Renaissance Rewritings

Edited by
Helmut Pfeiffer, Irene Fantappiè and Tobias Roth

DE GRUYTER

The publication of this volume was made possible through the support of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, using funds provided to Collaborative Research Center 644 »Transformations of Antiquity«.

ISBN 978-3-11-052230-3
e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-052502-1
e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-052325-6
ISSN 1864-5208

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A CIP catalog record for this book has been applied for at the Library of Congress.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at http://dnb.dnb.de.

Cover illustration: Martin Zech, Bremen
Logo »Transformationen der Antike«: Karsten Asshauer – SEQUENZ
Printing and binding: Hubert & Co. GmbH & Co. KG, Göttingen
♾ Printed on acid-free paper
Printed in Germany

www.degruyter.com

Susanne Goumegou (Tübingen)

Ariosto's Rewriting of Ancient and Contemporary Models in Italian Verse Satire

Ludovico Ariosto is credited with having started the tradition of two genres in Italy: his 1508 comedy, *La Cassaria*, lays the foundations for the 'commedia erudita' and his satires (albeit posthumous) mark the beginning of the vernacular verse satire, as Piero Floriani clearly postulates in his major study on *Satira classicistica nel Cinquecento:* 'La fondazione del genere satirico volgare porta, com'è comunemente riconosciuto, la data della prima satira ariostesca, il 1517'.[1]

Ariosto's invention of these genres in the vernacular is by no means a creation *ex nihilo*. Beginning in 1486, the late Quattrocento sees the revival of the comedies of Terence and Plautus – especially Plautus – at the Court of Ferrara, while at about the same time the Roman verse satires of Juvenal and Horace begin to appear in print.[2] Ariosto's contribution is therefore not strictly speaking an invention of new genres, but rather the transformation of classical genres. In this sense, the *commedia erudita* and the vernacular satire can be understood as rewritings which stand in a complex relationship to the preceding Latin tradition and situate themselves in an ambivalent way between the Renaissance cult of the ancient world and Ariosto's confident claim to innovation. We may gain an insight into the complexities of positioning within this tension-ridden field by looking at Ariosto's first prologue to *La Cassaria* (1508). On the one hand, he confidently announces a "nova commedia [...] piena / Di varii giochi, che né mai latine / Né greche lingue recitarno in scena" (v. 1–3).[3] This claim to novelty is mostly based on the fact that, unlike a number of authors at the Court of Ferrara, Ariosto has not merely adapted a single Latin comedy into the vernacular, but instead combined plot elements from a variety of Latin models. With this in mind, he presents himself as an innovator who has outdone classical tradition – a pose, however, which itself goes back to the tradition of prologues to Latin comedies, where departures from the Greek model are a common theme.[4] Ariosto's rewritings of the Roman comedies are thus modelled on plays which are themselves rewritings of Greek models and invariably remark on this connection in their prologues.

1 Floriani (1988), 63.

2 There is a plethora of literature on the origins of Italian comedy in the Cinquecento. For paradigmatic studies on the subject cf. Herrick (1966); Radcliff-Umstead (1969); Guidotti (1983); Bonino (1989) and Padoan (1996). On the development of Italian verse satire cf. Floriani (1988), Galbiati (1987) and Brummack (1971); on the tradition of the Roman satire in the Renaissance cf. Knoche (1971).

3 The prologue to *Cassaria* is quoted from Borlenghi (1959), Vol. I, 979.

4 On prologues to Roman comedies, cf. Wessels (2012).

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110525021-011

On the other hand, Ariosto also positions himself within the topos of the superiority of the ancients. The speaker of the prologue addresses his audience as people who hold the ancient authors in higher esteem than the moderns and will thus regard his 'nova commedia' with scepticism:

> Parmi veder che la più parte incline
> A riprenderla, subito c'ho detto
> Nova, senza ascoltarne mezzo o fine:
> Che tale impresa non li par soggetto
> De li moderni ingegni, e solo estima
> Quel che li antiqui han detto esser perfetti. (v. 4–9)

Caught in this dilemma between the Renaissance demand for innovation and the respect for ancient models, Ariosto opts for a dual strategy, acknowledging the superiority of the ancients on a linguistic level, but claiming equality on the level of *ingegno:*

> È ver che né volgar prosa né rima
> Ha paragon con prose antique o versi,
> Né pari è l'eloquenzia a quella prima.
> Ma l'ingegni non son però diversi
> Da quel che fur, che ancor per quello Artista
> Fansi, per cui nel tempo indrieto fèrsi (v. 10–15).

Although he concedes the rhetorical superiority of the ancient authors, Ariosto insists on the modern's *ingegni* being at the same level. This equality allows them not only to imitate the classical tradition, but also to transform it in an innovative fashion, by inventing "varii giochi"[5].

