The *volgarizzamento* of the Imola Commentary to the *Commedia*: The Identification of a Hand in MS Oxford, Bodleian Canon. Ital. 107, present in MS Paris, BNF Italien 78, with Notes Towards a Venetian Milieu

This paper will identify a hand in MSS Oxford, Bodleian, Canonici Italian 105-107, a witness of Dante's *Commedia* produced in Venice between 1415-20, which also transmits an Italian translation of the commentary of Benvenuto da Imola. 'Zorzi Zanchani' (Giorgio, in Italian) is the name of the copyist I am hoping to add to MSS Oxford, Canon. Ital. 105-7 (henceforth 'the Oxford MS'). This scribe is present in that witness, I submit, only as a corrector in one of the (now) three divided codices, Ital. 107 (containing the *Inferno*), and then only on folio 58 recto and verso. That we might give this minor correcting hand a name is thanks to a colophon of his in MS Paris, BNF, Italien 78 (henceforth 'the Paris MS'). Both the Oxford MS, for which I am proposing this attribution, and the Paris MS, containing Zanchani's colophon, are witnesses of the *Commedia* and the Italian translation of the Imola commentary. In the Paris MS, Zanchani's name is found under his transcription of Boccaccio's *Life of Dante*, on fol. H verso, prefatory to the poem itself. The primary palaeographical task will be a comparison of the hand in either witness, to identify this name given in the Paris MS colophon, with the few lines of correction in the Oxford MS.

But that this scribe might be shared, and in such a way, between these witnesses is especially meaningful – and this brings with it a host of new questions. These two witnesses of the *Commedia*, and only these two, preserve the Italian translation of Benvenuto da Imola's commentary to the poem.[1] Benvenuto da Imola

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[1] The text of Imola's Latin commentary is edited in Benvenutus de Rambaldis de Imola, *Comentum Super Dantis Aldigherij Comoediam: Nunc Primum Integre in Lucen Editum*, ed. William Vernon and Philip Lacaita, 5 vols. (Florence: G. Barbèra, 1887). There is no printed edition of the Italian translation. A Venetian printed edition of 1477 (Vindelino da Spira, ISTC No. id00027000) claims to be the Imola

prepared his Latin commentary – a uniquely learned, uniquely lengthy, and especially lively commentary, possibly the best of the fourteenth century – a generation before the earliest date possible for the inscription of our MSS. Written between Bologna and Ferrara in the 70s and 80s of that century, and dedicated to Niccolò d'Este, the commentary continued north and – for reasons we can only surmise – found its way into the vernacular in the early fifteenth century, or at the end of the fourteenth century (based on the most recent dating of the Paris MS).[2] Very little is known about this translation of the commentary: it has no further witnesses, and both MSS that preserve it for us offer it in a translation with strong Venetian dialectical markers. That can't be taken as indicative of the translation's origin, however: nothing is known about who prepared the translation, or for whom it was prepared. The present palaeographical question, then, stands to contribute significantly to our current understanding of a relationship between two MSS that has appeared for a long time suggestive,[3] but no more.

If the identification is successful, then we also have before us a changed understanding of the kind of association possible between these two witnesses to Dante's poem and Imola's vernacularized commentary. We may not be able to neatly answer who prepared the commentary, or who asked for it, but we are given something more instructive still. Passing over these MSS now as principal scribe, now as corrector, the relationship Zanchani's hand discloses between these witnesses

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commentary in Italian translation, however misattributes to Benvenuto the commentary of Iacopo della Lana.

[2] This dating for the Paris MS – '14. Jh. Ende' – is established by Marcella Roddewig, *Dante Alighieri: Die Göttliche Komödie; Vergleichende bestandsaufnahme der handschriften* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1984), sec. 554. I will refer to Roddewig's description of the Paris MS throughout.

[3] Marcella Roddewig, following Colomb de Batines, notes this relationship of commentary text in her entry on the Oxford MS (no. 518 in her census). In Roddewig, *Die Göttliche Komödie*.

offers something more complex than discrete filiation. We begin to see in these witnesses the outcroppings of a single milieu, startlingly adaptive in its graphical habits (as appears from the substantial differences in the presentation and graphic culture of either witness) but organised (as we might begin to suspect from this amending practice) around a coherent conception of the poem. We will newly be able to ask what conception of the poem, from its codicological form through to the (especially interesting) commentarial apparatus, this milieu of production and reproduction intends. Zanchani's hand will, as a result, bear on both date and origin attributions for these MSS, currently separated by decades (the Paris MS has been described as end-of-the-fourteenth century, and I have given 1415-20 for the Oxford MS (See APPENDIX)). As we begin to ask about how a new relationship between these MSS bears out a larger scribal practice, we stand to learn more about a little part of Venice's extremely lively early Humanist-period scribal culture.

In the hope of seeing clear toward these coordinates, this paper will comprise three parts. 1) A discussion of the scripts present in either production, and a palaeographical analysis of Zanchani's hand, between its known locus in the Paris MS, and the folio sides mentioned in the Oxford MS. 2) A necessarily focussed history of the codicological tradition of the *Commedia*, to situate both 'projects' – the Oxford and Paris witnesses of the poem and commentary – within a branch of that tradition. 3) A conclusion, returning to the question of dating, but seeking to transform that question in terms of how a milieu interprets and refashions the codicological models – and ultimately the conception of Dante's poem – with which it works.

I include, as well, a full description of the MSS Oxford, Canon. Ital. 105-7 in an appendix, as detailed reference to it will be made throughout.

1. 'Zorzi Zanchani la scripto per amore': scripts present in the Oxford and Paris MSS, and the identification of a correcting hand in MS Oxford, Bodleian Canon. Ital. 107

1.1 The *Commedia* tradition and *littera textualis*

One of the remarkable aspects of the tradition of Dante manuscripts is that book hand – *littera textualis* – is not widely represented in it. That graphic system which 'era in grado di assicurare la massima dignità a testi che stavano cerando un loro posto nel panorama della cultura tardo duecentesca e trecentesca' ('was able to secure the maximum dignity for texts that were looking to find their place in the late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century cultural panorama'),[4] and which was widely used to transmit other culturally prestigious vernacular texts, is found in a surprisingly low proportion of extant MSS of Dante's poem.[5] That both of our MSS present gothic *textualis*, then, rather surprisingly sets their graphic component apart. This will be perhaps the most instructive single detail when it comes to understanding a model upon which these MSS are premised. What Marisa Boschi Rotiroti says of Dante MSS written within the so-called 'antica vulgata' (the first group of *Commedia* manuscripts, datable to the period before Boccaccio penned 'Chigiano', his Dante MS conserved now as MS Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Chigiano L V 176 and Chigiano L VI 213), bears mention this far down stream as well: 'La scelta della *littera textualis*…da parte di questa minoranza di copisti, può essere vista come un diverso modo di leggere il testo della *Commedia*' ('The choice of *littera textualis*…on

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[4] Marisa Boschi Rotiroti, *Codicologia trecentesca della commedia: Entro e oltre l'antica vulgata* (Rome: Viella, 2004), 99. My translation.
[5] An analysis of the proportion (as low as 10% of MSS before Boccaccio's, approaching half towards the beginning the 15th Century) is available in Ibid., 100.

the part of this minority of copyists, can be seen as a different way of reading the text of the *Commedia*').[6]
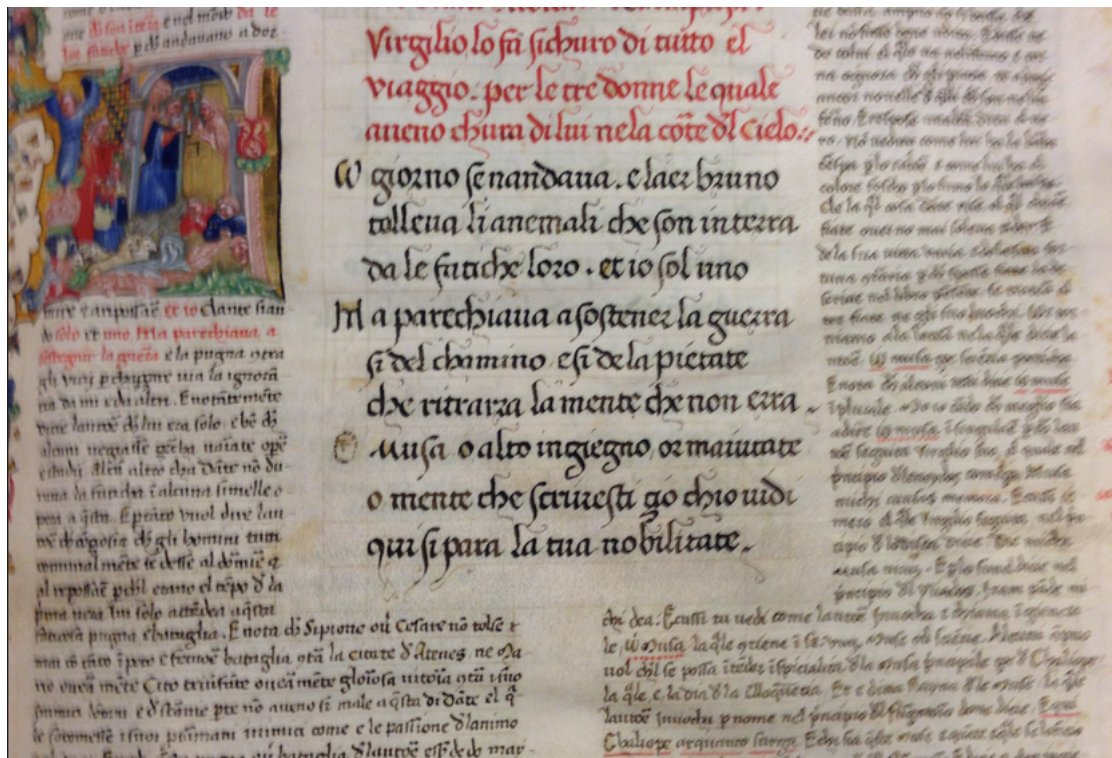

Figure 1: MS Paris, BNF, Ital 78, fol. 10r, showing the MS' ornate *littera textualis*. The poem framed by Benvenuto da Imola's commentary in an Italian translation.

Both MSS present a *littera textualis* for the main inscription of the poem – albeit of very different quality. The ornate gothic hand of the text of the Paris MS (Figure 1), in Zanchani's hand, is of an altogether different quality to that found in the Oxford MS (Figure 2). For the commentary text, the Paris MS presents a smaller *textualis* than is used for the poem inscription, whereas in the Oxford MS the commentary text presents a cursive hand (without loops).
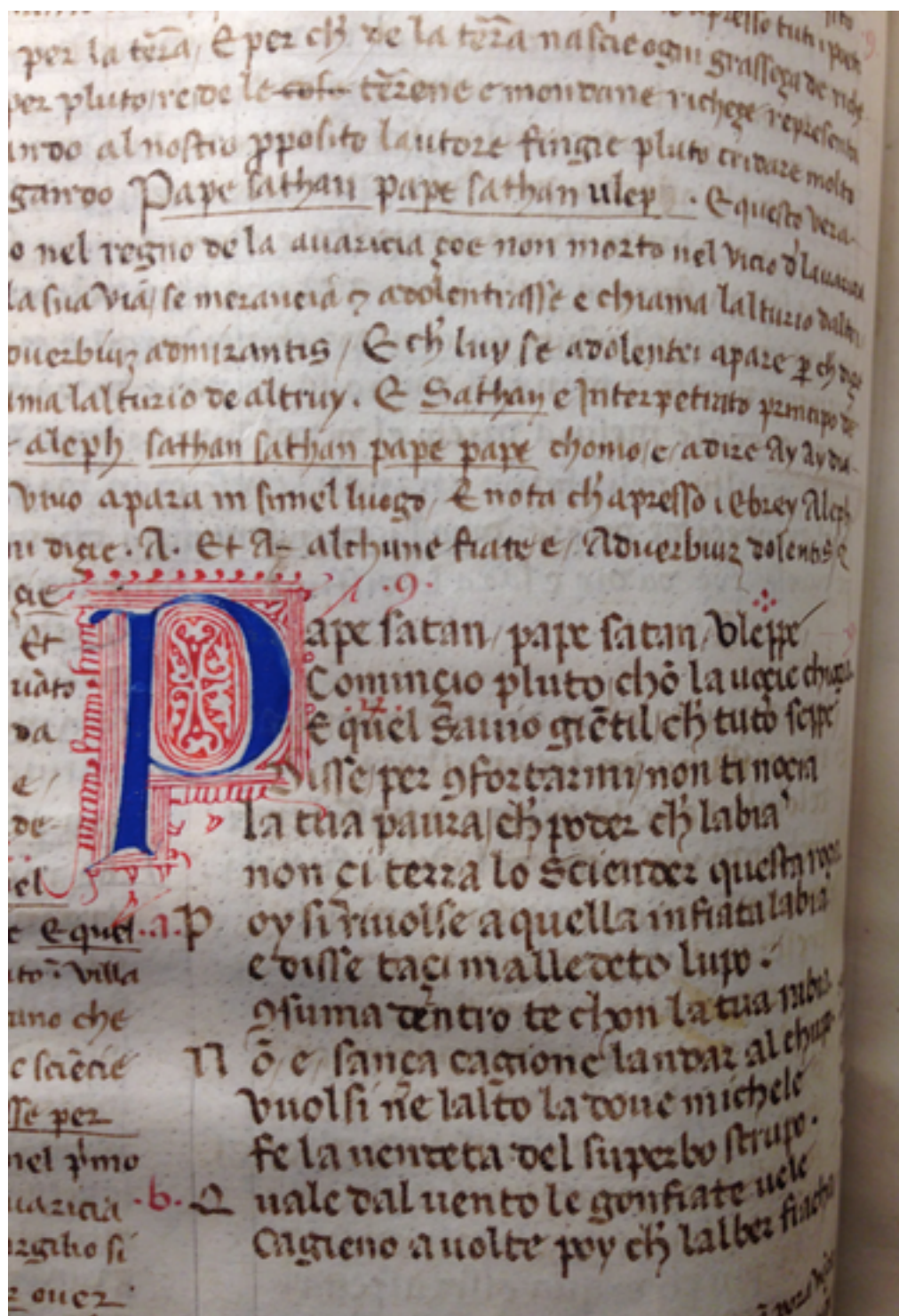
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[6] Ibid., 101.

