

THE CASE OF THE LOST ORIGINAL ENDING
OF DANTE'S *VITA NUOVA*.
MORE NOTES TOWARD A CRITICAL PHILOLOGY

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IN the practice of a critical philology, one that demonstrates critical self-awareness with respect to how we harness philology to our hermeneutic agendas, we might begin by privileging what exists over what does not. In the case of Petrarch, this would mean, for instance, following the autograph manuscript with its existing instructions, according to which Petrarch clearly divided his collection into two parts at the canzone *I' vo pensando*, and not presuming to editorialize, as we do by adding the rubrics «in vita di madonna Laura» and «in morte di madonna Laura». It also means not writing about the nine forms of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, the forms hypothesized by Ernest Hatch Wilkins in his 1951 book *The Making of the 'Canzoniere'*, as though they exist, when in fact they do not. At the crossroads where philology and interpretation meet, we have seen interpretation trump philology, and in the case of the nine forms of the *Canzoniere* we have seen interpretation disseminated as philological doctrine.¹ There are other cases as well in the history of interpreting medieval Italian texts where the roles of philology and interpretation have been dangerously confused.

The study of Dante boasts many examples of apparently philological debates that are not in fact philological at all, but rather debates in which hermeneutics is masked as philology, in which the authority of the philologist – of one who deals with material reality – is hijacked by interpretation.² In this paper I will consider the case of the invention of the so-called “original ending” of the *Vita Nuova*. This case is egregious with respect to the confusion wrought by the un-critical practice of both philology and hermeneutics: more egregious, for instance, than the Petrarch case cited above because Wilkins' nine forms of the *Rerum vulgarium fragementa* were at least extrapolated from the two forms that exist, and are based on principles of construction that are verifiably Petrarch's own. But there is no reason to have ever believed—no *philological* reason, that is—in an original ending of the *Vita Nuova* that was eventually rewritten circa 1312 (hence the references to the *rifacimento* or ‘remaking’ of the *Vita Nuova*) as the ending we now possess. What follows is the story of so-called “philology” put to the service of satisfying an explicitly hermeneutic agenda, a story titled *Il rifacimento della 'Vita Nuova'* whose main chapters are to be found under the following rubrics: the thesis of an original, now lost, ending of the *Vita Nuova* was given life by Luigi Pietrobono in 1915; it was attacked by Michele Barbi, in a long review article on Pietrobono of 1933, and then in

¹ For elaboration of these issues, see TEODOLINDA BAROLINI, *Petrarch at the Crossroads of Hermeneutics and Philology: Editorial Lapses, Narrative Impositions, and Wilkins' Doctrine of the Nine Forms of the 'Rerum vulgarium fragmenta'*, in *Petrarch and the Textual Origins of Interpretation*, eds. Teodolinda Barolini and H. Wayne Storey, Leiden-Boston, 2007, pp. 21-44.

² For a listing of such debates, see Teodolinda BAROLINI, *From Boccaccio's 'canzoni distese' to Dante's libro delle canzoni: 'Convivio', 'Rime', and the Practice of Critical Philology*, forthcoming in *Boccaccio: Philosopher and Philologist*.

his 1934 Introduction to the Busnelli-Vandelli edition of the *Convivio*; it was picked up by Bruno Nardi as early as a letter to Pietrobono of 1934, and then tenaciously for the rest of his career;¹ it was laid to rest by Mario Marti in 1965; and it was then unfortunately resuscitated by Maria Corti in 1983.

Luigi Pietrobono's thesis of the *rifacimento* or rewriting of the end of the *Vita Nuova*, first advanced in 1915, is a striking example of an issue discussed as though philological which actually possesses no philological substance. Pietrobono invented a non-existent, prior version of the *Vita Nuova*, one that ended with the triumph of the *donna gentile*. In other words, he invented an ending that is more satisfyingly congruous, in narrative terms, with the *donna gentile* section of the *libello*. According to Pietrobono's thesis, this original ending with the triumphant *donna gentile* was later rewritten by Dante as the ending we now possess, in which the poet returns to his love for the dead Beatrice.

