

The Metamorphoses of *Dafne* (and Apollo): the Birth of Opera at the Crossroads of Genres

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The relationship between poetics and literary practice within Italian literature in the seventeenth-century represents one of the most central – and controversial – research topics in early modern drama.¹ Understanding the relationship becomes even more problematic when examining the period at the end of the Cinquecento – the transition from the Renaissance to the Baroque – when the epistemological discourse and rules of poetics change. It is in this complex period that the birth of the musical drama as a new genre occurs, which can be effectively studied through Ottavio Rinuccini and Jacopo Peri's *Dafne* (1600).

This article has two main objectives: First, to demonstrate the existence of a link between genre theory at the end of the sixteenth century and Rinuccini and Peri's *Dafne*, which leads to a new understanding of the opera. Starting with Giovan Battista Guarini's theory of tragicomedy, and then focussing on the literary genres Rinuccini makes use of in his *Dafne*, I will demonstrate how the mixing of genres becomes a central theme for the Florentine dramatist. Second, to explore how the poetics of pleasure in *Dafne* appears to be contaminated by the poetics of *docere*, a type of poetics which conforms to the court within which this early operatic production has its origins.

In relation to the first objective, the relationship between genre theory and *Dafne*, it should be noted that musical dramas were written without any specific theory legiti-

¹ See Rolf Lohse's recent monography, *Renaissancedrama und humanistische Poetik in Italien*, Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink 2015. – This article is a revised and extended version of the paper delivered at the RSA conference in Berlin in 2015. The main ideas presented here will be developed in a chapter of my PhD thesis («Die mythologischen Musikdramen des 17. Jhs.: eine gattungstypologische Untersuchung»), which I am currently completing at the Freie Universität Berlin. In my dissertation, I discuss the first mythological operas within the context of the dramatic genres that were mixed into it: tragedy, pastoral, and comedy. This study aims at providing new insight into the problem of opera and politics, as well as on poetics and practice of the first librettists. I wish in particular to thank Alexander Winkler and Dr. Tatiana Korneeva for their valuable feedback and their precious support and Paul Muscat for his linguistic revision.

zing the idea that a <non-regular> dramatic text be set to music. The theories of Girolamo Mei and the Camerata dei Bardi on the creation of the first musical dramas,² first used by Giulio Caccini in his score of *Euridice*, concerned the possibility of setting a tragedy to music (tragedy being a regular genre).³ The first theories on musical drama appeared only later: the *Corago*⁴, which was not published and whose subject was «lo spettacolo teatrale nella sua globalità»⁵, and Giovan Battista Doni's *Trattato della musica scenica*, which also remained unpublished until 1763.⁶ In early musical dramas traces of pastoral drama, mythological poetry, tragedy, and (naturally) lyric poetry can be detected. This peculiar combination, undoubtedly a significant innovation of the new genre,⁷ may have a theoretical explanation in Guarini's apologetic treatises,⁸ which were developed to justify the new genre of tragicomedy. Despite tragicomedy's classical background⁹ (the theory of which is outlined, for example, in Giralaldi Cinzio's *Lette-*

- 2 The connection between the Camerata dei Bardi and the creators of the first musical drama is controversial. Although Bardi was in contact with Peri, Rinuccini, and Corsi, what is certain is that the Camerata and Corsi's group were «really two different and separate [...] social and intellectual circles». See Claude V. Palisca: «The Alterati of Florence, Pioneers in the Theory of Dramatic Music», in: William Austin (ed.): *New Looks at Italian Opera. Essays in Honor of Donald J. Grout*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1968, p. 9–38, here p. 9–10.
- 3 Rinuccini borrows from Mei's theory, as the prologue of his *Euridice* clearly demonstrates: «È stata opinione di molti, Cristianissima Regina, che gli antichi Greci e Romani cantassero sulle scene le tragedie intere [...]» (in *L'Euridice d'Ottavio Rinuccini, rappresentata nello sponsalizio della Christianissima Regina di Francia, e di Navarra*, Firenze: Cosimo Giunti 1600, unpaginated). Rinuccini however does not exclusively follow the model of the tragedy as he mixes up different dramatic genres, and this might be explained using Guarini's theory.
- 4 *Il Corago*, a cura di Paolo Fabbri e Angelo Pompilio, Firenze: Olschki 1983.
- 5 Fabbri/Pompilio 1983, p. 12.
- 6 In Giovan Battista Doni: *De' trattati di musica*, a cura di Anton Francesco Gori, II, Firenze: Stamperia imperiale 1763.
- 7 The *Stilmischung*, which is arguably closely related to the mixture of genres, was clearly perceived as an innovation by contemporaries, such as Giovanni Bardi. Cf. Laura Riccò: *Dalla zampogna all'aurea cetra. Egloghe, pastorali, favole in musica*, Roma: Bulzoni 2015: «Quando Giovanni de' Bardi rimpiange la commedia del 1589 con i suoi intermedi, rimpiange proprio quella politica spettacolare della separatezza degli stili che a un decennio di distanza ha subito pesanti <perdite>» (p. 156).
- 8 The link between Guarini's theory and Rinuccini's drama has been long established and accepted by scholars; see Paolo Fabbri, *Il secolo cantante. Per una storia del libretto d'opera in Italia nel Seicento*, Bulzoni: Roma 2003, p. 15. Also Elisabetta Selmi, whose enquiries are dedicated to Guarini, recognized this connection: «Il piacere delle emozioni, nella dialettica intellettuale della finzione guariniana, diviene, pertanto, il mezzo e il fine di cui si appaga e in cui si circoscrive l'essenza della rappresentazione: una traiettoria di sviluppo che anticipa lo spirito del melodramma, d'imminente trionfo sulla scena barocca», Elisabetta Selmi: «Classici» e «Moderni» nell'officina del «Pastor Fido», Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso 2002, p. 43.
- 9 Plauto defined his *Amphitruo* a *tragicomoedia*. On tragicomedy, see the now classical but still valuable study by Marvin Herrick: *Tragicomedy: its Origin and Development in Italy, France, and England*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1962, which offers a comprehensive historical overview of the genre. For some specifications of terminology see Lohse 2015, p. 485–524. Cf. also a recent and stimulating publication by Gigliucci, which links tragicomedy and opera: Roberto Gigliucci: *Tragi-*

*ra ovvero discorso sopra il comporre le satire atte alle scene*¹⁰), it appears to be the case that only Guarini's theory (as well as his poetical work) could have exercised significant influence on the literary production of the late Cinquecento and the early Seicento. In his *Verrati* (1588 and 1593) and then more extensively in his *Compendio* (1601) (an important piece of poetics written within the controversy surrounding his *Pastor Fido*) Guarini defends his pastoral tragicomedy by supporting historical relativity:

Ma e' non vale la conseguenza, Aristotele non ne parlò [della tragicommedia] dunque non è poema, perciocché a voler provar cotesto bisognerebbe ch'egli l'avesse escluso, e non tralasciato: tanto più non avendo noi quell'opera intera. Sapete voi perché? Perché a suoi tempi non era in uso.¹¹

Guarini introduces a kind of *querelle des anciens et des modernes* when he writes that

[s]e dunque il Poema Tragico ha potuto da principio sì debole, anzi sì ignobile, innalzarsi a tanta grandezza, perché volete voi negare il medesimo all'Egloga, che pur dianzi vi s'è mostrato co 'l testimonio di Teocrito, e di Virgilio, che qualche volta s'innalza, e favella di cose grandi? Che tenacità è cotesta vostra di negare a' moderni que' privilegi poetici, che sono stati conceduti agli antichi?¹²

At this point, the audience's judgment also becomes of foremost importance for Guarini: «E veramente se le pubbliche rappresentazioni son fatte per gli ascoltanti, bisogna bene, che secondo la varietà dei costumi, e dei tempi si vadano eziando mutando i poemi.»¹³

comico e melodramma. Studi secenteschi, Milano/Udine: Mimesis 2011. See the bibliography on tragicomedy at p. 33. Pastoral and tragicomedy, thought they have to be distinguished, are tightly bound (cf. Herrick 1962, p. 125). The third dramatic genre represented a training ground for experimentations and genre-mixtures since the 15th century (consider, for example, Poliziano's *Orfeo* and the following *drammi mescolati*) and for poetic theories in the 16th century.