Figure 2: MS Oxford, Bodleian, Canon. Ital. 107, fol.

This distinction between *textualis* and cursive for poem and commentary observes a well-noted principle of differentiating *modus scribendi*. That is, these MSS respect a fundamental distinction between, or hierarchy of, principal and commentary text, signalled by a change in the graphic system. Brunetto Latini expressed this important

distinction for a thirteenth century vernacular audience, when he wrote 'La dove è la lettera grossa si è il testo di Tullio e la lettera sottile sono le parole de lo sponitore' ('Where the letter is thick, that's Cicero's text, and where it's thin, those are the words of the commentator').[7] (His 'thick' and 'thin' here are likely to do with cursivity, rather than the writing implement). The observation of the distinction of *modus scribendi* has fuller implications that will re-emerge in the later discussion of a distinguishable model within the tradition of the *Commedia*. What I'd like to draw attention to here, however, is that this division between graphic systems in the Oxford MS can be readily seen to be the work of one scribe (see APPENDIX, SCRIPT). Even substantial changes in the cursive model (for instance a rounded gothic *r*, and a distinct cursive *r*, are present at different points in the inscription), evidence a decision on the part of a single scribe to observe a hierarchy of scripts.

The presence of multiple graphic systems becomes central to the story of these MSS, as appears from another graphic feature of the Oxford MS. Each of the three cantiche of Dante's poem (now separately bound in three codices, respectively Canon. Ital. 105 (*Paradiso*), 106 (*Purgatorio*), and 107 (*Inferno*)) is prefaced by a list of contents (fol. i verso in Ital. 107). These lists of contents, in turn, present a humanist hand. As a result, cataloguers have treated these prefatory lists as a later addition to the main inscription (a suggestion in fact strengthened by the collation of these codices, which shows this folio to be codicologically distinct in all three (see APPENDIX, COLLATION)). However, the presence of this humanist hand in rubrics throughout the project as well (and also in Canon. Ital. 106 and 105) suggests it is in fact closely contemporary with the main inscription. This humanist hand appears in all rubrics *after* the first, and in each codex (and after fol. 34r in Ital. 107). The

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[7] cited in Ibid., 102. My translation.

presence of this humanist hand in minor parts of the Oxford witness was not enough for it to be included in Sandro Bertelli's recent study of *Commedia* witnesses 'all'antica' (written in *littera antiqua*).[8] The minor presence of a humanist hand in the Oxford MS, however, might have been especially illuminating of the process of reworking prior models that Bertelli examines.

This humanist hand, now properly understood as an integral part of the graphic scheme of the Oxford MS, also bears on the interpretation of the Paris MS as we attempt to trace these to a single Venetian milieu. The Oxford MS is catalogued as a fifteenth-century MS, from the first half of that century (according to Roddewig's census, though I have been more precise in my dating, putting it between 1415-20). With this humanist hand, contemporary to the main inscription, this dating remains plausible. The Oxford MS now appears remarkable in its decision to largely *preserve* a fourteenth-century *textualis* appearance. The Paris MS meanwhile, as noted, is catalogued in major censuses of the *Commedia* as late fourteenth-century, a thesis which rests on its beautiful gothic text, and on a host of other codicological indicators which will be discussed in the next section. A very great span, then, is said to divide our two witnesses, which seems initially supported by this change in writing systems and our understanding of the watershed moment in Italian graphic culture inaugurated by the humanist recovery of *littera antiqua* at the beginning of the new century.[9] But a common hand, present in both MSS, must in turn raise questions about this decades-

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[8] Sandro Bertelli, *La Commedia all'antica* (Florence: Mandragora, 2007).
[9] For recent studies of this moment, with reference to Venice, see Teresa De Robertis, "I Primi Anni Della Scrittura Umanistica. Materiali per Un Aggiornamento," in *Palaeography, Manuscript Illumination and Humanism in Renaissance Italy: Studies in Memory of A.C. de La Mare*, ed. Robert Black, Jill Kraye, and Laura Nuvoloni, Warburg Insitute Colloquia 28 (London: Warburg Institute, 2016), 55–85; Teresa De Robertis, "Motivi classici nella scrittura del primo quattrocento," in *L'ideale classico a Ferrara e in Italia nel Rinascimento*, ed. Patrizia Castelli (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1998), 65–79.

long difference in dating. A plurality of graphic cultures, traceable to a single milieu, must change how we understand the agency of these scribes in the interpretation and reproduction of their models.

What Zanchani's shared hand might help to establish is a new foundation for dating that begins from the perception of continuity in a single model, being interpreted and re-interpreted by a milieu. This would sanction a different interpretation of the graphic facts than that which meets the eye. In short, if Zanchani's hand is shared, he offers a nexus between graphic cultures that seem to stand in different centuries. And this intimates that 'new' and 'old', and that dating hypotheses used to support these, must become less relevant terms. Both may be embedded in a more complex milieu – adaptable in its interpretation of the model it reproduces, and evidently more graphically plural than one or the other witness allows. Our minor correcting hand presents an opportunity to review the relationship of text to dating that has lead to such discrepancy in the cataloguing of both witnesses.

1.2 Zorzi Zanchani's hand

I will begin with Zanchani's colophon in the Paris MS, found on fol. H verso:
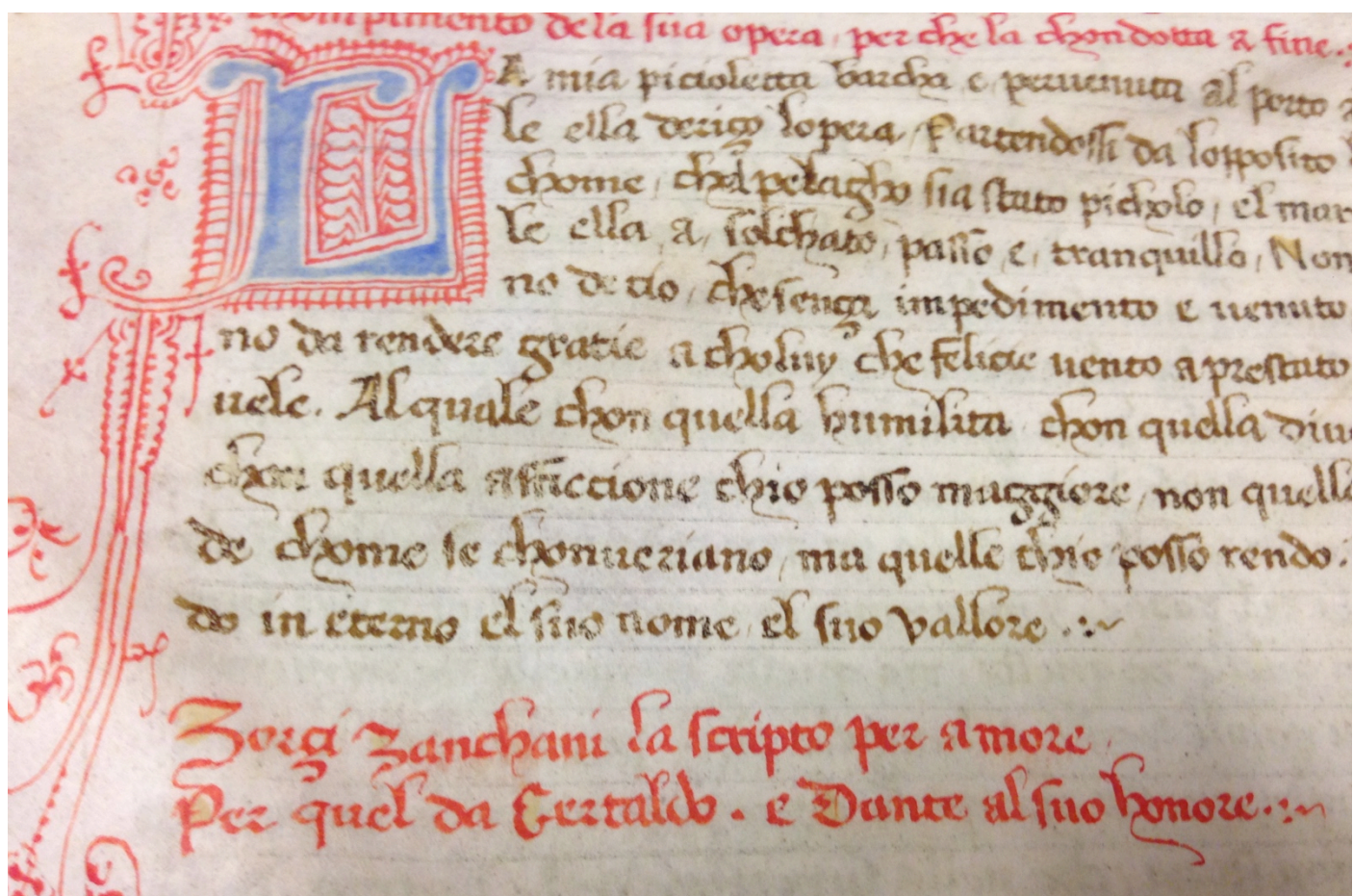
Figure 3: MS Paris, BNF, Ital 78, fol. H verso.

Extremely distinctive about Zanchani's hand is his delight in tremendously long 'graces'. 'Grace' is I borrow from Bertelli to refer to these flourishes at the top of ascenders, as well as at the bottom of the curved stroke of *h*, substantially modifying the morphology of both. These features of *h* are, though in a very distinct graphic system, common to *bastarda* forms of the letter[10] – but such a feature in an altogether distinct *textualis* system strikes me as unique. The grace on the second stroke of *h* frequently tends towards the limit of the ruled line, often touching it. On the ascenders of *l* (part of the time)*, b,* and *h* (part of the time), a forked form appears as a result of two clearly separate strokes at the top. This is a feature that is very distinctive to Zanchani's hand. An interesting comparison with these forked ascenders, to the end that these appear all the more distinctive, might be made with an earlier witness in the Dante tradition, MS Rome, Chigiano L IV 109 (as Bertelli notes, 'La mano del copista…si caratterizza per i numerosi ritocchi alle lettere, delle vere e proprie "grazie"' ('the hand of the copyist is characterised by the numerous retouches to the letters, these literal 'graces')). [11] With two consecutive ascenders this forking bifurcation does not take place, and only the second of the two presents this long thin stroke curving to the right at the top. For the last line of text in the Paris MS, Zanchani often provides even more exaggerated flourishes on descenders as well.
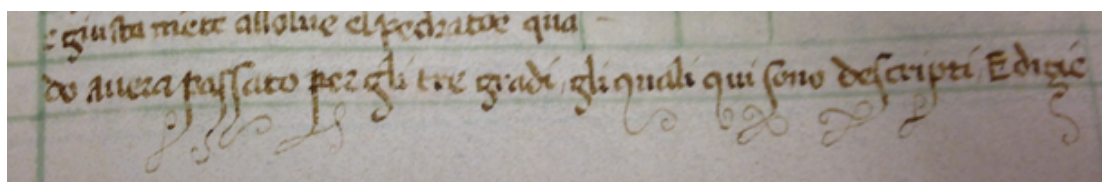

Figure 3: MS Paris, BNF, Italien 78, fol. 93v

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[10] A point of comparison in the Dante tradition would be with the copyist of *App*. For reproductions see Sandro Bertelli, *La tradizione della "Commedia" dai manoscritti al testo*, vol. 1 (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2011), 66–7.
[11] A section of this MS is reproduced and analysed in Bertelli, *La Commedia all'antica*, 59. My translation.

