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# The Artist as a Dantista: Francesco da Sangallo's Dantism in Mid-Cinquecento Florence

DILETTA GAMBERINI

During the Italian Renaissance, a great many artists exhibited a remarkable devotion to Dante. Documentary evidence, such as inventories of the possessions of painters and sculptors, reveals the *Commedia*, or less frequently the *Convivio* or the *Vita Nuova*, to be a recurring presence in the personal libraries of the practitioners of the visual arts.<sup>1</sup> And if the architect and amateur poet Donato Bramante from Urbino was known at the Milanese court of Ludovico il Moro as a “sviscerato partigiano di Dante,”<sup>2</sup> it was above all the Florentine artistic milieu that was imbued with Dantean enthusiasms. Giorgio Vasari's *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori* (1550 and 1568) is an important source in this regard. Vasari's biographies of Andrea and Bernardo Orcagna, Taddeo Bartoli, Filippo Brunelleschi, Sandro Botticelli, Michelangelo, and Bronzino provide details of how assiduously these figures studied the *Commedia*.<sup>3</sup> In many cases, the author stressed how the artists' profound familiarity with the poem intersected with their figurative production. He devoted considerable attention, for instance, to Botticelli's illustrations to the *Commedia*, and to the subjects in the Sistine *Last Judgement* that Buonarroti derived from the poet he loved so much.

On the basis of Vasari's testimony, numerous studies have investigated the ways in which major artistic personalities developed in their work a systematic dialogue with Dante.<sup>4</sup> Far less consideration has been given to the forms Dantism could take in artists who were less well

established than someone of the caliber of Botticelli or Michelangelo, even though such minor figures likely felt a greater need to proclaim their intellectual credentials. In fact, some of these practitioners of the visual arts set up a relationship with the *auctoritas* of Dante that was no less articulated, lasting, and fruitful than that of their more illustrious colleagues. An especially significant case, from this point of view, is that of the Florentine sculptor, architect, military engineer, medallist, and amateur rhymester Francesco Giamberti, known as da Sangallo (1494–1576).

The son of Giuliano da Sangallo (1443 or 1445–1516) and scion of one of the leading artistic dynasties of Renaissance Italy, Francesco held a prominent place in the cultural world of Ducal Florence. In that setting he distinguished himself as a devoted cultivator of family memories, as a master of an architectural and sculptural language that combined experimentation with an appeal to local tradition, and as an artist who tenaciously pursued a strategy of intellectual self-promotion.<sup>5</sup> And it is within the framework of such a strategy that we can best understand the nature, scope, and significance of Sangallo's lengthy and multivalent engagement with Dantism.

The most thorough study of Francesco's multifaceted profile has taken the artist's explicit references to Dante to argue that these should be understood within the general pattern of Dantean interests that characterize Florentine culture of the age.<sup>6</sup> Yet so far there is no investigation of the specific meanings and functions of Dantism in Sangallo's intellectual and artistic persona. By analyzing, framing, and critically evaluating a series of documents and literary sources, based on new archival research and in part previously unknown texts, this article sets out to illuminate how the artist managed to exploit his familiarity with Dante as a decisive element in the construction of his own cultural identity, and how foremost literati of the age responded to his public persona as a Dantista. At the same time, the present contribution aims to provide the first sustained study of the manifold processes of cross-fertilization between Francesco's exhibited Dantean cult and his professional activity.

### **Dantism as (Perhaps) a Family Question and the Relation with the *Convivio***

The beginning of Sangallo's career as a Dantista is connected with the mystery that surrounds the paternity of one of the most extraordinary sets of illustrations to the *Commedia* produced during the Italian Renaissance. In a long article from 1955, Bernhard Degenhart did in fact identify Giuliano and Francesco da Sangallo as the main authors of a series of almost 250 drawings in pencil or pen and ink which, together with numerous marginalia, we find in a copy of the 1481 *editio princeps* of Cristoforo Landino's commentary of the *Comedy*, now in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome (incunable Z. 79. A, fig. 1 and 2).<sup>7</sup>

In his essay, Degenhart adopted a series of solid criteria in support of his proposed attribution, delineating at the same time the chronological coordinates for the two distinct groups of drawings within the incunable.<sup>8</sup> He ascribed the earlier group, evidently from the fifteenth century, to Giuliano, who would have made most of the illustrations between 1481 and the end of the following decade, a period in which there are examples of the artist's work that show stylistic characteristics and *ductus* analogous to those of the Dante Vallicelliano. To reinforce his hypothesis, Degenhart drew attention to the monogram "GS" that appears like a signature on one of the architectural drawings of Tuscan villas, by the same author as most of the illustrations, added with other leaves to the end of the volume.<sup>9</sup>

According to Degenhart, a second series of drawings in the Dante Vallicelliano was the work of Francesco da Sangallo, who for the most part would have replicated (on a larger scale) the subjects already illustrated by his father.<sup>10</sup> The article also proposed that Francesco was the author of a part of the many marginalia of the incunable—a hypothesis Degenhart corroborated by calling attention to the note (on c. 106r) in which the annotator identifies himself with the words "Franc.o qui."<sup>11</sup> Intermingled with the interventions of two or three other readers, tentatively identified as other artists of the Sangallo family,<sup>12</sup> the annotations of Francesco would have been added over a significant period, beginning early in his long life.<sup>13</sup>

Scholars have generally accepted Degenhart's attribution. However, it is easy to see why recent studies have spoken of a hypothesis that still remains open.<sup>14</sup> Although he discussed the question of the different

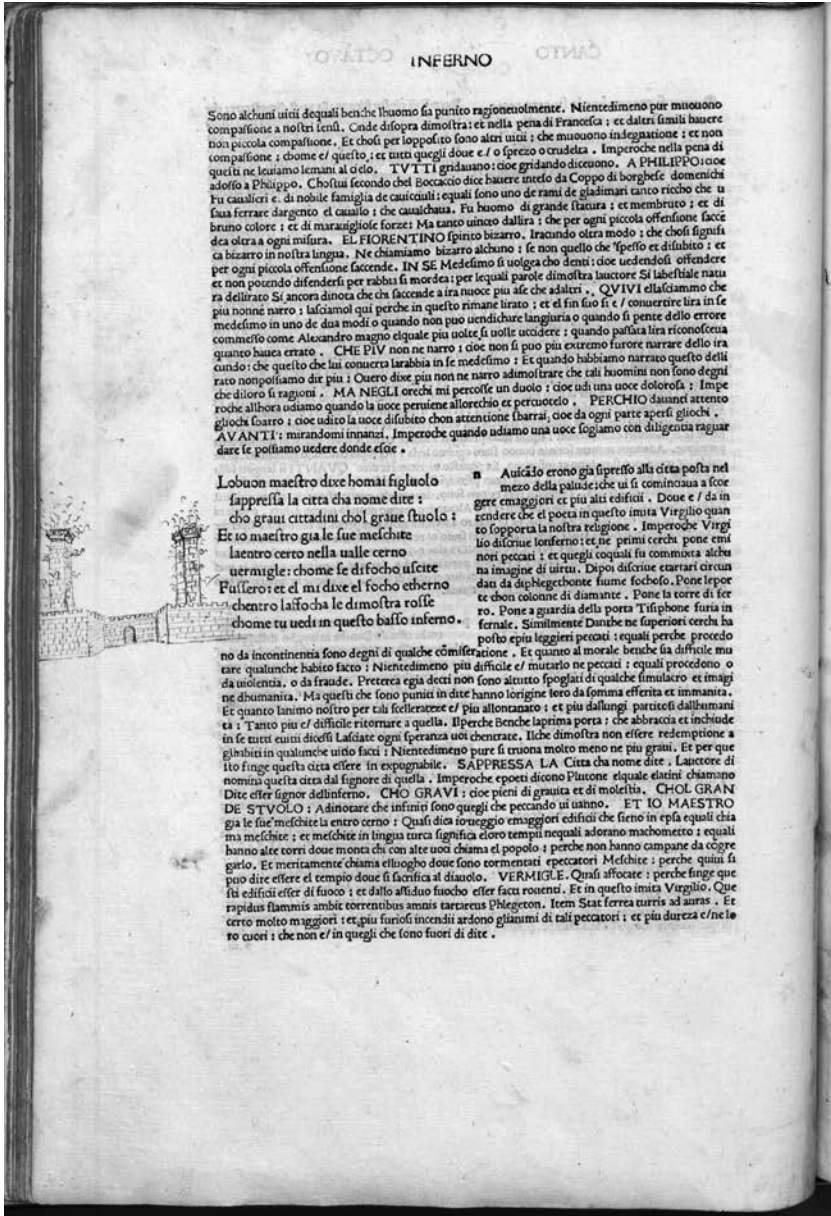


Fig. 1. Draftsman A of the “Dante Vallicelliano”, *The city of Dis*. Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, incunabile Z. 79. A, c. 61v. Su concessione del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali.

