

CONTRIBUTIPULCI AND FICINO:
RETHINKING THE *MORGANTE* (CANTOS XXIV-XXV)FEDERICA SIGNORIELLO
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Pulci's poetry represents the apogee of the Florentine comic realist tradition in the fifteenth century. His poem *Morgante*, a mock-version of stories from the Matter of France, was written over more than twenty years (1461-1483) and deals with a variety of topics, including the philosophy of Marsilio Ficino and Ficino himself, who is allegorically concealed within one of the characters. The *Morgante* was instantly successful and remained popular in the centuries that followed because of its original language and the way it related a combination of traditional chivalry stories, biblical allegories and themes from classical literature and comic-realism¹.

The parody of religion, the mocking of hypocrites and his dispute with Ficino contribute to the sense that Pulci was more a "medieval" than a Renaissance man. This interpretation is set out primarily in Paolo Orvieto's *Pulci medievale*². Orvieto points to Pulci's profanity, aggressive behaviour and quasi-banishment from Florence to argue that Pulci's work provoked much controversy. This interpretation, however, has been recently questioned. According to Alessandro Polcri, there is no conclusive evidence showing that Pulci became an outcast, either culturally or politically³. Moreover, especially in light of the trust that Lorenzo undoubtedly put in Pulci as a mediator between him and Roberto Sanseverino, it becomes problematic to conclude that the Medici really wanted to drive him out of Florence.

The controversies that surrounded Pulci are of great interest. The following pages focus on one particular part of Pulci's life and work, his dispute with

¹ See the very recent study by Stefano Nicosia, **La funzione *Morgante*: persistenze e variazioni nel genere comico in ottave tra Cinque e Settecento**, Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2015.

² Paolo Orvieto, **Pulci medievale: studio sulla poesia volgare fiorentina del Quattrocento**, Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1978.

³ Alessandro Polcri, **Luigi Pulci e la chimera: studi sull'allegoria nel *Morgante***, Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 2010.

Marsilio Ficino. The interpretation proposed in the pages below is that a section (Cantos XXIV-XXV) of the *Morgante* should be regarded as an experimental phase in which Pulci, before his dispute with Ficino, sought to write a heroic-poem inspired by Ficino's Neoplatonic philosophy. After the rupture with Ficino, Pulci began depicting him, from Canto XXVI to Canto XXVIII, as the evil King Marsilione. The first part of this article untangles the different threads that are woven in this enigma and suggests a new dating for Cantos XXIV and XXV; the second part deals with the content of this section of the *Morgante*, which contains philosophical digressions. In the conclusion, I suggest a new chronology of the events happened between 1473 and 1483.

I. Pulci, Ficino and the *Morgante*

Work on Pulci usually associates him with the Medici household on account of his friendship with Lorenzo de' Medici. Recent studies have confirmed, however, that Pulci's first patron was in fact Francesco di Matteo Castellani (1418-1494), another Florentine aristocrat who employed the young Luigi as a secretarial assistant and for his poetic skills⁴. Pulci probably served both Castellani and the Medici family for some time during the early 1460s, while dealing with the substantial economic debts of his family and especially those of his older brother Luca. Because of these debts, Pulci and his siblings were temporarily exiled from Florence in 1466 and even the death of Luca in 1470 did not help Luigi's finances. These difficulties were often eased by Lorenzo de' Medici, who saw in Pulci a faithful servant and a master of comic poetry⁵. In addition to the fact that Lucrezia Tornabuoni, the wife of Piero de' Medici, appointed Pulci to write a chivalric poem that later became the *Morgante*, the appreciation of the Medici family is also evident in Lorenzo's early comic writings, which were much influenced by Pulci's style. It even seems – if we are to believe Pulci's letters – that at this time Pulci and Lorenzo wrote poetry together⁶.

Pulci, unlike his father and despite his commitments to the Medici, was never appointed a magistrate by the Signoria. By contrast, his *concittadino* Bartolomeo Scala, a “mere” miller's son, was able to embark on a political career that led him first to the position of chancellor of the *Parte guelfa* (1459)

⁴ Carlo Carnesecchi, “Per la biografia di Luigi Pulci”, in **Archivio storico italiano**, 17, 1896, pp. 371-379; see also Alessio Decaria, **Luigi Pulci e Francesco di Matteo Castellani: novità e testi inediti da uno zibaldone magliabechiano**, Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 2009, pp. 49-80.

⁵ Lorenzo's financial help is mentioned in several letters: e.g. Letter XXIII in Luigi Pulci, *Morgante e lettere*, ed. by Domenico de Robertis, Florence: Sansoni, 1962, p. 975.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Letters II, VIII, XX, XXX, pp. 939, 952, 971, 984.

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and then to chancellor of the Signoria (1465). The apparent injustice, given the difference between the Pulci and Scala families, angered Luigi and he subsequently attacked Bartolomeo in his poetry⁷. Chronologically speaking, this is the first time (as far as we know) that Pulci employed his poetic gift to criticize or condemn a rival⁸. This resentment never left Pulci who, without an institutional role, served Lorenzo's personal and diplomatic needs. For example, Pulci accompanied Lorenzo's wife Clarice on a trip to Rome; he persuaded scholars who had left the Florentine Studio for Bologna, Ferrara, and Padua to return to Florence; and, most importantly, Pulci frequently accompanied the mercenary *condottiero* Roberto Sanseverino (1418-1487) as an observer⁹. From the late 1460s to his death, Pulci was in charge of assisting Sanseverino, who was hired first by Francesco and then by Galeazzo Maria Sforza, both allies of the Medici. When the duke of Milan was murdered in 1476, Lorenzo managed to prevent Sanseverino being hired by his opponents. Lorenzo also attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, to have Sanseverino work for the city of Florence using Pulci as a mediator.¹⁰ Clearly, Lorenzo trusted Pulci in

⁷ Alison Brown, **Bartolomeo Scala, 1430-1497, Chancellor of Florence: the Humanist as Bureaucrat**, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, pp. 28, 42. See also Letter XXII (1472) in which Pulci requested the office of magistrate and reminded Lorenzo that his father had been magistrate, in Pulci, *Morgante e lettere*, ed. by Domenico de Robertis, *op. cit.*, pp. 973-974. In Letter XXIII it is clear that Lorenzo's efforts on Pulci's behalf were unsuccessful and Pulci did not obtain a *mazzocchio*, the "magistrate's hat", *ibid.*, p. 975. See also Luigi Pulci, **Sonetti extravaganti**, ed. by Alessio Decaria, Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 2013, pp. 17-27.

⁸ Alessio Decaria, **Luigi Pulci e Francesco di Matteo Castellani**, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-71.

⁹ For the trip with Clarice Orsini in 1472; see Pulci's Letters XXIV-XXVI in Luigi Pulci, *Morgante e lettere*, ed. by Domenico de Robertis, *op. cit.*, pp. 977-982. A description of Pulci's mission for the Studio is described in Armando Felice Verde, **Lo studio fiorentino, 1473-1503: ricerche e documenti**. Vol. 4.1, **La vita universitaria. Gli statuti; Anni scolastici 1473/74 - 1481/82**, Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1985, pp. 130, 202. Franco satirized Pulci's allegedly unsuccessful mission to Pisa, see Luigi Pulci and Matteo Franco, **Il Libro dei sonetti**, ed. by Giulio Dolci, Milan: Società Anonima Editrice Dante Alighieri, 1933, XXXVI.1-4, p. 44: "Odi all'orecchio un po', che nissun oda;/ per gli scolari nel Padovano andasti,/ ingiustamente quanti ne 'nfamasti,/ perché non ti facevon drieto coda".

¹⁰ Armando Felice Verde, **Lo studio fiorentino, 1473-1503: ricerche e documenti**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 4.1, p. 202.

this and other delicate duties. This was the case for over a decade until he died in Padova while on yet another mission with Sanseverino¹¹.

Pulci wrote constantly and, alongside his *Morgante*, there is a vast production of short poems, many of which have a specific addressee, mostly targets of satire, as with the aforementioned Bartolomeo Scala. Prominent among the addressees are also hypocritical Christian worshippers, depicted for example in *In principio era buio, e buio fia* and *Questi che vanno tanto a San Francesco*¹². Pulci here aimed at ridiculing the hypocrisy of pilgrims (*In principio era buio e buio fia* was probably written during the Jubilee of 1475) and friars who, in his eyes, sinned repeatedly and drank hidden in taverns while all the time maintaining a superficial public face of penance and piety. In a third poem, *Poich'io partii da voi, Bartolomeo*, Pulci writes a methodical parody of a range of Biblical episodes: from the disciple Peter walking on the water with Jesus (Matthew 14:22-33) to Samson's strength (Judges, 13-16) and from Moses crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 13:17-14:29) to the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:1-44). Besides parodies of religious import, other conflicts influenced his writing while Pulci was part of the Medici household. He had two noteworthy conflicts that left traces in written documents, especially letters and sonnets. One gave rise to the *tenso* with Matteo Franco, which took place from 1473 to 1476¹³. Some years later, probably after Pulci's death, Franco organized the poems in a collection that was subsequently printed with some success¹⁴. The second occurred with Ficino, in letters, sonnets and in part of the *Morgante*.

Pulci and Ficino. Evidence of their dispute

Evidence that Pulci and Ficino engaged in a dispute comes from both participants. Ficino explicitly attacked Pulci in four letters of his epistolary, two of them in the first book and two in the third. None are dated. The oldest manuscript of the first book of letters dates back to 1475, which thereby becomes their *terminus ad quem*, and it contains one letter to Bernardo Pulci and one to Bernardo Rucellai (113 and 114), Pulci's friend and Lorenzo's

¹¹ Lorenz Böniger, "Notes on the Last Years of Luigi Pulci (1477-1484)", *Rinascimento*, 27, 1987, pp. 267-268.

¹² Luigi Pulci, *Opere minori*, ed. by Paolo Orvieto, Milano: Mursia, 1986, pp. 198-199; *id.*, *Sonetti extravaganti*, ed. by Alessio Decaria, Florence: Società editrice fiorentina, 2013, pp. 77, 86; Alessio Decaria, *Luigi Pulci e Francesco di Matteo Castellani*, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

¹³ Stefano Carrai, *Le muse dei Pulci: studi su Luca e Luigi Pulci*, Naples: Guida, 1985, pp. 75-84.

¹⁴ Decaria, "Il Pulci ritrovato e nuove ipotesi sul *Libro dei Sonetti*", in *Bollettino storico della Svizzera Italiana*, 111, 2008, pp. 259-262.

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brother-in-law respectively¹⁵. Both are entitled *Contra mendaces et impios detractores*, “Against liars and impious slanderers”. In these letters Ficino showed no mercy in depicting Pulci’s faults and, although they do not go into great detail, it is evident that Ficino refers to Pulci’s behaviour as well as to his writings (I, 113): “I cannot deny that a man is a liar who exercises a venomous tongue and pen irreverently and insolently against divine majesty, which is truth itself”¹⁶.

In the letter to Rucellai, Ficino was understandably less cautious. He uses therefore many realistic metaphors in describing Pulci, who is compared to a “dog that barks” and has a “foul mouth” and a “corrupt mind”. Ficino also emphasizes, once again, the impiety of Pulci’s writings (I, 114):

How can a madman, who hates God, love men who are the images of God? You ask me to correct him with whatever principles I can. You ask me to plough the sea shore. No one attacks divine matters more aggressively nor more foolishly than that little man you ask me to correct. That Thersites should be punished rather than corrected. What an abomination, that he should with impunity disgorge such invective from his venomous mouth against God!¹⁷

In the oldest manuscript of this first book of letters we find another undated letter that follows the letters currently numbered 113 and 114 and addressed to Lorenzo de’ Medici, entitled *Gravis est iactura temporis* (the title later became

¹⁵ Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, XC sup. 40; see Ficino, **Lettere: epistolarum familiarium liber I**, ed. Sebastiano Gentile, 2 Vols., Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1990-2010, Vol. 1, pp. xcvi-xcix.

¹⁶ Marsilio Ficino, **The Letters of Marsilio Ficino**, transl. members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, 9 Vols., London: Shephard-Walwyn, 1975-2012, Vol. 1, p. 168; *id.*, **Lettere**, ed. by Sebastiano Gentile, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 198: “Negare non possum eum esse mendacem, qui contra maiestatem divinam, que infinita veritas est, venenosam linguam calamumque tam impie tamque insolenter exercet”.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 170; Marsilio Ficino, **Lettere**, ed. by Gentile, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 220: “Quonam pacto potest insanus, qui Deum odit, homines ullos, qui Dei imagines sunt, diligere? Rogas me ut eum quibuscunque possum rationibus corrigam: littus arare me iubes. Nemo infestius, nemo rursus ineptius contra res divinas invehitur quam iste homuncio quem emendare me rogas; puniendus est potius Tersites iste quam castigandus. Proh nefas! Impune invectivas multas ore venoso evomuit contra Deum”.

Tempus parce expendendum). Here Ficino warns Lorenzo against “flatterers and disparagers”, alluding, probably, to Pulci¹⁸.

Two more letters in the third book (5 and 6) are entitled *Maledici contemnendi*, “Slanderers are to be scorned”. The letters are dated between 1476 and 1478 and are addressed to Lorenzo and Giuliano de’ Medici. From their tone it is possible to assume that Ficino had been insulted rather personally by this stage (III, 5):

So let that little imp bite your Christian priests with impunity, as he was long ago allowed to bite Christ. Let the mob judge at random a teaching which is scarcely known even to the very few. Let little men, who have no sense, pass sentence as they please on my life, which is known to God alone¹⁹.

Perhaps for this reason, in the same letter, Ficino mentions philosophy as the weapon to fight such assaults:

Thus the lofty ramparts of sacred Philosophy keep all such trifles far from us. Yet today the same Philosophy gives me one bidding, that I should indicate to you the very way to discharge your duty as you have done most diligently for us at other times²⁰.

¹⁸ This letter is now number 84; see *id.*, **The Letters**, transl. members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 132; *id.*, **Lettere**, ed. by Gentile, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 148. Gentile has pointed out the changed sequence of these letters; see Ficino, **Lettere**, ed. by Sebastiano Gentile, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. cclxix. See also Alessandro Polcri, **Luigi Pulci e la chimera**, *op. cit.*, p. 45 and Alessio Decaria, **Luigi Pulci and Francesco di Matteo Castellani**, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-221.

¹⁹ Marsilio Ficino, **The Letters**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 12; *id.* **Opera omnia**, Basilea, officina Henricpetrina, 1576 (reprint Turin, Bottega d’Erasmus, 1962), Vol. 1, p. 755: “Liceat ergo, liceat impiolo illi Christos tuos impune tangere, cui iamdiu licuit christum. Sit passim doctrine iudex vulgus, quae vix nota ets que paucissimis. Forat ut libet homunculi, quibus nulla sententia est de mea vita sententiam, quae soli nota est Deo”.

²⁰ *Id.*, **The Letters**, transl. members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 12; *id.*, **Opera omnia**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 755: “Omnes igitur eiusmodi nugas sacrae Philosophiae parietes altissimi a vobis longius arcent: hoc tamen unum ipsa me Philosophiae hodie monet, utrem ipsam tibi significem, quo officio tuo fungaris, quemadmodum alias in re nistra diligentissime es perfunctus”.

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Further, in the letter to Giuliano there is helpful detail on the nature of the argument which concerned the soul and God (I, 6):

I am not surprised that that dog constantly snarls at me, for it is his custom to snarl at good men and men of learning, as it is his custom to snarl at the soul and at God²¹.

A last letter, dated 1 January 1477 (1476 Florentine calendar) and addressed to Giovanni Cavalcanti, reports that Giuliano and Lorenzo reprehended Pulci (III, 36):

A few days ago, the two Medici each used against our adversaries in our cause not only rebuke but even invective. Lest, perchance, I should send anything beyond letters, whether of a public or private nature, to you, now avid for letters alone, farewell²².

The “invective”, however, does not seem to have had serious consequences on Pulci’s relationship with Lorenzo, as we read in a letter of 3 January, 1477. Pulci here confirms his loyalty to Lorenzo, after dealing with some urgent matters – the Duke of Milan had just been murdered²³. There is no reply to any of these letters, so we do not know whether Bernardo Pulci did complain about his brother or whether Rucellai asked Ficino to bring Luigi back to the “righteous path” or whether these letters were part of an attempt by Ficino to discredit Pulci.

References to Pulci are to be found in other letters and in some of his philosophical works. In these cases, however, Pulci is not targeted for his blasphemy. For example, it has been noted how in the concluding paragraph of

²¹ *Id.*, **The Letters**, transl. members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 13; *id.* **Opera**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 755: “Quod canis ille continue contra ma latret, quemadmodum contra bonos doctosque viros, animamque ed Deum, semper est solitus”.

²² *Id.*, **The Letters**, transl. members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 44; *id.*, **Opera omnia**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 736-737: “Medices utrique paucis ante diebus in causa nostra adversus adversarios nostros non correptione tantum usi sunt, sed etiam invective. Verum ne quid praetor literas ad te literarum nunc solum avidum forte mittam vel publicum, vel privatum”.

²³ Luigi Pulci, ***Morgante e lettere***, ed. by Domenico de Robertis, *op. cit.*, p. 1000. For the relationship of the two letters, see Alessandro Polcri, **Luigi Pulci e la chimera**, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

his *De vita Platonis*, written by 1477, Ficino albeit without naming him, attacked Pulci:

There are certain vulgar verse-makers, who undeservedly grab for themselves the name of poet [...]. Once, similar poetasters did not think twice about biting the divine Plato, considered by the Greeks the son of Apollo, and Socrates, considered by Apollo the wisest among Greeks. [...] He vituperated others in this way, most of them very upright and learned, with some false story [...]. May they fall silent, then, among the afterworld's dogs of Hell and may they join Cerberus in barking in Hell²⁴.

Ficino had already denounced comic poets in his *In Philebum* (I.17) of 1469, expressing ideas found in Plato's works²⁵. That this is not an invective aimed at comic poets in general but rather at Pulci in particular is clear from the reference to Cerberus, also found in the letter to Bernardo Rucellai mentioned above: "[...] he joins Cerberus in barking even after he is dead!"²⁶

Here Ficino's evocation of Cerberus, the mythical dog from the underworld, may be seen as a *signum* that helped Ficino to refer to Pulci indirectly. The same use of a classical metaphor is made by Ficino with the giants. We can assume that this is another ironic *signum* of Pulci, who was famously short:

Do not be too disturbed Bernardo, if giant Pulci snarls ferociously at everybody. [...] Now you are striving in vain to correct that lost soul, the giant Pulci [...]. It is said that in ancient times a presumptuous war

²⁴ Marsilio Ficino, *Opera omnia*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 770: "Sunt plebei quidam versificatores, qui immerito poetarum sibi nomen usurpant [...]. Tales igitur olim poeti divum Platonem a Graecis Apollinis filium et Socratem ab Apolline Graecorum sapientissimum iudicatum, mordere non dubitarunt. [...] Qui sicut alios plerosque modestissimos doctissimosque ficta quadam historia vituperavit [...]. Obmutescant igitur apud superos inferni canes atque apud inferos latratu Cerberum comitentur".

²⁵ See Michael Allen, *Synoptic Art: Marsilio Ficino on the History of Platonic Interpretation*, Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1998, pp. 94-123.

²⁶ Marsilio Ficino, *The Letters*, transl. members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 169; *id.*, *Lettere*, ed. by Gentile, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 199: "[...] nisi forte etiam post mortem latratu Cerberum comitentur". The words used here in the passage of *De vita Platonis* are identical.

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was declared by the Giants against Jupiter, but in these times a pathetic war has been declared by dwarves against the most high God²⁷.

Giants also appear in the *Disputatio contra iudicium astrologorum*. Written between 1475 and 1477, in the *Disputatio* Ficino gives his opinion on astrologers and muses on how useless it would be to foresee future events in order to avoid them or change them:

So pray arise, philosophers. Arise all you who yearn for freedom and most precious peace. Come, gird yourselves now with the shield and spear of Pallas. War is impending for us against those petty ogres. By foreknowledge of the future they presume to equate themselves with God, who is infinite. By upholding heavenly fate, they presume to take away freedom of direction from God, who is above the heavens, and who is the highest freedom. But those who aspire with such arrogance to climb the world of the gods will in humiliation be cast down headlong to the infernal regions. Almighty God, extend your hand to us from on high. Give your soldiers strength; for now we are undertaking to defend your sovereignty²⁸.