The result of Pietrobono's thesis is that scholars have spent time and energy defending the 'current' ending of the *Vita Nuova*, even though we possess no other ending and to our knowledge no other ending has ever existed. In this instance, the corrective role of 'critical philologist'—in the sense of one who demonstrates greater critical self-awareness with respect to how we harness philology to our hermeneutic agendas—was played first by Michele Barbi and later by Mario Marti. Marti's title, *Vita e morte della presunta doppia redazione della 'Vita Nuova'*, shows how confident he was that his excellent 1965 essay had vanquished once and for all the irrational specter of the *libello*'s non-existent prior ending.² In my own youth, convinced of the force of reason in scholarship, I too believed, as I wrote in 1984, that the «theory of two redactions of the *Vita Nuova* [...] was laid definitively to rest by Mario Marti».³ I didn't yet know how vulnerable scholars can be to seductive interpretations with no basis in empirical reality, nor did I know that Pietrobono's hypothesis had already been revived by Maria Corti, in her 1983 book, *La felicità mentale*. Corti's own status as a philologist gave Pietrobono's invention new currency and, alas, apparent legitimacy. As a result it will be useful to look at her arguments, and those of her predecessors and successors, in some detail.

As noted above, in some ways the case of the *rifacimento*, or second ending, of the *Vita Nuova* is more egregious than that of the nine forms of the *Canzoniere*. Wilkins invented his nine forms on the basis of existing philological material: we possess one form besides the final form, and we possess one draft notebook, and as a result we can indeed see something of the process in which Petrarch was engaged. Although there is no doubt that interpretation has trumped philology with respect to the nine forms

¹ See LUIGI PIETROBONO, *Il poema sacro. Saggio d'una interpretazione generale della 'Divina Commedia'. Inferno – Parte I*, Bologna, 1915, pp. 87-154; MICHELE BARBI, *Razionalismo e misticismo in Dante*, in ID., *Problemi di critica dantesca. Seconda serie (1920-1937)*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1933, pp. 1-9 and 76-86; ID., *Introduzione*, in *Convivio*, eds. Giovanni Busnelli and Giuseppe Vandelli, 2 Vols, Firenze, Felice Le Monnier, 1934; BRUNO NARDI, *S'ha da credere a Dante o ai suoi critici?* «CN» II, 1942, pp. 327-333; and MARIA CORTI, *La felicità mentale*, Torino, Einaudi, 1983. For Nardi's intense, and quite idiosyncratic, adherence to Pietrobono's thesis, see MARIO MARTI, *Vita e morte della presunta doppia redazione della 'Vita Nuova'*, in *Studi in onore di Alfredo Schiaffini*, vol. 2, Roma, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1965, pp. 657-669, a p. 660).

² See MARTI, 1965. Marti uses Cecco Angiolieri's correspondence sonnets to Dante (one of which is an explicit reply to Dante's *Oltre la spera*) to date the ending of the *Vita Nuova* and confidently concludes that «francamente, una volta ammesso che la *Vita Nuova* originariamente si estendeva fino al sonetto *Oltre la spera*, non v'è più luogo all'ipotesi di una doppia redazione del giovanile libretto; la quale, per tutte le ragioni sopra esposte, è dunque da considerarsi morta agli studi, e viva soltanto come momento storiografico o cronachistico in sé concluso e definitivamente superato» (p. 669).

³ TEODOLINDA BAROLINI, *Dante's Poets: Textuality and Truth in the 'Comedy'*, Princeton, University Press, 1984, p. 21, n. 13.

of the *Fragmenta*, there is at least a philological foundation on which the interpretive house of cards was built. With respect to the rewritten ending of the *Vita Nuova*, on the other hand, there is no philological base, no material evidence at all: a discussion that is 100% interpretation has somehow over the decades achieved a false patina of philology. Hence, a literary critic, Robert Pogue Harrison, who follows the philologist Corti with respect to the revised *Vita Nuova* ending in his 1988 book, *The Body of Beatrice*, writes: «To this day the philological controversy over the ending of the *Vita Nuova* remains unresolved». ¹ But there is not now and never has been a «philological controversy over the ending of the *Vita Nuova*». Controversy there has been, but no philology.

Pietrobono's argument is very straightforward, proceeding exactly as indicated by the sub-headings of the chapter of *Il poema sacro* that he devotes to the *donna gentile*. His outline of chapter 2 reads as follows: I. La donna gentile. II. Le contraddizioni tra la *Vita Nuova* e il *Convivio*. III. Di un probabile rifacimento della *Vita Nuova* (p. 87). Thus, after discussing the contradictions between the account of the *donna gentile* that we find in the *Vita Nuova* and the account of the *donna gentile* that is offered by the *Convivio*, and having noted that these contradictions are not susceptible to being reconciled, he posits – in order to remove the contradictions and achieve reconciliation – the «probable rewriting of the *Vita Nuova*».

