



For a Study of the Reception of the *Canzoniere* in the “Petrarch Project”

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Abstract: This article presents a research project developed by a group of scholars from different Italian universities; they plan to help construct the hypertext configuration of the Petrarch Project by attempting a first collective research on the fortunes of a single poem of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Rvf*), sonnet 35, “Solo et pensoso i più deserti campi.” The ultimate aim of this mosaic work is to produce a synthetic, but integral, investigation of the fortunes and poetic interpretations of the text. Finally, the article discusses the new perspectives opened by the hypertext approach to the study of the reception of the *Rvf*. For this reason, this group of scholars extends an invitation to other researchers to collaborate in creating the map of the reception of sonnet 35 and other poems from Petrarch's *Canzoniere*.

I don't think there is any need to dwell on the fact that, even in literary studies, the extraordinary quantity of information available through the Web and digital technologies provides the chance of experimenting with organisations and constructions of meanings. Otherwise the wealth of textual data could turn into a substantial and meaningless chaos. We therefore cannot fail to praise the “Petrarch Project,” begun by the University of Oregon, which reminds us of the opportunity in today's new digital technologies for experimenting with new investigative methods and broader, coordinated research projects.

The structure of the “Petrarch Project,” based on the individual poems of the *Canzoniere*, leads us to reconsider the study of the reception of a macrotext, no longer as a unitary “book of rhymes,” but by considering the fate of its discontinuous elements. The “Petrarch Project” website, starting from every single text, will allow the construction of a network of references and studies: from the reproduction of Petrarch's manuscripts to the ancient commentaries, from the paraphrases to the bibliography of the individual texts, from the musical executions to the translations. A group of scholars from the Department of Italian Studies of the University of Bologna has begun, based on the configuration of the website, a first collective research on the fortunes of a single poem: sonnet 35, “Solo et pensoso i più deserti campi.” Each member of the group will identify a significant episode of reception in poetic rewritings from the fourteenth century to contemporary poetic adaptations. The ultimate aim of this mosaic work is to produce a synthetic, but integral, investigation of the fortunes and poetic interpretations of the text. We extend an invitation to other researchers to apply a similar mapping work to various other poems of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*.

What does *significant episode of reception* mean? By this we mean a cycle of historical experiences that share a common denominator or, better, a common interpretative stance. We believe that we can identify three cases:

1. A homogeneous reception segment: a period of time in which most readers share the same interpretation or analytic approach to the text
2. A collection of antagonistic interpretations in the same historical time: a competing reception
3. A lack of interest or a moving away from the text in a specific chronological period

Even a non-existent or weak or parodic reception is worthy of investigation as, once the reception of the *Canzoniere* has been mapped, we will be able to see the gaps and the texts that count and those that have been marginalized across the various periods and cultures as well as what the various historical interpretations of the *Canzoniere* have focused on. This will undoubtedly be useful to gain a better understanding of the semantic machine of the macrotext.

First, we must distinguish the possible levels or poles of reception, including the thematic and the stylistic that perhaps require different investigative criteria. On the one hand, we must examine a set of significant microunits that cut across the boundaries of literary genres and their varied evolutionary lines; on the other, we must bear in mind the specific formal institutions of lyrical writing which are the origins of the modern poetical self. Let's try and examine three cases related to "Solo et pensoso."

Solitude / flight

Solo et pensoso i più deserti campi
vo mesurando a passi tardi et lenti,
et gli occhi porto per fuggire intenti
ove vestigio human la rena stampi.

(Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, 35, 1-4; see text 1 in Appendix)

Undoubtedly the motif of rural solitude found a long term development in the bucolic genre of the late fifteenth century until the Arcadian eighteenth century, as the idealised disguise for the separate nature of the court or literary society. In its first expression—the collection of the *Bucoliche elegantissime* printed in Florence by Antonio Miscomini in 1482, the *Pastorale* by Boiardo, the *Arcadia* by Sannazaro—the pastoral eclogue drew almost exclusively on classical models: certainly not Petrarch, but rather Virgil, Theocritus, Moschus, Claudian, Calpurnius, and Nemesianus. However, in the conflictual and tormented first part of the sixteenth century the relationship between rural solitude and inner dialogue that we find in "Solo et pensoso" gathers prominence also in the pastoral genre, defining, in terms of themes, a double wish to isolate oneself: either in the idyllic-loving shelter of the court (static motif of solitude: line 1, "Solo et pensoso") or beyond the disorders of history and the fights for power (dynamic motif of the escape: line 3, "per fuggire"). Therefore the Petrarchan sonnet provides material for the introductory setting of

eclogues, woodland stanzas, silves and pastoral poems in two long-lasting methods that are worth examining separately.

Let's limit ourselves to a few representative examples. In introducing the shepherd's lament, the portrayal of solitude drawn from "Solo et pensoso" can be combined with absolute immobility and with resting the tired body against a "trunk" or a "stick," such as the beginning of the *Aristeo* by Girolamo Muzio which depicts Alfonso d'Avalos, marquis of Vasto, in a pastoral setting:

Il pastor Aristeo pensoso e solo
 appoggiato si stava al duro tronco
 d'un faggio antico in solitaria spiaggia;
 e per quel che di fuor porgea la fronte
 scorgere ben si potea che 'l suo pensiero
 era tutto lontan d'ogni allegrezza. (Muzio, *Aristeo*, 1-6)

The same applies for another courtly eclogue, *Metauro*, by Bernardino Baldi: "Quel pastor che colà pensoso e solo / sopra il curvo baston tutto s'appoggia, / Montan mi sembra" (Baldi 172). This happens again in *Talia* by Tullia d'Aragona, where the shepherd does not walk but sits on the grass, "in sé raccolto, immobile e pensoso" (Aragona 155). At the most, the protagonist's movement is no longer directed toward fleeing ("fuggire") but it rather becomes an "intorno," wandering motion, vague and indefinite like that in the *Aminta* by Bernardino Rota: "Aminta, ove ne vai solo e dolente, / di lagrime bagnando il lito intorno / ove vestigio uman nullo si vede?" (Rota 130). It is a solitude enclosed in a confined place that, however, embraces not only the innermost lament, but also the conversation between shepherds, with an invitation to socialise the lyrical words that use even vaguely ironic allusions to the "fuggire" of "Solo et pensoso," as in the *I due pellegrini* eclogue by Luigi Tansillo, where Petrarch's "vo mesurando" becomes "vo smarrito":

Già si raddoppia il dì ch'io vo smarrito,
 mercé del piè che mi conduce in via
 dove vestigio uman trovo scolpito.
 Sapessi almen dove mi vada o sia!
 Ecco un che va solingo e fuor di strada:
 forse, di me pietoso, il Ciel l'invia.
 ...
 Chiunque sei, del loco o peregrino,
 tu che il piè movi sì pensoso e vago,
 quel che cerchi t'apporti il tuo destino. (Tansillo, *I due pellegrini*, 1-12; see text 2)

On the other hand, the immobility of the pensive and solitary lover imposes itself as the stereotype also in Renaissance chivalric poems: from Ariosto's Sacripante who, almost "cangiato in insensibil pietra," remains "pensoso più d'un'ora a capo basso" (*Orlando furioso* I, 40), to the Rinaldo created by the young Torquato Tasso, who "sta pensoso e muto, / e come sia di pietra immobil resta" (*Rinaldo* IX, 88).