²⁷ *Id.*, **The Letters**, transl. members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, Vol. 1, p. 170. The letters were translated by the members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, based on the text of a manuscript witness (Florence: Biblioteca Riccardiana, 797). In other versions of the text Pulci's name disappears, see for example Gentile's edition, *id.*, **Lettere**, ed. by Sebastiano Gentile, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 114-115: "Noli nimium turbari, Bernarde, si ille omnes tam turpiter latrat [...]. At tu frustra conaris istum perditum emendare [...]. Gloriosum bellum Iovi quondam a Gigantibus indictum fuisse narratur, ignominiosum summo Deo his temporibus a pigmeis".

²⁸ *Id.*, **The Letters**, transl. members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 76-77; *id.*, **Opera omnia**, *op. cit.*, p. 781: "Surgite igitur philosophi precor, surgite omnes libertatis tranquillitatisque pretiosissime cupidi, eia agite, iam accingite vos clypeo Palladis atque hasta, bellum in praesentia nobis imminet contra nefarios gigantulos illos, qui et futurorum praesentia Deo prorsus immenso se aequare conantur et fati caelitis defensione supercaelestis Dei, qui est summa libertas liberum imperium auferre. Sed qui tam superbe ad superos ascendere moliantur, miserabiliter praecipitabuntur ad inferos. Porrigite manum nobis ex alto Deus omnipotens, vires tuis militibus subministra, tuum istud defendere imperium".

Ficino defines those who try to forecast the future as *nefarios gigantulos* (literally “ill-doing little giants”), a curious image, since by definition giants are not small, with the exception perhaps of “the giant Pulci”. Of note also is that one of the most popular characters in the poem *Morgante* appears a demi-giant: Margutte wanted to be a giant but changed his mind to eventually become a “little giant” (XVIII.114). Mythical creatures aside, Pulci also dealt with astrology in the *Morgante* and he said of himself that he had tried to read the future by using magic²⁹. The connection between the introductory section of Ficino’s *Disputatio* and Pulci’s epic is unmistakable.

Judging by his writings, Ficino sought to convey to others that Pulci’s main fault was impiety and disrespect towards religious institutions. In *De vita Platonis* and *Disputatio contra iudicium astrologorum*, however, Ficino had Pulci in mind but did not deem it necessary to point directly at him and so used only vague metaphors.

On the other hand, Ficino is mentioned only once in Pulci’s letters, and not, perhaps surprisingly, in a negative way. In a letter to Lorenzo de’ Medici Pulci expresses great anguish on account of Franco’s attacks on him (the letter is not dated but we can assume that it belongs to the period of the *tenso*, 1473-1476). He gives here an account of how he had asked Ficino to give a message to Lorenzo (XXXVI, “per messer Marsilio hiersera gliel dixi”)³⁰.

One of Pulci’s letters and a passage in the *Morgante* also refer to an “academia”; both vaguely hint at some disagreement³¹. For this reason it has been suggested that the argument between Pulci and Ficino started as early as 1473 (the date of the letter), when Ficino possibly was the head of a purported Platonic “Academy”. The use of this word, however, does not prove that Ficino was necessarily involved; further, the notion that there was such a thing as a Florentine Platonic Academy centred around Ficino only became accepted in

²⁹ References to giants and Cerberus can also be found in some of Franco’s poems against Pulci; see Alessio Decaria, **Luigi Pulci e Francesco di Matteo Castellani**, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-228.

³⁰ Luigi Pulci, ***Morgante e lettere***, ed. by Domenico de Robertis, *op. cit.*, p. 992.

³¹ Letter XXXII (31st August 1473), *ibid.*, p. 986: “Tu harai detto ch’io affrettai il partire per non trovarmi coll’academia. Lasciagli venire in qua, et sentirai ch’io te ne scardassi qualcuno. So mi capiteranno alle mani, et da lloro sapremo come andorno le muse; et se io non havessi havuto gran fretta ti contentavo costì; ma io ti farò più honore di qua, dove molti udiranno”. Stanza XXV.117 in the ***Morgante*** is more vague: “La mia accademia un tempo o mia ginnasia/ è stata volentier ne’ miei boschetti,/ e puossi ben veder l’Affrica e l’Asia:/ vengon le ninfe con lor canestretti/ e portanmi o narciso o colocasìa,/ e così fuggo mille urban dispetti;/ sì ch’io non torno a’ vostri ariopaghi,/ gente pur sempre di mal dicer vaghi”.

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the sixteenth century. The word “*academia*” was employed during the same years to refer to other groups of intellectuals, such as that gathered around John Argyropoulos³².

Also of interest is that Pulci would include many of his personal issues in poetry, as seen above with the examples of the poems addressed to Scala and Franco. There are, therefore, several unsparing depictions of Ficino, mainly in four sonnets and in the *Morgante*. The four sonnets are: *Marsilio, questa tua philosophia*, *Buona sera, o messer, vien za, va drento*, *O venerabil gufo soriano* and *Se Dio ti guardi, Marsilio Ficino*. One more sonnet, probably written by Pulci with his friend Benedetto Dei, *Costor che fan sì gran disputazione*, is a parody of the Ficinian theories on the soul³³.

Whereas the sonnets leave no doubt as to Pulci’s opinion on Ficino, albeit providing little evidence on the nature of their dispute, the evidence afforded by the *Morgante* is more revealing but fraught with complications.

The “second poem”: Cantos XXIV-XXVIII

On February 7th, 1483 the printer Francesco di Dino completed the first printed edition of the *Morgante* in twenty-eight Cantos, a chivalric poem inspired by the Carolingian *Chansons de geste*, the medieval literary cycles on the adventures of Charlemagne. Pulci drew on this tradition and its stories of the struggle between Christendom and Islam in his mock-heroic epic. His version includes many elements of burlesque, grotesque and comic.

The poem had circulated before November 1478 in manuscripts containing a shorter version of twenty-three Cantos³⁴. Pulci had begun this first part in 1461, when Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Piero de’ Medici’s wife and mother of

³² Hankins challenged the notion of the Florentine Academy, while the same idea has been defended by Arthur Field; see James Hankins, “The Myth of the Platonic Academy in Florence”, in **Renaissance Quarterly**, 44, 1991, pp. 429-475, pp. 439-440; Arthur Field, “The Platonic Academy of Florence” in **Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His legacy**, ed. by Michael J. B. Allen, Martin Davies and Valery Rees, Leiden: Brill, 2002, pp. 359-376. An example of how the word *accademia* was commonly used during this period is found in a letter by Agnolo della Stufa that referred to the “*accademici dell’Argiropulo*”; see Alison Brown, **Bartolomeo Scala, 1430-1497, Chancellor of Florence**, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

³³ Paolo Orvieto, “A proposito del sonetto *Costor che fan sì gran disputazione* e dei sonetti responsivi”, in **Interpres**, 4, 1981-82, pp. 400-413.

³⁴ Franca Brambilla Ageno, “Le tre redazioni del *Morgante*”, in **Studi di filologia italiana**, 9, 1951, pp. 5-37.

Lorenzo de' Medici, asked him to write a chivalric poem on Charlemagne. Exactly when Pulci began writing the last five Cantos is unclear. It has been supposed that they were written shortly after 1478, but their heterogeneity has led scholars to propose various dates. Clues for dating the last six Cantos include the allusion to the death of Lucrezia Tornabuoni, which occurred on March 25, 1482 (XXVIII.132) and a reference to Girolamo Savonarola's first sermons in Florence during the Advent of 1482 (XXVIII.42-45)³⁵. As for the other Cantos, the evidence is ambiguous, for example the bestiary – a list of mythical animals used for the purposes explained below – in Canto XXV (322-331), derived from Albert the Great's *De animalibus* and Pliny's *Naturalis historia*. It has been assumed that Pulci used the edition of *De animalibus* printed in Mantua in early January 1479, and Cristoforo Landino's vernacular translation of *Historia naturalis*, printed in 1476³⁶.

No autograph manuscript of the *Morgante* survives and we must rely on the printed editions to infer that the two sections of the poem, Cantos I-XXIII and Cantos XXIV-XXVIII (Canto XXIII is still part of the "first poem" from the point of view of content) are, in some ways, distinct. Their main differences are the following:

1. The first part of the *Morgante* is a collection of stories, each loosely linked to the others. The narrator does not pay special attention to creating a consistent macro-structure. The reason for this apparent haphazardness is perhaps that the *Morgante* was composed episode by episode and not homogeneously, each story being created perhaps to be read aloud³⁷. Hence many themes are replicated in different episodes and the characters retain the same behaviour throughout the Cantos. The second part of the poem, by contrast, focusses narrowly on the Battle of Roncevaux. Pulci, however, added some original features to the standard plot³⁸.

2. The stated aim of the *Morgante* is to celebrate Charlemagne (I.4-5). Pulci, however, did not accomplish this task in the "first poem", which amounts to a list of the adventures of the French paladins³⁹. The discrepancy between Pulci's

³⁵ Stefano Carrai, **Le muse dei Pulci**, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-187.

³⁶ Luigi Pulci, **Morgante**, ed. by Franca Brambilla Ageno, Milan: Ricciardi, 1955, p. 922.

³⁷ Stefano Carrai, "*Morgante* di Luigi Pulci", in **Letteratura Italiana**, ed. by Alberto Asor Rosa, **Le Opere I. Dalle origini al Cinquecento**, Turin: Einaudi, 1990, pp. 769-789.

³⁸ Franca Brambilla Ageno, "Scelta linguistica e reazione antiletteraria nel *Morgante*", in **Lettere Italiane**, 7, 1955, pp. 113-129.

³⁹ Mark Davie, **Half-Serious Rhymes: The Narrative Poetry of Luigi Pulci**, Ballsbridge: Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 1998, pp. 13-15.

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target and the actual contents of these Cantos has been partially explained by the discovery of a source, the anonymous poem later named *Orlando laurenziano*, which Pulci followed closely⁴⁰. In the “second poem” Pulci reinforces his desire to celebrate Charlemagne’s life, this time accomplished in his account of the Battle of Roncevaux and of Charlemagne’s legendary (XXVIII.53-57) and historical life (XXXVIII.67-104)⁴¹.

3. Unlike the “first poem”, the last five Cantos often assert the veracity of the narrative by recalling sources, *auctoritates*. For Charlemagne’s legendary life, Pulci names a “citarista Lattanzio, [...] molto gentil, molto famoso artista” who lived in Aachen (XXVIII.53 1-3) but, in fact, he quotes Andrea da Barberino’s poems (c.1370- c.1441) *Reali di Francia* and *Aspramonte* and another anonymous poem, *Spagna in rima*. For the historical account of Charlemagne’s life, Pulci mentioned Alcuin of York, although he actually quotes Donato Acciaiuoli’s *Vita Caroli Magni*. He also cites someone called Arnaldo (XXV.115, 169; XXVII.80; XXVIII.26), an imaginary source⁴². Pulci also quotes the *Historia Karoli Magni et Rotholandi* (XXVII.69, 72, 257), which he believed had been written by Turpin, archbishop of Reims in the eight century and eyewitness to the Battle. This fictitious account of Charlemagne’s war against the Saracens is, in fact, an anonymous work of the mid-twelfth century.

Characters are brought into focus in the last five Cantos, while in the “first poem” they remain undeveloped “sketches”. This difference may be illustrated by looking specifically at four characters: Charlemagne, Gano, Rinaldo and Marsilione.

a) Pulci’s Charlemagne in the first part of the poem does not have the strong personality that he has in the *Chanson de Roland* tradition and, despite

⁴⁰ See Pio Rajna, “La materia del *Morgante* in un ignoto poema del sec. XV”, in **Propugnatore**, 2, 1869, pp. 7-384: 7-32, 220-252, 353-584. For the debate around this discovery see Brambilla Ageno, “Scelta linguistica e reazione antiletteraria nel *Morgante*”, in **Lettere Italiane**, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-129; Carlo Dionisotti, “Entrée d’Espagne, Spagna, Rotta di Roncisvalle”, in **Studi in onore di Angelo Monteverdi**, ed. by Giuseppina Gerardi Marcuzzo, 2 Vols., Modena: Società tipografica editrice modenese, 1959, Vol. 1, pp. 207-224: 207-241; Paolo Orvieto, “Sul rapporto *Morgante* - *Orlando laurenziano*” in **Ritterepik der Renaissance: Akten des deutsch-italienischen Kolloquiums**, Berlin, 30.3-2.4.1987, ed. by Klaus W. Hempfer, Stuttgart: Steiner, 1989, pp. 146-152; Mark Davie, **Half-Serious Rhymes**, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-63.

⁴¹ Costance Jordan, **Pulci’s *Morgante*: Poetry and History in Fifteenth-Century Florence**, Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1986, p. 125.

⁴² Luigi Pulci, ***Morgante***, ed. by Franca Brambilla Ageno, *op. cit.*, p. 866.

being the Holy Roman Emperor, he is often deceived by Gano di Maganza (I.15-16; VIII.54; 71; X.13-15; XII.4-8), whom Charlemagne always forgives (XI.5; XII.209-210). Besides, Charlemagne is mournful when the paladins are not at the court to help. In the second part of the poem, although very old, Charlemagne is “less petty, more grandly foolish, and finally more heroic” and fights and defeats his enemies after the Roncevaux rout⁴³.

b) Gano di Maganza in the first twenty-three Cantos is a colourless character. He spies on the paladins and Charlemagne with the sole purpose of thwarting their plans and damaging the French court. Gano changes in the second poem, as he is no longer immune to guilt, which torments him deeply (XXV.48, 75, 85)⁴⁴.

c) Rinaldo in the first poem is the perfect paladin. He defeats dragons, hell monsters, giants, and a very long list of Muslims. Rinaldo never refuses to fight, except on one occasion, typically for this genre of heroic poem, when he falls in love with his enemy (Antea, XVI.14-21). In the second part of the poem, however, Rinaldo’s character is tempted by demons to misbehave and develops an evil side, a novelty in the tradition (XXV.291-304), especially during the battle of Roncevaux (XXVII.63, 91, 95)⁴⁵.

d) Finally, the character of Marsilione undergoes maybe the most significant change. This is discussed below.

4. In the second poem the style varies more than in the “first poem”. The second poem still makes frequent use of elements of that comic-realist style just as the first poem does. Important to note, however, are the quite pointed changes in register for some of the descriptions, for example when the betrayal is organized and apocalyptic signs forecast the massacre of Roncevaux (XXV, 73-80). Orlando’s death, too, represents another instance of the text making unexpected use of a higher register (XXVII, 116-208).

5. Pulci uses classical and well-known medieval or contemporary sources more frequently in the last five Cantos than in the first twenty-three. For example, Virgil (*Bucolicum Carmen*, *Aeneid*), Lucan (*Pharsalia*), Pliny the Elder (*Naturalis Historia*), Statius (*Thebaid*), Dante (especially the *Inferno* but also the *Paradiso*), Petrarch (*Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*) are all prominent. These quotations are often related to an elevation of stylistic register.

⁴³ Constance Jordan, **Pulci’s *Morgante***, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

⁴⁴ Luigi Pulci, ***Morgante***, ed. by Davide Puccini, 2 Vols., Milan: Garzanti, 1989, Vol. 1, pp. liii-liv.

⁴⁵ Ruedi Ankli, ***Morgante iperbolico: l’iperbole nel Morgante di Luigi Pulci***, Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1993, pp. 264-304.

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6. Unlike the first twenty-three Cantos, the “second poem”, at least in Cantos XXIV and XXV, has an undoubtedly original plot. The Battle of Roncevaux was a well-known event in the Middle-Ages, but Pulci, in keeping with the liberty afforded to him by tradition, invented new episodes leading up to the Battle. First, Canto XXIV is dedicated to Antea’s revenge. Antea, the beautiful daughter of the Sultan of Babylon, becomes queen of the city after the death of her father, caused by a Muslim converted by Rinaldo. She and the Spanish King of the Saracens, Marsilione, are convinced by Gano to attack Paris. When this news arrives at Charlemagne’s court in Paris, the responsibility is immediately attributed to Gano, who is slapped on the cheek by Ulivieri, the Marquis of Vienna⁴⁶. The slap is followed by the siege of Paris, when Antea brings two giants with her who are overcome by the magic of Malagigi, Charlemagne’s magician. After a duel between Orlando and Antea, she and Marsilione withdraw their armies. The classic story of the Battle of Roncevaux then takes place, with many details changed for purposes discussed below.

Another original invention is Astarotte, a character who is mainly depicted in Canto XXV. Some poems of the chivalric tradition, such as the *Cantari di Rinaldo da Monte Albano*, mention Rinaldo’s wandering through the Middle East as a pilgrimage towards Jerusalem; Pulci, however, transforms it into an adventurous tour of heathen lands⁴⁷. Since Rinaldo is still far away when the Battle is about to begin and the Christian army cannot win without one of its paladins, the author needs a way to bring him to Roncevaux. Malagigi forecasts the future and knows of the betrayal. He evokes the demon Astarotte to bring Rinaldo to the battlefield⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ The slap is a typical example of how Pulci was inspired by his sources without copying them literally. This episode appears in the **Spagna in rima**, but is set during a council of the French court, which had gathered to decide on who should be sent to answer one of Marsilione’s legations. When Charlemagne chooses Gano, the latter complains because he is afraid of being killed by the heathens. After Ulivieri’s punishment, Gano swears to take revenge on the paladins. This is the reason that moves him to betray Charlemagne once he reaches Marsilione’s court; see **La Spagna. Poema cavalleresco del secolo XIV**, ed. by Michele Catalano, 3 Vols, Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1940, XXIX.25-30, Vol. 3, pp. 21-22.

⁴⁷ **Romanzi dei Reali di Francia**, ed. by Adelaide Mattaini, Milan: Rizzoli, 1957, pp. 893-894.

⁴⁸ The anonymous author of the **Spagna in rima** offers a similar ploy but in a different context. Charlemagne uses Macabel, a demon evoked by Orlando, to go to Paris and to prevent Maccario from seizing his throne: **La Spagna. Poema**

Metamorphosis: King Marsilione becomes Marsilio Ficino

King Marsilione is an essential character in the plot of the last five Cantos. Significant for this discussion is the way that the fictional Marsilio (a name that is always used as short for *Marsilione*) undergoes a change that encourages the identification with Marsilio Ficino⁴⁹.

The alteration that Marsilio undergoes in these Cantos is not however uniform. The inconsistencies between the old Marsilio and the new Marsilio can be detected in some passages describing the personality of the character. In Canto XXIV, for example, the King is described as wise and reasonable:

era pur savio il re Marsilione
e molto a Bianciardin prestava fede.
(XXIV.15, lines 1-2)

In this way, wisdom appears as one of the main traits of Marsilione. This theme is continued throughout the Canto:

[...] fu la risposta fatta da Marsilio
che teneva e di piombo e di coturno.⁵⁰
(XXIV.17, lines 3-4)

Marsilione is nevertheless Muslim and therefore retains some evil traits attributed to him in the first twenty-two Cantos. For example, he arbitrarily kills a member of Charlemagne's legation (XXIV.29.5).

At Canto XXV Gano goes as Charlemagne's ambassador to Marsilio's court in Zaragoza and the two of them plan that Gano will convince Orlando to meet Marsilione in Spain, without an army, to sign an agreement and stop the war and all hostilities, leaving the French army undefended from a Saracen attack. In this context Marsilione, despite being a Muslim, is still wise. Blame is not attributed to Marsilione. Tellingly the text cites Gano as the betrayer:

cavalleresco del secolo XIV, ed. by Michele Catalano, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, XXI-XXIII.25-30, pp. 254-312.

⁴⁹ Paolo Orvieto, **Pulci medievale**, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-283.

⁵⁰ See **Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca, con tre indici delle voci, locuzioni, e prouerbi latini, e greci, posti per entro l'opera. Con priuilegio del sommo pontefice, del re cattolico, della serenissima Repubblica di Venezia, e degli altri principi, e potentati d'Italia, e fuor d'Italia, della maestà cesarea, del re cristianissimo, e del sereniss. arciduca Alberto**, Venice: Giovanni Alberti, 1612, p. 630 s.v. "piombo": "Andar col calzar del piombo: Proverbio, che è Andar considerato, e non si muovere a furia".