This kind of innovative transformation can be understood as a form of rewriting because it continues to draw on existing comedy material with its finite stock of characters and subjects. The originality to which Ariosto lays claim lies not in the invention of new subjects, but in the use of *contaminatio*, i. e. Ariosto conflates elements from a variety of comedies. In his later comedies, he goes even further in this regard, integrating components borrowed from the Italian novella, thereby extending the traditional repertoire with vernacular material to which he grants as much importance as to his classical models. He also increasingly takes settings and problems from contemporary reality, and in the thirties, moreover, he switches from prose to verse, thus raising himself up to the level of the ancients in the area of *eloquenzia* as well. We

5 The semantics of 'giochi' oscillates between the Latin words *ludus* and *iocus*. Cf. Nuti (1998), 18–19. In the context of the prologue, the appropriate meaning to apply to the word is presumably one that comes close to 'feints' in the plot or Plautine *ludi*. Cf. Ferroni (1980), 106: "In tutti questi casi il 'gioco' appare dunque come creazione di oggetti e di mosse finte, che servono ad avviluppare una vittima dentro un falso 'creder', a ridurlo alla dimensione di 'pazzo' o di 'sciocco', e quindi di bersaglio ludico".

can thus observe a gradual transformation of the genre into the vernacular, a transformation which is marked by a steady increase in autonomy: first performances of original Roman comedies in Italian translation at the end of the Quattrocento are followed by first adaptations by Italian authors; these in turn are succeeded by the *commedia erudita* which originates in Ariosto's attempts to go beyond these adaptations by employing *contaminatio* in *La Cassaria* – and which will continue to gain autonomy in the years to come.[6]

In what follows, however, I will not be talking about comedy, but about Ariosto's satires. If I began by quoting the prologue to *Cassaria*, I did so because it contains programmatic statements made by Ariosto on his relationship to classical antiquity. No such statements exist for the satires; this lack of metapoetic paratexts may result from the fact that Ariosto did not publish the satires himself. Nonetheless the question of how Ariosto combines imitative and innovative elements in his 'fondazione di genere' – how he transforms ancient models and adapts them to contemporary reality – is also relevant to the satires. Furthermore, in the satires, too, he not only transforms ancient models, but also, as in the comedies, includes contemporary models in his repertoire.

Satire's relationship to the classical tradition is, in fact, even more complex than is the case with comedy, with its fixed stock of characters and plot elements. At first glance, it may seem strange to explore satire from the perspective of the literary transformation of classical antiquity, since it is a genre usually seen to be steeped in contemporary reality. Research, however, has long since shown that Ariosto's satires are by no means to be read as autobiographical statements in which an "Ariosto in veste di camera" (Croce) airs his private views on contemporary reality. In fact, they closely follow the Horatian model and contain a large number of intertextual references to Horace's satires.[7] In the following sections, I shall first outline the main features of the development of the genre at the end of the Quattrocento and the specific features of Ariosto's satires, and then proceed to a close reading of Ariosto's fifth satire.

1 The Origins of Ariosto's Italian Verse Satire

In the late Quattrocento, the foundations are laid for the development of Italian verse satire.[8] Crucial to this development is the role of Roman verse satire at that time. The dominant model is Juvenal, whose satires are printed more than fifty times between 1470 and 1500, but mention should also be made of the numerous printings of Hor-

6 For paradigmatic studies on the subject cf. Ferroni (1980) and Guidotti (1983).

7 On the adaptation of the generic model cf. Floriani (1988); on concrete intertextual references cf. Petrocchi (1972), Marsh (1975), Sarkissian (1985).

8 Cf. especially Galbiati (1987) and Floriani (1988), but also Knoche (1971) and Brummack (1971).

ace and the somewhat less numerous editions of Persius.[9] These editions often contain important commentaries by humanist authors which develop a first Renaissance theory of satire and lay particular emphasis on satire's coupling of *prodesse* and *delectare*.[10] In order to open up Latin verse satire to a broader public, Italian translations appear in print: Giorgio Sommariva translates Juvenal into Italian as early as 1480, while Horace has to wait until 1559 to be translated into the vernacular by Lodovico Dolce. These translations meet a growing interest in moral poetry during this period. Floriani interprets the various forms of moral poetry in the vernacular, which occur in genres as different as the sonnet or the *capitolo*, as a symptom of the humanist crisis and of the humanists' ethico-political consciousness.[11] The Italian verse of Antonio Vinciguerra, printed in Bologna in 1495, could even be classified as the first Italian satire. But, according to Floriani, Ariosto's satires differ from these Italian predecessors in one crucial respect: they combine the moral subjects of vernacular poetry with a classical generic model, namely the Horatian-style satire. The crucial difference compared with existing vernacular genres is the communication structure, which is based on the Horatian model. Florian defines it as:

> testo poetico in terzine nel quale uno *speaker* che coincide con la persona storica dell'autore si rivolge in forma epistolare (prevalente) o colloquiale ad un contemporaneo suo: gli scrive o gli parla del presente, col linguaggio della conversazione 'normale': il giudizio, pungente o bonario, sui vizi e sulle convenzioni risibili del mondo, viene emesso in questo contesto [...] come il risultato inevitabile del confronto dell'io dello *speaker* con la realtà di cui si parla.[12]

In line with the authors of classical antiquity, the satire is regarded as a *sermo humilis*, linked – and this is paramount – to a dialogical communication situation. Floriani further stresses the importance that the satires be anchored in contemporary reality, or rather in the contemporary system of discourse. He omits, however, another equally crucial aspect, namely Ariosto's intertextual references to classical satires; the speaker of his satires refers not only to the 'realtà di cui si parla', but also to the ancient pre-texts. This invocation of an intertextual level of reference is largely neglected in research on satirical discourse, but it is nonetheless crucial, adding as it does another level to an already complex field.