The contradictions between *Vita Nuova* and *Convivio* that bedevil Pietrobono are far from trivial; they are profound and ideological. In the youthful *libello* the *donna gentile* is repudiated as «malvagio desiderio e vana tentazione» and the poet recommits himself to Beatrice, while in the later philosophical treatise his desire for the *donna gentile* is exonerated, indeed viewed as a good, because she turns out to be an allegory for Lady Philosophy. Writes Pietrobono: «Pazienza se le contradizioni fossero poche e di lieve momento; ma no, che sono molte, e tutte gravissime e, checchè se ne dica, irriducibili». ² He is right: the contradictions are irreducible. It does not follow that we should construct a hypothesis – in this case, invent a different ending – in order to remove them. Is removing contradiction so very necessary? Apparently, yes: «Onde conviene di necessità ricorrere all'ipotesi che, quando Dante scriveva il *Convivio*, l'opera sua più giovanile non doveva essere quale oggi la possediamo, ed ammettere che la *Vita Nuova* sia andata soggetta a un assai considerevole rimaneggiamento». ³ And, as Pietrobono tells us with exemplary candor, lack of material evidence for his theory is no obstacle, indeed it does not even constitute a significant deterrent: «Se di questo non ci è stata conservata traccia nessuna nei codici, io non so che farci nè che mi dire». ⁴

Lack of material evidence was the foundation of the rebuttal put forth by Michele Barbi, the then dean of Dante philologists, in his debates first with Pietrobono, and then with Pietrobono's successor in *rifacimento* theory, Bruno Nardi. (It is worth noting that neither Pietrobono nor Nardi were philologists.) As Barbi asks pointedly, correctly noting the lack of an empirical basis for Pietrobono's supposition: «Che base ha questa supposizione [il supposto rifacimento della *Vita Nuova*] nei fatti?». ⁵ Invoking empirical philological arguments, Barbi comments cogently on the total absence of a material record for the presumed 'first' ending of the *libello*, despite the existence of a not inconsiderable manuscript tradition for the *Vita Nuova*: «Abbiamo, per quest'opera, una

¹ ROBERT POGUE HARRISON, *The Body of Beatrice*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988, p. 144.

² PIETROBONO, 1915, p. 100.

⁴ PIETROBONO, 1915, *ibidem*.

³ PIETROBONO, 1915, *ibidem*.

⁵ BARBI, 1933, p. 77.

tradizione manoscritta, se non straordinariamente copiosa come per la *Divina Commedia*, certamente assai abbondante: c'è nessun codice, nessun frammento, nessun estratto, che conservi traccia di quel presunto testo primitivo, che pur sarebbe stato diffuso tant'anni prima del rifacimento e che avrebbe dovuto dar origine a non poche copie?".¹ Indeed, as he specifies further, it is implausible that, while forty copies of the 'second' ending have reached us, we should possess not even one copy of the *Vita Nuova* with its original or 'first' ending: «con due redazioni in giro è inverosimile ammettere che mentre ci son pervenute quaranta copie della seconda non debba essercene pervenuta neppur una della prima».²

Marti adopts Barbi's emphasis on the complete lack of proof for the *rifacimento* in his 1965 synthesis: «Alle loiche, ma soggettive argomentazioni del Pietrobono Barbi ebbe buon gioco a contrapporre intanto un dato di fatto obbiettivo ed incontrovertibile e di gravissimo peso; la mancanza, nella tradizione manoscritta della *Vita Nuova*, di qualsiasi traccia della primitiva redazione. Un dato di fatto, dal quale si sarebbe invece dovuto partire per ogni possibile dimostrazione, e che non può essere né ignorato, né sottovalutato, né rapidamente, ma illusoriamente, liquidato».³ But the «objective and incontrovertible fact» that there is no trace whatsoever of an earlier and different redaction of the *Vita Nuova* – this «dato di fatto» which, as Marti justly observes, should have been the starting point for any argumentation with respect to an alternate ending – had little deterrent value. In a cultural context in which the prestige of philology could be harnessed, for instance, to try to rid Dante's canon of the distasteful *tenzone* with Forese Donati, it is not surprising that Barbi was unable to shame Nardi into backing down on philological grounds.