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O traditor rubaldo e maladetto
che non cura più Iddio nel suo decreto!
(XXV.67, lines 5-6)

and a few lines on:

Era Gan traditor di sua natura,
prescito più che Giuda Iscariotto.
(XXV.69, lines 1-2)

The abrupt change in Marsilione happens only at the very beginning of Canto XXVI. After the usual formulary sentences in the first stanza, the second offers a list of lamentations for the ill-fated battle of Roncevaux. Verse 5, stanza 2, is the very first to label Marsilione “betrayed” (rather than Gano): “O traditor Marsilio saracino”. This continues in the following verse “potranno i tuoi inganni alfin vedersi?” Marsilione the wise King has disappeared and a “jealous betrayer” takes his place throughout the rest of the poem:

Questo è Marsilio traditore astuto [...].
(XXVI.9, line 5)

Ch'io avevo Marsilio cognosciuto
traditor prima che fussi creato.
(XXVI.20, lines 4-5)

Ma quel Marsilio, se nessun lo ignora,
fra molti vizii tutti osceni e brutti
una invidia ha nell'ossa che il divora,
che si cognosce finalmente a' frutti:
io l'ho sempre veduto in uno specchio
un tristo, un doppio, un vil traditor vecchio.
(XXVI.21, lines 3-8)

“Quel traditor, non dico di Maganza,
anzi Marsilio, anzi altro Scariotto”
(XXVI.107, lines 1-2)

“[...] del tradimento, tu tel puoi pensare:
sai che Gano e Marsilio è traditore.”
(XXVI.149, lines 5-6)

The same features are used to describe the Muslim King in Canto XXVII:
Marsilio è tanto cattivo ribaldo [...].
(XXVII.3, line 5)

[...] poi disse al re Marsilio: “Il tempo è giunto
a punir te dell’opere tue ladre
perché tu meritasti un capresto unto
mentre tu eri in corpo di tua madre.”
(XXVII.36, lines 1-4)

[...] e disse: “O traditor Marsilio, ora ecco
dove tu commettesti il grande scelo!”
(XXVII.270, lines 5-6)

and finally in Canto XXVIII:

“e il traditor di Marsilio è punito [...].”
(XXVIII.4, line 3)

The only exception to this is in Canto XXVII, during the battle. As Marsilione commands his troops, he once again proves his wisdom:

Fece Marsilio, come dotto e saggio
uno squadron ristretto di pagani,
uomini tutti ch’avevon coraggio [...].
(XXVII.9, lines 1-3)

The fictional Marsilione has been linked to the real Marsilio Ficino by Orvieto, who points out that in the “second poem” Marsilione is described rather oddly⁵¹. At this stage Marsilione behaves in ways that we have not observed previously. He swears at God, for instance, and shows himself to be two-faced and envious⁵². Moreover, there are other aspects of these Cantos related to the Muslim King that are described differently from the traditional account of the Battle of Roncevaux of the *Chanson de Roland*. For instance, Marsilione searches for the arm of his son which has been cut off by Orlando; Marsilione wants to display it in various mosques as a relic. In *La Spagna in rima*, *Rotta di Roncisvalle* and *Chanson de Roland* there is another version of

⁵¹ See the whole chapter “Per un’interpretazione allegorico-polemica dei cantari XXIV-XXVIII” in Paolo Orvieto, *Pulci medievale*, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-283.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 253-258.

the amputation, as Marsilio's own arm is cut off and not his son's⁵³. In addition to these discrepancies, there are some textual resemblances between the poem and the sonnets that Pulci wrote against Ficino. These are analysed in detail at Chapter 8⁵⁴. Finally, there is additional evidence showing that the first readers of the poem, such as the humanist Angelo Colocci, believed that Marsilione in the *Morgante* was a portrait of Ficino⁵⁵.

A closer reading of the text gives insights as to why Pulci depicts Marsilione as evil. This was not a chance happening. Most probably during the process of writing the last five Cantos something changed in Pulci's life and this event encouraged him to alter features of Marsilione half way through the second part of the *Morgante*, at Canto XXVI.

Dating Canto XXV

Pulci scholars have dated Canto XXVIII of the *Morgante* to 1482 and much importance has been given to the sources of the bestiary at Canto XXV. The present section suggests a different dating.

The bestiary is the second of its kind in the *Morgante*. On this occasion Pulci changed source, drawing on three texts: Pliny's *Naturalis historia*, Albert the Great's *De animalibus* and Lucan's *Pharsalia*. The bestiary is a list of legendary creatures that appears during one of Rinaldo's adventures on his way to Roncevaux, while accompanied by Astarotte. After stopping to rest in Zaragoza, they assist at Queen Blanda's banquet without being seen (XXV.292-305). Queen Blanda, Marsilione's wife, has a daughter named Luciana, who once was in love with Rinaldo; the paladin recalls then a tapestry that Luciana embroidered for him with animals from all around the world. This is setting for the bestiary of Canto XIV.42-92. Astarotte replies to Rinaldo claiming to know of another tapestry with more exotic animals, hence the second bestiary of Canto XXV.

Franca Brambilla Ageno in her edition of the *Morgante* argues that the main source of the first stanzas at Canto XXV was the translation into Florentine vernacular of the *Naturalis historia* by Cristoforo Landino, published in 1476

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 257-259. The arm of St Julian has been kept as relic in the Cathedral of Macerata since Epiphany day, 1442; see Rab Hatfield, "The Compagnia de' Magi", in **Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes**, 33, 1970, p. 137. Perhaps Pulci had this relic in mind because San Giuliano alludes to Giuliano de' Medici, the victim of the Pazzi conspiracy.

⁵⁴ Paolo Orvieto, **Pulci medievale**, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-265.

⁵⁵ Alessio Decaria, "Notizie su Luigi Pulci in uno zibaldone colocciano", in **Interpres**, 28, 2009, pp. 255-265.

in Venice by Nicola Jenson⁵⁶. The table provided in the Appendix shows that Pulci's text follows closely Pliny's descriptions albeit with some exceptions. The following is a list of the errors common to both the *Morgante* and Landino's version (see Table 1 in the Appendix):

- a. The animal called *callirafio* (312, line 7) in the original Latin is *rufium*. It is preceded by the word "galli", which generated the mistake: the union of *Galli* and *rufium* must have created *Gallirufium*, then *Callirufium* and finally *Callirafium*.
- b. The word *macli*, found in both Landino's text and in the *Morgante* (320 line 4), originated in a similar way to the word *callirafio*. In Pliny's text it is preceded by the word *narratam*, whose final letter "m" becomes the beginning of the following word, "accli";
- c. The word *tarandrus* (*tarando*, 322 line 1) undergoes the elision of the second "r".

These errors, Brambilla Ageno argues, link Landino's translation to the text of the *Morgante*. They are, however, found in four Latin editions of the *Naturalis Historia*, all printed in Italy between 1470 and 1476⁵⁷. Their text includes the words *calliraphium*, *machlin* and *tarandus*⁵⁸.

On the other hand, there are some words in Pulci's text that do not have equivalents in Landino's translation:

- a. Pliny's *rhinoceros* becomes Landino's *rhinocerote*, whereas Pulci spelled it differently, *rinoceronte*. The word *rinoceronte* (312, line 2) in this spelling is not attested before the *Morgante*;
- b. Pliny's *crocodilus* and Landino's *crocodillo* are different to Pulci's modern form *coccodrillo* (315, line 4)⁵⁹;
- c. At stanza 318 Pulci described a "forked tongue", "lingua biforcuta", not found in Pliny's nor Landino's text. The Latin text reports "ungulis binis",

⁵⁶ Pliny the Elder, **Historia naturale**, transl. and ed. by Cristoforo Landino, Venice: Nicolaus Jenson, 1476.

⁵⁷ *Id.*, **Historia naturalis**, ed. by Johannes Andreas, bishop of Aleria, Rome: Conradus Sweynheym and Arnoldus Pannartz, 1470; *id.*, **Historia naturalis**, ed. by Johannes Andreas, bishop of Aleria, Venice: Nicolaus Jenson, 1472; *id.*, **Historia naturalis**, ed. by Nicolaus Perottus, Rome, Conradus Sweynheym and Arnoldus Pannartz, 1473; *id.*, **Historia naturalis**, ed. by Philippus Beroaldus, Parma: Stephanus Corallus, 1476.

⁵⁸ *Id.*, **Historia naturalis** (1470), ff. 189v, 185v, 194r; *id.* **Historia naturalis** (1472), ff. 178r, 175v, 183r; *id.* **Historia naturalis** (1473), ff. 99v, 97v, 102v; *id.* **Historia naturalis** (1476), ff. 86r, 84r, 87v.

⁵⁹ Leon Battista Alberti, **I libri della famiglia**, ed. by Ruggiero Romano and Alberto Tenenti, Turin: Einaudi, 1994, p. 328.

while Landino's "lunghia di due pezi". Pulci most probably misread from the Latin text and not from Landino's vernacular.

In addition to the textual evidence, we know that Pliny's *Naturalis historia* had circulated in Florence before Landino's translation. The word *catoblepa*, for instance, found in Fazio degli Uberti's *Dittamondo* (c. 1318-1360) along with the words *cefos*, *noceronte* and *leofante*, each of which feature in the *Morgante* (V.23)⁶⁰. The animal named *catoblepa* (314, line 1) is found also in Ficino's *Theologia platonica* (XIII.4):

Among the western Ethiopians purportedly lived beasts called the catoblepas that would kill men simply by looking at them (basilisks also do this near Cyrene), so effective is the power in the vapours of [their] eyes⁶¹.

This textual evidence suggests that the *Naturalis historia* was read in Florence before Landino's translation. For instance, Ficino concluded his work in 1474, two years before the publication of Landino's *Historia naturale*. Moreover, Pulci could have consulted a manuscript copy or any of the editions printed between 1470 and 1476.

The second source of the bestiary is Albert the Great's *De animalibus*. Brambilla Ageno has argued that Pulci used the edition printed in Mantua in January 1479⁶². Table 2 in the Appendix compares the text of the *Morgante*, to

⁶⁰ The word "cocodrillo" is found in Sacchetti's **Il libro delle rime**, ed. by Franca Brambilla Ageno, Florence: Olschki; Perth: University of W. Australia Press, 1990, X, 12, p. 15; in Leon Battista Alberti, **I libri della famiglia**, ed. by Ruggiero Romano and Alberto Tenenti, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 328; Fazio degli Uberti, **Il dittamondo e le rime**, ed. by Giuseppe Corsi, 2 Vols., Bari: Laterza, 1952, Vol. 1, pp. 402-403.

⁶¹ Marsilio Ficino, **Platonic Theology**, English transl. Michael J.B. Allen and John Warden; ed. by James Hankins and William Bowen, 6 Vols, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2001-2006, Vol. 4, pp. 194-195: "Apud Hesperios Aethiopas fuisse traditur bestias, nomine catoblepas, quae solo aspectu homines interimerent, quod et apud Cyrenem faciunt basilisci. Tanta est vis in vaporibus oculorum". It is notable that neither the **Morgante** nor the **Theologia platonica** mention the eyes of the catoblepa but its look ("guardo" and "aspectus").

⁶² See Franca Brambilla Ageno's commentary in Luigi Pulci, **Morgante**, ed. by Franca Brambilla Ageno, *op. cit.*, p. 922: "vari indizi mostrano che l'autore si valse di quest'ultima".

the text of the 1479 edition, and in the third column the text of a modern edition of Albert's work.

There are five names quoted identically in the *Morgante* and in the 1479 edition of Albert's work, these six words have the same errors:

- a. in the words *arundutis*, *athylon*, *dryatha* the original "t" becomes "c" (*arunducus* in the print and *arunduco* in the poem; *achylon* and *achiton*; *dryacha* and *driaca*);
- b. in the word *athylon* "l" becomes "t";
- c. in the word *iboz* "z" become "r" (*ibor*);
- d. the word *asfodius* undergoes two changes, firstly the two consonants "sf" become "ls", then an "r" is inserted because of rhotacism and the word becomes *alsordius* and then *alsordio*.

The words that distinguish the *Morgante* from the edition printed at Mantua, however, are more numerous:

- a. The Mantua edition spells *cafezacus* correctly, but Pulci writes *caferaco*;
- b. *Scaura* becomes unexpectedly *saure*, with an unpredictable elision of the velar sound;
- c. *Aracsis* becomes *arachs*, losing the last syllable in the print, to which Pulci adds the final "e";
- d. The *cornuta aspis* become plural, with a lenition of the "t" ("cornude");
- e. *Alhartraf* becomes *albatraffa* in the poem, with a standard rhotacism but an unusual insertion of a "b" instead of the "h" (the consonant "h" was normally substituted with the velar "c");
- f. *Caprimulgus* becomes *caprivulgus* in the Mantua edition, but Pulci uses *caprimulgo* in the *Morgante*;
- g. *Memnonides* becomes *menonides* in the Mantua edition; Pulci's version is even simpler, *meonide*;
- h. *Caristae* corresponds to Pulci *carità*. The original meaning of the word *carità* is completely inappropriate in this context, so there must be another reason why Pulci used it instead of copying the word *cariste* from the printed edition. This cannot be satirical because the rest of this bestiary does not have a comic register;
- i. *Lucidiae* becomes *licidia* in the *Morgante*.

We can observe two fundamental factors in this comparison of the texts. First, the number of misspellings unique to the *Morgante* outnumbers the words that the Mantua edition and the *Morgante* have in common. Secondly, an important reason for Pulci doing this work was his desire to find original information on lesser known animals and, where possible, report as many peculiarities as possible. This said, his interest in animals is most significant only for the first part of the bestiary inspired by Pliny's *Naturalis historia*. In the second part of the bestiary Pulci seems to copy the names of animals from Albert's work and is not generous with details. This suggests that Pulci used an

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abridgment of Albert's work that reported only snakes and birds, which is the focus of Chapter XXIII and XXV of *De animalibus*.

In conclusion, there is no convincing evidence that Pulci used the editions of *Naturalis historia* and *De animalibus* as suggested by Franca Brambilla Ageno. Pulci could have read any version of Pliny's treatise, either in manuscripts or in any of the four Latin editions printed between 1470 and 1476. Also, it is more probable that Pulci read an abridgement of Albert the Great's *De animalibus* than the 1479 *editio princeps* of Albert's work. The dating of Pulci's bestiary cannot be determined by the printing of these two texts in 1476 and 1479.

This conclusion is supported by other clues that point towards a predating of Cantos XXIV and XXV:

1. These Cantos have in common with the "first poem" the change in the character of Malagigi, the magician of the Carolingian court⁶³. In the "first poem" he appears several times to help Charlemagne and the paladins against the Saracens. On these occasions, he never refuses to intervene with his magic and to change the course of events, nor does the narrator ever explain how it is that Malagigi is able to perform magic so efficiently. However at Canto XXI Malagigi is asked to perform magic and refuses, explaining that magic requires the right place and time and it cannot be used at will (102-103). The same happens at Canto XXIV, where the narrator similarly justifies Malagigi's choice and gives a brief account of the conditions under which magic can be performed (XXIV, 106-113). The suddenly scrupulous Malagigi, concerned with God's rules and free will, reappears at Canto XXII, marking a significant continuity between Canto XXI and Canto XXIV.
2. Brambilla Ageno pointed out that the demon Astarotte, mentioned for the first time at Canto XXV (49, line 3), is in fact referred to at Canto XXI. Pulci tells of a demon that "stayed inside the horse" ("che nel cavallo stette"), anticipating the events that take place further on in the poem. At Canto XXV Astarotte enters the body of Rinaldo's horse in order to collect Rinaldo from Egypt. When Pulci wrote Canto XXI, therefore, he had already conceived or perhaps written the section of the plot that concerns Cantos XXIV and XXV.⁶⁴
3. Finally at Canto XXV.169 Pulci thanks Angelo Poliziano for some

⁶³ See also Constance Jordan, *Pulci's Morgante*, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-134.

⁶⁴ See Luigi Pulci, *Morgante*, ed. by Franca Brambilla Ageno, *op. cit.*, p. 650: "Questo accenno all'episodio di Astarotte narrato nel cantare XXV dimostra che il secondo poema (cantari XXIV-XXVIII) era in parte composto, o almeno concepito, prima che venisse finito il primo (cantari I-XXIII); si può pensare anche a un episodio avvenuto durante qualche "evocazione" di Astarotte, e che abbia suggerito l'episodio relativo".

suggestions – probably concerning the idea of inserting Astarotte into the plot of the *Morgante*. Poliziano joined the Medici household, where Pulci probably met him, no earlier than 1473.

In light of the three points, I suggest that Cantos XXI-XXV were written during the same period across the first half of the 1470s. A letter from Pulci to Lorenzo dated January 1472 adds weight to this argument as it quotes an episode in Canto XIX.170-173⁶⁵.

Brambilla Ageno's hypothesis that the bestiary in Canto XXV was written after 1479 would leave a gap of six Cantos (XIX-XXV) and more than seven years (1472-1479). The evidence gathered above, however, provides continuity between Cantos XIX-XXIV, datable to the first half of the 1470s. More importantly, Cantos XXIV and XXV no longer have a *terminus post quem* in 1479, a fundamental premise to draw them nearer to Ficino's works.

II. Philosophy in the *Morgante*

Cantos XXIV and XXV are noted for their breaks in narrative to allow to philosophical and theological material. There is a difference, however, between the two: Canto XXIV incorporates theoretical disquisitions, while Canto XXV includes stanzas on philosophical or theological matters that are integrated into the plot as speeches given mainly by two characters, Marsilione (42-46) and Astarotte (119-167; 228-244). There has been much speculation as to the reasons behind these breaks in the narrative, though a satisfactory explanation is yet to be proposed⁶⁶. What is clear is that these philosophical and theological

⁶⁵ *Id.*, *Morgante e lettere*, ed. by Domenico de Robertis, *op. cit.*, XXIII, pp. 976-977. This clue was first pointed out by Ernest H. Wilkins, "On the Dates of Composition of the *Morgante* of Luigi Pulci", in **PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America**, 66, 1951, p. 246.

⁶⁶ Edoardo Lebano, for example, has claimed that all these sections in the *Morgante* are parodic in "I miracoli di Roncisvalle e la presunta ortodossia del diavolo-teologo Astarotte nel *Morgante* di Luigi Pulci", in *Italica*, 46, 1969, pp. 120-134. Orvieto has remained undecided, maintaining that (**Pulci medievale**, *op. cit.*, p. 263): "Pulci imita e nel contempo dissacra". Puccini, in the introduction to his edition of the *Morgante*, suggests that Pulci tried to incorporate Ficinian philosophy into his poem; see Luigi Pulci, *Morgante*, ed. by Davide Puccini, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. lv. Gilda Corabi ("Demonologia pulciana: caratteri generali e strategie retoriche", in **Semestrale di studi (e testi) italiani**, 18, 2006, p. 94), following Giovanni Getto (*Studio sul Morgante*, Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1967, p. 16), has argued that Pulci "non sente la responsabilità etica e teoretica di trattare la tematica religiosa con rigore: la affronta al pari della materia cavalleresca, per provare la sua arte e la sua fantasia (spesso dissacrante)".

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themes share much with Ficino's philosophy, especially his treatises finished before 1474.

Ficino's influence is, most immediately, detectable in the lexicon of these two cantos. Even though the expressions shared between the *Morgante* and Ficino's texts are very common in theological and philosophical discourse, it is important to note that not only were they unusual in a chivalric poem, but they do not occur in the first twenty-three cantos of the *Morgante* either. They must have sounded as peculiar to the loyal *lettore* of the poem as they do now. Philosophical language appears at the very beginning of Canto XXIV. One of the first stanzas exemplifies this:

Io cominciai a cantar di Carlo Mano:
convien che 'l mio cantar pur giunga in porto,
e ch'io punisca il traditor di Gano
d'un tradimento già ch'io veggo scorto
cogli occhi della mente in uno specchio;
e increseme di Carlo, che è pur vecchio.
(XXIV.4, lines 3-8)

Specchio, "mirror", is a term not found in the first twenty-three Cantos. *Occhi della mente*, likewise used here for the first time, is a common Ficinian phrase which is quite frequent in his letters⁶⁷. Pulci, in the task of depicting an historical event, attempts to lend credence to the veracity his version. Such "veracity" comes through the mind's eyes and the mirror, supposedly sources of knowledge thanks to which events come to be interpreted and interpretable in narrative. The function of these terms becomes clearer when we analyse their meaning in Ficino's treatises. In *De amore*, for example, the trope of mind's eye is significant. One of many passages in which it occurs is in Oration VI.18:

Similmente Iddio crea l'anima e donagli la mente, la quale è virtù
d'intendere, e questa sarebbe vota e tenebrosa se il lume di Dio non gli
stessi presente, nel qual'e' vega di tutte le cose le ragioni, sì che intende
per lume di Dio e solo questo lume intende, ben che paia ch'e' conosca
diverse cose, perché intende decto lume sotto diverse idee e ragioni di
cose. Quando lo huomo con gli occhi vede l'uomo fabrica nella fantasia
la imagine dell'uomo, e rinvolvegesi a giudicare decta imagine. Per questo
exercitio dell'animo dispone l'occhio della mente a vedere la ragione e
idea dello huomo che è in esso lume divino, onde subitamente una certa

⁶⁷ It is also found for example in Plato, **Republic** 533d; **Symposium** 212a 1-2; Aristotle, **Nicomachean Ethics**, VI.3, 10.

scintilla nella mente risplende, e la natura dello huomo veramente di qui s'intende; e così nell'altre cose avviene⁶⁸.