10 Cinzio had more success as a writer of tragedies than as author of pastoral dramas: indeed his *Egle* did not become a model for the third dramatic genre. In particular, *Egle's* unhappy ending was refused by the subsequent authors of pastoral dramas. Cinzio's *lettera* can be read in *Scritti critici*, a cura di Camillo Guerrieri Crocetti, Milano: Marzorati 1973, p. 225–242. For an updated bibliography on Cinzio, see Irene Romera Pintor: «Bibliografia giraladiana», in: *Studi giraladiani*, 1/2015, p. 125–172.

11 *Verrato primo*, p. 232. I will quote some excerpts of the two *Verrati* from the edition *Delle opere del cavalier Battista Guarini*, in Verona: Giovanni Alberto Tumermani 1737–1738; *Verrato primo: Il Verrato ovvero difesa di quanto ha scritto Messer Giason De Nores contra le tragicommedie, e le pastorali, in un suo discorso di poesia* (vol. II); *Verrato secondo: Il Verrato secondo ovvero replica dell'Attezzato accademico ferrarese in difesa del Pastor Fido, contra la seconda scrittura di Messer Giason De Nores intitolata Apologia* (vol. III). See also: «E perché non è lecito all'Egloga uscire della sua infanzia, e pervenire agli anni maturi, se l'ha potuto far la Tragedia?» (*Verrato primo*, p. 295). Cf. Selmi 2002, p. 14.

12 *Verrato primo*, p. 296–297.

13 *Verrato primo*, p. 261; cf. also: «finalmente il mondo è giudice de' Poeti, ed egli dà la sentenza inappellabile» (*Verrato primo*, p. 233). Cf. Selmi 2002, p. 20.

Using these new criteria Guarini feels authorized to break some dramatic rules in force in the sixteenth century and to combine noble characters, typical of tragedy, with a comic plot, and to use a style that mixes Petrarchism and eclogue together. Indeed, Guarini claims that

chi compone tragicommedia [...] dall'una prende le persone grandi e non l'azione; la favola verisimile, ma non vera; gli affetti mossi, ma rintuzzati; il diletto, non la mestizia; il pericolo, non la morte; dall'altra il riso non dissoluto, le piacevolezze modeste, il nodo finto, il rivolgimento felice, e soprattutto l'ordine comico.¹⁴

On a stylistic level this mixture is put into practice through the «temperamento» between the «forma magnifica» and the «forma dolce»:

La sua propria, e principale [forma] è la magnifica, la quale, accompagnata con la grave, diventa «idea» della tragedia; ma, mescolata con la polita, fa quel temperamento, che conviene alla poesia tragicomica. Perciocchè, trattandosi in essa di persone grandi e d'eroi, non conviene favellare umilmente; e, perciocché nella medesima non si vuole il terribile e l'atroce, anzi si fugge, lasciando da parte il grave, prendesi il dolce, che tempera quella grandezza e quella sublimità, ch'è propria del puro tragico.¹⁵

The mixture of tragic and comic structural elements aims at arousing measured and balanced feelings in the public: as opposed to the excess of laughter inspired by comedy, and the fear triggered by tragedy.¹⁶ The main purpose of tragicomedy, for Guarini, is thus to cure the audience from melancholy by provoking positive emotions.¹⁷ In fact, it is especially by religion that the soul will be purged from fear and terror — which according to the Aristotelian poetics was the goal of tragedy.¹⁸ It is useful to point out

14 Battista Guarini: *Il Pastor Fido e il Compendio della poesia tragicomica*, a cura di Gioachino Brognoligo, Bari: Laterza 1914, p. 231.

15 *Compendio*, p. 248.

16 «[...] il temperamento del diletto tragico e comico, che non lascia traboccare gli ascoltanti nella soverchia né malinconia tragica né dissoluzione comica. Da che risulta un poema di eccellentissima forma e temperatura, non solo molto corrispondente all'umana complessione, che tutta solamente consiste nella temperie di quattro umori, ma della semplice e tragedia e commedia molto più nobile, come quello che non ci reca l'atrocità de' casi, il sangue e le morti, che sono viste orribili ed inumane, e non ci fa, dall'altro lato, sì dissoluti nel riso, che pecchiamo contro la modestia e 'l decoro d'uom costumato.» (*Compendio*, p. 233).

17 «[...] la Tragicommedia anch'essa ha due fini, l'istrumentale ch'è forma risultante dall'imitazione di cose Tragiche, e Comiche miste insieme, e l'architetonico ch'è il purgar gli animi dal male affetto della maninconia» (*Verrato primo*, p. 258). On the cathartic goal of pastoral dramas, particularly of Guarini's *Pastor Fido* and Tasso's *Aminta*, see Federico Schneider: *Pastoral Drama and Healing in Early Modern Italy*, Farnham/Burlington: Ashgate 2010.

18 «E, per venire all'età nostra, che bisogno abbiamo noi oggidì di purgare il terrore e la commiserazione con le tragiche viste, avendo i precetti santissimi della nostra religione, che ce l'insegna con la parola

that the importance Guarini attributes to religion can be seen as an element that underpins Robert Henke's view of Guarini's tragicomedy as «a genre appropriated for post-Tridentine Italy».¹⁹

These new ideas introduced by Guarini, who claims to respect Aristotle's principles,²⁰ occasioned a long debate, with some of the most substantial opposing arguments coming from Giason Denores, expressed in his *Discorso [...] intorno a que' principi, cause, et accrescimenti, che la comedia, la tragedia et il poema heroico ricevono dalla philosophia morale et civile, et da' governatori delle repubbliche* (1587).²¹ To this, Guarini responded with his *Verrato* (1588), to which Denores countered again in his *Apolo-gia contra l'auttor del Verato* (1590). Denores supported an Aristotelian genre theory, which involved a clear separation of genres, and argued for the political and moral value of literature. Guarini replied again with his *Verrato secondo* (1593), elaborating on his theories in the *Compendio*. His *Annotazioni* to the *Pastor Fido*, his last theoretical work, should also not be forgotten in this context (1602).²² Guarini was well known in Florence at the end of the sixteenth century, and his *Compendio* had already been circulated in 1599 among the members of the Accademia della Crusca.²³

Guarini's position, which prepared for and anticipated the mixing of genres in Baroque poetics,²⁴ was not alone in its time: Angelo Ingegneri²⁵ also wrote in his *Della poesia rappresentativa* (1598) about the mixture of tragedy and comedy. According to Inge-

evangelica?» (*Compendio*, p. 245).