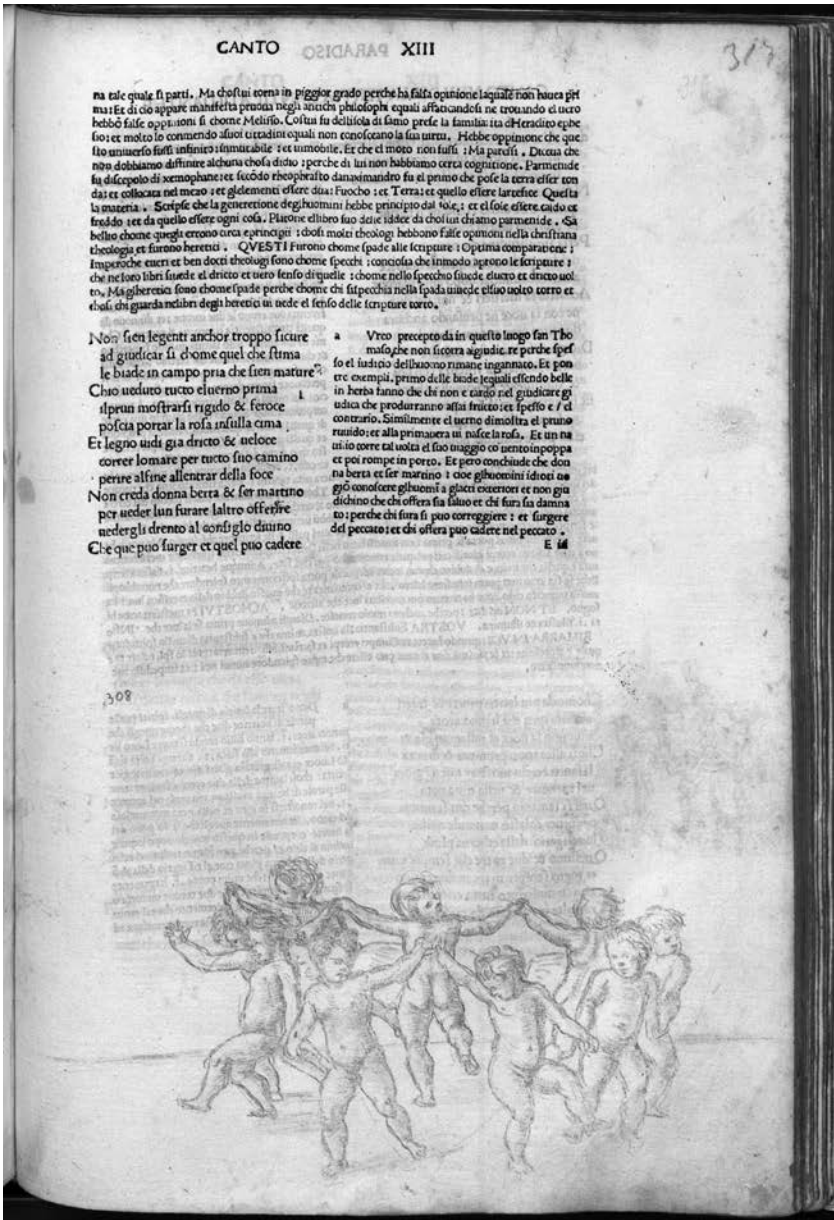


Fig. 2. Draftsman A of the “Dante Vallicelliano”, *Dancing Puttos*. Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, incunabile Z. 79. A, c. 313r. Su concessione del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali.

handwritings present in the Dante Vallicelliano,<sup>15</sup> Degenhart did not proceed to a systematic paleographic examination of the annotations, nor did he investigate the complex stratification of written interventions among the pages of the volume. He did not for example solve the problem of how to identify securely the hand of Francesco, a somewhat large and regular chancellery italic, typical of Italian scribes trained in the early sixteenth century, from among the hands of other annotators, especially since the note “Franc.o qui” is too minimal to allow a reliable comparison with the artist’s known writings.

The identification of the Vallicellian incunabulum as a sort of “family Dante” of the Sangallos<sup>16</sup> therefore appears to be a very plausible hypothesis, albeit one awaiting verification in the form of stringent paleographic proof. There does however exist one certain case in which Francesco left a trace of his Dantean interests in a codex formerly owned by his father. I refer to an autobiographical note (fig. 3) that the artist added to the pages of what today is the manuscript Barberiniano Latino 4424 in the Biblioteca Vaticana, a splendid folio volume that gathers together many architectural drawings by Giuliano da Sangallo.

In this note, the artist described witnessing a prodigious astronomical event on June 11, 1540, when the skies of Florence were lit by fireworks for Duke Cosimo’s birthday. In Francesco’s eyes, the exceptional nature of the phenomenon was linked to the prestige of the two personages who had first described it: none other than Dante and Aristotle. The annotator thus reported what he saw:

Parmi che non sia da mancare di non fare memoria di quello che io viddi la sera di santo Bernaba a ore 1 ½ di nocte che fu addì XI di Gugno MDXXXX la sera che si facevano li fuochi delo rinovale della criatione dello Illustrissimo Signore Duca Cosmo de’ Medici ii di Fiorenza, che sendo io Francesco di maestro Giuliano da Sangallo nello mio orto all’ora sopra decta viddi la Luna che era in quarterone pasare socto il segno di Marte e rimanere Marte celato, e non si vidde epso Marte se non quando fu pasata della Luna quella parte che risprendeva e di poi imediata-mente si vidde Marte aparire che il corpo della Luna no’llo ochupava, tanto che qui non pocha confusione in me rimase, connciosiache s’el corpo della Luna è corpo esperico, come si crede e si connfessa, ed esendo epso corpo lunare denso tucto e non raro, dicho che se ciò fussi non s’arebbe àuto a vedere Marte se non pasata tucta la ritondità della Luna, e per questa dimostratione ch’io viddi pare si possa pennsare o che ’l corpo della Luna non sia tucto denso o veramente non sia corpo esperico, unitamente trovandosi la Luna e Marte come qui è disegnato [. . .], tanto che a questa così facta dimostratione sarebbe quello che Dante dice che Aristotile



Fig. 3. Francesco da Sangallo, autograph note: Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ms. Barberiniano Latino 4424, c. 18r. Image from the facsimile edition of the manuscript: *Il libro di Giuliano da Sangallo: Codice Vaticano Barberiniano Latino 4424, con introduzione e note di Cristiano Huelsen*, Leipzig, Harrassowitz, 1910, vol. 2.



fa mentione che alli suoi tempi achadde e vidde epso Aristotile il medesimo caso apunnto e così lo recita.<sup>17</sup>

As Dario Donetti has demonstrated, the annotation is the result of an erroneous interpretation of a passage in the *Convivio*.<sup>18</sup> Francesco was here referring to the third chapter of the second book, where Dante made reference to Aristotle's *De Caelo* as the most important classical authority that had described the eclipse of the planet Mars caused by the interposition of the moon. More specifically, the passage in the *Convivio* illustrated how it is possible to observe this spectacle when the moon is in its first quarter, and therefore half of its surface is visible from the Earth. If, according to Sangallo, on that Florentine night in 1540, Mars—incredibly—could be seen as it passed behind the dark side of the moon, Dante had described an astronomical phenomenon that was rare and yet did not defy the laws of physics. Following Aristotle, he had emphasized that, on the occasion of an eclipse, the red planet comes back into sight only after it has passed behind the opaque body of the moon:

sì come ne lo eclipsi del sole appare sensibilmente la luna essere sotto lo sole, e sì come per la testimonianza d'Aristotile, che vide con li occhi (secondo che dice nel secondo De Celo et Mundo) la luna, essendo nuova, entrare sotto a Marte da la parte non lucente, e Marte stare celato tanto che rapparve da l'altra parte lucente de la luna, ch'era verso occidentale.<sup>19</sup>