In this passage Ficino describes the process of intellection; the phrase “mind’s eye” expresses metaphorically the way in which the intellect apprehends an object. In using this phrase Pulci guarantees that his knowledge is not only intuitive but both intellectual and rational, and therefore truthful.

“Specchio” is also employed by Pulci in a typically Ficinian mode. The poem of the *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum* provides a good example:

My main intention in writing it has been this: that in the divinity of the created mind, as in a mirror at the centre of all things, we should first observe the works of the Creator, and then contemplate and worship the mind of the Creator⁶⁹.

From this point of the poem onwards, Pulci uses the phrase *occhi della mente* or similar metaphors concerning sight to depict a type of vision that reaches beyond appearance towards truth.

The mind’s eye is also the tool that allows knowledge of the future, even though not everyone has this power. This is true in the case of demons, who cannot predict the future as they are said to have a veil (this metaphor appears for the first time in the poem) covering their mind’s eye (XXV.146, line 4). Ficino uses the same metaphor, the veil that impedes the mind from seeing, in his *Theologia platonica* (XIII.2). In this passage, while demonstrating the immortality of the soul, Ficino examines the seven kinds of release of the soul. The seventh is that which results from the chastity of a mind devoted to God. Ficino then lists exemplary characters who could reach this state of release and concludes as follows:

But all these men, like those who were dreaming, took whatever they were seeing with the mind and immediately concealed it under the veils

⁶⁸ Marsilio Ficino, *El libro dell’amore*, ed. by Sandra Niccoli, Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1987, p. 158.

⁶⁹ *Id.*, *Platonic Theology*, transl. Allen and Warden, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 10-11: “In quo quidem componendo id praecipue consilium fuit, ut in ipsa creatae mentis divinitate, ceu speculo rerum omnium medio, creatoris ipsius tum opera speculemur, tum mentem contemplemur atque colamus”.

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of the phantasy in such a way that their mind's visions, obscured beneath the shadows of the phantasy, needed an interpreter⁷⁰.

The meaning of this passage is quite different to what Pulci states in the *Morgante* but the metaphor, "the mind obscured by a veil", resembles closely Ficino's. Ficino's influence is clearer still in Canto XXVIII:

Questa nostra mortal caduca vista
fasciata è sempre d'un oscuro velo,
e spesso il vero scambia alla menzogna;
poi si risveglia come fa chi sogna.
(XXVIII.35, lines 5-8)

Here, although the mind is no longer prominent, sight is not used in its literal meaning and it must be interpreted as the mind's sight. The text moves, therefore, closer still to Ficino's, especially in Pulci's phrase "come fa chi sogna", that recalls Ficino's "like those who were dreaming" ("quemadmodum et somniantes") in the passage quoted above from *Theologia platonica* XIII.2.

Free will

Pulci incorporates many of Ficino's ideas in his idiosyncratic philosophical and theological theories. The first theme considered here is free will.

Pulci's first philosophical intervention comes in Canto XXIV.104-113, following the *marguttino* episode. Antea, the Queen of Babylon and allied with Marsilione, attacks Charlemagne's Paris and brings with her two giants. To salvage the situation, Malagigi, the French magician, creates a creature called *marguttino*, a deformed demi-giant with two heads who lures Antea's giants into a forest. He then traps them in tree branches and a squire sets fire to the branches, killing the giants. Pulci here feels the need to justify his narrative choices:

Ora ècci un punto qui che mi bisogna
allegar forse il verso del Poeta:⁷¹

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 166-168: "Sed ii omnes, quemadmodum et somniantes, quicquid mente cernebant, phantasiae velaminibus statim operiebant, ita ut visa mentis phantasiae umbraculis obscurata interprete indigerent".

⁷¹ The Poeta is clearly Dante and Pulci is quoting *Inferno*, XVI.124-126, in which Dante, developing the concept of the ineffable, asks readers to believe

“sempre a quel ver c’ha faccia di menzogna”
è più senno tener la lingua cheta,
ché spesso “sanza colpa fa vergogna”;
ma s’io non ho gabbato il bel pianeta
come Cassandra già, non è dovuto
che il ver per certo non mi sia creduto.
(XXIV.104)

Pulci asserts the truth in his words by stating that:

Io veggo tuttavia questi giganti
con gli occhi della mente [...].
(XXIV.105, lines 1-2)

The phrase *occhi della mente* is here mentioned for the second time and the meaning of it is clearer than in the first occurrence: the mind’s eye is a trustworthy inner tool which makes Pulci capable of seeing the past clearly. This is because, according to what he writes two lines further on (105, line 4): “io non parlo simulato e fitto”. Stanzas 106-113 justify in detail what has just happened in the poem’s narrative with interesting philosophical implications:

Chi mi dicessi: “Or qui rispondi un poco:
se Malagigi avea questa arte intera,
potea pur far, come il boschetto, il fuoco
e strugger que’ giganti come cera”,
nota che l’arte ha modo e tempo e loco [...].
(XXIV.106, lines 1-5)

The objection, formulated as a dialogue, doubts the real skills of the magician, as he is not able to kill the giants using magic alone. Pulci in his reply narrows the use of magic into three specific categories: manner, time and space. The reason for this is explained in this way:

Ma quello Iddio che impera a tutti i regi
ha dato termine, ordine e misura,
e non si può passar più là che i fregi,
però che a ogni cosa egli ebbe cura;
e fatture, aüruspi e sortilegi
non posson far quel che non può natura,
e le imagin più oltre son di ghiaccio,

what he is describing, even though it seems too extraordinary to be true (a ride on the back of the monster Geryon).

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perché e' fe' la potenza nel suo braccio.
(XXIV.107)

Pulci here refers to the universal order ruled by God. The domain of magic can only lie in Nature, and what Nature cannot do cannot be done by magic either. This is also the case in Ficino's *De amore*:

Ma perché si chiama l'Amore mago? Perchè tutta la forza della magica consiste nello amore [...]. Le parti di questo mondo, come membri d'uno animale dependendo tutte da uno Auctore [...] e membri di questo grande animale, cioè tutti e corpi del mondo, intra loro concatenati, accattano intra l'loro e prestano loro nature. Per questa comune parentela nasce amore comune, da tale amore nasce el comune tiramento, e questa è la vera magica. [...] Adunque l'opere della magica sono opere della natura, e l'arte è ministra; perché l'arte, quando s'avede che in qualche parte non è intera convenientia tra le nature, supplisce a questo in tempi debiti per certi vapori, qualità, numeri, figure, così come nell'agricoltura la natura parturisce le biade e l'arte aiut'a preparare la materia⁷².

This passage lays out Ficino's theory that the universe is like an animal whose parts depend on the Creator, that is, God. The bond between these parts is a form of attraction, love, and this attraction is the domain of natural magic. Pulci and Ficino, therefore, share the same perspective on magic: they both postulate first that the cosmos depends on God, then they make clear that magic stays strictly inside the boundaries of Nature and they both call magic *arte* because magic, in this respect, is a practical way of manipulating Nature.

Pulci also relates the rules of magic to free will. He maintains that Malagigi is unable to harm Antea's giants and that he is only able to create a trap, because at the real heart of magic is, in fact, free will:

Dunque Malgigi e gli altri nigromanti
ci posson cogli spiriti tentare,
ma non poteva uccidere i giganti
per arte, o il fuoco i demòni appiccare;
potea ben fare apparir lor davanti
il bosco, e lor vi potevano entrare
e non entrar: ch'a nessuno è negato
libero arbitrio che da Dio c'è dato.
(XXIV.111)

⁷² Marsilio Ficino, *El libro dell'amore*, ed. by Sandra Niccoli, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

Pulci posits here a firm boundary between the power of magic and the influence of free will. God Himself provides free will, which cannot be infringed by any natural or unnatural manipulation of Nature.

We should also point out, in relation to this passage, that Pulci's argumentative poetry is very close to Ficino's prose. This similarity is clear, for example, in the list of the three conditions which must be satisfied in order to perform magic (XXIV.106-107). In the following passage of *De amore* Ficino similarly describes the essence of beauty (VI, 5):

Finalmente che cosa è la bellezza del corpo? Certamente è uno certo acto, vivacità e gratia risplendente nel corpo per lo influxo della sua idea. Questo splendore non discende nella materia, s'ella non è prima aptissimamente preparata. E la preparatione del corpo vivente in tre cose s'adempie: ordine, modo e spetie; l'ordine significa le distantie delle parti, el modo significa la quantità, la spetie significa lineamenti e colori⁷³.

In order to receive the "splendour" of beauty, Ficino lists three features as necessary conditions, *ordine*, *modo* and *spetie* and likewise Pulci points out, with a list that comprises three parts, that "l'arte ha modo e tempo e loco" (106, line 5) and that God "ha dato termine, ordine e misura" (107, line 2). According to Pulci, these laws of Nature can be broken only by those who transcend them, like demons:

[...] ma gli spirti infernal malvagi e rei
privati son delle virtù divine;
ma perché pur molti segreti sanno,
per virtù natural gran cose fanno.
(XXIV.108, lines 5-8)

Ficino puts forward the very same idea in his *De amore* (VI.10):

Questa arte magica attribuirono gli antichi a' demoni, perché e demoni intendono qual sia la parentela delle cose naturali intra lloro, e qual cosa con qual cosa consoni, e come la concordia delle cose, dove manca, si possa ristorare⁷⁴.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145. In Ficino's work, however, the word *demone* does not always have the meaning that Pulci implies, which is a devil from hell. Ficino often refers to Platonic demons, lower divinities and means which allow men to

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Once again Ficino and Pulci express the same concept: demons know some secrets on the relationships between things and the ways to restore harmony between them. They can perform the art of magic because of their status of demons. It is in their nature (“virtù natural”) to manipulate natural elements. Pulci, in fact, distinguishes a further category of creature, the *spiriti folletti*:

Vanno per l'aire come uccel vagando
altre spezie di spiriti folletti,
che non furon fedel né rei già quando
fu stabilito il numer degli eletti.
(XXIV.109, lines 1-4)

The nature of these creatures seems to be something other than human, though it would not appear to be divine. Assuming that demons are, as in Christian theology, angels who have rebelled against God and have been punished, the *spiriti folletti* are those who, at that point, had not yet taken any decision. The status of the *spiriti folletti* resembles what Ficino describes in the *Theologia platonica* (X.2), where he explains the chain of being in order to demonstrate how “things divine” are not attached to “things mortal”. In the list of beings, “lower beings” are linked in their higher parts to the lower parts of the “higher beings” that immediately follow. Immediately above men “there must be spirits who are familiarly linked to men and under whose instruction, says Plato, we have discovered the miracles of the art of magic.”⁷⁵ Further in the same chapter, these spirits are classified hierarchically:

But Plato calls the one soul of the one machine Jupiter, but the twelve souls of the twelve spheres he calls the gods in Jupiter’s train. To the purer parts of the spheres, that is, the stars and planets, he similarly attributes souls that participate in mind, and these too he calls gods. To the parts of fire he allocates fiery daemons and heroes, to those of the clear air airy ones, and to those of the misty air watery daemons and heroes⁷⁶.

communicate with the divine. They could be also evil and in this case they would be the same as the Christian fallen angels.

⁷⁵ *Id.*, **Platonic Theology**, transl. Allen and Warden, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 116-117: “Esse rursus oportet spiritus hominibus familiaritate coniunctos, quorum instructione magicae artis Plato vult reperta fuisse miracula”.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, pp. 118-121: “Sed ipsam unam unius machinae animam Iovem nuncupat Plato, animas autem duodecim sphaerarum duodecim vocat deos Iovis pedissequos. Sphaerarum partibus purioribus similiter attribuit animas

According to Plato, Ficino's source for this hierarchy, demons can be classified by the element in which they live, which in turn gives them specific skills (XVI.7):

Clearly the airy demons move the airy spirit in us, and when the spirit has so to speak vibrated, the humors too are moved in the body and images are aroused in the phantasy⁷⁷.

This depiction of airy demons is mirrored by Pulci's description of the *spiriti folletti* at Canto XXV:

E sopra tutto a questo ti bisogna
 non ti fidar di spiriti folletti,
 ché non ti dicono mai se non menzogna
 e metton nella mente assai sospetti
 e farebbon più danno che vergogna.
 (XXV.160, 1-5)

Free will in relation to the soul is Pulci's main concern at Canto XXV.42-46, a passage that I have recently discussed elsewhere⁷⁸. In these stanzas King Marsilione – not yet the evil Marsilio – explains how a newly created soul chooses the faith it will have in its mortal life with a *novelletta* that combines several sources such as Plato, Iamblichus, the *Picatrix*, and, of course, Ficino's *De christiana religione*.

Further theological and philosophical issues related to Ficino

Astarotte's digressions engage in other topics related to theology. These appear in no particular order, as the figure of Astarotte seems to display all his knowledge without following any coherent logic. One of the topics discussed by Astarotte, for instance, is Original Sin. According to the demon, sinning deliberately is worse than any other offence (XXV.152, lines 6-8). Astarotte chooses some examples to prove his argument, for instance, Adam and Pilate,

mentis participes, stellis scilicet et planetis, quos etiam vocat deos. Ignis partibus daemones heroesque igneos. Aeris clari aereos. Aeris caliginosi aquaticos daemones atque heroes”.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, pp. 308-309: “Movent sane aereum in nobis spiritum aerei daemones, quo quidem quasi vibrato et humores moventur in corpore et in phantasia imagines excitantur”.

⁷⁸ Federica Signoriello, **Satire of Philosophy and Philosophers in Fifteenth-century Florence**, PhD diss., London: University College London, 2014, pp. 202-211.

both of whom sinned unaware of their wrong-doing; hence, they were forgiven (XXXV.153). Likewise, in Chapter XXXIII of *De christiana religione* Ficino discusses Original Sin and the redemption of Christ. The argument stems from the fact that Jews do not believe that Christ, with his death and resurrection, was able to rectify Adam's sin, as the punishment for Original Sin still affects men. In order to argue against this theory, Ficino mentions Adam's free will and his awareness when he committed Original Sin:

Ancora vi contraponete in questo modo la macula contracta da genitori: per origine, non essendo volontaria nella progenie, non è peccato. Anzi, è peccato essendo una certa perversità declinante dalla rectitudine e inepta a conseguire l'optimo fine, come è il difecto nello zoppo. [...] Oltre a questo è volontario non tanto di volontà propria della progenie, quanto d'essa volontà di Adamo el quale per moto di generatione in un certo modo muove tutti di sua stirpe nascenti, non altrimenti che la volontà d'una anima muova a effecto molti membri del corpo⁷⁹.

The Latin title of this paragraph reads: "Sin is intentional, because if it is not intentional it is not sin"⁸⁰. As does Astarotte, Ficino distinguishes types of sin according to the intentions of the sinner. Free will is also related to Adam and Original Sin, as the following passage, which addresses the Jews in the second person, clarifies:

So bene che voi in questo luogo così contraddite el peccato di Adam perché procede dall'acto proprio di suo libero arbitrio essersi appartenuto alla propria persona più che alla spetie. A questo, secondo la mente de nostri theologi, in tale forma rispondo. Alla persona di ciascuno in duo modi si può la cosa adaptare o secondo essa persona o secondo dono di gratia. Similmente alla natura in due modi adaptare si suole: o secondo essa natura, cioè quello che nasce da principii e elementi di quella, o di dono di gratia supernaturale⁸¹.

⁷⁹ Marsilio Ficino, **Libro di Marsilio Ficino fiorentino Della cristiana religione ad Bernardo del Nero clarissimo cittadino fiorentino**, Florence: 1476, f. 96r.

⁸⁰ *Id.*, **Opera omnia**, *op. cit.*, p. 63: "Peccatum adeo est voluntarium, quod si non esset voluntarium, non esset peccatum".

⁸¹ *Id.*, **Libro di Marsilio Ficino fiorentino Della cristiana religione ad Bernardo del Nero clarissimo cittadino fiorentino**, *op. cit.*, f. 96v.

Jews claim that the Original Sin was Adam's responsibility, as he committed it out of his own free will. Ficino, however, opposes this idea, relying on the theologians' authority, just as Astarotte does ("e domanda i teologi tuoi, poi" XXV.142, line 3). Moreover, according to Ficino, the human race is afforded justice by divine grace:

La natura humana, da principio, ebbe la originale iustitia non da principii suoi intrinsechi, ma dal dono della grazia divina, el quale dalla origine a tutta la natura nel primo genitore fu conferito. Colui perde questo dono per colpa del primo delicto⁸².

At the root of all humanity, Adam's sin caused the loss of this divine gift for everyone. Astarotte's concern, however, is not for the human race but for himself and the damned angels. Angels cannot be forgiven because, unlike Adam's, their sin was committed in full knowledge. Hence mercy will not be granted:

e non fu men d'ingrato che superbo
 il peccato di tutti e la malizia;
 e non si pente il nostro animo acerbo,
 però che ciò che dal volere inizia,
 cognosciuto il ver prima, per se stesso,
 non tentato d'alcun, mai fu dimesso.
 [...]

Ma la natura angelica corrotta
 non può più ritornar perfetta e intera,
 la qual peccò come natura dotta,
 e per questa cagion poi si dispera.
 (XXV.152, lines 3-8; 154 lines 1-4)

These angels chose freely to rebel against God. This means that they, unlike mankind, had the option to either follow or repress the impulse to rebel. This option corresponds to the gift of justice. Astarotte's statement is the logical conclusion of Ficino's analysis. This is clear in the use that Pulci makes of the terms *natura angelica* and *natura dotta* to indicate the precise status of the angels. In the same way, Ficino's phrase to depict men's essence is *natura humana*. Ficino is not Astarotte's only source for ideas on Original Sin. Astarotte makes distinctions concerning it found in Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*. Thomas here separates sins committed in *ignorantia* and sins

⁸² *Ibid.* f. 96r.

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committed in *malitia*, a word that Astarotte uses in the *Morgante*, XXV.152, line 4⁸³.

Another relevant passage of Astarotte's disquisitions is dedicated to the nature of God in which he briefly defines the Trinity:

e domanda i teologi tuoi, poi:
voi dite: "in una essenza tre persone",
ovvero "una sustanzia", e così noi:
"un atto puro senza admistione".
(XXV.142, lines 3-8)

Firstly the demon distinguishes two perspectives, *voi*, presumably Malagigi and the theologians, and *noi*, the demons, but then Astarotte claims that the two visions of the Trinity are essentially the same, giving particular emphasis to the word *sustanzia* (line 5). From his perspective, God is a pure *atto* as well as a substance. The importance given to this unity was part of a debate on Trinity, especially for those who, like Ficino, were trying to illustrate how Platonic philosophy might embody Trinitarian ideas. Ficino's aim was only partly successful, since in the Neoplatonic system there could not be one sole substance for the three persons⁸⁴. In his works published in the 1470s, Ficino does not explicitly interpret the dogma of Trinity in Neoplatonic terms (although we find one example in *De amore*, I.3; III.2) but in biblical terms (*De christiana religione*, XXXI), by finding textual evidence from the Old Testament.

Following his explication of the Trinity, Astarotte lists in stanza 143 various metaphors expressing how this unity establishes God as the prime cause of everything. Pulci here refers to the three main Neoplatonic causes. The "exemplary" cause, the "final" cause and the "efficient" cause correspond, in Ficino's system, to the three persons of the Trinity. These are borne out textually: line 2, exemplary, "un ordin donde ogni ordin sia costruito"; line 3, efficient, "una cāusa a tutte primitiva"; line 6, final: "un principio onde ogni principio è indutto". Another Neoplatonic cause, the instrumental, is found in the metaphor of line 5, "un foco donde ogni splendor s'avviva". The remaining causes, shared by both Neoplatonists and Aristotelians are the material (line 4, "un poter donde ogni poter vien tutto"), and the formal (line 7, "un saper donde

⁸³ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1.2 quaest. 76; Original Sin also includes three kinds of *ignorantia*, i.e., *ignorantia iuris*, *ignorantia facti* and *ignorantia omnium peccatorum*.