Moreover, Barbi went beyond the absence of proof. He annoyed *rifacimento* enthusiasts by stoutly asserting the value of critical skepticism in evaluating what Dante has to say about himself. Dante, in other words, according to Barbi, is fully capable of rewriting his past (to which I would add that Dante indeed has the right to rewrite his past), and we should be sufficiently critical readers to acknowledge as much. Barbi declares that there is no need to believe Dante, and that he does not accept the *Convivio*'s protestations – allegorical or astronomical/chronological – as a source of unimpeachable autobiographical exactitude: «a me sembra poca avvedutezza critica valersi delle affermazioni del *Convivio*, sia cronologiche sia d'altro genere, per illustrare l'episodio della donna pietosa nella *Vita Nuova*. Come non bastano le affermazioni dell'opera filosofica a farmi credere allegorico quell'episodio, così non valgono le indicazioni cronologiche dei due giri di Venere e dei *trenta mesi* (*Conv.*, II, II, 1 e XII, 1-9) a persuadermi che esso durasse tanto».⁴

Barbi's position is quite advanced in its resistance to Dante's authority. We see from the 1903 date of the above citation that he was able to evince a healthy skepticism about Dante's autobiographical claims even before the need to rebut the Pietrobono *rifacimento* thesis. Nardi's response to Barbi is clearly expressed in the title of his 1942 article, *S'ha da credere a Dante o ai suoi critici?*. Dante, according to Nardi, must be believed, and if Dante's autobiographical statements are self-contradictory then we need to find a way to reconcile them. It is interesting to note that the very trait that served Nardi well as a historian of religion, allowing him to 'believe' Dante's prophetic pretensions

¹ BARBI, 1933, p. 77-78.

² BARBI, 1933, p. 82.

³ MARTI, 1965, p. 660.

⁴ MICHELE BARBI, *La seconda fase del pensiero dantesco in un libro di Paride Chistoni*, in ID., *Problemi di critica dantesca. Prima Serie (1893-1918)*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1903, pp. 87-97, a p. 90.

in his essay *Dante profeta*, were a disservice to him in a pseudo-philological context. Moreover, he views Barbi's skepticism as an arrogant claim to omniscience. Nardi's recasting of Barbi's skepticism as arrogance found favor with Corti, who refers to Barbi's misplaced «sicurezza». ¹ Corti's analysis of Barbi peaks in a complete distortion in which she loftily indicts a type of Dante scholar who cannot tolerate uncertainty: «un genere di dantisti che non sopportano l'incertezza e si sentono sicuri nel giungere a conclusioni opposte». ² In fact, Corti's characterization of the matter is exactly backwards. It is not the case that Barbi has failed to accept uncertainty that the *rifacimento* theorists accept. As we saw, the theory of the *rifacimento* began precisely because of Pietrobono's stated unwillingness to accept the existence of irreconcilable differences between *Vita Nuova* and *Convivio*: differences that bred uncertainty that he straightforwardly classified as unacceptable.

Barbi's position is noteworthy precisely in its acceptance of uncertainty. Discussing the contradictions between *Vita Nuova* and *Convivio* in his Introduction to the Busnelli-Vandelli edition of the *Convivio*, he declares that the desire to ascertain what the texts say has been replaced by the desire to eliminate the contradictions between them: «Considerando ciascuna delle due opera nella sua propria concezione, tale dissonanza non si può negare, e le interminabili questioni in cui più fanno mostra della loro virtuosità I dantisti nascono precisamente dal voler conciliare quello che conciliare non si può invece di constatare quello che è». ³ The *Convivio*'s contradictions of the *Vita Nuova* will not compel Barbi to invent a new ending for the prior text, while Pietrobono, Nardi, and Corti refuse to accept the ambiguity and uncertainty generated by the *Convivio* and prefer to rewrite the *Vita Nuova* to make it conform to the later work.

