify an aspect, comment upon an event or a character, conclude a thought, or create a circular structure with the beginning of the story. Thus, each of Boccaccio’s paremias becomes specific to the context that “hosts” it. Additionally, as these paremias change in their syntactical and prosodic structure, they also contribute to show the manipulation that Brusantino operates on the entire text of the Decameron and the way he interprets it.

A crucial aspect in the elaboration of Le cento novelle affects the way Brusantino places Boccaccio’s paremias in his own text: the Ferrarese author introduces the hendecasyllables and the octaves over a style and narration that already exist, and not vice versa. Le cento novelle’s octaves are crafted to contain Boccaccio’s highly developed narrative and its complex linguistic structures, which explains why Brusantino does not obtain that “coincidenza di strutture sintattiche e di misure metriche” that characterizes, for instance, Orlando furioso (Blasucci, 88). The octave appears as a container that accepts Boccaccio’s style, characterized by concatenation of sentences and fluid continuity of the syntax, but also distinguished by rhythm and poetic structures. All these aspects of the original text transfer to Brusantino’s hendecasyllables, adapt to them, and comply with his general interpretation of the text (De Robertis, 17).

Alfredo Schiaffini, starting from Ernesto Giacomo Parodi’s considerations (Parodi E., 1957), evaluates Boccaccio’s attention to rhetorical and poetic elements in his stories: Boccaccio puts adjectives before nouns, past participle before auxiliary verbs, and other rhetorical elements that contribute to the poetic flow of his narrative and imitate Latin syntax.

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220 On the origins of Boccaccio’s paremias and their fortune in lexicographic works, see Rondinelli in Marchiaro and Zamponi, 297-317. Analysis of sententiae is excluded in this paragraph, for which see Chiecchi.
It is probable that Paolo da Perugia and Dionigi da Borgo San Sepolcro, humanist scholars whom Boccaccio met in his years at Carlo d’Angiò’s court, introduced him to “prosa versificata” or “prosa rimata,” which Boccaccio found as a way to combine his attraction to medieval rhetoric with narrative prose (Schiaffini, 178-84). Bruni argues that Boccaccio’s prose contains elements of the lyric and love poetry (Bruni, 383), while Branca defines Boccaccio’s prose a “prosa adorna di versi” (Branca 1986, 59). The Decameron’s oratio soluta, namely its prosaic style, contains many verses, such as pentasyllables, lines of six syllables, and hendecasyllables, as well as phonetic markers, rhetorical elements, and structures typical of poetry, especially used in moments of pathos and heroism to elevate the tone, or in comic and ridiculing sections of a speech. Boccaccio also resorted heavily to cursus velox, which he had used extensively at the end of the octaves of his Filocolo, and which was at the time mainly employed in treatises and pontifical documents (Parodi E. 1957, 480). With it, he was able to give musical intonation to the lines, with an intensification of the rhythm given by the final word(s) (Manni, 254). This pattern was frequently combined with the conclusive tone at the end of a sentence or final distich of an octave, and contributed to a sense of musicality while, at the same time, emphasizing the centrality of the expressed message.

The result is that Boccaccio’s prose is, in certain instances, in fact a poetry-prose or a rhythmic prose, where every single component is asked to provide poetic musicality and

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221 See also Manni, 253-54.
222 For an historical overview of “prosa versificata” and more accurate examples from the Decameron, see Branca 1986, 58-85.
223 Supposedly, this style drew inspiration from classical figures, such as Saint Augustine, Saint Bernardus, and Isidorus of Seville, as well as more contemporary rhetoricians, among whom Giovanni di Garlandia, and could be observed in Paulus Diaconus’s and Guittone d’Arezzo’s works and in Dante’s Vita Nuova (Branca 1986, 60-61).
224 For more information on cursus and its influence on medieval times, especially on Dante, see Aristide Marigo, Il “cursus” nella prosa latina dalle origini cristiane ai tempi di Dante. Padova: L. Penada, 1932. See also Beccaria 1994, s.v. cursus.
225 In the Decameron, Boccaccio devotes specific attention to the cursus, eminently in the Introduction and in the more elevated novellas for style, setting, and content. For accurate examples, see Chiecci, 132-34.
melodic rhythm to the prose (Branca 1986, 45-85; Del Popolo, 38-42; Bruni, 380-81; Beccaria 1994, s.v. prosa ritmica; Manni, 309). Given that the poetic structures is superimposed on a structure that is primarily comprised of prose, it can also be argued that Brusantino’s text is an example of “poesia narrativa.” The canonized elements of a chivalric poem in octaves engage in a constant dialogue and mutual interference with the distinctive features of prose, yet a prose that is at times evidently poetic. Likewise, the poetic syntax of Boccaccio’s prose, the back and forth of dialogues, and the essence of a word written to be read silently and not recited, are in contact with the poetic pattern and meter of Le cento novelle. These characteristics influence the alternation of octaves, as well as the concatenation between verses, thus generating a style that distinguishes Le cento novelle from previous examples of chivalric poems (and, probably, destined it to oblivion) and contributes to its hybridity between prose and poetry.

Considering Branca’s assertion that the Decameron’s prose seems to borrow the narrative fluidity of cantari, the connection between novellas in prose (or better, poetry-prose) and poetic renderings in octaves acquires a much stronger connection and filiation (Branca 1986, 65). Starting from the Decameron’s style, the passage from prose to poetry, and in particular to the ottava rima, could easily happen in Le cento novelle, and it would have not required restructuring the prose of the original text completely. However, if Boccaccio employs metrical elements to make his prose more poetic, Brusantino seems to operate in the opposite direction. He makes his text, which is structurally more poetic than the original, remain attached to Boccaccio’s prose style, and frequently restructures and eliminates those elements of poetry that Boccaccio had already placed in the text. An example might be the introductory sentence in novella VIII.6, where Boccaccio does not

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226 The cluster is borrowed from Francesco Flamini, who entitled the first chapter of the second part of his volume on sixteenth-century literature, “La poesia narrativa,” which focuses on Orlando furioso’s rewritings, also parodic ones, and on chivalric poems (Flamini, 141-68), and from Carlo Enrico Roggia’s article (Roggia).

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introduce Calandrino, Bruno, and Buffalmacco again, since they had already been mentioned in the third novella of the same day (Branca 1986, 63):

Chi Calandrino Bruno e Buffalmacco

fossero non bisogna che io vi mostri,

di sopra udito (Dec., VIII.6.4).

According to Branca, this sentence is constituted of three regular hendecasyllables that could be easily transferred to poetry, with minor adjustments for the rhyme. Brusantino does not seem to pay attention to the presence of rhetorical elements in Boccaccio, though, as he restructures the sentences in two hendecasyllables at the beginning of the second octave of the novella:

Chi Buffalmacco fusse, e Bruno insieme

Sapete, et chi ancor fusse Calandrino (CN, 397).

In his act of transferal and consequent appropriation of the *Decameron*, Brusantino renders Boccaccio’s sentence appropriate and meaningful to his own text, disregarding its original style.

Paremias are subjected to the same logic. Analyzing their “transition” confirms that Brusantino is not simply copying Boccaccio’s work, as he takes into account a new genre, a new social context, and a new public. For instance, the way he eliminates or adds paremias reveals his personal rewriting of the text, so that it would ultimately assume a textual and ideological coherence in its entirety.

Brusantino does not include the first *sententia* of the *Decameron*, which introduces the proemio and offers an interpretive key to the entire collection of short stories with his solemn rhythm:

_Umana cosa è aver compassione degli afflitti* (Dec., Proemio, 2).227

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227 On the paremia, see Boccaccio 1980, 5. n. 1; on its rhythm, see Del Popolo, 37.
It has already been discussed that Brusantino’s Prohemio is different from Boccaccio’s, and pointed out how he skips the initial description of the plague, as well as his reference to women suffering of lovesickness. Boccaccio’s compassion toward afflicted people, especially those who experienced, as he did, love and its subsequent loss, is no longer present in Le cento novelle. Brusantino does not seem to address a specific reader, since his rewriting of the Decameron is aimed at anybody who could draw useful teachings from the stories, as summarized in the initial allegories and paremias. Thus, Brusantino’s reading of the Decameron shifts the purpose of the work from a text that could sustain, assist, and provide refuge to women (Dec., Proemio, 13) to one that could provide ethical messages to a wider public of men and women, as well as offer material for courtly conversation; the absence of a paremia determines all these consequences in the organization and purpose of the work.228 Brusantino’s Decameron becomes a manual of positive and negative qualities with a societal appeal, and his confines extend beyond the enclosed walls of the rooms where women spend their time melancholically weeping over their lost love and reading.

Since Brusantino shortens the conclusion at the end of each day, the proverbial phrase in the conclusive section of Day III, Meglio essere un buon porco che una bella tosa,229 gets eliminated in the process. Brusantino does not keep the two proverbial phrases that feature in the Decameron’s novella IX.5, specifically Andare dietro come la pazza al figliuolo and Menare per lo naso, which gives substance to the argument that he seems to privilege proverbs over proverbial phrases. However, Brusantino also disregards some of the Decameron’s proverbs. For instance, the aforementioned novella V.9 presents a final sentence that captures the essence of courtly love represented throughout the story. In the

228 By eliminating the introductory paremia, Brusantino also disregards the elegant incipit of the Decameron obtained by the competent realization of cursus planus (Del Popolo, 37).
229 For more information, see Boccaccio 1980, 456, n. 4 and Merbury, 108.
Decameron, Monna Giovanna explains her choice to marry Federigo degli Alberighi to her brothers, who do not understand the reason behind it:

Ma io voglio avanti uomo che abbia bisogno di ricchezza che abbia bisogno d’uomo (Dec., V.9.42).

Her words, coming from Plutarch’s life of Themistocles (XVIII), Cicero’s De officiis (II.20), and Valerius Maximus’s Dicta et Facta Memorabilia (Boccaccio 1980, 691), emphasize the greater value of the heart over wealth, and represent an appropriate elevated end for such a refined story. In Le cento novelle, Brusantino decides not to transfer the paremnia in his verses, but to rephrase, or better, paraphrase it to render it more intelligible to a less cultivated audience. He maintains the meaning, yet without the caustic, short, and meaningful structure of the original. His translation reads as follows:

Ma chieggio huomo avanti a cui conviene

Bisogno di ricchezza, e di ricetto,

Che huomo ricco, imperò che ’l bene

Consiste in virtù più de l’intelletto (CN, 287).

Brusantino discards the chiasm of Boccaccio’s proverb, which could have been inserted in two hendecasyllables with minimal adjustments for metrical reasons. He prefers expressing its pedagogical message plainly: he adds that more than a rich man, a man who is in need of economical substance and of shelter (the need of a place to live was not in the Decameron) is the perfect husband. He then explains the reason in the last line: according to the elegiac tone of the novella, displaying good manners is more virtuous than possessing intellect, probably intending the latter to mean a mind devoted to accumulating riches.

In the reorganization of the original text, at an intermediate level between elimination of paremias and their preservation and consequent adaptation to the new context, one finds Brusantino’s personal additions and innovations: this may imply the insertion of paremias
that were absent in the *Decameron*. One such example is in story I.1, where a paremnia substitutes for a sentence and condenses its message related to Ciappelletto’s wickedness in a hemistich:

*Boccaccio*

E a lui non andava per la memoria chi tanto malvagio uom fosse in cui egli potesse alcuna fidanza avere, che opporre alla loro malvagità si potesse (Dec., I.1.8)

*Brusantino*

E come pien d’ingegno e tutto scaltro

*Pensò un cauto barber per rader l’altro* (CN, 199).

Since Musciatto Franzesi is looking for the most wicked man who could face and exceed the evilness of the inhabitants of Burgundy while he is back in Tuscany, his choice goes to Ser Ciappelletto. *Un barbier rade l’altro* means that a sly person always finds someone who is slyer than he is (GDLI, s.v. *barbiere*), and hence, Musciatto finds a person who is more evil than the people from Burgundy. By adding the adjective “cauto,” Brusantino gives us a perspective on the character: Ser Ciappelletto is not only a barber able to cut the other barbers’ throats, and as such, able to overcome the Burgundians who are disloyal, contemptible, and inclined to fight (Dec., I.1.8). He is also cautious, which means that he can detect the best ways, and the best people to deal with, in order to achieve his goal to the utmost. A legitimate question would be why Brusantino opts for a proverbial phrase, when, as Perocco argued, Boccaccio’s sentence has a clear and identifiable rhythm, easily transferable to poetry (Perocco, 299). As shown in the first chapter, employing a paremnia means creating a relationship with the community, as well as giving voice to the vitality of language. It also means to be more synthetic, as opposed to the sophistication of Boccaccio’s style. Brusantino’s verses, as all the traditional *cantari novellistici*, aim to appeal to a wide
popular public, who could immediately identify the meaning of the paremia and its reference or correspondence to everyday life.

Brusantino also transforms into a paremia what was originally a moral message in novella II.1. Boccaccio introduces the story with a sententious tone:

\[ \text{Chi altrui sé di beffare ingegnò, e massimamente quelle cose che sono da reverire, s'è con le beffe e talvolta col danno sé solo ritrovato (Dec., II.1.2).} \]

Even though there is no paremia, the moral message embedded in these terms can be easily condensed in the structure of a proverb, one that is more easily memorizable, pedagogically stronger, and more understandable. Brusantino does exactly so:

\[ \text{Chi in beffar altrui s'è dilettato} \]

\[ \cdots \]

\[ \text{Resta con danno al fin lui sol beffato (CN, 49).} \]

He shapes Boccaccio’s sentence into two rhymed verses inside the first six lines of an octave and create a paremiac structure.

When Brusantino reads the paremias in the Decameron, he finalizes them to the “buon andamento del metro” (Pettinelli 2004c, 190), or else he paraphrases them to explain their contextual meaning. The context, other than being meaningful since it provides the physical space in which the paremia actualizes its conventionalized meaning, is also fundamental because it offers linguistic material and metrical pauses so that the paremia can feature in a verse of eleven syllables and present a caesura. On the one side, proverbial phrases adjust in more flexible ways to the context; they simply need to be inserted in one or two lines and modified in accordance with the syntactical and morphological aspects of the context. On the other, as a hybrid genre at the intersection of poetry and prose, proverbs already present a poetic structure obtained by means of an assonance, a consonance, or, more frequently, a rhyme, which Franceschi defines as a distinguishing aspect and a crucial tool for
Proverbs can be assimilated into poetry by the presence of tropes of sound (alliterations, homoeoteleutons, paronomasias), syntactical figures (antitheses, chiasmi, polysyndetons, anaphoras, polyptotons, parallelisms, inversions, separations, and binary structures), and semantic figures (hyperboles, similes, and metaphors). Other elements contribute to rhythm, such as the prevalence of apocopes, which give the text a broken style, similar to the musical staccato, or synaloephas, which conversely produce a sense of musical legato (Menichetti, 452).

All these aspects are evidently already present in much of Boccaccio’s prosaic style. However, in order to render proverbs even more musical than they already are, in Le cento novelle, elements are inserted or removed, the syntax and the morphology restructured, and the single components moved freely in order to create rhythm and to adjust the paremia to the structure of the octave of rhymed hendecasyllables. Brusantino’s proverbs are mostly perfect hendecasyllables (except for a few instances of lack of isosyllabism, mostly decasyllables), and many of them have accents on the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth syllables (iambic style). The others might have the accent on the first syllable, but mostly do not change the subsequent accents (dactylic style).

Sometimes, the original proverb is difficult to “translate” into two hemistiches of hendecasyllables, since it is constituted of shorter meters than a pentasyllable and a septenary. In this case, Brusantino usually adds new linguistic substance to the proverb, especially if he consciously aims to give it a slightly different taste in accordance to the context. Brusantino also devotes much attention to the caesura of proverbs. In the poetry of

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230 The rhythm, according to Qualizza, helps to recall both portions of the binary structure of proverbs, as they become “proprietà di rinforzo” for a better memorization and remembrance (Qualizza, 179).


232 For examples of the different tropes in proverbs, see Soletti 2011.

233 In the Greek world, a meter was mostly used for popular poetry, filled with paremias, hence the title “paremiac meter.” It was composed of three ascendant feet (two short and one long) with a final catalepsy. On the topic and on the variety of meters associated to proverbs, see Corazzini.
Le cento novelle, most of the time, the syntactical pause coincides with the end of the line, and consequently, the following verse hosts the second hemistich of the proverb. All proverbs that feature in a final distich follow this structure, and are indeed the most rhythmic and poetic ones. Thanks to their musicality, they can remain impressed in the minds of the readers or listeners as they summarize a concept or poignantly transmit a moral message. Whenever the pause does not correspond with the end of the line, Brusantino might use a pause where there is no syntactical break; in these cases, the syntactical organization of the proverb in the lines may be awkward and far from musical.

A few textual examples may clarify the paremiac transformation. For instance, Brusantino changes the proverbial phrase, Peccato celato è mezzo perdonato in Peccato ascosto mezo perdonato, where the synaloepha between “peccato” and “ascosto” renders the paremia a perfect hendecasyllable (Dec., I.4). Similarly, the Ferrarese author changes the proverbial phrase, Come il diavol si rimetta in Inferno in Come il diavol si metta ne l’Inferno, which is a perfect hendecasyllable (Dec., III.10). In story III.1, he adds clusters in order to obtain two rhymed hendesyllables out of Boccaccio’s proverb, Chi la sera non cena tutta notte si dimena, which becomes Chi va al letto la sera senza cena Intorno tutta la notte si dimena. In VIII.6, Boccaccio’s Quando tu ci avesti messi in galea senza biscotto, comes to be E in galea ne mettessi a tua cagione Senza biscotto con tuo gran piacere, which creates two hemistiches with eleven syllables each. In VIII.10, Brusantino expands the six syllables of the proverb, Chi ha a far con tosco, non vuole esser losco, and makes them two hendecasyllables, Dicendo espresso, non deve esser losco Chi contrattar ne vuol con huomo tosco, where the verb “contrattare” also provides a more specific range of relations than the more generic “aver a (che) fare.”

At other times, the rhyme dictates the substitution of a term, as in Le femine in ogni cosa sempre pigliano il peggio, becoming Le donne in ogni

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234 For changes in Brusantino’s entire novella, see Pettinelli 2004c, 189-92.
seggio comunemente pigliano il lor peggio, which guarantees the rhyme between “seggio” and “peggio” in the final distich of the octave (Dec., I.10).

The verses affect the original paremias, and can lead to different syntactic results. For instance, in the aforementioned novella IV.2, the meter causes the inversion of two members, without interrupting the narrative flow of the paremia. After Madonna Lisetta accepts Friar Alberto’s proposal to introduce the Archangel Gabriel in her bed, she

rimase faccendo sì gran galloria, che non toccava il cul la camiscia (Dec., IV.2.29).

In Le cento novelle, the proverbial phrase becomes:

Né gli toccava la camiscia il cullo (CN, 202).

The inversion in the typical syntactical structure of the proverbial phrase brings at the end of the line the word “cullo,” spelled with a double [l], which might be interpreted as the oscillation in consonant that is usual in the Paduan area. Despite this change, the substitution of “non” with “né,” and its more linear structure, the paremia is immediately recognizable, as it commonly features in collections of paremias. Both Salviati and Serdonati list the proverbial phrase, Non toccargli il culo la camicia, which literally means that his shirt is not touching his buttock; indeed, if someone thinks too highly of himself, his shirt looks shorter. In the context of this octave, Madonna Lisetta is extremely happy, and so the paremia pictures her happiness (“galloria”) and her reaching the sky because of it. The paremia is placed at the beginning of an octave, which makes the message a strong introduction to the following events: Madonna Lisetta lacks mental perspicacity to such a

235 It is interesting to point out how Brusantino adds a Venitian phonetic aspect to Boccaccio’s novella, already rich in dialect elements (Boccaccio 1980; Branca 1981; Branca 1986). Boccaccio uses the questions, “Che s’è quel? Che s’è quel?” to imitate the crowd, which is curious to know who is under the disguise, but Brusantino changes this into, “Chi xe quello?” The ortography reproduces the real pronunciation of the question in Venetian dialect (already noticed by Pettinelli 2004b, 172, n. 30), even though the subsequent “quello” seems to be a Tuscanization. For information on dialectal elements and choices in collections of short stories before the 1550s, see Alfredo Stussi, “Scelte linguistiche e connotati regionali nella novella italiana,” in Malato 1989, 191-214.

236 For more information on the proverbial phrase, see Franca Brambilla Ageno, “Riboboli trecenteschi,” Studi di filologia italiana. 10 (1952): 413-54.
point that she considers herself superior to all the women in Maremma, and even in the world, for being chosen by the Archangel.

Brusantino mentions, almost in the exact same way as in the original, one of Boccaccio’s most famous paremias, which refers to the adventures that Alatiel undergoes passing from man to man until finally recovering her future husband (II.7).\(^{237}\) He follows its metrical structure, made of two hendecasyllables with an assonance, and its antithetical message expressed by the two hemistiches; and he fits it in a visible place, the final distich of an octave:\(^{238}\)

**Boccaccio**

E per ciò si disse: “Bocca basciata non perde ventura, anzi rinnuova come fa la luna”

(Dec., II.7.122)

**Brusantino**

Bocca basciata non perde fortuna,

Ma si rinova come fa la luna (CN, 97).

Through the paremia, which finds in the *Decameron* its first attestation, Panfilo refers to the introductory speech to his novella (Dec., II.7.3-7), where he talks about the temporary nature of all things. They are all short lived, except for love, which always renovates itself and is even tastier, despite all the misadventures. Despite being the same as the original both syntactically and prosodically, Brusantino’s paremia introduces a few lexical changes: the substitution of the transitive verb “rinnuova” (diphthongized in the typical Florentine way) with the pronominal “si rinova;” the consequent change of the adverb “anzi” with the conjunction “ma;” and the replacement of “ventura” with “fortuna.” Evidently, the reason for


\(^{238}\) On the structure of the paremia, see Boccaccio 1980, 257, n. 4 (for further reference on the novella and the paremia, see: Baratto, 94-101; Chiecci, 139; and Bragantini 2014, 290-92, who argues for a sarcastic reference to Juvenal’s tenth satire).
this last change was related to metrical issues, and specifically the need for the word to rhyme with “luna,” where in the original there was an assonance. The change, however, seems also connected to the meaning that the word “fortuna” has in Brusantino’s vocabulary, and to the recognition of its power in directing the human life (Baratto, 54-57).  

A paremia that Boccaccio uses a few times in the Decameron reveals interesting material on the topic of transferring proverbs and proverbial phrases as well as on changes and modifications of embedded paremias. *Quale asino dà in parete tal riceve* appears three times in three different novellas of Boccaccio’s collection: II.9.6, V.10.64, and VIII.8.3. The paremia, mentioned twice in Varchi’s *Hercolano* and listed in Salviati’s and Serdonati’s collections, is an equivalent of the Latin *Par pari referre* or *Qui dat malum, malum accipit,* and was a popular one at the time. It conveys the meaning that if one does something, mostly if he insults or offends someone, he will experience an appropriate punishment for his misdeed, just like the donkey that kicks the wall and receives a similar hit hurting itself (GDLI, s.v. *asino*).

In the aforementioned novella II.9, Branca argues that Boccaccio’s section leading to the final paremia is based on a sequence of hendecasyllables (Branca 1986, 74): 

L’altro rispose: “E io fo il somigliante: 
Perciò che se io credo che la mia 
Donna che se io credo che la mia

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239 Looking at the initial paremias in *Le cento novelle*, fortune plays an important role (Pettinelli 2004b, 176): it appears in the introductory paremias for novellas II.3, II.4, II.6, V.6, and, in rhyme, in X.1. Three out of the five paremias that feature the word “fortuna” introduce stories in the second day, which is devoted to misadventures that suddenly end happily and beyond one’s hope, such as Alatiel’s story. Additionally, the word “sorte” appears in the initial paremias of novellas II.2, IV.1, IV.7, and X.2. On the significance of rhyme and on their semantic implications, see Pier Marco Bertinetto, “Echi del suono ed echi del senso. Implicazioni semantiche in rima,” *Parole e metodi. Bollettino dell’atlante linguistico italiano*. 3 (1972): 47-57.

240 “To give tit for tat” and “Whosoever gives evil receives evil.”

241 In *Hercolano*, the paremia appears in context: “Dunque il Castelvetro ha havuto ragione a render pane per cofaccia, e il Caro non si può dolere se, *quale asino dà in parete, tal riceve*” (Herc, CCLXXXIV). Serdonati explains it: “Se l’asino percuote in una parete, tal colpo riceve quale dà, o forte o piano che urti; però s’usa quando alcuno stuzzicando altri resta da es
Ella il fa, e se io nol credo, si ’l fa:

E perciò a fare a far sia, quale

Asino dà in parete tal riceve (Dec., II.9.6).

Brusantino does not maintain this poetic structure, but remodels it:

E per ciò a far questo mi assicura

Qual asino essere debbo me ne avedo

Che urti el parete ne la scioglia dura,

E così il danno mio bene prevedo (CN, 108). 242

The paremia disappears, even though some of its elements persist: the donkey and the wall. Brusantino spells out its message, by making Dioneo say that, if one is conscious to be like a donkey who hits the wall, he should expect some harm out of this metaphorical “bump.” In order to create perfect hendecasyllables, Brusantino also adds new elements, such as the detail of the donkey kicking the threshold made of stone, which is absent in the Decameron.

In the novella that hosts the majority of paremias in the entire Decameron, and thus in Le cento novelle, V.10, the same paremia features at the very end, where it comments on the adulterous adventure of Pietro di Vinciolo’s wife:

Per che così io vi vo’ dire, donne mie care, che chi te la fa, fagliele; e se tu non puoi, tienloti a mente fin che tu possa, acciò che quale asino dà in parete tal riceva (Dec., V.10.64).

The paremia in question is associated with another proverb, Chi te le fa, fagliele, which carries an equivalent meaning; thus, Quale asino dà in parete tal riceva confirms the

242 It is interesting to find two elements of the Ferrarese koinè in the paremia: the article “el” and the introduction of the fricative sounds in “soglia,” probably a Ferrarese palatalization (i.e. to change the articulation of the original sound and transfer it in the palate). This demonstrates how, in some instances, Brusantino includes forms in Florentine vernacular, yet in others, he resorts to his own vernacular: sonorization in “segondo” in II.7; “se” instead of “si” in V.7; and “solazzo” spelled “solaecio” in VIII.5. These linguistic types are frequent in Cieco da Ferrara’s Mambriano and Boiardo’s Orlando inamorato (for an analysis of the language of the latter, see Matarrese 2004, 63-82).
contextual message already expressed before, namely that one needs to pay the other person back in his own coin. Pietro’s wife paid her husband back because of his lack of expressing love and betrays him; however, ironically, she unconsciously chooses someone who could satisfy her husband too.\textsuperscript{243} This time, Brusantino accepts the paremia and its pedagogical strength and places it in the last distich of the octave:

\begin{verbatim}
E perciò voglio dir donne mie care
Fallo a chi te le fa, e se non poi
Tientelo a mente ne te lo scordare
Acciò che dopo il fallo non ti annoi
Perché quale asino al parete urtare
Simil riceva il danno, e il mal dapoi
Hor sia per questo a tutti quelli esempio
Che seguitano error sì tristo e empio (CN, 293).
\end{verbatim}

The major variation concerns \textit{Chi te le fa, fagliele}, which is an anacoluthon in the \textit{Decameron} since the two hemistiches have a different subject (“chi” and “tu”) (Manni, 302); conversely, in \textit{Le cento novelle}, Brusantino introduces the dative necessary to make it grammatically correct. \textit{Quale asino dà in parete tal riceva} endures only minor lexical modifications, such as the substitution of the verb “dare” with “urtare,”\textsuperscript{244} and the introduction of the direct object “il danno” after the verb “ricevere.” These additions result from the fact that Brusantino does not opt for the metrical scheme of the original paremia: in the \textit{Decameron}, the hendecasyllable is given by the proverb without the pronoun “quale.” In \textit{Le cento novelle}, instead, Brusantino separates the two sections of the paremia and features them in two

\textsuperscript{243} For a longer explanation of the paremia in the context of the novella, see Boccaccio 1980, 704-05, n. 5.

\textsuperscript{244} In all major collections of paremias, this proverb appears with the verb “dare,” so it is difficult to find a probable reason for the introduction of “urtare,” unless it is a way to give the proverb a more formal and elevated form.
hendecasyllables. The paremia also preserves, more than the previous example in novella II.9, i.e. the exhortative subjunctive, which is featured in the *Decameron* and makes it an admonition to keep in mind for future similar circumstances: “tienloti a mente fin che tu possa” (Dec., V.10.64).

In the third occurrence of the paremia in novella VIII.8, Fiammetta explains that the story of adultery between the two married couples will make everyone understand,

[...] che assai dee bastare a ciascuno se *quale asino dà in parete tal riceve*, senza volere, soprabbondando oltre la convenevolezza della vendetta, ingiuriare, dove l’uomo si mette alla ricevuta ingiuria vendicare (Dec., VIII.8.3).

Brusantino keeps the paremia, yet restructures its syntax:

Che comprender per quello hora potrete
Che assai a ciascadun deve bastare

*Se qual Asino da urta in parete*

*E tal riceve* poi nel vendicare (CN, 419)

The [e] at the beginning of the last line could be a conjunction, and in such case, the paremia would have a parahypotactical structure, with popularizing and intensifying outcomes, frequently present in paremias. Otherwise, it might be the subject pronoun [e’], although this option appears less probable, because Brusantino never uses the Tuscan form for egli > ei > e’in his paremias. The introduction of the cluster “dà urta,” which recalls the verb “urtare” used in the precedent example in V.10, might result from his need to fill in a metrical space.

Sometimes, the restructuring of paremias may cause a disintegration of their traditional form (Malavasi in Pignatti and Crimi 2014, 403) and, consequently, the paremia is not easily recognizable, or at least it loses its condensed, direct, and effective structure. Paremias almost become an allusion to a famous sequence of terms, which the reader should find easy to recognize given the shared traditional patrimony and knowledge of popular
wisdom (Malavasi in Pignatti and Crimi 2014, 405). For instance, Boccaccio’s paremia in novella III.5, *Egli meglio fare e pentere, che starsi e pentersi*, is barely recognizable in Brusantino’s verses, where all the additional elements and the lexical changes degenerate its essence: *Meglio è far e pentirsi il core humano Che star di fare, e poi dolersi invano.* Likewise, in VII.4, Boccaccio’s famous paremia made of an octonary and a septenary, *A modo del villan matto, dopo danno fé patto* becomes, *Hor cosi fece patto pur ritroso Dopo il suo male, qual villano matto*. This choice, despite preserving the nominal cluster “villano matto,” does not present the same short and dense effectiveness of the original.

The same happens when Brusantino unwraps the message of a paremia, introducing its explanation or adding explanatory comments not in separate lines but rather intermixing them with the paremia itself. The result is a loss of the strength and charge that the paremia presents due to its brevity, but conversely, an expansion of its contextual use and a gain in narrative development. In the aforementioned novella IX.5, Boccaccio leaves to his readers’ metaphorical interpretation the task of intending the meaning of the typical Tuscan proverbial phrase, *Tutta l’acqua d’Arno non ci laverebbe* (Dec., IX.5.26). Conversely, Brusantino feels the need to explain it to his own public, who might not know the expression, adding, “Perciò che l’acqua d’Arno non seria Bastante di lavar cotanto errore” (CN, 463). Bruno instructs everyone to conform to the plan of ridiculing Calandrino by making him think that beautiful and refined Niccolosa would agree to a relationship with him. He then adds that they all need to stick to their role, otherwise, should Niccolosa’s husband find out about it, the entire water of Arno would not suffice to cleanse them. Brusantino clarifies that the water of the river would not be enough to eliminate their faults and excuse them from what they devised and are carrying out, namely quite a brutal erotic *beffa* against Calandrino.
An insertion that expands the meaning of the original paremia happens in story IV.2, already mentioned above:

**Boccaccio**

Usano i volgari un così fatto proverbio: *Chi è reo e buono è tenuto può fare il male e non è creduto* (Dec., IV.2.5)

**Brusantino**

E disse uno proverbio, e tra volgari

*Che chi è tristo e buono vien tenuto*

Spesso pone ciascuno in pianti amari

*E pol far male, che non gli è creduto* (CN, 199).

In *Le cento novelle*, the components of the proverb are still visible, starting from the introductory formula specifying that what follows is indeed a proverb. However, the proverb is extended to occupy three lines of the octaves and given an additional line, “spesso pone ciascuno in pianti amari,” which changes its nature and separates the two original hemistiches. If Boccaccio’s proverb is displayed in two lines,

*Chi è reo e buono è tenuto,*

*Può fare il male e non è creduto,*

it is evident that the proverb is constituted by an octosyllabic verse followed by a decasyllable. Moreover, both hemistiches are divided into two parts by a *caesura* followed by the conjunction [e], which parallels them and makes them communicate in prosodic terms. For all these reasons, the way the proverb is organized resembles poetry. This is not true for Brusantino’s proverb, which is more narrative than the original one. The bipartite structure of the two initial hemistiches is lost, and a prosaic style substitutes for it. Specific word choices, namely the conjunction “che” and the adverb “spesso,” also contribute to this narrative flow.
Placed at Pampinea’s initial introductory words to the novella, the proverb introduces the theme of deception and lies. Even though before moving to Venice, Friar Alberto conducted a criminal life in Imola, where everybody knew his wicked schemes, the aura surrounding his religious status eliminates any doubts and confirms his supposedly good behavior in his new city. Pettinelli points out how Brusantino, a special devotee to Venice and its pervasive freedom of thought, as expressed in canto XXXII of his *L’Angelica innamorata*, diminishes the harsh tones that Boccaccio uses to describe the city (Pettinelli 2004c, 189). However, the story will prove the proverb wrong by demonstrating the opposite, and so diminishing its meaning: Friar Alberto’s evilness will be eventually discovered and presented to the eyes of the entire community, showing how one should recognize that someone is acting badly regardless of the general opinion about him (Bragantini 2014, 290).

In Brusantino’s rendition of the paremias, specifying that the damage such a person can commit includes bitter tears (“Spesso pone ciascuno in pianti amari”) augments the dramatic tone of the section, an element that Pettinelli recognizes as a general trend in the entire work (Pettinelli 2004c, 181). Overall, Friar Alberto’s behavior was not detrimental to Monna Lisetta, except for the malevolent laughter that her neighbors directed at her. Therefore, Brusantino’s insertion makes for a more pathetic feature that the *Decameron* does not state, as it anticipates the sad consequences on Friar Alberto’s life and the bitter tears he will pour after being publicly ridiculed and imprisoned until his miserable death.

The introduction of embedded paremias with canonical and traditional formulae of presentation is another important aspect in transferal of paremias. As in the previous example of novella IV.2, Boccaccio occasionally introduces proverbs and proverbial phrases in the narration with the word “proverbio,” or with other expressions. They usually express the

On the depiction of Venice as a place of virtue, freedom, and truth in *L’Angelica innamorata*, see Pettinelli 2004a, 95-112. This contrasts the depiction of Ferrara, which in the same poem appears as the static and enclosed Este court in the mid-sixteenth century (Pettinelli 2004a, 67-93).
author’s conscious willingness to exhibit the use of a paremia (Malavasi in Pignatti and Crimi 2014, 398), or indicate the metaphorical aspect of the paremia that follows. They might emphasize the paremia’s distribution and knowledge among people, or delimit the beginning and end of the paremia itself, especially if the final distich of an octave hosts it (Chiecchi, 135). Brusantino transfers many of the introductory sentences that Boccaccio uses. Specifically, he maintains the formula that he found in the following novellas: I.10.8 (Dec.: “Acciò che per voi non si possa quello proverbio intendere che comunemente si dice per tutto;” CN: “E accio per noi non si possa mostrare il proverbio ch’è noto in quell’etate che dice”); III.4.27 (Dec.: “Ora io ve l’ho udito dire mille volte;” CN: “Mille e più fiate dicon le persone”); IV.2.5 (Dec.: “Usano i volgari un così fatto proverbio;” CN: “E disse uno proverbio, e tra volgari”). However, he does not include the one introducing the paremia in V.10.21 (Dec.: “noi siamo messe in canzone e dicono”).

One case worth analyzing in more detail is novella IX.9.7, where Boccaccio uses the misogynistic proverb *Buon cavallo e mal cavallo vuole sprone, e buona femina e mala femina vuol bastone* (Chiecchi, 135; Manni, 295). He introduces it with the formula “come che gli uomini un cotal proverbio usino,” which emphasizes its circulation among the people. Brusantino, when transferring it in his octaves, slightly adjusts the paremia to fit a distich and changes the introductory formula drastically:

Che detto sia per lei simil novella

Che a bon cavallo, e reo bisogna sprone

E trista, e bona donna vuol bastone (CN, 477).

For Brusantino, the paremia is no longer a proverb but a “novella,” a novelty to say in reference to the story of Melisso and Giosefo asking Solomon for advice. He introduces a rhetorical device, which substitutes for the original polysyndeton (*Buon cavallo e mal cavallo - buona femmina e mala femmina*): the chiasm between *bon cavallo-bona femmina* and *reo-
trista, emphasized by the cluster noun-adjective and adjective and vice versa (bon cavallo e reo; trista e bona donna). Additionally, he gives a prominent position to the paremia, placing it at the end of an octave, whereas in the Decameron it was in the middle of Emilia’s introductory speech on the fragility of women (Dec., IX.9.3-9). As the paremia stands out in the articulation of the metric scheme, its message is highlighted and reinforced; therefore, it becomes the climax of the octave and the section of greater narrative tension. Brusantino provides the paremia with a specific narrative and metrical force it did not have in the original, and the role of summarizing and introducing the content of the novella that Emilia is about to narrate. By means of blending the chivalric tradition with that of the short stories, Brusantino explores the message of the story according to his own perspective, as many other times he had done with paremias at the end of octaves and at the end of entire novellas (Pettinelli 2004c, 185-86).246

Conclusions

Brusantino’s Le cento novelle is a remarkable achievement: Brusantino manages to transform the entire Decameron into a poem of rhymed octaves while adhering almost faithfully to the original text. His additions, namely introductory allegories and paremias, and the personal interpretation of paremias embedded in the text of the Decameron, demonstrate how Brusantino was not a simple imitator. Despite not sharing the same humanistic culture...

246 Boccaccio paid considerable attention to conclusive thoughts expressed through paremias, which, according to the art of dispositio, could attract the attention of the public and allow the exploration of a concept (Chiecchi, 142-46). Paremias concluded octaves in cantari, as well as Orlando innamorato and Orlando furioso. Orlando innamorato used to conclude octaves with popular and paremiac segments that could perfectly fit in the metrical system (Pettinelli 1983a, 101-02), and so was Mambriano, where moralizing, sententious, and paremiac beginnings commented on facts and events (Pettinelli 1983, 155-56). Similarly, Ariosto placed paremias in strategic moments of the narration, namely in the final couplet of the octaves as a sort of brief, condensed, detached, and straightforward focus after a long and explanatory thesis, which was bombastically running toward the conclusion of the octave (Bigi, 171-72; Soletti 2007, 142) (for the structure 6+2 in Ariosto’s octaves—as opposed to Boiardo’s most common structure 2+2+4—see Praloran, 239-44, and Blasucci).
that characterized Boccaccio, Brusantino is nonetheless an acute observer of society, which he describes, provides with advice, and warns with his paremias, while also offering a list of ethical and unethical behaviors.

The way allegories and paremias are applied to the *Decameron* and how they modify Boccaccio’s message places *Le cento novelle* in the realm of “rassettature” of Boccaccio’s collection in content, genre, and language. They become the tools through which Brusantino expresses his own view on the literary text, on the cultural and social context, and on individuals, and reveal aspects of the mechanisms that guided him in his choices. Brusantino decides how and on which terms Boccaccio’s text adapts to the new genre, and consequently to the purposes and objectives of the resulting text and to the ethical interpretation he aims it to take on. Even though Brusantino’s cantos follow the content of Boccaccio’s stories, and in many instances simply restructure the original syntax without changing words or sentences, *Le cento novelle* is the result of Brusantino’s personal appropriation of the original text in content, structure, and style, mediated through the lens of his “translation.” He consciously blends—and becomes the intermediary—among different traditions, namely *cantari novellistici*, rewritings of Boccaccio’s *Decameron* aimed to make the text more intelligible, chivalric models, and literary examples of collections of stories and chivalric poems with insertion of paremias and allegories for pedagogical purposes. He hybridizes, synthesizes, and gives a new life to all of them, always under the greater objective of presenting a text that could be ethically acceptable in his own society (Mercuri in Sportelli, 91). The result is a new literary product, where the voices of the past and of contemporary trends speak concurrently with Brusantino’s voice in a constant exchange and mutual recognition. As he manipulates the text and its meaning within certain boundaries established by the genre (the chivalric poem) and its tradition, as well as by the aura of prestige surrounding the *Decameron*, Brusantino appropriates the text and marks it with his own features. He chooses to use verses;
he levels the different registers that he finds in the *Decameron* (from the elevated and noble discourse by Gismunda in IV.1 to the dialect of the “schermaglia erotica” between Monna Belcolore and the priest of Varlungo in VIII.2) and makes the language less refined; he exploits sexuality in different, more explicit ways; and he gives absolute centrality to paremias. Paremias interpret the message of the stories, and they change from prose to poetry and acquire the syntactical, metrical, and prosodic structure of *Le cento novelle*, but they mostly “translate” Brusantino’s subjective interpretation of the literary work for the sake of making the *Decameron* a didactic tool that appeals to a wide audience.

Even though a minor work in the realm of Italian literature, Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle* reveals a treasure trove of information on the interpretation of Boccaccio’s text during the early years of the Tridentine period, when the weight of the Inquisition and the *Index librorum prohibitorum* was not yet present, but society had started to comply with the Counter-Reformation’s demand for ethical attitudes. Despite its poor reception and the condemnation his work faced, Brusantino’s rewriting of the *Decameron* is still an important voice to acknowledge. From a peripheral position, *Le cento novelle* can tell us much of the fortune, tradition, and reception of one of the most important works of Italian literature.
Quasi tutti e medesimi proverbi o simili, benché con diverse parole, si truovono in ogni nazione; e la ragione è che e proverbi nascono dalla esperienzia o vero osservazione delle cose, le quali in ogni luogo sono le medesime o simili

Francesco Guicciardini, *Ricordi*, n. 12
3.1 Contextualizing Pompeo Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata*

Fifty years after the posthumous publication of Giambattista Basile’s *Lo cunto de li cunti, overo lo trattenimento de’ peccerille* (1634-36), Pompeo Sarnelli, under the pseudonym of Masillo Reppone de Gnanopoli, published a collection of fables in the Neapolitan dialect entitled *Posilecheata*. His collection included five fables or *cunti*, along

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248 Masillo Reppone da Gnanopoli, *Posilecheata*. Napoli: G. Roselli, 1684. It is a paper examplar in dodicesimo (14.9 x 8.5 cm), whose title page reads as follows: “**POSILECHEATA DE MASILLO REPPONE DE GNANOPOLI. Al Virtuosiss. Signore IL SIGNOR IGNAZIO DE VIVES. In Napoli presso Giuseppe Roselli 1684. A spese di Antonio Bulifon, Libraro di S.E. Con licenza de’ Superiori.**” It features: Antonio Bulifon’s symbol for the years 1685-97, which is a crowned siren that holds its two tails in its hands; Mount Vesuvio, a rising sun, and ships in the background; the initials AB with two crosses on top; and the motto “Sempre non nuoce” surrounded by a vegetal cornice (for more information, see Armando Polito, “Il Vesuvio e la sirena,” Vesuvio Web. Accessed 13 Jul. 2016). The first edition contains: a letter dedicated to Ignazio de Vives by editor Antonio Bulifon; Claudio Ciciriani’s dedicatory sonnet to Pompeo Sarnelli; the letter to the virtuous readers; a celebratory letter by Accademico Sgargiato [E]ugenio Desviati (most certainly a nickname); the book’s imprimatur; the licence to print the book granted on August 13, 1684, by Cesare Natale; the introduction; the five fables; the conclusion; and a final section, which contains the index of the various sections of the book followed by “Innece de le ccose notabele,” or an index of the noteworthy aspects of the work. The exemplar preserved at the Newberry Library (Bonaparte 56:34), which has been consulted in this study, has a cover in vellum and belonged to various personalities, listed in the internal part of the cover (Canon “Paziente” Alvito Castrucci, who donated *Posilecheata* to Emilio Loehr; Bartolomeo Bottoglieri; and Giovanni Cioni). The organization of the volume shows how the introduction or dinner between friends is the “cornice” to the subsequent fables. For an accurate list of the editions of Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata* (or *Posilechejata*) up to 1885, refer to the initial pages of Vittorio Imbriani’s edition (Sarnelli 1885, v–ix). The identity of the author of *Posilecheata* has been the subject of different interpretations throughout the centuries. In the first edition of the collection, Bulifon states that Reppone lived at Pompeo Sarnelli’s house, thus promoting the idea that Reppone was not the same person as Pompeo Sarnelli. Probably, this idea was generated by the 1676 edition of *Degli Avvenimenti di Fortunato e de’ suoi figli Historia comica*, whose translation and illustrations
with a prefatory letter to “li vertoluse lejeture,” (the virtuous readers), an introduction or “commito d’ammice fatto a Posileco,” (banquet amongst friends in Posillipo), and a “scompetura,” (conclusion) to the collection.

are said to have been curated by Masillo Reppone. In the prefatory letter to this translation that is dedicated to Pompeo Sarnelli, Reppone plays with the two identities when he writes that “ho pensato dedicarlo a me stesso, cioè a te, che, come mio fratello, sei un’altro me” (c. †3r). In Vittorio Imbriani’s 1885 edition of Sarnelli’s Posilecheata, Ciciriani’s poem confirms the same idea of two different people. In his treatise on the Neapolitan dialect, Del dialetto napoletano (Galiani 1779), Galiani names Tommaso Perrone as Posilecheata’s author. Luigi Serio in his Lo vernacchio. Risposta al Dialetto napoletano (dell’abate Galiani) (Serio) points out the mistake and attributes the collection to Pompeo Sarnelli. In 1846, Liberatore Raffaele, in his article “Del dialetto napoletano,” demonstrates Sarnelli’s authorship of Posilecheata (Annali civili del Regno delle due Sicilie. 14 (1837): 28-41). Nonetheless, in 1867 and later in 1874, Pietro Martorana contradicts himself. In Basile’s entry, he writes that the 1674 edition of his Cunto is by Tommaso Perrone and mentions Perrone’s correction of previous editions (Martorana, 23). However, in Sarnelli’s entry, he considers Sarnelli the author of both Lo cunto de li cunti’s 1674 edition and Posilecheata, specifically mentioning Galiani’s mistakes (Martorana, 371).
FIGURE 4: Posilecheata
Title page with Antonio Bulifon’s symbol
Courtesy of the Newberry Library, Bonaparte 5634
A Bari native, Sarnelli (1649-1724) moved to Naples when he was an adolescent and studied theology and law there. After he became priest in 1669, he entered the Accademia degli Spensierati di Rossano in Naples, worked for Cardinal Vincenzo Maria Orsini, and became affiliated with Pope Benedict XIII. In 1689, he was offered the bishopric of Termoli, which he refused, but in 1692 he accepted that same position in Bisceglie after Pope Innocent XII proposed it to him. Other than a vast quantity of erudite publications, Sarnelli is the author of Degli Avvenimenti di Fortunato e de’ suoi figli, Historia comica Tradotta, et illustrata da Masillo Reppone da Gnanopoli. Libri due. Al molto Ill. e Rev. Sig. e Pad. Oss. Il signor Pompeo Sarnelli Dottor delle Leggi e Protonotario Apostolico. This book, presented at the Accademia degli Sciooperati and published in Naples by Antonio Bulifon in

249 Sarnelli was born in Polignano (today Polignano a Mare, near Bari). For further information on his life, see Malato (Sarnelli 1986, xxv-xxix), which contains a list of all the sources that mention Sarnelli’s life, as well as a critical bibliography. On Sarnelli’s biography, also consider Canepa 2008, and Iurilli.

250 Malato 1986, xxvi reports the date 1692, whereas Gimma, 295 declares that the date is instead 1691.

251 Among Sarnelli’s works of erudition, the most important are: a work on the Greek alphabet (L’alfabeto greco, 1675); a translation of Giovanni Battista della Porta’s works as Della chirosionomia (1677) and Della magia naturale del signor Gio. Battista della Porta Napolitano libri XX (1677); Specchio del clero secolare (1679); Cronologia de’ vescovi ed arcivescovi sipontini (1680); a Bestiarium Schola (1685); Antica Basilicografia (1686); Lettere ecclesiastiche (1686-1716); a chronology of bishops and archbishops in Benevento (1691); and memories of the bishops in Bisceglie (1693). Sarnelli also published many elegies and odes in Latin, a commentary on Latin poems (i.e. Il filo d’Arianna, 1672), and paraphrases of religious texts (i.e. Salmi penitenziali). In the introduction to his Avvenimenti di Fortunato e de’ suoi figli Historia comica, he mentions another work of his entitled Metamorfosi del bue humano, Poema. Along with Bulifon, he coordinated the second edition of Giovanni Antonio Summonte’s Historia della città e regno di Napoli (1601-02; 1640-43) and Ferrante Loffredo’s Antichità di Pozzuoli (1570), both republished in 1675. Sarnelli also published two guides of Naples and surrounding cities: Guida de’ forestieri curiosi di vedere ed intendere le cose più notabili della real città di Napoli e del suo amenissimo distretto. Napoli: G. Roselli, 1685 (reprinted by Antonio Bulifon in 1697), and Guida de’ forestieri curiosi di vedere e considerare le cose notabili di Pozzuo, Baja, Miseno, Cuma, Gaeta ed altri luoghi circonvicini. Napoli: G. Roselli, a spese di Antonio Bulifon, 1685, translated in French by Antonio Bulifon. For a record of all of Sarnelli’s works, see the list of printed books contained in Istoria delle perrucche, and Gimma, 285-301 (for an annotated description of Sarnelli’s works) and 301-03 (for a list of his printed books). In addition, in the Catalogo de’ libri composti, e dati alle stampe dall’illustrissimo et reverendissimo signor Pompeo Sarnelli vescovo di Bisceglia in Bulifon’s 1697 edition of Sarnelli’s Guida de’ forestieri curiosi di vedere ed intendere le cose più notabili della real città di Napoli (254), Bulifon refers to the catalogue realized by Nicolò Toppi and lists some of Sarnelli’s works. For more information on Sarnelli as a writer of moralistic and artistic works, see Basile Bonsante.

252 Probable founded by the end of the sixteenth century or the beginning of the seventeenth century in Correggio, the Accademia degli Sciooperati replaced the Accademia dei Trasformati, founded at the
1676, is a translation, personal interpretation, and illustration of a Spanish story,\textsuperscript{253} narrated through the intermediary of a French version (Gimma, 287).\textsuperscript{254}

His reputation as a knowledgeable man of letters was not sufficient to protect him from the oblivion that \textit{Posilecheata} experienced. For years, he was considered a follower of Basile, and consequently the brighter and long-lasting success surrounding \textit{Lo cunto de li cunti} overshadowed his work. The inclusion of Sarnelli in Frederick Crane’s 1886 article, “Some Forgotten Italian Storytellers,” confirms the relegation to obscurity that \textit{Posilecheata} suffered for almost two centuries after its publication. Not even Enrico Malato’s 1963 and more recent 1986 Italian translation of Sarnelli’s \textit{Posilecheata} helped to promote his work in either academic or non-academic venues, as did Croce’s translation of Basile’s collection (Basile 1925).

The very first mention of Sarnelli’s works is in an anthology of famous people from Naples entitled \textit{Biblioteca Napoletana, et apparato a gli huomini illustri in lettere di Napoli, e del regno delle famiglie, terre, citta, e religioni, che sono nello stesso regno: dalle loro origine, per tutto l’anno 1678}, written by biographer Niccolò Toppi di Chieti and published in Naples by Bulifon in 1678 (154). In this text, however, \textit{Posilecheata} is not mentioned, as it would be published six years later. The 1703 entry in Giacinto Gimma’s \textit{Elogi degli Accademici Spensierati di Rossano} is a rather detailed entry of all of Sarnelli’s works. In

\textsuperscript{253} The original text comes from an anonymus story called “Fortunatus” (ca. 1509), probably based on one of the tales in \textit{Gesta Romanorum}, and later translated in Spanish and in French by Vion d’Alibray with the title \textit{Histoire Comique, ou Les Aventures de Fortunatus} (1615). The translation is also mentioned in Bovicelli’s \textit{Istoria delle perrucche}, where however the title wrongly appears as \textit{Avvertimenti di Fortunato}.

\textsuperscript{254} At the Accademia degli Scioperati, Sarnelli’s book was criticized for the supposed lack of a literal translation. Since he added new episodes and twisted the plot, they argued that his own translation did not comply with the original one, \textit{vis-à-vis} the French translation, which was literal and did not interpolate the original story with any additions. In order to make his point, Sarnelli quotes his discussion over translation in his Latin grammar book, \textit{L’ordinario grammaticale} (1677), and combines it with Terence’s prologue to the comedy \textit{Andria}, demonstrating his great knowledge of classical literature and grammar.
1779, in a treatise entitled *Del dialetto napoletano* by Abbot Ferdinando Galiani, Sarnelli is briefly referred to as a mere imitator of Basile. Sarnelli is also praised for preserving the civil memory of Naples and the value of his dialect. In the nineteenth century, in his *Storia della letteratura italiana*, Tiraboschi mentions Sarnelli’s *Cronologia de’ vescovi ed arcivescovi sipontini* and *Lettere ecclesiastiche* as examples of works on the history of the city of Naples (Vol. 8, 399), and Pietro Martorana offers a contribution about Sarnelli in his *Notizie biografiche e bibliografiche degli scrittori del dialetto napoletano* (1865-67; 1874).

Emmanuele Rocco’s 1882 *Vocabolario del dialetto Napolitano* frequently mentions Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata* and reports many of his expressions, including paremias, in the entries of his dictionary. In 1906, Nicola De Donato dedicates a typical nineteenth-century biography to Sarnelli, titled *L’erudito monsignor Pompeo Sarnelli, fra i piú moderni del Seicento (Vescovo di Bisceglie)*. In the chapter on *Posilecheata*, De Donato gives an overview of the criticism on the work and praises the fresh, natural, and lively use of the dialect (56), describing the five *cunti* as they “fluiscono pieni ed abbondanti, come rivoli che, per aperta campagna, vanno, mormoreggiando, al piano” (58).

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255 Galiani writes that, “Tommaso Perrone è il solo, che nel 1684, imitando i Conti del Basile, ne pubblicò cinque altri suoi in prosa, un poco meno sciapiti di quegli, ma neppur degni di grande applauso” (Galiani 1779, 138), but “[i]n esse [the five stories] cercò l’autore di conservare la memoria d’alcuni antichi monumenti della nostra città divenuti quasi sacri per noi. […] Per l’eleganza del dialetto è da annoverarsi tra’ migliori nostri scrittori” (Galiani 1779, 165-66).

256 Thanks to the accurate and rigorous philological research and the considerable number of authors and works included (especially from the seventeenth and eighteenth century), Rocco’s dictionary provides a wide spectrum of literary references and accurate descriptions for each entry. At the moment, the available letters in his dictionary are just A-F (last entry *Feletto*). The critical edition of letters F-Z is the object of Antonio Vinciguerra’s Ph.D. dissertation, entitled *Il Vocabolario del dialetto napoletano di Emmanuele Rocco. Studio ed edizione critica della parte inedita (F-Z)*, defended in 2014 at the University of Florence. For further information, see: Antonio Vinciguerra, “Spigolature lessicali napoletane dalle «Carte Emmanuele Rocco» dell’Accademia della Crusca,” *Studi di lessicografia italiana*. 32 (2015): 197-222; and two forthcoming articles: Antonio Vinciguerra, “Per un’edizione critica della parte inedita (F-Z) del «Vocabolario del dialetto napoletano» di Emmanuele Rocco,” *Atti del XXVII Congrès international de linguistique et de philologie romanes, organisé par le laboratoire ATILF* (CNRS & Université de Lorraine) et la Société de linguistique romane, Nancy (Francia) 15-20 luglio 2013, and Antonio Vinciguerra, “Verso una «nuova accessione».” Emmanuele Rocco nella cultura lessicografica napoletana dell’Ottocento,” *Le parole del dialetto. Per una storia della lessicografia napoletana*. Eds. Nicola De Blasi and Francesco Montuori. Firenze: Cesati.
Benedetto Croce redeems Sarnelli’s work from being designated as a copy of Basile’s *Lo cunto de li cunti* and defined it an “imitazione intelligente ed elegante” (Croce 1948, 74). In more recent anthologies of Neapolitan language and literature, or in works of Baroque fairy tales, only short paragraphs are devoted to Sarnelli and his collection of fables. Rosa Franzese dedicates an article to *Posilecheata’s* etiologic stories and fantastic settings in the journal *Napoli Nobilissima* in 1984, and more than a decade later, Giorgio Fulco reserved a paragraph to *Posilecheata* in the *Storia della letteratura italiana*, published by Salerno Editrice. He recognizes Sarnelli’s imitation of Basile’s model as a personal and original innovation, characterized by constant variety and inventiveness (Fulco, 863-64). Hermann Haller accords Sarnelli a respectable place in the canon of writers in Neapolitan in his *The Other Italy: The Literary Canon in Dialect* (Haller 1999, 255-56) and subsequently in its Italian translation *La festa delle lingue* (Haller 2002, 254-55). Finally, Raffaele Giglio’s and Clara Allasia’s articles focus on the fairy-tale tradition that Sarnelli imitates and at the same time innovates, and Ruth Bottigheimer reserves some space for *Posilecheata* in her 2012 book on Italian and French literary and critical works on fairy tales, entitled *Fairy Tales Framed: Early Forewords, Afterwords, And Critical Words* (71-79, translated and introduced by Nancy Canepa).

As far as Sarnelli’s language is concerned, Raffaele Capozzoli in his *Grammatica del dialetto napoletano* (1889) uses *Posilecheata* among other works to offer examples in morphology, orthography, etymology, and syntax in Neapolitan language. More recently, Charles Speroni and Vincenzo Valente published significant articles on aspects of Sarnelli’s dialect and language. Speroni’s “Proverbi della *Posilecheata*” (Speroni 1953) lists all of the proverbs and proverbial phrases in Sarnelli’s work and indicates their possible sources, which

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257 Among the others, Basile Bonsante (actually a concise study on Sarnelli as a moralist); Fulco, 863-64; Nigro 1993; Malato 1996, 264; Porcelli 1997. Sarnelli is also briefly mentioned in Picone and Messerli 2004, and in a few notes in Canepa 1999.
is similar to what he had done, just a decade before, with Basile’s. Valente’s “La lingua napoletana di Pompeo Sarnelli” (Valente 1977) analyzes the Neapolitan language in Sarnelli’s work by way of comparing and contrasting it with the dialect used by earlier authors. Sarnelli’s language is frequently mentioned by Adam Ledgeway’s Grammatica diacronica del napoletano (Ledgeway 2009), which lists Posilecheata in the text sources. Likewise, Carolina Stromboli refers to Sarnelli extensively in her edition of Basile’s collection of fables (Basile 2013). In his article “Sui proverbi della Campania”, Montuori mentions Sarnelli’s Posilecheata as an important work for identifying Neapolitan proverbs. (Montuori, 158, n. 27). However, no other scholar has engaged in an extensive critical analysis of Sarnelli’s dialect which is a productive narrative tool, the perfect instrument to allow for comedy and laughter, the means to discuss socio-cultural issues and practices as well as to let ethical values emerge. Sarnelli’s original and personal elements make his work a jewel of linguistic virtuosity representative of Neapolitan culture and identity and of the Baroque poetics, which make him deserve a place among the best representatives of literature in the Neapolitan dialect.

3.2 Literature in Neapolitan Dialect and Sarnelli’s Contribution

Since the fourteenth century, Neapolitan dialect attracted the Florentines. The very first example of “dialettalità riflessa,” or conscious use of the dialect vis-à-vis another

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258 In order to analyze Sarnelli’s language in his paremias, Rocco’s dictionary will be extensively referred to for a synchronic analysis (Rocco) and Ledgeway’s grammar book for a diachronic investigation (Ledgeway). Another grammar book, Raffaele Capozzoli’s Grammatica del dialetto napoletano (1889) will be used, along with other dictionaries, namely Vincenzio de Ritis’ Vocabolario napoletano lessigrafico e storico (1845), Raffaele D’Ambra’s Vocabolario napoletano-toscano di arti e mestieri (1873), Raffaele Andreoli’s Vocabolario napoletano-italiano (1889), and a more recent one, Francesco D’Ascoli’s Nuovo Vocabolario dialettale napoletano (1993).  
259 For more examples on literature in Neapolitan dialect, see Cortelazzo 2002, 652-60.
available language (Paccagnella 1983), is Boccaccio’s *Epistola napoletana*, written in 1339 in Neapolitan and signed by his pseudonym Jannetta di Parisse. Zanobi da Strada provides another example when he recounts to Jacopo Acciaioli how a Tuscan lady had become so Neapolitan that her way of speaking was almost unintelligible (Bianchi, 35).

In the next century, the interest in the Neapolitan dialect evolved and matured into a specific attention to the more popular and spoken linguistic modes of expression. Personal accounts and mémoires present interesting linguistic aspects in this regard. Since they were usually written in quotidian language, they avoided vernacular, but were also equally distant from the Tuscan model, whose style had been progressively imitated by non-popular literature (Bianchi, 63). The most famous mémoire from the fifteenth century is Loise de Rosa’s *Ricordi*, a collection of five texts in Neapolitan dialect written between 1467 and 1475. De Rosa’s structure aims to establish a connection with the reader by way of employing certain elements of the oral discourse, most of all paremias, idiomatic expressions, and riddles, to mimic the spoken language in the written form (De Rosa, 50-58).

During the Aragonese domination, beginning with Alfonso I’s conquest of Naples in 1442, Naples became a cosmopolitan and plurilinguist city where different languages came in

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262 De Rosa’s *Ricordi* features civil, military, and historical accounts of Naples, etiologic descriptions of the city and surrounding areas, reports of supernatural events, and praises of women, with novellas and dialogues inserted alongside the narration. The third text contains an exaltation of the city of Naples, which is defined the best province in the world and in Italy in all matters, from geographical to religious (De Rosa, 653-63). (On De Rosa’s *Ricordi*, other than the critical edition by Vittorio Formentin, see Ghirelli, 535-36).

263 The content and language of the mémoire refer to oral tradition: many are the examples of discordance between De Rosa’s account of an event and other historical accounts, which highlights how De Rosa’s sources were on the one side, stories recounted orally and not codified in a written form, and on the other, his own personal experience, elaborated in a way that could suit traditional literary topoi (Bianchi, 72; De Rosa, 44-46).
contact with each other and gave voice to its bureaucratic, administrative, cultural, literary, economic, and commercial activities (De Blasi 2012, 45). Among the other languages (namely, Latin, Neapolitan, Florentine, Venetian, French, Provençal, German), Castilian and Catalan were used at court and at the chancellor’s office ("koiné cancelleresca"). Then, after Naples was annexed to Ferdinand the Catholic in 1503, the distinctive linguistic panorama of the Neapolitan area consisted of a pronounced diastratic division between Neapolitan as the lower linguistic form in oral communication (a spoken dialect far from interference by the literary Neapolitan) and Spanish and Catalan as prestigious varieties mostly because they represented the language of a nation which could boast an incredible military strength and could dominate others. From that point forward, speaking Spanish meant to pay tribute to the dominators, thus it became a common way to communicate in high society.

Consequently, dictionaries, grammar books, and conversational texts started to be published for the sake of disseminating the correct use of the language amongst the community (D’Ascoli 1972, 8-10). There are, however, accounts of bureaucratic documents written in Neapolitan, which is evidence of a progressive expansion of Neapolitan in legal areas. This Neapolitan was highly influenced by Latin, though, which was the official language of bureaucracy, and thus lacked the most typical linguistic aspects of the dialect (De Blasi 2012, 53).

From a literary perspective, authors were aware of the marginality to which the dialect was condemned, but they were also conscious of the fact that Neapolitan and Florentine were not adversaries in linguistic competition; both could be used as literary instruments and could control a specific sphere of the literary spectrum. Florentine was granted space in refined

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264 On the contact between Italian and Spanish in the 1500s and the 1600s, see Beccaria 1985 (many examples concern the Neapolitan dialect). For a diastratic analysis of the languages spoken in the Neapolitan area in the 1500s, see Radtke 1997b. Since the 1400s, a variety of prestigious Neapolitan existed and was used in the Aragonese court when Latin and Catalan were not employed (for more information, see Ghirelli, 501).
literature: both Jacopo Sannazaro and Tommaso Costo, an Accademico della Crusca, adhered to the Florentine model in their works, respectively Arcadia (1504) and Fuggilozio (1596), yet avoided its usual literary affectation and mawkishness (De Blasi 2002, 95); similarly, Torquato Tasso used standard Florentine in all his poetic production.

On the other hand, Neapolitan could explore the realm of popular literature (Radtk 1997b, 80). The bland acceptance of Pietro Bembo’s prescriptions (Bianchi, 83; Haller 1999, 244) and the constant presence of discussions about the supremacy and superiority of the Neapolitan language, such as, for instance, Eccellenza della lingua napoletana con la maggioranza alla Toscana (1662) by unknown Partenio Tosco, affirm how the conversation regarding the dichotomy between Neapolitan and Tuscan was deeply felt, still at the time when Sarnelli was writing (Malato 1996, 265-66; see also, Vitale 1988). As Manlio Cortelazzo argues, dialect renounced the competition with Tuscan, by way of appropriating its topics or disguising them inside literary genres that the elevated literature in standard language had not yet recognized (Cortelazzo 1980, 75; also in Rak 1994, 22-25). Authors writing in dialect transferred all of the typical forms and genres of high literature into their own compositions and gave them a local flavor, afforded not by the narrowness of the subject, but instead by the language itself. They seldom parodied a traditional genre or canonized authors, as they rather intended to explore the infinite expressive potential of the Neapolitan language in different genres as a counterpart to the purist Tuscan monopoly (Paccagnella 1994). Their use of the Neapolitan language to overturn traditional topoi, allowed them a great degree of experimentation and freedom, as well as of consideration of the less literary variations of the language.

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265 For more information, see also De Blasi 2002.

266 Tosco lists the four aspects that make Neapolitan superior to Tuscan: “dolcezza,” “proprietà,” “varietà,” “amorevolezza,” and “soccintezza” (Tosco).
Idiomatic expressions and paremias were heavily employed in literature in dialect as expressions of authenticity and popular materiality, hence as an antidote to the affectation of the high literature identified with the Tuscan language. Thus, they contributed to the legitimization of the local dialect (Bianchi, 64). Already in the fifteenth century, comic poetic exchanges called gliommieri demonstrated a fertile dialect expressing a colorful and lively community of people, and featured paremias, maxims, and an array of idiomatic expressions recited for pure amusement and linguistic virtuosism. Moreover, poets wrote entertaining songs in dialect called villanelle, which recalled oral practices exercised during communal events for the local society.267 Paremias also filled another considerably large recipient of the Neapolitan dialect, theater, especially in farze (or farce) cavaiole—farces that hybridized Neapolitan and Tuscan—, in performances of the commedia dell’arte and in puppetry, where Neapolitan characterized the language of mean and vicious Pulcinella.268

In the seventeenth century, both Giambattista Basile and Giulio Cesare Cortese, himself a member of the Accademia della Crusca, wrote in Italian and in Neapolitan (Radtke 1997b, 82). Along with Felippe de Scafato Sgruttendio, more than parodying the earlier high literature or canonized authors by means of using dialect, they aimed to shape an autonomous literary reality, equally independent and respectable, which could express messages usually associated with literature in Italian (Cortelazzo 1980, 75; Rak 1994, 22–25). By way of reworking standard genres, they elaborated new poetic and prosaic forms that could give voice to local identity and to popular culture, satisfy the taste for realism, and transcend boundaries between high and low literature, while at the same time creating a new readership and raising awareness of the existence of a different literature.269 Using an individual language, style, and rhetoric, filled with classical and mythological references, while

267 For further information, see Malato 1996; Rak 1994, 47-74 on songs, and 240-51 on Pulcinella; Haller 1999, 243-78; and De Blasi 2012, 57-60.
268 For a detailed overview of different forms of theatrical performances, see Rak 1994, 99-134.
269 On the Neapolitan questione della lingua, see Radtke 1997b.
indirectly excluding those works that did not fall into their category, they became the crowns of the Neapolitan language. As a triad, after more than two centuries, they could compete with the established crowns of the Florentine language, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. 270

Sarnelli and his Posilecheata are one of the products of this tradition of literary productions in the Neapolitan dialect. In his opinion, the Neapolitan dialect answers to the necessity of creating a geographical identity that was situated in the streets of Naples, with its people, voices, and objects. It is a strong declaration of belonging and faithfulness to the culture that accepted and nurtured him after leaving Apulia. Neapolitan, for Sarnelli, becomes a language of inclusion and exclusion, the statement of a collective of which he was a member (Grimaldi 1997, 533). Naples had constituted a center of attraction since the late fifteenth century (Haller 1999, 280) and, indeed, Sarnelli views it from the periphery as a non-native speaker. However, in order to demonstrate his full membership in this center, he frequently feels the necessity (probably as a literary topos) to defend his acquired knowledge of the local dialect by way of demonstrating his analytical study of and expertise in the language.

For instance, in the letter “al curioso lettore” introducing the 1685 edition of the Guida de’ forestieri Curiosi di vedere, e d’intendere le cose più notabili della regal città di Napoli, e del suo amenissimo distretto, Ritrovata colla lettura de’ buoni Scrittori, e colla propria diligenza, dall’Abate Pompeo Sarnelli, Bulifon reports Pompeo Sarnelli’s defense against the accusations of an alleged scarce knowledge of the Neapolitan language. Bulifon demonstrates how Sarnelli is a member of the city of Naples, from both a civil and political

270 For a comprehensive analysis of Neapolitan culture and language from the thirteenth century to 1648, see Storia di Napoli, in particular Rak’s essay on the popular and dialect tradition from the Spanish conquest in 1503 to 1648 (Ghirelli, 573-747). For a general overview of Neapolitan history and literary enterprises in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, including references to the other parts of the reign, see De Blasi 1988. On Naples and Neapolitan language during the period of the Spanish viceroys, see De Blasi 2012, 65-88.
perspective and from a linguistic one. When he writes “nostro napoletano” and “nostro compatriot,” Sarnelli expresses how he feels part of the community:

Dovrei solamente accennare, che dove io scrivo nostro Napoletano, nostro Compatriota, et favello in questa guisa perché se bene non son nato in Napoli, ma in Polignano, antichiss[ima] Città del Regno, ho però dalla mia fanciullezza contratto il domicilio in Napoli, come appare dal privilegio di Napoletano, registrato nella Curia Arcivescovile di questa nostra Città […].