The ascender *l* frequently shows a curve to the left at the bottom of the letter, giving a hooked appearance (for instance in 'Al quale', third line from the last of the text in Figure 3). Zanchani's *d* presents an uncial form, but frequently with a rather upright beam (see, for instance, 'da rendere', on the line just below the embellished capital L). A very flat, square-eyed 'g' is also present, as appears in 'gratie' and 'maggiore' respectively in the fifth and third line from the last line of black text in Figure 3. *A*, when it is independent or word-initial, also presents an uncial form, different to that presented within words.

The comparatum is MS Oxford, Bodleian Canon. Ital. 107, fol. 58 recto and verso:

...ation de ...

...bidire e desicttare e a humentare grado dal te...

...chon tutta Lonbardia dominatore. E ad here...

...ntradicie arichusiar la sua ruuida residenza...

...uicinanza al steminio de Patauini placati...

...a cipta assumendo in quella Martio quirin...

...hon infinito excercito. tra Verona e Brescia el...

...anto che tutti i Patauini erano lochati in dive...

...sono di libertta priuati ridotti fuori delle m...

...lchano strociati e chombusti per diuersi te...

...a da oblitar non che la signioria tirannicha. m...

...sogioghati e dieti citadini. // Or tornando al n...

...uali tuti do fo molto violenti nel suo temp...

...de po volse anche auere la signioria de m...

...y si ch obico e Aço suo fiolo regno nel te...

...e nō pote otegnire la sua Intencione / e...

...metersi lombardia p la sua possança e m...

...moiere la fiola de charlo sechondo sorel...

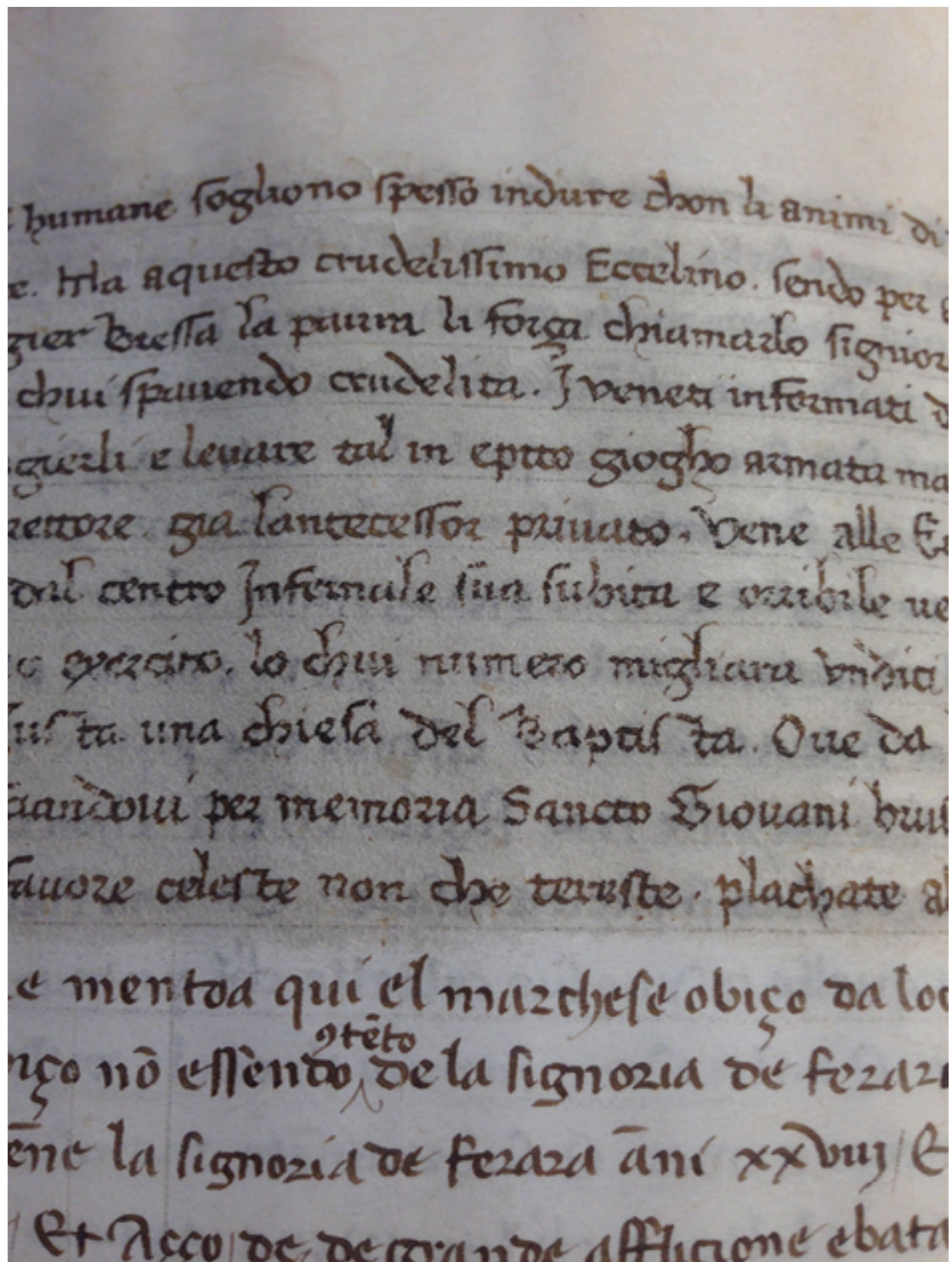Figure 4: MS Oxford, Bodleian, Canon. Ital. 107, fol. 58r

Figure 5: MS Oxford, Bodleian, Canon. Ital. 107, fol. 58v

These images detail the erased and amended section of Imola's translated commentary, found in the Oxford MS, in which the new hand introduced in the palimpsest is, I submit, that of Zorzi Zanchani. The primary hand is that visible at the bottom of both images. Here the letter *d* is a good place to start: as is evident even in

these glimpses of the prior inscription, a flat uncial *d* is present in the original (Figure 6 'da', first line of original transcription; Figure 5 'tornando' and 'da', in the first and second line of the original transcription respectively). But a much more upright, horizontal beam for *d*, like that present in the Paris MS, appears in these corrected sections (Figure 5 'defiderare', and 'grado', in the first visible line), presenting at the same time the much longer, horizontal stroke that characterises the beam of Zanchani's *d* in the Paris MS.

As for the distinctive ornate ascenders – the prime ground for this comparison – the two forms of *h*, one with a single long flourishing stroke to the right, and another with a forked appearance and the same stroke to the right, appear in the Paris MS as well as the Oxford MS. In the Paris MS:
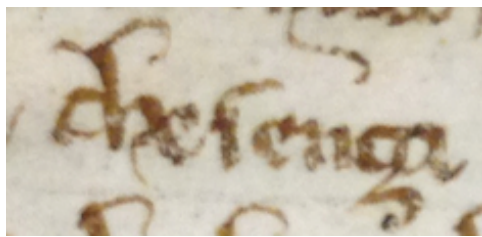

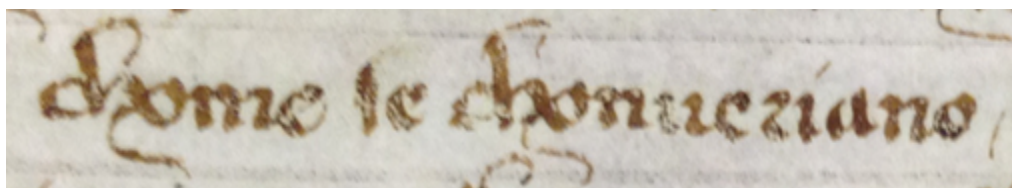**Figure 6: *h* with a forked top, detail of Figure 3 (Paris MS)**

Figure 7: *h* without a forked top, detail of Figure 3 (Paris MS)

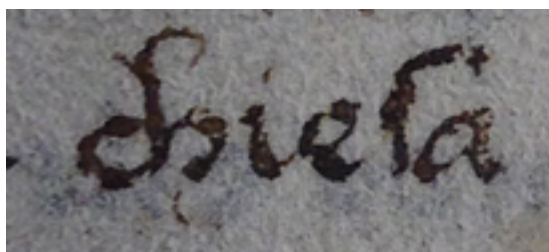In the Oxford MS correction:

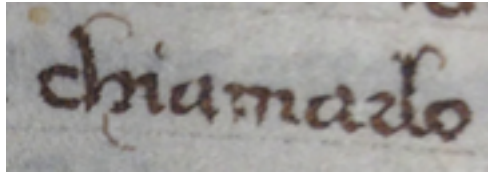**Figure 8: *h* with a forked top, detail of Figure 6 (Oxford MS)**

Figure 9: *h* without a forked top, detail of Figure 6 (Oxford MS)

Of course, the most striking feature of these ascenders is the thin, long, rounded grace that hooks to the right at the top of the ascender, and the second that hooks from left to right at the bottom of the second, rounded stroke of the *h*. The former stroke, as in Figure 8, can be long enough to almost touch the top of the following rounded stroke of the *h* – but this is not always the case. Frequently they appear in the Paris transcription, as they do in the corrected section of the Oxford MS, with a rounded flourish at the top that does not descend much lower. The latter grace, at the bottom of the second stroke of the letter *h*, is likewise be exaggerated or curtailed in both witnesses.

The frequent and notable hooked appearance of the lower portion of the body of *l*, with its curve to the left, also appears to be shared by both MSS:
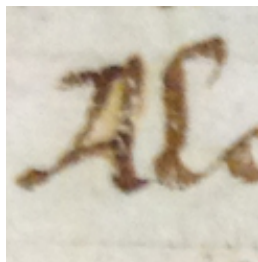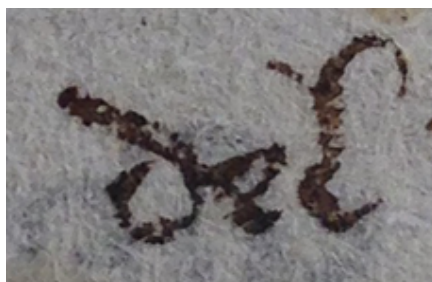

Figure 10: Detail of Figure 3

Figure 11: Detail of Figure 4

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This curve is likewise not observed for all *l* forms, either in the Paris MS or in this corrected section of the Oxford MS. A straight ascender is often used instead. However, this distinctive morphology of *l* is a strong point of commonality between these witnesses. As with other ascenders, whether there are two distinct strokes at the top of the letter, or simply the long curving right-hand grace, has to do with whether or not there is a preceding long stroke.