⁸⁴ Michael Allen, "Marsilio Ficino on Plato, the Neoplatonists and the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity", in *Renaissance Quarterly*, 37, 1984, p. 559.

ogni sapere è dato”). Pulci added two other fundamental attributes to God that recall the Trinity (as described in *De amore* III. 2) in which the power of God can be seen as the Father, His wisdom as the Son and His goodness as the Holy Ghost. Pulci uses here the words *poter*, “power” (line 5, “un poter donde ogni poter vien tutto”), *saper*, “wisdom” (line 7, “un saper donde ogni sapere è dato”), and *bene*, “goodness” (line 8, “un bene donde ogni bene è causato”). This description of the Trinity, like the ideas on the Original Sin summarized above, was a common theological issue discussed, for example, in Thomas Aquinas’s *Summa theologica*⁸⁵.

A further element links Astarotte’s speeches to *De christiana religione*, the allusion to the Sibyls prophesying the birth of Christ and the consequent reference to the “Golden Age”. This is most evident in stanza 241:

Vedi quanto gridato hanno i profeti
della Virgin, dell’alto Emanuello,
e da quel tempo in qua son tutti cheti
che il Verbo santo si congiunse a quello;
tante Sibille, insin vostri poeti
disson che il secol si dovea far bello:
leggi Eritrea, del signor nazzareno,
che dice insin che e’ giacerà nel fieno.
(XXV.241)

Like Pulci, Ficino (*De christiana religione*, XXVI-XXVIII) discusses the truthfulness of the prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah, and gives details on the Sibyls (Chapters XXIV-XXV). The Sibyls were considered prophets during the early Middle Ages; Ficino, following this tradition, lists some of those who announced the future birth of Christ and the main events of his life. The Erythraean Sibyl is among them (*De christiana religione* XXIV-XXV):

Gli altri libri erano d’altre Sybille. Questi libri non si discernevano per titolo alcuno di quale Sybilla fussino, se non ne’ versi della Herithrea, perchè ne’ versi anestò il nome suo⁸⁶. [...] Il senato romano, come di sopra dicemmo, conservava e’ libri sibillini ne’ quali Lactantio, familiare di Costantino imperadore, lesse molte cose pertinenti a Cristo figliuolo di Dio, principalmente quella Heritrea. [...] Aggiunse la Heritrea: diranno la sibilla essere stolta e mendace, ma adempiute che queste cose saranno si ricorderanno di me. Nessuno più mi chiamerà mendace essendo propheta del grande Iddio. Adduce Aurelio

⁸⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica*, op. cit., 1.1, quaest. 30.

⁸⁶ Marsilio Ficino, *Libro della cristiana religione*, op. cit., f. 43v.

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A[ug]ustino molti versi della sibilla Heritrea translata in lingua latina e quali vide in greco [...]»⁸⁷.

This interpretation of the Sibyls' oracles leads Ficino to introduce Virgil's celebrated fourth eclogue as a reinterpretation of the Sibyls' revelation on Christ:

E' versi di Virgilio riducendogli in prosa apunto sono questi che ora raconteremo. Già l'ultima età del verso della Cumea è venuta. El grande ordine nasce dallo intero de' secoli. Già torna la vergine. Già tornano gli aurei secoli. Già nuova progenie dal cielo alto si manda.[...] Nascente colui età di ferro nell'età dell'oro si convertirà e in quel tempo sarà l'ornamento de' secoli. ⁸⁸

The sixth verse of Pulci's stanza 241 also refers to Virgil's eclogue, which mentions the song of the Cumean Sibyl⁸⁹.

One last common reference between Pulci's and Ficino's texts is the Antipodeans. When Astarotte explains the issue of salvation, he states that part of humanity cannot know of the coming of the Messiah:

E come un segno surge in oriente,
un altro cade con mirabile arte
come si vede qua nell'occidente,
però che il ciel giustamente comparte.
Antipodi appellata è quella gente;
adora il sole e Iuppiter e Marte,
e piante ed animal, come voi, hanno,
e spesso insieme gran battaglie fanno.
(XXV.231)

In Canto XXVII Pulci acknowledges the roundness of the Earth:

Credo che quegli Antipodi di sotto
dubitassin fra lor più volte, il giorno,
che non fussi del ciel l'ordine rotto,
ché il bel pianeta non facea ritorno,
o che e' fussi quel dì l'ultimo botto,
e ritornassi all'antico soggiorno
prima che fussi il gran caòs aperto;

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 46r.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 44v.

⁸⁹ Virgil, *Eclogues* IV.4.

e in dubbio stessi lo emisperio incerto.
(XXVII.215)

After the battle of Roncevaux Charlemagne pleads with God to stop the sun, as he needs more daylight to recover the bodies of the dead Christians⁹⁰. This means, according to Pulci, that on the other side of the world the Antipodes should have been surprised to have such a long night. Pulci took this notion, according to Jordan, from Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli (1397-1482), the mathematician and cartographer patronised for most of his life by the Medici family⁹¹. By 1474 Toscanelli had developed a sea chart where he traced the supposed westward journey from Europe to Asia. This idea was very important to Pulci, who reconsiders Dante's Ulysses in a new light at Canto XXV. The paladin Rinaldo, like the Greek hero, burns with desire to cross the Pillars of Hercules, although the new geographical notions justify Rinaldo's thirst for knowledge⁹². Before, however, Pulci had written these lines, Ficino matched the use of the term Antipodes and the roundness of the Earth in his treatise *Theologia platonica* (IV.2), in which he explains the rotation of the celestial spheres as physically moved by souls. Describing how the spheres are concentric, Ficino assumes that the Earth is a sphere and that the hemisphere below ours is inhabited by the Antipodes:

whoever wants heaven to be at rest should, when it takes his fancy, attach Saturn's sphere to the [world's] axis. Then one semicircle of the sphere would be above our head, the other above the head of the Antipodes. Now since all parts of this sphere would be mutually completely alike without any difference of nature, there is no reason why the one part would be more here than the other part there. Thus the lower

⁹⁰ An allusion to Joshua, 10:13.

⁹¹ Constance Jordan, *Pulci's Morgante*, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

⁹² See *ibid.*, pp. 152-155. Gustavo Uzielli has identified Pulci's source with the works of Lorenzo Buonincontri, a Florentine philosopher who, from April 1475 to 1478, held some lectures on Marcus Manilius's astronomical poems. Manilius's work *Astronomicon* is possibly quoted at Canto XXV (230, lines 3-4); see Gustavo Uzielli, **Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli iniziatore della scoperta dell'America: ricordo del solstizio d'estate del 1892**, Florence: Stabilimento tipografico fiorentino, 1892, p. 88; Arthur Field, "Lorenzo Buonincontri and the First Public Lecture on Manilius in Florence, 1475-78", in *Rinascimento*, 36, 1996, pp. 207-225; Rossella Bessi, "Luigi Pulci e Lorenzo Bonincontri", in *Rinascimento*, 14, 1974, pp. 289-295.

semicircle, because it is equally suited to our region here as to the region of the Antipodes, will strive to be there just as it was here⁹³.

Morgante as historia between knowledge and magic

The philosophical and theological themes in Pulci's work have been interpreted in many ways. Since the first twenty-three Cantos conform to more traditional versions of the chivalric poem, the somewhat unexpected display of such knowledge – to which we should add natural philosophy, given the prominence of the bestiary in Canto XXV – has mainly been seen either as Pulci's amateurish attempt to raise the profile of his work or as a mockery of philosophy, Ficino's in particular⁹⁴. The comparisons between Pulci's text and Ficino's treatises written before 1475, however, seem to provide compelling evidence that Pulci had a basic knowledge of Ficinian theories, which he attempted to integrate and to develop in the poem.

In order to establish more definitively whether this work is a parody of philosophy, it is necessary to consider the prominence of the various philosophical concepts incorporated into the text⁹⁵. One such concept is free

⁹³ Marsilio Ficino, **Platonic Theology**, transl. Allen and Warden, *op. cit.*, pp. 310-311: “Si stare quis caelum velit, figat ipsum Saturni caelum in cardine quandocumque lubet. Tunc semicirculus ipsius sphaerae alter super caput nostrum, stat alter super caput Antipodum. Cum vero partes omnes huius sphaerae sine ulla naturae discrepantia inter se simillimae sint, nulla est ratio per quam alia pars hic sit magis, illic allia. Ergo inferior semicirculus, quia cum loco hoc nostro aequae convenit ac cum regione Antipodum, ita nitetur hic esse, sicut ibi, et superior semicirculus propter eandem convenientiam ad locum illum contendet esse illic, sicut et hic erat”.

⁹⁴ Attilio Momigliano, **L'indole e il riso di Luigi Pulci**, Rocca San Casciano: Cappelli, 1907, p. 327; Gilda Corabi, “Demonologia pulciana”, in **Semestrare di studi (e testi) italiani**, *op. cit.*, p. 94; Edoardo Leano, “I miracoli di Roncisvalle e la presunta ortodossia del diavolo-teologo Astarotte nel **Morgante** di Luigi Pulci”, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

⁹⁵ Many scholars have dismissed Astarotte's speeches as satirical. See for example Momigliano, **L'indole e il riso di Luigi Pulci**, *op. cit.*, p. 332; Salvatore Nigro, **Pulci e la cultura medicea**, Bari: Laterza, 1972, p. 74; Paolo Orvieto, **Pulci medievale**, *op. cit.*, p. 264; Mark Davie, “Pulci e Ficino: verità religiosa per sola fede” in **Il sacro nel Rinascimento. Atti del convegno internazionale (Chianciano-Pienza 17-20 luglio 2000)**, ed. Luisa Secchi Tarugi. Franco Cesati, Florence, 2002, pp. 405-412.

will, which features prominently in Cantos XXIV and XXV. A brief digression concerning magic is necessary to explain this point.

In these two Cantos Pulci gives much information on his personal life and we learn of his fascination with magic. We know that he went to Norcia to see the cave of the Sibyl⁹⁶. Pulci also professes a desire to see a place he called the “enchanted waters” (XXV.112, line 7). This metaphor indicates a period of Pulci’s life when he was reading Cecco d’Ascoli’s works, in which magic is a prominent topic (XXIV.112, line 6-8)⁹⁷. During this time also Franco accused Pulci of practising magic and of being involved in evocations of demons⁹⁸.

This fascination with magic is evident in the *Morgante*. There is, however, something more to the use of magic in the text. A number of scholars have drawn attention to the theme of literary composition and the way it relates to the theme of magic, for example in Canto XXV.113, at line 5 “questo era il mio Parnaso e le mie Muse”. Here magic is symbolized by Mount Parnassus, while the Muses recall poetic invention. Orvieto, among others, has argued that this verse works as a commentary on poetry, which Pulci, in his view, could no longer practise because of his alleged “exile” from the Medici household⁹⁹. The text, however, points in another direction:

e dicone mia colpa, e so che ancora
 convien che al gran Minòs io me ne scuse,
 e ricognosca il ver cogli altri erranti,
 piromanti, idromanti e geomanti.
 (XXIV.113, lines 5-8)

What is clear here is that Pulci predicts that his soul would go to Hell, specifically to the Dantean fourth *bolgia* of the eighth circle. He was convinced that he would be among the *altri erranti*, the sorcerers, astrologers and false prophets. By listing three different kinds of forecasters, and precisely those who predict the future with fire, water and the signs on the ground, Pulci was not referring to Dante – there is no mention of these techniques to predict the future in the *Inferno*. This clarification sheds light on Pulci’s main “magical” activity

⁹⁶ As found in a letter he wrote to Lorenzo de’ Medici from Naples on 4 December 1470 and in a stanza of the poem, XXIV.112, line 4; see Luigi Pulci, *Morgante e lettere*, ed. by Domenico de Robertis, *op. cit.*, pp. 960-963.

⁹⁷ Pulci quoted elsewhere Cecco’s main poem, *Acerba* (XXIV.113, lines 1-2), a sort of handbook for those who were initiated in magic. Pulci also provided in the *Morgante* technical details on the practice of magic (XXIV.104-111).

⁹⁸ Luigi Pulci and Matteo Franco, *Il Libro dei sonetti*, ed. by Giulio Dolci, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁹⁹ Paolo Orvieto, *Pulci medievale*, *op. cit.* p. 274.

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of astrology¹⁰⁰. The supposed influence of the stars and the planets on human affairs and terrestrial events was a very important issue during the Renaissance, and especially to Pulci. This is at the heart of Cantos XXIV-XXV, where the focus on free will leads naturally to references to astrology¹⁰¹.

The “second poem” was conceived with different purposes from the first and was composed seemingly with the intention of reporting history. The change from first to second poem becomes clear by comparing the *incipit* of Canto I and *incipit* of Canto XXIV. In the first we read that the angels, by virtue of their perfect memory, inspired the poem (I.1). From Canto XXIV onwards the perspective radically changes when Pulci, becomes a “more typical poet who represents what he has seen” and, although he follows the tradition by evoking the Muses, he is the main authority and is no longer guided by angels. In this way, Pulci himself becomes the creator of his poetry¹⁰². He then implicitly compares his work to the work of a magician and represents his stories as an artificial or magical reality that is wholly indistinguishable from reality itself. The comparison between poetry and magic allows also the parallel between “Gigi” Pulci and Malagigi the magician¹⁰³. The parallel between magic

¹⁰⁰ Further to this, Pulci’s personal letters – especially those sent to Lorenzo de’ Medici at the early stages of their relationship (1463-1470) – show familiarity with the occult. For example, in a letter from the 1460s he refers to a demon called Salay; see Lugi Pulci, *Morgante e lettere*, ed. by Domenico de Robertis, *op. cit.*, p. 942: “Idio ci aiuterà o Salay”. In a letter written during February in 1466 he asks (*ibid.*, p. 943) “Che debbo dunque fare? Darmi al trecentomila diavoli?” Later in March during the same year he states (*ibid.*, p. 950): “Non ci siamo interamente raccozzati insieme, tanto pel tuo partire savamo sbaragliati; et oltre a questo stima che Salay ancora di noi voglia la sua parte: forse ci arà un dì tutti”. During that year “Salay” is frequently named in these letters (23rd August 1466, *ibid.*, p. 950): “qui con certi alberelli et consigli di Salay mi governo”; (4th November 1466, *ibid.*, p. 952) “non posso ad altro pensare che a te e a Salay: da un tempo in qua, queste sono le mie tarantole [...] e ricordatevi di me [...] come il trentamila diavoli”.

¹⁰¹ This feature of this section of the *Morgante* is analysed in Constance Jordan, *Pulci’s Morgante*, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-181.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 130.

¹⁰³ The character of Malagigi derives from the magician who in the Matter of France was called Maugris or Maugis. In Italy, Andrea da Barberino had already written of a magician with this name. Pulci’s nickname was “Gigi”, as we read Matteo Franco’s sonnets and letters; see Matteo Franco, *Lettere*, ed. by Giovanna Frosini, Florence: Accademia della Crusca, 1990, pp. 73-75. It was probably the nickname “Gigi” which suggested the identification of Pulci

and poetry justifies the quotation of Mount Parnassus and the Muses (XXV.112, line 5, see p. 119). Hence magic is an art as much as poetry and requires as much inspiration as the writing process.

In the “second poem” Pulci no longer relies on divine help. Not only does Pulci not ask for divine assistance, but he also claims to recount accurately what he has seen. The words used in the opening stanzas of Canto XXIV describe this process:

Io cominciai a cantar di Carlo Mano:
 convien che 'l mio cantar pur giunga in porto,
 e ch'io punisca il traditor di Gano
 d'un tradimento già ch'io veggo scorto
 cogli occhi della mente in uno specchio.
 (XXIV.4, lines 3-7)

As pointed out above, the phrases *occhi della mente* and *specchio* recall Ficinian ideas and are used in particular by Ficino in the treatises written during the first half of the 1470s. If the stanza quoted above is interpreted philosophically, then authorship is not guaranteed only by the author and sight is not that of normal eyes, but of the mind's eye. As this sight does not involve the imperfect human body, it never fails, hence it must reveal the truth. In Ficinian philosophy the *specchio* is God's mind where everything is reflected; we can therefore assume that the mind's eye is the means to understanding and the mirror is the object of his sight, which reflects the “real” essence of things, as other later passages confirm (XXIV.45, line 4: “convien che il vero appaia in ogni specchio”, XXVI.122, line 7: “Omè, che 'l ver m'apparve in chiaro specchio”). Pulci assures that he is not simply recounting a story but that this is history and it is true.

The need to recount the history of and pay homage to Charlemagne is explicit in Canto I. This homage was probably a request that came from Lucrezia Tornabuoni herself since the medieval myth of Charlemagne re-founding Florence was still alive in the Quattrocento¹⁰⁴. Pulci did not fulfil his

with Malagigi. Pulci's contemporaries also established a parallel between Pulci's writing and Malagigi's magic, for example Nicodemo Folengo, who wrote an epigram for the recently deceased Malacisius Florentinus. “Malacisius” is, according to Cordiè and Perosa, Latin for “Malagigi”; see Nicodemo Folengo, *Carmina*, ed. by Carlo Cordiè and Alessandro Perosa, Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, 1990, pp. 28-29. “Malacisius”, according to Folengo, was a facetious and witty poet; see *ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁰⁴ Despite Leonardo Bruni's attempts to disprove this myth; see Anna Maria Cabrini, “Coluccio Salutati e gli elogi di Firenze fra Tre e Quattrocento” in *Le radici umanistiche dell'Europa. Coluccio Salutati cancelliere e politico*.

intention of honouring Charlemagne in the “first poem”, telling instead the adventures of the paladins, in which Charlemagne plays a minor role¹⁰⁵. The motives behind Pulci’s sudden urge to fulfil his promise to honour Charlemagne, more than ten years after that first Canto was written, are unclear¹⁰⁶. One as yet unproven hypothesis, however, is that Pulci was influenced by Plato’s views of poets. According to Plato, poets, as enemies of truth, should be banished from the ideal city¹⁰⁷. This idea and its implications in Ficino’s philosophy are a complex issue that has been examined elsewhere¹⁰⁸. Worth emphasizing, however, is that, to Ficino, not all poets write the same kind of poetry, and that only some poetry is worth saving. One of the genres admitted to the city, for instance, is narrative poetry that recounts and celebrates the deeds of the ancestral founders of the *patria*¹⁰⁹. There could not have been a better chance for Pulci to prove himself with this task than finally narrating the great *gesta* of one of Florence’s founders. The considerable use of Ficino’s philosophy in these Cantos seems to support to this interpretation¹¹⁰.

Atti del convegno internazionale del Comitato nazionale delle celebrazioni del VI Centenario della morte di Coluccio Salutati, Firenze-Prato, 9-12 Dicembre 2008, ed. by Roberto Cardini and Paolo Viti, Florence: Polistampa, 2012, p. 267.

¹⁰⁵ Mark Davie, **Half-Serious Rhymes**, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-15.

¹⁰⁶ A partial explanation was provided by Pio Rajna and his discovery of the so-called **Orlando laurenziano**, the direct source of the “first poem”; see Rajna, “La materia del *Morgante* in un ignoto poema del sec. XV”, in **Propugnatore**, *op. cit.* For an analysis of the relationship between the two texts see, Mark Davie’s chapter “Point of departure: *Orlando* rifatto”, in **Half-Serious Rhymes**, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-62.

¹⁰⁷ See for example Plato, **Republic**, 10.607B5; Marsilio Ficino, **Opera omnia**, *op. cit.*, p. 1315.

¹⁰⁸ See Michael Allen’s chapter “Poets Outside the City” in **Synoptic art**, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-123.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹¹⁰ One further clue is the use of Pulci’s unexplored sources, for example the Latin translation of Diodorus Siculus’s **Bibliotheca historica** in Canto XXV. This is a text that was quite obscure and it definitely stands out among Pulci’s other sources. The **Bibliotheca historica** was also an important source to Ficino, since it was his authority for including Orpheus among the ancient theologians; see Daniel P. Walker, “Orpheus the Theologian and Renaissance Platonists”, in **Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes**, 16, 1953, pp. 100-120: 100.

In conclusion, the difficulties posed by the project of writing about history were resolved by the resources offered by philosophy. Before the events that led to the dispute between Pulci and Ficino, Pulci followed and possibly admired Ficino and borrowed ideas from his works while writing the *Morgante*.

III. Conclusion: a new chronology, 1473-1483

The evidence gathered above suggests that Pulci did not oppose the Ficinian Academy (if there ever was such a thing) during the early 1470s. On the contrary, Pulci made partial use of Ficinian theories to justify his new focus on history when he began the final Cantos of the *Morgante*. Cantos XXIV and XXV, in which we find Ficinian ideas on the soul, free will and salvation, were written between 1473 and 1478 while Ficino was completing and publishing his commentary *De amore* and his treatises *De christiana religione* and *Theologia platonica*. In April 1478 the Pazzi conspiracy resulted in the murder of Giuliano de' Medici. This event marked a watershed in the *Morgante*. After Giuliano's death Pulci began work on Canto XXVI.