Although based on a singular misunderstanding of the Trecento source, the note in the Vatican manuscript is of great importance for reconstructing the interests and inclinations with which the artist regarded the writings of Dante. In particular, the text reveals Francesco's ambition to give proof of a Dantean expertise that was not limited to the *Commedia*, a work that was widely known even among the artisans and laboring men of renaissance Florence,<sup>20</sup> but which extended also to the *Convivio*. While the *Convivio* was much less popular than the *Comedy*, it enjoyed a critical rediscovery in the period under consideration. After an early circulation in manuscripts in the central decades of the Quattrocento, and four published editions between 1490 and 1531, in the early 1540s the book was attracting the attention of leading commentators on Dante.<sup>21</sup> Notably important from this point of view were the studies of the first public readers of the *Commedia* at the Accademia Fiorentina, the official and most prestigious literary institution of Ducal Florence. In

their academic lectures of 1541, for instance, Francesco Verino, Giovambattista Gelli, and Pierfrancesco Giambullari illustrated the poem with systematic references to the treatise.<sup>22</sup>

In this light, it becomes clear that Sangallo's annotation belongs to the renewed critical focus on the *Convivio* in mid-sixteenth-century Italy. At the same time, his note finds its background in an approach to Dante's encyclopedic work that had long been typical of Florentine technical writers, including an artist of the caliber of Leonardo. Ever since the treatise had first begun to circulate, such writers had used it as a valuable repertory of scientific observations, especially with regards to matters cosmological, geographical, and astronomical.<sup>23</sup>

### **Dantism as a Strategy of Cultural Self-Legitimation**

The annotation left by Francesco in the pages of his father's magnificent book was presumably intended for a public not much more extensive than his own family. However, the artist was by no means reluctant to display his Dantean knowledge in broader circles as well. For him these competencies must have represented an effective means of self-accreditation within the Accademia Fiorentina, into whose ranks Sangallo and other Florentine painters and sculptors were accepted in 1545. It is well known that the institution treated a devotion to Dante as a powerful factor in its inductees' identify formation.<sup>24</sup> Therefore it seems probable that the power of cultural legitimation ascribed to a Dantean expertise would have increased at a time when the academy entered a period of upheaval—a shake-up that came to affect Francesco himself. Along with many other practitioners of the visual arts, Sangallo was in fact expelled on the occasion of the academic reform of the spring 1547, purportedly for insufficient commitment to public lectures.<sup>25</sup>

In the crucial years before the expulsion, in order to promote his own intellectual credentials, the artist showed off his familiarity with Dante in his correspondence with literati who held prominent positions in the Accademia. In letters where the author rhetorically affirmed that he was not up to the level of his correspondent, the emphasis placed on their shared knowledge of the poet of the *Commedia* provided a way of overcoming his alleged cultural inferiority. In terms of Bourdiean sociology, he played the card of his own Dantean expertise in the game

of that “dialectic of knowledge (*connaissance*) and recognition (*reconnaissance*)” that constitutes the basis of cultural artefacts’ symbolic capital.<sup>26</sup> He knew, in other words, how to exploit that familiarity for its capacity to confer, especially in the context of exchanges with exponents of high culture, “the acquisition of a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourability.”<sup>27</sup> Such a strategy would seem to explain the Dante quotations that adorn the two letters, both intended for publication, that Sangallo addressed to Nicolò Martelli and Benedetto Varchi.<sup>28</sup>

In the first, dating from the autumn of 1546, Francesco alludes to a polemical passage in the fourth book of the *Convivio*. His mention of “nostro Divin Dante” was intended to exhort Martelli, a former consul of the Accademia Fiorentina, to regard as braying asses those envious fellow-citizens who were ready to calumniate him.<sup>29</sup> In the second, composed some months later in response to Varchi’s poll among artists on the *paragone* between painting and sculpture, Sangallo inserted two verses from the sixth canto of *Inferno* to support his argument for the superiority of sculpture. The short passage, taken from the speech in which Virgil explains how as things become more perfect they more perfectly experience both joy and sorrow, is preceded by a new profession of faith in “nostro Divin Dante.”<sup>30</sup> Evidently, the quotation was intended as a means of associating the artist to the addressee, who during his consulship at the academy (1545) had given an important series of Dantean readings, and, in his lecture on the *paragone*, had exalted the poet of the *Commedia* as he who “seppe tutto e tutto scrisse.”<sup>31</sup>

### **Francesco’s Dantism at the Intersection with his Artistic Activity**

At this point, it is important to ask how far Francesco’s efforts to present himself as a competent Dantista to leading contemporary men of letters were rewarded by these humanists’ recognition. Even more pressing is another query: to what extent, apart from the problematic case of the Dante Vallicelliano, did such a strategy of intellectual self-advancement affect Francesco’s professional activity? Answering these questions will help situate his ambitions in the context of the Florentine artistic scene under Cosimo I. Because of the many exchanges among intellectuals,

painters, and sculptors that took place around the Accademia Fiorentina, this milieu enjoyed a flourishing of paintings and sculptures celebrating Dante, including such iconic works as Vasari's portrait of the *Six Tuscan Poets* and Pierino da Vinci's relief of the *Death of Count Ugolino*.<sup>32</sup>

Against this background, a poetic exchange between Sangallo and Benedetto Varchi is especially meaningful. Published in the second volume of Varchi's *Sonetti* (1557), the lyrical dialogue almost certainly dates from the same years when the Florentine artist was concentrating his efforts on being regarded as a Dantista (internal evidence allows us to date these poems to a period slightly later than the spring of 1546).<sup>33</sup> A careful reading of the sonnets sheds light on how Francesco's claims to Dantean expertise were, among other things, functional to his career as a Medicean artist:

M. FRANCESCO SANGALLO

QUEI tre spirti del ciel pregiati, e  
chiari,

Che 'l mondo illuminâr con  
prose, e carmi,

Par, che preghino ogn'hor, che 'n  
bronzi, o 'n marmi

Mostrin, ch'a Flora sian graditi, e  
cari,

Dunque, Varchi gentil, ch'adorni, e  
schiari

Ad Arno l'onde, e c'hai troncato  
l'armi

Dell'empia invidia, sì che voce  
parmi

Sentir: pon questi a quei tre primi  
pari,

Aiuta quanto puoi sì belle imprese,  
Che 'l tuo buon Cosmo invitto

unico Duce

Pe' tuoi preghi a' gran Toschi sia  
cortese

Ei gloria eterna havrà, se ciò  
conduce,

Per te fien sempre tai memorie  
intese,

Io per quel viverò con maggior  
luce.

RISPOSTA

FRANCESCO, se così pregiate, e chiari

Fussero al mondo o mie prose, o  
miei carmi,

Come i metalli vostri, e i vostri  
marmi

4 Sono ad ogni gentil graditi, e cari,

Ben porrìa tra gli spirti eletti, e rari

A ricco seggio, et honorato  
alzarmi;

Hor ghiaccio [sic] in terra, e mai  
quindi levarmi

8 Non spero, non che gir coi primi  
a pari,

Ma per ciò non fia già, che l'alte imprese  
Vostre non lodi, e non preghi il  
mio Duce,