19 In the post-Tridentine Italy, «tragedic fate too closely resembled Calvinist predestination and [...] the moral earnestness of the reforming church could not well countenance the carnivalesque transgressions of earlier Cinquecento comedy» (Robert Henke: *Pastoral Transformations. Italian Tragicomedy and Shakespeare's Late Plays*, Newark: Delaware University Press 1997, p. 74). Lohse interprets Guarini's statement on religion as a claim in favor of the independence of art from religion – and not as a Counter-Reformation issue (Lohse 2015, p. 203).

20 Guarini follows «una logica inferenziale che sfaccetta, per via d'espansioni interne, il significato del testo aristotelico» (Selmi 2002, p. 15).

21 Denores' *Discorso* will be quoted from the Tumermani-edition of Guarini's works (vol. II).

22 This debate involved far more authors, see Bernhard Weinberg: «The quarrel over Guarini's *Pastor Fido*», in: Id., *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 1961, p. 1074–1105.

23 See Riccò 2015, p. 155 n. 38.

24 Cf. Selmi 2002, p. 19.

25 On Ingegneri, see the recent publication of Baldassarri Guido: *Angelo Ingegneri. Itinerari di un «uomo di lettere»*, Vicenza: Accademia Olimpica 2013, which includes a rich and updated bibliography, and especially Laura Riccò: *Ben mille pastorali: l'itinerario dell'Ingegneri da Tasso a Guarini e oltre*, Roma: Bulzoni 2004.

gneri, this mixture can only be realized in pastoral poetry, whose purpose is to stimulate noble feelings in the audience:

Restano adunque le pastorali, le quali, con apparato rustico e di verdura e con abiti più leggiadri che sontuosi, riescono alla vista vaghissime; che co' l' verso soave e colla sentenza dilicata sono gratissime agli orecchi e all' intelletto; che, non incapaci di qualche gravità quasi tragica [...], patiscono accconcissimamente certi ridicoli comici; che, admettendo le vergini in palco e le donne oneste, quello che alle comedie non lice, danno luoco a nobili affetti, non disdicevoli alle tragedie istesse; e che insomma, come mezzane fra l'una e l'altra sorte di poema dilettaano a maraviglia altrui, sieno con i cori, sieno senza, abbiano o non abbiano intermedi [...].²⁶

Ingegneri represents the point of view of a <true> practitioner of theater: concerned first and foremost with the performance rather than with the theoretical dimension of a script. In fact, for Ingegneri the possibility of actually putting a dramatic text on stage is the most important requirement for its success. For this reason he claims that tragedy cannot be successful: its performance would be too expensive and lavish, not to mention too long to please the theater-goers.²⁷ To summarize, towards the end of the sixteenth century literary critics, particularly Guarini and Ingegneri, developed theories that pay attention to the taste of the theater-going public – which encouraged the emergence of new genres, such as the musical drama.

In his *Dafne*, Rinuccini seems to adopt in part Guarini's theory of genres, which widens the Aristotelian system by combining different genres,²⁸ and in part Denores' idea of the didactic value of literature, as we shall see later.²⁹

26 Angelo Ingegneri: *Della poesia rappresentativa e del modo di rappresentare le favole sceniche*, a cura di Maria Luisa Doglio, Modena: Edizioni Panini 1989, p. 7.

27 «[Le tragedie] Alla fine come imitazione d'azioni reali e di regie persone (portando massimamente il costume d'oggi altra pompa d'apparato e d'abiti che forse non si richiedeva a' tempi di Sofocle per rappresentare verbigratia un povero re di Tebe oltraggiato dal cognato e minacciato dall'indovino) ricercano a punto borsa reale, la quale con sano giudicio i principi d'oggi riserbano per la conservazione degli Stati loro e per la sicurezza e commodità de' loro sudditi», *ibid.*

28 See again Selmi 2002, p. 21.

29 Scarpati explains that, according to Guarini's poetics, literature does not have a direct didactic and moral purpose, as he distinguishes between moral and poetics. Guarini resolves «la diatriba sul *delectare* e sul *docere* con l'insistere sul fatto che «il poema drammatico diletta e giova perché dispone e non perché insegna» [from *Verrato primo*, f. 30 r.].», Claudio Scarpati: «Poetica e retorica in Battista Guarini», in: *Id.*, *Studi sul Cinquecento italiano*, Milano: Vita e pensiero 1985, p. 206.

From Peri's preface to *Euridice* (1600) it can be established that *Dafne* was written in 1594.³⁰ It is not certain however whether this year corresponds to the inception of Peri's initial idea of the musical drama and the composition of some of its arias, or whether *Dafne* was staged for the first time in 1594. It is most likely that the first hypothesis is correct: as a matter of fact, Peri wanted to affirm his primacy with the invention of this new kind of entertainment in order to defeat his rival Emilio Cavaliere, who claimed to have written the first play completely set to music in 1595 (*Il Giuoco della Cieca*).³¹ The music for *Dafne* was written mainly by Peri (some arias were composed by Jacopo Corsi), whereas the subsequent version of the musical drama would be set to music by Giulio Caccini. According to Marco da Gagliano, the first production of *Dafne* took place during the carnival of 1598 in the Palazzo Corsi,³² and the second mise-en-scène was performed in the Palazzo Pitti in 1599.³³ *Dafne*'s third staging took place in 1600 in the Palazzo Corsi in the presence of the grand duchess Christine de Lorraine, and the fourth in 1604 in the Palazzo Pitti for the duke of Parma.³⁴ This musical drama was thus staged both on private and public occasions. Of particular note is that the audience of these performances was both academic and courtly, evidenced by the nature and personality of Jacopo Corsi. At the same time in relation to his private life, Corsi, through his patronage, appealed to the public dimension in order to advance the

30 «Benchè dal Sig Emilio del Cavaliere, prima che da ogni altro, ch'io sappia, con maravigliosa invenzione ci fusse data udire la nostra Musica su le scene; Piacque nondimeno a' Signori Iacopo Corsi, ed Ottavio Rinuccini (fin l'anno 1594) che io adoperandola in altra guisa, mettessi sotto le note la favola di Dafne, dal Signor Ottavio composta, per fare una semplice pruova di quello, che potesse il canto dell'età nostra.», Iacopo Peri: *A lettori*, in: *Le musiche di Iacopo Peri nobil fiorentino Sopra l'Euridice del Sig Ottavio Rinuccini* [...], Firenze: Marescotti, 1600.

31 Tim Carter: «Correspondence to the Editors of *Music & Letters*», in: *Music and Letters*, 59/1978, p. 522–523, here p. 522. The first complete chronological study of *Dafne* is Oscar G. Sonneck: «*Dafne*, the first opera. A chronological study», in: *Sammelbände der internationalen Musikgesellschaft*, 15/1913, p. 102–110; some incorrect chronological dates are corrected by Carter. On some philological questions, see Frederick W. Sternfeld: «The First Printed Opera Libretto», in: *Music and Letters*, 59/1978, p. 121–138. On *Dafne*'s music, the score of which is lost but some musical excerpts are preserved, see William W. Porter: «Peri and Corsi's *Dafne*: Some New Discoveries and Observations», in: *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 18/1965, p. 170–196. On Cavaliere and his pastoral dramas see Warren Kirkendale: *Emilio de' Cavalieri, «Gentiluomo romano»: his Life and Letters, his Role as Superintendent of all the Arts at the Medici Court, and his Musical Compositions*, Firenze: Olschki 2001, particularly p. 185–212.