The accusation addressed to Sarnelli sounds similar to the one pointed at Florio, which will be analyzed later, and raises a similar question concerning the linguistic identity of the two authors. Both of them, linguistic foreigners in the place where they have lived all of their life (Florio) or where they have been legally naturalized (Sarnelli), experience a dual linguistic identity. If Florio usually refers to his linguistic identity with the motto, *Italus ore, Anglus pectore*, Sarnelli faces an even more complicated linguistic situation since his linguistic background includes multiple languages. He had been undoubtedly exposed to the local dialect spoken in Polignano, which had been influenced by the Aragonese dynasty in Naples in the second half of the fifteenth century. It showed limited influence from the substratum of the Oscan language and from the Greek spoken in the area of Magna Graecia. Other than his “maternal” language, Sarnelli was perfectly fluent in Latin, Greek, and Italian, and learned the local dialect used in the streets of Naples, as well as the literary Neapolitan employed in literature (Malato 1996). Sarnelli declares a strong linguistic identity in order to defy both the presumed inferiority of the content of his collection, which was thought to be passively copied from Basile’s, and his incorrect use of the dialect. Not surprisingly, in the prefatory letter *A li vertoluse leiture Napolitane* to his 1674 edition of Basile’s *Lo cunto de li
Sarnelli employs paremias to demonstrate that he is a competent Neopolitan writer and, consequently, that he is the best candidate to reproduce Basile’s language in its most faithful form.  

Naples and Neapolitan dialect intrude, determine, and leave a visible trace in all the different parts of Sarnelli’s Posilecheata. The recounting of the fables happens in Posillipo and all of the fables are set in Naples with a limited centrifugal movement towards distant lands, whose vehicular language is nonetheless Neapolitan. The Neapolitan dialect outlines Sarnelli’s deliberate act of “dialettalità riflessa,” and gives voice to the subjectivity of the Neapolitan characters who appear in the linguistic context of the prefatory letter, the concrete and humorous framework of the introduction, and the magic, yet concretely Neapolitan atmosphere of the fables. Neapolitan also shapes the Baroque dimension of the collection with its explosion of events and language to attract and astonish the audience. This aspect had been the object of scrutiny since the aforementioned Lezione sopra il comporre delle novelle

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272 Sarnelli is attentive to minute differences of the language: when he specifies that he also studied the idiom of each area in the city, including Lavinaio, he aims to show how he conducted a careful and conscientious research and, therefore, cannot be attacked for a lack of comprehensive penetration of the dialect. As Valente argues, the reference to different ways of speaking in various neighborhood of the city proves the diatopic variability of the language at the time (Valente 1977, 260). In order to highlight his acquaintance with literature in Neapolitan and show his majesty in the topic, Sarnelli quotes a proverbial phrase, embedded within a sentence: “Tant’haggio magnato vuoccuole e torza, azzoè tant’haggio liuoto buon’autore che me ne rentenno quarche pocorillo” (Who eats broccoli and cabbage with someone knows him or her well since they have shared food together). Transferred in the defensive tone of the letter, the proverbial phrase testifies to Sarnelli’s competence in Neapolitan because of a constant and repetitive study and analysis of the language. Another paremia appears when Sarnelli discusses the editing process of Basile’s collection of fables. Sarnelli’s attention goes to one of Basile’s orthographic choices, the rendering of the assimilation of [m] and [n] with a precedent nasal consonant. This process requires that [b] [v] [m] [n] assimilate in [mm-] and occasionally in [m-], as, for instance, in bocca > ‘mmoca > mocca (Ledgeway, 102). Sarnelli recognizes that Basile, in order to solve the ambiguity about the right pronunciation of the word “mocca,” added an apostrophe, similar to the Greek spirit, which would indicate the emission of sound that needs to be blown in order to render the geminated consonant. Sarnelli admits that Basile’s wise and appropriate decision is testified by the fact that “non voleva lo soperchio, che rompe lo coperchio.” Meaning that someone wants too much, in Sarnelli’s text the paremia says that if Basile did not want the over-lid to crack the lid, he did not require too much when proposing or fixing the orthographic rules of the Neapolitan language. Thus, his choices aimed to facilitate reading Neapolitan for those who were not native speakers. For the partial Neapolitan text of the letter, see Sarnelli 1986, xii, and Picone and Messerli, 311, n. 10; for the English translation, see Bottigheimer, 74.
by Bonciani, who asserted that wonder, caused by a certain novelty, was one of the most important reasons for enjoyment (Ordine 1996, 66).

A fundamental feature of fables, and specifically of Baroque fables, is connected to language: “ricerca […] dello stupefacente” (Spera, 29). As Giovanni Getto highlights in his 2000 book on the literary Baroque in Italy, trying to channel the Baroque novella inside a historical and literary catalogue is a burdensome enterprise. However, Getto underscores some elements that characterize and unify Baroque novellas: the shared goal to delight and marvel the audience, and to reproduce the corpulent, explosive, and pompous spirit of the period, which is always different and always elusive. Not surprisingly, most of these characteristics pertain to language: accumulation, specifically accumulation of words; metaphorical transformation and deformation as a literary ornament to the narration and its resulting augmentation of reality; and ludic enthusiasm for linguistic games (Getto, 276; 300). All these aspects, according to Angela Albanese, pair marvel and comedy. While analyzing the English translation of Basile’s paremias, she declares that elements of comic accumulation, pompous rhetoric, and hilarious multiplication of reality, in other words Baroque “linguistic freedom”, created polyphonic literary works that could appeal to the different senses of the human being (Albanese 2013, 11). This is particularly true for Basile’s language, which is dominated by an absolute freedom that explodes in a comic, concrete, at times vulgar, vision of reality and popular life. Likewise, Sarnelli’s language in Posilecheata, despite being more controlled probably due to the author’s engagement with the Church, reveals the strength, expressiveness, dynamism, and comedic capacities and potentialities of the Neapolitan dialect.273

273 For a critical discussion on fables, see Calvino, 31-78; for their popular tradition, 117-34.
As a collection of fables, the abstract and the fantastic permeate Posilecheata; nonetheless, the cunti also perceive and depict the true essence the Neapolitan cultural, social, and linguistic reality, anchored, as they are, in the real world that creates them and constitutes the starting point of the utopian dimension they promote (Canepa 1999, 24). As such, the five fables position themselves between fact and fantasy, reality and imagination, where the first member of the dichotomy allows for comedic and ironic aspects to emerge. Indeed, Sarnelli’s comedy entirely and exclusively depends on Naples and is later applied to the fairy-tale feature of the fables. Following the Horatian principle, Sarnelli makes the newly-created seventeenth century genre of the fable convey moral teaching by way of resorting to the narrative patrimony transmitted by and preserved among the common people. Simultaneously, he provides entertainment and comedic scenes for the sake of the public’s attention and approval (Rak 1994, 298; Tarzia 1996, 180; Getto 2000, 298). Undoubtedly, paremias are the perfect tools to achieve this dual purpose of moralizing and entertaining the readers (Valente 1977, 257). They adapt to the textual, stylistic, and cultural exigencies of the three parts of the work to convey moral teachings, interpret events and characters, and transmit pleasant delight and humor. In the prefatory letter, which is a pseudo-linguistic treatise, paremias in Neapolitan are used as satirical and playful tools to minimize the

274 On carnivalesque in Basile, see Canepa 2004. Sarnelli was apparently interested in stories and fables, especially those that could convey a moral message through laughable topics. For instance, Degli Avvenimenti di Fortunato e de’ suoi figli’s prefatory letter is very similar to Posilecheata’s letter to the virtuous readers, as both of them combine erudition and witticism with a strong morality. Similarly, in the Bestiarum Schola, Sarnelli gathers ninety-nine fables in order to convey a moral philosophy and castigate the immoral behavior of the time (see Iurilli).

275 For further references on the fairy-tale tradition and on the role of Basile in shaping and introducing the genre, see Calabrese; Chlodowski; Rak 1986; Lavinio; Ragone; Tarzia; Canepa 1999; Getto; Spera; and Picone and Messerli.

276 It is noteworthy to mention that Sarnelli wished to compile a list of “Frasi di lingua napoletana,” as he admits in the preface to his 1674 edition of Basile’s Lo cunto de li cunti (Bottigheimer, 74). It seems that Sarnelli had planned to write a manual on Neapolitan orthography (Valente 1977) and had been gathering and explaining a list of Neapolitan sentences and synonyms. Unfortunately, there is no reference to where this list could be preserved, and the major libraries in Naples seem not to store the document. It is, however, arguable to think that Sarnelli was gathering sentences and words to use in future works of his, a sort of manual to which he could refer when in need of expressing a concept. It would not be improbable to believe that Sarnelli gathered paremias for the most diverse literary occasions. 

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traditional prestige associated with the language of the city of Florence, attack the Northern dialects, and thus confirm the creativity of the Neapolitan language. In the carnivalesque dialogue of the introduction, they allow for laughter, but also show socio-cultural elements and practices: through them, comedy explodes while ethical values emerge.277

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277 Sarnelli had already employed paremias in his Degli Avvenimenti di Fortunato e de’ suoi figli, drawing them from a variety of sources and making them express a contextual meaning related to religious matters, social practices, erudite disquisitions, and literary matters. For instance, he uses Terence’s paremia: Nihil dicendum, quod non iam dictum sit prius (Eunuchus, Prologue, 41). Terence, defending himself from the attacks on his presumed plagiarisms of Menader’s original comedy, requests the public to judge his comedies, and excuses himself for any inevitable borrowings, since it is impossible to say something that has not already been explored in the past. Sarnelli also uses a paremia to emphasize friendship. He mentions the Greek paremia, Πολλὰς φιλίας ἀπροσηγορία διέλυσεν and, just after it, its correspondent in Latin, Multas amicitias silentium diremit, to explain how silence can break many friendships. The Greek paremia comes from Aristotle’s Ethica Nicomachea, in Book 8, Chapter 5 (Ethica Nicomachea, VIII.5.1157b, bekker page 10), dedicated to the state of friendship distinguished from the activity of friendship and from the feeling of friendliness: “ἥν δὲ χρόνος ἢ ἀποσια γίνητι, καὶ τῆς φιλίας δοκεῖ λήθην ποινήν: οὗτον εἴρηται πολλὰς δὴ φιλίας ἀπροσηγορία διέλυσεν” (“But if the absence is prolonged, it seems to cause the friendship to be forgotten; and hence the saying, Many the friendship silence hath undone”). Erasmus listed this paremia in his Adagia, sub paremia amicitia (Adagia, 2.1.26). Sarnelli mentions a paremia from Plutarch’s oration, De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute: Πρποι γάρ αντα τώ σιδήρω τό καλός κιθαρίσδειν, and the Latin, Vergit ad lethale ferrum lepide cithara canere (“Sweet singing on the lyre stirs one deadly steel”), which Plutarch declares to be commonly used among the Spartans. Erasmus, sub paremia Cithara ad bellum (Adagia, 4.7.71: Cithara incitat ad bellum), included in the entry Incitare, explains it as follows: “Quo significabant certis citharae modis sedradi motus animorum, aliis addi vigorem ad praelium” (“With which they meant that by playing the cithara in certain ways the impulses of the soul are placated, in some others the war excitement is raised”). The paremia means that certain ways of playing the cithara can instigate to war, whereas some others can placate a turbulent soul: thus, Sarnelli considers Degli avvenimenti di Fortunato e de’ suoi figlioli as a pleasant diversion during times of intense study. Finally, Sarnelli employs an erudite Spanish didactic saying, which sounds like a programmatic intent for his future Posilecheata, a combination of comic events and truth, castingig vices and lies and exalting virtue and good reasoning: Alegre con las burlas, enseñado con las veras, admirado de los sucessos, discrete con las razones, advertido con los embustes, sagaz con los exemplos, ayrado contro el vicio, y enamorado de la virtud (“Joyful with teases, trained through the truths, in awe of the mundane, logical and careful with reasons, conscious of half-truths, clever with examples, infuriated by vice, in love with virtue”). The saying comes from Miguel de Cervantes’s Vida y hechos del ingenioso caballero Don Quixote de la Mancha (1615). The context in which the saying appears concerns a discussion over the rules of writing a good comedy in lieu of a reformation of theatre (Don Quixote, Chapter 48). The priest’s idea is that a good comedy, ingenious and well organized, can be much more successful than a comedy that lacks these artistic elements. Consequently, one who listens to a good comedy would experience those aspects that the paremia lists. It is suggestive that Sarnelli compares the reaction of the readers to his Avvenimenti with the reaction that watchers of a comedy would experience. Despite the different genres, in a prefatory letter in a prosaic and adventurous work, and a discussion of comedy in a chilvaric poem, the effects of comedy are the same, and the purposes of their authors are similar, to the point that a paremia can transit from one genre to the other and convey the same message, even though the results of this meaning vary in accordance with the specific context.
3.3 The Prefatory Letter: “Pe farele toccare la coda co le mmano”

Before the collection of fables is introduced in the realistic narrative frame, Sarnelli dedicates a prefatory letter to the supposedly virtuous readers of his work. (Sarnelli 1986, 3-8). The letter becomes a manifesto of Sarnelli’s polemical and subversive idea of linguistic supremacy and of his attitude toward the Neapolitan language. He powerfully and comically compares Neapolitan to other languages with stronger literary traditions, thus elevating the Neapolitan language. The first victim of his derision is the dated and antiquated idea of language promoted by the Accademici della Crusca in their two published editions of the Vocabolario (1612; 1623); the second are the Northern dialects, stereotyped as more sophisticated and refined languages.

Sarnelli is conscious of the supremacy of the Tuscan vernacular and of the great literary traditions in Lombard and Venetian dialects. In all fairness, literature in Neapolitan had embraced more genres and shown more original aspects than dialect literature in northern Italy. The sole exception was Venice, where production in the local languages was quite robust, especially in theatre (Malato 1996, 260). Yet literature in the Neapolitan dialect was not granted the same respect as other dialects throughout the peninsula. In Posilecheata, the only way Sarnelli can find a meritorious place in the linguistic canon for Neapolitan and claim its literary dignity is to play with the stereotype created by the Tuscan tradition. One of the first stereotypes of literature in Neapolitan dialect was indeed its alleged satirical and comedic representation of life, its buffoonery, and its comic and hilarious language likely to appear in works that were quintessentially associated with a popular or lower social sphere.

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278 “To make him touch the tail with his hands”
279 In his research on theoretical approaches on comedy, Giulio Ferroni argues that in comedic events, including literary ones, a subject triggers comedy (actor, author), a subject laughs (the audience), and a subject or object is the victim of the comedic act (Ferroni, 14).
280 At that time, the Accademici were working on the third edition of the Vocabolario to be eventually published in 1693.
compared to the presumably dignified literature in Italian. Therefore, Sarnelli activates an antagonistic “parodia del diverso” based on diatopic aspects and demolishes it (Cortelazzo 2002, 1003). He accepts the stigma of humble literature in dialect, but also compares it to the Tuscan language in order to demonstrate that Tuscan cannot be given the label of a more literary language and emphasize that his work is a legitimate and honest recreation. Therefore, Sarnelli plays with this stereotype but overtures it: dialect allows for a parodic vision of the canonical literature in Tuscan, and the comic and harshly ironic puns make this parody undoubtedly effective.

Paremias are Sarnelli’s satirical and playful tool par excellence and they are used to minimize the traditional prestige associated with the language of the city of Florence, attack it, and thus confirm the creativity of the Neapolitan language. The clash between two

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281 For instance, see Manuela Caniato, “Lingua e dialetto come espressione dell’altro nella commedia del Cinquecento,” Lingue e letterature in contatto: Atti del XV Congresso dell’AIPI, Brunico, 24-27 agosto 2002. Eds. Bart Van den Bossche, Michel Bastiaensen, and Corinna Salvadori Lonergan. Firenze: Cesati, 2004: 49-54. She explains that a cognitive process seems to associate dialect with buffoonery, along with an inferior and exclusively comic representation of life, compared to the presumably dignified literature in Italian. Specifically, Neapolitan was associated with comic and hilarious language, used to entertain and likely to appear in works that were quintessentially associated with a popular or lower social sphere. There was, however, a considerable tradition of serious texts, in prose, poetry, and theatre (for more information, see Haller 1999, 243-78).

282 This seems to confirm Radtke’s idea that “la scelta del dialetto […] s’intende come un divertimento intellettuale, come un pretesto, ma non come necessità letteraria” (Radtke 1997b, 81). Rak also comments that the presence of Tuscan in the Neapolitan tradition is always comic and parodic (Rak 1994, 23). (On the topic, see also Brevini, LXXVI-LXXXII).

283 Here (“recreazione leceta ed onesta”), he probably refers to Cervantes’s Don Quijote, where in Chapter 48, the canonical says that, “No es posible que esté continuo el arco armado, ni la condición y flaqueza humana se pueda sustentar sin alguna lícita recreación.” The priest is here saying that it is impossible that the arch is always tense, meaning that the tension sometimes needs relaxing, and that the human relaxation cannot sustain itself without a licit recreation. As in Cervantes’ discussion, where well-written and well-organized comedies are a precious example of eloquence and a good pastime for intelligent people, Posilecheata is an appropriate and permitted way to pause from virtuous enterprises (P, 4.4).

linguistic codes, especially if one is dialect and another represents the standardized or more prestigious language, is a powerful tool for satire and comedy (Gibellini). Sarnelli starts his letter by asserting that those who have always engaged in grand literature consider his *Posilecheata* a “passiatempo,” (a pastime) or a work that does not deserve the recognition that is typically awarded to other literature (P, 4.3). He refers to the writers of those literary works by the epithet of “pennarulo,” namely a pen-wielder, but in *Posilecheata* used as an ironic and derogatory remark for writers who use their pen only after being paid. Two proverbial phrases express Sarnelli’s decision to write a work that does not meet the expectations of an obtuse community of critics as well as his derision of those who censure his work:

Pocca li primme uommenne de lo munno porzì songo state cenzorate, essenno 'mpossibbele che quarche travo rutto no' strida e che quarche strenga rott
non se metta 'n dozzana: anze, trattannose de livre, vide pe infi' a li strunze
(parlanno co lleverenzia de le facce voste) che diceno: *Nos coque pomma*
natamus (P, 3.2).

Before Sarnelli, Cortese had used the two expressions together in his *Vaiasseide*: *Non è possibile che quarche travo rutto non strida e che quarche strenga rott non se metta ndozzana* (Vaiasseide, 1.19). The first expression (essenno 'mpossibbele che quarche travo rutto no' strida) conveys the message that anything defective, despite seeming strong as a...

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285 When attacking Tuscan, Sarnelli links the supremacy of the Neapolitan language to the substance that the latter presents: “E po’ co sta lengua Toscana avite frusciato lo tafanario a miezo munno! Vale cchiù na parola Napoletana chiantuta che tutte li vocabole de la Crusca” (P, 5.6).
286 All quotations from the text come from 1986 Malato’s critical edition of *Posilecheata* (Sarnelli 1986). The page number is followed by the number of the paragraph where the quotation appears. References to the English translation of the prefatory letter and of the final paragraphs of the introduction by Bottigheimer are provided (Bottigheimer, 76-79); for other quotations, the meaning of the paremias is rephrased according to the context, and thus without providing a literal translation.
287 “Indeed, the very first men of the world were censored, for it’s impossible that there’s no beam that doesn’t creak or that in a dozen shoelaces there’s not a broken one or two. In fact, in the matter of books, you’ll see that pieces of shit (speaking with reverence for your faces) will say: «We can swim, too.»” (Bottigheimer, 76).
beam, creaks and shows its flaw, and, consequently, when an imperfection occurs, it is impossible to hide it. Critics, who do not excel in their job and are “travi rotte” (“broken beams”), cannot help expressing their own, incorrect ideas. In fact, the first writers fell victim to these incompetent critics, who blamed them for their supposed imperfections or literary inappropriateness. The second proverbial phrase (essennon impossibile che quarche strena rotta non se metta ’n dozzana) confirms this message, as it refers to blusteringous people who cannot avoid intruding in matters that do not concern them. They put themselves in a dozen groups, and are therefore grouped all together without distinction and thus intermingled with the others. This happens with “stringhe rotte” (“broken shoelaces”), that are together in inappropriate places or without being distinguished from the good ones, which is a metaphor for the above-mentioned critics.

The message is even more apparent when considering that some unworthy authors believe themselves to be “apples” when in fact they are “pieces of shit.” Here, sarcastically, Sarnelli refers to the Latin expression, Nos quoque poma natamus (phonetically transcribed in Neapolitan, Nos coque pomma natamus), “We are floating apples,” which Malato tracks down to the Aesopian fable, Poma et sterquilinum. Malato identifies Aesop’s fable as a source of a Neapolitan story about a shipwreck that left oranges floating in the water besides some dung. Sarnelli applies the literal meaning of the expression to the context of the prefatory letter, where it refers to those who are not able to write and dare to criticize other writers. These people also deem themselves to be on the same level as the brightest writers, in

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288 Basile uses the proverbial phrase in Muse Napolitane, 4.153 and 5.381.
289 Orlando Pescetti lists, “Si vuole metter in dozzina, come le stringhe marcie” (Pescetti, 105). The Dizionario etimologico italiano by Battisti and Alessio lists the form “strenga” as a term of northern dialects in the fourteenth century.
290 On the English tradition of this saying, see Taylor 1931, 209. The translation of Aesop’s fable, Sterquilinium et Poma, which argued against the vanity of praise, follows: “Some dung, which happened to be carried up along with some apples in a sudden runoff of water, was floating in that place where till recently it had been lying. Believing itself so excellent then, in riding on the water and being ferried in the company of apples, it said «How skilfully we apples swim!» But a little later, dissolved by the humidity, it vanished in the water.”
the same faulty way that excrement is believed to be apples. By inference, this group of unskilled critics includes those who would attack Sarnelli for the enterprise he has undertaken, his *Posilecheata*. The sarcastic devaluation of Sarnelli’s attackers is fully achieved.

The paid writers continue to denigrate Sarnelli’s project and consider it void of any significance, a “*bagattella*” indeed:

“E non se vregogna no paro tujo perdere lo tiempo a ’ste bagattelle? Haje scritto tant’opere grave e de considerazione, e mo scacarete co sti cunte dell’uorco? E po’ a lo mmacaro avisse scritto ’n lengua toscanese o ’n quarch’auto lenguaggio, pocca veramente la lengua napoletana non serve che pe li boffune de le commeddie” (P, 4.3).291

The first tale of Basile’s collection, *Lo cunto dell’uerco* (The Tale of the Ogre) (CC, I.1)292 is mentioned here in order to devalue the literature in dialect in its entirety. The motive lies in Sarnelli’s inability to write high-level literature in Neapolitan, as the opening tale of Basile’s collection supposedly shows. The secular stigma against the Neapolitan language is apparent here: the Neapolitan language serves only for the buffoons of comedies.293 Sarnelli’s work

291 “Isn’t someone of your station ashamed to be wasting time on these trifles? You’ve written so many serious works worthy of consideration, and now you’re shitting your pants with these ogre’s tales? I mean, if you had at least written in Tuscan or some other language; Neapolitan really isn’t good for anything but buffoons in comedies” (Bottigheimer, 76).

292 For more information on this fable, see Sanguineti; Rak 1986; Rak 1994; Canepa 2004. Basile in *Muse napolitane 5, Tersicore overo la zita*, uses the expression with the same meaning, namely thoughts of no importance, as Masiello, Petrillo, and Lello discuss love (Basile 1976, 287). Similarly, in Basile’s *Cunto*, eglogue 2, *La tenta*, the cluster “cunte dell’uerco” is used to indicate the nonsensical discourses that tincture provokes in human beings.

293 Galiani, in his treatise on the Neapolitan dialect, criticized those teachers who persisted in changing the pronunciation of Neapolitan kids to make it more Florentine (Galiani 1779, 8). He frequently referred to the Florentine grammar as something that Neapolitans abhor (Galiani 1779, 15) since it would never be able to achieve the same level of expressiveness as the Neapolitan language (Galiani 1779, 24); the vernacular from Florence is said to sound awkward and flawed (Galiani 1779, 45), as well as more corrupt, and thus more distant from Latin than Neapolitan (Galiani 1779, 56-67). Galiani, however, admits that Neapolitan is not as far from the Italian language as one might imagine, apart from phonological and slightly different morphological aspects; the syntax, indeed, does not differ from the standard (Galiani 1779, 22). Consequently, a way to make Neapolitan more understandable to everyone, including foreigners, would be the gradual movement toward the Tuscan
would have been appreciated and considered in a different light had he written it in another language, preferably Tuscan. However, once he wrote in a language apt only for the buffoons of comedies, his work became worthless. This is the argument made by his imaginary critic.  

In order to show the resonant power of the Neapolitan language, Sarnelli sets forth a classical source: he mentions Pompeus Magnus who, upon arriving in Naples and falling in love with the local dialect, abandoned Latin. When Cicero scolded him for his decision, Pompeus responded that if Cicero had been acquainted with the Neapolitan language, he

language, so that the morphological and lexical differences between the two languages would be progressively diminished and the dialect would become more Italianized (Galiani 1779, 35-36). Galiani regrets, though, that Neapolitans had spent centuries (from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries) trying to imitate and conform to the Tuscan language, ultimately resulting in a progressive loss of its superiority (Galiani 1779, 67) up to the stigma of a dialect solely able to promote laughter with its low buffooneries (Galiani 1779, 120; also x). He thus attacks both Cortese and Basile for their barbarous orthography, which made their works unintelligible not only to foreigners but to Neapolitan people as well, and for their distorting Tuscan words in order to make them more Neapolitan (Galiani 1779, 30; 121-36). The only merit he recognizes in Basile is his extensive use of paremias and idiomatic expressions, which give voice to the common people (Galiani 1779, 123). Galiani’s work was harshly attacked by Luigi Serio in his Lo vernacchio (1780), a treatise written in Neapolitan, where each of Galiani’s explanations are criticized and corrected in accordance with a supposedly better understanding and knowledge of the Neapolitan language. Serio considered the Neapolitan that is influenced by the Tuscan language an intermediate variety devoid of any identity, for the only true speakers of the Neapolitan language can be the common people (Serio, 27). It follows that Basile is a master of this dialect (Serio, 31), and could not have written a different collection to express the people’s language and deride Tuscan speakers as well as Marino’s followers (Serio, 38).  

Sarnelli had already explored this topic in the preface to his 1674 edition of Basile’s Lo cunto de li cunti. Neapolitan lacks any formal recognition and any instruments that could vouch for its literary endeavors, and thus is inferior to other languages. When discussing the best dictionary in each language, Sarnelli mentions: Latin and its dictionary by Ambrogio Calepio (known as Calepino), titled Dictionarium Latinum (1502); Greek (Lexicon Linguae Grecae), after which lexicographical studies intensified in the 1500s; and Tuscan with the Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca. He compares it to the absence of any recognized dictionary or linguistic analysis for the Neapolitan dialect. Sarnelli is indirectly saying that, since there are no dictionaries and grammar books to attest the correct orthography of the Neapolitan dialect, his orthographic choices are the result of a thorough study and will be a model for subsequent editions of Basile’s text. He is praising his own edition of Basile’s collection and placing it at the same level of the best literary editions in Greek or Latin.  

This anecdote is taken from Book 1, Chapter 6, of Giovanni Antonio Summonte’s Historia della città e regno di Napoli (1601-02), which refers to one of Cicero’s letters Ad Atticum. Summonte specifies that it is from Book 7, where the only possible reference to Summonte’s quotation might be from the second letter (even though the topic is completely different): “Quo modo expectabam epistulam quam Philoxeno dedisses! Scripseras enim in ea esse de sermone Pompei Neapolitano” (“Impatiently indeed did I await the letter you said you had given to Philoxenus! For you wrote that it contained an account of your conversation with Pompey at Naples”). (For more information, see Sarnelli 1986, 5, n. 5).
himself would have chosen it over Latin, given its greater sweetness. Cicero’s reprimand is described by means of a proverbial phrase:

Quanno Cicerone ne le fece na lavatella de capo senza sapone […] (P, 5.7).

Lavare il capo a uno col ranno caldo, o senza sapone means to scold someone (in GDLI, s.v. sapone). Sarnelli modifies the expression by replacing the more traditional lavare with fare una lavatella, where the word “lavatella,” resulting from a derivative process, typical to southern Italy (Serianni, 653), is infused with an ironic pun in comparison to the neutral “lavata.” A reprimand is usually firm and direct, and difficult to soften. “Lavatella” grammatically seems to lessen the meaning of the expression or, at least, make it nicer so to reveal an affectionate feeling or emotion. However, in the context where it appears, by saying it with a comedic grin, the phrase ironically means that the rebuke was in fact very harsh. Sarnelli is saying that Cicerone is not simply giving Pompeo a washing without soap, but rather a good washing.

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296 The concept of sweetness refers to Dante’s *De Vulgari Eloquentia* and his goal of finding the best vernacular in the Italian peninsula. When the poet needs to choose the most suitable words for his compositions, the only option left are words that are combed, decorative, and glossy (DVE, II.7), thus as sweet as hydromellum. Surprisingly, Dante, in his linguistic analysis of the dialects of the peninsula, does not touch upon Neapolitan. He mentions it when he states that Naples and Gaeta belonged to the same tribe (DVE, I.IX.4). Later, in Chapter 12, he inserts the Neapolitan vernacular in the bigger area of Apulia, whose inhabitants, according to him, use many gross barbarisms, such as “Bolzera che chiangesse lo quatraro” (“I would like the boy to cry”). Galiani also refers to Dante’s example, saying that “volzera” does not exist in the Neapolitan dialect and must be a mistake due to copyists (Galiani 1779, 48).

297 The proverbial phrase also appears in Basile’s *Cunto*, I.15. IV.10.29 and V.2.25. Benedetto Varchi says that the expression Lavargli il capo da’ barbieri col ranno caldo or sometimes col ranno freddo is used when someone talks ill of someone who is not present (Herc., 3.55). Connected to them is the proverb Chi lava il capo all’asino perde il ranno e il sapone, since he wastes time and does something useless and without profit, as much as *Perdere l’olio e l’opera* (Virgiliii, LXXXI: Operam et oleum perdere, fol. XIIIv).

298 The suffix “-ella” comes from the Latin -ĔLLUS, that progressively substituted -ŬLUS in Romance Languages. See Serianni, 653; Renzi, Salvi, and Cardinaletti, Vol. 3, 507-09.

The proverbial phrase *Fare na lavatella de capo* achieves many objectives in this section of the prefatory letter: it situates Cicero and Pompeus Magnus in a colloquial context, since they are not placed in a political setting. If Cicero can scold Pompeus for his choice of spoken language, then the paremia also shifts their relationship to a level of friendly banter. The Neapolitanization of the proverbial phrase makes the entire event local, and places the two men far from Rome. Additionally, the contrast between Neapolitan and Latin creates a dichotomy between a highly-recognized language and a dialect. Since Tuscan is not present in the comparison, Neapolitan can compete with Latin and is even the victor of this competition, as Pompeus chooses it over his native language. The proverbial phrase makes light of Cicero’s inability to convince Pompeus. The great philosopher and rhetorician appears powerless, and fails in demonstrating the superioriy of Latin over Neapolitan. It is almost as if Sarnelli is comparing Cicero’s unsuccessful attempt to convince Pompeus in Latin with his successful praise of the Neapolitan language over Tuscan. The paremia, despite having no connection with the Latin-Neapolitan dichotomy, indirectly contributes to the Tuscan-Neapolitan contrast. And in both of these situations, Neapolitan is on the winning side, whereas its opponents are ironically derided. The presence of the paremia is also fundamental to the narration and to understand the meaning of Pompeus’s subsequent answer, concerning an event of linguistic clash between Naples and the North of Italy. The paremia expresses Cicero’s reprimand and, as a consequence of his disapproval, Pompeus answers in a demonstrative and epideictic way. Without it, it can be speculated that Pompeus’s answer would have probably been less passionate and less reasoned.

While defining his own acquired identity and underscore his loyalty to the Neapolitan language and culture, Sarnelli declares,
Chi ha fatto lo stromiento co li Toscanise de parlare a lengua loro, s’aggia pacienza:

Io non ce l’aggio fatto, e perzò voglio parlare a lengua de lo pajese mio. E chi no’ lo pò sentire, o s’appila l’aurecchie, o cinco lettere (P, 7.14). Sarnelli’s unwillingness to find a compromise demonstrates his intolerance of the Tuscan language. By now totally integrated in the city that he considers his (“pajese mio”), he only offers two possibilities, neither of which is agreeable to speakers of languages other than Neapolitan. The options are either a voluntary choice of deafness, or “five letters.” In his edition of the collection, Malato explains that the meaning of the proverbial phrase *cinco lettere* is lost and that it might be a periphrasis for “shit,” Italian “merda.” Rocco (s.v. *cinque*) identifies *cinco lettere* with “crepa (”snuff it”) o altra voce simile che abbia cinque lettere,” and reports Sarnelli’s quotation without offering further explanation. However, “pazienza” and “cinque lettere” are usually coupled in the proverbial phrase, *O pazienza o cinque lettere.*

In Sarnelli’s text, the word “pacienzia” (“pazienza”) refers to those who have enough patience to tolerate the Tuscan language, unlike himself who has lost it and wishes to speak in the language of Naples. Consequently, in this context, *cinque lettere* means that the alternative to “pazienza” relates to pain, and a possible explanation may be “dolor” or “morte.” This is a metaphorical and slightly ironic pain or death since it affects only those who do not recognize the value of the Neapolitan language, thus of Sarnelli’s work. In his opinion, Neapolitan demonstrates its greater aptness at all levels of literature, as well as its naturalness, as opposed to the artificiality of the Tuscan language, exclusively based on an atrophied bookish tradition (Valente 1977). The paremia, being elliptical or monophrastic and thus more concise than other paremias, should communicate a direct message to the readers

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300 “If you’ve made a pact with the Tuscans to speak their language, you’ll have to bear with me: I haven’t, and I intend to speak in the language of my own country. And if you can’t stand hearing it, either plug your ears, or take those five letters and do with them what you wish” (Bottigheimer, 78).

301 Rocco (s.v. *cinque*) lists an example by Zeeza Michele’s *Artaserse*, 2.11, where *cinco lettere* means “forca,” which is death: “Aggia lo reo la vita o cinco lettere.” Giuseppe Frizzi in his *Dizionario dei frizzetti popolari fiorentini* relates the word “cinque” to the vulgar term for the male genital organ, “cazzo.”
or listeners (Bessi, 65). However, in this instance, that is not the case. It is, instead, the most ambiguous structure that could have been used and its indeterminant meaning, one that lies somewhere between surrendering and irreverance, is also a sentiment that characterizes Sarnelli’s prefatory letter.

Next, Sarnelli scrutinizes the Northern dialects. He criticizes them in order to heap praise upon the phonetic and morphological regulatory principles of the Neapolitan language. In a seventeenth-century dialectology lesson, Pompeus recounts of a philosopher from Posillipo who, as the embodiment of Sarnelli, engages in a derogatory and critical analysis on the Lombard vernacular, expressed by means of a harsh linguistic prank and an obscene pun. The philosopher acts like a “protoquamquam”, ironically meaning that he behaves like a pedantic and know-it-all person, and frequently appears ridiculous in his display of knowledge:

Na vota, cammenanno no cierto felosófo de Posileco pe la Lommardia, perché parlava napoletano chiantuto e majâteco, tutte se ne redevano. Isso, mo, pe farele toccare la coda co le mmano, decette a uno che faceva lo protaquamquam: “Vedimmo no poco, de ’ratia, si songo meglío le parole voste o le noste!” (P, 6.10).

Rocco (s.v. coda) explains that the proverbial phrase Pe farele toccare la coda co le mmano means to make someone “rimaner confuso, sgarato, avvilito” (to be confused, defeated, and discouraged). Thus, in the context of the letter, it acquires the meaning of beating Sarnelli’s critic in this linguistic competition. Again, a paremia emphasizes a moment of linguistic

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303 “Once, when a certain philosopher from Posillipo was walking around in Lombardy, everyone started laughing at him because he was speaking his vigorous and succulent Neapolitan. So, to make sure they’d go off with their tails between their legs, he says to one of them who was acting like a know-it-all: «Now, let’s just see, if you please, if your words or ours are better!»” (Bottigheimer, 77).
conscience domitated by ironic tones. Neapolitan is said to be “chiantuto e majateco,” vigorous, consistent, solid, and flourishing, especially if compared to Northern dialects.\(^{304}\) As Michele Rak argues, “chiantuto” establishes a connection between literature and life as a way to mirror literature, namely literature in Neapolitan dialect, which is rooted in its geographical, cultural, and social history (Rak 1994, 24); these elements do not pertain to Tuscan or other dialects.

The apocopation of words typical of the Lombard dialect introduces a comparison between the beauty of Neapolitan and the ungraceful Lombard words.\(^{305}\) Ultimately, Sarnelli celebrates the Neapolitan dialect and its phonetic aspects, which he considers more meaningful and productive than those of the northern dialects. After demonstrating that the

\(^{304}\) D’Ambra (s.v. chiantuto) describes “chiantuto” as “ben piantato, ben tallito, attecchito,” and metaphorically “robusto, vigoroso, tarchiato, atticcato, fattoccio, aiante.” Rocco (s.v. chiantuto) too defines “chiantuto” as “ben piantato, grosso, robusto, ed anche sodo, massiccio.” He reports an example in Niccolò Amenta’s comedy La Fante (Napoli, 1701), where in act 3 scene 9 one reads: “No lo siente lo parlat’ chiantuto e aggrazejato?” Cortese also uses “chiantuto” in Viaggio di Parnaso, I.24 (where it is associated with the voice in Naples, “vuce chiantute de la maglia vecchia, Ch’anno gran forza, ed enchieno l’aurecchia”). Other instances are, Sgruttendio, Tiorba a taccone, corda 1, sonet 5 Luoco e muodo comme se nnamoraje (where it is associated with a Turkey oak, “majateco e chiatuto comm’a cierro”); Basile, I.1 (associated to Antuono and his gaining weight out of the ogre’s plush meals) and I.2 (describing the beauty of a young woman). Sarnelli uses the adjective “chiantuto” in cunto 4 when he says that on Belluccia’s gravestone the proverbial phrase Non c’è peo de vellane arresagliute is carved “a lettere chiantute,” in big letters (P, 174.92). For “majateco,” D’Ambra explains that “questa voce adoperata del continuo, ha molti significati, come quella che soventi ad un tempo vuol indicare in una cosa freschezza, rotondità, pastosità, succio, sincerità, e bel colore.” D’Ascoli 1993 proposes that the meaning of “majateco” is “marchiano, robusto;” its reference to a flourishing robustness comes from the cherries in May (“majateco” derives from the Latin maiaticus from maius, May), which are particularly big and pulpy. “Maiàteco” is used in Sgruttendio’s Torbia in the aforementioned sonnet 5 of the first corda, and in two of Niccolò Capasso’s sonnets: one uses it to describe the succulent roasted testicles of a ram, “Pe l’accattà majateche, e chiantute,” which is an ironic reference to Petrarchist poets (Capasso 1761, 174); the other refers to Petrarchian poetry, which is said to contain “smoccarie grosse e majateche,” worthy of cleaning his posterior (Capasso 1761, 192). Galiani links “chiantuto” and “majateco” to “quelle piante o frutta polpute, e succulenti, che riempiono la bocca, e lusingano gratamente il palato” (Galiani 1779, 11), while Serio asserts that the two words came from healthy broccoli with a strong stalk and a thriving top (Serio, 17). Before Sarnelli, Nicolò Lombardi used the two words together in his Ciuceide, when in the second octave of the eight “arragliata” the ass asks the King to send him female asses: “Le bbuoglio tuoste, giuvene, e scheunte [probably, “schenute”], chiatte, gruosse, majateche e chiantute.” (On “parole chiatute,” see also De Blasi 2002, 95-99).

\(^{305}\) On the mockery and critique of northern dialects from a Neapolitan perspective and on examples of Neapolitan dialect, see Del Tufo, 624-883 (Ragionamento V). On the dichotomy between literature in dialect and Tuscan tradition, see also Vignuzzi, Bertini, and Malgarini in Cortelazzo 2002, 996-1028.
Neapolitan words “io capo casa” (I house head) become “mi ca co” in Lombard,\(^{306}\) the philosopher says:

“Di alla ’mpressa le parole meje a lengua toja: Io, Casa, Capo”. E lo Lommardo, subeto: - Mi Ca-Cò! - E si te cacò - decette lo Napoletano - te lo ’mmeretaste!” (P, 6.11).\(^{307}\)

The Neapolitan philosopher deflects the malevolent laughter originally directed at him by the Lombard, whose inconvenient and inappropriate dialect makes him instead the victim. Other than its scatological and vulgar references, the pun also mocks the grammar of those who cannot speak the Lombard dialect, correctly. By using the third person singular of the verb “cacare” (“cacò”) for both the subject pronouns “mi” and “tu,” the philosopher, a master of language and rhetoric, mocks the ungrammatical way in which people from the north of Italy talk. The philosopher’s wordplay paves the way to the apex of the prefatory letter, which introduces a paremia expressly created for this context.

As Boccaccio’s Decameron (Umana cosa è aver compassione degli afflitti) and Basile’s Cunto (Chi cerca quello che non deve trova quello che non vuole) are introduced by a paremia, a proverbial phrase features in the climactic point of Posilecheata’s prefatory letter and sets its tone. The philosopher refers to a paremia used in an area surrounding Posillipo:

“Pocca se dice a lo pajese che non è mio: Lengua che no’ la ’ntienne, e tu la caca. Ora vide chi parla a lo sproposeto, nuje o vuje?” (P, 6.11).\(^{308}\)

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\(^{306}\) In the Atlante Linguistico Italiano, the extended Lombard area (Brescia, Milan, Bergamo, Como, Trento) is identified by the form “ko” for “capo.” The pronunciation of “casa” as “ka” starts in Forlì and includes the entire Paduan area, indicatively corresponding today to Emilia Romagna; Lombardy minus Brescia; Liguria, except a few areas around Genova and Savona; and Piedmont, excluding the areas along the border (Asti and Vercelli).

\(^{307}\) “‘Say my words in your language fast: Io, Casa, Capo.’ And the Lombard right away replied: «Mi Ca-Cò.» ‘If you shat yourself,’ said the Neapolitan, ‘you deserved it!’” (Bottigheimer, 77).

\(^{308}\) “Because it’s said in a town—not mine—that ‘If you don’t understand a language, you shit it right out.’ Now let’s see who’s talking out of turn, us or you?” (Bottigheimer, 77).
Instead of healing melancholy or presenting a moral and didactic appeal as it happens in the texts of his predecessors, the philosopher’s paremia in Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata* expresses an intensely ironic and hilarious view of the Northern dialects, confirming the supremacy of the Neapolitan dialect over any other vernacular. In its harsh tones, Sarnelli’s words are accompanied by a scornful laughter, a *skoma* or *cachinnus*, meant to hurt and ridicule.309 Malato comments that the paremia was used in Naples in the seventeenth century to indicate the Neapolitan people’s indifference to foreign languages.310 In the context of the prefatory letter to *Posilecheata*, by means of a defecatory metaphor, the parahypotactical paremia affirms that the Northern dialects, though supported by a stronger literary tradition, are incomprehensible, and thus they should be discarded. This is further explained by another comic example that demonstrates how the farther north one goes, the fewer words one uses. Sarnelli proves that the Neapolitan “*pane*” becomes “*pan*” in an area that can be identified with central Italy and then “*pa*” in the Northern regions of Lombardy.311 For the traveler,

309 In ancient Greek, “σκόμμα” and “σκωπτικόν” (from which the noun skepticism is derived) designated sarcasm on one hand, and satire and derision on the other. In Latin, many words indicated the act of ridiculing: “ridere” (and its derivatives “ridicule,” “ridiculus,” “risus,” and “risorius”) translated both to laugh and to ridicule or to deride; the verbs “irridere” and “deridere” (and their respective nouns “irrisio” and “derisio”) dealt with the act of scorning (as opposed to “arridere” and “subridere,” which instead refer to the act of smiling). “Cachinnus” (and its derivatives “cachinnabilis;” “cachinnation;” “cachinnosus;” “cachinno, ōnis”), deriving from the verb “cachinno” are defined as “a loud laugh, immoderate laughter, jeering,” and thus a violent and derisive laughter of someone sneering or mocking scornfully (Perseus Digital Project, Entry in Lewis & Short Elem. Lewis). For further references, see Maria Plaza, *Laughter and Derision in Petronius’ Satyricon*. A Literary Study. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2000, and Maria Plaza, *The Function of Humor in Roman Verse Satire. Laughing and Lying*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. For a sixteenth-century treatise on laughter, see Laurent Joubert, *Treatise on Laughter*. Trans. Gregory David De Rocher. Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1980.

310 In Rocco’s dictionary, the entry “*cacare*” mentions the paremia, which is said to appear both in Sgruttendio and in Sarnelli. In Sgruttendio’s *Torbìa al Taccone*, though, the paremia appears in a completely different context in which fear in front of the loved one intervenes, ultimately leading to loss of language. Thus, the following advice is given: “Parla chiaro, tu sai comm’è lo mutto: *Lengua, che no’ la ’ntienne, e tu la caca*” (*Torbia*, 1.12).

311 In the *Atlante Linguistico Italiano*, at the point 835 (Naples), “*pane*” is transcribed as “φ ppανα.” “*Pan*” can be found in central areas such as Porciano (Ferentino) in Frosinone (point 666), Monte Romano in Viterbo (618), Sorano in Grosseto (580), Paganico in Grosseto (562), Monticiano in Siena (553), Cortona in Arezzo (548), Bibbiena in Arezzo (525), Sillano in Lucca (502), and Mulazzo in Massa Carrara (501). It also appears in the province of Trento. “*Pa,*” instead, is located in Lombardy starting from point 142 (Ceresara, Mantova), 125 (Crone, Brescia), 124 (Redona, Bergamo), 120
therefore, it is better to return home instead of continuing his journey, because “se cchiù 'nnanze jammo non trovarrimmo cchiù pane, e nce morarrimmo de famme!” (P, 7.13). In other words, as one goes farther North, one finds less food, hence less linguistic sustainment. Thus, food and hunger become a metaphor for linguistic criticism and ironic assessment on the prestige of languages (Rak 2005, 257).

Like Lionardo Salviati’s *Oratione in lode della Fiorentina lingua e de’ Fiorentini autori* recited in the Florentine Academy in 1564, Sarnelli endorses the rules of his own language, but he does so in an ironic context. This irony makes his statement even stronger than Salviati’s academic oration. Sarnelli does not focus on the positive aspects of Neapolitan, but, rather, he concentrates on a negative one. He describes the language as being corpulent and heavy, worthy of common people, suitable for depicting the rural world instead of the refined world of letters. He also succeeds in demonstrating that the Neapolitan language has “pataccone” [...] belle parole accossi grosse e chiatte314, che non ce manca na lettera,” (“big, fat, beautiful words, where not one letter is missing”) (P, 7.12). By way of exalting these supposedly negative characteristics, he ironically denies the other vernaculars any form of linguistic dignity. Paremias give strength to Sarnelli’s arguments, and are placed in crucial sections of the letter to employ comedy or sarcasm, to create ambiguity, or to express in a more tangible way the wisdom of the Neapolitan culture. They ultimately

(Collio, Brescia), 119 (Sale Marasino, Brescia), 118 (Spinone al Lago, Bergamo), 114 (Cimbergo, Brescia), 111, 112, and 113 (Piazza Brembana, Gromo, and Barzesto, Bergamo). The nasalized final vowel in “pã” and the semi-nasalized one in “pâ” start to appear in Modena and include the entire Paduan area, along with “pañ,” and Parma, namely all the area affected by Gallo-Italic aspects. 312 “Let’s go back, since if we go any farther we’re not going to find any more bread, and we’ll die of hunger!” (Bottigheimer, 77).

313 It is interesting to note that Frizzi, in his *Dizionario dei frizzetti popolari fiorentini* (s.v. punto), mentions the word “pataccone.” Pataccone is presumably the name of a person who possesses shoes without any stitching points, as it was usual to build shoes at the time; therefore, the proverbial phrase *Essere come le scarpe di Pataccone, senza punti* is used to play around the lack of money, something opposite to the robustness of Sarnelli’s words (Frizzi, 196-97).

314 “Chiatto” is explained by Rocco as “grasso, pingue” (Rocco, s.v. chiatto).
exemplify the dialect’s ability to adapt to various contexts and they help Sarnelli express a powerful message on the recognition of the Neapolitan language and culture.

3.4 The Introductory Banquet: “Lo numero de lo tre ha cchiú bertute che non hanno tutte le numere ’n chietta”

Umberto Eco writes that, “il comico pare popolare, liberatorio, eversivo perché dá licenza di violare la regola” (Eco, 257). Bakhtin would have said that in the popular explosion of vitality for which Carnival allows, it is normal to overturn the typical order of life: freedom is one of the most appropriate manifestations of these new rules of behavior and social relationships, and laughter becomes the tool for understanding reality and revealing truth (Bakhtin 1984, 83-101; 196-303). Even language is affected during Carnival practices since it becomes freer. That is, linguistic hierarchy is abolished, and neither decency nor respect are required any longer.

The lunch described in Sarnelli’s ‘Ntroduzzione de la Posilecheata e commito d’ammice fatto a Posileco, which represents a frame for the five cunti, epitomizes these elements. Linguistic and cultural creativity and freedom, accumulation of paremias, word games, and funny expressions, coupled with a background of gastronomic erudition, contribute to a popular atmosphere (P, 9-33). The realistic scene and “hyperboles of food” (Bakhtin 1984, 184-85) also create a comic effect, while at the same time attesting to the inventiveness of the dialect. Proverbs and proverbial phrases help demonstrate the linguistic

315 “Because the number three has more virtues than all the other numbers together.”
316 It is interesting to read what Galiani writes about the expressiveness of Neapolitans: “Ma il Napoletano, l’ente della natura, che forse ha i nervi più delicati, e la più pronta irritabilità nelle fibre, se non è tocco da sensazioni, tace: se lo è, e sian queste o di sdegno, o di tenerezza, o di giubilo, o di mestizia, o di gusto, o di rammarico (che ciò non fa gran differenza), subito s’inflamma, si commuove, e quasi si convelle. Allora entra in subitaneo desio di manifestar le sue idee. Le parole se gli affollano, e fanno groppo sulla lingua. S’ajuta co’ gesti, co’ cenni, co’ moti. Ogni membro, ogni parte è in commozione, e vorrebbe esprimere. Così senza esser facendo è eloquentissimo. Senza ben esprimersi si fa comprendere appieno, e sovente intenerisce, compunge, persuade” (Galiani 1779, 23).
superiority and the greater literary versatility of the Neapolitan dialect, and thus show a
tangible proof of the speculations expressed in the prefatory letter.

The banquet introduces three characters, one of whom is the author under his
pseudonym Reppone, and the five storytellers. Compared to the literary frames of Boccaccio
and Basile, the reaction of Sarnelli’s characters to the stories are limited, and they are
secondary to the narration of the fables. In further contrast to Boccaccio’s frame, Sarnelli’s
frame is filled with comic and parodic elements and, as a response to Basile’s fantastic world,
its atmosphere is real and as robust as the language that Sarnelli employs.317 The scene opens
with a sentence that sounds paremiac, or, in Temistocle Franceschi’s words, a didactic
saying:

Na longa vita senza na recreazione, a lo munno, è ghiusto comme a no luongo viaggio
senza na taverna pe defrisco, senza n’alloggiamento pe repuoso (P, 9.1).318

Even though this typology of paremia is less important for the purpose of this study, as its
meaning is not contextual, the location where the didactic saying is used is central. The
expression introduces the banquet and determines its ethical tone: life needs recreation, thus
authors are summoned to produce pleasureable texts, so that readers can benefit from a
pleasant reading. The literal meaning of the didactic saying is positive: a long journey is just
without rest and so a long life is right without any diversion. However, the message that it
aims to convey in the context is the opposite: a long life without any form of entertainment is
not right nor is it right not to take a break during a long journey. This is precisely why the

317 For more information on the Decameron’s frame, see Branca 1968, 31-44; on its comparison with
Basile’s frame, see Picone 2003. For contacts between Sarnelli’s Posilecheata and Basile’s Cunto, see
Allasia.

318 “In the world, a long life without any recreation is as fair as a long journey without a tavern to
restore oneself and without a lodging to rest.” Capozzoli lists this sentence in his Grammatica when
talking about some consonantic substitutions. He prescribes that [g] should not replace [c], even
though its use was frequent in the past. He thus mentions the opening sentence of Sarnelli’s
Posilecheata, referring to the spelling of the word “luongo,” which should be written “luonco,” since
in his time the common pronunciation required the velar consonant instead of the palatal one
(Capozzoli, 9-10, n. 8).
tone can be considered ironic. Sarnelli is reporting the common people’s opinion that negative judgement against someone who engages in diversion is reprehensible. Those who believe that diversion is disgraceful, Sarnelli admits ironically, are irreprehensible men, who always walk with lead on their feet and with a compass in their hands, meaning that they are scrutinizing the world carefully and reducing it to a sort of geometrical and mathematical formula (P, 9.1). And yet, even the most proper and formal men enjoy a distraction from time to time so that they do not reek of staleness and mold (P, 9.1).

Consistent with his overarching agenda, Sarnelli is again defending his own work, which can be considered an escape into fresh air from the erudite studies to which he had been devoting himself up until that point. Considering the subsequent etymological reasoning that Sarnelli proposes, the idea that his Posilecheata can be read as a useful and worthy divertissement becomes significant. He explains that the word “Posileco,” the name of the town of Posillipo at Sarnelli’s time (nowadays Pusilleco in Neapolitan dialect), carries in its same etymology (Posillipo means remedy against melancholy) an implicit acceptance of entertainment and pleasure. In the title of Sarnelli’s collection, the word is given the typical denominative suffix “-ata” that produces feminine words (Renzi, Salvi, and Cardinalletti, Vol.

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319 Malato translates “peruto” as “putrido;” Rocco (s.v. peruto) gives the explanation “muffito, muffato.” The same sentence is used in cunto 3 of Posilecheata to describe three sisters, who have been locked in a garden for a long time: “le fegliole […] oramaje fetevano de ’nchiuso e de peruto” (P, 98.8).

320 In the letter to Masillo Reppone by Eugenio Desviati, the academician Sgargiato refers to Posillipo as the “luoco assaje deliziuso, ca fa sano ogne malato” (Sarnelli 1885, XXIII). Del Tufo celebrates Posillipo as “gran spasso d’un cor ferito e lasso” (Del Tufo, 82). In cunto 3 of Posilecheata, an etiologic explanation on Naples and its gulf includes Posillipo too, which is said to be always green and merry, characterized by amusement and happiness (P, 108.40-41). Posillipo acquires a mythological dimension when it is said to be a young man transformed into a mountain because of love sickness (P, 108.42). Giulio Cesare Capaccio in his 1634 Il forastiero. Dialogi di Giulio Cesare Capaccio Academico otioso (day X; 100-102) and Carlo Celano in his 1692 Notizie del bello, dell’antico e del curioso della città di Napoli, per i signori forestieri, divise in dieci giornate (day IX: 77-78) describe Posillipo in the same encomiastic tones.

321 In Sarnelli’s Guida de’ forestieri curiosi di vedere ed intendere le cose più notabili della real città di Napoli e del suo amenissimo distretto, the editor, Bulifon, describes Posilecheata as follows: “Posilicheata di Masillo Reppone, cioè trattenimento, ed honesta ricreazione in Pausilipo, scritto in lingua Napoletana […]” (in the third page of the Catalogo de’ libri composti, e dati alle stampe dall’illustrissimo et reverendissimo signor Pompeo Sarnelli vescovo di Bisceglia).
This suffix, which is common in improvised constructions that are not highly productive (Renzi, Salvi, and Cardinaletti, Vol. 3, 512-13), makes “Posilecheata” mean, “to go on a trip in Posillipo in a leisurely way without much programming.” In other words, Posilecheata is a brief extemporaneous recreational event dominated by a light and delightful atmosphere that allows for pleasing and funny conversations. As the word also conveys the idea of an enjoyable and relaxed stroll without a clear direction, so the description of the banquet in the introduction appears to be subjected to mere casualty—which nonetheless leads to the recounting of the five fables.322

On July 26, 1684, Masillo arrives at his friend’s, Petruccio, house “justo justo ad ora de magnare” (at exactly the right time to eat) (P, 11.4). The two friends are unaware, though, that an uninvited host would join them and stage a gigantic scene in both words and actions. Giving credit to Cicero’s words as cited by Donato, namely that “comoediam esse imitationem vitae, speculum consuetudinis, imaginem veritatis” (Excerpta de comoedia, 5.1), Sarnelli’s introduction is a perfect example of a comedic scene that imitates life, mirrors habits, and reflects truth. The comic characterization of Marchionno—the doctor who shows up at the dinner—is achieved by single words, comparisons, and paremias (Taylor 1931, 98); the result is a linguistic and theatrical comedy, whose humor results from the absurd and the illogical inversion of common sense and from the excessiveness of both words and acts.

As Bakhtin’s “grotesque realism” emerges from Marchionno’s initial description (P, 12.7; 14.13), Marchionno is presented as a meritorious descendant of Rabelais’s Pantagruel or almost an ogre (Allasia, 262) and as a member of the lower social class. The corporal reality that he introduces, though obscene and contrary to any form of stature, is worthy of

322 D’Ambra (s.v. posellechesco) comments that “posellechesco” corresponds to “boschereccio, pastorale” or else “piscatorio, cioè a modo di Posilipo, famosa riviera ad occidente della città di Napoli,” mentioning that Cortese defined his comedy La Rosa, “posellechesca” as an imitation of the dramatic idyls by Torquato Tasso and Guarino Guarini.
Marchionno’s voracity is a mainstay for feasts, banquets, food and the pleasure of eating, as well as for an exploitation of each possible aspect of the language. The author creates an everyday reality that is far from being repetitive and predictable, and ultimately leads to an explosion of physical pleasure and linguistic fun. With a long speech on the significance of the number three, and in employing all of the tools on which logic and rhetoric can count, Marchionno skillfully dupes his hosts into inviting him to their meal:

“Non sapite vuje, signori mieje, ca a lo ’mmito non deveno essere né manco de le Grazie, né cchiù de le Muse? Azzoè o tre o nove, ma duje è troppo poco. Otra po’ che lo numero de lo tre ha cchiù bertute che non hanno tutte le nummere ’n chietta” (P, 12.8).

After this, Marchionno enumerates all of the elements of the world with a tripartite structure: the natural principles, the types of animal, the components of the soul, the things that control the world, and so on. In this section of Marchionno’s Baroque and expressivist tirade, a significant quantity of paremias and maxims underscore the properties of this number, as they are all, accordingly, based on the presence of three members. Therefore, Marchionno’s paremias are inserted and ammassed for their distinctive structure and for their capability to express the “multivocità verbale” (Fasano, 486). This accumulation of paremias is an expression of Marchionno’s “lingua libera” and “libertà linguistica” (Terracini), which, as discussed above, is a primary characteristic of Baroque literature and culture.

323 The description of Marchionno’s hunger and eating (P, 14.13) resembles that of Basile’s cunto II.10.
324 “Don’t you know, my lords, that at a banquet there should be neither fewer people than the Graces nor more than the Muses? That is, either three or nine, but two is way too few. Aside from that, the number three possesses more virtues than all the other numbers together». ”
The paremiac type (Taylor 1931, 10) that Marchionno employs is composed of an initial proposition that cites the characteristic(s) of the three things and starts with the word “tre,” and then the list of the three things themselves. Benedetto Croce describes this typology of paremias as follows:

Sono curiosi per più rispetti, e, fra l’altro, perché hanno il carattere comune di contenere non già ciascun proverbio un’idea, ma ciascuno tre idee che vanno a braccetto e s’incontrano poi in una sola (Croce 1883, 66).

Works containing tripartite paremias, as well as collections of tripartite paremias, on the basis of the Latin formula “Tria sunt…,” were published in Italy during the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Its first instances are found in the Old Testament, in Chapter 25 of the Ecclesiasticus, which lists a paremia containing up to nine members, and in Chapter 30 of Solomon’s Proverbs, where a few tripartite paremias appear. In 1519, Ulrich Von Hutten published Trias Romana (Mainz: Johann Schöffer), which contains a list of tripartite paremias, specifically forty-eight Latin sententiae followed by fifty-eight German sententiae, mostly dealing with the immoral customs and the corrupted institutions of Rome (in Besso, 151-56). Additionally, in 1614, Giulio Cesare Croce published a work titled Il Tre, featuring sixty-two paremias from both the oral and the written tradition. Speroni, who re-published this text in 1960, mentions that paremias with three elements were particularly suited for moral and didactic purposes and for being easy to remember (Speroni 1960, 5).

325 Malato, in his edition of Rinaldi’s Dottrina delle virtù e fuga dei vizi (1585), calls these paremias “di elaborazione letteraria più che di formazione spontanea, e quindi di limitata tradizione orale” (Rinaldi, 15-16).
326 For more information on collection based on a triadic structure (“three things are” or “three things do”) in the French, Italian, and Catalan tradition and on the intercheangeability with other numbers, specifically two and four, see Alfred Morel-Fatio, “Le livre des trois choses,” Romania. XII (1883): 230-42. (For examples of triadic paremias in other languages, see Taylor 1931, 159-64; on a collection of paremias based on the number four, see Rinaldi).
327 Even in a modern collection of Neapolitan paremias, such as Vittorio Gleijeses’s, under the letter T, a considerable number of paremias have a tripartite structure (Vittorio Gleijeses, I proverbi di Napoli. Napoli: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1978: 397-402).
The most evident difference between the writings of Giulio Cesare Croce and Sarnelli is the language: Croce writes in Tuscan whereas Sarnelli writes in Neapolitan. With the exception of the last ten paremias in Croce’s work, this tripartite paremiac type is identical among both lists. The list of the three items, however, might not be completely identical and, sometimes, the order may be different or one item from the list may differ, as the following pairs show:

1a. *Tre cose non sono apprezzate, cioè bellezza di cortigiana, fortezza di facchino, e consiglio di fallito* (Croce)

1b. *Tre cose non sono stemmate: forze da vastaso, consiglio de poverommo, e bellezza de pottana* (P, 13.9)\(^{328}\)

2a. *Tre sono le sue [dell’anima] Potenze, cioè Intelletto, Memoria e Volontà* (Croce)


At times, the structure could remain the same but the three items could be different, yet connected:

3a. *Tre parti vuole havere il ruffian, cioè audace, eloquente e patience nelle bastonate* (Croce)

3b. *Tre cose abbesognano a lo ruffiano: gran core, assai chiacchiare e poca vregogna* (P, 14.12).\(^{330}\)

That the ruffian has a brazen heart (Sarnelli) means that he is audacious (Croce) and that he chatters endlessly (Sarnelli) means that he is eloquent (Croce). The last item differs in that Croce’s text refers to the consequences (“bastonate”) that the ruffian will endure because of

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\(^{328}\) “Three things are not valued: the strength of a porter, the advice of a poor man, and the beauty of a whore.”

\(^{329}\) “Three are the primary gifts of the human soul: memory, intellect, and will.”

\(^{330}\) “Three are the things that the ruffian needs: a brazen heart, endless chatter, and little shame.”
his behavior, while Sarnelli’s highlights the lack of shame in his attitude and thus the cause of the beating mentioned by Croce. Despite the different items contained in the paremia, the conventionalized meaning is the same since the ruffians’ behavior is at stake, and is possibly a warning not to trust him or her.

Giulio Cesare Croce’s list of tripartite paremias is not the only collection of paremias connected to the analysis of Marchionno’s enumeration. In 1883, Benedetto Croce published a list of forty-five “proverbii trimembri napoletani.” He transcribed them from an undated manuscript of Latin, Italian, and Neapolitan proverbs and proverbial phrases gathered by Luca Auriemma (Croce 1883). Vittorio Imbriani later published the list in its entirety in his 1885 edition of Sarnelli’s Posilecheata (Sarnelli 1885, 112-17). Unlike Cesare Croce’s paremias, many of Auriemma’s are not tripartite, but rather they are comprised of three similar or linked parts, without enumeration.\(^{331}\) More than half of them though (27, to be exact) have the same structure as those featured in Sarnelli’s work. For this reason, it is valuable to compare some of Marchionno’s paremias with the corresponding ones in Auriemma’s list; this comparison is even more valuable considering that the two text share the same language. For instance,

4a. *Tre F cacciano l’ommo dalla casa: fummo, fieto, femmena marvasa*  
(Auriemma, n. 20)

4b. *Tre cose cacciano l’ommo da la casa: fummo, fieto e femmena marvasa* (P, 14.12).\(^{332}\)

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\(^{331}\) As an example, consider number 16 and 17 from Croce’s edition: *Chi ama la maretata, la vita soia la tene prestata; chi ama la donzella, la vita soia la mena in pena; chi ama la vèdova, la vita la tene sicura,* and *De la gallina è meglio la nera; de la pàpara la pardiglia; de la fèmmena la piccola* (Croce 1883, 66).

\(^{332}\) “Three things send the man away from home: smoke, stench, and an evil woman.” Rinaldi (s.v. città) proposes a quadrimember version: *Quattro cose caccian l’uomo di casa. Il troppo fumo, la pioggia che vi entra, la molta puzza, e le contese donneache.* He lists another paremia where the man is sent out of his city: *Quattro cose cacciano l’uomo della città: i difetti del tiranno, il mancamento della vittuaglia, le spese e i doni* (Rinaldi, s.v. città).
Both of them explain that three things (or Fs) send a man away from a house, namely smoke, stench, and an evil woman. Also, on the three things that one cannot hide (purring inside a bag, women shut in the house, and straw inside shoes):

5a. *Tre cose non se ponno annásconnere: le fusa int’a no sacco, le femmene ‘nchiuse a la casa, la paglia into de le scarpe* (Auriemma, n. 24),

5b. *Tre cose non possono stare annascose: le fusa dinto de lo sacco, le femmene ‘nchiuse ‘n casa e la paglia dintro de le scarpe* (P, 13.10).

Except for a few differences in vocabulary, i.e. “into” vs “dinto/dintro” and “possono” vs “ponno,” the examples show similar language. Both Auriemma and Sarnelli use the Italianized article “la” instead of the feminine singular “‘a” (which originated in the seventeenth century) or the elided form (common from the sixteenth century) (Ledgeway, 167-70), the feminine plural article “le,” and the preposition “de.” They also share the apheresis of the initial “l” in “‘nchiuse” (Ledgeway, 102); the word “marvasa” (Ledgeway, 114); and the assimilation in “annasconnere”/“annascose” (Ledgeway, 75; 102). Given their similarities, Sarnelli and Auriemma might have referred to a common source of paremias or, more directly, to that common paremiac knowledge or wisdom that characterized the life and literary experience of members of society at the time.

One work undoubtedly crossed Sarnelli’s path when he was enumerating his tripartite paremias, and that is Francesco Alunno’s *Della fabrìca del mondo*, published in 1546-48.

During his tirade at the banquet, Marchionno declares that if someone aspires to know all the

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333 “Three things cannot be hidden: purr inside a bag, women closed in the house, and straw in the shoes.”
334 D’Ambra (s.v. *dinto*) lists “dinto,” “dintro,” “drindo,” and “into” as synonymical adverbs.
335 The third person plural of the verb “potere” can be both “possono” and “ponno” in Neapolitan (Ledgeway, 388-89).
336 Elision regards unstressed sounds that are reduced or eliminated when, for instance, two vowels are next to each other, such as [l’] with feminine nouns.
337 Apheresis is the omission of a sound at the beginning of a word.
338 Assimilation is the phonetic process that makes a sound become more alike or identical to a near one; in this instance, nasconnere < nascondere.
other virtues of the number three, he should read Alunno’s *La Fravecà de lo munno*. In fact, Alunno mentions all of the paremias that Marchionno lists and many more in his ninth book entitled *Quantità* (section *Tre*, 232r-233r), thus demonstrating that this paremiac type is productive in different contexts and genres. A comparison of Alunno’s and Sarnelli’s texts reveals the Neapolitan patina of Sarnelli’s work vis-à-vis the Tuscan vernacular of Alunno’s paremias. For instance, an aforementioned paremia (example 1b) appears in its Tuscan version in *Fabbrica*,

6a. *Tre cose non scono stemmate: forze da vastaso, consiglio de poverommo, e bellezza de pottana* (P, 13.9)


Similarly, Sarnelli’s paremia derives, with a slight change in the main verb, from Alunno’s:

7a. *Tre cose squatrano ogne cosa: nummero, piso e mesura* (P, 13.9)

7b. *Tre cose gonernano il tutto, cioè numero, peso et misura* (Fabbrica, IX, 232v).340

Another of Marchionno’s paremias (also in Rocco s.v. *archemista*) comes from the Tuscan:

8a. *A tre cose non se deve credere, all’archemista povero, a lo miedeco malato, e al remito grasso* (P, 13.10)341

8b. *Di tre cose non ti fidare, di medico malato d’Alchimista stracciato, e romito grasso* (Fabbrica, IX, 232v).342

339 “Three things are not valued: the strength of a porter, the advice of a poor man, and the beauty of a whore.”

340 “Three things square (P) / govern (Fabbrica) the world: number, weight, and measure.”

341 “You should not believe in three things: the poor alchemist, the sick doctor, and the fat hermit.”

Rinaldi (s.v. *medico*) lists, *Quattro cose convengono al medico: investigar con diligenza la cagione del male, visitar spesso l’ammalato, dargli le medicine in tempo, e confortar gagliardamente l’infermo.*

342 “You should not trust three things: the sick doctor, the alchemist with tore-up clothes, and the fat hermit.” The proverb also features in Salviati’s collection (*Di tre cose non ti fidare, di medico malato, d’Alchimista stracciato, e romito grasso*) and in Serdonati’s collection as well (*Di tre cose non ti
Many of the previously described elements typical of the Neapolitan dialect distinguish Sarnelli’s language. There are, however, other aspects that are visible, such as the rotacism\(^{343}\) in “archemista” (Ledgeway, 106-07) and the diphthongization of the tonic vowel [i] > [ie] in “miedeco” (Ledgeway, 50-52). A Florentine aspect is present in the article: the article “al” agreeing with “remito,” which would have been “a lo” in Neapolitan. As this one, many other words are not far from the Tuscan equivalent, and hence the similarity between Neapolitan and Tuscan paremias is evident. There are two possible explanations for this. First, there is an explanation external to Neapolitan, which recognizes that non-indigenous words in Neapolitan dialect were transferred directly from the paremias available in Italian, and that the transition left a few remnants of the original language. This explanation supports the idea that the Neapolitan paremias originated from the Tuscan ones. Even though this evidence might contradict Sarnelli’s disparagement of the Tuscan language as declared in the prefatory letter, as well as undermine his efforts to demonstrate the autonomous productivity of the Neapolitan language, Marchionno’s words in the introduction seem to support the idea that Sarnelli was “translating” Alunno’s list of paremias in Neapolitan. The second explanation, internal to Neapolitan, proposes that Neapolitan words similar to those in Italian would be considered a legacy of previous contact between the two languages. Thus, Florentine words would have been progressively assimilated and therefore not recognized as such any longer in the Neapolitan vocabulary. In other words, terms common to the Neapolitan dialect and Florentine coexisted for long time until they simply became part of the vocabulary of the Neapolitan dialect (Montuori, 156).\(^{344}\) In any event, even though Tuscan may represent a catalyzing tool and might have been the original language from which

\(^{343}\) Rotacism is the passage of a consonant to [r].