11 Che voglia ai tre gran Toschi esser  
cortese,

Il cui valor, che gloria tanta adduce,

In ogni tempo, e per ciascun  
paese,

14 Via più risplenderà, ch'oro non  
luce.<sup>34</sup>

With his sonnet, Sangallo was asking Varchi to help him obtain a prestigious ducal commission to create sculptures in honor of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. The Three Crowns are in fact the figures concealed behind those Tuscan heavenly spirits who, having already given luster to the world with their exceptional productions in prose and verse, according to Sangallo now requested to be suitably honored in Florence with commemorative statues.<sup>35</sup> In his reply, Varchi agreed to praise Sangallo's talents and his work to the Duke, and to promote a sculptural project that would finally express Florence's devotion to its greatest literary glories.<sup>36</sup> Despite this promise, it does not seem that the commission was ever realized. Among the works attributed to the artist there are no portraits, painted or sculpted, of these writers. Further, there are no known documents that cast light on such a plan; it has thus been proposed that this was in truth a poetic fiction.<sup>37</sup> However, a comparison with other verse exchanges between Varchi and the painters, sculptors, and medallists active in Ducal Florence suggests that the project might have indeed been discussed in Medici circles at that time. On several occasions Florentine artists addressed sonnets to the humanist in his capacity as cultural broker at Cosimo's court, and thus as a personage capable of interceding with the Duke on their behalf to procure the desired commissions.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, a new project to commemorate in sculpture the Three Crowns, once again destined to remain unfulfilled in the sixteenth century, was part of an artistic program for the Uffizi that is documented shortly after the period under consideration.<sup>39</sup>

Whatever the historical reality of the project discussed in the verse dialogue of Varchi's *Sonetti*, this was not the only case of a major Florentine writer expressing the hope that Francesco might create an artwork on a Dantean subject. The Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence preserves a poetic text that provides fundamental, and practically unknown,<sup>40</sup> testimony in this regard. The poem appears in a *zibaldone* of the still largely unpublished corpus of burlesque verse by Alfonso de' Pazzi (1509–1555), one of the foremost poets of Ducal Florence.<sup>41</sup> Inserted into the midst of numerous texts of great interest, which comment on many political and artistic events of the contemporary Florentine scene, we read the following *sonnetta*:<sup>42</sup>

Se voi farete, San Ghallo, di Dante  
    il magnio Inferno che già il Manetto  
    ispeculò; e scrisse, et io l'ò letto,  
4     il Giamburlari ancor tanto prestante,  
Vo' mostrerrete che da voi innante  
    non s'è veduto se non imperfetto,  
    et così, col disegno e spirto eletto  
8     vostro, haren noi un sì bel lume innante;  
vo' siate prior dell'achademianza,  
    fatel acciò che con tal nuovo raggio  
11    facciat'a morte e tempo oltraggio e scherno,  
date principio al mirabil Inferno  
    † ché non men questa ch'ugni altr'oper' vostra †<sup>43</sup>  
14    vi farà lume et metteravvi in saggio,  
e se in ciò vi inghaggio  
    la spalla mia è pronta quanto vale  
17    a darvi haiuto, ma più le vostr'ale;  
non d'altro so vi chale  
    che di giovare altrui con chiaro lume—  
20    la gola e 'l son et l'ozziöse piume.  
Dunque con vostro acume  
    mostrateci le bolgie, il cierchio, e 'l cietro,  
23    e come et chi son quei che vi son dentro.

The fact that this document has remained virtually unknown, the difficulty of its language and allusions to the circumstances of its composition, and the special interest it has for the present investigation require careful analysis. First of all, two considerations remove any doubt about the identity of the addressee and help specify the dating of the poem. The unrealistic hope, expressed in line 9, that the interlocutor might soon become “prior dell'achademianza,” that is to say consul of the Accademia Fiorentina, makes it certain that the “San Ghallo” whom Pazzi addresses is none other than Francesco di Giuliano. Francesco was the only member of his family to matriculate into the academy, where he was an ally of Pazzi, whose candidacy for the position of censor he publicly proposed on August 15, 1546.<sup>44</sup> The poem should thus almost certainly be dated to the period when Francesco was a member of the institution, between January 1545 and the spring 1547.<sup>45</sup>

Once again, then, the document appears to have originated in the mid-1540s, when Francesco's efforts to position himself as an expert on Dante were at their most intense. The sonettessa indicates that these

efforts were successful, as Sangallo's Dantism was favorably regarded not only by an intellectual such as Varchi but also by Pazzi, who was a deadly enemy of Varchi's.<sup>46</sup> Evidently, the appreciation for the artist's Dantean skills was capable of overcoming even the sharpest divisions within the academy.

The dating of the poem becomes particularly important in view of Pazzi's invitation to Francesco to represent, making use of his own design and of his own noble spirit, Dante's Hell. It is in the context of the contemporary Dantean debates at the Accademia that the invitation assumes a special relevance. According to Pazzi, Sangallo's work would have been superior to the speculations of the Florentine mathematician and architect Antonio Manetti. It would even exceed what Pierfrancesco Giambullari—whom the author declared to be intellectually gifted ("tanto prestante"), but whom he also ridiculed by distorting his surname—had written on the same topic.<sup>47</sup> The objects of Pazzi's allusions are among the works that, in mid-sixteenth-century Florence, most profoundly influenced discussions about the shape, spatial distribution, and dimensions of Dante's Hell. His reference to Antonio Manetti conjures two texts that had illustrated, also by means of cartographic schemes or maps of the infernal regions, answers to these questions. First, there is the brief discussion of the site, topography, and size of the Inferno which Landino inserted, drawing on the observations of his friend Manetti, into the preface to his 1481 commentary to the *Commedia*. Second, there is Girolamo Benivieni's *Dialogo di Antonio Manetti cittadino fiorentino circa al sito, forma, et misure dello Inferno di Dante Alighieri poeta excellentissimo* that, added as an appendix to the Giunti edition of the *Commedia* of 1506, explained in more detail the results of Manetti's investigations.<sup>48</sup> But Pazzi also made reference to a work that was hot off the press at the time of the sonetessa's composition. Pierfrancesco Giambullari's *De 'l Sito, Forma, & Misure, dello Inferno di Dante*, one of the most significant sixteenth-century attempts to resolve the principal mathematical and geometrical discrepancies in Manetti's hypotheses, had been printed in Florence in 1544. Although it provided a generally more accurate account of the infernal topography than those of its predecessors, Giambullari's system nonetheless retained certain unsolved problems, such as the exact locations of certain categories of the damned.<sup>49</sup>

These perennial areas of difficulty help explain the significance of Pazzi's invitation to Sangallo. According to the author, a new figurative object by the addressee would have revealed the imperfection of all the systems that intellectuals had hitherto elaborated to illustrate the exact shape and measures of Dante's Hell. Although the sonettessa referred explicitly only to Manetti and Giambullari, the poet's argument was meant to characterize as deficient *all* of the authors who had dealt with these questions. The allusion to erroneous treatments of the subject almost certainly extended to radical criticism of the infernal topographies of Manetti and of his Florentine acolytes as well—namely the *Descrizione dell'Inferno* that the Lucchese Alessandro Vellutello had prefaced, accompanied by a series of woodcuts, to his *Nova esposizione* of the *Commedia* (1544).<sup>50</sup> Considering the dating of the sonettessa and Pazzi's hostility towards Varchi and his circle, it is possible that the accusation of inadequacy was also directed at the investigations that Varchi had carried out with his friend Luca Martini, a foremost Medici courtier, academician, and Dante scholar.<sup>51</sup> Having retired in the Florentine countryside, between 1546 and 1547 the pair tried to clear up the various unresolved questions concerning the actual measures of Dante's Hell—problems that Martini attempted to solve by creating a relief model of the Inferno.<sup>52</sup>

According to Pazzi, Sangallo would finally have been able to answer, for the benefit of a community of people (“noi,” line 8), which appears to designate the academy, those questions that were so hotly debated at the time. By sharing with the intended audience his own innovative and illuminating understanding (“nuovo raggio”) of Dante, the poet argued, Francesco would have achieved such fame as to challenge the destructive power of time and the very shadow of death itself, and the resulting work would have marked its creator as a wise man (“metteravvi in saggio”). Furthermore, Pazzi explicitly proposed himself as the patron of the artwork (“in ciò vi ingaggio”), but while he put at Francesco's disposition all his own strength and resources, he acknowledged that it would be the addressee's genius that would best sustain the enterprise. According to the author, the artist's generosity would make the project possible. Spurning every other-worldly care,<sup>53</sup> Sangallo would benefit mankind through his well-known discernment (“chiaro lume”). Availing himself of his own intellect, Pazzi concluded, the artist would be