Let us now take a closer look at satire as a discursive practice. Research that considers satire from the perspective of communication theory has shown that satirical discourse is a form of indirect communication in which real circumstances do not feature directly; instead, reference to those circumstances is made on the basis of

9 Cf. Knoche (1971), 96.

10 The commentaries on the Roman satirists first printed in around 1470 tend to repeat the problems outlined by the authors themselves. Cf. especially Brummack (1971), 296 and Galbiati (1987), 12–25.

11 Cf. Floriani (1988), 29–54.

12 Ibid., 6.

knowledge shared by sender and receiver. A triadic structure is formed, consisting of the satirist A, the satiree B and the satirized (= target of satire) C.[13]

What is particular about satirical communication is that it is based on an indirect speech act in which there is no direct link between what is said and what is meant. As a result, satirical communication can only be successful if the addressee shares knowledge of the extratextual real circumstances which are pre-supposed, but not actually mentioned by the speaker.[14] Behind the text, then, there is a second, implicit field of reference, which will be activated during the process of reception; this is the true target of satirical discourse – and should, strictly speaking, be referred to not as "reality", but as a "discourse-dependent construction of reality".[15] Such explanations of satirical discourse, however, which consider the satirical from the perspective of communication theory without taking into account its literary implementation, neglect the additional level of reference present in both Roman and Renaissance verse satire, namely literary imitation or intertextuality. Consideration of this additional aspect yields an even more complex play on references. For it is not only the discourse on contemporary reality that belongs to the second field of reference, but also the literary pre-texts; it is not only knowledge of the discourse-dependent construction of reality, but also knowledge of the intertexts invoked that is necessary to the understanding of a given satire and that makes it a text which contains its own models. Let us see more precisely how this works by taking a look at Ariosto's satires.[16]

Ariosto never published his satires. These take the form of letters, but it is not possible to establish whether the epistolary situation is a fiction or whether Ariosto actually sent them.[17] Either way, the private communication situation of the satires invites an autobiographical reading. The first satire is a response to the rift which divided Ariosto from Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, after Ariosto refused to follow him to Hungary. This external motivation becomes the motivation for broader criticism of

13 I follow here the model of the triadic structure of satire as it is developed by Simpson (2003), 85–88. Successful satire brings positions A and B closer together while distancing both from position C. Failed satire, on the other hand, brings B and C closer together. The communication between A and B, and this is the satirical part, only partly flouts the Gricean maxims of conversation; more precisely it assumes that A and B are in agreement that truth and sincerity are suspended and that irony plays a crucial role (96).

14 Mahler (1992), 39–55 und Simpson (2003), 90 et seq.

15 Mahler (1992), 53. Simpson conceptualizes this as "orders of discourse in social, cultural, and political organisation", without taking into account the reality behind (Simpson [2003], 86), while Mahler explicitly distinguishes between contingent reality and its discursive construction which eliminates contingency (Mahler [1992], 62).

16 The following remarks derive from Goumegou (2010). Ariosto's satires are quoted from Ariosto, *Satire*, ed. Cesare Segre, Torino 1987.

17 Grimm (1969) regards it as a fiction; Schunck (1970) and Segre (1976), 43 believe it genuine. Paoli (2000) argues plausibly that the satires were actually dispatched to the addressees at the time of writing.

the structures of court society in general and the role of the court poet in particular. To formulate this criticism, Ariosto draws on the Horatian model, to a certain extent the *Sermones*, but more particularly the *Epistulae*. The form of the satires makes this particularly clear; like Horace's satires, Ariosto's present themselves, in spite of their elaborate form, as pragmatic texts, letters with clearly identifiable addressees, which borrow heavily from the private letter. First of all, this (possibly fictional) epistolary situation makes it possible to create an ideal circle of recipients, which in turn allows the writer to present himself in a private context as a speaker who is free from social conventions, and thus frank and honest. Secondly, the deictic references typical of the letter as a pragmatic genre provide a connection to the realm of the factual, linking the satires to specific, extratextual events which can, for the most part at least, be historically situated. In this way, the speaker inscribes himself in existing social structures and creates his own ideal recipient within the text while, at the same time, meeting the challenges put to the satirist in satire theory around 1500: he must write for a small circle and for his private pleasure; he must be innocent and dedicated to *virtus*, and he must cultivate a sensible and realistic style. In other words, he must present himself as a "maestro di pubblica moralità"[18] and employ a "tono medio". In Ariosto's first satire, the satirist is the *persona* of the satire, who shares a large number of biographemes with Ariosto;[19] the satiree is the ideal circle of recipients who share this *persona*'s convictions, and the satirized, i. e. the target of satire, is the prince and his courtiers.