As Decaria has argued in a recent essay, the episode of the Battle of Roncevaux in the *Morgante* is an account of the betrayal and defeat suffered by the French army against the Saracens and also an allegory of the Pazzi conspiracy. The conspiracy was seen as a betrayal of the Medici family¹¹¹. Besides the change that the character of King Marsilione undergoes from Canto XXVI onwards, Decaria identifies Canto XXVIII.147-152, as a passage key to understand Pulci's allegory. This allegory works on two levels. The first comes in the parallels with the Pazzi conspiracy: Orlando, victim of the betrayal, is Giuliano de' Medici and King Marsilione is Ficino, who was trusted by the Medici whilst being close to the Salviati family, hence indirectly implicated in the conspiracy. Pulci claims to have followed two sources, "Lattanzio" (XXVIII.53), who in the allegory is Pulci himself, and "Alcuino" (XXVIII.16), representing Poliziano. The second allegory, developed in Canto XXVIII, does not stem from the *littera* but from the first allegory. Pulci saw in Giuliano the image of Pallas, the tragic character of the *Aeneid* killed by Turnus. A further two characters in Virgil's works, Menalcas and Mopsus (*Eclogues*, V), are implicitly compared to Pulci and Poliziano who, like the two shepherds who

¹¹¹ For a summary of this see Alessio Decaria, "Tra Marsilio e Pallante: una nuova ipotesi sugli ultimi cantari del *Morgante*", in **L'entusiasmo delle opere: studi in memoria di Domenico De Robertis**, ed. by Isabella Becherucci, Simone Giusti, Natascia Tonelli, Lecce: Pensa Multimedia, 2012, pp. 299-340, p. 306.

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mourned their semi-divine fellow Dafni, praised Giuliano in his life (*Stanze per la giostra*) and death (*Morgante*)¹¹².

It has not been noted, however, that the symbols that support these allegories are found in only in the last three Cantos (XXVI, XXVII, XXVIII). The only ambiguous passage found earlier in the poem is at Canto XXV.72-75. Divine fury manifests itself through several marvels and, among them, lightning strikes a laurel, even though this does not happen in the *Chanson de Roland*. Decaria reasons that this laurel symbolises Lorenzo de' Medici, who was frequently referred to as *Lauro*¹¹³. The lack of other symbols related to the allegory and the fact that in the preceding stanzas (69-70) Gano is still scorned as the betrayer, however, weakens the identification of the laurel with Lorenzo/Lauro. Besides this, at Canto XXVII Marsilione is hanged from the remains of the same tree, which is no longer a laurel but a carob. Pulci hints here at the medieval belief that Judas, the most famous of all traitors to whom both Gano and Marsilio are compared, hanged himself from a carob¹¹⁴. The change from laurel to carob emphasizes Marsilio's new role as the betrayer of the French, who stand allegorically for the Medici. If the laurel at Canto XXV were a representation of Lorenzo, and if the lightning were a symbolic representation of the attempt to kill him, the change into carob would not make sense. Add to this the fact that Petrarch provides an eminent predecessor for the image of lightning striking a laurel in *Standomi un giorno solo a la fenestra*¹¹⁵.

Once we acknowledge the importance of the Pazzi conspiracy in the dispute with Ficino, we are able to distinguish in Pulci's texts two different kinds of satire. In *Morgante* XXVI-XXVIII and in the poem *Se Dio ti guardi, Marsilio*

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 319-327.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 312-313.

¹¹⁴ Gano: XI.6, line 5; XVI.84, line 7; XVI.70, line 6; XXII.29, line 1; XXIV.34, line 3; XXIV.42, line 6; XXV.4, line 6; XXV.69, line 2; XXV.114, line 2; XXVII.167, line 6; Marsilio: XXVI.25, line 4.

¹¹⁵ Petrarch, **Rerum Volgarium Fragmenta**, 323.25-36. This has been pointed out also by Alessio Decaria, "Tra Marsilio e Pallante: una nuova ipotesi sugli ultimi cantari del *Morgante*", in **L'entusiasmo delle opere: studi in memoria di Domenico De Robertis**, *op. cit.*, pp. 312-313. There is a carob mentioned in Canto XXV: Gano, while plotting the betrayal, goes under a carob tree and a fruit hits his head (XXV.77). The carob from which Marsilione is hanged at Canto XXVIII, however, is clearly the same tree that was burnt by the lightning: "E quando e' vide quel carubbo secco/ e quello allòr fulminato dal cielo,/ parve che 'l cor gli passassi uno stecco/ e che per tutto se gli arricci il pelo [...]" (XXVIII.270, lines 1-4).

Ficino, which quotes directly a passage from *Morgante* XXVII.275¹¹⁶, Pulci patently accuses Ficino of betrayal. In four other poems satirizing philosophy, *Costor che fan sì gran disputatione*, *Marsilio, questa tua philosophia*, *O venerabil gufo soriano* and “*Buona sera, o messer, vien za*” “*va drento*” Pulci, through themes and rhetoric borrowed from the tradition, ridicules Ficino the philosopher and his philosophy.

With this distinction in mind, we should take into account one last issue, the so called poems of religious parody, considered to be the main cause of Pulci’s supposed intellectual exile from Florence¹¹⁷. A new dating of these poems by Decaria, which I follow here, sees *In principio era buio, e buio fia*, as written before August 1473 and *Poi ch’io partii da voi, Bartolomeo* as written before 1475¹¹⁸. The outrage caused by these poems is witnessed in some poems by Feo Belcari, Matteo Nerucci and an anonymous reader of Machiavelli’s *Mandragola*¹¹⁹. Pulci’s response to this amounts to a brief apology in his religious poem *Confessione*, dated 1483 (lines 66-67)¹²⁰. The poems parodying religion were initially intended for a private circulation and were addressed to three members of the Medici household: Pandolfo Rucellai, Benedetto Dei and Bartolomeo dell’Avveduto. Another poem is very similar in contents to the three above, *Questi che vanno tanto a San Francesco*, and its only autograph witness shows that Pulci did not aim this kind of contents to a wider public¹²¹. Despite the undoubted controversy, the reaction to Pulci’s satire of religion did

¹¹⁶ See Paolo Orvieto, **Pulci medievale**, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 222-244; Paolo Orvieto, “A proposito del sonetto *Costor che fan sì gran disputatione* e dei sonetti responsivi”, in **Interpres**, 4, 1981-82, pp. 412-413.

¹¹⁸ Luigi Pulci, **Sonetti extravaganti**, ed. by Alessio Decaria, pp. 67-76. For the dating proposed by Paolo Orvieto see Luigi Pulci, **Opere minori**, ed. by Paolo Orvieto, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-196.

¹¹⁹ For Belcari, see Paolo Orvieto, **Pulci medievale**, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-227; for Nerucci, see Armando Felice Verde, **Lo studio fiorentino, 1473-1503: ricerche e documenti**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 4.1, pp. 130-136 and Alessio Decaria in Luigi Pulci, **Sonetti Extravaganti**, ed. by Alessio Decaria, *op. cit.*, p. 70; for the last witness, see *ibid.*, p. 71.

¹²⁰ The text of Pulci’s “*Confessione*” is in Luigi Pulci, **Opere minori**, ed. by Paolo Orvieto, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-229. For its dating, see Stefano Carrai, **Le muse dei Pulci**, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-187. Alessio Decaria maintains that Pulci’s “*Confessione*”, in fact, is not an apology for his “heretical” poems, see Alessio Decaria, **Luigi Pulci e Francesco di Matteo Castellani**, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-138. Pulci also vaguely refers to a controversial poem in Canto XXVIII.46.

¹²¹ Luigi Pulci, **Sonetti Extravaganti**, ed. by Alessio Decaria, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

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not seem to harm his personal and professional interests. In 1476 Matteo Franco lamented the fact that Pulci remained dear to Lorenzo¹²².

Given this brief history, it can be assumed that during the first half of the 1470s Pulci was on good terms with Ficino and also that he had come into contact with Ficino's treatises, commentaries and public lectures. This influenced some passages of Cantos XXIV and XXV of the *Morgante*. During these same years, most probably early in the decade, Pulci wrote poems of religious parody that contain certain heretical ideas. It is however important to remember that such themes were not uncommon in contemporary comic literature – both Franco and Lorenzo de' Medici also wrote satirical verses on the nature of the soul and its relationship with God¹²³. In this period too Luigi was involved in a tenso with Franco which lasted until at least 1476. Immediately before 1476 Ficino wrote the letters to Bernardo Pulci and Bernardo Rucellai, lamenting Pulci's immorality. The cause for Ficino's anger is not clear from these letters, although in the letter to Rucellai, according to some scholars, there are references to *De christiana religione*, which Pulci quoted in Canto XXV¹²⁴. Ficino, perhaps, did not appreciate Pulci's amateurish attempts of incorporating his philosophy into the poem. We do not have enough evidence to assert that this was what angered Ficino, although it is reasonable to assume that the poems of religious parody were not the sole reason of

¹²² The famous letter dated 1474 “scritta con la mano che trema per la febbre” has been used to argue that the poems of religious parody deeply damaged Pulci; see Alessio Decaria in Luigi Pulci, **Sonetti Extravaganti**, ed. by Alessio Decaria, *op. cit.*, p. 69, who uses it to date “Costor che fan sì gran disputatione”. The letter laments Franco's aggressive poems (“sonetti dove erano coltellate”), testifies that Ficino was still on good terms with Pulci (“per messer Marsilio hiersera gliel dixi”) and refers to other poems that he wrote for an anonymous recipient (“E de' sonetti aiutati a fare, ho tratto sempre a un altro ch'io ho veduto et trovato cogli occhi miei in casa”). Pulci wrote three poems against Franco for someone identified by the name of “Agnolo orafo”, *ibid.*, pp. 61-64. “Sempre la pulcia muor, signore, a torto”, an apologetic poem by Pulci, mentions a controversial “sonetto” that could be any of the attacks on Scala or Franco. See Paolo Orvieto, **Pulci medievale**, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-222; Alessio Decaria, **Luigi Pulci e Francesco di Matteo Castellani**, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-119; Luigi Pulci, **Sonetti Extravaganti**, ed. by Alessio Decaria, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97. For Franco's letter to Lorenzo de' Medici, see Matteo Franco, **Lettere**, ed. by Giovanna Forsini, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

¹²³ Alessandro Polcri, **Luigi Pulci e la chimera**, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

¹²⁴ Raymond Marcel, **Marsile Ficin, 1433-1499**, Paris: Les belles lettres, 1958, pp. 428-430.

Ficino's bitter reaction. We do know that Ficino started to promote an image of Pulci that exaggerated his most provocative features, outlining a portrait of a heretical poet who despised and mocked Christianity. This portrayal was underpinned by Pulci's notoriety – the poems against Scala and Franco, already known to a wider public, reveal a short temper and testiness – and by the poems of religious parody, that in the meantime had circulated in and around Florence.

The poems against Ficino may have been written after these first attacks in 1476. Later in that year Ficino asked Lorenzo and Giuliano to intervene and, according to his letter dated January 1477, his wish was granted. In 1477 Ficino alluded to Pulci and his *Morgante* in the prologue to *Disputatio contra iudicium astrologorum* and in the concluding paragraph of *De vita Platonis*. Ficino, however, was not on good terms with the Medici at this point and the events of April 1478 worsened his position¹²⁵. The *Morgante* was published in November 1478 in its version of twenty-two Cantos. In the aftermath of Giuliano's death, Pulci wrote Cantos XXVI and XXVII, depicting Ficino as an evil betrayer, and the poem *Se Dio ti guardi, Marsilio Ficino*. In 1482 he concluded the poem with the final Canto and the complete *Morgante* was finally published in 1483.

¹²⁵ Mario Fubini, "Ficino e i Medici all'avvento di Lorenzo il Magnifico", in *Rinascimento*, 24, 1984, p. 51.

APPENDIX

The following tables compare the text of the bestiary in *Morgante*, XXV.322-331 with its sources.

Table 1

The first column of the following table gives the text from the *Morgante*; the second the text from the 1476 edition of Cristoforo Landino's translation;¹²⁶ and the third Pliny's text¹²⁷.

<p>311. Disse Astarotte: - La gran Libia mena molti animali incogniti alle genti, de' quali alcun si dice anfisibena¹²⁸, e innanzi e indrieto van questi serpenti che in mezzo di due capi hanno la schiena; altri in bocca hanno tre filar di denti, con volto d'uom, mantichore appellati; poi son pegàsi cornuti ed alati:</p> <p>312. da questi è detto il fonte di Pegàsò. Un altro, il qual rinoceronte è detto, offende con un corno ch'egli ha al naso, perché molto ha l'elefante in dispetto, e se con esso si riscontra a caso, convien che l'un resti morto in effetto; e callirafio il dosso ha maculato; e crocuta è di lupo e di can nato.</p>	<p>VIII.23 Amphisibene hanno due capi l'uno nel luogho suo, l'altro ne la coda, chome se non bastassi che gittassino el veleno per una bocca¹²⁹.</p> <p>VIII.21 Nascevi ancora, secondo che Ctesia scrive, uno animale decto Mantichora. Questa ha tre filari di denti in forma di pectine congiuncti. Ha faccia et orecchi d'huomo. Occhi verdi et di colore sanguigno. Ha corpo di leone coda di scarpione et cosi fora con la puncta¹³¹.</p> <p>VIII.21 L'Ethiopia produce assai lynxi et Sphingi [...] et molti altri animali simili a un monstro. Cavagli alati et cornuti e' quali chiamano pegasi¹³³.</p> <p>VIII.20 Ne medesimi giuochi fu l'animale decto Rhinocerote el quale ha un corno nel naso. Questo è un altro inimico agl'helephanti et havendo a combattere con loro aguza el corno e una pietra et nella battaglia s'ingegna ferire nella pancia, perchè è luogho molto piu tenero. E lungho quanto l'helephanto ma ha più corte gambe et di colore simile al bosso¹³⁵.</p> <p>VIII.19 E giuochi di Pompeo magno furono e' primi che mostrorono a Roma un animale chiamato Chao et alquanti lo chiamano Calliraphio. Ha</p>	<p>VIII.85 Geminum caput amphisbaenae, hoc est et a cauda, tamquam parum esset uno ore fundi venenum¹³⁰.</p> <p>VIII.75 Apud eosdem nasci Ctesias scribit quam mantichoran appellat, triplici dentium ordine pectinatum coeuntium, facie et auriculis hominis, oculis glaucis, colore sanguineo, corpore leonis, cauda scorpionis modo spicula infigentem¹³².</p> <p>VIII.72 Aethiopia generat multaque alia monstris similia, pinnatos equos et cornibus armatos, quos pegasos vocant [...] ¹³⁴.</p> <p>VIII.71 Isdem ludis et rhinoceros unius in nare cornus, qualis saepe, visus. alter hic genitus hostis elephanto cornu ad saxa limato praeparat se pugnae, in dimicatione alvum maxime petens, quam scit esse molliorem. longitudo ei par, crura multo breviora, color buxeus¹³⁶.</p> <p>VIII.70 Pompei Magni primum ludi ostenderunt chama, quem Galli</p>
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¹²⁷ Pliny the Elder, *Historia naturale*, ed. by Cristoforo Landino, *op. cit.*

¹²⁷ *Id.*, *Natural History*, transl. and ed. by H. Rackham, 10 Vols, London: Heinemann, 1938-1963.

¹²⁸ The "anfisibena" is named in Dante's *Inferno*, Canto XXIV.87, and by Boiardo, *Amorum libri tres*, II.26.

¹²⁹ Pliny, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.* f. 98r.

¹³⁰ *Id.*, *Natural History*, transl. Rackham, *op. cit.*, p. 62-63: "that the amphisibaena has a twin head, that is one at the tail-end as well, as though it were not enough for poison to be poured out of one mouth".

¹³¹ *Id.*, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.*, f. 97v.

¹³² *Id.*, *Natural History*, *op. cit.*, p. 54-55: "Ctesias writes that in the same country is born the creature that he calls the mantichora, which has a triple row of teeth meeting like the teeth of a comb, the face and ears of a human being, grey eyes, a blood-red colour, a lion's body, inflicting stings with its tail in the manner of a scorpion".

¹³³ *Id.*, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.*, f. 97v.

¹³⁴ *Id.*, *Natural History* *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53: "Ethiopia produces [...] many other monstrosities - winged horses armed with horns, called pegasi [...]".

¹³⁵ *Id.*, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.*, f. 97r.

¹³⁶ *Id.*, *Natural History*, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53: "At the same games there was also a rhinoceros with one horn on the nose such as often been seen. Another bred here to fight matches with an elephant gets ready for battle by filing its horns on rocks, and in the encounter goes especially for the belly, which it knows to be softer. It equals an elephant in length, but its legs are much shorter, and it is the colour of box-wood".

<p>313. Leucrocuta è un altro animale: groppa ha di cervio, e collo e petto e coda di leon tutto, e bocca da far male, che fessa insino agli orecchi la snoda, e contraffà la voce naturale alcuna volta per malizia e froda; ed assi un'altra fera è nominata, molto crudel, di bianco indanaiaata.</p> <p>314. Ed un serpente è detto catoblepa, che va col capo in terra e con la bocca per sua pigrizia, e par col corpo repa; secca le biade e l'erba e ciò che tocca, tal che col fiato il sasso scoppia e crepa, tanto caldo velen da questo fiocca; col guardo uccide periglioso e fello; ma poi la donnoletta uccide quello.</p> <p>315. Icnëumone, poco animal noto, con l'aspido combatte, e l'armadura prima si fa tuffandosi nel loto; dormendo il coccodrillo, il tempo fura, e in corpo gli entra come in vaso vòto,</p>	<p>forma di lupo. Ma indenaiato come el pardo.¹³⁷</p> <p>VIII.21 Crocute sono nate di cane et di lupo et ogni dura cosa rompono co' denti et smaltischano nello stomaco¹³⁹.</p> <p>VIII.72 Leucrocuta è pessima fiera simile all'asino di grandezza. Ha groppe di cervio, collo et pecto et coda di lione, capo di martora, unghia fessa in due parti, bocca fessa insino a gl'orecchi et in luogo di denti ha uno osso intero et piano. Dicono che questa fiera contraffà el parlare degl'huomini¹⁴¹.</p> <p>VIII.21 In India sono buoi con l'unghie d'un pezzo et hanno un solo corno. Item una fiera detta Axi. La pelle sua tutta indenaiata di biancho¹⁴³.</p> <p>VIII.22 Appresso a questa è una fiera decta Catoblepa. Non troppo grande, pigra in tutte le membra. El capo ha grave et malagevolmente el porta et sempre è chinato verso la terra, altrimenti sarebbe somma peste agl'huomini perchè qualunque vede e' suoi occhi di subito muore¹⁴⁵.</p> <p>VIII.23 Ha mortale guerra l'aspido con lo Ichneumone. Questo è noto animale maxime per questa gloria. Nascie in egypto, tuffasi nella belletta et dipoi, rasciutto alsole, più et più volte si rituffa in modo che rimane in</p>	<p>rufium vocabant, effigie lupi, pardorum maculis¹³⁸.</p> <p>VIII.72 [...]crocotas velut ex cane lupoque conceptos, omnia dentibus frangentes protinusque devorata conficientes ventre [...]¹⁴⁰.</p> <p>VIII.72 Indicos boves unicornes tricornesque, leucrocotam, perniciosissimam asini feram magnitudine, clunibus cervinis, collo, cauda, pectore leonis, capite melium, bisulca ungula, ore ad aures usque recesso, dentium locis osse perpetuo. hanc feram humanas voces tradunt imitari¹⁴².</p> <p>VIII.76 In India et boves solidis unguis, unicornes, et feram nomine axin hinnulei pelle pluribus candidioribusque maculis¹⁴⁴.</p> <p>VIII.77 Iuxta hunc fera appellatur catoblepas, modica alioqui ceterisque membris iners, caput tantum praegrave aegre ferens — id deiectum semper in terram —, alias internicio humani generis, omnibus, qui oculos eius videre, confestim expirantibus¹⁴⁶.</p> <p>VIII.87-88 [...] deinde internecivum bellum cum ichneumone. notum est animal hac gloria maxime, in eadem natum Aegyptio. mergit se limo saepius siccaturque sole, mox ubi pluribus eodem modo se coriis</p>
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¹³⁷ Pliny the Elder, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.*, f. 97r.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*: “The games of Pompey the Great first displayed the chama, which the Gauls used to call the lynx with the shape of a wolf and leopard spots.” What Shulters points out, i.e. that Luca Pulci named the “callirafio” in his poem Ciriffo Calvaneo (VI.25), is not pertinent: Canto VI is not by Luca Pulci but by Bernardo Giambullari, who continued the Ciriffo after 1484 and wrote cantos VI-X; see John Raymond Shulters, **Luigi Pulci and the Animal Kingdom**, Baltimore: J. H. Furst. 1920, p. 31 and the online version of the Dizionario biografico degli italiani, www.treccani.it/biografie, s.v. “Giambullari, Bernardo”.