In both MSS, we also find the use of two forms of *a*: an uncial form that is word-initial or independent, a second form used within a word, offering a further point of commonality between our comparata. A final case, and coincidentally of profound significance to our current understanding of the development of Venetian *humanistic* script, concerns the majuscule M:
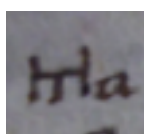
Figure 12: Detail of Figure 6
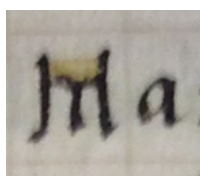
Figure 13: Detail of Figure 1

These instances of 'Ma' ('But') occur respectively in the corrected section of the Oxford MS commentary, and in the text of the *Commedia* in the Paris MS (pictured in Figure 1). In this latter instance, the M is found in the particular position of a terzina-initial capital.[12] Elisabetta Barile's study of the first decades of humanist writing in Venice reports the following (with reference to notary documents): 'L'attestazione

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[12] Terzina-initial capitals are present here in a schema known as *iniziali sporgenti* – initial letters that stand apart in their own column. This is a persistent feature of Dante MSS, and a fascinating one, with parallels in the Carolingian transmission of Latin poets, notably Vergil, as well as with Christian Latin verse (see for instance the Antwerp Sedulius (MS Antwerp, Musaeum Plantin-Moretus, M.17.4)).

cronologicamente più 'alta' da me reperita è del maggio 1421: si tratta della parola "MAIUS" con M tre aste e traversa orizzontale rettilinea, che segna l'inizio delle deliberazioni del Senato veneziano risalenti a tale mese' ('The earliest attestation that I have found is from May 1421: it concerns the word 'MAIUS' with an M with three beams and a rectilinear horizontal crossbeam, which marks the beginning of the deliberations of the Venetian Senate from that month').[13] This M is introduced into early examples of *littera antiqua* in Venice, in a recuperation of a Greek form of the majuscule. The Greek M was, it must be said, in continuous use in funerary inscription in the Veneto through the later Middle Ages (Petrarch's tomb being a notable instance), and Barile does note an exceptional prior instance of this M from 1405, though 'di gusto ancora gotico' ('still of a gothic flavour').[14] Still, the form of the majuscule M offered here by Zanchani presents a remarkable puzzle: certainly a late-fourteenth century dating for the Paris MS becomes less likely. Literary examples of this M recall the first 'irregular' humanistic scripts of the Venetian 1420s, such as those of Sebastiano Borsa and Ruggiero Cataldo,[15] who are likewise noteworthy for their use of this M in tituli *as well as* for majuscules in the main body of text transcribed. With this backdrop to the morphology of this letter, Zanchani must emerge as a significant Venetian graphic innovator, albeit in this one particular but significant detail.

With the long *d*, and the eye-catching graces on ascenders (the regular feature of *l, h, b*), and with the co-presence of identical variants in the morphology of these

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[13] With particular reference to MS Venice, Archivio di Stato, Senato, Misti, reg. 53, c. 132v, in Elisabetta Barile, *Littera antiqua e scritture alla greca. Notai e cancellieri copisti a Venezia nei primi decenni del Quattrocento*, Memorie del Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti 51 (Venice: Insituto Veneto di Scienza, Lettere ed Arti, 1994), 90.

[14] MS Venice, Archivio di Stato, Secreta. Pacta, reg. 7 c. 16v, in Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 13–20.

last, in both witnesses, I believe we have enough to establish this hand as that of Zorzi Zanchani.

If both of these MSS passed beneath the hand – and in the case of the Oxford MS, the expunging and tutelary hand – of one scribe, a closer than imagined relationship of production must be hypothesised to exist between these two witnesses of the *Commedia* and the vernacularized Imola commentary. This raises the question: do these MSS disclose a shared milieu of production, and how might we understand this? If, to pick up Rotiroti's cue concerning gothic *textualis* in the tradition of the *Commedia*, we can talk about a distinct 'way' of reading the *Commedia*, what particular way of reading does this milieu supply? Might even the marked differences between these MSS tell us about how a particular milieu worked to achieve a particular model?

As a conclusion to the present scribal inquiry, briefly, I'd like to add a few words on what is known about Zorzi Zanchani. The most extensive study of this scribe is a few pages from Rinaldo Fulin's study of Venetian MSS, written in the mid-nineteenth century.[16] Fulin had the opportunity of seeing the Paris MS, then housed in the Bibliothèque impériale, though not the Oxford MS. (In fact he devotes several pages to decrying the still-recent bulk acquisition by the Bodleian of Matteo Luigi Canonici's library, of which of course our MS Oxford, Canonici Italian 107 forms a part).[17] From Fulin, and his source – the letters of Apostolo Zeno – we learn that the Zanchani family had roots in Venice from the twelfth century, notably burning down

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[16] Rinaldo Fulin, "I codici Veneti della Divina Commedia descritti," in *I codici di Dante Alighieri in Venezia: Illustrazioni storico-letterarie* (Venice: P. Naratovich, 1865), 43–6.

[17] For a brief note on the history of the collection, see Irene Ceccherini, "The Canonici Collection from Italy to Oxford: Towards the Bicentenary," *DIGITAL GLOSSES*, April 24, 2015, http://blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digitalglosses/2015/04/24/the-canonici-collection-from-italy-to-oxford-towards-the-bicentenary/.

much of the city in 1106 (a rampant fire began in their house).[18] What Fulin gleans

from invoking this family dynasty is a suggestion that, though we cannot be sure of

who Zorzi is exactly, his social rank would suggest that the Paris MS was produced

'ad uso suo proprio' ('for his own use'). This would be evidence, as Fulin suggests,

that 'i gentiluomini veneziani si sobbarcavano sovente anche al tedio delle trascrizioni

per avere al maggior grado possibile emendatissimi i testi di cui faceano tesoro'

('Venetian gentlemen often took upon themselves even the tedium of making

transcriptions, to have the texts they treasured emended to the fullest possible extent')

– the product of this gentleman's labours being in this instance an exceptionally

luxurious witnesses of the poem. I must demur, but cautiously. Without wishing to

prolong these speculations too much, I note the presence of a certain Pietro Zanchani,

a silver weigher and scribe at the Venetian Zecca (the mint) in the 1410s. Alan M.

Stahl notes that 'mint weighers appear to have been drawn from the lowest ranks of

the nobility. …In the later part of the fourteenth century and the early fifteenth, they

included a few individuals from more important families, but apparently the poorest

members of these.'[19] It is possible that a sibling of such a member of minor nobility,

and likewise in need of income, would offer a more likely portrait of Zorzi Zanchani.

Ultimately, however, the name must remain only a name, and we cannot as a result be

precise about this individual's relation to other scribal activity in Venice.

But perhaps the best portrait on offer is the colophon itself. Written in the

vernacular, in a manuscript whose most distinctive feature is its vernacularity, it is a

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[18] I note that 'Zanchani' is not among the names included in the list of medieval
Venetian names provided by Gianfranco Folena. Unless, that is, a Joannes Zantani
counts. I note that 'Zorzi', which I have taken (along with Fulin) as a baptismal name,
is also a common *cognomen* from the thirteenth century on. See Gianfranco Folena,
"Gli antichi nomi di persona e la storia civile di Venezia," *Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di
Scienze, Lettere Ed Arti* 129 (1971): 473.
[19] Alan M. Stahl, *Zecca: The Mint of Venice in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore: Johns
Hopkins University Press, 2000), 296–7.

rhyming couplet in dodecasyllables, and playful enough to name Boccaccio as simply 'quel da Certaldo' (*that one* from Certaldo). As we turn to the question of the tradition of these MSS, we will also have reason to return to this colophon as a sophisticated bit of self-presentation. I will now turn to the set of questions I posed above, and examine the manuscripts from a fuller codicological perspective.

2. Zanchani's place in the tradition: The 'university textbook' format, and the legacy of the Riccardiano-Braidense MSS.

What I hope to do in this section is use what we have learned about the correcting hand in the Oxford MS, to add to our understanding of how we perceive a model – a particular, coherently related group of witnesses – from within the vast array of shapes, sizes, graphic cultures, regional venues, and so forth, that make up the diffusion of Dante's poem in its first centuries. One of the most exciting things about the tradition of the *Commedia* is that, just as the textual diffusion of the poem was so quick, and so large, and took place over such a large dialectical swathe, that any attempt to produce a Lachmannian reconstruction of an authorial original is indefinitely postponed, so too the codicological challenges of transmitting such a poem led scribes to experiment with all available book models. Their clear experimentation with codicological solutions defeats any attempt we might make now to declare what model, and what associated reading or interpretive mode, the author had in mind. As Bertelli puts it, 'la *Commedia* si presenta come l'unico grande testo in volgare ampiamente riprodotto secondo tutti i modelli grafico-librari che caratterizzarono l'ultimo medioevo' ('the *Commedia* shows itself to be the only long

vernacular text widely reproduced, following all the graphic and book models that characterised the end of the Middle Ages').[20]

Both of our MSS are written on parchment, and measure 395-8 by 279-80mm – falling into the category 'large' as established by Rotiroti.[21] The Paris MS contains 433 folia, and the Oxford MS 437. Both present a gothic *textualis* hand, as noted above. Both contain Italian rubrics for each canto, following a schema known as long form. Both also contain miniatures by the famous Venetian illuminator Cristoforo Cortese (see APPENDIX, DECORATION), though Roddewig casts doubt on this attribution for the *Purgatorio* (Canon. Ital. 106). After noting these similarities, however, it becomes clear where these productions differ. A single column of the text of the poem is inscribed in the centre of the folio in the Paris MS, but justified on the gutter side of the folio in the Oxford MS. The surrounding commentary is in two columns in the Paris MS, but is written full page in the Oxford MS. The Paris MS contains an illumination – or presents a sketch or blank space that never received illumination – at the beginning of every canto in the poem. By contrast the Oxford MS presents three illuminations, one at the beginning of each cantica. What becomes clear is that some basic codicological choices to do with dimensions are consistent in both witnesses, but that visually – from the *mise-en-page*, to the illumination scheme, to the graphic choices made (recall the Oxford MS' cursive commentary) – these MSS present profound differences in their conception.

To re-arrive at what the assertion of a coherent tradition might mean in this case, and how it might be perceived, I want to look much further back at an early *Commedia* MS that appears to share in the Paris MS' *mise-en-page*. This is the

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[20] Bertelli, *La Commedia all'antica*, 39. My translation.
[21] This category pertains to codices with h + l superior to 67cm. See Boschi Rotiroti, *Codicologia trecentesca*, 29.

manuscript that goes by the sigla *Rb*: once an integral MS, but now divided between MS Florence, Riccardiano 1005, and MS Milan, Braidense AG XII 2. It is a Bolognese witness, penned by a Maestro Galvano in the second quarter of the fourteenth century.[22] It is, as a result, a key early witness of the textual tradition of the poem – even hypothesised to transmit a 'brogliaccio d'autore' (that is, the poem text may draw on Dante's 'working copy').[23] Bologna was the first centre of diffusion of Dante's poem, and the earliest commentators – Graziolo Bambaglioli and Jacopo della Lana – were resident there as well. Sandro Bertelli sees the fortunes of *Rb* as one of three distinct early formats of *Commedia* production, arising in the generation after the poet's death. The palaeographer suggests that a model of production, with *Rb* at its head, had ample fortunes in the late fourteenth as well as the fifteenth Century. In the latter century, Bertelli demonstrates that this model is represented both in manuscripts bearing the new *littera antiqua*, as well as in the continuing production of manuscripts preserving older graphic aspects.[24]

The distinctive features of *Rb* begin with its inscription in an accomplished *littera textualis* – the minority graphic situation, when compared to the profusion of witnesses in *littera bastarda* in particular. *Rb* also presents the collocation scheme 10.10.10.10.10.10…4: that is, it contains gatherings of 10 folia as required, followed by a final gathering of 4, at the end of each cantica.[25] The final smaller gathering is the result of choosing to bring to an end the text of each cantica of the poem (*Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso*) at the end of a gathering, thus producing each cantica as a discrete 'codicological element' to be then bound together into a single codex, or left

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[22] Bertelli, *La tradizione della "Commedia" dai manoscritti al testo*, 1:381.
[23] Marisa Boschi, "Un esempio di costuzione sperimentale di un modello: Il codice RB della 'Commedia' di Dante," in *Scritti offerti a Francesco Mazzoni dagli allievi Fiorentini* (Florence: Società Dantesca Italiana, 1998), 31–38.
[24] Bertelli, *La Commedia all'antica*, 41.
[25] Boschi Rotiroti, *Codicologia trecentesca*, 53.

separate.[26] Both our MSS preserve this collation scheme – gatherings of ten, the last of which is adapted to produce a caesura between each cantica (this also accounts for the final gathering of twelve in the *Purgatorio* codex (Canon Ital. 106) – see APPENDIX, COLLATION). This is, however, a broader feature of the first decades of the *Commedia*'s production (Bertelli calls it 'primotrecentesco').[27] It is partly why it was easy to separate the Oxford witness into three separate codices at a later date, the form it is conserved in now (as, indeed, *Rb* itself is now shared between Milan and Florence). It bears mention that these discrete codicological units, for each cantica, interestingly mimic what Dante said about his poem's original inscription: 'ma perché piene son tutte le carte | ordite a questa cantica seconda…' ('but because all of the sheets laid out for this second cantica are full…' (*Purg.* 33.136)).[28]

The most distinctive feature of *Rb*, however, is how it lays out its commentary. *Rb* transmits the commentary of Jacopo della Lana, a Bolognese commentator responsible for an exceptionally early commentary, possibly written as early as 1322 (a year after the poet's death). The Lana commentary is laid out, in *Rb*, as a frame around a single column of poem text in the centre of the folio side. This scheme, preserved in four instances within the *antica vulgata*, quickly grew to prominence and is that found in the vast majority of witnesses containing commentary at the end of the fourteenth century.[29] This is the scheme found in the Paris MS (see Figure 1). Codicologists have noted that *Rb*'s format, in turn, appears to borrow features of fourteenth-century university texts.[30] We can hazard being more precise:

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[26] The definition of an *élement codicologique* is from Peter Gumbert, drawn on by Rotiroti in Ibid., 41.