But sonnet 35 from the *Canzoniere* portrays a poet distancing himself from society (“vestigio human” 35, 4; “le genti” 35, 6) with the dynamic motion of “fleeing”: pensive solitude can therefore become characteristic of a necessary autonomy of judgement of the well-educated gentleman and even an allusive distancing oneself from the oppressive world of the court and from intellectual, political, or religious conformism. For example, in the *Silve* by Antonio Fileremo Fregoso the reference to “Solo et pensoso” starts a lament against “vivere a la moderna” because at court “probità sincera” is not adequately rewarded:

Solo e pensoso io passeggiava un giorno
per un’ombrosa e solitaria via,
ascoso e ancor temendo d’alcun scorno;
e discorrendo con la fantasia,
pensava a la cagion de’ mei gran danni,
se da me nasce o da la sorte ria. (“De la Probità,” 1-6)

In the *Orbecche* tragedy by Giovan Battista Giraldi Cinzio the wooded and uninhabited space seems like a possible escape from a barbaric court and a corrupt and sinister authority:

Oh perché ne’ Rifei monti non sono
più tosto nato, o tra le tigri Ircane
ne gli ermi boschi e ne’ più alpestri campi,
ove vestigio uman non si vedesse,
che qui dove i’ son nato e son nodrito,
qui dove più d’ogn’aspra fiera crudi
gli uomini si ritrovano? (Giraldi Cinzio 389, IV 1-7)

In the eighteenth-century *Eclogues* by Gian Vincenzo Gravina the “fleeing” theme still illustrates the inner independence of the intellectual: “Qual novello desio lungi ti mena / da ninfe e da pastor, fuggendo il loco / ove vestigio uman segni l’arena?” (in Quondam 61). It is no accident that the “passi tardi et lenti” of “Solo et pensoso” appear between the lines of the most famous escape of Renaissance Italian literature: “pensosa” Erminia’s solitary and, in other words, anti-courtesan escape among the shepherds in Torquato Tasso’s *Gerusalemme liberata*: “tarda i passi” (VI, 82), “move lenti i passi” (VI, 93), “là s’indrizza a passi lenti” (VII, 6).

By separating the Petrarchan text into thematic microunits, it will be easier to explore the multi-faceted labyrinth of the reception and define homogenous segments in even long chronological periods of time (case 1, as defined above).

The conflict of the Petrarchist styles

On a stylistic level it is better to examine the whole text, comparing it to its different versions in the lyrical genre; this mainly consists of taking a census of the rewritings and differences of the stylistic choices. Let’s once again examine sixteenth-century examples related to “Solo et pensoso.”

Perhaps it was inevitable that the worldly code of Renaissance Petrarchism would first of all refer to the wilder and more solitary Petrarch. It should come as no surprise that “Solo et pensoso” had a primary role in the early poetic apprenticeship of Pietro Bembo, the theorist of Italian vernacular classicism and the exclusive imitation of the *Canzoniere*: one of his very first sonnets, before 1500, “Solingo augello, se piangendo vai” (see text 3) is in fact a mosaic of Petrarchan elements under the dominant mark of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* 35 (previously quoted as *Canzoniere* 35, henceforth as *Rvf* 35), not only for the opening “Solingo,” but most of all for the tercets that reformulate the opening of “Solo et pensoso:

Rvf 35, lines 1-3:

Solo et pensoso i più deserti campi
vo mesurando a passi tardi et lenti,
et gli occhi porto ...
(Petrarca 190; see text 1)

Bembo, *Rime* 48, lines 10-12:

e nudo e grave e solo e peregrino
vo misurando i campi e le mie pene.
Gli occhi bagnati porto ...
(Bembo 546; see text 3)