Biographical research tends to read the satire as a direct reference to Ariosto's world, but although there clearly are biographical elements in the text, Ariosto's life is not the only reference level. Elsewhere I have shown how, in the first satire, Ariosto prefers to employ methods which leave it unclear whether his statements are to be read as factual or intertextual. At the end of the text, for instance, he claims that he is forty-four, which, for the time of writing, at least, is not the case. The statement can, however, be read as a reference to an identical claim made in Horace's last satire, where mention of Horace's age (externally datable because he also specifies the year of the consulate) and other personal data become the book's signature.[20] Possibly more important than Ariosto's true age, then, is the reference to Horace. What at first appears to be a strategy of factual authentification turns out to be an intertextual reference as well.

By having recourse to Horace, Ariosto can also project the ideal of a free and self-sufficient poet – an ideal that contrasts starkly with the constraints in force at Ippolito's court. Even without a detailed exploration of the intertextual references,[21] it becomes clear that Ariosto is projecting a relationship between prince and poet which

18 Fatini (1933), 504.

19 The split between author and *persona* that is a common feature of Roman verse satire is not allowed for in Simpson's model of communication (Simpson [2003]) and has to be added.

20 Cf. Goumegou (2010), 125.

21 Cf. ibid., 131–138.

is modelled on that of Horace and Maecenas – and it becomes equally clear that Ippolito does not live up to the role of Maecenas. The full meaning of the satire, therefore, is only revealed in confrontation with the ancient model. Nor is that all. Ariosto also writes himself a role as author which, on the one hand, draws on the model of Horatian *autarkeia*, while on the other hand echoing a sonnet by Petrarch (RVF 187); in this way, he claims for himself a model of renowned contemporary authorship.[22]

2 The Fifth Satire: Rewriting Juvenal, Alberti and Bracciolini

The fifth satire is to a certain extent an exception in Ariosto's work in that it contains significantly fewer autobiographical elements than most of his other satires and borrows its subject matter not from Horace, but from Juvenal.[23] There are however only a few direct references to Juvenal or rather to Renaissance vernacular translations of his satires, but similarities exist on a structural and thematic level.[24] Juvenal's sixth satire, famous as a paradigm of misogyny, presents "a satirical reworking of a standard rhetorical set-piece on the theme of whether or not a man should marry"[25] and deals primarily with the topic of female adultery, with some extremely aggressive criticism of the debauchery of depraved women along the way. This has led to discussion in scholarship as to whether the target of the satire is women or marriage, or rather the satire's *persona*, who reveals himself to be excessively misogynistic.[26] Juvenal follows the schema and topoi of the epithalamium in his satire, adapting and inverting them, of course, to his own, diametrically opposed purposes.[27]

Ariosto's satire follows the ancient model in a number of important points, even if he differs clearly from Juvenal in other respects. Like Juvenal, who is obviously very well-versed in the contemporary discourse on marriage and makes satirical references to it, Ariosto presents his satire as an epithalamium and invokes the humanist texts on the subject. Besides the vernacular translations and adaptations of Juvenal's satire by Giorgio Sommariva, Nicolò Lelio Cosmico and Antonio Vinciguerra,[28] mention should be made of two other pre-texts: Leon Battista Alberti's advice on how to choose a suitable wife in his *Libri della famiglia* on the one hand and on the other

22 On the imitation of other vernacular literature of the Renaissance, and especially the *romanzi*, cf. Orto (2002).

23 Debenedetti (1944), 115 regards it as unique; Schunck gives similar arguments (1970), 72–73.

24 Cf. Corsaro (1980), 468–470.

25 Braund (1992), 82.

26 On Juvenal's sixth satire cf. especially Braund (1992). See too Smith (1980), Anderson (1982), Wiesen (1989), Henderson (1989) and Watson (2007). On the tradition of satirical writing about women and marriage form classical antiquity to the Middle Ages cf. Smith (2005).

27 Cf. Braund (1992), 80.

28 Cf. Giorgio Sommariva, *Compendiosa materia de tutta l'opera de Juvenale composta per el nobile et generoso Georgio Summaripa veronese*; Nicolò Lelio Cosmico, *Una satira di Niccolò Lelio Cosmico*; Antonio Vinciguerra, *Utrum deceat sapientem ducere uxorem an in coelibatu vivere*.

(for the end of the satire) a facetia by Poggio Bracciolini.[29] The heterogeneity of the underlying texts is striking and is reflected in the different readings of the satire. While Peter Schunck regards the fifth satire as a "wedding joke", "an amusing gift for a friend in search of a wife"[30], Antonio Corsaro reads it as a kind of 'trattatello', in which – departing from the Juvenalian model and following Alberti – Ariosto proffers rules on how to choose a wife and how to treat her once you have married her.[31] In what follows I will aim to show how Ariosto deals with the topic of marriage, using Juvenal as a foil, while at the same time borrowing from Alberti. I will demonstrate that Ariosto's satire presents a further 'satirical reworking' of the topic – a reworking which adopts the premise of Juvenal's satire that sexual infidelity is inevitable, but on diametrically opposed grounds and in a different context. Moreover, the target of satire has shifted and Ariosto's satire is a great deal less misogynistic than Juvenal's and less pessimistic about marriage. Ariosto, too, may write about *lussuria*, but in his satire men are at least as much the focus of criticism as women.