\(^{344}\) Galiani talks about the neapolitanization of the Tuscan/Italian language and Italianization of the Neapolitan dialect, and about the detrimental effects of these linguistic events on the identity of the two languages (Galiani 1779, 24-28).
Sarnelli’s paremias were translated, once they were adapted to the phonetic and morphological structures of the Neapolitan dialect, those paremias became constituent parts of the identity of that linguistic area, and, accordingly, of any work written in that language.

Sarnelli does not adopt all of the paremias that Alunno lists. This is because an encyclopedic entry should include as much information as possible and cover all the possible knowledge of the topic, whereas a persuasive oration can be limited to a reasonable number of paremias to prove the point (and to listen to). It seems that Sarnelli does not want to include religious or spiritual paremias, which therefore means that Sarnelli’s use of these tripartite paremias does not infer a possible religious subtext. Sarnelli omits those tripartite paremias that Alunno introduces as the “ternary spirituali” (Fabbrica, 232r), which include paremias concerning God and the afterlife, sins and virtues, and a few expressions drawn from Dante. He also does not consider a paremia on the bell ringing thrice a day for the hymns to the Virgin Mary or Angelus Domini, along with two regarding the enemies of the soul and the dangers of the world, and one on Christ’s disciples. On different topics, he omits geographical paremias, “Se vogliam parlare del sito nostro, trovaremo tre essere le parti principali, cioè Asia, Africa, et Europa” (Fabbrica, 232r), as well as paremias mentioning mythological figures (the Moirai, the infernal furies, the gorgons, and the graces), the lives of men, and astrological matters. It seems that there is not logical explanation for these choices.

The organization of the two collections of paremias is quite dissimilar. The difference again lies in the two involved genres: a fictional oral conversation (in Posilecheata) and an encyclopedic entry (in Della fabbrica del mondo), and is apparent in the following paremia that lists the beauties of a woman. Marchionno says:
Tre bote tre unnece cose fanno bella na femmiena: azzoè tre cose longhe e tre corte; tre larghe, tre strette e tre grosse, tre sottile; tre retonne, tre piccole, tre ghianche, tre rosses, tre negre (P, 13.11).345

This is not an actual tripartite expression, but the repetition of the word “tre” is the requisite for the paremia to be included in the collection. Furthermore, the total number of things referenced in this paremia is thirty-three (when considering that there are eleven listed items in multiples of three). Thirty-three is a perfect number for a list of paremias based on the number three and listing sentences that shows this number. Sarnelli’s paremias stem from Alunno’s, which is in Della fabbrica del mondo followed by the Latin translation (not here):

Con tre volte tre 11, che sono 33, si distinguono le parti che dobbono haver la donna a voler essere bella compimento, cioè tre cose lunghe e tre corte si fanno la donna bella; tre larghe, tre strette, tre grosse, tre sottili, tre rotonde, tre piccole, tre bianche, tre rosses, et tre nere, le quali, volendo particularmente distinguere diremo prima che le tre lunghe sono i capelli, la mano et la gamba; le tre corte sono i denti, l’orecchie et le mammelle; le larghe la fronte, il petto, e fianchi; le strette nel traverso, nelle coscie, la terza è poi quella ove natura pose ogni dolcezza; le grosse, con misura però, sono le trecccie, le braccia et le coscie; le sottili i capelli, le dita et i labri; le rotonde il collo, le braccia et groppe; le piccole la bocca, il mento et il piede. Le bianche i denti, la gola et la mano. Le rosses le gote, le labra et i capitelli delle mammelle. L’ultimo sono le nere, cioè le ciglia, gli occhi e i peletti della natura, e che siano rari et alquanto crespetti. Et se oltre le trentatre parti sopra dette sono poi accompagnate con la gratia, con la maniera e col leggiadro portamento si può dire con verità quella essere bellissima (Fabbrica, 232v).

345 “Three times eleven things make a woman beautiful: which is three long and three short; three large, three tight, and three big, three thin; three round, three small, three white, three red, three black.”
Sarnelli transferred Alunno’s paremia into his own context, and adapted it to the purposes of Marchionno’s speech and to the more general structure of his work. Before mentioning the tripartite paremias, Alunno provides a grammatical definition of the number three, and the translation into Tuscan of Latin words containing the number. Examples of this include temporal words (triennis, three years; trinoctium, three continuous nights), anatomical words (trifaux, -cis, with three throats or mouths), and words describing things or facts (triga, a cart with three horses; trigamus, with three wives). He then argues that in mathematics the number three is considered a perfect number, and thus highlights the numerology associated with the paremia and the appropriateness of its presence in an entry on the number three. After demonstrating that everything in nature derives from this number, he lists the paremia, which, since it features in an encyclopedic entry, requires better deductive reasoning, and an explanation of its different elements related to the number three. This explains why Alunno includes an adjective for each single three-numbered entry (three long, three short, three large, three narrow, three big, three thin, three rounded, three small, three white, three red, three black). In Posilecheata, instead, Marchionno does not include the paremia’s different parts; he enumerates the paremia for the sole purpose of exemplifying a specific structure, which ultimately supports his idea of the superior value of the number three. Marchionno’s paremia is thus more effective, yet understandably it explains less than Alunno’s paremia.

Due to the encyclopedic context, Alunno presents his paremia with many introductory formulas, which serve to make the discourse flow, and makes use of frequent transitions, connections, and explicative conjunctions like “cioè.” On the contrary, introductory formulas are absent in Marchionno’s speech—except the sentence that introduces the entire list, “Vuj sapite che…” (“you know that”) (P, 12.9). In one instance, Sarnelli emphasizes a link between two paremias, which is not otherwise evident in Alunno’s entry. Alunno lists two paremias that share a word and the same introductory formula:
Tre cose da notare, amore non vuol bellezza, appetito non vuol sapore, comperar non vole amicitia, et comperar l’olio di sopra, il vin nel mezzo, et il mele nel fondo di qualunque vaso (Fabbrica, 232v).\textsuperscript{346}

Sarnelli calls attention to the fact that the two paremias share the same word “accattare,” which is the Neapolitan translation of “comperare,” meaning “to purchase.” He therefore adds a transitional formula (“chi accatta ha da sapere che”) that creates a logical connection between the two paremias:

\begin{quote}
Tre cose abbesogna tenere a mente: che ammore non vò bellezza, che appetito non vò sauza e che l’accattare non vò ammecizia. E de cchiù, chi accatta ha da sapere che se deve accattare l’uoglio de coppa, lo vino de miezo e lo mmèle de funno (P, 13.10-11).\textsuperscript{347}
\end{quote}

These two paremias speak about the paradoxes associated with certain human behaviors, and remind us that one should keep them in mind in order to succeed.

In one case, Sarnelli slightly changes the paremia chronicled by Alunno. Alunno lists the following paremia,

\begin{quote}
Tre cose sommamente dispiacciono a Dio, ricco avaro, povero superbo, et vecchio lussurioso (Fabbrica, 232v),\textsuperscript{348}
\end{quote}

which Sarnelli trasforms into,

\begin{quote}
Three things God dislikes supremely: a rich cheapskate, an arrogante poor person, and a lustful old man.”
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{346} “Three things you should notice: love does not go with beauty, appetite does not go with flavor, and buying does not go with friendship, and buying the oil on top, the wine in the middle, and the honey at the bottom of any vase.”

\textsuperscript{347} “Three things you should bear in mind, that love does not go with beauty, appetite does not go with sauce, and obtaining does not go with friendship. Moreover, he who wants to obtain something should know that you should take the oil on top, the wine in the middle, and the honey at the bottom.”

D’Ambra (s.v. accattare) reports this paremia, whereas Rocco incorporates a paremia used by Cortese in his Vajasseide (3.3): “L’accattare non vo ammecizia” (s.v. accattare) and a paremia used by Francesco Cerlone in Zingaro per amore (I.10, 2.7) and in Generoso indiano (1.12), “Appetito non bo sauza e ammore no bo bellezza” (s.v. appetito).

\textsuperscript{348} “Three things God dislikes supremely: a rich cheapskate, an arrogante poor person, and a lustful old man.”
It looks as if Sarnelli wished to eliminate the reference to God, and replaced it with disapproval for the three types of people mentioned. In Alunno’s text, it is God who is displeased and does not approve of the three things. In Sarnelli’s text, however, it is a common feeling of non-acceptance for these types among the populace. Moreover, Sarnelli changes the adjective related to “vecchio” from “lussurioso” to “’nnamorato.” The meaning remains the same: a libidinous old man is undoubtedly in love. However, luxurious, coming from the Latin “luxuria,” excess, and later borrowed by Christianity, is charged with a spiritual meaning—it is indeed one of the capital vices—whereas, enamored does not present the same connotation. This change seems to conform with Sarnelli’s general choice to omit paremias related to God and religious topics from Alunno’s list. Sarnelli evidently draws his Neapolitan list of tripartite paremias from Alunno and appropriates them in Marchionno’s discourse, but he does not limit his changes to a simple translation from Florentine to Neapolitan. He also changes content that does not alter the meaning of the paremia drastically, but does make his paremias suitable for the new context; in other words, he transfers Alunno’s paremias to a popular, extravagant, excessive, and Neapolitan context.

Some of Marchionno’s tripartite paremias also feature in the aforementioned collection, *Proverbii. Attiladi novi et belli* (Romagnoli 1865). A comparison between these paremias and Sarnelli’s permits us to understand how Sarnelli reused and combined paremias that were already available in order for them to fit his new context, something that Florio does too. Moreover, it highlights Sarnelli’s choices among the many possible

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349 “Three things are unacceptable: a rich cheapskate, an arrogante poor person, and an enamored old man.”  
350 More information can be found in paragraph 1.1 here.
instances contained in Alunno’s list. For instance, in the *Attiladi*, the following two unrhymed distiches are listed:

*Archimista povero*

*e medico amala* [malato]

*Romitto grasso*

*e matte stiza* [stizzoso].

Sarnelli changes these into a tripartite prosaic structure, eliminating the last part on the irritable madman, as previously shown:

*A tre cose non se deve credere, all’archemista povero, a lo miedeco malato, e al remito grasso* (P, 13.10).\(^{351}\)

If Romagnoli’s example establishes a connection between the four members of the paremia without expressing it, Sarnelli’s explicitely articulates this connection. Both accounts reveal a contextual use of the paremia: on the one hand, Romagnoli’s is a list of maxims based upon a recurrent structure in distiches; on the other, Sarnelli’s is a passionate verbal demonstration in favor of the number three. The transition of paremias from one context to another does not change their meaning, but, once again, highlights their different purpose in the economy of the work and in the specific context where they appear.

After Alunno’s aforementioned paremia on the physical aspects that a woman needs to have in order to be considered beautiful, Sarnelli interrupts the list of paremias taken from Alunno and continues with a new section of tripartite paremias (P, 14.12-13). Some of these paremias are featured in Giulio Cesare Croce’s *Il Tre*, whereas others are mentioned in Auriemma’s list of Neapolitan paremias.\(^{352}\) An interesting example confirms Sarnelli’s method of creating paremias. Sarnelli’s paremia,

\(^{351}\) See note 341 for the paremia’s translation.

\(^{352}\) Giuseppe Pitrè’s *Curiosità popolari tradizionali* contains a considerable number of tripartite paremias. Some of them are mentioned in the chapters concerning traditions and practices in the
Tre sss besognano a lo ‘nnammorato: sulo, solliceto e secreto (P, 14.12),

comes from Giulio Cesare Cortese’s Book 4 of his Li travagliuse ammure de Ciullo, e Perna,

*opera burlesca in lingua napoletana:*

*Lo nnamorato vole essere sulo, solliceto, e segreto* (Cortese, 161).

Cortese’s paremia, though, does not contain the introduction that mentions the triadic structure. Sarnelli, as he shifts the available paremia into the context of his introduction, creates a tripartite structure suitable for that contextual situation.

Some of the tripartite paremias listed by Marchionno also appear in Basile’s collection, specifically in *cunto* IV.6, *Le tre corone*, inside a hyperbolic conversation between a young lady called Marchetta and a cruel female ogre. In Basile’s fable, the paremias are present in the ogre’s discourse about a succulent dinner. When Marchetta prepares a juicy dinner for her so that she, herself, can avoid being eaten by the ogre, the ogre recites several tripartite paremias. All of the paremias in this section are focused on the number three and on the rhetorical strength of the three members. This serves to emphasize the character’s ecstatic disposition before the meal and her never-ending praise of Marchetta’s food. The ogre is unaware that Marchetta has prepared the succulent dishes and thus begins her discourse with the sentence:354

*Io iuro pe le tre parole de Napole ca, si sapesse chi è stato lo cuoco, io le vorria dare le vísole meie* (CC, 744.29).355

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353 “Three s the man in love needs: alone, swift, and secretive.”
354 All quotations from Basile’s texts come from Stromboli’s edition of *Lo cunto de li cunti* (Basile 2013): the first number is the page number, followed by the number of the paragraph. The translation comes from Canepa’s English edition of Basile’s collection (Basile 2007).
355 “I swear on the three words of Naples that if I knew who the cook was, I would give her the pupils of my eyes” (Basile 2007, 339).
There is more than one hypothesis about what the three words of Naples refer to. Benedetto Croce argues that they might be the three epithets “Gentile, Sirena e Sacra,” which Friar Manuel Ponze de Soto used in his *Memorial de las tres Parténope* (1683). Evidently, Basile did not extract the three epithets from the friar’s eulogy but probably referred to a common tradition before Ponze de Soto’s written record. Croce’s other conjecture about which the three words of Naples are, seems more apt. He suggests that the paremia *Tre cose abbesognano a chi stace a Napole: vruoccole, zuoccole, trapole* might be the source.

Among the paremias used by the ogre, some are present in Sarnelli’s text: *Pe le tre canele che s’allumano quanno se fa no strommiento de notte; Per li tre parme de funa che danno vota a lo ’mpiso; Pe tre cose che la casa strude: zeppole, pane caudo e maccarune; Pe tre cose che cacciano l’ommo da la casa: fieto, fummo e femmena marvasa* (see examples 4a and 4b); *Pe le tre effe de lo pesce: fritto, friddo e futo;*357 *Pe le tre S ch’abbesognano a no ’namorato: sulo, sollicito e secreto; Pe le tre scorte de perzune che se tene la pottana: smargiasse, belle giuavane e corrive; Pe tre cose ch’arroinano la gioventú: iuoco, femmene e taverne; Pe tre cose che vole avere lo roffiano: gran core, assai chiacchiere e poca vergogna* (see examples 3a and 3b); *Pe le tre cose ch’osserva lo miedeco, lo puzo, la facce e lo càntaro* (CC, 744-46.29-33).358 In Basile’s fable, the tripartite structure is not directly linked to the situation *per se*, but is introduced for rhetoric and stylistic reasons as well as to give voice to

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356 Benedetto Croce writes that in the 1885 edition of Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata*, there should be a note by Imbriani on the topic on page 116, but no reference to the paremia can be found in the entire sixth illustration dedicated to the virtues of number three (*Le virtù del tre* in Sarnelli 1885, 112-17).

357 Also in Buoni’s *Nuovo thesoro*, but in a four-member structure: *Quattro cose vuol haver il pesce, fresco, fritto, fermo et freddo.*

358 “I swear on the three candles that are lit when a contract is signed at night; on the three spans of rope wrapped around the hanged man; on the three things that drive a man from his home: stench, smoke, and a wicked woman; on the three Fs of fish: fried, frosty, and fresh; on the three Ss a lover must be: solitary, solicitous, and secret; on the three sorts of people a whore takes to: swashbucklers, handsome young men, and dimwits; on the three things that ruin youth: gambling, women, and taverns; on the three things that a procurer should have: a big heart, a lot of hot air, and little shame; on the three things a doctor checks: the pulse, the face, and the chamber’s pot” (Basile 2007, 339-40). (For a complete list, see Speroni 1941. For the word “futo” and paremias containing it, see Malato 1965, 139-40).
an emotional status. Conversely, in *Posilecheata*, Marchionno’s tripartite paremias are inserted in the prose for their distinctive structure and for their capability to express “multivocità verbale” (Fasano 1975, 486). As they are strongly related to the narrative context, they underscore the main objective of his monologue: the number three is the best number possible for fellow diners. The fact that the same paremia is mentioned in the two texts in a very similar way, but that their order is different might indicate that both Basile and Sarnelli were looking at a third source and reused it in accordance with their personal needs. However, there is no evidence to support this idea.

The accumulation of tripartite paremias inside Marchionno’s appraisal of the value of the number three falls within the Baroque intention to delight and astonish the readers, as well as within the typical Neapolitan oral tradition. The presence of such a considerable number of paremias and their excessive and hyperbolic use in a work that is not devoted to them accords *Posilecheata* a specific significance. Other than creating a feeling of wonderment, it results in a comedic effect since it aims to achieve a goal that could be accomplished efficiently with less waste of energy and linguistic material. It should not be forgotten that the display of paremiac wisdom is intended to convince Masillo and Petruccio to invite Marchionno to dinner, a far too easy target for such a demonstration of knowledge and rhetorical skills. Yet, Marchionno employs paremias to achieve his goal, exploiting their value to the upmost while creating comedy.

When the demonstration of the virtues of the number three concludes and Marchionno is invited, the supper can officially begin. For the first course, soup is brought to the table and Marchionno eats it with much eagerness to the point that Reppone and Petruccio can only enjoy a few sips. In order to tease Marchionno, Petruccio asks if he enjoyed the soup, to which Marchionno answers:

The Spanish paremía expresses the idea that nothing can be built upon a rounded surface. In the Floresta española de apotegmas ó sentencias, sabia y graciosamente dichas, de algunos españoles (1777) by Melchor de Santa Cruz de Dueñas and Francisco Asensio y Mejorado, this same paremía appears:

A un Francés dábanle uvas al principio de comer. Dixo, que no las comia, sino á la postre, porque sobre cosa redonda no se hace buen edificio (Part six on the table, 255, number XV).

The shrewd French man is trying to get a better meal than simple grapes in order to save himself from hunger; thus, he employs the paremía as a sarcastic way to get his point accross. The language and context of the paremía have similarities: the thing mentioned by the paremía is as round as grapes. Building a good construction on a rounded surface is impossible or, at least, the result would not be a “buen edificio.” Consequently, to build an entire meal from grapes will not result in a good outcome.

The conventionalized meaning of this paremía appears to be that it is unwise to begin something if the foundation is not strong, or the prerequisites are not satisfied. Its contextual meaning, as it is used by Sarnelli, grants the situation a comic twist. That is, in Marchionno’s opinion, a meal cannot rely only and exclusively on a soup, which is an insignificant dish and not sufficiently nutritious. Thus, the indirect message that the paremía conveys is that it is inappropriate to treat a host badly when, in fact, he should be treated with a proper welcome.

In contrast to the quotation from the Foresta, in Sarnelli’s context, there is nothing round, even though the shape of the bowl for soup recalls a round surface. However, the contextual

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359 “It’s good! But it is not a thing to use as foundation. Don’t you know that the Spanish say: Upon that which is round, you don’t have a good building?"

360 “Grapes were given to a French man to eat at the beginning of the meal, but he said that he did not eat them, if not at the end, because upon that which is round, you don’t have building.”
meaning is similarly related to food, or, even more precisely, it relates to obtaining better and more food. The objective is achieved: upon Marchionno’s request, Petruccio asks Cianna to bring a mullet, in Italian “cefalo,” which Marchionno greatly appreciates.

If the paremia is analyzed linguistically, it reveals a transition from Spanish to Neapolitan once it is part of Marchionno’s verbal utterance; its language becomes a Neapolitanized Spanish. For instance, the verb “hacer” conjugated in the impersonal way faces the typical Neapolitan substitution of the unsound dental fricative consonant with the alveolar fricative consonant\(^{361}\) (Ledgeway, 99-100). Therefore, even though Marchionno refers to an external source to express his idea, the paremia is orthographically and phonetically closer to Neapolitan. As will be perused thoroughly later when analyzing cunto 1, the Spanish expression appears to be so internalized in the speaker’s conscience that he mentions it with the morphologic and phonetic elements of his own language (Beccaria 1985, 308-09).

On the presence of paremias in languages other than Neapolitan in the introduction, the following paremia provides another good example:

E non sapite ca prossimo accignendo habeto ped accinto? (P, 17.21).\(^{362}\)

Malato argues that the paremia is a phonetic rendering of an untraceable Latin paremia, which means that one should consider as having happened that which is going to happen soon. The paremia aims to respond to a provocation, as a counter-motto, or a reaction to a motto previously stated, while at the same time anticipating a situation that will soon happen, namely that Marchionno will receive a lot of wine. Marchionno explains that wine is necessary to counteract the dryness of fish, which can disturb the throat. Reppone chides Marchionno with a sentence saying that Marchionno is getting ahead of himself because he

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\(^{361}\) It indicates the passage from \([\theta]\) as in the Spanish “hacer” to \([z]\).

\(^{362}\) “And don’t you know that what is happening soon has already happened?”
has not yet started to eat fish and already fears dryness, ultimately trying to reject his request to drink more wine.

Since he is not given adequate attention, as in a farce, Marchionno pretends that a thorn is stuck in his throat and that he needs a huge quantity of wine to free himself from it. When he receives it, he concludes:

Auto ca chillo de masto Grillo (P, 18.21).363

Marchionno refers to a story in verse of a doctor called Grillo, who seemed particularly skilled in solving any sort of medical issues in quite unorthodox ways, since he was originally a farmer. After his decision to wander in search of a better life, his wife takes revenge on him. Since the daughter of the King has a thorn stuck in her throat, she tells him that her husband is the most knowledgeable doctor. Called by the King, Grillo does not perform any medical treatment but instead starts to oil the young lady’s backside in such a way that he made her laugh hard. Upon laughing, the thorn was expelled and the young lady was safe.364

The comparison with this story makes Marchionno’s behavior even more ridiculous than it really is: he is much better than mastro Grillo, who is known to be an impostor. As such, he is the epitome of the successful mischievous person, who always manages to get what he is looking for, regardless of the methods he uses.

Marchionno reinforces his arrogant and annoying behavior when fried fish is served during dinner. Since he had smelled a conger eel that was still in the kitchen, Marchionno

363 “More than that from doctor Grillo.” In the sonnet that introduces the 1674 edition of Cunto de li cunti, mastro Grillo is mentioned in reference to Basile’s text, which would make its readers laugh and cure them better than mastro Grillo (line 8). Mastro Grillo is also mentioned by Basile in the introductory cunto of his collection: “Zoza, che, comm’autro Zoroastro o n’autro Aracreto, non se vedeva maia ridere. […] ca manco lo remmedio de mastro Grillo, manco l’erva sardoneca, manco na stoccata catalana a lo diaframma l’avreria fatto sgrignare la vocca” (Basile 2013, 2.3, 4.5) (“Zoza, who, like a second Zoroaster or Heraclitus, had never been seen to laugh […] for not even Master Grillo’s remedy, not even the sardonic herb, not even a sword in her chest would have made the corners of her mouth turn up”). (On mastro Grillo, see also Sarnelli 1986, 18, footnote 13).

stages a scene and asks a small fish the whereabouts of his dead father. This supposedly prompts Marchionno to make inquiries about the dish that has not yet been served, which leads Petruccio to tease him with a proverbial phrase, which leads Petruccio to tease him with a proverbial phrase:

Ma Petruccio, pe darele cottura e ped annozzarele lo muorzo ’n canna, responnette: “Io no’ approvo chillo proverbejo: Carne giovane e pesce viecchio, pocca sti pescetielle me piaceno. E così, sio Dottore mio, haje sbagliato o coll’uocchie o co lo naso” (P, 21.29).  

This is the first time in the collection when a sentence introduces a paremia, though with the generalizing term “proverb” (“chillo proverbejo”). This is likely due to the effectiveness of the paremia in the narrative. Carne giovane e pesce vecchio refers either to a relationship between an old man (usually fish is a phallic symbol) and a young woman (indeed fresh flesh), or to the relative merits of tastier mature fish over softer and young flesh. There is, however, a specific pragmatic significance to the paremia’s use in context. Petruccio naturally prefers a mature fish such as a conger eel to small, fried fish. By saying that he does not approve of the proverbial phrase, Petruccio tries to silence Marchionno and make him eat the fried food without longing for the huge eel. Thus, the proverbial phrase serves as a rather comic and provocative tool to divert the attention toward a different matter and to advance the narration by way of dropping an unwanted topic. It, however, proves to be unsuccessful since Marchionno continues acting in the same way and requesting for more food.

“However, Petruccio, in order to bother him and make his morsel go down the wrong pipe, answered: «I do not agree with that proverb: Young meat and old fish, because I like this little fish. So, my dear Doctor, you got it wrong either with your eyes or your nose».”

Rocco (s.v. gatto) states that in the paremia, meat and fish underscore two opposing aspects. A similar opposition features in another expression at the beginning of Marchionno’s tirade: “Non sapite vuje ca è chiù golioso lo pesce che la carne? Pe’ la quale cosa, li Rommane de la maglia antica chiamavano l’uommene dellecate Ichthiophagi, cioè magna-pisce” (P, 15.15; Sarnelli 1986, 15, n. 9).

Lapucci 2006, sub litera C, n. 751 for the second meaning; also listed in Giuseppe Giusti’s 1853 edition of his Proverbi.
Upon Marchionno’s wish to drink more wine, Petruccio sarcastically says to his servant Cianna:

Ma pocca non chiove, ca delluvia,\(^{368}\) veggote la chieve de l’autra cantenetta ’n grazia de lo sio dottore (P, 23.35).\(^{369}\)

Petruccio gives the key to the canteen to Cianna so that she can go there and replace the twelve barrels of wine that they already drank. This would be a favor to the Doctor because “here it does not rain, but it pours down.” The paremia comes from the Neapolitan expression, “I’ dico ca chiove, ma no’ che delluvia,” namely “I say it rains, and it does not pour.” It literally speaks about weather conditions, but also has a metaphoric meaning: one acknowledges the reality (“rain”), but not its exaggeration (“downpour”) (Sarnelli 1986, 23, n. 20). By reciting Non chiove, ca delluvia, Petruccio twists the original expression making it comically suitable for the scene. The fact is acknowledged (it definitely rains), but it is not sufficient, and its exaggeration (it is pouring down) needs to be taken into account. Out of metaphor, Petruccio is facing the fact that food is not just given to Marchionno, but is given in such huge quantities that it seems to pour from the sky directly into his mouth, and hence disappearing in his stomach.

Another paremia emphasizes Marchionno’s excessive behavior and introduces a popular dimension:

*Da dove viene? da lo molino!* (P, 18.22).\(^{370}\)

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\(^{368}\) Rocco (s.v. *delluvio*) lists Serio’s similar expression, *Non è chiovere, è delluvio* (Serio, IV, 29-44). More common is the proverbial phrase *Credere che dovesse piovere, ma non diluviare*, which features, for instance, in Vignali’s *Lettera dell’Intronato Arsiccio*: “Credetti bene che piovesse, ma che non diluviasse.”

\(^{369}\) “But because it does not rain, but it pours down, here is the key to the other canteen to please the doctor.”

\(^{370}\) “Where does he come from?” «From the mill.» “A similar comparison appears in Basile’s *Lo cunto de li cunti*, II. 10.8-9: “[…] comme si fosse abbrammato, allancato, ammollato a rasulo assaiaito comme cane de presa e co la lopa ’n cuorpo, co na carrera che bolava, «Da dove vene? Da lo molino!», menava le mano comme a sonatore de pifaro, votava l’uocchie comme a gatta forastera ed operava li diente comme a preta de macena” (“as if overcome with cravings, dying of hunger, sharp as a razor, fierce as a hound sent to sic, and with a wolfish craving in his belly and lightning speed—
Sarnelli plays with the language in order to depict the grotesque event of the dinner. The insertion of a proverbial phrase, *Da dove viene? Da lo molino!*, underscores this concept: even though Marchionno wants to conceal his origins, the paremias *Chi va al mulino s’infarina* or *Chi va al mulino (o usa col mugnaio) bisogna (o è forza) che s’infarini*, testify that everyone brings signs of the place where he comes from. Moreover, the rapidity and ravenousness of Marchionno’s behavior, i.e. his extreme hunger, suggests the image of a millstone that relentlessly swallows wheat. Emotively, the paremia expresses Masillo’s and Petruccio’s astonishment and intolerance of Marchionno’s behavior, and, at the same time, ironically highlights Marchionno’s popular manners.

In *Posilecheata*’s introduction, the accumulation of paremias and popular expressions to express a point shows how rich and pompous the Neapolitan language can be, and how many meanings can be conveyed with an incredible amount of synonyemic expressions (Cortelazzo 1980, 86). In other words, Sarnelli represents the Neapolitan “realismo popolare” (Getto, 300). Since reality can be multiplied and even projected on a fantastical world, one paremia is not enough to represent it; a vast number of paremias are needed to give credit to the multiple facets of reality. Further, their accumulation needs to leave the reader almost breathless. As Nancy Canepa states, Baroque poetics was based on the pervasive application of *inventio* to rhetoric and on the value given to the author’s ability to create “a world of words” (Canepa 1999, 61). Even though Marchionno is described in

«Where are you coming from, the mill?»—he would wave his hands around like a piper, roll his eyes like a wild cat, and work his teeth like a grindstone”) (Basile 2007, 204). Rak writes that a theatrical precedent exists for the event in Giovan Battista della Porta’s comedy *La Sorella*, printed in Naples in 1604, 1.5 (see Basile 1986, 432, note 6). The same rhetorical aspect appears in Basile’s *cunto* IV.2 (*Li dui fratielle*), where almost the entire fable is filled with proverbs and proverbial phrases expressing moral teachings to a couple of young brothers.

371 See also Sarnelli 1986, 18, footnote 15 and Basile 2007, 204, note 6. GDLI (s.v. *mulino*) lists another meaning for a quite similar expression (*Di dove vieni, vengo dal mulino*), that of indicating the numerous and harsh blows given to somebody. However, this meaning does not seem to apply here. With this meaning, in Basile’s *Muse Napolitane*, I, *Clio overo li smargiasse*, 589-90: “«Eh bello, donde vieni?» «Da lo molino.»”
grotesque and animalesque terms, all of Sarnelli’s admiration is for him and for his virtuosity as a member of that Neapolitan community that *Posilecheata* aims to recreate. Sarnelli indirectly shows devotion to Marchionno’s linguistic creativity and appreciation for the popular context of wisdom that he discloses. Even though Petruccio’s paremias might convey irony or sarcasm against Marchionno, in fact Sarnelli accepts Marchionno’s behavior good-naturedly since it truly represents the culture and the community that he aims to depict in his collection.

3.5 The Five Fables: “A lo prova se canosceno li mellune ed a lo spruoccolo lo presutto”

In the introduction to his edition of Basile’s collection, Michele Rak writes that paremias are narrative elements since they resemble micro-stories with a specific and individual dimension, yet they are more flexible than a fixed narration (Basile 1986, xlii). Paremias indeed tell a story, which, as previously demonstrated, starts from an actual reference to reality, and is later conventionalized into a commonly recognizable message. In *Posilecheata’s* five fables (Sarnelli 1986, 35-207), paremias tell an individual and personal story, regardless of the context in which they appear. At the same time, they participate in the context and offer it a new direction or a different implication. They delimit an autonomous place for themselves, while remaining in contact with the surrounding space and adapting to the infinite variety of circumstances that take place.

When they operate at the beginning of a *cunto* (for three out of the five fables), not differently from Brusantino’s introductory paremias, they set the groundwork for the moral, social, and didactic direction of the fable. They permit the reader to “avere una conoscenza

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373 “By testing them, it is possible to determine if they are melons and with the stick if it is ham.”
374 Fables 1, 4 and 5.
preliminare dell’intreccio” (Albanese 2012, 73) as they offer suggestions about what to focus on in the text and how to interpret it. This does not mean that the story should be confined to only one line of interpretation if other interpretations are possible, but the paremia indicates which one should prevail. The paremia therefore highlights the main message of the story or the message that the author wants the readers to analyze.

Paremias may appear in the narration, where they can be moral maxims, ironic assessments, short and frequently witty rhetorical forms, or a means to construct the varied structure of the fables. They may shed light on a particular aspect, present alternative perspectives, centralize a concept by adding a specific twist or moving the narration forward as “narrative propellers.” They actualize their meaning(s) in the stories themselves and assume specific characteristics within that specific context (Sarnelli 1986, lxiii-lxvii). As Fabio Tarzia states, paremias are not a-posteriori tools to fill a blank, but are rather crucial integration to the narration as they refer to “una saggezza altra e popolare, nutrita di una intima e sottilissima venatura comica;” in other words, “la stessa sapienza del popolo diveniva [...] spettacolo a suo modo arguto e sentenzioso, divertimento nuovo” (Tarzia, 180).

When they are placed at the end of the canti, they cannot provide an indication on how to read the text but they rather explicate what message the story aims to convey and which of the many aspects of the fable should be taken into consideration. As such, they frequently confirm a moral message that was anticipated at the beginning of the story. In Posilecheata, out of the five final paremias, three correspond perfectly to the title of the fable; since the title sends out a moral message, the final paremia confirms it and creates a

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375 Ghirelli defines final paremias as a clever compendium, a perfect equivalent of the narrated fable, a concluded narrative unit yet capable of originating an infinite number of similar fables, given its applicability to a variety of contexts (Ghirelli, 675). It is worth noting that final recapitulatory paremias were common not only in genres typically associated with an oral performance or delivery but also with formal and political discourses (see Montuori, 159-62), as, for instance, conclusive thoughts in Diomede Carafa’s Memoriai (for more information, see Antonio Lupis in Diomede Carafa, Memoriai. Ed. Giuseppe Galasso. Roma: Bonacci, 1988: 387-08, especially 404-08).

376 Fables 1, 2, 3.
paremiographic circular movement. They might also account for an etiologic description of buildings, statues, and inscriptions in Naples, making real and human what is originally fantastic and, most of all making it specific to and distinctive of the city. As they conclude the stories and maintain a logic link with them, paremias might caustically summarize their meaning and content into a short and effective structure and offer a moral interpretation or suggestion. Thus, they express in a more brief and powerful way the didactic and moral stance of the text. The final rhyme then contributes to make the paremias memorable and likely to be used in civil conversations, as were the introductory paremias in *Le cento novelle*.

Typographic elements also help to ease the memorizing process: Sarnelli’s final paremias stand out in its first edition, for they are in italics and detached from the text of the fables. In Brusantino’s texts, initial paremias are placed in a significant position of the page and are prominent throughout the text of the stories. Similarly, in Sarnelli’s text, paremias have a noticeable position at the end of each fable. As such, they become a “suggerimento mnemonico non solo della favola ma, ancor meglio, della sua morale di cui rimangono antichi e tradizionali depositari” (Albanese 2012, 70).

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377 The etiologic descriptions are an original introduction by Sarnelli, which cannot be found, for instance, in Basile’s collection. They are: Neptune’s statue outside the castle (*cunto* 1); a bust called the “head of Naples” around the market (*cunto* 2); the river and the gulf of Naples (*cunto* 3); the bronze horse in the surroundings of the Foro Nostriano (*cunto* 4); and the statue of Jupiter known as the statue of the giant outside the regal palace (*cunto* 5). Sarnelli must have gathered information on Naples and the surrounding areas when writing his two guides (for more details, see note 251). *Guida de’ forestieri curiosi di vedere ed intendere le cose più notabili della real città di Napoli* is devoted to descriptions of notable places in Naples, such as castles, churches, buildings, and libraries, with a particular attention to artistic aspects and topographic indications to foreigners. Before the two guides were published, Sarnelli had already described the history of Naples and the surrounding places, including Posillipo, Pozzuoli, Cuma, Baia, and Miseno in the pages of his *Degli Avvenimenti di Fortunato e de’ suoi figli* (1676: 181-216). (For more information, see Franzese, 115-18; and Giglio).

378 Allasia rather argues that the stories are woven so that they can function as comments on their final paremias (Allasia, 258).

379 Generally, she defines paremias as, “dispositivi di memoria, vere formule mnemoniche” (Albanese 2013, 4).

380 Paul Zumthor comments that the two positions at the beginning and at the end of a text purport the same function, the “globalisation thématique,” the thematic globalization both to introduce and to conclude the topic. What changes is its perspective, on the one side, the “annonce prémonitoire,” since introductory paremias disclose and anticipate the topic or the direction of the readers’
Already from the five storytellers, Ciulettella, Popa, Tolla, Cecca, and old Cianna, whose names smell of the people’s land and sweat (Chlodowski, 195), the five fables are provided with a popular dimension. This aspect conveys a genuine message and depicts the authentic reality of the local people, the value of their oral tradition, and centennial wisdom and morality, while at the same time indulging in some comedic touches. Marchionno asks the five women to entertain him and the others with fairy tales in Neapolitan. The only possible alternative to the retelling of stories is reading Basile’s Cunto, a book that everyone enjoys, including non-Neapolitan readers. However, since none of the present characters has it, Cianna answers:

“Chesta è arte nosta! […] Anze ste fegliole, s’accossi ve piace, ne decerranno porzine uno ped uno: avarranno perzò pacienzia se non sarranno comme a chille de lo livro, che songo cose stodiate, ma nuje le decimmo a la foretana, accossi comme l’avimmo ‘ntiso contare da l’antecestune nuoste” (P, 33.58).

Her words become intrinsically connected to popular memory, something that does not happen in such a profound way in Basile’s Lo cunto de li cunti. If, as Giorgio Raimondo Cardona argues, the library of orality is memory (Cardona, 36), the spoken word is a direct descendant of the ancestors’ wisdom and linguistic culture. Thus, oral performances are more respectful of the words’ origins and traditions and constitute a revival of popular authenticity. The authority of the five stories is sanctioned here as neither literature, nor the work of canonized authors. Instead, the voice of the

interpretation, and the “conclusion récapitulative” since concluding paremias summarize the same topic or a specific line of interpretation that runs through the text (Zumthor, 323).

381 In Posilecheta, though, the proper names of the five storytellers do not carry the same level of comedy as those in Basile’s Lo cunto de li cunti. (For more information on the meaning of Basile’s ten women’s names, see Picone 2003).

382 D’Ambra (s.v. foretana) explains it as “contadinescamente.”

383 “We are certainly skilled in doing that! […] and if you like, each of my daughters will tell you one of them. However, you must be patient with us, if they aren’t exactly the same as those in the book, which are studied things. We tell them in a country way, the way we heard them told by our forefathers.”
community and, specifically, the voice of the most native community is the repository of a wisdom that the learned and studied words of books do not seem to contain with the same strength and authenticity (Guaragnella in Franceschi 2011, 330).

The act of recounting fairy tales is consequently linked to the language in which they are transmitted. Marchionno does not speak about tales regarding Neapolitan matters or characters, but instead he specifically requests stories in the language spoken by the five storytellers. This highlights his, and Sarnelli’s, interest in the diastratic dimension of the Neapolitan region. The intricacy of the plot, the variety of concepts, and the grace of words will then create a perfect balance between enjoyment and didacticism. However, the marked admission of an oral component of Sarnelli’s Posilecheata should not confuse the readers. Sarnelli’s language results from a life-long and philological approach to texts, as well as acquaintance with earlier authors, as he has greatly demonstrated in his other works and demonstrates in his paremias here. At the same time, the reference to the “country style” of recounting aims to call attention to the fact that the urban, refined, and elegant way of recounting stories is less traditional and further from their original form and structure. Proverbs and proverbial phrases are the language elements best suited to reflect the importance given to orality as well as to the connection between comedy, realism, popular contextualization, moral teachings, communal cultural and linguistic identity, emotional evaluations, and narrative structures. Even though Sarnelli employs a considerably smaller number of paremias than Basile (Speroni 1941; Speroni 1953), and even though his fables include fewer paremias than those present in the prefatory letter and the introduction, proverbs and proverbial phrases still play a considerable role in the five cunti.
Cunto 1: La piatà remmonerata

The first cunto, recounted by Ciulletella, is introduced by both proverbs and proverbial phrases, following the example of Basile who places a paremia at the beginning of all his fables:

Veramente disse buono, e non potea dicere meglio, chillo che decette: Fa bene e scordaténne. Pocca quanno manco l’ommo se lo penza trova lo contracammio, se non dall’aute uommene, da lo Cielo stisso. E pe lo contrario: Chi fa male, male aspetta: che non è possibile: semmenare grano e cogliere ardiche, o puro chiantare ardiche e cogliere vruoccole (P, 35.1).

Fa’ del bene e scordatene is the concluding paremia of Basile’s cunto IV.8, Li sette palommielle (CC, 795.77). Chi fa male, male aspetta is not present in Basile’s Cunto but its contrary does: Chi bene fa bene aspetta found in fable III.5 (Lo scarafone, lo sorce e lo grillo), and Chi fa bene sempre bene aspetta in fable II.6 (L’orza). In cunto III.5, the paremia is, “Ma non dubitare: chi bene fa bene aspetta; fa’ bene e scordatenne” (CC, 544.37), which also includes the first proverbial phrase used by Sarnelli. In this example from Basile’s text, the semantic field is positive in Basile’s instance, meaning that if one does good things, he will also receive them back. Young Nardello frees three animals, and therefore acts in a good way. Yet, his new three friends will be employed in an amoral way and they will help Nardiello make a fool of the prince who married the woman he loves. In contrast, Sarnelli’s proverb, Chi fa male, male aspetta, focuses on the negative side and means that someone who acts in an evil way should expect negative outcomes. The paremia seems to combine two

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384 For a list of the motives and a schematic summary of all fables, see Sarnelli 1986, 227-29.
385 “In truth he spoke well, and could have not spoken better, who said: «Do good and then forget about it.» Because when a man expects less, he finds repayment, if not from other men, from God himself. And on the contrary: Who does bad may expect bad, because it is not possible to sow wheat and harvest nettles, or to sow nettles and harvest broccoli.” In his edition, Malato highlights only the first and second proverbial phrases in italics.
386 Lapucci lists a longer paremia, although clarifying that usually only the first part is used: Fai del bene e scordatelo, Fai del male e pensaci (Lapucci 2006, sub litera B, n. 335).
proverbs available in the Florentine vernacular, as listed in Lena’s collection: *Chi fa bene ha bene* (Lena, 91) and *Chi fa male, male aspetti* or *Chi fa male, aspettine altro tale*, originating from the Latin, *Metit miseram messem iniustus* (Lena, 92). As they refer to bad and good behaviors, both paremias aim to express the message that one gets what he deserves according to his behavior. This meaning applies to Sarnelli’s story, in which an evil husband faces a suitably bad and painful death as a result of his malicious acts against his wife, both while living with her and later when manipulating facts to implicate her in a homicide that she did not commit.

The two proverbial phrases at the end of Sarnelli’s quotation, *Semmenare grano e cogliere ardiche* and *Chiantare ardiche e cogliere vruoccole*, mean that someone cannot but be born by his own parents, as wheat cannot generate nettle nor nettle broccoli. Sarnelli’s two proverbial phrases show that the same or a similar conventionalized meaning can be expressed by different paremias when the contextual situations are similar and allow them to actualize the potentiality of their meaning. Notably, the paremias at the beginning of *cunto* 4 and *cunto* 5 convey the same message as the two proverbial phrases at the beginning of this first *cunto*, demonstrating a transferability of the paremias to different contexts. In *cunto* 4,

> Ca l’ommo comme nasce accossì pasce. E se maje villano fece azione de
galant’ommo, o fu jannizzero o cuorvo janco: pocca da le cettule non
nasceno aquele, né da le ciavole palumme. E perzò se sole dicere: pratteca co

387 In other words, *Chi nasce di gallina convien che razzoli, Chi nasce mulo, bisogna che tiri i calci, Chi nasce di gatta, piglia i topi al buio*, and *Il lupo non caca agnelli* (GDLI, s.v. *lupo*). In Latin, popular expressions with the same meaning were: *Asinus magis stramina optat quam aurum* (Virgili, CCXLIII, fol. XLIr) (“The donkey estimates more the straw than gold”), *Qualis pater, talis filius* (“So is the father, so is the son”), and *Qualis hera, talis pedissequa* (“So is the lady of the house, so is the handmaid”) (Erasmus, IV.V.lxiii). They meant that a child resembles his father and mother, especially in the negative or the more characteristic aspects, and no matter how exposed one may be to gold, fortunate events cannot change one’s nature if one is used to straw. Lena lists a similar proverb, *Il pruno non fa melaranci*, whose Latin counterpart is *Troia non producit Thracem* (Lena, 345-46).
chi è meglio de tene e falle le spese: perché chi meglio nasce, meglio procede,
e chi dorme co cane non se nn’auza senza pullece (P, 141.1).

In cunto 5,

Non sempre cammina la regola: Comm’è la chianta è la scianta. Perché se vede ca da le spine nasceno le rose, e da ’n’erva fetente nasce lo giglio (P, 181.12).

The introductory paremias of cunto 4 declare that similarity to ancestors is genetic. However, *Chi meglio nasce, meglio procede* and *Chi dorme co cane non se nn’auza senza pullece* convey a slightly different meaning: similarity of intent and behavior, if not genetic, can be acquired by continuous relations with someone, both in positive and in negative terms.

Basile, in IV.2.14, makes a dying man express the same concept and give the same advice to his two children: *Chi prattica co lo zuoppo, ’n capo dell’anno zoppeca; chi dorme co cane, non se n’auza senza pulece.* Sarnelli’s cunto 5 expresses another exception: if *Da le spine nasceno le rose* and *Da ’n’erva fetente nasce lo giglio*, then redemption is possible and upbringing and education can overcome nature. The two proverbial phrases indirectly promote the idea that associating with a better person in order to gain something positive from the relationship is better than associating with those who are more degraded.

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388 “Because as a man is born, so he is fed. And if ever a villain behaved as a gentleman, either he was a Janissary or a white crow: because neither from owls can eagles be born nor from magpies doves. So, it’s a common saying, «Associate with those who are better than you and share with them.» Because a person who is born better continues to be better, and a person who sleeps with dogs wakes up with fleas.”
389 “Scianta” means, “ramo strappato dalla pianta madre” (D’Ambra, s.v. *schianta*). The noun comes from the verb “schiantà,” “schiantare, svellere, sdradicare” (D’Ascoli 1993, s.v. *schianta*).
390 “This rule doesn’t always work: As the plant is, so is the branch. Since one can see that roses bloom from throned branches, and lilies blossom amongst weeds.”
391 *Chi dorme coi cani si leva con le pulci* is listed by Monosini in his fifth book, along with his original Latin equivalent, *Cum pulicibus surgit, cum canibus dormiens*, and the synonymous expression, *Cum claudo versans, claudicare discit* (Monosini, 241, n. 18).
392 “He who associates with a cripple will be limping by the end of the year; he who sleeps with the dog won’t get up without fleas.”
In the first *cunto*, ironic paremias mark Pacecca’s lack of critical judgement and her generosity. Simultaneously, they express her husband’s, mastro Cocchiarone, insensitiveness and mischievous behavior. As Pacecca begs her husband to buy her a pair of shoes unsuccessfully, Sarnelli, with a tolerant and good-natured eye towards her ingenuity, comments:

Ma non s’addonava la scura ca lo marito la ’nfenocchiava, e decea chelle parole pe darele la quatra (P, 37.7).393

“Quatra,” which is a unit used to measure wheat as the fourth part of a bushel (and indeed *darle la quatra* means to give her the fourth part), is reported by both D’Ambra and Andreoli. They list the expression *Fare na quatra de vierme*, literally to make the fourth part of a worm, meaning to be greatly afraid and experience an extremely frightening situation.394 GDLI, however, lists two other meanings for the expression. The first, which does not apply to this context, is to flatter someone. In this meaning, the proverbial phrase appears in Salviati and Serdonati, and is explained by Varchi in his *Hercolano*, Chapter 56, as “To adulate,” along with *Dar caccabaldo, dar le moine, dar la trave*. The second meaning, which Malato adopts in his Italian translation of *Posilecheata*, is to fool or deride someone, as reported by Voc. Cr. 1612 (*s.v.* dare and quadra) (“Motteggiare, uccellare, e beffare copertamente”). Therefore, in Sarnelli’s context, Pacecca’s husband is both mocking and covertly fooling her. Another proverbial phrase confirms the two characters’ personality, when the narrative voice sarcastically hints at Pacecca’s naïveté and condemns her husband’s narrow-mindedness:

*Longa se vedde, corta se trovaje.* (P, 38.8)395

The paremia functions as an “indicatore di lettura,” a prolepsis of the next development of the narration. The readers infer that later in the story Pacecca will be humiliated. And, she is: she

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393 “But the unfortunate woman did not realize that her husband was hoodwinking her and was saying those words to fool her.”
394 In this meaning, it appears in Basile, I.5.23.
395 “Long she saw herself, short she found herself.”
believed that she was wealthy (long) when in fact she was a pauper (short) since mastro Cocchiarone abandons her without clothing, in the woods.

An interesting example of transition between two languages is the paremnia employed when Pacecca wanders in the woods and finds a castle. She is initially scared to access it, but *fece de la trippa corazzone* (P, 45.32). The proverbial phrase comes from the Spanish, *Hacer de tripas corazón*, which means to let courage come from fear. The paremnia’s meaning transfers from a physical and tangible condition (literally to transform the bowels, the typical place where fear manifests, into heart or courage) to a general meaning (to gather the necessary courage to do something out of deep fear), and then into the contextualized meaning (for Pacecca to overcome her dread and explore the castle). In his *Vocabolarietto napoletano*, Malato explains the proverbial phrase as “fare della necessità virtù,” thus to take advantage of a situation (Malato 1965, 57-58). In his glossary to Cortese’s *Opere poetiche*, he also includes the meaning “fare buon viso a cattiva sorte,” which refers to the act of trying to minimize the effect of a negative situation by showing an opposite feeling (Cortese, 167). A phonetic and morphologic adaptation of the Spanish paremnia is particularly evident in the word “corazzone,” a calque from the Spanish “corazón.” Once again, the paremnia becomes linguistically attached to the Neapolitan dialect as it is transferred to its culture.

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396 “She had courage coming out of her bowels.” Also, in Cortese’s Book 4 of his *Li travagliuse ammure de Ciullo, e Perna*, Vol. 3, 163 (“Fece commo dice lo Spagnuolo, de la trippa corazzone”); in Basile, *Muse Napolitane*, IX.75 (“chillo fa buono c’a ’sto munno Fa corna comm’a boie, Che fece de la trippa corazzone”), *Valasseide*, III.26 (“Ciullo [...] non vedenno chella, Carmosina, zoè, che sta ’mpresone, Non fece de la trippa corazzone”), and *Mico Passaro*, VI.17 (“Puro, fatto de la trippa corazzone, Se mese co lo vecchio a chiacchiarare”).

397 D’Ambra (s.v. *corazzone*). Also in Lorenzo Franciosini, *Vocabulario italiano, e spagnuolo: nel quale con agevolezza si dichiarano, e con proprietà convertono tutte le voci Toscane in Castigliano, e le Castigliane in Toscano: con infinite frasi, e molti verbi: s’è aggiunto la grammatica della lingua spagnuola, etj alcuni dialoghi, che facilitano sommamente l’apprendere l’uno, e l’altro idiom. Venetia: Presso il Barezi, 1645 (s.v. *tripa*).

398 In “corazzone,” the unsound dental fricative [θ] is substituted by the alveolar fricative [z] (Ledgeway, 99-100) and the word is given the final weakened sound [ə] (Ledgeway, 77-78)
Rather than being associated with social or political explanations, such as a debt to the institutionalized language of the people in charge, the presence of Spanish paremias in *Posilecheata* derives from aesthetic and stylistic matters. According to Beccaria, one possible explanation is to detach that expression from the rest, probably for ironic purposes or as a way to make it stand out (Beccaria 1985, 259), which does not seem the case here or in all of the other instances of Spanish paremias.\(^{399}\) Another plausible explanation is that Sarnelli aims to make the text more pleasurable by means of enriching its vocabulary with precious and unique expressions, which do not belong to the native language, or that he searches for linguistic freedom by way of including foreign words (Beccaria 1985, 264; 279). Consequently, mentioning a Spanish paremia might also be a conscious choice of plurilingualism. In a work that is already in dialect, inserting expressions from another language, which is also the most prestigious among the foreign languages, aims to present a multi-faceted and composite dialectalism while also giving space to a “gioco gratuito, libera sperimentazione tecnica di modi e risorse inedite” (Beccaria 1985, 286; 291). Spanish paremias were circulating in Italy in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries and Italian authors heavily borrowed from Spanish collections, considering Spanish better crafted to create proverbs.\(^{400}\) Thus, employing them in the narrative is not exceptional, but rather shows the author’s acquaintance with them and his familiarity with the foreign language, as well as his recognition of Spanish witticism. At the same time, it also testifies to the fact that Neapolitan was considered to be at the same high status of a standard language, which is open to contact with other languages just as was Spanish.

\(^{399}\) During the Siglo de Oro, paremias invaded and became a constituent part of literary works. Moreover, collections and dictionaries of paremias were constantly published for the entire century. The most extensive of them was Gonzalo Correas’s *Vocabulario de Refranes i Frases Proverbiales i otras Formulas Komunes de la lengua castellana*, with more than 25,000 paremias compiled between 1625 and 1627, but published only at the beginning of the twentieth century in 1924 by the printing press of the “Rev. de archivos, bibliotecas y museos” (Fajardo, 61-81).

\(^{400}\) For more information on the presence of collections of Spanish paremias in Italy, see Beccaria 1985, 309, specifically n. 114.
One of the paremias of the first cunto already appeared in the *Degli Avvenimenti di Fortunato e de’ suoi figli*. In that story, Sarnelli’s alias, Reppone, recounts the story of a man who lost his inheritance for having only changed one letter of his name in order to declare himself a descendant of an important family. The paremia is disguised inside his discourse:

\[\ldots\] *pascendosi di fumo*, poco mancò, che *si morisse di fame* (Avvenimenti, c. †††3v).\(^{401}\)

The most common version of the paremia, *Chi si pasce di speranza muore di fame*\(^{402}\) (in Lena, *Chi vive in speranza magra fa la danza, Spes longo consumit gaudia voto*, 127) is here made *Chi si pasce di fumo muore di fame*,\(^{403}\) which is then manipulated to fit into the narrative. The relative pronoun “chi” is substituted for a specified subject, thus lacking the impersonal tone of the proverb while the two coordinated emistichs of the proverb are dismembered into a gerund and a completive introduced by the main clause. The use of “fumo” emphasizes the meaninglessness of the man’s decision, who is attentive only to appearance and not to the real substance of names and titles.

In cunto 1 of *Posilecheata*, the purpose of the paremia is different. Mastro Cocchiarone, an insensitive person who is far from sharing the same good feelings that move his honest and generous wife,

> se ’ngorfeva le bone morzella, e la mogliera *la pasceva de fummo* (P, 36.4).\(^{404}\)

The paremia shares an aspect of mastro Cocchiarone’s profession, since he is a cook. Smoke is widely present in kitchens and metaphorically cooks inhale and feed themselves smoke. Nevertheless, in the context of the cunto, mastro Cocchiarone feeds Paccecca smoke, while he instead enjoys good and sweet bites. Vain promises are sent to her repeatedly so that she

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\(^{401}\) “Living off smoke, he was near to die of hunger.”

\(^{402}\) In GDLI (s.v. *pascere*), a few proverbial phrases are listed: “pascersi di aria,” “di occhiate,” “di vanità,” “di nubi,” “di sol odore,” explained as “sentirsi soddisfatto di cose inconsistenti, vane.”

\(^{403}\) In GDLI (s.v. *fumo*), “pascersi di fumo” is explained as “accontentarsi dell’apparenza, lasciarsi conquistare dalle adulazioni.”

\(^{404}\) “He was engulfing the best morsels and he was feeding his wife with smoke.”
would not complain about the misery in which he keeps her. Consequently, the proverbial phrase conveys quite a sad depiction of their marriage and, in particular, of Pacecca’s life since she is not able to see the reality of her husband’s meanness.

Before her final reward, Pacecca needs to face a charge of murder for the death of the Prince’s young bother, when in fact mastro Cocchiarone killed the boy and orchestrated the entire scene to get rid of his wife. When Pacecca resuscitates the young boy, who accuses mastro Cocchiarone of being the murderer, everyone at court would like to castigate him harshly, but Pacecca asks for him to be spared (P, 50.71). The final paremia of the *cunto* refers to Pacecca’s final choice as well as to the content and significance of the entire story, summarizing its moral tension and didactic orientation:

*Chi vò male ped aute a sè non jova,*

*E chi fa bene, sempre bene trova* (P, 61.79).

The meaning of the proverb is clear: those, like mastro Cocchiarone, who wish bad events upon others, always pay the consequences of their evil acts. Meanwhile, those, like Pacecca, who commit themselves to helping others, are rewarded in turn for their worthy deeds. Indeed, Pacecca marries the Prince of Campochiaro and is loved by everyone at court, whereas mastro Cocchiarone, drowned in a water tank, is transformed into a statue after a dove’s defecating upon him three times and is placed before the main sewer in Campochiaro. A Bakhtinian laughter conveys Sarnelli’s sarcasm: it is a derisive laughter, since defecation is related to the fate of mastro Cocchiarone, but it is also constructive and resuscitating, because from it new opportunities will arise for Pacecca, namely her marriage and her future life as a princess (Bakhtin 1984).

The story continues as it contains the etiologic explanation of a statue in the city centre of Naples. After a few years, mastro Cocchiarone’s statue is transferred from

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405 “He who wants evil for others is not useful to himself, and he who does good, always finds good.”
Campochiaro to Naples where it is placed in the square in front of the Castle, the Maschio Angioino, and near the main sewer. Some believe that this is Neptune’s statue and that mastro Cocchiarone is just a fairy-tale. Some others, Sarnelli included, can prove that the statue is indeed mastro Cocchiarone’s, as it is demonstrated by an epigraph—an octave with the rhyme scheme ABABCCDD—which celebrates Pacecca’s goodness in contrast to mastro Cocchiarone’s evilness. Despite the way the etiology of the statue is described, its meaning is adapted from a written source into a visual one and adopts the message of a fairy tale related to life and human behavior. In this way, everyone could believe in the merits of good behavior and follow the moral message of the final paremia as well as the ethical admonitions of the initial ones.

Cunto 2: La vajassa fedele

Like the first cunto, the second cunto, recounted by Popa, begins with a rather misogynistic quotation. Sarnelli specifies that he borrowed it by Sannazaro’s Arcadia, eglogue VIII, 10-12, which in turn originates from Petrarch’s Rerum vulgarium fragmenta, 212, 4. Sannazaro, whose name is comically twisted into the Neapolitan dialect as Sanzaro, meaning “sensale” or agent, writes that entrusting one’s hopes to a woman is impossible and useless since all of the activities to which love is compared are unreliable:

Ne l’onda solca e nell’arena semina
E i vaghi venti cerca in rete accogliere
Chi sue speranze fonda in cor di femina (P, 63.1).

406 For a reference to Sannazaro in Sarnelli’s Guida see Sarnelli 1986, 63, n. 2.
407 “Who lays his hope on the heart of a woman cuts through the waves and sows in the sand, and tries to gather the dainty winds in a net.” Sannazaro’s original is: “Nell’onde solca e nell’arena semina E ’l vago vento spera in rete accogliere Chi sue speranze funda in cor di femina” (Arcadia, VIII, 10-12). Petrarch’s line is: “Solco onde, e ’n rena fondo, et scrivo in vento” (RVF, 212, 4).
Sarnelli aims to place more emphasis on the moral message of the entire *cunto* and, calling attention to a literary source, he introduces the *cunto* by stating the opposite of what the *cunto* itself will later show. Sarnelli uses the authority given by literature to argue that he disagrees with the idea that all women are untrustworthy. He can show the contrary in his *cunto* since its main character is a faithful servant, able to endure privation in order to serve her mistress fully and even go beyond her own immediate job’s responsibility. This initial moral quotation, as it happened in *cunto* one, provides the reader with an indication of how to read the story. However, by way of stating the opposite of the general tone and conclusion of the *cunto*, Sarnelli succeeds in reinforcing the moral message of the recounted events. Other moral aspects are present in the story, such as the King of Red Land’s affection and his faithfully waiting to consummate his marriage, but they are secondary to the message of long-lasting faithfulness and the near submission of a woman to another woman. Additionally, by extracting a verse from a Neapolitan author, Sarnelli confirms the Neapolitan essence of his story; and by contradicting it, he strengthens the identity of his work in Neapolitan dialect vis-à-vis high-level and respected literature.

Sarnelli promises to demonstrate the fallaciousness of Sannazaro’s lines, since every event of the story leads to the final consideration that Petruccia is undoubtedly a “vajassa fedele,” i.e. a faithful servant, as the title recites. When, seven fairies are called to predict the future of Pomponia, a newly born princess in the reign of Green Land, the shells of some nuts scattered on the floor hurt one of them. Furious with rage, the fairy casts a terrible spell upon Pomponia: she will transform into a snake on her first night of marriage and she will remain in that shape for three years, three months, three hours, and three minutes. Only if she can find a faithful servant, with two uncouth sisters and no male siblings, daughter of an orphan mother without any grandfather and whose face resembles Pomponia’s to the smallest details, will she regain her original human body; if not, she will remain a serpent forever.
As the story progresses, Pomponia experiences her mother’s death. A paremia, which describes her grief, is disguised inside the narrative and rendered in a prosaic style in line with the rest of the sentence:

[…] comme che li dolure de li pariente muor te songo comme a le tozzate de gúveto, che doleno assai ma durano poco […] (P, 69.18).

This paremia expresses that the grief upon a relative’s death resembles a bump to the ulnar nerve, which is very painful but lasts a short time. Salviati, Voc. Cr. 1612, and Serdonati list the paremia, *Il duol della moglie è come il duol del gombito*, where the pain at the funny bone relates to the pungent yet brief pain caused by wives. Giuseppe Giusti, in his collection, lists the paremia, *Morte di suocera, dolor di gomito*, thus associating death with pain, as Sarnelli does. This is a rather comic example as it states that the death of one’s mother-in-law is painful but fades away easily, and so does grief. In Sarnelli’s context, there is an equal slightly ironic tone: Pomponia is sad for her mother’s death but, as soon as her mother is buried, she forgets her sadness and starts to take care of her own business (P, 69.18).

Comic metaphors co-mingle with paremias concerning food when the King of Red Land selects Pomponia as his future wife. Eager to marry his beautiful daughter to him, because an alliance to that family would be of incredible advantage, Pomponia’s father expresses his thoughts on the profitability of the marriage with a culinary reference:

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408 In his *Vocabolarietto napoletano*, Malato reports the paremia, *Dulore ’e guveto e de mugliere, assaje dole e poco tene*, of which Sarnelli’s constitutes an “interesting variation” (Malato 1965, 81-83). Capozzoli mentions the paremia in his *Grammatica* to demonstrate how the plural of masculine and feminine nouns finishing in “-ore” and “-one” change the accented vowel [o] in [u] (“dolore”-“dolure”) (Capozzoli, 49-50). Basile uses it in II.16.13. (See also Speroni 1941, 177).

409 Lena reports the paremia, *Doglia di moglie morta dura fino alla porta (Lentissime coniuges stentur, saepe vero laetissime)* (Lena, 179). He also lists a similar one, *Doglia passata, commar dimenticata (Simul et misertum est, et inter iit gratia)* (Lena, 179). The paremia appears in Pescetti, even though the explanation he provides relates to a different context, namely “Cioè le donne aborriscono Venere fin che sentono le doglie del parto” (Pescetti, 116).
The two proverbial phrases in italics comically mean that someone might experience unexpected good luck or that an event can be solved in the best way possible or that simply an event happens conveniently (Rocco, s.v. *caso*). Everything goes into the right place by chance, such as broccoli on lard, and something fits perfectly, such as cheese over macaroni pasta (D’Ambra, s.v. *caso*). Pomponia and the King of Red Land are the appropriate match since perfect suitability and profitability bless their marriage.

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410 The two proverbial phrases appear in Basile’s *Cunto*, I.1.53, when Antuono takes advantage of the profitable situation, namely the innkeeper and his wife beaten by the magic club, to have them return all the magic objects that the ogre donated to him. The second paremia is reported by Rocco (s.v. *caso*): *Cadere lo maccarone d’int’a lo caso o lo caso ncoppa lo maccarone* “Accadere una cosa opportunamente.” Both paremias are mentioned by Basile, *Muse Napolitane*, 5, *Tersicore overo la zita*: “l’è caduto Lo vruoccolo a lo lardo, Lo maccarone dinto de lo caso” (Muse, 152-54), on the perfect opportunity occurred for a recently celebrated marriage.

411 “[…] considering that this relationship mattered a lot to him, and that had he been looking for it carefully, he would have not been able to find a better one, such that it suited his daughter the way broccoli goes with lard and macaroni with cheese […].”
TAVOLA
N O N  D A  M A G N A R E,
ma
D E  L I  C U N T E,
Che se fanno dapò magnare.

Introduzione de la Posilecheata. e
comito d’Ammice fatto a Posile-
co. da la pag. 1. pe’ nsi a la pag. 25.
La Vajaşa sefele. Cunto II. pag. 58.
La ’Ngannatricce ’ngannata. Cunto III.
pag. 95.
La Gallerina. Cunto IV. pag. 145.
La Capo, e la Coda. Cunto V. pag. 186.
Scompatura de la Posilecheata: ouero
festa de Posileco de li 26. de Luglio
1684. pag. 221.

FIGURE 5: Posilecheata
“Tavola non da magnare ma de li cunte che se fanno dapò magnare”
 Courtesy of the Newberry Library, Bonaparte 5634
This culinary reference is not surprising in a Neapolitan context and in a text where food constitutes the *fil rouge* of the different parts of the collection.\(^{412}\) Again, food is mentioned by means of paremias when Pomponia is looking for a faithful servant by way of testing three sisters from Villanova, whose genealogy corresponds to the one Pomponia is looking for. The first sister is Livia, a rough and poorly educated young girl, who does not appreciate the endeavour that she needs to undertake, which is to form a string out of a good amount of linen by the next day. Upon her poor results, Pomponia discharges her and one of Pomponia’s servants is sent to eavesdrop on her reaction:

[…] mettlenno la lengua ’n mota accommenzaje a ghiastemmare la Prencespessa, comme femmena senza descrezzione, e come ca lo sazio non crede lo dejuno,\(^{413}\) e ca lo piso de la corona fa calare tal’ommore all’uocchie che non vedeno lo deritto, e tant’aute felastroccole che non le avarria ditto manco no poeta (P, 74.32).\(^{414}\)

\(^{412}\) Sarnelli plays with culinary metaphors in different ways. In the introductory letter, when referring to the usefulness of his collection to different categories of readers, his book is said to substitute a meal (P, 8.17). Reppone, who finally accepts his friend’s invitation to spend some time with him in Posillipo, arrives at Petruccio’s house at exactly the right time to eat (P, 11.4): his stomach is empty and ready to receive nutrients, i.e. fables. Descriptions of food also appear in the fables. In the conclusion, a reference to food is present but in a privative way: after having watched the fireworks in honor of Viceroy Gaspar Méndez de Haro y Guzmán in the area of Mergellina (on the west side of Naples) during the festivity of Saint Anne, Reppone goes back home in Naples exhausted by hunger. So, he satisfies his sudden need “co na cocchiarella de mèle” (P, 214.10), to replace with a culinary product the same sensation he received from the stories (for more information on the reference to a teaspoon full of honey, see Allasia, 256-57, and n. 8). Finally, at the end of the book, the index’s title maintains the food-related metaphor: “Tavola non da magnare ma de li cunte che se fanno dapò magnare” (P, 215), which has a metonymic meaning as a table where one eats, hence feeds himself with fables. Comically, Sarnelli shifts the semantic area of the word “tavola” as a table of contents to the same word as a table to eat and, thus, connects reading and listening to fables to eating, yet chronologically places the act of eating before the act of recounting fables.

\(^{413}\) Rocco (s.v. *dejuno*): “Panza sazia non crede a lo diuno.” Also mentioned in Basile’s *Muse Napolitane*, eglogue 8, *Urania overo lo sfuorgio*: “Lo satoro non crede a lo diuno,” on a comparison between richness and poverty (Muse, 219, and not 332 as mentioned by Rocco). Both Salviati and Serdonati, along with the Voc. Cr. 1612 (s.v. *digiuno*), list a Tuscan variant of the paremia, *Il pasciuto non crede al digiuno*.

\(^{414}\) “[…] and, setting her tongue in motion, she started to curse the princess as an insentive woman, and as a well-fed person who does not believe a starving one, and that the weight of a crown clouds eyes so that they cannot discern the right way, and many other verses that not even a poet would have been able to declare.”
The introductory completive participle “ca,” for “che,” represents a way to insert the
paremias inside the discourse and make them less separate from the surrounding content.

Before being dismissed in favor of her younger sister Petruccia, Livia rebukes the princess,
Pomponia, for not understanding those who are not as rich and wealthy as she is, just as a
well-fed person does not believe a starving one. She also argues that those who are healthy or
rich do not give credit to complaints from the sick or poor, nor do they believe that they are
as sick or as poor as they claim (lo sazio non crede lo dejuno). The second proverbial phrase
(lo piso de la corona fa calare tal’ommore all’uocchie che non vedeno lo deritto) underscores
this even more, by connecting the weight of a crown (a coin indeed)\textsuperscript{415} to an impaired
judgement possibly caused by an imbalance of the four Hippocratic humors. Wealth causes
anyone to overlook the implicit and correct perspective, as the haughty princess does. Since
\textit{Portare corona sopra qualcuno} means to surpass him in fame and merit, the proverbial
phrase might also say that an excessive consideration of oneself, as Livia does, leads to
inconsiderate and inappropriate behaviors and choices.

The ironic aspect of the two paremias lies in the dichotomy between poetic writings
and Livia’s expressions, high literature and popular knowledge, written tradition and oral
wisdom. Poets usually sing “filastrocche,” nursery rhymes characterized by a metric scheme.
Evidently, Livia’s paremias do not belong to this category of poetic productions, but more to
the category of traditional and everyday practices. Therefore, since poets are those who
criticize Sarnelli—as it was shown above—, Livia’s paremias acquire a greater significance
in demonstrating that the words of the people are more powerful and even more meaningful
than poetic examples. Even though the rhetoric and stylistic elements of popular paremias do
not achieve the same level of sophistication of verses modelled by poets, they succeed in

\textsuperscript{415} The word “corona” indicated a crown starting from the thirteenth century, and a coin starting from
the sixteenth century.
conveying a dense as well as appropriate and effective meaning as much as literary-constructed experiments.