The importance of the experience is revealed by the echoes of “Solo et pensoso” in the first book of the *Asolani*—for example, “D’erma rivera i più deserti lidi / m’insegna Amor” (Bembo 372)—and the expansion of “Solingo augello, se piangendo vai” from sonnet to canzone in the *Asolani* of 1505, until the retrieval of both texts in the *Rime* from 1530. Both the sonnet and the canzone document the fundamental nature of the experience: “vo misurando i campi e le mie pene” (Bembo, *Rime* 48, 11) and “vo misurando i poggi e le mie pene” (Bembo, *Rime* 56, 16). However Bembo’s rewriting, inaccurate compared to the model, outlines a socialising overturning of the Petrarchan solitude and a movement towards the other unhappy lovers: “i’ fuggo indi, ove sia / chi mi conforte ad altro, ch’a trar guai.” These verses are purposefully extremely tormented with the variants “fuggo ove che sia,” “ovunque sia,” and “ove alcun sia.” So, although the imitation of the *Rvf* 35 is placed in the tercet, the new text gives relevance to the “inseme” canto and the figurative rendering of the lyrical scene introducing the meeting with the bird, following the example of *Rvf* 311 and 353. Similarly, the uniform rhythm of the Petrarchan sonnet (“Solo et pensoso—i più deserti campi / vo mesurando—a passi tardi et lenti”) is matched by Bembo’s more agitated and pathetic attack which links in a broader syntactic turn the thematic antithesis of “solingo” and “meco.” The aristocratic and solitary style of the lyrical abstraction was about to become the gentlemen’s dialogic instrument.

But it is precisely Bembo’s multifaceted and problematic imitation that renders “Solo et pensoso” the touchstone text for those Renaissance poets who wanted to attempt a personal interpretation of the *Canzoniere*.

In April 1526 Bernardo Tasso sent count Claudio Rangoni the sonnet “Fuggo, Signor, ove l’arena stampi” (*Lettere inedite* 8; see text 4) in praise of Ginevra Malatesta (“l’arbor mio bel” of line 4 is in fact the Ginepro). The revival of Petrarch’s “ove vestigio human la rena stampi,” in the broken line of “ove l’arena stampi / vestigio uman” (lines 1-2), already documents a more vigorous striving for psychological chiaroscuro, between the “accesi lampi” of the beloved and the “desir pigro e restio” of the lover. Set in contrast with the

exterior situation—“ma non però...” (line 2), “suo mal grado” (line 6), “né però...” (line 8)—the introspective intention defines a more allegorical rather than real landscape and it aims for a representation of the poetical self, somewhere between impulse and fall, between fervour and torpor, far removed from the classic composure of the image found in Bembo’s sonnet. Here we find a pursuit of a style modelled on Petrarch, but more modest and colloquial, right from the opening vocative that relativises the reason for fleeing from men with more immediacy: “Fuggo, Signor...”.

Even if Bernardo Tasso’s is simply an extemporary experiment, subsequently not included in the collection of the *Amori*, his attempt to place side by side external actions (“I più secreti e solitarii campi / cerco solingo”) and inner feelings (“invio / il desir a virtù pigro e restio”) can be found in a more exhaustive way in a sonnet by Gian Giorgio Trissino published in the *Rime* from 1529, “Quanto ognior penso, più la mente ingombra” (99; see text 5), that from “Fuggo, Signor” also takes the *ombra: ingombra* rhyme. In 1529 Trissino published simultaneously a dialogue on the Italian language called the *Castellano*, a first part of the *Poetica*, and the elegant volume of the *Rime*, in order to contrast on various levels Bembo’s Petrarchan exclusivism, extending the “regola universalissima” of the imitation to an eclectic and not hierarchic repertory of “buoni autori” of all ages, from Pindar to Horace and the *stil novo* poets. Considering the variety of poetical selections, it will come as no surprise that in Trissino’s sonnet, as in Bembo’s, the imitation of “Solo et pensoso” is revealed fully only in the tercets’ openings. If Bembo’s opening focused only on “solo-solingo,” Trissino opts for “pensoso-quanto ognior penso,” developing an analysis of the melancholy of love that makes use of the Petrarchan vocabulary (apart from “intolerabil”), but to outline a stage of the pre-Petrarchan poetical self that is spatialized (“giù,” “profondo,” “mena”) and measurable (“Quanto... più...”). After all, even the metaphor of the thoughts weighing on the heart is more in the *stil novo* style than Petrarch: “Questa pesanza ch’è nel cor discesa” (Cavalcanti, *Rime* X, 13 503). This is an example of an open Petrarchism, subtly compositional, even adept at overturning the phenomenology of love canonized by Petrarch.