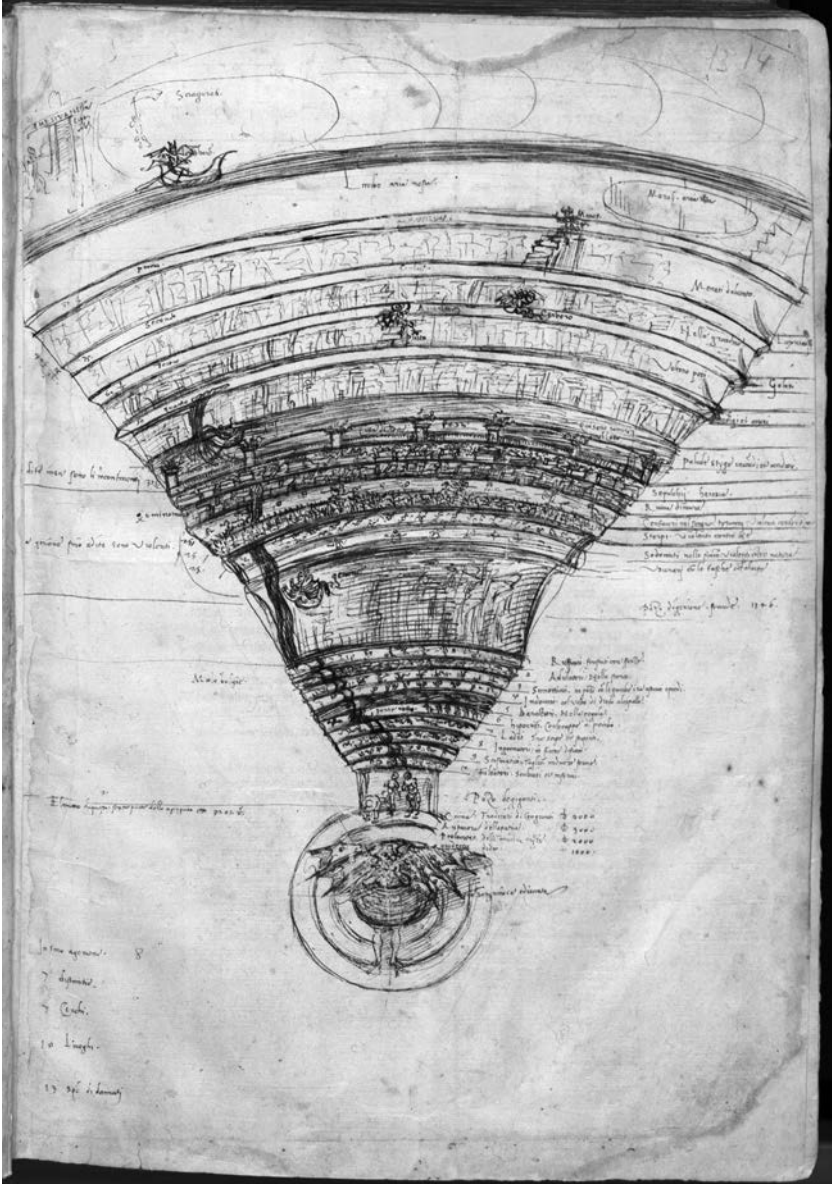


Fig. 4. Draftsman A of the “Dante Vallicelliano”, *Map of Hell*: Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, incunabile Z. 79. A, c. 13r. Su concessione del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali.

able to properly illustrate the infernal *bolge*, the exact circumference and center of the infernal regions, and the precise location of the reprobates who are punished there—all questions that Manetti, Giambullari, and other intellectuals had probed so extensively.

But what kind of artwork did the poet mean to champion? It is possible that the reference to “disegno” in line 7 is a metonymy used to indicate an object made by means of one of the arts of design, not an actual drawing. Considering the professional profile of Francesco, Pazzi could have been exhorting his sculptor and engineer friend to make a detailed relief of Dante’s Hell. The virtual commission might have been for something comparable to the relief made by a certain Raggio Sensale—a personage of whom Vasari speaks in his life of Filippo Lippi<sup>54</sup>—or else akin to the model that Luca Martini was working on at this very time. But the most obvious answer is to interpret the reference to design as an indication of the artistic medium that Sangallo was being asked to use. And if Francesco and his father were indeed the owners and draftsmen of the Dante Vallicelliano, Alfonso de’ Pazzi might even have seen that incunable. He would therefore have been in the position to urge his addressee to replicate a drawing by his father: the detailed section of Dante’s Hell which, accompanied by many minute marginalia, we find on c. 13r of the volume (fig. 4).<sup>55</sup>

Until the questions concerning the paternity of the illustrations and annotations in the Dante Vallicelliano have been resolved, this hypothesis cannot be proved with certainty. Nevertheless, the sonnet remains a document of remarkable importance, which helps shed light on an unknown aspect of the intense debates on the infernal topography that enlivened Dantean criticism in mid-Cinquecento Florence. More specifically, the text reveals how a foremost literato from that milieu could nominate a practitioner of the visual arts, rather than a professional scholar, as the person with the necessary expertise and ability to settle such longstanding controversies. Ultimately, then, the poem testifies and confirms that a knowledge of Dante was indeed a most powerful means to legitimate the intellectual ambitions of a contemporary artist.

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NOTES

I had the pleasure to present part of this work in one of the panels on *Dante's Reception in Words and Images*, at the 2017 RSA Annual Meeting in Chicago. I owe sincere thanks to the organizers—Deborah Parker and Arielle Saiber—and participants of those sessions for their feedback on my paper. I want to express my gratitude to Dario Donetti, who kindly let me read some chapters of his dissertation on Francesco da Sangallo, and to Simon Gilson, for his valuable comments on an earlier draft of this essay. I am thankful to Samuel Vitali, for fundamental help in the translations from German, and to Anna Fenton-Hathaway, for many stylistic improvements to my text. Many thanks go to Dr. Paola Paesano and Dr. Gabriella Romani, of the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome, for quickly providing me with digital reproductions from the “Dante Vallicelliano”.

1. On the basis of such documentary evidence, we know that the sculptors Giovanni and Benedetto da Maiano and the engraver Francesco Rosselli had their own manuscript copies of a “Dante,” that is of the *Commedia*; that the painter Filippino Lippi listed the *Convivio* and “uno Dante in charta pechora” among the twelve books contained in his workshop; and that the sculptor Luca della Robbia owned a manuscript of the *Vita Nuova*. For these records, see Francis Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 21–22; Ulrich Pfisterer, *Donatello und die Entdeckung der Stile, 1430–1445*, Römische Studien der Bibliotheca Hertziana, Bd. 17 (Munich: Hirmer, 2002), 253–54; Patricia Lee Rubin, *Images and Identity in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 140 and 288, n. 62; Introduction to the volume *The Artist as Reader: On Education and Non-Education of Early Modern Artists* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), ed. Heiko Damm, Michael Thimann, and Claus Zittel, 7 and 45, while Alessandro Parronchi, “Come gli artisti leggevano Dante,” *Studi danteschi*, 43 (1966), 97–134, remains a valuable and more general introduction to how Italian painters and sculptors were familiar with Dante. To the aforementioned artists we might add the name of Benvenuto Cellini, who, according to the notary inventory of his estate that was written upon his death (1571), in his own bedroom kept “un Dante in penna in asse” (Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, ms. Ricc. 2787, c. 81r).

2. The definition comes from Gasparo Visconti, a major poet who was active in that milieu: see Carlo Vecce, introduction to Donato Bramante, *Sonetti e altri scritti* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1995), 15.

3. See, in order, Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori* (Florence: Giunti, 1568), 1:182, 184, 233, 304, 472, 474, 2:721, 748, and 776.

4. On Botticelli and Michelangelo see, among others, Corrado Ricci, *La “Divina Commedia” di Dante Alighieri nell’arte del Cinquecento: Michelangelo, Raffaello, Zuccari* (Milan: Fratelli Treves, 1908); Lamberto Donati, *Il Botticelli e le prime illustrazioni della “Divina Commedia”* (Florence: Olschki, 1962); *Botticelli e Dante*, ed. Corrado Gizzi (Milan: Electa, 1990); *Sandro Botticelli: pittore della “Divina Commedia,”* ed. Sebastiano Gentile (Milan: Skira, 2000); *Michelangelo e Dante*, ed. Corrado Gizzi (Milan: Electa, 1995), and Andrea Alessi, *Dante, Sebastiano e Michelangelo: l’Inferno nella “Pietà” di Viterbo* (Milan: Electa, 2007).