When Zeza, the second sister, who receives a greater amount of linen and less time to work it, returns a thick thread and proves to be as vulgar as her previous sister, Pomponia chooses the third sister, Petruccia, who resembles her greatly and is able to work linen in thin and elegant strings. Therefore, she is selected as Pomponia’s faithful servant, ultimately enduring many difficulties, such as pretending to be dead in the eyes of her mother, living in isolation in a room for three years, with Pomponia as her only contact, taking Pomponia’s place for the entire length of the spell, and taking care of her in the garden when she is transformed into a serpent. A paremia summarizes the meaning of this sequence of events:

*Male e bene a fine vene* (P, 82.54), already used by Basile in *Muse napolitane* (Muse, VIII.170).\(^{416}\) In comparison to its Italian version, *Male e bene a fin(e) viene*, the translation of the paremia into Neapolitan makes it even more regular in terms of the rhyme between the two emistics, a quadrissyllable and a verse of five syllables. The paremia gives advance notice of the final development of the *cunto*, which will undoubtedly have a happy ending and a final positive outcome; it is an “anticipatore della narrazione” because it anticipates the narration, similar to what the initial paremia of a *cunto* does.

Upon Pomponia’s regaining her human body, Petruccia and Pomponia hug each other in such a way that,

*parevano l’urmo e la vite* (P, 86.65).\(^{417}\)

The proverbial phrase comes from an account of the myth of Vertumnus and Pomona in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, where the association of the two plants is a symbol of marriage, since both the elm and the vine without each other would not grow appropriately. Instead,

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\(^{416}\) In Lena, *Male e bene a fin viene*, *Casura omnia extant* (Lena, 408).

\(^{417}\) “They looked like the elm and the vine.”

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their combination gives strength to both since they can rely upon each other. The paremia is
used by Vertumnus, disguised as an old woman, to tell Pomana that she should not follow the
message of the saying, and thus not marry, unless she chooses the best fit for her. And this
person would be Vertumnus himself. The image of the two plants growing together is also
used by Alciati in his Emblemata, bearing the motto *Amicitia etiam post mortem durans*
(“friendship lasting even after death”) (emblem CLX). The explanation reports, “Exemploque
monet, tales nos quaequire amicos, quos neque disiungat foedere summa dies;” thus, the
*motto* serves as a model of long-standing friendship between two people above and beyond
the passage of time and the end of life, which is what characterizes Petruccia and Pomponia’s
relationship.

The vine and the elm are also present in one of Christ’s parables, *The parable of the
vine and the elm* (252.7-252.8). In this reference, however, the image of mutual support is
charged with a final negative element. After the initial collaboration, the elm destroys the
roots of the vine and prevents it from thriving, thus making it unable to give fruit to the
farmer. According to a wise man, the only solution would be the removal of the elm,
including its roots. This proves to be an appropriate decision since it succeeds in giving new
life to the vine and enabling the farmer to see the vine flourish again and taste its grapes. The
moral of the story is that the farmer trusted the wise man even though his idea was extreme,
and it turned out to be good advice. Applying this reasoning to Sarnelli’s *cunto*, Pomponia’s
trust in the girl, despite it being extreme, resulted in a happy ending. Indeed, Pomponia and
the King of Red Land have a life full of love together, Petruccia marries the King of Red
Land’s brother, and both couples live together in Naples.

In the city, an epigraph in a public square commemorates Petruccia’s faithfulness
along with a sculpture of the head of Medusa atop a bust in her likeness. The story again

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418 “And it admonishes by the example that we look for those friends whose bond would not be
broken by the last day of life.”
becomes an etiologic explanation of a piece of architecture in the city of Naples, a fountain allusively called Fontana de li serpi, the fountain of the snakes. Petruccia’s bust is then moved to near the central market and her statue is from then on called “capo de Napole.” The monophrastic proverb associated to the statue,

\[ \text{Chi serve fedele aspetta premio} \] (P, 93.82)\textsuperscript{419}, transfers the meaning of the entire cunto into a condensed structure that demonstrates how loyal servitude pays off. Sarnelli’s initial assertion is proven: contrary to what Sannazaro wrote, it is possible to completely trust a woman. In a circular movement, the paremia coincides with the “smentita” of Arcadia’s lines. At the same time, the proverb explains how hope can be directed towards faithful people, including women, and how they are justly rewarded.

This story has a particular connection to the characters presented in the frame of the overall text, in that Petruccio bears the same name of the main character of the fairy tale, and is said to be particularly proud (P, 94.83). Therefore, the moral message of the final proverb and of the tale itself offers an immediate meditation on the meaning of friendship and on the faithfulness that human beings can show. It places this capacity on the same level as mythological figures, such as Pylades and Orestes, Euryalus and Nisus, Patroclus and Achilles, all of whom are mentioned in the story.

In the Tuscan vernacular, many alternatives seemed to be available within a frame of messages concerning the way one serves someone else and what to expect from it: Chi serve ingrati fa onta a Dio (Salviati and Serdonati); Chi serve a gente ingrata il tempo perde, Malo si benefacias, it beneficium interit (Lena 119); Chi serve al comune non serve a nessuno, Quae publice prosunt, parum cuique cura sunt (Lena 119); Chi serve ha da servire, Ad sua compositi discedant munera servi (Lena 120); Chi serve in corte, su la paglia muore and Chi

\textsuperscript{419} “He/she who serves faithfully expects a reward.”
vive in corte, muore in paglia, Qui alitur in aula, moritur in palea (Lena 120); Chi servo si fa, servo s’aspetta, Confessio servitutis est iussa facere (Lena 120). All of these proverbs emphasize the negative aspect of serving so that once one begins to serve he is always expected to be a servant, or likewise, he who serves in the court will have a poor life until death since the ambience is not welcoming. Lena lists two proverbs that focus on the positive aspect of serving, though in religious terms: Chi serve a Dio, ha buon padrone, Dulcis est servitus, quae Deo exhibetur (Lena 119) and Chi serve all’altare, vive d’altare, Dei donis ornamur, cui servimus (Lena 119-20). Sarnelli, instead, does not aim to give a religious meaning to his paremia, but rather seeks to highlight the inherent rewards of a laic servitude that is guided by respect.

Sarnelli’s proverb is similar to Basile’s in cunto II.3, Ogni fatica cerca premio. In Basile’s story, the paremia does not appear at the end of the tale but in the middle, where it recounts the skills that young Viola employs to free herself from the sexual advances of a prince. Her aunt, who is helping the prince in his pursuit, is deprived of her ears by Viola who says: “Tienete sso buono veveraggio de la sansaria: ogni fatica cerca premio, a sfrisate de ’nore sgarrate d’aurecchie” (CC, 320.20). Clearly, Basile is using the paremia ironically: Viola is twisting its positive meaning to reproach her aunt and scorn her for the fact that she is now obtaining the appropriate reward for acting as an unapproved intermediary. Sarnelli’s proverb, in contrast, carries a positive meaning and moral message: it emphasizes the patient work of Petruccia, who serves Pomponia during a time of difficulty, and who will receive her final reward of a marriage into wealth by the end of the story.

420 “Here is a generous tip for your matchmaking. Every job deserves a reward: for honor ruined, ears damaged” (Basile 2007, 158).
Cunto 3: La 'ngannatrice 'ngannata

In the third cunto, Tolla employs a proverbial phrase when part of the narration had already started, and so it does not set the tone of the entire fairytale, but rather introduces the relationship between Menic’Aniello and his friend Marcone. Menic’Aniello addresses his friend anticipating how he considers and values his friendship:

_A l’abbesuogne se canosceno l’ammice, e comme lo buono vino è sempre buono pe nfi’ a la feccia, cosi lo buono amico dura porzí da po’ la morte (P, 96.3)._421

Since the last reference in the previous tale is to long-lasting and deeply felt friendship, this proverbial phrase establishes a link between the two tales, even though their main topics are different and exemplify the consequences of two opposite behaviors and feelings, namely faithfulness and deceit.

When Menic’Aniello requests that his friend Marcone watches over his daughters after his death, Lella, Cilla, e Cicia are enclosed in the courtyard of their palace and are forced to work. When they talk about their future as spouses, Sarnelli writes that the three girls,

_facevano lo cunto senza lo tavernaro (P, 98.11)._422

The proverbial phrase, _Fare i conti senza l’oste_, is listed in both Salviati’s and Serdonati’s collection and had been used by Pulci in the famous encounter between Margutte and Morgante (Morgante, XVIII.145.5-6: “Ma mio costume all’oste è dar le frutte Sempre al partir, quando il conto facciamo”). The proverbial phrase might have different meanings: it might mean that one needs to redo the calculations again if the innkeeper does not agree, which is highly probable if accounts are prepared when he is absent. It can also mean to cheat

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421 “You value a friend when needed and, as good wine is always perfectly fine up to its dregs, so a good friend lasts even after death.” The paremia _A l’abbesuogne se canosceno l’ammice_ is mentioned by Capozzoli in his grammar book to explain how the masculine plural of certain nouns ends in “-ce” (“ammice”) to distinguish it from the feminine plural in “-ca” (Capozzoli, 46).

422 “They paid the bills without the innkeeper.”
on the bill by way of making the other pay more; indeed, to do it is a waste of time. In Voc. Cr. 1612 (s.v. oste), the explanation of the proverbial phrase is: “Determinar da per se di quello, a che dee concorrere ancora la volontà d’altri,” meaning to make decisions on one’s own without conferring with the interested parties. However, a more interpretative and conventionalized meaning would be to plan something without evaluating the possible difficulties and implications. In Posilecheata, the three girls decide their future without considering the other person’s thoughts (the innkeepers in this case are their future husbands), and especially Cicia is not thinking about the possible consequences of her childish act when she says that she would like to marry the King. Sarnelli plays with the correspondence between two homographs, “cunto” as calculation, and, “cunto” as tale to recount (Andreoli; D’Ambra, s.v. cunto). The three sisters are planning their lives so they make their own decisions, but they are also the characters of a cunto, thus they create Sarnelli’s story as they are also creating their own story in their minds.

Luck is not on Cicia’s side, though, since her husband’s stepmother, Pascadozia, hates her and her newly-born twins, and replaces her two children with two puppies. This causes Cicia to be imprisoned and the two infants to be abandoned in the woods, even though in Pascadozia’s mind they should have been killed. This event leads to the second part of the narration where new adventures take place for the two twins, who are named Jannuzzo and Ninella. When the wife of a miller finds the two children, they soon become part of the miller’s family but their desire to search for their own origins leads the two adolescents to wander in the world until they decide to reside in Naples. As the fable continues, Januzzo is brought to unknown lands in order to satisfy his sister’s desires. Unbeknownst to them, they end up living in a house just in front of the palace of their parents, where Pascadozia dwells. As the two women see each other through the windows, Ninella is told by Pascadozia that she would be more beautiful if she possessed three magic elements. These elements could be
found only in a distant land: a singing apple, dancing water, and a talking bird. Jannuzzo, as a
sort of fairy-tale knight looking for honorable tasks or “imprese,” embarks on long journeys
to scary places, where even Rodomonte, the famous invincible knight in Ariosto’s *Orlando
furioso*, would have been afraid (P, 115.55). In contrast to the traditional *quête* of valiant
knight, here the search is not profitable or honorable, for it just stems from Ninella’s
capriciousness and thus resembles Ariosto’s knights searching for love.

In this section, paremias comically or ironically comment on people’s behavior, and
hence are linked to emotional conditions. For instance, the character Jannuzzo, fooled by the
beauty of the place, is transformed into a statue after he dares touching a talking bird with his
own hands. A proverbial phrase describes Jannuzzo’s scarce consideration of his action
and indirectly depicts him as a naïve young boy who does not have much worldly experience.
He is said to believe to insert pearls in a reed, a rather difficult enterprise and impossible to
conclude:

> […] credennose de *infilare perne a lo junco* (P, 123.83).

Basile adopts the paremia in his *cunti* II.5 and IV.2. In the first one, it appears in the
discourse that a snake gives to Cola Matteo, asking him to gather all of the stones that he can
find and to plant them in the park so that “ne vederrai perne ’nfilate a lo iunco” (*CC,
II.5.15*). Even though this was thought to be an impossible mission, the snake was able to
accomplish it. In V.2, when the month of March gives Cianne a stick he says: “[…] tu dì:
‘Scorriato, dammene ciento,’ e vederrai perne ’nfilate a lo iunco” (*CC, V.2.25*), meaning
that the stick would be able to perform marvels. Related to love matters, Cortese uses the

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423 The recounted events seem to refer to Basile’s *cunto* IV.9, where Iennariello and Liviella, whose
names appear similar to Sarnelli’s characters, undergo similar events to Jannuzzo’s and Ninella’s.
Iennariello helps his sister, devasted by love sickness, but a dove, tells him that, upon disclosure of a
spell, he will turn into a statue. Only through the intervention of Liviella’s father, Iennarello can go
back to his human life.
424 “Thinking that he would have inserted pearls in a reed.”
425 “You’ll see pearls strung on rush stems” (Basile 2007, 171).
426 “You say: ‘Flail, give me a hundred of them!’ And you’ll see the rushes strung with pearls”
(Basile 2007, 397).
expression in his *La rosa*, I.3, even though he substitutes for the reed with a spit, still meaning that incredible things will happen (D’Ambra, *s.v.* *perna*). Instead, in *Posilecheata* the proverbial phrase acquires a different contextual meaning, compliant with the described situation. It ironically comments on the young boy’s lack of sufficient cleverness and ability to decode reality: Jannuzzo did not consider the fact and thought that it would be an easy task; therefore, now he pays the consequences of his poor judgement.

Since Jannuzzo does not come back from his journey, Ninella, disguised as a pilgrim, starts to look for him and arrives at the mountain covered with statues. The mountain stores statues not only for Naples, but also for many Italian cities, including Rome, Milan, and Venice. In the entire section, etiologic stories come one after the other and explanations of the origins of statues in the city of Naples follow. Once again, the fantastical world of a fable establishes a link with the real world and makes the fable exclusively Neapolitan. For example, the statue of Luigi Impò, which is located in a small square at the end of Via della Sellaria, is the result of a thief who has been transformed into a statue for having robbed the laundry of a poor woman (P, 127.96). Naples seems to replace Rome as a *caput mundi*: its language might not be as polished and refined as the Tuscan vernacular and the Northern dialect, but from a visual perspective, the city can count on a recognition that goes above and beyond that of other cities. For all of these urban references, the fable is said to be,

accossi saporito, coriuso e galante [...] che chisto sulo se potea chiammare lo cunto de
li cunte, avennoce renchiuse tutte le storie de Napole (P, 138.128).  

It is a tale that generates other tales, as happens also in Basile’s work, but it is also the tale *par excellence*. Indeed, it offers a journey through the city of Naples and the Neapolitan region with specific references to neighborhoods and natural places, and consequently it is considered the story that more than all of the others is pleasant, characteristic, and graceful.

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427 “It was so tasty, curious, and graceful that this alone could be called the tale of the tales, since it included all the stories of Naples.”
The final proverb of the cunto highlights the moral content of the entire story, already anticipated by its title: tricking someone invites being tricked back, which is Pascadozia’s destiny as she dies and is transformed into a statue:

’Ncoppa a lo ingannator cade lo ‘nganno,

E se tarda, non manca lo malanno (P, 138.127).

Sarnelli adds a temporal element: if the trick is not played on the trickster soon after, there will, nonetheless, be misfortune and bad luck. In one way or another, L’ingannatore rimane spesso ai piedi dell’ingannato, as Boccaccio and Brusantino wrote, thus the moral message conveyed by the proverb and by the entire cunto is not to commit tricks because the trickster will always pay the consequences of his acts.

**Cunto 4: La gallenella**

The introductory paremias of cunto 4 have already been analyzed while interpreting cunto one:

Ca l’ommo comme nasce accessor pasce. E se maje villano fece azzone de
galant’ommo, o fu jannizzero o cuorvo janco: pocca da le cevettole non nascono
aquele, né da le ciavole palumme. E perzò se sole dicere: pratteca co chi è meglio de
tene e falle le spese: perché chi meglio nasce, meglio procede, e chi dorme co cane
non se nn’auza senza pullece (P, 141.1).

Here, it suffices to mention that they outline one of the possibile interpretations of the cunto. They indeed tell the reader that the moral message of the fable will concern the behavior of a poor person who will suddenly become rich. Many are the ideal candidates of this behavior,

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428 “The deceit falls on top of the deceiver And if it delays, misfortune won’t lack.”

429 “Because as a man is born, so he is fed. And if ever a villain behaved as a gentleman, either he was a Janissary or a white crow: because neither from owls can eagles be born nor from magpies doves. So, it’s a common saying, Associate with those who are better than you and share with them. Because a person who is born better continues to be better, and a person who sleeps with dogs wakes up with fleas.”
including the two twin protagonists of the story. But only one, Belluccia, will fully demonstrate (and in a negative way) the meaning expressed by the two paremias.

The story is given a frame that reproduces almost the same aspects of Sarnelli’s collection as a whole in that the act of recounting is associated with food and spending time together. Cecca’s grandmother recounts a story while she is roasting chestnuts one night with her granddaughter and the memory of the culinary practice is as vivid as the story itself.430 The frame also explicitly makes a reference to the plague, despite being set in a fantastic time. A date is not specified, but it is probable that the memory of the pestilence that hit Naples in 1656 might have influenced Sarnelli in its literary description. Compared to the famous representation of the 1348 plague in the Decameron, Sarnelli’s account is less emotional and miserable, especially because the author uses a popular perspective, which the paremias emphasize. For instance, when Death is said to kill both a father and his son at once, Sarnelli uses the proverbial phrase,

Fare no viaggio e duje servizie (P, 143.5),

which literally means to take one journey and accomplish two jobs, thus enunciating the fact that Death is not sparing anyone.431 The paremia acquires a dark connotation since Death’s scythe kills two innocent people (“duje servizie”) with one blow (“no viaggio”), but it also gains a popular sense as it shifts the description of the plague from an historical account to an

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430 Sarnelli’s story derives from Sacchetti’s novella CCXIX in his Trecentonovelle. Here, two sisters-in-law, longing for a child who would never come, listen to the words of a Hebrew person named David (who is said not to be trusted because of his nature and religion). He fools them into thinking that a miraculous beverage would make them pregnant. If the eldest of the two refuses to drink the potion, the other imbibes it only to discover that the beverage in fact contains serpents’ eggs. Sarnelli reproduces the way serpents are pulled out of the lady’s bowels: the woman is put upside down and a cup of milk is left under her mouth until all the serpents exit her body. (For other variants of the fable, see Sarnelli 1885, 208-11).

431 The paremia also appears in Cunto 3, when the wife of the miller experiences great joy upon breastfeeding Jannuzzo e Ninella since he can get rid of the excessive milk in her breast and feed them, “facenno no viaggio e duje servizie” (CC, 103.24). In Basile, Cunto IV.9, the journey is one but the performed services are three (CC, 816.70).
everyday and common context. It therefore renders the entire scene closer to the feelings of the Neapolitan readers of the book.

The death of a Neapolitan couple establishes the link between the plague and the fairytale. Upon dying, Peppone and Zezolla leave their two children, Sole and Luna,\textsuperscript{432} entrusted to the care of their wet nurse, Cenza, in the countryside. The woman, after raising them to adolescence, decides to bring them back to the city and abandons them. As in \textit{cunto} 3, magic animals intervene in this tale. Cecca is given a hen, which discovers a secret passage to the palace of her parents, where a lizard then shows her many riches and advises her of her future life. Since Cecca needs to assess her brother’s, Mineco, wisdom before disclosing to him the incredible treasure in the palace, she asks him what they should do with the hen, to which he answers that hey should eat it. When Cecca scolds Mineco telling him that common sense dictates that the hen should be preserved and that it would be better to have it become a mother hen and collect eggs, Mineco answers:

\begin{quote}
E chi vò aspettare tanto? […] Primma de vedere sto gallinaro sarriamo cennere. Non saje ca se dice: \textit{È meglio la gallina oje che l’uovo craje}? (P, 152.31).\textsuperscript{433}
\end{quote}

Mineco is telling his sister that \textit{A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush}. The use of a common proverbial phrase and its actual modification is an interesting adaptation of the paremia for ironic purposes. The traditional form of the paremia, \textit{Meglio n’uovo ogge ca na gallina dimane} (“It is better an egg today than a hen tomorrow”) (D’Ambra, s.v. \textit{uovo}), suggests that waiting could not be advantageous if one hopes for future luck or wealth. Since Mineco wishes to eat the hen, and not the egg, he flips over the two parts of the proverbial phrase, conveying the message that it is better to have a hen today than an egg later.

\textsuperscript{432} The same names are in Basile’s fable, V.5: \textit{Sole, Luna e Talia}.

\textsuperscript{433} “And who wants to wait that long? […] Before we go and see these chicks, we would be ashes. Don’t you know that it is commonly said: It is better a hen today than an egg tomorrow?”
Sarnelli’s change makes the proverbial phrase specific to the context of the fable, as it is translated for the immediacy and contingency of the situation. Moreover, the proverbial phrase is representative of the moral meaning that the tale aims to convey and the appropriate behavior it intends to show. Ironically, it confirms Mineco’s immaturity in the given scenario, as opposed to his sister’s wisdom, and thus shows how he lacks good judgement and cannot be trusted.

When Mineco acquires the necessary wisdom a few years later, Cecca discloses the treasure to him and, remembering the lizard’s advice, convinces him to marry an extremely poor lady called Belluccia. Sarnelli employs paremias as a repository of ancient wisdom such as in a comment about Belluccia’s jealousy toward her sister-in-law Cecca, who enabled her to become wealthy. Guaranteeing that his paremias belong to the past, and hence are reliable and always succeed with their moral message, he describes the woman’s behavior:

Perché li proverbie antiche sempre so’ rescuite, ca non se dice lo mutto e non è miezo o tutto: azzoè ca non c’è peo de pezzente arresagliuto, pocca lo grasso
le dà subbeto a lo core, e lo cavallo c’ha uorgio e paglia soperchia tira cauce

(P, 158.48).434

Dare il grasso al cuore means that something arrives directly at the center of emotions, the heart, without passing through the mind. Thus, the person becomes very emotional and does not rationalize before taking action or thinking something through. The meaning is further explained by the next proverbial phrase, which depicts the lack of gratitude to those who provide someone with food and shelter, like a horse who, after having eaten in abundance, reacts with violence. In the context of the cuntò, Belluccia cannot control the surge of pride given only and exclusively by her new social status; she is indeed a “pezzente arresagliuto,” a

434 “Because ancient proverbs always succeeded, since one does not say a motto if it is not half or all of it: there is nothing worse than an enriched villain, since fat immediately strikes one’s heart, and the horse that has excessive barley and straw kicks.”
parvenu, a derelict or a beggar who has gained wealth all of the sudden from her bad and poor condition (Rocco, s.v. *arresagliuto*). By seeing wealth ("lo grasso"), she loses her reasoning and common sense—like a horse that is ungrateful to its master and kicks him without appreciating the refinement of the food it receives.\(^{435}\) The fact that the final paremia of the *cunto*, *Non c'è peo de vellane arresagliute* (P, 174.92), is used here with a much stronger reference to the social class to which Belluccia belongs ("pezzente") and not only to her behavior ("vellane"), clarifies the moral tension created by paremias present in the middle of the narrative. This moral tension, which anticipates how the derelict whose fortune has changed is indeed Belluccia, creates a circular narrative and moral movement that is then resolved at the end of the *cunto*. As discussed earlier in other instances in *Posilecheata*, paremias outline moments of crucial significance in the text and give them the value they deserve.

*Cunto* 4 also features another revision of a paremia, whose meaning consequently takes on an ironic tone. Attempting to get Cecca out of the house and make her look dishonorable, Belluccia feeds her serpent’s eggs, which make her seem pregnant, and then tries to convince her husband, Mineco, to disown her. She reproaches him as follows:

Meglio che tu te lieve da casa na scrofa ch’essere mostato a dito comm’a ciervo; è meglio che tu lighe no chiappo a lo cannaruzzolo sujo ch’esserete ditto: *L’ommo se lega pe le corna e li vuoje pe le parole* (P, 161.56).\(^{436}\)

*Gli huomini si legano per la lingua (or le parole) e i buoi per le corna* (“Men are tied up by their tongue, oxen by their horns”) signifies that for each person and each personality a specific behavior is required.\(^{437}\) Sarnelli’s paremia can be understood by looking at what

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\(^{435}\) A paremia explains why barley is mentioned: *L’orzo non è fatto per gli asini* (“Barley does not suit donkeys”); consequently, gross and ignorant people cannot understand the value of what is beautiful and precious (GDLI, s.v. *asino*).

\(^{436}\) “It is better to deprive your house of a sow rather than be pointed at as a deer; better to have your hands tied than have it said: Men are tied up by horns, oxen by words.”

\(^{437}\) For references in Latin and in other languages, see Tosi in Franceschi 2011, 191, par. 3.1.
Rocco reports (s.v. cuorno): he lists the expression *Fare corna comm’a boje* (“To grow horns like oxen”), meaning “rassegnarsi.” It can be inferred that the paremia *Gli huomini si legano per la lingua e i buoi per le corna* means that in order to dominate people, the only way is to use the tongue, hence to employ all of the devices that rhetoric offers. In other words, if animals can be limited only with material things, such as a rope, men realize their will through words. By inverting the two sections of the paremia, thus the two types of behavior, Belluccia satirizes the horns, which are culturally associated with betrayal. Appropriately, in this context, the reader is confronted with fraternal betrayal and social scandal. Words usually restrain men when they are unreasonable; when betrayed, though, men are wild, dangerous, and almost skittish. Therefore, a rope in their horns can only control them, the same way an ox is fastened to work. Belluccia manipulates the paremia to fit the context that she is creating verbally. Since the “memory” of the traditional form of the paremia is vivid, and a listener can immediately understand its twisted meaning, the paremia is effective and sends out a strong message about human social behavior, while at the same time criticizing Mineco’s lack of judgment.

When Cecca is put upside down so that the serpents present in her belly, summoned by the smell of the milk below, can emerge, a paremia, which can be interpreted literally or according to a contextualized meaning, is associated to the event:

*le fece venire tutte le bodella ‘ncanna* (P, 165.66).

If taken literally, the expression means that a person is evidently hanged with his head down so that the bowels can go down and almost reach the place where the throat is. However, conventionally, the expression can become a proverbial phrase when it is interpreted as making someone anxious and agitated (GDLI, s.v. *budello*). In the context of Sarnelli’s *cunto,*

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439 “He made her have her bowels in the throat.”
the first literal interpretation needs to be considered: an old lady has hanged Cecca by her feet and her intestine literally arriving at the level of the mouth, through which the animals will exit her body. A conventionalized interpretation would conflict with the actual context where the paremia is used; therefore, the paremia should be read literally since interpreting its meaning is not required for a correct understanding of the text.

As time progresses and Cecca lives happily married in Foggia, an occasion brings Cecca, her husband, and her daughter to Naples to do some business with Cecca’s brother. While at Mineco’s house, where all onlookers are unaware of Cecca’s identity, the truth is revealed. With a meta-narrative technique, which is also emphasized by the fact that the narrator of Sarnelli’s story bears the same name of the character in her story (Cecca), Sarnelli makes the fairy-tale character Cecca recount her own story in front of the his brother and sister-in-law. However, this time, the cunto is not as spontaneous as the other accounts of story telling in the collection. The act of recounting the story is premeditated and not impromptu. Cecca feigns to tell her daughter a story but, contrary to the five storytellers of the five cunti, she does not know many stories and cannot recount them in a specific style. The only story she knows is that of the little, pretty hen, which indeed retraces her own personal events before she was left in the woods to die. A common topic connects this storytelling to the entire collection: the tale is told while eating. Since eating and recounting stories bring people together, this section of the story connects food and fables just as in the frame of the collection and the frame of this precise story. Cecca uses a proverbial phrase to describe Belluccia’s scheming:

Essa fice comme fa lo cane ch’abbaja a la luna. Azzoè che tanta màchene soje ghiezero ’n fummo (P, 169.81).440

440 “She did like the dog that barks at the moon, which is that many of her machinations went into smoke.”
The proverbial phrase is followed by an explanation introduced by the conjunction “azzòè,” which provides the correct interpretation of the paremia in the context of the *cunto*. The conventionalized meaning of the proverbial phrase is, to do something without any result, a useless and ridiculous thing, or to pick on someone who does not have any part on a matter and menace him or her in vain (D’Ambra and GDLI, s.v. *abbaiare* and *cane*). Therefore, the contextual meaning is that Belluccia did something against Cecca, who had not done anything wrong, but Belluccia failed in her plans. In Salviati and Serdonati, a related expression *La luna non cura l’abbaiar de’ cani* or *La luna non si cura dell’abbaiar de’ cani*, is explained as follows: “I potenti non fanno stima delle minaccie de’ bassi e deboli, e gli animi grandi e generosi non tengon cura dell’offese de’ vili e codardi.” In Voc. Cr. 1612 (s. v. *luna*), the provided meaning is: “Le cose grandi e di valore, non curano delle piccole, e vili.” Ultimately, the expression emphasizes how Cecca’s soul is stronger and superior to Belluccia’s, who is indeed a villain and as such will always remain one. Just as in canonical fables, the final resolution of Sarnelli’s *cunto* vindicates Cecca and results in a happy ending for her and Mineco. Belluccia dies, Mineco marries Cecca’s sister-in-law, and Cecca moves to Naples with her family and enjoys the treasure left by her parents.441

The final proverbial phrase, mentioned above, demonstrates how wealth cannot change one’s origins and can make things worse if one is poor (*Non c’è peo de vellane arresagliute*). This paremia summarizes Belluccia’s behavior for the entire *cunto*: Belluccia, who was not intelligent, does not benefit from being a rich merchant’s wife, since she meets a cruel death. With a typical ironic comment, Sarnelli makes Cecca, the story-teller, explain that from her wealth she gained a marble head stone where the proverbial phrase summarizing the moral of her story is engraved as a memento for future generations. While castigating

441 The etiology of the story is connected to the metal horse full of treasures. Its body is sold to a merchant from the Vico de le Campane, who melts it to produce weapons. The head, instead, is sold to a knight and today is still in the courtyard of a palace named, “Cavallo d’avrunzo” (“The bronze horse), which is along the street that goes to the Foro nostrano (P, 172-73.89-91).
Belluccia and all people who behave as she does, the fable also aims to show the persistency of fraternal bonds vis-à-vis the negative behavior of unreliable people and the importance of trust in fraternal relationships.

**Cunto 5: La capo e la coda**

The fifth and last *cunto* is recounted by Cianna, the oldest lady of the group of five story-tellers. As with all of the others, it features a proemial message, which contains a wellerism, which, given its typical satirical, ironic, comic, or humorous twist, gives a comedic atmosphere to the *cunto*:

> Se bè de tutte li vizie se pò dicete chello che decette no cierto foretano de li lupe, che addommannato che nce nne trovasse uno buono, responnette: «Sempe che so’ lupe, malannaggia lo meglio!», puro l’avarizia è no vizio accossì brutto che fa venire l’avoro ’nzavuorrio a tutte (P, 177.1).  

The wellerism, *Come disse quel che vendeva i lupi: malanno habbia il meglio: o trist’è quel poco di buon che vi è*, is listed by Lena twice: *Come disse quel che vendeva i lupi: malanno habbia il meglio: o trist’è quel poco di buon che vi è*, *Sardi venales alius alio nequior* (Lena, 140) and *Malanno habbia il meglio: disse quello che vendeva i lupi, Simiarum pulcherrima deformis est* (Lena, 408). It refers to a bad situation that cannot be ameliorated, given the circumstances and aspects of the situation itself. That is, even if there is a small quantity of good, this good is surpassed by the bad. The wellerism derives from Benvenuto da Imola’s comment on the passage in *Divina Commedia* that refers to Conte Ugolino’s dream while imprisoned in the tower:

> Questi pareva a me maestro e donno,

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442 “Even though, of all the vices you can say what a certain farmer of wolves said, who, when asked to find a good one, answered: «As long as they are wolves, and may misfortune get the better,» yet avarice is such a bad vice that it makes everyone hate the avaricious person.”
Cacciando il lupo e’ lupicini al monte
Per che i Pisani veder Lucca non ponno (Inferno 33, 28-30).

Benvenuto da Imola comments on it as follows:

Ideo bene dicit ille qui portabat parvulos lupos ad vendendum. Rogatus ab emptore ut
daret sibi unum bonum respondit: Omnes sunt lupi.443

In Sarnelli’s context, the paremia means that all of the vices are bad and they do not differ
from each other; even if a better one exists, it cannot be praised because it always remains a
vice. However, avarice is so bad that everyone despises it, and so the wellerism cannot be
applied to it, as avarice differs from all other vices. Sarnelli’s repulsion by avarice is evident
in his disposition against the character that embodies it in the story, Roseca-chiuove. Her
initial description recalls a long tradition of vituperatio ad vetulam, aimed at emphasizing the
most repulsive attributes of an old woman. In a few words, her physical appearance
 corresponds to the ugliness of her mind and soul, which are described in comic ways.444

While depicting the fairies as local gossipers speculating over the beauty, ugliness,
virtues, and vices of women in the neighborhood, the cunto portrays Nunziella as the
recipient of a contest between three fairies. The paremias used to describe how Nunziella
differs from her mother have already been analyzed in cunto one:

Non sempre cammina la regola: Comm’è la chianta è la scianta. Perché se vede ca da
le spine nasceno le rose, e da ’n’erva fetente nasce lo giglio (P, 181.12).445

443 “And so he spoke well who was bringing small wolves. Having been asked by the buyer to give
him a good one, he answered: They are all wolves.”
444 Her description resembles that of the two old sisters in Basile’s cunto I.10.5-6, and also Rustico
Filippi’s sonnet Dovunque vai conteco porti il cesso. Her head is full of bumps, her front is wrinkled,
her eyebrows are spare, and her ears are long and transparent. Her eyes are as those of a cat, since
they try to scrutinize you and they are as open as a split, probably recalling the tightness of a greedy
person; her throat is as that of a magpie because she is unappeasable and constantly greedy, and the
neck is that of an ostrich, wrinkled and ugly. Her breath smells like a cemetery, and her mouth is
corrugated and toothless.
445 See note 390 for the paremia’s translation.
It is sufficient to show here how the paremia in Neapolitan features a rhyme which is not present in the Tuscan version. In Neapolitan, the paremia is, *Comm’è la chiANTA è la sciANTA* and in Italian, *Com’è la pianta così è il ramo*, or *Il ramo somiglia al tronco* (Giusti), or *Il ramo è come la pianta* (Lapucci 2006, sub litera R, n. 159). The introductory formula is also interesting because one of the fairies says that those paremias do not always work: “Non sempre cammina la regola.” In this case, the paremias are mentioned as a stylistic tool to demonstrate the opposite of what the tale aims to show—it is not always true that children resemble their parents, but it is possible that a change occurs and a good branch comes out of a bad root. Similarly, Nunziella was born as a rose from the thorns of her mother’s avarice.

In this very Baroque section, paremias follow one another to give strength and emphasis to the moral perspective of the story, highlighting the same concept with a variety of synonymous expressions. One of the many is,

\[ \textit{scotolare sto sacco e bedere se nc’era porvere o farina} (P, 182.15).^{446} \]

Considering that the sack and the flour always go together (as the proverb says, *Chi ha la sacca non ha la farina* and *Chi ha la farina non ha la sacca*, in GDLI, s.v. farina), to find dust inside the sack means to find something that is not normally associated with it or that is strange to locate there. To shake the sack, which usually means to say everything bad that could be said to a person or say everything that someone knows about someone else (*scuotere il sacco* or *sciorre il sacco*, in Voc. Cr. 1612, s.v. sacco), here means to scrutinize Nunziella since by way of “shaking” her, her true essence will emerge. The fairies aim to determine whether or not she is the generous and good-hearted person about whom everyone talks, and

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446 “To shake this sack and see if there is dust or flour inside.”
so the proverbial phrase’s meaning is appropriately transferred to Sarnelli’s context in order to fit in it.\textsuperscript{447}

An example of interpretative versus literal meaning of a proverbial phrase in this \textit{cunto} happens with the proverbial phrase that describes the falling-into-pieces dress that the fairy wears when disguised as an old lady:

\begin{quote}
Se mettette no sajo viecc\’io accoss\’i stracciato che \textit{non ce potive appenere no fuso} (P, 182.16).\textsuperscript{448}
\end{quote}

Its conventional meaning is moral in nature: if not even a spindle can find a place in a dress, then the person wearing it is moderate and an example of good behavior, thus no defect can be found in him or her (Andreoli and D’Ambra, s.v. \textit{fuso}). In the context of Sarnelli’s fairytale, a literal meaning is required since the fairy is feigning to be a poor person, but no moral element is involved. As seen before, the conventionalized meaning of the paremia would be incorrect in Sarnelli’s context in that it would attribute to Roseca-chiuove a positive personality when in fact she is the opposite. Not transferring the literal meaning onto the second level of interpretation would, instead, guarantee a correct interpretation of the paremia in consideration of its narrative context: Roseca-chiuove is so cheap that one cannot obtain anything from her.

When Nunziella helps the fairy, her mother throws her out of her house. As she wanders alone in the woods, she arrives at a river and receives a spell by one of the aforementioned fairies in the form of a sardine. She is given a ring, which allows her to marry a rich merchant, Micco. When Micco asks her about her heritage, about which she had not told him the truth, Nunziella starts complaining about her miserable lie that will lead her to

\textsuperscript{447} GDLI (s.v. \textit{asino}) lists a similar expression, \textit{Alla prova si scortica l’asino}, meaning exactly that one can understand and recognize the value of something or someone only in difficult times because this is when filters and screens fade away and one’s real personality cannot be hidden.

\textsuperscript{448} “She wore such an old dress full of holes that nothing could be hanged there.”
death. She uses a common proverbial phrase, *Fare il becco all’oca*, and syntactically and morphologically transforms it into a sarcastic exclamation:

*Eccote fatto lo becco a l’oca* (P, 189.35).

The paremia is a playful way to say that something is over and finished (Voc. Cr. 1612, s.v. *becco*), that it is well-done and well-concluded (GDLI, s.v. *becco*; Speroni 1941, 183), or, as Rocco says (s.v. *becco*), that something has gone farther than what originally thought. Serdonati provides the following explanation for the phrase, *È fatto il becco all’oca*: “La cosa è finita, e se gli è posta l’ultima mano. Uno scultore prese a fare un ritratto d’una oca, e spesso domandato da gli amici se l’oca era finita, rispondeva che le mancava il becco; e finalmente venne a loro e disse ch’era fatto il becco all’oca, mostrando che l’opera era finita; e ’l motto passò in proverbio.” The proverbial phrase was so common in the Renaissance that in his chivalric poem *Mambriano*, Cieco da Ferrara dedicates an entire novella to explaining the origin of the phrase in canto II, 42.117.

*Cunto* 5 can be considered the most Baroque of the five fables because it is the story where the greatest accumulation of derogatory remarks happens as a vivid and strong representation of the Neapolitan expressiveness and creativity. Lexical accumulation is a distinctive feature of works in dialect in the seventeenth century for it is a way to demonstrate the richness of the dialect itself vis-à-vis the alleged poverty of the Tuscan language (Cortelazzo 1980, 86). This undoubtedly answers to the Baroque exigency to create comedy, to demonstrate virtuosity, and to incite marvel and fascination for it was “suitable for the plurilingual early-seventeenth century courts for which it *Posilecheata* was intended” (Haller 1999, 253). As Malato states of Basile’s exhuberant creations and diverse language “il dialetto […] è spesso arricchito dall’iniziativa innovativa dell’autore, incentivata dalla

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449 “Here is done the beak of the goose.”
450 Basile uses the proverbial phrase in the last meaning of the listed ones in *cunto* III.4.13.
inclinazione barocca all’accumulo lessicale, alla moltiplicazione sinonimica, alla divagante variazione cromatica” (Basile 2013, xii). The same can be easily said of Sarnelli. It is true that this tendency to accumulate and express a variety of feelings and emotions is embedded in the Neapolitan language itself, which finds its utmost form of expression in its performative nature and in combining words and gestures. All sections containing an accumulation of compound words are characterized by a performative and theatrical component, which might be generated both by actions and words or simply by the words themselves. The effect is a chaotic accumulation of terms, which is nonetheless fruitful, since they do not specifically relate to reality nor aim to describe it, but instead seek to express the metaphorical potentiality of linguistic combinations and to achieve a specific pragmatic effect (Fasano, 486).

Sarnelli lists derogatory epithets in two occasions. The first instance happens when the fairy arrives at Nunziella’s palace covered with rags and blood to test her, and Nunziella’s butler addresses her with a long list of derogatory remarks; through them, they highlight the disgust he feels towards an old and poor woman who dares approach the house of a rich family (P, 195-96.53). The second instance occurs when Nunziella realizes what has happened and she answers back to her butlers and all the onlookers with a likewise astonishing list of derogatory remarks, which convey the rage and fury that she feels against those inconsiderate men (P, 196-99.54-56). Sarnelli aims to excite an emotional state both in his recipient in the narrative context and in his readers, who perceive the same violent feelings that the speaker of a derogatory epithet conveys. He wishes to create a satiric and offensive atmosphere, while, at the same time, being playful in accordance with popular and Baroque expressivism.

452 Rak comments that the literature in Neapolitan dialect is characterized by a “calcolata prossimità con le pratiche del teatro basso” (Rak 1994, 38).
As in all other cunti, justice happens at the end of cunto 5: Roseca-chiuove is transformed into a toad and continues being stingy, whereas Nunziella enjoys her life together with her husband. The final proverb,

\textit{Lo vizio dello lupo tanto dura}

\textit{Che pilo pò mutare, e no’ natura (P, 207.79)}, \footnote{“The vice of the wolf lasts as long as it can change its hair but not its nature.”}

harkens back to the initial paremia of the cunto, reinstating that no matter what the appearance is, nature remains the same, especially if avarice comes into play (GDLI, s.v. \textit{lupo}). Roseca-chiuove, even though she changes her nature from a human being to an animal, still lives avariciously, deeply rooted in her vice, with no plans to change or improve her behavior. The cunto demonstrates how avarice is the worst of all vices, since it results in no compassion for the others and, consequently, no help from others when in need, and, worst of all, no change. The cunto is therefore the proper conclusion of an array of fables thematizing the virtues that one should have (kindness and goodness of heart in cunto 1 and faithfulness in ethical behavior in cunto 2), and the bad behavior that one should avoid (deceit in cunto 3; unsubstantiated boastfulness in cunto 4; avarice in cunto 5). Similar to those ethical and unethical behaviors that Brusantino’s introductory paremias describe and to the moral message associated to Florio’s paremias, Sarnelli’s catalogue is the moral lesson that his cunti transmit to its readers of yesterday and today.

Conclusions

The analysis of Posilecheata is the first to highlight the specific literary and linguistic features of paremias that Sarnelli employs as recurrent elements throughout his work and as a means of interpreting, commenting, and offering a Neapolitan perspective on reality,
language, and society. In the treatise-like ambience of the prefatory letter, the popular and carnivalesque dimension of the introduction, and the fairy-tale atmosphere of the fables, proverbs and proverbial phrases fulfil a variety of purposes. They express irony, humor, and comedy in content and language; set a realistic and popular tone; and look at the Tuscan model renovating it in the Neapolitan dialect. They also activate a moral interpretation of the text; offer a way to read the text or provide a summary of its content; advance or block the narration or purposely introduce ambiguity in the text; and express an attack or praise. In relation to the texts themselves, they generate or summarize a story, they advance the narration, promote a new narrative perspective, or summarize a moral or ethical idea. They might insert references to other authors (especially from the classical world) or other cultures (mostly Spanish) which are manipulated and modified as they transfer in the new context. At the same time, transition of paremias reveals the author’s library, highlights contacts with as well as different uses of Neapolitan authors (in primis, Basile, Sgruttendio, Cortese, Croce, and Lombardi), and emphasizes Sarnelli’s personal choices. Paremias reveal a common practice in other works of his, where they equally resonate the hyperbolic Baroque spirit at the time and demonstrate the author’s virtuosity with the language.454

In the prefatory letter, paremias are charged with a profound ironic and derogatory meaning, which plays a huge role on the narrative. As they translate feelings in words, they may also not specify their meaning in clear letters, and thus their veiled reference to indignation makes Sarnelli’s point even stronger. For the list of tripartite proverbs used in the introduction, it is legitimate to talk about a translation from Florentine to Neapolitan. The direct correspondence with Alunno’s work is an example of how paremias transited from the standardized vernacular to dialect. While the vocabulary is not greatly affected by this

454 Some of these aspects are also listed by Picone as distinctive features of Basile’s paremia (Picone 2003, 302). Similarly, Pasquale Guaragnella talks about it for Basile’s Cunto: “L’originalità di Basile consiste nella valenza metanarrativa che egli attribuisce alla simbiosi di proverbi e racconti” (Guaragnella 2011, 329-30).
passage, morphology evidently makes the transformation happen. Despite not being able to reconstruct the phonological aspects of the language, it is nonetheless evident that typical endings and morphological processes render the paremia Neapolitan and separate it from the original Florentine. Within the fables and their closing, paremias generally appear to constitute more an example of cultural rendition. Sarnelli seems to combine paremias known in his mind in order to create other paremias that would be suited both for the place where they are used, Naples, and for the context where they appear, whether they summarize the moral stance of the fable or have an impact upon the narration in a particular section of the text. Proverbs translate a state of mind, a traditional thought; they translate the meaning and the message of the fable, and they show the presence of the author, who transfers them in the context he provides and makes them become, in language and content, a constituent part of the Neapolitan culture.
Qui Luciano ha un proverbiale al quale non corrisponde nessuno de’ nostri ch’io sappia,
e il proverbiale è di quelli che renduti secondo che suonano, o restano insolventi
o anche senza senso: ora parafrasato e dichiarato nessun proverbiale è più proverbiale,
e pel’ordinario diventa freddura. Sicch’io l’ho saltato di netto:
e pure in questa traduzione ho proposto di essere fedelissimo

Giacomo Leopardi, Poesie e prose, II, 1150
CHAPTER FOUR

JOHN FLORIO’S FIRSTE FRUTES AND SECOND FRUTES:
PAREMIAS AT THE SERVICE OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING
IN ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

4.1 Florio’s Activities in England

Resolute John Florio, or Giovannni Florio⁴⁵⁵ (1553-1625), is the perfect example of an in-between, ambidextrous identity.⁴⁵⁶ His life was divided between two languages (Italian and English), two religions (Catholicism and Protestantism), and three home places and cultures (Italy, Soglio in Switzerland, and London). On the one side, Italian culture and language profoundly shaped him as they were filtered through the eyes of his father, Michelangelo Florio, yet the younger Florio never experienced them personally. On the other side, British identity filled him, thanks to his studies and his constant relationship with the most refined Elizabethan society, with which he could engage thanks to his intellectual profession. Florio was perfectly integrated in the English community, in language and nature, and, at the same time, deeply embedded in the language, culture, and customs of Italy and Italians. He was a man “Italus ore, Anglus pectore,” as his coat of arms says. There, the two words “ore” and “pectore” reflect the opposition between what is pronounced and heard, namely Italian, and what is linked to the heart, the center of emotions, namely English. This dichotomy, deriving from Florio’s experience as both an immigrant and the son of an emigrant, gives his works an original appeal if compared to previous works on the same

⁴⁵⁵ Florio used his Italian name, Giovanni Florio, in Giardino di ricreatione and in Firste Fruites in the dedicatory letter to Robert Dudley and at the end of its grammatical section. For the epithet “John Florio the Resolute,” see Florio 2013, xi.
⁴⁵⁶ For a reference to his ambidexterity and to the use of both hands alike in the “Epistle Dedicatorie” to his A Worlde of Wordes, see Florio 2013, 3.
topics. Likewise, his bilingualism and his use of Italian as a privileged second-generation learner make him a distinctive figure in linguistic scholarship in England.

John’s father,⁴⁵⁷ a Tuscan native and anti-Trinitarian priest, embraced the spirit of the Counter-Reformation and because of it was forced to leave Florence (or probably Siena or Lucca) in 1550 and move to London. Here, he became part of an already-established group of Italian refugees and worked as a preacher and an Italian teacher, which enabled him to contribute in disseminating Italian literary culture and Counter-Reformation ideals in London and England. In 1554, when Mary I of Tudor became Queen of England and started to reintegrate a strict and observant Catholicism in the reign after the beheading of Michelangelo Florio’s pupil, Lady Jane Grey, he abandoned England with his one-year-old child, John. He found a place as a pastor in the reformed town of Soglio, where he remained with his son until his death in 1565.⁴⁵⁸ During his life, he distinguished himself for a grammar book of the Tuscan language, Regole de la lingua thoscana (1553), which was a balance between Bembo’s influence and his own inclination to promote “living languages” (Pellegrini, 100-03; Wyatt 2005, 212-13),⁴⁵⁹ and for a translation in English of 1556 Georgius Agricola’s De re metallica (1563). John Florio probably gained from his father an interest in studying, teaching, and translating languages, yet devoid of the religious sense that pervaded the works written by Michelangelo and other refugees at the time.


⁴⁵⁸ For more information on John Florio’s life, see Yates 1934, 19-26; Praz 1942b; Florio 1993, 11-31; Wyatt 2005, 1-3; and Enciclopedia Treccani.

⁴⁵⁹ Evidently, Florio shared an interest in paremiology with his father too. In the preface to his Regole, Michelangelo Florio uses a few paremias: Tre cose governano il tutto, cioè numero, peso et misura (coming from Alunno’s Fabbrica del mondo and also mentioned by Sarnelli; see Ch. 3.4, example 7a-7b), Saltar di palo in frasca, and Uscir fuori del seminato (Pellegrini, 105-06).
John returned to England in 1572, at a time when Elizabeth I had reigned for fourteen years after succeeding Mary I in 1558. He taught French and Italian at Magdalen College in Oxford until 1578, and then moved back to London where he continued teaching. At the same time, thanks to his father’s reputation, he could take advantage of close relationships and assiduous frequentation with some of the most influential personalities at the time, such as Robert Dudley (Earl of Leicester), Sir Walter Raleigh, Henry Wriothesley (Earl of Southampton), and Queen Anne. It was at the court of the Count of Southampton where he probably met Shakespeare, whose production was marked heavily with language, images, and information on Italy. A friend of Giordano Bruno, who includes him in De la causa, principio et uno (1584), Florio was an acclaimed and influential teacher, translator, lexicographer, and linguist, all of which position his activity within “un paradigma di artigianato culturale di alto profilo” (Vedovelli, 66). Thanks to Sir Robert Cecil’s intermediation, Florio’s appointment as a member of the royal court continued even when James I became king of England and Ireland in 1603 (1603-25). However, with the death of his wife, Queen Anne, in 1619, his active career reached an end as he spent the last years of his life in complete poverty.

460 For historical information on Mary I and Elizabeth I, see Wyatt 2005, 101-16 and 117-54 respectively.
461 Oxford and London were crucial centres for the diffusion of the Italian language, and the most vital and vibrant points of intersection of languages, ideas, and cultural trends. In London almost all schools, where modern languages were taught alongside Latin, opened in the neighborhood of St. Paul’s Churchyard.
463 For more information, see Yates 1934, 87-123; Franzero, 77-81; and Spampanato.
Florio was highly reputed in London thanks to his solid humanistic education, as well as the humanistic approach in his writings (Simonini 1952b, 74-75). Similarly to his father, he engaged in a variety of genres to spread “the Italian Renaissance civilization, universal knowledge, and multilingualism” in England (Florio 2013, xvi). In his many-sided personality and way of working, he produced bilingual manuals for English speakers (Firste Fruites in 1578 and Second Frutes in 1591),\(^\text{464}\) foreign language dictionaries (A Worlde of Wordes in 1598, later enlarged in Queen Anna’s New Worlde of Wordes in 1611), translations (Jacques Cartier’s A Shorte and briefe narration of the two Navigations and Discoveries to the Northwest partes called Newe Fraunce in 1580;\(^\text{465}\) King James’s Basilikon Doron in 1598;\(^\text{466}\) Michel Eyquem de Montaigne’s Essays in 1603;\(^\text{467}\) and Boccaccio’s Decameron in 1620 based on Salviati’s rassettatura), and a collection of paremias (Giardino di ricreatione in 1591). They all assured him a considerable place in the realm of language teaching in England while at the same time confirming his transition among cultures and languages (Pfister, 48).

Both his Fruits, First Fruites, dedicated to Robert Dudley, and Second Frutes, dedicated to Nicholas Saunders of Charlwood and Ewell, are Italian-language manuals for English speakers containing the Italian and English versions of daily conversations that take place between aristocrats and servants of high Elizabethan society. As bilingual books, the two Fruits benefitted learners of both the English and the Italian language.\(^\text{468}\) Even though

\(^{464}\) In this chapter, when referring to both Firste Fruites and Second Frutes, Fruits is used.

\(^{465}\) Paremias feature in Florio’s translation of Jacques Cartier’s accounts on his navigations in France, based on its Italian translation by Giovan Battista Ramusio. At the end of the two relations of Cartier’s account, Florio inserts a paremia in Italian: Assai ben balla a chi fortuna suona and Patisco il male sperando il bene.

\(^{466}\) For a thorough analysis of this work and its text, see Giuliano Pellegrini, John Florio e il Basilicon Doron di James VI. Milano: Feltrinelli, 1961.

\(^{467}\) For an analysis of this translation, see Yates 1934, 213-45; Policardi, 136-70; and Matthiessen, 103-68.

\(^{468}\) Florio says so in the dedicatory letter to Sir Robert Dudley (“Sr. Roberto Dudleo”) in his Firste Fruites: “Non ho voluto mancare con il mio debil ingegno di compiacer a certi gentil huomini miei amici ch’ogni giorno mi stimulavano di darli in luce alcuni motti, o vogliam dire proverbii con certo
the initial language of the translation process is Italian, English is the metalanguage that guarantees a correct interpretation of the Italian and offers structures to Italian speakers; thus a constant relationship develops between the two (Palermo and Poggiogalli, 10). There is, however, a clear demarcation: if Italian is the refined language of culture and literature to use in courtly conversations, English is considered a more practical and less literary language. Consequently, English is apt for gentlemen and merchants alike, whereas Italian is addressed to gentlemen only (as for the introductory letters at the beginning of Fiste Fruites). Since they were based heavily on paremias, both Fruits promoted the idea that proverbs and proverbial phrases contributed not only to language teaching and learning but also to cultural growth and to courtly conversations by way of offering a ready list of pleasant phrases, formulations, and structures to use in diverse contexts.469

While working on his Second Frutes, and probably even since his Fiste Fruites, Florio also started to gather Italian paremias in his Giardino di ricreatione, a collection of 6,150 (or 6,155, according to Gamberini) Italian paremias dedicated to Sir Edward Dyer.470 Organized alphabetically, even though in casual order within individual letters, the collection is placed at the end of the 1591 edition of Second Frutes. Florio’s collection is anticipated only by two works: the small list of Italian paremias translated into English inside James Sanford’s The Garden of Pleasure (1573),471 which is, however, not an autonomous

469 In his The Italian Reviv’d, Torriano draws his conversations from Florio’s dialogues in Fiste Fruites and Second Frutes; the discussed themes generally derive from Florio’s texts, yet adapted to a different time and a different public.
470 The collection gathers paremias written in Italian. However, under letter A, the English translation appears beside an Italian paremia: Affibbia quella, Crack me that nut. Both the Italian and the English version metaphorically express the act of fornicating with the nut, which represents the feminine genitals (for more information, see, Gordon Williams, A Dictionary of Sexual Language and Imagery in Shakespearian and Stuart literature. London: Athlone Press, 1994, s.v. nut).
471 James Sanford, The Garden of Pleasure: Contayninge most pleasante Tales, worthy deeds and witty sayings of noble Princes learned Philosophers, Moralized. No less delectable than profitable. [By Lodovico Guicciardini.] Done out of Italian into English by James Sanforde, Gent., etc. B.L. London: Bynneman, 1573. This is the English translation of Guicciardini’s Hore di ricreatione and
collection yet, and *Proverbi Vulgari* by Charles Merbury (1581),\(^{472}\) which is an unsystematic collection of 650 adages and paremias, sometimes glossed or translated in English (Merbury 1946, 85).\(^{473}\) Florio selects paremias consistently from both Sanford and Merbury\(^{474}\), as well as from Ariosto’s, Boccaccio’s, Dante’s, Machiavelli’s, and Tasso’s masterpieces, Alciato’s *Emblemata*, Bruno’s *La cena delle ceneri*, Cornazzano’s *Proverbi in faciete*, Doni’s *I Marmi* and *La Zucca*, Guazzo’s *La civile conversazione*, Vignali’s letter, and all the available Italian

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\(^{472}\) The collection is included in the following work: Charles Merbury, *A Briefe Discourse of Royall Monarchie*, as of the best Common weale: Wherein the subject may beholde the Sacred Maiestie of the Princes most Royal Estate. Written by Charles Merbury Gentleman in dutifull Reverence of her Maiesties most Princely Highness. Whereunto is added by the same Gen. a Collection of Italian Proverbs, *In benefite of such as are studious of that language*. London: Thomas Vautroullier, 1581.

\(^{473}\) For precise references between Merbury’s paremias and Florio’s paremias in *Firste Fruites* and *Giardino di ricreazione*, see Merbury 1946, 115-49. Speroni demonstrates how a huge quantity of Merbury’s paremias derives from literary sources, such as Cardinal Bibbiena’s *Calandria*, Doni’s *La Zucca* and *I Marmi*, Vignali’s letter, Guazzo *La civil conversatione*, other than the authors that Merbury mentions, among whom are Homer, Plato, Cicero, Seneca, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Castiglione, Ariosto, and Francesco Guicciardini (Merbury 1946, 68-74). For further references to Doni’s and Florio’s paremiac relationship, see D. G. Rees, “John Florio and Anton Francesco Doni.” *Comparative Literature*. 15.1 (1963): 33-38. For Second *Fruites*, sixty-five of Florio’s paremias appear to show a resemblance with Merbury’s paremias: thirty-two of them are identical whereas thirty-three are slightly different. Among them, the main difference is given by Florio’s insertion of paremias in context, even though sometimes Merbury’s paremias present an introductory formula, which is absent in Florio’s *Fruits*. Other than minor morphological or syntactical differences or some additions given by the combination of different paremias or continuation of a paremia, two paremias might differ in their vocabulary, as for instance *Chi non s’arrischia, non guadagna* (*Proverbi Vulgari*) and *Chi non s’arrischia non s’arichisce* (SF). Sometimes, Merbury’s paremia is associated with a specific person or object, which is absent in Second *Fruites*, such as *Le puttane sono come il carbone che, ò cocce, ò tinge* (*Proverbi Vulgari*) and *Come il carbone, il quale ò tinge ò bruscia* (SF), or else between the two works there is a difference in what is associated with the paremia, such as *L’amore infanga il giovane, et il vecchio annega* (*Proverbi Vulgari*) and *Egli è un vero diavolo incarnato, che infanga i giovani, et annega i vecchi* (SF). At times, the structure of the paremias is the same, but some aspects differ: for instance, *Cinqu’ore dorme il viandante, sette il studiante, et undeci ogni forfante* (*Proverbi Vulgari*) and *Sei hore dorme lo studente, sette il viandante, otto il lavorante, et nove ogni furfante* (SF). On Florio’s borrowings from Guazzo’s work in both *Fruits*, see John Leon Lievsay, “*Florio and His Proverbs,*” *Stefano Guazzo and the English Renaissance*, 1573-1675. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961: 127-32.
literature that he could access (Gamberini, 112-13). As such, Florio’s _Giardino_ is the major collection of Italian paremias published outside Italy in the sixteenth century, which demonstrates Florio’s knowledge of paremiographic works in Italy. Moreover, it inaugurates a fruitful season of paremiac collections _in terra angliae_. Differently from Salviati’s and Serdonati’s collections, Florio’s does not feature any explanation for its paremias, evidently because many of them are present in both _Firste Fruites_ and _Second Frutes_, where they are generally introduced and explained and their message contextualized within a conversation. In the collection, some paremias are repeated identically or with minor changes, specifically 297, according to Gamberini (Gamberini, 111), but others are invented _ex novo_.

In 1598, fourteen years before the publication of the first edition of the _Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca_, Florio published his renowned dictionary, _A Worlde of Wordes_, dedicated to the Earl of Southampton, the Earl of Rutland, and the Countess of Bedford. Florio published the first bilingual English-Italian dictionary, listing more than forty thousand entries and providing its users with a diachronic account of Italian linguistic diversity, inspired by a pedagogical intent that drew him to explain the meaning of an entry at length. Evidently positing his linguistic idea against the monolithic tendencies of the _cruscanti_ (Florio 2013; Wyatt 2005, 223-54), he referred to a selection of eclectic books, (including treatises on cooking, riding, animals and plants), encyclopedic texts (such as Alessandro Citolini’s _Tipocosmia_ and Tommaso Garzoni’s _La piazza universale_), and a great variety of canonical works in Italian literature, both from the past and from his time, so as to

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475 Some of them are mentioned in _Firste Fruites_, Chapter 25, where “certi belli detti di Ariosto e di altri poeti” are listed (FF, 42v-45v).
476 Florio’s most important successor is Torriano, whose two works on paremias, _Select Italian proverbs_ in 1642 (with 650 translated paremias) and _Piazza universale di proverbi italiani_ in 1666 (with ten thousand translated paremias in alphabetical order, and for the first time divided between proverbs and proverbial phrases), expand Florio’s _Giardino di ricreatione_. (For further information on Torriano’s two collections, see Speroni 1957, and Gamberini, 151-54).
477 For instance, _Solo perché casta visse, Penelope non fu minor d’Ulisse_.
478 For more information, see Policardi, 109-35; for a general overview, see O’Connor 1990: 19-43.
satisfy a thirst for universality (Florio 2013, ix). This combination distinguished his dictionary from other previous ones in quality and number of consulted texts, an aspect that became even greater in its 1611 enlarged edition, dedicated to Queen Anne of Denmark (which comprised more than two hundred sources).

In his two editions, Florio imitates popular culture and people’s vivacity of speech, while also indulging himself in creating neologisms and in searching Italian regional idioms and words in order to reevaluate popular wisdom and cultural variety among the Italian community in London (Florio 2013, 5). Coherent with this programmatic intent, he includes paremias, mostly proverbial phrases, in the entries and uses them as pedagogical tools so that he can explain them and make them available for the community of speakers (i.e., *dar la baia, dar la berta, montar la mosca, stare a pollo pesto*). He even employs two paremias in the letter to the reader of his two editions, *A suo danno* and *Et a torto si lamenta del mare, chi due volte ci vuol tornare* (Florio 2013, 9), and another one in the dedicatory epistle of *A Worlde of Wordes, Le parole sono femine, e i fatti sono maschij* (Frantz 1997, 8-9; Florio 2013, 6).

Evidently, the distinctive aspect of Florio’s work is the constant relationship between translation and paremias. Paremias make their appearance as dignified tools for language teaching and facilitation of language interpretation, promotion of popular wisdom, and testimonies of the intrinsic wealth of the Italian language. They also prove the culture of exchange between Italy and Elizabethan England. Despite their diverse uses, they are instruments that, while transiting from one culture to another and from one language to

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479 See also Rossi 1969, 139-42.
480 For more information on Florio’s library in vernacular for his dictionary, see Wyatt 2003.
481 For a thorough analysis of the paremia in both *A Worlde of Wordes* and *Second Frutes*, see Wyatt 2005, 245-46, and Florio 2013, xix-xxxiii.
another, determine a fertile space of cultural and linguistic transaction that could facilitate knowledge of the target culture and language among foreigners.\textsuperscript{482}

4.2 Teaching the Italian Language with Paremias in Language Manuals

In the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the sixteenth century, teaching languages in England was part of the humanist idea that contact with other languages would enrich a society that could not yet count on a deep linguistic consciousness. After a centennial of undisputed supremacy of French, both at a popular level and as an elitist language of literature and conversation, starting with the Tudor dynasty in 1485, vernacular Italian acquired more importance (Simonini 1952a, 17) and finally managed to dominate the scenario undisputed as it was employed in elevated forms of literary speculation.\textsuperscript{483} By the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century, though, the slow process that allowed English to gain priority in all sectors of life and politics at the expense of other languages started to bear fruit, and the Elizabethan literary production in English received its deserved recognition (Wyatt 2005, 158). After the marriage of Charles I with Henrietta Maria of France (1625), which opened up a renewed period of fertile exchange with France, the Italian language lost ground and simply became the modern representative of a classical world to appreciate, but far from the European political scene (Gamberini, 11-43).\textsuperscript{484}

\textsuperscript{482} For a more comprehensive investigation of Florio’s biography and the historical and social context of his life, with some fictional moments, see Franzer. For a complete overview of studies and monographies on Florio and his works, see the extensive bibliography in Wyatt 2005, 341-65, and Florio 2013, i-lxiii. For further information, see also Yates 1934; Yates 1983; and Florio 1936, i-lxiii.

\textsuperscript{483} Yates (Yates 1937), Rossi (Rossi 1969, 97-99), and Wyatt (Wyatt 2005, 15-19; 138) highlight how the exchange between Italian and English cultures extended into many aspects of intellectual life, shaping England’s path toward a national consciousness, as it was the language of a rich culture, yet without political balance.

\textsuperscript{484} For more information, see Praz 1942a; Parks 1962; and Parks 1969. For a larger perspective on the position and role that Italy and Italian had at the English court, see Francesco Viglione, \textit{L’Italia nel pensiero degli scrittori inglesi}. Milano: Fratelli Bocca, 1946. For the opinion of Italians on England
Rome started to be considered an enemy of the English Puritan orientation, as well as a place of corrupted politics and inadequate poetry (Iamartino, 31; Pizzoli, 13-22, and 26-41).

After Henry VIII’s separation from the Papal authority with the promotion of the English reformation (1509-47), during the reign of Edward VI (1547-53), the Italian language and its promoters in England became inextricably connected to Protestantism (Simonini 1952a, 24; Rossi 1969, 62). As has already been mentioned above, many refugees, Michelangelo Florio included, landed in England, encouraged by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer and Secretary of State Sir William Cecil, and succeeded in establishing a strong network of Italian teachers and tutors. They got involved in translations of masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance that could promote and enrich the relationship between Italy and England, and inspired with a new life the emerging English literature. At the same time, starting in 1548, refugees began to release translations of anti-Papal and anti-Roman works (mostly by Bernardino Ochino, Francesco Negri da Bassano, and Pietro Martire Vermigli), which could contribute to the English ideological climate at the time (Rossi 1969, 69-94).

During the reign of Mary I, which caused the dispersion of many Italian Protestants and the end of a fertile experience with Italian refugees, translations shifted their objective: while continuing to promote Italian literature, they made it pedagogically available to unlearned people (Rossi 1969, 93-94).

During the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), Italian gained a respectable place among the other languages, becoming part of aristocratic education, and could count on the existence of many noteworthy members of society, included the Queen herself, who were

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485 On Italian humanists and artists in England, see Wyatt 2005, 28-53. On the contribution of Italian Protestant emigrants in the diffusion of Italian literature abroad, see Tedeschi. On a discussion of the Italian influence on a variety of fields in England, see Einstein.

486 At the time, the number of religious refugees coming from central and southern Europe corresponded to one-twentieth of the entire population (Simonini 1952a, 7), and in the 1570s Italians were almost a couple hundred (Wyatt 2005, 137-38).
able to both converse and write fluently in it. Under the guidance of Giovanni Battista Castiglione, known today as “Queen Elizabeth’s Master for Italian,” Elizabeth opened her reign to the profound influence of the Italian culture in all fields, from theater to fashion to language, exploiting the new and generalized deep fascination for what was foreign and not germane to English culture and society.\textsuperscript{487}

Just a few decades before this new interest in Italian culture and language, English authors and scholars appreciated the cultural richness of Italy, as well as the profundity of its literary achievements, but at the same time they were aware of their own society’s concern about the ethical and moral perspectives of Italians, especially after Roger Ascham’s spiteful remark in his \textit{The Scholemaster}. Ascham opened his manual with the paremia \textit{Un Inglese italianato è un diavolo incarnato} to castigate Englishmen for their corruption after they travel to Italy and read Italian works instead of the Bible. He aimed to protect his students from the danger inherent in a close frequentation of Italians and Italian culture (Parks 1961; Stammerjohann 1990, 15; De Seta, 287-95; Pirillo).\textsuperscript{488} Florio, instead, in the letter to the readers of his \textit{Second Frutes},\textsuperscript{489} uses this same paremia to appraise his superiority as a speaker of the two languages, Italian and English, something that allows him to shift continuously and easily from one to the other and to express the potentialities of both of them. In doing so, he expresses the positive attitude of Elizabethan society toward Italianness. Knowing more languages, mastering them in an appropriate and effective way, and being a


\textsuperscript{488} On the oxymoron between condemnation of Italian, considered a dead language, and use of the paremia, see Wyatt 2005, 162.

\textsuperscript{489} “As for me, for it is I, and I am an Englishman in Italiane, I know they [critics] have a knife at command to cut my throat, \textit{Un inglese italianato è un diavolo incarnato}. Now, who the Divell taught thee so much Italian? Speake me as much more, and take all. Meane you the men, or their mindes? Be the men good, and their minds bad? Speake for the men (for you are one) or I will doubt of your minde? Mislike you the language? Why the best speake it best, and hir Maiestie none better, I, but too manie tongues are naught; indeede one is too manie for him that cannot use it well” (SF, A2r-A2v).
source of inspiration and knowledge is, according to Florio, worthier of praise than a demerit (Florio 1936, xxix). In his opinion, the paremia that *An Italianate Englishman is a devil incarnate* conveys the message that being in between two languages and two cultures makes someone a stronger, more intelligent, and more astute person equipped with different tools and able to succeed in achieving his objectives. So are Florio’s two language manuals, as they offer both the Italian and the English languages, and effectively achieve the purpose of teaching the Italian language well and quickly for its best and most appropriate use in society. Thus, they convey moral and ethical messages, interspersed with some witty and light remarks, “without a trace of the foreign devilry in morals dreaded by [the] elders,” namely Ascham’s generation (Yates 1934, 36).

For the Elizabethan generation of Italian expatriates, teaching was the easiest activity to achieve, as it was greatly supported by the spread in education that Elizabeth I promoted, and by the interest of rich merchants and trade guilds in investing in schools. The majority of refugees either found a place in private schools or were hired as private teachers and tutors by noble families (Yates 1937, 104; Wyatt 2005, 138). Far from any act of proselytism, progressively, teaching became a cultural project and aimed to guarantee the members of the court the ability to read Italian works, converse in Italian, and compose better in their own language, while at the same time offering them a way to acquire “polite education” and social grace (Rossi 1969, 96-98; Engel, 518; Pizzoli, 58).