Meanwhile, in the *Libro primo degli Amori* published in 1531 Bernardo Tasso presented a different rewriting of *Rvf* 35: “Solo e pensoso i miei passati affanni” (*Rime* 75; see text 6). It is already quite revealing that Bembo and Trissino, in stirring the comparative attention of the reader, find the imitation in the body of the sonnet, while Bernardo Tasso focuses on the *incipit*, making it easier to recognise the underlying model to stress the stylistic difference. Therefore the new rewriting becomes an almost singable piece, constructed on a melodic play of repetitions (for example: “affanni” in rhyme in lines 1 and 5; “sempre lagrimando” and “sempre sospirando” in rhyme in lines 3 and 6; the grammatical rhyme in “-ando” multiplied in lines 6-7 by the series “sempre sospirando, / mercé gridando, lagrimando, amando”). It is a way of making the short measure of the sonnet not so much an image-monomad defined by a style of arduous elegance like Bembo’s, but a more natural and sentimental poetical dialogue and lyrical meditation, in line with an ideal of *sprezzatura*, of *negligentia diligens* defined in those years in the *Cortegiano* by Baldassarre Castiglione.

Even without producing further examples, it seems obvious that the different stylistic choices emerge more evidently by taking a census and comparing the single lyrical rewritings of the same text in a similar historical context (case 2). The multidimensional aspect of a website will allow for the inclusion of every significant rewriting, with a brief critical note.

On the boundary of the ages

Studying the reception of a single poem of the *Canzoniere* will also allow us to verify and investigate, on a smaller scale, the great articulations of literary history and geography. Let's consider, for example, another historical context where "Solo et pensoso" becomes a relevant text of the Petrarchan book of rhymes: the passage from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, from the neoclassical sublime to the romantic restlessness, from Alfieri to Foscolo.

There are multiple rewritings, including poetry and prose: the thematic refrains, even in the canonical metre of the sonnet, tend in fact to break Petrarch's linear and meditative rhythm. According to Mario Fubini, Alfieri broke the unity of the Petrarchan verse by rewriting a calm beginning such as "Solo et pensoso i più deserti campi" in a cadence broken and distended by hyperbaton and enjambment: "Solo, fra i mesti miei pensieri, in riva / al mar..." (Alfieri *Rime* 1154; see text 7). But this could also apply to Foscolo's sonnet-self-portrait ("mesto i più giorni e solo, ognor pensoso") (*Poesie* 71, 10) and even certain pages of the *Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis* (364; see text 10). In fact there is an ideal continuity from Alfieri's sonnet "Solo, fra i mesti miei pensieri" to the sonnet by the young Foscolo "Quando la terra è d'ombre ricoverta" from 1797, "torno dove la spiaggia è più deserta / solingo a ragionar con la mia speme" (*Poesie*, 303, 5-6; see text 9), to the pages of the *Ortis*, until the portrait of Foscolo in the *Epistola sui Sepolcri* by Giovanni Torti, "Ahi! chi vegg'io / solo e pensoso e così fiero in vista / misurar queste arene?" (Torti, 25).

And yet it is *Rvf* 35—and in particular the antithesis between "fuor" and "dentro" of line 8—that perhaps allows us to draw a line between one period and the next, between two contiguous, and yet different, cultural systems. Quite clearly Petrarch's success between the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century is linked to the exceptional reader Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his keen sense of the bitter and inhospitable landscape, as the interlocutor of the sincere and impassioned man, as "toutes les grandes passions se forment dans la solitude" (*Nouvelle Héloïse* II, 105; *Nouvelle Héloïse* I, 33). "Solo et pensoso" not only resurfaces as a title, *Les Réveries du promeneur solitaire*, but the entire *Nouvelle Héloïse* is pervaded with Petrarchan rewritings—with deserted and wild landscapes in which the lover finds in his surroundings an image of his own desolate and melancholic soul that consoles him of his inner anxiety. Here is an example perfectly balanced between interior and exterior:

Dans les violens transports qui m'agitent, je ne saurois demeurer en place; je cours, je monte avec ardeur, je m'élançe sur les rochers; je parcours à grands pas tous les environs, et trouve par tout dans les objets la même horreur qui regne au dedans de moi. On n'apperçoit

plus de verdure, l'herbe est jaune et flétrie, les arbres sont dépouillés, le séchard et la froide bise entassent la neige et les glaces, et toute la nature est morte à mes yeux, comme l'espérance au fond de mon cœur. (*Nouvelle Héloïse* II, 90; text 12).