In keeping with the classical conventions of the epithalamium, Juvenal's sixth satire begins by looking back to a mythological past that witnesses the disappearance of *pudicitia* from the world and the emergence of adultery in the Silver Age. Against this backdrop, the satirical *persona* turns to Postumus, who is preparing to marry – and whose sanity is in question: "Certe sanus eras. Uxorem, Postume, ducis?" (v. 28).[32] The satirical *persona* dismisses the notion as suicidal and paints a drastic picture for the future husband of what awaits him after matrimony – a picture in which the woman's infidelity and lust for power culminate in an attempt to kill her husband. Most space, however, is devoted to depicting the *matrona* as a *meretrix* and describing – with undisguised relish – her insatiable sexual greed.[33]

The beginning of Ariosto's satire takes an opposite tack, but, as in Juvenal, the occasion for the satire is an imminent wedding – that of his cousin Annibale Malegucio. By speaking directly to the addressee, whose plans for marriage he claims only to have heard about from third parties, Ariosto creates the private communication situation typical of his satires. He does not neglect to mention his own unmarried state, and begs Malegucio not to conclude from this that he is against marriage in principle. Instead, he concludes the opening section with the words:

> fui di parer sempre, [...]
> [...] che senza moglie a lato
> non puote uomo in bontade esser perfetto (vv. 13–15).

29 'Visio Francisci Philelphi', in: *Opera omnia*, P. Bracciolini, Torino 1964.
30 Schunck (1970), 73.
31 Cf. Corsaro (1980).
32 Juvenal's sixth satire is quoted from Juvenal, *Satires*, 56–85.
33 Cf. Watson (2007).

By claiming that it is not until he has a wife that a man can be 'in bontade perfetto', Ariosto makes it clear that he intends to tackle the subject matter from a point of view diametrically opposed to that of Juvenal, and begins his satire as a praise of marriage. In keeping with notions of an ideal communion between man and woman, Ariosto seems at first to focus on the self-perfection of man in marriage.[34] In his explanation, however, a satirical dimension emerges and Ariosto takes up Juvenal's main topic, sexual infidelity – albeit with the difference that here the problem concerns not women, but men:

> che chi non ha del suo, fuor accattarne,
> mendicando o rubandolo, è sforzato (vv. 17–18).

In a hunting image in the next lines, male *lussuria* is metaphorically portrayed as the devouring of birds;[35] at the end, a priest is described as "sí ingorda e sí crudel canaglia" (v. 24). The topic of sexuality also informs the arguments that follow. The topos of the lecherous priest is followed by that of the old man in search of a wife, who is introduced as a warning to the cousin not to put off getting married for too long. It is at this point that mention is first made of women's sexual desire which, combined with the impotence of an aged husband – another element that is depicted with relish[36] – could result in adultery:

> Non voglion rimaner però le spose
> nel danno; sempre ci è mano adiutrice
> che soviene alle pover bisognose. (vv. 41–42)

Unmarried men – this is the next satirical element – also tend to produce illegitimate children. With mention of the situation in Ferrara, Ariosto comments on the state of affairs as follows: "Quindi è falsificato di Ferrara / in gran parte il buon sangue" (vv. 68–69).

In the opening section, then, Ariosto criticizes the sexual lapses of unmarried men in satirical fashion. The initial notion that man perfects himself in marriage proves, on closer inspection, to stem from the basic assumption that man (just like woman) is out to satisfy his sexual urges. This means that marriage no longer serves the perfection of man, but is at most a means to domesticate male *lussuria*.

After this satirical introduction comes the main body of the satire which begins by offering suggestions on how to choose the right wife (vv. 73–246) and advice on how a husband should behave (vv. 247–294). It is these sections which have led Corsaro to characterize the satire as a *trattatello*. Choosing a wife is indeed a significant

34 This is the interpretation of Grimm (1969), 25, who discusses the quotation out of context.
35 "[...] oggi tordo o quaglia, / diman fagiani, uno altro dì vuol starne" (vv. 20–21).
36 "Il vecchio, allora che 'l desir lo spinge, / di sé presume e spera far gran cose; / si sganna poi che al paragon si stringe" (vv. 37–39).

topic in *paterfamilias* literature of the Quattro- and Cinquecento,[37] the most important example being Leon Battista Alberti's *Libri della famiglia*. The second book of the *Libri* contains Lionardo's defence of marriage. The discourse is set in a context of ideal housekeeping and focuses above all on the survival and reproduction of the family, so that Lionardo names procreation and a lifelong *compagnia* as goals of marriage: "E stiagli l'animo a prendere moglie per due cagioni: la prima per stendersi in figliuoli, l'altra per avere compagnia in tutta la vita ferma e stabile".[38] The topic of infidelity hardly features in this context.