[27] Bertelli, *La Commedia all'antica*, 57.

[28] Cited in Boschi Rotiroti, *Codicologia trecentesca*, 41.

[29] Statistical tables are provided in Ibid., 58.

[30] 'Dal punto di vista codicologico, *Rb* si presenta come un manoscritto organizzato sul modello de libro scolastico, universitario, col testo della *Commedia* fissato al

the model in question is one associated with books of civil law, containing Justinian's *Institutes*.[31] The salient feature of this model is its *mise-en-page*: a double column of text of the *Institutes* in the centre of the folio, surrounded on all edges by commentary, also in two columns, and forming a square around the text at the centre. This layout is referred to as *a cornice* – 'framing'. *Rb* is seen, for the *Commedia* tradition, as an originator of this visual layout. Extensive studies on the question of *Rb*'s model have been put forward by Pomaro and Boschi,[32] among others, and the evidence that Maestro Galvano is the first scribe responsible for this design is convincing. This hypothesis is generated from the difficulty the scribe apparently had in matching poem to commentary, suggesting he was working from separate texts, not an integral precedent. As Bertelli summarises this thesis: 'L'armonia tra testo e commento è stata attentamente studiata dal copista, che per non alterare un certo equilibrio ha provveduto di volta in volta ad adeguare alla necessità la larghezza delle colonne, il numero delle linee di scrittura, l'altezza del margine inferiore e la densità della scrittura. Non sempre, tuttavia, questi artifici sono stati sufficienti a ben calibrare glossa e testo. Infatti, i numerosi spazi rimasti in bianco sono stati spesso

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cento della pagina a circondato, nella disposizione cosiddetta a cornice (chiose su due colonne inquadranti il testo dantesco), dal commento di Iacopo della Lana.' ('From a codicological perspective, *Rb* presents itself like a manuscript organised on the model of a school book, used in the university, with the text of the *Commedia* placed in the centre of the page and surrounded by the commentary of Iacopo della Lana, in the so-called *a cornice* model (two columns of gloss framing the Dantean text.') In Bertelli, *La tradizione della "Commedia" dai manoscritti al testo*, 1:63.

[31] I must acknowledge my teacher, Dr. Irene Ceccherini, as the source responsible for this aperçu, and I must acknowledge my debt to her scholarship on the Canonici collection of the Bodlian Library, which has been partly concerned with this question of the longevity of *Rb*'s model. Naturally, I personally take full responsibility for whatever limitations might arise in both this point of departure, as well as in the claims I am developing on this basis.

[32] Gabriella Pomaro, "I copisti e il testo. Quattro esempi dalla Biblioteca Riccardiana," in *La Società Dantesca Italiana 1888-1988*, ed. Rudy Abardo (Milan: Riccardi, 1995), 497–536; Boschi, "Un esempio di costuzione sperimentale di un modello: Il codice RB della 'Commedia' di Dante."

riempiti dal copista nelle maniere più diverse…' ('The harmony between the text and commentary was studied attentively by the copyist, who saw fit, from time to time, to adjust the size of the columns, and the number of written lines, as well as the height of the lower margin and the denseness of the writing. These tricks didn't always work, though, to bring the text and gloss into line. Indeed, the numerous lines left blank were frequently filled up by the copyist in the most various ways…').[33]

The Bolognese origin of *Rb* would account, of course, for the availability of university book models to use as a basis. Galvano could very well have been adapting the *Commedia* into a codicological form he knew well, but which he fitted to the *Commedia* for the first time. This of course brings with it a new conception of the poem itself. And just what this is, I would like to expand upon for a moment. Another text which was, beginning in the twelfth century, produced in the form of civil law books was Gratian's digest of canon law, known as the *Decretum*. The discipline inaugurated by Gratian at Bologna in tandem with the development of the first university law school there,[34] had grown to prominence by the time Dante was writing his poem, and so had its books. Dante's comments on the *Decretum* are deeply disparaging: 'Per questo l'Evangelio e i dottor magni / son derelitti, e solo ai Decretali / si studia, sì che pare a' lor vivagni' ('such that the Gospel and the Church Fathers are made barren, and only the *Decretum* is studied, as appears from its stuffed margins' (*Paradiso* 9.133-5)). The change Dante is denouncing in his own time is one in which Scriptural and Patristic authority has been supplanted by a new university textual community, with its own legal exegetical culture. This dereliction of the

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[33] Bertelli, *La tradizione della "Commedia" dai manoscritti al testo*, 1:383–4.

[34] A fuller picture of the development of canon law in the vicinity of the Bolognese law school, as well as the analysis of the recension of the text of the *Decretum*, can be found in Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

authorities of an earlier textual community (dereliction is Dante's word), and the terrible hubris of this new textual community, has as its visible sign the crammed commentary apparatus – laid out in two columns, *a cornice* – found in books of the *Decretum*. But it is this model which Galvano adjusts to suit Dante's poem, and quite likely for the first time. The fuller exegetical and, it might be said, soteriological stakes of the codicological model Galvano introduces, cannot be separated from the poet's own awareness of the ideology of *mise-en-page*. I can find no better comment on how deeply Galvano's model interprets what Dante's poem is, and how it is to be read, than this stunning collision with poet's ire. This is not to say that Dante was adverse to his poem being commented upon; rather, the poet saw how a specific codicological model was inseparable from larger interpretive practices. And the fattened margins of the *Decretum* are the sign of the abandonment of other practices of the book.

These same scholastic civil and canon law books often also display illumination at the beginning of every division of the text, and this scheme may account for why Galvano decided to provide the beginning of each canto of the poem with two miniatures, one for the poem and one for the commentary. This illustration scheme is similar to the one we find in the Paris MS, with its beautiful miniatures by Cristoforo Cortese (or a sketch or a space left for them) at every significant textual division – every canto. By contrast, most illuminated witnesses of the poem (like the Oxford MS) present three miniatures, one for the beginning of each cantica.

The question of the continuity of a model stemming from *Rb* over the span of a century is undoubtedly fraught. With the commonalities of size, collation scheme, script (*textualis*), *mise-en-page*, and even illumination scheme, between the Paris MS and a putative ancestor in *Rb*, the field can still seem too vast to establish more than

coincidence and a blending of given models. A recent investigation of the codicological situation of the Lana commentary (that found in *Rb*), and focussed on Oxford MSS in particular, suggests that such a *mise-en-page* 'is not a feature particular to commentaries of Iacomo della Lana, but rather a feature of Italian Humanistic manuscripts'. [35] But of course this model it is not proprietary to a 'Humanistic' setting, either. Indeed, a further analogy with this commentary model – *a cornice* – might be drawn, well before the humanist period, with the tradition of manuscripts of the Bible containing the *glossa ordinaria*. It would expand the scope of the present inquiry into Zanchani's milieu too far to attempt to establish better codicological criteria for the identification of continuity in *Rb*'s model across the entire *Commedia* tradition. Rotiroti's study of the fourteenth century tradition, which identifies four witnesses conforming to this model within the *antica vulgata* and 25 within the later fourteenth century – and Bertelli's comments above – may have to suffice for now. But, there is another way of understanding a relationship with *Rb*'s model – and this one provided by our scribe Zanchani.

Zorzi Zanchani, remarkably, shows himself to be conscious of a model that stretches as far back as *Rb*, from the only text in which he might speak *in propria persona* – his colophon (Figure 3). This reads 'Zorzi Zanchani la scripto per amore / Per quel da Certaldo e Dante al suo honore'. [36] Maestro Galvano, *Rb*'s scribe, penned his colophon on folio 100rB in MS Milan, Braidense AG XII 2, and it reads: 'Maestro Galvano scrisse 'l testo e la ghiosa / Mercé de quella Vergene gloriosa'. [37] Zanchani's

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[35] Emma Barlow, "The Commedia Commentaries of Iacomo Della Lana in the Fifteenth Century in Bodleian Manuscripts," *DIGITAL GLOSSES*, June 30, 2016, http://blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digitalglosses/2016/06/30/commedia-commentaries/.
[36] I provide the following translation: 'Giorgio Zanchani wrote it out of love for the one from Certaldo (Boccaccio) and Dante – to his honour'.
[37] Likewise, I translate: 'Maestro Galvano wrote the text and the gloss, thanks to that glorious Virgin'

own rhyming couplet in dodecasyllables has a precedent here. The forms Zanchani redeploys, beginning the couplet with the two-word name, giving 'la scripo' in place of Galvano's 'scrisse', and imitating 'de quella Vergene' with 'quel da Certaldo', are grounds for a claim of a specifically scribal tradition. That a metrical form, and even a playful indirection at a lexical level (*that one* from Certaldo, *that* Vergin), might be shared, suggests a remarkable degree of imitative scribal self-presentation in Zanchani's colophon. There is virtually no possibility that the later Venetian scribe could have seen *Rb*, but it is suggestive that the codicological hypothesis of a discrete branch of the tradition, stemming from *Rb,* is something already identified and actively cultivated by Zanchani. This detail, as it interprets the question of a tradition with reference to a lettré scribal awareness, may not end the question of a discrete codicological model, isolable within the larger dissemination of *Commedia* witnesses. But within the limits I have set – the suggestion of a specific milieu discernible in its interpretation of prior models – this detail is not to be missed.

3. Conclusion: MSS Oxford, Canon. Ital. 105-7 and MS Paris, Italien 78 - a common model?

Two relationships are central to this paper: that between the Paris MS and a tradition stemming from *Rb*, and that between the Paris MS and the Oxford MS, centring on the identification of Zorzi Zanchani as a scribe present in both. I would like focus primarily on the latter here, and return to the question of the relative dating of the Oxford and Paris MSS. This will advance the question posed at the beginning, about a Venetian milieu.

The Oxford MS and the Paris MS are currently catalogued as products of different centuries. This dating could stand, provided we assert that Zanchani lent his

had to the correction of the Oxford MS decades after his completion of the Paris MS. But we now have less reason for trusting to this gap. Meanwhile, no dates are given in the colophons of either MS, and no date is known for the production of the translation of the Imola commentary. Rather than confining our interpretation to the apparent conservatism of the Paris MS (with its clearer proximity to an early fourteenth century model), and the apparent rupture signalled in the Oxford MS (with its humanist script, and the change it signals in relation to the *mise-en-page* associated with the prior model), we might begin by assembling the facts around what we have learned of their common thread – Zanchani.

Both the Oxford and the Paris MSS have been shown to refer, in small but significant ways, to a humanist graphic culture. In the Oxford MS, the reassessment of the integral nature of the paratextual apparatus in *littera antiqua* assures us of this. In the Paris MS, a reconsideration of the graphic milieu of the scribe is demanded by the single case of Zanchani's majuscule M. These new pieces of analysis suggest that the dating estimates for *both* MSS must be fifteenth century. The way one MS appears 'old' and the other 'new', with respect of the graphic change brought about in Venice by the first humanist decades, no longer suffices. Both MSS must have been produced against this enormous fifteenth century change in graphic systems, and both bear its traces.

The fifteenth century Venetian setting through which both MSS passed – under the hand, or under the tutelage of Zorzi Zanchani – must have brought to the fore pressing questions about the models of producing, and ultimately of reading Dante's poem, that were inherited from the century before. The hypothesis that my identification allows, is that the difference in graphic and codicological models presented by our two MSS evince not a disintegration of older models over decades,

or distinct and unrelated models, but contemporaneous adaptability within a single milieu – supervised, so it appears, by the same scribes. The Paris MS must have been cheaper – with less luxurious parchment, and a much less ample illumination scheme. But inexpensiveness does not quite suffice to explain why its codicological choices are thoroughly adapted in terms of its disposition of commentary and text, as well as its deployment of cursive text (allowing generally for a quicker inscription, at the sacrifice of regularity in the letter forms). What the common presence of Zanchani's hand offers to view is a remarkable scribal adaptability traceable to this one milieu. And this challenges how we discern a milieu of production, in relation to the *Commedia* tradition. The case for comparison here, from the previous century, must be the so-called 'Dante of 100': a famous group of Florentine manuscripts that present near identical characteristics, from the number of terzine disposed on a page (c. 14), to a consistent illumination scheme (one miniature for each cantica: Dante and Vergil for the *Inferno*, Dante and Vergil in a boat for the *Puratorio*, and Dante and Beatrice for *Paradiso*).[38] The hypothesis of a milieu in this instance, that is, in Zanchani's case, would ultimately need to account for such a drastic change in terms of scribal agency – that is, this suggestion would have to be legible in terms of *dis*similarity. And the information is missing in terms of who is commissioning these books, and the reading contexts these books in turn support.