But in Rousseau we find most of all the sentimental myths of nature and the “camminatore solitario”: inaccessible peaks, shadowy forests, rushing torrents, and boundless seas. Also in Alfieri's sonnet 135 (text 7) the emphasis is placed on the undefined and sublime landscape of the stormy sea (Petrarch's “i più deserti campi” and “la rena” become an “ermo lido” pounded by “onde irate in suon feroce”) and it is a scene that consoles the lover with a “dolce oblio” of himself until it calms every “affanno” (lines 9-11). The situation is no different in another sonnet by Alfieri inspired by “Solo et pensoso,” “Là dove muta solitaria dura”: “a passo lento, per irta salita, / mesto vo...” (Alfieri, 1146; see text 8, lines 3-4). The predilection for rugged and boundless landscapes will appear once again in the pages of the *Vita scritta da esso*: “immense selve, laghi, e dirupi,” “vasti deserti,” “solitudini immense,” “orrido mare,” “vasto indefinibile silenzio” (Alfieri, 80, 102, 196, 82 and 83). However, the sonnet by the young Foscolo “Quando la terra è d'ombre ricoverta” (text 9) already performs a minimal but decisive change: now the landscape is a quiet lunar night scene that does not console the “piaga aperta” in the “cuore.” The image of solitary wondering “fra le ombre pacifiche della notte” is of a poetical self that does not find in natural objects a completed image of himself and a full harmony between landscape and “cuore.” The emphasis now falls on the “sublime” and “errante” inner life that does not find even momentary consolation from the surroundings, like in the Petrarchan pages of the *Ortis*:

Oh! diss'ella, con quel dolce entusiasmo tutto suo, credi tu che il Petrarca non abbia anch'egli visitato sovente queste solitudini sospirando fra le ombre pacifiche della notte la sua perduta amica? Quando leggo i suoi versi io me lo dipingo qui—malinconico—errante—appoggiato al tronco di un albero, pascersi de' suoi mesti pensieri, e volgersi al cielo cercando con gli occhi lagrimosi la beltà immortale di Laura. (*Ortis* 364; see text 10)

That this, already romantic, experience takes place under the Petrarchan influence of “Solo et pensoso” can also be confirmed by Foscolo's letter to Pietro Borsieri from 5 May 1809:

Quando non piove, passeggiò solo, e pensoso, e ne' deserti campi anch'io come il signor canonico Francesco; ma non però come lui Or rime e versi, or colgo erbe e fiori; ch'io non amo le rime, e pavento d'accostarmi a' versi; né in queste paludi trovo mai fiori, e invece di erbe, m'abbatto in erbacce crasse, e inodore. (*Epistolario* III 169; see text 11)

Between the eighteenth and nineteenth century there was a juxtaposition of two different ways of interpreting Petrarch's sonnets: at first emphasis was placed on the exterior “i più deserti campi,” the impassioned and consoling dialogue with the vastness of nature (“monti et piagge / et fiumi et selve”); subsequently prominence was placed on the

restless and solitary inner life, the I imprisoned amongst “marshes” and “weeds” of a grey and oppressive world.

In conclusion, this methodology of inquiry based on comparative study of the reception allows, on the one hand, for a redefinition of the relationship between micro and macro text in the system of the *Canzoniere* and on the other hand, for a thorough and refined reflection on the great rhythms of cultural history.

Texts

Text 1: F. Petrarca, *Canzoniere* 35.