32 See *La Dafne di Marco da Gagliano Nell'Accademia de gl'Elevati L'Affannato Rappresentata In Mantova*, Firenze: Appresso Cristofano Marescotti 1608.

33 See Rinuccini's dedication of *Euridice* to Maria de' Medici, in *L'Euridice d'Ottavio Rinuccini rappresentata nello sponsalizio della Christianissima regina di Francia, e di Navarra*, Firenze: Giunti 1600.

34 Carter 1978.

cause of his family in the eyes of the Medici.³⁵ The boundaries between public and private, as well as between courtly and academic settings are not easy to draw. In any case, it would be safe to say that *Dafne*'s first performance was not courtly, but instead reserved for a selected public of music enthusiasts and learned members of academies. This was important in order to legitimize a meta-poetic reading of *Dafne*, which is generally of utmost interest to an academic audience.

In terms of structure, *Dafne* contains a prologue, declaimed by Ovid, and one act, which represents a rewriting of the episode of Apollo and Daphne as described in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Considering some differences between the source text and its operatic adaptation, the following short summary of *Dafne* may be helpful. After the victory of Apollo over the monstrous snake Python, the god of music and Cupid have a heated argument about the supremacy of the power of war over the power of love. Apollo makes fun of Cupid, who takes revenge by making Apollo fall in love. A chorus, which narrates the episode of Narcissus, separates this first part from the subsequent episode. Apollo then meets Daphne and falls in love with her. Next, Cupid enjoys his success with his mother, Venus, and the chorus glorifies the power of love. Finally a messenger announces the pursuit of Daphne and her metamorphosis into a laurel tree, which Apollo then praises. The last chorus exhorts obeying the god of love.

The critical debate surrounding *Dafne* is already relatively rich, but what I intend to provide with my reading is an interpretation of the opera that takes into account the tradition of previous genres, and seeks to demonstrate how the references to pastoral and mythological genres play a significant role in the poetics of the first musical drama. More precisely, the interpretation refers on the one hand to Guarini's extending genre theory, and to the didactic value of literature on the other.

Existing critical contributions underline Apollo's final praise of the laurel, which is to be dedicated to Apollo himself forever. This key episode is a symbol of the power of art, which cannot possess beauty but can immortalize it.³⁶ This meta-poetic meaning

35 See Tim Carter: «Music and Patronage in Late Sixteenth-Century Florence. The Case of Jacopo Corsi (1561–1602)», in: *I Tatti Studi in the Italian Renaissance*, 1/1985, p. 57–104, and Donatella Pegazzano: *Committenza e collezionismo nel Cinquecento. La famiglia Corsi a Firenze tra musica e scultura*, Firenze: Edifir 2010.

36 See Barbara Russano Hanning's articles and book: «Apologia pro Ottavio Rinuccini», in: *American*

appears to be applicable to the first (or one of the first) works of a new genre, which might need theoretical justification. Apollo's praise certainly has a meta-poetic function: indeed Petrarca in the *Canzoniere* adopted the same myth and in particular the laurel as a symbol of poetic fame («gloria poetica»). However another interpretation could be given to this episode, also meta-poetic but which tries to make sense of those elements of the play that have so far been considered to be disparate and illogical³⁷ but which, in my opinion, reflect Rinuccini's interest in the issue of genres. With my meta-poetic reading of *Dafne* I would like to show that the mixing of genres is an essential part of this new genre, and as such it is also reflected in the drama.

Dafne, as it has been already pointed out above, follows the plot of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but adds a pastoral setting to it. The characters added to the Ovidian plot are shepherds and nymphs who act in the choruses. The bucolic element is not merely decorative but is also largely significant in the choice of themes, as well as for the overall interpretation of the play. The centrality of love, which is discussed in the choruses, represents a bucolic as well as lyric element: the main focus of the play lies in the reciprocity of love, a law that is violated by Daphne, who rejects Apollo. The closeness of *Dafne* and pastoral drama is also confirmed by intertextual references by the opera to Guarini's *Pastor Fido*. Guarini thus appears to be both a theoretical, as it has already been shown, and a textual model, as his *Pastor Fido* (along with Tasso's *Aminta*, of course) is the most representative example of the genre at the end of the century.³⁸

Musical Society, 26/1973, p. 240–262; «Communication», in: *American Musicological Society*, 29/1976, p. 501–503; «Glorious Apollo: Poetic and Political Themes in the first Opera», in: *Renaissance Quarterly*, 32/1979, p. 485–513, and *Of Poetry and Music's Power. Humanism and the Creation of Opera*, Ann Arbor: UMI 1980. See also Tim Carter, Richard A. Goldthwaite: *Orpheus in the Marketplace. Jacopo Peri and the Economy of Late Renaissance Florence*, Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press 2013, p. 115, which supports Hanning's allegorical interpretation of Apollo's episode.

37 «The libretto of *Dafne* does indeed consist of a dramatically unwieldy juxtaposition of disparate situations which are unsatisfying for audiences and critics who expect only dramatic unity, convincing characters, and motivated actions» (Hanning 1979, p. 486–487). See also Gary A. Tomlinson: «Ancora su Ottavio Rinuccini», in: *American Musicological Society*, 28/1975, p. 351–356.

38 The bibliography on the pastoral drama is vast. To quote but a few most relevant publications: Marzia Pieri: *La scena boscareccia nel Rinascimento italiano*, Padova: Liviana 1983; Riccò 2004; Lisa Sampson: *Pastoral Drama in Early Modern Italy: the Making of a New Genre*, London: Modern Humanities Research Association 2006.

At the outset of the *Dafne*, shepherds and nymphs are complaining about their difficult situation caused by the monstrous snake Python, when suddenly Echo steps in and takes part in the dialogue embodying Apollo:

CORO

Ebra di sangue in questo oscuro bosco
giacea pur dianzi la terribil fera. — *Era*.
Dunque più non attosca
nostre belle campagne, altrove è gita? — *Ita*.
Farà ritorno più per questi poggi? — *Oggi*.
Oimè! chi n'assecura
s'oggi tornar pur deve il mostro rio? — *Io*.
Chi sei tu, che ne affidi e ne console? — *Sole*.
Il Sol tu sei? Tu sei di Delo il dio? — *Io*.
Hai l'arco teco per ferirlo, Apollo? — *Hollo*.
S'hai l'arco tuo, saetta infin che mora
questo mostro crudel che ne divora. — *Ora*.³⁹

If we compare this episode with the *Pastor Fido*, we see that here too Echo embodies a god (the god of love), who announces his revenge, after Silvio's statements against the power of love.⁴⁰ The dialogue refers to and plays with the idea of love's omnipotence (Amor defines himself as god of the world), and with the ambiguity of the bow, which can be a tool for hunting as well as the instrument of Amor's revenge. Later in the play, Silvio injures Dorinda, who is disguised as a wolf, and then Silvio, who is in love with her, breaks his own weapons, as predicted by Cupid. Such themes, along with intertextual references to Guarini's episode of Silvio and Amor, also come up in *Dafne*, for example where Cupid is in opposition to Apollo and where Apollo is defeated by Cupid, whose bow is stronger than Apollo's (vv. 100–127), as we will see later.⁴¹ In this way the two Echo episodes are tied together thematically, because they both imply figures (Silvio and Apollo) whose roles will be reversed because of the power of love – they change their status, become victims of love and undergo an inner metamorphosis. The function of this Echo scene in each text is nevertheless quite different. In Rinuccini's

39 *Dafne* can be read in: *Libretti d'opera italiani dal Seicento al Novecento*, a cura di Giovanna Gronda e Paolo Fabbri, Milano: Mondadori 1997, p. 3–20. Here are cited vv. 44–55.