But suggestive, as a way of understanding this dexterity, is the imitative sophistication with which Zanchani presents himself from his colophon. In his couplet he frames himself – or so it appears to a student of the manuscript tradition – as an inheritor of a scribal lineage. And the larger codicological choices in the Paris MS seem congruent with this model of imitation. His re-presentation of a fourteenth

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[38] This has been extensively studied. For a summary of the characteristics of this Florentine group, see Bertelli, *La Commedia all'antica*, 42.

century *Commedia*, which has thrown off modern attempts at dating the Paris MS, might be read now as a sophisticated act of interpretation of a prior codicological model, made by a scribe who was proximate to, and who was himself involved in, tremendous graphic innovation.

Significant in the light of the humanist traces in these MSS, and my consequent suggestions of re-dating the Paris MS, I'd like to close with Teresa de Robertis' notes on the Venetian humanist setting in the first decades of the fifteenth century. The scholar writes:

> E come se esistessero due anime, nella restaurazione delle *litterae antiquae formae*. Un'anima fiorentina, pratica, equilibrata… E un'anima padano-veneta, tutta persa dietro il mito dell'antico, quasi senza termini intermedi, che non riuscirà mai a disciplinarsi in un canone, che continuerà ad esprimersi gamma diversissima di scrittura. In altre parole un'anima artistica, antiquaria, utopica, contrapposta a quella disciplinata, nutrita di esigenze filologiche, grammaticali e ortografiche dei fiorentini.
>
> It is as if there existed two spirits, in the restoration of *littera antiqua*. A Florentine spirit – practical, balanced… and a spirit in the Veneto, absorbed in a myth of the ancient, almost without holds barred, that will never manage to discipline itself into a canon, and will continue to express itself in an enormous range of scripts. In other words, an artistic soul, antiquarian, utopian, counterpoised against a disciplined one, raised on philological, grammatical and orthographical exigencies – the soul of the Florentines.[39]

Without wishing to identify the complex graphical situation of our MSS wholly with this Venetian *littera antiqua* backdrop (this script is a decidedly minority presence in our MSS), I wonder if Zanchani shows himself to be, in his own way, passionately absorbed in a model of the (Italian) past. But more than that – I wonder if he shows himself passionately absorbed in the manner of a Venetian scribe, for whom the past

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[39] De Robertis, "Motivi classici nella scrittura del primo quattrocento," 73–4. My translation.

is not a given model, but one that must be a source of experiment, made new each time.

Words: 8743

Appendix

MSS CANON**. I**TAL**. 105-107**

Dante Alighieri, COMMEDIA, surrounding EXPOSITIONE DEL TESTO by Benvenuto da Imola, in Italian translation by unknown; Italian.
Venice, c. 1415-1420. Parchment, c. 398 x 279 mm; 437 fols + 1 loose leaf
[Coat of arms erased, Ital. 107 fol. 2v]; Owned by Matteo Luigi Canonici; Bodleian Library since 1817

AT A GLANCE

MSS Canon. Ital. 105-107 comprise a Venetian text of the Commedia from the first quarter of the Fifteenth century, with an Italian translation of the Imola commentary. The three volumes each present a separate cantica; the expected order is reversed: Ital. 105 = PARADISO, 106 = PURGATORIO, 105 = INFERNO. The codices further present illuminations by a key Venetian illuminator, Cristoforo Cortese (see Bollati, 2004: 176-9).

Evidence of a single project

Although the MSS are now three different codicological units, they form part of a single project. This conception has resulted in the present decision to describe them as a single entry. Previous cataloguers have catalogued the MSS separately (Mortara, 1865) and as a single entry (Pächt and Alexander, 1970). In focusing on a project, rather than on codicological units, a fuller view is needed of the aspects under which the project appears. The same scribe, and rubricators are present in each codex, as is the illuminator (though Roddewig disputes this attribution for Ital. 106). But more than this, ancient foliation is continuous (rather than beginning again with each codex), which raises the possibility that the texts were once bound together and only later devolved into separate bindings. The LIST OF CONTENTS leaves at the front of

each codex are included in this first foliation, though they do not physically form part of the first quires. The foliation suggests these were prepared and present before the quires from the start, rather than added later. It has previously appeared as though these leaves were added later because they present a distinct humanistic script rather than textualis (Roddewig). Rubrics add an important dimension to the understanding of the project. One rubricator is responsible for the *first* rubric in each cantica (before canto 1), though not for the rubrics of later cantos (the exception in Ital. 107, where this hand in responsible for the rubrics before cantos 1 to 7). This fact is enough to suggest that the separate quires – destined to begin each cantica – were prepared and organised simultaneously by one hand, and so the present survey opts to respect this rubricator's conception of the MSS and treat these codices under one heading.

Editing standards

Transcription standards are as follows: 'j's will not be preserved, but transcribed as 'i'; 'v's and 'u's will be distinguished and transcribed appropriately; apostrophes and diacritical marks follow modern use. Round brackets will be used to indicate uncertainty caused by abbreviation, or uncertain placing of letters, or sharing of letters, though in general abbreviations will not be marked. Line end marked with |, column end marked with ||. Punctuation is modern. Elided prepositions have been separated.

CONTENTS

Canon. Ital. 105

(2° folio: 'Al nome')

(fol. i-ii recto-verso, modern endleaves) blank; recto side Bodleian classmark, 'MS Canon: Ital: 105.'.

(fol. 1r) single leaf; blank.

(fol. 1v) single leaf; a LIST OF CONTENTS in humanistic script, rubric beings at upper left-hand column: 'In questo terço libro de dante nel quale | tracta del paradiso se contieni capitoli | xxxiii. El primo capitolo comença a char | te cccv.' The cantos' numbers are in red, with the respective canto's incipit underneath in black. Two columns, with 'finis' written at the end of the second column (rubricated).

[items 1 and 2 occupy all quires of the volume].

1. (fol. 2r – 120r) Dante Alighieri, COMMEDIA: PARADISO (Petrocchi, 1967). Complete text of the third cantica of the Commedia. Initial rubrics, long form, which number the cantos. The first rubric on fol. 2r begins: 'Danti avendo tratato de lo Inferno e del porga | torio entra nel cielo dove è la gloria delo eternale | dio. Et Invochato Appolo idio degli poeti e de la | sapiencia che li debi dare aiutorio a complire la sua | poesia nel tratato del san | to paradiso gli aparve la Beatriçe…' Poem inc.: 'La gloria di coluy che tuto move | per l'universo penetra e risplende | in una parte più e meno altrove'. Exp.: 'L'amor che move il sol e l'altre stelle'. No final rubric. Minor correction of final line of canto 22 (fol. 84r) – possibly a later hand, as the 'y' changes shape. On folio 2r: marginal annotations in red, contemporary with the rubric, quite faint, the first of which reads 'Confortacione | a farsi alchuno | glorioso nome | perpetuale.' Very tiny note on fol. 6v (lower margin), in unidentified hand; again on fol. 105v. Manicula on fol. 7r. Notes beside poem text, on 3r (defining 'legno' as 'de lauro', and 'marsia' as 'uno grandissimo | sonatore dogni instrumento'). Note again on fol. 58r: 'padre di | federicho | barbarossa'. Again on fol. 70r, 'El

batista | per lo salta…'. Again on fol. 88, 'cita | dini' (glosses 'civi'). A note on fol. 116v sees the scribe insist that he has missed nothing – after 'Cominçio questa santa oracione', the final line of canto 32, a note reads 'chi seguita nel | capitolo sotoscrito'.

2. (fol. 2r – f. 120) Benvenuto da Imola, EXPOSITIONE DEL TESTO, surrounding the text of the Commedia, translated into Italian by unknown. The Italian translation of the Imola commentary is unedited, and not found in incunabula. A Venetian printed edition of 1477 (Vindelino da Spira, ISTC No. id00027000) claims to be the Imola commentary in Italian translation (cfr. Mortara), however misattributes to Benvenuto the commentary of Iacopo della Lana. Inc. (fol. 2r): 'Al nome de la santa et Individua trinitate padre figlio e spirito santo amen [following text damaged for 15 letters] | a crivellare uno mogio di sablone [following text damaged for 12 letters] une pietra preciosa diçie [text damaged for 10 letters] | suo colliegeth la quale chosa…'. Exp. (fol. 120r): 'A la visi | one beatificha a qui fine ne perducha quello el quale questo autore beatissimo si degno di produre | nela vita beata nel quale è ch'onore e gloria perpetua in secula seculorum amen. DEO GRACIAS.' Minor addition in margin on fol. 46r. A Latin marginal note appears on fol. 80r, concerning 'cephas'. Another note on fol. 98r, 'Chades è ne le confine di | barbaria…'.

(fol. 120v) blank.

(fol. 121r) illegible black ink on the bottom of the page, two lines.

(fol. 121v) '121 leaves' in modern pencil

(fols 122-123) modern endleaf, blank.

Canon. Ital. 106
(2° folio: 'Con çiosia')

(fol. i-ii recto-verso, modern endleaves) blank; ii recto side Bodleian classmark, 'MS Canon: Ital: 106.'.

(fol. 1r) single leaf; blank.

(fol. 1v) single leaf; a LIST OF CONTENTS in humanistic script, rubric begins at upper left-hand column: 'In questo segondo libro de dante nel quale | tracta de lo purgatorio se contieni capitoli | xxxiii. El primo capitolo comença a char | te clxxi.' The cantos' numbers are in red, with the respective canto's incipit underneath in black. Two columns, with 'finis' written at the end of the second column (rubricated).

[items 1 and 2 occupy all quires of the volume].

1. (fols 2r–134r) Dante Alighieri, COMMEDIA: PURGATORIO (Petrocchi, 1967). Complete text of the second cantica of the COMMEDIA. A mis-transcription on fol. 4r reversed the order of two terzine (lines 22-24 appear after 25-27 (Petrocchi)) – this has been fixed by the scribe, however, who uses marginal sigla to reverse the order. First rubric (fol. 2r) 'Danti [followed by word of 6 characters, very faint] chome Virgilio fuor del inferno In qu[i]sto capitolo diçie che | [Vuole] tratare de migliore materia di quella che ha e tratato E vole | tratare [n]el porgatorio quelli che per purgatione | sono degni de salire a la gloria eternale…' Poem inc. (fol. 2r): 'Per corer miglior aqua alçia le velle | omay la naviçiella del mio inçegno | che lascia a se drieto mar si crudele'. Exp.: 'Puro e disposto di saglir a le stelle'. No final rubric. Correction (fol. 68r) adds 'tutto' to canto 16.78.

2. (fols 2r–134v) Benvenuto da Imola, trans. unknown, EXPOSITIONE DEL TESTO. Inc.: 'Con çiò sia che buono poeta e ben perita sia coluy el quale descrive e determena caduna cosa | segondo la sua proprietade e veritade segondo chomo descrive el filosofo ne la sua poetria'. Exp.: 'per si ardua e stretta schala a se chiamare e dignato. amen. amen. amen.' A small marginal 'nota' in black on fol. 6r, beside an extensive citation from Livy. A note on fol. 44r, possibly an ancient and a modern hand, which reads 'ac n°. 378'. Effaced note on fol. 68r. An exceptionally large majuscule overflows the margin on fol. 77r. A large section of text is cancelled on fol. 103v.

3. (fol. 134v) Benvenuto da Imola, HACTENUS IPSE SUAS VIDI (Vernon and Lacaita 1887), an hexameter poem, not translated, which concludes the Imola commentary for the PURGATORIO. Inc.: 'Hactenus ipse suas vidi tolerantia penas'. Exp.: 'sedes et regna beatum'.