As for the previous generation of religious exiles, in Elizabethan London, teaching was subjected to the laws of the market and affected by the fierce competition in the field, which was not particularly generous to Italians. Italian teachers were underpaid, and needed

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490 In *Firste Fruites*, in the letter *A tutti i gentilhuomini inglesi*, Florio confirms that the use of proverbs and proverbial phrases enables dedicated students to learn Italian effectively and appropriately along with certain rules of the language. Florio makes the Italian speaker admit that it is possible to learn Italian in three months (FF, 51v), and that the best way to learn it fast is to read it, which in turn permits to speak and read the language (FF, 50r).
to emerge from the mass of educators to ensure themselves a meritorious place in English society as well as a better stipend (Pizzoli, 25-26). There were two available alternatives: translations (Wyatt 2005, 157-202)\(^{491}\) and publication of grammar books and language manuals, both of which became a profitable market and involved many exponents, including Florio himself. Translations were fundamental tools to enrich the entire country and disseminate a culture that could not be acquired in the original language. Many of the masterpieces in Italian literature arrived in England through a pervasive campaign of translation, a process promoted by editors John Wolfe, Thomas Woodcock, and Edward Blount (Matthiessen, 3; Florio 2013, xiii).\(^{492}\) Courtesy books, \textit{in primis} Baldassare Castiglione’s \textit{Il cortegiano}, Giovanni della Casa’s \textit{Il galateo}, and Stefano Guazzo’s \textit{La civile conversatione}, were translated respectively in 1561 by Thomas Hoby, in 1576 by Richard Peterson, and in 1581 by George Pettie, and experienced incredible success in England, ultimately leading the way to conversational and phrase books such as Florio’s \textit{Fruits}.\(^{494}\)

Simultaneously, grammar books and dialogue manuals experienced a huge resurgence. Along with dictionaries,\(^ {495}\) they meant to facilitate the process of language learning for different categories of learners: those who needed to engage in business

\(^{491}\) See also Policardi and Boucher.
\(^{493}\) This is the only book that Ascham praises in his \textit{The Scholemaster}, where he dismisses Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Machiavelli. He says that solely Castiglione’s translated book, if read appropriately, would prevent English people from being corrupted by Italy. For further information, see Wyatt 2005, 159-63.
\(^{494}\) For more information on the English translations of these courtesy books, see Wyatt 2005, 180-83.
\(^{495}\) The first examples of dictionaries are comparative instruments among different languages, aimed at a heterogenous group of readers interested in the similarities and differences between them (Gamberini, 47-52). The first bilingual dictionary is Thomas’s dictionary in his \textit{Principal Rules}, which contained a list of words in Italian and English to help in better understanding Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Dante. It was followed by Florio’s \textit{Worlde of Wordes} and Torriano’s \textit{Vocabolario Italiano & Inglese / A Dictionary Italian & English}, an expansion of Florio’s manuscript notes for the third edition of his own dictionary (Yates 1934, 322-33). (For a list of bilingual dictionaries, see O’Connor 1990, 173-82, and O’Connor 1997).
relationships with Italy, primarily merchants; those who wished to visit Italy as part of their education and professional growth; and those who were fascinated by Italy and decided to base their education on its literary masterpieces. Therefore, teaching foreign languages answered to a dual objective: on the one side, the utility of knowing languages as a way to expand the economic and financial enterprises of the nation, and on the other, the pleasure of expanding one’s knowledge through language and literature and acquire cultural competence in a society different than one’s own. The combination of leisurely structured objectives, educational matters, and practical and utilitarian ends greatly affected the way languages were taught and the way textbooks were structured in England.

The demand for auxiliary instruments to learn languages was so consistent that during the Stuart and Tudor period (mostly throughout the sixteenth century up to the first half of the seventeenth century), twelve bilingual grammar books and four dictionaries were published (Simonini 1952a, 14; 110-14). Among the bilingual grammar books, the first one was released by William Thomas and was titled *Principal Rules of the Italian Grammer* (1550), followed by Ascham’s *The Scholemaster* (1570, posthumous), and by Henry Grantham’s *An Italian grammar* (1575). John Sanford’s *A grammar or Introduction to the Italian*

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496 For a description of multilingual grammar books, see Gamberini, 52-60. For a detailed analysis of all the grammar books that will be mentioned in this paragraph, see Mormile and Matteucci, 13-34 (for sixteenth-century grammar books, including Thomas, Rhys, Grantham, Holyband, and Florio) and 37-62 (for seventeenth-century grammar books, including Sanford, Benvenuto Italiano, and Torriano).


498 Roger Ascham, *The scholemaster or plaine and perfite way of teaching children, to understand, write, and speake, the Latin tong: but specially purposed for the priuate bringing vp of youth in gentlemen and noble mens houses, and commodious also for all such, as haue forgot the Latin tonge*. London: Printed by John Daye, 1570. Ascham’s work be considered the first substantial contribution to the field of teaching foreign languages and will be a model for subsequent grammar books aiming to educate an elite of intellectuals inspired by moral principles (Mormile and Matteucci, 23).

Tongue (1605) and Giovanni Torriano’s *New and Easie Directions for Attaining the Tuscan Tongue* (1639) belong to the seventeenth century, and Torriano’s work, especially, was the last example of promotion of the Italian language before its progressive disappearance.

Besides these grammar books, there were also manuals that offered real instances of the language in context, especially through dialogues and a consistent presence of paremias. They drew their structure from medieval debates, Latin colloquia, and conversational books in French called *manières de langage* (Simonini 1952c, 145; Pizzoli, 65-66). Other than Florio’s *Fruits*, Claude de Sainliens, called Claudius Holyband, published fundamental examples of dialogue manuals: *The Pretie and wittie Historie of Arnalt & Lucenda* (1575), the first of the series to present pedagogical dialogues; *Campo di fior* (1583), a multilingual compilation with dialogues in Latin, Italian, French, and English; and his very popular *The Italian Schoole-maister* (1595), which was the Italian equivalent of two precedent works devoted to the grammar of the French (*The French Schoole-maister* in 1565) and the English language (*The French Littelton* in 1566). *The French Littelton* is an important model for the structure and organization of Florio’s manuals, yet with more flexibility and affinity to real

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501 Giovanni Torriano, *New and easie directions for attaining the Tuscan Italian tongue, Comprehended in necessary rules of pronunciation, rules of accenting, by way of alphabet. With a nomenclator, or little dictionarie. Set forth for the especiall use of such as are desirous to bee proficients in the said language. By Gio. Torriano, an Italian, and professour of the same within the city of London*. London: Printed by R. Oulton for Ralph Mab, 1639.
502 For further information, see Borello.
speech in Florio’s text; both manuals also share a list of decontextualized paremias and a considerable number of numeric paremias. From the 1600s, Benvenuto Italiano’s *Il passagiere/The Passenger* (1612) selects much information from Florio’s works, especially in his use of paremias, and Torriano’s *Italian Tutor* (1640), which, again, can be considered the last voice in the realm of manuals on the Italian language.

Exactly in the same years when grammar books and language manuals for foreigners were published outside the peninsula, grammar books were released in Italy. Contrary to their counterparts abroad, the Italian works were deeply rooted on a theoretical level as they were disputing the typology of vernacular to use in literature and aimed to promote a normative approach to the written language as well as to offer definite rules on their syntax and morphology. Their objective was not to teach the vernacular but rather to improve its knowledge and use it as a literary instrument, while also engaging in speculation over the “questione della lingua” (Bonomi and Castegnaro, 15). Foreign grammar books, instead,

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506 For more information on Holyband’s innovative method of teaching, which inspires Florio’s, see Simonini 1952c.
507 Benvenuto Italiano, *Il Passaggiere di Benuenuto Italiano, diviso in due parti, che contengano sette esquisiti dialoghi, in italiana, & tradotti nell’inglese fauella, etc. / The Passenger of Benuenuto Italian, divided into two parts, containing seaven exquisite dialogues in Italian and English*. London: Thomas Snotham for Richardo Redmer, 1612.
508 Giovanni Torriano, *The Italian tutor or a new and most compleat Italian grammer: Containing above others a most compendious way to learne the verbs, and rules of syntax. To which is annexed a display of the monasillable particles of the language, by way of alphabet. As also, certaine dialogues made up of Italianismes or neicities of the language, with the English to them. Studied and compiled with much time and labour, and now published for the speede and ease of such as desire to attaine the perfection of the said language; with an alphabet of primative and originall Italian words, underiveable from the Latin. By Gio. Torriano, an Italian and professor of the same within the city of London*. London: Printed by Tho. Payne, and sold by H. Robinson, 1640.
509 For a description of each of the mentioned grammar books, see Simonini 1951a; Simonini 1952a, 42-80; and Gamberini, 45-98. For a descriptive overview of the same grammar books, along with a detailed analysis of their linguistic choices, see Pizzoli. On Torriano’s works, see Policardi, 109-35, and Gamberini, 150-51.
510 This is also reflected in the language that foreign grammar books of Italian chose. Their language was a “lingua commune” that could be understood all over Italy, and they often opted for more modern choices in diacritical signs and punctuation than the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* (Florio 2013, xxi).
511 In addition to Pietro Bembo’s *Prose della volgar lingua* (1525) and Giovanni Francesco Fortunio’s *Regole grammaticali della volgar lingua* (1516), many grammar books proposed a tight link between language and literature and looked at the examples of Florentine literary authors to determine the
were far from any theoretical perspective: they were ancillary instruments in the language learning process and described the language without any normative intent. As such, they were exploring the practical use of the language, looking at its immediate use, and constantly considering the context and the public that would benefit from its learning (Pizzoli, 340; Palermo and Poggiogalli, 37-38).

Even though the examples of Fortunio’s and Bembo’s grammar books were strong beyond their national boundaries, foreign grammarians accepted their ideal of language as a given fact and not as something to promote vis-à-vis Latin. Moreover, grammarians outside Italy did not simply adopt the literary language, but mixed it with spoken Tuscan, demonstrating a more open attitude than their Italian colleagues and an acknowledgment of the importance of communication over respect for tradition and perfection (Gamberini, 42-43; Fornara, 56). Grammar books for foreigners aimed to reproduce a real context of use and to insert the language in plausible events of daily life: for them, the learning process happened in real life, and the language was alive and spoken. This meant that the language grammar books and language manuals proposed could not comply with purist trends but needed to portray, describe, and employ the “uso vivo” of the language (Rossi 1969, 97). It

model of language to imitate: among them, Alberto Acriisio’s Vocabolario, grammatica et orthographia de la lingua volgare (1543), Giacomo Gabriele’s Regole grammaticali (1545), Rinaldo Corso’s Fondamenti del parlar thoscano (1549, which, however, presents a more pedagogical structure that facilitates its consultation), and Lodovico Dolce’s Osservazioni nella volgar lingua (1550). Besides these examples, other grammar books (though without success) demanded the choice of an Italian or national perspective, such as Gian Giorgio Trissino’s Dubbi grammaticali and Grammatichetta (1529), or promoted the use of the sixteenth-century Florentine (for more references, see R. Glynn Faithfull, “The Concept of ‘Living Language’ in Cinquecento Vernacular Philology,” The Modern Language Review. 48.3 (1953): 278-92). Among the promoters of contemporary spoken Florentine, Pierfrancesco Giambullari’s Regole della lingua Fiorentina (1552) was characterized by the pedagogical intent to reach the non-Florentine speakers in the Italian peninsula, and at the same time proposed to achieve the goal of teaching its readers how to speak and write fittingly. On the same line, Benedetto Varchi’s Hercolano (1570, posthumous) entrenched itself in a comparison between Florentine and classical languages to demonstrate the superiority as well as appropriateness of the language of Florence spoken at the time. (For an excursus of grammar books of the Italian language, see Poggi Salani; Paccagnella 1991; Bonomi and Castegnaro; and Fornara).

512 For a European perspective, see Marazzini 2000.
513 For information on the English contributions to the Italian “questione della lingua,” see Gamberini, 11-43.
was rather exclusively devoted to satisfy communicative functions in accordance with the request of the public and its actual use in society (Vedovelli, 48-49).

For instance, if phonetics were constantly omitted in the Italian grammar books, in Florio’s *Fruits*, as will be later explored, the indication of the proper way to pronounce the phonemes of the language acquires crucial importance. Consequently, grammar morphology is not presented explicitly, and syntax faces a decrease in presence and importance (Gamberini, 57).

Moreover, a brief mention of the language used in the *Fruits* gives an idea of the “true Italian” to which Florio refers. For the third person singular pronoun, Florio never uses “egli” as Bembo prescribed in his *Prose della volgar lingua*—except in a few examples of interjections, which are, however, sequences of terms that undergo slower evolution). Florio resorts to “lui,” which Bembo used only in oblique cases and as a direct object pronoun. Two instances of this use are in Chapter 6 of the first manual in the introductory formula to a paremia: “Come dice lui, vi prego? Lui dice che è sempre bene per uno haver due corde per il suo archo, acciò che se una si rompe, lui ne habbia un’altra presto” (FF, 6v). Additionally, Florio accepts spoken structures, such as, for instance, the use of the double indirect pronoun in a sentence like, “a me mi par caro” (FF, A3r). Another anti-Bembo position is in the formation of the future. If Bembo had prescribed the suffix “-erò” for the first person singular for verbs of the first conjugation, Florio opts for the more generalizing rule used in the other two conjugations: therefore, his future ends with the suffix “-arò” (“domandarò” in FF, 6r). From a sociolinguistic perspective, *Firste Fruites* contain many diatopical elements. For instance, in Chapter 4, different regional elements coexist within the same conversation. There are instances of northern Italian languages, such as the

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514 In the final grammar section of *Firste Fruites*, Florio shows that “egli” (“e” and “ei”), “ella,” “eglino,” and “elleno,” are the subject pronouns (he called them “primatives”), whereas “lui,” “lei,” and “loro” are the object or indirect pronouns, yet they are used in all instances (FF, 127v-128v).
intervocalic sonorization\(^{515}\) in “maladi” for “malati” and “miglioradi” for “migliorati” (FF, 3v), “voda” for “vota” (FF, 30r), “fuogo” for “fuoco” (FF, 31r), and the word “stracco” (< “*strak,” “tired” in Longobard). Except two Tuscan instances with the indirect pronoun as a subject pronoun in “Le mi piacciono benissimo” (FF, 2v) and “La mi piace bene” (FF, 70v), there is also evidence of Paduan koinè in the fricativization\(^{516}\) in “camisia” (FF, 4r) and the substitution of the palate-alveolar consonant [c] with the alveolar affricate consonant [z] in “salsize” for “salsice” (FF, 4r) and “sorzi” for “sorci” (FF, 31r; 33r). In Chapter 12, “frecce” is spelled “frezze” and the Tuscan “archibugio” is spelled “archebuso” (FF, 10r). Conversely, in the more Tuscanized *Second Frutes*, Florio resorts to the subject pronoun “egli” (and all the other third person singular and plural subject pronouns) more often. The language, given the more Petrarchan emphasis of the book, also appears free from regional aspects or, at least, more generally Tuscan (for instance, “duo paia”).

Because of this attention to the use of the language, paremias were directly linked to education as irreplaceable elements of language teaching. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, their close connection to the context for an appropriate interpretation and expression of their message gives paremias a privileged place, considering that the aim of the foreign grammar manual is to show the use of the language in context. As they offer a real taste of the language, paremias convey popular knowledge and culture, effective guidance to life, and examples of moral and ethical values, and so they can achieve a multifold goal in pedagogy. In Italy, only one example of pedagogical use of paremias in language teaching exists: Pescetti’s *Proverbi italiani e latini per uso de i fanciulli, che imparan la grammatica* (1602), which presented a list of paremias in Italian followed by their equivalent in Latin. Beginning with the dedicatory letter to Pier Francesco Zino, Pescetti states that proverbs and proverbial phrases are useful both for the knowledge of the language and the authors, and for the

\(^{515}\) In these instances, a passage from [t] to [d] and from [c] to [g] that are between vowels.

\(^{516}\) Spirantization is the passage of a sound to a fricative one, such as [s] and [z] or [f] and [v].
“istituzione della vita” (Pescetti, A2r), as they could instruct young adolescents during their education (Pignatti 2010, 262). Since Latin was still the language of educated people and the lingua franca in Europe, this compilation not only offered students material for comparison and for better memorization, but also fostered the spreading of paremias in a larger context. The diffusion would have been double-edged: Italian pupils would have been skilled in Latin paremias, whereas in other countries, the Latin paremias would have been recognized and would have granted an “approximation” to the content of the paremias in vernacular (Fiorelli 1993, 189). Nonetheless, the latter was the main objective to achieve, as the collection gave preeminence to paremias in vernacular over those in Latin.\footnote{On the use of paremias for pedagogical purposes, see Pignatti 2010, 258-63. See also Carpane in Pignatti 2014, 341-43, and his analysis of paremias as pedagogical tools in relation to Pescetti 1592 Orazione dietro il modo di istituire la gioventù.}

Conversely, many more are the examples of employment of paremias in language manuals of Italian for English speakers published abroad.\footnote{On the teaching of Italian language in England and on the use of paremias for pedagogical objectives, see Rossi 1969, 95-212; Gamberini, 45-129; Mormile and Matteucci, 11-34; Pizzoli; Wyatt 2005, 155-202; and Palermo and Poggiogalli.} Among the others slightly before or simultaneously with Florio’s Fruits, Roger Ascham’s The Scholemaster (1570, posthumous), Henry Grantham’s An Italian Grammar (1575), and Claudius Holyband’s The Italian Schoole-maister (1583), are the best representatives. Paremias were part of aristocratic culture in Renaissance London, as they were considered, along with epigrams, to be crucial tools for one’s eloquence (Manley, 249) as well as for one’s capability to speak ornately and meaningfully (Speroni 1957, 150). Since foreign language manuals aimed to help students to engage with the language as soon and as naturally as possible, paremias also helped learners to speak Italian readily and colloquially, and thus gave preeminence to spontaneity over awareness of the grammatical rules of the language, and in general to culture and communication over grammar (Engel, 515).
Florio furthers his appreciation of paremias by acknowledging them a crucial place in the promotion of Italian language and culture in England, beyond the mere instruction of a strictly linguistic approach. In an original way, he inserts paremias inside a context: if his predecessors had provided paremias in their works, yet without allowing them to express their different levels of meaning, mostly because they gathered them in lists, Florio gives great importance to the contextual use of paremias in meaningful dialogues (Policardi, 93). In his *Fruits*, paremias express the many potentialities of their meaning and assume a character of specificity for many possible contexts.

**Florio’s Firste Fruites and Second Frutes**

Dedicated to lovers of the Italian language, future entrepreneurs or Grand Tour enthusiasts, and members of courtly circles and mundane meetings (Yates 1937; Simonini 1952a), Florio’s *Firste Fruites* and *Second Frutes* present a similar organization: both of them are based on dialogues between different interlocutors on a variety of topics in London. *Firste Fruites* is composed of forty-four graded dialogues, much shorter than the twelve that compose *Second Frutes*. From a typographical perspective, *Firste Fruites* are organized into two columns per page, the left one of which contains the Italian and the right one the English translation. In *Second Frutes*, instead, the two columns, one in Italian and the other one in English, appear on two different sheets. In *Firste Fruites*, the two speakers, a foreigner newly arrived in England and an Englishman willing to dispense recommendations and advice to him, are not indicated at the beginning of each line, so that the lines follow one another without being clear who is talking. Sometimes, their names emerge in the conversation.

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519 For *Firste Fruites*, the numeration in sheets as it is in the 1578 edition will be followed and will specify the *recto* (r) and *verso* (v) of the sheets, whereas for *Second Frutes* and *Giardino di ricreatione*, the numeration in pages as it is in the 1591 edition will be adopted. In *Second Frutes*, all those expressions that show an asterisk in the 1591 edition are considered paremias, in accordance with Florio’s choice (even though they might be *sententiae*, didactic sayings, or maxims). The asterisks are reproduced in all quotations in the text.
although only with their initials, and their lines are not distinguished from other characters’ conversations. On the contrary, in *Second Frutes*, the names of the many participants (among them is Nolano, who recalls Giordano Bruno), are spelled out in the caption and during the conversations, and the initials of their names are provided before each line.\(^{520}\) This feature helps one navigate the dialogues of *Second Frutes* more effectively, especially because many speakers usually appear simultaneously.

The introductory captions that express the topics of the dialogues are very concise in *Firste Fruites*, and they mostly refer to the way of talking,\(^{521}\) to the topic of the conversation, including references to literary works,\(^{522}\) and to the linguistic structure used to talk about a specific topic, distinguishing between *sententiae*, paremias, sayings, and mottos, both literary and products of circumstance.\(^{523}\) Close to the end of the manual, in Chapter 43, Florio inserts a glossary of 394 Italian words with correspondent English translations on different aspects

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\(^{520}\) Mormile and Matteucci pay attention to the presence of more than two speakers in the dialogue, as it was not habitual before Florio, and consider it a demonstration that Florio’s pedagogical orientation exceeded that of his predecessors (Mormile and Matteucci, 30).

\(^{521}\) “Parlar familiar;” “Parlar familiare con uomo o con donna;” “Parlare con donzella, gentiluomo, gentildonna, mercante, servitor.”


\(^{523}\) “Sentenze divine et profane;” “Proverbii;” “Belli detti;” “Belle domande;” “Di ira con certi belli detti di Ariosto, et di altri poeti, et che cosa è patienza et adulazione;” “Certi belli, dotti, et galanti detti, tolti da Antonio Guevara scritti da lui sopra diverse occasioni;” “Parole di Plutarco scritte da lui a Traiano imperatore, con diversi alti detti di Antonio Guevara;” “Belli discorsi di Antonio Guevara sopra diverse occasioni.” The classification is not always respected, as, for instance, a *sententia* in Chapter 22, which is called “proverbio;” “Anche verificano il proverbio di quel nostro philosopho che dice che di pace vien prosperità, prosperità porta abondantia, abondantia porta ricchezze, et le ricchezze concupiscientia, concupiscientia porta sedgno, sedgno guerra, guerra povertà, povertà humilità, humilità pace, pace prosperità, et così il mondo va intorno” (FF, 39v).
of human life. In Second Frutes, the captions mostly refer to social aspects and courtly topics, daily habits, and the way of talking about a topic.

A crucial model for Florio’s organization and content of his Fruits was Juan Luis Vives’s Linguae Latinae Exercitatio, published in 1539. Presenting twenty-five dialogues on the most common aspects of Spanish society in the first decades of the sixteenth century, Vives’s grammar book immersed students in situations of daily life and guided them progressively toward a comprehensive and pragmatic knowledge of Latin. This immersion was meant to have been achieved linguistically and culturally by means of “sententiolas,” short sententiae that could be easily memorized. Since, according to him, memorization guaranteed a more effective use of the language, other concise structures of the language should be memorized to promote a successful language learning process. Undoubtedly, paremias were included among them, as they served the purpose of making the learner experience the language thoroughly, expose him to the habits of the target culture, and make

524 This list can be considered Florio’s first lexicographical work; it is characterized by many regional aspects from Northern Italy (“le ungie” for “the nails,” “una brancada” for a “handful,” “barba” for “unkle”) and contains two Anglicisms (“pacuzo” for “a warehouse,” and “tubbaro” for “a cooper” from “tub”) (O’ Connor 1990, 20-21)
525 “Vien descritto un descinare al quale intervengono sei persone fra quali seguono molti piacevoli ragionamenti circa il mangiare e pasteggiare;” “Si ragiona del giuoco e di molte cose a ciò pertinenti e si descrive una partita a primiera, una al tavoglier e una a scacchi con la natura del giuoco de scacchi;” “Di molti complimenti famigliari e cerimoniosi tra sei gentilhuomini, tra quali si ragionia di molte cose piacevoli e massimamente d’alcuni nessesnarii, utili civili e proverbiali ricordi e precetti per un viandante;” “Di trattenimenti civili famigliari e piacevoli tra duo gentilhuomini in camera e alla fenestra e poi spasseggiando fuora si ragionia delle arme e dell’arte della scrimia e di molte altre cose come del vender e comprare;” “Si ragiona di molte facete e piacevoli cose e vien descritta una cattiva stantia, una brutta vecchia, le bellezze che dee haver una donna per esser bella in perfettione e piacevolmente si descrive un’infingardo e da poco servitore;” “Secretamente si tratta delle novelle, della corte, de’ cortegiani hodierni, e di molte altre piacevoli cose;” “Si parla d’andar a letto e di molte cose a ciò pertinenti.”
526 “Del levare la mattina e di ciò che appartiene alla camera et al vestire.”
527 “Di parlar famigliare la mattina per strada tra tre amici;” “Di parlar famigliare la mattina, dove si tratta di molte cortesie e del modo di saltar e visitar gli ammalati e del cavalcar con tutto ciò che al cavallo appartiene;” “Si ragiona dell’andar a cena e del parlar famigliare la sera al tardi;” “Proverbialmente e facetamente si ragiona d’amore e delle donne.”
528 The topics concern: getting up in the morning, greeting, taking kids to school, school classes, lunch at school, going back home, games and their rules, writing, charlatans, alcohol poisoning, walking in the morning, the house, the bedroom, the kitchen, the dining room, the banquet, the royal palace, the prince, the human body, education and its precepts, the city of Valencia.
every discourse more elaborated (Rossi 1969, 112). Not unlike the paremias in Florio’s language manuals, Vives’s paremias contributed to create a popular atmosphere, while at the same time nourishing the requests for moral aspects of human life and behavior, which was the center of attention for Vives.

Another important reference for Florio’s Fruits was Lodovico Guicciardini’s work, *Hore di ricreatione*, published in Antwerp in 1568. It is a collection of 727 classical and modern short stories (similar to the Novellino’s structure), selected according to three specific criteria: their pleasantness, their moral inclinations, and their supposed usefulness. Guicciardini fulfils these aspects by means of apophthegms, paremias, mottos, parables, and *sententiae*, selected from popular wisdom as well as literary sources. He commonly placed moral assertions at the end of each story to provide a review of the ethical aspects of the recounted events and express the message that they leave to readers. Many of Florio’s proverbs and proverbial phrases from both Fruits come from the list of paremias in two chapters in *Hore di ricreatione*: “Le sentenzie e’ proverbi principali e più piacevoli del prefato Piovano” and “Ma poiché noi siamo venuti a’ proverbi del Piovano, ne metteremo anche qui alquanti che parlando e scrivendo usava talvolta il nostro gran Boccaccio” (Guicciardini L. 1990, 77-78). The others derive from the captions of the stories, such as *Chi fa i fatti suoi, non s’imbratta le mani* (SF) (Guicciardini L. 1990, 54), *Le allegreze di*

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529 Its first edition was published in 1565 in Venice by Francesco Sansovino and was titled *Detti, et fatti piacevoli, et frasi, di diversi principi, filosofi, et cortigiani raccolti dal Guicciardini et ridotti a moralità*. For more information, see Rossi 1969, 129-39, and Florio 1993. With a structure similar to *Hore di ricreatione*, in *Detti, et fatti piacevoli*, Guicciardini writes that he collected apologues, parables, facetous stories, proverbs, and sententious mottos, aiming to convey moral pleasantness and honest usefulness (in his letter to the readers) (Guicciardini L. 1565). The majority of paremias gathered in pp. 122-25 are both in Guicciardini’s collection and in Florio’s manuals and *Giardino* (just eleven of them do not feature in Florio’s works); sometimes, a paremia is only present in *Firste Fruites* or in *Giardino* in the same way it is in Guicciardini’s *Detti et fatti piacevoli*. In one case the structure of the paremia is the same and so is the conventionalized meaning of the paremia, but the main terms of the paremia differ: *Chi mi fa meglio che non suole, tradito m’ha o che tradir mi vuole* (Guicciardini) and *Chi fa più carezze che non suole, t’ha ingannato or ingannar ti vuole* (SF).

530 The numbers refer to the stories in Anne-Marie Van Passen’s critical edition (Guicciardini L. 1990).
questo mondo durar poco (FF) (Guicciardini L. 1990, 254), or Chi tutto vuol, di rabbia muore (FF), which, however, presents a different second hemistich from Guicciardini’s Chi tutto il vuole, tutto ei perde (Guicciardini L. 1990, 365).  

If Vives provided Florio with a pedagogical structure for his two language manuals, Guicciardini’s work offered him a profitable combination between usefulness and pleasantness. Not unlike Brusantino and Sarnelli, Florio considers paremias as conforming to the Ars Poetica’s line, “Aut prodesse volunt, aut delectare poetae,” which aims both to instruct and to entertain the readers. The two Fruits offer useful teachings and ethical messages and, at the same time, bring some pleasurable moments to the conversation, while guaranteeing a rapid acquisition of the language and exposure to the culture (Simonini 1952a, 90). Among the many innumerable other examples, an instance from Firste Fruites can explain how Vives’s and Guicciardini’s specific intent in their works succeed in Florio’s language manual. Two servants talk to each other:

Ascolta fratello, che fai tu?
Perché mi domandate?
Perché io vorei sapere.
Adunche voi non lo saperete perché colui che cerca l’altrui facende da tutti li savij è tenuto matto.
Certo, tu mi hai colto.
Perdonatemi, vi dico il vero.
Così mi pare (FF, 9v).

The conversation is both pedagogically and socially useful and pleasant. On the one side, it teaches that one should not inquire too much, risking being rude and making the other person uncomfortable. On the other, it is an enjoyable dialogue, which does not create any tension.

531 For the English section, Florio drew consistently from Sanford’s translation of Guicciardini’s book The Garden of Pleasure or Houres of Ricreation.
between the two speakers, mostly because the paremia “translates” the person’s opinion in an anonymous way (generally, people say it) without decreasing the person’s message. Finally, while learning how to behave in society in a delightful way, the public is instructed on the Italian language and on the use of paremias in the discourse; thus, the paremia absolves Florio’s aim to teach how to speak and to show how the target culture works.

As Florio declares in his letter to all Italian gentlemen and merchants in *Firste Fruites*, in his first language manual “ci troverete molti belli proverbi italiani e inglesi, gentili detti, belli motti, belle sentenze, tolti da diversi buoni autori, non solamente profittevole, ma anche dilettevole” (FF, **iiir). The mention of “belle sentenze,” “gentili proverbi,” and “vari detti” seems to recall the opening caption of the thirteenth-century *Novellino*, which likewise purported to teach and delight its readers. Florio’s *Fruits* pleased its public by means of the beauty of the collected sayings and by their being true flowers of rhetoric. As for the pragmatic usefulness of sayings and paremias, Florio’s manuals aim at a dual goal: on the one side, to clarify the message that paremias convey and that is related to their conventionalized meaning, and on the other, to express the role paremias assume in the context of the two books as instruments to teach and demonstrate their moral, cultural, literary, and linguistic appropriateness in achieving the knowledge of the language.

Both *Firste Fruites* and *Second Frutes* are the result of a gradual and ultimately long acquaintance with works in Italian literature. In the dedicatory letter in English to Robert Dudley in *Firste Fruites*, Florio writes that his manual contains “ordinarie answers, together with divers proverbs, sentences, and golden sayinges, used as well in Italian as English, and therwithall collected and translated out of sundry the best Italian authors.” Similarly, in the dedicatory letter to Saunders in *Second Frutes*, he admits that he “ransackt and rifled all the

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532 The caption describing the content of the collection says: “Questo libro tratta d’alquanti fiori di parlare, di belle cortesie e di be’ risposi e di belle valentie e doni, secondo che, per lo tempo passato, hanno fatto molti valenti uomini.”

533 This quotation comes from the first page of the quoted letter.
gardens of fame throughout Italie” (SF, A3r). By constantly emphasizing the literary origins of the paremias and sayings he inserts in his dialogues, Florio can protect himself from the accusation of being born outside Italy, having never been there, and therefore being unable to listen to popular paremias in person or remember them by heart from his childhood. He can also excuse himself from the critics who might point out his limited skills in speaking the Italian language and his lack of proper education for writing language manuals (FF, A tutti i gentilhuomi e mercanti, iiiv). As he shows his erudition in extrapolating paremias from recognized sources, he sends out a clear message on his knowledge of Italian literature and on the authority of the selected works. When in Chapter 6 of the first language manual, one of the speakers asks about the provenance of the just mentioned paremias, his interlocutor answers that they can be found in poetic works:

Chi pensate che habbia fatto questi proverbij?

Io credo qualche poeta (FF, 6v).535

Wyatt argues that this answer references the idea that to use paremias means to “lie” in the way poets do, namely by means of figures of speech able to create ambiguity. Hence, the interpretation of paremias is not immediate, as they need a metaphorical process that can eviscerate their non-literal meaning and their contextual use. This is the reason why Florio inserts them into “the larger compass of linguistic activities that constituted his career,” or in other words, inside pedagogical dialogues that allow their correct interpretation (Wyatt 2005, 175). The passage also proves that paremias are normally used in the Italian language, meaning that they are not exclusively literary but rather common in spoken conversation.

Paradoxically, Florio describes an opposite passage to the traditional one, which sees paremias created by a community of speakers and then ratified in written form. His paremias

534 See par. 4.4 in this chapter for a mention of the paremias and their contextual evaluation.
535 This is a reference that will be also mentioned later in Second Frutes. As a way to kill time until lunch, one of the speakers proposes to “recitar qualche belle sentenze, qualche belli proverbii, e gentili motti, fatti da qualche gentil poeta e che comunemente si usano ne la lingua italiana” (SF, 22).
are, instead, the products of poets and authors, as for the first time they were recorded or created for a specific literary context; later on, as they transited to spoken language and lost their literary origins, they became fundamental components of daily conversations as well as crucial elements in the conversation of foreign learners.

In *Firste Fruites*, the atmosphere is euphuistic, and a sophisticated phraseology characterizes the manual: dialogues are full of antitheses, alliterations, rhetorical questions, parallel clauses, and sentence-balances, sometimes resulting in a bombast for language (Jeffery, 127-28). The style relies on the beauty and preciosity of conceits typical of Marinism, and contributes to a flowery dimension (Florio 2013, xv). At the same time, stilnovistic elements can be found in the text, such as in Chapter 14, the topic of which deals with love between a man and a cruel woman inconsiderate of his love. In *Second Frutes*, instead, characters embrace a more frivolous approach to life, which probably results from Florio’s greater experience with London and its society, and his relationships with many personalities at the time (Yates 1934, 136). The participants of the dialogues engage in conversations on everyday, cultural, and popular topics; however, the way they treat them shows a more intellectual undertaking and a more polished language devoid of the local and regional aspects of *Firste Fruites*. In this respect, they appear to be more “Baroque,” presenting courtly and mundane activities that are absent in the more Puritan and stern atmosphere of the first language manual. Characters are also immune from moral discussions, as they are embedded in a society that they observe with light and refined witticism.

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536 For instance, in Chapter 2 of *Firste Fruites*, there is a refined tone in the conversation between a man and a woman, which highlights a diastratic dimension where the man is the Stilnovistic humble servant. Sentence-balance contributes to the general tone, such as, for instance, “Io vi ho amato, vi amo, vi amerò” “Io vi ho odiato, vi odio, vi odierò” (FF, 1v). This example also proves Florio’s didactic intent, as he presents different tenses within their conversation.

537 Style and language help to create the Stilnovistic ambience: for instance, there is abundance of diphthongized forms, typical of the Tuscan tradition (“pruova”) and words common in love poetry (“strali”).
(Gamberini, 90-92). The manual’s dominant topics pertain to love matters, which are treated in Petrarchan ways and do not include any erotic or sexual references. Florio adapts his book to the immediate requests of his public which was eager to read and discuss love poetry, dedicating for instance the last chapter of his Second Frutes to rhetorical elements related to this topic. As it results from a greater experience with Italian literary sources, the language of this manual, including paremias, is elaborate and refined, and more advanced from a pedagogical perspective than the first manual.

In both Fruits, Florio promoted the idea that foreign learners of the Italian language should have a general knowledge of paremias. Up to his times, since proverbs and proverbial phrases never crossed the Alps, when abroad, Italians were forced to put aside their natural and lively way of everyday speech and resort to a bookish style, so that second language learners could understand them (SF, A2v). Hence, Florio felt urged to advance the interest of paremias outside the boundaries of the Italian peninsula and use them as a didactic instrument. In the Epistle to the Reader in his Second Frutes, he states that paremias are “the pith, the properties, the proofes, the purities, the elegancies, as the commonest so the commendablest phrases of a language,” and, “to use them is a grace, to understand them a good” (SF, A1r). As they acquire a crucial importance in providing elegance to a text or a speech, it is fundamental to be able to use paremias and, at the same time, understand them, which is indeed Florio’s intent in his two bilingual manuals. Paremias, both popular ones and those deriving from respected literature, are tools for effective discourse and transmission of cultural content, specifically and for their condensed, yet effective message and for their prosodic and rhythmic structure (Renzi, Salvi, and Cardinaletti, Vol. 1, 38).

538 Sergio Rossi finds some intersections with the Italian theatrical works of the time, apparent in the numerous lazi, in the names of the characters and in a comic perspective in talking about women, betrayed husbands, and unfaithful lovers (Rossi 1984, 84). (On theater and games in Second Frutes, see Arcangeli).
539 Merbury had written: “Voi sapete, ch’in ogni lingua non c’è più bella gratia, che l’usar, et nel parlar, et nel scrivere, di bei e spessi proverbì: I quali […] par che portino seco (non sò come) una certa authorità, dignità, et Maestà à quel che si scrive et si dice” (Merbury 1946, 84).
If by accumulating paremias, Sarnelli aims to demonstrate the immense potential of the Neapolitan dialect as a creative language and the varied culture and wisdom associated with it, Florio intends to offer the greatest amount of input in order to show learners the structure of the two languages, and help students memorize them for future understanding and, most of all, practical use. If in *Posilecheata* accumulation of proverbs and proverbial phrases mirrors the Baroque culture, in Florio’s *Fruits* the accumulation of paremias works as a way to exhibit a plethora of possible forms, including their use, message, and reception. All of this happens in dialogues that make the accumulation less overwhelming and instead associate it with an immediate response and feedback.

As in the aforementioned collection of paremias by Pescetti for pupils learning the Italian grammar, in Florio’s manuals, the parallel presence of Italian and English aimed to offer linguistic support in both languages. The dialogues guarantted a complete involvement in the Italian language, “immersing students in actual conversational situations” (Florio 2013, xiii); consequently, not only English speakers would have been able to fulfil their wish to learn Italian, but also Italian expatriates and residents in London could have been exposed to input in their native language. The dialogues also allowed them to reestablish or maintain a connection to their homeland, one that was progressively becoming less strong, as well as refine their competence in English. Paremias also provided a memorial link to the original homeland for Italians in England, and thus became charged with personal and affective aspects. The situational contexts were likewise related to life in London, and thus made it possible for the Italian language to acquire a relevance in the society where it was studied. From a linguistic perspective, the layout of the two manuals, with the English translation beside the Italian original, indirectly introduced a metalinguistic and contrastive analysis that Italian alone would have not guaranteed to English speakers.
Yet, the way paremias are used in *Firste Fruites* and *Second Fruites* varies along with the objectives the manuals aim to achieve and the social context surrounding them. The change in perspective from *Firste Fruites* to *Second Fruites* reflects the transition that the language learning approach had been experiencing in thirteen years to comply with a new public (Yates 1934, 124). Consequently, in the first manual, Florio does not introduce paremias for aesthetic purposes, which would have clashed with the Puritan and moralistic tones of the book. Not unlike Brusantino’s paremias, which aimed to provide readers with an ethical reading of Boccaccio’s stories, Florio uses his paremias to determine a “schema di moralità rinascimentale, sotto forma di prontuario di virtù” (Gamberini, 85). Simultaneously, paremias present a definite narratological and social purpose: they explain, comment, summarize, give strength to a concept, become dialogic propellers, represent a moral perspective, and allow expressing oneself with grace and spontaneity. Given the atmosphere of the entire book, some of the paremias from *Firste Fruites* show the profound influence of the Spanish euphuistic author Bishop Antonio de Guevara in his 1533 book *Libro aureo de Marco Aurelio, emperador y eloquentissimo orador* (Yates 1934, 39-41; Policardi, 75): all *sententiae*, sayings, and paremias from Chapters 36 and the majority from Chapter 37 come from Guevara’s book. For instance,

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540 De Guevara’s book is composed of forty-eight chapters on Marcus Aurelius’s life, his suggestions on aspects and events of life, his considerations on the life of princes, and nineteen letters sent by him to different people. Florio does not translate de Guevara’s text directly from Spanish, but from an Italian translation; among the many available ones, he might have read the 1544 translation by Mambrino Roseo da Fabriano or the 1568 translation published in the printing press of Francesco Portonaris da Trino (for more information on the Italian translations of De Guevara’s work, see Livia Brunori, *Le traduzioni italiane del ‘Libro aureo de Marco Aurelio’ e del ‘Relox de Principes’ di Antonio de Guevara*. Imola: Galeati, 1979). It is possible that Florio looked at the English translation of de Guevara’s book, *The golden boke of Marcus Aurelius Emperour and eloquent oratour*. Londini: In aedibus Thomae Bertheleti regii impressoris, 1536, translated from French by Lord John Bourchier Berners. This translation was later expanded by Sir Thomas North (*The diall of princes*. London: Thomas Marsh for John Waylande, 1557) (for more information, see Franzero, 66).

541 Yates argues that, thanks to his own translation, Florio was indeed an intermediary between Guevara’s book and the English euphuism, which will then reach its highest peak with John Lyly and his *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1579) and *Euphues and his England* (1580) (Yates 1937, 112-13).
Il detto autore ci invita a obedir un solo Dio e un solo principe

and

Detto del medesimo autore dice. Andando per il mondo, ho visto che il seditioso comanda al pacefico, il superbo all’humile, il tiranno al giusto, il crudele al piatoso, il cotardo all’ardito, l’ignorante al prudente; ho visto i peggiori ladroni apicar in più innocenti (FF, 81r),

which belong to a group of moral considerations on social, religious, and political life in de Guevara’s Chapter 36. 542

In Second Frutes, paremias are present in greater number than in Firste Fruites, and they truly translate the author’s ideal to create a manual of paremiac wisdom and witty sophistication. Sometimes, they might be listed for the pure sake of featuring in that context without clearly transmitting a message or having significance in the text, and consequently they are neither introduced nor explained. The following example from Chapter 2 shows Florio’s clever witticism in the paremiac conversation between Thomaso and Giovanni:

T. Che andate facendo così solo?

(For more information on euphuism, see Clarence and Jeffery, 117-32; for paremias in Euphuies, see the comprehensive analysis by Tilley).

542 Many references to England, London, and its society, and to Queen Elizabeth appear in Firste Fruites. If the Queen is praised undeservedly (FF, Chs. 13 and 28), society is commended and, at the same time, denigrated. As Florio writes, in England “la nobiltà è molto cortese, ma la plebe è tanto più discortese, e specialmente verso i forastieri” (FF, 9v), and people are driven by arrogance and pride as they always try to show off their clothing and pretend to belong to a higher social class (FF, 16v). He also comments on the lack of proper education in foreign languages when he makes one of the interlocutors say to the other that he is an idiot since he speaks just English and no other foreign languages (FF, 20v). Chapter 27 contains a dense conversation between an Englishman and an Italian, who expresses his thoughts on England and the English language. English is said to be a disorganized language made of elements from many different languages, which is nonetheless spoken in a limited area and unknown outside Dover; consequently, merchants are not able to communicate with foreigners in English. The Italian speaker also blames the lack of interest in foreign languages and suggests that parents should make their children learn other languages, almost giving voice to Florio’s soul as a teacher (FF, 50r-50v). In Second Frutes, Florio touches briefly upon London and England, but his tone is stronger as he always tries to exhalt the Italian language at the expense of English (Pizzoli, 34). In Chapter 2, he says that in England, comedies and tragedies are not true comedies and tragedies, as they rather are historical representations without any form of decorum (SF, 22). In Chapter 3, England is attacked for the way its inhabitants are used to riding horses and for the uncomfortable saddles they use (SF, 42), whereas in Chapter 10 England is accused for its bad culinary habits.
G. *Io non vorrei esser solo in paradiso.

T. *E pur è meglio esser solo che male accompagnato.

G. Chi si trova con V.S. è molto bene accompagnato (SF, 14), whereas the following one displays the subtle paremiac reasonings between Pandolpho and Silvestro on the subject of love:

P. *Succia amor la borsa, succia amor il cuore.

   Pazzo è chi compra con duo sangui amore, et

   *Per un piacer mille dolori, si truova haver chi segue amore.

S. *Parole, parole senza sugo, l’amor ci dà la vita.

   *Et in vita et in morte il tutto amor governa (SF, 176).

Because of these intrinsic aspects with paremias as “a means to promote […] graceful conversations” and urban eloquence (Florio 1969b, Intr.), Second Frutes can be placed within the “courtesy-book tradition.” Its topics, indeed, seem appropriate to courtly conversations among people eager to engage in philosophical and literary speculations at court or in circles, along with social and civil ones (Florio 1969b, Intr.; Florio 2013, xii-xv).

The way paremias are highlighted in the text seems to confirm this: paremias present an asterisk beside them so that they can be easily extrapolated and uttered. It might be that, while he was planning his Giardino di ricreatione, Florio was adopting a way that could allow him to find paremias more easily in the dialogues. However, as will be shown below, just a small percentage of paremias included in Second Frutes appear in the later collection of paremias. It is then arguable that Florio glossed his paremias for the general usefulness of the readers of his book and to invite them to memorize proverbs, proverbial phrases, and wellerisms.543 By means of gnomic pointing, paremias in Second Frutes were almost similar to those listed in a collection yet with a clear difference: paremias in the language manual

543 George Hunter shows that ways to highlight sententiae in a text were frequent between 1500 and 1660 (Hunter).
feature inside a context and are organized according to thematic units, and not alphabetically, as happens in collections of paremias. This method makes it difficult for someone looking for a specific paremia to find it, but is incredibly advantageous for those who might engage in conversations on similar topics and might need a ready list of proverbs and proverbial phrases to use in those specific situations.

During Elizabethan England, Florio’s manuals provided a path for explorers of the Italian language and culture, resembling an enchiridion as they offered the greatest possible number of paremias (Tilley, 1; Engel, 509). They were booklets to which members of the court or of circles could refer for polite phrases, for effective clusters of words, and for ideas on topics to discuss during their conversations. They were repositories of proverbs, proverbial phrases, and a few wellerisms, which could transmit a message immediately understandable to everyone in the original language or mediated by the English translation. They were “collection[s] of quotable passages” that could supply “quantities of easy erudition and common places” during conversations (Simonini 1952a, 10), useful to show off or to win an argument. By way of employing them, people could show knowledge of the foreign language, without having acquaintance with the foreign literature or a complete grasp of grammatical, morphological, and syntactic rules. Just like the manuals of good behavior that had been published in the first half of the century, Florio’s grammars contributed to the good manners in society: paremias allowed for an elegant and civil participation in mundane and urbane occasions, as well as for the expression of wit, and, especially in Second Frutes, for discourses on culture and literature at large.

Florio’s Innovative Approach to Teaching Italian

Since Florio’s pedagogy is based on spoken communication and cultural exposure, rather than being rooted exclusively on grammatical explanations and metalinguistic analysis
it can be argued that his methodology complies with the fundamental concepts of communicative and direct teaching approaches. Florio does not engage in meta-linguistic assessments nor does he comment on the way paremias should be used in a language manual. Only in the letter to the English gentlemen in *Firste Fruites* and in the dedicatory epistle in *Second Frutes*, he writes that through paremias learners would be able to achieve the best level of knowledge of the language. In order to ensure this goal, Florio promotes input flooding, meaningfulness and naturalness of the provided input, and cultural aspects; paremias guarantee all of these elements, which in turn ensure meaningful output.

The presence of a translation in English for all the paremias as well as all the dialogues, appears to go against the full immersion in the target language and culture. Florio, however, believed and was particularly engaged in the politics of translating works. Translating would have assured an immediate comprehension of the language for those who needed to show off knowledge of Italian. Those, instead, who wished to speak the language fluently, could rely on the Italian section and practice the structures of the language that Florio had conscientiously selected there. They could, however, refer to the translation from time to time when even the context would be insufficient to unwrap the conventionalized, and consequent contextual, meaning of a paremia. Another reason for inserting translation could be that the English translation offered a wealth of linguistic resources in Italian for those English authors who wished to embellish their discourses and works with paremias and idiomatic expressions (Yates 1937, 111; Simonini 1952a, 61). Especially in *Second Frutes*, English authors who were neither learners nor experts in the Italian language did not need a translation that could help them activate a grammatical reflection. They rather needed a

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544 For more information, see Diadori 2001, 1-19.

545 For an overview of the sixteenth-century importance in determining future methodologies in teaching languages, see Simonini 1951b.
translation of the meaning in order to be sure that the way they were using those expressions in their works was appropriate and compliant with the context and the cultural scene.

In both *Fruits*, the input flooding, which can be syntactical, lexical, or morphological, reveals both Florio’s inventiveness and his skills as a collector. An example of syntactical flooding comes from Chapter 9 in *Firste Fruites*, where the two speakers engage in a back and forth of sentences containing “voglio” followed by an infinitive verb. Inside this structure, they repeat certain components as a sort of grammatical drill (FF, 8r-8v). Chapter 13 in *Firste Fruites* shows an example of lexical input flooding, where pedagogical intents intermingle with political issues. In a section devoted to acclamining Queen Elizabeth, the accumulation of different members of a semantic group, specifically adjectives, nouns, structures, and synonyms, is meant to immerse the students in the language, but also aims to connect them to the figure of the Queen and immortalize her virtues and immense knowledge in the eyes of his readers (FF, 11r-11v). In so doing, Florio achieves a dual objective and also makes his language manual a tool for political or civil propaganda.

546 “Io non sono ben disposto: io voglio andare a dormire
Io voglio cavalcare il mio cavallo bianco.
Io voglio ballare, saltare, danzare, giocare.
Che gioco sapete giocare?
Io so giocare a le carte, a li dadi, al tavoliere, e agli scaki, et io so lottare.
Io voglio camminare ne li campi fino a che sia hora di cenare.
E voglio comprare un par di fazzoletti.
Io voglio andare a veder giocare di poma, e forse giocare anche io; volete giocare due o tre partite meco?” (my italics).

547 One aspect of this section of the conversation seems contrary to Florio’s pedagogical project. To pay attention to real situations would mean that Florio privileges the naturalness of the conversation and its progressive fluency. Hence, sentences should not present the subject pronoun “io.” Florio abandons it in the penultimate sentence but resumes it in the last one, demonstrating that in this short section, his aim is not to recognize the progressive autonomy of the learners from structures that interfere from their native language, specifically, the compulsory expression of the subject pronoun in English. Florio rather presents his students with alternatives to use a specific structure. By showing the two alternatives with and without the subject pronoun, leaners would be aware that they are synonymic and they can be used interchangeably, as they do not cause any change in the meaning.

548 “Quanto a la regina, a dirvela scietta, nessuna lingua non è bastante a laudarla assai; lei è in liberalità, magnificentia, cortesia, virtù, prudentia, bellezza, nobiltà, et in dottrina, gentileza, sapientia, unica al mondo, adorna di tutte quelle bone virtù che si appartengono a regina. Lei più tosto si può dir celeste che terrestre: lei è dotta, savia, gentile, cortese, nobile, prudente, liberale, bella, amorevole, virtuosa; lei è galante, misericordiosa; lei non è altiera, superba, avara, crudele, aspra, furiosa,
Input flooding is less present in Second Frutes, where, following graded levels of learners, students are supposed to be prepared by the previous manual and thus less in need of list of words in context. There is one instance in the first chapter where input flooding concerns pieces of clothes (SF, 6) and another instance in the fourth chapter that concerns food and specifically winged animals (SF, 54). Generally, in Second Frutes, Florio pays more attention to synonimic variants, which could show the richness and creativity of the language and fulfil the students’ more advanced knowledge of Italian. For instance, he shows equivalent ways to ask someone for a favor and invite someone to do it for the sake of exciting the learners’ awareness of synonimic variation (SF, 32).

It is inevitable that in Florio’s Fruits paremias are likewise part of language flooding; their accumulation, indeed, supports the Renaissance concept of “copia” (Florio 2013, xxix) and, as precepts transmitted by generations (SF, 104), their pedagogical value is unquestioned. A few chapters in both Fruits stand out for their accumulation of proverbs and proverbial phrases: Chapters 18 and 19 (FF, 21v-27r and 27r-34v), and some accumulated paremias in Chapter 3 (FF, 73v-75r) in Firste Fruites, as well as Chapter 6 and, in part, Chapters 9 and 12 in Second Frutes (SF, 78-110; 138-49; 164-205). In both

ignobile, ma come vi ho detto inanzi ella è degna di posseder ogni gran cosa; lei è l’ultimo refugio, recapito, presidio, di tutte le bandite virtu. […] Lei parla Greco, latino, italiano, franzese, spagniolo, scozese, flamengo, e inglese; tutte queste lingue sa benissimo ed eloquentemente.”

549 “P. Io prego V.S. a farmi un piacere.
A. Molto volentieri commandate.
P. Di gratia fatemi un favore
A. Di buon cuore, commandi V.S.”

550 Accumulation of paremias transmitted by a dying father to his children occurs in Basile’s Lo cunto de li cunti, IV.2.

551 The lists of paremias in the two manuals seem a contradiction to the principle of meaningful contextualization of the language. Yet, Florio was an enthusiast of the language as well as an excellent collector of words, idiomatic expressions, and paremias, which he could use in different works as he was probably simultaneously working at his two language manuals, his dictionary, and his Giardino di ricreatione. A logical consequence could be that he did not wish for all the accumulated linguistic and cultural treasure to be lost, and thus he recycled many of his paremias in the lists of paremias in the two language manuals.

552 Chapter 9 from Second Frutes contains a long list of paremias on young women and old men, adultery, and infidelity.
manuals, they interrupt the conversation and resemble a succinct collection.\textsuperscript{554} This is especially true for Chapter 19 in \textit{Firste Fruites}, where paremias, mostly taken from Sanford’s \textit{The Garden of Pleasure}, are listed alphabetically (but not in alphabetical order inside each letter), and for Chapter 6 in \textit{Second Frutes}, where paremias are gathered without any apparent logical criterion except a linguistic or semantic tie (for instance, cities and places). In Chapter 18 from \textit{Firste Fruites}, paremias, called “sentenze divine et profane” (FF, 21v-27r), are constituted by a series of numeric members. Not unlike tripartite paremias in Sarnelli’s introduction to \textit{Posilecheata}, their structure is generally fixed, with the indication of the number of “things” that have a specific characteristic (three, four, five, six, eight, and nine) and their enumeration.

In general, the entire manual of \textit{Second Frutes} presents a flooding of paremias, since proverbs and proverbial phrases are frequently accumulated in the dialogues for decorative reasons and to embellish the conversation of those who could read it and re-use the presented paremias in suitable contexts. Conversely, in \textit{Firste Fruites}, paremias are fewer, and they are inserted with a specific purpose of precise meaningfulness in the context. The difference in number of proverbs and proverbial phrases between the two manuals is evident: 287 in \textit{Firste Fruites} and 517 in \textit{Second Frutes}. A possible explanation for this could be that Florio was

\textsuperscript{553} Chapter 12 from \textit{Second Frutes} is the petrarchist chapter \textit{par excellence}: love is described through an accumulation of proverbs and proverbial phrases, which almost generate a collection of paremias on love matters. The exchange of lines between Pandolpho and Silvestro shows the difference between Petrarchan poetry, which is connected to literary enterprises, and anti-Petrarchan poetry, which is expressed by means of common and popular wisdom. If Silvestro’s speech is full of references to Italian poets to praise the eternal value of love, Pandolpho’s shows a plethora of paremias as he speaks out against love and women.

\textsuperscript{554} The reader may feel overwhelmed by the almost three hundred paremias and by the sometimes unnaturalness of certain dialogic instances. This chapter clearly reflects Florio’s idea that learning should be privileged over comprehension, that memorization of formulas useful to enrich everyday talks and embellish courtly conversations is more important than a discernment of the presented grammatical structures and understanding of normative rules. It also proves how paremias and dialogues should be considered first as forms of \textit{divertissement} and cultural pills in social conversations, and as grammar tools later. This idea finds substance in what Signor G. states just before Chapter 19 as an introduction to the list of paremias: their conversation would now feature “certi proverbi che comunemente si usano tanto in Italia, come in Inghilterra […] così passeremo via il tempo;” these paremias “non p[ossono] se non dare uno certo diletto al ascoltatore” (FF, 26v).
making a timid attempt at this methodology of teaching languages in *Firste Fruites* (even though almost three-hundred paremias are far from being a timid attempt); later, when working on his *Second Frutes*, his greater awareness of teaching methods and of Italian literature, combined with a bigger amount of collected paremias, encouraged him to use paremias pervasively. After twelve years, as his audience was requesting fewer moral and politically correct references to life and literature, Florio could experiment more and be sure of the successful results of such an approach.

When using his paremias in both *Fruites*, Florio is sensible to a situational approach (Borello, 160-61), according to which the situation plays a significant role in the choice of primary sources. Combined with a direct method, it means that the learner is exposed to the language and culture without the intermediation of grammar (Palermo and Poggiogalli, 27). Florio’s dialogues mention situations likely to happen in everyday life and structures likely to be used in everyday conversations. In other words, they create settings where “la materia linguistica balza fuori con vivacità e freschezza” (Gamberini, 90). Following Erasmus’s *Colloquia* (Matthiessen, 110), Florio’s dialogues answer to the speakers’ need to evaluate the authentic, live, and real language in context and to the teachers’ objective to teach the target language and culture as communication would happen in the real world (Rossi 1969, 121; Pizzoli, 74-76; Palermo and Poggiogalli, 24). They do not contain “le anonime e fredde frasi di un manuale scolastico, bensì espressioni che aderiscono ad una precisa realtà del momento e della quale anzi sono spesso una valida testimonianza” (Rossi 1969, 123). Moreover, the “performative aspect” of Florio’s dialogues, in which the speakers become actors and convey a linguistic and cultural message (Wyatt 2005, 167), facilitates the learner’s awareness of the contextual use of the language and of all the extra-linguistic and

**555** Many scholars (Yates 1934; Gamberini; Mormile-Matteucci) argue that Florio’s dialogues are not artificially constructed, but present instead a specific linguistic aspect and structure or offer an account of phrases to learners that guarantees a full and meaningful immersion in Italian language and culture (Florio 2013, xiii).
extra-textual elements that intervene in communication. Dialogues are privileged places in the manuals, as they host credible reproductions of real uses of the language, far from lists of anonymous sentences or bookish situations. They are also a space where Italian culture emerges vividly and can be compared and contrasted with aspects of English culture (Pfister, 49).556

The situational approach is much more evident from the captions of Second Frutes: here, each of the twelve chapters relates explicitly to various situations, from the moment one wakes up to conversations in the streets, social events, and different ways to approach a topic. Each of them offers the necessary vocabulary for that specific situation, and in each of them paremias contribute to provide linguistic material along with cultural references. If the input offered to the learners shows cultural elements and is a realistic reproduction of the linguistic and social life of the place where the language is spoken, the entire learning process is stimulated and becomes more effective. This allows students to discover linguistic and cultural elements in an easier way while simultaneously facilitating their memorization. In his The Italian Schoole-maister, Holyband, following Vives’s method, was the first to include appealing dialogues that could attract prospective learners, mostly merchants and professionals who were about to engage in economic and business enterprises with Italy (Rossi 1969, 109-18; Pizzoli, 66-67). He aimed to make his students experience the practical use of the language, and not its subtleties. Florio’s purpose is similar, as he wishes to refine the students’ language learning process and expose them to the target culture (Gamberini, 69; Wyatt 2005, 168). However, when he follows Holyband’s examples, he establishes a much higher level for his students, who are not beginners and should already know the basics of the language in order to grasp the content and profundity of his dialogues.

556 For a comprehensive analysis of the presence, characteristics, and objectives of dialogues in manuals of Italian as a second language, see Vedovelli, 93-99.
Florio shows that he is aware of the modern concept of acquisitional sequences and scaffolding, meaning graduated input for students at different stages of their learning process and with different interests, as he proceeds from the first manual to the second and within the manuals themselves. Starting from the *Firste Fruites*, where he mostly offers an account of short sentences and an accumulation of names and adjectives, in *Second Frutes*, the dialogues become more difficult since they deal with more complex topics, and show a higher level of formality, and are thus apt for students who have worked through the first manual. However, sometimes the acquisitional sequences do not appear to be sequential within the same book. For instance, Chapter 16 in *Firste Fruites* is evidently characterized by simple sentences and basic grammar, much easier to understand and grasp than the first chapters of the book.\(^{557}\) In addition, as for the reception of the input, paradoxically the first manual is culturally more difficult than the second one: since it refers to specific aspects of everyday life in the target society, culture is much more present and heavily affects the direction of the conversation, paremias included. Differently, in the *Second Frutes*, literary discourses appeal to concepts that are almost universally known or experienced and that everyone could grasp if having competence in the discussed topics. The English translation would then constitute an aid to learners struggling with those aspects in the two manuals, without however disrupting the primary goal of presenting real occasions to use the language. All these almost contradictory aspects, according to Simonini, make Florio’s *Fruits* “the most interesting of the Elizabethan language lesson manuals” (Simonini 1952a, 59).

Since in both *Fruits*, Florio does not introduce explicit grammatical explanations or sections devoted to metalinguistic analysis inside the conversational sections, as would become more evident in eighteenth-century grammar books (Marazzini 1997), it can be

\(^{557}\) For more information on the acquisition of a foreign language, see Diadori, Palermo, and Troncarelli 2015, 119-51.
inferred that his methodology is inductive. The language is first presented in its globality and in its applicability to concrete situations. Then, the teacher explains the grammatical rule in context, analyzes it in its constituent elements, and provides examples. Inductively, the student would then be able to produce the same language and the same structure in similar situational contexts. As they are immersed in the target language, learners memorize without analyzing: therefore, they acquire paremias as lexical chunks and discrete units, and do not focus on their working principles. Thanks to the contextual use of paremias and sayings, extrapolating their meaning from the dialogues and reusing them in appropriate contexts is easier for learners, and at the same time understanding the way the language (and culture) worked is more effective. This ultimately guarantees a more meaningful and productive experience of language learning and paremiac understanding in the short and long run. Even though mediated by the written form and thus not completely spontaneous, Florio exposes his learners to an example of written language that can be defined as “scritto-parlato,” borrowing this definition from Giovanni Nencioni. His language is natural and his paremias succeed in demonstrating its liveliness and guaranteeing its Anglophone learners the possibility to speak Italian, enjoy the learning process, make a good impression at court, and experience Italian culture.

At the end, the students would refer to the conclusive grammar section of Firste Fruites, entitled Necessarie Rules for Englishmen to learne to reade, speake, and write true Italian (FF, 106r-159v). Drawing from Alessandro Citolini’s Grammatica de la lingua

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558 For more information on grammar and learners, see Diadori, Palermo, and Troncarelli 2015, 155-83.
559 For further references on this definition, see Giovanni Nencioni, Di scritto e di parlato: discorsi linguistici. Bologna: Zanichelli, 1983.
560 For a more comprehensive analysis of the grammatical section in Firste Fruites, see Gamberini, 86-89. In order to satisfy the requests of the Italian people in London, Florio also introduces a grammar section of the English language, which, as the one on the Italian language, aims to show the correct way to pronounce English: Regole necessarie per indurre gl’italiani a proferir la lingua inglese (FF, 160r-163r). In a much more concise way, yet with the same objective in mind than the grammar section for English speakers, Florio attempts to explain how to pronounce letters in English,
italiana (ca 1573-74), Florio provides his students with a recapitulative grammatical section, which, after the student’s immersion in real situational contexts, could offer a few guidelines on how to learn Italian appropriately, frequently lingering over the differences between Italian and English. The grammatical explanations occupy a small portion compared to the rest of the book and, as such, could appropriately answer to the request of those Englishmen travelling in Italy and needing an easy, direct, and exemplified grammar to learn the language in the fastest way possible (Pizzoli, 94). It is a short “induction,” or introduction to those necessary rules to read, speak, and write (as the title mentions) the Italian language in the best and most natural way possible for cultural, linguistic, and instrumental purposes. Given the communicative approach Florio adopts, the explanations happen in the form of a dialogue between the author and an English speaker who asks him to explain the rules of the Italian language. As a sort of sixteenth-century conversation, which

as he had promised in the dedicatory letter of Firste Fruites to Italian gentlemen and merchants. He offers many examples and practical explanations on the position of the tongue and lips, which derive from his pragmatic approach to teaching (Wyatt 2005, 217) (for more information, see Orsini).


562 For instance, Sanford opens his A Grammer with a phonetic table, where Italian letters and clusters are paired with clusters of English letters showing similar pronunciation. For accurate instances of grammatical sections in grammar books meant to teach the English language to Italophones, see Pizzoli, 126, n. 4.

563 The length of grammar books for foreigners at the time could vary considerably; however, the majority of them presented very short or concise grammatical accounts, since their focus was first, the promotion of oral output and secondarily, metalinguistic analysis. The explicit mention of the brevity of the grammatical section is present in Torriano, whose The Italian reviv’d or the introduction to the Italian tongue is said to contain those rules and aspects of the language that are the most useful to learn the language quickly and easily (for an overview of the structure of books of Italian for foreigners, specifically devoted to the presence of grammatical sections, see Vedovelli, 85-106).

564 That phonetics acquires great importance is also evident within the dialogues, where sometimes Florio resort to a phonetic transcription to help his students, the most frequent of which is the guttural phoneme [ki], for instance “scaki” for “scacchi” or “skiava” for “schiava.”

565 In Regole de la lingua lingua thoscana, Florio’s father had devoted space to the pronunciation of the Tuscan language, ratifying his distance from Bembo’s model (Pellegrini, 105-08). Pronunciation was likewise privileged in Thomas’s Principal rules of Italian grammar, Granthan’s An Italian grammer, and Holyband’s The French Littelton. It also had a strong presence in two works from
recalls Pietro Bembo’s *Prose*, practical examples and instances of actual use accompany the grammatical analysis, aiming to provide learners with clear-cut rules on how to pronounce words and later, as a second step, on how to write them correctly.

As the direct method affirms, the first use of a foreign language is communication, and hence the input should be mostly oral and the output exclusively oral. Moreover, since Florio’s *Fruits* were likely used for mundane conversations, they needed to provide some firm rules for those who had never been exposed to Italian and needed quick, direct, and practical tricks to pronounce proverbs, proverbial phrases, and sayings in the best way possible. Therefore, the effectiveness of the process is great: learners can understand the meaning or structure of the input and can exchange content and materials more efficaciously,

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566 Florio uses the Latin declinations to inflect the parts of the discourse (for instance, four declensions for nouns), a method that will be used until the nineteenth century (Poggi Salani, 775). This aspect characterizes other grammar books of the period, which imitate a classification used for Latin by Priscian, Donatus, and Quintilian (for more information, see Pizzoli, 128-65).

567 “Wherefore if you follow this simple rule, that is to take great heede in placing your letters, and give them their right forme, you shal not onely write true orthographie, but attaine unto the perfection of it in speaking, and reading” (FF, 107). Florio is referring to the opposition between the accented and the non-accented [a]. He provides the example of “honestá” as opposed to “honestà,” and recommends that the difference should be clear in pronunciation since the non-accented [a] is shorter than the accented [â], and then also in orthography.

568 Just a few years before the publication of *Firste Fruites*, Siôn Dafydd Rhys had published a manual in Latin exclusively based on pronunciation and devoted to foreigners willing to study Italian and pronounce it correctly, *De Italica Pronuntiacione* (Padova: Laurentius Pasquatus excudebat ad instantiam Petri Antonii Alciati, 1569). Rhys, despite choosing the Tuscan model, opts for an eclectic approach to pronunciation, emphasizing the practical aspects of speaking languages. He refers to written Latin and applies a comparative approach to English, French, Polish, Gaelic, Portuguese, Spanish, and German, always presenting a paragraph on pronunciation and one on orthography. However, Florio does not seem to know Rhys’s work. (For more information on treatises on Italian phonetics from Italy, see Nicoletta Maraschio, ed., *Trattati di fonetica del Cinquecento*. Firenze: Accademia della Crusca, 1992; for Rhys’s text, see 91-264).
while at the same time applying paremias to the most appropriate cultural and social scenarios.

4.3 The Art of Translating Paremias in Florio’s *Fruits*

The initial quotation of this chapter from Giacomo Leopardi captures an important aspect of the culture of translation of paremias: how can paremias be translated without distorting their original meaning, and at the same time without betraying their effectiveness and communicability for the receiving party? Leopardi admits that it is almost impossible to reproduce in the target language the same linguistic and cultural experience of the paremia in the original language. A literal translation guarantees a word-by-word correspondence but, most of the time, leaves the meaning of the paremia incomprehensible in the target language. On the other side, a paraphrase of the message of a paremia would not give justice to its condensed structure, which demands a metaphorical process of interpretation. The result would be that what was originally a paremia is no longer one.

Translating paremias is never a straightforward task. As one tries to preserve the literary quality of a paremia, one is likely to betray its rhythm, which may be one of the main reasons why the paremia was chosen; on the contrary, if the prosodic aspects are maintained, then the paremia needs an explanation of its meaning and sense (Cherchi in Albanese 2012, 9). Translation of paremias requires understanding the intentions lying behind their meaning, Kwame Appiah argues (Appiah, 390), for the necessity of a comprehensive contextual analysis; and it should reproduce in the translated text an effect that echoes that of the original (Benjamin, 76). For instance, Canepa, when translating Sarnelli’s paremias (Canepa 2007), decided to reproduce the Italian almost literally although she was conscious that her translation would have puzzled her Anglophone readers. Albanese comments that Canepa’s
English paremias are far from common language or paremiac expressions used in everyday conversations, and thus they require explicative notes in order to be fully understood and grasped (Albanese 2012, 80-90; Albanese 2013). Canepa makes a strong decision to privilege the text over its fluid reading and immediate understanding: she gives more importance to the “restituzione, in forma prosastica, quasi di ogni singola parola,” despite losing rhythmic elements, syntactic relationships, and frequently content at large (Albanese 2012, 83). Florio faces the same issue when he translates Italian paremias into their correspondents in English as he aims to create a productively foreignizing translation that would preserve the text and at the same time make it readable to English speakers and transmit cultural and social elements with it. In A Worlde of Wordes, Florio defines the verb “tradurre” as “to bring, to turne, to convert, to convey from one place to another, to bring over. Also to translate out of one tongue into another. Also to bring, covert or transport from one to another, to leade over, to displace and remove from one place to another, to transpose.” His definition evidently stems from the etymology of the verb and acknowledges the various interpretations of the act of translating: what is considered the most canonical way to interpret the term (namely, to translate from one language to another), even comes after the most general definition of transition or movement from one place to another. Indeed, Florio is not a supporter of the idea of the perfect linguistic translation, especially if paremias are the object of this translation. He openly declares it in Chapter 18 of his first language manual:

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569 Giulio Lepschy comments that the unclearness of the translated expression is seen as a way to stimulate the reader to guess, more than to understand, the meaning of the expression (Lepschy 2009, 17-20).
570 It is indeed true that Florio first selects the Italian paremias and then translates them in English. However, in two instances, the Italian words “dangerosa” and “infamosa” appear to be calques from the English “dangerous” and “infamous,” which are indeed present in Florio’s translation (FF, 66r). As such, they diminish the absolute certainty of the direction of Florio’s translation, as it seems that, in these two examples, he was doing the opposite given the evident interference of the English language (for a comprehensive analysis of interference, contact, and shifts between languages, see Weinrich).
Ma avvertite prima che un proverbio italiano a dirlo in inglese non può haver quella gratia come ha in italiano, e anche un proverbio inglese a dirlo in italiano non ha quella gratia come ha nel suo natural linguaggio (FF, 27r).