40 Battista Guarini: *Il Pastor Fido*, a cura di Elisabetta Selmi, Venezia: Marsilio 1999; IV, 1027–1084.

41 On the topic of hunting vs. love, see Giovanni Bàrberi Squarotti: *Selvaggia diletta. La caccia nella letteratura italiana dalle origini a Marino*, Venezia: Marsilio 2000.

Dafne, Echo is a spectacular device at the beginning of the drama, intended to induce wonder in the audience (and, more subtly, to refer to Guarini's Echo scene), whereas in Guarini's *Pastor Fido* Echo is a clever device used to announce a critical event, which modifies the development of the drama.⁴² In *Dafne* there are numerous other inter-textual references to *Pastor Fido* and *Aminta*, which show the strong connection of the genre to pastoral drama.⁴³ *Dafne*'s pastoral themes interact with elements belonging to other genres, and the result is the 'widening' of genres (as defined by Guarini). This leads to a new meta-poetic reading of *Dafne*.

Rinuccini's drama is centered on the metamorphosis of Apollo, who at the outset of the play is depicted as an epic hero killing the terrible snake menacing the pastoral world. The language of this first part is high and elevated; in the very first verses the chorus appeals to Jupiter («Giove immortale»), almost as if it were an epic prologue.⁴⁴

CORO

Giove immortal, che tra baleni e lampi
scoti la terra e 'l cielo,
mandane o fiamma o telo
che da mostro sì rio n'affidi e scampi. (vv. 36–39)

CORO

Ebra di sangue in questo oscuro bosco
Giacea pur dianzi la terribil fera. (vv. 44–45)

Many of the lexical and thematic elements of these verses belong to the epic tradition, despite the rhetorical devices (parallelism and couples of words) fit closer with a middle style.⁴⁵ It is a stylistic mixture tending towards a high epic style, but keeps the typical stylistic features of musical poetry.⁴⁶

- 42 «Il motivo dell'eco, di ampia fortuna nel dramma pastorale, trova una delle sue più brillanti realizzazioni nell'abile regia guariniana che ne fissa il modello scenico per la tradizione eglogistico-melodrammatica. [...] Il Guarini rifiuta di fare dell'eco un personaggio che agisce sulla scena [...]. Ma, soprattutto, come ribadisce l'Ingegneri, fa in modo che l'invenzione possa essere «adoprata per istrignere il nodo, od agevolarne la soluzione». È questa la funzione che l'eco guariniana svolge rispetto agli sviluppi drammatici della parte episodica» (Selmi 1999, p. 424–425).
- 43 A full discussion of these references and their implications with regard to a possible political interpretation, will be provided in my PhD thesis.
- 44 See the apostrophes to Jupiter in Virgil's *Aeneis* (2,689, 4,206, 5,687, 9,625).
- 45 On style and rhetoric devices, see Tasso's *Discorsi del poema eroico*, in: Id., *Scritti sull'arte poetica*, a cura di Ettore Mazzali, Torino: Einaudi 1977.
- 46 The references to the tragedy also play an important role in this first part. They will be fully investigated in my PhD thesis.

Apollo then delivers a grand monologue praising his victory, where bucolic elements underline the positive atmosphere following the death of Python, as well as the pastoral setting of the play.⁴⁷ The chorus also acclaims the god's success:

CORO

Almo dio, che 'l carro ardente
per lo ciel volgendo intorno
vesti 'l dì d'un aureo manto,
se tra l'ombra orrida algente
splende il ciel di lume adorno,
è pur tua la gloria e il vanto.

Se germoglian frondi e fiori,
selve e prati, e rinnovella
l'ampia terra il suo bel manto,
se de' suoi dolci tesori
ogni pianta si fa bella,
è pur tua la gloria e il vanto.

Per te vive e per te gode
quanto scerne occhio mortale,
o rettor del carro eterno:
ma si taccia ogn'altra lode,
sol de l'arco e de lo strale
voli il grido al ciel superno.

Nobil vanto: il fier dragone
di velen, di fiamme armato
su'l terren versat'ha l'alma;
per trecciar fregi e corone
al bel crin di raggi ornato
qual fia degno edera o palma? (vv. 67–90)

Some epic expressions are repeated to highlight Apollo's status: «È pur tua la gloria e il vanto» is repeated two times, «edera o palma» are attributes of the Fame and form a parallelism with «fregi e corone».

ted in my thesis.

47 APOLLO: «Pur giacque estinto al fine / in su 'l terren sanguigno / da l'invitt'arco mio l'angue maligno. / Securi itene al bosco, / ninfe e pastori, ite securi al prato: / non più di fiamma e toscio / infetta 'l puro ciel l'orribil fiato. / Tornin le belle rose / ne le guancie amorose; / torni tranquillo il cor, sereno 'l volto: / io l'alma e 'l fiato al crudo serpe ho tolto» (vv. 56–66).

During the confrontation with Cupid, Apollo loses his primacy: the «palma della vittoria». Cupid thus triumphs over the epic god, who becomes a follower of the «religion of love».⁴⁸ Apollo undergoes a lowering in status: from epic god to bucolic figure, which was new for pastoral drama, since before Rinuccini it generally did not allow the presence of gods as main characters.⁴⁹ The passage from epic to pastoral atmosphere is announced by the contrast between the last two pairs of words in two consecutive verses:

qual fia degno edera o palma?

AMORE

Che tu vadia cercando o giglio o rosa (vv. 90–91)

The traditionally bucolic flowers «giglio o rosa» are antithetical to «edera o palma», a noble and almost epic pair of plants.

Apollo's lowering in status is underlined in the line delivered by Venus, who also plays a similar role in Rinuccini's *Euridice*, where she again announces a transition:⁵⁰

Pe' boschi oggi sen van gli dei del cielo. (v. 99)

In the dialogue between Apollo and Cupid, Rinuccini builds up a sequence that plays on the metaphorical use of the word «bow», as Guarini does (in *Pastor Fido*, IV, 1027–1084 which represents an important textual model, as said before): the bow is both a war instrument (used in the struggle against the snake) and the instrument of Cupid's revenge – a tool which inspires love. In this way the contrast between epic or tragedy on the one hand, and bucolic or lyric on the other hand, is realized both thematically and rhetorically.