5. The best account of Francesco’s artistic profile, of his relation to the glories of the Sangallo family and to the architectural languages of Quattrocento and Cinquecento Florence, as well as of his cultural ambitions, comes from Dario Donetti’s unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, *Francesco da Sangallo e l’identità dell’architettura toscana* (Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore, 2016).

6. See *ibid.*, 218–19.

7. See Bernhard Degenhart, “Dante, Leonardo und Sangallo (Dante-Illustrationen Giuliano da Sangallos in ihrem Verhältnis zu Leonardo da Vinci und zu den Figurenzeichnungen der Sangallo),” *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 7 (1955): 101–287. Degenhart’s article remains the most systematic study of the visual apparatus of the “Dante Vallicelliano,” even though such an apparatus has for more than a century attracted the attention of art historians and literary scholars. The other key contributions on the incunabula include: Ricci, *La “Divina Commedia,”* XI; Vittorio Cian, “Un Dante illustrato del Rinascimento,” *Giornale Storico della Letteratura*

*Italiana*, special issue 19/21, *Miscellanea Dantesca* (1921): 564–80; Donati, *Il Botticelli*, 102–44; André Chastel, *Arte e umanesimo a Firenze al tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Turin: Einaudi, 1964), 129; Parronchi, “Come gli artisti leggevano Dante,” 126–28; Stefano Borsi, *Giuliano da Sangallo: i disegni di architettura e dell’antico* (Rome: Officina, 1985), 514–16; Giovanni Morello’s entry in *Sandro Botticelli: pittore della “Divina Commedia,”* vol. 1, 255–56, and Henrik Engel, *Dantes Inferno zur Geschichte der Höllenvermessung und des Hölletrichtermotivs* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2006), 118–22.

8. On these two groups of illustrations, see also Cian, “Un Dante illustrato,” esp. 565–71.

9. See Degenhart, “Dante, Leonardo und Sangallo,” 193, with reference to c. 367r of the Dante Vallicelliano. The scholar (171) also observed that these leaves bear the same watermark as other works securely attributed to Giuliano, such as the architectural drawings in the Geymüller codex now in the Uffizi.

10. See, for instance, Degenhart, 119, plate 96.

11. Degenhart, 262. The author does not mention the adverb “qui,” which can be read in the original incunable.

12. Degenhart proposed the names of two cousins of Francesco: the architect and engineer Giovan Battista (1496–1548), and the architect, engineer, painter, and stage designer Aristotile (1481–1551). See esp. 210–11.

13. Among others, Degenhart attributed to Francesco the note where, having observed how Dante indicated in a periphrasis how many years Adam had waited in Limbo for the descent of Christ (*Par.* 26.118–23), the annotator dated his own note “1519”: see Degenhart, 104, with reference to Dante Vallicelliano, c. 344v. Still, Degenhart made a mistake in reading as “1568,” and as a further possible dating of the artist’s intervention, the date beneath an illustration of a cavalry battle (104 and 163, pl. 191, with reference to the drawing at c. 142r of the incunable). A more careful reading of the numerals on the original drawing, and the subject of the scene itself, which is the battle of Tagliacozzo mentioned by *Inf.* 28.17–18, confirms that in fact the date is “1268,” the year of that crucial armed encounter. Such a correction, however, makes it impossible to say for how long the annotator identified with Francesco continued his interventions on the volume.

14. Borsi, *Giuliano da Sangallo*, discusses the drawings of the Dante Vallicelliano in his chapter on the works whose attribution to Giuliano remains dubious; Giovanni Morello’s entry in the catalogue in *Sandro Botticelli: pittore della “Divina Commedia”* is similarly cautious on the identity of the annotators and draftsmen of the volume.

15. Degenhart, 201–11.

16. *Ibid.*, 104.

17. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Cod. Barb. Lat.* 4424, c. 18r. The note has been transcribed from the facsimile of *Il libro di Giuliano da Sangallo: Codice Vaticano Barberiniano Latino 4424*, ed. Cristiano Huelsen (Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1910), 18. Like subsequent transcriptions from sixteenth-century manuscript and printed sources, the text expands abbreviations without using round brackets, transcribes *f* as *s*, *j* as *i*, *x* as *ss*, separates *u* and *v*, modernizes word divisions, and rationalizes punctuation.

18. Donetti, *Francesco da Sangallo*, 217–19. Stefano Borsi was the first scholar to identify the passage from the *Convivio* to which Francesco alludes in his note: see Borsi, *Giuliano da Sangallo*, 116.

19. Dante Alighieri, *Convivio* (2.3.6) in: idem, *Opere minori*, vol. 1. 2, ed. by Cesare Vasoli and Domenico de Robertis, (Milan: Ricciardi, 1979), 131–32. Compare the relevant passage in Aristotle’s *De caelo*, 2.12 (Aristotle, *On the Heavens*, transl. W. K. C. Guthrie [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939], 205): “the moon has been observed, when half-full, to approach the planet Mars, which has then been blotted out behind the dark half of the moon, and come out again on the bright side.”

20. It is useful to recall here the elitist remark that Leonardo Bruni famously ascribed to his fellow humanist Niccolò Niccoli in his *Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum* (ca. 1406), that Dante was a poet suitable to the crowds of “wool-workers,” “bakers,” and other artisans of the same sort. On this and other humanistic polemics on the audience of Dante, see most recently

Alison Cornish, *Vernacular Translation in Dante's Italy: Illiterate Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 164–66.

21. See Simon Gilson, “Reading the *Convivio* from Trecento Florence to Dante’s Cinquecento Commentators,” *Italian Studies*, 64, no. 2 (2009), 266–95, with further bibliography.

22. On references to the *Convivio* in Verino, Gelli, and Giambullari’s Florentine lectures, see *ibid.*, 282–86.

23. *Ibid.*, 275. On Leonardo’s knowledge of the *Convivio*, which is reflected in a number of his annotations, see Parronchi, “Come gli artisti,” 125, and Martin Kemp, *Leonardo da Vinci: The Marvellous Works of Nature and Man* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 267.

24. Sangallo became an associate of the Accademia during the consulship of his friend Nicolò Martelli, on January 8, 1545: see Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana, Fondo Principale, ms. B III 52, c. 22v. Later that year, the sculptors Baccio Bandinelli and Benvenuto Cellini were admitted in the institution, in which other artists, including Bronzino, were already enrolled. On the myth of Dante within the academy, see Michele Barbi, *Della fortuna di Dante nel secolo XVI* (Pisa: Nistri, 1890), 25–37; Armand De Gaetano, “Dante and the Florentine Academy: The Commentary of Giambattista Gelli as Work of Popularization and Textual Criticism,” *Italica*, 45, no. 2 (Jun. 1968), 146–70; Aldo Vallone, *L’interpretazione di Dante nel Cinquecento* (Florence: Olschki, 1969), 139–244; Giancarlo Mazzacurati, *Conflitti di culture nel Cinquecento* (Naples: Liguori, 1977), 183–223; and Davide Dalmas, *Dante nella crisi religiosa del Cinquecento Italiano: Da Trifon Gabriele a Lodovico Castelvetro* (Manziana: Vecchiarelli, 2005), 33–152. For a number of earlier examples of the Florentine tendency towards an identitarian reading of Dante, see Deborah Parker, *Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993).

25. On this, see the fundamental work of Michel Plaisance, *L’Accademia e il suo Principe. Cultura e politica a Firenze al tempo di Cosimo I e Francesco de’ Medici* (Manziana: Vecchiarelli, 2004), esp. 123–34. Also relevant are Massimo Firpo, *Gli affreschi di Pontorno a San Lorenzo: Eresia, politica e cultura nella Firenze di Cosimo I* (Turin: Einaudi, 1997), 205–6, and François Quiviger, “The Presence of Artists in Literary Academies,” in *Italian Academies of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. David Chambers and François Quiviger (London: Warburg Institute, 1995), 105–12.

26. See Randal Johnson, Introduction to Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 7.

27. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, transl. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 291.