Canon. Ital. 107

(2° folio: 'Proemius et comendatio Dantis adigery')

(fol. n^1 and n^2 recto-verso, modern endleaf) n^2 recto side Bodleian classmark, 'MS Canon: Ital: 107.'[40]

(fol. i recto) single leaf; blank.

(fol. i verso) single leaf; a LIST OF CONTENTS in humanistic script, rubric beings at upper left-hand column: 'In questo primo libro de dante nel quale trac | ta de lo inferno se contieni capitoli | xxxiiii. | el primo capitolo comença a charte iii.' The cantos' numbers are in red, with the respective canto's incipit underneath in black. Two columns, with 'finis' written at the end of the second column (rubricated).

1. (fols 1r–1v) Benvenuto da Imola, POEM IN PRAISE OF DANTE (Vernon and Lacaita, 1887). A poem in honour of Dante, followed by a divisio of the benefits of the commentary. Inc.: lost to damage (about thirteen letters each). A later hand has repaired some of the damaged text below these first lines, in black. The first legible line (in ancient hand) reads 'carmine dantem. | Elloqu[ar insigne] | studi[is quem]' (text in square brackets finished in black). There is a marginal note, on the supplemental piece of parchment (see **Material**), which reads 'Nescio qua tenui | sacrum modo | carmine dantem'. This supplies the missing first lines. The note that supplies the missing lines appears to be in a sixteenth-century hand (see **Script**). Exp.: 'operis clarissime ostendetur | Ad quam nos vocare dignetur qui est mortis et vite | dominus in eternum. Amen.'. There is a difference here from the reading in MS Paris, BNF Ital. 78, as the Oxford MS omits the following lines present in the relevant explicit in the Paris MS: 'Sequitur divisio Libri et merito post comendatione Autoris' (perhaps unique to Paris codex, not edited).

2. (fols 1v-2r) Benventuo da Imola, COMMENDATIONE (Vernon and Lacaita, 1887). This prefatory section, also present in the Paris codex, begins: 'Premissa

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[40] Previous foliation of 'fol. i' (for following leaf) requires these sigla for previously unfoliated flyleaves.

commendatione nostra poete nunc conse | quenter est ad libri literum decendendum'. The reading differs from that established in Vernon and Lacaita:'Praemissa commendatione *communi tam poetriae quam* nostri poetae, nunc consequentur…'. Exp.: 'Et hoc [2 letters damaged] titul[ii] libri [5 or six letters damaged] | sufficient', (not in Vernon and Lacaita's edition). The rubric after the text (not present in Paris codex) reads 'Incipit prima cantica comedie | dantis adigery poete florentini in qua tractatur di inferno'. This repeats the *titulus* given further up on fol. 2r: 'Libri titulus est talis: Incipit prima cantica comedie dantis...'.

3. (fol. 1v) Acrostic of 'Dantes' (unedited), in the lower margin underneath the ruled space, which gives six words (one beginning with each letter of the name), grouped in pairs, each pair representing one of the cantiche ('DA… in inferno', etc.) The words are 'Da[m]naios', 'Angens', 'Noxia', 'T[damaged letter]gens', and final two words are damaged (10 letters).

[Following items 4 and 5 occupy all quires of the volume]

4. (fol. 2v–169r) Dante Alighieri, COMMEDIA: INFERNO (Petrocchi, 1967). Complete text of the first cantica of the COMMEDIA. The first rubric reads 'In questo primo chanto danti propone che essendo | luy de anni xxxv se a trovo essere ne la via | de vicii e pechati E voiendo ussire di quella gli | vene contra tre grandi ostachuli…' Poem inc.: 'NEl meço del chamin di nostra vita | Mi ritrouay per una selua oschura'. Exp.: 'E quindi uscimo a riveder le stelle'. The terminal rubric reads: 'Qui finisscie el primo libro de la come | dia de danti adigieri intitulato inferno | Deo gratias amen'. A mistake is corrected, at canto 5.97-100, with marginal sigla '.a.' through '.d.', which re-order (correctly) lines that were mis-transcribed. A modern marginal note reads 'i. sapinto', beside *Inf.* 13.127 (fol. 65r). This corrects 'In quel che sapigliato miser i denti', however cf. Petrocchi: 'In quel che s'appiattò miser li denti'. Another such note, also in canto 13 (fol. 61r), corrects 't[o]rien' to 'torian'. Line order is corrected – again with sigla – in this same canto, ll. 70-2 (fol. 62v). A modern note reading 'fogia' corrects 'foglia' on fol. 66v. Two small notes appear above the text at canto 19.122 and 133 (fol. 93r); 'a cui attenta' is written above 'chussi contenta labia', and 'çoè la valle de li Indivinatori' above line 33, 'Indi un'altro vallon mi fu scoperto'. Notes also appear above and below the text on fols 148v and 149r.

5. (fols fol. 2v – f. 169r) Benvenuto da Imola, trans. unknown, EXPOSITIONE DEL TESTO. Much of the incipit text is no longer visible, but it is possible to read from the impression of the pen, and it begins 'Poy che discorso abiamo i preambuli…'. Exp.: 'Qui finisscie la expositione del primo libro de danti çoe de l'inferno composta per maistro Benvenuto da ymola', however any subsequent lines have been removed from the codex (a large square has been cut out of bottom of fol. 169). Exceptionally, the end of the EXPOSITIONE for canto 2 is rubricated (fol. 14r), introducing the following 'Capitolo' (perhaps to fill the line). A large section of the EXPOSITIONE text appears in the margin on fol. 34v, no change of hand. Small addition in margin, fol. 50r; again on fol. 73r, fol. 121r, 131r, 149r, and 150r. A note in the margin on fol. 126r reads 'la dita ymagine | era chiamata palladia'.

DECORATION

Two historiated initials begin each cantica (thus each codex) – one for the beginning of the COMMEDIA text and one for the beginning of the EXPOSITIONE – by Cristoforo Cortese, active in Venice and Padua (Bollati). Illuminations in Ital. 106 may not be by Cortese (Roddewig). Late gothic Venetian (Land). Huter's art-historical study of Cortese's development allows for a more accurate dating of these MSS between 1415-20. Previous descriptions of the MSS date them as early Fifteenth century (late Fourteenth in the case of Roddewig). A comparison of style, from this period of Cortese's career, can be seen with two other Dante MSS illumined in the same years: MS Rimini, Biblioteca Gambalunga, SC.MS 1162, and MS Oxford, Bodleian, Canon. Ital. 115.

The initials are found in the codices on fol. 2r (separately on fols 1r and 2v in Ital. 107). They are enclosed in the square borders with a perimeter of gold. Vine-tendril patterns flow into the margins from the capitals, and are decorated with gold (the result of a Franco-Flemish influence on Cortese's style, possibly transmitted through the Brussels Master whilst both were resident in Padua (Huter)). The palette is rich, with red, green, blue, brown, and pink.

Subsequent four-to-six (sometimes eight) line pen-flourished initials begin the text of the poem and the commentary (respectively) at the beginning of each canto. These are alternating red and blue, and the pen-flourishes alternate between red and (faded) purple. These appear to have been added after the EXPOSITIONE text, as the flourishes

overlay the black of the commentarial text (see the red lines above the 'I', beginning canto four in Ital. 105, fol. 15v).

The capital that begins each terzina is follows the convention of 'iniziali di terzine sporgenti', and spaced ruled separately from the poem text. These are in black, and not elaborated.

A coat of arms appears in the lower margin of Canon. Ital. 107, fol. 2v, however it has been rubbed away. Parts of two surrounding cornucopias are visible still, in green. Illuminations bear a relationship to Venetian illumination cycles. A version of the three beasts on the side of the hill motif (illuminating *Inferno* 1) is presented here, and is also found in MS Paris, Italien 78. The Paris MS contains a much more complex version however, showing three progressive stages of the encounter (and Dante's flight towards Virgil). An Inferno illumination showing the beasts in the dark wood in, in fact, common in Venetian illumination (see other Venetian MSS, apart from BNF, Ital. 78: Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 1035, fol. 4v; Budapest University Library. 33 for an early example (Brieger, Meiss, Singleton, I, p. 51, 212, 316, 332 and II, p. 39, 45)). Representatives of Venetian illumination from this period often include an image of passing through the gates of hell, absent here.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Material:

Parchment, mostly thick. The quires have flesh-side outermost. Flyleaves are modern paper.

Canon. Ital. 105

Parchment thin from quire vii onwards, especially at fols 88-89. The hair sides show more substantial discolouring in these later quires (see fols 60-61). Gatherings with flesh-side outermost. The hair side is quite apparent throughout (fol. 40v). Very few natural flaws or holes. Some liquid stains (esp. fol. 10, also fols 33-34). Wormholes in final quire, and some damage to the leaves, which have had parchment added to for reinforcement (see fols 7, 115, 120, 121).

Canon. Ital. 106

Hair side is very evident, and often discoloured (see fols 54v, 55r, 61r, 73r, 76v, 77r, 115r). Moisture stains throughout quires i and ii, especially on fol. 2r (which contains

the two historiated initials. The colour is smudged here and has leaked onto fol. 1v (the LIST OF CONTENTS). Otherwise the staining is quite minimal in the first two quires, although there is substantial discolouration on the hair side of fol. 9 (recto). Very few flaws in the parchment, but minor holes (fols 28, 45, 118).

Quire vii contains damage patterns that are unique in the three codices. First, a damaged capital at fol. 45r, though this is likely not from exposure, being in the middle of the quire. Rather, the embellished 'L' of the capital seems to be a decoration error that was then half-effaced: the capital L appears in a separate block of poem-text on the folio, which is only one terzina long, and so must have mislead the artist into thinking it was the beginning of the following canto. This text is rather the penultimate terzina of canto 10, and canto 11 begins overleaf with its own, correctly placed capital. But quire vii also has substantial effacing on fol. 48v, which is less easy to account for. A very dark stain appears in the gutter from fol. 77-80. Hair-side fols 86 and 87 appear poorly treated, and present the surface of the skin very clearly. Corner of folio cut away, fol. 70.

Canon Ital. 107

Heavily damaged folia in the first full quire, as well as the added fol. i before it (list of contents). The margins have been cropped here and new parchment has been attached. The damage to fol. 1r spared Cortese's beautiful illumination, but rubbing, wormholes, moisture stains and other stains are all present. All outer margins have been damaged and replaced with parchments strips of c. 25-35 mm until fol. 9. Stains again throughout following quires (iv-vii), though minimal; some wearing through of the parchment at the margins, and ink smudges at fol. 18v. Substantial loss of text on the first and last folia of quire vi (fol. 31 and 40), suggesting that the quire was unbound at some point; indeed, this is also true of the partially effaced text on fol. 121r, which begins quire xv. Rectangle cut out of the bottom of fol. 70. Minor smudging, perhaps from liquid, on fols 94, 112, and 113, both sides; again on fols 110-111, and these are respectively the last and first folia of their quires. Smudging again, and large powdery stains on fols 122v and 123r where the hand might rest; also on fol. 125r. Corner cut away on fol. 143.

Dimensions:

c. 398 x 279 mm

Number of Leaves:

437 + 1 loose leaf, in three vols. Canon Ital. 105 = 128, Ital. 106 = 141, Ital. 107 = 174 + 1 loose leaf (blue).

Foliation:

1-423 in ancient red, in the upper right.

Canon. Ital. 105

304 in ancient black, 305-423 [424 damaged] in ancient red, in the upper right; 1-121, in modern pencil in the upper right; the modern endleaves (fols i-ii & 122-23) foliated by the cataloguer.

Canon Ital. 106

170-303 in ancient red, in the upper right; 1-134 in modern pencil in the upper right; the modern endleaves (fols i-ii & 135-36) foliated by the cataloguer.

Canon. Ital. 107

2-169 [1 damaged] in ancient red in upper right, ('1' is missing and '2' is faint; modern pencil corrects both); fol. i added in modern pencil. Modern flyleaves (fols n^1, n^2, and 170-171) added by cataloguer. Folia n^1 and n^2 are the modern flyleaves before fol. i (LIST OF CONTENTS). An additional leaf is foliated by the cataloguer as folio x, and this is an unbound single sheet of modern blue paper, very fragile, inserted between fols 169 and 170.