Solo et pensoso i più deserti campi
vo mesurando a passi tardi et lenti,
et gli occhi porto per fuggire intenti
ove vestigio human la rena stampi.
Altro schermo non trovo che mi scampi
dal manifesto accorger de le genti,
perché negli atti d'alegrezza spenti
di fuor si legge com'io dentro avampi:
sí ch'io mi credo omai che monti et piagge
et fiumi et selve sappian di che tempre
sia la mia vita, ch'è celata altrui.
Ma pur sí aspre vie né sí selvagge
cercar non so ch'Amor non venga sempre
ragionando con meco, et io co llui.

Text 2: L. Tansillo, *I due pellegrini*, lines 1-12.

Filauto:
Già si raddoppia il dì ch'io vo smarrito,
mercé del piè che mi conduce in via
dove vestigio uman trovo scolpito.
Sapessi almen dove mi vada o sia!
Ecco un che va solingo e fuor di strada:
forse, di me pietoso, il Ciel l'invia.
Pria che l'ombrosa notte qui m'invada,
vo' dimandar s'albergo è di vicino,
dove le stanche membra a gittar vada.
Chiunque sei, del loco o peregrino,
tu che il piè movi sì pensoso e vago,
quel che cerchi t'apporti il tuo destino.

Text 3: P. Bembo, *Rime* 48.

Solingo augello, se piangendo vai
la tua perduta dolce compagnia,

meco ne ven, che piango anco la mia:
 insieme potrem fare i nostri lai.
 Ma tu la tua forse oggi troverai;
 io la mia quando? e tu pur tuttavia
 ti stai nel verde; i' fuggo indi, ove sia
 chi mi conforte ad altro, ch'a trar guai.
 Privo in tutto son io d'ogni mio bene,
 e nudo e grave e solo e peregrino
 vo misurando i campi e le mie pene.
 Gli occhi bagnati porto e 'l viso chino
 e 'l cor in doglia e l'alma fuor di spene,
 né d'aver cerco men fero destino.

Text 4: B. Tasso, *Lettera a Claudio Rangoni*.

Fuggo, Signor, ove l'arena stampi
 vestigio uman, ma non però poss'io
 fuggir l'ingordo e folle mio desio,
 né dell'arbor mio bel gli accesi lampi.
 I più secreti e solitarii campi
 cerco solingo, e suo mal grado invio
 il desir a virtù pigro e restio,
 né però trovo chi d'amor mi scampi.
 Che ovunque volgo gli occhi infermi e chiusi
 veggio quei rami sacri e la dolc'ombra
 ch'al mio caldo pensier dà rezzo et òra.
 Dunque s'io fallo e se talor m'ingombra
 vano disio vostra mercé mi scusi
 perché 'l nemico mio meco dimora.

Text 5: G.G. Trissino, *Rime* 29.

Quanto ognior penso, più la mente ingombra
 nuovo pensiero, e giù nel cuor profondo
 mena sì grave e intolerabil pondo,
 che d'ogni suo piacer l'anima sgombra.
 Crudel Amor, crudel, che sotto l'ombra
 de l'ale tue sperai viver giocondo,
 ma pianta fui che in un terren fecondo
 uggia mortale in sul fiorire adombra.
 Ond'io per selve e per deserti campi
 vò sospirando e consumando il giorno,
 senza riposo, infin che 'l sol s'asconde.
 Poi, come vien la notte, a pianger torno,
 così mi guida Amor, perch'io non scampi;

et io, lasso, pur vivo, e non so donde.

Text 6: B. Tasso, *Libro primo degli Amori* 87.

Solo e pensoso i miei passati affanni,
e li futuri ancor vo misurando,
e veggio ben che sempre lagrimando
spoglierò l'alma de' terrestri panni;
veggio che 'n tanti e sì gravosi affanni
viver non posso; e sempre sospirando,
mercé gridando, lagrimando, amando,
fuggiran l'ore in un momento e gli anni;
ma siami come vole acerba e fera
l'alta mia Donna, Amore, e 'l mio destino,
ch'a le mie notti non cheggio altro sole:
sempre fian le bellezze al mondo sole
ne l'alma impresse, e quella luce altera
onde di gir al Ciel scorgo il camino.