28. Only the letter to Varchi was published during Francesco’s lifetime; see *Due Lezioni di M. Benedetto Varchi, nella prima delle quali si dichiara un Sonetto di M. Michelagnolo Buonarroti. Nella seconda si disputa quale sia più nobile arte la Scultura, o la Pittura, con una lettera d’esso Michelagnolo, & più altri Eccellentiss. Pittori, et Scultori, sopra la Quistione sopradetta* (Florence: Torrentino, 1549 *stile fiorentino*), 139–49. Nicolò Martelli included his 1546 exchange with Sangallo in the manuscript of the second volume of his letters that he prepared for the press (now ms. Magl. VIII. 1447 of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale of Florence), but the collection remained unpublished in the sixteenth century. See Renzo Rabboni, “Fra Aretino e Varchi: le lettere (e le rime) sull’arte di Nicolò Martelli,” *Italianistica*, 38, no. 2 (Summer 2009), 251–69: 251, and 265–67, for Martelli’s friendship with Sangallo.

29. Francesco da Sangallo, letter to Nicolò Martelli, November 20, 1546, in Detlef Heikamp, “Ein Madonnenrelief von Francesco da Sangallo,” *Berliner Museen*, 8, no. 2 (November 1958), 34–40. “Et s’alchuni pure quella biasmassero [. . .], come usano pur molti della nostra città i quali sono li malvagi invidiosi, l’insolenti superbi et altri simili [. . .]. Et così voi, Messer Niccolò mio, alzate il capo e come dice il nostro Divin Dante, quando di tali men che huomini parla, che di loro si deve far conto come delle voci degli asini” (40). The passage refers to *Convivio* 4.15.6 (698–99), where Dante lampooned those who argued that two different forms of human generation existed: “sanza dubbio forte riderebbe Aristotile udendo fare spezie due de l’umana generazione, sì come de li cavalli e de li asini; che, perdonimi Aristotile, asini ben si possono dire coloro che così pensano.”

30. Francesco da Sangallo, letter to Benedetto Varchi, *sine data* (but February / March 1547), in Benedetto Varchi and Vincenzio Borghini, *Pittura e scultura nel Cinquecento*, ed. Paola Barocchi (Livorno: Sillabe, 1998): “di modo che, essendoci tante difficoltà a condurre tale opere e tante fatiche d’animo e di corpo, e se si sente poi la dolcezza di quella eternità, in pace comportare si deve molte fatiche, talché mi pare a proposito ci sia la sentenza del nostro divin Dante, dove dice: ‘Che vuol, quanto la cosa è più perfetta, / Più senta il bene, e così la doglienza’” (78). The quotation, as noted by both Barocchi and Donetti (*Francesco da Sangallo*, 219), is from *Inferno* 6.107–8.

31. Varchi, *Lezione sulla maggioranza delle arti*, in Varchi and Borghini, *Pittura e scultura*, 53. On Varchi’s academic lectures on Dante, see Annalisa Andreoni, *La via della dottrina. Le lezioni accademiche di Benedetto Varchi*, (Pisa: ETS, 2012), 15–238, as well as eadem, “Varchi letterato. Un’indagine su Dante, Petrarca e il classicismo,” *La Rivista. Études culturelles italiennes Sorbonne Universités*, 5 (2017): special issue *Varchi e dintorni*, 3–11.

32. Between 1532 and 1533, Agnolo Bronzino had painted his famous *Allegorical portrait of Dante*, the centerpiece of the decorative plan for the bedchamber of the banker and intellectual Bartolomeo Bettini (on the work see, most recently, Raffaele de Giorgi’s entry in the catalogue *Bronzino. Pittore e poeta alla corte dei Medici*, ed. Carlo Falciani and Antonio Natali [Florence: Mandragora, 2010], 206). At about the same time as Sangallo’s Dantism reached its peak, Luca Martini commissioned from Giorgio Vasari the painting of the *Six Tuscan Poets* (1543–1544), in which the author of the *Commedia* figures as the *fons et origo* of the greatest poetry in the vernacular, and from Pierino da Vinci the bronze relief of the *Death of Count Ugolino* (1548), an intense visual meditation on *Inferno* 30. On Vasari’s portrait, see Deborah Parker, “Vasari’s *Ritratto di sei poeti toscani*: A Visible Literary History,” *Modern Language Notes*, 127 Supplement (2012), 204–15. On Pierino’s relief, see Britta Kusch-Arnhold, *Pierino da Vinci* (Münster: Rhema, 2008), 51–69, with further references. On Luca Martini’s Dantean interests, see *infra*, and for a general introduction to artistic representations of Dante in the contemporary Florentine scene, with special attention to the cultural context of the Accademia Fiorentina, see Jonathan Nelson, “Dante Portraits in Sixteenth Century Florence,” *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 6, no. 120 (1992), 59–77.

33. In March 1546, Varchi gave a polemical lecture on envy at the Accademia Fiorentina. The lecture marked the culmination of the literary war that had long pitted the humanist against other leading intellectuals of the academy such as Cosimo Bartoli, Carlo Lenzone, and Giovambattista Gelli. (For a detailed reconstruction of the conflict, see Firpo, *Gli affreschi di Pontormo*, 266–84.) Slandered by his enemies for his literary and philosophical positions, Varchi in his lecture reacted by openly accusing his detractors of envy. Sangallo makes explicit reference to this, mentioning how the addressee had recently broken Envy’s arms off (lines 6–7).

34. See *De’ sonetti di M. Benedetto Varchi colle risposte, e proposte di diversi, parte seconda* (Florence: Torrentino, 1557), 135. Only recently have scholars begun to pay attention to Varchi’s poetic production in the vernacular: see esp. Bernhard Huss, “‘Cantai colmo di gioia, e senza inganni.’ Benedetto Varchi’s *Sonetti* (parte prima) im Kontext des italienischen Cinquecento-Petrarkismus,” *Romanistisches Jahrbuch*, 52, no. 1 (2001), 133–57; Giuliano Tanturli, “Una gestazione e un parto gemellare: la prima e la seconda parte dei *Sonetti* di Benedetto Varchi,” *Italique*, 7 (2004), 43–100; and Laura Paolino, “Il ‘geminato ardore’ di Benedetto Varchi. Storia e costruzione di un canzoniere ‘ellittico,’” *Nuova Rivista di Letteratura Italiana*, 7, no. 1/2 (2004), 233–314.

35. Another poem in the anthology of Varchi’s 1557 *Sonetti* designates the Three Crowns as the “tre gran Toschi”: see Diletta Gamberini, “I colloqui poetici degli artisti della corte medicea con Benedetto Varchi,” *La Rivista. Études culturelles italiennes Sorbonne Universités*, 5 (2017), special issue *Varchi e dintorni*, 61–69: 65, n. 23.

36. It is useful to recall here that a quickly aborted project of monumental commemoration of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, devised for the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, had already been discussed in late-Trecento Florence. On this, see Erminia Irace, “Il ritorno delle ceneri,” in *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, ed. Sergio Luzzatto and Gabriele Pedullà (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), vol. 1, *Dalle origini al Rinascimento*, 298–303.

37. See Donetti, *Francesco da Sangallo*, 221.

38. See Gamberini, “I colloqui poetici,” 65–68.

39. In his funeral oration for the Grand Duke, the first physician at the Medici court wrote that in the 1560s Cosimo had planned to have the twenty-eight niches of the Loggiato of the Uffizi adorned with statues representing “tutti quei Fiorentini, che fussero stati chiari, & illustri nelle armi, nelle lettere, & ne i governi civili” (see Baccio Baldini, *Orazione fatta nella Accademia Fiorentina, in lode del Serenissimo Sig. Cosimo Medici Gran Duca di Toscana, Gloriosa Memoria* [Florence: Sermartelli, 1574], unnumbered pages). It appears certain that such a plan, intended to be a proud celebration of the cultural and literary primacy of the city of Florence, would have entailed the completion of effigies in honor of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. On the project, see Stefania Iacopozzi, “Il ciclo scultoreo degli Uffizi: genesi e sviluppo di un progetto non solo celebrativo,” in *Gli uomini illustri della Loggia degli Uffizi: Storia e Restauro*, ed. Magnolia Scudieri (Florence: Edifir, 2001), 15–33: 17 and 29, n. 6.