Collation:

Canon. Ital. 105

Gatherings of ten, apart from flyleaves and LIST OF CONTENTS: i 2 (fols i and ii = flyleaves) | ii 1 (fol. 1 = LIST OF CONTENTS), a single leaf that does not form part of quire iii; iii 10 (fols 2-11) | iv 10 (fols 12-21) | v 10 (fols 22-31) | vi 10 (fols 32-41) | vii 10 (fols 42-51) | viii 10 (fols 52-61) | ix 10 (fols 62-71) | x 10 (fols 72-81) | xi 10 (fols 82-91) | xii 10 (fols 92-101), very thick central bifolio | xiii 10 (fols 102-111) | xiv 10 (fols 112-121) | xv 2 (fols 122-123), modern endleaves: no quire marking, but the white threads in the centre of each quire are visible.

Canon Ital. 106

Gatherings of ten, except for quire xv, and apart from flyleaves and LIST OF CONTENTS: i 2 (fols i and ii = flyleaves), ii 1 (fol. 1 = LIST OF CONTENTS), a single leaf that does not form part of quire iii; iii 10 (fols 2-11) | iv 10 (fols 12-21) | v 10 (fols 22-31) | vi 10 (fols 32-41) | vii 10 (fols 42-51) | viii 10 (fols 52-61) | ix 10 (fols 62-71) | x 10 (fols 72-81) | xi 10 (fols 82-91) | xii 10 (fols 92-101) | xiii 10 (fols 102-111) | xiv 10 (fols 112-121) | xv 14-1 (fols 122-134; fol 122 lacking its counterpart, no loss of text) | xvi 2 (fols 135-36); modern endleaves.

Canon. Ital. 107

Gatherings of ten, except for quire xix, and apart from flyleaves and LIST OF CONTENTS: i 2 (folia n^1 and n^2 = flyleaves) | ii 1 (fol. i = LIST OF CONTENTS), a single leaf that does not form part of quire iii; iii 10-1 (fols 2-10), the stub of the missing final folio is visibly attached to fol. 10. No loss of text, but the stub covers part of one marginalium (not, however, the other marginalium on this folio, which has been partly written over the stub) suggesting the removal was contemporaneous with inscription | iv 10 (fols 11-21) | v 10 (fols 21-30) | vi 10 (fols 31-40) | vii 10 (fols 41-50) | viii 10 (fols 51-60), after the final folio of this quire (fol. 60) there appears to a stub of parchment in the gutter, through this does not affect the collation | ix 10 (fols 61-70) | x 10 (fols 71-80) | xi 10 (fols 81-90) | xii 10 (fols 91-100), there appears to be a stub of parchment in the gutter between fols 98-99, this does not affect collation | xiii 10 (fols 101-110) | xiv 10 (fols 111-120) | xv 10 (fols 121-130) | xvi 10 (fols 131-140) | xvii 10 (fols 141-150) | xviii 10 (fols 151-160) | xix 10-1 (fols 161-169; fol 161 is lacking its counterpart, though the poem and commentary both end on fol. 169) | xx 2 (fols 170-171) modern endleaves.

Ruling:

in lead point; in black exceptionally on Ital. 106, fol. 8r. Double inner and single outer vertical bounding lines. Also a single vertical line for the emplacement of the row of 'iniziali sporgenti'. Horizontal lines appear at the top margin, though not at the bottom. The ruling for the poem text varies from folio to folio, but in general the poem is provided a box justified to the gutter-side of the folio (not central, as in MS Paris, BNF Ital. 78). Usually one box, though occasionally two. Ruled space 290-320 x 207-13 mm. This variation is due to the fact that more lines of text appear per folio

towards the end of each cantica (especially PARADISO, Ital. 105). The number of lines per folio varies from c. 57 to 65. The commentary is written full-page, while MS, Paris BNF Ital. 78 presents the commentary in two columns.

Triple pricking for inner verticals bounding lines – separating poem text from commentary – are occasionally visible. The mise-en-page is reversed for one folio, Canon. Ital. 105, fol. 60r (the text is justified against the other margin); same for Ital. 106, fol. 128v. Evidence of pricking – esp. Ital. 105, fol. 96 (where it was re-done, leaving 12 holes beside the poem text); common throughout Ital. 105 and 106, three holes in a horizontal row that rule the commentary edge, 'iniziali sporgenti' letters, and poem text respectively (two rows per folio).

Script:

Commedia text written in Gothic textualis, with EXPOSITIONE in cursive (without loops). 2 hands (the majority of the inscription, in cursive and textualis, are by the same scribe; there is a second rubricating hand).

LIST OF CONTENTS in all three codices is written in a humanistic script. In Ital. 107, this hand re-appears as the scribe of rubrics before cantos, beginning with canto 7 (fol. 34r). This hand can be recognized by the horizontal stroke of the 'e', as opposed to the diagonal stroke preferred by the main scribe. An uncial 'a' is also favoured. The use of '7' for 'e' is particular to this hand, as well as a humanistic 'g' with a separate bottom loop (though, importantly, these are not identical between the LIST OF CONTENTS and the rubrics, notably that on fol. 34r). There is a more vertical orientation to letters in this hand, and a right-hand lean. This hand continues all the rubrics in Canon. Ital. 107, past fol. 34r – although the final rubric 'Qui finisscie el primo libro…' is written in *textualis* and shows all the signs of being the primary hand. The rubric of canto 2, and all subsequent rubrics in Canon. Ital. 106 present this second hand (which prefers humanistic script). The same is true of Canon. Ital. 105.

The primary hand is responsible for the poem text, as well as the commentary, initial rubrics, and running titles. There are tremendous graphic differences between these texts but common to this hand are flat gothic 'g's, and a 'gi' and 'ga' fusion, as well as a horizontal stroke for the bar for 'e'. Majuscule 'A' is very distinctive, appearing like a large minuscule uncial 'a' open wide at the bottom. This can be seen in the cursive commentary text, too (i.e. Canon. Ital. 106, fol. 7v, at the top). The fact that

these features appear in both the poem text and the commentary suggests one hand common to both, while the scribe observes a hierarchy of scripts.

Complicating this picture slightly is the script for the EXPOSITIONE that appears between fols 3r and 8v of Canon. Ital. 107. The majuscule 'I', closely resembles that of the running header. The majuscule 'A' noticed before is common as well. The script, however, is distinguished by a relative lack of cursive 'r's, in favour of rounded *textualis* 'r's, as well as by a more pronounced use of uncial 'a's and 'd's (flat, rather than tending towards a vertical beam). Majuscule 'E' is distinct from that in the rest of the EXPOSITIONE text, by being more often rounded rather than square (but the primary scribe does use both). Likely, this is the same scribe working at a slower speed, and still deciding on the relative hierarchy of scripts.

The primary hand appears to be responsible for marginal notes in Canon. Ital. 107, as well on fol. 2v of Canon. Ital. 105 (there are otherwise no marginal notes in Ital. 105 and 106).

The sigla used for cross-reference between the poem and EXPOSITIONE text, in red, appear to be the *textualis* used by the primary hand in the poem text. This is surprising, as later rubrics present a distinct humanistic hand (as noted), suggesting that the hand responsible for the red sigla, and for the canto rubrics, are different.

The noted presence of a humanistic script relates to Bertelli's suggestion that after 1400 Italy witnessed a slow migration in the production of the COMMEDIA from Gothic *textualis* to *littera antiqua* scripts (Bertelli, p. 77). In this light, the present volumes (produced a generation later than the period in which Bertelli marks this change) are notable for their decision to *preserve* a fourteenth-century appearance, while at least one hand present the newer graphic capability. We can see this as a choice, as the volumes present humanistic script in the body of the text (not, as other cataloguers have believed, only in the LIST OF CONTENTS) but employ it only in the position of rubrics and paratextual material. While other cataloguers have believed that the humanistic script in the LIST OF CONTENTS represented only a later addition to an already-complete production (an appearance strengthened by the **Collation**), the presence of this hand in rubrics throughout suggests that it is closely contemporary with the main inscription.

The presence of another hand is clear in Ital. 107, in an extensive correction on fol. 58r/v. This is a textualis inscription, but with a thinner writing implement and a

marked graphic difference. This is the hand of Zorzi (Giorgio) Zanchani, the principal scribe of MS Paris, Italien 78.

The margins of Ital. 105, fol. 68v contains the capitalised words 'DIRIGITE JUSTITIAM', the boundary for which appears to be lead ruled. The gutter margin contains 'Q[UI] JUDICATIS TERRAM'. These are written dot-by-dot (perhaps dotted because these words are spelled out by individual souls at this point in the *Paradiso* text). These words are (exceptionally) written in majuscule only in the EXPOSITIONE text (fol. 69r).

A much later (possibly sixteenth-century) hand is responsible for some marginal notes, in black, at various points in Canon. Ital. 107 (examples noted in CONTENTS). Directly beside the corrected section of text mentioned above (in a third hand), a long note in this modern hand appears. It is a citation, ending in 'etc.', but it is damaged and (for what appears) its source is unknown. This hand is also responsible for the note on Canon. Ital. 107, fol. 1r, on the added parchment used for repair (see CONTENTS, **Ital. 105**, 1). This hand is again visible in an illegible pair of lines at the end of Canon. Ital. 105, fol. 121r.

Rubrication:

Red rubrics, two different scribes (see SCRIPT above). Two different colours differentiated between rubricators. The scribe responsible for the first rubrics in each codex (but not for subsequent ones in Ital. 105 and 106) is also responsible for foliation, running titles, and cross-reference sigla on the evidence of colour. There is numeration before each canto in the form 'Canto vi' (the LIST OF CONTENTS refers to each canto as 'capitolo', and the running header uses 'Cap.^m', while the rubric prefers the 'canto' designation.) These MSS follow the long-form tradition of *Commedia* rubrics, though they are present in Italian not Latin.

The commentary is cross-referenced with the text through the use of sigla. All letters of the alphabet are used in order (after 'p' comes 'pp') in the form '.a.', then after '.y.', '.ç.' (in place of 'z'), '.7.', '.9.' and '.4.', before beginning again with '.a.'. The pattern of sigla after '.y.' changes occasionally. A sigla in the poem text will be matched with the same sigla in the outer margin, which is then matched with the beginning of the gloss in the body of the EXPOSITIONE text (three marks in total per note). There reference sigla are in red, but are clearly different to the red of the canto rubrics.

Running titles are used throughout, in the upper margin. Verso sides read 'Cap.ᵐ'
followed by the number of canto in roman numerals. Recto sides read 'Parad' with a
strike through the 'd' for Canon. Ital. 105; 'Purg' with a stroke above 'g' for Ital. 106,
and 'Infern' with a long figure like an 'I' after the 'n' for Ital. 107. Omitted, Ital. 107
fol. 62v.

No catchwords or quire signatures.

Binding:

Modern red leather, embossed gold around edges on front and back. Textblocks sewn
on six supports. Gold lettering on spine reads 'Dante | Inferno | Coi Com: | Di Ben |
D' Imola', (alternately 'Purgat' and 'Parad') on green. Below reads 'Cod. Mem.'
Leather rubbed on all corners; minor worm damage.

Provenance:

[Coat of arms erased, Ital. 107 fol. 2v]; in Venice, owned by Matteo Luigi Canonici,
and sold in 1817 to Bodleian Library.

Textual history

Venetian dialect (Moore, Roddewig). Looking as far back as possible, the present text
of the COMMEDIA is related to texts produced by Antonio da Fermo, after the
'Landiano' MS of 1336 (see Sanguineti, p. xlvii). This is on the authority of two of
Barbi's *loci*, which relate the present text at *Purg*. 24.125 and *Par*. 5.95 to the
Landiano MS. Apart from the significant error noticed by Moore (above), which
relates the present text closely to that of MS Paris, BNF Ital. 78, there are other
significant textual properties of these codices that have not been discussed in critical
editions (that may, as a result, be unique or local). This includes *Par*. 16.154 'Non per
division già fato vermiglio', where 'già' appears to be interpolated. A major
discrepancy appears at *Purg*. 16.145, which reads 'Chossi parole più non volse al
dirmi', rather than 'Così tornò, che più non volle udirmi'. No major MSS groups give
this reading.[41] The line before this gives 'che li paia' rather than 'che n'apaia'. Again
in *Purg*, the final line of Canto 23 gives a *lectio facilior* reading of 'richiusa', rather

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[41] As established by the most recent critical edition of Sanguineti, which gives seven
groups upon a more complete examination of the *Barbi loci* for extant MSS
(including Ital. 105-7).

'ricuscia'. The famous explicit of *Inferno* 5 reads 'E cadi come morto chorpo cade', rather than 'chorpo morto'. Another error, to do with the power of a dead metaphor, changes *Inf.* 8.130 (fol. 42r) to read 'Tal che per luy ne fia la porta averta', rather than 'la terra aperta'.

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