In Florio’s opinion, paremias are apparently less translatable than other words or expressions, since translation makes the paremia lose its own grace, a grace that belongs to the original culture and language that produced it and that the target language cannot easily reproduce (Wyatt 2005, 176).

Therefore, Florio’s choice of how to translate paremias from Italian into English is strictly connected to whether he wishes to render their “grace” in the original language into the target language, and to the objectives of the language manual. The choice he makes cannot be generalized for the two manuals in their entirety, yet for the majority of translated paremias Florio adopts a different technique of translation for his first manual and for his second one. In Firste Fruites, the lower level of the learners’ language knowledge and the necessity to present every single aspect of the target language and culture, which might be completely unknown, drives him to a word-by-word translation. Florio resorts to two alternatives compliant with a faithful criterion of translation, even at the cost of compromising the fluidity of the target language at times: a literal translation that risks losing the expression’s rhythmic and prosodic structure, thus diminishing those aspects that make the immediate recognition of a paremia possible, or a literal translation that conversely reproduces the rhythmic scheme quite faithfully at the risk of rearranging the syntactic structure. With these two typologies of translation, the figurative interpretation is affected and the original message might not be immediately understandable. The result might be an

571 Translation of paremias in Florio’s Fruits follows the rules of a “cultural politics of translation,” where paremias become a representative element within the realm of translated linguistic and cultural activities that constitute Florio’s career (Wyatt 2005, 175).
expression that does not show a metaphorical meaning and, thus, loses its essence as a proverb or proverbial phrase.

Conversely, in *Second Frutes*, a translation of the meaning transmitted by the paremias is more frequent. Here, translation does not aim to make the learners understand the formal aspects of the language and to preserve the original rhythmic and syntactical structure, but rather purports to allow the learners to reflect over the discussed topics of the conversations. An explicative paraphrasis of the meaning of the paremia, therefore, suffices to express its message in accordance with its conventionalization or its contextual use. This translation privileges semantic features and allows a non-literal interpretation; it preserves the pragmatic, functional, and communicative effects since the message between the two languages is equivalent, even though the specificity of the original terms is lost and idiosyncrasies may not be expressed. Through their Italian original and English translation, the role of the paremias emerges, subsequently explaining the aim, structure, and objective of the entire manual. As a matter of fact, as long as the paremia still makes sense, pleasantness can be transmitted and culture interiorized:

Quello non importa [i.e. the impossibility of rendering the grace of the original language in the target language], pur che habbi qualche senso con sé, non può se non dare uno certo diletto al ascoltatore (FF, 27r).

Despite a “linguistic clothing” that is not easily interchangeable, paremias can transit from one language and culture to another if their translation gives shape to an “imaginative world unlimited,” a world in which linguistic boundaries exist, yet are easily surpassable (Wyatt 2005, 166).

In *Firste Frutes*, paremias are generally translated literally, resulting in sentences that do not convey any metaphorical or conventionalized meaning in English compared to a more
common alternative as reported by Augusto Arthaber. For instance, in Chapter 6, the paremia,

*Altri fanno conto inanzi l’hoste* (FF, 6v)

*Others make their account before the host* (FF, 6v)

[Arthaber, 319: *He that reckons without his host, must reckon again*],

presents an awkward translation, especially in the use of the verb “make” and in the ambiguity of the adverb “before.” In English, “before” could have both a temporal meaning, which is the appropriate one in the Italian paremia, and a spatial one, i.e., in front of the host, which would completely change its meaning, and thus confuse the student. Another example of literal translation from the same chapter is,

*Chi troppo abraccia poco stringe* (FF, 6v)

*Who imbraceth much, little closeth* (FF, 6v)

[Arthaber, 1371: *He that too much embraceth, holds little; He that grasps at too much, holds nothing fast*],

which does not flow elegantly in English. Sanford’s translation is smoother: “He that embraceth too much, bindeth nothyng” (or in a more condensed way, nowadays it would be: “Take all, lose all”).

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572 Yates comments that Florio looks at Sanford’s *The Garden of Pleasure* for his English translations, even though he does not reproduce Sanford’s translation literally. Within his pedagogical intent to provide a meaningful context for the paremias that he includes in the conversation, Florio changes the original text slightly so that he will not be accused of plagiarism (Yates 1934, 37). Despite their having the same structure, both the choice of words and the syntax differ in Sanford’s and Florio’s translations. For instance, *Peccato vechio, penitenza nuova* (FF, 32v); *Old sinne, and new penance* (FF, 32v); *Olde sinne, new repentaunce* (Sanford, 98); or else *Aspettar, e non venire: star nel letto, e non dormire: servire e non gradire, son tre cose da morire* (FF, 27r); *To tary for a thing that cometh not; to lye a bed, and sleepe not; to serve wel and not be accepted, be three things to dy* (FF, 27r); *To look for and not to come; to be in bed and not to sleepe; to serve and not to be accepted, be three deadly things* (Sanford, 103). Another paremia from Chapter 19 demonstrates how Florio might have consulted Sanford’s translation, but in the end releases a personal translation: *Né femina né tela non piglia a la candela* (FF, 32v); *Neither a woman, nor linnen chuse thou by a candle* (FF, 32v); *Choose not a woman, nor linnen clothe by the candle* (Sanford, 101). At times, the translations might seem similar, but the spelling of words differentiates the two translations: *Con arte, e con inganno, si vive mezo l’anno, con inganno, e con arte, si vive l’altra parte* (FF, [28]r); *With art and with deceit, halfe
Likewise, a paremia, which is very common nowadays, is translated in an “ungracious,” literal way, which however transmits the appropriate meaning to the language learners:

Ma dal detto al fatto ci è un grande tratto (FF, 18v)

But from the said unto the deed there is a gret throw (FF, 18v)

[Arthaber, 373: From words to deeds is a great space].

In fact, in English, the most common version would be, There is a great difference between word and deed, as one can read in Jacques Yver’s A Courtlie Controversie of Cupids Cantles (1578), and later in Torriano’s Piazza Universale (1666). The paremia is employed to express a correspondence between Italy and England on the topic of corruption and the power of money in societal life and relationships:

Ma dal detto al fatto ci è un gran tratto.

Questo proverbio è vero et usato

Ogni dì si usa in Inghilterra (FF, 18v).

By saying that the paremia is used every day in England, the interlocutor is drawing a line that equates the paremia in Italian and its equivalent in English. This equation runs on the value of truthfulness and commonality of paremiac expressions in both countries. Thus, despite Italy and England’s being distant and different, the two cultures share the tradition of paremias and their evaluation as cultural, moral, and ethical tools, which is exactly what Florio intends to demonstrate in his two language manuals.

The lists of numeric paremias in Chapters 18 and 33 are translated faithfully. The translation reproduces the original syntax and hence, aims to present to learners the structure of the paremia and the relationship between its different components, with minor changes given by the different nature of the two languages. From Chapter 18, for instance,

the yeere we live; with deceit and with art, we live the other part (FF, [28]r); With art and with deceithe, Men live halfe the yeare. With deceithe and with arte, men live the other parte (Sanford, 101).
Quatro vie ci sono, che nessuno può star fermo sopra, sopra luoghi bagnati, sopra il giaccio, sopra gloria et ambitione, sopra la beltà di una donna (FF, 24r)

Foure wayes there be, that no man can stand sure on, upon moyst places, upon yse, upon glory and ambition, upon the beautie of a woman (FF, 24r),

and from Chapter 33,

Tre bone regole per ogniuno, reggi il tuo volere: tempera la tua lingua: rafrena il tuo ventre (FF, 75r)

Three good rules for every man rule thyne owne wyl, temper thy tongue, refrayne thyne owne belly (FF, 75r).

In the last paremia from Chapter 33, though, Florio interprets a section of the paremia and unwraps the metonymy in the Italian original:

Tre sorte de huomini possono mentire per auctorità, un medico, un vechio, et un che è stato lontano (FF, 75r)

Three sortes of men may lye by aucthoritie, a phisition, an olde man, and a travayler (FF, 75r),

where the traveler in fact constitutes the category to which a person who is always far away, as it is in the original paremia, belongs. In this way, the possible ambiguity of the Italian paremia to the eyes of a foreigner is solved in the translation.

Sometimes, Florio provides an alternative to one of the terms of the paremia, probably to make its meaning clearer and to show a synonymic term to his readers, as for instance,

Ma a chi non ha danari, non ha credito, se non di bastonade (FF, 9v)

But who hath no money, hath no credit, but of blowes or stripes (FF, 9v),

where “stripes” is not included in the Italian version. Elsewhere, Florio offers a translation that is in between a literal translation and a translation of the conventionalized meaning of the paremia, as, for example,
Ogniuno tira laqua al suo molino, così fate voi (FF, 14r)

Every man draweth water to hym selfe, and so do you (FF, 14r)

[Arthaber, 865: Every miller draws the water to his own mill; Every man wishes water to his own mill].

Here, the paremia is not translated literally, but its structure is preserved and the metaphorical reference to drowning in water persists. What changes is that the metaphor is interrupted, contrary to the Italian version, and its final stage is substituted with the conventionalized meaning of the paremia: to draw the water to one’s own mill means to draw the water to oneself, and hence to look at one’s own advantages in doing something. In Chapter 19, the same paremia appears, slightly different in the subject:

Tutti tirano l’aqua al suo molino (FF, 33v)

Every one draw water to theyr myl (FF, 33v).

This time, the English translation is completely literal and the conventionalized meaning is not contemplated. Probably, the insertion of the paremia in the decontextualized list of paremias in Chapter 19 does not require an indication of its conventionalized meaning: since the only possible options are literal meaning and conventionalized meaning, Florio supplies its literal meaning. Conversely, in the contextualized situations of Chapter 14, which allows the three levels of meanings, included the contextual one, Florio supplies half of the literal meaning and half of the conventionalized meaning. Supposedly, this choice should have helped the language learners to understand the meaning of the paremia better.

Within Chapter 19, all paremias from the list (containing 273 proverbs and proverbial phrases) are generally given the most faithful and literal translation. For instance, the following can be considered word-by-word translations:

A bon intenditore, meza parola basta (FF, 25v)

Unto a good understander, half a woord is sufficient (FF, 25v)
[Arthaber, 647: *A word is enough to the wise*],

as well as,

È bella cosa pigliar due colombi con una fava (FF, 29v)

*It is a pretty thing to catch two doves with one beane* (FF, 29v)

[Arthaber, 1114: *To kill two flies with one flap; To stop two gaps with one bush*]

[Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, s.v. *kill: To kill two birds with one stone*].

In *The Booke of Merry Riddles*, from which Florio drew consistently, the listed paremias shows the same structure of Florio’s, with an introductory formula on its validity, as well as similar lexical choices: *It is a goodly thing to take two pigeons with one beane* (Merry Riddles, 98).⁵⁷³

With another paremia, coming from Boccaccio’s *Decameron* and maintained by Brusantino as was shown in Chapter 1,

*Chi va in letto senza cena, tutta la notte si dimena* (FF, 29r)

*Who goeth to bed supperlesse, shal turne and tosse al night* (FF, 29r)

[Arthaber, 255: *Who goes to ber superless, all night tumbles and tosses*],

the literal translation makes the paremia lose its original rhyme and thus be less apt to memorization. Yet, even though its original metrical “grace” is disrupted, the paremia does not lose its rhythm: in the English equivalent, there are still two hemistiches separated by a comma. The same happens to the preceding paremia:

*Chi va dormir con i cani, si leva con i pulici* (FF, 29r)

*Who sleepeth with dogges, shal rise with fleas* (FF, 29r)

[Arthaber, 212: *He that goes to sleep with dogs, shal rise with fleas; He that lies down with dogs, will get up with fleas*],

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⁵⁷³ *The Booke of merry riddles together with proper questions and witty proverbs, to make pleasant pastime: no lesse usefull then behoovefull for any young man or child, to know if he be quick-witted, or no.* London: Printed for John Stafford and W.G., 1629, is an anonymous collection of riddles, along with comedies, and useful paremias.
where the introduction of “shal” normalizes the number of syllables in the two hemistiches and create a balanced structure easy to stick in the memory of language students.

In a paremia, the animal species of the Italian version is changed, so that what was originally an ass becomes a horse, in a translation that, apart from this word, is strictly literal:

*Asino punto bisogna che trotti* (FF, 25v)

*A pricked horse must neds trot* (FF, 25v)

[Stevenson, 1175: A pricked horse must needs trot].

Florio must have looked at a different source from James Sanford’s *The Garden of Pleasure*, which lists the paremia as *An ass pricked must neds trot* (102), and so does *The Booke of Merry Riddles*, which reports *An asse pricked must needs trot*. It might be that Florio himself changed the paremia and introduced a variant, or that he misremembered it.

In another case, an apocopation in one of the terms of a paremia makes Florio comprehend a different literal meaning, and thus he translates the paremia according to his understanding:

*Homo peloso, o che l’è matto, over venturoso* (FF, 30v)

*A heary man, either he is a foole or els fortunate* (FF, 30v).

Salviati and Serdonati report the paremia as *Huomo peloso, o matto, o avventuroso*, where the last word indicates a man who goes for a dynamic and adventurous life, thus an excessively daring person. Instead, Florio reads the apocopated word as an adjective from “ventura,” destiny, and thus translates it literally as “fortunate.”

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574 Lapucci writes that the paremia could also be referred to as a person who likes a dynamic life full of adventures and challenges (Lapucci 2006, sub litera U, n. 150). He also lists an equivalent paremia in Latin, *Vir pilosus, seu fortis, seu libidinosus*, which should clarify the meaning of the Italian adjective “avventuroso” as someone who looks for romantic adventures (Lapucci 2006, sub litera U, n. 151).
Within a general choice for literal translation, in *Firste Fruites* there are, however, cases in which the translation does not reproduce the original paremia word by word. For instance,

*A caval donato, non guardar in bocca* (FF, 27r)

*Looke not a geven horse in the mouth* (FF, 27r)\(^{575}\)

[Arthaber, 426: *Look not a gift horse in the mouth*]

presents a translation that is very similar to a paremia used in English. Florio’s choice could find an explanation in the commonality and frequency of use of the paremia at the time, which might have pushed him to use it instead of providing a literal translation.

In an instance from the already mentioned Chapter 19, the translation does not reflect the Italian original literally. The specific form of the verbs provides information on the provenance of the paremia:

*Le bone parole ongino, le cative pongino* (FF, 31r)

*Good woords annoynt a man, the yl woordes kyl a man* (FF, 31r),

where the absence of anaphonesis\(^{576}\) is a clear indication that the paremia was not taken from a Tuscan author; in fact, in Florence, the two verbs would have been “ungono” and “pungono.” The verb ending in [-ino] might suggest the presence of Paduan koinè, which means that the paremia probably had a northern provenance. In the English translation, Florio adds “a man” at the end of the first hemistich, ultimately supplementing the original rhyme between the two verbs (“ongino”–“pongino”) with an identical rhyme (“man”). With a method that is more present in *Second Frutes*, Florio also intensifies the semantic meaning of the verb “pungere” by translating it into “kill.”

\(^{575}\) This translation is exactly the same as Holyband’s in *The French Littelton* (Littleton, 70).

\(^{576}\) Anaphonesis concerns the change of a vowel, usually Latin [e] > [i] and Latin [o] > [u]. Historically, it affected Florence and Tuscan earlier than other areas in the Italian peninsula.
Another example concerns a very well-known paremia at the time, which shows an interesting modification or correction from the Italian to the English:

*L’huomo compone e Dio dispone* (FF, 6r)

*Man doth purpose and God doth dispose* (FF, 6r).

As will be exposed below, usually this paremia presents the verb “propone” in its Italian version (*L’uomo propone e Dio dispone*). Florio’s English equivalent translates this version, and not the one provided in Italian, as it inserts the translation of the verb “propone.” It can be inferred that he was either looking at two different literary sources or collections of paremias, and the English one was reporting the most common form of the paremia; or that Florio, while writing by memory, forgot the common form of the paremia, which he re-established in English.

Overall, proverbial phrases are exempt from a literal translation, given their greater ambiguity not only in content but in vocabulary too. With them, Florio is forced to provide a translation of the meaning (usually, their contextualized meaning) and thus refuses to show his beginner students the grammar behind them by means of a literal translation. For instance, from Chapter 10,

*Voi sete pronto per darmi la baia* (FF, 8v)

You are redy to *mocke me* (FF, 8v)

is not translated word by word as “to give me a teasing,” but is paraphrased in the meaning it conveys, namely to make fun of, fool, or scoff at someone (GDLI, s.v. *baia* and Voc. Cr., s.v. *baia*). The translation eliminates the different stages of paremiac interpretation and provides the conventionalized meaning of the paremia. Similarly, in

*Fallando si impara* (FF, 30r)

*Missing one doth learne* (FF, 30r)

[Arthaber, 1236: *By ignorance we mistake, and by mistakes, we learn*],
the English word “missing” conveys quite a different meaning from the Italian verb “fallare,” i.e. to make mistakes, to do wrong, to err. Since this choice seems not to be driven by metrical reasons, and indeed “mistaking” would have created a better balance of the two sections of the proverbial phrase, it may be argued that Florio did not really catch the meaning of the verb and, consequently, of the entire paremia.

For the proverbial phrases that Florio draws from the book of Joshua ben Sirach, a collection of poetic paremias and moral teachings written in Hebrew around 180 B.C., he is generally faithful to the original text. Despite his mentioning openly that one paremia is original from the collection, three of them actually derive from it:

\[\text{Tre cose piacciono a Dio e anche a gli huomini, concordia fra fr[a]telli, amicitia fra vicini, accordo fra il marito e moglie}\]

\[\text{Tre cose dispiacciono a Dio et a gli huomini, un homo poco superbo, un homo ricco bugiardo, et un homo vecchio inamorato}\]

\[\text{Due cose, dice Sirach, mi scorrucciano et la terza mi dispiace, quando che homini savii sono disprezati, quando che esperti soldati sono in povertà, quando che un homo declina da la virtù al vitio (FF, 23r).}\]

The first two paremias are found in Chapter 25 from the book of ben Sirach (“Things Beautiful and Things Hateful”) and in an English translation (Oesterley) they appear as follows:

\[\text{Three things hath my soul desired, and they are lovely in the sight of the Lord and of men, The concord of brethren, and the friendship of neighbours, and a wife and a husband suited for each other}\]
Three types of men doth my soul hate, and I am greatly offended at their life, The poor man that is arrogant and the rich man that is deceitful, and an old man that is an adulterer.\textsuperscript{577}

The third one comes from Chapter 26 ("Three Things Which Cause Sorrow"), and appears as follows:

For two things my heart is grieved, and for a third cometh wrath upon me: A man of war in want through poverty, and men of understanding if they are despised, and one that turneth from righteousness to sin; The Lord will prepare a sword for him.

If we compare this translation with Florio’s, the results of Florio’s transferal are evident:

Three things please both god and man, Concord betwene brethren, amitie betweene neighbours, agreement betweene [m]an and wife

Three things displease God and man, A poore man proude, e riche man a lyer, and an olde man in love

Two things saith Sirach, makes me angry, and the third doth displease me, When wise men are despised, when expert soulsdiours are in povertie, when a man declineth from virtue to vice (FF, 23r).

The structure of the original paremias is maintained, and so are their two or three members. The change that occurs concerns the narrative voice in the two paremias, whose origins are not specified: Joshua ben Sirach is talking in the first person, and so the aspects that he dislikes are hateful to him (as in the last of the three paremias above), whereas Florio adapts his own two paremias to the rest of the list in Chapter 18 and makes them relate to God. He also gives them a more general appeal, as he relates them not only to a religious entity but to the entirety of humanity ("a Dio e anche a gli uomini" and "a Dio et a gli huomini").

\textsuperscript{577} Both of them also feature in the French Littelton under the captions “Three things be faire before God and men” and “Three things odious and tedious.”
As argued before, in *Second Frutes*, paremias are generally given a translation of their meaning so that the connection between the Italian original and the English translation occurs thanks to their shared conventionalized meaning. They also share their contextualized meaning, since they both appear in the same context, yet expressed through two different languages. One example of this concerns a very common paremia at the time, and today:

*Chi va piano va sano* (SF, 10)

*Soft fier makes sweet malte* (SF, 11)

[Arthaber, 1079: *Who goes slowly, goes far; He that goes softly, goes safely; Fair and softly goes far in a way*.]

The conventionalized meaning of the English paremia corresponds exactly to the conventionalized meaning of the Italian paremia, namely that something done in a slow way guarantees a better success and no harm (GDLI, s.v. *piano*). Language learners would have understood the meaning of the Italian paremia and vice versa immediately by transferring their conventionalized meaning. Similarly, another paremia receives an adequate translation of the conventionalized meaning it conveys:

*Cuor contento è manto su le spalle* (SF, 10)

*Who lives content hath all the world at will* (SF, 11).

The English translation substitutes for the cloak over a person’s shoulders with the positivity that comes from being content, because “He who is content can never be ruined” (Stevenson, 414). In another example from Chapter 3,

*Per dar caparra o arra al vetturino* (SF, 38)

*To give the hacknie man some earnest* (SF, 39),

the translation of the paremia’s meaning in English annuls the original play between “caparra” and “arra,” and thus eliminates the parallel structure with an inclusive rhyme, which characterized the Italian paremia, to the advantage of expressing the message
conveyed by the paremia. Compared to the Italian equivalent, the English structure loses the constituent aspects of a paremia; yet, its meaning is immediate and more spontaneous than that of a literal translation.

The English translation can also add more meanings to the original Italian paremia, as happens in the following example from Chapter 5:

A. Volete voi giuocar’ a dadi?
S. *Signor no, perché donna, vino, e dado, rende l’huomo rovinato (SF, 72)
A. Will you play at dice?
S. *No sir, for women, wine, and dice, will bring a man to lice (SF, 73).

The Italian paremia refers to the adverse consequences a man can face if he cherishes women, dice, and wine, the three things that made Cecco Angiolieri content in his famous sonnet Tre cose solamente. In Florio’s paremia, they just “ruin” the man. The English translation, instead, interprets the disaster that man experiences and lays out its result: among the possible downfalls of such a behavior is poverty, which means lack of personal hygiene, and therefore lice.

The same happens in another paremia at the end of Chapter 1, which is given additional elements when translated:

*Chi ben serra, ben apre (SF, 14)
Fast binde, fast finde (SF, 15)

[Hazlitt: Fast bind, fast find].

First of all, the English translation of the Italian paremia introduces a rhyme that was absent in the original, and in this way, it guarantees an even more symmetrical structure than that of the Italian original to the advantage, in this case, of the Italian readers who could memorize the structure. The parallelism between the two adverbs is maintained even though the

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578 The sonnet reads: “Tre cose solamente mi so ’n grado, Le quali posso non ben men fornire: Ciò è la donna, la taverna e ’l dado; Queste mi fanno ’l cuor lieto sentire” (1-4).
“swiftness” (English “fast”) of the action replaces the “good” (Italian “ben”) way to do it. Additionally, the English translation spells out the conventionalized meaning that the second hemistich of the paremia expresses: if you shut something properly, then you will be able to open it, and therefore you will find something inside.

A translation of the meaning of paremias is not followed as an unconditional rule throughout all Second Frutes, where there might be instances of literal translations. However, differently from Firste Fruites, Florio does not limit himself to word by word translation but tends to add something or at least manipulate the meaning of a section of the paremia. The following example shows how he preferred to rephrase an inappropriate reference to religious offence in the Italian paremia with a description of this offence:

*Io m’accomodo ad ogni cosa e sono come il sacco d’un mugnaio, e non come alcuni che fanno tal volta conscientia di sputar in Chiesa, e poi cacheranno su l’altare (SF, 12)

I aplie my selfe to all, and am like to a miller’s sack, and not as some, who sometimes make it a matter of conscience to spitt in the Church, and at another time will betray the altar (SF, 13).

The verb “cacare” is not translated “to shite,” as Florio does in his A Worlde of Wordes, and the entire section is substituted with a translation of the conventionalized meaning of the original: if one defecates on the altar, it means that he will betray and disrespect it (Wyatt 2005, 178). Similarly to Brusantino’s ethical interpretation of the Decameron, Florio introduces his own perspective when translating paremias, and does not merely transfer words or meanings from Italian to English, but rather considers the cultural ambience that will receive it and appropriately choses the best available option. Even though his Second Frutes focused on less moral topics than those of his Firste Fruites, such a reference would have still been seen as too desecrating.
In one instance, Florio translates an Italian paremia, manufactured expressly to create a rhyme, literally, and even leaves the two invented words in the English translation,

*Sotto questo recipè, non s’asconde nissun decipè* (SF, 60)

*Under this recipè, there is hid no decipè* (SF, 61).

In a quite similar example,

*Molti de’ nostri che vanno Messeri, e tornano Seri* (SF, 90)

*Men who goe out maisters, and return clearks* (SF, 91),

he tries to render in English the play of words in the Italian version. The dichotomy between the Italian “messeri” and “seri,” where “seri” means downgraded “messeri” because they lack a part, namely “mes,” is rendered through professions, specifically a boss and a clerk. As discussed above, Italy was not granted good reputation in civil and behavioral matters. Because of this, Stefano, one of the participants of the conversation in Chapter 6, gives Pietro advice on his imminent trip to Italy by means of a pedagogical narrative obtained through paremias. Pietro promises him not to change, and thus not to leave like a respectable person and come back half of it. Since a direct translation of “messere” and “ser” is not available in English, the degrading power of Italy over human souls is rendered in the translation by the figure of a man who leaves England as a boss in control and comes back as a subjugated clerk. The ethical and moral message of the two paremias is the same, as they both “translate” the decrease of someone’s importance and respect in society.

This specific example demonstrates how Florio’s paremias do not distinguish among social classes, something that instead a courtesy book would have emphasized (Wyatt 2005, 182-84). The genre undoubtedly influences the way paremias are chosen to be translated. At a smaller level, namely that of sentence structure, a change in some of the components of paremias is required in order to fit the morphological, lexical, and syntactical structure of the
sentence or paragraph in which they appear, revealing how paremias can potentially adapt to infinite possibilities as they shift from one form to another.

4.4 Firste Fruites and Second Frutes: Paremias in Context

When Florio inserts paremias in a conversation, there is noticeable development in their presentation or explanation, due to the graded level of his students. While an explanation of their meaning within a dialogue is frequently required or asked for in Firste Fruites, and a negotiation of meaning follows many paremias so that the learning process can be constantly guided, this strategy slowly decreases in Second Frutes, where formulas of acknowledgment are rarer, if not completely absent. In the first five chapters in Second Frutes, those paremias that are introduced or trigger a reaction in the receiver share their lexicon with the introductory formulas and with the subsequent line of the dialogue. Thus, they allow the conversation to take a different direction, exactly thanks to the introduction of a new topic whose connection with the precedent one is typically a word. Similarly, when paremias are left unconcluded in the first utterance, the speaker might request an explanation and might confirm his understanding, activating a back and forth of questions equivalent to what is almost always happening in the first manual. In the last chapters of Second Frutes, instead, paremias appear disconnected from the actual conversations and leave the speakers impassible; in other words, they do not affect the narrative but they feature as “gems (or conceits) to embellish the language,” which more advanced language learners would have appreciated and understood (Simonini 1952a, 60).

In Firste Fruites, proverbs and proverbial phrases are almost always introduced by formulas that feature the term “proverbio:” “— Ma non sapete come dice il proverbio?” (FF.

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579 For a critical analysis and examples of introductory formulas, see Cerquiglini and Cerquiglini.
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4v); “– Quelli verificano il proverbio. – Che proverbio volete dire?” (FF, 6v); “– Che proverbio è quello? – Proverbio che si usa spesso. – Di gratia recitatelo” (FF, 14v).

Moreover, after uttering the paremia, a negotiation or an explanation of its meaning occurs, as, for instance, in the following lines: “– Ogniuno tira l’acqua al suo molino, così fate voi. – Ma non sapete voi come ogniuno cerca il suo profitto? – Natura ci insegna così” (FF, 14v).

This even happens in Chapters 18 and 19, which are lists of numeric paremias. Yet, the interlocutors do not simply list the paremias, as they sometimes engage with each other after a paremia is uttered. Especially in Chapter 18, one of them usually pronounces the paremias, and the other one replies, commenting with an assertive statement (“certo questo è vero,” “questo si vede spesso,” “un detto verissimo,” “certo bon principio,” “certo tutti boni”), an evaluative comment (“io vorria che queste cose non si usassino,” “di quelli ce ne sono assai,” “molti fanno queste cose,” “ma de quelli ce n’è pochi”), or expressing an emotion (“mi ralegra il core di sentire certe cose,” “questo mi fa quasi ridere”). All these formulas confirm that the receiver of the paremiac utterances understands their conventionalized meaning, and so the conversation can continue or turn to another subject.

In Chapter 5, a man declares his love to a Madonna, proclaiming a Stilnovistic-like subservience; in turn, the woman employs a paremia to convey a message on the inappropriateness of this feeling:

Madonna, io vi amo cordialmente, io voria che io fosse vostro marito, io vi ameria e serviria fedelmente.

Io sono molto obligato a voi per il vostro ben volere.

Io vi ringratio per la vostra cortesia.

Ma non sapete come dice il proverbio? (introductory sentence; use of the term ”proverbio”)

Non certo: come dice? (phatic function: contact with the emitter)

Chi tardi arriva, mal alloggia. (paremia)
Come, dunche io arivo tardi. (negotiation/interpretation of meaning)

Si certo a dirvi la verità. (acknowledgment of presumed meaning)

Dunche voi siete promessa. (comprehension of the contextual meaning of the paremia)

Signor sì, longo tempo fa

(FF, 4v-5r).

An introductory sentence anticipates the emission of the paremia, by mentioning the term “proverbio” and the very common *verbum dicendi* “dice.” Next comes the enunciation of the paremia, followed immediately by a request for clarification and negotiation of the meaning, a short comment that aims to show how the receiver of the paremiac expression is on the same page with the emitter, namely that they both understood its message (Grimaldi 1997, 532). Finally, the speaker comprehends the contextual meaning expressed by the paremias in the specific context where it appears: “A man who does not decide to ask for a woman’s hand in marriage eventually discovers that she has been promised to another man and cannot change the reality of having waited too long.”

Not all introductory formulas present the term “proverbio.” In Chapter 6, a paremia introduces two men discussing their menu for the following day:

_Volete farmi un piacere?_

_Volentieri se io posso._

_Venite a desinar meco._

_Quando?_

_Domani._

_Vi ringratio, io verrò: Che bona cera⁵⁸⁰ haverò io?_

_Voi haverete un pezo di carne boina alesso, e un capon arosto._

_Certo questo mi piace._

---

⁵⁸⁰ This is an idiomatic expression modeled on the French “bonne chère,” meaning “fare una buona mangiata.”
Io porterò un fiasco di vino.

Havetene che sia bono?

Signor sì, bonissimo.

Orsù aspettatemi, io venirò, se io non moro questa notte.

Come fate conto di morir così subitanamente?

Che so io? Vedo talvolta che l’huomo compone e Dio dispone. (introductory sentence and paremia)

Veramente voi dite il vero. (acknowledgment of truth)

(FF, 6r).

The aforementioned paremia L’huomo compone e Dio dispone is introduced with a formula (“vedo talvolta che”) that attests the authenticity of its meaning, namely that it is not up to men to decide their own future and destiny, since God has always the final answer (GDLI, s.v. disporre). The truth of the paremia is recognized just after it is uttered: the final assertion acknowledges that the paremia is truthful, expressing it twice with the repetition of the word “vero” as a noun and an adverb.

Tradition does not sustain the formulation of the paremia L’huomo compone e Dio dispone, which usually features the verb “propone” instead of “compone.” Homo proponit sed Deus disponit features in Solomon’s Proverbs (xvi.9) and in Thomas Haemerkken’s (Thomas à Kempis)’s The Imitation of Christ (t.19.9). Still in Latin, but in an English work, the verb is used in William Langland’s Piers Plowman (1370-90; B, xi, 36-37), as “Homo proponit, quod a poete and Plato he hyght, And Deus disponit, quod he lat God done his wille.” It also appears in John Palsgrave’s L’eclairissement de la langue francoyse (1530) as Man proposeth and God disposeth, as well as in Pescetti’s and in Serdonati’s collection as
L’huom propone, e Dio dispone (Pescetti, 2). It might be that Florio was citing by memory and mistook the two verbs, whose etymology and phonetics are similar. “Dispone” as “dis + ponere,” means undoing, i.e. the negation of something that has been assembled. In this logic, the verb “compone” as “cum + ponere,” is the opposite of something that has been undone, i.e., something that has been put together. Either with the verb “comporre” or the verb “proporre,” the ultimate meaning is that God decides and has the last word. Yet, in L’uomo propone e Dio dispone, God has the last word in permitting what the man has been planning, whereas in L’uomo compone e Dio dispone, God is depicted as the one who literally dismantles what the man has been constructing over time. Regardless of the verb, in the context of the dialogue, the conventionalized and contextual meanings of the paremia are understood, as one of the two interlocutors confirms that the negotiation of meaning has happened and was successful.

After this paremia, the two interlocutors continue discussing the growing number of men who are hit by the fluctuating strikes of fortune, so that they either lose everything or die. Here, greater space is devoted to the introductory phase before the two paremiac utterances, as a sort of preparation for their emission:

Io vedo certe persone bizarre che fanno il bravo hoggi, domani sono poveri, altri
fanno conto inanzi l’hoste, vogliono fare, dire, che e che no, e sono morti.
(introductory sentence and paremia)

Di questi ne vedemo l’esperientia giornalmente.

Quelli verificano il proverbio. (introductory sentence; use of the term “proverbio”)

Che proverbio volete dire? (phatic function: contact with the emitter)

Quel proverbio che dice, Chi troppo abraccia poco stringe. (paremia)

---

581 In modern times, Lapucci lists the paremia with the verb “propone” (Lapucci 2006, sub litera U, n. 169-70). He states that the paremia in Latin is usually concluded by “nec est in homine via eiusmod” (“there is no way of their own for men”).

582 Other than in the English translation, the paremia also appears in its traditional formulation, L’huomo propone, e Dio dispone, in Giardino di ricreazione (GR, 171).
Certo, questo è bono. *(emotional function: appreciation of paremìa)*

Ma sapete cosa dicea quel altro? *(introductory sentence)*

Come dice lui, vi prego? *(phatic function: contact with the emitter)*

Lui dice che *è sempre bono per uno haver due corde per il suo archo*, acciò che se una si rompe lui ne habbia un altra presta. *(paremìa; explanation of meaning)*

Certo colui la intende. *(comprehension of the contextual meaning of the paremìa)*

È proverbio antico. *(acknowledgment of truth)*

*(FF, 6r-6v).*

The paremìa *Chi troppo abbraccia poco stringe* refers to those who wishes to have more and more and do not consider the consequences of an act or decision, ultimately remaining without anything *(GDLI, s.v. abbracciare)*. The first paremìa of the series confirms this meaning: as mentioned before, *Far il conto senza l’hoste* means to plan something without great success and without considering possible obstacles in the manner of a person who tries to adjust the expenses without consulting the landlord and does not realize that the landlord will not stick to the deal and will do the bill of expenses again. This message complies perfectly with the message of the paremìa, *Chi troppo abbraccia poco stringe*. The last paremìa, *È sempre bono per uno haver due corde per il suo archo*, is introduced by two questions and is immediately followed by a metaphorical explanation of its meaning (“acciò che se una si rompe lui ne habbia un’altra presta”). No further explanation is required, since the speaker understands its meaning: indeed, one who pulls the arch too much risks that it breaks *(GDLI, s.v. arco)*, and having a second cord allows the person to aim again for what he was trying to obtain.

Another interesting instance of introduction and negotiation of meaning in a dialogue which features many paremìas is found in Chapter 14:

*L’huomo spesse volte si tien certo di qualche cosa e resta ingannato.*
Ma non è così con me.
Forse voi e ingannate.

Imitate il proverbio. (*first introductory sentence; use of the term “proverbio”*)

Che proverbio è quello? (*phatic function: contact with the emitter*)

Proverbio che si usa spesso. (*second introductory sentence; use of the term “proverbio”*)

Di gratia, recitatelo. (*phatic function: contact with the emitter*)

*Con il tempo e con la paglia le nespole si matura. O veramente quest’altro, Chi va pian va san.* (*paremias*)

Non ne sapete altri? (*introductory sentence*)

*Ogniuno tira l’acqua al suo molino, così fate voi.* (*paremia*)

Ma non sapete voi come ogniuno cerca il suo profitto? (*negotiation/interpretation of meaning*)

Natura ci insegna così.
Ma Dio ci insegna a amar il nostro prossimo, come noi medesimi, e non essere avari.
Si, ma pochi sequitano le leggi de Iddio.

Ce ne sono de li altri che praticano una nuova alchimia.

Come volete voi dire?

Dirovi come alcuni fanno. (*introductory sentence*)

Come ditemi, vi prego? (*phatic function: contact with the emitter*)

*Imprestar e mai non rendere, assai promettere e poco attendere, ben guadagnar e poco spendere, farà presto l’huomo richo.* (*paremia*)

Questo è un bello proverbio. (*emotional function: appreciation of paremia*)

Ve ne voglio dire due altri belli. (*introductory sentence; implicit term “proverbio”*)

Così facendo, mi farete a piacere.

*Chi cerca spesso ingannar altrui, oppresso resta et ingannato lui.* (*paremia*)
Questo è bello e vero. *(emotional function: appreciation of paremia)*

Christo lasciò ne li precetti, *Voi non far altrui quel che per te non vuoi.* *(introductory sentence and paremia)*

Anche questo è bellissimo. *(emotional function: appreciation of paremia)*

(FF, 13v-14v).

The introductory/phatic phase and the appreciative/emotional phase determine a space that is devoted to paremias and features a proposition of a paremiac utterance, a negotiation of meaning, and a final acknowledgment and recognition thanks to their beauty and truthfulness. It is interesting to note that two paremias, *Con il tempo e con la paglia le nespole si matura* and *Chi va pian va san,* are listed as synonymic; the synonymy (or better the fact that they share the same conventionalized meaning) is underscored by the cluster “o veramente,” equivalent to “o vero/o ver/overo,” as they both express the idea that with patience and endurance one really achieves what he is looking for, and that haste is detrimental to the positive development of a situation (GDLI, s.v. *nespola*). All these elements would have helped students to follow the conversation and appreciate the cultural and linguistic aspects more.
FIGURE 6: *Firste Fruites*

cc. 13v-14r

Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California, RB 60820

Source: http://eebo.chadwyck.com
Proverbial phrases offer less room for a contextual evaluation of their meaning. For instance, in Chapter 10, a woman uses the aforementioned proverbial phrase *dar la baia*, contextualized in a sentence, against a man who approaches her. When she answers that she is ready to serve him, he thanks her and highlights that he is aware of her courtesy. Hence, the lady’s insertion of the proverbial phrase:

Certo, signora, vi rendo mille gratie, io so che sete cortese.

Voi sete pronto per *darmi la baia*. (*paremia*)

Non certo, signora, perdonatemi.

Non mi havete offeso.

Né ancho cercherò di farlo (FF, 8v).

The meaning of the proverbial phrase is evident to the man, who does not feel the need to negotiate it or ask for a confirmation. He does, however, answer back, excusing himself if his assertion has been read as a mockery of the woman’s gracious manners. After this exchange, the man dares asking the woman if she would accept his love, to which she answers that she is not worthy of his feelings.

An interesting typology of proverbial phrase are those paremias that Florio transfers from Solomon’s *Proverbs* and the book of Joshua ben Sirach in his Chapter 18. The chapter abounds with numeric paremias, namely paremias based on a structure that presents the mention of a certain number of things with a specific characteristic, and then lists them.

There is also a recurrent substructure, especially in those paremias with four listed items: they present the first three items associated with an aspect, and then a fourth item that represents the opposite aspect. As previously argued, these numeric paremias were easy to remember. Their repeated structure, the presence of examples derived from everyday life or aspects of the human behavior, and the logic concatenation of thoughts, made them an effective way to prove a point and, in Florio’s case, to teach the language.
As they mention things that God hates, and things that should be avoided or else promoted in interpersonal relationships, these paremias send out signals on how people should behave. At the same time, by listing them, Florio absolves his duty to present as many structures as possible in the Italian language and guarantee the students’ exposure to different input. Numeric paremias from Chapter 18 (FF, 22v-23r) are neither introduced nor explained: just an opening formula introduces all of them and establishes their literary (and religious) origins (“Io comincerò con certe sentenze scritte da Salomone, e da Iesù figliol di Sirach; io comincio”), and no request for explanation appears in the text of the conversation. This might mean that Florio was assuming or else was sure that his audience would have grasped their meaning immediately and would have been able to understand the mention of the two religious figures. Probably, Florio was aware of the public’s more solid exposure to biblical readings than to Italian literature, whose authors are simply referred to as “diversi autori profani” (FF, 23r).

Solomon’s Proverbs, included in the Sapiential books of the Old Testament, are composed of nine collections of paremias by diverse authors and times, of which only the second and the fifth are specifically attributed to Solomon, the wise king of Israel. The paremias provide useful teachings and focus on the positive side of a just and upright human behavior that God rewards. With their moral lessons, they aim to make wise people wiser and educated people shrewd, and thus, to turn Florio’s students into better men. When he transfers numeric paremias that he finds there, Florio, just like Brusantino and Sarnelli, changes the paremia according to the context, as well as to his personal perspective. For instance, Solomon’s paremia from Chapter 6,

_Sei cose odia il Signore,

_Sette ne detesta:

_occhi alteri, lingua bugiarda,_
mani che versano sangue innocente;
cuore che ordisce trame malvagie,
piedi solleciti a correre al male;
teste bugiardo che sparge menzogne,
chi causa risse in mezzo ai fratelli,

becomes,

Sei cose ci sono che Iddio ha in odio, et la settima lui ha in abominatione, ciò è: ochi alti, la lingua bugiarda, le mani che spargono il sangue, i piedi veloci per correre a far male, il cuore che macchina iniquità, il testimonio falso, e colui che mette contenzione fra fratelli (FF, 22v).

The content of the paremias does not change, and its members, even though not in the same order as in the original, are the same, with the seventh element at the end of both. However, Florio changes the vocabulary of the original paremia by introducing synonymic words or phrases. In one instance, he simplifies the original, when he renders a person who tells lies with “il testimonio falso” (“the false testimony”). It seems that Florio wishes to demonstrate his ability with the Italian language, so that when he reads a paremiac source, he does not reproduce it literally. He rather shows how he can manipulate proverbs and proverbial phrases and how his knowledge of the language is rich and composite to the advantage of his language students. In the two contexts, morality is conveyed differently: in Solomon’s Proverbs, paremias need to be remembered and to convey moral advice effectively; in Firste Fruites, instead, the moral teachings are inserted inside a conversation. Indeed, in the language manual, the other interlocutor answers to the presentation of this paremia by commenting on it and saying “Io vorria che queste cose non si usassino” (FF, 22v); as such, the structure of these paremias adapts to the structure and the pedagogical objectives of the entire book.
Another example demonstrates how Florio aims to show the range of his vocabulary. From Chapter 30 of Solomon’s *Proverbs*, Florio extracts a paremia,

*Tre cose sono troppo ardue per me,*

*quattro non le capisco:*

*il cammino dell’aquila nel cielo,*

*il cammino del serpente sulla roccia,*

*il cammino della nave in mezzo al mare,*

*e il cammino dell’uomo verso una ragazza,*

which he transforms in,

*Ci sono tre cose che non si possono sapere et la quarta nessuno può intendere, i passi de una aquila volante nel aire, la via de un serpente passando una rocca, la via de una nave in sopra il mare, e la via de un giovine nella sua gioventù* (FF, 22v).

Florio’s syntax appears elaborated and poetic, in line with the euphuistic atmosphere of *Firste Fruites*. The major change occurs in the final member of the paremia, the fourth thing that nobody understands. Florio generalizes the original text, which appears to be a synecdoche compared with *Second Frutes*: indeed, the path of a young man towards a girl (*Proverbs*) depicts just one aspect of the decisions taken by a young man in his youth (FF).

Contrary to *Firste Fruites*, in *Second Frutes*, the introductory formulas diminish, and paremias are usually presented without any introduction. They appear to be more embedded in the cultural and social framework, since their use does not affect communication or change its dynamics, and an explanation of their conventionalized or contextual meaning is rarely given or requested. Paremias follow each other without contributing to the development of the communicative situation. As mentioned above, they are not connected to aspects of textual coherence and cohesion, but rather fulfil the purpose to present a structure that might be used in mundane conversations (Vedovelli, 95). Consequently, the reader needs to resort
to his common knowledge and to the surrounding context (often given by other paremias) in order to interpret the meaning of paremias accordingly.

In the first chapter, a sort of *commedia dell’arte* argument arises between Torquato and his servant, Ruspa, because Ruspa seems not to remember anything:

R. Io non so trovar la chiave.

T. Dove l’hai posta, trascurato che sei?

R. Stamane l’ho messa nella scarsella, o io l’ho.

T. Se tu così povero di memoria?

R. *Io non mi ricordo dal naso alla bocca.* *(paremia)*

T. *Tu non farai mai statuti, né casa da tre solari.* *(paremia)*

R. Pur che io ne faccia da uno. *(answer to the paremia)*

T. Tre arbori, ti basteranno a far ciò.

R. Molti grandi vengono a star in case così basse.

T. Al corpo di ch’io non vuo dire, che s’io metto mano ad un bastone, io ti farò ben star in cervello.

R. Io non saprei farci altro.

T. Tu vuoi ch’io dii di piglio a qualche pezzo di legno per pestarti le ossa.

R. Ciò non vorrei già io.

T. *Hora vedo che chi l’ha da natura fin alla fossa dura.* *(paremia)*

R. Ecco qui una dozzina di camiscie, due di fazzoletti, altrettanti collari di renza, otto ghimphe o lattuche, co’ loro manichetti lavorati di seta, quattro tovaglioli, sei sciugatoi, otto scuffie, tre paia di lenzuola, ecco poi in questa pettiniera i vostri pettini d’avolio e di bosso, le vostre forbicette, con i curaorecchie, et le altre cose *(SF, 6-8).*

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583 William Engel comments that the paremia contains an allusion to the Memory Palace *(Engel, 512).*
FIGURE 7: Second Frutes
pp. 8-9

Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California, RB 59806
Source: http://eebo.chadwyck.com
The first paremia, *Io non mi ricordo dal naso alla bocca*, which Pescetti explains as “D’uno c’ha poca memoria,” is neither introduced by any formula nor later explained. It is followed by another paremia, *Tu non farai mai statuti né casa da tre solari*, which further the concept it expresses. This second paremia derives from the proverbial phrase, *Havere un cervello da far statuti* (GDLI, s.v. *statuto*), which means to be shrewd, expert, and forward-looking, but is usually used in an ironic way. Thus, Torquato is saying that Ruspa is far from being astute, in response to Ruspa’s assertion that the number of things he himself remembers is as small as the distance between his mouth and his nose. Moreover, since “casa da due solari” refers to a very rich house (because it has two terraces), the second part of the paremia means that whatever the person plans to do, it would be impossible to accomplish. Ruspa does not need an explanation, but he answers back to the paremia, as occurs frequently in *Firste Fruites*: he employs a concept or a part of the paremia so that he can continue the metaphor introduced by the paremia, thus admitting that a house with one floor will suffice (“Pur che io ne faccia da uno”). The retaliation continues as he says that, “Molti grandi vengono a star in case così basse,” ironically rebutting his master’s assertion that a small amount of wood would be enough to build such an insignificant house. When the third paremia is introduced (*Chi l’ha da natura fin alla fossa dura*), the comic sketch is almost concluded, for Ruspa is unperturbed by his master’s accusation concerning the supposed insufficient improvement in his behavior. The paremia does not affect the conversation this time, but actually serves as a conclusion to the exchange of lines between the two interlocutors, and as a promoter of a new section where Ruspa goes back to his work (“Ecco qui una dozzina di camiscie...”).

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584 According to Wyatt, the exchange of lines between Torquato and Ruspa describes the relationship of power between them as it is mediated through the language lesson. Torquato, as the boss, confirms his higher position by using paremias to answer Ruspa, who in turn is not affected by his master’s bites, and in the end, is even praised for his sagacity (Wyatt 2005, 179).
Occasionally, the meaning of a paremia or a proverbial phrase is obscure; nonetheless, it is not explicitly explained. One example is found in Chapter 4, where six interlocutors spend their time engaging in pleasant conversations during a meal. When talking about the cook, they employ a few paremias to comment upon a sudden noise coming from the kitchen:

S. O disgratiato cuoco, egli farebbe venir stizza a un santo.

H. *Il fuoco aiuta il cuoco. (paremia)

S. *Anche io so menar l’oche a bere quando piove. (paremia)

T. Qui c’è da mangiar assai e d’avanzo.

(SF, 52).

All the assertions by the three speakers are unrelated, and indeed the reader has the impression that the piece is less of a conversation than a list of phrases. There is no reaction after the first paremia, whose meaning is easily understood, not after the second paremia, whose meaning, instead, might not be immediate. The Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca 1612 reports the paremia I paperi voglion menare a ber l’oche (s.v. papero), explaining it as “si dice, quando un giovane vuole aggirare un vecchio.” In other words, for the ducks to be able to conduce the geese to drink means that unexperienced people try to guide experienced ones, as they are full of themselves (GDLI, s.v. oca). Since in Florio’s context, the subject is the speaker himself, there seems to be a classist consideration embedded in the paremia. Simone, the cook’s boss, would be able to teach a cook his art, even though Simone has never been engaged in such a job. He is probably highlighting his superiority and emphasizing the scorning attitude of a rich and powerful person, and he achieves it through a paremia.

The absence of formulaic introductions and formal explanations of paremias is not a general rule in Second Frutes. Sometimes the paremia is clearly introduced by a sentence and determines a reaction in its receiver. These instances, though, are limited in number if one
considers the total number of paremias in the book, which equals 517 units. An example comes from Chapter 2, where two paremias appear one after the other, and are introduced by three formulas during a conversation between Thomaso and Giovanni. The first formula is a general introduction of the paremiac exchange, and expresses the validity of the paremias from a pedagogical standpoint. The second formula, which share a lexical item (“acqua”-“mare”) with the first paremia, refers to it and confirms its essence of precept (“precetto”). Last, the third formula puts stress on the paremia’s spoken dimension and on its commonality among people (“si suol pur dire”):

T. È precetto che si possa sapere? *(introductory sentence)*

G. *Signor sì, e gli [=his father] mi diceva spesso che potendo andar per terra, io non...* 

zelfossi mai andar per acqua. *(introductory sentence + first paremia)*

G. *Si suol pur dire che chi non va per mare non sa ciò che sia il timor di Dio.*

*(introductory sentence + second paremia)*

(SF, 16).

If there is a back and forth of paremiac lines, Florio might insert a few formulas to interrupt the list and give vitality to the conversation. As, in the same conversation, Thomaso and Giovanni utter a series of paremias related to faithfulness, they require an introduction of the paremias and an acknowledgment of their meaning:

T. *Non sapete che le belle parole et i cattivi fatti ingannano i savii et i matti?* *(phatic function: contact with the emitter = paremia)*

G. *Io lo so, ma se lui mi batte con la spada, io lo batterò con il fodro.* *(acknowledgment and paremia)*

T. *Dunque, volete rendergli pane per focaccia.* *(negotiation/interpretation of meaning = paremia)*

G. *A chi te la fa, fagliela, o tientela a mente.* *(confirmation of meaning = paremia)*

(SF, 18).
They obtain it by means of turning the paremia into a question (as for Thomaso’s first line) or by explaining a paremia with another paremia, which they link to the previous one by means of a connective (in these instances, “ma” and “dunque”). In other words, all the functions of the discourse, from the phatic function (asking for the interlocutor’s attention) to the negotiation of meaning and its confirmation, happen by means of paremias.

Likewise, in Chapter 3, on the pain caused by a dislocated arm, a didactic paremia is turned into a question:

P. *Non sai che convien tener il braccio al petto e la gamba al letto? (paremia)
T. Non mi spiace questa regola, e l’osserverò. (emotional function: appreciation of paremia)

(SF, 44)

As such, the paremia is recognized, and its message accepted and followed.

In Chapter 5, a paremia is explained because it is left incomplete by its utterer. While Antonio, Samuel, and Crusca discuss games, Antonio asks his servant Crusca how the weather is, and, since it is stormy, he answers with a paremia:

C. Fa tempo aspro, cattivo, chiuso, oscuro, crudele, e tempestoso.
A. *Faremo dunque come fanno a Prato. (paremia)
S. E come fanno a Prato, quando piove? (request for clarification and negotiation of meaning)
A. Lasciano piovere e stanno in casa. (provision of explanation)
S. *Chi è coperto quando piove, è un matto se si muove, se si muove e si bagna, è più che matto se si lagna. (paremia)
A. Volete inferire che ci bisogna star in casa. (request for clarification and negotiation of meaning)
S. Signor sì, fin che passi questa burasca. (confirmation of meaning)
A. Andiamo dunque nel vostro studio a leggere.

(SF, 78).
The first paremia, which is uttered *ex abrupto* and without introduction, is not understood. It might be that the local geographical dimension of the paremia, referring to a small town like Prato, was not immediately clear in the English community in London, as it was in the Florentine. Therefore, the form of the paremia might have affected the method of its utterance, forcing the interlocutor to ask for a clarification of its message. This is particularly true for another aspect. *Far come quei da Prato* is a proverbial expression that is also truncated: Antonio does not pronounce the second part of the proverbial expression (*Lasciano piovere e stanno in casa*), which Samuel, understandably, asks for. The same structure, including utterance of the paremia, clarification of its meaning, and its confirmation, happens for the other paremia, *Chi è coperto quando piove è un matto se si muove; se si muove e si bagna, è più che matto se si lagna*. The interlocutor requests a clarification of the contextual meaning, and not of the conventionalized meaning; the proverb is, indeed, clear in his mind probably because of its prosodic and attractive structure and its simple and everyday message. As he doubts that he has opted for the correct application of the conventionalized meaning to the context of their conversation, namely that they should remain home to avoid the rain, he asks for a confirmation. The other speaker confirms the correct application by adding a reference to the actual context: they will remain at home, until the storm goes away, and read to kill time.

The acknowledgment of a paremia may result in a concatenation of paremias related by content or lexical sharing. The connection through content requires an understanding of the conventionalized meaning of the paremias. An example could be cited from Chapter 1 in a conversation between Torquato and Nolano:

T. Io mi contento di quel poco ch’io ho.

N. *Chi si contenta gode.* (paremia)

T. *Cuor contento è manto su le spalle.* (paremia)
N. Perché vi vestite così caldo?
T. Per viver’ assai e per seguir’ il proverbio. (introductory formula use of the term “proverbio”)
N. Come dice cotesto proverbio? (phatic function)
T. *Vesti caldo, mangia poco, bevi assai, che viverai. (paremia)
N. *Chi non sa far’ i fatti suoi, peggio farà quegli d’altrui. (paremia)
T. *E chi fa i fatti suoi, non s’imbratta le mani. (paremia)

(SF, 10).

The link between the first and the second paremia of the quotation is happiness, and specifically the verb “contentare,” which derives from the adjective “contento:” the conventionalized meaning of the paremia Cuor contento è manto su le spalle, which relates to the protection from adversities that a positive attitude guarantees (GDLI, s.v. cuore), leaves Nolano indifferent, and pushes him to change subject and ask about the dress that Torquato is about to wear. Torquato determines a certain set of expectations (and hence the request to utter the paremia) when he says that in life he follows a specific paremia. In fact, the paremia is intended here as a didactic motto, able to offer useful teachings: Vesti caldo, mangia poco, bevi assai, che viverai. The passage from this paremia to the following one is a jump into a completely different topic, which is, however, linked to the previous one by semantic ties. The paremia Vesti caldo, mangia poco, bevi assai, che viverai ends with the verb “vivere,” which creates a context in which the good and bad of life are considered. In the following paremia, Chi non sa far i fatti suoi, peggio farà quegli d’altrui, even though not apparent, the underlying semantics addresses life too, and how one who does not know how to handle his own business is not able to handle others’, and might end up losing many opportunities. The last paremia of the series, connected semantically to the previous one as they both feature the term “fatti,” reinforces this concept: Chi fa i fatti suoi, non s’imbratta le mani completes the
meaning of the preceding paremia and adds the opposing aspect of the spectrum. This time, indeed, whoever is able to handle his own business, does not get involved in others’, and thus triumphs in life.

The lexical connection is easy to detect when the paremias all share the same word or a synonym. An instance of this is prevalent in Chapter 4, where only one form of interpretation is allowed to give the term “sale” its proper meaning in the following paremias:

T. Io mangio più sale che non fa una capra. (mention of the term “sale”)

C. *Il tutto saporisce e condisce il sale. (first paremia; mention of the term “sale”)

M. *Sopra sale non è sapore, sopra Dio non è signore, et sopra negro non è colore.

(second paremia; mention of the term “sale”)

S. Gentil proverbio, a proposito di sale. (emotional function: appreciation of paremia; mention of the term “sale”)

(SF, 52).

In a pleasant conversation during a meal, Tancredi, Camillo, Melibeo, and Simone comment upon the usefulness of salt in making food delicious. The paremia, *Il tutto saporisce e condisce il sale*, could be interpreted literally but also metaphorically, such as the salt of life. Likewise, the following paremia, stated by Simone, the owner of the house, *Sopra sale non è sapore, sopra Dio non è signore, et sopra negro non è colore*, can be read literally, as evidence that nothing can give more taste to food than salt. On the other side, the paremia could also be interpreted for its conventionalized meaning, namely that one cannot go beyond certain aspects and entities of life, since they are the best that one can obtain. The context and the final assertion direct the way the paremia’s meaning should be transferred in the precise context, which is a literal interpretation: since the final comment recognizes how the previous paremia is a good one about salt, it determines that all the other paremias are to be interpreted literally, and that salt represents the chemical substance.
In Chapter 7, a term, namely “coscientia,” is lexically connected to the mention of a paremia, which in turn shows how proverbs and proverbial phrases are created. As Edouardo, Giordano, and Ulpiano address the topic of faithfulness in friendship, Giordano uses a paremia, whose meaning is questioned. Upon answering, Giordano provides an explanation of the formulation of the paremia:

U. Certo signori io non ho così cattiva conscientia come pensate.

G. *Tutti sete macchiati d’una pece, et havete la conscientia del lupo. (paremia)

E. Che conscientia ha il lupo? (negotiation/interpretation of meaning)

G. Il lupo, trovandosi ammalato, andò dal medico per qualche medicina, il quale gli disse che non dovesse per qualche tempo mangiarsi che per tre quattrini di carne il pasto. Hora il lupo, tornando a casa, trovò per via una pecora con il suo agnello, e mosso da conscientia lupina, per cenar bene stimò la pecora valer due quattrini, et l’agnello uno, così se gli mangiò, e poi disse non haver preterito l’ordine del medico. (explanation)

E. E sopra ciò hanno fatto il proverbio? (phatic function: contact with the emitter)

G. Signor sì, ma questi guanti mi sono troppo stretti. (acknowledgment)

(SF, 120-22)

The request for explanation, which derives from the ambiguity of the conventionalized meaning of the proverbial phrase (*Havere la conscientia del lupo*), triggers a detailed description of its origin. After that, the first reaction by skeptical and surprised Edouardo is a phatic question that requests a confirmation of the actual existence of the paremia. This question, however, does not further the discussion, since Giordano, after ratifying it, shifts abruptly to a more mundane topic, which starts a new list of paremias.
Despite the considerable number of paremias, wellerisms in Florio’s *Fruites* are scarce.585 If we agree with Taylor, wellerisms offered relatively few opportunities for pedagogical use because of the lack of a proper moral message, which rendered them “unsuitable for school use” (Taylor 1931, 206). Speroni also argues that a wellerism transplanted in a foreign culture hardly takes root or becomes productive, as “it is very difficult to appreciate or even to care for the local, and frequently, incongruous and untranslatable, phrases that constitute many wellerisms” (Speroni 1953b, 6). This could be the explanation for the scarcity of wellerisms in Florio’s two language manuals, directed to a public that was unfamiliar with Italian culture.

In *Firste Fruites*, Florio does not include any wellerism. In *Second Frutes*, instead, three wellerisms appear, and they show a specific structure: the proverbial component of the paremia is extrapolated and is placed in the primary position, followed by the “come disse/come diceva” part:

- *Nel mezzo consiste la virtù, disse il diavolo trovandosi fra due Monache* (SF, 48)
- *Per tutte c’è da fare, diceva colui che ferrava le oche* (SF, 84)
- *Io non so se l’anderà bene, diceva colei che dava un servitiale al suo marito con un buon bastone* (SF, 136).

585 Wellerisms in *Giardino* are likewise rare and scattered inside the collection, so that its letter “C” does not have a special section dedicated to them, as happens in other collections of paremias, such as Salviati’s and Serdonati’s. Speroni shows that twenty-four wellerisms are present in Florio’s *Giardino di ricreatione* (Speroni 1953b). However, he considers as wellerisms six proverbial phrases listed by Florio, even if they show neither the formula “come disse” nor the indication of the person or animal that pronounces the saying (specifically, the wellerisms indicated by the numbers 42, 50, 74, 114, 253, 299 in Speroni 1953b). For example, the wellerism *Come disse il Calavrese: Havesti paura?* (Speroni 1953b, n. 42) is mentioned three times in GR as a proverb and a proverbial phrase: *A chi tocca tocca, se nò, havesti paura?* (GR, 55); *Havesti paura?* (GR, 139); *Se coglie coglia, se no, havesti paura?* (GR, 245). Furthermore, the phrase *La padella dice al paiuolo, sta in là, che tu mi tingi*, is listed as a wellerism, but not the similar *La padella dice al manico, tu sei negro*, and both belong to one of four categories of false wellerisms (Speroni 1953b, 5). Based on these considerations, the wellerisms in Florio’s *Giardino* appear to total 22.
The first two wellerisms of the list show a lexical connection to the precedent sentence (“mezzo” for the first) or a conceptual one (“occupato in qualche negotio importante” for the second), whereas the third is introduced without any apparent link to the context.

In particular, the second wellerism is an interesting case since it is changed for reasons related to contextualization. It appears during a conversation between six speakers, including two servants, on the issue of “familiar and ceremonious compliments” in Chapter 6. Once Michele’s unexpected arrival is warmly received, Daniele addresses him by noting that he is always busy with many matters. The conversation between them and Stefano follows:

D. Sete sempre occupato in qualche negotio importante.
M. *Per tutte c’è da fare, diceva colui che ferrava le oche. (paremia, wellerism)
S. Ho a caro che siete giunto così a proposito.
M. A me sia carissimo se io son giunto a tempo per potervi fare qualche servigio.
S. Servigio non già, ma favore ci sia che vi piaccia descinare con esso noi.
M. Perdoninmi le SS. VV., io ho di già descinato.
D. Havete dunque mangiato molto per tempo.
M. Mi piace di mangiare quando mi vien fame.
H. *Il ricco quando vuole, il povero quando puole. (paremia)
S. Fateci almeno compagnia, che poi giuocheremo (SF, 84).

Michele uses the wellerism *Per fortuna c’è da fare, diceva colui che ferrava le oche, manipulating it from its most common form, Come disse quel che ferrava l’oche. E’ ci sarà, che fare.586 As it means that no one is exempt from dealing with issues or problems, it carries a rather negative emotional assessment of the continual occurrence of problems. The provenance of the paremia is rather comic, as is the case for almost all wellerisms: a man, apparently not very perspicacious, wants to shoe the feet of his geese. As someone reports, he

586 For further references on the wellerism, see Speroni 1953b, 43.
stretches out on the ground and looking at the foot of a goose, utters, “E’ ci sarà che fare,” acknowledging that the task is more difficult than expected. Others report that, as soon as the same man lifts the foot of one goose, each of the remaining geese lifts a foot; he then realizes the burden of the undertaking and exclaims that he was already aware of the difficulty of his initiative. Voc. Cr. 1612 lists another meaning for the wellerism (s.v. oca), and relates it to all the geese together tightening their palms while raising their foot. Within the context of Second Frutes, the addition of the cluster “per fortuna” overturns the original meaning, and unhooks the wellerism from its original context of creation and from the conventionalized meaning that is traditionally associated with it. In the dialogue, the wellerism has an entirely positive meaning, as it emphasizes the advantage of having to deal with occupations that evidently bear wealth and income to those who are interested. Michele is asserting that he feels lucky to be always busy with negotia, occupations and affairs, and so is reading the paremiac section of the wellerism in a literal way. This instance confirms that, if paremias are inserted in a meaningful context, their contextualization goes beyond morphological, syntactic, and lexical elements, and can even reach the point of making the paremia express an opposite meaning to its common one. Michele’s wellerism has so little impact on the narration that Stefano goes back to talk about Michele’s unexpected arrival. Similarly, the subsequent paremia in their conversation, Il ricco quando vuole, il povero quando puole, does not trigger any reaction among the two speakers, and is followed by Stefano’s invitation for Michele to grant the others his company.

Firste Fruites, Second Frutes and Giardino di ricreatione: A Contextual Comparison

The contextual evaluation of paremias in Firste Fruites and Second Frutes acquires more significance if their proverbs, proverbial phrases, and wellerisms are compared with each other, where more instances of the same paremia are present, and with those listed in
Comparing and contrasting the paremias’ modifications in morphology, syntax, and vocabulary throughout the three works offers important examples of contextual use of paremias, and gives strength to the influence of context on the paremiac structure.

With its more than 6,000 Italian paremias without a context and without translation in English, Florio’s collection makes more evident how time and context introduce differences in the paremias that appear in the two manuals. As they shift from a narrative or dialogic characterization in *Firste Fruites* and *Second Frutes* to a gnomic character with a generalization in structure and meaning in the collection of paremias and vice versa, paremias adapt to the genre and hence change their structure accordingly.

Of the roughly 287 paremias in *Firste Fruites* (six of them are repeated twice), almost all of them (254) are transferred in *Giardino*, including those variants that reproduce part of the paremias in the language manual or present lexical or morphological changes: just thirty-three of them do not find a place in *Giardino*, and they do not seem to be excluded for an apparent reason. The 273 paremias in Chapter 19 are transferred almost entirely into *Giardino* (only twenty-six paremias do not have an equivalent): 229 of them show a perfect correspondence, or just minor modifications when in the collection; the remaining eighteen can count on a variant, which conveys the same conventionalized meaning, or with which they share part of their structure, mostly a hemistich. The variant may also expand the list of possibilities for the comments (for instance, FF, *Chi nuoce altrui, nuoce se stesso* and GR, *Chi conosce se stesso, altrui non nuoce*; FF, *La speranza è l’ultima cosa de l’huomo* and GR, *L’ultimo rifugio, è la speranza, o la morte*).588

587 Torriano, for instance, translates the Italian paremias in English in his *Piazza universale*.
588 Within *Giardino di ricreatione*, there are examples of paremias with different variants, an indication of how Florio knew different formulations of the same paremia and wanted to collect the greatest number of instances for a lexicographic intent. The lexical variation, even within the first letter of the alphabet, is well represented. For instance, the paremia *A gatto che lecca cenere, non fidar farina* (GR, 1) presents an alternative: *A gatto che lecca il spiede, non fidar l’arosto* (GR, 12).
For *Second Frutes*, the number of transferred paremias is consistently different: of a total of 517 paremias in the second language manual (twelve of which are repeated twice), only 274 appear in *Giardino*. This gives strength to the speculation that the asterisk beside the paremias in *Second Frutes* is not an indication of which proverbs and proverbial phrases appear in the collection, considering that 242 paremias are missing there. The inconsistent use of this paratextual element might suggest that the asterisks were an aid for readers, who could, without much difficulty, spot a paremia inside the dialogues and use it in their own conversations. They could even be an encouragement to memorize the paremias, which, as the title of the collection suggests, grow in Florio’s garden in the form of “fronde, fiori e frutti, vaghe, leggiadri, e soavi”—a title that aligns with the motto and the intent of the Accademia della Crusca to satisfy the ideal of “il più bel fior ne coglie.”

Contextualization of paremias in the *Fruits* makes paremias show additional elements that do not appear in *Giardino*. The most common ones are structures that introduce a completive sentence, among which are “bisogna che,” “c’è de gli huomini che,” “convien/conviene che,” “è meglio che,” “si dice che,” “non sapete che,” “bene dice il savio che,” “vi converrebbe dire che,” and the authorial “ben dice il Boccaccio che.” One instance is a paremia from *Second Frutes*:

*A carne di lupo convien dar dente di cane* (SF, 20)

*A carne di lupo, dente di cane* (GR, 1).

In *Second Frutes*, the paremia appears in a dialogue between Thomaso and Giovanni in the second chapter and thus acquires a more prosaic structure and intonation, which differs from the syntactical and prosodic balance that it shows in *Giardino*. The paremia is mentioned

Florio’s variant is registered by Serdonati as an alternative to a more common formulation of the paremia: “*A can che lecca cenere non gli fidar farina.* Perché, come disse l’Arsiccie, il ciò fare è come porre il lupo per pecoraio, e andare alla gatta pel lardo. Altri dicono *A gatto che lecca cenere ecc.: chi ne fa una piccola ne farà una grande.*” Since neither Buoni nor Pescetti report this variant, and Salviati’s variant included a dog (*A can che lecca cenere, non gli fidar farina*), it is possible that Serdonati read this paremia in Florio’s collection, if, as Speroni argues, Serdonati explicitly mentions Florio in a few occasions (Speroni 1957, 156, n. 18).
after Giovanni declares not to doubt the presence of a friend, and is inserted inside a back-and-forth of paremiac lines:

T. *Chi promette e non attende, la promessa non val niente.

G. Sì, ma io mi fido della sua promessa.

T. *Da chi mi fido guardimi Dio, che da chi non mi fido mi guarderò io.

G. Egli mi dà tante belle parole, ch’io non potrei non fidarmi di lui.

T. *Non sapete che le belle parole et i cattivi fatti, ingannano i savi e i matti?

G. *Io lo so, ma se lui mi batte con la spada, io lo batterò con il fodro.

T. *Dunque, volete rendergli pane per focaccia.

G. *A chi te la fa, fagliela, o tientela a mente.

T. Con tale gente bisogna far così.

G. *A carne di lupo convien dar dente di cane.

(SF, 18-20).