Text 7: V. Alfieri, *Rime* 135.

Solo, fra i mesti miei pensieri, in riva
al mar là dove il Tosco fiume ha foce,
con Fido il mio destrier pian pian men giva;
e muggian l'onde irate in suon feroce.
Quell'ermo lido, e il gran fragor mi empiva
il cuor (cui fiamma inestinguibil cuoce)
d'alta malinconia; ma grata, e priva
di quel suo pianger, che pur tanto nuoce.
Dolce oblio di mie pene e di me stesso
nella pacata fantasia piovea;
e senza affanno sospirava io spesso:
quella, ch'io sempre bramo, anco pareo
cavalcando venirne a me dappresso...
nullo error mai felice al par mi fea.

Text 8: V. Alfieri, *Rime* 89.

Là dove muta solitaria dura
piacque al gran Bruno instituir la vita,
a passo lento, per irta salita,
mesto vo; la mestizia è in me natura.
Ma vi si aggiunge un'amorosa cura,
che mi tien l'alma in pianto seppellita,
sì che non trovo io mai spiaggia romita
quanto il vorrebbe la mia mente oscura.
Pur questi orridi massi, e queste nere

selve, e i lor cupi abissi, e le sonanti
 acque or mi fan con più sapor dolore.
 Non d'intender tai gioje ogni uom si vanti:
 le mie angosce sol creder potran vere
 gli ardenti vati, e gl'infelici amanti.

Text 9: U. Foscolo, *Versi giovanili* 12.

Quando la terra è d'ombre ricoverta,
 e soffia '1 vento, e in sulle arene estreme
 l'onda va e vien che mormorando geme,
 e appar la luna tra le nubi incerta;
 torno dove la spiaggia è più deserta
 solingo a ragionar con la mia speme,
 e del mio cor che sanguinando geme
 ad or ad or palpo la piaga aperta.
 Lasso! me stesso in me più non discerno,
 e languono i miei dì come viola
 nascente ch'abbia tempestata il verno;
 che va lungi da me colei che sola
 far potea sul mio labbro il riso eterno:
 luce degli occhi miei, chi mi t'invola?

Text 10: U. Foscolo, *Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis*, I, 364.

– Oh! diss'ella, con quel dolce entusiasmo tutto suo, credi tu che il Petrarca non abbia anch'egli visitato sovente queste solitudini sospirando fra le ombre pacifiche della notte la sua perduta amica? Quando leggo i suoi versi io me lo dipingo qui–malinconico–errante–appoggiato al tronco di un albero, pascersi de' suoi mesti pensieri, e volgersi al cielo cercando con gli occhi lagrimosi la beltà immortale di Laura.

Text 11: U. Foscolo, *Lettere*, A Pietro Borsieri, 5 Maggio 1809.

Quando non piove, passeggi solo, e pensoso, e ne' deserti campi anch'io come il signor canonico Francesco; ma non però come lui Or rime e versi, or colgo erbetto e fiori; ch'io non amo le rime, e pavento d'accostarmi a' versi; né in queste paludi trovo mai fiori, e invece di erbetto, m'abbatto in erbacce crasse, e inodore.

Text 12: J.-J. Rousseau, *Nouvelle Héloïse* I, 26.

Dans les violens transports qui m'agitent, je ne saurois demeurer en place; je cours, je monte avec ardeur, je m'élançe sur les rochers; je parcours à grands pas tous les environs, et trouve par tout dans les objets la même horreur qui regne au dedans de moi. On n'apperçoit plus de verdure, l'herbe est jaune et flétrie, les arbres sont dépouillés, le séchard et la froide bise entassent la neige et les glaces, et toute la nature est morte à mes yeux, comme l'espérance au fond de mon cœur.

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