In the search for a suitable wife, Lionardo observes, "bellezze, parentado e ricchezze" are crucial selection criteria.[39] Particular attention is paid to a woman's ability to give birth to children of sound intellect and morals, so that 'bellezze' are looked for primarily in morals and virtue and only subsequently in outward appearance. In his satire, Ariosto follows the criteria mentioned by Alberti. He begins with the aspect of *parentado*, recommending an inspection of the woman's mother and nurse – an opportunity for him to outline with satirical hyperbole the scenario of a woman with several lovers:

> Se la madre ha duo amanti, ella ne mira
> a quattro e a cinque, e spesso a piú di sei,
> et a quanti più può la rete tira. (vv. 109–111)

The seriously intentioned advice of the *Libri della famiglia* is combined here with Juvenalian motifs to foreground female infidelity and target the unfaithful woman.

The next aspect Ariosto deals with is *ricchezze*; his advice is to marry neither above nor beneath one's own station. The potential consequences of choosing a wife from too high up the social scale are also cited in a style that owes much to Juvenal:

> Vorrà una nana, un bufoncello, un pazzo,
> e compagni da tavola e da guoco
> che tutto il dí la tengano in solazzo. (vv.124–126)

Finally, as regards *bellezze*, Ariosto recommends a *mediocre forma* – a golden mean in the Arisotelian sense – so as to prevent all the other men from falling passionately in love:

> [...] non ir dove tu inciampi
> in troppo bella moglie, sì che ognuno
> per lei d'amor e di desire avampi. (vv. 163–165)

37 Cf., for example, Frigo (1985), especially 110–116, and Richarz (1991).
38 Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, 132.
39 Ibid.

Still in line with Alberti, Ariosto attaches great importance to morals – and to the woman's being ten to twelve years younger than her husband. He follows up this serious advice by turning his attention to two points of a clearly satirical nature: firstly, the suggestion that the woman should avoid contact with priests (this leads to further satirical remarks on the subject of priests), and secondly, a long invective against make-up.

The subject of make-up is a very popular one in literary tradition from Ovid through Juvenal to Alberti – and Ariosto, too, devotes a passage of almost thirty lines to the topic (vv. 202–231), using a *stile umile* which often tips over into burlesque. He lays particular stress on the ingredients of make-up, highlighting their repulsiveness by means of obscene comparisons:

> Se sapesse Erculan dove le labbia
> Pon quando bacia Lidia, avria più a schivo
> Che se baciasse un cul marzo di scabbia. (vv. 208–210)

At his point he gives a list of the putative – and pretty unappetizing – ingredients: "il salivo delle giudee", "la merda [...] di circonsisi lor bambini", "il grasso / d'orride serpi" (vv. 211–216). Finally, Ariosto draws the obscene conclusion:

> Sì che quei che le baciano, ben ponno
> con men schivezza e stomachi più saldi
> baciar lor anco a nuova luna il conno. (vv. 220–222)

From a stylistic point of view, Ariosto has come a long way from the *trattatello*, moving closer to Juvenal who, like him, does not baulk at obscenities, even if he is rather less expansive on the subject of make-up.[40] The second part of the main body of the text, however, which deals with the treatment and education of a wife, returns to the stylistic level of the *trattatello*, even if the transitional lines do contain a sexually suggestive riding metaphor.[41] Following Alberti again, Ariosto argues that a wife should be made a *compagna* rather than a *serva*, prompting Corsaro to detect a "disegno culturale comune ai due scrittori"[42]. In the case of minor lapses, Ariosto recommends fond severity, but also warns that supervision should not be neglected. The topic of sexual fidelity remains, but in Ariosto the warnings are aimed at the husband as well as the wife: "Tolto che moglie avrai, lascia li nidi / degli altri, e sta sul tuo" (vv. 250–251). Marital fidelity is thus considered a duty for both sexes – albeit

40 Juvenal devotes only twelve lines to make-up (vv. 461–473), and his strongest statement is: "facies dicetur an ulcus?" (v. 473).

41 The transitional lines are: "Poi ch'io t'ho posto assai bene a cavallo, / ti voglio anco mostrar come lo guidi, / come spinger lo déi, come fermallo" (vv. 247–249). It is true, however, that the metaphor refers explicitly to the topic of controlling a horse.

42 Corsaro (1980), 475.

without any guarantee of success. It is in this vein that Ariosto concludes the second part of the main body of his satire – with a call to keep one's cool:

> Lievale quanto puoi la occasïone
> d'esser puttana, e pur se avien che sia,
> almen che ella non sia per tua cagione.
> [...]
> Ma s'ella n'avrà voglio, alcun non creda
> di ripararci: ella saprà ben come
> far qu'al suo inganno il tuo consiglio ceda. (vv. 289 – 297)

The topic of sexual infidelity is once more given particular emphasis in the final part of the satire. In the role of the *apologo*, Ariosto takes up a facetia by Poggio Bracciolini which presents the misogynous topos of the notorious infidelity of women (vv. 296 – 328). The artist Galasso paints the Devil in the guise of a beautiful woman. When the Devil appears to him in a dream, wanting to reward him, the artist asks for some means to ensure that his wife remain faithful and, on receiving a ring on his finger, he believes the Devil is promising him: "Fin che ce'l tenghi, esser non puoi tradito" (v. 321). But when Galasso wakes up, his happiness is short-lived, for he soon discovers that what he has been given is no magic ring, but a far more banal means of preventing his wife's infidelity: "truova / che 'l dito alla moglier ha ne la fica" (v. 324). Ariosto ends his satire with the admonition that this ring be kept firmly on one's finger, but he adds that it cannot nonetheless provide complete security: "pur qu'ella voglia, e farlo si dispogna" (v. 328). In this way he humorously takes to its limit the motif of man's powerlessness in the face of female infidelity.