To my way of thinking, there is more critical hubris in the invention of a non-existent prior version of the *Vita Nuova* in order to fabricate complete consistency between *Vita Nuova* and *Convivio* than there is in Barbi's salutary skepticism toward Dante's revisionism. Dante is of course free to rewrite and revise and change his own self-narrative. Consistency between versions of self need not be his goal. And this is a freedom of which he spectacularly availed himself: in the *Vita Nuova* with respect to the earlier *rime*, in the *Convivio* with respect to the *Vita Nuova*, and in the *Commedia* with respect to the *Convivio*. (I have shortened this tally for simplicity's sake, omitting the *De vulgari eloquentia*, with its contradictions of the *Convivio*, and the *Monarchia*, with its contradictions of the *Commedia*—or vice versa.) What Dante says later need not be reconcilable with what he said before. Our job as critics is to note the contradictions, and even, if we so desire, to interpret the contradictions. We *are* entitled to interpret the contradictions and ambiguities; we are *not* entitled to erase those contradictions and uncertainties from the record for our hermeneutic comfort.

The *rifacimento* hypothesis has all the hallmarks of a scholarly conspiracy theory, the search for an interpretive solution that can provide emotional satisfaction in the face of resistant, obstinate, and irreconcilable data. Again, we note that being a philologist—someone with presumably a healthy reverence for the material record—does not provide immunity from deracinated theorizing. The pages devoted to the *rifacimento* of the *Vita Nuova* in Corti's *La felicità mentale* are tendentiously rhetorical and interpretive;

¹ See CORTI, 1983, p. 146. Harrison (1988, p. 148) follows Corti: he cites the same passage from Barbi cited by Corti and dismissively critiques «Olympian attitudes of this sort toward the discrepancies in Dante's texts».

² CORTI, 1983, p. 146.

³ BARBI, 1934, p. xxxvi.

they are not philological. Her interpretation is built into her rhetorically clever title, *Quel rompicapo del finale della 'Vita Nuova'*, which *a priori* locates the «head-breaking» problem in the «finale della *Vita Nuova*»: for, unless we already accept that Dante rewrote the end of the *libello*, the text that qualifies as a «rompicapo» must be the *Convivio*, the work that openly revises the content of the earlier work.

Corti begins her argument by asking: «Prima di tutto, cosa c'entra nella struttura della *Vita Nuova*, storia di un amore angelicato e testo della poetica nuova stilnovistica, un episodietto amoroso? Le donne dello schermo avevano, vivente Beatrice, una precisa funzione nella strategia del racconto d'amore per la gentilissima; ma, morta Beatrice, che ci starebbe a fare nella *Vita Nuova* la passioncella?». ¹ These premises are less logical than rhetorical; their real argument is located in the diminutives «episodietto amoroso» and «passioncella», used for the *donna gentile* episode, terms that seek to convey that the *donna gentile* is slightly vulgar and certainly beneath the dignity of the *Vita Nuova* and stilnovist poetics. ² These arguments are completely interpretive and not at all philological; they are also based on the mistaken idea that there is no place for a dis-conversion – a movement *away* from Beatrice – in the narrative of what happened after Beatrice's death. As Corti says, the screen-ladies may have had a functionality in the plot of the *Vita Nuova* while Beatrice was alive, but what purpose does an alternative object of desire have once she is dead? So arguing, she fails to grasp the logic of theologized courtliness, and to appreciate the originality of Dante's youthful work with respect to its courtly predecessors: the whole point of the *Vita Nuova* – what makes it new in the context of previous Occitan and Italian lyric and courtly contexts – is that its theologizing generates a logic that requires fidelity to the lady even after her death. Dis-conversion is always relevant to conversion narratives: the *donna gentile* episode is therefore essential, because only by staging a conversion away from Beatrice following her death can Dante stage his utterly novel idea of a lady who demands fidelity and provides comfort even *post mortem*. ³

Corti goes on to provide a series of stylistic and linguistic analyses intended to support the *rifacimento* thesis. For instance, Dante's use of the word *fine* is analyzed with the purpose of showing that the phrase from the *Convivio* where Dante refers to the noble lady whom he had mentioned «at the end of the *Vita Nuova*» («quella gentile donna, cui feci menzione ne la fine de la *Vita Nuova*» [*Convivio* 2.2.1]) cannot refer to what Corti calls the 'current' ending, because the *donna gentile* episode is too 'distant' from the ending we now possess. Of course, there is no textual measuring stick with which we can determine objectively the precise textual distance that can qualify as close enough to the end to be part of the end. As far as the subjective 'sense of the ending' goes, readers have always experienced the *donna gentile* episode as toward the end of the *libello*: situated beyond the denouement provided by Beatrice's death and as the text moves toward resolution. Similarly, the use of the phrase «che la mia vita duri per alquanti anni» in the

¹ CORTI, 1983, p. 148.