¹³⁹ *Id.*, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.*, f. 97v.

¹⁴⁰ *Id.*, *Natural History*, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53: “hyenas like a cross between a dog and a wolf, that break everything with their teeth, swallow it at a gulp and masticate it in the belly”.

¹⁴¹ *Id.*, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.*, f. 97v.

¹⁴² *Id.*, *Natural History*, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55: “Indian oxen with one and with three horns; the leocrocota, swiftest of wild beasts, about the size of an ass, with a stag’s haunches, a lion’s neck, tail and breast, badger’s head, cloven hoof, mouth opening right back to the ears, and ridges of bone in place of rows of teeth - this animal is reported to imitate the voices of human beings”.

¹⁴³ *Id.*, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.*, f. 97v.

¹⁴⁴ *Id.*, *Natural History*, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57: “He says that in India there are also oxen with solid hoofs and one horn and a wild animal named axis, with the hide of a fawn but with more spots and whiter ones”.

¹⁴⁵ *Id.*, *Historia naturale*, *op. cit.*, f. 97v.

¹⁴⁶ *Id.*, *Natural History*, *op. cit.*, p. 57: “In its neighbourhood there is an animal called the catoblepas, in other respects of moderate size and inactive with the rest of its limbs, only with a very heavy head which it carries with difficulty - it is always hanging down to the ground; otherwise it is deadly to the human race, as all who see its eyes expire immediately”.

<p>però ch'e' tiene aperta per natura la bocca, quando di sonno ha capriccio, e lascia addormentarsi dallo scriccio.</p>	<p>volto in molte choverte. Dipoi combatte con l'Aspido et da quello con tale armadura si difende e sta alla dura insino ad tanto che a un puncto preso, se gli ficcha in boccha et nella stroza. Né gli basta questo che anchora un non meno feroce animale vince¹⁴⁷.</p> <p>VIII.25 El crocodillo nasce nel Nilo, bestia di quattro piedi in terra et in acqua nocivo. Né altro animale terrestre si trova senza lingua se non questo. Questo solo morde movendo la mascella di sopra et non quella di sotto et ha edenti in forma di pectini. Cresce più che diciotto gomiti. Fa huova grandi come quelle dell'ocha. Queste porta sopra a quel luogo insino al quale per una certa divinatione sa che quello anno debba crescere el Nilo. Ne si truova animale che da si picchola origine diventi tanto grande. E armato d'unghie et ha il chuoio apto a resistere a ogni colpo. El di sta in terra, la nocte nell'aqua et l'uno et l'altro fa con certa ragione: havendo rispetto al tempo. Questo satollo di pesci et colla boccha sempre piena s'addormenta nella ripa del fiume. Et un piccholo uccello, quivi chiamato Trochilo et in Italia Re de gl'uccelli, lo 'nvita a aprire la bocca per inghoiarlo et saltandogli spesso al muso gli netta la boccha et cosi saltandogli in boccha et ritornando indietro lo stuzica con tanta voluptà che apre tutta la boccha et finalmente per questo piacere s'addormenta. Il che, quando vede lo Ichneumone, chome un dardo s'allancia in boccha et corre al ventre et rodelo¹⁴⁹.</p>	<p>loricavit, in dimicationem pergit. in ea caudam attollens ictus inritos aversus excipit, donec obliquo capite specularatus invadat in fauces. nec hoc contentus aliud haud mitius debellat animal¹⁴⁸.</p> <p>VIII.89 Crocodilum habet Nilus, quadripes malum et terra pariter ac flumine infestum. unum hoc animal terrestre linguae usu caret, unum superiore mobili maxilla inprimit morsum, alias terribile pectinatim stipante se dentium serie. magnitudine excedit plerumque duodeviginti cubita. parit ova quanta anseres, eaque extra eum locum semper incubat praedivinatione quadam, ad quem summo auctu eo anno egressurus est Nilus. nec aliud animal ex minore origine in maiorem crescit magnitudinem. et unguibus autem armatus est, contra omnes ictus cute invicta. dies in terra agit, noctes in aqua, teporis utrumque ratione hunc saturum cibo piscium et semper esculento ore in litore somno datum parva avis, quae trochilos ibi vocatur, rex avium in Italia, invitat ad hiandum pabuli sui gratia, os primum eius adsultim repurgans, mox dentes et intus fauces quoque ad hanc scabendi dulcedinem quam maxime hiantes, in qua voluptate somno pressum conspicatus ichneumon, per easdem fauces ut telum aliquod inmissus, erodit alvum¹⁵⁰.</p>
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¹⁴⁷ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 98r.

¹⁴⁸ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65: "and in the next place she has given it war to the death with the ichneumon. That animal, which is also a native of Egypt, is specially known because of this exploit. The asp repeatedly plunges into mud and dries itself in the sun, and then when it has equipped itself with a cuirass of several coatings by the same method, it proceeds to the encounter. In this it raises its tail and renders the blows it receives ineffectual by turning away from them, till after watching for its opportunity, with head held sideways it attacks its adversary's throat. And not content with this victim it vanquishes another animal no less ferocious, the crocodile".

¹⁴⁹ *Id.*, **Historia Naturale**, *op. cit.*, ff. 98r.-98v.

¹⁵⁰ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-67: "This belongs to the Nile; it is a curse on four legs, and equally pernicious on land and in the river. It is the only land animal not furnished with a tongue and the only one that bites by pressing down the mobile upper-jaw, and it is also formidable because of its row of teeth set close together like a comb. In size it usually exceeds 18 ells. It lays as many eggs as a goose, and by a kind of prophetic instinct incubates them always outside the line to which the Nile in that year is going to rise a full flood. Nor does any other animal grow to greater dimensions from a smaller original size; however, it is armed with talons as well, and its side is invincible against all blows. It passes its days on land and its nights in the water, in both cases for reasons of warmth. This creature when sated with a meal of fish and sunk in sleep on the shore with its mouth always full of food, is tempted by a small bird (called there the trochilus, but in Italy the king-bird) to open its mouth wide to enable the bird to feed; and first it hops and cleans out the mouth, and then the teeth and inner throat also which yawns opens as wide as possible for the pleasure of this scratching; and the ichneumon

<p>316. Un'altra bestia, che si chiama eale, la coda ha d'elefante e nero e giallo il dosso tutto, e dente di cinghiale; il resto è quasi forma di cavallo; ed ha due corni, e non par naturale, ché può qual vuole a sua posta piegallo, come ogni fera talvolta dirizza gli orecchi e piega per paura o stizza.</p>	<p>VIII.21 Appresso a chostoro è anchora Eale animale grande quanto un cavallo d'acqua. Ha coda d'elephante et e dicolore nero et giallo. Ha mascelle di cinghiale et le corna lunghe più che uno gomito le quali muove et volge chome vuole et quando combatte rizza hor l'uno, hor l'altro, et variaie et pel diricto et pel traverso come giudica essergli più utile¹⁵¹.</p>	<p>VIII.73 Apud eosdem et quae vocatur eale, magnitudine equi fluviatilis, cauda elephantis, colore nigra vel fulva, maxillis apri, maiora cubitalibus cornua habens mobilia, quae alterna in pugna sistit variatque infesta aut obliqua, utcumque ratio monstravit¹⁵².</p>
<p>317. Ippotamo, animal molto discreto, quasi cavallo o di mare o di fiume, entra ne' campi, per malizia, a drieto; e se di sangue soperchio presume, cercando va dove fusse canneto tagliato, e pugne, come è suo costume, la vena e purga l'omor tristo allotta; poi risalda con loto ov'ella è rotta. E non ti paia opinion qui folle</p>	<p>VIII.25 Un'altra bestia di maggiore altezza è nel Nilo, la quale si chiama hiopotamo, cioè cavallo di fiume. Ha l'unghia di due pezi come el bue, el dosso e crini et l'anitrire ha di cavallo, la coda torta, e' denti simili al chinghiale, ma meno nocivi; la pelle non si può passare se non è molle. Et per questo ne fanno schudi et elmi. Pasturasi di biade che sono ne' campi et entravi all'indietro acciochè paia che ne sia uscito et non vi sia appostato¹⁵³.</p>	<p>VIII.95 Maior altitudine in eodem Nilo belva hippopotamius editur, unguis binis quales bubus, dorso equi et iuba et hinnitu, rostro resimo, cauda et dentibus aprorum aduncis, sed minus noxiis, tergoris ad scuta galeasque impenetrabilis, praeterquam si umore madeant. depascitur segetes destinatione ante, ut ferunt, determinatas in diem et ex agro ferentibus vestigiis, ne quae revertenti insidiae comparentur¹⁵⁴.</p>
<p>318. che da quel tratto è la flobotomia, perché Natura benigna ci volle insegnar tutto, per sua cortesia. Non si passa di questo se non molle il cuoio, tanto duro par che sia; co' denti quasi di verro ferisce e con la lingua forcuta annitrisce.</p>	<p>VIII.26[...] lo hippotamo e stato maestro in dimostrarci una spetie di medicina: Imperochè quando per troppo mangiare e ripieno et troppo grasso, esce a riva et apposta dove di proximo sia stato tagliato el canneto, et a una di quelle taglature acosta una vena et taglala, onde uscendo el sangue rimane col corpo scarico et sano. Et quando è uscito tanto sangue che gli paia abastanza, con la bellotta ritura la piaga¹⁵⁵.</p>	<p>VIII.96 [...] hippopotamius in quadam medendi parte etiam magister exstitit. adsidua namque satietate obesus exit in litus recentis harundinum caesura speculatum atque, ubi acutissimam vidit stirpem, imprimens corpus venam quandam in crure vulnerat atque ita profluvio sanguinis morbidum alias corpus exonerat et plagam limo rursus obducit¹⁵⁶.</p>
<p>319. Leontofono è poco cognosciuto, che del leone è pasto velenoso; tragelafo è come becco barbuto; toos, il qual non è sempre piloso:</p>	<p>VIII.38 Leontophono, cioè Amazaleone, è piccholo animale, né altrove nasce se non dove sono leoni. Adunque tal natura è di questa bestia,</p>	<p>VIII.136 Leontophon accipimus vocari parvum nec aliubi nascens quam ubi leo gignitur, quo gustato</p>

watches for it to be overcome by sleep in the middle of this gratification and darts like a javelin through the throat so opened and gnaws out the belly”.

¹⁵¹ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 97v.

¹⁵² *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55: “Among the same people is also found the animal called the yale, the size of an hippopotamus, with an elephant’s tail, of a black of tawny colour, with the jaws of a boar and movable horns more than a cubit in length which in a fight are erected alternately, and presented to the attack or sloped backward in turn as policy directs”.

¹⁵³ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 98v.

¹⁵⁴ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69: “A monster of still greater height is also produced in the Nile, the hippopotamus, which has cloven hoofs like those of oxen, a horse’s back, mane and neigh, a snub snout, a boar’s tail and curved tusks, thought these are less formidable, and with a hide that supplies an impenetrable material for shield and helmets, except if they are soaked in moisture. It feeds on the crops, marking out a definite portion beforehand for each day, so it is said, and making its footprints knead out of the field so that no traps may be laid for it when it returns”.

¹⁵⁵ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 98v.

¹⁵⁶ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-71: “The hippopotamus stands out as an actual master in one department of medicine; for when its unceasing voracity has caused it to overeat itself it comes ashore to reconnoitre places where rushes have recently been cut, and where it sees an extremely sharp stalk it squeezes its body down on to it and makes a wound in a certain vein in its leg, and by thus letting blood unburden its body, which would otherwise be liable to disease, and plasters up the wound again with mud”.

<p>la state è nudo, e di verno velluto; licaon è come lupo famoso; altri animali appellati sono alci, cavai silvestri, e traggon di gran calci.</p> <p>320. Poi son bissoni, buoi silvestri ancora che nascon molto in Iscizia e in Germania; ed un serpente che si chiama bora; e macli è bestia, ch' a dir pare insania, che con le giunte niente lavora, sì che dormendo rimane alla pania, perché appoggiato a un alber s'accosta, e chi quel taglia lo piglia a sua posta.</p>	<p>che se leone gusta di questa carne subito muore¹⁵⁷.</p> <p>VIII.33 Un animale altrimenti che il cervo, se non che ha la barba et e' velli chome un beccho, è per questo chiamato Tragelapho, perchè tragos in grecho significa beccho et Elapho cervo¹⁵⁹.</p> <p>VIII.33 Thoos è spetie di lupo ma e più lungo et ha le gambe più corte. Veloce nel saltare. [...] Questo non muta colore, ma muta abito, impochè el verno è vestito di peli, la state è nudo¹⁶¹.</p> <p>VIII.15 Item uno animale decto Alce simile aun cavallo senon havessi elcollo et glorecchi assai piu lunghi¹⁶³.</p> <p>VIII.15 Pure vi sono notabili generationi di buoi salvatichi decti bissony [...] ¹⁶⁵.</p> <p>VIII.14 Fanno fede che questo si creda certe serpi in Italia spesso vedute et sono chiamate Boie [...].¹⁶⁷</p> <p>VIII.15 Item in Scandinavia isola è una bestia decta macli, non mai veduta in Italia ma narrata da molti; la quale è simile alle decte di sopra, ma non si possono piegare nelle gambe, il perchè non giace quando dorme, ma appoggiasi a uno albero. Adunque chi lha vuole pigliare sega gl'alberi tanto che ogni poco pondo gli possa fare</p>	<p>tanta illa vis et ceteris quadripedum imperitans ilico expiret¹⁵⁸.</p> <p>VIII.120 Est eadem specie, barba tantum et armorum villo distans, quem tragelaphon vocant, non alibi quam iuxta Phasim amnem nascens¹⁶⁰.</p> <p>VIII.123 Nam thoes — luporum id genus est procerius longitudine, brevitate crurum dissimile, velox saltu, venatu vivens, innocuum homini — habitum, non colorem, mutant, per hiemes hirti, aestate nudi¹⁶².</p> <p>VIII.39 praeterea alcen iumento similem, ni proceritas aurium et cervices distinguat¹⁶⁴.</p> <p>VIII.38 [...] insignia tamen boum ferorum genera, iubatos bisontes excellentique [...] ¹⁶⁶.</p> <p>VIII.37 Faciunt his fidem in Italia appellatae bovae in tantam amplitudinem exeuntes, ut [...].¹⁶⁸</p> <p>VIII.39 Item natam in Scadinavia insula nec umquam visam in hoc orbe, multis tamen narratam achlin haud dissimilem illi, set nullo suffraginum flexu, ideoque non cubantem et adclinem arbori in somno eaque incisa ad insidias capi, alias velocitatis memoratae¹⁷⁰.</p>
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¹⁵⁷ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, ff. 101r-101v.

¹⁵⁸ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97: "We are told that there is a small animal called the "lion's-bane" that only occurs in regions where the lion is found, to taste of which causes that mighty creature, the lord of all the other four-footed animals, to expire immediately".

¹⁵⁹ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 100v.

¹⁶⁰ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-87: "the animal called the goat-stag, occurring only near the river Phasis, is of the same appearance, differing only in having a beard, and a fleece on the shoulders".

¹⁶¹ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 100v.

¹⁶² *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89: "For the jackal – which is a kind of wolf, longer in the body and differing in the shortness of the legs, quick in its spring, living by hunting, harmless to man – changes its raiment though not its colour, being shaggy through the winter but naked in the summer".

¹⁶³ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 95 v.

¹⁶⁴ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, 30-31: "[...] and also the elk, which resembles a bullock save that it is distinguished by the length of its ears and neck".

¹⁶⁵ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 95r.

¹⁶⁶ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, p. 29: "[...] but some remarkable breeds of wild oxen, the maned bison [...]."

¹⁶⁷ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 95r.

¹⁶⁸ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29: "Credibility attaches to these stories on account of the serpents in Italy called boas, which reach such dimensions that ...".

¹⁷⁰ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31: "[...] also the achlis, born in the island of Scandinavia and never seen in Rome, although many have told stories of it – an animal that is not unlike the elk but has no joint at the hock and consequently is

<p>321. E cefi sono altri animali strani che nascon nelle parti d'Etioṗia, c'hanno le gambe di drieto e le mani dinanzi, come forma umana propia: questi vide ne' giuochi pompeani prima già Roma, e poi non n'ebbe copia. E Gano a questi giorni a Carlo scrisse e come falso di questi promise.</p> <p>322. Ed una fera tarando è chiamata, la qual, dov'ella giace, il color piglia di quella cosa che ella è circundata, sì che a vederla la vista assottiglia; un'altra ancora è salpiga appellata, che nuoce assai senza muover le ciglia; e spettafico, arunduco e molti angue che pur Medusa non creò col sangue.</p>	<p>cadere. Appoggiasi dunque per dormire, ma cadendo l'albero cade anchora la bestia et in questa forma si pigla, perchè altrimenti per una inaudita velocità non si potrebbe piglare¹⁶⁹.</p> <p>VIII.19 Item d'Ethiopia mostrorono Cephi. Questi hanno e' piedi et le gambe di drieto simili a piedi et ale gambe dell' huomo et quelle dinanzi simili alle mani. Questo animale da quel tempo in qua non è stato veduto a Roma¹⁷¹.</p> <p>VIII.33 El Tarando in Schytia muta colore, il che non fa altro animale [...] El tarando è della grandezza del bue. El capo è maggiore che di cervo ma simile a quello et con le medesime corna. Ha l'unghie fesse et pelo dorso. Ma quando vuole essere di suo colore è simile all'asino. Ha el chuoio sì duro che se ne fanno corazze. Dovunche sta piglia el colore delle chose propinque. Il perchè rade volte è preso perchè non si può schorgere¹⁷³.</p>	<p>VIII.70 Iidem ex Aethiopia quas vocant cephos, quarum pedes posteriores pedibus humanis et cruribus, priores manibus fuere similes. hoc animal postea Roma non vidit¹⁷².</p> <p>VIII.123 Mutat colores et Scytharum tarandrus nec aliud ex iis quae pilo vestiuntur, nisi in Indis lycaon, cui iubata traditur cervix. [...] tarandro magnitudo quae bovi est, caput maius cervino nec absimile, cornua ramosa, ungulae bifidae, villus magnitudine ursorum, sed, cum libuit sui coloris esse, asini similis. tergori tanta duritia, ut thoraces ex eo faciant. colorem omnium arborum, fruticum, florum locorumque reddit metuens in quibus latet, ideoque raro capitur¹⁷⁴.</p>
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Table 2

This table shows in the first column the text of the *Morgante*, in the second the 1479 edition text¹⁷⁵ and in the third the text of a modern edition of Albert's work.¹⁷⁶ The text describing the animals is only transcribed when there is a corresponding description in the *Morgante*.

<p>321. Ed una fera tarando è chiamata, la qual, dov'ella giace, il color piglia di quella cosa che ella è circundata, sì che a vederla la vista assottiglia;</p>	<p>25.II Salpiga¹⁷⁷</p>	<p>25, II, 47 Salpiga serpens esse dicitur qui propter parvitatem non videtur et tamen vim nocendi habet maximam.¹⁷⁸</p>
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unable to lie down but sleeps leaning against a tree, and is captured by the tree being cut through to serve as a trap, but which nevertheless has a remarkable turn of speed”.

¹⁶⁹ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 95v.

¹⁷¹ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 97r.

¹⁷² *Id.*, **Natural History**, transl. Rackham, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53: “the same show exhibited what they call cephi from Ethiopia, which have hind feet resembling the feet of a man and legs and fore feet like hands. Rome has not seen this animal subsequently”.

¹⁷³ *Id.*, **Historia naturale**, *op. cit.*, f. 100v.

¹⁷⁴ *Id.*, **Natural History**, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89: “The reindeer of Scythia also changes its colours, but none other of the fur-clad animals does so except the Indian wolf, which is reported to have a mane on the neck. [...] the reindeer is the size of an ox; its head is larger than that of a stag but not unlike it; it has branching horns, cloven hooves, and a fleece as shaggy as a bear's but, when it happens to be self-coloured, resembling an ass's coat. The hide is so hard that they use it for making cuirasses. When alarmed it imitates the colours of all the trees, bushes and flowers and places where it lurks, and consequently is rarely caught”.

¹⁷⁵ Albert the Great, **De animalibus**, Paulus de Butzbach, Mantua, 1479.