If these paremias are compared with those featuring in Giardino, which presents their a-contextualized form, it appears that they are manipulated when placed in a dialogical context, and that they carry a message specific to that context:

a. *Chi promette e non attende, la promessa non val niente (SF, 18)
   
   Chi promette e non attende, la promessa non val’ niente (GR, 31)

b. *Da chi mi fido guardimi Dio, che da chi non mi fido mi guarderò io (SF, 18)
   
   Da chi mi fido guardimi Dio, che da chi non mi fido, mi guarderò io (GR, 94)

c. *Non sapete che le belle parole et i cattivi fatti, ingannano i savi e i matti? (SF, 18)
   
   Belle parole, e cattivi fatti, ingannano savij, et matti (GR, 18)

d. *Io lo so, ma se lui mi batte con la spada, io lo batterò con il fodro (SF, 18)
   
   Chi percuote con la spada, sarà percosso col fodro. (GR, 38)

e. *Dunque, volete rendergli pane per focaccia (SF, 18)
The examples c, d, e, and g prove how the paremias in Second Frutes respond to a need for stylistic conformity to the syntax and content of the speech in which they appear. In this way, they can become part of a question (e.g., c), specify a thought and refer to a specific person (and hence the use of personal pronouns replacing the pronoun “chi” and of the passive in GR; e.g., d), introduce a logical inference or a concluding summary (e.g., e), and give a suggestion (e.g., g).

In Firste Frutes, a paremia, which has already been mentioned, if compared with its equivalent in Giardino, shows how it adapts to the syntax and morphology of the conversation. In Chapter 6,

È sempre bono per uno haver due corde per il suo archo (FF, 6v),

the proverbial phrase adds a possessive adjective to make the expression connect with the precedent dative “per uno.” The paremia is also introduced by an introductory phrase, “È sempre bono,” which indicates the common belief in the appropriateness and universality of the paremia. The same introductory formula appears in the list of paremias in Chapter 19:

È bon sempre haver due corde per un archo (FF, 30v).

What emerges from the comparison is that the proverbial phrase in context presents more linguistic substance, so that its structure can run smoothly in the sentence. Instead, when Florio lists the paremia without any context in Chapter 19, he maintains the introductory formula, but renders the paremia less narrative, as well as more impersonal than it is in Chapter 6. In Giardino,
È sempre buono, haver due corde per un’arco (GR, 98),

Florio appears to combine the two versions, as he maintains the introductory formula from Chapter 6 (yet he introduces the diphthongization in “buono”) and keeps the general structure of the paremia from Chapter 19. Understandably, Giardino di ricreatione is ideologically nearer to the list of paremias in Chapter 19, since they share the decontextualized presence of paremias. However, Florio makes the paremia more general, as it refers to a generic arch (“per un’arco”) and not to someone’s arch (“per il suo archo”).

A few paremias appear twice in the language manuals, and they may change in accordance with the context. This happens with one proverb that features twice in Firste Fruites and once in Second Frutes. Chi tardi arriva mal alloggia appears, as shown above, in Chapter 5 of Firste Fruites, and then again in Chapter 19 in the same exact form, except for the apostrophe to indicate apocopation and the degemination in the verb of the first hemistich. In Second Frutes, the paremia’s form does not show the truncation of the adverb, which makes it more prosaic:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Chi tardi arriva, mal alloggia} (FF, 5r)
  \item \textit{Chi tardi ariva, mal’allogia} (FF, 29r)
  \item \textit{*Chi tardi arriva, mal alloggia} (SF, 58).
\end{itemize}

Another example of transferal of paremias from one context to another is seen in the paremia Muro bianco carta di matti, which Florio lists in Chapter 19 of Firste Fruites, and then uses in the letter to the readers of his Second Frutes:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Muro bianco carta di matti} (FF, 32r)
  \item \textit{Muro bianco} is paper good enough for everie matto (SF, A2v).
\end{itemize}

Florio plays with the meaning of the paremia, namely that a mad person could even use a white wall to write, conventionally saying that you cannot imagine what a mad mind can do,
and that no field is immune from the presence of crazy people.⁵⁸⁹ In *Second Frutes*, the paremia is dismembered and transformed into a hybrid structure between Italian and English. Florio then explains that “prints were first invented for wise men’s use, and not for foole’s play,” thus applying the paremia’s conventionalized meaning to literary enterprises where “crazy people,” namely unworthy writers and linguists, pretend to be at the same level of the others and thus do the craziest things ever (such as engaging in a publication). Considering that Florio is excusing himself from the accusation of being unworthy of writing a bilingual manual, he is ironically admitting that the range of possibilities for a “crazy” mind, as much as his, is infinite. And hence, he will release his Italian proverbs and proverbial phrases to the world and make them available in London and England.

If a paremia appears in both the language manuals and the later collection of paremias, usually the paremia in *Giardino* is more similar, if not totally equivalent, to the paremia in *Second Frutes*, given the less context surrounding paremias in the second language manual. Sometimes, the differences are minimal and pertain to morphological choices, as in the following examples:

- *Christo lasio neli precetti suoi, non far altrui, quel che per te non vuoi* (FF, 26r)
- *Christo lasciò neli precettii, voi non far altrui, quel che per te non vuoi* (FF, 14v)
- *Christo lasciò ne gli precetti suoi, non far’altrui, quel che per te non vuoi* (SF, 102)
- *Christo lasciò negli precetti suoi, non far’altrui quel che per tè non vuoi* (GR, 41)

or, similarly,

- *Gatto guantato non piglia sorzi* (FF, 30r)
- *Gatto guantato non piglia sorgij* (SF, 120)
- *Gatto guantato, non piglia sorgij* (GR, 107).

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⁵⁸⁹ Hazlitt reports a rhyme created out of the paremia: “He is a fool and ever shall That writes his name upon a wall” (Hazlitt, 43).
In the first example, the truncation of the verb “fare” before “altrui” appears in both Second Frutes and Giardino; in the second example, the regional aspect (“sorgi”) demonstrates equivalence between the paremia in Second Frutes and the one in Giardino.

Sometimes, however, the opposite occurs, and the paremia in Giardino clearly derives from a paremia in Firste Fruites. In one case, a paremia has three members in Firste Fruites and Giardino, but contains ten members in Second Frutes, where it is expanded with additions of synonymic elements:


Aspettare e non venire, star’in letto e non dormire, ben servire e non gradire, son tre doglie da morire (GR, 13).

The paremia in Giardino is undoubtedly nearer to the paremia in Firste Fruites; however, it presents a lexical element from Second Frutes, namely “doglie,” which replaces the more generic “cose” in the first language manual. The addition of more elements in the structure of the paremia in Second Frutes answers to the necessity of presenting the greatest possible number of paremiac instances with the same or a similar meaning, for those in need of a phrase book or a conversation manual. This is an objective that is less perceived in Firste Fruites, and that apparently does not guide the selection of paremias in Giardino, where paremias are generally brief.
Many are indeed the examples of combined paremias in Second Frutes, as opposed to disjointed ones in Giardino. For instance,

*Lauda il mare, e tienti alla terra; lauda il monte, e tienti al piano, lauda la guerra, e tienti alla pace; e lauda la moglie, ma tienti donzello* (SF, 98),

which corresponds to four distinct paremias in Giardino:

Lauda la moglie, e tienti donzello
Lauda la guerra, e tienti alla pace
Lauda il monte, e tienti al piano
Lauda il mare, e tienti a terra (GR, 137);

or,

*Freno indorato non migliora il cavallo, né guaina d’oro coltello di piombo* (SF, 194),

which corresponds to two separate paremias in Giardino:

Freno indorato, non migliora il cavallo (GR, 102)
In guaina d’oro, coltello di piombo (GR, 123).

The combination of the two paremias in Second Frutes changes the meaning of the two paremias in Giardino. In Second Frutes, the main clause, “non migliora,” supports both the first hemistich and the second one, so that the meaning of the second would be that a good appearance cannot change the real substance of things, much as a “a sheath of gold [does not better] a leaden knife.” In Giardino, instead, *In guaina d’oro, coltello di piombo* conveys the conventionalized meaning that appearances are not truthful (GDLI, s.v. guaina).

From a linguistic point of view, at times, Firste Fruites and Second Frutes appear less Tuscan than Giardino di ricreatione. For instance, the proverbial phrase, *Acqua lontana non spegne fuoco vicino* (SF, 198) presents the verb “ispegne” in the collection of paremias,

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590 The paremia also features in SF, 122, where it appears with only its first hemistich.
which is a typical Tuscan prosthesis. In a proverbial phrase from *Firste Fruites, Alegreza di cuore, fa bella peladura di viso* (FF, 27v), “peladura” shows the already-mentioned sonorization from Northern dialects, absent in *Giardino*, which features the standard “pelatura.” In *Chi duo lepri cazia, uno perde, l’altro lasia* (FF, 26v), the elements of the Paduan koinè are apparent in the spirantization of “cazia” and in the lack of the palatal phone in “lasia,” two aspects that are normalized into the Tuscan forms “caccia” and “lascia” in *Giardino*. Moreover, *In una notte nasce un fungo* (FF, 30v) does not feature the typical Tuscan anaphonesis “fongo” that appears in *Giardino*. Finally, the shift from the article “li” for masculine plural nouns in the first language manual to “i” and “gli” in the collection of paremias, and from “el” to “il” for masculine singular nouns, are spies of the tendential Tuscanization of the language of proverbs and proverbial phrases from *Firste Fruites* to *Giardino*, mediated by *Second Frutes*.

Conclusions

Despite Praz’s assessment of Florio as a mediocre writer (Praz 1942b), Florio’s original methods of teaching languages are undoubtedly innovative. His novelty consists in being the first to consider paremias as the fastest and most effective tool to teach languages and cultures. He recognized them as fundamental tools to transmit Italian language and culture, and used them extensively to fulfil this purpose. In his two language manuals paremias help students learn Italian and, at the same time, represent a linguistic and cultural product of Italy essential to teaching the language and its culture. In other words, paremias became the elements of the language that *par excellence* perform a memory-facilitating function for educational purposes, thanks to their prosodic elements. At the same time, they

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501 Prosthesis is the addition of a letter or a syllable at the beginning of a word.
shape communicative contexts and create situational scenes that could be reproduced in everyday conversations and mundane meetings. This way is effective and profitable in terms of cultural and linguistic instruction, as well as delightful.

Paremias have different functions in the two language manuals: *Firste Fruites* is more didactic and complies with a stern and “moral” context, whereas *Second Frutes* is more decorative. The diachrony between the two works as well as the different levels of target audiences also differentiate the objectives of each work and the ways to achieve those objectives. The first manual is more apologetic as Florio tries to excuse possible mistakes and misinterpretations in the text; this is why paremias are constantly confirmed in their meanings and messages. On the contrary, in the second manual, as paremias become elements to embellish literary discourses, their message is secondary to their form and structure, and their presence in the text affects the speakers and the narrative less and less. From *Firste Fruites* to *Second Frutes*, paremias shifted from narratological elements to decorative elements. They also moved from being appropriate for intermediate students exposed to everyday (and pedagogically easy) contexts, yet to many cultural aspects (quite difficult to grasp for a student with only a basic knowledge of the language) to advanced students able to read about sophisticated conversations on high-quality topics even though they were less exposed to cultural elements.

The dynamic relationship within each of the two manuals creates an ambience in which culture, education, and linguistics meet and release the results of their combination. In accordance with Florio’s objectives, translation of paremias can be literal or based upon their message, and the passage from one option to the other represents the evolution from the first to the second book and the evolution within society in Elizabethan England. Progressively, paremias do not simply describe a culture and a linguistic code, but they become representatives of a situation and a message related to that culture and that linguistic code,
while remaning associated with the context that could guarantee their insertion into the conversation.

Unlike in *Giardino di ricreatione*, the contextual analysis of paremias assumes a crucial role and demonstrates how paremias modify their nature when they are contextualized. Whether Florio wants to present the best “flowers” of the Italian language in a list of paremias, or to use them in manuals devoted to teaching Italian, paremias easily fluctuate from one context to another, as they represent Italy and Italians and give voice to the author’s request for recognition and approval. In both manuals, Florio also exposes students to as many paremias as possible, both in context and in lists. Since he constantly uses them as a demonstration of his acquaintance with the language, his paremias capture an emotive status that makes them alive in the text. Their accumulation is not just a fancy, since it derives from a determined goal: to spread the knowledge of the Italian language in a society that was thirsty for foreign models to follow and imitate; to offer learners a quick and effective way to learn the language for sentimental or professional reasons; and to show a section of a culturally rich nation by means of elements, i.e. paremias, constantly used by Italians living in London and merchants engaging in business deals with locals. Paremias answer to a pragmatic necessity, while simultaneously fulfilling the recreational needs of learners and lovers of the Italian language.

Paremias constitute the recurrent element in many of Florio’s works, from his translations to his bilingual dictionary. They assume different linguistic, literary, and cultural tasks and they prove different points while they promote the importance of the Italian language at work. It does not surprise that even the frontespice of the Queen Anna’s *New World of Words* presents a paremia, namely a proverb that summarizes Florio’s approach to literature, linguistics, and probably life: *Chi si contenta gode.*
Non ho osservato interamente l’ordine richiesto, a cui d’una in un’altra lingua, gli altri scrittori et concetti trasporta et traduce; anzi talhora levando, talhora aggiungendo qualche parola, ho mischiato il mio con quello dell’autore, secondo che mi è paruto meglio et di più vaghezza, pur ch’io habbia servata integra la sententia.

Lodovico Guicciardini, *Detti et fatti piacevoli et gravi di diversi principi, filosofi, et corgiani*, 4v
CONCLUDING NOTES ON TRANSFERRING PAREMIAS

Paremias are subject to change: this is the underlining message that this study aims to highlight. Transitions of paremias happen “interculturally and intertemporally” (Bassnett, 89), as well as intertextually, contextually, and among writers, and result in fruitful examples of paremiac variation and creativity. The three authors selected in this research prove how paremias change in original and personal ways and how they cross genres and ideologies.

One might say that paremias are the voice of a community but other communities might understand their meaning. They overpass social, national, and linguistic boundaries and become a timeless *lingua franca*, as they express ideas and thoughts from the past and that are still current nowadays. As Constance Sullivan states, paremiac acts are the “cultural currency at a given historical moment,” and even beyond that historical moment. In other words, paremias are transnational and belong to all cultures and literatures.

Yet, paremias change through time as every language is subjected to modifications due to internal and external factors. Paremias change through geographical and social spaces: despite a common core of shared paremias, each culture features its own proverbs and proverbial phrases, which are the result of mostly historical and geographical factors.

Paremias are rooted in a community and speak exclusively to that community. On a smaller scale, modifications apply to paremias as they are used by different speakers, as they move from one work to another, and when they are translated from one language to another. What is intrinsically specific in the transference of paremias is how they gradually change through minds and situations as speakers and writers express their ideas and perspectives on society.

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language, and texts. The message of a paremia is modified when speakers and writers reveal their emotions in ways that twist the original meaning of a paremiac expression and when they make proverbs and proverbial phrases convey a specific concept. Finally, paremias change when beyond their conventionalized and traditionally recognized status they acquire a specific contextual meaning, which cannot be applied to another context (Vallini, 63).

In both written and spoken uses, paremias establish a tight relationship with the context. In literature, this context is given by the literary genre, the purpose of the literary work, and the specific sentence in which paremias are inserted. On the one hand, the context shapes the paremias and determines the way proverbs, proverbial phrases, and wellerisms change and transit through their different levels of meaning. On the other hand, paremias influence the context, as they transmit a message that needs to be received and recognized. Therefore, the connection between context and paremias determine a “fertile space” and a dynamic relationship where paremias can assume a different role in the text and contexts can enrich their literary essence. The modification can be minimal, but what results always leaves a visible trace in the message that the paremia conveys and in the way the audience receives it and the text at large. Whether it becomes a phrase used to admonish, praise, instruct, educate, or entertain, only the context determines which of the multiple conventionalized meanings of a paremia is the one to select and to apply in order to obtain its appropriate contextual meaning.

The specific investigation of this study acknowledges all these forms of paremiac change and evaluates them with the lens of an emic perspective, first proposed by Pike and later embraced by Labov and Grimaldi, as discussed in Chapter 1.2. Since this perspective analyzes paremias from the inside, it explores their constituent elements and, especially, the situations in which they appear. Decontextualized paremias remain suspended in a potential state and represent an unreal condition, an artificial construction for the sake of creating
lexical material. Contextualized paremias, instead, are actualized in a real and meaningful situation, consequently sending clear information on the author’s literary mind and ideology, his literary stature, his attitude, and his perspective. Sometimes, this information is disguised since the author uses it ironically and makes paremias evoke something different or transmitting a specific message. However, the contextual analysis allows to give paremias the appropriate emphasis in the sentence or in the narrative section.

Such a methodological approach proves to be particularly fruitful when applied to the three authors of the present study. Even though they engage in different genres, live in different historical moments over a time period of one hundred and thirty years, and use different languages, Brusantino, Sarnelli, and Florio share their peripherical position and their choice to venture outside the boundaries of their maternal languages. Their proverbs and proverbial phrases “translate” their voice and vividly express their ideas, which in turn reflect in the varied objectives of their works. By employing paremias to both instruere ac delectare, they pay adequate attention to the requests of their own society and adapt their texts in ways that make them the best representatives of individual as well as societal perspectives.

The contextual analysis of paremias might look at clusters of words or single letters to determine a specific message, and yet is part of a larger set of objectives and a powerful method to engage with the texts in a more meaningful way and know each author’s process of writing better. In this study, it succeeds to bring to light Brusantino’s work, to re-evaluate Sarnelli’s fables, and to expose the modernity of Florio’s approach to language teaching. Brusantino chooses his paremias in order to express a personal ethical interpretation of the Decameron much before the canonical “rassettature” of Boccaccio’s text. Sarnelli describes the Baroque atmosphere of Naples with accumulation of paremias as well as with paremias interspersed in the narration and distinguishes his work from Basile’s Lo cunto de li cunti for his greater attention to local aspects. Florio is the first author to use paremias pervasively in
language manuals in order to show his students the Italian culture and language in meaningful communicative contexts.

The three authors place paremias at the intersection of imitation and personal innovation: when they employ paremias, they guarantee that paremias reiterate themselves from one generation to another; and since they use paremias in specific situations, they simultaneously renew the paremias’ meaning(s) through their contextual use. Idiosyncrasies of their language and use emerge as they draw from common and popular knowledge, intersperse their writings with personal interpretations, give strength to their voices, translate their attitudes toward texts and traditions, and determine their autonomy and independence from celebrated authors, languages, and texts. The analysis of paremias in their works proves how paremias can be used for multiple purposes and hence how polysemy is intrinsic to their structure.

From an ideological point of view, Pettinelli’s assertion that Brusantino’s *Le cento novelle* is a “manuale di comportamenti” from which to draw during mundane conversations (Pettinelli 2004, 168; 182), establishes a connection between Brusantino’s work and Florio’s *Fruits*. Both works aim to be useful for a specific typology of public: Brusantino speaks for and to the mid-sixteenth century audience of *Le cento novelle*, who was starting to experience the moral stances of the Tridentine council; almost simultaneously, Florio writes for the English population, who was looking for examples of moral behavior as well as instances of refined discourses in the available books. Both authors achieve this goal by means of paremias. Proverbs and proverbial phrases become the means through which people can learn an ethical message about life, refer to literary matters, speak better in public and consequently become better members of society, and ultimately learn in an easier and more meaningful way about the culture and society who speaks the Italian language. Despite the different contexts in which paremias are used, both works offer a vast number of paremias for almost
every occasion of life as well as for ethical and cultural interpretations of literary documents and topics.

From an authorial perspective, if Florio’s paremias belong to tradition and result from a meticulous search through Italian collections of paremias, Brusantino’s and Sarnelli’s proverbs and proverbial phrases reveal the personality of the two authors much more. Except for one instance, Brusantino invents all his initial paremias and shows how a strong sense of ethics drives his interpretation of Boccaccio’s text. His paremias also reveal how Brusantino is far from being a strong censor of erotic scenes in the Decameron. Brusantino accepts love when it is driven by natural necessities and feelings but condemns it when it affects society negatively; and he highlights this perspective through one-hundred initial paremias, while leaving the original text as it is or changing it minimally to support the initial message. Similarly, Sarnelli’s paremias translate the emotions and feelings associated with literary, linguistic, and social instances and events. Their accumulation mirrors the power of the mind combined with the power of the word, and evokes the creative process of an author who uses the Neapolitan dialect for the sake of demonstrating its being a thriving language that creates, shapes, modifies, and recreates. Compliant with the Baroque spirit of the late seventeenth century, paremias reflect the author’s willingness to marvel and astonish the reader with the corpulence as well as flexibility of the language.

From a paremiac perspective, Brusantino, Sarnelli, and Florio share the use of proverbs and proverbial phrases in context. Except a few lists of paremias in Florio’s Fruits, the three authors’ paremias are intrinsically connected to a provided literary or dialogic situation. They also share the lack of wellerisms; just a few of them appear in Sarnelli’s and Florio’s work (while they are absent in Brusantino’s Le cento novelle), and when the two authors employ them, they always give a comic and ironic patina to the narration.
Tripartite and numeric paremias are richly present in both Sarnelli’s *Posilecheata* and in Florio’s *Frutes*. For instance, the introduction to *Posilecheata* and Chapter 4 of *Second Frutes* both describe a meal between friends, interspersed with paremias. In Florio’s language manual, proverbs and proverbial phrases either have a direct connection with the offered food and beverages (the majority of them), or enrich the talk between the fellow diners. As they provide useful examples for conversation over meals, they contribute to a more refined dialogue. Conversely, in *Posilecheata*, Marchionno bombastically employs paremias in order to get an invitation to dinner, while at the same time showing his popular background through his behavior and speech. Both texts aim to achieve an objective: to teach how to speak appropriately and in good Italian (*Second Frutes*), and to show the dense and productive nature of the Neapolitan culture, language, and personality (*Posilecheata*).

Similarly, on the description of the best features of beautiful women based on the number three, Florio recalls the same tradition to which Sarnelli refers in his *Posilecheata*, namely Alunno’s entry *Tre* in *La fabbrica del mondo*:

*Tre bote tre unnece cose fanno bella na femmiena: azzoè tre cose longhe e tre corte; tre larghe, tre strette e tre grosse, tre sottile; tre retonne, tre piccole, tre ghianche, tre rosse, tre negre* (P, 13.11)

*La donna che vuol’ esser detta bella sopra tutte le bellissime, convien haver treinta cose, per le quali vien celebrata Helena. Cioè, tre bianche, tre negre, tre rosse, tre corte, tre longhe, tre grosse, tre sottili, tre strette, tre larghe, e tre piccole. Le bianche sono, i denti, le mani, et la gola. Le negre sono, gli occhi, le ciglia, et i peletti c’ascondono diletto. Le rosse sono, le labbra, le guancie, et i capitelli delle mammelle. Le longhe sono, le gambe, le dita, et i capelli. Le corte sono, i piedi, le orecchie, et i denti, ma con misura. Le larghe sono, la fronte, il petto, et i fianchi. Le strette sono, nelle coscie, nel naso, et nel luogo*
di piacere. Le grosse o piene sono, le coscie, le groppe, et il ventre. Le sottili sono, le labbra, le ciglia, et i capelli. Le picciole sono, la bocca, nel traverso, o le pupille de gl’occhi. Et chi manca alcuna di queste parti non puo vantarsi d’esser bella, ma chi tutte le possiede, si può dir bella in ogni perfettione (SF, 130).

This example illustrates how both authors, though geographically apart, were inspired by the same source, a Florentine text that is also pervasively used in the elaboration of the first edition of the Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca. Florio did not put an asterisk beside his long and detailed paremia; he probably did not consider it as an instance of tripartite paremia, but just a maxim to transmit useful teachings on how to view women. On the contrary, in Sarnelli’s work, Marchionno employs the same paremia in order to prove his point: everything in the world is based upon the number three and, thus, a dinner should be composed of three fellows, one of whom should be himself.

Another example of paremiac sharing and of dissimilar contextual use is the proverb Chi va a letto senza cena, tutta notte si dimena, which derives from Boccaccio’s text and appears in Le cento novelle and in Second Frutes (SF, Ch. 10). In both instances, the proverb is interpreted literally: the characters will move around the bed under the grip of hunger because they did not eat anything at night. However, the metaphorical hint at the real act of engaging in a passionate sexual relationship (as is the case in the Decameron and Le cento novelle) is absent in Florio’s language manual. Here, the proverb is a statement pronounced by a character who comments upon a desired dinner that seems not to take place. When a group of friends realizes that they will be going to bed without supper, one of them replies in paremiac tones, which soften the tense situation and help them find an alternative to the unfortunate circumstances.
Brusantino, Sarnelli, and Florio leave us with a strong and substantiated message on paremiography and transferal of paremias: creativity, change, and evolution distinguish paremias as they continually transition from one dimension to another, and as they are used and manipulated across time and genres. Studying *Le cento novelle, Posiclecheata, Firste Fruites* and *Second Frutes* contributes to opening new perspectives in the field of paremiac studies and emphasizes the importance of the contextual and linguistic analysis of paremias in works of the Early Modern and Baroque periods, and beyond. In fact, the contextual analysis of paremias is not limited to literary works. As many critics have argued, spoken paremias can be analyzed in the same way, by considering extra-linguistic elements that contribute to the expression of their message and explain the reciprocal relationship between spoken utterance and contextual situation.

Paremias also move across different disciplines: from the Renaissance to today, paremias have been placed side by side with images. The purpose of illustrating paremias was and still is to facilitate the expression of their meanings, or to focus on one of their meanings, to capture the attention of the audience, and to transmit profound messages (to people who were, for instance, performing calligraphy or waiting to meet the exponents of a noble family while viewing representations of masterpieces in Italian literature on the walls). Illustrations of paremias also create memorable emblems and thus establish a communication between words and images, or shape a visual situation for the paremia, as in many recent publications of collections of paremias across countries and cultures. This would be a new and innovative way to study transitions of paremias in fields that are not necessarily verbal or written.

Paremias are more than cultural means; they are expressions of identities, thoughts, and events, and, when they move from one context to another, they acquire and continue to acquire new forms, new contents, and new messages for new societies and communities. And
authors and speakers contribute to keep their messages and meanings alive for generations to come.

As stated in a proverb, *Chi vivrà vedrà.*
Non ho osservato interamente l’ordine richiesto, a cui d’una in un’altra lingua, gli altri scrittori et concetti trasporta et traduce; anzi talhora levando, talhora aggiungendo qualche parola, ho mischiato il mio con quello dell’autore, secondo che mi è paruto meglio et di più vaghezza, pur ch’io habbia servata integra la sententia.

Lodovico Guicciardini, *Detti et fatti piacevoli et gravi di diversi principi, filosofi, et corgiani*, 4v
INDEX OF PAREMIAS IN *Le cento novelle, Posilecheata,*

**Firste Fruites and Second Frutes**

Voi sapete ch’in ogni lingua non c’è più bella gratia,
che l’vsar, et nel parlare, et nel scriuere, di bei e spessi Prouerbi

Charles Merbury, *Proverbi Vulgari, A i nobili et illustri signori di corte*

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593 In this section, for all three authors, the transcription of paremiias is diplomatic.
### Vincenzo Brusantino: *Le cento novelle*’s Paremias

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Paremias for Each Novella</th>
<th>Final List of Paremias at the End of Each Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credi a gli effetti, et non a le parole, Che spesso ’l mal’, e ’l ben’ ingannar suole.</td>
<td>Credi à gli effetti, e non à le parole Che spesso il male, el bene ingannar suole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se opra rea da religion si vede Per questo non si de mancar di fede.</td>
<td>Se gran peccato d’opra rea si vede Per questo non si de mancar di fede.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il dubbio lassa al disputar di fede Che sol fedel, è quel che’n Christo crede.</td>
<td>In dubbio lassa il disputar di fede Che sol fedel, è quel che in Christo crede.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nel riprender altrui del mal insano Il giuditio bisogna haver ben sano.</td>
<td>Nel riprender altrui del male insano Il giuditio bisogna haver ben sano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L’avidità che non si satia mai Da continentia viene oppressa assai.</td>
<td>L’avidità talhor non satia mai Da continenza vien’ oppressa assai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D’ogni religioso opra piu ria Non è presso di lui c’hippocrisia.</td>
<td>De lo religioso opra piu ria Non è, appresso di lui, che hippocresia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L’avaritita cagion di tutto il male Spesso piu di ragione, e virtù vale.</td>
<td>L’avairita cagione di tutto il male Spesso piu di ragione, e virtù vale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per vergogna tal’hor mostra l’avaro Illustri atti, cortesi à ogni altro à paro.</td>
<td>Per vergogna talhor mostra l’avaro Illustri atti, cortesi a ogni altro a paro.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move talhor vergogna un cor cortese E inducel spesso a gloriose imprese.</td>
<td>Talhor move vergogna un cor cortese E induce quello à gloriose imprese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi vuol tal volta vergognar altrui Oppresso resta, et ingannato lui.</td>
<td>Chi vuol tal volta vergognar altrui Oppresso resta et ingannato lui.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spesso l’ingannator, ne resta oppresso
E de l’opra sua rende aspro interesse.

Spesso governa buona sorte un saggio
Per vie non conosciute in qualche
oltraggio.

Se fortuna travaglia un nobil core
Raro è, che al fine non gli dia favore.

Quando dona Fortuna a l’hom ricetto
Gli da favore, e aiuto, al suo dispetto.

Cadde lo sciocco appresso in grave errore
Se sconciamente vuol seguir amore.

De Fortuna crudele il fiero oltraggio
Patiente sopportar deve l’hom saggio.

La bellezza maggior, col Ciel secondo
Vien disiata al fin per tutto’il mondo.

Quando vien dal maggior fatta violenza
Contra ragion li vol buona patienza.

Resta l’ingannator del mal accinto
Da l’ingannato spesso oppresso, e vinto.

Debbi il vecchio fuggir con fiere voglie
Di farsi gioven’ donna amica, e moglie.

Se castità servar si dee a ragione
Fuggir l’agio, bisogna, e occasione.

II.1

Spesso l’ingannetor, ne resta oppresso
E de l’opra sua rende aspro interesse.

II.2

Spesso governa buona sorte un saggio
Per vie non conosciute in qualche
oltraggio.

II.3

Se fortuna travaglia un nobil core
Raro è, che al fine non gli dia favore.

II.4

Quando dona Fortuna al hom ricetto
Gli da favore, e aiuto al suo dispetto.

II.5

Cadde lo sciocco spesso in grave errore
Se sconciamente vuol seguir amore.

II.6

De Fortuna crudele il fiero oltraggio
Patiente porta
De torsi donna giovene per moglie.

II.7

La bellezza maggior col Ciel segundo
Vien disiata al fin per tutto il mondo.

II.8

Quando vien da i maggior fatta violenza
Contra ragion li vuol buona pacienza.

II.9

Resta l’ingannator del mal accinto
Dal ingannato spesso oppresso, e vinto.

II.10

Debbi il vecchio fuggir con fiere voglie
De torsi donna giovane per moglie.

III.1

Se castità servar si dee a ragione
Fuggir l’agio, bisogna, e occasione.
L’avidità talhor fuora del segno
Ne capitaria mal senza l’ingegno.

III.2
L’avidità talhor fuora del segno
Ne capitaria mal senza l’ingegno.

Il troppo creder di una mente insana
Fa l’arte sua parer propria ruffiana

III.3
Il troppo creder de una mente insana
Fa l’arte propria sua parer Ruffiana.

Creder così non si dee facilmente
Che spesso inganna il reo la bona mente.

III.4
Creder così non si de facilmente
Che spesso inganna il reo la buona mente.

Giova l’astutia a un cor nobile, e raro
Per opprimer amando, il sciocco avaro.

III.5
Giova l’astutia, a un cor nobile, e raro
Per opprimer amando il sciocco avaro.

Lieve è di astutia ingannar gelosia
Che il tutto crede, quando è in frenesia.

III.6
Lieve, è di astutia ingannar gelosia
Che il tutto crede, quando è in frenesia.

L’animo generoso in cor constante
Di fede adorna ogni huomo in bel sembiante

III.7
L’animo generoso in cor constante
Di fede adorna ogni huomo al bel sembiante

Facil crede, e ogni cosa gli par lieve
A lo sciocco se duolo, o mal riceve.

III.8
Facil crede, e ogni cosa gli par lieve
A lo sciocco, se danno, o mal riceve.

Vince l’humanitade il cor altiero
Se con sagacità seguita il vero.

III.9
Vince l’humanitade il cor altiero
Se con sagacità seguita il vero.

Quanto lascivia piu in disio si mesce
Tanto la voglia piu augumenta, e cresce.

III.10
Quanto lascivia piu in disio si mesce
Tanto la voglia piu augumenta, e cresce.

Non cura crudeltà sdegno, o rea sorte
Un generoso cor, ne affanno, o morte.

IV.1
Non cura crudeltà sdegno, o rea sorte
Un generoso cor, ne offanno, o morte.

Danno, e vergogna convien, che scocche
Da la persuasion di donne sciocche.

IV.2
Danno, e vergogna al fin convien, che scocche
Da la persuasion de donne sciocche.
L’ira l’alma impedisce, e’l cor altiero
Ne lascia de ragion veder il vero.

IV.3
L’ira, l’alma impedisce, e il cor altiero
Ne lascia de ragion veder il vero.

Quando giustitia Amor pone in oblio
Manca di fe tal’hor per gran disio.

IV.4
Quando giustitia Amor pone in oblio
Manca di fe talhor per gran disio.

La trista vision moss a talhora
Affligge il senso, e mai non lo ristora.

IV.5
La trista vision mossa talhora
Affligge il senso, e mai non lo ristora.

Del mal che puo avenir, ne suol visione
Inditio spesso dar con piu ragione.

IV.6
Del mal che puo avenir ne suol visione
Inditio spesso dar con piu ragione.

Ne tira spesso a una medesma morte
Lo sfrenato disio sotto rea sorte.

IV.7
Ne tira spesso a una medesma morte
Lo sfrenato disio sotto rea sorte.

Per ambition tal’hor, per alterezza
More il perfetto amor di alta vaghezza.

IV.8
Per ambition talhor, per alterezza
More il perfetto amor d’alta vaghezza.

Di gelosia talhor superbe voglie
Tirano al fin’ Amor con fiere doglie.

IV.9
Di gelosia talhor, altiere voglie
Tiran’ al fin d’Amor superchie doglie.

Per burlare talhor si giunge a tanto,
Che causa morte, over miseria, o pianto.

IV.10
Per burlare talhor si giunge a tanto,
Che causa morte spesso, o duolo, o pianto.

Di rozzo inerto, e vil fa spesso Amore
Generoso, e cortese un nobil core.

V.1
Di rozzo inerto, e vil fa spesso Amore
Generoso, e cortese un nobil core.

Se con fermezza il cor seguita il vero
Ottiene al fine il disiato impero.

V.2
Se con fermezza il cor seguita il vero
Ottiene al fine il disiato impero.

Se ben non pensa il fin d’ogni suo effetto
Non deve il saggio assicurarsi il petto.

V.3
A non pensar il fin d’ogni suo effetto
Non deve il saggio assicurarsi il petto.
V.4
A lo sfrenato ardir spesso gli vale
Condur chi non gli pensa in molto male.

V.5
Sel si porta di fede l’alma accesa
S’ottien perserverando ogni alta impresa.

V.6
Raro è ch’a l’alte imprese pellegrine
Non dia favore la fortuna al fine.

V.7
Da lo sfrenato amor guardar si deve
Che danno, e biasmo spesso se riceve.

V.8
S’Amor non pol, a un cor ingrato, et empio
Giovaralli timore, e crudel scempio.

V.9
Non deve a l’alta, et honorata impresa
Un magnanimo cor mancar di spesa.

V.10
De vergogna non cura l’alma insana
Ne escie del fango mai come la Rana.

VI.1
Resti il vile, e l’insipido di gire
Onde ne appar virtù gratia, e disire.

VI.2
Accorta cortesia sempre sta in punto
Di sua gran nobiltate a render conto.

VI.3
L’animo accorto è sempre piu abondante
Di effetti, e di risposte in uno instante.

VI.4
Muta spesso l’accorto in gran piacere
L’ire, e gli sdegni, ne le voglie altiere.
S’altrui schernir si vuol del mal espresso
Bisogna prima esaminar se stesso.

Ingegno spesso, e alta virtude giova
Provar cosa impossibile con prova.

Spesso trova beltà con sentimento
Del fallo suo la scusa in un momento.

A l’inganno non giova mai ragione
Che sempre seguir vuol sua opinione.

Spesso opprime virtude l’ignoranza
Talmente che la fa di morti stanza.

A l’Ipocrito giova esser sagace
Se vuol far creder col suo modo audace.

De l’astutia lo sciocco, oppresso è quello
Che perde al troppo credere il cervello.

Son de lascivie l’opre, così astute
Che se ben falla non sono credute.

Ingegno, et arte spesso ne bisogna
Ne li casi amorosi a dir menzogna.

Accorto del suo error lo sciocco viene
Da doppia astuzia oppresso in dure pene.

La troppo gelosia induce a tale
Che da se stessa se ne causa il male.
VII.6
Giova spesso l’astutia in core altero
A fingere, e mostrare, di falso il vero.

VII.7
Indutta spesso vien simplicitade
A patir mal per troppa credultade.

VII.8
Del doppio errore ne resta ingannato
L’orgoglio dal cor sagggio inamorato.

VII.9
L’industria più in amor che in altro vale
Che il mal fa creder bene, e il bene male.

VII.10
Quando d’oprar il mal piglia l’assonto
Pensa de l’opra sua non haver conto.

VIII.1
A chi per pregio dona castitade
Ben merta, che se gli usi falsitade.

VIII.2
Più del poter prometter non si deve
Che sfrenato disir fa poi mal greve.

VIII.3
Semplicitade mai non mutò via
Che non mostrasse a i gesti alta pazzia.

VIII.4
Ben lice a l’honestà con modo scaltro
Fuggir vergogna, et por l’uno per l’altro.

VIII.5
Non si muta sciocchezza mai di loco
E rende ovunque appar solaccio, e gioco.

VIII.6
In forma di schernir l’aviditade
Robba ingannando la simplicitade.
VIII.7
Se schernito l’Amante si sospetta
Col generoso cor diè far vendetta.

VIII.8
La rea, e finta amistade ingannar parme
E vendicarse con le sue proprie arme.

VIII.9
Chi è semplice e saper piu si persuade
Vergogna, e danno ovunque va gli accade.

VIII.10
Merta ben degna laude, e grande honore
L’ingannato a ingannar l’ingannatore.

IX.1
Le spaventose cose a comandare
Con giusta causa si dovrian negare.

IX.2
Scoperto il Reo del suo proprio errore
A la fraude, et al mal ne da favore.

IX.3
L’astuto inganna col sagace appresso
La bontà, la sciocchezza a un modo istesso.

IX.4
Non si pol nel giocar haver bon loco
Che mal profitto al fin nasce dal gioco.

IX.5
Da la malitia schiocchezza persuasa
Piace a ciascuno eccetto a suoi da casa.

IX.6
Giova l’industria alhor nel mal audace
Quando in discordie ree fa nascer pace.

IX.7
Spesso l’huomo insognarsi un gran periglio
Ne puol fuggir pigliando il bon consiglio.
IX.8
Cade spesso il cattivo in dure pene
Se il sagace schernir non si ritiene.

IX.9
Ama e amato serai ben con ragione
La donna rea gastiga col bastone.

IX.10
La sciocchezza ingannata in piu maniere
Spesso con biasmo suo gli da piacere.

X.1
Quando del ben servir mal si raduna
Non si deve incolpar se non fortuna.

X.2
Tal’hora l’huomo da fier Sorte astretto
Gli vien fatto appiacer al suo dispetto.

X.3
Pien d’invidia talhor ne porta offese
A un’animo eccellente il men cortese.

X.4
Non muta effetto in le honorate imprese
Un cor inamorato, alto, e cortese.

X.5
L’impossibil richiesta, è cosa lieve
A l’Amante donar in tempo breve.

X.6
Dimostra il vecchio per suo grande honore
Cortesia grande a lo sforzato Amore.

X.7
Amor se in nobil cor il foco accende
Quantunque sia maggior cortesia rende.

X.8
Finta virtude mai non trova loco
Senza la cortesia un’huom da poco.
Non perde cortesia il giusto pregio
Servendo a nobil cor famoso e egregio.

De cose fuor di modo, e di credenza
non deve l’huom mai farne esperienza.

Embedded Paremias Compared with Boccaccio’s Paremias

Proemio

Dec., Proemio.2
Umana cosa è aver compassione degli afflitti

CN
/

I.4

Dec., I.4.16
Peccato celato è mezzo perdonato

CN, 28
Peccato ascosto mezo perdonato
È cosa chiara ne si saprà mai

I.10

Dec., I.10.8
Acciò che per voi non si possa quello proverbio intendere che comunemente si dice per tutto, cioè che le femine in ogni cosa sempre pigliano il peggio

CN, 42
E accio per noi non si possa mostrare
Il proverbio ch’è noto in quell’etate
Che dice, che le donne in ogni seggio
Communemente pigliano il lor peggio

II.1

Dec., II.1.2
Chi altrui sé di beffare ingegnò, e massimamente quelle cose che sono da reverire, s’è con le beffe e talvolta col danno sé solo ritrovato

CN, 48
Spesse volte felici donne aviene
Che chi in beffar altrui s’è dilettato
In quel che riverir, ben’ si conviene
Resta con danno al fin lui sol beffato
II.7

Dec., II.7.122 Bocca basciata non perde ventura, anzi rinnuova come fa la luna
CN, 97 Bocca basciata non perde fortuna
Ma si rinova, come fa la luna

II.9

Dec., II.9.3 Suolsi tra’ volgari spesse volte dire un cotal proverbio: che lo ’ngannatore rimane a piè dello ’ngannato
CN /

Dec., II.9.6 Quale asino dà in parete tal riceve
CN, 108 E per ciò a far questo mi assicura
Qual asino essere debbo me ne avedo
Che urti el parete ne la scioglia dura,
E così il danno mio bene prevedo

Dec., II.9.75 E così rimase lo ’ngannatore a piè dello ’ngannato
CN, 115 Così al piè resta appresso con furrore
de l’ingannato, il falso ingannatore

II.10

Dec., II.10. 42 Il mal furo non vuol festa
CN, 120 Il mal loro non vol vigilia, o festa

Dec., II.10. 43 [...] mi pare che ser Bernabò disputando con Ambruogiuolo cavalcasse
la capra inverso il chino
CN, 120 Ser Bernardo con Ambrogiuol meschino
Cavalcò mal la capra inverso il chino

III.1

Dec., III.1.37 Un gallo basta assai bene a diece galline, ma che diece uomini posson
male o con fatica una femina sodisfare
CN, 131 E a dire incomenciò madonna ho inteso
Che basta un gallo, a dieci gran galline
Ma che dieci homin possano il gran peso
Di una donna satiar, nol trovo in fine

III.4
Dec., III.4.27 Chi la sera non cena, tutta notte si dimena
CN, 145 Mille, e piu siate, dicon le persone
Chi va al letto la sera senza cena
Intorno tutta la notte si dimena

III.5
Dec., III.5.30 Egli meglio fare e pentere, che starsi e pentersi
CN, 150 Meglio, e far, e pentirsi il core humano
Che star di fare, e poi dolersi invano

III.6
Dec., III.6.43 Egli non può oggimai essere che quello che è stato non sia pure stato
CN, 155 […] esser non puole
Quel ch’è stato non sia […]

III.10
Dec., III.10.3 Come il diavolo si rimetta in Inferno
CN, 179 Come il Diavol si metta ne l’Inferno
Dec., III.10.35 E per ciò voi, giovani donne, alle quali la grazia di Dio bisogna,
apparate a rimettere il diavolo in inferno
CN, 182 E questo motto per longhe contrade
È gito e poi passato qua da mare
Per donne apparate con interno
Piacer a metter il diavol nello inferno

III. Conclusione
Dec., III.Concl.18 Fosse meglio un buon porco che una bella tosa
CN /

IV.1
Dec., IV.1.23 Amor può troppo più che che né voi né io possiamo
CN, 194 Troppo d’amor, a cui non è cor alto
Che durar possa al suo crudele assalto
IV.2

Dec., IV.2.5  
Chi è reo e buono è tenuto, può fare il male e non è creduto  

CN, 199  
Che chi è tristo; e buono vien tenuto  
Spesso pone ciascuno in pianti amari  
E pol far male, che non gli è creduto  

Dec., IV.2.29  
Rimase faccendo sì ran galloria, che non le toccava il cul la camiscia  

CN, 202  
Né gli toccava la camiscia il cullo  

V.10

Dec., V.10.19  
Una femina stancherebbe molti uomini, dove molti uomini non possono una femmina stancare  
[...]  
Rendere al marito tuo pan per focaccia  

CN, 289  
Et una donna sola in tal maniere  
Stancarebbe più huomini ogni etate  
Ne molti una sol potrian stancare  
[...]  
Onde ti dico che buon pro ti faccia,  
Che se lo fai tu farai molto bene  
Dar al marito tuo pan per fucaccia  

Dec., V.10.21  
Alle giovani i buon bocconi, e alle vecchie gli stranguglioni  

CN, 289  
E a le giovene donne i buon bocconi  
E di noi vecchie sono istranguglioni  

Dec., V.10.55  
Sí come colui che se’ così vago di noi come il can delle mazze  

CN, 292  
Come quel, che di donne sei si vago  
Come i can de le mazze traditore  

Dec., V.10.64  
Per che così io vi vo’ dire, donne mie care, che chi te la fa, fagliele; e se tu non puoi, tienloti a mente fin che tu possa, acciò che quale asino dà in parete tal riceva  

CN, 293  
E perciò voglio dir donne mie care  
Fallo a chi te le fa [...]  
Perché quale asino al parete urtare  
Simil riceva il danno [...]  

VII.4

Dec., VII.4.31  
A modo del villan matto, dopo danno fé patto  

CN, 343  
Hor cosí fece patto pur ritroso
Dopo il suo male, qual villano matto

VII.9
Dec., VII.9.17 Per lo primo colpo non cade la quercia
CN, 365 Chiamolla, e disse a un colpo sol non cade
La quercia, onde piu darli al fin gli accade

VIII.3
Dec., VIII.3.35 Avremmo perduto il trotto per l’ambiadura
CN, 387 E havessimo perduto noi il trotto
Per cambiadura nostra in questo motto

VIII.6
Dec., VIII.6.54 Quando tu ci avesti messi in galea senza biscotto
CN, 401 E in galea ne mettessi a tua cagione
Senza biscotto con tuo gran piacere

VIII.7
Dec., VIII.7.3 Spesse volte avviene che l’arte è dall’arte schernita
CN, 402 Incominciò ben spesso vien schernita
L’arte dal Arte […]
Dec., VIII.7.3 Non dico tutti, ma la maggior parte sanno dove il diavolo tien la coda
CN, 418 Non sapendo però che sano bene
Li scolari ove il diavolo ne appare
E tien la coda […]

VIII.8
Dec., VIII.8.3 Quale asino dà in parete tal riceve
CN, 419 Se qual Asino da urta in parete
E tal riceve poi nel vendicare
Dec., VIII.8.30 Madonna, voi m’avete renduto pan per focaccia
CN, 421 Disse sorella hora buon pro vi faccia
Che mi rendete pan per focaccia
VIII.10
Dec., VIII.10.67 Chi ha a far con tosco, non vuole esser losco
CN, 442 Dicendo espresso, non deve esser losco
Chi contrattar ne vuol con uomo tosco

IX.3
Dec., IX.3.5 Andar comperando terra come se egli avesse avuto a far pallottole
CN, 454 […] comprare
Terra come palottole da fare

IX.5
Dec., IX.5.26 Tutta l’acqua d’Arno non ci laverebbe
CN, 463 Perciò che l’acqua d’Arno non seria
Bastante di lavar cotanto errore

Dec., IX.5.36 Io le farò giuoco che ella mi verrà dietro come va la pazza al figliuolo
CN /

Dec., IX.5.43 Parmi che ella ti meni per lo naso
CN /

IX.7
Dec., IX.7.8 Chi mal ti vuol, mal ti sogna
CN, 472 Crolò la donna la soperba testa
E disse chi non ti ama mal ti sogna

Dec., IX.7.9 Cotal grado ha chi tigna pettina
CN, 472 Cha ogni modo dovevi così dire
che tal grado ha chi petinar conviene
la tigna per star sempre sul languire

Dec., IX.7.10 Egli avrebbe buon manicar co’ ciechi
CN, 472 Harebbe buon coi ciechi manicare

IX.9
Dec., IX.9.7 Buon cavallo e mal cavallo vuole sprone, e buona femina e mala
femina vuol bastone
CN, 477 Che a bon cavallo, e reo bisogna sprone
E trista, e bona donna vuol bastone

Dec., IX.9.112
Senno s’insegna a chi tanto non apparò a Bologna

CN, 433
Così se insegna il senno a cui bisogna
Che tanto lui non apparò a Bologna
Pompeo Sarnelli: *Posilecheata’s Paremias (in alphabetical order)*

A lo tuorno se fanno le stròmmola  
Arma toia, maneca toja  
Cadere lo vruoccolo dinto lo lardo, lo maccarone dinto lo ccaso  
Carne giovane e pesce viecchio  
Chiantare ardiche e coglieri vruoccole  
Chi a vo’ cotta e chi a vo’ cruda  
Chi dorme co cane non se nn’auza senza pullece  
Chi fa male, male aspetta  
Cinco lettere  
Comm’è la chianta è la scianta  
Da dove viene? Da lo molino!  
Da le cevettole non nascono aqelle, né da le ciavole palumme.  
Da le spine nasceno le rose  
Da ’n’erva fetente nasce lo giglio  
Darele la quatra  
È berissemoco lo cchiù de le bote è de cchiù consederazione l’apprenzione de lo male ch’ha  
  da venire, che non è lo male quann’è benuto  
È meglio la gallina oje che l’uovo craje  
Essere stoccata catalana  
Fa bene e scordaténne  
Facevano lo cunto senza lo tavernaro  
Fare comme fa lo cane ch’abbaja a la luna  
Fare fuorfece fuorfece  
Fare il becco all’oca  
Fare na lavatella de capo senza sapone  
Fare no viaggio e duje servizie  
Fare toccare la coda co le mmano  
Fare venire tutte le bodella ’ncanna  
Infilare perne a lo junco  
Lengua che no’ la ’ntienne, e tu la caca  
Li dolure de li pariente muorte songo comme a le tozzate de gúveto, che doleno assai ma  
  durano poco  
Lo cavallo c’ha uorgio e paglia soperchia tira cauce  
Lo grasso dà subbeto a lo core  
L’ommo comme nasce accossi pasce  
L’ommo se lega pe le corna e li vuojpe pe le parole  
Longa se vedde, corta se trovaje  
Lo piso de la corona fa calare tal’ommore all’uocchie che non vedeno lo deritto  
Lo sazio non crede lo dejuno  
Maje mora fegliaje e fice no bello nennillo janco comme a lo latto, nè crapa rognosa facette  
  agniello co lana jentile  
Male e bene a fine vene  
Meglio nasce, meglio procede  
Mettere lo spruoccolo a lo pertuso  
Non capere a li panne  
Non c’è peo de vellane arresagliute  
Non chiove, ca delluvia  
Opera lauda lo masto, e non parole
Pratteca co chi è meglio de tene e falle le spese
Quarche strenga rott a se metta ’n dozzana
Quarche travo rutto stride
Scotolare sto sacco e bedere se nc’era porvere o farina
Se dice lo mutto e non è miezo o tutto
Semmenare grano e cogliere ardiche
Sempe che so’ lupe, malannaggia lo meglio
Stìpare ssa vocca pe le ffico

**Paremias at the end of the five cunti**
Chi vò male ped aute a sè non jova,
E chi fa bene, sempre bene trova.
Chi serve fedele aspetta premnio.
’Ncoppa a lo ingannator cade lo ’nganno,
E se tarda, non manca lo malanno.
Non c’è peo de pezzente arresagliuto.
Lo vizio dello lupo tanto dura
Che pilo pò mutare, e no’ natura.

**Tripartite Paremias**
A tre cose non se deve credere, all’archemista povero, a lo miedeco malato, e al remito grasso
Pe le tre cannele che s’allumano quanno se fa no strommiento de notte
Pe le tre cose ch’osserva lo miedeco, lo puzo, la facce e lo càntaro
Tre cose non sango stemmate: forze da vastaso, consiglio de poverommo, e bellezza de pottana
Pe le tre effe de lo pesce: fritto, friddo e futo
Pe le tre s ch’abbesognano a no ’namorato: sulo, sollicito e secreto
Pe le tre sciorte de perzune che se tene la pottana: smargiasse, belle giuvane e corrive
Per li tre parm de funa che danno vota a lo ’mpiso
Pe tre cose ch’arroinano la gioventute: iuoco, femmene e taverna
Pe tre cose che cacciano l’ommo da la casa: fieto, fummo e femmene marvasa
Pe tre cose che la casa strude: zeppole, pane caudo e maccarune
Pe tre cose che vole avere lo roffiano: gran core, assai chiacchierie e poca vergognna
Tre bote tre unnece cose fanno bella na femmiena: azzoè tre cose longhe e tre corte; tre larghe, tre strette e tre grosse, tre sottile; tre retonne, tre piccole, tre ghianche, tre rosse, tre negre
Tre cose abbesognano a lo ruffiano: gran core, assai chiacchiare e poca vregognna
Tre cose abbesogna tenere a mente: che ammore non vò bellezza, che appetito non vò sauza e che l’accattare non vò ammecizia. [...] chi accatta ha da sapere che se deve accattare l’uoglio de coppa, lo vino de miezo e lo mmèle de funno
Tre cose arroinano la gioventute: iuoco, femmene e taverna
Tre cose cacciano l’ommo da la casa: fiummo, fieto e femmene marvasa
Tre cose non possono stare annascose: le fusa dinto de lo sacco, le femmene ’nchiuse ’n casa e la paglia dintro de le scarpe
Tre cose non songo stemmate: forze da vastaso, consiglio de poverommo e bellezza de pottana
Tre cose osserva lo miedeco: lo puzo, la faccia e lo cantaro
Tre cose songo 'nsoffiribile: ricco avaro, povero soperbio e biecchio 'nnammorato
Tre cose songo utele a lo cortesciano: fegnemiento, fremma e sciorte
Tre cose squatrano ogne cosa: Nummero, Piso e Mesura
Tre cose stanno male a lo munno: n’auciello ’mmano de no peccerillo, no fiasco ’mmano de no Todisco, na zita giovane ’mmano de no viechio
Tre cose strudeno la casa: zeppole, pane caudo e maccarune
Tre femmene e na papara fanno no mercato
Tre le dute prencipale de l’anema de l’ommo: memmoria, ’ntelletto e bolontà
Tre mmm songo chelle delle quale ognuno n’ha la parte soja: matto, miedeco e museco
Tre parme de funa danno vota a lo ’mpiso
Tre sciorte de perzune se tene la bonarrobba: smargiasso, bello, giovane e corrivo
Tre sciorte de perzune songo patrune de lo munno: pazze, presentuse e sollicete
Tre so’ le cannelle che s’allummano quando se fa no stromiento de notte
Tre songo le scorte de l’anemale: Vegetativo, Sensetivo e ’Ntellettivo
Tre songo li principie naturale: Materia, Forma e Privazione
Tre songo li termene d’ogne ncosa: Prencipio, Miezo e Fine
Tre sss besognano a lo ’nnammorato: sulo, solliceto e secreto

Spanish Paremias
Fare de la trippa corazzone (< Hazer de tripas corazon)
Prossimo accignendo habeto ped accinto
Sobre una cosa redonda, no haze buen edificio
John Florio: *Firste Fruites and Second Frutes*’s Paremias

Compared with *Giardino di ricreatione*

- A bon intenditore, meza parola basta (FF) → A buon’intenditore, meza parola basta
- A buona derrata pensaci su (SF) → A buona derrata, pensavi sù
- A carne di lupo convien dar dente di cane (SF) → A carne di lupo, dente di cane
- A caval donato, non guardar in bocca (FF) → A cavallo donato, non guardar’ in bocca
- A cavalli magri, sempre vanno le mosche (FF) → A cavalli magri, vanno le mosche
- Accenna coppe e poi dà bastoni (SF) → Accennar coppe, e dar bastoni
- A chi dici il tuo secreto, doni la tua libertà (SF) → A chi dici il tuo secreto, doni la tua libertà
- A chi te la fa, fagliela, o tientela a mente (SF) → A chi te la fà, fagliela, o tientela a mente
- Acqua lontana, non spegne fuoco vicino (SF) → Acqua lontana, non ispegne fuoco vicino
- L’acqua lontana non spegne fuoco vicino (SF) → Acqua lontana, non ispegne fuoco vicino
- Acquista in giovanezza, per viver in vecchiezza (SF) → Acquista in giouanezza, per viuer’in vecchiezza
- Ad altare scarupato non s’accende candela (SF) → Ad altare scaruppato, non s’accende candela
- Ad amor non mancan brame, benche spesso muor di fame (SF) → Ad amor non mancan brame, benche spesso muor di fame
- Ad arca aperta il giusto pecca (SF) → Ad arca aperta, il giusto pecca
- A disgratiati il pan tempesta in forno (SF) → Al disgratiato, il pan tempesta in forno
- Adorna una simia d’oro, che sempre sara simia (FF) → Adorna la cimia d’oro, e sempre sarà cimia.
- Ad un’ vero amore, mai nulla manca (SF)
Affrettiamo il passo perché egli è tra cane e lupo (SF)

A gatto vecchio, sorgio tenerello (SF) A gatto vecchio, sorgio tenerello

A giuocar con voi, convien’esser’astuto volpone (SF)

Al contrario de’ porri, cioè col capo in su (SF)

Alegreza de cuore, fa bella peladura de viso (FF) Allegrezza di cuore, fa bella pelatura di viso

A lettere de scattole, tu pari et in effetti sei, un furfante visu, verbo, et opere (SF)

Alle nozze, e alla morte, si cognoscono li amici (FF) Alle nozze alla morte, si conoscono gl’amici

Allontanati dal dinanzi delle Donne, dal dietro delle Mule, e da tutti i lati de’ Monaci (SF) Guardati dal davanti della donna, dal dietro della mula, e da tutti i lati de monaci

Al mal mortal, ne Medico, ne medicina val (FF) A mal mortale, ne medico ne medicina vale

Al manco m’havesse mio padre pisciato al muro (SF) Tutti non son’ huomini, che pisciano al muro Tutti voglion pisciar’ al muro

Al Medico et Avocato, non tener il ver celato (FF) Al medico, & avvocato, non tener’ il ver celato

Ama chi ti ama (FF) Ama, che sarai amato

Ama e sarai amato (SF) Ama Dio, & non fallire, fa pur bene, & lascia dire

Ama Dio, et non falire: fa pur bene, et lassa dire: che non mai potrai falire (FF) Ama Dio & non fallire, fa pur bene, & lascia dire

Ama l’amico tuo con il difetto suo (SF) Ama l’amico tuo, con il diffetto suo

Amami poco, et amami longo (FF) Amami poco, ma continua

Ama per lui et non falire, che non mai potrai fallire (SF; x2)

A me non entrerà mai nel capo (SF)

Amor a chi lo serve al fin da per mercede Amor da per mercede, gelosia e rota fede
(SF)

Amor ci guida et i nostri timidi animi assicura (SF)

Amor di putana, e vin di fiasco, la sera è buono, la matina è guaste [sic] (FF)

Amore è il vero pretio con che si compra, l’aurea catena, con che si lega, et la vera calamita con cui si trahe, amore (SF)

Amor’è il nipotino della natura, e primogenito di madonna beltà, e di diletto suo marito (SF)

Amore nel principio dolcemente aplaude, poi tesse di nascosto inganno e fraude (SF)

Amor può il tutto, et il tutto amor mantiene (SF)

Amore si può dire essere una pillola inzuckerata, et, un dillettosso male ciecho, perche ci accieca; sciolto, ma gli altri lega; nudo, e pur cuopre inganno; un boccone che affoga, un fuoco interno, un capestro di seta, un incanto di Circe, un cane d’Atteonte, una ruota d’Issione, un specchio di Narcisso, un fanciullo, una bagatella, un traditore, un assassino, un tiranno, un micidiale, una sanguisuga, una sirena, una Hienna, un basilisco, un cocodrillo, una Chimera di natura di lione, di capra, e di dragone; di lione per la sua fierezza, di capra per la sua lussuria, e di dragone per la sua crudeltà; e col suo tentare, piagare, tormentare, et uccidere (SF)

Amor vince ogni cosa (FF)

Andando per viaggio, nel inverno honora il compagno, per non esser il primo ad inciampare ne’ cattivi passi; l’istate mettiti inanzi, per non havere la polvere ne gli occhj (SF)

Andarono in trenta per cavar una rapa (SF)

A novelle di borsa, e di San Paolo non
bisogna dar piu fede, che a promesse di fuor'usciti, e favole di comedianti (SF)

A pazzi si mostra la vergine Maria (SF) A’ pazzi, si mostra la vergine Maria

A’ porci cadono le migliori pere in bocca (SF) A’ porci, cadono le buone pera in bocca

A qual si voglia dolore, rimedia la patientia (FF)

A scrigno sgangherato non si scrolla sacco (SF) A scrigno sgangherato, non si scrolla sacco

Asino punto bisogna che trotti (FF) Asino punto, convien che trotti

Aspetta luogo e tempo, à far vendetto [sic]: che non si face mai ben in fretta (FF) Aspetta tempo e luoco a far vendetta, che non si fece mai bene in fretta

Aspettare e non venire; star nel letto, e non dormire; servire e non gradire, son tre cose da morire (FF) Aspettare e non venire, star’in letto e non dormire, ben servire e non gradire, son tre doglie da morire


Aspettar finché sonino le campane (SF)

Assai acqua corre per il Molino, che il Molinaro non ne sa (FF) Assai acqua passa per il molino, ch’il molinaio non vede

Assai ben balla, à chi fortuna sona (FF) Assai ben balla, a chi Fortuna suona

Assai guadagna, chi fortuna perde (FF) Assai guadagna chi fortuna passa, ma molto più ch le donne lassa

Assai presto si fa, quel che, si fa bene (FF) Presto e bene, non si conviene

Assai sa, chi non sa, se tacer sa (FF) Assai sà, chi sà, se tacer sà

A tal carne, tal cortello (SF) Tal’ carne, tal cortello
A te tutti i gatti son grigi all’oscuro (SF)
Al’oscuro, ogni gatto è grigio

Attaccar dal mal, al peggio (SF)

A tutto è rimedio, eccetto che alla morte (FF)
A tutto è rimedio, eccetto alla morte

A uno a uno, si fanno li fusi (FF)
Ad uno, ad uno, si fanno i fusi

Ave morta, non fa mele (FF)
Senz a le api, non si ha il miele

Bandiera vechia, honor di capitano (FF)
Bandiera vecchia, honor di Capitano

Barbier giovine, e medico vechio (FF)
Barbier giovane, e medico vecchio

Beato il figliuolo, di cui il padre va a casa del diavolo (SF)

Beato voi che godete fino del latte della gallina (SF)

Bel carro e bei buò, e bella moglie a chì la vuò (SF)
Bel carro, & be’ buò, bella moglie, a chì la vuò

Bel cavallo non morire, che l’herba fresca de venir (SF)
Bel cavallo non morir, che l’herba fresca dee venir

Bella donna è donna, et ogni donna molle, et donne d’esser belle, mai non son satolle (SF)

Belle parole e cattivi fatti, inganano, i savi et i matti (FF) (SF)
Belle parole, e cattivi fatti, ingannano savij, & matti

Bello si fa, chi ben’ amando muore. Piu bello si fa, chi non amando gode (SF)
Bello sin fà, chi ben’amando muore

Ben faremo, ben diremo, mal va la barca senza remo (FF)
Ben diremo, ben faremo, ma mal’ và la barca senza remo

Ben venga maggio co suoi fiori (SF)
Ben venga maggio co suoi fiori

Bisogna ch’il prete viva dell’altare (SF)
Bisogna ch’il Prete viva dell’altare

Bisogna che ogni santo abbia la sua candela (SF)
Ogni santo, vuol la sua candela

Bisognerebbe haver la patientia di Giobbe, a durarla con voi (SF)
Bocca dolce, mano che molce (SF)  Bocca dolce, bocca di puttana
Bologna la grassa, ma Padova la passa (SF)  Bologna la grassa, Padoua la passa
Buon cane rare volte truova buon’osso (SF)  Buon cane, non truova buon’osso
Buonissimo come il pane (SF)

Buon prò vi faccia, ma non come l’herba a cani (SF)
Buon prò vi faccia come il mele all’orso, o l’oglio alle ancione (SF)
Buon viaggio faccia la barca (SF)

Calabrese, guai a quella casa, dove sta un mese, se ci sta un anno ci apporta rovina e danno (SF)  Calabrese guai a quella casa dove sta un mese, se ci sta un anno, c’apporta ruina e danno
Cane che baia, non sol nocer (FF)  Cane che baia, non suol nuocer’
Cane vechio non baia in darno (FF)  Cane vecchio, non baia in darno
Capra al sale, mosca al miele, al sol furfante (SF)
Carne vecchia fa buon bruodo (SF)  Carne vecchia, fa buon brodo
Cascan le rose et restan poi le spine (SF)  Cascan le rose e restan poi le spine, non giudicate nulla inanzi il fine

Castello spesso combattuto alla fine è preso o si rende (SF)
Caval corrente sepoltura aperta (FF)  Cavallo corrente, sepoltura aperta
C’è de gli huomini che vogliono l’uovo e la gallina (FF)  Voler l’vuovo e la gallina
Cedi al maggiore, persuadi al minore, et consenti a l’uguale et fuggirai il male (SF)  Cedi al maggiore, persuadi al minore, e consenti a l’uguale
Cento carra di pensieri, non pagano mai un’ancia di debiti (SF)  Cento carra di pensieri, non pagan’un’ancia di debito
Cera, tela, e fustagno, bella bottega, poco guadagno (FF)  Cera, tela, e fustagno, bella bottega, e poco guadagno
Cercar i fatti d’ltrui, è tempo perso (FF)
Poi c’ha gustato corre amante, con l’amata sua donna a far la tresca (SF)

Che colpa n’ha la gatta, se la massaia è matta (FF) (SF; x2)

Che dove non han pasco ne ricetto, infin le Furie abandonano i luoghi (FF)

Che in virtù et in constantia vive, e ciascheduna esser vuol quell’una, quantunque al mondo non sen truovi ch’una (SF)

Chi a l’honor suo manca d’un momento, non ripara mai in anni cento (SF)

Chi bellissima nacque, povera non nacque (SF)

Chi ben dona chiaro vende, se villan non è chi prende (SF)

Chi ben e male non può soffrire, a grand’honor non può venire (SF)

Chi ben serra, ben apre (SF)

Chi ben siede, mal pensa (FF)

Chi beve vino, beve sangue, e chi acqua cotta flemma (SF)

Chi cerca spesso ingannar altrui, oppresso resta et ingannato lui (FF; x2)

Chi cerca, trova (FF)

Che colpa n’ha la gatta, se la massara è matta (FF)

Chi compra caro, e toglie à credenza, consum’il corpo, e perde la semenza (FF)

Chi cucina in fretta, ha mal stagionate le vivande (SF)

Chi d’amor vuole diletto, convien che porti con sospetto, la corazza con l’elmetto, e che scherzi raro et giuochi netto, come a

Chi d’amor prenda diletto, porti sempre con sospetto, la corazza con l’elmetto, scherzi raro, & giuochi netto
mamma fanciullo, avaro all’oro, mosca al tignoso, alla pignatta il cuoco, cos’l’amante avezzo al foro torna, che la facenda dolcemente inforna (SF)

Chi da venti non è, e da trenta non sè, e da quaranta non ha; ne mai sarà, ne mai saprà, ne mai haverà (SF)

Chi del suo onore si lascia privare, ne viva ne morta donna, si dee più chiamare (SF)

Chi di gallina nasce convien che razzoli (SF)

Chi di gatta o sorgij piglia o graffia (SF)

Chi di paglia fuoco fa, molto fumo, e altro non ha (FF)

Chi dorme co’ cani si leva co’ pulci (SF)
Chi va dormir co i cani, si leva con i pulci (FF)

Chi dorme, non piglia pesce (FF) (SF)

Chi duo Lepri cazia, uno perde, l’altro lasia (FF)

Chi è coperto quando piove, è un matto se si muove, se si muove, e si bagna, e piu che matto se si lagna (SF)

Chi è in difetto, è in suspetto (FF)

Chi è mostro del corpo, è mostro dell’animo (SF)

Chi è nutrito tra lupi, impara a hurlare (SF)
Chi pratica co’ lupi, impara a hurlare (SF)

Chi è nutrito in corte, impara ogni astutia (SF)

Chi è reo, e non è tenuto, puo far il mal, e non è creduto (FF)

Chi fa i fatti suoi, non s’imbratta le mani (SF; x2)
Chi fa il contrario sempre viverà in affanni (FF)
Chi fa male, odia il lume (FF)
Chi fa piu' carezze che non suole, t'ha ingannato or ingannar ti vuole (SF)
Chi fa quel che non debbe, gli avvien quel che non crede (FF) (SF)
Chi frequenta la cucina sente da fumo (SF)
Chi ha a far con Tosco, non convien' esser losco (SF)
Chi ha buona Lancia, la pruovi nel muro (FF)
Chi ha cavallo bianco et bella moglie, non si trova mai senza doglie (SF)
Chi ha fiele in bocca, non può sputar miele (SF)
Chi ha tempo, ha vita (FF)
Chi ha tempo, non aspetti tempo (FF)
Chi havendo tempo, aspetta tempo, tempo perde, e tempo perso non si riacquista mai (SF)
Chi in corpo bianco tiene mente negra, habbiasi sempre corpo negro finche possegga mente bianca (SF)
Chi la dura, la vince (FF)
Chi lascia andar la sua moglie ad ogni festa, et bere il suo cavallo ad ogni fontana; del suo cavallo haverà una rozza, e della sua moglie una puttana (SF)
Chi lascia la via vecchia, per la nuova, spesse volte inganato si ritrova (FF)
Chi lascia la via vecchia per la nuova, spesso ingannato si ritrova (SF)

Chi lascia andar sua moglie ad ogni festa, & bere il suo cavallo ad ogni fontana, del suo cavallo haverà una rozza, & fra poco della sua moglie una puttana

Chi la dura, la vince, o la perde amaramente.