Corsaro interprets this attitude as "disilluso scetticismo"[43], as the realization of the "impossibilità di un controllo completo sulla realtà" or as a "ripiego fatalistico"[44]. According to him Ariosto refers to Alberti's ideal model, but in an ironically dismantled form, because he considers it inappropriate to the reality of the Cinquecento. I should like, however, to put Ariosto's satire in a different perspective, taking into account the various levels of rewriting mentioned before. Ariosto takes up a topic which has been around since Juvenal and which has, on the whole, been treated in a misogynistic fashion. He enacts a speech situation that can be traced back to the Horatian model, and suggests that a man should choose a woman of "mediocre forma" (v. 170) – meaning not mediocrity but the golden mean between the extremes. In the context of this setting, fuelled as it is by an ethico-moral humanist stance, Ariosto's art consists in incorporating motifs of Juvenalian satire into this *disegno culturale*. He may indeed begin with the alleged *perfetta bontade* of marriage, but he ends by invoking the impossibility of female fidelity. Unlike Juvenal's *persona*, however, he does not work himself into a tirade against women, but presents the two

43 Ibid.
44 Ibid., 477.

sexes as being under equal pressure from *lussuria*. This transforms the message of the satire. Whereas Juvenal's satire presents itself as an "argument against marriage on the grounds of likely infidelity by the wife"[45], Ariosto takes up the basic premise of inevitable infidelity, but does not conclude that marriage should be condemned. Instead he highlights the comic side of the subject, both in his polemical criticism of priests and of the lords of Ferrara, and in the burlesque jokes he incorporates into the text. The way in which Ariosto 'contaminates' Alberti's advice to the *padre di famiglia* with the basic motifs of Juvenalian satire, culminating in Poggio Bracciolini's *facezia*, thus points not only to a relativization of the ethico-moral stance of the satirical *persona*, but also to a play with obscenity entirely appropriate to the speech occasion of the satire. In light of the imminent wedding, it is clear that we are not dealing with serious advice on how to choose the right wife, but rather with a piece of light-hearted entertainment for a bridegroom who is about to enter into matrimony. If Ariosto combines Juvenal and Horace, Alberti and Bracciolini, he obtains a *satura* in which the most diverse elements are mingled. By doing this, he not only rewrites ancient models, but also allows humanist authors to join the ranks of his models on an equal footing. Rather than being regarded as an expression of a morally pessimist 'scetticismo disilluso', then, his satire should be read as a virtuoso combination of various forms of rewriting.

Bibliography

Primary sources

Alberti, Leon Battista, *I libri della famiglia*, ed. Ruggiero Romano, Alberto Tenenti, Torino 1972.
Ariosto, Ludovico, *Satire*, ed. Cesare Segre, Torino 1987.
Borlenghi, Aldo (ed.), *Commedie del Cinquecento*, Milano 1959.
Cosmico, Nicolò Lelio: *Una satira di Niccolò Lelio Cosmico,* ed. V. Cian, Pisa 1903.
Juvenal, *Satires*, ed. Pierre de Labriolle, Jean Gérard, 12th ed., Paris 1983.
Sommariva, Giorgio: *Compendiosa materia de tutta l'opera de Juvenale composta per el nobile et generoso Georgio Summaripa veronese*, Treviso 1480.
Antonio Vinciguerra: *Utrum deceat sapientem ducere uxorem an in coelibatu vivere,* Bologna 1495.

Secondary sources

Anderson, William, "Juvenal 6: A Problem in Structure", in: *Essays on Roman Satire*, Princeton 1982, 255–276.
Baumert, Jürgen, "Identifikation und Distanz: Eine Erprobung satirischer Kategorien bei Juvenal", in: *Rise and Decline of the Roman World*, part II: Principate, vol. XXIII.1, ed. Wolfgang Haase, Berlin/New York 1989, 734–769.