40. The poem was only published, in utterly incorrect and unreliable form, in a nineteenth-century anthology of verse devoted to Dante Alighieri: see *Poesie di mille autori intorno a Dante Alighieri raccolte ed ordinate cronologicamente con note storiche, bibliografiche e biografiche*, ed. Carlo del Balzo (Rome: Tipografia del Senato, 1897), vol. 5, 283. In the edition, the text goes under the title *Contro il Sangallo*, which has no justification in the manuscript and overturns the intended encomiastic sense of the poem.

41. On the author, see esp. Domenico Zanrè, *Cultural Non-Conformity in Early Modern Florence* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 111–39; Aldo Castellani, *Nuovi canti carnascialeschi di Firenze. Le ‘canzone’ e mascherate di Alfonso de’ Pazzi* (Florence: Olschki, 2006), and Giorgio Masi, “Politica, arte e religione nella poesia dell’Etrusco (Alfonso de’ Pazzi),” in *Autorità, modelli e antimodelli nella cultura artistica e letteraria tra Riforma e Controriforma. Atti del seminario internazionale di studi, Urbino-Sassocorvaro, 9–11 novembre 2006*, ed. Antonio Corsaro and Paolo Procaccioli (Manziana: Vecchiarelli, 2007), 301–58. The manuscript that preserves the text, on p. 440, is the cod. Capponi 134 (formerly Palatino 421) of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale of Florence. Luigi de’ Pazzi compiled this anthology in the early 1570s, transcribing hundreds of compositions by his father. On this *zibaldone*, see Giorgio Masi, entry “Pazzi, Alfonso de’, detto l’Etrusco,” in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, Rome: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia*, 82 (2015), available in electronic format: [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pazzi-alfonso-de-detto-l-etrusco\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pazzi-alfonso-de-detto-l-etrusco_(Dizionario-Biografico)/). This collection would seem to be the only surviving manuscript source for the poem under examination, as this text has not been preserved in the principal autograph collection of Alfonso de’ Pazzi’s literary works: see Archivio di Stato of Florence, *Guardaroba Medicea*, 221. Just like the Capponi *zibaldone*, this important manuscript collection of Pazzi’s verse and prose awaits a systematic analysis, which will be rendered all too difficult and excruciating by the author’s nearly illegible handwriting, as well as by his obscurely allusive language often lacking in apparent logical connections, in the manner of Burchiello.

42. It is useful to recall here that the sonettessa is a sonnet that is augmented by the addition of a series of extra final lines, arranged in several *code* of rhymed hendecasyllables and septenaries. In the Italian Cinquecento, the metrical structure was especially popular among comic poets.

43. The line appears to be corrupt, since it does not rhyme, as required by the metrical norms of the sonetto and of the sonettessa, with line 9 of the poem. It seems plausible that in this case, as in several other compositions of the Capponi manuscript, Luigi de’ Pazzi was not able to decipher a portion of his father’s handwritten poem, and filled the resulting gap within the text with a line of his own invention.

44. On this circumstance, see Masi, “Pazzi, Alfonso.”

45. It is most unlikely that the author would wish the consulate on somebody who had not yet joined the ranks of the academicians, and quite impossible that he would have wished it on one of the many who were expelled from the academy in 1547.

46. Alfonso de’ Pazzi was the author of the so-called “Varcheide,” a collection of over a hundred vituperative poems against Varchi. Many of these texts were published in the volume *Il terzo libro dell’opere burlesche. Di M. Francesco Berni e di M. Gio. Della Casa, dell’Aretino, de’ Bronzini, del Franzesi, di Lorenzo de’ Medici, del Galileo, del Ruspoli, del Bertini, del Firenzuola, del Lasca, del*

Pazzi, e di altri autori, ed. Giovanni Bottari, (Naples, 1729, with the false print date and location of "Florence, 1723"), 273–350.

47. Pazzi repeatedly used the same form *Giamburlari* as a means to lampoon his fellow intellectual of the Accademia Fiorentina. Compare, for instance, the sonnet *Giamburlari, se per giamba o burla ài*, published in Masi, "Politica, arte e religione," 350.

48. On these works, and on their visual paratext, see, most recently, John Kleiner, *Mismapping the Underworld: Daring and Error in Dante's "Comedy"* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 24–56; Piero Scapecchi, "Cristoforo Landino, Niccolò di Lorenzo e la 'Commedia,'" in *Sandro Botticelli: pittore della 'Divina Commedia,'* vol. 1, 44–47; Simona Foà, "Il Dialogo sul sito, forma, e misure dell'inferno di Girolamo Benivieni e un particolare aspetto dell'esegesi dantesca tra XV e XVI secolo," in *Dante e il locus inferni. Creazione letteraria e tradizione interpretativa*, ed. Simona Foà and Sonia Gentili (Rome: Bulzoni, 2000), 179–90; Simon Gilson, "Science in and between Dante and His Commentators: The Case of Cristoforo Landino's 'Comento sopra la Comedia di Danthe Alighieri,'" *Annali d'Italianistica*, 23 (2005), 31–54: 37–38, and Engel, *Dantes Inferno*, 75–88.

49. See Kleiner, *Mismapping the Underworld*, 148, n. 8 and 154, n. 38; Floriana Calitti, *Scrittori in cattedra: la forma della lezione dalle origini al Novecento* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2002), esp. 92–96; Foà, "Il Dialogo," 190, and Engel, *Dantes Inferno*, 135–44.

50. Kleiner, *Mismapping the Underworld*, 25–26; Calitti, *Scrittori in cattedra*, 91–92, and Engel, *Dantes Inferno*, 145–52. On the work, see also the introduction and notes to Alessandro Vellutello, *La 'Comedia' di Dante Alighieri con la nova esposizione*, ed. Donato Pirovano (Rome: Salerno, 2006), 3 vols.

51. On Martini, see Jonathan Nelson, "Creative Patronage: Luca Martini and the Renaissance Portrait," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 39, no. 2/3 (1995), 282–305. For a recent assessment of his *dantismo*, see Enrico Garavelli, "Riflessi polemici, difesa del fiorentino e culto di Dante in una lettera inedita di Luca Martini a Vincenzio Borghini," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 108, no. 4 (2007), 709–27.

52. In his posthumous biography of Varchi, Baccio Valori, though mistakenly dating the event to 1555, wrote that the humanist stayed in San Gavino, "dove dimorò alcun tempo e fra gli studi suoi faticò molto insieme con Luca Martini, che andò da lui per questo, in ricercare le vere misure dell'inferno di Dante, così confuse per quel verso e più d'un terzo di traverso non ci ha. Al qual effetto fabbricò Luca certo modello del sito" (quoted from Salvatore Lo Re, "Biografie e biografie di Benedetto Varchi: Giambattista Busini e Baccio Valori," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 56, no. 4 [1998], 671–736: 733–34). For the dating of the event see also Garavelli, "Riflessi polemici," 722–23.

53. The temptations to greed, idleness, and lust (line 20, "la gola e 'l son et l'ozziose piume") are evoked by the Petrarchan quotation from *Canzoniere*, 7.1.

54. See Vasari, *Vite*, vol. 1, 493 (with reference to Botticelli's paintings in the Florentine church of Santa Maria del Carmine): "E nella storia che segue ritrasse Sandro Botticello suo maestro e molti altri amici e grand'uomini, e infra gli altri il Raggio sensale, persona d'ingegno e spiritosa molto, quello che in una conca condusse di rilievo tutto l'Inferno di Dante, con tutti i cerchi e partimenti delle bolgie e del pozzo misurati apunto, tutte le figure e minuzie che da quel gran poeta furono ingegnossissimamente immaginate e discritte, che fu tenuta in questi tempi cosa maravigliosa."

55. As noted by Morello's entry in *Sandro Botticelli: pittore della "Divina Commedia"* (vol. 1, 256), the section of *Inferno* in the Dante Vallicelliano closely follows the scheme that was first elaborated by Botticelli in his famous chart of Hell, now preserved in the Biblioteca Vaticana. See also Engel, *Dantes Inferno*, 121.