48 In Rinuccini's *Dafne* some intertextual connections to Petrarca's *Canzoniere* can be found, in which Apollo plays also an importante role: see Bojan Bujic: «Stilemi petrarcheschi nei libretti delle prime opere in musica», in: Loredana Chines (ed.): *Petrarchismo: un modello di poesia per l'Europa*, Roma: Bulzoni 2006, p. 465–484.

49 The only pastoral dramas, which mixed gods and sheperds, are supposed to have been written by Cavalieri: «Nella pastorale in musica [...], i «solisti» Fileno e Clori, accompagnati dal Coro, erano private persone alle prese con dei del cielo e spiriti inferi, cioè i personaggi del genere comico (ora in veste pastorale) agivano insieme ai personaggi degli intermezzi: si unificavano così, per farcitura di quel «campo franco» sperimentale e alla moda che le selve erano diventate nella prassi teatrale del tempo, i due mondi spettacolari che il pubblico fiorentino era abituato a vedere separati. Dagli intermezzi, infatti, è più plausibile che provenissero le figure divine che non da pastorali lontane nel tempo o nei modi» (Ricco 2015, p. 129). Cavalieri's works should have influenced Rinuccini's dramas, as Ricco claims (p. 137).

50 See Ead., p. 175.

APOLLO

Dimmi, possente arciero,
qual fera attendi o qual serpente al varco
ch'hai la faretra e l'arco?

AMORE

Se da quest'arco mio
non fu Pitone ucciso,
arcier non son però degno di riso,
e son del cielo, Apollo, un nume anch'io.

APOLLO

Sollo; ma quando scocchi
l'arco, sbendi tu gli occhi
o ferisci a l'oscuro, arciero esperto?

VENERE

S'hai di saper desio
d'un cieco arcier le prove,
chiedilo al re dell'onde,
chiedilo in cielo a Giove,
e tra l'ombre profonde
del regno orrido oscuro
chiedi, chiedi a Pluton, s'ei fu sicuro!

APOLLO

S'in cielo, in mare, in terra
Amor trionfi in guerra,
dove, dove m'ascondo
chi novo ciel mi insegna o novo mondo?

AMORE

So ben che non paventi
la forza d'un fanciullo,
saettator di mostri e di serpenti.
Ma prendi pur di me gioco e trastullo.

APOLLO

Ah tu t'adiri a torto:
o mi perdona, Amore,
o se mi vuoi ferir risparmia 'l core. (vv. 100–127)

Cupid is defined as «possente arciero», «arcier non [...] degno di riso», «arciero esperto», «cieco arcier». Apollo uses the word «arciero» contentiously: on the one hand he

wants to show the ideal model of the epic hero (Apollo himself) and, on the other hand, to mock Cupid. In contrast, Cupid wants to point out that both uses of the bow preserve the same dignity. Apollo claims that Cupid is incompatible with the epic world («S'in cielo, in mare, in terra / Amor trionfi in Guerra»), whereas the god of love provides many examples of his success among the gods:

Orsù, de l'alto cielo
mirin gli eterni dei
le glorie e vanti miei;
e voi quaggiù, mortali,
celebrate il valor de gl'aurei strali. (vv. 242–246.)

Madre, di gemme e d'oro
un bel carro m'appresta,
pommi su l'aurea testa
nobil fregio d'onor, cerchio frondoso;
veggammi oggi gli dei dell'alto cielo
trionfator pomposo.
Quel dio ch'intorno gira
il carro luminoso,
vinto dall'arco mio piange e sospira. (vv. 253–261)

Cupid acquires Apollo's attributes («le glorie e i vanti miei»), which the chorus had previously attributed to the snake's murderer («è pur tua la gloria e il vanto»), and «nobil fregio d'onor, cerchio frondoso»: the symbol reserved to the winner of the struggle against the snake («per trecciar fregi e corone / al bel crin di raggi ornato / qual fia degno edera o palma?»).

Apollo, in his final claim, does not appear as a triumphant figure, rather he portrays himself through elegiac feelings:

Lumi, voi che vedeste
l'alta beltà che a lagrimar vi sforza,
affisatevi pure in questa fronde:
qui posa e qui s'asconde
il mio bene, il mio core, il mio tesoro,
per cui, ben ch'immortal, languisco e moro. (vv. 373–378)

At the end, Daphne is turned into a laurel and thus becomes a symbol of poetic fame, which Apollo wants to glorify:

I bei cigni di Dirce e i sommi regi
di verdeggianti rami al crin famoso
portin segno d'onor ghirlande e fregi. (vv. 391–393)

Apollo's song ends in a pastoral tone, and a kind of meta-poetic definition of musical drama is given, that is «dolce cantando»:

Gregge mai né pastor fia che noioso
del verde manto suo la spogli e prive:
alla grat'ombra il dì lieto e gioioso
traggan dolce cantando e ninfe e dive. (vv. 394–397)

Apollo's transformation from epic hero to unhappy lover coincides with a transformation of genres within the new genre of musical drama. It is a sort of metamorphosis from an epic-tragic genre to a pastoral one: and indeed in Rinuccini's operas the main theme is always love (in *Euridice* and *Arianna* love is firstly deceived and then recovered), and the setting always pastoral or marine. In any case, the special feature of the opera is not the transformation, but the coexistence of both (or even more) genres. Rinuccini needs the reference to tragedy in the prologue of *Euridice*, where many tragic elements (such as the discussion between the king (Pluto) and his counsellors), as well as cathartic tragic affects can be found.⁵¹ In this way he fulfills a *Gattungsmischung*, a word used by Ulrich Schulz-Buschhaus to identify the main characteristic of literary works of the Baroque age.⁵²

This meta-literary reading can be justified not only by the interest in poetics, which Rinuccini affirms in his preface and which the Camerata dei Bardi had already demonstrated, but also through *Dafne*'s setting: the first representation was not performed in an <official>, festive occasion, as the play took place at Corsi's residence. The mostly

51 Rinuccini realizes also a «tragedia in musica» with the *Arianna*. In my PhD thesis I will focus on this peculiar mixture of genres.

52 See Ulrich Schulz-Buschhaus: «Gattungsmischung–Gattungskombination–Gattungsnivellierung. Überlegungen zum Gebrauch des literarhistorischen Epochenbegriffs Barock», in: Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Hrsg.): *Epochenschwellen und Epochenstrukturen im Diskurs der Literatur- und Sprachgeschichte*, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp 1985, p. 213–233.

academic audience can be assumed to have had a particular interest in issues to do with poetics.⁵³ The paramount influence of the context and the reliability of a meta-literary interpretation of Rinuccini's *Dafne* are indirectly confirmed by another play: the German version of *Dafne* translated by Martin Opitz and set to music by Heinrich Schütz (1627). This German version of *Dafne* displays different characteristics, which can be reexplained by the fact that the opera was performed as a part of wedding celebrations.⁵⁴ In any case, the meta-literary interpretation does not exclude the possibility of references to political or encomiastic issues, as Russano Hanning persuasively demonstrated in the case of *Dafne*.⁵⁵ In fact, the first opera librettos contained a complex system of meanings and references, which did not guarantee cohesion of the whole text.⁵⁶ In the case of *Dafne* however, a coherent interpretation, including all the elements of the libretto, can be provided.