Chi lascia la via vecchia per la nuova, spesso ingannato si ritrova
Chi lava la testa à un asino, perde il sapon, et la fatica (FF)
Chi le fugge seguono, et chi le segue fuggono (SF)
Chi mi ama, me [sic] ama il mio cane (FF)
Chi mi fa meglio che non sole, tradito m’ha, o tradir mi vole (FF)
Chi monta più alto che non deve, cade più basso che non crede (SF)
Chi muta stato, muta conditione (FF)
Chi non ama essendo amato, commette gran peccato (SF)
Chi non ama il cielo, si giacci nell’inferno (SF)
Chi non cavalca per terra non sa che cosa sia solazzo o piacere (SF)
Chi ben chiude schifa rìa fortuna (SF)
Chi non è d’amor soggetto, non conosce alcun diletto (SF)
Chi non fa, non falla, chi falla, s’amenda (FF)
Chi non ha che quattro, e spende sette, non ha bisogno di borsette (SF)
Chi non ha cuore, habbia gambe (FF)
Chi non ha danari, non ha credito, se non di bastonate (FF)
Chi non ha figlioli, bene gli pasce (FF)
Chi non ha gustato l’amaro, non sa che cosa sia il dolce (SF)
Chi non ha moglie, spesso la batte (FF)
Chi non ha servito, non sa comandare (FF)
Chi non naviga, non sa che sia il timor di Dio (FF)
Chi non può batter il cavallo, batta la sella (FF)
Chi non robbia, non fa robba (FF)
Chi non sa far i fatti suoi, peggio fa a quegli d’altrui (SF)
Chi non va per mare, non conosce il timor di Dio
Chi non vuol durare fatica in questo mondo, non nasca (FF)
Chi non vuole la luce, habbisi le tenebre (SF)
Chi non vuole quando puole, quando vorrà non potrà (SF)
Chi non vuol periclitar e, non si dee metter’ad amare (SF)
Chi nuoce altrui, nuoce se stesso (FF)
Chi paga inanzi tratto, trova il lavor mal fatto (SF)
Chi pecora si fa, il lupo la mangia (SF)
Chi pensa di trovar in una troia purità, o in una vacca castità? (SF)
Chi promette e non attende, la promessa non val niente (SF)
Chi, quel sbardellato, che non studia altro, che la boccolica, le matte lettere, e con tanta
Chi segue amori potrà per cimier portar la pentecoste, perché in breve si pente del suo costo (SF)

Chi segue amori potrà per cimier portar la pentecoste, perché in breve si pente del suo costo (SF)

Chi semina virtù, raccoglie fama, & vera fama, supera la morte

Chi semina virtù, raccoglie fama, & vera fama, supera la morte

Chi serve al comune, serva nessuno (FF)

Chi serve al comune, serva nessuno (FF)

Chi serve le putane, il tempo perde (FF)

Chi serve le putane, il tempo perde (FF)

Chi sente, vede, e tace può sempre vivere in pace (FF)

Chi sente, vede, e tace può sempre vivere in pace (FF)

Chi si allieva il serpe in seno, è poi pagato di veleno (SF)

Chi si allieva il serpe in seno, è poi pagato di veleno (SF)

Chi si contenta gode (SF; x2)

Chi si contenta gode (SF; x2)

Chi si mette fra la semola, è mangiato da porci (SF)

Chi si mette fra la semola, è mangiato da porci (SF)

Chi s’impaccia con fanciulli, con puttane e con fuorusciti, con ingrati, con bugiardi e con sconosciuti si ritrova poi (SF)

Chi s’impaccia con fanciulli, con puttane e con fuorusciti, con ingrati, con bugiardi e con sconosciuti si ritrova poi (SF)

Chi vuol dar fastidio tutta la sua vita (FF)

Chi vuol dar fastidio tutta la sua vita (FF)

Chi sta bene non si muova, perché movendo se si rompe le gambe, a suo danno (SF)

Chi sta bene non si muova, perché movendo se si rompe le gambe, a suo danno (SF)

Chi sta nel’acqua fino alla gola, ben’è ostinato se merce non grida (SF)

Chi sta nel’acqua fino alla gola, ben’è ostinato se merce non grida (SF)

Chi tarda ariva, male alloggia (SF; x2) (SF)

Chi tarda ariva, male alloggia (SF; x2) (SF)

Chi teme ha e tempo aspetta, tempo perde (FF)

Chi teme ha e tempo aspetta, tempo perde, et tempo perso non si racquista mai (SF)

Chi teme ha e tempo aspetta, tempo perde, et tempo perso non si racquista mai (SF)

Chi ti vede di giorno, non ti cerchera di notte (FF)

Chi ti vede di giorno, non ti cerca di notte (FF)

Chi tosto da, due volte dà (SF)

Chi tosto da, due volte dà
Chi troppo abbraccia, nulla stringe (FF)
Chi troppo abbraccia, poco stringe (FF)
Chi tutto vuol, di rabbia muore (FF)
Chi va a Roma e porta buon borsotto, diventa Abbate, o Vescovo di botto (SF)
Chi va di notte, ha delle botte (SF)
Chi va e ritorna, fa bon viaggio (FF)
Chi va in letto senza cena, tutta la notte si dimena (FF) (SF)
Chi va pian, va san (FF) (SF)
Chi ven vive, ben more (FF)
Chi vede la bella e non le dona il cuore, o non è vivo, o non conosce amore (SF)
Chi vende a credenza, spaccia robbia assai, l’amico perde, denari non ha mai (SF)
Chi vive a speranza, magra fa la danza (SF)
Chi vive in corte, muore in pagliaro (FF) (SF)
Chi vuol dir mal d’altrui, prima si pensi di lui (FF)
Chi vuol sopra sapere, per bestia si fa tenere (SF)
Christo lascio neli precetti suoi, voi non far altrui, quel che per te non vuoi (FF)
Christo lasciò negli precetti suoi, non far’altrui quel che per tè non vuoi
Ci lasciò quasi la stampa della cuffia (SF)
Ci vado come la biscia al’incanto (SF)
Col mall’anno e la mala Pasqua che Dio ti dia (SF)

Chi tutto abbraccia, nulla stringe
Chi tutto vuole, di rabbia muore
Chi va a Roma e porta buon borsotto, diventa Abate, o vescovo di botto
Chi va di notte, ha delle botte
Chi va e torna, fa buon’ viaggio
Chi va in letto senza cena, tutta notte si dimena
Chi va piano, va sano
Chi ben vive, ben muore
Chi vedi la bella e non le dona il cuore, o non è vivo, o non conosce amore
Chi vende a credenza, spaccia robbia assai, perde gli amici, denari non ha mai
Chi viue in speranza, magra fà la danza
Chi viue in corte, muore su’l pagliaio
Chi vuol dir mal d’altrui, prima pensi di lui
Chi vuol sopra sapere, per bestia si fa tenere
Christo lasciò negli precetti suoi, non far’altrui quel che per tè non vuoi
Andarci, come la biscia al’incanto
Col mall’anno e la mala Pasqua che Dio ti dia
Colui che cerca l’altrui facende da tutti li sauij è tenuto matto (FF)

Colui che vien ultimo, serra la porta (FF)

Come a bella giovenca torna il toro, al fonte cervo, l’agghiacciato al fuoco, al suo nido l’augello, chierico al coro, al ballo pastorella, e barro al giuoco (SF)

Come corre al buon vin gente Todesca (SF)

Come ha l’uccellaccio la sua canzone, la quale non rende harmonia veruna (SF)

Come il pesce, che cercando fuggir padella, cade nelle bragie (SF)

Lui salta da la padella nelle brascie

Come i pifari da Bologna che non sanno sonare, se non sono gonfij e pieni (SF)

La puttana è come il carbone, o tinge, o bruscia

Come il carbone, il quale o tinge o bruscia (SF)

Come il molino a vento, che macina secondo il vento (SF)

Come la bilancia, che prende dove piu riceve (SF)

Come la brutta è mal di stomaco, così la bella e mal di testa, l’una satia, e l’alta cruccia (SF)

Donna brutta è mal di stomaco, donna bella è mal di testa

Come la castagna, che di fuori è bella e dentro ha la magagna (SF)

Amor di donna è come la castagna, di fuor’ e bella, e dentro ha la magagna

Come ogni cavallo buon’ o rio, vuol lo sperone, così ogni donna, buona o ria, vuole il bastone (SF)

Come quegli da Mantoa, che andaron per sonare, e furono sonati (SF)

Far come i pifari da Luca, che andaron’ a sonare, e furono sonati

Come volete ch’io sappia tener la lingua fra i denti (SF)

Con arte, e con inganno, si vive mezo l’anno, con inganno, e con arte, si vive l’anno

Con arte, e con inganno, si vive mezzo l’anno
l’altra parte (FF)

Con il martello d’oro si rompe ogni serratura, et si giunge ad ogni altezza (SF)

Con il tempo, e con la paglia, le Nespole si matura (FF)

Con le sue burle, berte, baie, e facetie, harebbe fatto smascellare un’Heracleito dalle risa (SF)

Conto fatto, amicitia longa (SF)

Contrario oggetto proprio della fede, et è infelice et misero chi lor crede (SF)

Convien star’ in cervello in questo mondo (SF)

Convien tener il braccio al petto, e la gamba al letto (SF)

Corbi con corbi, non cavano mai gli ochi (FF)

Corpo senz’alma, e fonte senz’humore, pesce senz’onde, e senza gemma anello, si può dir l’huomo che non sente amore (SF)

Corpo vendibile, e spirito corruttibile (SF)

Cortegiano giovine et vecchio mendico (SF)

Così cieco come chi non vuol vedere (SF)

Così rade come vien l’anno del Giubileo (SF)

Credo che fosse madre del gallo, che cantò a Pietro (SF)

Credo che siate fiorentino, poiche sete così ritroso, protervo, e fastidioso a contentare (SF)

Cuor contento è manto su le spalle (SF)

Da’ cattivi costumi seguono le buone leggi (SF)

Con inganno, e con arte, si vive l’altra parte

Col tempo e con la paglia, si maturano le nespole

Contar spesso, è amicitia longa

Il braccio al petto, e la gamba al letto

Corvi con corvi, non si cavano mai gl’occhij

Corpo senz’alma, & fonte senz’humore, è quella donna che non sente amore

Otiuso gioane, vecchio mendico

Cuor contento, è manto su le spalle
Da chi mi fido mi guardimi Dio, che da chi non mi fido mi guarderà io (SF)

Dal detto al fatto ci è un grande tratto (FF)
Dal ditto al fatto, vi è un gran tratto (FF)

Dalla bellezza nasce la superbia, et la superbia dà adito alla lussuria (SF)

Dalla bellezza vien la tentatione, dalla tentatione il dishonore (SF)

Dalla campana alla nona, non ci passa buona persona (SF)

Dalla nona alla campana, sempre passa qualche puttana (SF)

Dall’avversità nasce la virtù (SF)

Dalle cose passate, si giudicano le presente (FF)

Da le spine nascon le rose (SF)

Dal mare salato esce il pesce fresco (SF)

Da tre cose signor liberaci, Da una borsa voda, da un cattivo vicino, e da una cattiva donna (FF)

Debba voler bene al bambino per amor della balia (SF)

Debba voler bene al tagliere per amor della carne (SF)

Del ocha, mangiane poca (FF)

Denaro è il principal verbo in questa casa (FF)

Dice Christo nel Vangelo, che l’umiltà apre le porte del cielo, et impara a spese altrui ad esser savio (SF)

Dice Aristotine, quando puoi haver del bene tuotene. Dice poi Platon, se non lo tuoi, tu

Dice Christo nel vangelo, l’umiltà apre le porte del cielo

Dice Aristotine, quando puoi haver del bene, tuotene, e dice poi Platon se non lo
sei un coglion (SF)  
Di denari, senno, è fede, ce n’è manco che non si crede (SF)  
Di donna è et sempre fu natura, odiar chi l’ama, e chi non l’ama cura (SF)  
Di donna son nato, e da donna son rovinato (SF)  
Di minaccie non temere, ne di promesse non godere (SF)  
Dio guardi me da cinque F, cioè Femine, Fuoco, Fame, Frati, et Fiume (SF)  
Dio vi doni quel guadagno, e me guardi da quella perdita (SF)  
Di pochi fidatevi, ma da tutti guardatevi (SF)  
Di senno è pieno ogni testa (FF)  
Dita di vischio, se tocca prende, se prende tiene, et se tiene si truova tener un bel corno (SF)  
Dolce parole rompono l’ira (FF)  
Dolce vivanda bisogno haver salsa brusca (FF)  
Donato è morto, ristoro sta male (FF)  
Donna, forze, occhi, voce, ben’, corpo, alma, trahe, orba, mastra, strugge, infetta, ancide (SF)  
Donna fu detta danno (SF)  
Donna, vino, e dado, rende l’huomo rovinato (SF)  
Dopo tempesta, vien bel tempo (FF)  
Dove ci è nulla, il Re perde il suo dritto (FF)  
Dove è amore, ivi è Dio, e dove Dio, hai di
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beni un cornucopia (SF)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dove è vita ivi è modo, dove modo ricapito, dove ricapito speranza, e dove speranza ivi è consolatione (SF)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dove ho l’amore, ivi ho il cuore, il qual dimora, non dove vive, ma dove ama (SF)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dove non puoi fare con la pelle del lione, cerca di fare con quella della volpe (SF)</td>
<td>Ducane manca forza di lione, habbi l’astutia di volpone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D’una fetida herba nasce il giglio (SF)</td>
<td>Di fetida herba, nasce il giglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duro con duro non fece mai buon muro (FF)</td>
<td>Duro con duro, non fece mai buon muro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E bella cosa pigliar due colombi con una fava (FF)</td>
<td>E bella cosa pigliar due colombi con una fava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E bon batter il ferro quando che l’è caldo (FF)</td>
<td>Batter si deve, mentre è caldo il ferro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E bon sempre haver due corde per un arco (FF)</td>
<td>E sempre buono, haver due corde per un’arco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E sempre bono per uno haver due corde per il suo archo (FF)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Egli debbe dunque haver’ il mal matino (SF)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Egli è il diavolo quello haver debiti (SF)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Egli è il diavolo quel toccar sul vivo (SF)</td>
<td>E il diavolo quello toccar su il vivo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egli è una bella cosa il sapersi guardare (SF)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Egli è tanto superbo, che havendo bisogno di misericordia, grida vendetta (SF)</td>
<td>Haver bisogno di misericordia, e cridar vendetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egli è un vero diavolo incarnato, che infanga i giovani, et annega i vecchi (SF)</td>
<td>Amor’infanga i gioueni, &amp; annega i vecchij</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El ben guadagnare, fa il bel spendere (FF)</td>
<td>Il bel guadagnare, fa il bel spendere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El dir mal d’altrui, è il quinto elemento (FF)</td>
<td>Il dir mal d’altrui, è il quinto elemento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E egli de’ soldati del Tinca (SF)</td>
<td>Soldati del Tinca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El fine fa il tutto (FF)</td>
<td>Il fine, fa il tutto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
El mal va dietro al bene, et il bene al male (FF)
Il mal' va dietro al ben, el ben’ al male

El mal vien per libra, e va via per oncie (FF)
I mali vengono a carra, e fuggono a oncia

El pasciuto, non crede al digiuno (FF)
Il pasciuto, non crede al digiuno

El pesce grande, mangia il piccolo (FF)
Il pesce grande, mangia il piccolo

El pesce guasta l’aqua, et la carne la concia (FF)
Il pescie guasta l’acqua, la carne la concia

El primo capitolo de matti, si è tenersi svio (FF)
Il primo capitolo de’ matti, è di teneri savio

El promette mari e monti (FF)
Chi promette mari, monti, e montagna, non ha credito in Bertagna

El promettere, è la viglia del dare (FF)
Il promettere, è la vigilia del dare

El sparagno, è il primo guadagno (FF)
Il sparagno, è il primo guadagno

El vino al sapore, el pane al calore (FF)
Il vino al sapore, il pane al calore

E meglio assai morire con honore, che vivere con vergogna (FF)
Chi troppo nell’honor presume, in vergogna muore

E meglio che si dica, qui fuggi Lippa, che qui mori Lippa (SF)

È meglio sdrucolar co’ piedi, che con la lingua (SF)
E meglio sdrusciolar co’ piedi, che colla lingua

È morto in letto d’honore (SF)
Chi muore in campo, muore in letto d’honore

E più dura la ferita della penna, che quella della lancia (SF)

E pur è meglio esser solo che male accompagnato (SF)
E meglio esser solo, che male accompagnato

Era un’avarone, ch’haverebbe scorticato un pedocchio per haverne la pelle (SF)

Esperientia è qualche volta pericolosa (FF)

Essendo a tavola, se c’è poco pane, tienlo in mano; se poca carne, prendi l’osso; se poco vino, bevi spesso; e non voler mai presentar
ne sale, ne testa d’animale a veruno, se
prima non ne sei richiesto; e non ragionar
mai de’ morti a tavola (SF)

Esser cavallo di Ruggiero (SF)

Essere un acqua queta di Toscana (SF)

E tempo perso, à metter aqua nel mare (FF)
Si può aggiunger’ acqua, ma non gia
crescer’ il mare

E voi potete pisciar’in letto e dir ch’havete
sudato (SF)
Lui piscia in letto, e dice ch’ha sudato

Faccia rara, mente avara (SF)

Fallando si impara (FF)
Guastando, s’impara

Fame è la miglior salsa (FF)
Fame, è la miglior salsa

Fammi indovino, et io ti faro richo (FF)
Fammi indovino, io ti farò ricco

Fanno conto inanzi lhoste (FF)
Chi fà conto senza l’hoste, due volte lo fà

Far ben, non è inganno, buttar via il suo,
non è guadagno (FF)
Far bene non è inganno, gittar via il suo,
non è guadagno

Farebbe spasimare, tramortire, e venir meno
gn’huomo quantunque ardito, o almeno lo
farebbe fuggire gridando a acorrhuomo (SF)

Fare come il gambaro (SF)

Fare di una lancia un fuso (SF)
Far d’una lancia un fuso
Fare d’vna lancia, vna spina

Fare tal coscientia di sputar in chiesa e poi
cascar su l’altare (SF)
Molti fan coscientia di sputar’ in chiesa, e
poi cacan su l’altare

Fargli portar il cimier’ cerviero (SF)

Faremos dunque come fanno a Prato (SF)
Se pioue facciamo, come fanno a Prato

Fate di necessita virtu (FF)
Fare di necessità virtù

Fate d’ogni herba fascio (SF)
Fare d’ogni herba fascio

Fatemi indovino, ch’io vi farò richo (SF)
Fammi indovino, io ti farò ricco

Febraio curto, peggi de tutti (FF)
Febraio corto, peggio di tutti

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Felice è colui ch’impara a spese altrui (SF) Felice colui, che impara a spese altrui
Foco e stoppa non s’acorda (FF) Fuoco, e stoppa, non s’accordano
Frati osservanti sparagnano il suo, e mangiono quel d’altrui (FF) Frati osseruanti, mangiano quel d’altri, e sparagnano il loro
Freno indorato, non migliora il cavallo (SF) Freno indorato, non migliora il cavallo
Freno indorato non migliora il cavallo, ne guaina d’oro coltello di piombo (SF) In guaina d’oro, coltello di piombo
Fuggi donne, vino, e dado, se non il tuo fatto e spacciato (SF) Bocca, braghe, e dado, il tuo fatto è spacciato
Fuggi l’acqua quiete, ne la corrente, entra sicuramente (SF) Guardati da l’acqua quiete, nella corrente entra sicuramente
Fuggi le quistioni, e non entrar mai in disputa, ne con hosti ne con donne, ma paga et va con Dio (SF)
Fuggi quel piacer presente, che ti da dolor futuro (FF) (SF) Fuggi quel piacer presente, che ti da dolor futuro
Gatto guantato non piglia sorzi (FF) Gatto guantato, non piglia sorgij
Gente d’Essaù, chi le ha avute una volta, non le vuole più (SF)
Giugno, Luglio, et Agosto, non toccar ne donna ne mosto (SF) Giugno, Luglio, & Agosto, non toccar ne donna ne mosto
Gli amici tuoi piglialo quando vuoi (SF) Gli amici, piglialo quando tu puoi
Grand amore, gran dolore (FF) Grand’amore, gran dolore
Grand e grossa mi faccia Dio, che bianca e rossa mi farò io (FF) Grande e grassa mi faccia Dio, che bella & bianca mi farò io
Gran navi, gran pensieri (FF) Gran nave, gran pensiere
Gratie non aspettate, soglion’esser piu grate (SF) Gratie non aspettate, sogliono esser più grate
Guancia polita, fronte ardita (SF)
Guarda bene inanzi che tu salti (FF) Guarda inanzi che tu salti
Guardate di non mandarle, per la posta delle lumache (SF)
Lui scrive per la posta delle lumache

Guardatevi d’aceto, et da vino dolce, et da la cholera d’un homo pacifico (FF)
Guardati d’aceto di vin dolce

Guardatevi dal non ci pensai, ne vogliate comprar penitentia a troppo alto pretio (SF)
Guardati d’aceto di vin dolce

Guardatevi da questo lupo involto in pelle pecorina, il quale sotto forma di colomba, porta cosa di scorpione (SF)
Sotto forma di colomba, portar coda di scorpione

Guardati da debiti, tempera la voglie, e moderà la lingua (SF)

Habbi sempre la mano al cappello et alla borsa (SF)

Havete buon vicino. E per conseguentia buon matino (SF)

Havete dato su la brocca (SF)
Dare nella brocca

Havete la coscientia del lupo (SF)

Havete tolto una cattiva gatta a pettinare (SF)
Haver mala gatta a pelare

Homo condannato, è mezo degolato (FF)
Huomo condannato, è mezzo degolato

Homo da confini, overo l’è ladro, overo assassino (FF)
Huomo da confino, o ladro, o assassino

Homo peloso, o che l’è matto, over venturoso (FF)
Huomo peloso, o matto o venturoso

Homo rosso, e femina barbata, tre miglia de lontan la saluta (FF)
Huomo rosso e donna barbuta, tre miglia di lontano gli saluta

Il corvo per troppo gracchiare, del cibo si lascia privare (SF)
Il corvo per troppo gracciar, perde il suo cibo

I denari fanno correre i cavalli (FF)
Denari fanno correr’ i cavalli

I fatti sono maschi, e le parole femine (FF)
I fatti sono maschij, e le parole femine
Le parole sono femine, et i fatti sono maschi (SF)
Il buon marito fa la buona moglie (SF)

Il dolce cibo vuol la salsa amara (SF)  Dolce vivanda, vuole salsa acerba

Il fine fa tutti equali (FF)

Il fuoco aiuta il cuoco (SF)  Il fuoco, aiuta il cuoco

Il giuoco è un tarlo, che rode fin su l’osso (SF)

Il mal’anno che Dio ti dia (SF)

Il Mappamondo, ne la carta da navigare, non la troveria, ne Mercurio con tutta quanta la sua malitia (SF)

Il mio cuoco mi serve bene (SF)

Il Pensa non harebbe pensato a tanta malitia (SF)

Il principio è paura, il mezzo peccato, et il fine dolore e noia (SF)

Il ricco quando vuole, il povero quando puole (SF)

Il savio non si deve vergognar di mutar proposito (FF)  Il savio, non si dee vergognar di mutar proposito

Il secreto è laudabile (FF)

Il secreto si deve celare (FF)  Se vuoi sia secreto, non lo dire

Il serpente tra i fiori et l’herba giace (SF)  Il serpente tra fiori, e la herba giace

Il spagnolo per star sano fa un buon pasto, un cattivo, et un mezzano (SF)  Vn buon pasto, un cattiuo, & un mezzano, mantien l’huomo sano

Il sparagno è il primo guadagno (SF)  Il sparagno, è il primo guadagno

Il suo amor si cambia come fa il nuvolo la state (SF)

Il tempo è padre de la verita, e l’esperientia è madre de le cose (FF)  Il tempo è padre della verità, e l’esperientia madre delle cose

Il troppo amore fa spesso occhio ben sano, veder torto (SF)  Amor’ occhio ben sano, spesso fa veder torto
Il tutto saporisce, e condisce il sale (SF)
Ogni cosa saporisce il sale

Il vitio non è egli maschio, et la virtù non è lei femina (SF)

Il vostro credo non si canta in chiesa (SF)
Il suo credo, non si canta in chiesa

I matti fanno le feste, e i savij le godeno (FF)
I matti fanno le feste, & i savij le godono

Impara una arte, et mettila da parte, che tempo vegnera, che la ti bisognera (FF)
Impara l’arte e mettila da parte, che tempo verrà, la ti bisognerà

Imprestar e mai non rendere assai promotter, e poco attendere, ben guadagnar, e poco spendere, sono tre cose da inrichirsi (FF)
Imprestar e mai non rendere assai promettere, e poco attendere, ben guadagnar, e poco spendere, farà presto lhuomo richo (FF)

In bocca ha miele, et il rasoio alla cintola (SF)
Lui ha miele in bocca, & il rasoio alla cintola

In Cipro è bon mercato di tre cose, Sale, zukaro, e putane (FF)
In Cipro sono tre cose a buon mercato, sale, Zucchero, e puttane

In corpo storto di rado si truova un’anima retta (SF)

In corte chi non sa, non ha (SF)

In corte chi sa mentire, sa regnare (SF)

In Genova harete, aria senza uccelli, marina senza pesce, montagne senza legna, huomini senza rispetto, et donne senza vergogna (SF)

In Italia sono troppe feste, troppe teste, e troppe tempeste (SF)
In Italia sono troppo teste, troppo feste, e troppo tempeste

In ogni luogo, guardati da gli huomini rossi, dalle donne barbute, e da’ segnati da Dio (SF)

In Roma piu vale la cortegiana, che la donna romana (SF)
In Roma piu vale la cortegiana, che la moglie Romana
In una mano tiene il pane, e con l’altra avventa la pietra (SF)

In una notte nasce un fungo (FF)  
In una notte, nasce un fongo

Io credo che siate nato con l’amor in bocca, perche sempre date, su quella brocca (SF)

Io credo in Dio, e non nelle donne, quantunque ne facessero miracoli, o che havessero il pegno in mano (SF)

Io domando acqua, e non tempesta (SF)  
S’intende acqua, e non tempesta

Io faccio il mestier di Michelazzo, mangio, bevo, e vado a solazzo (SF)  
Far’ il mestier di Michelazzo

Io le farò ragione, ma non alla Todesca (SF)

Io lo conosco meglio, che la madre che l’ha fatto (SF)

Sono come il sacco d’un mugnaio (SF)

Io non andrei in prigione a ritorre un’occhio, s’io ce lo havessi lasciato (SF)

Io non ci vorrei esser dipinto tanto odio, et ho a schifo il luogo (SF)

Io non ho pelo adosso che ci pensi (SF)

Io non mi ricordo dal naso alla bocca (SF)  
Lui non si ricorda dal naso alla bocca

Io non so se l’anderà bene, diceva colei che dava un servitiale al suo marito con un buon bastone (SF)  
Io non so se l’anderà bene, diceva la moglie, che, dava un servitiale a suo marito con un bastone

Io non vorrei esser solo in paradiso (SF)

Io sono cavaliero da ogni sella (SF)  
Lui è cavaglire da ogni sella

Io prendo il panno per il verso, e lascio correr l’acqua al mare (SF)

Io stavo fresco s’io giuocavo quel cavallo (SF)

Io ti farò ben star in cervello (SF)
I panni rifanno le stanghe (SF)
I panni, rifanno le stanghe

I patti rompono le leggi (FF)
I patti, rompono le leggi

La bella donna è un bel cipresso senza frutto (SF)

La bella moglie è un dolce veneno (SF)

La bella robba fa l’huomo ladro (SF)
La comodità fa l’huomo ladro

La bellezza delle donne è come un fiore, che la mattina si mette in seno, e la sera si getta in terra (SF)

La bellezza et l’honestà di rado s’accordano (SF)
Virtù e fortuna, di rado s’accordano

La bellissima [donna] è tesoro grandissimo (SF)

L’abondanza delle cose, genera fastidio (FF)
L’abbondantia genera fastidio

La coda condanna spesso la volpe a morte, per esser troppo lunga (FF)
La coda per esser troppo longa, alle volte condanna la volpe

La conscientia serve per mille testimonij (FF)
La conscientia serve per mille testimonij

L’acqua marisce fino i pali (SF)
L’acqua fa marcire i pali

L’acqua lontana non spegne fuoco vicino (SF)
Acqua lontana, non ispegne fuoco vicino

La corte romana, non vuole pecora, senza lana (SF)
Corte Romana, non vuol pecora senza lana

La fame è quella che caccia il lupo del bosco (SF)
La fame fa uscir’ il lupo del bosco

La legge nasce del peccato, et lo gastiga (FF)
La legge nasce dal peccato, e lo castiga

L’alegreze di questo mondo duran poco (FF)
Le allegrezze di questo mondo, duran poco

La lingua corre, dove il dente duole (SF)
La lingua corre, dove il dente vuole

La lode in corte è cibo delle orecchie, et un
nome vano (SF)

La mala compagnia è quella, che mena molti alla forca (FF)

La mala herba cresce presto (FF)

La maraviglia è figliola de lignoranza (FF)

L’amaro chi non vuol gustare, non gusti il dolce dell’amare (SF)

L’amor di donna lieve è come vin di fiasco, la sera è buono et la mattina è guasto (SF)

L’amor passa il guanto, la scommessa è fatta (SF)

La morte de Lupi, è sanita de le pecore (FF)

La morte segue chi la fugge, et chi la fugge, chiama alle ortiche, che pongono chi le tocca leggermente, ma non offendono chi le preme (SF)

La necessita non ha legge (FF; x2)

La notte è Madre de pensieri (FF)

La peggior carne che sia al mondo, è quella de l’huomo (FF)

La porta di dietro, guasta la casa (FF)

La povertà non è vitio, ma solo in comodità (SF)

La prima parte del pazzo, è di tenersi savio (FF)

L’aqua fa male, il vino fa cantare (FF)

L’aqua va al mare (FF)

La robba non è à chi la fa, ma à chi la gode (FF)

Lascia il frutto per le foglie, rogna compra e pesca foglie, un pedante in casa toglie, chi
ricerca d’haver moglie (SF)  ricerca d’haver moglie
La Spagna spugna della nostra etade (SF)  La Spagna, spugna della nostra etade
La speranza è l’ultima cosa de l’huomo (FF)  L’ultimo rifugio, è la speranza, o la morte
La terra non avvilisce l’oro (SF)
Lauda il mare, e tienti alla terra; lauda il monte, e tienti al piano; lauda la guerra, e tienti alla pace; e lauda la moglie, ma tienti donzello (SF)
La vera legge è la natura (FF)  La vera legge, è la natura
La vita passa, e la morte viene (FF)  La vita passa, e la morte viene
La vostra voce non entra in paradiso (SF)
L’avvertito, si può dir mezzo munito (SF)
Le belle parole et i cattivi fatti, ingannano i savij et i matti (SF)  Belle parole, e cattiui fatti, ingannano sauij, & matti
Le bone parole ongino, le cattive pongino (FF)  Le buone parole ongono, le cattive pongono
Delle parole, le buone ongono, et le cattive pongono (SF)
Le bugie hanno corte le gambe (FF)  Le bugie, hanno corte le gambe
Le donne sono il purgatorio della borsa, il paradiso del corpo, et l’inferno della anima (SF)
Le donne sono simili a’ cocodrilli, che per prendere l’huomo piangono, e preso lo divorano (SF)
Le donne sono Sante in chiesa, Angele in strada, Diavole in casa, Sirene alla finestra, Gazze alla porta, e Capre ne’ giardini (SF)
Lei fa le fusas storte, e manda il suo marito in Cornovaglia senza barca (SF)  Fare le fusas storte
Andar senza barca in Cornouaglia
Lei fa come l’insegnare dello spetiale, cioè ne ben ne male (SF)
Le lettere sono de li studiosi, le richeze de i Il mondo è de’ prosuntuosi, il paradisio de’
soleciti, il mondo de presuntuosi, il paradiso de divoti (FF)

Le perle crescono nelle conche, le gemme nelle rupi, l’oro et l’argento nelle mine, et il miele è prodotto dalle api (SF)

Le più limpide acque scatturiscono da le più dure pietre (SF)

L’hai toltà bella, a tuo danno sia (SF) L’havessi io saputo, vien troppo tardi (FF) L’hai tolta bella? A tuo danno L’havessi io saputo, sempre è tardi

L’huomo compone e Dio dispone (FF) L’huomo propone, e Dio dispone

L’infante brugiato, teme il foco (FF)

L’Inghilterra è il paradiso delle donne, il purgatorio de gli huomini, et lo inferno de’ cavalli (SF)

L’ingiuria che non vuoi vendicare, non la voler mai publicare (SF) L’ingiuria non publicare, che non vuoi vendicare

Lingua bardella, è che in fretta favella (FF) Lingua bardella, per sette saltella

Lingua chieditrice, pensier’ espilatrice (SF)

L’innocentia porta seco una d[e]fensione (FF) L’innocentia porta seco la sua deffensione

L’ira placata, non rifa l’ofese (FF) L’ira placata, non rifa l’offese

L’occhio del patron, ingrasa il cavallo (FF) L’occhio del patrone, ingrasa il cauallo

Lombardia è il giardino del mondo (FF) La Lombardia, è il giardino del mondo

L’orbo mangia molte mosce (FF) Chi è cieco, mangia molte mosche

L’oro ha la istessa virtu che ha la carità, cioè cuopre una infinità di peccati (SF)

Lui è come un stizon di fuoco, al’uma altrui, et si brucia se stesso (FF)

Lui è povero come Iob (FF)
Lui ha due faccie sotto una beretta (FF)  
Due visi sotto una beretta

Lui mette il carro inanzi al cavallo (FF)  
Metter’ il carro inanzi i buo’

Lui porta fuoco in un amano, et aqua in l’altra (FF)  
Haver’ acqua nel’una, e fuoco nel’altra mano

Lui robba Pietro, per pagar san Paulo (FF)  
Lui spoglia Pietro, per vestir Paolo

Madonna Ingordigia, con sua sirocchia  
Avaritia, che poco fa si sono maritate a quei che come cavalli mordono et piangono (SF)

Maggior fretta minor atto, e per troppo spronar la fuga è tarda (SF)  
Maggior fretta, minor atto  
Per troppo spronar, la fuga è tarda

Mal anno e mala moglie, non manca mai (FF)  
Mal’anno e mala moglie, non manca mai

Maritasi un donna, over compra una nave (FF)  
Matto per natura, e sauiu per scrittura (FF)

Matto per natura, e savio per scritura (FF)  
Matto per natura, e sauiu per scrittura

Medico pietoso fa la piaga tegnosa (FF)  
Medico pietoso, fa la piaga rognosa

Meglio e dar la lana, che la pecora (FF)  
E meglio donar la lana, che la pecora

Meglio è esser confessore, che martire (FF)  
E meglio esser confessore, che martire

Meglio è haver mezzo un pane, che non ne haver niente (FF)  
Meglio è un pezzo di pane, che niente

Meglio è un magro accordo, che una grassa sentenza (FF)  
Meglio è magro accordo, che grassa sententia

Menar l’oche a bere quando piove (SF)  
Anche io sò menar l’oche a bere, quando pioue

Mettere il borsotto nel borsetto (SF)  
Metti il matto sul bancho, ò gioca di piede, ò di canto (FF)

Miglior medicina, che pisciar chiaro, per poter far le fiche al medico (SF)  
Piscia chiaro, e fa le fiche al medico

Milan può far, Milan può dire, ma non può far di acqua vino (SF)  
Milan puo far, Milan puo dir, ma non puo far d’aqua vin
Minor pena Tantalo pate nell’inferno, che non fa chi stà di donna al governo (SF)

Molte volete le ciancie, riescono a lancie (SF)

Misero chi speme in cor di donna pone (SF)
Misero è quello che speme in cor di donna pone (SF)

Misuratene sempre tre, prima che tagliarne uno (SF)

Mi vorreste render pane per focaccia (SF)
Rendigli pan per focaccia (SF)

Muro bianco carta de matti (FF)
Muro bianco, carta di matto

Napolitano, largo di bocca, stretto di mano (SF)

Ne amor, ne signoria, vuol compagnia (FF)
Ne amor ne signoria, vuole compagnia

Ne disperarsi per fortuna aversa, che la sua rota sempre ingiro versa (FF)
Non ti disperare per fortuna avversa, che la sua ruota sempre in giro versa (SF)

Ne femina ne tela non piglia à la candela (FF)
Ne donne, gioie, o tela, non piglier’ alla candela

Ne guanto ne beretta, mai fu troppo stretta (SF)
Guanto, figa, e beretta, non fu mai troppo stretta

Nelle guerre d’amor chi la fugge la vince (SF)
Nelle guerre d’amor, chi fugge vince

Nel mezzo consiste la virtù, disse il diavolo trovandosi tra due Monache (SF)
Virtù consiste in mezzo

Ne occhi in lettera, ne mani in tasca d’altrui (FF)
Ne occhi in lettera, ne man’ in tasca, ne orecchie in secreti altrui

Ne salata, ne donna, ne capone, non perse mai stagione (SF)

Nessuno da quel che non ha (FF)
Nessuno dà, quello che non hà
Non aspettar s’esser servito vuoi, servitio altrui se tu servir ti puoi (SF)
Non aspettar s’esser servito vuoi, servitio altrui se tu servir ti puoi

Non ci è mai fumo, senza fuogo (FF)
Non ci è fumo, senza fuoco

Non ci sara mai grido in quella casa, dove che il patrone è orbo, et la patrona sorda (FF)
Non può esser guerra in quella casa, doue il marito è cieco, e la moglie sorda

Non ci è mai fumo, senza fuogo  (FF)
Non ci è fumo, senza fuoco

Non di quelle del dottor Grillo (SF)
Soccorso del dottor Grillo

Non dir mai ne donde vieni, ne dove vai (SF)

Non dir mai ne donde vieni, ne dove vai (SF)

Non dovresti mangiar altro che Heleboro (SF)
Hauer bisogno di heleboro

Non e al mondo, ne mai fu, ne sia, cuor che da donna alfin vinto non sia (SF)
Non è al mondo, ne mai fu, ne fia, cuor che d’amor legato al fin non sia

Non e virtu, che poverta non guasti (FF)
Non è virtù, che povertà non guasti

Non far ad altri quello che non vuoi per te (SF)

Non fu mai si bella scarpa, che non diventasse una ciavatta, Ne, si vaga rosa che non diventasse un grattaculo (SF)
Non fù mai si bella scarpa, che non diuenisse ciauatta
Non fù mai si vaga rosa, che non diuentasse grattaculo

Non gittar mai tanto con le mani, che tu sij costretto andarlo cercando poi co’ piedi (SF)
Non gittar del tuo tanto con le mani, che tu lo vadi poi cercando co’ piedi

Non hai più ingegno ch’il Savoiano, che disfece la sua casa per poter vender ‘il calcinaccio, o Gian dela Vigna, che vendette una bella vigna per comprar’una cantina (SF)
Romper’ la casa per vender’ il calcinaccio

Non haver mai ne occhio in lettere, ne mano in tasca, ne orecchie in secreti d’altri (SF)

Non mostra mai ne il fondo della tua borsa, ne quello del tuo animo (SF)

Non scoprir l’ammalato quando suda (SF)
Non discoprir’il malato quando suda

Non ti fidar d’amici finti (SF)
Non ti fidar di donna alcuna, che lei si volta come fa la luna (SF)

Non ti fidar di nissuno, se prima non mangi seco un moggio di sale (SF)

Non ti metter a giuocare, se non vuoi periclitare (SF)

Non ti motteggiar del vero (SF)

Non trescar mai con nissuno che doglia (SF)

Non vogliate mai dar fede a’ faremo di Roma, agli adesso adesso d’Italia, a’ magnana di Spagna, a’ by and by d’Inghilterra, a’ warrant you di Scotia, a’ tantost di Francia, perché tutte sono ciancie (SF)

Non voler esser troppo pertinace, perché al piu potente, cede il più prudente (SF)

Non voler mai metter liquor pretioso in nuovo, ma, inanzi che ci metti vino, guarda se tiene acqua (SF)

Nozze e Magistrato, sono del ciel destinato (FF)

Nul bene senza pene (FF)

Occhio bello, animo bello (SF)

O che tu mi cacci pur le grosse carotte (SF)

Odio fra gli amici, è soccorso de gli stranieri (FF)

Odi, vedi, e taci, se tu vuoi vivere in pace (FF)

Oglio, Ferro, e Sale, mercantia regale (FF)

Ogni carne fa buon bruodo, purche s’habbia fame (SF)

Ogni dieci anni, l’uno ha bisogno de l’altro (FF)
Ogni di viene la sera (FF) Non vien di, che non venghi sera
Ogni bello e gran giorno, ha sera

Ogni estremità è vitio (FF) Ogni estremo, è vitio

Ogni parola non vuol risposta (FF) Ogni parola, non vuol risposta

Ogni scuffia ti serve di notte (SF) Ogni Lorda scuffia, serve di notte

Ogni timidità è vitio (FF) Ogni timidità, è vitio

Ogni tristo cane mena la coda (FF) Ogni tristo cane, mena la coda

Ogni uccello non conosce il buon grano (FF) Ogni uccello, non conosce il buon grano

Ogni uno per se, et il diavolo per tutti (FF) Ogni un per se, e Dio per tutti

Ogniuno con arte et con inganno vive Con arte, e con inganno, si vive mezzo
mezzo l’anno, e con inganno et con arte, l’anno
vive l’altra parte (SF) Con inganno, e con arte, si vive l’altra parte

Ogniuno tira laqua al suo molino (FF) Ogni uno tira l’acqua al suo molino
Tutti tirano l’aqua al suo molino (FF)

O huomo insano e pieno di sciochezza, che O huomo insano e pieno di sciocchezza, che
pensa in donna di trovar fermezza (SF) pensa in donna di trovar fermezza

O maledetto sesso, abietto, et immondo, O servi come servo, o fugge come cervo
nato solo per purgar l’huomo al mondo (SF)

O servi come servo, o fuggi come cervo (SF) O servi come servo, o fugge come cervo

O torto, o ragione, non andar in prigione O ragione o non ragione, non andar’ in
(SF) prigione

Pan Padovano, vin Vicentino, carne Pan Padovano, vin Vicentino, carne
Furlana, formaggio Piacentino, trippe Furlana, formaggio Piacentino, trippe
Trevigiane, e donne Venetiane (SF) Trevigiane, e donne Venetiane (SF)

Parente con parente, guai à chi non ha Parente con parente, guai a chi non ha
niente (FF) niente

Pari con pari, bene sta et dura (FF) Pari con pari, bene stà e dura

Parole di zuccaro, per addolcir gli suoi, se Parole di zuccaro, per addolcir gli suoi, se
non veneni, almeno purgationi (SF) non veneni, almeno purgationi (SF)

Parole, parole senza sugo, l’amor ci dà la
vita, et in vita et in morte il tutto amor governa (SF)

Patisco il male, sperando il bene (FF)  Soffri il male, & aspetta il bene
Peccato celato, è mezo perdonato (FF)  Peccato celato, è mezzo perdonato
Peccato vechio, penitenza nuova (FF)  Peccato vecchio, penitentia nuova
Per far’ una cacciata tale potrebbono esser finite (SF)
Per ogni verità che ti esce di bocca, ti salta fuori una lepre del culo (SF)
Per tutto c’è da fare, diceva colui che ferrava le oche (SF)  Per tutto c’è da far, diceva colui, che ferrava l’oche
Per una o due donne che si trovin ree, che cento buone sian creder si dee (SF)
Per un piacer mille dolori, si truova haver chi segue amore (SF)
Per un ponto, Martin perse la cappa (SF)  Per un ponto, Martin perse la cappa
Pesa giusto, e vendi caro (FF)  Pesa giusto, e vendi caro
Petto d’alabastro, se lo miri è bellissimo, se lo tocchi è durissimo (SF)
Piacer preso in fretta riesce in disdetta (SF)  Chi fa in fretta, ha disdetta
Piglia il bene quando puoi (SF)  Piglia il bene, quando viene
Piu ch’ il peccato, se la vedeste per fuggirla salterestei n qualche calcinaccio (SF)
Piu morde la penna di un letterato, che non fa il dente di alcun serpente (SF)
Piu ne hai, manco noia (SF)
Piu per dolcezza, che per forza (FF)
Piu presso la chiesa, più lontano da Dio (FF)  Piu presso alla chiesa, più lontan da Dio
Piu tira un sol pelo d’una bella donna, che non fanno cento paia di buoi (SF)  Piu tira un pel di donna, che cento paia di buoi
Piu valente, che la spada (SF)

Poche parole bastano fra gli homini savij (FF)

Poco fa, chi a se non giova (FF)

Poco senno basta, a chi fortuna sona (FF)

Potendo andar per terra io non dovessi mai andar per acqua (SF)

Presto maturo, presto marzo (FF)

Putti e matti indovinano (FF)

Qual è l’arbore tale è il frutto (SF)
Tal è l’arbore, tal è il frutto (FF)

Qual vita, tal fine (FF)

Quand’ il marito fa terra, la moglie fa carne (SF)

Quando che il cavallo è rubbato, serra la porta de la stalla (FF)

Quando il cieco guida il cieco, amendo si truovan nella fossa (SF)

Quando la gatta non è in casa, i sorzi bellano (FF)

Quando l’a ben tonato, è forza che piovi (FF)

Quando sei incudine ubidisci al martello, ma quando martello, attendi a martellare (SF)

Quanto in piu gioventute et in piu bellezza, Tanto par che l’honestà sua laude accresca (SF)

Quanto piu si ha, tanto piu si desidera (FF)

Quantunque la lingua non habbia osso, la fa spesso romper il dosso (SF)

Quantunque un gallo basti a dieci galline, Un gallo basta a dieci galline, ma non dieci

La lingua non ha osso, e pur fa romper’ ossi
dieci huomini non bastano ad una donna (SF)  
Quelli che hanno ducati, signori sono chiamati (SF)  
Quello che meno pesa, et più vale (SF)  
Quel che tu stesso puoi e dire e fare, che altri il faccia mai non aspettare (SF)  
Quello che tu stesso puoi e dir’ e fare, ch’altri il faccia, mai non aspettare (SF)  
Questa legna è verde bruscia e non fa fiamma (SF)  
Questi nostri vini sono buoni Christiani, perché sono ben battezzati (SF)  
Questo vostro servitore è di levante (SF)  
Radigo non fa pagamento (FF)  
Ragione deve esser in consiglio (FF)  
Razza di Susagna, chi perde il suo amore, assai guadagna (SF)  
Recipe delle pillole di gallina, elettuario di cucina, siloppo di cantina, con buona pasta di farina (SF)  
Rendono più frutto donne, asini, e noci, a chi ver loro ha più le mani atroci (SF)  
Riescono amici da stranuti, il più che ne hai è un Dio ti aiuti (SF)  
Sangue d’huomo non rompe gia diamanti. Ma sangue di becco si (SF)  
Sapientia di pover’huomo, e forza di facchino, e bellezza di puttana non vaglion un quattrino (SF)  
Sciocco è colui che pensa contro amore, o santo, o cattivo, o sia pien di valore (SF)  
Se brutta ella è un sfinaimento, e se bella un tormento (SF)
Se brutta non è sfinimento, se bella non è un tormento, se ricca può mantenermi, se povera può piacermi, se vergine è pieghevole, se vedova è esperimentata, se giovane è piacevole, se vecchia è profittevole (SF)

Secondo il fate, et secondo il tempo navigate (SF)

Se è grande è otiosa, se è ritrosa. Se è bella, è neghittosa, se è brutta, è fastidiosa. Se è vergine è inesperta, se vedova è ostinata, se giovane è lasciva, se vecchia è spiacevole, se grassa è pastosa, se magra è carogna (SF)

Se hai il lupo per compagno, porta il cane sotto il mantello (SF)  
Chi ha il lupo per compagno, porti il can sott’ il mantello

Sei d’una natura tanto perversa, e scialacquata, che faresti uscir del seminato un santo (SF)  
Tu esci del seminato

Sete fuori del seminato (SF)

Scientia non è peso (FF)  
Scientia non è peso

Sei hore dorme lo studente, sette il viandante, otto il lavorante, et nove ogni furfante (SF)  
Cinque hore dorme il viandante, sette il studente, otto il mercatante, & uvndeci ogni furfante

Se il letto è picciolo, mettiti in mezzo (SF)  
In letto stretto, mettiti in mezzo

Se mortal velo il mio veder appanna, che colpa è delle stelle, o delle cose belle? (SF)  
Che colpa n’han le stelle, e le cose belle?

Sei più smemorato che l’oblio (SF)

Sel Cielo casca, haveremo quaglie (FF)  
Se il ciel casca, haveremo quaglie

Se la donna ama, lo fa per novità, cioè una volta in sette anni (SF)

Se la donna fosse così picciola come è buona, il minimo bacello le farebbe una veste et una corona (SF)  
Se la donna fosse piccola come è buona, la minima foglia le farebbe una veste et una corona

Se le donne fossero d’argento, o d’oro, non varrebbe un quattrino, perché non starebbono mai ne a tocco ne a martello  
Se le donne fossero d’argento non varrebbon’ un quattrino, perché non starebbon’ al martello
Se lui mi batte con la spada, io lo batterò con il fodro (SF)
Chi percuote con la spada, sarà percosso col fodro

Se mi bravate con la Loica, io vi colpirò con la Gramatica (SF)

Sempre a beltà fu leggiezza amica, della beltà compagna è la fierezza (SF)
Sempre a beltà, fù leggieranza amica De la beltà, compagna è la fierezza

Se non ci fosse vento o femina nata, ne in mar ne in terra si sentirebbe mai mala giornata (SF)
Se non ci fosse vento o femina nata, non ci sarebbe mai ne tempesta, ne mala giornata

Senza denari non canta Marcantonio (SF)
Haver l’humor di Marcantonio

Senza virtù è viso bello, Bella testa non ha cervello (SF)

Senza denari, Georgio non canta

Se per sorte se ne truova una che ami, si può dir essere miracolo, e miracoli non duran che nuove giorni (SF)

Se più che crini havesse occhi il marito, non potria far che non fosse tradito (SF)
Se più che crini hauesse occhi il marito, non potria far che non fosse tradito

Sete nuovo in un mantello vecchio (SF)

Se vuoi del tuo mestier cavar guadagno, d’un tuo maggiore non ti far compagno (SF)
Se vuoi del tuo mestier cavar guadagno, d’un tuo maggiore non ti far compagno

Se vuoi esser viandante et andare salvo per il mondo, habbi sempre et in ogni luoco, Occhio di falcone, per veder lontano; Orecchie d’asino per udir bene; Viso di cimia, per esser pronto al riso; Bocca di porcello, per mangiar del tutto; Spalle di camelo, per portar ogni cosa con patientia; e Gambe di cervo, per poter fuggire i pericoli (SF)

Se vuoi venir meco, porta teco (FF)
Chi vuol venir meco, porti seco

Siamo al cospetto delle donne, come neve al sole, cera al fuoco, o la farfalla alla candela (SF)
| Si danno bene gli officij, ma non si da discrezione (FF) | Si dan gl’officij, ma non la discrezione |
| Siedi e gambetta, che vedrai tua vendetta (SF) | Siedi e gambetta, vedrai tua vendetta |
| Siena di sei cose piena, cioè di torri e di campane, di scolari, di puttane, di becchi, e di ruffiani (SF) | Siena di sei cose piena, di torri e di campane, di scolari e di puttane, di becchi, & di ruffiani |
| S’io ti comando qualche servigio, tu mi fai fare come il Podesta di Sinigaglia, che comanda e bisogna, che faccia da se stesso (SF) | Il podestà di Sinigaglia, comanda e poi fa’ |
| S’io ti faccio carezze, tu mi mantelizzi (SF) | |
| S’io ti mando in qualche negotio, tu ritorni col coro (SF) | |
| Si puol cacciar chiodo con chiodo (FF) | Si suol cacciar, chiodo con chiodo |
| Sofri il male, e aspetta il bene (FF) | Sofri il male, & aspetta il bene |
| Solo bella tella fece, cio che di giorno fè, la notte poi disfece (SF) | |
| Solo perché casta visse, Penelope non fu minor d’Ulisse (SF) | Sol perché casta visse Penelope, non fu minor d’Ulisse |
| Son contento d’haver’ imparato a mie spese (SF) | Imparare a sue spese |
| Sopra Dio non è Signore, sopra negro non è colore, sopra sal non è sapore (FF) (SF) | Sopra Dio non è signore |
| Sopra negro non è colore |
| Sopra sale non è sapore | |
| Speranza conforta l’huomo (FF) | |
| Spesso sotto habito vile, s’asconde thesor gentile (SF) | |
| Stolto chi lor da fede prima che provarle (SF) | |
| Succia amor la borsa, succia amor il cuore, pazzo è chi compra con duo sangui amore (SF) | Succia amor la borsa, e succia il core, pazzo è chi compra con duo sangui amore |
Taci caval di Cardinale, ch’io non ti crederei se tu fossi il credo (SF)

Taglia la coda al cane, e sempre resta cane (FF)

Tal biasma altrui, che se stesso condanna (FF)

Tal patrone, tal servitore (FF)

Tanto è il mal, che non mi noce, quanto è il ben, che non mi giova (FF)

Tanto è mio, quanto io godo, e do per Dio (FF)

Tardi s’avvede il ratto, quando si truova in bocca del gatto (SF)

Ti dirò bene dove ti tocca il gricciolo se non vedi di emendarti, poltrone in radice, in tronco, in rami, in foglie, in fiori, e in frutti che tu sei (SF)

Tra quali sempre bisogna lasciar del pelo (SF)

Tra sepolto tesoro, et occulta sapientia, non si conosce alcuna differentia (SF)

Trista quella Musa, che non fa trovar scusa (FF)
Trista quella musa, che non ha qualche scusa (SF)

Triste quelle case, ove le galline cantano, et il gallo tace (FF)

Tristo colui, che da esempio altrui (FF)

Troppo di una cosa, non val niente (FF)

Troppo sperar inganna (FF)

Trotto d’asino, foco di paglia, et amor di donna, poco durano (FF)

Trotto di una cosa, dove la gallina canta, & il gallo tace

Tristo colui, che dà esempio altrui

Troppo, non vale nulla

Troppo sperar’, inganna

Trotto di asino, amor di donne, favor di signore, suon di campana, fuoco di paglia, vino di fiasco, e vento di dietro, poco durano
Tu hai dato il cervello a ripudolare, ne sai cosa che stia bene (SF)

Tu hai le mani lunghe, e le meni basse (SF)

Tu hai tutti i sette peccati in te (SF)

Tu hai un cervello heteroclito e sregolato (SF)

Tu la poi slongare, ma non scampare (FF)   L’huomo la può slongare, ma non fuggire

Tu l’hai sempre in bocca, come la canzon del’uccellaccio (SF)

Tu mi fai pagar’ ogni cosa un’occhio (SF)

Tu mi infinocchi (SF)   Lui sa bene infinocchiare

Tu mi ongi i stivalli (SF)

Tu mi vendi acqua di finocchio (SF)

Tu non farai mai statuti, ne casa da tre solari (SF)

Tu non sei buono ne crudo ne cotto, ne vivo ne morto, e sempre sei ubriaco come una suppa (SF)

Tu sei come l’ancora, la quale sta sempre nell’acqua, e mai non impara, a nuotare, o come una rapa, che più che sta sotto terra, diventa più grossa (SF)

Tu sei più appricioso che la mula del Papa (SF)

Tu sei più doppio ch’una cipolla (SF)   Lui è più doppio, ch’una cipolla

Tu sei più fantastico, che tre dadi (SF)

Tu sei più pigro ch’il sonno, o che Lippopotopo (SF)

Tu sei più scaltrito, ch’il ladro che rubbò la peste a San Rocco (SF)   Lui torrebbe la peste a san Rocco

Tu sei più sporco ch’un guattaro d’Hongheria (SF)
Tu sei tanto da poco che moriresti in un forno di pane (SF)
Lui morirebbe di fame in un forno di pane

Tu stai tutto il giorno con le mani a cintola (SF)
Tutte le arme di Brescia, non armeriano la paura (SF)
Tutte le arme di Londra, non armerion la paura (FF)

Tutti sete macchiati d’una pece (SF)
Tutti siam macchiati, d’una pece

Tutto è pesce che vi vien’ alla rete (SF)
Tutto l’acciaio che hai adosso non farebbe un ago (SF)
Tutto quel che luce, non è oro (FF)

Una donna m’ha fatto, ed una donna m’ha disfatto (SF)
Una man lava l’altra, et tutte due lavano il viso (FF)
Una sola donna si truova netta e pura, di tante che ne ha fatte la natura (SF)

Un bel morire, tutta una vita honora (FF)
Un demente non fa inferno (SF)

Una pecora rognosa, guasta tutto un gregge (FF)
Una pillola formentina, la giornata d’una gallina, con qualche dramma di sermentina, era una buona medicina (SF)

Un avoltor non sara mai bon sparaviere (FF)
Un cappello et una borsa piu o meno l’anno, costano poco et molti amici fanno (SF)

Un homo val cento, e cento non vagliano uno (FF)
Un’ huomo ne val cento, e cento non n vagliono uno
Un uccello in gabbia, ne val due del bosco, et
pure si è meglio esser uccello di campagna, che uccello di gabbia (FF)

E meglio esser’ uccello di campagna, che di gabbia

Un non ardito cuore, di rado gode il suo amore (SF)

Un signor ch’il tuo ti toglie, il francioso con le doglie, assassin che ti dispoglie, è men male che l’haver moglie (SF)

Vn signor ch’il tuo ti toglie, il Francioso con le doglie, assassin che ti dispoglie, è men mal che l’haver moglie

Valente come il poeta da Modona, che seminava le fave a cavallo (SF)

Saresti mai il Potta da Modona, che seminava i piselli a cavallo

Val meglio un huomo di paglia, che una donna d’oro (SF)

Un’ huomo di paglia, vale vna donna d’oro

Val più l’iniquità dell’huomo, che la bontà della donna (SF)

Di questi che vanno messeri, e tornano seri

Vanno Messeri e tornano Seri (SF)

Vegliar à la luna, e dormir al sole, non fa ne profitto, ne honore (FF)

Vegliar’ alla luna e dormire al sole, non è ne profitto ne honore

Venetia, chi non ti vede, non ti pretia, ma chi ti vede, ben gli costa (FF) (SF)

Venetia chi non ti vede non ti pretia, ma chi ti vede ben gli costa

Vesti caldo, mangia poco, bevi assai, che viverai (FF) (SF)

Mangia poco, vesti caldo, bevi assai, che viuerai

Vesti un zoccarello, e’ pare un forfantello (SF)

Chi veste un zoccarello, pare un forfantello

Vino adacquato non vale un fiato (SF)

Viso di calamita per tirar i cuori di ferro come navi a naufragio (SF)

Vi tirerete la rovina addosso (SF)

Vive chi vince (FF)

Vive chi vince
Rida chi vince

Vivi con vivi, e morti con morti (FF)

Vivi co vivi, e morti co morti

Vivono alcuni d’amore, Come le aloette di porri (SF)
Voi meritate il paradiso, non che il calendario (SF)

Voi mi date duro osso da rosegar (SF)

Voi mi fate lambicar’ il cervello a sodisfarvi (SF)

Voi non andate dunque vestito a figura (SF)

Voi non credete al santo se non fa miracoli, et fate come Papa Leone, che donava tutto ciò ch’egli non poteva vendere, od havere (SF)

Voi non credete ch’io sia calvo se non mi vedete il cervello (SF)

Voi non credete al santo, se non fa miracoli
Volentier dona ciò che non puoi vendere

Voi non crederete ch’io sia calvo se non mi vedete il cervello
Non credi che sia calvo, se non vedi il cervello?

Christo lasciò ne li precetti, voi non far altrui, quel che per te non vuoi (FF)

Christo lasciò negli precetti suoi, non far’altrui quel che per tè non vuoi

Voi non havete perso che due poste (SF)

Voi sete un tristo uccello ad imbrattar’ il vostro nido (SF)

Voi uscite de’ gangheri (SF)

Voi uscite sempre de’ gangheri

Volonta fa mercato, et denari pagano (FF)

Volontà fa mercato e denari pagano

Volto di miele, cuore di fiele (SF)

Vuovo d’un hora, pane d’un di, capretto a’ un mese, vino di sei, carne d’un’ anno, pesce di dieci, donna di quindici, et amico di cento, bisogna havere, chi vuol ben godere (SF)

Pan di un di, vuovo d’un hora, vin d’un anno, pesce di dieci, donna di quindici, amico di cento

**Numeric Paremias**

Due cose dice Sirach, mi scorucciano, et la terza mi dispiace, Quando che homini sanij sono disprezati, quando che esperti soldati sono in poverta, quando che un homo declina da la virtu al vitio (FF)

Due cose non possono patir equalita, cio è amor et principalita (FF)

A tre cose non manca mai commedatione, cioè à bon vino quando vien bevuto, una bona sentenza, quando vien detta, et un bon homo in adversita (FF)
Ci sono tre cose che mai sono satisfatte, et la quarta non dice mai satis, Una donna che non è temperata, la terra non è mai sciutta, Inferno non è mai satisfatto, et il fuoco non ha mai legna assai (FF)

Ci sono tre cose che non si possono sapere, et la quarta nessuno puo intendere. I passi di una Aquila volante nel aire, la via de un Serpente passando una Rocca, la via d’una nave sopra il mare, e la vita de un giovine passata ne la sua gioventu (FF)

Da tre cose guardate, cioè, Da un Sicophante, da un Adulatore, da un presuntuoso (FF)

Da tre cose signor liberaci, Da una borsa voda, da un cativo vicino, e da una cativa donna (FF)

Di tre cose il diavolo si fa insalata, di lingue di avvocati, di dita di notari, la terza è riserbata (SF)

I tre corsi dell’huomo, Pueritia, Gioventu, et Vechieza (FF)

La donna che vuol’ esser detta bella sopra tutte le bellissime, convien haver trenta cose, per le quali vien celebrata Helena. Cioè, tre bianche, tre negre, tre rosse, tre corte, tre longhe, tre grosse, tre sottili, tre strette, tre large, e tre piccole. Le bianche sono, i denti, le mani, et la gola. Le negre sono, gli occhi, le ciglia, et i peletti c’ascondono diletto. Le rosse sono, le labbra, le guancie, et i capitelli delle mammelle. Le longhe sono, le gambe, le dita, et i capelli. Le corte sono, i piedi, le orecchie, et i denti, ma con misura. Le large sono, la fronte, il petto, et i fianchi. Le strette sono, nelle coscie, nel naso, et nel luogo di piacere. Le grosse o piene sono, le coscie, le groppe, et il ventre. Le sottili sono, le labbra, le ciglia, et i capelli. Le piccie sono, la bocca, nel traverso, o le pupille de gl’occhi. Et chi manca alcuna di queste parti non puo vantarsi d’esser bella, ma chi tutte le possiede, si può dir bella in ogni perfettione (SF)

Non ti scorucciari con tre cose, con la verita, con bon consegl, et con il gallo che canta la mattina (FF)

Per tre cose la terra spesse volte è flagellata, et la quarta è intolerabile, quando che un servitore è fatto signore sopra i beni del suo signore, un pazo cibato con delicateze, un giovine dato à la concupiscientia, et una servente fatta herede de la sua signora (FF)

Quatro sorte di tentatione, con cupiscentia, ambitione, hipocrisia, et vana speranza (FF)

Quatro humili regnano nel’huomo, secondo i quatro elementi, cioè, una complessione è sanguigna, l’altra cholericha, l’altra flemmaticha, l’ultima malinchonicha (FF)

Si vede de gli huomini che diventano poveri per tre cause: alcuni per esser troppo pietosi: ma de quelli ce ne pochi, alcuni per esser troppo liberali, de quelli ce ne manco, alcuni per esser troppo prodighi, ma de quelli ce ne assai in Londra (FF)

Tre bone cose: Verita, charita, e virtu (FF)

Tre bone Regole per ogniuno, Reggi il tuo volere: tempera la tua lingua: rafrena il tuo ventre (FF)

Tre cose a nessuno efetto, A tenir acqua in un tamiso, a correre dietro ucelli nel aire, a pianger dietro i morti (FF)
Tre cose apartengono à un Conseliere, Scientia, benevolentia, et liberta in parlar (FF)

Tre cose bone in un prencipe, Misericordia, Eloquenza, et Dotrina (FF)

Tre cose bone per una donna, le richezze di Giuno, la sapientia di Pallas, la belezza di Cerere (FF)

Tre cose l’huomo non deve prestare, La sua donna, il suo cavallo, le sue arme (FF)

Tre cose piacciono à Dio, et anche à gli huomini, Concordia fra fratelli, amicitia fra vicini, accordo fra il marito et moglie (FF)

Tre cose dipiacciono à Dio, et à gli huomini, Un homo povero superbo, un homo ricco bugiardo, et un homo vechio inamorato (FF)

Tre sensi del’huomo, Naturale, vitale, ragionevole (FF)

Tre sorte de huomini che sono da esser tenuti pazzi, Un fedel amante di donne, un misericordioso soldato, et un bel giuocatore (FF)

Tre sorte de huomini possono mentire per auctorita, un Medico, un Vechio, et un che è stato lontano (FF)

Tre sorte de huomini sempre mancano ingegno, colui che non sa vincere la sua ira, et colui che mangia assai, et non fa niente (FF)

Tre sorte de huomini non vedono niente, lorbo senza ochij, un pazo senza discretione, et colui che si diletta in piaceri mondani, senza paura di morte (FF)

Tre sorte de huomini sono sempre sordi, colui che sempre sente boni detti, e non semenda, colui che si diletta di scandalizar ogniuno, et colui che desidera di sentir i secreti di tutti gli huomini (FF)

Tre sorte di beni possiede l’huomo, cioè, i beni di Fortuna, i beni del corpo, et i beni dell’animo (FF)594

Tre sorte di eloquentia, Gramatica, Retorica, Dialettica (FF)

Tre sorte di Filosofia, Naturale, Morale, Loica (FF)

Tre sorte di flagello, Fame, peste, et guerra (FF)

Una cosa in tre fa l’huomo salvo da ogni male, Padre, Figliolo, et lo Spirito Santo (FF)

Un homo non si doveria mai vantar di tre cose, di bon vino, de la beleza de la sua moglie, et de le sue richezze (FF)

Un homo val cento, e cento non vagliano uno (FF)

Tre sorte [di beni possiede l’Huomo], cioè, i beni di Fortuna, i beni d’el corpo, et i beni del’animo (FF)

I quattro Elementi, Aqua, Foco, Aire, et terra (FF)

594 This is the only numeric paremias which is not featuring in Chapters 18 and 19, but in Chapter 24.
Non cercar a mover queste quattro cose, un homicido, un homo a chi piace cicalare, una comune cortesana, et un cavallo che corre volontariamente in un luogo pericoloso (FF)

Non è mai bono per uno a far fretta a quattro luoghi, a una zuffa, a una compagnia de e briachij, ò a una festa et non esser invitato, et a parlar con un matto (FF)

Non ti fidar troppo di quattro cose, cioè, di un can forastiero, un caval sconosciuto, una donna parlatrice, et nel piu profondo luogo di una rivera (FF)

Quatro cose amazano un huomo inanzi il suo tempo, Una bella donna, una casa che non è quie te, mangiar et bever smisuratamente, et un aire corotto (FF)

Quatro cose corompono tutte le sentenze, Doni grassi, odio, favore, et paura (FF)

Quattro cose danno noia a la vista di tutti gli huomini, cioè lacrime, fumo, vento, et la peggior de tutte, è a veder i suoi amici sventurati, et i suoi inimici felici (FF)

Quatro cose doveriano sempre esser in casa, Il polaio, la gatta, il camino, et la bona moglie (FF)

Quatro cose necessarie in una casa, un camino, un gatto, una gallina, et una bona donna (FF)

Quatro fatti che tiranni usano, distruggere li boni, odiare li poveri, inalzar li maligni, annullare virtu (FF)

Quatro sorte de huomini trovano amici, Il liberale, il gentile, il potente over richo, et color à chi legiermente si puo parlare (FF)

Quatro vie ci sono, che nessuno puo star fermo sopra, sopra luoghi bagnati, sopra il giaccio, sopra gloria et ambitione, sopra la belta di una donna (FF)

Cinque cose che non sono necessarie in una republica, Un falso Giudice in Concistorio, un mercante ingannatore nel mercato, un Prete avaro in una Chiesa, una bella donna in Bordello, et adulatori ne le corte de prencipi (FF)

Cinque sorte di persone dicono la verita spesse volte, un infante, un ebrio, un pazo, un scandalizatore, et colui che dorme (FF)

Sei cose ci sono che Iddio ha in odio, et la settima lui ha in abominatione, cio è: Ochi alti, la lingua bugiarda, le mani che spargeno il sangue, i piedi veloci per correre a far male, il cuore che macchina iniquit a, il testimonio falso, et colui che mette contentione fra fratelli (FF)

Sei cose ci sono, che non si possono mai ascondere, la roagna in mano, la tosse a un banchetto, una fibia in un sacco, una putana a un balcone, poverta in superbia, et alegreza ne la li bidine (FF)

Sei cose sono sempre mutabile, Il favor de prencipi, il amor di donna, il corso de dadi, il far caccia à ucelli, il tempo, et la primavera de i fiori (FF)

Sette cose che non sono profitabile in una cosa, una gallina senza ovi, una Troia senza porcellini, una vacca senza latte, una figliola che va intorno la notte, un figliolo giuocatore, una donna che spende privatamente, una massara gravida (FF)
Queste otto cose non si accordano mai, Un codardo con la guerra, un piccol cavallo con un homo pesante, un homo che ha sete con un piccol potto, un cacciatore con un can pigro, cani e gatti in cucina, un giardinier con una capra, un gran datio ed un povero mercante, un homo vecchio con una donna giovine (FF)

Queste otto cose se vedeno rare vole, Una bella figlia senza inamorato, una gran fiera senza ladri, un usuraio senza denari, un giovine senza alegrezza, un granaio senza sorzi, una testa tegnosa senza pedochi, un becco senza barba, un homo sonnolente adorno di sapientia et dottrina (FF)

Colui che cerca di trovar queste cose, perde il suo tempo, un porco grasso fra Giudei, verita in ipocriti, fede in un adulatore, sobrieta in un ebriaco, danari con un prodigo, sapientia con un matto, richeze in un maestro di scuola, silentio in una donna, virtu in una compagnia cattiva (FF)

Queste cose si accordano insieme, Un taglia borsa con una borsa piena di denari, un corridore con una strada piana, bona compagnia et alegreza, un Asino et un Molinaio, un hoste et un ghiottone, una bella donna con belle vestimenta, una donna ostinata con un bastone, figlioli disobbedienti con una scoriada, un ladro con una forca, un bon scolar con i suoi libri, Quaresimma et pescatori (FF)

Tieni le tuo orechie da li secreti de altri huomini, i tuo ochij da gli altrui scriture, le tuo mani da gli altrui borse (FF)
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