¹⁷⁶ *Id.*, **De animalibus libri XXVI**, nach der Colner Urschrift, ed. by Hermann Stadler, Münster: Aschendorff, 1916-21.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 298v.

¹⁷⁸ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 157; *Id.*, **On Animals: a Medieval Summa Zoologica**, transl. Kenneth F. Kitchell Jr. and Irvn Michael Resnick, 2 Vols., Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, Vol. 2, p. 1732: “The Salpiga is said to be a serpent. It is not seen because of its smallness, but nevertheless its capacity for harm is very great”.

<p>un'altra ancora è salpiga appellata, che nuoce assai senza muover le ciglia; e spettafico, arunduco e molti angue che pur Medusa non creò col sangue. 322. Poi son celidri¹⁸³, serpenti famosi, e dipsa, emorrois e caferaco, saure e prèster, tutti velenosi; e non pur nota una spezie di draco; ed animali incogniti e nascosi, che stanno in mare e chi in padule o laco; e molti nomi stran di basilischi si truova ancor con vari effetti e fischi; 323. dracopopode, armene e calcatrice, irundo, alsordio, arache, altinanite, centupede e cornude e rimatrice; naderos molto è solitario, immite, berus e boa e passer e natrice, che Luciana non avea sentite, ed andrio, edisimon ed arbatraffa; e non si ricordò della giraffa.</p>	<p>25.II Spectaficus¹⁷⁹ 25.II arunducus¹⁸¹</p> <p>25.II Celidrus¹⁸⁴ 25.II Cafezacus¹⁸⁶ 25.II Scaura¹⁸⁸</p> <p>25.II Dracocopodes¹⁹⁰ 25.II Armene¹⁹² 25.II Irundo¹⁹⁴ 25.II Alfordius¹⁹⁶ 25.II Arachs¹⁹⁸ 25.II Altynanty²⁰⁰ 25.II Centupeda²⁰² 25.II Cornuta aspis²⁰⁴ 25.II Rymatrix²⁰⁶ 25.II Naderos²⁰⁸ 25.II Berus²¹⁰</p>	<p>25, II, 53Spectaficus¹⁸⁰ 25, II, 9Arundutis¹⁸²</p> <p>25, II, 21Celydrus¹⁸⁵ 25, II, 18cafezatus¹⁸⁷ 25, II, 49scaura¹⁸⁹</p> <p>25, II, 29 Draconcopodes¹⁹¹ 25, II, 3 Armene¹⁹³ 25, II, 35 Irundo¹⁹⁵ 25, II, 6 Asfodius¹⁹⁷ 25, II, 8 Aracsis¹⁹⁹ 25, II, 7 Altynanty²⁰¹ 25, II, 25 Centupeda²⁰³ 25, II, 16 Cornuta aspis²⁰⁵ 25, II, 45 Rymatrix²⁰⁷ 25, II, 41 naderos²⁰⁹ 25, II, 15 berus²¹¹</p>
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¹⁷⁹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479) *op. cit.*, f. 298v.

¹⁸⁰ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1573.

¹⁸¹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296v.

¹⁸² *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1560.

¹⁸³ Franca Brambilla Ageno has underlined how this animal is quoted as the “chelydrus” in Lucan, **Pharsalia**, IX, 711 and stressed that Pulci uses the 1479 edition’s version “celidrus”; see Luigi Pulci, **Morgante**, ed. by Franca Brambilla Ageno, *op. cit.*, p. 928.

¹⁸⁴ Albert the Great, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 297r.

¹⁸⁵ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1564.

¹⁸⁶ *Id.* **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 297r.

¹⁸⁷ *Id.* **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1563.

¹⁸⁸ *Id.* **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 298v.

¹⁸⁹ *Id.* **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1572.

¹⁹⁰ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 297v.

¹⁹¹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1567.

¹⁹² *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296r.

¹⁹³ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1558.

¹⁹⁴ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 297v.

¹⁹⁵ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1568.

¹⁹⁶ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296r.

¹⁹⁷ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1559.

¹⁹⁸ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296r.

¹⁹⁹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1560.

²⁰⁰ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296r.

²⁰¹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1560.

²⁰² *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, 297r.

²⁰³ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1564.

²⁰⁴ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296v.

²⁰⁵ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1563.

²⁰⁶ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 298r.

²⁰⁷ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1570.

²⁰⁸ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 298r.

²⁰⁹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1570.

²¹⁰ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296v.

²¹¹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1562.

<p>324.. E degli uccelli ibis, che par cicogna, perché e' si pasce d'uova di serpente; fassi il cristeo al tempo che bisogna con l'acqua salsa, chi v'ha posto mente, rivolto al culo il becco per zampogna: ché la Natura sagace e prudente intese, mediante questo uccello, apparare poi i fisici da quello.</p> <p>325. Agotile, appellato caprimulgo, poppa le capre sì che il latte secca; e chite, uccello ignorato dal vulgo, la madre e 'l padre in senettute imbecca; un altro è appellato cinamulgo, del qual chi mangia, le dita si lecca: e non ispari il ghiotto questo uccello, perché di spezierie si pasce quello.</p>	<p>25.II Boa²¹² 25.II Natrìx²¹⁴ 25.II Andrius²¹⁶ 25.II Ahedysimon²¹⁸ 25.II Alhartraf²²⁰</p> <p>23.XXIV Ibis [...] est autem avis magna in multis cyconie natura imitans sed non est cyconiam quia rostrum longum quidem sed aduncum habet. Hec autem avis pugnat cum serpente quodam qui etiam ybis vocatur et declinatur yibis ybis yibi quia potest in omne venenosum et ova serpentis pro desideratissimo cibo fert suis pullis. [...] Hec avis cum constipata fuerit ex ano per rostrum cibos eicit et aliquando clistere sibi faciens aquam maris salsam in posterius inicit et sic se laxat. Unde et Galienus narrat per huiusmodi visa avium ibidum et ardearum, clisteris usum esse inventum²²².</p> <p>23 Agothylez grece, latine caprivulgus vocatur [...] capras querens lactis irriguas quibus se supponit et sugit lac earum et consequitur succionem eius exsiccatio lactis in uberibus et hebetatio vel excecatio visus caprarum²²⁴.</p> <p>23.XXIV Kythes et cum pullis perfecti sunt reponunt suos parentes in nidis de quibus exiverunt ne amplius laborent et eos cibant in nidis illis pietate naturali²²⁶.</p>	<p>25, II, 14 Boa²¹³ 25, II, 40 Natrìx²¹⁵ 25, II, 5 Andrius²¹⁷ 25, II, 10 Ahedysimon²¹⁹ 25, II, 11 Alhartraf²²¹</p> <p>23, XXIV, 57 Ibis [...] est autem avis magna in multis ciconiae natura imitans, sed non est ciconiam quia rostrum longum quidem sed aduncum habet. Haec autem avis pugnat cum serpente quodam qui etiam ybis vocatur et declinatur yibis ybis yibi quia potest in omne venenosum et ova serpentis pro desideratissimo cibo fert suis pullis. [...] Haec avis cum constipata fuerit, ex ano per rostrum cibo eicit et aliquando clistere sibi faciens aquam maris salsam in posterius inicit se laxat. Unde et Galienus narrat per huiusmodi visa avium ibidum et ardearum, clisteris usum esse inventum²²³.</p> <p>23, 4 Agothylez Graece, Latine caprimulgus vocatur, [...] capras quaerens lactis irriguas quibus se supponit et sugit lac earum, et consequitur succionem eius et exsiccatio lactis in uberibus et hebetatio vel excaecatio visus caprarum²²⁵.</p> <p>23, XXIV, 65 Kythes [...] et cum pullis perfecti sunt, reponunt suos parentes in nidis de quibus exiverunt ne amplius laborent, et eos cibant in nidis illis pietate naturali²²⁷.</p>
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²¹² *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, 296v.

²¹³ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1562.

²¹⁴ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 298r.

²¹⁵ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1570.

²¹⁶ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296r.

²¹⁷ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1559.

²¹⁸ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296v.

²¹⁹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1560.

²²⁰ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 296v.

²²¹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, p. 1561.

²²² *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 285r.

²²³ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1499; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, pp. 1631-1632: "The ybis [...] is a large bird, mimicking in many ways the nature of the stork. But it is not a stork because although it has a long beak, the beak is curved. This bird fights with a particular serpent which is also called ybis but whose name is declined ybis, ybis, ybi. It fights with is because it has power over every venomous creature and bring serpent eggs to its chicks as a greatly desired food. [...] When the bird is constipated, it takes the food out of its anus with its beak, giving itself an enema by injecting sea water into its posterior, in this way relieving itself. This is how, according to Galen, from seeing things of this sort among ibises and cranes, the use of the enema syringe was discovered".

²²⁴ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 273v.

²²⁵ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1439; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, p. 1555: "The agothylez is so named in Greek. In Latin we call it the caprimulgus [goat milker]. [...] It seeks out goats full of milk, places itself beneath them and sucks out their milk. As a result of this there arises both a drying up of the milk in the teats and a dulling or even a blinding of the goat's sight".

²²⁶ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 285v.

²²⁷ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1501; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, p. 1634: "When the chicks are grown, they put their parents back in the nest they have just left so that they work no more and they feed them out of a natural piety".

<p>326. Meonide ancor son famosi uccelli che fanno appena creder quel che è scritto, però ch'ogni cinque anni vengon quelli di Meon al sepulcro insin d'Egitto; combatton quivi, o gran misteri e belli! mostrando pianto naturale afflitto come facessin l'essequie e 'l mortoro; poi si ritornon nel paese loro.</p> <p>327. Ed ardea quasi l'aghiron simiglia, che fugge sopra i nugol la tempesta; coredul, ciò che per ventura piglia, del cor si pasce, e l'avanzo si resta; carità vola, e parrà meraviglia, per mezzo il foco, e non incende questa. Né so se ancora un uccel cognoscete nimico al corbo, appellato corete.</p>	<p>23 Cynamulgos avis est que in ethyopia et climatibus secunndo et primo in altissimarum arborum extremis ramusculis de cynamomo nobiliori textit nidum ad quem cum incole scandere non possint propter altitudinem arborum et fragilitatem ramusculorum sagittis plumbatis nidos deiciunt et colligunt cynamomum. Ipsam etiam avicula cum suis interioribus non exviscerata comeditur propter aromaticitatem eorum quibus nutritur²²⁸.</p> <p>23.XXIV Menonides quidam vocant aves a loco ab egyptiis sic vocatas. Catervatim enim ab egypto volant ad ylium ad sepulchrum mennonis pythagorici philosophi sempre in quinto anno. Et cum biduo ibi circumvolaverunt x die pugnā ineunt et se rostris et unguibus lacerant et tunc revertunt in egyptum²³⁰.</p> <p>23 Ardea [...] alte volat dicta ardea quasi ardua eo qui alte eat volando. Dicunt enim hanc avem cum tempestate presentit alte supra nubes volare [...].²³²</p> <p>23 Coredulus avis sic est vocata eo qui venatione vivat et cordi eorum que venatur edat et parum de corpore reliquo prede accepte²³⁴.</p> <p>23 Cariste sunt aves ut dicit solinus et Iorach que innoque flammis involant ita que nec pennis nec corpore aduruntur²³⁶.</p>	<p>23, 21 Cynamulgos avis est quae in Ethyopia et climatibus secundo et primo in altissimarum arborum extremis ramusculis de cinamomo nobiliori textit nidum, ad quem cum incolae scandere non possint propter altitudinem arborum et fragilitatem ramusculorum, sagittis plumbatis nidos deiciunt et colligunt cinamomum: ipsa etiam avicula cum suis interioribus non exenterata comeditur propter aromaticitatem eorum quibus nutritur²²⁹.</p> <p>23, XXIV, 75 Memnonides quidam vocant aves a loco ab Egiptiis sic vocatas. Catervatim enim de Egipto volant ad Ylium ad sepulcrum Memnonis, Phytagorici philosophi, semper in quinto anno: et cum biduo ibi circumvolaverint, tertio die pugnā ineunt et se rostris et unguibus lacerant: et tunc revertuntur in Egiptum²³¹.</p> <p>23, 5 Ardea [...] alte volat dicta ardea quasi ardua eo quod alte eat volando. Dicunt enim hanc avem cum tempestatem praesenti, alte supra nubes volare [...].²³³</p> <p>23, 31 Coredulus avis sic est vocata eo quod venatione vivat et corda eorum quae venatur edat et parum de corpore reliquo praedae acceptae²³⁵.</p> <p>23, 23 Caristae sunt aves ut dicunt Solinus et Jorach quae innocuae flammis involant ita quod nec pennis nec corpore adurunt [...].²³⁷</p>
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²²⁸ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 275r.

²²⁹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 1446-1447; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, p. 1564: “the cynamulgos is a bird which lives in Ethyopia, in both the first and the second climata. It weaves its nest out of the finest cinnamon on the outermost small branches of the tallest trees. The region’s inhabitants, since they cannot climb to it due to the height of the tree and the fragility of the branches, knock the nests down with arrows weighted with lead and then collect the cinnamon. This little bird is not disembowelled but is eaten with its innards, due to the aromatic nature of the things it feeds on”.

²³⁰ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 285v.

²³¹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1502; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1636: “Some people name the memnonides after some birds which the Egyptians name after a place. They fly in flocks fro Egypt to Ilium, to the tomb of Memnon, a Pythagorean philosopher. They always do this in the fifth year and, when they have flown around for two days, they enter into a fight on the third day, cutting each other with their beaks and talons. They then go back to Egypt”.

²³² *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 273v.

²³³ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1440; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1555: “The ardea [...] is a bird which takes its name, according to some, from the fact that it flies high and thus has a lofty [ardua] flight. For they say that this bird flies high above the clouds when it senses a storm is coming [...]”.

²³⁴ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 275v.

²³⁵ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1450; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1568: “The coredulus is a bird so called because it lives by hunting and eats the hearts [corda] of those it hunts. It eats very little else of the prey it has caught”.

²³⁶ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 275r.

²³⁷ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1448; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1565: “Caristae are birds which, as Solinus and Jorach say, fly unharmed through flames, burning neither their feathers or body”.

<p>328. Ed un uccel che di state si vede dopo la pioggia, si chiama drīaca, che la Natura creò senza piede; ed atilon, che gridando s'indraga drieto alla volpe; se l'asino vede, amico il segue e con esso si placa; bistarda è grave, e dir non ne bisogna, ché, come vil, si pasce di carogna.</p> <p>329. Non so se del caladrio udito hai dire, il qual, posto all'infermo per obietto, si volge addrieto se quel dèe morire, così al contrario pel contrario effetto; ibor come caval s'ode annitrire; luce licidia, un pulito ugelletto, tanto che quasi carbonchio par sia, sì che di notte dimostra la via.</p> <p>330. Incendula, col gufo combattendo, vince il dì lei, e il gufo poi la notte. Ma sopra tutto porfirio commendo, un certo uccel che non teme di gotte: ché ciò che piglia lo mangia bevendo, sì che e' vuol presso la madia e la</p>	<p>23 Choretēs aves sunt pugnantes cum corvis [...]²³⁸.</p> <p>23.38 Dryacha avis est pedibus carens [...] hec non apparet nisi post pluviam in principio estatis [...]²⁴⁰.</p> <p>23 Athylon autem avis amica asini et inimica vulpis [...]²⁴².</p> <p>23 Bistarda [...] sed vel cadavera forte inventa comedit [...]²⁴⁴.</p> <p>23 Caladrius [...] que presentata infirmo etiam indicat oens morborum disponens et nonnullos dicitur curare. Si enim infirmo obiecta avis vultum et et oculos in infirmum convertit indicat sanandum. [...] Si autem obiecta infirmo avertit ab ipso vultum et oculos significat moriturorum²⁴⁶.</p> <p>23.XXIV Ibor [...] habet enim hinnitum sicut equus²⁴⁸.</p> <p>23.XXIV Lucidae aves sunt pennas habentes noctilucas et ideo prorectis pennis vias demonstrat et ideo nomen hoc acceperit²⁵⁰.</p> <p>23.XXIV Incendula [...] pugnans cum bubone que quia de die clarius videt victo bubone de die devorat et frangitova ipsius. Nocte autem cum praevalet videre bubo agreditur incendulam [...]²⁵².</p>	<p>23, 25 Choretēs aves sunt pugnantes cum corvis [...]²³⁹.</p> <p>23, 38 Daryatha avis est pedibus carens [...]. Haec non apparet nisi post pluviam in principio aestatis [...]²⁴¹.</p> <p>23, 27 Achylon autem avis est amica asini et inimica vulpis [...]²⁴³.</p> <p>23, 17 Bistarda [...] sed vel cadavera forte inventa comedit [...]²⁴⁵.</p> <p>23, 20 Caladrius [...] quae presentata infirmo et indicat omnes morborum dispositiones et nonnullas dicitur curare. Si enim infirmo obiecta avis vultum et oculos in infirmum convertit, indicat sanandum [...]. Si autem obiecta infirmo avertit ab ipso vultum et oculos, significat moriturum [...]²⁴⁷.</p> <p>23, XXIV, 58 Iboz [...] habet enim hinnitum sicut equus²⁴⁹.</p> <p>23, XXIV, 67 Lucidae aves sunt pennas habentes noctilucas et ideo praeiectis pennis vias demonstrat et ideo nomen hoc acceperunt²⁵¹.</p> <p>23, XXIV, 59 Incendula [...] pugnans cum bubone quae quia de die clarius videt, victo bubone de die devorat et frangitova ipsius. Nocte autem cum praevalet videre bubo agreditur incendulam [...]²⁵³.</p>
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²³⁸ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 275v.

²³⁹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1449; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1566: "Choretēs are birds that fight with ravens".

²⁴⁰ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 276r.

²⁴¹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1453; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1571: "The daryatha, as Aristotle says, lacks feet. [...] This one appears only after a rain shower in the beginning of summer".

²⁴² *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 275v.

²⁴³ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1449; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1567: "the achyton, however, is a bird friendly to the ass but unfriendly to the fox".

²⁴⁴ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 274v.

²⁴⁵ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1445; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1562: "Rather, it eats carcasses it has found".

²⁴⁶ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 275r.

²⁴⁷ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1446; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 1563-4: "When presented to a sick person, it indicates all the conditions of his decease and it is said to cure quite a few. If it is held up to a sick person and it turns its face and eyes on him, it indicates he will be cured. [...] If, however, it is held up to a sick person and it turns its face and eyes away from him, it signifies that he will die".

²⁴⁸ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 285r.

²⁴⁹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1499; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1632: "It has a whinny like a horse".

²⁵⁰ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 285v.

²⁵¹ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1501; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1635: "Lucidae are birds with feathers that glow in the dark. Therefore, having thrown their feathers ahead of them, they point out their paths and this is why they have taken this name".

²⁵² *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 285r.

²⁵³ *Id.*, **De animalibus** (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 1499-500; **On Animals**, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1632: "The incendula [...] fights with the owl [bubo]. Because it sees more clearly by day than the owl, it overcomes the bubo by day and breaks and eats its eggs. At night, however, when the bubo has the sight advantage, it attacks the incendula".

PULCI AND FICINO:
RETHINKING THE *MORGANTE* (CANTOS XXIV-XXV)

<p>botte; l'un piè par d'oca, perché e' nuota spesso, e l'altro con che e' mangia è tutto fesso.</p>	<p>23.XXIV Porfirion avis est ut dicunt quidam esterarum regionum unum pedem habens anserinum ad natandum et alium divisus digitis ut avis terestris. Hec avis sola habet inter alias quod pede aquam hauriens bibit et pede cibum in os ponit et oportet ipsam in omni bolo bibere quia aliter sibi cibus propter appetitus debilitatem non descenderet²⁵⁴.</p>	<p>23, XXIV, 91 Porfirion avis est ut dicunt quidam exterarum regionum, unum pedem habens anserinum ad natandum et alium divisus digitis ut avis terestris. Hec avis sola habet inter alias quod pede aquam hauriens bibit, et pede cibum in os ponit: et oportet ipsam in omni bolo bibere quia aliter sibi cibus propter appetitus debilitatem non descendit²⁵⁵.</p>
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²⁵⁴ *Id.*, *De animalibus* (1479), *op. cit.*, f. 286r.

²⁵⁵ *Id.*, *De animalibus* (1916), *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1506; *On Animals*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 1642: "The porfirion [osprey? flamingo?] is a bird, as some say, of the outer regions which has one foot like a goose for swimming and the other with separated toes, like a land bird. This bird alone among the others has the habit that it drinks water by drawing it up in its foot, and that it puts food in its mouth with its foot. It has to drink, moreover, at every mouthful of food since, due to weakness in its appetite, the food does not go down any other way".