Rinuccini's *Dafne* has a didactic goal. That Rinuccini does not only aim at pleasing, but also at instructing is clear from Ovid's declaration in the prologue,⁵⁷ in which he refers to the *Metamorphoses* (and that is the subject of *Dafne*) as well as to his *Ars amandi*.⁵⁸

53 An allegorical interpretation, which takes into account the correspondence between mythological figures and real (and royal) people, can be applied to *Euridice*: many scholars see in the figure of Euridice either Maria de' Medici or the city of Florence. This interpretation is justified by the context of the royal wedding, in which the gods may stand for an allegorical representation of the marrying couple. The play thus becomes a mirror of reality and of the audience itself. See, for example (but the bibliography on Rinuccini's *Euridice* is very vast), Sara Mamone: *Firenze e Parigi. Due capitali dello spettacolo per una regina. Maria de' Medici*, Silvana editoriale: Cinisello Balsamo 1987, and Gaspare De Caro: *Euridice. Momenti dell'Umanesimo civile fiorentino*, Ut Orpheus Edizioni: Bologna 2006. I believe however that the correspondence between extratextual and intratextual figures has to be explored more precisely, as I will show in my dissertation.

54 In my thesis I will compare Rinuccini's, Da Gagliano's and Opitz's *Dafne* (1600, 1608 and 1627), in order to specify the connections between text and context.

55 Russano Hanning 1973.

56 This complex system of meanings depends on the nature of the opera, arising through the collaboration between librettist, musician(s), patrons, etc. Differing requirements (of political or poetic nature, for example) are to be found – especially in more complex situations, like by the marriage's celebrations of 1600.

57 Gier defines *Dafne*'s message «eine ganz karnevalistische Moral», in Albert Gier: *Das Libretto. Theorie und Geschichte einer musikalischen Gattung*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1998, p. 43.

58 According to Osthoff there is also a reference to the *Heroides* («celesti amanti»); see Wolfgang Osthoff: «Daphnes Metamorphose in der frühen italienischen Oper», in: Heidi Marek, Anne Neuschäfer und Susanne Tichy (ed.): *Metamorphosen. Festschrift für Bodo Guthmüller zum 65. Geburtstag*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag 2002, p. 141–162, here p. 141.

OVIDIO

Quel mi son io, che su la dotta lira
 cantai le fiamme de' celesti amanti,
 e i trasformati lor vari sembianti
 soave sì, ch'il mondo ancor m'ammira.
 Indi l'arte insegnai come si deste
 in un gelato sen fiamma d'amore,
 e come in libertà ritorni un core
 cui son d'amor le fiamme aspre e moleste. (vv. 5–12)

The importance of «docere» is undeniable in the context of the first musical dramas. The wedding celebrations for Maria de' Medici and Henri IV were held in 1600 and consisted of the staging (among other forms of entertainment) of some of the first operas (Rinuccini's *Euridice*, Chiabrera's *Rapimento di Cefalo*). In his *Descrizione delle felicissime nozze della Cristianissima Maestà di Madama Maria Medici Regina di Francia e di Navarra* Michelangelo Buonarroti il Giovane describes the events occurring during the festivities from an official point of view.⁵⁹ The *Descrizione* was commissioned by the Medici themselves, since traces of their requests and modifications can be seen in the journey from manuscript to press. Referring to *Euridice* and describing its effects on the public, Michelangelo mentions only the «piacere»: the pleasure produced by the dramatic work. He further distinguishes between mental and sensual pleasure, as Marco da Gagliano also does in his preface to *Dafne*: «Dopo questa mutazion sola la scena di prima tornò, né più si vide mutare: il tutto compiutamente passando con onore di chi a condurla in qualunque parte vi intervenne; e con piacer vario, e di mente di senso in chi vi fu spettatore» (Buonarroti 1863, p. 428). The space reserved for *Euridice* in the *Descrizione* is very small (it was described as an «affettuosissima e gentilissima favola»), as was the attention it received during the celebrations. The play took place in a small *stanza* in the Palazzo Pitti (in the apartments of Don Antonio de' Medici) and its staging was possible only after the payment of a large amount of

59 The *Descrizione* can be read in Michelangelo Buonarroti il Giovane: «Descrizione delle felicissime nozze della Cristianissima Maestà di Madama Maria Medici regina di Francia e di Nauarra», in: Id.: *Opere Varie di M.A. Buonarroti il Giovane. Alcune delle quali non mai stampate*. Raccolta da Pietro Fanfani, Firenze: Le Monnier 1863, p. 403–454.

money by Jacopo Corsi. This clearly shows that *Euridice* was part of the program, but it was not the central event of the wedding celebrations.⁶⁰

In contrast, Michelangelo devotes many pages to a meticulous description of *Rapimento di Cefalo*, the «dramma maggiore» (official drama), which was performed in the Teatro mediceo on the 9 October and which was described as a «nobilissima favola, e di superbo apparato». At the end, Michelangelo mentions the two goals of this play: to cause wonder as well as to teach, to purge as well as to delight:

Dalle machine adunque la maraviglia, che è la prima cagione dello imparare, ed è fine in somiglianti cose dello inventore di esse, fuori di ogni capacità vi s'apprese: dalla nobile e graziosa favola la moralità e 'l costume divino e l'umano; il quale con bel decoro essendovi espresso, ne purgava le menti degli uditori, traendoli a giustizia e a dirittura di vero amore; come ancora si potette trarre dallo 'ntessimento di parole ottime, che immagini sono de' pensieri interni, e dalla squisita e rara musica e varia, ottimamente a' personaggi e a' concetti adattata e non simile più forse udita, della quale non senza proposizione tal'ora fu detta esser composta l'anima umana. Per la natura delle cose infine dagli inventori delle macchine, e da' musici compositori, e cantanti in cielo, in mare e sopra terra (somministrandola il poeta) fatta conoscere e dimostrata perfettamente, sì magnifico e sì dilettevole componimento e soave ne risultò, che l'animo degli spettatori invescatene stranamente (quantunque più tosto in rimembrandole, maraviglie d'uomo dormente alla memoria ingannata par che si offerano, che corpi in arteficial teatro rappresentati), piacere alcuno avriano creduto giammai a quello essersi potuto agguagliare. (Buonarroti 1863, p. 449–450)

«Docere» is probably set as a goal because of the utmost importance of *Rapimento*, the value of which, from a political point of view, was greater than of *Euridice* – that is why pleasure alone is reserved to the latter. In the case of Rinuccini's *Dafne* the didactic function can be seen as a technique employed to make the new genre acceptable: in this way the originality of music drama could appear less groundbreaking, even less <dangerous> and be justified through his didactic purpose.⁶¹ Thus the incompatibility with some of the Aristotelian rules (as the mixing of dramatic genres demonstrates) is

60 Our present perspective on the drama and on its success is conditioned by the influence of Rinuccini's play on the later musical dramas and by his role as a literary and musical model.

61 This didactic function, which does not appear in the following musical dramas by Rinuccini, was borrowed from a narrative genre – the short mythological poem, in particular from Luigi Alamanni's *Favola di Narcisso*. This short poem was published 1532 within Alamanni's *Opere toscane* and later also in *Stanze di diversi illustri poeti*, an anthology of poems «in ottava rima» written by famous authors and edited by Ludovico Dolce. Alamanni's *poemetto* was therefore well known in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In my PhD thesis I will show the intertextual connections between Alamanni's *Narcisso* and Rinuccini's *Dafne*.

counterbalanced by additional emphasis on the conformity with other rules (the didactic goal).