² This rhetoric of slightly bad taste is used by another philologist, Guglielmo Gorni, when he wades into hermeneutic waters and seeks to assert authority over the opinions of others: he argues against the chronological ordering of Dante's *rime* by calling it «un *feuilleton* senza fine» and nothing more than «la ricapitolazione degli amori di Dante» (see GUGLIELMO GORNI, *Sulla nuova edizione delle 'Rime' di Dante*, «LI», LIV, 2002, pp. 571-598, a p. 588).

³ On these aspects of the *Vita Nuova*, see the introductory essays to the *donna gentile* sonnets in TEODOLINDA BAROLINI, *Rime giovanili e della 'Vita Nuova'*, ed. Teodolinda Barolini, with notes by Manuele Gragnolati, Milano, Rizzoli, 2009.

penultimate sentence of the *Vita Nuova* is deemed implausible, as Harrison puts it in his paraphrase of Corti, «for a twenty-eight-year-old man, though not so unusual if Dante composed this chapter some fifteen or sixteen years later».¹

I could reply, to the first objection, that to me the *donna gentile* episode has always felt like it falls in the last part or 'end' of the *Vita Nuova*, and that I experienced it thus before having ever read the *Convivio*. Corti's second objection is easy to disprove, given that Dante had used the same verb *durare* with the same existential and personal import even earlier along the diachronic timeline recorded by the *Vita Nuova*, in both the prose and poetry of chapter xxiii (14). Here he expresses his anxiety about his life after a grave illness, since the illness has caused him to understand how brief is the duration of his existence: «veggendo come leggiero era lo suo durare» (VN xxiii, 3 [14, 3]).² Dante's canzone *Donna pietosa*, possibly written even earlier than its accompanying prose, similarly forecasts the use of the existential *durare* of «che la mia vita duri per alquanti anni» in the *libello*'s penultimate sentence: «Mentr'io pensava a la mia frale vita, / e vedea 'l suo durar com'è leggiero» (*Donna pietosa*, vv. 29-30). But my replies to Corti's weak objections are in a sense beside the point: all interpretation can be countered by other interpretation, and the point here is that we should not be in the business of inventing alternative endings to texts and then reifying our alternative invented realities tendentially in our prose, as does Corti in her references to «the ending that the *Vita Nuova* has today» and «today's ending» («il finale che [la *Vita Nuova*] ha oggi» and «l'odierno finale»³ – as though it were definite and incontrovertible that the *Vita Nuova* had a different ending previously.

Harrison offers the metacritical summation that «perhaps the failures of philology to account for the facts once and for all must become a matter for hermeneusis».⁴ But, while he is welcome to engage in hermeneusis, we should be clear: in this debate there is not and never has been a philological problem that philology has failed to solve. There have been no "facts" for which philology has failed to account. Hermeneusis – and hermeneusis alone – has been at work here. There exist no codices containing an alternate *Vita Nuova* by some attributed to Dante, by others not; there exists no manuscript with suggestive erasures. There is, precisely, nothing. Nothing but a later text, *Convivio*, and the reality that the story it tells blatantly contradicts the story told by an earlier text, *Vita Nuova*, and uses allegory to attempt to make the contradiction less troublesome, in a kind of literal 'cover-up': one meaning (philosophy) covers over another (compassionate and beautiful young woman). To remove this problem critics have postulated a revision of the *Vita Nuova*. Ockham's razor alone, not to speak of the sound and skeptical principles of a critical philology (and a critical hermeneusis!), should deter us from embracing such an inelegant proposition.⁵ But if we do embrace it, we should at least be clear as to what it is we are doing: we are not engaging in a philological controversy or solving a philological problem, but prosecuting a failed hermeneusis based on the principle that authors cannot contradict themselves.

¹ HARRISON, 1988, p. 149.

² As per convention I cite first the paragraphs of Barbi's 1932 edition and parenthetically those of Gorni's 1996 edition.

³ CORTI, 1983, p. 152.

⁴ HARRISON, 1988, 149.

⁵ The principle attributed to the fourteenth-century English logician and Franciscan friar William of Ockham stating that the explanation of any phenomenon should make as few assumptions as possible: «entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem» («entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity»).