45 Braund (1992), 76.

Bonino, Guido Davico: *La commedia italiana del Cinquecento e altre note su letteratura e teatro,* Torino 1989.
Braund, Susanna, "Juvenal – Misogynist or Misogamist", in: *The Journal of Roman Studies* 82 (1992), 71–86.
Brummack, Jürgen, "Zu Begriff und Theorie der Satire", in: *DVJS* 45 (1971), 275–377.
Corsaro, Antonio, "Sulla satira quinta dell'Ariosto", in: *Italianistica* 9 (1980), 466–477.
Croce, Benedetto, *Ariosto, Shakespeare, Corneille*, Bari 1957 (1922).
Debenedetti, Santorre, "Intorno alle Satire dell'Ariosto", in: *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 122:364/366 (1944), 109–130.
Fatini, Giuseppe, "Umanità e poesia dell'Ariosto nelle Satire", in: *Archivum Romanicum* 17 (1933), 497–564.
Ferroni, Giulio, "Gioco, trucco, illusione: La corte nel corso del tempo", in: Giulio Ferroni: *Il testo e la scena. Saggi sul teatro del Cinquecento*, Roma 1980, 99–162.
Floriani, Piero, *Il modello ariostesco. La satira classicistica nel Cinquecento*, Roma 1988.
Frigo, Daniela, *Il padre di famiglia. Governo della casa e governo civile nella tradizione dell'"economica" tra cinque e seicento*, Roma 1985.
Galbiati, Giuseppina M. Stella, "Per una teoria della satira fra Quattro e Cinquecento", in: *Italianistica* 16,1 (1987), 9–37.
Goumegou, Susanne, "Faktual oder fiktional? Der Aussagestatus der Ariost'schen Satire und die Selbstinszenierung des Dichters", in: *Fiktionen des Faktischen in der Renaissance*, ed. Ulrike Schneider/Anita Traninger, Stuttgart 2010, 121–142.
Grimm, Jürgen, *Die Einheit der Ariost'schen Satire*, Frankfurt a. M. 1969.
Guidotti, Angela, *Il modello e la trasgressione. Commedie del primo '500*, Roma 1983.
Henderson, John, "… when Satire writes 'Woman'", in: *Satire and Society in Ancient Rome*, ed. Susan Braund, Exeter 1989, 89–126.
Herrick, Marvin T., *Italian Comedy in the Renaissance,* London 1966.
Knoche, Ulrich, *Die römische Satire*, 3rd ed., Göttingen 1971.
Mahler, Andreas, *Moderne Satireforschung und elisabethanische Verssatire*, München 1992.
Marini, Paolo, "Ariosto magnanimo. Sulla figura dell'io poetico nelle *Satire*", in: *Lettere Italiane* LX,1 (2008), 84–101.
Marsh, David, "Horatian Influence and Imitation in Ariosto's Satires", in: *Comparative Literature* 27,4 (1975), 307–326.
Nuti, Andrea, *Ludus e iocus. Percorsi di ludicità nella lingua latina*, Treviso/Roma 1998.
Orto, Alfredo d', "Criteri e techiche di imitazione nelle *Satire* dell'Ariosto", in: *Critica letteraria* 29 (2002), 419–433.
Padoan, Giorgio: *L'avventura della commedia rinascimentale,* Padova/Milano 1996.
Paoli, Michel, "'Quale fu la prima satira che compose': storia vs. letteratura nelle satire ariostesche", in: *Fra satire e rime ariostesche*, ed. Claudia Berra, Gardagno del Garda (14–16 ottobre 1999), Milano 2000, 35–63.
Petrocchi, Giorgio, "Orazio e Ariosto", in: *I fantasmi di Trancredi*, Roma 1972, 261–275.
Radcliff-Umstead, Douglas: *The Birth of Modern Comedy in Renaissance Italy,* Chicago 1969.
Richarz, Irmintraut, *Oikos, Haus und Haushalt. Ursprung und Geschichte der Haushaltsökonomik*. Göttingen 1991.
Sarkissian, John, "Allusions to Classical Satire in Ariosto's First and Third Satire", in: *The Early Renaissance*, ed. Anthony Pellegrini, Binghampton (NY) 1985, 107–120.
Schunck, Peter, "Die Stellung Ariosts in der Tradition der klassischen Satire", in: *ZRPh* LXXXVI (1970), 49–82.
Segre, Cesare, "Struttura dialogica delle Satire ariostesche", in: *Ariosto 1974 in America*, ed. A. Scoglione, Ravenna 1976, 41–54.

Simpson, Paul, *On the Discourse of Satire. Towards a Stylistic Model of Satirical Humour*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2003.

Smith, Warren S., "Husband vs. Wife in Juvenal's Sixth Satire", in: *The Classical World* 73, 6 (1980), 323 – 332.

Smith, Warren S., *Satiric Advice on Women and Marriage*, Michigan 2005.

Watson, Patricia, "Juvenal's *scripta matrona:* Elegiac Resonances in *Satire* 6", in: *Mnemosyne* 60,4 (2007), 628 – 640.

Wessels, Antje, "Zur Exposition bei Plautus", in: *Der Einsatz des Dramas. Dramenanfänge, Wissenschaftspoetik und Gattungspolitik*, ed. Claude Haas/Andrea Polaschegg, Freiburg i.B. 2012, 59 – 74.

Wiesen, David, "The Verbal Basis of Juvenal's Satiric Vision", in: *Rise and Decline of the Roman World*, part II: Principate, vol. XXXIII.1, ed. Wolfgang Haase, Berlin/New York 1989, 708 – 733.