As pointed out, Giasone Denores also pleaded for literature created for didactic purposes. Nonetheless, Denores's idea of literature having a moral significance is quite different from Rinuccini's understanding: Denores asserts that literature is closely tied to moral and civic philosophy and that the community can actually benefit from it, because it rejects vices and encourages virtue. Furthermore, according to Denores, literature can also have a political purpose by strengthening the republic, and this goal can be realized only by three literary genres: epic, tragedy and comedy.⁶²

[I governatori delle repubbliche] permisero ultimamente, che a' medesimi loro cittadini ne' tempi debiti si recitassero alcune diverse forme di poesie or cantando; or rappresentando, ordite, e composte in tal guisa, che gli ritirassero dal vizio, che operassero in loro virtù, & gl'animassero alla conservazione di quella tal ben istituita maniera di stato, alla cui potestà, e leggi prestavano ubbidienza. [...] Onde determinarono, che a loro cittadini si proponessero tre sorti di Poesie; il poema eroico, che raccontasse qualche azion di alcun principe legittimo, che si affaticasse, per liberar da travaglio, e per render felici i suoi compagni, e sudditi, a differenza del tiranno, che suol loro procurar ogni ruina, e distrugimento per guadagno, e per utile di se stesso; la tragedia, per ispaventargli dalla tirannide; e la commedia, per ben disporli alla vita popolare.⁶³

Denores admits that what makes people want to attend a play is pleasure only (*Orlando Furioso*), but he also argues that an author should aim at instructing as well as pleasing the public:

Imperocché chi si conduce a simili spettacoli, va principalmente per diporto, e per passatempo, e nondimeno con leggiadro inganno, senza avvedersi, riceve anco non mediocre beneficio, e gioiamento, a tal che in quanto all'auditor, il principal fine della poesia per il più non è altro, che il diletto, ma in quanto all'intenzion del buon poeta verso l'auditor, il principal fine della poesia è la

62 Guarini instead pursues a separation between rhetoric, poetics and politics. See Scarpati 1985, especially p. 205: «il *Segretario* ha il suo fulcro teorico nella difesa della specificità della retorica condotta a riconoscere il suo riferimento primo nella dialettica e metodologicamente svincolata dalla subordinazione alla politica. Il tardo dialogo, ad un'osservazione comparativa, situato nell'insieme dell'operosità guariniana, mostra di occupare una posizione esattamente complementare rispetto agli scritti attraverso cui si snodò la lunga polemica con Giasone De Nores. Il *Segretario* assolve sul versante della retorica lo stesso compito di definizione disciplinare che i due *Verrati* svolgono nei confronti della poetica».

63 Denores 1587, p. 155.

utilità, comandata da' filosofi, e da' governatori delle reppubbliche. E il diletter l'adopera egli come istromento, e mezzo d'introdur la utilità negli animi degli ascoltanti.⁶⁴

The didactic goal of *Dafne*, which is highlighted in the epilogue through the idea of the exemplary history of Apollo and Dafne,⁶⁵ has nothing to do with politics: it participates in the vernacular love literature of the Renaissance. The subject of love and particularly of the reciprocity of love was central in academic discourses.⁶⁶ Lorenzo Giacomini, a member of both the Accademia degli Alterati (to which Corsi probably belonged) and of the Accademia Fiorentina, wrote a lesson on love in which he stressed the concept of the pleasure inherent in the reciprocity of love: «[...] è abito dell'appetito sensitivo, pel quale con veemente affetto desideriamo, e vogliamo bene a persona par-saci bella per fine di diletto, principalmente nell'essere riamati».⁶⁷

Giacomini insists on this idea, describing the opposing feelings felt as a consequence of either the presence or lack of love:

L'essere amato da chi è sommamente amato da noi, e da chi sommamente desideriamo di essere amati, in questo collocando la nostra felicità, e ricevere in dono l'animo dell'amato, dono sopra ogni bene dall'amante apprezzato, avanza tutti i dilette, che egli possa conseguire; siccome il non essere amato, ed in vece di amore ricevere odio, e disprezzo avanza tutti i dolori, che egli possa sentire.⁶⁸

It is no coincidence that the history of Dafne is chosen for such a purpose: Ariosto puts Dafne in hell among the «donne ingrate» in his *Orlando Furioso* (Canto XXXIV).⁶⁹ Rinuccini makes use of the same literary *topos* in *Ballo delle ingrate*,⁷⁰ which was staged

64 Ibid., p. 190.

65 «Ma s'a' preghi sospirosi, / amorosi, / di pietà sfavillo ed ardo, / s'io prometto all'altrui pene / dolce spene / con un riso e con un guardo, / non soffrir, cortese Amore, / che 'l mio ardore / prenda a scherno alma gelata, / non soffrir ch'in piaggia o 'n lido / cor infido / m'abbandoni innamorata. / Fa' ch'al foco de' miei lumi / si consumi / ogni gelo, ogni durezza; / ardi poi quest'alma all'ora / ch'altra adora, / qual si sia la mia bellezza»: vv. 428–445.

66 On the reciprocity of love in love treatises of the Cinquecento, see Maiko Favaro: «*L'ospite preziosa*». *Presenze della lirica nei trattati d'amore del Cinquecento e del primo Seicento*, Lucca: maria pacini fazzi editore 2012, p. 167–172.

67 *Raccolta di Prose Fiorentine. Parte seconda. Volume Quinto. Contenente lezioni*, Firenze: Per li Tartinii, e Franchi 1730, p. 124. Rinuccini repeats in the same page: «per conseguirne diletto principalmente nell'esser riamato».

68 *Lezione quarta*, p. 135. Later Giacomini even quotes Alamanni among the poets who wrote verses on an unlucky love (Dante, Petrarca, Bembo, Sannazzaro, Casa, Martelli).

69 See Chiara Cassiani: «Il mito di Dafne nell'*Orlando Furioso*», in: Giuseppe Izzi (ed.): *Nello specchio del mito. Riflessi di una tradizione. Atti del Convegno di Studi, Università degli Studi Roma Tre, 17–19 febbraio 2010*, Firenze: Cesati 2012, p. 273–29.

70 See Stefano Patuzzi: «Da Ariosto al *Ballo delle ingrate*. Un itinerario di affluenze», in: Piero Gargiulo, Alessandro Magini, Stéphane Toussaint (ed.): *Neoplatonismo, musica, letteratura nel Rinascimen-*

in 1608 in Mantua for the marriage celebrations for Francesco Gonzaga and Margherita di Savoia. Ten years later, Rinuccini again follows his poetics of *docere*, which in this case is completely supported by the nuptial context.

In summary, Rinuccini's *Dafne* stands at the crossroad between the new poetics of *Gattungsmischung*, which clearly constitutes an important subject for reflection of the Florentine author, and the poetics of *docere*, which places the new drama in a long literary tradition. In the entangled context of the late 16th century debates on poetics, Rinuccini brings together most diverse, often experimental and heterogeneous tendencies and, in doing so, he sparks off the new genre of the *dramma per musica*.

to: *i Bardi di Vernio e l'Accademia della Crusca. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Firenze – Vernio, 25–26 settembre 1998*, Paris: Société Marsile Ficini 2000, p. 73–81.